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GreenGram

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The Green Party of NJ Bulletin - September 2009

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2009 GPNJ CANDIDATES

Steven Welzer for State Assembly, 12th District

Steve has been active distributing campaign literature and filling out candidate questionnaires from diverse organizations such as the New Jersey Education Association, Project Vote Smart, and the League of Humane Voters. On October 12 he will be included in an editorial board meeting at the offices of the Asbury Park Press, facing off against Republican incumbents Caroline Casagrande and Declan O'Scanlon, Jr. and Democratic challengers Michelle Roth and John Amberg.

Jason Koralja for Borough Council, Surf City

Five candidates are running for two seats on the Surf City Council: Republicans John Klose and James Russell; Democrats James Breitling and Robert Delorenzo; Green Jason Koralja. Each seat carries a three-year term.

GREEN CANDIDATES NATIONWIDE

Across the country, for an off-year election, a record number of Green Party candidates are running for office. There are currently 144 Greens running in local and state races, nearly 50 more than at this point in 2007. Outside of New Jersey, here are some races to watch, donate to, or get involved with . . .

Last month in New York City Rev. Billy Talen's volunteers turned in over 18,000 signatures to get Billy on the ballot for mayor. Rev. Billy's flair for public events has him constantly performing and campaigning throughout the neighborhoods of NYC, including a recent duet with Joan Baez. Visit: www.voterevbilly.org

Allan Brison is running for re-election as Alderman of New Haven, Connecticut. New Haven is a one-party town and Allan is facing a tough challenge from the ruling Democratic Party. You can read about Allan's track record as an Alderman and his vision for New Haven at: www.allanbrison.net

Cam Gordon is seeking re-election to the Minneapolis, Minnesota City Council. Cam has earned the endorsement of his local Green Party, a local Sierra Club chapter, the Minnesota Nurses Association, and several other area unions. You can contribute to Cam Gordon's campaign at: www.camgordon.org

Also in Minneapolis, Annie Young is running for re-election to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. Annie has served on this board since 1989 and also brings several big-name endorsements to this race. More information is available at: www.annieyoung.net

In the Pittsfield, Massachusetts primary, Green-Rainbow Party member J.D. Hebert finished in the top 2 (of 4) candidates for the Ward 7 City Council seat and will advance to the general election on November 3. Hebert works as director of transportation, housing, shelter and facilities for Berkshire Community Action Council, an anti-poverty organization in Western Massachusetts. See: www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=116416930953

Lynne Serpe's NYC Council Campaign has \$100,000+ budget!

www.serpeforcouncil.com

Here are excerpts from the latest email newsletter of the Lynne Serpe campaign:

As we enter the final phase of our City Council Campaign, I want to share how far we've come here in District 22, all because of your support . . .

We turned in over four times the signatures needed to get on the ballot. Thank you to the dozens of volunteers who collected them and the thousands of district voters who stopped to sign.

We've opened our fabulous storefront campaign office at 25-23 Astoria Boulevard. Feel free to drop in, we're there weekends and most week nights.

We just crossed the \$100,000 funding point, thanks to donations from almost FOUR HUNDRED grassroots supporters, almost a dozen house parties and fun fundraising events, and the NYC Matching Funds Program.

But we're just getting warmed up! The final six weeks is the time for us to keep reaching out to voters and to maintain a visible presence in the community.

VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE: OCT 2 - OCT 8

We live in a popular, diverse neighborhood but not everyone is registered to vote. I aim to change that. Please contact [helen\[at\]serpeforcouncil.com](mailto:helen[at]serpeforcouncil.com) for our voter registration schedule for the week of Oct. 2-8 (deadline to register is October 9).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: SEPT 22-OCT 23

We have several local papers in Western Queens. Letters in the paper are a great and free way to let everyone know there is a true progressive option for City Council. Contact [robyn\[at\]serpeforcouncil.com](mailto:robyn[at]serpeforcouncil.com) for where-to-send information and ideas about topics.

OFFICE VOLUNTEERS AND CANVASSING: EVERY DAY

Our campaign office has several phone lines and computers, and the entire district needs to be walked. Let us know how and when you can help, we'd love to have you be part of the team. Send an email to [vote\[at\]serpeforcouncil.com](mailto:vote[at]serpeforcouncil.com).

ELECTION DAY: NOV 3

We will be mobilizing 100 volunteers minimum on Election Day. Please email [robyn\[at\]serpeforcouncil.com](mailto:robyn[at]serpeforcouncil.com) if you can volunteer a few hours, half day or even the full fifteen hours of fun.

FUNDRAISING

Please donate today so we can focus 100% on voter outreach. Remember, thanks to the city's matching funds program your donation will be matched 6:1, so a \$20 donation means a total of \$140 for us to fight the good fight.

