



Green Wisconsin

Newsletter of the Wisconsin Green Party

Spring 2014

WI GREENS TAKE STRONG STANDS ON MINING, MARIJUANA, MINIMUM WAGE; PUT OUT CALL FOR 2014 CANDIDATES AT MILWAUKEE MEETING

By Dave Schwab

At the Wisconsin Green Party 2013 Fall membership meeting in Milwaukee on Saturday, November 9th, Greens from around Wisconsin made bold proposals for the state's future while calling on their fellow Wisconsinites to join the Green Party and run for office.

Delegates began the meeting by amending the state party's platform to call for rigorous environmental safeguards against mining pollution, legalization of marijuana, and a \$15 inflation-adjusted minimum wage. Proposals to charter a publicly-owned state Bank of Wisconsin and institute election reforms including independent redistricting, instant runoff voting, and proportional representation were also added to the platform by consensus.

At the meeting, the Wisconsin Green Party agreed to recruit and support at least one statewide candidate in 2014, with the goal of winning a ballot line for the party.

"People are looking for solutions outside the failed status quo and big-money politics," said party co-chair Dave Schwab. "The Green Party is growing across the country because we are putting those solutions on the table."

In the afternoon, Frank Koehn, the first Green elected to public office in the U.S., joined Carl Sack of Madison Action for Mining Alternatives to give a presentation on Wisconsin's frack sand mining boom and the proposed Gogebic Taconite mine in the Penokee Hills. After the presentation, Greens discussed organizing in Milwaukee to defend Wisconsin's land, air and water from the threat of mining.



Carl Sack speaks on iron mining at the WIGP meeting.

WISCONSIN GREEN PARTY CALLS FOR CANDIDATES FOR NOVEMBER 2014 ELECTIONS

The Wisconsin Green Party is currently recruiting candidates for November 2014 elections. Have you considered running for legislature or statewide office, or do you know someone who may consider running? We'd like to talk with you about the possibilities - contact WIGP co-chair Dave Schwab at david.c.schwab@gmail.com about our candidate recruitment process.

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PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES: GREENS ON THE DANE COUNTY BOARD

By Leland Pan

In Dane County, we are faced with a rapidly growing number of homeless people with nowhere to stay. There are limited-to-no shelters during the day in a place where winters can get colder than Alaska. Homeless people lack access to basic facilities like restrooms or storage lockers and are some of the most at-risk for thefts and violent crimes.

The Dane County government has, in response to growing demands and outrage at the lack of services by homeless people and advocates, put in funds for a permanent day resource center for homeless folk. Additionally, Dane County is working with the city to fund permanent 24/7 public restrooms and is looking for a location for storage lockers for homeless folk. All of these actions are a step in the right direction, though we all know they are merely a start to the true goal: Housing is a human right and we must provide stable housing for all.



Leland Pan

Even these small steps, though, could not have been taken without the work of leftist elected officials – those supported by third parties. The formation of the Homeless Issues Committee to coordinate city and county joint efforts for policy change in favor of homeless folk was created by a third party-endorsed official. The budget amendment to fund the purchase and operation of a day resource center was introduced by a third party-endorsed official. In addition, some of the most active advocates and organizers of homeless folk are members of the Green Party. The truth is that left to Democrats, none of these reforms would have happened.

To institute real progressive policies in a country awash with small but powerfully wealthy conservative interests means pushing the boundaries of the accepted political dialogue. It means we do talk about ideas that the Democrats will not, out of fear for re-election or ambition of higher office. In Dane County, it has been Green Party-endorsed officials that have done the lion's share of work on homelessness, that have introduced public banking into the dialogue, that

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GREEN PARTY MAYOR THWARTS HOUSE FORECLOSURES

By Michael Slattery

Gayle McLaughlin, Green Party member and mayor of Richmond, California, systematically confronts the exploitation of minority and poorer classes by US domestic and international financial institutions and ineffective government redress and the environmental affront caused by a multinational oil conglomerate.

Richmond is a city of 106,500 residents, mostly Latino (40%), African American (27%), Asian (14%), and Native American and Pacific Islanders (1%), and undocumented. It is situated in the eastern end of San Francisco Bay. A major industry is Chevron Petroleum with a major winery and service-sector hospital the others. Unemployment approximates 12 percent and residential foreclosure rates top 16 percent, more than double the national average. After World War II the city became a blighted and rusted out city as major shipyards shut down, auto plants moved, and railroads stagnated. This induced a deteriorating economic structure which fosters unemployment and poverty. As of 2000, median income roughly was \$44,000 and per capita income was \$19,000; 13 percent of families and 16 percent of the population lived below the poverty line.

