

## Bergen Greens Table at Rutherford on Labor Day

submitted by Stu Kautsch

Once again, the Bergen County Green Party hosted a table at Rutherford's Labor Day Street Fair. The Fair was attended by an estimated 10,000 people and lasted much longer into the day than usual - until after 5pm - due to the wonderful weather.

Of the more than a dozen Greens who helped staff the table, five candidates were present: Gary Novosielski and Natalie Kochmar, Rutherford Borough Council; Irwin Nack, Bergen County Freeholder; Stu Kautsch, Assembly 36th District, and Matt Thicke, our gubernatorial candidate. Most of the candidates had opportunities to speak to the press, though the mention of our candidates in the local press was woefully insufficient.

The candidates had literature and "giveaways" (pens and sunflower seeds), and the party contributed a wide array of leaflets. Over 1,000 pieces of literature were distributed, and several people signed up for more information.

On September 17, the Bergen Greens were out in full force to picket the

—Continued on page 3

## Monmouth County Candidates Take on Clean Elections

Green Party candidates for District 13 Assembly, Greg Orr and Mike Hall, are taking to task the NJ Fair and Clean Election legislation, which is being piloted in their district. Testifying at the August commission hearing, they surfaced the program's deep flaws and blatantly unfair provisions. Press coverage was very good — an Asbury Park Press Sunday editorial specifically advocated that the Green Party be eligible for the same amount of public funding as the two major parties.

The story behind the Clean Elections pilot reveals our business-as-usual NJ legislature at work. The first NJ Clean Elections bill (A3833) was introduced in June 2003 by then Green Party Assemblyman Matt Ahearn. It was an effective, workable bill based on the successful Clean Election Laws already in place in Maine and Arizona. However, instead of simply taking this tried and true approach to clean and open democracy, the NJ legislature proceeded to create a Frankenstein program.

For the most glaring example, consider the criteria used to qualify candidates for clean campaign funding. In Maine and Arizona, an Assembly candidate must collect, respectively, 50 and 210 \$5 contributions, during an 8 month period. Did NJ take a similar approach? Hardly. They raised the bar to a staggering 1,500 contributions, 500 of which must be at a new \$30 level. A joint campaign for two Assembly candidates running together must therefore raise 3,000 contributions (amounting to \$40,000) — all in just 9 weeks. Since these qualifying contributions all go directly to the state election fund, candidates that try hard but fall short *get no funding whatsoever* — making such a large effort a risky investment, even for major party candidates with massive political machines at their disposal. Clearly for independent and third party candidates, the extreme threshold effectively excludes them altogether from the

—Continued on page 2

# Clean Elections

—Continued from page 1

## Clean Election Program.

Leaving nothing to chance, the NJ legislature also tossed in an apparent 'just in case' provision. Should independent or third party candidates manage to reach the same threshold of 1,500 qualifying contributions, they are to receive "no more than half" of the public funding allocated to major party candidates. This is a blatantly unfair and corrupt creation of the NJ legislature. Even more bizarre, when a third party candidate falls short of qualifying or does not participate, their allocation is handed over to the (presumably) major party candidates. A convenient way to channel more money to the major party candidates, should anyone try to challenge their power.

Since even the major party candidates have been struggling with this monster program, Governor Cody last week extended the qualifying deadline in an 11<sup>th</sup> hour attempt to rescue the program. The use of an Executive Order to change the actual legislated deadline is questionable in itself, but this last minute band-aid is an indicator of just how much dirt there is in the details of their highly touted "Fair and Clean" Election Law. New Jersey desperately needs Clean Elections. The Green Party will continue to fight for final legislation that enables and encourages all candidates to qualify in a program that is both clean and fair.



## Ocean County Update:

There's a lot going on in Ocean County.

Liz Arnone has been attending meetings spear-headed by the Jersey Shore Nuclear Watch folks. This organization is alerting NJ residents to the dangers posed by the Oyster Creek nuclear power plant in Lacey Township. It is the oldest nuclear facility in the US and is located next to Route 9, one of the state's busiest highways. If you want more information, please visit their web site at [www.jerseyshorenuclearwatch.org](http://www.jerseyshorenuclearwatch.org).

The Ocean County Greens also want to alert local residents to the fight to stop Big Box stores from destroying their communities. One such is a proposed Wal-Mart location on Rte. 37 W and Northhampton Blvd. Interested parties can contact Carol Gay at [carolgay747@aol.com](mailto:carolgay747@aol.com).

Rena Amada continues to collect food and clothing for the needy in Lakewood. Contributions come in from stores and people willing to donate what they can't use. Rena's garage is packed to the gills and every Saturday she loads up and heads for the Square in Lakewood to distribute the goods. She spends a great deal of time making pick ups and sorting through items and boxing them to bring to the Square where folks truly welcome and appreciate her presence. She has helped thousands of needy.

