

GPPA Names New SC, Candidates for 2010

Packer to run for U.S. Senate; Bortz for Congress; D'Agostino, Giordano, Farrington and Sweeney for State Rep.

Monroeville, PA - During its Nominating Convention in February, the Green Party of Pennsylvania chose a new Steering Committee and approved nominations for six candidates to compete in the November General Election.

Steering Committee

I.K. Samways and **Katrina Brabham**, both of Pittsburgh, were elected to serve as Chair and Secretary, respectively, and **Vivek Ananthan** of Philadelphia was retained as Treasurer. Mr. Samways, who had been serving as Interim Secretary since April 2009, follows in the footsteps of Hillary Kane of Philadelphia, who stepped down as Chair after three years of service.

"I can only hope to approach what Hillary accomplished as Chair to strengthen the party and get more Greens involved at the State and National levels," said Samways. "I have learned much to guide me from her example."

Newly elected Steering Committee members include Guy Gray of Northampton County and Sandra Hazley of Pittsburgh. Returning to for another one-year term are Tim Reim of Erie and Bob Small of Delaware County.

Candidates

Long-time peace activist **Mel Packer** will be at the top of the ticket as the Green Party candidate for U.S. Senate. Packer works as a emergency room Physician Assistant in Pittsburgh. While a member of the Teamsters, Packer helped organize Teamsters for a Democratic Union, a rank-and-file movement for greater union democracy. Packer recently served on the board of the Thomas Merton Center, a nationally-known peace and social justice center in Pittsburgh.

In a speech to convention-goers Saturday night, Packer referred to the country's economic condition by saying, "As a nation, we must rise to new personal and collective heights; understand that this battle is not just an economic battle, but a moral battle to save the soul of this nation. We must take on the Goliaths that stalk our land, plunder our economic wealth, pillage our communities and soil, and recognize that they only have power because we give them power."

The Green Party also approved the nomination of **Ed Bortz** of Pittsburgh to run against Rep. Mike Doyle in the race for U.S. House of Representatives, 14th District. The Green Party has challenged Doyle twice before with Titus North, who received one of the highest percentages for a third party candidate in Pennsylvania history.

Bortz distinguished Green Party candidates from the rest of the field by saying, "The Green Party offers a non-corporate clean break from the dirty-money-dominated 'politics as usual.' Greens propose funding for education, not Wall Street bailouts. Greens propose sanity in foreign policy, bringing all of our troops home from Afghanistan and Iraq, and redirecting the bloated war budget toward universal healthcare, human and environmental needs. Green Party legislators will send the health insurance and corporate lobbyists packing, and open up the process to the stakeholders that have been locked out – the voters."

Four Green candidates have declared for the Pennsylvania General Assembly. **Dr. Rex D'Agostino** will run in the 183rd District, which covers parts of Lehigh and Northampton Counties. **Roy Farrington** of Clinton County will vie for the 76th District, while former GPPA officer and longtime activist **Jay Sweeney**, a expert on the Marcellus Shale, will run in the 111th District. **Hugh Giordano** will be running for an open seat recently left vacant in Philadelphia's 194th District by Kathy Manderino's retirement. (See page 5 for links to more information about our candidates.)

"We're very excited about the upcoming campaign season," said Samways. "Our slate of candidates is very impressive and all are passionate about challenging the two-party orthodoxy with which voters are increasingly expressing their displeasure. Their geographic diversity speaks volumes about how far and wide our message is already propagating throughout the Commonwealth."



New GPPA Chair I.K. Samways (seated) and Secretary Katrina Brabham with Titus North at a dinner for Pittsburgh's Thomas Merton Center last November (see page 5 for more information about this event)

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From the Editors...

2010 marks the TENTH YEAR of existence for many of our locals. Considering how antagonistically the PA electoral system is constructed towards third parties, it truly is a marvel that we're still around. But we are – and as our new Chair points out in this issue, it's all thanks to your ongoing support, hard work, and dedication. Keep yourself informed about our collective progress in 2010 by checking out the GPPA website, www.gpofpa.org – where you can find more news than we could fit in these pages!

The GPPA Communications Committee



Green Party of Pennsylvania

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Steering Committee

I.K. Samways, Chair
Katrina Brabham, Secretary
Vivek Ananthan, Treasurer
Guy Gray Sandra Hazley
Tim Reim Bob Small

Administrative Committee

Blyden Potts
Ed Bortz Traci Confer
Mike Ewall

Communications Committee

Randi Peters Skip Mendler
Paula Bronstein Guy Gray
Hillary Kane Michael Ochs
Mary Riley Charles Sherrouse
Bob Small Chuck Steel

*For Spring,
the Green Pillar is*

Ecology

including these Key Values:

Ecological Wisdom

**Future Focus/
Sustainability**

**Personal & Global
Responsibility**

Green Opinions

Ed Bortz, Green Party Candidate for Congress in the 14th District, posted this entry to his blog before the recent passage of the health care "reform" legislation. See <http://seminal.firedoglake.com/diary/35579>

Get Off Your Knees and Stand!

