

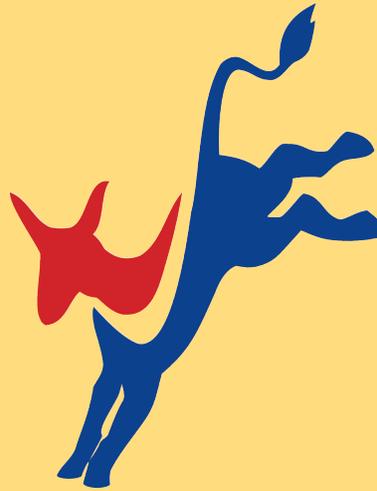
## February 2019 Newsletter

### Message From Mark Neumann, New Executive Board Member

Up until two years ago, I guess I mostly acquiesced to what seemed to me to be a common appreciation of politics and politicians: It's the shameful lot of untrustworthy scoundrels. Since then, I have learned how wrong I was to hold that prejudice. I have come to see that politics is a humanizing effort of concerned people who want to make our life together more wholesome and fulfilling.

Our 2016 national election was a wake-up call. Politics could no longer be a spectator sport for me. I set out to learn how to engage personally in the work and enjoyment of "making democracy." This has been an adventure of stepping outside of my comfort zone time and time again. I went to the Women's March 2016 in Madison and held a follow-up political "house" party. I joined LCDP. I became a charter member of OWR. I met Mike McCabe and learned about Blue Jean Nation. When Mike ran in the 2018 gubernatorial primary, I joined that campaign and learned firsthand about the thrills and challenges of electoral politics.

And now, most recently, with my approaching professional retirement, I am thoroughly engaged in a project of issues politics that is the promotion of healthcare for all. It is well past time for all Americans to experience the benefits of a publicly funded, single payer, universal and comprehensive national health program. We call it Expanded and



### Upcoming Events

**LCDP Table at Progresstival 2019**  
Saturday, February 2, 2019, 1:00 p.m.  
Concordia Ballroom, 1129 La Crosse  
Street, La Crosse, WI

**LCDP Executive Board Meeting**  
Monday, February 4, 2019, 6:00 p.m.  
Ho-Chunk Nation Three Rivers House  
724 Main St., La Crosse, WI

**LCDP Regular Meeting**, Monday,  
February 18, 2019, 6:30 p.m.,  
Ho-Chunk Nation Three Rivers House,  
724 Main St., La Crosse, WI

**Organizing Meeting for Medicare  
for All**, Tuesday, February 12, 2019  
6:00 - 7:30 p.m., All Star Lanes, 4735  
Mormon Coulee Rd., La Crosse, WI

Improved Medicare for All.

Basically, I believe what a mother must experience when she holds her newborn is that this baby is born into the world to blossom and thrive. This experience of thriving (not just surviving) is what is meant for us all

and for all of our neighbors. We have a fantastic tradition and aspiration for democratic governance as Americans. Democracy is never fully achieved, it is rather aspirational, something that we will always work toward. Democracy is a verb and not a noun. The goal is to achieve good governance for the wellbeing of all neighbors in our community. We carry forward the work of governance of the people, by the people and for the people that Abraham Lincoln challenged us to at Gettysburg. In this light, politics and politicians engage with us all on a most noble human quest.

The biggest risk today to our success in self-governance is the perverting influence of concentrated economic power. The power that comes with much wealth increases the ability to get even more power. This is a self-reinforcing multiplier that results in the shriveling up of our human spirit. Instead of allowing us to thrive in community, our human spirit trends toward trying to somehow just survive. Greed dehumanizes both the powerful and the powerless. Good governance is our defense against this threat to who we are in our deepest fiber.

The work of politics in its most sublime form is to discover who we are as a community. From this self-awareness we recognize our shared values. From these values we establish policies that reflect those values and in so doing we enhance and enrich our self-identity as a people engaging in self-governance.