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Thank you . . . Lynne Serpe
Green Party Candidate for City Council, District 22

COUNTY LOCAL REPORTS

Bergen County

The Bergen County Green Party continues to host very successful public forums on topics that attract good attendance and lively discussions. On September 9, at the Ethical Culture Society in Teaneck, their featured speaker was Dr. Kenneth Weinberg, a Board member of Physicians for a National Health Program (see: www.pnhp.org). Dr. Weinberg has been a vocal supporter of a single-payer national healthcare system since observing the retreat associated with the "HillaryCare" initiative of 1993. The event was co-sponsored by Bergen County People's Organization for Progress, Bergen Grass Roots, Bergen Peace & Justice, Leonia Peace Vigil Group, New Jersey Peace Action, Northern NJ Health Care Now, Northern New Jersey Socialist Party, and Physicians for a National Health Program.

Dr. Weinberg asserted that the media has been playing an irresponsible role on this issue, both in failing to give any serious coverage to single-payer supporters and in presenting a

distorted picture of the balance of forces at last summer's town hall meetings. He noted how other advanced industrial countries have been getting better health results for less expenditure under national healthcare systems and he advocated building support for Rep. John Conyers' U.S. National Health Care Act (H.R. 676).

Also speaking at the event (informally) was Ray Stever, state chairman of the "New Jersey: One Plan, One Nation Coalition" (<http://njoneplan.org>), a labor and grassroots coalition. Stever, who is also president of the New Jersey State Industrial Union Council, AFL-CIO (<http://njsiuc.net>), advocated action in the streets to show Congress the extent of support for a single-payer system.

Military Families Speak Out will be holding a forum on the Afghanistan quagmire on Saturday October 17, 7:30pm, at St. Anastasia's Church (1095 Teaneck Road, Teaneck, NJ 07666). The Bergen County Green Party will be a co-sponsor of the event and member Irwin Nack will be a principal speaker. For more information, contact Ed Fanning: [fasteddie55\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:fasteddie55[at]gmail.com)

Green activist Stuart Shaw mourned

Stuart Shaw, a Green Party member and a Clean Money activist, passed away over the summer. Below is a tribute to him written by Harriet Rosen of the Bergen County Green Party:

Stuart Shaw was beautiful.

A gentle giant...opinionated, confrontational, tenacious...but beautiful.

Stuart understood intellectually and emotionally what was good and right; he fought for those things with his total being.

His work on behalf of Clean Money is well known. He rang doorbells, petitioned and leafleted in New Jersey and in neighboring states. His beliefs and his support of them were not limited geographically.

Stuart and his whistling coffee urn were fixtures at Bergen County Green Party meetings.

He played an important role in the history of the Bergen County Green Party. He enriched the lives of its members.

He will be sorely missed.

Essex County

On August 15th, the Essex Green Party held its second annual "green party for the Green Party" in the green backyard of Jane Califf, Ted Glick and Daniel Califf-Glick. It was very successful. Fifty people attended, enjoyed a smorgasbord of various kinds of vegetarian foods, including barbecued veggie burgers and tofu hot dogs, listened to music and presentations by several people, and checked out flyers, buttons and books on the literature table. About 35 copies of Green Pages (the newspaper of the Green Party of the U.S.) were distributed. Also available were free compact florescent light bulbs made available by Project Porchlight.

Peter Montague of the Environmental Research Center in New Brunswick eloquently presented the case for why we should all be working to prevent the building of a new 750-megawatt coal plant in Linden (see article below about the resistance movement forming to stop the plant).

Maria DeStefano sang two beautiful songs. Anna Maria Cardenas and Daniel Califf-Glick reported on their 10-day trip to Cuba as part of Pastors for Peace's 20th Friendship Caravan. And comedian Dave Lippman, the "bard of the bankers," brought out many smiles and chuckles as he satirically lampooned warmakers, greedy bankers and those in government servicing them. (Dave is available for other performances; his website is www.davelippman.com)

The Essex Greens were glad to welcome representatives of the Bergen Greens, who seemed to enjoy themselves. The event netted \$300, and Bud Feder, our treasurer, was delighted that this led to a bank balance of over \$1,000. The party was a benefit to support our group's efforts to fight the plans for the Linden coal plant.

- Ted Glick

Three members of the Essex County Greens went to a town meeting for gubernatorial candidates on Sept. 8th in the Westfield Library. The event was sponsored by Environment New Jersey. The purpose was to question the three candidates - Jon Corzine (D), Christopher Christie (R), and Chris Daggett (Ind.) - regarding where they stand on Environment New Jersey's "Green Actions Top Ten List" (these are spelled out at www.environmentnewjersey.org/news-releases).

The only candidate to appear in-person was Daggett, a former head of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection. Corzine sent State Assemblyman John McKeon to represent his campaign and Christie sent Rick Dovey, president of the Atlantic County Utility Authority (who is not officially connected with his campaign - Dovey admitted he has only spoken to Christie two times for about ten minutes, but, he said, it was enough for him to see that "Christie's heart is in the right place"!). This arrangement of speakers was problematic because it was not always clear if the two stand-ins were speaking for themselves or for the candidates. The overall responses of the three were disappointing. They were often vague, at times seeming to be on the side of environmentalists, but then saying something like: "We need to look into this more," or: "This is a complicated issue."

