

# Green\*Star

a quarterly publication of the Green Party of Pennsylvania

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Winter  
2008-2009

## Green Party Regains Minor Party Status in Allegheny County, PA

Based on official results of the Nov 4th election, the Green Party of Allegheny County has regained minor party status within Allegheny County.

This is how it works:

Titus North, Green Party candidate for Congress (14th District; all within Allegheny County) received:

23,214 votes (8.71%)

And, the highest winning candidate total for Allegheny: Jack Wagner (Auditor General) = 442,486 Allegheny Co. votes

$442,486 \times 5\% = 22,124$

Titus exceeded 5% of Wagner's Allegheny County total

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## Blyden Potts in Temple's SWSA campaign forum

GPPA Secretary Blyden Potts represented the Green Party of PA and Presidential candidate Cynthia McKinney on Thursday, Oct. 9, by invitation at a campaign forum in Harrisburg hosted by Temple University Harrisburg's Social Work Student Alliance. An audience of 75 came to hear him and representatives of the Libertarian, Republican, and Democratic Parties speak and answer questions. The Obama campaign and Democratic Party were



GPPA Secretary Blyden Potts

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Winter 2008:

## Current state of PA Ballot Access

Currently we have a proposed Voters Choice Act bill, the VCA, that State Senator Mike Folmer from Lebanon County is preparing to introduce in January. (see [senatorfolmer.com](http://senatorfolmer.com) or [\[state.pa.us\]\(http://state.pa.us\) and search SB 1578 in the Electronic Bill Room\). While not perfect, this bill is extremely close to the version that the Pennsylvania Ballot Access Coalition crafted, with the help of Richard Winger. \(\[www.paballotaccess.org\]\(http://www.paballotaccess.org\)\) Richard Winger is the publisher and Editor of Ballot Access News and the acknowledged guru of Ballot Access in this country.](http://www.legis.</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

This VCA or Voter's Choice Act is based on the Delaware model and would level the electoral playing field. Basically, it would not require the current floating 2% of the highest votegetter of the previous election year, for statewide and National Candidates, which has led to the requirements of 67,000 signatures in 2006 and 25,000 in 2008 (and now 65,000 in 2009!!!) There are two ways that a

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## Malik Rahim Honored with Thomas Merton Award

Malik Rahim, founder of Common Ground Collective in New Orleans and Green Party candidate for Congress in Louisiana, came to Pittsburgh recently to receive the prestigious 2008 Thomas Merton Award ([www.thomasmertoncenter.org](http://www.thomasmertoncenter.org)).

During Malik's visit, a spirited gathering of Greens and friends filled the Shadow Lounge in Pittsburgh's East Liberty neighborhood. Many thanks to Malik, Ceci Wheeler (who organized the gathering), and to Vincent Eirene for recording a most moving evening. Listen in at: [www.radio4all.net/index.php/program/30144](http://www.radio4all.net/index.php/program/30144)

- Ed Bortz



L to R: Titus North,  
Liz Hughes,  
Malik Rahim

photos by  
Sandy Hazley



Ceci Wheeler with  
Malik Rahim

## GREEN PARTY CONDEMNS NATURAL GAS PROCEDURE

Says no to "fracking" and no drilling on public lands

On Oct. 16 2008, the Green Party of Pennsylvania issued a statement calling for the abolition of hydraulic fracturing in natural gas drilling in Pennsylvania, and a total ban on natural gas drilling on public land, due to the potential for environmental damage and poisoning of local water supplies. This is especially relevant given the large amount of natural gas under Pennsylvania, located in what is known as the "Marcellus Shale."

Hydraulic fracturing, also known as "fracking," is a procedure that involves pumping a mixture of sand, water, and chemical additives under high pressure into the underground rock to fracture it and therefore release a greater flow of natural gas. These chemical additives can be quite dangerous, leaving the water polluted despite efforts to clean it. Fracking even a single natural gas well consumes millions of gallons of water, which can be a significant burden on local water tables. Currently, natural gas drilling is exempted from the Clean Water Act, because adherence to the law would be too expensive for the drillers.

Titus North, Green Party candidate for Congress (14<sup>th</sup> District) said, "Burning natural gas releases greenhouse gases, and tapping new sources of it will only impede conservation efforts and delay

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### In This Issue:

- ➔ Green Party regains Minor Party Status in Allegheny County
  - ➔ PA Ballot Access update
  - ➔ Green Party Condemns Natural Gas Procedure
  - ➔ Local events
- And more!*

## Local Organizing and Events

On Sunday, October 19th the Delaware County Green Party presented a Regional Green Gathering. We had representatives from the following Counties; Berks County, Lehigh Valley Greens, Montgomery County, Northampton Green Party, Philadelphia Green Party, and The Green Party of the state of Delaware.