# Beginning Year 3 of Our National Emergency

Message from the Chair, Michael Smuksta

Donald Trump shut down the government over a crisis of his own making – his temper tantrum demanding 5.7 billion dollars for a southern border wall that the American public does not support and for which Mexico has refused to pay. The partial government shutdown is over with the passage of a stopgap spending bill that has no funding for the wall. Nevertheless, if a solution is not attained by February 15 that doesn't include funding for the wall, Trump threatens to declare a national emergency to bypass Congress to fund the wall.

Trump held the government and more deplorably, the 800,000 federal workers on furlough or who worked without pay as hostages. Moreover, the direct and indirect cost of the shutdown to the economy was 11 billion dollars. Michelle Goldberg's recent column entitled "Our National Emergency Turns 2" (The New York Times, January 14, 2019) summarized the situation as follows: "We're living through an unprecedented breakdown in America's ability to function like a normal country. The shutdown throws our crisis into high relief. For the first two years, Trump destroyed American norms, standards and conventions. Now he's cavalierly destroying American lives [that is, the 800,000 federal workers]."

More space than what is available in this newsletter would be needed to fully explore the damage Trump, and by their complicity the Republican Party, has done to this nation. This is a partial list of my personal preferences, so feel free to add to your own list.

He is unethical, as are many of the grifters in his family, the 2016 campaign, and his Cabinet. Numerous individuals in the Trump campaign have been indicted, convicted, and sentenced for criminal offenses, including his first national security adviser Michael Flynn, his former campaign chairman Paul Manafort, and his "fixer" Michael Cohen. At the Cabinet level, individuals who have resigned because of ethics violations unrelated to the campaign include Secretaries Ryan Zinke (Interior), Tom Price (Health and Human Services), David Shulkin (Veterans Affairs), and Scott Pruitt (Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency). And, don't forget the financial fraud and scams of the Trump Foundation.

He was the first presidential nominee in over 40 years who did not release his tax returns, claiming he was under an IRS audit. On a more serious level, he did not divest of his business interests by creating a blind trust. The result

is that his properties, such as Trump Hotel in Washington, D.C., or his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida, have enriched his pockets, a possible violation of the emoluments clause in the US Constitution (Article I, Section 9, Paragraph 8).

He and members of his campaign have probably colluded with Russia during the 2016 election campaign. The Trump campaign had more than 100 contacts with Russians before the inauguration. His bromance with Vladimir Putin has influenced him to endorse policies favorable to Russia. For example, Trump has repeatedly threatened to withdraw the United States from NATO, an alliance that has kept the peace in Europe for over 70 years.

He has openly praised autocrats: Putin of Russia, Kim Jung-un of North Korea, Recep Erdogan of Turkey, and Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines. A most egregious example is his unwillingness to hold the crown prince of Saudi Arabia responsible for the death of Jamal Khashoggi, journalist and critic of the Saudi regime. In doing so, Trump has emboldened autocrats worldwide and abandoned the U.S. commitment to human rights.

He has withdrawn the US from important international treaties that threaten the world (the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change) or contribute to further instability in the Mid-East (the 2014 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, also known as the Iran nuclear deal).

He has started trade wars with China and our allies, hurting farmers who export commodities, businesses that import material for production, and American consumers who pay higher prices for imported consumer goods.

He has sold off leases or proposes to open fragile ecological areas (e.g., Bears Ears National Monument, Utah; the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska) to oil and gas companies for development.

He has deregulated environmental laws that protect air and water quality, endangering the health of Americans.

He has destabilized the Affordable Care Act, jeopardizing the lives of many Americans who rely upon the ACA for health insurance.

In sum, and most alarming, he has undermined our democratic institutions and norms. He disregards the rule of law, attacks the press as "the enemy of the people," and undermines the independence of the judiciary. His tweets that mock and belittle those who disagree with him corrode the public discourse. He is a narcissist and pathological liar. *The Washington Post* has tallied 8,258 Trump falsehoods and lies in 731 days, an average of 11 per day. He is, as conservative pundit George Will described, "our shabbiest but not our first shabby presidency." (*The Washington Post*, January 19, 2019)

## Reminder – Complete the Member Survey

A previous email was sent with a link to a four question survey asking for member about on increasing membership of underrepresented groups, meeting time for the regular meetings, ideas and issues for discussion in 2019, and collaboration with allied organizations as we prepare for 2020. If you haven't completed this brief survey, please do so as we value your ideas and suggestions. Copy and paste this link in your browser: <https://goo.gl/forms/XnTvUeKBfkMcHqU92>.

