

May 2018 Newsletter

Message from a Board Member

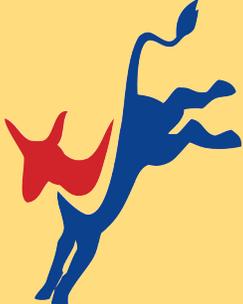
Peter Klitzke,
at-large LCDP Executive Board Member

My political values and principles can be summed up in the cliché “We are **all** in this together.”

My political values and principles are progressive center-left. That may sound to some like inconsistency. How can someone who professes to value progressive principles not be considered a far left liberal. Perhaps my values developed from my upbringing, my serving people with disabilities, or my career teaching elementary school children. Regardless...

I strive to listen to and understand people’s values from numerous points on the political spectrum. I believe I am a practical centrist. I look for commonality of belief and experiences among many people from seemingly disparate points of view, whether ethnic or socio-economic. I see inner city urban people struggling to exist with no job or two or more low paying jobs with no healthcare, sick days, or retirement benefits. I see independent business people struggling to provide a product or service, to meet expenses, and provide benefits. But often no benefits are provided for their families and employees and owners make just enough profit to stay in business. I see rural people working farms and also holding down second or third jobs. If people in all these groups are lucky, someone in the family has a job with healthcare and retirement benefits. I see people everywhere feeling anxious, insecure and unsafe, except for those fortunate few at the very top of socio-economic hierarchy.

I believe that puts me in the center of the political spectrum. The solutions to feeling physically safe and financially secure, I believe, must benefit **all** people whoever they are or wherever they live. In my mind that makes me a progressive. I believe we **all** benefit when we take responsibility for our own lives **and** try



Upcoming Events

May 7, LCDP Executive Board Meeting, Ho-Chunk Three Rivers House, 724 Main Street, La Crosse @ 6:00 p.m.

May 21, LCDP Regular Monthly Meeting, Ho-Chunk Three Rivers House, 724 Main Street, La Crosse @ 6:30 p.m., gubernatorial candidate Dana Wachs will speak to the members.

June 1-2, Democratic Party of Wisconsin State Convention, Best Western Premier Waterfront Hotel and Convention Center, 1 N. Main Street, Oshkosh, WI 54901

See the article on p.2 of this newsletter for more information.

our best to understand and help others. I oppose identity politics that attempts to favor one group over another.

My passion still is learning and specifically public education. I see strong forces with deep financial backing working to privatize education for the benefit of a few “owners.” I see attempts to weaken the constitutional separation of church and state by allowing private religious schools, with predominantly conservative Christian beliefs, to receive taxpayer funding through the deceptive framing of private school student voucher funding methods. I see a restricting of equal access and opportunity of ethnic minority and poor people to achieve to each individual’s highest potential resulting in the perpetuation of an under-class – the opposite of the freedoms expressed in the Declaration of

Independence and the Bill of Rights.

I believe debating differing principles, values, and policies to arrive at acceptable compromises benefitting **all** constituents makes our representative democracy healthy. This is in contrast to undemocratic gerrymandered boundaries that create “safe” districts that create minority rule that favors one political ideology over the majority view, whether liberal or conservative.

I was unable to make a personal presentation on the day of the LCDP Executive Board election. Allen Pruitt made my statement on my behalf. I am grateful to him and to the members who elected me to an at-large position on the Executive Board.

Here is a restatement of my two goals: **First:** Promote progressive values, issues and candidacies by:

- Demonstrating through our policies and activities that we care about increasing the quality of life among **all** citizens of La Crosse County, not just the well connected, and well off.
- Recruiting and promoting candidates for **all** elected offices with progressive Democratic values who will represent **all** people, not just those from one privileged ethnic group, or gender, or orientation, or socio-economic group, or corporate business structure, or industry at the expense of others.

• No more “divide and conquer politics.” **Second:** Increase participation in the La Crosse County Democratic Party by promoting inclusion of progressive-minded people from every city neighborhood, county town, township and village in all aspects of our party business and activities:

- Spend time where people live listening to their aspirations and needs
- Recruit and elect people to public office who will represent those aspirations and needs

People will care about what you know, when they believe you care about them. We are all in this together.