Rena is also vocal on local issues which she brings to township meetings regarding housing, development, "opt out" programs in the schools, registering young people to vote, and tabling Green Party information at Ocean County College, all this while husband Len is busy writing a continuous stream of articles to the press. These two folks have been activists since the early days of the Viet Nam war and continue to this day. They march, they speak, they vigil, and they walk their talk. Truly great Americans! It is an honor to have them with us.



## Plenty of candidates in NE New Jersey

In Bergen County, the Greens are running Gary Novosielski and Natalie Kochmar for Borough Council in Rutherford. Their campaign is pushing the common-sense approach to local politics that the GP can bring to the table due to its avoidance of corporate contributions. They had an important presence at the Rutherford Labor Day Fair, distributing hundreds of flyers, pens, and sunflower seeds. Mass flyer distributions are planned for October. To learn more about their campaign, visit [www.SaveRutherford.org](http://www.SaveRutherford.org). Their email addresses are listed there and they would like to hear from you.

Irwin Nack honors us with his second run at County Freeholder. He will be appearing in forums sponsored by the League of Women Voters. Most importantly, his presence on the ballot gives all voters in Bergen a chance to vote Green. Irwin has been busy this year writing tax policy for the Bergen chapter.

Stu Kautsch is the first Green to run *as a Green* for state assembly in the 36th District. His web site - [www.StuKautsch.com](http://www.StuKautsch.com) - has a lot of issue content on topics including energy, eminent domain, democracy, the environment, and much, much more. He is encouraging voters to register as a Green to facilitate the introduction of GP candidates at the local level.

## House Party for “Matt for Governor” at Liz Arnone’s

Liz Arnone

Liz Arnone hosted a house party fundraiser for Matt Thieke on 8/28. Eleven people attended including Matt’s father, John and sister, Diana. It was a pleasure having them with us because we got the inside scoop about the real Matt Thieke. We can tell you the fruit doesn’t fall far from the tree in this yard. Matt’s dad is a warm, friendly fellow who is full of great stories and lots of politics. Imagine the lively discussions when this

## labor Day

—Continued from page 1

armed forces’ recruiting stations in Hackensack. The picket line, which was organized by the Peoples’ Organization for Progress (“POP”), the Bergen Action Network, and the BCGP, drew somewhere around 30 demonstrators and many onlookers. Many of the GPer were attired in their fashionable “Bergen County Green Party” aprons. POP provided signs for those without them (like this writer!), and a good time was had by all. Many photos were taken; hopefully they’ll appear in a future issue of this paper or on the BCGP web page.

—Continued on page 4



## Arnone's House Party

—Continued from page 3

family gets together. Matt also told us ever since he was a little boy he dreamed of becoming President one day. If we do a good enough job, maybe one day we'll be having Matt for President house parties. Imagine that?

All in all we had a great day. Several of our loyal Greens from Ocean County came out, Rena and Lena Amada, Joe Carrino, Robert Main and Marty Anderson. We can always count on these folks. And much to our surprise Mike Skelly and wife Pat surprised us with a basket of fresh goodies from their garden and delightful conversation.

Matt spoke about his platform and the changes he would like to see implemented if he were elected and folks were free to ask questions. Some of the things they were anxious to hear about were the impact of the war in Iraq, real estate taxes, the environment, eminent domain, Oyster Creek, and Wal-Mart.

After Matt finished answering everyone's questions, they were more than happy to write out a check to his campaign, to the tune of \$560.00.

We could use a few more parties like this. Wouldn't it be great to break \$1,000?

## Campaign House Party Held in East Windsor

Steve Welzer

We had a beautiful day and good attendance for the Green Party picnic in East Windsor on August 21. In attendance and making presentations were GPNJ candidates for State Assembly in the 5th District (Mark Heacock), 12th (Ann Napolitano), 13th (Greg Orr, Mike Hall), and 36th (Stewart Kautsch). Also with us was the Green candidate for Mayor of Parsippany, Michael Spector. The highlight of the day was a talk by Green Party gubernatorial candidate Matt Thieke, who outlined the issues he will be addressing in the fall. Attendees were generous contributing to the various campaigns. A good time was had by all.



*Matt Thieke at house party in East Windsor.*

GPNJ.org

**NOT  
For Sale**

**About the GreenGram** The GreenGram is circulated bimonthly in an effort to keep all GPNJ members informed about recent matters and upcoming events. Members are encouraged to provide brief submissions of news items or opinions, as well as event announcements. Deadline for the December issue will be November 20. Stu Kautsch is the editor, Sally Jane Gellert of SAGE Editorial Services (SageEdit@aol.com) is the designer. Please submit material to skautsch@mindspring.com.