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I can't sit by and see wrongs and not do anything. I couldn't justify having a kid if I wasn't going to try and fix the world. When I'm around my Green friends, I feel like there's hope. Green values encompass everything that's important, and give us an avenue to fix the problems in our society. — Dani Liebling

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GREEN PAGES

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Utah Greens Reboot, Make Ballot

See story page 4



Brendan Phillips with Gabrielle Saunders

Caught in the hurricane

Texas and Florida Greens tell their stories

Compiled by Deanna Dee Taylor, Green Party of Utah

This segment of a series focuses on stories of Green Party members who lived through two of the most catastrophic Atlantic hurricanes since 2005, Hurricane Harvey in Texas and Hurricane Irma in Florida.

Hurricane Harvey in Texas

Joy Davis, a Green from Houston, recalls the buildup to the hurricane. “Houstonians began to prepare for Hurricane Harvey. Our Governor, Greg Abbott, told people to evacuate. Our Mayor, Sylvester Turner, told people not to evacuate and to shelter in place. We went out and purchased supplies to carry us over through the storm. The shelves had already begun to look bare. We were able to purchase our essentials. Water went from \$3–5 per case to \$17–42 per case. Luckily, I had stocked up on water days before. Gasoline prices went up as well. In the event you did not stock up before the storm, you were pretty much unable to get anything unless your neighbor had what you needed. In some cities, residents were told to write their names and social security numbers on themselves in case they needed to be identified after the storm.”



Joy Davis worked with other Greens to get needed supplies to neighborhoods not getting proper or timely government assistance.

During the storm, however, evacuations became mandatory. “The flooding was catastrophic. Highways were submerged up to the highway signs on the overpasses and our roadways looked like rivers. It was not ‘all hands on deck.’ People were calling 911 to be rescued. Their calls went unanswered or they experienced long wait times.” Davis described how Houstonians turned to social media to use apps like Zello, sending out emergency requests for rescues because water was coming into their homes, forcing them to climb onto the roof to survive.

“The Mayor put out a call to anyone who had a boat to come to Houston and assist in rescues. There were boat and helicopter rescues happening 24 hours a day/every day. Some portions of the highway were turned into drop-off points for those being rescued by helicopter. . . . Our Mayor has faced harsh criticism for telling people to shelter in place, however he stands by his decision.”

“Most of the photos you have seen regarding the flooding in the Houston, Texas area is my neighborhood. I resided in this same area when Tropical Storm Allison hit which brought about 28 to 30 inches of water and we survived. . . . I was fearful of falling

asleep because you don’t want to wake up trapped in a residence filled with water. On the very last day Hurricane Harvey was to impact our area, it looked as if the Bayou was going to breach its banks near the area close to me. That has never happened before. People have lost everything here. They have lost their jobs, cars, homes, family members, and their lives. Our death toll keeps rising. People have been reported missing, they are still finding bodies that were swept away, and trapped in homes. Evacuees rescued in Dickinson and the surrounding area were flown to Dallas. There were over 9,000 Hurricane Harvey evacuees in the George R. Brown Convention Center alone. NRG Stadium was also turned into a shelter.”

People have lost everything here. They have lost their jobs, cars, homes, family members, and their lives. Our death toll keeps rising.

The worst was not over, according to Davis, after the hurricane passed. In the cities of Houston and Katy, for example, one of the reservoirs began overflowing into the neighborhoods. “The decision was then made to release the waters from the reservoirs, intentionally flooding the homes that were nearby, to prevent the dams from failing. So, if you survived without any damage during the hurricane, your home was now going to be intentionally flooded within certain areas.”

What positive things arose from this destruction? Davis describes how the community rallied to help. “I witnessed every day people step up and help their communities. People have been traumatized but are working through that to help their community the best way they can. The Cajun Navy from Louisiana saved so many lives. Companies sent massive trucks in to rescue people and transport them to shelters. Mosques opened their doors to evacuees, Gallery Furniture turned its store into a shelter. Hilton Furniture was transporting people in their company trucks to shelters. Harris County Greens like myself and my son Victor Mendoza of the GPUS Youth Caucus began to organize clothing drives. They went from residence to residence picking up clothes from those willing to donate to the hurricane evacuees. They knew something else had to be done because access to Houston was extremely limited and people needed help. Those affected by the hurricane lost everything so they were not able to make it to donation pick-up sites. Some places required you to have identification to get assistance.”

Davis and her son began a campaign in which Greens all over the country donated to help get supplies directly to the hurricane evacuees or areas that had not received any assistance from governmental agencies.

“The people helping those affected by the Hurricane and providing direct outreach to these neglected communities are individuals with a passion to help others and grassroots organizations. Robin Denise Harris is a Green I had direct contact with as well. She was in Texas that was actively on



Texas National Guard Soldiers respond to the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Tim Pruitt)

the ground helping communities with disaster clean up in Columbus, Texas and the surrounding area. She stated how some residents thought that she was with FEMA coming to help them.”

A week after Harvey, Houston remained in survival mode. “The roads were operational but some areas were still underwater,” said Davis. “People were gutting their homes and needing cleaning supplies. They were throwing everything out on the streets, but it was just sitting there. The debris had not been picked up and it was foul smelling and becoming toxic. They were going to send the evacuees that were currently at the George R. Brown Convention Center to Northwest Mall but changed their minds even though portable toilets had been set up there. The Red Cross came under a lot of criticism here for staying in five star hotels costing close to \$200 a night. They claimed a portion of their website that had an area that distributed financial assistance to Harvey evacuees had crashed. However, the donation portion of the site was still up and running. People that were in the shelter came out with how the Red Cross handled donations that were received and a Kingwood Representative that is on our City Council went viral telling people not to donate to the Red Cross. School started back while some of the children and teachers had lost everything.”

When asked about what the future may hold for Houston, as rebuilding efforts commence, Davis said, “Houston will recover, rebuild, and become even more resilient than before. I believe there were lessons learned that will help our city be better prepared for when these events happen again in the future.” As of November many still had no government assistance.

Hurricane Irma in Florida

Joni Leviness, a Green from Oklahoma who has been caring for her mother in Hollywood, Florida since March 2015, weathered Hurricane Irma by staying in place, since her mother refused to evacuate.

“Listening to the local public radio WLRN on a transistor radio made me realize just how deep the need for connection is especially in times of turmoil. . . . What I heard mostly was all the systems that were so touted as being prepared were not, and the Woodlake Dam depth waters were ready to break free.”

On September 15th Leviness reported having been without electricity for days and that the community came together to sup-

port each other. “I met more neighbors. We were six days without electricity and keeping mom cool became so much better since a neighbor with electricity and a cord let us plug in an a/c. Another neighbor with a generator let us plug in our fridge and a fan. I hate to think where we’d have been without them. We may have been without electricity, but we were far from powerless.”



Joni Leviness, who stayed to take care of her mother through Hurricane Irma in Florida, links the global environmental crisis to capitalism.

