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The Green Party of NJ Bulletin - December 2009

- * Campaign results and assessments
- * County local reports
- * Greens Say NO to Obama's Escalation in Afghanistan
- * CT GP would welcome Nader into race against Dodd
- * GPNJ members represented in latest Green Horizon Magazine
- * Events Calendar
- * Links

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2009 CAMPAIGN RESULTS AND ASSESSMENTS

Steven Welzer for Assembly, District 12

I ran a low-key campaign but did manage to get our message around, and over 2% of those casting votes for Assembly candidates in this generally conservative district voted Green (over 1,500 votes). This makes me feel that two energetic Green Party candidates running a coordinated campaign in just about any district next time around (2011) could reasonably set a target of garnering 5% or more of the vote.

I had a campaign web site (www.newmenu.org/stevenwelzer) and:

- * had press coverage and letters appear in the Star-Ledger, Asbury Park Press, Trenton Times, Windsor-Hights Herald;
- * distributed over 1,000 campaign flyers;
- * debated my Democratic and Republican opponents at an Asbury Park Press editorial board meeting;
- * had my campaign and biographical info listed on nj.com, njvoterinfo.org, votesmart.org, growvotes.org, lwnj.org, and other sites;
- * put out dozens of campaign signs at key intersections in the district;
- * submitted questionnaire responses to over a dozen organizations.

I want to thank all those who contributed time, money, or good wishes to my campaign.

Running for Council in Surf City (Ocean County) Jason Koralja got 18 votes (1.40%). He reports:

Surf City has 1,033 registered voters, of which about 44% are Republicans, 17% are Democrats, and 38% are unaffiliated. A handful are registered with a third party. For my campaign, I sent out a letter to about 25% of the registered voters in town and I was interviewed by The SandPaper (a free weekly news magazine that services Southern Ocean County).

Report on my campaign

By Sean Dunne

[Sean ran under the label "Fight Corruption" but he had the backing of - and a close relationship with - the Monmouth County Greens. On Dec. 17 Sean will be hosting a campaign review session at his house: 7 Merrie Mill Lane, Holmdel. Greens are encouraged to attend. In addition to reviewing the 2009 campaigns we can start to talk about making a greater effort in 2010. RSVP's are requested - call Sean at 732-264-3292.]

We achieved a great result (over 3,400 votes, over 5% of the voters) and it's important to learn from this campaign so that future campaigns achieve greater success. I'll organize some of what I learned into a few central themes.

Media: I underestimated just how cynical and dishonest the media would be. I had several positive experiences with some journalists and newsletter editors, but the Asbury Park Press is terrible to deal with due to their dishonest coverage.

Money: We had very limited financial resources, but we did rely on social networking sites more than any other candidate. These sites are free to use, and therefore allow candidates with less money to connect to different networks of people.

The Message: The central theme of our campaign was fighting corruption. Soon after I opted for "Fight Corruption" as the phrase under my name on the ballot, the FBI produced a sting of crooked politicians and others. This obviously helped demonstrate the need to reduce corruption in New Jersey, but we tried to point out to people that corruption not only exists in the delivery of white envelopes at diners. We argued that the current Republican-Democrat duopoly is itself corrupt, and voters must fight back against it.

Voters: The most enjoyable part of the campaign. They absolutely want change from the duopoly. By "they," I mean people from a range of political perspectives. This provided me with great optimism for the future. We just have to keep fighting.

National highlights

California

Greens in California made history again by winning, for the fourth time in American history, a Green Party majority on a town council. Pam Hartwell-Herrero finished first of seven candidates to join Lew Treamine and Larry Bragman on the majority-Green Fairfax Town Council. (Greens also earned majorities on the Arcata council in the late '90s and in Sebastopol, CA and the village of New Paltz, NY earlier in this decade.)

