



Summit County
**Progressive
Democrats**

SCPD NEWSLETTER March 2021

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Annual fundraiser
- Another way we're helping candidates
- SCPD had lots of wins in November
- That other party rules as a minority
- And more

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Val McKittrick



Happy New Year! It's a simple enough phrase, but this is the first time in over four years that I've felt that a new year has "happy" potential. Even though we're still in the throes of the covid pandemic, I feel a sense of energy that I've been lacking. I know that Biden's election isn't a panacea, but it sure has had a positive effect on my psyche! While I'm

cognizant of the Herculean tasks that Biden and his administration face, I'm nonetheless feeling a sense of optimism.

Thus, it was with that optimism that I attended the board retreat on 20 February. With all board members present, Frank Kunstel planned and facilitated the two-hour retreat. (Many thanks, Frank!) There was lengthy philosophical discussion regarding whether the current iteration of the organization still aligns with the original mission statement. Has our mission changed? How do we see ourselves as we work through the pandemic, and what about after?

The following are the main areas of focus to come out of the retreat:

- progressive v. pragmatic Democrats and the purpose of the questionnaire

- long-term goals v. short-term goals
- How does SCPD marshal energy and resources?
- Do we support many or few issues/candidates?
- How do we expand and diversify our membership?

The above are the topics that will direct the organization this year, but the board is a small component of the organization, not *the* organization. My ask is that each of us reflects on our commitment to SCPD and pledges to strengthening the commitment, thereby strengthening SCPD.

SCPD PAC ANNUAL FUNDRAISER AND AWARDS EVENT

By Sherrie Weitzenhoff, Fundraiser Chair



Making Ohio Blue Again - while we won the Presidential election, we are now in a battle to help our democracy survive at the local, state, and national level.

Thursday, May 6, 2021, 7 – 8:30 pm – virtual event

Featuring Keynote speaker Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley

Private meet & greet with Nan Whaley, 6:15 – 6:45, with limited slots available for \$50.

Member Awards – progressive patriot, committee person, unsung hero

Exclusive wine offerings auction of 3 bottles valued at over \$90 each.

Admission: \$35/ Young Dems \$15

Sponsorships available. All sponsors will be recognized at the event.

- platinum \$1500 (includes free admission to VIP & general event)
- gold \$1000 (includes free admission to VIP & general event)
- silver \$500 (includes free admission to general event)
- bronze \$250 (includes free admission to general event)
- patron \$100.

Wine lotto – wine can be purchased prior to the event & the bottles will be delivered to your home. Enjoy wine while participating in the celebration.

- 10 bottles valued at less than \$25, for \$20 each.
- 12 bottles valued from \$25 - \$50, for \$35 each.
- 5 bottles valued from \$50 - \$100, for \$60 each.

Register & sponsor online at:

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/scpdevent>

Wine lotto at: <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/scpdwinelotto>

For information: (330)666-2627 or sweitzenho@aol.com

Send checks to SCPD PAC, P.O. Box 477, Bath OH 44210-0477

WE'RE HELPING CANDIDATES

By Tom Schmida, CDC Chair



It has been over a year since our Candidate Development Committee has conducted live, in-person training sessions for candidates and potential candidates. While most of the dust has settled after the 2020 election (the

Trumplicans out there are beyond help), we continue to live in the midst of the ongoing COVID pandemic with hopes that this world-wide tragedy will soon be behind us.

In the meantime, the CDC has been meeting regularly and examining ways to adapt to these strange times and virtual environments. To that end, the CDC decided to embark upon a redesigned candidate training program presented virtually.

In its planning the CDC considered the fact that many of us and the population at large are experiencing something akin to “Zoom Overload”. We believe that shorter training sessions spread out would be more attractive to candidates, not to mention our committee members who present the training.

We conducted three sessions, starting on February 27. Topics included methods of voter contact including canvassing, creating a campaign message and the delivery of the message, campaign fundraising and financial reporting requirement, and use of social media.

We had 9 participants including candidates for Akron Bd. of Ed, Stow/ Munroe Falls Bd. of Ed. Stow City Council, Stow Clerk of Courts, Cuy. Falls City Council (2), and two participants planning to run for office in the future.

We also added a new presenter: Madison Newingham who is 2nd VP of the Cuyahoga Falls Dems and works as a fundraiser for Sherrod Brown and the Ohio House Caucus.

Zoom worked well...we had protocols in place, and a manageable number of participants. But. we all believe that in-person training is far superior to on-line sessions, and the same is true for the video feedback training that we have offered in the past. We in the CDC (I think we need a different acronym while COVID is around) look forward to the time when we can return to our “live” training sessions that are more engaging and effective.

If you are interested in joining the Candidate Development Committee, email me at tom.schmida@gmail.com

FOLLOW AND LIKE SCPD!

By Jill Cabe, Communications Chair



Summit County Progressive Democrats has a Facebook page and a Twitter account to help us engage with our members and other progressive activist organizations in the area.

The next time you are online please take a moment to like our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/SCDPAC>

If you are on Twitter follow us at: <https://twitter.com/SCProgDems>

Our web page has been updated and we look forward to adding more photos when we can all gather again. <https://summitprogdems.org/>

2020 VICTORIES AND 2021 RACES

By Brad McKittrick, Candidate Support Committee Chair

2020 was a good year for candidates endorsed by SCPD! Our organization endorsed 18 candidates and 15 of those candidates won their races. The following is a list of our winners:

Judge Betty Sutton, 9th District Court of Appeals

Judge Jennifer Brunner, State Supreme Court

Sheriff Kandy Fatheree, Summit County's first female Sheriff!