Leviness reflected on how to move forward from this experience and what it means to be Green, “I was trying to think how I could pay it forward so I set up a sign where I’ve been free cycling for the past two plus years. . . . Hurricane Irma cleared away more of the debris from the diseased and decaying systems that need to go. The old systems that are resource extractive and predatory, are shown for what they are. Each crisis highlights the gaping holes which are leaving people to die, like the extremely vulnerable in nursing homes, and in their own homes with day to day healthcare needs, housing needs, clean food, water, air and connectivity needs which increasingly is apparent that it cannot happen within this capitalist system. As a Green I’ve known this for a long time, that these systems can and will be replaced with alternatives as more people recognize that energy must be resourced into these systems, rather than expending energy into opposing the capitalist system, which just feeds on any energy you give it.”

We are continuing to collect stories on the effects of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria for our next issue. Please submit your stories to greenpages@greens.org

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Que Viva Puerto Rico Libre!

By David McCorquodale, Green Party of Delaware

In the late spring of 2017, the Latinx Caucus of the Green Party of the United States (GPUS) released a statement by co-chair **Darlene Elias**, in support of the actions of the New York Puerto Rican Day parade, which noted that “it is now to the point that it [Puerto Rico] can no longer sustain itself and a humanitarian crisis now exists. . . .” That statement was prescient as the situation has become exponentially worse after the devastating destruction from Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

The GPUS platform has called for Puerto Rican independence as the only solution that would allow the Puerto Rican people to address their own problems. While it could require a history course to understand that Puerto Rico has long been treated as a colony, a brief outline may help to understand.

Originally populated by native Taino people, Columbus claimed Puerto Rico for Spain late in the 15th century. It endured various forcible takeovers by other European nations, but Spain again controlled it in the late 19th century. Meanwhile, after the introduction of African slaves and waves of Iberian immigrants, the culture had become creole Hispanic. After the Spanish-American war, the United States took it over.

Puerto Rico is now known as a “free associated state”, a change, which occurred in 1952, following an uprising for independence in 1950 and international pressure. Individuals are U.S. citizens, and some have fought and died in U.S. wars, but many Puerto

Ricans believe the island still exists under colonial rule. Taxes are imposed on imports that make consumer goods two to three times more expensive than on the U.S. mainland. Corporations do not pay taxes on the profits they extract from the island. While the Puerto Rican government is \$73 billion in debt, corporations have extracted over \$600 billion in profits in recent years. Even a modest tax would have eliminated the debt. GPUS calls for forgiving the debt and ending the tax on imports. Though Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens, they cannot vote in the presidential election and they are not represented in Congress.

In June, Elias addressed the U.N. Committee on Decolonization, severely criticizing the “establishment of the Financial Oversight and Management Board, otherwise known as the Junta, [which] is just a measure put in place by the U.S. to ensure that its benefactors continue to prosper from the predatory lending practices of its banks and corporations under the guise of helping the people of Puerto Rico.”

That was before the island was devastated by storms. Now it is even more obvious that debt repayment will not be possible. However, the foot-dragging repair efforts seem to be pointing to another nefarious solution. Tens of thousands of Puerto Ricans have given up and have migrated to the U.S. mainland. Some suspect that the goal is to simply wait until many leave.

Monika Ponton Arrington, who met

Elias as the U.N. committee meeting and who has joined the Latinx Caucus, addressed the motivation behind the U.S. actions: “[Puerto Rico is] treated as resort island for the wealthy and famous, yet our island has a population of Boricuas who have lived there for generations and are poor with the lack of medical and schools for the people.”

While the Puerto Rican government is \$73 billion in debt, corporations have extracted over \$600 billion in profits in recent years. Even a modest tax would have eliminated the debt.

Hector Lopez, a Puerto Rican who has been active in the Connecticut Green Party for over 20 years, adds “Now they want a Puerto Rico empty of Puerto Ricans so that they can build a paradise for themselves, no Puerto Ricans allowed. This was done in Hawaii and now the Hawaiians find it too expensive to live there in their homeland. By the way, gentrification has already begun.

When speaking before the U.N. committee last June, Darlene Elias pointed out “the Puerto Rican people are despondent



and have lost faith in the political system. Only 23 percent of residents living on the island showed up to the polls to vote in the most recent plebiscite. This is a very low number when you take into account that Puerto Rico consistently has high voter turn out. It is also by far the most telling statement of the Puerto Rican people’s desire for independence.” Those preferring independence boycotted the plebiscite.

Elias’ statement continues: “However, the U.S. should not assume, under false pretenses as it did with Hawaii, that Puerto Rico wants to be a state. Instead, Puerto Ricans should be allowed to govern themselves as an independent state and or sovereign entity - whichever the people elect. The Green Party maintains that it is only when Puerto Rico is able to exercise their right to self-determination and dictate its own circumstances that it will prevail. In conclusion, true democracy is the only path to liberation and as a party we will continue to stand with Puerto Ricans towards this end. We do thank the committee in advance for its consideration and noble effort in realizing our mutual goal of decolonization and seeing Puerto Rico succeed. Que Viva Puerto Rico Libre!”

How to deal with all the garbage New York Greens propose Pay-As-You-Throw

By Mark Dunlea, Green Party of New York State

The production of garbage and waste is a huge problem throughout the planet. The creation of waste depletes critical natural resources and its disposal usually creates additional harmful pollution. Disposing of garbage is one of the biggest expenses taxpayers face at the local level. Also, the disposal of waste is often an environmental justice problem as landfills, incinerators and transfer stations are often situated in low-income communities of color.

The best way to deal with garbage is to avoid creating it in the first place. Those who create the garbage — the initial manufacturers — need to be held financially responsible for its ultimate disposal. One simple step is to require packaging to be made of reusable or recyclable material. For waste that remains, we should first reuse and then recycle it. The goal is to have nothing left to landfill.

The Greens have long opposed the incineration of waste as it emits toxic pollutants, including heavy metals and dioxin, undercuts recycling and costs taxpayers lots of money. The Green national platform calls for a zero waste policy. Zero waste emphasizes waste prevention as opposed to end-of-pipe waste management. Zero waste focuses on restructuring production and distribution systems to reduce waste.

In Rensselaer County, located three hours north of NYC, local Greens have helped make a volume based garbage system a major issue. In order to hide a 15 percent tax increase, the mayor of Troy decided this fall to propose moving garbage from the city budget and instead impose a \$190 per household fee on garbage disposal. The Democrats argued that such a fee would provide an incentive to reduce the amount of garbage. The Greens and the Republicans pointed out that if you wanted to reduce garbage, you should charge the fee based on how much you throw out while doing recycling for free (Troy only recycles 6 percent of its

garbage).

The Green City Project of the Green Education and Legal Fund (GELF) had proposed a Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) system for Troy 17 years ago. Students at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) had conducted a study of the city’s solid waste program which is available on GELF’s website. The study recommended a volume-based system such as used in Binghamton as well as composting and an improved recycling system. Residents who throw out more garbage to be landfilled would pay a higher rate. The study also recommended overhauling the city’s moribund recycling programs and establishing a municipal composting pickup program. When the Greens re-released the study, it became front-page news and dominated the discussion at the city council meeting.

A Pay-As-You-Throw program would be a win-win, both for saving residents and the city money, as well as finally working on the terrible waste problem that is destroying the planet.