Here are a few examples of answers to questions from the audience:

1. On the building of a coal plant in Linden that would use experimental carbon sequestration of CO2 under the Atlantic Ocean:

- . Daggett called the idea of putting such a plant in a densely populated area "problematic". He said he's not convinced it will work because the technology has not been fully tested.
- . Christie apparently has no position on this issue.
- . Corzine's representative said he "has made no commitment to it" (with the implication that he is thinking it over).

[Two days after the Town Hall meeting, Chris Daggett came out with a statement against the Linden coal plant. We Greens think we had something to do with this because, after hearing him give vague answers about this issue, we personally gave him literature about it following the event. In his statement he also came out strongly for shifting away from fossil fuels and toward clean energy, particularly stating his opposition to storage of natural gas off the NJ coast - which had been brought up by an activist at the town hall meeting.]

2. On PSE&G's plan to bring more dirty coal-generated power into NJ via major power lines from Susquehanna, PA to Roseland (the lines would cut through some of NJ's most beautiful and pristine areas in the Highlands - not only promoting coal use but also exposing people to dangerous electromagnetic fields):

- . Daggett: "I need to know more. It needs to be decided after careful study."
- . Christie's rep: "no position."
- . Corzine's rep: He supports the power line but "it is a tough issue; PSE&G has the right of way through the Highlands; it will give the Highlands \$20 million."

3. On using nuclear power:

- . Daggett said he favors considering it because a lot of power can be generated without contributing to the global warming problem: "I will have an open mind as we address the safety and waste issues. There are concerns about the Oyster Creek nuclear plant. There are legitimate issues, but we can't avoid considering nuclear."
- . Christie's rep: "Nuclear isn't contributing to climate change; the waste can be dealt with."
- . Corzine's rep: He will determine what seems to be the best alternative. "Oyster Creek workers are always being trained ... It is true that all of the water in Barnegat Bay goes into the plant; it may be a good idea to cut another inlet leading water to the plant." (It was not clear to the audience what he meant.)

4. On meeting the deadline to reduce CO2 emissions:

- . Daggett: "We are not going as fast as we'd like." The solution is "improving the bureaucratic process" and implementing changes in the DEP that the task force he worked with recommended. He said that clean energy like solar and wind won't be cheap (even though he was challenged from the floor explaining the long term benefits).
- . Christie's rep: "We should put solar panels on landfills."
- . Corzine's rep: "Financial incentives will help."

They all said that the NJ Global Warming Response Act passed in 2007 had great goals but needed better implementation. McKeon touted Corzine's "successes."

In my opinion, the audience was too polite, rarely challenging a vague answer with a follow-up remark. We need to be more forceful in holding these candidates accountable.

- Jane Califf

Monmouth County

[Coordinator Rich Fuller got a chance to promote the Green Party in the pages of the Star-Ledger (July 31) in response to a remark quoted in an earlier article]

www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2009/07/legal_experts_say_nj_corruptio.html

When allegedly offering a \$10,000 bribe to one elected official, FBI informant Solomon Dwek jokingly said he was neither a Democrat nor a Republican, but a member of the "green party," according to a criminal complaint. He wasn't talking "green" as in environment. He was talking "green" as in cash.

Only the two men know if either one laughed, but the real Green Party doesn't think it's the least bit funny. Calling the comment "libelous," the Green Party of Monmouth County issued a statement yesterday saying it "has zero tolerance for corruption."

"Under a Green administration we will vigilantly weed out corrupt officials, seize their assets, strip them of their pensions and make sure they spend the rest of their days in a state prison for their crimes against the honest, hard-working taxpayers of Monmouth County," said Rich Fuller, county coordinator for the party. "A Green vote truly is a clean vote in every way."

GPNJ'ers in print

The latest issue of the national magazine Green Horizon will be available in a few weeks. Articles in this issue include: "Who's on First? HAVA and the US Election Process" by our GPNJ Treasurer, Lynn Petrovich; a letter from our Sussex County Coordinator Anthony Wille; and an analysis of Libertarianism by our Communications Committee Chair, Steve Welzer. To order a copy, to subscribe, or to become a Green Horizon Sustainer, email: [SteveWelzer\[at\]msn.com](mailto:SteveWelzer[at]msn.com)

RESISTANCE MOVEMENT FORMING TO STOP PLANNED LINDEN COAL PLANT

Below is information from Peter Montague about the plans for a huge, \$5 billion, 750-megawatt coal plant in Linden. Since the news surfaced this summer, environmental groups and activists throughout New Jersey have come together with local Linden community groups to begin developing a campaign to defeat these plans. The Essex Greens have been very active in helping to build this movement. Other groups involved include: the Environmental Research Center, NJ Environmental Federation, NJ Sierra Club, the NJ Environmental Justice Network, Environment New Jersey, NJ Baykeepers, Clean Ocean Action, and Greenfaith. Chris Daggett, the Independent candidate for governor, has come out against the plant.