If there was a perfect moment for universal single-payer healthcare activists to move from talk to courageous screams for justice, it would be right now. Forget the political calculus...burning issues must always trump the politics of the elites.

When civil rights workers James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner were murdered in Mississippi in 1964, folks didn't wait for Congress and Federal investigations to show their unequivocal commitment (along with tears and shouts) for equal rights...we brought it to the streets, even as teenagers in my hometown of Pittsburgh.

What if the Voting Rights Act of 1965 provided insurance for those denied voting rights, rather than the actual guarantee of voting rights as a human right? What if the Voting Rights Act required the purchase of an outrageous poll tax in order to vote, even if you were considered "eligible" to vote? What would Dr. King have thought about that kind of "compromise"? If you're honest with yourself, the answers are self-evident.

So who says we need to give up and accept a fundamentally flawed corporate-written health insurance bailout bill, rather than a clear and principled healthCARE reform bill? We already have the foundations for an equitable and cost effective system in Medicare...let's improve on Medicare and make it available to everyone!

If we consider "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness" to be bedrock principles of our society, it surely follows that healthcare as a HUMAN RIGHT should be included.

NEW MENU

*Find Green Party
Candidates at*

www.NewMenu.org

Hello fellow Greens,

This is a short story about the "democracy" we call our Government. This Country lacks the motivated individuals it needs to make significant change nationwide. We are calling on all concerned citizens who feel they are not being properly represented to come forth and join the Green Party. Our Grassroots approach will make you part of the good fight!

The Federal Government is acting in unconstitutional ways that are not in the enumerated rights of the Constitution or in any Amendments that have been made. Yes, they may have passed resolutions that allow them to make us think that their actions are OK, but they are not in the Rights written into the Constitution or any of the Amendments.

We can fix most problems at the local level. Americans have forgotten the Power we have at the State Level. The Federal Government is assigned certain Rights and Obligations to be upheld for the People. Any Rights not specifically assigned to it in the Constitution, the Bill of Rights or the other Amendments are retained by the People, or by Local and State lawmakers to Govern their State. The Federal Government is to oversee the states and only act on their Federal Obligations under the Constitution. We have all been blinded by what they want us to believe, instead of the reality of what those Brave Men fought so hard for 200 and some years ago.

We must fight to make change - so join the Green Party and we will show you the way. We need to flood the states with Third Party Candidates to get our country out of this two-party system. We will make sure you have all the support you need to seek public office. The reality is: if you want change you have to do something about it! If you let the same two parties keep electing all local officials, you will always have the "same old same old." Remember - it all starts with WE THE PEOPLE!

— **Roy Farrington**, candidate for State Representative, 76th District, Lock Haven

Message from the Chair

by I.K. Samways, Chair, Green Party of Pennsylvania

All I remember from that seminal day in late 2000 is cold-calling Curt Larson, who was then running under the Green banner for the Pennsylvania State House in Allegheny County, and offering to do whatever I could to help his campaign. Before long, I was delivering flyers for him and Ralph Nader, and stumped for both at the polls on Election Day. That was the beginning of my involvement with the Green Party.



Another seminal moment for me came when I attended our State Convention in Harrisburg in early 2008. That meeting set off a series of State and National Meetings, where I met boatloads of enthusiastic and dedicated Greens, until after barely blinking I found myself where I am today. Such are the wonderful opportunities that our Party provides to each and every one of us, if only we just plant that initial seed and allow our involvement to grow and thrive.

I am very proud to have been elected as your new Chair at our State Nominating Convention. As we move ahead into this year's exciting campaign season, I look forward to becoming better acquainted with individual Greens and Green locals across the state. I credit my predecessor, Hillary Kane, with teaching me about the Party and its workings at the State and National levels. She also provided the optimal living example of what a hard-working, inspirational and resoundingly effective State Chair should look like. Her shoes will be very tough to fill – but I want to thank her and my other teachers and mentors throughout Pennsylvania for paving the way to where I find myself today, ready to serve Greens in general and particularly this year's impressive slate of candidates.

