

PORTAGE COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY
NEWS AND NOTES - August 2017

Friend -

The month of August has been a busy one for the local Democratic Party - and nowhere more so than at the Randolph Fair.

I want to extend a personal thanks to all of those who worked at our booth at the Fair, talking with all comers about why Democrats have their backs. Special thanks, too, to those who used that occasion to gather additional signatures for the [redistricting reform effort](#). We are now much closer to our goal for that very important work - thanks to all of you!

As we turn to September, there are many events on the horizon for you to be aware of (shared below). We also want to take a moment to recognize Labor Day, and the men and women of organized labor who have given their blood, sweat and tears to secure workplace rights for all of us. Without you, holidays, weekends, fair wages and safe workplaces would all remain distant dreams for far too many. We are grateful for all you have done, and eager to push forward with you on the ample work that remains.

If there are items beyond those listed you feel it would benefit our members to know about, please send them to Brad Cromes at cromesbl@gmail.com for inclusion in a future newsletter.

Thanks again for all you do every day to show your friends and neighbors what it means to be a Democrat - and I look forward to continuing on with you in that work.

Onward,

Craig Stephens, Chairman
Portage Co. Democratic Party

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CALL TO ACTION

NOTE: The following is an update from Bob Howard, member of the Central Committee from Brady Lake, [Portage County Progressives](#) leading organizer, and the point person for the redistricting ballot initiative effort in Portage County.

The petition drive to put the "Fair Districts" reapportionment issue on the ballot continues. We have submitted nearly 300 signatures to ODP in our first bunch, and will continue to collect more, with a final goal of working with your partners to gather the more than 6,000 needed from Portage County.

If you can volunteer to help collect signatures, want an additional petition, or have petitions to turn in at other times, please contact Bob at 330-931-1186 or at murnhoward@gmail.com.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

[Swearing In - Portage County Treasurer Brad Cromes](#)
August 31, 2017 - 1 - 12:00pm - Portage County Court House, Ravenna

You are invited to join Treasurer Brad Cromes as he is sworn in for a new term of office. The oath will be given by Judge Laurie J. Pittman. Treasurer Cromes will then swear in his staff, and offer brief remarks. Refreshments will follow.

[Celebrate Portage Awards Ceremony](#)

September 7, 2017 - 5pm - 8pm - NEOMED NEW Center, 4209 State Route 44, Rootstown, OH 44272

Join leaders from across Portage County as we recognize some of Portage County's best and brightest. Awards will be given to top nominees in the areas of Best Economic Development Project, Most Engaging High School, Best Community Service Project, Biggest Community Hero, Best Health Initiative and Best Art/Culture Event. The evening will include entertainment, food and networking.

http://www.portagedemocrats.org/r?u=http%3A%2F%2Frandolphfair.com%2F&e=3359918e7020905197ef1641deadf1ec&utm_source=portagedems&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=augnews2017&n=6&test_email=1*NAMI Walk for Recovery*

September 23, 2017 - Kent United Church of Christ - 1400 E. Main St., Kent, OH 44240

The National Alliance on Mental Illness - Portage County will host its annual awareness walk/fundraiser in Kent. Walkers will travel from the United Church of Christ downtown and back again (2 miles). Walk-ups are welcome!

[Jefferson-Jackson Dinner](#)

October 19, 2017 - 5:30pm - 8:30pm - Ravenna Elks Lodge, 775 N. Freedom St., Ravenna, OH 44266

You are cordially invited to attend the Federated Democratic Women of Portage County for their Annual Jefferson-Jackson Dinner, which celebrates our Party's history and points toward a more progressive future. This year's keynote speaker will be Rob Richardson, Jr., a Cincinnati attorney and candidate for Ohio Treasurer of State. Tickets are \$40/person. Please mail checks, made out to "Federated Democratic Women," to Suzanne Coia, 3960 Summit Rd., Ravenna, OH 44266, and call 330-310-0126 with any questions.

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ELECTIONS UPDATE

The voter registration deadline for this fall's General Election is October 10, 2017. To register, complete the form [here](#) and return to the Board of Elections by that date (they will be open until 9pm to facilitate that activity). You can also register or update your address [online](#).

Candidates for positions on the ballot this fall must file their pre-election campaign finance reports no later than October 26, 2017.

For a full list of candidates in this fall's election, see [this list](#).

Lastly, the Board is always looking for poll workers! Find out more about the job (and fill out an application) [here](#).

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FROM OUR OFFICIALS - Prosecutor Victor V. Viguicci

This section highlights the work of our local elected Democrats.

Prosecutor Victor V. Viguicci (D - Rootstown) was appointed in 1994. He won election to office shortly thereafter, and has held office for 23 years - making him the longest-serving prosecutor in Portage County history. We sat down with Vic to talk about how he came to office, what he's proud of, and what work remains. Lightly edited notes of that conversation follow.

Thanks for taking the time to talk with us, Vic. Can you give us some background on what made you seek the office of Prosecutor?

"I was appointed to office in 1994 by the Democratic Party Central Committee. I had been in private practice, and was approached by the Chairman and Vice Chairman about the position. I was happy with my private practice, having worked in that capacity for 17 years. But, the Prosecutor's Office was just exiting a period of scandal, and needed new leadership from the outside."