Greens from around the state are encouraged to get involved with this effort. To do so, contact Ted Glick at: [indpol\[at\]jgc.org](mailto:indpol[at]jgc.org)

Background

A small Massachusetts firm, SCS Energy, has proposed building a 750-megawatt coal power plant in Linden to be called PurGen One.

The plant would capture 90% of its own carbon dioxide (CO₂), plus gather CO₂ from other area sources, compress it into a liquid, pipe it 70 miles offshore, then pump it 1.5 miles beneath the floor of the Atlantic Ocean, hoping it will stay there forever. Over its 50-year lifetime the plant would bury a trillion pounds (500 million tons) of CO₂ beneath the Atlantic.

Humans have no experience doing anything intended to last forever, so this is a massive, unprecedented experiment. The people of New Jersey - and the fauna and flora of the sea - are being used as guinea pigs. Purgen One has hired Bradley Campbell, former commissioner of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), to secure the necessary permits. In April and May, Campbell held a series of private meetings with top DEP staff. The owner of the property in Linden announced in June that it had secured the support of DEP officials "at the highest levels."

Here are twenty reasons why all environmentally-aware people in New Jersey should unify to fight this coal plant:

1. An estimated 1.8 million people live within ten miles of the proposed plant. In New Jersey, the areas most directly affected would be Union, Hudson, Essex and Middlesex counties; in New York, Staten Island lies directly downwind of the plant. These areas already fail to meet health-based air standards by a wide margin.
2. The coal plant will emit hundreds of tons of soot into the air each year. NJ DEP estimates that soot is already killing almost 2,000 people annually in New Jersey.
3. DEP estimates that the cancer hazard from soot in Union County is 664 times as high as the safety benchmark; in Essex County it's 658 times as high; in Middlesex, it's 558 times as high; and in Hudson it's 1,408 times as high as the benchmark! Adding more soot to the air of North Jersey and Staten Island will make an intolerable situation worse.

4. In addition to soot, the air in these counties exceeds health-based standards for many cancer-causing chemicals, including acetaldehyde, benzene, chloroform, formaldehyde, naphthalene, and many others. This is one reason why New Jersey has the highest cancer rate in the nation.

5. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has identified over 2,000 environmental hazards in New Jersey. Calculating the number of hazards per square mile in all 21 counties in New Jersey, Hudson comes up #1, Union #2, Essex #3, and Middlesex #4. These counties already host far more than their fair share of environmental hazards. Furthermore, in all four counties, these hazards are disproportionately located in communities of color and communities of below-average income.

6. The coal plant is not needed. The Linden coal plant would put an estimated 500 megawatts of power into the electric grid. However, a study published recently by the Rutgers University Center for Energy, Economic and Environmental Policy concludes that energy efficiency programs that are economically feasible today could eliminate the need for over 4,000 megawatts of new electric power (the equivalent of 8 new power plants the size of PurGen One) between now and 2020. See: <http://tinyurl.com/kp9bnf>

7. The nation needs a modern energy infrastructure built on renewable fuels. Coal is not renewable.

8. Linden has been designated by NJ state government as an "environmental justice" community because of excessive asthma. The coal plant will heap new burdens and new injustices on the children of Linden.

9. For \$5 billion, the coal plant would provide very few jobs (125 union, 25 management).

10. By itself, PurGen will make only the tiniest dent in the global warming problem. Purgen consultant Professor Daniel Schrag says we'd need to bury 2 trillion tons of CO₂ this century if we wanted to rely on carbon sequestration as a primary strategy to ameliorate global warming. This would require 4000 projects the size of PurGen and the creation of a CO₂ waste-disposal industry larger than the petroleum industry is today. Surely, we can imagine better uses for such a large investment.

11. Purgen couldn't survive without massive taxpayer subsidies - presently \$200 million per year (\$20 for each ton of CO₂ buried), which may increase when Congress passes the cap-and-trade energy bill. The private sector won't fund this risky technology without a major federal subsidy.

12. Regulation of this risky experiment will fall to the Minerals Management Service of the U.S. Dept. of the Interior. Up until now, their main function has been oversight of offshore oil drilling. This agency's oversight hardly bodes well for environmental protection.

13. The undersea pipeline will traverse 100 miles to reach its destination 70 miles offshore. If the 100-mile-long CO₂ waste pipe ever becomes empty, the weight of the ocean will crush it flat. Then we will be left with just another coal plant emitting CO₂ directly into the atmosphere for many decades.

14. If the CO2 ever migrates horizontally below ground, it could escape into the seawater and acidify the ocean further. Acidification is already widely recognized as a threat to all life in the oceans.

15. PurGen is planning to make and sell urea (nitrogen fertilizer). But artificial nitrogen washing off the land is already creating numerous large dead zones in the world's oceans. Artificial nitrogen fertilizer creates enormous environmental problems of its own, so making more of it is an environmental negative, not a positive.

16. If, in 50 years, it turns out that the carbon burial "experts" were wrong, we could face a situation where the CO2 leaks back into the atmosphere, warming the planet rapidly. Are the experts infallible? What is their Plan B if leakage is discovered in 50 years?

