

## July 2018 Newsletter

### Democrats Need to Stand for Democracy

Greg Schams

at-large LCDP Executive Board Member

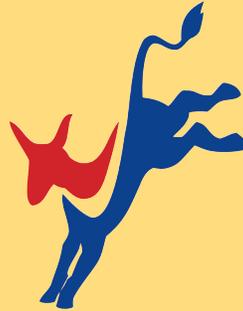
Greetings, fellow La Crosse County Democrats. I am proud to be a new member of the LCDP serving on your Executive Board for 2018.

First, a little about me. I recently completed my eleventh year teaching high school social studies at Central High School in La Crosse. As a public educator, I take very seriously my role in preparing all students to be active and participatory citizens. High school students are full of energy, and they have very inquiring minds. I thoroughly enjoy posing serious, real-world political questions to my students, and seeing their thought processes as a result. If any of you have similar experiences, then you know what I mean. If not, I highly recommend connecting with the youth in our community to reinvigorate and repurpose what it is you do.

I would like to write this piece mainly about the principles and platform of the Democratic Party. This will come as no surprise (and I am very happy to say), but when it comes to the issues, Democrats win. On poll after poll and survey after survey, we as Democrats are on the winning side of the issues. From protecting the environment to protecting our public schools, from sensible gun regulations to protecting a woman's access to reproductive care, a solid majority of Americans hold our values. Because this is true, Democrats should have majorities in statehouses and in Congress. Yet we don't.

The reasons for recent Democratic powerlessness are many, but I want to argue that the foundational structure of our democratic system is the root cause, and those foundations have been slowly whittled away by both major parties. It's time for this to change.

I believe that as Democrats, we need to advocate more for a truly open and



### Upcoming Events

**July 18-22, Interstate Fair – Volunteers needed**

**Monday, July 16, LCDP Regular Meeting, 6:30 p.m., LCDP Office, 115 5th Ave S., La Crosse**

**Saturday, July 28, LCDP Office Grand Opening, 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Special Guest is Martha Laning, Chair of the Democratic Party of Wisconsin**

**Monday, August 6, LCDP Executive Board Meeting, 6:00 p.m., LCDP Office, 115 5th Ave S., La Crosse**

**Monday, July 30 to Friday, August 10, Absentee Voting in Person - VOTE!**

**Tuesday, August 14, Primary Election - VOTE!**

**Monday August 20, LCDP Regular Meeting, 6:30 p.m., LCDP Office, 115 5th Ave S., La Crosse**

inclusive democratic system. Because Republicans have tilted the playing field in their favor recently (through partisan redistricting, voter ID laws, etc.), it is easy for Democrats to point the finger and cry “foul play.” But when the pendulum inevitably shifts back our way, will our complaints be little more than lip service? Or will we truly be committed to genuine electoral reform? After all, the same tactics used by Republicans since 2010 have been used by Democrats in the past. And that does not bode well for the health of our

system.

We need true non-partisan redistricting. The power to redraw legislative maps after each census needs to be revoked from elected officials (even Democrats) and given to a commission designed to produce truly competitive races (examples from other states abound, so I will not cite any here). Given that we win on the issues, this should be a fix that we embrace wholeheartedly.

Secondly, we need strict limits on campaign financing. Again, statistics abound, but it's no secret that our elected officials — of both parties — are heavily reliant on deep-pocketed individuals, corporations, unions, and other special interests to run their campaigns. As Democrats, we need to win on the issues, not on the wallets. That means advocating for firm campaign finance limits. It also means developing a system of publicly-financed campaigns that levels the playing field for all candidates. Again, most Americans agree that money has an outsized influence in our political system, and the candidate with the biggest war chest should not usually be the victor in any race.

If the previous two paragraphs haven't made me enough enemies within the LCDP already, let me state that we need to push for a ranked-choice voting system. The state of Maine is the recent example that comes to mind, but there are others as well. Ranked-choice voting allows for a greater diversity of views among candidates, and ensures that the winner of any election will be (at the very least) palatable to a majority of the electorate. This type of voting system is not only good for voter choice, but it also aligns with our democratic ideas of a free and open exchange of ideas. Yet again, Democrats win on ideas, so this should be a policy that we embrace.

