

## February 2018 Newsletter

### Co-Chair's Message

by Peter Gorski

This may be uncharacteristic of a party co-chair, but for most of my life I was politically apathetic. I passed on the opportunity to vote, paid no heed to politicians, and generally felt that politics was work for someone else, and not much worth doing at that. I now realize that I was quite naive, and that the systems of power that operate our society had taught me to be disillusioned in order to render me complacent. The powers driving our society – primarily the super rich who, thanks to the Citizen's United decision, exert tremendous power over our political elections and policy – want nothing more than to convince every citizen below the 99% line that they have no power.

As I gradually learned more and became aware of some of the problems we face as a society, I got involved in community groups like Citizens' Climate Lobby and Showing Up for Racial Justice to work toward fighting against climate change and racism. Along with this work, I realized that politics is a crucial component of effecting change, and began to work within the system as well, overcoming my apathy and cynicism.

Unfortunately, I do not think that I was alone in these feelings. As we can see, a full 45% of our population did not vote in our last presidential election, even amidst the constant coverage and scandal that surrounded it. Voters are faced time and again with candidates that do not inspire them, or they are so over-worked and under-informed that they do not know when or who to vote for. Even worse, many are denied the right to vote via voter suppression tactics.

It is undeniable that voting is the basis of the democratic process. But voting alone does not sustain a healthy democracy. We must have a well informed electorate that is driven to be involved in candidate selection and shaping policy if we wish to have a government that reflects our country in an equitable and just fashion. It is my aim as co-chair to work toward greater and more widespread involvement in the political process in the La Crosse area.

When politics is boiled down to turning



### Upcoming Events

**February 19**, LCDP Regular Monthly Meeting, Ho-Chunk Three Rivers House, 724 Main St, La Crosse @ 6:30 p.m.

**February 20**, Spring Primary Elections - vote for candidates of your choice for Wisconsin Supreme Court and La Crosse County Treasurer. Copy and paste the links in your browser:

- Check your voter registration @ <https://myvote.wi.gov>
- General information @ <http://www.cityoflacrosse.org/elections>
- Sample ballots @ <http://www.co.la-crosse.wi.us/countyclerk/docs/Web%20Page%20Sample%20Ballot%20Feb%2018.pdf>
- Polling places <http://www.co.la-crosse.wi.us/countyclerk/docs/PollingPlaces.pdf>

**March 10**, Democratic Party of the 3rd Congressional District of Wisconsin Convention, American Legion Hall, 1116 Angelo Rd., Sparta WI. Delegates chosen at the February 19 LCDP Regular Meeting

**March 17**, LCDP St. Patrick's Day Social, 5-8 p.m., Earl's Grocery and Saloon, 401 3rd St. S., La Crosse

out the vote and winning elections, the causes of the common people will fall to the wayside. For too long, the elites in our

country, and our binary parties, have been allowed to dictate policy, and we as a population have accepted their options without presenting our own. This has led to policy that alienates and harms ordinary people, denies basic human rights, and allows elites to get wealthy off of working class labor without paying their share.

The massive protests and response to Donald Trump has been heartening, but as Naomi Klein has asserted many times, if we simply defeat Trump, we are only going to return to the same society that brought him to us in the first place. Yes, Donald Trump is a violent, unqualified, and unforgivably abhorrent man who has disavowed political correctness. At the same time, racism, sexism, and jingoism are plagues that affect our political representatives on both sides of the aisle. The rhetoric in discussions may be less inflammatory, but the concrete actions and consequences of the last few decades of our government have helped to increase income inequality to astronomic levels. Mass inequities in healthcare and education, mass incarceration, inhumane and racist immigration policy, perpetual wars, climate inaction and environmental destruction, immense wage gaps across race and gender, lack of parental leave, lack of child and elder care, and reproductive injustice are not new problems.

It is past time that the people of our country stand up to these systems of oppression and the politicians that support and propagate them. Lasting societal change is a force that must come from a cultural revolution born from the grassroots. The civil rights act, women's suffrage, and marriage equality did not come into being because our politicians suddenly realized they were good ideas. They followed the people, as masses of everyday people took risks to stand up to injustice, time and time again. Now is our time to stand up and build the just and sustainable world we all need. Let us have our party be the space where we call in those who have felt powerless to realize our power together.

## Ron Kind's Message

It is an embarrassment that our great nation has to rely on budgets that last weeks or days instead of years. This isn't how we support or help anybody — troops, veterans, seniors, and farmers all rely on critical programs and deserve a lot better than what is being offered to them in Washington. We must protect our country, health, and economy but not at the expense of the freedom and dignity of others.