“A volume-based municipal solid waste program introduces financial incentives to recycle and disincentives to discard recyclables with trash. An increase in the recycling rate means increased revenues for the city from sale of the recyclables, and a decrease in tipping fee expenditures,” said Prof. Steve Breyman of RPI, one of the co-authors of the study.

Under a volume-based system, residents are charged for waste collection

based on the number and size of waste containers that they use. In some communities, households are charged directly for waste collection (usually through direct billing) based on the number of bags or cans set out at the curb. Others require residents to purchase special trash bags, tags, or stickers that include the cost of waste collection in the purchase price.

The Greens pointed out that the city must educate residents about the environmental and economic benefits of a PAYT program prior to implementation. Pamphlets, leaflets, community meetings, and public hearings are all useful methods of increasing public awareness. Education will increase compliance, and should be continued well after the program goes into effect.

“A Pay-As-You-Throw program in Troy would be a win win, both for saving residents and the city money, as well as, finally working on the terrible waste problem that is destroying the planet. Many people do not realize Green policies helpful to the environment, actually save citizens money and bolster job growth. The volume-based garbage system is one such example,” said **Deyva Arthur**, a Troy resident and long-time Green.

The Democrats eventually amended their fee proposal to say they would study the implementation of the PAYT system over the next three years. The Republicans — who probably were more motivated by causing problems for the Democratic mayor — balked, saying “we want a PAYT system now, not a promise of possible future action.” Eventually the garbage fee was removed, leaving a \$3 million hole in the budget. The real effect was to kick the issue over to the new incoming City Council, which will have a new Democratic majority. Several of them have stated their support for a PAYT system.

Other approaches to reducing garbage are being proposed in different parts of the

state. The Green Party in Brooklyn helped organize an effort to get rid of plastic bags. New York City spends \$12 million annually to dump 10 billion plastic bags in landfills. Many more bags get stuck in trees, storm drains, sewage-treatment plants and recycling machinery.

Research shows that plastics originating from land account for 80 percent of global marine pollution. Plastic bags never break down. Instead, plastic breaks up into tiny little pieces that end up in the ocean to be consumed by wildlife. There are an estimated 46,000–1,000,000 plastic fragments floating within every square mile of our world’s oceans.

While the City’s had limited legal ability to deal with plastic bags due to state law, after four years the Mayor agreed to sign a bill that imposed a five-cent fee on plastic bags (with an exemption for purchases made with food stamps or WIC). The governor and state legislature took the unusual step of blocking the city law under pressure from the plastic bag industry, but the governor set up a task force to make a recommendation for state action by the end of 2017.

Greens elsewhere in the state have helped enact laws that ban plastic bags or impose a fee. The Green Party is now working for a bill to ban them statewide, with a fee for other bags. Other cities across the country starting with California have cut plastic-bag use by 60 percent or more.

POSITIONS OPEN

GPUS needs people with skills in organizing, volunteer coordination, project management, event planning, social media, writing, graphic design, and fundraising. Some of this work is paid, and some volunteer. Tell us what you can do, and let us put you to work growing the party!
write to: secretary@gp.org

This red state is turning Green

A profile on Texas

From GPUS.org

The nation’s second-largest state is also one of its reddest. In 2012 and 2014, Republican candidates for president, governor, and U.S. Senate all topped 57 percent of the vote in Texas, and the state has not had a non-Republican governor or senator in more than 20 years. But even in such seemingly inhospitable terrain, the Green Party is making inroads.

This past June, 2017, Aleksandra Anello won a seat on the El Paso city council in a run-off election. She garnered more than 60 percent of the vote against an incumbent. In 2012, two Green candidates for statewide office (state Supreme Court and railroad commissioner) received nearly 500,000 votes each, and the GP national ticket received more than 24,000 votes after receiving fewer than one thousand statewide in 2008. Two years later, Green U.S. Senate nominee Emily Marie Sanchez took 1.2 percent of the vote, and U.S. House candidate Antonio Diaz finished second in a three-way race with 15 percent of the vote. In 2016, Green George Altgelt was elected to the city council in Laredo, a city of 250,000.

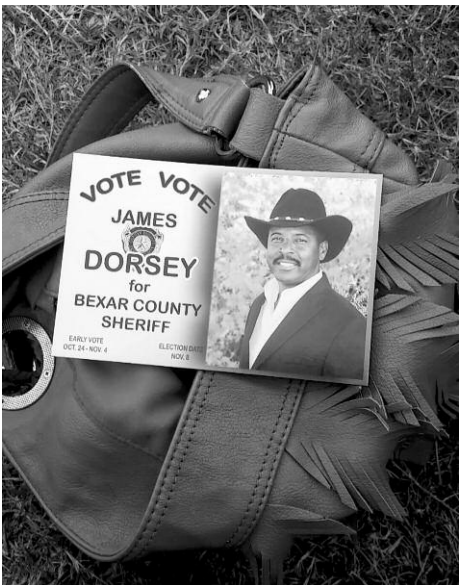
Texas is a red state, so there is no ‘lesser evil’ risk in voting Green.

GPTX already set a new record in 2016, with more than 50 candidates running for offices across the state. There are candidates for the U.S. House in 19 of the state’s 36 districts. This was the first time the Green Party fielded candidates in a majority of the state’s races. GPTX has held workshops to prepare for a petition drive for ballot access. Five people have already declared to run for specific offices in 2018 with others intending to run for an undecided office.

“Texas is a red state, so there is no ‘lesser evil’ risk in voting Green,” said Aaron Renaud of GPTX. “Besides, the Democrats do not have the energy or motivation to fix the campaign finance system, in that regard they are just as culpable. In the end, I would say to vote for the only party that doesn’t accept corporate donations. I would say to put real people into office, not politicians.”

But there are challenges in organizing in a state that covers more than a quarter-million square miles and that has more than 250 counties. Co-chair Laura Palmer says, “Because the state is so large, party cohesion is one of our biggest challenges. Getting to know party members in other areas, keeping track of the status of local parties, and having the ability to screen volunteers for key roles are all enormous concerns.” Palmer says the GPTX has started to implement an “intentionally regional approach,” urging locals in the same parts of the state to work together.

Beyond the physical and logistical challenges, some aspects of the Green agenda are a challenge to sell in the Lone Star State. “Obviously Texas is deeply invested in oil and gas, so the complete transition to re-



Still, as America is changing, so is Texas. As of 2010, nearly 38 percent of the state’s population was Latinx, with 45 percent of residents non-Latinx whites. Only one out of three students in the state’s schools today are non-Latinx whites.

“Our humane perspective on immigration is certainly welcoming to the Hispanic community,” Palmer says. “Poverty, social justice, and the need for single-payer healthcare all resonate here, as does ending the drug war.”