17. CO2 is colorless, odorless, tasteless and heavier than air. At a 10% concentration, it is rapidly fatal to humans. During its lifetime, the coal plant will process one trillion pounds of CO2, under 2000 pounds-per-square-inch pressure. Can this be done without ever having an accident that asphyxiates people in Linden in their sleep?

18. Wherever it is mined, coal has created a human rights catastrophe. Whether it is longwall mining in Pennsylvania or mountaintop removal mining in southern Appalachia, coal destroys the land, pollutes the water, and ruins communities. After 150 years of mining, coal communities remain the poorest in the nation. Now, when those communities are trying to build a new economy based on tourism and the natural beauty and serenity of the Appalachian mountains, the coal companies are wreaking mechanized havoc. The people of New Jersey should not contribute to this human rights disaster.

19. In 2006, the parent company, SCS Energy, built a power plant in Astoria, Queens but soon sold one-third of the plant to foreign investors. What will happen down the road if SCS has financial difficulties and sells controlling interest in the Linden plant to irresponsible investors?

20. Environmental groups in New Jersey are unified in their opposition to this coal plant.

GREEN PARTY OF PA SAYS 'NO' TO CARBON SEQUESTRATION

In July the Green Party of Pennsylvania (GPPA) spoke out against a plan by Governor Ed Rendell to bury CO2 waste from power plants in the ground. "We should be reducing our carbon emissions, not simply moving the by-products around like it's some sort of shell game," said Hillary Kane, GPPA Chair.

Recently, Governor Rendell and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources have initiated an effort to explore the state's geologic storage potential for carbon capture and storage. Act 129 of 2008 requires research on carbon sequestration. Pennsylvania produces one percent of the earth's greenhouse gases and this is an attempt to reduce the Commonwealth's contribution to global warming. According to the Rendell administration, capturing carbon dioxide from power plants and storing it instead of

releasing it into the atmosphere will allow coal resources to be used in a more environmentally friendly manner. But the Green Party, a long-time environmental leader, disagrees.

"Pennsylvania should be reducing its coal fired power production by 50% and increasing its solar and wind energy production to compensate for this reduction," suggested Wyoming County Green Party chair Jay Sweeney. "Capturing carbon, liquefying it and building a system of pipes to move the liquefied carbon to a sequestration site poses many environmental hazards. The science is unproven and the results could be far more harmful than beneficial." Visit: <http://GPofPA.org/>

NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL PARTY

"College Greens" Initiative Launched

GPUS is organizing a network of Green Party chapters on campuses nationwide called "College Greens." They will be offering resources to help all students, faculty members, alumni, and parents meet the challenge put up by the College Democrats and Young Republicans by organizing a better, Greener option at colleges across the country. Members and supporters of GPNJ are encouraged to get active promoting the establishment of College Greens groups on New Jersey campuses.

See: www.gp.org/College-Greens

The web site includes all the tools needed to organize a fully-functional, vibrant College Greens chapter: an organizing checklist, supplemental organizing handouts, sample flyers, links to Facebook and Twitter pages, an online "sign-up" form, and an online donation form that helps support the effort.

If you have experience from your days as a Campus Greens organizer or as a faculty advisor, state or local Green Party coordinator, or leader of another social justice or environmental group, please volunteer to help advise and guide College Green chapters. (FYI: Campus Greens was an independent 501(c)4 organization unaffiliated with the Green Party. They are currently not organizing chapters on a national level. Any group that was once affiliated with Campus Greens is invited to affiliate themselves with College Greens, however this effort is not affiliated with that or any other 501(c)4 organization).

For more information, read the Frequently Asked Questions at: www.gp.org/College-Greens/faqs.html or contact: [college\[at\]gp.org](mailto:college[at]gp.org) or 1-866-41-GREEN

GPUS Annual National Meeting

The Green Party of the United States held a successful Annual National Meeting (ANM) in Durham, North Carolina over the weekend of July 24-26. You can see videos of some of the workshops and plenary sessions at: www.gp.org/video/durham.shtml

A full report about the meeting is available at:
www.gp.org/committees/anmc/documents.shtml

Through registrations and contributions, over \$10,000 was raised for the Green Party during the course of the ANM. Also, an objective was set to ramp up the GPUS Sustainers program. The goal will be: 500 sustainers giving a total of \$10,000 a month by the end of 2009. Sustaining pledges of \$10 or \$20 a month are being encouraged. To become a sustainer, go to: http://bit.ly/GL_Donation

If you are unable to give a monthly gift please consider making a one-time donation.

Plans are underway with the Green Party of Michigan to hold next year's Annual Meeting in Detroit in late June in order to coordinate the Green Party's meeting with the U.S. Social Forum.

GPUS committees and caucuses need your time, creativity, and experience to do the important work of the party. Please consider volunteering for a GPUS committee. You can contact them at office@gp.org for more information or to get connected to someone who can help you get started on a committee or caucus.

Green Party merchandise

The GPUS online store is now carrying long-sleeve Green Party logo t-shirts. Perfect for fall! These shirts, like all of our apparel, are union-made in the USA.