You're Portage County's longest-serving Prosecutor, at 23 years and counting. What are you most proud of during your tenure?

"I'm proud of modernizing the office, of assembling a very effective staff, and of maintaining a scandal-free, ethical office."

What's the biggest challenge facing your office now?

"Staffing is constantly an issue. The volume of cases we see continues to grow, while staff levels stay the same. Restrictions from the state on penalties we can pursue are also an issue. We need more funding for all of our programs, but especially for more jail space. We could also use more labs to analyze our evidence - especially drug-related evidence. That's often the source of delays that can really hamper our work."

Ok, Vic. You've done a lot for Portage County over your tenure. What can we do to help you?

"Don't commit crimes."

Fair enough. Thank you again for your time!

To learn more about what Prosecutor Vigluicci is working on, visit his office [website](#) (and especially the annual report section).

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ICYMI - NEWS AND NOTES

Politico (Washington, D.C.) - [Senate Democrats Set Conditions for Tax Reform](#)http://www.portagedemocrats.org/r?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.politico.com%2Fmagazine%2Fstory%2F2017%2F07%2F31%2Fmy-party-is-in-denial-about-donald-trump-215442&e=3359918e7020905197ef1641deadf1ec&utm_source=portagedems&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=augnews2017&n=14&test_email=1 - August 1, 2017

"The Democrats who signed onto Tuesday's letter, spearheaded by Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) Schumer and Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden, the top Democrat on the tax-writing Finance Committee, also made two blunt demands on taxes: They will not back any bill that gives new breaks to the wealthiest individuals and will not back any legislation that adds to the deficit."

Advance Ohio (Cleveland) - [Presidential opioid commission recommends national emergency](#) - August 1, 2017

"Niles Democratic Rep. Tim Ryan said he previously urged Trump to declare the opioid epidemic a public health emergency, and was pleased the commission reached the same conclusion. 'I urge him to take swift action to fulfill this request,' said a statement from Ryan. 'Lives depend on it each and every day.'"

Enquirer (Cincinnati) - [Ohio has the most student loan debt in the country. Here's why.](#) - August 2, 2017

"In Ohio, the average student debt is \$30,239 and more than two-thirds of students have debt. Both measures are among the top 10 in the country. The balance of students' loans make up more than 50 percent of their annual income."

Dispatch (Columbus) - [Sessions wants 'war' on prescriptions; Ohio's done that for years](#) - August 3, 2017

"Then-Gov. Ted Strickland cracked down on pill mills in 2010 and current Gov. John Kasich squeezed down the amounts of opioids that can be prescribed in 2013 and 2015."

The New Yorker - [Democrats Could Have 2020 Field As Wide As An Iowa Corn Field](#) - August 3, 2017

"It's the early, silly season of 2020 presidential speculation. So there's nothing unusual about speculation surrounding two fairly obscure Democratic House members, Seth Moulton of Massachusetts and Tim Ryan of Ohio."

L.A. Times - [So Trump wants the consumer watchdog sacked. Here's what's really going on.](#) - August 4, 2017

"(Former Trump Advisor Corey) Lewandowski said on NBC's "Meet the Press" that CFPB Director Richard Cordray should be given the heave-ho because he's "all but running for governor in the state of Ohio," and because "you've got an unelected bureaucrat sitting in an office right now."

The Blade (Toledo) - [Universal Pre-K is a game changer. Let's hear more about it.](#) - August 6, 2017

"There is ample social science evidence that universal preschool can help to break destructive behavior learned at home. And there is practical evidence, as well. Universal preschool has been so successful for 4-year-olds in New York City that the city is hoping to expand it to 3-year-olds."

Ohio Public Radio - [Schiavoni seeks guarantee that money pulled from charters goes back to traditional schools](#) - August 7, 2017

"If an enrollment audit by the state auditor discovers that a charter school is getting more money for students they don't have, the money goes back to the state education department. But Democratic Sen. and candidate for governor Joe Schiavoni of Boardman says that money should go directly to public schools."

WKBN (Youngstown) - [Ohio Senators say renegotiating NAFTA critical to state](#) - August 8, 2017

"Both senators agree that stepping away from the agreement, as the President once claimed he was open to doing, would be disastrous for Ohio. "Nobody's opposed NAFTA more than I have in the Senate, but I also know that you can't just tear up the agreement and walk away," said Sen. Sherrod Brown."

Record-Courier - [Suspicious powder scare at county building](#) - August 8, 2017

"County workers and early voters got a scare Monday after a letter containing a suspicious white powder caused an emergency response at the Portage County Administration Building on South Meridian Street in Ravenna. The potential for a chemical or biological attack resulted in parts of the building being cordoned off and movement restricted for nearly four hours until the scene was declared safe, county officials said Tuesday. The substance proved to be nothing more than harmless dried toothpaste, and the culprit — a letter writer simply using what was available to him at the time — meant no harm, authorities said."