Simply put, we must work together to pass a bipartisan year-long budget that restores certainty without sacrificing the same freedoms that made our country great. That is why I voted against the most recent CR in the House.

The inevitable blame game has already set in but my message is clear. I'll work with anybody to get the job done and pass a full-year budget with broad support from both parties.

In other news, the 3rd Congressional District Convention has been called and is coming up fast! It's in Sparta WI on Saturday, March 10, 2018. We will meet at the American Legion Hall, 1116 Angelo Rd, Sparta, WI 54656.

Registration will run from 9am-10:30am with call to order promptly at 10am.

If you wish to register as a delegate or submit a resolution, please contact a co-chair ([chair@laxdems.org](mailto:chair@laxdems.org)) before February 16, 2018 to ensure your voice is heard at this important event.

Thanks for all you do,  
Ron Kind

### Spring Election Information

The 2018 election season will be underway on Tuesday, February 20, 2018 with the spring primary, followed by the spring election on Tuesday, April 3, 2018. Of special interest is the February primary for La Crosse County Treasurer and the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

To double-check your voter registration, find your polling place, see your February sample primary ballot, or request an absentee ballot, go to <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/> and click on the appropriate link.

If you are not registered to vote, register as soon as possible. Since you are reading this in early February, options 1 and 2 below are not available for the spring primary on February 20 due to blackout periods before an election. For the April 3 election, the last day to register to vote online is March 14, 2018. The following information is from the City of La Crosse website at <https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/content/407/437/1252/1262/default.aspx>

Anyone wishing to vote in the State of Wisconsin, where they are required to register, has four options to register:

**1. By Mail:** Download the Application for Voter Registration (EL - 131). Complete the form and mail it to your municipal clerk's office up to 20 days before the election (5:00 p.m. on the 3rd Wednesday before the election). Proof of Residence is required for any elector, who is not a military or permanent overseas elector, who registers by mail. If registering by mail, a copy must be included when submitting the registration application.

**2. Online:** Register online at My Vote Wisconsin up to 20 days before the election. Voters who have a valid State of Wisconsin Driver License or State of Wisconsin ID card issued by the Wisconsin Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) can register to vote online.

**3. In Person:** Register in the municipal clerk's office up to 5:00 p.m. on the Friday before the election. Proof of Residence is required for any elector, who is not a military or permanent

overseas elector, who registers in person at the Municipal Clerk's Office.

**4. At the Polling Place on Election Day:** If you wish to register to vote at your polling place, you must bring proof of your residency.

Proof of Residence is required for any elector who is registering to vote on Election Day. See below for acceptable forms.

Information on absentee voting is available at <http://elections.wi.gov/voters/absentee>.

Information from this website on in-person absentee voting is reproduced here:

#### **In-Person Absentee Voting at your Municipal Clerk's Office (Early Voting)**

You can also vote absentee at your local municipal clerk's office. If you apply for an absentee ballot in your municipal clerk's office, or another designated location for in-person absentee voting, you will vote your ballot immediately in the clerk's office, seal your ballot in the proper envelope, and return it to a member of the clerk's staff. No ballots may be taken out of the clerk's office.

**You will need to show your acceptable photo ID** for voting when voting by in-person absentee ballot. More information about acceptable photo IDs can be found at [www.bringit.wi.gov](http://www.bringit.wi.gov).

#### **When can I Vote an In-Person Absentee Ballot?**

Each city, village and town in Wisconsin is responsible for setting the dates and hours of in-person absentee voting for their municipality. To find the dates and hours for in-person absentee voting where you live, **contact your municipal clerk.**

#### **Who is my Municipal Clerk?**

The municipal clerk is the clerk for the City, Village or Town in Wisconsin where you reside. If you do not know who your municipal clerk is, or where the clerk's office is located, please use the MyVote Wisconsin website, [myvote.wi.gov](http://myvote.wi.gov), to locate your clerk's contact information. You can also find your clerk by searching a list of all Wisconsin Municipal Clerk Contact Information.

# Will November 6, 2018 Be a Wave Election to Turn Wisconsin Blue?

by Michael Smuksta, LCDP co-chair

Tsunami. Blue Wave. Although ten months is an eternity in politics, there are auspicious indicators that Democrats will be happier on the day after Election Day, November 6, 2018 than they were on November 9, 2016, the day after Trump was elected president.