Looking for something a little more professional for petitioning, walking door-to-door with candidates, or going to a town hall meeting? Try our Green Party logo polo shirts. They are thick, dark green, and embroidered with the Earthflower logo.

When you're out, don't forget to pass out copies of Green Pages, the newspaper of the Green Party of the United States. The current issue has 20 pages of stories from around the country, features on Green leaders, reports from state Green Parties, poems, and more.

Green Party items are available at: http://bit.ly/GL_Store. Or you can go directly to: <http://bit.ly/LongSleeve> for long-sleeve Green Party logo shirts; <http://bit.ly/SunflowerT> for olive green logo-and-sunflower t-shirts.

To order a bundle of Green Pages: http://bit.ly/GP_Bundle

VICTORY IN COURT FOR THE GREEN PARTY OF CONNECTICUT

[The following is excerpted from an 8/29 article in the Hartford Courant by Edmund Mahony]

On August 28 a federal judge threw out the state's campaign finance law, saying it puts minor party office seekers at an unconstitutional disadvantage when they challenge traditionally better-financed major party candidates.

U.S. District Judge Stefan R. Underhill said the state's cutting-edge campaign finance reforms, known as the 2005 Citizens' Election Program, were built on good intentions and inspired by "a regrettable legacy of corruption that has pervaded all levels of elected office in recent decades." But he said the reform law "imposes an unconstitutional, discriminatory burden" on minor party candidates. That burden is created, he said, because the reforms enhance the ability of Republicans and Democrats to raise money without imposing spending limits on major party candidates who take advantage of public financing.

Specifically, Underhill said:

- . The reforms provide funding to participating candidates at levels "well beyond" historic spending levels. Those funding levels amount to "an impermissible subsidy" for major party candidates rather than a substitute for traditional sources of funding.
- . The qualifying criteria for minor party candidates are so difficult to achieve that most will never become eligible for even reduced levels of public financing.
- . The procedures enacted for distribution of public financing could tend to discourage minor party candidates from even trying to participate. That is because the law triggers release of additional money to major party candidates when their minor party challengers achieve even minimal fundraising milestones.

The Green Party of Connecticut, lead plaintiff in the suit upon which Underhill's decision is based, praised the opinion. "It is a very important victory," said David McGuire, a Connecticut ACLU lawyer who represented the Green Party. "It is a victory for free speech and a victory for all political candidates. It really does level the playing field now."

The response from state political figures of all major party stripes, however, was strong, if respectful, condemnation. "My office will appeal and seek an immediate stay of this decision, which misapplies constitutional doctrine to strike down our state's campaign finance reform system," said Attorney General Richard Blumenthal. He said he will appear in Bridgeport before Underhill next week to seek an immediate stay of the order, a measure that would indefinitely postpone the order from taking effect. If Underhill denies a stay, Blumenthal said, he will apply to the U.S. 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals. In any event, Blumenthal, a Democrat, said he will ask the appellate court to reverse Underhill's decision. Republican Gov. M. Jodi Rell, another supporter of the campaign reforms, was equally critical.

The small but vocal Green Party said Underhill's major party detractors were missing the point. Minor parties - less organized, operating without staffs that can circulate petitions, and the infrequent beneficiaries of large contributions - were put at a disadvantage, party officials said.

At one point in his decision, Underhill said steps should be taken to preserve the ability of minor party candidates to serve as checks on their major party opponents and their representatives in government. "We're very pleased the court ruled that real campaign finance reform requires a level playing field," said Michael DeRosa, co-chairman of the state Green Party.

GREENS ELECTED IN RECORD NUMBERS TO EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

[Last spring's European Parliament elections were a watershed for the Green politics movement. The following article is excerpted from a report by Mike Feinstein, a member of the International Committee of the Green Party of the United States]

During June 4-7, elections to the 736-seat European Parliament (EP) were held in 27 countries. Greens received more than 10 percent in seven of them, up from four in the last EP elections in 2004, and won 46 seats overall, up from 35 in 2004 (when the EP had 785 seats). The Greens were the only party-bloc whose proportion of seats increased, from 5.5 percent to 7.1 percent.

The most Green seats were won in Germany (14) and France (13), while the highest percentage of the vote came in Wallonia, the French-speaking part of Belgium, with 23.3 percent.

At the European Green Party Congress, held March 27-29 at the European Parliament in Brussels (and attended by more than 1,200 people from across Europe and around the world) the Green parties hammered out a common platform based upon the theme: "A Green New Deal."

Through a combination of private and public investment in environmental initiatives amounting to 500 billion Euro over five years (0.75 percent of the EU's GDP), the Green New Deal would create five million "green-collar" jobs in renewable energy, social care, sustainable housing and public transportation, according European Green Party (EGP) co-spokesperson Philippe Lamberts, who was elected on the Ecolo (Wallonia, Belgium) list. "Voting Green means voting to put Europe at the forefront of a global economic revolution."