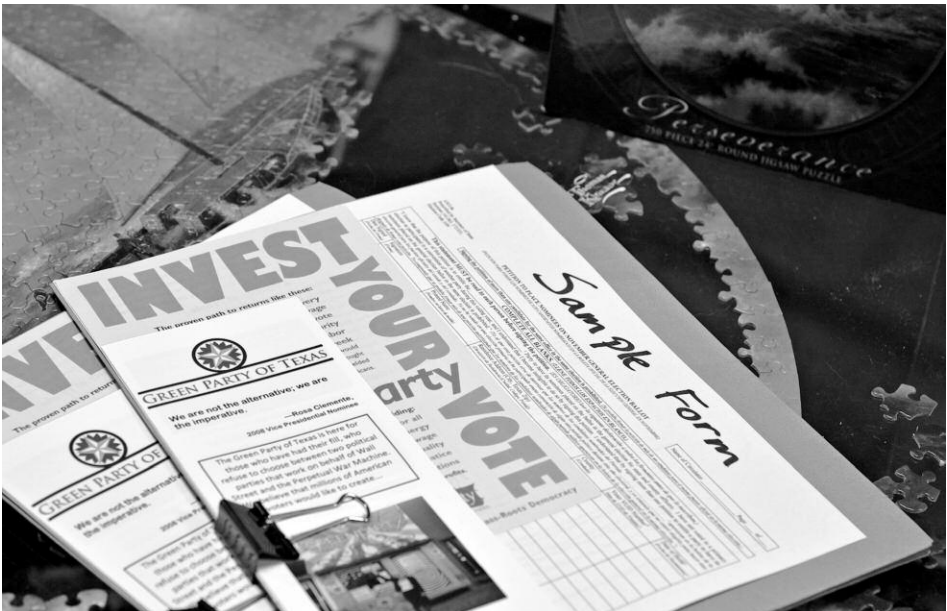
Poverty, social justice, and the need for single-payer healthcare all resonate here, as does ending the drug war.

Renaud says Greens in Texas are reaching out to the state’s Latinx community by working with the new GPUS Latinx Caucus and producing campaign literature in Spanish. He adds, “Many of our members, candidates, and officers are Latino/a or speak Spanish, much like Texas as a whole.”

“For years, we have watched as the establishment agenda grinds on,” says Palmer. Regardless of which party is in power, we continue our imperialist wars and policies that benefit big business.” But Texas “is very liberty-loving. . . . To the degree that GPTX can project itself as non-statist and respectful of the rights of individuals while also recognizing the need for government to function for the common good, we emerge as a viable alternative.”

Palmer sees opportunities for the party as voters become disenchanted and turnout declines.

“With all the billions of dollars that are poured into elections each cycle, the establishment parties can’t even motivate more than one-third of voters to participate,” she notes. “As soon as Greens build enough awareness in the general public, we are poised to emerge as a major factor in U.S. elections by giving the disenfranchised two-thirds something to vote for.”



newable energy is received with some anxiety and skepticism,” says Palmer. “But even so, people seem willing to concede that it is a transition that must eventually happen. There is also resistance to the idea of a basic income, as if people can’t believe that we could actually provide for everyone. . . . Still, I think the assurance of basic income could be a comfort to those who have anxiety about systemic transition; so that people need not fear losing their job in the oil and

gas sector, because everyone will be allowed a basic living.”

Renaud sees a similar challenge. “While people can easily identify with rooting out corruption, fair campaigns, environmental protections, and other common-sense ideas, the myth of the American Dream is still very powerful, especially in Texas,” he says. “There are many that do not acknowledge the relationship between economic and social oppression.”

Politics and music stay in the family

Portrait of a Utah Green – Brendan Phillips

By Deanna Dee Taylor, Green Party of Utah

Brendan Phillips can be described in many ways. He is a stay-at-home dad of two boys, musician and DJ, activist and grandson of musician/dissenter, Utah Phillips. The 34-year-old was also Green Party write-in candidate for Utah’s Congressional District 3 special election this fall.

“I began organizing at the young age of 17 years old.” Phillips said he never channeled all of those experiences into politics until 2016, when I was inspired by the Bernie Sanders campaign. “Prior to that, I was largely non-participatory. I felt elections were a sham...I felt my vote was a wasted effort. The Sanders campaign showed me a grass-roots effort can indeed have an impact at the ballot box.”

Much of Phillips’ passion for politics is not coincidental and can be attributed to his grandfather, legendary folk singer and labor organizer Bruce (Utah) Phillips. “My grandfather ran for U.S. Senate in 1968 on the Peace and Freedom Party ticket. He was an anti-war activist and champion for the work-

ing class.” Also like his grandfather, Phillips has a deep love for music. “My dream would be to one day own a record store which would serve as a social hub for local musicians, producers, and DJs. I got my first guitar at ten years old, and played my first gig in a bar at eleven.”

Nothing inspires me more than seeing different folks, from different walks of life, coming together in solidarity to fight for the common good.

Though Phillips is an active Green Party member, he had to run as an Independent candidate in the special election for Utah’s Congressional District 3 in November. The Green Party of Utah had not yet achieved ballot access at the time of the filing date.

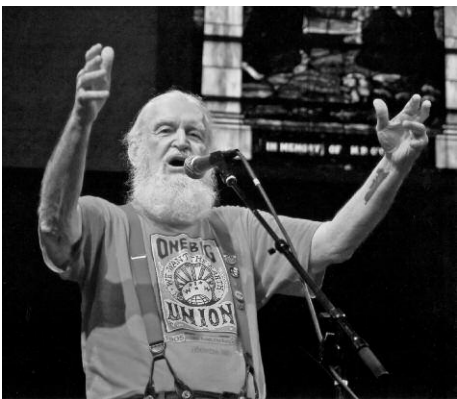


Brendan Phillips helped revive the Green Party of Utah, and get it on the ballot.

Phillips became attracted to and joined the Green Party because of its platform. “It is the ONLY party whose platform aligns almost perfectly with my ideals. The Green Party rejects war, oppression, and capitalist exploitation. The party supports grassroots democracy, social justice, environmental stewardship, and non-violence. The party offers a perspective and platform that compares to no other party.”

Phillips was the driving force behind the petition to get 2016 Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein on Utah’s ballot. At the time of the presidential election, Utah did not have an active Green Party, however, Phillips was instrumental in reviving the Green Party of Utah. After a year and half of recruiting members and heading up the petition drive to achieve ballot access, the party reached the requirements of Utah’s ballot access laws and became an official party with the state.

The party’s first annual convention was held in June where Phillips was elected to serve as one of two national delegates to the GPUS National Committee and government liaison for the Green Party of Utah. He also serves as secretary of the Young Greens of Utah and is a co-chair of the National Green Party Youth Caucus. He is also the Northwest regional coordinator for the GPUS



Bruce “Utah” Phillips, labor activist and folk singer

Ballot Access Committee.

“I have marched/rallied for countless issues ranging from healthcare, tribal sovereignty, police brutality, air quality, war, and many more. I have actively lobbied on capitol hill for bills relating to land use, Bears Ears, voter privacy, election reform, and social justice.” Phillips serves on the Board of Directors of The Long Memory Project, an effort to restore the “barn”, which was an old caboose that served as his grandfather’s recording studio. Phillips is also the secretary of the Tooele County Historic Preservation Commission.