There are many reasons for Democrats to be optimistic about 2018. Midterm elections are historically a referendum on the president and the president's party. The opposing party gains 30 seats on average, and Democrats need to gain 24 seats to win the majority in the House. There are 31 House Republicans either retiring or leaving to seek another elected office. Many of these individuals hold a seat in a congressional district that Hillary Clinton won in 2016. Other factors include Trump's abysmal approval ratings in the high 30s that are the worst for any first year of a president's term, movement away from Trump in some key demographic groups, a 9 point advantage for Democrats in a generic congressional vote, a congressional approval rating of only 15.7%, and almost 6 in 10 Americans believing the direction of the country is on the wrong track.

More importantly, there have been some recent Democratic victories at the polls. In Virginia, a Democrat was elected governor, and the Republican majority in the House of Delegates was dramatically reduced from 66-34 to 51-49. That slim 51-49 majority was only decided after a recount in one district resulted in a tie; the eventual winner was the Republican candidate whose name was drawn from a hat.

In red Alabama, for the first time in twenty-five years a Democrat was elected to the U.S. Senate in a special election. Doug Jones narrowly defeated Roy Moore, theocrat and former Chief Justice of the Alabama Supreme Court, 49.92 percent to 48.38 percent, or by 21,924 votes of a total of 1,348,720 votes cast. African-American women played a pivotal role in electing Jones.

But the most exciting Democratic win occurred January 16, 2018 in the special election for Wisconsin Senate District 10 in northwestern Wisconsin. St. Croix medical examiner Patty Schachtner beat the Republican candidate by 11 percentage points in this traditionally Republican territory. For perspective – Republican Sheila Harsdorf, who left the Senate District 10 seat due to Walker appointing her Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection, was re-elected in 2016 with 63 percent of the vote.

Schachtner ran a positive campaign that focused on local issues, and stated that her "message has always been be kind, be considerate, and we need to help people when they're down." What a contrast to Republican

candidates in Virginia and Alabama whose campaigns echoed Trump-style divisive rhetoric – and lost.

This confluence of positive gains could become even better as 2018 progresses. In early January, federal judges ordered that North Carolina redraw new congressional district maps due to Republican gerrymandering. Democrats can remain hopeful that the U.S. Supreme Court will follow their lead and do the same for Wisconsin. If Democrats and other progressive groups disenchanted with Republican control of Wisconsin can tap into the current surge of energy, we can deny Scott Walker a third term, and defeat Republican Assembly representatives and Republican state senators.

Will November 6, 2018 be a wave election to turn Wisconsin blue? Only if we make it so. Wave elections do not just happen. Hard work remains in grassroots organizing, talking politics with our friends and neighbors about Democratic Party values and principles, registering voters, and voting in an off-year election.

For a more complete analysis of the victory in SD10, copy and paste these links in your browser:

"Democratic Senate race win in northwest Wisconsin sends political shock wave" @

[http://lacrossetribune.com/news/state-and-regional/democratic-senate-race-win-in-northwest-wisconsin-sends-political-shock/article\\_8c310d35-da19-5491-b85e-10f778747e40.html](http://lacrossetribune.com/news/state-and-regional/democratic-senate-race-win-in-northwest-wisconsin-sends-political-shock/article_8c310d35-da19-5491-b85e-10f778747e40.html)

"Wisconsin Upset Raises Hopes for Democrats in 2018 Races" @

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/17/us/wisconsin-elections-state-senate.html>

On the potential for a 2018 wave election, copy and paste these links in your browser:

"Republican Retirements Raise Talk of Democratic Wave in November" @

[https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/09/us/politics/republicans-retirements-house-democrats-wave-2018.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/09/us/politics/republicans-retirements-house-democrats-wave-2018.html?_r=0)

"A Year Later, Trump Is Less Popular Across Voting Blocs. See by How Much" @

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/01/11/us/politics/trump-approval.html>

**"Be kind, be considerate,  
and we need to help people  
when they're down."**

**~ WI Senator-elect Patty**

**Schachtner**



## LOCAL SPOTLIGHT

### Industrial Agriculture in the Driftless

by Sara Bentley

More than 200 concerned citizens, including six LCDP members, attended the January 20 Industrial Ag in the Driftless conference in Boscobel to hear the keynote speaker and panelists discuss the rapid increase of Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) in the Driftless Region. Twenty-two grassroots organizations sponsored the conference that focused on corporate owned swine CAFO's that have saturated rural Iowa and southern Minnesota and are now seeking to expand into the Driftless region.

