

PORTAGE COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY
NEWS AND NOTES - MAY 2017

Friend -

The month of May has been an historic one for the Portage County Democratic Party. We celebrated victories with candidates for City Council in Kent, continued our efforts to identify top-flight candidates for the local offices on the ballot this fall and in 2018, and perhaps most exciting of all, saw one of our own make the leap from local representative to candidate for statewide office.

As we turn the page to June, the work continues. Tonight, we joined the Federated Democratic Women at their "Taste of Italy" event. This weekend, we will pause to remember the brave men and women who have given their lives in defense of our freedoms. And in the weeks ahead, we will work with our local elected officials, Central Committee members, and stakeholders in our community to ensure Democrats have the resources they will need to continue fighting for our shared values this fall and beyond.

Below, you will find a call to support our local statewide candidate Kathleen Clyde and a much-needed effort to put fair congressional districts on the ballot this fall. You'll also find a list of upcoming events, an interview with Commissioner Vicki Kline, and a listing of news and notes from the past month. If you have suggestions on how we might improve this newsletter, or events and activities you'd like us to share in the future, please forward them via email to Brad Cromes at cromesbl@gmail.com.

Thank you all for your hard work, and I look forward to seeing you tonight and at all of our events to come.

Onward,

Craig Stephens, Chairman
Portage Co. Democratic Party

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CALLS TO ACTION

As we alluded to above, last week our State Representative Kathleen Clyde made it official - she's running for Secretary of State!

A passionate advocate for voting rights, Kathleen is also an attorney who has spent her career

seeking greater access to the ballot for voters. She is by far the most qualified candidate for this office, and we are immensely proud of her and excited for what she'll do for Ohio!

Our pride and excitement alone won't put her at the helm of Ohio's elections where she belongs, though. We need to support her by spreading the word about the great things she's done and plans to do - particularly with our friends outside Portage County.

You can learn more about her work and her plans for our state on her new [campaign website](#) (where you can also make a [donation](#) and [sign up](#) for campaign updates). Then, spread the word by liking and sharing her [Facebook page](#).

Stay up-to-date on campaign developments by following her on [Twitter](#), too.

Run, Kathleen, run - we know you'll continue to make Portage County and the state of Ohio proud!

Looking for a way to stay up to date on the latest calls to action from the Ohio Democratic Party on behalf of Kathleen and all our candidates for statewide office? Join the [ODP Truth Team](#) today!

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In 2015, Ohioans [voted overwhelmingly](#) in support of a ballot measure to change the way our state draws the districts for the state legislature. The ballot measure restored fairness to the process, and returned the power to voters in choosing their representatives.

While that measure was an unquestionable victory in the fight for voting rights, there remains one group of politicians in Ohio with the power to pick their voters - our members of Congress. In fact, despite a nearly 50-50 statewide vote in 2012, Republicans drew districts that gave them a 12-4 margin the U.S. House vote. We're stuck with that map until at least 2022, with the very real possibility that a worse one might be coming.

Ohio Democrats and like-minded groups are fighting back, and working to put an issue on the ballot this fall that would make our members of Congress subject to the same new rules we're putting in place for our state legislature. The timeline is tight, and we need your help!

Starting on June 3rd, volunteers will be working every day in Portage County to gather the signatures we need to put this issue on the ballot and stop partisan line drawing in our state. They will be working through at least July 6th, out of our [headquarters](#) in Ravenna.

You can sign up to help [online](#), or by emailing us [here](#).

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Memorial Day Parades

May 29, 2017 - Various - Locations Throughout Portage County

Memorial Day is our opportunity to pause and remember those who have given the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of our nation and in defense of the freedoms we enjoy. We invite you to join us in observing the holiday by attending a parade and memorial service in your community. Contact your local veterans organizations for details.

[Central Committee Meeting](#)

June 8, 2017 - 5:15pm - Italian-American Society, Ravenna

Join the elected representatives of the Democratic Party from each precinct in Portage County at their spring meeting. Discussion will center on ballot issue efforts in 2017 and the path to next year's mid-term elections.

[LGBTQ March on Washington](#)

June 11, 2017 - 10am - Washington D.C.

Building on the success of this year's Women's March, the LGBTQ March will focus on civil rights and equality. The March kicks off at 10am, and coincides with D.C.'s annual Pride Festival. Additional information can be found on [Facebook](#).

[Indivisible Northeast Ohio Women's Charity Drive](#)

June 19, 2017 - 6:30 - 9:00pm - MadCap Brew Co., 1422 Mogadore Rd., Kent, OH 44240

The Women's Rights Committee of Indivisible Northeast Ohio is hosting this event to give support to local women's charities and to raise awareness about issues that directly affect women in our local communities.

[Chair's Circle Fundraiser](#)

July 10, 2017 - 5 - 7pm - Kent State Hotel & Conference Center, 215 S. Depeyster St., Kent, OH 44240

This event will feature Congressman Tim Ryan, who will discuss our country's direction and how Democrats can help America fulfill its true promise. This is the Party's only fundraiser, and underwrites all our activities in support of local candidates and causes each year. Tickets are \$300 for individual patrons, \$500 per couple.