Advance Ohio (Cleveland) - [Ohio Democrats announce first gubernatorial debate](#) - August 14, 2017

"The Ohio Democratic Party announced the first in a series of gubernatorial debates among the four declared candidates will be held in early September. Party chairman David Pepper said Monday in a conference call with reporters the Democratic candidates for governor will take the stage Sept. 12 at Martins Ferry High School in Belmont County as part of a strategy to hold at least six debates in different regions in the state. The choice to have the first debate in Southeast Ohio was a deliberate attempt to acquaint voters who might feel like Columbus is failing them with the mostly unknown Democratic Party candidates, Pepper said. It will be livestreamed online so those in the rest of the state can watch with questions also coming from Facebook and Twitter."

Plain Dealer (Cleveland) - [Fixing Ohio's Gerrymandering Problem](#) - August 16, 2017

"Gerrymandering not only shapes districts in odd ways, dividing communities and ignoring local concerns, it severely limits the odds of a dissatisfied electorate from flipping control of Congress from one party to the other at election time. Congress is not held as accountable as it could be. It doesn't have to be this way."

The Dispatch (Columbus) - [What is it with Ohio and hate groups these days?](#) - August 17, 2017

"Perhaps surprisingly, Ohio has become an "epicenter of hate group activity," and Ohio Democratic Chairman

David Pepper wants to know why. "I think people are very quick to attribute this to being a southern issue; we dismiss it as happening somewhere else," said Pepper, who was on a press call today with Rep. Stephanie Howse, president of the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus. "I don't think there's any minimizing this ... Ohio is unfortunately right in the middle of this problem. I don't think you can sugarcoat this."

The Dispatch (Columbus) - [Democrat questions Husted's voter education ad buy](#) - August 21, 2017

"A Democratic legislator raised concern Monday about a \$260,000 no-bid advertising contract that Secretary of State Jon Husted is awarding to a GOP-connected communications firm."

WFMJ (Youngstown) - [Tim Ryan: "Maybe the country needs somebody from a place like Youngstown."](#) - August 23, 2017

"There has been plenty of talk over the past year on whether Valley Congressman Tim Ryan will toss his hat into the 2020 race for President. And now, comments made earlier this week by Ryan have once again peeked the interest of those keeping watch. "I have no idea at this point," said Tim Ryan during an interview with WMUR in Manchester, New Hampshire. "But we'll see, I like being out around the country. I like talking about this. I like crafting the message, and I think, you know, maybe the country needs somebody from a place like Youngstown, Ohio, that has tried to develop the local economy at the local level."

Jackson County Times-Journal - [Ohio students learn about manufacturing through camps sponsored by Sen. Sherrod Brown](#) - August 23, 2017

"Manufacturing is one of our state's most important industries, but too often, our companies can't find workers with the right skills, while our students don't realize all the opportunities available to them," said Brown. "We need today's Ohio students to realize all the potential careers they could have in Ohio manufacturing, and that's why, for five years now, my office has put on summer manufacturing camps for 4th through 8th graders across Ohio. I'm proud we were able to do the same this year."

Record-Courier - [Portage legal case could nullify sales tax](#) - August 24, 2017

"Portage County's increased Sales and Use Tax could be nullified based on a court's decision expected in October. A complaint, heard this week in Portage County Court by visiting Judge Richard Reinbold, claims that the Portage County Board of Commissioners violated Ohio's Open Meetings Act in 2015. The complaint was filed by Brian Ames, a Randolph resident and member of the Portage County Tea Party."

Tiffin Advertiser-Tribune - [Pillich touts experience in run for Ohio governor](#) - August 29, 2017

"Pillich stressed the importance of campaigning in every county. "Democrats have forgotten large sections of this state for a very long time and it shows," she said. "People deserve to have their voice heard. I have to listen, it's my obligation to go hear them." Pillich said she thinks it is important for Democrats to reclaim their status as patriots. The Democratic Party has really lost its way, in my mind," she said. "We've lost our foundation. There's nothing patriotic about shipping jobs overseas just to get a tax break to billionaires. What's patriotic is building a new middle class with jobs of the 21st century."

Record-Courier - [Berry remembered as 'advocate' for Ravenna](#) - August 28, 2017

"Frederick L. Berry, a Ravenna City councilman at large and former coach and business owner in Ravenna, died Thursday, Aug. 25, 2017. He was 69. Berry was appointed to council in 2010 to fill the unexpired term of Joseph Bica after Bica was appointed as the city's mayor. He subsequently won election to the seat in 2011 and 2013."

Lima News - [Auditor candidate Space makes pitch in Lima](#) - August 29, 2017

"While the office of Ohio Auditor may not carry with it the same level of name recognition as a governor or congressional representative, it is an important one with powers that, according to one candidate, can be used for the benefit of Ohioans. That was the message from Democrat Zack Space, a former congressman who announced his candidacy for state auditor Tuesday at United Association Local 776 in Lima, part of a campaign kickoff tour that also included stops in Martins Ferry, Zanesville and east Columbus."

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For more news and notes on the activities of Democrats from around Ohio, subscribe to the Ohio Democratic Party daily update [here](#).

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The Portage County Democratic Party

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

The Portage County Democratic Party · 210 S Meridian St, Ravenna, OH 44266,
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