Phillips identified seeing grassroots democracy in action as the most positive thing about working in the Green Party. “To see solidarity and direct action unite the people is an inspiring experience, and it is this experience that oftentimes keeps me going. When you can gather with those fighting for the same things, stand together in solidarity, and collectivize your energy....it can be very powerful, inspiring, and change-making. There is nothing more inspiring than seeing collective direct action directly influence change.”

“The most un-American thing you can do is to stifle dissent.” – Utah Phillips

The greatest difficulty as a Green for Phillips is dealing with his own fear and self-doubt. “Politics are dog eat dog. They are designed to keep the average guy out, and the status quo in place. People like me are mocked and intimidated, and encouraged to simply butt out. I often feel like a fish out of water, which is exactly how the establishment wants me to feel. They want me...to return to my non-participation. Sometimes it’s hard to convince myself I am doing the right thing.”

One of the most crucial issues facing the Green Party, from Phillips’ perspective is restrictive ballot access legislation. “I also feel that other crucial issues we face include billions of dollars in private interest money, and corporate biased media. These things keep the corporate backed oligarchy in place.”

Phillips states that an organized strategy to combat these crucial issues must be developed. “That can be done through electoral reform, utilization of independent media, and well-organized state parties. We must fight to get big money out of politics, and loudly call out those who accept this money.”

He describes the most rewarding part of being a Green. “Nothing inspires me more than seeing different folks, from different walks of life, coming together in solidarity to fight for the common good.”

Phillips carries his family legacy true to the words and music of his grandfather through the history upon which he continues to build quoting Utah Phillips, “Yes, the long memory is the most radical idea in this country. It is the loss of that long memory which deprives our people of that connective flow of thoughts and events that clarifies our vision, not of where we’re going, but where we want to go.”

What would Green tax reform look like?

The national platform on fair taxation

FAIR TAXATION

Federal and state taxes must be strongly progressive.

Our current tax system is outrageously unjust. It is riddled with loopholes, subsidies and dodges for corporations and the super-rich. Most working people pay too much in taxes compared to corporations, multi-millionaires and billionaires. Many of our biggest and most profitable corporations pay little or no tax. Much investment income is taxed at less than the rate workers pay.

We can afford to cut taxes for most people if we make corporations and the super-rich pay their fair share. Then we can cut them even more when we halt our nation’s wasteful spending on wars, weaponry and militarism.

We call for progressive taxation, shifting tax from individuals to corporations, taxing “bads” not “goods,” taxing unearned income at the same rate as earned income, taxing speculation on Wall Street, and cutting corporate tax giveaways.

We will institute comprehensive tax reform to simplify the tax system. We will eliminate loopholes and other exemptions that favor corporate and wealthy interests over tax justice.

Small business, in particular, should not be penalized by a tax system which benefits those who can “work” the legislative tax committees for breaks and subsidies. We support substantive and wide-ranging reform of the tax system that helps create jobs, economic efficiencies and innovation within the small business community. We will end “corporate welfare.” Smaller businesses are the USA’s great strength. Greens believe government should have a tax policy which encourages small and socially responsible business.

Political democracy remains a distant promise without economic democracy. A principal instrument for achieving economic democracy is our tax system. Taxes are the means whereby we fund our public services. They can also help create equity, justice, health and sustainability.

Cut taxes for wage workers

Exempt people earning less than \$25,000 per year and families earning less than \$50,000 per year (adjusted for inflation) from the federal and state income taxes.

Exempt food, clothing, prescription medications, other necessities and second-hand goods from sales taxes.

Fair taxes for corporations and the wealthy

End corporate welfare, such as the bailouts for Wall Street, the big banks and the automobile industry; subsidies for agribusiness, Export-Import Bank loan guarantees; tax abatements for big box stores; the tax loophole for “carried interest” from private equity and hedge fund managers; tax deductibility for advertising and business entertainment; offshore tax avoidance schemes; giveaways for new sports stadiums and casinos.

Impose a financial transaction tax on trades of stocks, bonds, currency, derivatives, and other financial instruments.

Block financial transactions with tax havens, to stop tax evasion.

Decrease the \$1 million home value cap on the mortgage interest tax deduction for federal income taxes, to reduce the tax subsidy provided to those living in the most expensive homes.

Restore the estate tax.

Apply the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (Social Security and Medicare) taxes to investment income and to all levels of income, not merely the first \$106,800 earned.

Oppose the privatization of Social Security.

Enact a wealth tax of 0.5% per year on an individual’s assets over \$5 million.

Eco-taxes to help save the planet

Establish a system of carbon taxes on all fossil fuels, to begin to reflect the real environmental cost of their extraction and use. Carbon taxes should be applied as far upstream as possible, preferably when possession of the carbon-bearing fuel passes from extraction (for example, coal mine; oil wellhead or tanker; gas wellhead) to the next entity in the supply chain (for example, coal shipper or utility; oil refiner or importer; natural gas pipeline). Offset potential regressivity for lower income individuals via the Green Tax shift that lowers income taxes and/or other approaches.

Eliminate tax subsidies for the oil, gas, coal, nuclear and timber and mining industries.

Enact a Green Tax Shift that shifts from taxing people and work (via income and payroll taxes) to taxing natural resource extraction, use, waste and pollution.

Enact a system of Community Ground Rent/Land Value Taxation that distinguishes

between the socially and privately created wealth of land, by increasing the taxes on the former to retain for society the value that it collectively creates and lowers them on the latter to reward individuals for their initiative and work.

To ensure that prices reflect their true environmental cost, enact a system of True Cost Pricing (TCP) for goods and services. TCP is an accounting and pricing system that includes all costs in the price of a product. TCP charges extractive and productive industries for the immediate or prolonged damage (pollution of air and water) and diminishment of natural resources caused by

their acts.

Impose a carbon fee on goods imported from nations with lower carbon taxes than in the U.S., based upon the carbon spent in manufacturing and transporting them to the U.S.

Other tax reforms

Simplify the tax code. Make it transparent, understandable and resistant to the machinations of powerful corporate and wealthy interests.

Eliminate tax incentives to send jobs overseas.

Raise taxes on tobacco, alcohol, soda pop and other junk food.

Tax bill another reason to vote Green

By Joy Davis, Green Party of Texas

As one of the Green Party’s National Outreach Committee co-chairs as well as a co-chair of the National Women’s Caucus, I want to let you about the senate and house versions of the GOP Tax Reform bills and what it could mean for you.

Tuition waivers, for example: currently, grad students who work as research or teaching assistants are exempt from paying taxes on the tuition waivers they receive in exchange for work. Under the House bill, the exemption for tuition waivers would be eliminated. This means graduate students would have to count the waivers as income, even though they did not receive the money directly. Now, under the Senate bill, the exemption for tuition waivers would remain in place.

The Senate version of the Tax bill also includes a provision to allow for drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We continuously see the damage that occurs when these pipelines leak. It is an environmental disaster.

On a side note, Al Green (not the entertainer), U.S. Representative from Texas, pushed forward with Articles of Impeachment against Donald Trump. Now Republicans are the majority in the House and the Senate; however, there were Democrats who voted in favor of tabling the impeachment resolution.