Jim Harvey and Paul Perkovic both won re-election to the Montara Water and Sanitary District, San Mateo County. Curtis Robinson won re-election as a Marin County Board of Education Member, Trustee Area 6. He finished first of two candidates with 2,385 votes or 61%.

Dana Silvernale won her race for Northern Humboldt Union High School District. She finished third of four candidates for three seats with 3,239 votes or 22.7%.

Connecticut

In New Canaan, three Greens - Estela Lopez, Cole Stangler, Hector Lopez - ran for Constable and all were elected.

Maine

Kevin Donoghue won re-election to the Portland City Council, District 1, Cumberland County. He finished first of two candidates with 1,779 votes or 66%. David Marshall ran unopposed for a seat on the Portland City Council from District 2.

Maryland

Dan Robinson ran unopposed for re-election to Takoma Park Town Council, Ward 3, Montgomery County. Christine Nagle won her race for College Park City Council District 1, Prince George's County. She finished second of five candidates for two seats with 281 votes or 28%.

Massachusetts

Bruce Menin, who serves on the city's School Committee, was elected to the Newburyport Charter Commission. He finished fifth of twenty candidates for nine seats with 997 votes.

Chuck Turner won re-election to the Boston City Council from District 7. He finished first of two candidates with 5,516 votes or 59.8%

Minnesota

Cam Gordon was re-elected to the Minneapolis City Council from Ward 2, Hennepin County. He finished first of two candidates. Annie Young was re-elected to the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board. She finished second of four candidates for three seats.

New York

Jennifer Dotson ran unopposed for Ithaca Common Council, Ward One, Tompkins County. Mary Jo Long was re-elected to the Afton Town Council in Chenango County. She finished second of three candidates for two seats with 222 votes.

Lynne Serpe put the Green Party on the map in New York City, winning nearly 25% in her race for a City Council seat.

Ohio

Dennis Spisak was re-elected to the Struthers Board of Education, Mahoning County. He finished third of four candidates for three seats with 1,695 votes or 22.1%.

Pennsylvania

Bill Smedley ran unopposed for re-election to Nippenose Township Constable, Lycoming County, and Jay Sweeney ran unopposed for Falls Township Auditor, Wyoming County.

To get a sneak preview of the 2010 Green Party candidates from your area, visit the Green Party's comprehensive election database at:

www.gp.org/elections.shtml

Post-election analysis of my campaign

by Howie Hawkins, Green Party of New York State

[Howie was the Green Party candidate for Syracuse City Council in District 4]

Thank you to all the volunteers and contributors to my campaign. 41 percent is a higher vote than a Green candidate has ever received in Syracuse. We've never done the kind of doorstep and phone canvassing, voter ID, and GOTV that we did this time. Our street presence on Election Day surpassed every other campaign in the city.

From what I've seen of the Campaign Finance Reports posted at the state Board of Election, our broad base of small individual contributors far surpassed that of any other campaign in the city. We raised more money that way than any other district council candidate, unless they spent a lot more in the last 10 days that has not yet been reported.

The major party candidates relied on a small number of big contributions from wealthy individuals and the PACs of landlords, developers, and other business interests, and, unfortunately, the unions. About the only evidence my opponent had a campaign was two mailers to voters sent on his behalf from 1199 SEIU in the last five days.

The unions continue to naively believe they can buy friends for workers in the parties of big business, whose campaign contributions dwarf labor's. Memo to the unions from a rank-and-file Teamster: The bosses have two parties. We need one of our own.

I am only a little disappointed that we did not win the office this time. We needed to bring about 10 percent more of the voters off the Democratic line at the top of the ballot and down to the bottom line to vote Green. In the end we were beaten by the "Zombie Democrats" who vote their brand loyalty without knowing who the candidates are. They would vote for George W. Bush and Dick Cheney if they were on the Democratic line, as they automatically click every lever across the Democratic row on the machines.