If you don't have access to the internet and want to complete the survey, mail your responses to this address: La Crosse County Democratic Party, PO Box 1861, La Crosse, WI, 54602-1861. You may also contact the chair at 608-769-5286 and leave a voice message with your responses.

1. What ideas or strategies would you suggest for reaching out to millennials, Gen-Xers, Gen Z, and people of color to join and become active in the LCDP?
2. The LCDP currently meets on the third Monday of each month. What are your thoughts about holding an LCDP meeting on a different day, time, or different location if this meant more members could participate, e.g., a weekend potluck at a public venue in La Crosse County?
3. What are some issues and topics that you would like to learn more about or are important for discussion in 2019? Can you recommend any individuals as speakers or facilitators?
4. Please list any groups or organizations of which you are a member. (For example, a trade union, La Crosse Education Association, Rotary, Sierra Club, Showing Up for Racial Justice.) Would you be willing to initiate contact in an effort to help the LCDP collaborate with other La Crosse organizations?



- Thanks to Janis Hanson, Richard Morehouse, and Tom Wilda for serving on the three person review committee to audit the financial records of the LCDP. They met with Treasurer Diane Oldani Wulf on January 14, 2019, and certified that the financial records are a true and accurate depiction of the receipts and disbursements of the LCDP for the period January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018.
- Thanks to departing officers and Executive Board members: Susan Goeldner and J.D. Wine as immediate past chairs, Diane Oldani Wulf as treasurer for three years, at-large members Greg Schams and Austin Goodrich, and College Democrats representative Stephanie Boebel.



## Spring 2019 Voting Information from the Wisconsin Election Commission (<https://elections.wi.gov/>)

Nonpartisan state offices elected in 2019 are Supreme Court Justice, Court of Appeals Judge, Districts II, III and IV, and Circuit Court Judge.

**There will be no statewide primary election on February 19, 2019.** However, many municipalities and school districts may have local primaries on February 19 to narrow down the field of candidates who will be on the April 2, 2019 Spring Election ballot. At [myvote.wi.gov](http://myvote.wi.gov) you can check whether you have a local primary, register to vote, check your voter registration status, find your polling place, see what's on your ballot, request an absentee ballot and check provisional ballot status.

**Questions about Voter Registration or Absentee Voting Deadlines for the February 19, 2019 Spring Primary Election and the April 2, 2019 General Election?** For information about various deadlines – register by mail, register online, register at your municipal clerk's office, to register in person, request an absentee ballot, absentee and in-person voting, and returning absentee ballots, go to <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/VoterDeadlines>. This link also has information about voter deadlines for the April 2, 2019 Spring election.

“We should do everything we can to make sure this country lives up to our children's expectations.”

~ *Barack Obama*



## LOCAL SPOTLIGHT

### Summary of Governor Evers Address by Rep. Steve Doyle

This past week I sat in the first State of the State Address that truly addressed the challenges facing our state and discussed meaningful solutions. Tony Evers was elected Governor on November 6th, 2018, sworn into office January 7th, 2019, and immediately got to work.

In fact, his first substantive comment during his State of the State address was to explain his creation of an innovation and entrepreneurship committee focused on supporting small businesses. Wisconsin ranks near the bottom in small business creation. Improving our small business culture is one way Wisconsin can go from surviving to truly thriving.

From there, the Governor launched into his plans for education in the next budget. Specifically, he proposed having the State for the first time in years meet its commitment to fund two-thirds of the cost of K-12 education – a huge relief for our school boards and property taxpayers. Additionally, the Governor's budget proposal will include a six hundred million dollar increase in special education funding coupled with a

five-fold increase in mental health programs for K-12 students. Our children truly are our future. It's refreshing to see education taken seriously.

