



Green Wisconsin

Newsletter of the Wisconsin Green Party

Fall 2014

Vote Ron Hardy for State Treasurer Tuesday November 4th

My name is Ron Hardy, and I am the Green Party candidate for State Treasurer. I am a librarian at UW Oshkosh, and a Winnebago County Board Supervisor. My family and I live in Oshkosh in Northeast Wisconsin.

I'm running for State Treasurer because I am very concerned about the state of the economy, and our state's financial security. I'm concerned about the increasing income disparity between the rich and the poor, the shrinking middle class, and the huge student loan debts that our young people are saddled with just when they are starting off in life. The banking collapse of 2008 revealed just how fragile the banking and finance system in this country really is. While tax payers were forced to bail out the giant Wall Street Banks, one bank was immune to the crisis – the Public State Bank of North Dakota.



So just what is a Public Bank? A Private Bank uses deposits to issue credits and loans – and the interest and fees from those loans becomes the bank's profit. Typically a private bank can create loans out of thin air, as long as it has enough capital to cover just a fraction of their loans. A Public Bank is simply a bank owned by the State, with the same ability to issue credit and loans, with two key differences. First, a Public State Bank is backed by the revenue and investments of the State itself, not private depositors, making it safe from the kinds of crises that caused this last five year

continued on page 4

Fall Membership Meeting - Milwaukee Saturday, November 8th

Schedule:

10am-1pm: Officer elections, party business

1pm-2pm: Lunch

2pm-5pm: Issue forum and discussion: Legalizing marijuana and ending prohibition in Wisconsin

5pm-9pm: Dinner and election party

Sunday, November 9th:

10am-3pm: Coordinating Council strategic planning

exact location TBA - check wigp.org for updates

Call for WIGP Officer nominations

The Wisconsin Green Party will elect officers at the Fall 2014 meeting in Milwaukee. All positions are up for election, including 2 co-chairs, secretary, treasurer, 2 Coordinating Council representatives from each congressional district, and 4 Coordinating Council representatives from caucuses (Youth, Women, Diversity, LGBT). All party members in good standing are entitled to vote, and to submit self-nominations. Send nominations to info@wisconsinngreenparty.org.

Inside:

- WI utilities' "Robin Hood in reverse" rate scheme - p. 2
- "Why I joined the Green Party" - p. 2
- The Keystone XL in our backyard - p. 3
- Howie Hawkins for NY Governor: a model for Green campaigns across the US - p. 3
- Have you considered running for office? - p. 6
- Start a Green chapter on campus - p. 6
- Lawrence Dale for Congress - p. 6

Our Energy Future - in Reverse

By Don Ferber

Our utilities are supposed to serve the public, but three Wisconsin utilities filed rate proposals with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin that would not only encourage use of fossil fuels, but are socially and economically regressive. Madison Gas & Electric proposed an increase in the residential electric connection fee from \$10.40 to \$19/mo. next year, and Wisconsin Public Service requested a hike from \$10.40 to \$25/mo. We Energy not only filed for an increase from \$9 to \$16/mo., but is asking for solar users to pay an additional fee that would amount to nearly \$30/mo. for an average system.

Their excuse for these schemes? With energy conservation and efficiency and the looming specter of distributed solar cutting into sales, they claim low energy users and solar adopters aren't paying their fair share of capital costs. That's despite that for years public policy has been to support energy reduction and clean energy, affordable energy has been regarded as a right and necessity, and that high energy users are not paying their fair share of the havoc being wrought by fossil fuels. The certainty of higher corporate profits seems to be trumping concerns over public policy, people and the planet.



In the pursuit of profits, MGE, WPS and We Energy are seeking to implement measures that would encourage energy use and continue their reliance on centralized fossil fuel power plants. Along with higher fixed rates, their plans would lower electricity use rates. The result is that returns on energy efficiency or solar investments would drop, reducing willingness to install these key carbon reducing measures. In addition, decreasing the use rate would be a disincentive to reducing wasteful energy use. With Wisconsin getting nearly 70% of its electricity from coal and 85-90% from all fossil fuels, the impacts of incentivizing added fossil fuel use on reducing our carbon footprint is apparent.