But I am encouraged about the future. The platform on which we campaigned - living wages, community hiring hall, public power, municipal broadband, municipal development bank, sustainability plan, progressive tax reform, full funding for schools and youth programs - is popular with the voters we were able to reach. The 41 percent vote gives us a stronger voice to push for these reforms between now and the next election, when the Greens will be back to challenge the corporate rulers' two-party duopoly again.

COUNTY LOCAL REPORTS

Bergen County

The Greens, in the persons of Ed Fanning and myself, joined forces with supporters of "Medicare for All" in Jersey City's Journal Square on November 21st. I spoke briefly to the activists assembled at the rally about the Green Party and our advocacy of a Single-Payer Health Plan. The coalition of sponsors included: Physicians for a National Healthcare Program, Northern New Jersey Healthcare Now, and One Plan/One Nation. We then went on a brief march through the area.

Submitted by Alvin Meyer

Essex County

For Immediate Release, December 4, 2009

Essex Greens Call for "Peace on Earth
and Climate Justice" this Holiday Season

The Essex Greens today announced that they will be holding a vigil from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, December 12th, in front of the main Bloomfield Post Office at the corner of Bloomfield Ave. and Montgomery St. (across from the Municipal Building).

December 12th will be a worldwide day of action taking place during the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark. 192 nations are meeting there from Dec. 7-Dec. 18 to try to come to an agreement on a new treaty to take stronger action to reduce carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases that are dangerously heating up the atmosphere.

Thousands of actions around the world will be happening on December 12th, coordinated by several international networks. More information can be found at: www.tcktcktck.org

Ted Glick, coordinator of the Essex Greens, explained the purpose of the Bloomfield action:

"During this holiday season, it is appropriate that we take action to oppose wars for oil in Iraq and Afghanistan and for a rapid shift from dirty fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy. The US negotiators in Copenhagen need to know that we are watching what they are doing and that we want them to support policies that will lead to a rapid shift to a clean energy economy. This will create millions of jobs,

clean up our air and water, end our oil addiction and rebuild our communities. It's what the United States has to be about."

All interested groups and individuals are invited to participate. For more information about the action go to:
www.essexcountygreens.org or call 973-338-5398

Mercer County

Gail Dixon of the Mercer County Greens will host a Green holiday party on Saturday, Dec. 19 (3:00 to 9:00pm). Location: 190 Wilfred Avenue, Hamilton, 08610. Join us for good company, good conversation, and we'll even take a little time to discuss strategic planning for GPNJ. There will be a pot-luck dinner, so bring something to share. Please RSVP to Gail if you are planning to attend: 609-695-4140.

Monmouth County

Coordinator Rich Fuller participated in the following activities this fall:

. At the Monmouth County Board of Freeholders' publicly-held planning session, Rich spoke out against the proposed "Insanity Island" Liquefied Natural Gas project. (Later that day, the Freeholders voted unanimously *against* the proposal and thereby in support of Clean Ocean Action's opposition!).

. Distribution of campaign yard signs and door-to-door literature for our locally-endorsed Independent candidate, Sean Dunne, who will host a discussion to review and analyze the campaign at a special meeting of the Monmouth Greens on December 17 (Greens from around the state are invited to attend).

. "Beach Sweep" for Clean Ocean Action - whereby debris items were collected, categorized and counted as part of a state-wide ocean pollution report.

. Attended the morning and afternoon sessions of two panel discussions on the topic of "Journalism: Countering the Culture of Corruption" at Monmouth University sponsored in part by the Citizens' Campaign.

. Continued picketing for peace at the gates of Fort Monmouth and protested Pres. Obama's Afghan surge decision in New Brunswick at a peace vigil. In both venues Rich's octagonal red sign proclaimed "STOP OCCUPATION & WAR".

GREENS SAY NO! TO OBAMA'S ESCALATION IN AFGHANISTAN

The Green Party is calling on President Obama to reverse his Afghanistan policy by pledging an immediate cease-fire in the Afghanistan war and a complete withdrawal of US troops and military contractors. President Obama intends to send 30,000 more troops, raising the number of US personnel in Afghanistan to over 100,000.