The upcoming 2018 elections are so important. A total of 468 seats in the U.S. Congress (33 Senate seats and all 435 House seats) are up for election next November.

We want you to not only vote Green. We want you to join the Green Party and get involved at the local level as well as the national level. We also encourage you to run for office. We want to continue seeing Green candidates getting elected, so, let’s send a message to Congress. Every Representative that voted in favor of this tax reform bill, we will vote against them in November and vote Green in 2018.

Maine legislators join Green Party

By Deyva Arthur, Green Party of New York State

The Party’s commitment to clean money politics and real democracy has been a significant cause of two Maine State Representatives while in office to defect to Green. **Henry John Bear** and **Ralph Chapman** both joined the Maine Green Independent Party this fall, making them the highest-ranking elected Green officeholders in the country. “I have joined the Maine Green Independent Party in order to highlight the democracy-diminishing effects of corporate funding influence on the statehouse party leadership of Maine’s two largest political parties” Chapman said of his reason for leaving the Democratic Party. “I saw more clearly that even our state legislature is largely controlled by accountability to funding sources, not people. The Maine Green Independent Party offers an alternative. In essence, the Maine Green Independent Party is demonstrating, by its actions, how to behave as though the Citizens United Supreme Court decision were overturned.”

The Green Party does not accept corporate donations, in contrast to the Democrats and Republicans. In his fourth term serving District 133, which comprises Blue Hill, Brooklin, Brooksville, Castine, Sedgwick and Surry, Chapman decided to change is affiliation after lawmakers overturned citizen-initiated legislation particularly in regard to ranked voting and minimum wage increases. A month after Chapman defected, Bear



Rep. Henry John Bear, Tribal Member Representing the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians (Photo by Joe Phelan)

also decided to join the Maine Greens. “I have found that our issues are very similar,” said Bear on why he joined the party, “especially on the issues of the environment and civil rights and sustainable economic development and income equity. I believe in health care for everyone who can’t afford it and I believe in ensuring that one person’s hard day’s work results in a living wage, enough for a house and a car payment, and



Rep. Ralph Chapman of Brookville, Maine (Photo by Linda Coan O’Kresik, Bangor Daily News)

food for her family.” Bear has held office since 2013 and was the first elected member of the Maine House of Representatives on behalf of the Maliseet people of the Houlton Band. Like Chapman, he left the Democratic Party to join the Greens. Party co-chair, Jon Olsen said “We Greens have long understood that our values of ecological wisdom, stewardship, and social justice are congruent with those of the traditions of First Peoples in this land,” Chapman also has a dedication to the environment and ecological sustainability. A scientist for more than 25 years, he has worked at Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Lincoln Lab and Tufts University’s Electro-Optics Technology Center. More re-

cently, Chapman has worked with United Technologies Center. His research concentrates on renewable energy and energy efficiency. He currently sits on the state Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry.

“The Maine Green Independent Party is demonstrating, by its actions, how to behave as though the Citizens United Supreme Court decision were overturned.”
— Ralph Chapman

Olsen thinks this may be the start of a trend for politicians to choose the Green Party. “We hope that other legislators of either major party will consider following [their] lead and that new aspiring candidates will do so as well. Toxic political environments, like physical toxic environments must be decontaminated.” Maine has been a high point for the Green Party. Chapman and Bear follow John Eder in highest office holding Greens. Eder served two terms from 2002 – 2006 in the Maine House of Representatives.

California candidate arrested at DACA protest

On December 5, Green congressional candidate **Angelica Dueñas** was detained by police, after demonstrating in Senator Dianne Feinstein’s Los Angeles office in support of permanent protection for DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) recipients. Dueñas made a statement about DACA and her detention:

The current presidential administration is on the path of destroying millions of people’s lives – including by taking away DACA protection from over 800,000 Dreamers, putting them at risk to lose everything that they are working for. Breaking up families and destroying homes. And robbing us all of the rich contributions Dreamers have to offer. I and several others went to Senator Feinstein’s office today to exercise our First Amendment rights, in order to highlight the importance of protecting our DACA recipient sisters and brothers’ right to stay in the country they call home. We condemn President Trump’s repeal of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and we call for Congress to immediately pass legislation to permanently protect young immigrants who came here as children without legal status. We also call

for Congress to immediately begin the process for comprehensive immigration reform towards a legal path to citizenship for all NOW. We chose Senator Feinstein’s office to highlight her role and responsibility as a senior Senator from California, a state with the most Dreamers in the country. While we were prepared to be arrested if necessary to promote this issue, we were shocked when we were detained and escorted off the property in handcuffs by police officers within seconds! This suggests insufficient interest in the Senator’s office in hearing our concerns. We believe that our elected officials are public servants. Their role is to make their constituents’ voices heard and fight for our issues. We also believe that it is our responsibility as community members that our representatives hear our demands. With the 2018 elections approaching, it is time to identify who stands with the People – and vote accordingly. That’s why we took the step of getting arrested in order to highlight the inactivity of our elected officials. We hope our message gets through to Senator Feinstein and that she supports a Clean Dream Act to give



Angelica Dueñas

permanent protection to the Dreamers. I know that this is what our constituents want in CA 29. In solidarity, Angelica Duenas for Congress, angelica4congress.com.

For the Green Party of Los Angeles County Statement on DACA go to:
 In English: losangeles.cagreens.org/issues/daca-nov-2017.
 In Spanish: losangeles.cagreens.org/issues/daca-nov-2017-esp

Greens of the Americas meet in Cancun



The Federacion de Partidos Verdes de las Americas (FPVA) held its annual meeting November 26-29 in in Cancun, Quintana Roo, Mexico, with Greens from eleven countries in attendance – Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Venezuela and the United States. The Green Party of the US was represented by three delegates, picture here from left to right **Bahram Zandi** (first on left), **Mike Feinstein** (four from left) and **Ahmed Al-Touny** (last on right). They are pictured here with members of the Young Greens of the Americas, that also met in Cancun over the same dates. Also pictured is **Maria Isabel Moreno Salazar** (fourth from right), who at 23 years old is the youngest member of Colombia’s national legislature. In addition to general business meetings of the FPVA, delegates and young Greens met with Green Mayors in Cancun and Puerto Morelos, and attended a debate among three candidates seeking to be elected next president of the Green Party of Mexico (Partido Verde Ecologista de Mexico). The FPVA has been meeting annual since 1998, working on international Green issues and promoting the growth of Green Parties throughout the hemisphere. Prior to the FPVA, Greens in Mexico, Canada and the U.S. formed CANAMEX in 1991, to bring Greens together from the three countries to work to oppose the North American Free Trade agreement being negotiated at that time. Eventually CANAMEX led to the founding of the FPVA.

Saving the Menominee

Michigan Greens support mining moratorium

By Aimee Cree Dunn, Green Party of Michigan

The proposed Back 40 Mine will poison Menominee County waters, members agreed at a recent meeting of the Green Party of Michigan (GPMI). They continue to support and promote a moratorium of metallic sulfide mining similar to a moratorium in Wisconsin.

Also known as the ‘Prove It First’ law, the mining law in Wisconsin has helped protect their North Woods for nearly 20 years.