As I mentioned at the Convention, this is a party that relies on the dedication and participation of activists who have other obligations afoot and cannot turn our work for Greens into a full-time job. We simply do not have the deep pockets to fund full-time paid staff to all do the ongoing work that a party needs done in order to survive, let alone thrive. Thus, it is my firm and unwavering belief that we all have to look inside ourselves to find that kernel, that seed of potential to offer towards making this an even more dynamic, forward-looking and far-reaching organization.

How often do we find ourselves lamenting the state of our organizations, grumbling about how things aren't getting done, or how the Party's potential isn't being fulfilled? Do we then stop to remind ourselves that “the Party” isn't some person or committee off in some office in a distant locale - it's the person we see in the mirror every single day! For all that we wish for “someone else” to grab the reins and move things forward, how often does it occur to us that there really IS no “someone else”... but US!

Thus, while the major parties might do everything in their power to prevent our voices from resonating in the political chamber, they cannot eliminate our dignity, our resolve... our ability to say “NO!” to the prevailing “wisdom” that only the big guys deserve to play, let alone win. The frustration, even anger, with “business as usual” that likely compelled each and every one of us to register Green in the first place can, and should, be carried forward to concrete roles, tasks, and objectives that we can start to embrace now for the betterment of our Party and, yes, of ourselves as individuals.

A thousand strong voices can cause quite a stir – and a rich confluence of talents, ideas, and projects stemming from a myriad of individual sources far exceeds the sum of its parts. The voice inside you, urging you on to greater contribution at the local, State or National level, is real and should not be ignored. There is plenty of room at all levels for the individual talents and gifts that we can each provide to an organization as solid and life-affirming as the Greens. Something about the Party's transformative values, its history, or its outlook clearly resonates with you in some decisive way – or you wouldn't even be reading this publication!

Check in with your locals, with anyone you know serving at the State level and, especially this year, with our candidates and their campaigns- there IS a forum where your voice can be heard. Are you good at designing websites? Managing money? Gathering petition signatures? The opportunity is there for you, the outlet for your rich potential lies right in front. All you need to do is make that literal or figurative cold-call to find a way to plant the first seed... and I guarantee it will grow in ways you can't possibly imagine or predict, and you'll never want to look back!

Thank you, as always, to our wonderful slate of candidates for the personal sacrifices they are making this year to run under the Green banner, and to everyone working so hard on their campaigns. (Please take time to read the comments from and about our candidates in this issue, and visit their websites. They represent us well in so many ways and deserve our unwavering consideration and support!) I especially want to thank each and every person who's spending time out on the streets or going door to door, getting our petitions filled... every single signature certainly counts!

Above all, thank you to all of you who continue to work hard for the Green Party, whenever, wherever, however you're able to do it. The Green Party is truly a party of the people. Each of us has the unique opportunity to take decisive ownership in an organization that continues to build and that is far ahead of its time.

I look forward to seeing and meeting more and more Greens statewide at meetings and through my travels this pivotal year, and wish everyone the best in their continued efforts to make this party THE alternative – indeed, the *imperative* – for disillusioned and disaffected voters throughout our Commonwealth. ***Go Green !***

Poetry Corner

White Pine

by Mort Malkin, Wayne County

Several species may
grow taller, but few achieve
the breadth a white pine can reach,
the majesty worthy of safeguarding
the Great Law of Peace.*

* The Great Law of Peace was negotiated several centuries ago by the five nations of the Iroquois Confederacy. Their leaders traveled on foot and by canoe to meet under the Tree of Peace, a great white pine. There, they recorded the more than 100 articles of the treaty in symbols on a wampum belt.

About Senate Candidate Mel Packer



Mel Packer is a physician assistant working in the Emergency Department of a Pittsburgh-area hospital. He is married and has two adult children. He is firmly rooted in his community and remains committed to building strong neighborhoods as a way to develop local democratic control.

Mel has a 40-year history of social, political, labor, and community activism, from the civil rights and Vietnam war eras to current protests against the wars and the G20 summit in Pittsburgh. While a member of the Teamsters, he was instrumental in the founding of Teamsters for a Democratic Union. More recently, Mel served on the Board of the Thomas Merton Center, the Pittsburgh-area peace and justice center, and served as Board President in 2008. In addition, he has been a frequent speaker at recent rallies and events organized to protest the closing of Braddock Hospital by the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

Regarding healthcare, Mel recently stated, "Were I a member of the US Senate, I not only would have voted against the health care bill, I would have called on citizens to come to DC and/or rally in their own towns to demand Medicaid for all – universal health care for all – an end to the for-profit health care system. As much as I respect Dennis Kucinich, he was wrong to support this bill. One does NOT vote for bad legislation – one opposes it and argues AND organizes for the health care we need: universal, lifelong, and non-profit."