A major inherent inequity is that low energy users are
continued on page 4

Why I joined the Green Party - A young Green's perspective

By Kristine Rivall

I think anyone paying attention to politics in America knows whatever we have going on right now is not working. Who we blame and why of course differs, and between our two major parties, it always seems to fall along polarized ideological lines. They quickly blame the other side, ignoring historical and societal context – and almost always lacking the bigger picture. As a recent graduate, I left college with 5 digits worth of debt. While I was there my loans transferred three times, and are now in the hands of Sallie Mae. Some of my loans are at 6-7% interest, and these are all Federal loans. This was one of my wake up calls, but it certainly wasn't my first or last.

I grew up working poor. My mother raised three kids working at a local Super America – so I've always been tuned in to class issues. The fact there is growing income disparity in this country hits me in the heart when I go home or meet with old friends. I've been sheltered by my excellent college education and my now middle class job, but I'll never forget what got me here. Obamacare was the first time I had health insurance since I was 6 years old, but the cheapest I could get was a high deductible plan. When I got really sick, I still had to pay obscene amounts of money for generic antibiotics and a trip to urgent care. Obamacare might have been touted as a way to help Americans, but I learned all it really is is a policy written by insurance companies that force Americans to swallow unbelievable health administration costs. I couldn't help but glare at the brand new Samsung TV's decorating the urgent care lobby. We can do better than this.

The Green Party is the only organized party in the United States that I believe is fighting for the right things, is blaming the right people, and falls in line with my environmental and social morals. I read somewhere that in America, we have 1,000 different choices for toothpaste but only 2 choices for politicians. That doesn't make much sense, does it? I don't like the idea of voting for the "lesser of two evils." This is our lives we're talking about. This is our well-being, and our future. That is why I have voted Green since I turned 18, and recently decided to join as a more active member. Thanks for the warm welcome!

Wisconsin's dangerous pipeline

By Steve Spieckerman

Most Wisconsinites probably don't know that Wisconsin has a pipeline (Enbridge line 61) that will be conveying more tar sands crude oil than was ever intended for the Keystone XL pipeline. And chances are most people haven't heard of Enbridge, the pipeline company, or of its Kalamazoo River disaster of 2010. So let me fill you in.

The Kalamazoo River tar sands crude oil spill, the largest inland oil spill in U.S. history, occurred in July, 2010 when Enbridge pipeline 6B burst and poured over 840,000 gallons of tar-sands sludge into the Kalamazoo River, blackening over 35 miles of the waterway and causing 150 families to be permanently relocated so as to avoid the stench of the toxic fumes. Three years later, reports were that the cost of the cleanup was over \$1 billion and was incomplete with an estimated 181,000 gallons of tar sands still in the river. Four years later, little has changed.

Tar sands crude is also known as diluted bitumen or "dilbit," a mixture of tar sands solids or semi-solids with several hydrocarbons or natural gas liquids some of which—like benzene and hexane—are carcinogenic. When dilbit spills into water, the lighter hydrocarbons evaporate, leaving toxic fumes in the air, and the tar sands solids sink to the bottom. The only way to clean it up is to dredge the riverbed. When regular sweet crude oil spills into water, the oil floats and can be vacuumed up off the top of the water. This difference can make spills of dilbit at least ten times more expensive to clean up than spills of regular light, sweet crude.