Dr. John Ikern, University of Missouri retired agricultural economist, shared findings from fifty years of research on the environmental, economic and social impacts of CAFOs on rural communities. These include lower property values, loss of small family farms, water and air pollution with negative effects on public health including antibiotic resistance, higher levels of unemployment and poverty, domestic abuse, drug addiction and an overall lower quality of life.

Our communities can protect themselves from CAFOs by voting with our forks to support our local farmers and the healthy food systems they are developing, by passing moratoriums and ordinances on CAFOs, by creating land covenants to protect local ownership of the land, and by running for office and voting for candidates who reflect our communities' values.



### LCDP at Progressival 2018

Several members of the LCDP attended Progressival 2018 on Saturday, February 3, 2018 at the Concordia Ballroom. The LCDP table had a display that asked visitors for their vision of the future and solicited suggestions on how the LCDP can work with their group. These suggestions were posted on sticky notes on a chart that listed the principles of the LCDP. The LCDP analysis of the comments will inform future LCDP planning for events and initiatives. The point was to give visibility to the LCDP. While members worked the table, the co-chairs circulated among the other groups, talking with many different individuals and encouraging them to check out "the new LCDP."

The main speaker was Paul Cienfuegos, the founding director of Community Rights US. His message is simple but powerful: local Community Rights law-making campaigns via grassroots activism can effectively challenge corporate constitutional "so-called rights" and reassert the authority of people to govern themselves.

## Call for La Crosse County Democratic Party Delegates to Attend the 3rd Congressional District Convention, March 10, 2018 in Sparta, WI

The La Crosse County Democratic Party (LCDP) calls for delegates from members of the LCDP to attend the Democratic Party of the 3rd Congressional District Convention on Saturday, March 10, 2018. The Monroe County Democratic Party will host the event at the American Legion Hall, 1116 Angelo Rd, Sparta, WI, 54656.

Article XI of the LCDP Constitution has details about the selection process for delegates. Delegates for the 3rd Congressional District and State Convention will be elected by the LCDP members at the February 19, 2018 meeting. A list of individuals who have notified the chairs of their intent to be LCDP delegates will be announced on February 16, 2018.

If you are interested in being a delegate, contact the co-chairs by phone, mail, or email before February, 16, 2018.

Peter Gorski  
140 23rd St. S.  
La Crosse WI 54601  
312-231-9884  
chair@laxdems.com

Michael Smuksta  
120 24th St. S.  
La Crosse WI 54601  
608-784-4219  
chair@laxdems.com

Once approved as a delegate at the February 19, 2018 general meeting, delegates can register on line or by mail by 11:59 p.m., Saturday, February 24, 2018. Pre-paid registration is \$25. The March 10th pay at the door fee is \$30, cash or check.

Copy and paste this link into your browser for delegate information:

[http://3rddemswi.nationbuilder.com/become\\_a\\_delegate](http://3rddemswi.nationbuilder.com/become_a_delegate) .

Copy and paste this link into your browser for convention details and links: <http://3rddemswi.nationbuilder.com/>

On March 10, 2018, registration will take place from 9:00 – 10:30 AM, with the call to order beginning promptly at 10:00 AM. REMEMBER—the delegates chosen to attend the 3rd CD convention are also considered to be delegates to the state convention in Oshkosh, June 1-2, 2018.

A typical convention ratifies business, fills any open offices, considers business from the floor, votes on resolutions submitted by counties in the 3rd congressional district, has a program of speakers, and a lunch. It's a good opportunity for networking.

The Call for Delegates from the 3rd CD – copy and paste this address in your browser:

[https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/3rddemswi/pages/30/attachments/original/1516283330/2018\\_Call\\_to\\_Convention.pdf?1516283330](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/3rddemswi/pages/30/attachments/original/1516283330/2018_Call_to_Convention.pdf?1516283330)

**"If you're walking down the right path and you're willing to keep walking, eventually you'll make progress."**

*~ Barack Obama*

## Our Elected Officials

### Senator Tammy Baldwin

717 Hart Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
Ph: 202-224-5653, Fax: 202-224-9787

### Senator Ron Johnson (R)

328 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. Office Building  
Ph: 202-224-5323

### Congressman Ron Kind

1406 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
Ph: 202-225-5506, Fax: 202-225-5739

### State Senator Jennifer Shilling

State Capitol 106 South  
P.O. Box 7882  
Madison, WI 53703-7882  
Ph: 608-266-5490, Local: 608-782-2785