Besides a shared potluck, we also shared ideas for 2009 and reflected on lessons learned from 2008. The Delco Green Players performed one of our skits from our Street Theatre. We came out of this afternoon feeling both shared affirmations and with a plethora of new ideas. We urge other regions to plan to have Regional Meetings in 2009. We felt this served the purposes of party building and affirmation.

- Delaware County Green Party; [www.delcogreens.org](http://www.delcogreens.org); 610-543-8427

Cynthia McKinney, Green Party Presidential candidate, spoke at a fundraising dinner in Philadelphia on July 20 at the Singapore Restaurant in Philadelphia.  
L to R: Vivek Ananthan, Hillary Aisenstein, Cynthia McKinney, Donna Holsten, Davide Jouse, and Khalil Ali



The Green Party of Philadelphia tabled at the third annual Green-Fest Philly, the region's largest sustainable living event, on South 2nd Street September 7.

The Green Party of PA and the Berks Green Party (Dave Kurzweg and Randi Peters pictured) manned the table at the 4th annual PA Renewable Energy & Sustainable Living Festival Sept 19-21 at Kempton.



### PA Ballot Access (cont'd from page 1)

Political Party can qualify and neither involves signatures but do involve registered voters and votes cast. It would not affect other races. Hillary Aisenstein is in the process of setting up a Statewide database, which will be posted on the StateWebsite, when ready so each County can coordinate their efforts.

We suggest that you start by a letter or e-mail followed up by a phone call and, if possible, a planned visit. For this planned visit, we can provide you with a Constitution or Libertarian Party member to accompany you, if we have at least a week's notice. The advantage to this joint meeting is to avoid this being seen as purely a Green Party issue.

We need the following commitments from these State Legislators;

- 1) Agreement to co-sponsor
- 2) Agreement to vote for the bill

This may seem like a great deal of work but it's nothing compared to the work of trying to get 67,000 signatures (in 2006) or 24,000 signatures (in 2008). In neither of those years did we have a Statewide Candidate on the Ballot and, this year, the only Third Party that was on the Pennsylvania Ballot was the Libertarians, who barely withstood a protracted GOP Court Challenge.

- Bob Small 610-543-8427 [bobthepoet@yahoo.com](mailto:bobthepoet@yahoo.com)

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## DELCO Greens Implement Green Values

*through their participation in community activities*

Paula Bronstein participates in Healthcare For All Philadelphia. This is a group of medical professionals and community activists working to obtain universal, single-payer health care. We support HR 676 -which would expand medicare to include everyone. We also support Health Care For All PA, which is in both the PA House and the PA Senate. Paula is on the Coordinating Board of The Peace Center of Delaware County ([www.delcopeacecenter.org](http://www.delcopeacecenter.org)) which coordinates Peace related events year-round. Paula also participates with CCSC (see below).

Donna Holston has been involved in Peace activities in the northern part of Delaware County as a member of the Bryn Mawr Peace Coalition, an organization which presents educational programs, holds monthly vigils and participates with other peace groups in activities such as demonstrations and leafletting rail commuters on issues. The Coalition networks with other peace groups through the Main Line Peace Network. Two recent initiatives of this network are Liberal Drinking gatherings and a fledgling chapter of Peace Action - both of which include a few Greens. In another direction of action basic to Green values Donna has attended some meetings of the Delaware County Environmental Justice Network and plans to continue representing DELCO Greens.

Bob Small facilitates both Democracy

Unplugged ([www.democracyunplugged.net](http://www.democracyunplugged.net)) and The Pennsylvania Ballot Access Coalition ([www.paballotaccess.org](http://www.paballotaccess.org)). Democracy Unplugged exists to give voice to Independent and Third Party viewpoints by presenting Candidate and issue Forums. The PaBac is working on getting a bill passed in 2009 that would change Pennsylvania's restrictive Ballot Access laws. PaBac is composed of Representatives from The Constitution Party, The Libertarian Party, The Reform Party, etc. along with The Nader Campaign and various Independents. Bob believes that change can only happen when we all work together. He believes these activities represent his commitment to Grassroots Democracy.

In addition to managing the Delco Green Website, Bryn Richard is also involved with Crum Creek Sustainable Community. Bryn was one of the founding members of Crum Creek Sustainable Community (CCSC). CCSC is a new group dedicated to helping members and neighbors create a more sustainable lifestyle and community. Among recent CCSC projects are Home Heating Forums and Organic gardening projects. Bryn is the local site host of Winter Harvest, which Paula did for the previous two years. Winter Harvest ([farmtocty.org](http://farmtocty.org)-click on buyingclubs), facilitates direct farm to consumer products from November to April.