Added EGP co-spokesperson Ulrike Lunacek, who was elected on the Die Grunen list (Austria): "A truly prosperous and sustainable economy requires more social justice in Europe and abroad. The Green New Deal advocates equal opportunities, fair working conditions, anti-discrimination and a decent standard of living for all. We will continue to fight hard for the strict application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and for a European Union that reinforces social and labor rights, guarantees equal pay for equal work for men and women alike, as well as for immigrant or temporary workers. Our manifesto also includes specific proposals to make the EU a truly participatory democracy, including giving the European Parliament the right to initiate legislation. Prioritizing Fair Trade and increasing the budget for overseas development are also vital components of the Green New Deal."

The Green New Deal drew support from some well-known circles. Vaclav Havel, the Czech playwright, nonviolent revolutionary, and former president of "Velvet Revolution" fame endorsed the Czech Green Party (Strana Zelenych) and criticized the Czech Republic's two largest parties for focusing on economic growth with no regard to anything else. Added noted British climate change author George Monbiot, "If you vote Green, you tell the political class exactly what you want."

In 2004 the European Greens were the first to campaign Europe-wide with a common platform and graphics, as well as candidates appearing outside of their own countries in which they were running. This continued to an even stronger degree in 2009 and apparently voters responded well to this approach, especially in a time of an economic crisis that transcends national borders.

According to Thomas Klau of the Center for European Reform: "The rise of the Green Party has been striking. The Greens are the one political force in the EU that has been closest to creating a true European party with a political message that is strong and plausible."

Perhaps the greatest example of the Greens' international approach was the campaign of Daniel Cohn-Bendit, a current co-president of the Green Group in the European Parliament. A German MEP from 2004-2009, Cohn-Bendit ran and was elected as a French candidate this June. He said, "I am a European MEP. I am trying to find a European common interest. I am not defending a national position. It is the same message - the Green message - whether I am standing in Germany or France."

The European Green Congress also nominated a team of "Green Ambassadors" to travel and participate in the debates all over Europe in the member states, made up mostly of experienced and well-respected Green politicians and former MP and/or MEPs.

[MP = Member of Parliament (national)
MEP = Member of the European Parliament]

For more information:
www.europeangreens.eu and www.greens-efa.org

GERMAN VOTERS TURN TO ALTERNATIVE PARTIES

German voters registered dissatisfaction with the dominant establishment parties in federal elections held September 27. The outcome was particularly painful for the liberal Social Democratic Party (SPD), which received only 23 percent of the vote, their lowest total in over six decades (since World War II). By comparison, the SPD has polled as high as 46 percent in 1972 and 41 percent as recently as 1998; they received 34 percent in the last federal election in 2005.

The conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) also performed relatively poorly, garnering only 33.8 percent of the vote. The CDU has been the largest party in Germany for the entire post-war period except for a brief interval during the 1990s. Between 1953 and 1998 the CDU consistently polled between 40 and 50 percent of the vote.

German voters have recently been sending a clear message that they favor alternatives. The total vote for the major parties (CDU plus SPD) during the seventies was upwards of 85 percent. During the eighties and nineties it fell toward 75 percent. But this year the CDU and SPD together received less than 57 percent!

The voters turned, instead to the minor-but-growing parties. The Free Democrats (FDP), the Left Party and the Greens all achieved their highest ever federal-level vote totals: 14.6 percent for the FDP, 12 percent for the Left, and 10.7 percent for the Greens. In the last federal election, in 2005, all three parties scored less than 10 percent of the vote each. The surge in votes for the Free Democrats (a free-market centrist party) will likely enable them to become part of a CDU-FDP coalition government under Angela Merkel's leadership.

Collectively the minor parties gained 12 percent in this election at the expense of the CDU and SPD. The Green Party gained almost three percent relative to its total in 2005. It is expected to have 68 seats in the new Bundestag (parliament) out of a total of 622. Below is a report from the party's most recent convention (which they call a "congress").

Report from the Berlin Congress (excerpts)
by Phil Hill 6/15/09

(Phil Hill is a former Green organizer from the United States who now makes his home in Berlin and is an active member of the German Greens)

This year the German Greens held two party congresses, the result of the crowded electoral calendar. After the first congress in Dortmund in January, at which candidates for the June 4th European Parliamentary election were nominated, the Greens gathered again in Berlin in May to pass the program for September's federal elections.

Nominated as the "lead candidates" for the federal campaign were Jurgen Trittin from Lower Saxony and Renate Kunast of Berlin. Between 1998 and 2005, when Trittin was Environmental Minister during the Red/Green coalition government with the Social Democrats (SPD), he was responsible for the country's nuclear power phase-out, scheduled to be completed in 2020, and was one of the key players worldwide in brokering the difficult Kyoto Protocol negotiations. In her role as Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Minister during that government, Kunast restructured what had been a purely "agribusiness ministry" into a modern administration that promoted organic farming and upgraded consumer rights to the cabinet level.