### 94th Assembly District Representative Steve Doyle

Room 124 North, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53708  
Ph: 608-266-0631 or 888-534-0094  
Fax: 608-282-3694

### 95th Assembly District Representative Jill Billings

Room 4 West, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53708  
Ph: 608-266-5780

### Governor Scott Walker (R)

Office of the Governor  
115 East State Capital  
Madison, WI 53702  
Ph: 608-266-1212

## LCDP Executive Board Officers

### Co-Chairs: Michael Smuksta & Peter Gorski

608-784-4219 / 312-231-9884

### Vice Chair: Dave Wulf

608-799-8977

### Treasurer: Diane Oldani Wulf

608-780-7007

### Secretary: Avery Van Gaard

608-769-1034

### At-Large Board Members:

Sara Bentley  
Austin Goodrich  
Obbie King  
Peter Klitzke  
Greg Schams

Past Chairs: Susan Goeldner, J.D. Wine

College Representative: Stephanie Boebel (UW-L)



LCDP members were busy after the holidays. Kudos to members who:

- attended the League of Women Voters January 9th meeting to learn about changes in the Wisconsin on-line voter registration system
- made phone calls to voters in Wisconsin Senate District 10 in support of Patty Schachtner, who beat the Republican candidate by 11 percentage points in the special election on January 16th
- traveled to Boscobel, WI, on January 20th to attend a conference on “Industrial Ag in the Driftless: How Do We Protect Our Communities?”
- worked at the LCDP table on February 3rd at Progressival 2018, “Fostering an Ecosystem of Activism”

## Some Facts On Your LCDP Membership

The best and easiest way to renew your La Crosse County Democratic Party membership is through your local county treasurer. Once you are a member of the county, you are automatically a member of the 3rd Congressional District (3rd CD) and the Democratic Party of Wisconsin (DPW). You need to submit membership dues only once a year to be a member of all three. It is unnecessary to submit duplicate memberships through the county and also through the state. If you have questions about your membership, please contact Diane Oldani Wulf, your current LCDP treasurer, at 608-780-7007, or at [eap11111@aol.com](mailto:eap11111@aol.com).

## We Welcome Your Input

Any thoughts or suggestions you may have for your Executive Board are greatly appreciated. You can express them by contacting any board member, either by phone or email.

## Renewing Your Membership!

You can renew your membership using the membership form found at the end of this newsletter. If you are receiving this newsletter via mail, please look at your mailing label to see when your membership expires. Thank you for your continued support!

If you are receiving this newsletter in the mail and would prefer to receive it via email instead, please contact Diane Oldani Wulf at 608-780-7007 or [eap11111@aol.com](mailto:eap11111@aol.com).



La Crosse County Democratic Party  
 P. O. Box 1861  
 La Crosse, WI 54602 -1861

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Authorized and paid for by the  
 La Crosse County Democratic Party,  
 Diane Oldani Wulf, Treasurer.  
 The contents herein are not authorized by  
 any candidate or candidate's committee.

For the LCDP to do the activities we want to do this year, we are going to need funding and volunteers. The party is only as strong as the engagement of its members and friends. And that is where you come in. We need you to volunteer and contribute. Please consider a contribution of any amount to help us provide the activities and events and broaden our base to prepare for 2018.

You may send a contribution to:  
 LCDP, P. O. Box 1861, La Crosse, WI,  
 54602-1861.  
 For online contributions go to our website  
[www.laxdems.com](http://www.laxdems.com).

Thank you.

**Become a member of the La Crosse County Democratic Party. Clip bottom of page and send to LCDP.**

Received \_\_\_\_\_  
 Renewal Month \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the dues structure that applies:

- \$10 Senior, Student, Limited Income
- \$25 General Membership (1 member)
- \$35 Pairs (up to two members)
- \$45 yearly Activist (up to 3 members)
- \$75 yearly (family)
- \$120 Supporting Membership
- \$240 Friend
- \$600 Patron

I would like to support the LCDP with a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount Paid \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to:  
 La Crosse County Democratic Party  
 P. O. Box 1861  
 La Crosse, WI 54602-1861

You may also donate online: [www.laxdems.com](http://www.laxdems.com).  
 Authorized and paid for by the La Crosse County Democratic Party, Diane Oldani Wulf, Treasurer

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Contributions are not tax deductible for federal income tax purposes. Your contribution may be used in connection with federal elections and is subject to the limitations and prohibitions of the Federal Election Campaign Act.

\*Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year.

I recommend contacting as a possible member:  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_