I could go on and on about the need for serious electoral reform, because it

Continued on Page 2

is something that I truly feel passionate about. Moreover, these are policies which (like our other Democratic values) garner a majority of support in nationwide polling. I realize that the pain of dismantling our tit-for-tat two-party system will be uncomfortable to some, especially to those who have remained comfortable in their elected offices with little or no serious opposition, whether from primary candidates, or in a general election. Nonetheless, these policies are good for democracy, and that is something I believe in even more than specific planks on the Democratic Party platform. As bearers of the title "Democrats," let's put our efforts into electoral reform policies which are truly "democratic." And let's not forget to hold our elected officials to the same.

As free citizens in a political democracy, we have a responsibility to be interested and involved in the affairs of the human community, be it at the local or the global level.

~ *Paul Wellstone*

## Ron Kind's Message

With everything going on in Washington, it can be hard to keep up with the issues that affect us all. With that in mind, I want to call your attention to a couple things:

Last week, House Republicans proposed and passed a budget in committee that would make massive cuts to Social Security and Medicare in order to cover for the irresponsible tax cuts and reckless spending that has occurred under this Republican Congress. I am calling on leadership in both parties to oppose this proposed budget and return to principles that ensure programs that hard-working Wisconsinites invest in and depend on will be there when they need them.

From Harley-Davidson to Wisconsin Cheese and Cranberries, we are seeing the chaos and harm caused by this administration's trade war. We should be focusing on opening up markets overseas for our farmers and manufacturers, not fighting with our allies.

The recent special elections have shown energy and enthusiasm for our side. We need to continue to organize and talk with neighbors, friends, and family about the stakes this fall.

In case you missed it: Ron's interview with WPR - <https://www.wpr.org/shows/u-s-rep-ron-kind-talks-immigration-gerrymandering-and-tariffs>

Yard Signs: Please share our link - [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfMT4ZvITnduuxAw9Nii\\_VZXv2TrDTuzLhNhK9dNB7m9a6aQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfMT4ZvITnduuxAw9Nii_VZXv2TrDTuzLhNhK9dNB7m9a6aQ/viewform)

You can sign up for a yard sign, or volunteer to help put them out in your community!



Welcome Table



Rosie and Carol setting up the kitchen

## Good Times at the June 18th LCDP Picnic

More than fifty LCDP members attended the Party's Annual Picnic on Monday evening, June 18, 2018 at the Copeland Enclosed Shelter. The weather cooperated with a cooling breeze. Good food, good beverages, and good conversations were the themes of the convivial evening. Members won door prizes of LCDP T-shirts, bracelets, pins, decorations, hanging baskets of flowers, as well as the grand prize of a 50/50 raffle.





## LOCAL SPOTLIGHT

### What I Want from the Governor

As a public-school educator, I understand that everything that happens in our society is reflected in our schools. Poverty in our society is reflected in students who are lacking basic human necessities, and they act out, they have trouble learning, and they come to school hungry. The same is true for kids without access to health care, for kids whose parents can't find jobs that provide family-sustaining wages, and the list goes on.

I have had multiple conversations with several Democratic gubernatorial candidates (and some slightly confrontational interactions with our current governor), and this is what I want to hear from anyone who is serious about leading our state. In fact, the candidate that commits to even most of these things will win in a landslide, and turn Wisconsin "blue" for the foreseeable future.

First, I want to hear that everyone in Wisconsin will have health insurance. Please, if you are serious about being Governor, quit playing semantics and quit nibbling around the edges. Every Westernized country in the world, except us, has single-payer health care and IT WORKS: costs are lower, service is universal, and people don't have to fear every small health care interaction as a possible bankruptcy.