"Millions of Americans voted for Barack Obama in 2008 under the impression that he was an 'antiwar' candidate, even though Mr. Obama supported the war in Afghanistan and favored a limited withdrawal from Iraq," said 2008 Green Party Vice Presidential candidate Rosa Clemente. "Troop escalation will not 'finish the job' in Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan," she says. "We'll be further mired in a war that shouldn't have happened in the first place."

The Green Party of the United States will participate in antiwar protests scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 12 in Washington, DC, and other locations throughout the US.

Green Pages, the national newsletter of the Green Party, is releasing new content regularly through an on-line edition:
<http://gp.org/greenpages-blog/>

GPUS has endorsed the December 11-12 call in and action days re: the Nuclear Information and Resource Service's "Don't Nuke the Climate" campaign. For details, see: www.nirs.org/petition2/index.php

Also, GPUS has signed on to the following:
www.endtheoccupation.org/article.php?id=2440
(demanding that the Department of Energy sanction, not award, Motorola Israel, whose "virtual fences" are used to support dozens of illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank and who provided fuses for Israel's MK80 series of bombs)

Help GPUS reach the goal set at our national meeting of funding operations with the help of 500 sustainers by the end of 2009. Also: If you receive gift cards for the holidays that you really don't want ... don't let them sit in your dresser drawer until they lose their value or you throw them away next summer ... send them to the Green Party! GPUS will gladly "recycle" any gift cards, especially office or general supply stores (but they will find a creative way to re-use any gift cards you can donate). Please mail with your name and address to: Green Party of the United States, PO Box 57065, Washington, DC 20037.

CONNECTICUT GP WOULD WELCOME NADER INTO RACE AGAINST DODD

Media release: November 17, 2009

Green Party of Connecticut officials announced today that they would welcome Ralph Nader into the 2010 race for US Senate and think he would have a good chance to win against current Senator Dodd.

"Since the media reports began in local and national web sites last week, we have seen hundreds of responses urging him to run," said Green Party spokesperson Tim McKee. He added, "With Dodd losing in many polls to the Republicans who have announced, we think Nader could be a clear choice to many who have lost faith in Dodd and his scandals with the banking and financial industries. To win, Nader would have to raise \$3-5 million, which he has done easily in past campaigns, and build an army of hundreds of volunteers for the race."

State Co-chair Steve Fournier said, "We have worked well with Nader and he knows the local Greens very well. We are very excited and can supply him with many workers if he chooses to run." Mike DeRosa, also a State Co-chair said, "Nader is America's Public Citizen Number 1! We just want to know when to start gathering the signatures for the petitions."

The Green Party of Connecticut has created an online petition - Nader for US Senate 2010 - which they hope Greens all around the country will sign on to:
www.petitiononline.com/nader10/

Below are excerpts from an article in the Litchfield County Times (12/3/09)

Recently the Green Party of Connecticut has encouraged Mr. Nader to run, and if he decides to do so, Mr. Nader could be cross-endorsed by other minor parties. "We want to help all of the small parties," Mr. Nader said. "Help them in the future to provide more competition." He has described the current two-party system as having a choke-hold on national politics.

A Quinnipiac University Poll released Nov. 12 showed 54 percent of voters disapprove of the job that Mr. Dodd is doing, up from 49 percent in September. The same survey showed the five-term incumbent Democrat particularly vulnerable among unaffiliated voters, the largest voting bloc in an otherwise Democratic-leaning state.

More than 100 people turned out to hear Mr. Nader talk in West Hartford, including some Green Party members who held signs that read, "Run Ralph Run!" The state's Green Party has been stepping up efforts to encourage Nader to get into the race, saying that this marks one of the best opportunities for the Greens to win a senate seat. Tim McKee, a Green Party spokesman in Connecticut, told the Associated Press that Mr. Dodd's low poll numbers give his party one of its best opportunities.