Call for Delegates to the Democratic Party of Wisconsin State Convention, June 1-2, 2018



Complete information is available at <http://www.wisdems.org/events/2018-state-convention>

The preliminary convention Agenda at <http://www.wisdems.org/2018-state-convention/convention-agenda>

When: Starts at 1:00 p.m. Friday, June 1 and ends at 2:30 p.m. Saturday, June 2, 2018

Where: Best Western Premier Waterfront Hotel and Convention Center, 1 N. Main Street, Oshkosh, WI 54901, <https://www.oshkoshwaterfronthotel.com/>. Additional information on other hotels: <http://www.wisdems.org/2018-state-convention/hotel-information>.

Who: The LCDP has 35 delegate slots available for the DPW State Convention.

If you registered for the 3rd Congressional District Convention held in Sparta on Saturday, March 10, you are also a delegate to the DPW State Convention (but you still must register for the state convention and pay the registration fee of \$25).

Important information for delegates

Delegates have priority seating on the convention floor and voting privileges. If you fill out the Delegate Request Form @ <http://www.wisdems.org/2018-state-convention/2018-delegate-request-form> before Friday, May 4th, your request will be sent to your local county party where your delegate status will be determined. You are also welcome to contact your county party directly about becoming a convention delegate. County parties have until Friday, May 11th at 5:00 p.m. to submit delegates for the State Convention.

The early registration fee of \$25 ends May 19, 2018. You can pay your registration fee by phone (608-255-5172), by the paper registration form sent to you (send to Democratic Party of Wisconsin, 15 N Pinckney St., Suite 200, Madison WI53703), or online at <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/cvn2018fee?refcode=cvn2018fee>

The LCDP has until 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 11, 2018 to submit the delegate list for the State Convention. Delegates must be current members in good standing. If you renew with Diane Wulf (LCDP Treasurer) at an LCDP meeting and also give a donation, the LCDP retains 100% of the donation. You can also renew online at <http://www.wisdems.org/membership-2>, but if also make a donation, the LCDP receives 43% of the amount.

Workers' Memorial Day

The Western Wisconsin AFL-CIO held their annual Workers Memorial Day on Saturday, April 28, 2018 at 1:30 p.m. at the Green Island Park in La Crosse. LCDP members who attended the event were Michael Smuksta and J.D. and Marcia Wine. Elected Democratic officials present included State Senate Minority Leader Jennifer Shilling, Assembly Representatives Jill Billings and Steve Doyle, and County Supervisor Maureen Freedland. The LCDP is committed to affirming the importance of unions by defending workers' rights, a fair and living wage, safe work places, and the right to join unions.

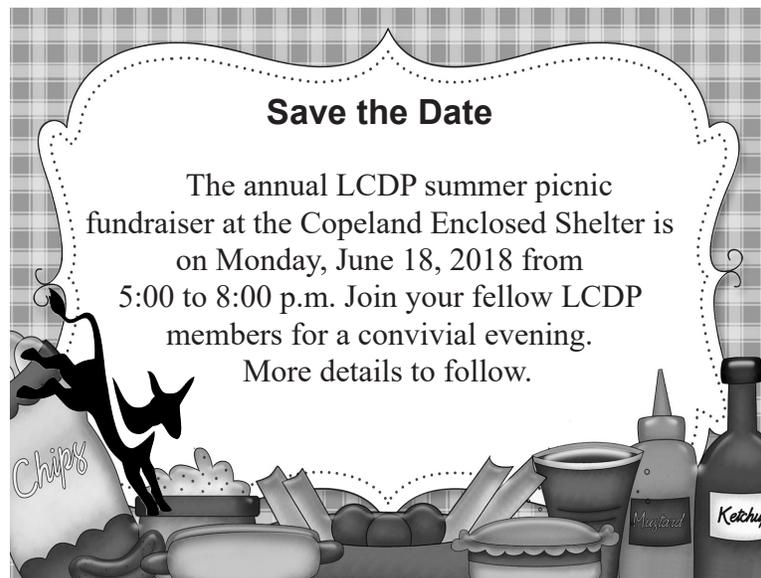
The solemn ceremony is a time to reflect, remember, and honor working men and women who died on the job and to continue the effort to renew the fight for safe jobs. This year is especially important given the Trump administration's efforts to roll back regulations and endanger the health and safety of American workers. In addition to Mayor Tim Kabat's proclamation supporting worker safety, guest speakers, and a Workers' Memorial Day Tribute Poem, the highlight of the ceremony was the reading of the names of workers who died while working and the placement of small white crosses bearing their names.