Marcia Fudge, 11th US Congressional District

Sandra Kurt, Summit County Clerk of Courts



Casey Weinstein, Rep for 37th District



Emilia Strong Sykes, Rep for 34th District House Minority
Leader



Tavia Galonski, Rep for 35th District

Vernon Sykes, State Senate 28th District

Rita Darrow, Summit County Council District 1

Sherri Bevan Walsh, Summit County Prosecutor

Dr. Christina Collins, State School Board

Veronica Sims, Summit County Council District 5

2021 will bring a large group of potential county candidates.

Judge Gerald Larson will be running again for Akron Muni Court

Amber Zibritosky will be running again for Clerk of Stow Muni Court

The following Cities will be having races:

Barberton Council, Cuyahoga Falls Mayor and Council, Fairlawn Council, Green Council, Hudson Council, Macedonia Council, Monroe Falls Council, New Franklin Mayor and Council, Stow Council, Tallmadge Council, Twinsburg Council.

Villages with Races:

Boston Heights Council, Clinton Village Council, Lakemore Council, Mogadore Council, Northfield Council, Peninsula Council, Reminderville Council, Richfield Council, Silver Lake Council

Township Trustee Races:

Bath, Boston, Copley, Coventry, Northfield Center, Richfield, Sagamore Hills, Springfield, Twinsburg

Board of Education races

Akron, Aurora, Barberton, Copley-Fairlawn, Cuyahoga Falls, Hudson, Nardon Hills, Norton, Stow - Monroe Falls, Tallmadge, Twinsburg, Coventry, Green, Highland, Jackson, Manchester, Mogadore, Northwest, Revere, Springfield, Woodridge

Marcia Fudge will be stepping down from her seat in the U.S. House of Representatives to become the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development for the Biden Administration. A special election will be held for that seat; a date has not yet been set. Once a filing date is set, SCPD will hold a special meeting, inviting those candidates. Then we can decide if we want to endorse in that race.

SCPD DIRECT FUNDRAISING

By Bob Gippin, Fundraising Committee Chair



In the last Newsletter, we told you about general plans to begin Direct Fundraising. Those plans are underway and – if successful – will provide SCPD with significant new funding. That money will mostly be used to support more candidates and more lavishly, but also to strengthen issues-related activities.

By Direct Fundraising, I mean reaching out to potentially high-dollar local individual contributors and organizations even at the national level that support progressive causes. As to individuals, it is pretty much what candidate campaigns do. As to organizations, it is pretty much what grant applicants do.

The first efforts will be with individual contributors. Jan Oakley did the hard work of updating a list we had from 2015, to identify about 100 potential contributors. Importantly, these are almost all people who have not contributed to the Fundraiser. We certainly don't want to step on our own feet!

We're very hopeful this will work well now. SCPD should be an easy "sell": We have an established track record over 15 years and have next to no overhead. Money contributed to us will be well-used, not be wasted or misspent. And the need to swing Summit County, Ohio "bright" (meaning Progressive) blue has never been greater!

Help would of course be most welcome. There will be lots of work to do for the individual outreach. Please contact me at rgippin@gmail.com or 330-283-3273 to discuss what you can do.

THE REPUBLICAN PLAYBOOK FOR RULING AS A MINORITY PARTY

By Frank Kunstel

Observing this year's Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC), Jennifer Rubin [wrote in the Washington Post](#) that today's conservatives lack any political principles, instead basing their worldview on white grievance, cult worship and revenge. She stated, "Their top political goal — voter suppression — is the only means by which they seek to capture power in an increasingly diverse America."

In the last 8 Presidential elections Republicans have [won the popular vote only once](#), yet they have won the office three times. The 2021 Senate has Republicans representing [41 million fewer](#) votes than Democrats represent, yet both parties have an equal number of Senators. In Ohio in the [last several elections](#) Republicans have won 75% of the Congressional seats with only 56% of the vote.

When the majority of voters lose their influence in the government, then the government loses credibility with those voters. Voters deem that democracy is not working.

How do Republicans do this? Here is their playbook.

1. Exploit structural advantages. Republicans target rural and small-population states to get their advantage in the Senate and the Electoral College.
2. Gerrymander. By controlling how state and federal legislative districts are drawn, Republicans construct districts that allow them to win majorities with a minority of the vote.
3. Suppress the vote. Republican legislators and secretaries of state enact laws and regulations that suppress Democratic votes, such as voter ID laws and shortening the time for early voting. In 2021 thus far there are already [over 250 bills proposed](#) by state legislatures to suppress the vote and these are by far aimed at Democratic voters.

4. Control the court. They create [a Supreme Court](#) that supports their playbook. Justices are approved by the Senate and that body is weighted toward small-state Republican voters.
5. Wield the filibuster. Republicans generally prefer small government, so they have few initiatives. Once they enact tax cuts for the rich and shovel more money to the military, they pretty much then oppose everything else. It's a lot easier to stop legislation than it is to enact it. As long as Republicans have 41 Senators, they can block bills—and they do.
6. Refuse to consider. When Mitch McConnell was Senate Majority leader, even though Republicans represented a minority of voters, he simply refused to bring measures to the floor of the Senate.
7. Lie. When they lose elections, they simply state they did not lose and rile up their voters to carry on more of the same steps above.

What can progressives do? Plenty. We can support the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact in which states pledge to award their electoral votes to whichever candidate wins the national popular vote. We can support the For the People Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. We can urge our representatives to support statehood for D.C. and Puerto Rico, which would add senators with a more urban perspective. We can raise our voices against voter suppression tactics in Ohio. We can join other advocacy groups to monitor Ohio redistricting and press legislators to make it fair.

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