What most people do not know is that Enbridge, a Canadian company, has pipelines all over the upper Midwest, and Wisconsin has one of the major ones in Enbridge line 61. This pipeline runs from Superior to Delavan, and it is currently carrying 400,000 barrels per day of tar sands to another Enbridge pipeline running to Illinois and from there to the Gulf of Mexico. Fairly recently, the company has been working to "expand" these pipelines. In the case of pipeline 61, this expansion means tripling the volume of tar sands to 1,200,000 barrels per day to be pumped through it. To achieve this increase, Enbridge is simply installing

continued on page 6

Howie Hawkins for NY Governor: A model for Green campaigns

By Dave Schwab

Probably the most talked-about Green Party campaign in 2014 is Howie Hawkins' run for Governor of New York. And for good reason: Hawkins' campaign has grown quickly enough that even the corporate media is buzzing about the Greens becoming a third major force in NY politics. Hawkins was polling 9% statewide in September, similar to Jesse Ventura's poll numbers before a strong debate performance propelled him to victory in the 1998 Minnesota gubernatorial election. A longtime Green activist, Howie Hawkins is showing the way for Greens across the country to run campaigns strong enough to make our party competitive at every level.



Howie Hawkins is a union Teamster from Syracuse. His running mate, Brian Jones, is an African-American teacher from New York City who has been a leader in defending public schools against privatization schemes. In the home state of Occupy Wall Street, Hawkins and Jones have shown by their activism that they stand with the 99%, working people, and union members on the front lines of the struggle against vulture capitalism. On top of decades of social movement activism, Hawkins has run for office 19 times without winning (but did come close in 2011 with 48% for Syracuse city council). These past runs have sharpened his campaign skills, attracted a core of dedicated volunteers, and built his name recognition (in September, he was at 25% in Syracuse, ahead of Republican Rob Astorino).

Hawkins first ran for Governor in 2010, winning 60,000 votes and ballot status for the NY Greens after a strong performance in a 7-candidate debate. Meanwhile, Democrat Andrew Cuomo won the governor's office, defeating his Republican opponent 63% to 34%. Cuomo quickly earned the nickname "Governor 1%" for his corporate-friendly economic policies. Like many Democrats, Cuomo has cultivated a progressive

continued on page 5

HARDY FOR TREASURER *cont. from page 1*

long recession. Second, the interest earned from its loans, typically municipal bonds to fund local capital improvement projects, goes back to the State, instead of becoming Wall Street Profits. That additional state revenue can then be reinvested in Wisconsin, used to consolidate and refinance student loans or used to offset taxes.

Our economy is too important to be left in the hands of private profit-driven Wall Street Banks. As State Treasurer, I will use the office to advocate for, and build support for a Public State Bank of Wisconsin, modeled after the State Bank of North Dakota.

The Democrats and Republicans in Wisconsin have stripped the State Treasurer's office of almost all power and authority over the years. Some want to eliminate the office altogether, despite the fact that almost every other state in the Union has a Treasurer that oversees the state's finances. Texas is the only state that has eliminated the office. This direction needs to change. Beginning with unclaimed property and Edvest, I want to work to start returning fiscal authority back to the office of the State Treasurer. Until that happens, I will use the office to audit government spending and investments, watch for fraud, misuse and corruption, and advocate for a Public State Bank.

Learn more about Ron Hardy's campaign at VoteRonHardy.org, and sign up to volunteer at WIGP.org.

OUR ENERGY FUTURE *cont. from page 2*

often lower income who live in apartments and include minorities, elderly and fixed income, and students. Increased fixed rates along with lowered use rates mean that they would pay more, while those using more energy, including many who are well off, would pay less. It's Robin Hood, in reverse. Many individuals and

families are already suffering hardships as victims of increasing disparities in this country. This would only worsen it.

Businesses would also suffer the same fate where low energy users would be most negatively impacted and high energy users would pay less. In addition, reduced

demand for solar and energy efficiency would further harm local economies by reducing jobs in energy retrofitting, solar installation and equipment maintenance. That's not beneficial to startups, small local businesses and a sustainable economy.

The utilities are regulated monopolies, guaranteed basic rates of return by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission. However, two of the three members of the PSC were appointed by Walker, and seem more dedicated to serving utility interests than protecting the public interest. The hearings have already been held, but pressure is still needed on the PSC to rule against these regressive rate proposals. MGE will also return with another rate case in 2015, and community input will be important. RePower Madison has been leading the charge against MGE and can be found on line ([.org](http://repower.org)) or on Facebook.