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Blyden Potts at Temple forum  
*(cont'd from page 1)*

represented by Mark Singel, former Lt. Governor of PA. Despite competing with this well-known PA politician, audience reaction to the Green Party message was quite favorable.

Potts opened by speaking favorably of Barack Obama as an individual candidate, but highlighting the Democratic Party's complicity in the last 8 years of federal government - e.g. Iraq, financial crisis, lack of universal health care, etc - and asked rhetorically "Just how much change can we expect from the Democratic Party on these issues?" He introduced the audience to Green values and talked briefly about candidates Cynthia McKinney and Rosa Clemente, then used the Green values to highlight positions of the Green Party and Cynthia McKinney on: the financial & mortgage crises using both McKinney's and Titus North's crisis plans; economic issues generally; healthcare; brief comments on education; Iraq & foreign policy; followed with very brief comments on energy and environmental policies; a vision of the Green future; instant runoff voting; and addressing concerns of whether a vote for a Green candidate would be a "wasted" vote.



### GPPA Donation Form

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I would like \_\_\_\_\_ copies (\$15/ea.) of the "Party with a Purpose" CD, whose cost will be deducted from my donation, including shipping & handling (no tax)

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Please subscribe me to the Green Star for 1 year at \_\_\_\_\_ (\$25 suggested donation) I prefer to receive Green Star in  hardcopy  electronic format

### Donation Tips & Instructions

- Make checks or money orders payable to the Green Party of Pennsylvania
- Please include all contact information
- If your donation is over \$200, state law requires us to also have your employer's contact information
- Individuals may only donate \$2000 in a given year
- Donations are not tax-deductible
- CD orders will have the cost of the quantity, plus \$3 for shipping & handling deducted from their donation
- Mail form to:

Green Party of Pennsylvania  
P.O. Box 11962  
Harrisburg, PA 17108-1962

## Green Party Condemns Natural Gas Procedure *(cont'd from page 1)*

the transition to renewable energy sources that represents the only long-term solution to our energy and environmental crisis."

Interest in drilling for natural gas in the Marcellus Shale formation has been one of the hottest energy developments in the U.S. in 2008. An initial wave of over 900 PA drilling permits were approved in June, and that number is likely to multiply several times over during the next year or so.

Jay Sweeney, Green Party candidate for State Representative (111<sup>th</sup> District), summed up the issue by saying, "Natural gas drilling in Pennsylvania has the potential to produce enough gas to meet the entire country's needs for 2 years, by industry figures, and generate billions of dollars in revenue. But it also has the potential to deforest thousands of acres, eliminate wildlife habitat, poison farmland and pollute millions of gallons of water. It's a devil's bargain."

The Green Party of Pennsylvania, <[www.gpofpa.org](http://www.gpofpa.org)>, is an independent political party founded on the four pillars of grassroots democracy, social justice, ecological wisdom and nonviolence.

To read the Green Party of Pennsylvania's full statement on natural gas drilling, visit: [www.gpofpa.org/index.php?module=htmlpages&func=display&pid=17](http://www.gpofpa.org/index.php?module=htmlpages&func=display&pid=17)

*Note from NEPA:* Jay Sweeney continues to receive a positive response from his campaign for State Representative in the 111th District. Jay and fellow Greens from Wyoming and Susquehanna Counties continue to be actively involved in the Marcellus Shale gas drilling issue and look forward to working with others in the region including New York. Carl Romanelli from Luzerne County has been actively involved with the campaign for a single payer health care bill. Skip Mendler, Wayne County, continues to spread Green ideas with his timely letters to the editor.

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## Green Party Regains Minor Party Status

*(continued from page 1)*

so... we made it! Also, our candidates for the PA Legislature had impressive results:

Mary E (Liz) Hughes (Green, 23rd District): 3948 votes; 13.21%

Liz's percentage is the highest Green Party result in PA for 2008.

Jonah McAllister-Erickson (Green, 21st District): 1891 votes; 7.18 %

Jonah's percentage and votes are an increase from his 2004 results; significant for this year and the fact that it was a 3-way race.

Congratulations and Thank You to all Green candidates and volunteers in PA!

Allegheny County Election Results:

[www.county.allegheny.pa.us/elect/200811gen/results.aspx](http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/elect/200811gen/results.aspx)

## Green Party of Pennsylvania

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