[Some GPNJ members turned out to show their support when Nader spoke in Princeton and at Brookdale College on Dec. 5. Note: It's not clear at this point whether Nader, if he decides to enter the CT race, would run on the Green Party line or run as an Independent with Green Party backing.]

GPNJ MEMBERS WELL REPRESENTED IN LATEST GREEN HORIZON

Three members of GPNJ have articles or letters in the Fall 2009 issue of Green Horizon Magazine. GPNJ Treasurer Lynn Petrovich offers a scathing critique of HAVA (the Help America Vote Act). She notes that: "The controversies surrounding the 2000 election, especially lack of conformity in the voting process, resulted in the Help America Vote Act [but] under its auspices, little that is problematic about our election system is being resolved." Lynn especially details the issues surrounding touch screen voting machines and electronic computation, where voters cannot witness how their vote is handled.

Also in this issue: Anthony Wille of Sussex County submitted a letter inquiring about the relationship between the decentralism of Community-based Economics and that of Ron Paul's Libertarian perspective. Steve Welzer answers, explaining why Libertarianism is a misguided path for decentralists. Excerpt:

"Libertarians are strong on critique of the centralized nation-state and its intervention in the economy, but weak in their formulation of an alternative model ... They are in agreement with leftists when they assert that a nation-state government is fundamentally an agency of the national power elite. It is not surprising, then, that anti-statists who intuitively sense the desirability of decentralization are sometimes drawn to Libertarianism and Austrian school economics ... without comprehending how unrealistic, amoral, and unnatural their ideology is in practice. As an alternative to statist economics, Libertarians advocate contractual relationships within the context of a pure free-market economy. No society has ever operated in such a way, and for good reason: human beings don't live as atomized opportunity-maximizing individuals ... Greens, on the other hand, offer an eco-communitarian model of relocalization that would restore our natural, organic, and sane human social heritage."

To get a copy or to subscribe: Green Horizon Magazine, PO Box 476, Topsham, ME 04086; or visit: <http://green-horizon.org/>

EVENTS CALENDAR

Thursday, Dec. 10 (Human Rights Day)

This could be our last chance before the Senate votes to speak out for Medicare for All. There will be a rally at the corner of 1 Gateway Center, Market Street (across from Penn Station) in Newark - from 4:00 to 6:00pm. Bring all types of noise makers ... horns, drums, tambourines ... Let's be heard! We want Menendez and Lautenberg to know Medicare for All is a Human Right. Please bring signs reflecting: Medicare For All is the only humane choice for healthcare reform. For more information: CarolGay747[at]aol.com

Friday, Dec. 11

350 Candle Light Vigil at the Jersey Shore - 6:00pm. Location: On the Boardwalk, 5th Ave and Ocean Ave, Asbury Park, NJ 07712. Dress warm; bring candles or flashlights.

Around the world people will gather at iconic and strategic locations in their communities and will light candles of hope to stand in solidarity with the citizens of the nations whose very survival is threatened by the climate crisis. Come and participate in a global 350.org Candle Light Vigil.

350 parts per million (ppm) is what many scientists, climate experts, and progressive national governments are now saying is the safe upper limit for CO2 in our atmosphere. Right now we are at approximately 390 ppm and this number is rising by about 2 ppm every year. It is critical that we get back to 350! This vigil falls right in the middle of the two-week Copenhagen talks. President Obama will deliver a speech in Copenhagen on December 9. The following day he'll go to Norway to collect his Nobel prize. We need to send a signal to say that speeches and prizes are good, but action is what's really required - enough action to head us back towards 350 parts per million. Learn more here:
www.meetup.com/nj-green/calendar/12020218/