That such regressive schemes could be proposed, especially in Madison, which gives breaks to the rich over those of lesser means, that incentives fossil fuel use at a time when climate change is a threat demanding immediate action, and that turns Madison's progressive directions on its head, is shameful, and flies in the face of this community's values.

Unfortunately, Wisconsin is not alone with its utility schemes, but is part of a rising trend. Ties to ALEC have been established with utilities in other states trying to adopt schemes to forestall a clean energy future. Right wing interests in this state have also been connected to the utility proposals here.

Less than a mile from MGE, another business exists that has set a great example of how to be part of this community. They are transparent in their policies, plans and practices, are open about criticism, engage their customers in decision making processes that affect them, and support user and community values as part of their mission. Significant effort is placed on educating customers regarding the choices they make and what the impacts are, such that customers often choose to pay somewhat higher up front prices due to the benefits. MGE, like the other utilities, is not a grocery coop, but perhaps it is Willy St they should listen to and learn from, not Wall St.

Don Ferber of Madison is active with the Four Lakes Sierra Club, 350 Madison, and RePower Madison.

image with liberal stands on social issues like same-sex marriage and reproductive rights, while taking money and policy pointers from the Koch brothers and their ilk. His backing for Common Core high-stakes testing has stirred rebellion among both parents and educators like Brian Jones. Cuomo's attempts to introduce fracking to New York have been frustrated so far by a spirited grassroots movement, with many Greens at the forefront. In May, Hawkins challenged the union-funded Working Families Party to endorse him and Brian Jones, the only ticket of working union members (the WFP endorsed Cuomo, also passing up liberal Democrat Zephyr Teachout). And in July, the New York Times reported that Cuomo, who came to power promising to clean up Albany's notorious corruption, had interfered with his own anti-corruption panel to protect Democratic donors from investigation.

All of these issues provide fertile ground for Hawkins to appeal to voters disappointed by the gulf between Cuomo's campaign rhetoric and his record. Hawkins' platform and press releases show an impressive command of the issues, while communicating his positions in a way that resonates with the general public. Rooted in Green values of peace, justice, democracy and ecology, Hawkins' campaigns specialize in issue-based critiques of both the system in general, and his opponents' records and positions in particular. These criticisms are always accompanied by proposed solutions, which are frequently backed up by research from academia or civil society groups. In his campaigns for governor, Hawkins has never shied away from bold stands: legalize marijuana, tax Wall Street, ban fracking, \$15/hour minimum wage, make SUNY tuition-free, create full employment by transitioning to 100% renewable energy by 2030. Rather than accommodating the socioeconomic status quo, or paying fealty to what the two corporate parties insist is "politically possible", the Greens are forging a new coalition based on what social movements know is possible.

Ideas and issues are important to any campaign, but what you do on the ground is just as essential. Starting with a sizeable supporter list and social media presence from 2010 (as well as ballot status), Hawkins and the NY Greens started fundraising early for what they knew could be a big year. By spring, the campaign had hired an experienced Green as campaign manager,

and more hiring announcements followed soon after: fundraiser, organizing interns, downstate and upstate field organizers. The campaign website, graphic design, and printed materials are professional quality, without losing their grassroots touch. Hawkins has traveled the state, meeting with supporters and other Green candidates, giving interviews with local media, and participating in rallies for a wide spectrum of causes from banning fracking to raising the minimum wage. This campaigning has generated hundreds of news stories. Frequent social media updates and regular emails have kept supporters informed and engaged, helping Hawkins to raise the funds and volunteers needed to mobilize more supporters and reach more people.

As of early October, Cuomo is trying to avoid debating Hawkins as much as possible. Of two scheduled debates so far, one has invited Hawkins and one has not. The Greens are working on a strategy to be included in all debates, which will likely include call-ins to debate sponsors, letters to the editor, and potential protest actions if Hawkins is locked out. Meanwhile, Hawkins is scoring points with voters and media for his mastery of the issues and eagerness to debate the governor.