Mel has long been, and continues to be, a strong and principled critic of our government's current economic, military, social, and environmental policies, not only nationally, but locally and regionally. His position papers posted on his website, www.melpackerforsenate.org, offer sound alternatives.

Giordano Hits the Ground Running

The campaign of Hugh Giordano, the Green Party candidate for State Representative (194th District), is off to a great start. On Friday, March 5, two weeks after receiving the official nomination from the 2010 Green Party Nominating Convention, the campaign held its first fundraiser. Friends and supporters packed into the Holy Smoke Bar and Restaurant to help kick off the campaign. (The 194th District covers the Roxborough, Manayunk, and Wynnefield sections of Philadelphia, as well as parts of Montgomery County such as Bala Cynwyd and Narberth.)

Giordano told the crowd why he should be the 194th District's next Representative in Harrisburg. "I care about working people and will fight for workers' rights," said Giordano. "I have seen three generations of poverty living in the same house – that's almost 90 years of poverty among hard-working people, people who worked in factories and never took a dime from the system. There's something wrong with that picture."

The event raised over \$2,000, some of which has already paid for professional-looking palm cards and yard signs.

Since the kick-off, Hugh and his supporters have diligently canvassed the district gathering signatures for his ballot access petition. He also has two major events scheduled for early April: a candidate debate sponsored by the Roxborough Development Corporation on Wednesday, April 7, and another fundraiser on Saturday, April 10. More information can be found on the campaign website, <http://www.hughgiordano.com>.

– Hillary Kane, Philadelphia



Hugh Giordano (R, standing) kicks off his State House campaign

Delaware County Outreach Efforts

Report from Honduras

On Saturday, February 13, 2010, the Delaware County Green Party hosted a gathering at The Peace Center of Delaware County to hear longtime peace activist Sylvia Metzler, who reported on her experiences as a member of the Quixote Center's Quest for Peace and its 8th International Witness Delegation to Honduras from November 25 through December 2, 2009.

After President Zelaya was ejected from the country by a military coup d'état on June 28, 2009 Hondurans took to the streets to protest and they have never stopped. The two main demands of the resistance movement are the restitution of Manuel Zelaya to the presidency and the implementation of a Constitutional Assembly to reform the Honduran Constitution.

The purpose of Ms. Metzler's Quest for Peace delegation was to bear witness to what was going on in Honduras before, during and after the November 29, 2009 vote. Their group of 19 spread out over the country. They met with a range of representatives from the Honduran resistance movement to better understand their goals, their decision to boycott the elections, and the violence they faced. They also met with Canadian and U.S. government officials about their respective governments' decisions to support and recognize the electoral process executed by the coup regime.

Now that they are home, these delegates seek to inform ordinary citizens about the unjust and undemocratic conditions existing in Honduras. They encourage ordinary citizens to pressure the U.S. and Canadian governments to reject the new Honduran government put in place by the illegal coup regime, condemn the dangerous and deadly human rights conditions in Honduras, and cancel all government aid to Honduran security forces.



Jocelyn Bowser-Bostick at the screening of CRUDE: THE REAL PRICE OF OIL

Crude: The Real Price of Oil

On the evening of March 27th, the Delaware County Green Party presented the documentary *Crude: The Real Price of Oil* to an audience of about 30 at Swarthmore Borough Hall, as part of Rainforest Action Network's "Change Chevron Campaign." The film traces the history of the "Amazon Chernobyl" in Ecuador and the twists and turns of a case that has gone on for generations. Chevron/Texaco has fought judgments for their environmental crimes which have caused death, disease, and destruction to the indigenous people of Ecuador. Frances Whittenton of the Delco Alliance for Environmental Justice (www.ejnet.org) introduced the film, and Jocelyn Bowser-Bostick spoke about the Delco Greens. After the film, Bob Small led a lively discussion. We are continuing to "brand" the Delco Greens by being involved with events such as these.

– Jocelyn Bowser-Bostick and Bob Small, Delaware County

About State Rep. Candidate R. D'Agostino

Dr. Rex D'Agostino, born in Trenton, NJ, lives in South Whitehall Township in the 183rd District, with his wife Marilyn and their two rescued greyhounds. He has over 30 years of experience in leadership positions in both the private and non-profit sectors, dealing with business development, strategic planning, and renewable energy development. Over that time, he has focused on promoting a philosophy centered on creating sustainable communities for future generations using technology, business practices, and education. He is presently managing a start-up company called Green Futures, Inc. to generate biomethane from organic food wastes currently disposed of in landfills throughout Pennsylvania. Prior to this, he was President and Executive Director of the Sustainable Energy Fund (SEF) based in Allentown, PA. Rex's outside interests include working with the Alliance for Sustainable Communities, and participating in general aviation.