Call for Volunteers: Signatures for Tammy Baldwin the weekend of May 19th and 20th

In order to get on the ballot, candidates must collect and turn in a certain number of signatures. This year, the Baldwin campaign wants to show the depth and breadth of Tammy's support by asking people all across the state to collect signatures at house parties, canvasses and high visibility events the weekend of May 19th & 20th. Contact chair@laxdems.com if you are interested to collect signatures for Tammy Baldwin.

Save the Date

The annual LCDP summer picnic fundraiser at the Copeland Enclosed Shelter is on Monday, June 18, 2018 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Join your fellow LCDP members for a convivial evening. More details to follow.



The Importance of Political Norms in a Democracy

by Michael Smuksta, Co-Chair of the LCDP

One of the features of the La Crosse County Democratic Party website is the rotating principles of the LCDP under the menu bar. Members of the Executive Board discussed these principles at the January and February Executive Board meetings. In the process, we made some editing revisions, wrote some additional principles, and categorized the principles under the headings of Community, Common Good, and Constitutional Rights. All the principles are self-explanatory, except for “Respect the basic norms of a democracy” in Constitutional Rights.

What does this statement mean? The easiest way to envision this is to compare how President Obama conducted himself as president contrasted to Trump. Obama upheld the dignity of the office, Trump defiles the office. Trump called congressional Democrats “treasonous” for not applauding him at his State of the Union Address. He accuses the press of being “the enemy of the people” and calls media reports critical of him as “fake news.” He undermines confidence in our institutions, whether the judiciary or the FBI. He uses Twitter to belittle and mock opponents. He tells, on average, over five lies a day.

Trump’s disregard for the rule of law, tolerance, constitutional rights, civility, and truth has strained our common ties to one another. In his article, “Damage Bigly,” pundit James Mann catalogues the many misguided domestic and foreign policies of Trump’s first year. But he adds: “The greatest damage done ... is the harm he has caused to America’s political system and to the democratic norms that underlie it.”

Political Scientists Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt cite two fundamental norms for a functioning democracy in their just published best-seller, *How Democracies Die*. The first is toleration, in which opponents are accepted as legitimate. The second is forbearance, or using political and legal power in a restrained manner. Trump, of course, is neither tolerant nor forbearing.

At the conclusion of the Constitutional Convention in 1787, a woman asked Ben Franklin whether the framers had produced a republic or a monarchy. Franklin responded, “A republic, if you can keep it.” We can’t rely on Republicans in Congress or Wisconsin to defend the republic, as nearly all are enablers, apologists or sycophants for Trump. We must not normalize Trump’s behavior. The LCDP is determined to defend standards and norms that are fundamental to a functioning democracy.

For additional reading:

Thomas B. Edsall, “Trump’s Tool Kit Does Not Include the Constitution” NY Times, Feb. 8, 2018 @ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/08/opinion/trump-democracy-midterm-elections.html>

Michael Klarman, “Trump, Democracy, and the Constitution,” Process: a Blog for American History, February 16, 2018 @ <http://www.processhistory.org/klarman-trump-democracy/>

Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, “How Wobbly Is Our Democracy,” NY Times, Jan. 27, 2018 @ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/27/opinion/sunday/democracy-polarization.html>

James Mann, “Damage Bigly,” NY Review of Books, Jan. 18, 2018 @ <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2018/01/18/donald-trump-damage-bigly/>

Call for County Fair Volunteers

LCDP is looking for volunteers to table at the county fair. We are developing an all fresh, new, interactive tabling approach and we need YOU to help! Contact chair@laxdems.com to get signed up



Gubernatorial candidate Mike McCabe was on hand to speak to LCDP members at the April meeting.



Mandela Barnes, candidate for Wisconsin Lieutenant Governor, also spoke to LCDP members at the April meeting.