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ELECTIONS UPDATE

The May 2, 2017 Primary/Special Election has come and gone. We would like to congratulate the Democratic candidates for City Council At-Large in Kent on a well fought race, and especially newcomer Gwen Rosenberg (owner of [Popped!](#)), who was the top vote getter! Because the race is uncontested in the General Election this November, she will join fellow winners Roger Sidoti and Michael DeLeone on Council early next year.

Full, final results in this race and on the local levies can be found on the Board of Elections [website](#).

The filing deadline for local school board and township trustee is 4pm on August 9, 2017. Are you interested in running? Contact us on our [website](#). To learn more about how the Ohio Democratic Party can support your candidacy, check out the Main Street Initiative [here](#).

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FROM OUR OFFICIALS - Commissioner Vicki Kline

This section highlights the work of our local elected Democrats.

Vicki Kline (D-Franklin Twp.) was elected as Portage County Commissioner in November 2014 for a term that runs through the end of 2018. Prior to her election as Commissioner, Vicki served Portage County as Treasurer from 2012 - 2014, and has long been active in Portage County politics. A Certified Public Accountant and Certified Financial Planner, Vicki's extensive background in finance and financial management is a tremendous asset to our County as she works to ensure our tax dollars are budgeted in the most effective way possible. She also was instrumental in the founding of the Portage County Land Bank, and continues to serve the Land Bank as Chair.

We sat down with Vicki to ask her what lessons she's learned as a public official, and what motivates her to continue serving. Our interview is below.

Thanks for taking the time to talk with us, Vicki. Can you tell us a little bit about your path to public service?

"My pleasure! I ran for Treasurer in the 2004 Primary against an appointed incumbent - which I didn't know at the time you aren't supposed to do - and worked very hard in that election. I ended up losing by around 500 votes, but I learned a lot of lessons. In 2010, our Party had an open seat for State Representative, and I thought very hard about running in that race because I thought I could make a difference at the state level. After talking with my friends and family, though, I decided I could have more of an impact locally, and ran for Commissioner - again against an incumbent. This time, I won - and I would have won in the General Election, too, but it was a tough year and a third party candidate who would have drawn votes from my opponent withdrew. I think my hard work in that campaign paid off, because I was appointed Treasurer in 2012 and had the good fortune of running unopposed to keep that seat that fall. Given my finance background, the Treasurer's Office was a natural fit - but I wanted to do more for the County, which is why I ran again for Commissioner in 2014."

Talk a little more about the Treasurer's Office and 2004 - why that seat, and why then?

"I'd had a full career in the private sector, and I was pretty successful and happy with my job...but I wanted to do more. When I learned that (then-Treasurer) Maureen Frederick was going to be

appointed Commissioner, I talked with her about seeking her seat in the Treasurer's Office. As a Certified Public Accountant, the position meshed well with my background, and I enjoyed it immensely."

Have you found your training as a CPA to be useful in the public sector? How does it intersect with the demands of the job?

"In some ways, actually, being a CPA translates better as a Commissioner than it did as Treasurer. As a Commissioner, I'm responsible for budgeting and allocating our County's tax dollars, which requires a great deal of attention to detail. Finance training is all about that, and also gives me the tools to practice foresight and think 'big picture' about things like infrastructure and our other long-term needs as a County.

What are you working on right now?

"Obviously, everyone's attention is on the sales and use tax - and rightly so - and the confusion that it's caused. I'm working with my fellow Commissioners, our staff, and our stakeholders to clarify and provide consistent information. When we initially passed the tax, we made a promise to dedicate the proceeds to law enforcement and criminal justice, and we're trying to honor that. We need to address the jail overcrowding issue first and foremost, and I think we have a plan to get there. Longer term, though, we won't solve the (heroin) problem by just focusing our attention on criminal justice. We need to consider root causes and alternative means of addressing them. It's a hard task, but we need to do it."

What are your plans for the future?

"It doesn't always feel like it, but we are making progress. We've done a good thing by creating a capital budget and doing long-term planning with some of our departments and other elected leaders (in particular, we're considering some work with the Sheriff, Motor Pool and Water Resources we think will be very beneficial). We keep looking for efficiencies. Our recent reorganization - which brought Gene Roberts in as head of outside services and promoted JoAnn Townend to manage internal services - has given us new perspectives and vision, and the County is benefitting from their collective experience and wisdom. Our meetings are much more efficient than they've ever been, which is helping us get more done. We're making progress, and I'm looking to continue that."

Ok, Vicki. Thanks very much for your time!

"Thanks for asking! I enjoy talking with our voters, and your concerns are very important to me."

To learn more about what Vicki Kline and our other Commissioners are working on, bookmark their website [here](#).

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ICYMI - NEWS AND NOTES

WKBN (Youngstown) - [Sen. Brown, Rep. Ryan Talk with Local Steelworkers on Policy](#) - April 24, 2017

Sen. Sherrod Brown and Rep. Tim Ryan were in Warren to talk with steelworkers at USW Local 1375 in Warren about trade policies that have led to an oversupply of steel from China, and to advocate for fair trade practices.