The Governor's second major policy focus was healthcare. Governor Evers reaffirmed his commitment to ensuring everyone has access to quality, affordable healthcare. He announced he will be expanding Medicaid in Wisconsin, which, according to the nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau, will allow 76,000 additional Wisconsinites access to affordable healthcare.

Next, the Governor announced a bipartisan task force to work on our crumbling transportation and infrastructure system. In this area, and others, he has extended his hand in cooperation. We will see if the Republicans accept the offer to work together.

The Governor declared 2019 the Year of Clean Drinking Water in Wisconsin. As he mentioned, 1.7 million Wisconsinites depend on private wells, and 47% of those wells are contaminated. Additionally, our state is host to 176,000 lead service lines, risking the dangers of lead contamination to everyone, especially children. It is time we do something to ensure our citizens are drinking clean water.

In his last major policy announcement, Governor Evers announced his plans for a ten percent tax cut for the middle class. His team has crunched the numbers and they are able to afford such a tax cut by putting a cap on a corporate tax credit that has been shown to almost exclusively benefit millionaires. In this way, working class Wisconsinites will be afforded a tax break that truly is sustainable.

Finally, the Governor closed his speech by mentioning a mural in his office that reads "The will of the people is the law of the land." It's exciting to see a Governor who views those words not just as decoration but as a rule of governing.



### Moving to Paperless Newsletters April 1, 2019

The Executive Board decided at the January 7, 2019 meeting that members who have a working email address on file will not receive a mailed paper copy of our monthly newsletter after the March issue. Individuals without listed email addresses, lack internet access to the LCDP website, or have requested a paper copy because of eyesight issues, will still receive a mailed, printed newsletter.

We are moving to a paperless newsletter to save money and

resources. The total cost for printing and mailing the newsletter in 2018 was \$681.81. In addition, postal rates in various categories increased January 29, 2019, which will increase the cost of mailings from the printer.

Paperless newsletters are environmentally friendly. Many of us already are familiar with paperless bank statements, bills, or publications.

Our target date is April 1, 2019, to reduce the number of paper copies printed and mailed and to require members who have a working email address to receive paperless newsletters. Exceptions are noted in the first paragraph above. We will continue to email the monthly newsletter as a downloadable PDF that you may, if desired, print at home. The newsletter as a PDF file will also be available to read on the LCDP website at <https://laxdems.com/category/newsletters/>. We are exploring other text options that would not require an individual to download the newsletter.

If you have an email address but require a mailed newsletter or if you would like more details about this new policy, email [chair@laxdems.com](mailto:chair@laxdems.com) or [treasurer@laxdems.com](mailto:treasurer@laxdems.com) by March 15, 2019.

## Our Elected Officials

### **Governor Tony Evers**

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

### **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

## LCDP Executive Board Officers

### **Chair: Michael Smuksta**

608-784-4219

### **Vice Chair: Peter Klitzke**

608-780-6037

### **Treasurer: Cathy Van Maren**

608-315-2693

### **Secretary: David Wulf**

608-799-8977

### **At-Large Board Members:**

**Sara Bentley**

**Ed Burgess**

**Obbie King**

**Mark Neumann**

**Avery Van Gaard**

**Past Chair: Peter Gorski**

**College Representative: Adam Vlach (UW-L)**

## 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, David Wulf, at davidpwulf@aol.com or 608-799-8977. He 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 Cathy Van Maren, your current LCDP treasurer, at 608-315-2693, or at treasurer@laxdems.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 David Wulf at 608-799-8977 or davidpwulf@aol.com.



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

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For the LCDP to build upon its success in 2018 and continue activities into 2019, we are going to need volunteers and funding. The party is only as strong as the engagement of its members and friends. And that is where you come in. We have many opportunities for you to volunteer your skills. Also, please consider a contribution of any amount to help support activities and events to broaden our base.

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

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

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

\*Contributions are not tax deductible for federal tax purposes. State law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, and occupation of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year.

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).  
 Paid for by the La Crosse County Democratic Party.

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