Second, I want to hear that everyone will be able to live comfortably in retirement. The public sector has the Wisconsin Retirement System, and everyone in the country sees it as a model to follow. When ACT 10 hit, one of the arguments was that the public workers had something that the private sector could only dream of having. Well, guess what? Private sector workers used to have pensions also, until the hyper-wealthy wrote legislation that allowed companies to renege on their promises to their workers. Let's reverse that by keeping the basic structure and leadership in place in the WRS, but open it up to any employers and employees, including farmers, small business owners, etc. Let's strengthen the system, and increase participation.

Third, I want to hear serious talk about raising taxes on corporations and the hyper-wealthy. That 1% of the population that will benefit from federal tax cuts now has some money that could be brought into the Wisconsin coffers. They would see no difference, no increase, and we could keep that money in Wisconsin. We need to have a progressive tax system, not the de facto flat tax rate that we currently have.

Fourth, I don't want to hear about IF we can close down the school voucher program; I want to hear about WHEN we will close down this system that privatizes a public good. Let's start with the 2019-20 school year. These privatization schemes are just another way to funnel tax dollars to people looking to profit off of our children. I don't want to hear any hesitation, any qualifiers.

Fifth, I want to hear about automatic voter registration, and stopping the current system of disenfranchisement of minority



- JD Wine for arranging for musicians at the LCDP Annual Picnic
- Obbie King and Rosie Brooks for a playlist of ambient music at the LCDP Annual Picnic
- Everyone who donated food, beverages, or door prizes at the LCDP Annual Picnic
- Donors who supported the Funding the Office for a Day Campaign – Wayne and Susan Goeldner, Barry Schockmel, Douglas Howard, Peter and Carol Klitzke, Mark Neumann, Ann Delwiche, Sara Bentley, David Blackey, Susan and Wayne Goeldner, Douglas Howard, Carol and Peter Klitzke, Mark Neumann, and Barry Schockmel
- Anyone who donated money or phone banked for the June 12 special elections for Ann Groves Lloyd in Assembly District 42 and Caleb Frostman, State Senate District 1

voters. We need to make voting easier, not harder, and we need to make sure that the voices of EVERYONE in Wisconsin are heard. The current administration has learned that the only way they can continue in power is to reduce the vote. The future is progressive, but only if people can vote!

Sixth, let's get the money out of politics! We need policies and laws that say that our legislators must meet with their constituents, that they cannot have back-room meetings with big donors, and that I will have the same voice as someone who can make multi-million dollar donations. We need to hold our legislators accountable, so let's have very open records regarding with whom our legislators meet and what they discuss. Sunlight is the best disinfectant, as they say.

Lastly, I want to hear that Wisconsin will become a fair-share state again, regardless of what the Gang of Nine on the SCOTUS says. Unjust laws should be fought, and since they have ruled on Janus, that Right-To-Work is the "law of the land", our Governor must be willing to say it is wrong, and that we will not comply. The thing about bullies is that they win because people are afraid to fight them, and the current federal government has lots of bullies. Our Governor must be willing to stand up to them, and force them to fight. I want to hear our Governor say that the Janus decision is wrong, and we will not abide by it; it does not represent the will of the governed, it represents the will of those who wish to rule.

When a candidate starts talking about these things, my choice will be very clear.

John Havlicek

## 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)

## Call for County Fair Volunteers

LCDP is looking for volunteers to table at the La Crosse Interstate Fair, July 18-22, 2018. We are developing an all fresh, new, interactive tabling approach and we need YOU to help! Contact chair@laxdems.com to get signed up.

## Posting of Unapproved Minutes

A couple of LCDP members have expressed an interest in receiving regular minutes prior to the next regular LCP meeting. If you want to receive the minutes early, please contact the LCDP secretary, Avery Van Gaard, at [averyvangaard@gmail.com](mailto:averyvangaard@gmail.com) or 608-769-1034. She will mail them as a PDF with an UNAPPROVED watermark. No hard copies will be sent.

## 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) \_\_\_\_\_  
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 \*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 \_\_\_\_\_