WKBN (Youngstown) - [OH Chairman: Dems Should Unify Around Jobs to Win Governor's Race](#) - April 25, 2017

Ohio Democratic Party Chair David Pepper told local Democrats recently that the path back to the Governor's mansion runs through one issue: jobs. "We aren't see that kind of job growth that other states are seeing, so our candidates for governor and our other offices will be the ones pushing a jobs message," Pepper said.

The Blade (Toledo) - [State House Budget Plan Would Cut 2 Tax Brackets](#) - April 26, 2017

"I have said for months that tax cuts should not be a priority when our schools are not adequately funded and our state is facing the worst public health crisis in decades," said State Sen. Joe Schiavoni (D-Boardman), a 2018 candidate for governor.

Columbus Dispatch - [GOP Lawmakers Target Mandel with Budget Amendment](#) - April 28, 2017

Ohio Republican lawmakers quietly acknowledge that a measure in the GOP-revamped state budget is aimed at curbing taxpayer-funded advertising by Republican state Treasurer (and U.S. Senate candidate) Josh Mandel. Mandel spent almost \$2 million in agency funds on ads that included him and Ohio State football coach Urban Meyer. The office paid for the ads - which ran just before Mandel's announcement for the Senate seat - in increments of less than \$50,000 to avoid triggering approval of the spending by the Ohio Controlling Board.

CNN - [Sherrod Brown sends Trump a plan to renegotiate NAFTA](#) - May 1, 2017

Sen. Brown is encouraging the President to seek agreements from Mexico and Canada that "buy American" provisions won't be weakened in negotiations - and that Mexico, in particular, will enforce labor and environmental standards. Brown is also encouraging Trump not to pit American farmers against manufacturers in a new deal, and to make U.S. trade proposals public both before and after negotiation rounds to increase transparency.

Advance Ohio (Cleveland) - [April revenue numbers are bad news for Ohio's budget crunch](#) - May 3, 2017

Ohio tax revenues lagged millions behind estimates in April for the 13th consecutive month, delivering more bad news to state lawmakers hammering out the next two-year state budget. State tax revenues came in 7.8% under estimates, and are \$773.4 million below estimates since the fiscal year began in July 2016.

Record-Courier - [Portage Children Services overwhelmed by opioids](#) - May 7, 2017

As the opioid and heroin epidemic sweeps across Ohio, local agencies like Portage County Job & Family Services are seeing a dramatic influx in "secondhand victims" - the children of addicts. Since the beginning of 2017, 70 children have been taken into custody or removed from a situation by Portage County Children's Services. In March alone, about 40 children from across the county were taken in.

Dayton Daily News - [Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley running for Ohio governor in 2018](#) - May 8, 2017

Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley, 41, announced a bid for Ohio governor, becoming the 4th candidate to enter the race. Whaley began her career in politics as a staffer to Sen. Sherrod Brown. She won a seat on the Dayton City Commission in 2005, and took the Mayor's Office in 2013. Whaley points to the following successes in Dayton: paid parental leave for city workers, pre-school for 4-year-olds funded by a city income tax hike, stabilized population within the city and nearly \$1 billion invested in downtown Dayton.

Newark Advocate - [Newark Councilman Blake considers run for Ohio treasurer](#) - May 11, 2017

A member of Newark City Council is looking to move from the city municipal building to the state capital. Blake has been on council since 2014 and was the finance committee chairman for two years. He also served on the Newark City Schools Board of Education for 5 years, spending two years as president. Part of the reason Blake said he wants to make the jump is because the Democratic Party is interested in small town progressives who have worked to achieve goals in red areas.

WFMJ (Youngstown) - [Rep. Tim Ryan says President Trump needs to act like an adult](#) - May 14, 2017

Tim Ryan is criticizing the timing of President Donald Trump's decision to fire FBI Director James Comey, and has some advice on choosing a new director. "...quite frankly Trump needs to start acting like an adult and not like a kid throwing a temper tantrum," said Rep. Ryan. "If he didn't like politics, if he didn't like the business and the challenges that come with it he should have never got into it."

Record-Courier - [Sales tax proposal reviews paused](#) - May 17, 2017

County commissioners cannot use taxpayer money for capital improvements to non-county organizations, the county prosecutor said. Commissioners agreed to recommend halting the review of 10 proposals targeting the county's substance abuse epidemic using roughly \$4 million in sales and use tax revenue.

Advance Ohio (Columbus) - [Ohio Democrats want to fight opioid crisis with \\$200 million from state's rainy day fund](#) - May 18, 2017

Their idea: Take \$200 million from the state's \$2 billion rainy day fund to increase treatment options, drug prevention education in schools and collect county-level data to better direct resources to places of most need. Sens. Joe Schiavoni and Kenny Yuko introduced legislation that would set aside the money to be spent over two years.

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The Portage County Democratic Party

<http://www.portagedemocrats.org/>

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