At the May congress, the approximately 700 Green delegates tackled thorny economic and social policy issues. Central was the demand for a Green New Deal, with which the economy could be revitalized by investment in green production, particularly in the energy area. While that may sound like an echo of Obama's campaign, the fact is that federal policy in the United States has a long way to go to catch up with the accomplishments just of the last Red-Green government. An American visitor, David Foster, director of the Blue Green Alliance ("blue" for blue-collar, a labor-environmental group) addressed the congress at length, saying a green economy and a unionized economy would necessarily go hand-in-hand.

In social policy, with teachers being an important long-time party constituency, the Greens emphasized that education is one of the key elements of a new green social policy, which is based on drawing marginalized people back into society rather than simply putting them on welfare. After the political and policy disaster of the welfare cuts imposed by the Schroeder government (with Green participation) in 2003, the Greens have modified their position and are demanding increases in the level of welfare benefits, as well as removal of some co-payment provisions in the healthcare system. In foreign policy, the goal will be strengthening international law in order to push back violence as a conflict-resolution tool. As a result of the Kosova War, the party has moved largely towards a consensus on supporting the doctrine of the international community's "responsibility to protect" people who are endangered by dictatorial oppression and violence, as long as it is under a UN mandate. That's a shift away from the pacifist position the party held for many years. In Afghanistan the Greens support German involvement, but in a way which counters the "bomb first, ask later" approach of the U.S. The Greens advocate emphasizing productive efforts, such as decreasing violence through promoting local development and alternatives to the poppy trade. There is hope among many German Greens that Obama will change the U.S. approach - as there is hope for him generally - but, of course, the jury is still out.

At a meeting of the leftist caucus, one of the party's two major wings, there was hardly any controversy, since all the group's demands seemed to be accepted by the party as a whole. The biggest issue going into the convention was which coalition partners to approach after the election - i.e., how to put the program into practice. Due to the entrenchment of a five-party system since reunification 19 years ago, it has been increasingly difficult to put together a viable coalition, since the "Left Party," as the former East German Communist Party now calls itself, has been considered an unacceptable coalition partner for all except the Greens. This means even a left-of-center electoral majority (the Greens, the Left, and the SPD) would not yield a governing majority because the SPD and the Left Party won't work together.

[The question became moot on Sept. 27 when the three left-of-center parties together garnered only 45.6 percent of the vote. But the outcome of the 2009 election could wind up being long-term beneficial in the sense that the weakened SPD may now be forced to stop treating the strengthened Left Party as a pariah. That could open the door for a three-way coalition in the future, something the Greens have been advocating for. -SW]

GREEN PARTY OF INDIA BEING FORMED

Environment crusader and Green activist Subhas Dutta is all set to launch India's first Green political party on the lines of parties in Germany, Australia, the US and the UK to protect the country's environment. Dutta visited London on Sept. 12 to meet Caroline Lucas, leader of the UK Green Party and Member of the European Parliament.

He said he made the trip "to learn about the Green Party's constitution, policies, framework and success. The Indian party will be launched next year and we will contest the 2011 Assembly elections in West Bengal." Dutta's efforts were instrumental in setting up India's first state level Green Bench at Calcutta High Court in 1996. He has fought for a number of green causes such as cleaning up pollution at the Victoria Memorial, countering the degradation of the Maidan, and the phasing out of old and polluting vehicles.

COHOUSING SYMPOSIUM

Moore College of Art and Design - Graduate Symposium

"Building Sustainable and Intentional Communities"

A day of discussion and discovery about the history, theories and practice of creating and living in cohousing.

Sat. October 10, 2009 . . . 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

The Interior Design Graduate Program at Moore College of Art & Design in Philadelphia will sponsor a day-long symposium on the concepts and practicalities of cohousing in the United States. Charles Durrett, architect and author of the seminal text on cohousing, will deliver the keynote presentation. Several shorter presentations by leaders in the field will follow, each of which will briefly discuss specific components and aspects of cohousing communities. The afternoon will consist of two sessions of workshops expanding upon the morning presentations.

Enhancing quality of life and living more lightly on the planet are two of the prominent goals - among many more -achieved by cohousing communities. Since 1972, nearly 400 projects have been completed in Denmark. Since 1990, nearly 100 intergenerational communities and three elder communities have been created in the United States.

The event is free. You can register online at: www.moore.edu/event_calendar/250/tb/1?height=600&width=700 or by phone with the graduate admissions office at 215-965-4016

RSVP by Sept 30 is required. Moore College is in Philadelphia, within walking distance of the 30th Street Station.

CLASS SERIES Re: GREEN WORKER COOPERATIVES

This fall a group called Green Worker Cooperatives plans to present a workshop/class series under the auspices of the Co-op Academy: "How to Start Ecologically Sustainable Worker Cooperatives."

The course will be eight weeks long, meeting once a week in New York City, with homework in between. Once the sign-up sheet has exceeded ten people, dates for the class sessions will be set based upon input from those interested in attending.

The cost for the entire course is \$200. There may be carpool opportunities available from New Jersey. For more information contact:

Abe Karl-Gruswitz
Abe[at]EmersonLilyFreeSchool.org 973-786-5396