Can Howie Hawkins win the race for Governor of New York? That depends on whether the Greens and their allies can convince enough New Yorkers that he is a viable alternative. If progressives, independents, and people simply fed up with politics as usual vote for the candidate most closely aligned with their values, then Hawkins can win. A post-debate bump in polls could help greatly to build the momentum needed for a November upset. Or it may be that most voters will remain stuck in the two-party trap, and those who Hawkins calls "zombie Democrats" – people who'd vote for George W. Bush if he had a D by his name – will hand a second term to Governor 1%. (Not to mention "zombie Republicans" - working people who consistently vote against their own interests because they identify themselves with conservative culture).

But whatever the outcome, Howie Hawkins' campaign is laying the foundation for the Green Party to flourish in New York. Just as importantly, Hawkins and his team are showing Greens across the United States how to run the kind of serious campaign that is urgently needed if we intend to save our world from economic and ecological disaster, and build a bridge to the better world we know is possible.

Have you considered running for office?

If you share our values of grassroots democracy, social justice, nonviolence, ecological wisdom, and getting corporate money out of politics, then you are the sort of person we need more of in government! The Wisconsin Green Party is committed to empowering people like you to run for office.

Many Wisconsin municipalities will hold local elections in Spring 2015. While these are officially non-partisan, many Greens have run for these offices with party support, and we are proud to have elected many local officials across the state, many of whom are still serving their communities today. In Spring 2016, there will be County elections across the state, and it's not too early to start thinking about November 2016, when many state and federal offices will be up for election.

If you are considering running for office, we would be glad to discuss the possibilities with you. Join us at our Fall membership meeting in Milwaukee on November 8th, or if you can't make it there, send an email with your statement of interest to info@wisconsin-green-party.org.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Start a Wisconsin Greens chapter on your campus

From crushing student debt to the accelerating climate crisis, young people face the worst of the problems created by years of political misleadership. Now, more than ever, it's vital that students organize and make their voices heard!

Like the Green Party worldwide, student Green groups are equal parts political party and social movement. Whether you're into electoral activism, issue activism, or both, a campus group is a great way to connect with like-minded people to make real change (and friends).

If you're a student who's interested in starting (or joining) a chapter of the Wisconsin Greens on your campus, send an email to info@wisconsin-green-party.org to let us know. We'll get in touch and help you start a student group that can make a real difference.

PIPELINE *continued from page 3*

more and higher capacity pumps along the route.

In addition, we know from a report from the Global Labor Institute at Cornell University that tar sands oil spills are three times more frequent than spills of regular crude, and, therefore, we in the Wisconsin Safe Energy Alliance believe that tripling the volume of the flow of this material would be a disaster waiting to happen. We care about the 262 bodies of water that line 61 crosses and the nearby Great Lakes, which provide drinking water to 42 million Americans. We don't want to take a chance that spills of this toxic gunk would pollute these bodies of water.

In addition, we don't need the tar sands oil because most of it will be shipped overseas for the profit of the big oil companies. And burning gasoline derived from tar sands oil is on average 17% more carbonaceous and will exacerbate global warming. For all of these reasons, we are asking those who care about this issue to join us in the WISE Alliance (Wisconsin Safe Energy Alliance). For more information, or if you would like to join us, you can contact Steve Spieckerman, at steves717@gmail.com.

Steve Spieckerman of Waukesha is active with the WISE Alliance.

Lawrence Dale for Congress WI-7



Lawrence Dale of Eagle River is the Green Party candidate for US House of Representatives in Wisconsin's 7th district, covering the Northwest portion of the state. Dale is running on a platform of sustainable economic alternatives to mining, including subsidies

for agricultural cooperatives and legalizing hemp and marijuana. To learn more, go to DaleForCongress.org.

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*