Congratulations to the LCDP members who were candidates for office in the April 3 election and to all the LCDP members who voted in the April 3 election. Democrats were elected to county and local offices, the United to Amend resolution passed in the city of La Crosse, and the proposal to eliminate the office of Wisconsin State Treasurer was soundly rejected.



LOCAL SPOTLIGHT

NEW DIRECTION

by Roz Schnick

Why NEW DIRECTION?

The 2015-2016 political rollercoaster and results of the 2016 elections are something we never want to experience again. Now, more than ever, we need a vehicle to help us who are broad-minded and compassionate to communicate, organize, and act in ways that will help change the events and election results from negative to positive ones for our democracy.

What is NEW DIRECTION?

NEW DIRECTION is a group based mainly in the La Crosse, Wisconsin area that enables broad-minded and compassionate persons to organize to (1) share information and act on important political issues that are affecting us and (2) elect officials that promote a democracy that serves all of its citizens.

What is the VISION of NEW DIRECTION?

The VISION of NEW DIRECTION is to “Promote and Protect our Democracy through the Values of Inclusion, Respect, and Fairness”.

What is the GOAL of NEW DIRECTION?

To accomplish the above vision, the GOAL of NEW DIRECTION is to provide an organization for broad-minded

and compassionate persons who share our values:

1. To support and re-elect our Democratic elected officials in as many ways as is possible
2. To find, encourage and help same-minded persons to become candidates for elected positions and fill other positions of leadership
3. To share information, network, ask for help/support, and share in action-related activities and focus groups
4. To coordinate rapid response and action to actions of others that threaten our values
5. To share, discuss and analyze new ideas, thoughts and opinions to promote positive actions

How can I join NEW DIRECTION?

To join NEW DIRECTION, you need to contact a current member who will provide you with a link to the secure e-mail list and/or the associated secure Facebook page (New Direction – 3 Rivers). These two routes provide for optimal communication, organizing, and actions.

Is NEW DIRECTION affiliated with the local, state, or national Democratic Party?

No. However, as a group of broad-minded and compassionate persons, NEW DIRECTION supports elected officials and candidates for elected office that are supported by the Democratic Party and the many compassionate values of the Democratic Party.

When and where does NEW DIRECTION Meet?

NEW DIRECTION meets the second Tuesday of every month at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of La Crosse (401 West Avenue South, La Crosse, WI)

Who can I contact at NEW DIRECTION if I have questions?

Please send an email to Roz Schnick (RozSchnick@centurytel.net)

Unity Reform Commission Established by the DNC

by Cathy Van Maren

To address procedural and policy problems highlighted during the 2016 Democratic presidential primary, a Unity Reform Commission (URC) was established by the Democratic National Committee (DNC). The URC is made up of members appointed by Secretary Clinton, Senator Sanders, and Tom Perez, chair of the DNC. “Empowering Democrats to participate in our Party at every level is key to this process and something every single Democrat is going to need to play a role in building a Democratic Party we can all be proud of. The commission is looking at key elements of our party’s processes, including but not limited to: increasing participation in the presidential nominating process, ways to engage new and unaffiliated voters, the role of unpledged delegates, and how to rebuild our Party so that we are competitive all across this country.”

The commission's final report was released earlier this year, endorsed by both Tom Perez and Keith Ellison, DNC Deputy Chair. It recommends changes to voter registration timelines, caucus procedures, the “super delegate” system, state party transparency,

and DNC operations.

You can read about the commission, including the final report, at democrats.org/page/unity-reform-commission. A summary of some of the commission's major recommendations is at ourrevolution.com/press/summary-unity-reform-commission-report/ A recent article by John Nichols in The Nation magazine describes why this process is so important to the future of the party. (<https://www.thenation.com/article/theres-a-better-way-for-democrats-to-nominate-a-presidential-candidate/>)

To ensure the reforms take top priority, party members including county and state parties and elected representatives should voice their support now.

“Do your little bit of good where you are;
it’s those little bits of good put together that
overwhelm the world.”

~ Desmond Tutu

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: 608-782-3694

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)

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.

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.



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.

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.
 Authorized and paid for by the La Crosse County Democratic Party, Diane Oldani Wulf, Treasurer

Name(s) _____
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 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 _____