Saturday, Dec. 12

[Our own Essex County Green Party is sponsoring a vigil on Dec. 12 in Bloomfield and all Greens are encouraged to participate (see article above). In addition, there is an action being planned in Washington, DC]

Tell Obama "No You Can't!"

www.enduswars.org/spreadtheword

There will be an emergency protest rally on Saturday, Dec. 12, from 11 am to 4 pm in Lafayette Park (across from the White House) in Washington, DC. It's being organized by the End US Wars coalition (www.enduswars.org). The speakers list includes Cynthia McKinney, Rep. Dennis Kucinich, former Sen. Mike Gravel, Nobel Peace Prize nominee Kathy Kelly, Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Chris Hedges, author David Swanson, Rev. Graylan Hagler, Capt. Ron Fisher, Gael Murphy (CODEPINK), Debra Sweet (World Can't Wait), Elaine Brower (Military Families Speak Out), Brian Becker (ANSWER), Mathis Chiroux (Iraq Veterans Against the War), among many other national peace leaders. Musicians Jordan Page, Head-Roc and others will perform.

In conjunction with the rally on Dec. 12, the film "Rethink Afghanistan" will be shown Friday, Dec. 11, from 6 to 8 pm at Busboys & Poets, 14th & V Streets NW.

Monday, Dec. 14

NORML NJ and the Coalition for Medical Marijuana NJ will hold a rally in front of the Somerset County Court House (20 North Bridge St, Somerville) from 8:30am to 12:00 noon in support of multiple sclerosis patient John Ray Wilson. Wilson faces 20 years in prison for growing 17 marijuana plants that he used to treat his MS. A fundraiser luncheon will be held for Wilson immediately following the rally at the nearby East Star Asian Buffet (69 Main St, Somerville). Tickets are donations to Wilson's legal defense fund. More information at: www.normlnj.org

Wednesday, Dec. 16

"No Impact Man" - the next in a series of environmental film screenings put on by Community Green (www.CommunityGreen.org). Location: Montclair Public Library (50 S Fullerton Ave, Montclair NJ 07043; 973-744-0500 ext. 2262 or 2284). Time: 6:30pm

The Montclair Township Environmental Affairs office and Community Green present another eye-opening film about what we can do for the future of our environment. No Impact Man gives us an entertaining vision of a family that tries to eliminate all the over-use of energy in their lives. Join us as we participate in New American Dream's nationwide pre-DVD release screenings of this documentary and a post-screening discussion about how to simplify our holidays this year. During the

two-weeks of the historic UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen (December 7th-18th), New American Dream is bringing people together to talk about the impact of holiday spending on their lives and the environment. To learn more about the film, google: "No Impact Project." For more information about the Montclair screening or about Community Green, contact Marnie Vyff at 973-335-4469 or marnie[at]ecologic-design.com.

Thursday, Dec. 17

Special meeting of the Monmouth County Green Party at the home of Sean Dunne: 7 Merrie Mill Lane, Holmdel 07733. Greens from all around the state are encouraged to attend. In addition to reviewing the 2009 campaigns we can start to talk about our 2010 candidacies. RSVP's are requested - call Sean at 732-264-3292.

Saturday, Dec. 19

Green holiday pot-luck at the home of Gail Dixon: 190 Wilfred Ave, Hamilton NJ 08610. Time: 3:00 to 9:00pm. Please RSVP to Gail if you are planning to attend: 609-695-4140.

January 2-17

Princeton Environmental Film Festival. Visit:
www.princeton.lib.nj.us/peff/schedule.htm

Saturday, Jan. 30

Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA-NJ)'s 25th Anniversary Conference at the Douglas Campus Center in New Brunswick. Info: www.nofanj.org

Interesting Links Re: Green Parties Worldwide

www.globalgreens.org/officeholders

The above link contains statistics reflecting how many Greens hold elective office in national parliaments, congresses, and legislatures, as well as in the European Parliament. In summary: As of July 2009, Greens hold a total of 293 national-level