Support our candidates!



Ed Bortz

US House, 14th Cong. District
www.edbortzforcongress.org



Rex D'Agostino

PA State Rep, 183rd District
www.rexdagostino.com



Roy Farrington

PA State Rep, 76th District
www.newmenu.org/royfarrington



Hugh Giordano

PA State Rep, 194th District
www.hughgiordano.com



Mel Packer

US Senate
www.melpackerforsenate.org



Jay Sweeney

PA State Rep, 111th District
www.jaysweeney.org

From a dinner in Pittsburgh...

Every November the Thomas Merton Center in Pittsburgh holds an award dinner honoring well-known activists who we are fortunate enough to hear speak. Previous honorees include Malik Rahim, Kathy Kelly, Angela Davis, and Amy Goodman. The picture of Ian Samways, Katrina Brabham and Titus North was taken at the award dinner last year when Dennis Kucinich was honored. (It is unusual for them to honor a politician, but Single Payer actions were going on in Pittsburgh on a regular basis and at the time, Kucinich was a small hope for some progress.)

In both 2007 and 2008, members of the Green Party of Allegheny County filled two tables – but this past November, we were proud to have three full tables of our Greens in attendance. That's 30 Greens, more than any other group or organization. It would be great if we could entice other Greens from across the state to come to Pittsburgh next November and attend this dinner with us.

– Sandra Hazley, Allegheny County

... to a café in Auckland

During a recent vacation trip to New Zealand and other points in Polynesia, York County Greens Steve & Katy Baker met with Green Party MP Keith Locke. Mr. Locke met the Bakers for lunch at a fashionable little café in the Kingsland neighborhood of Auckland, where they discussed the differences between the political systems of their two countries.

“Keith just shook his head in disbelief when I told him about the way the Greens were blamed for the Bush election in 2000 and the well-heeled challenge to Carl Romanelli's 2006 Senate run,” said Steve.



Katy, MP Keith Locke, Steve

The New Zealand Parliament, which is elected using a proportional representation system, typically has between 7-9 Green Party members. Interestingly, the Maoris, who are New Zealand's indigenous people, are automatically allocated a block of Parliamentary seats to fill. Green MP Jean Fitzsimons, who was well respected across the political spectrum, recently retired from political life. There is a movement to get her to come back.

“Keith was an intelligent and thoughtful man who listened attentively to our 'two-party system' woes in the States,” said Steve. “We gave him a signed copy of Ralph Nader's DVD, *An Unreasonable Man*, and a GPUS 'Green Party – Peace Party' button. He seemed to especially like the button.”

– Steve Baker, York County

Candidate pictures from newmenu.org; other photos submitted

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- Individuals may only donate \$2000 in a given year
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Thank you for your support!

EARTH DAY ACTION ALERT!

On **Earth Day, Thursday, April 22**, activists from the Green Party of Pennsylvania and other groups will be gathering outside each of the regional offices of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to call as one for the following demands:

- **An immediate moratorium on all horizontal hydrofracturing ("fracking") in the Commonwealth, including our state forests and floodplains,**
- **An immediate freeze on all new Marcellus Shale drilling permits throughout Pennsylvania,**
- **The immediate suspension of the authority of the Delaware River Basin Commission and Susquehanna River Basin Commission to approve drilling-related water withdrawals anywhere in Pennsylvania, and, if necessary,**
- **The unconditional resignation of DEP Secretary John Hanger.**

Keynote speakers and scheduled activities will commence at **noon** at DEP Regional Offices in Norristown, Wilkes-Barre, Pittsburgh, Williamsport, and Meadville, and DEP Headquarters in Harrisburg.

April 22, 2010, marks the 40th anniversary of the first Earth Day. In 1970, almost 20 million people gathered across the nation to celebrate, educate and demonstrate. It was a nationwide grassroots teach-in that gave rise to the modern environmental movement.

The 1970s saw passage of the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency. Beginning in the 1980s, however, large Earth Day events have been dominated by corporations with little grassroots input and limited citizen involvement.

Today, gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale, utilizing horizontal hydrofracturing, is a serious and growing threat to the precious clean waters and majestic state forests of our Commonwealth.

Pennsylvania's Constitution states that "All power is inherent in the people." This April 22nd, it is time to come together as one to protect our Commonwealth's public natural resources and to renew the promise of the first Earth Day.

To learn more about actions in your part of the state, contact Jay Sweeney, jnl@epix.net, 570-587-3603

Green Party of Pennsylvania

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