In this backdrop, after years of strong Democratic control, McLaughlin was elected to the nine-member city council in 2000 and, through a coalition of liberal Democrats, progressive independents, and Greens, was elected mayor in 2006, defeating a first-term Democrat competitor. In 2010, she survived a contested race with her opponent heavily supported by Chevron.



Gayle McLaughlin

With the failure of the Obama administration and federal programs to stem rising mortgage foreclosures following the onslaught of the Great Recession after 2007 and the debacle of sub-prime mortgage defaults caused by derelict, exploitive banks, McLaughlin and the city council unanimously approved a plan to advance the use of eminent domain to stem urban

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WHY MARIJUANA/HEMP LEGALIZATION IS SO IMPERATIVE

By L.E. Dale

Is it imperative to challenge corporations that manufacture, distribute and sell toxic agricultural chemicals marketed as pesticides, herbicides and chemical fertilizers?

Yes. And it's possible by taking an approach that focuses on three specific alternative agricultural product substitutions in order to clean and save massive segments of our environment from unbridled destruction. The first step necessitates legalizing one plant, marijuana. This multi-faceted plant, also called hemp, has historically provided raw material source for textiles, paper, food, medicine and ethanol fuel. Its commercial production would provide environmentally friendly alternatives to destroying forests for timber pulp and the mass poisoning of farm lands with insecticides, herbicides and chemical fertilizers to satisfy demand for textiles and ethanol.

What compelling urgency mandates conversion to hemp?

It's alarming that one out of every two men and one out of every three women in the United States can expect to contract cancer in their lifetime. Simply converting to hemp fiber for cotton and ethanol production would significantly reduce current epidemic levels of cancer, birth defects, premature births, autism, mental/ physical retardation, MS, and Alzheimer's thanks to reduced chemical use. Such a conversion has the potential to save untold numbers of humans and wildlife species from torturous deaths and extinctions.

Would substituting hemp pulp for old growth timber be commercially viable?

Yes. Wisconsin's timber pulp is primarily used to produce disposable products such as diapers, toilet paper, newsprint, packaging and composite building products. Hemp pulp could be easily substituted, and due to its longer fibers, it actually produces stronger composite building products like plywood as well as stronger paper and fabric products. Grinding up old growth forests for disposables and composite building products is even more grotesque considering that hemp pulp has long been a perfectly viable alternative.

Is the production of cotton finished products superior to hemp's?

No. Hemp produces fabrics equivalent to the best that can be made using current chemical industry enabled

2013 ELECTIONS BRING GREEN VICTORIES IN WISCONSIN AND NATIONALLY

By Dave Schwab

Following on the coattails of Jill Stein's inspiring 2012 Green New Deal presidential campaign, 2013 brought renewed Green Party success in local elections across the US.

In Wisconsin, a slate of Green-endorsed candidates made a strong showing in Madison local elections. Community activists Ledell Zellers and Dean Loumos won hotly contested races for city council and school board, respectively. Several other candidates endorsed by the Four Lakes Green Party, including Barbara Davis, C.J. Terrell, Christian Hansen, Hawk Sullivan, and Leslie Peterson, posted strong results ranging from 20% to 46% of the vote against opponents funded by corporate interests.



Ledell Zellers



Dean Loumos

Across the country, Greens entered 103 races and won victories in 31. In California, 20 Greens were elected in 2013, an odd-election-year record that brings the number of CA Greens in office to 55. 69% of California Greens who ran were elected. Greens had notable success in school board races and retained control of Fairfax's town council, where their priorities include alternative transportation and a goal of zero waste by 2020.

In Maine, Anna Trevorow was elected to Portland school board in a city where Greens have had a strong city council presence for years. Portland Greens also led a successful ballot initiative to legalize marijuana in the city. In Bangor, 22 year-old Josh Plourde became the first Green elected to city council.

In Cleveland, Green city council member Brian Cummins was reelected to a third term. He defeated a challenger backed by Cleveland's mayor, who had pushed a trash-to-energy plant opposed by Mr. Cummins. In Minneapolis, Greens Cam Gordon and Annie

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PENOKEE MINE OPPONENTS MAKE THEIR CASE

By Mike McCallister

Gogebic Taconite's proposed open-pit mine in the Penokee Hills of northern Wisconsin is becoming a focal point for Native American treaty rights activists, mine opponents said at a forum during the recent WI Green Party state gathering in Milwaukee.

The mine "is genocide on our friends and neighbors in Bad River," Frank Koehn of the Penokee Hills Education Project said. "We are not going to let them in the hills."

Gogebic is proposing a 22-mile-long, 1/2 mile wide and 1,000 foot deep open-pit iron mine a few miles from Lake Superior.

(Right: map of the Bad River watershed from Wikipedia.) Koehn, a longtime environmental activist and former Bayfield County Supervisor, said that the rocks that would be mined in this project



would be pulverized to get at the roughly 20% iron. The remaining dust from the pulverized rock has contaminants like sulfides, arsenic and asbestos. The mine threatens both air quality and the streams leading into Lake Superior. Indigenous activists from around the country have pledged to come to Wisconsin to prevent the mine from operating, Koehn said.