The Back 40 Mine would involve sulfide ore mining only 60 to 100 feet from the Menominee River and would create an 83-acre open pit mine over 750 feet deep as well as 152 acres of tailings. It will impact not only the land and waters of the Upper Peninsula, but also those of bordering Wisconsin.

Metallic sulfide mining creates acid mine drainage that can persist for thousands of years, destroying entire aquatic ecosystems and leaving a lasting heavy burden for taxpayers. And the fact is, there’s never been such a mine that didn’t seriously pollute its surrounding waters. This kind of mining threatens our traditional lifestyle of hunting, fishing, and gathering from a healthy land. It threatens a sustainable heritage that goes back centuries.

Menominee County resident and mother **Regina Chaltry** said “The local communities around the Menominee River and Green Bay are joining together to stop this mine from happening, which is evident by the number of surrounding counties, cities, towns and Tribal governments who have passed resolutions against the Back 40.”

“Wisconsin passed a moratorium on metallic sulfide ore mining in the state in 1998 after enormous pressure from people all across Wisconsin on the pro-mining ad-



The Oxbow on the Menominee River

ministration of Tommy Thompson,” GPMI member Linda Cree adds. “Unfortunately, efforts to repeal the moratorium have been launched recently by those hoping to develop a new mining district extending from northern Wisconsin and across the western Upper Peninsula of Michigan.”

Chaltry points out that the moratorium doesn’t ban mining. “All mining corporations

really must do is prove that sulfide mining can be done without polluting ground and surface water. If this advanced technology existed, then that law would not even be an issue.”

“Also known as the ‘Prove It First’ law, the mining law in Wisconsin has helped protect their North Woods for nearly 20 years,” Cree said. “In 2006, GPMI passed a resolution calling for a similar sulfide mining moratorium in Michigan. Like Wisconsin, we’re a water-rich state that could be devastated by metallic sulfide mining and the inevitable pollution it entails.”

GPMI’s call for a Wisconsin-style moratorium says: “No metallic sulfide mining will occur in Michigan until it can be proven that one metallic sulfide mine in the United States or Canada has operated for 10 years and been closed for 10 years without contaminating the groundwater or surface water.”

For more information visit the GPMI website at www.MIGreenParty.org.



Cheri Honkala speaking at the Saturday plenary meeting; seated: Akeem Browder, Seth Kaper-Dale, Ajamu Baraka



Lisa Durden, NJ Lt. Governor candidate



George Martin, SC co-chair candidate with Ajamu Baraka, 2016 VP candidate



Attendees outdoors on the NJIT campus



Members of the Latinx Caucus



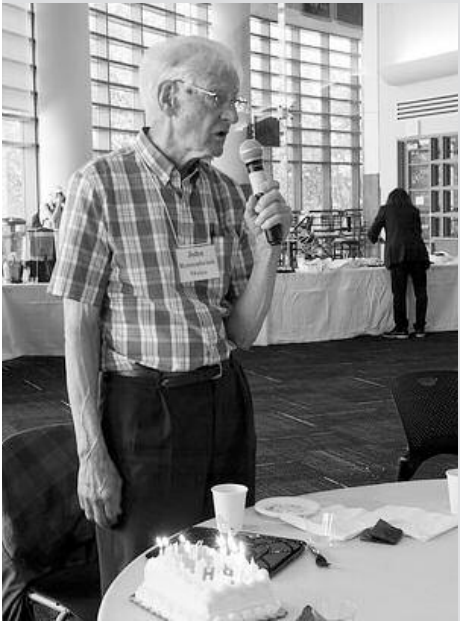
SC Co-chair Andrea Merida with Adrian Boutureira, National Political Organizer



Margaret Flowers speaking during a workshop; also Julie Varughese and Darryl! Mocho



Jill Stein speaking at Kaper-Dale / Durden fundraiser



John Rensinbrink addresses plenary after being recognized on his birthday



Caucus members air grievances during Saturday evening fundraiser



Tamar Yagar recognized for her many years of organizing Annual National Meetings

2017 Annual National Meeting, Newark NJ

News across America

More Green candidates enter races in 2017

In 2017, Greens across the nation have been electorally active and involved with the most candidates running on an off-year election. Here is a summary of some of what they have been getting up to:

Nationally, 44 Greens were elected, bringing the total number of Green officeholders to 137. In addition, despite 2016 having the lowest number of enrolled Greens in 15 years, 2017 experienced a 19 percent increase of registered Greens with a total of 257,389. This makes the Green Party of the United States the fourth-largest party in the country, and the largest that doesn't accept corporate money.

Green Party of Utah gains ballot access: On September 18, the Green Party of Utah received notification from the Lieutenant Governor's office that it had met the 2,000 signature threshold to gain ballot access as a political party in Utah. This allows for Green Party candidates to appear on ballots in 2018/2020, and voters will be able to register to vote as Green beginning November 30.

On June 10 in El Paso, Texas, **Alexsandra Annello** won a City Council seat in District 2. Although it was a non-partisan election, Annello was endorsed by the El Paso County Green Party.

On June 30 the Minneapolis city council

voted to accelerate the phase-in of the \$15/hour minimum wage. While council member **Cam Gordon** (G) argued for a faster phase-in for large companies, he reluctantly supported the five-year phase-in that the majority of council supported.

The Georgia Green Party has posted an online interview with **Dr. Margaret Flowers** on single payer healthcare, which can be found at georgiagreenparty.org.

In New York, **Jabari Brisport** ran an inspiring campaign for City Council in Brooklyn, receiving 29 percent of the vote and demonstrating a Red-Green Alliance for Greens and Socialists around the US! In Glens Falls, **Robin Barkenhagen** received 35 percent of the vote for Councilor-At-Large, riding a swell of community support that we know will only grow with him in the fights ahead. In Syracuse, first-time candidates **Eric Graf** and **Serena Seals** broke into double-digits, representing movements for Socialism and Black Lives Matter (see article below).

The Green Party of California and the Green Party of Los Angeles County have endorsed the Initiative to Repeal The Top Two Candidates Open Primary Law, a ballot measure that would overturn Top Two elections in California. "Californians deserve



Akeem Browder, Green candidate for NYC mayor marches to shut down Rikers Island Jail. (Photo by Tomas Mantilla)

more choice in elections, not less," said **Michael Feinstein**, former Green Mayor of Santa Monica and co-founder of GPCA. "Top Two elections undermine democracy by limiting voters to only two general election choices, while driving up the cost of running for office and making ballot access more difficult." Organized efforts are underway to gather the needed 365,880 signatures to place it on the November 2018 ballot.

The Green Party of Pennsylvania is celebrating several election victories for 2017. Out of ten candidates running, six were elected to office. **Jules Mermelstein**, statewide candidate for PA Superior Court Judge, was not one of those elected. However his strong showing was a victory in its own right, ensuring minor party status for GPPA for two more years. His vote count of 106,131 was more than eight times the number of registered Greens in the state. Mermelstein needed to get 2 percent of the number of votes received by the winner with the highest vote total in order for the Green Party to keep minor party designation in PA, and he achieved over 9 percent statewide.