Researcher and organizer for Madison Action for Mining Alternatives Carl Sack said the mine represented a "grave threat" to the environment. He noted that since a proposed mine in Crandon, WI was defeated in the 1990s, a mining industry publication has called the state "the worst place in the world to mine." Sack said "we intend to keep it that way."

"While the Republican-controlled state legislature may believe that industry is more important than water quality and air quality," Sack said, "the more people learn about this mine, the less they support it."

GREEN SHADOW CABINET SHOWS ANOTHER GOVERNMENT IS POSSIBLE

By Dave Schwab

"If Jill Stein won the election, what would she actually do as president?" The Green Shadow Cabinet was created to answer the question of how Greens would govern differently, providing timely Green perspectives on national politics and proposing solutions that Americans rarely hear from the two corporate-sponsored parties in Washington DC. Jill Stein and Cheri Honkala head the Cabinet as President and Vice President, and are joined by leading thinkers such as Gar Alperovitz (New Economy Advisor), Cmdr. Leah Bolger (Secretary of Defense), Ellen Brown (Treasury Secretary), Tim DeChristopher (Emergency Climate Action Coordinator), Margaret Flowers (Secretary of Health), Gloria Meneses Sandoval (Secretary of Immigration), Richard Monje (Secretary of Labor), David Swanson (Secretary of Peace), Col. Ann Wright (Secretary of State), and many others.

The GSC regularly weighs in on pressing issues; recent topics include cutting the military budget, the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement, the ongoing Fukushima nuclear disaster, the War on Drugs, Single-Payer health care vs. Obamacare, the Millions Against Monsanto march, and much more. To learn more about the Green Shadow Cabinet, go to www.GreenShadowCabinet.us.

GET READY FOR EARTH DAY TO MAY DAY: 10 DAYS TO CHANGE COURSE

By Dave Schwab

On January 18th in Chicago, Jill Stein joined leaders from across the spectrum of US social movements to launch the Global Climate Convergence, an effort to unite America's disparate social movements for 10 days of action, education, and movement-building from Earth Day to May Day. Speakers from the labor, immigration, indigenous, healthcare, climate, environmental, and racial justice movements sounded the call for a mass social movement based on the common ground of our struggles for democracy and justice in the face of a political system dominated by a tiny economic elite. "The growing climate disaster intensifies all our struggles," reads the website, "creating new urgency for unified action." To learn more about the Global Climate Convergence and get involved, go to www.GlobalClimateConvergence.org.

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blight and counter the wave of residential foreclosures. In September 2013, in a vote of four to three, the council approved the scheme to buy out mortgages using eminent domain. She is now being opposed by the deputy mayor and local realtors.

Virtually all of these mortgages are backed by property whose value has risen from 44 percent to now about 60 percent of the mortgage value. In fact, 28 percent of all mortgages in Richmond remain under water. Unfortunately, five votes are needed to actually initiate the purchasing. Several neighboring cities were also exploring and advancing the same scheme, but have refrained from actually making it a reality because of threats from commercial banks and realtors. When Richmond attempted last year to issue highly rated general obligation bonds, not a single buyer could be found, largely due to pressure from major financial institutions, particularly in the securities industry.

McLaughlin is also active on the corporate and international front. She has been confronting Chevron, Richmond's largest taxpayer, for both its domestic and international irresponsibility. She was invited and went to Ecuador where Chevron is defaulting on a court-ordered fine of \$18 billion, reduced to \$9.5 billion by an Ecuadorean court, that was adjudicated when Texaco, which Chevron later acquired, heavily polluted the Ecuadorean Amazon in its oil mining between 1964 and 1992. In 2013, when Chevron's Richmond plant exploded, fumes forced thousands of residents to be hospitalized. McLaughlin has long fought and forced Chevron to pay more taxes to the city and to increase damages owed for the 2013 explosion.

She has led and legislated policies for de-criminalizing homelessness and harassing illegal residents. She has also been instrumental in getting a solar-panel factory and a branch of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory to locate in Richmond and provide jobs.

McLaughlin and her ability to get elected and govern present us with a paradigm for Greens to implement our policies and be adaptable realists.

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Young won reelection to city council and parks and recreations board, respectively. Meanwhile, community activist and Socialist Alternative city council candidate Ty Moore, who was endorsed by the Green Party, narrowly lost in instant-runoff balloting. However, in Seattle, Green-endorsed Socialist Alternative candidate Kshama Sawant won a tight race for city council, boosting the causes of a \$15/hour living wage and independent politics in general.

In New York, Greens made strong showings in New York City, Albany, Syracuse, and Rochester, often earning more votes than Republican candidates. In Syracuse, Green stalwart Howie Hawkins again fell short in his bid for a city council seat. Notably, New York's Working Families Party sought to defeat Hawkins by investing resources in his opponent, a corporate-friendly Democrat, instead of using those resources to help more progressive Democrats facing strong Republican challenges.

Altogether, these election results (and others that we don't have space to print - see gp.org or greenpartywatch.org for more) show that Greens already have a high success rate in local elections, winning at least 35% of races they enter. Green incumbents also enjoy a high reelection rate, showing that once voters go Green, they're happy with what they get. This should encourage more Greens to run for local office where they can benefit their communities and lay the groundwork for continued Green success, as Greens have done in California and Maine. Local officials can make waves across the country, as did Gayle McLaughlin, Green Mayor of Richmond, CA, when she announced a plan to stop foreclosures using eminent domain. 2013 also shows the potential of working with truly independent parties like Socialist Alternative and Wisconsin's own Progressive Dane, which also endorsed most of Madison's Green slate. By demonstrating the viability of Green policies in action, local elections are no less important than major campaigns like Jill Steins; indeed, they are an integral part of the Green Party's identity and prospects for future success.

The Green Party's Ten Key Values

- *Grassroots democracy* • *Social justice and equal opportunity* • *Ecological wisdom* • *Nonviolence*
- *Decentralization* • *Community-based economics and economic justice* • *Feminism and gender equity*
- *Respect for diversity* • *Personal and global responsibility* • *Future focus and sustainability*

HEMP/MARIJUANA cont. from page 3

raw materials and hemp's finished fabric qualities range from coarse rope and burlap to a fine silk finish. Cotton may account for up to 50 percent of all chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticide used in the U.S. Hemp, as a substitute raw material, can be expected to produce a 200 percent greater yield per acre without chemicals.

Will converting to hemp help farmers?

Yes. Farmers will save on overhead costs because hemp needs little fertilizer and no chemicals. Higher yields per acre coupled with low overhead costs spells higher profits going to farmers, at the expense of the chemical cartel members like Monsanto, Dow and DuPont. With hemp legalization farmers will have more markets and will be able to grow marketable hemp for pulp, textile fibers ethanol and more. More markets for Wisconsin farmers means more jobs and lower consumer costs for finished products and an enhanced tax base.

Does legalizing marijuana save taxpayer money?

Yes. Now that Colorado has legalized recreational use and sale of marijuana on Jan .1st, 2014 it is projected to generate tens of millions of dollars in new tax revenues from a 25 percent sales tax on its sale an other associated fees. It is estimated that the U.S. spends \$45 billion annually just to interdict, investigate, prosecute, monitor, pay police, and prison personnel, build more prisons and incarcerate ordinary non violent citizens for unjustly criminalized marijuana violations.

Is legalizing marijuana for medical purposes valid?

Yes. Recent war veterans suffering Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) reportedly are helped tremendously by using marijuana to lower anxiety and other symptoms. (See: npr.org 12/24/13). The medicinal benefits of marijuana extend to many other health conditions too, for example, it alleviates chemo therapy induced nausea, treats alcoholism , high blood pressure, glaucoma and more.

Is legalizing commercial hemp imminent?

Yes. In a welcome sign, the recently defeated Farm Bill (7/13) had provisions to legalize commercial hemp and was supported heavily by some of Kentucky's extremely conservative House and Senate Republicans.

The research for the documentary Hemp Revolution (1996) was a primary source for this article.

DANE COUNTY cont. from page 2

have pushed ending drug prohibition, and that have demanded the end of deportation. Issues that most affect those with the least power in our current society are those that are not represented by the two parties. When a political body consists only of rational self-interested actors rather than principled idealists, it will never serve those that do not have political power to give.

So, if we want to create a better world and empower those who have been unfairly cast aside, we must double down on our efforts to ensure that Greens are elected. Only then do the tired, the poor, the huddled masses yearning to breathe free have true representation, and only then does our country move closer to living up to its ideals of liberty and justice.

Leland Pan is a Supervisor on the Dane County Board.

Upcoming WI Green Party events:

Four Lakes Green Party Spring Elections Endorsement Meeting - Saturday, March 1st, 11am-1pm - Social Justice Center, Madison

WIGP Spring State Gathering - Saturday, April 12th, 10am-4pm - Ambrosia Cooperative, Madison

Greater Milwaukee Green Party organizing meetings - check WIGP.org for updates

Earth Day to May Day Global Climate Convergence - Tuesday, April 22nd - Thursday, May 1st

WIGP at the Midwest Renewable Energy Fair - Friday June 20th-Sunday June 22nd - Custer, WI

Check WIGP.org for event locations and updated information about WI Green Party meetings and other events.