In Tacoma, WA the jury trial of two grandmothers who, with others including two Green Party Tahoma members, had locked themselves to the auger at the unpermitted but under-construction LNG

plant in May, finally began on December 11. The defense attorney was allowed to present only one witness, a revered elder of the Puyallup Tribe. As it happens, the jury decided the case on the basis of her testimony. The many counts against our two heroines fell under two charges: Trespassing and Obstruction of Police. On the first, defendants were found Not Guilty; on the second, as Tacoma Police had no jurisdiction on tribal lands, they were declared Not Guilty and were free and clear of all charges.

Making history in the Canadian province of Prince Edward Island, voters in the riding of Charlottetown-Parkdale elected Green Party of Prince Edward Island candidate **Hannah Bell** in the November 27 provincial by-election, garnering a hugely impressive 35.4 percent of the popular vote, beating the governing Liberal Party by 7.2 percent. Remarkably, the Greens won ten of the 11 polls as voters sent Bell to the PEI legislature. She becomes the first female Green Party member east of British Columbia to win a seat in a Canadian provincial legislature. The PEI Greens now have two seats, as leader **Peter Bevan-Baker** won the riding of Kellys Cross-Cumberland in the 2015 provincial general election. There are now six elected Green Party members in Canadian provincial legislatures.



Jabari Brisport (lower center) gained significant attention from the media and his constituents in his bid for city council in Brooklyn.

New York gets attention in local elections

By Peter LaVenja, Green Party of New York State

2017 was a banner year for Greens in New York: we put forward 47 candidates and perhaps the most significant number of serious local campaigns in our party's history. As Greens, we find our greatest success in local races, where we reach the electorate door-to-door and do our best work countering the influence of big money by educating voters about our platform and putting forth a determined volunteer effort. Local election years tend to be ignored by the media, and often by the voters, too, yet this year was quite different: the amount of press and excitement generated by our local candidates was unprecedented.

A quick rundown of some of our campaigns shows why this is so: **Jabari Brisport**, running as a Green and a Socialist for New York City Council's 35th District in Brooklyn, was profiled in *New York Magazine*, *The Intercept*, and the *Huffington Post*. Jabari's race energized the local party and brought dozens of activists into his campaign and donations to reach New York City's level for matching funds. Jabari received 29 percent of the vote, and represents a new and hopeful sign that the Greens and the resurgent



Cassandra Lems, Green candidate for county executive in Nassau County

socialist left can unite and build on his success.

Akeem Browder, running for mayor of New York City and brother of Kalief Browder, is the founder of Shut Down Rikers and a social justice advocate; his fierce criticism of the criminal justice system won him and the



Akeem Browder (right) ran for NYC mayor to speak out about the unjust death of his brother Kalief Browder (left). Photos courtesy of *Democracy Now*.

party mention in the press. **Cassandra Lems**, running for Nassau County Executive on Long Island, was invited to participate in a candidate debate for the office, a major step forward for candidates in Nassau. **Howie Hawkins**, running for mayor of Syracuse, participated in multiple mayoral debates and received prolific local media coverage, and he placed third in the race, ahead of the Republican Party's candidate. **Eric Graf** and **Serena Seals** ran for 2nd and 4th District Councilor in Syracuse, and represented platforms for socialism and Black Lives Mat-

ter; Eric received 19.8 percent of the vote, and Serena 10.9 percent. In the town of Glens Falls three Green candidates, Robin Barkenhagen, Rich Cirino, and Ben Lapham, running for City Councilor At-Large, Mayor, and 4th Ward Councilperson respectively, were invited to debates, profiled by the local media, and in Ben Lapham's case, endorsed by the town's paper. Robin received 35 percent of the vote, Rich 15 percent, and Ben 22 percent.

This year's local campaigns and the organizations on which they were built have laid the groundwork for a successful defense of our ballot line.

Greens across the state were taken seriously this year as candidates, from Albany to Buffalo, upstate to downstate, due to

years of hard work and struggle on the part of local party activists. We are heading into a state and federal election year, where our ballot-status will need to be maintained by a strong gubernatorial candidate receiving at least 50,000 statewide votes. This year’s local campaigns and the organizations on which they were built have laid the groundwork for a successful defense of our ballot-line. Moving forward, our local candidates and activists will help us develop our Green agenda for New York State, but more than that, they will be the nucleus of our success as we continue our struggle to transform our towns, cities, and villages into a space where grassroots democracy and people, not profit, rule.



Serena Seals, Green candidate for city council in Syracuse, NY



Ben Lapham, Green candidate for city council in Glens Falls, NY received 22 percent of the vote.

Connecticut Greens successful this election

Small, local campaigns make it possible

By David McCorquodale, Green Party of Delaware

The Green Party of Connecticut ran 30 candidates in the elections held this past November and saw 12 endorsed candidates win office. Although an off year for statewide elections, the state had many municipal positions open. If Greens start to make serious inroads in getting candidates elected to political office, it will probably begin in a state like Connecticut, where in a relatively small city there can be many offices available for which to run.

GPCT currently has eight chapters with two more in formation. Each chapter controls its endorsements in its local town or county chapter, with five chapters putting forward candidates. The GPCT website lists dozens of Greens serving in positions in municipalities. Many are voluntary, but before this election GPCT also had eight people in elected offices.

In this author’s state of Delaware, with exceptions for non-partisan elections of boards of education or small, non-partisan town councils, or the totally Democratic-party-controlled city of Wilmington, everything is run at the county or state level, making it quite expensive to run a serious campaign. Political appointees make many decisions with little public participation.

But in Connecticut, citizens can not only run for partisan election on school boards or small city councils, but for boards of finance, zoning and planning, assessment, fire department commission, or constable. Such a situation allows Greens to run small campaigns that can reach most constituents without great expense.

In Waterford, the town committee endorsed nine candidates. A couple of these candidates were registered Democrats with the rest being Greens. The Democratic Party also endorsed all of these candidates. The GPCT does not allow cross-endorsement on the state level, but chapters may do so. Ronna Stuller, Secretary of GPCT and Chair

of the New London Town Committee opines, “To me, it’s an absurdity that we ever feel the need to engage in this sort of game playing, but for now it’s one of the very few ways we can level the field.” It appears that Connecticut Greens choose these alliances with the party that is out of power as Republicans control Waterford. On the other hand, in New London **Miriam Martinez** won a seat on the board of education two times with an endorsement from the Republicans. Martinez is running strictly as a Green this time.

“Windham Greens won four out of six races, and we were the second highest vote getting party. We’re damned proud of ourselves!” – Jean de Smet

Here are the highlights of the elections for each chapter:

Of the nine Waterford Town Committee endorsed candidates, seven were elected. Waterford has four Town Meeting Districts, but each district elects five or six people. Greens elected one person in each district: **Andrew Frascarelli** (1st district); **Baird Welch Collins** (2nd); **Joshua S. Kelley** (3rd); and **Carl D’Amato** (4th). **Darcy Van Ness** was elected to the Zoning Board of Assessment. All of these candidates received endorsements from the Democratic Party. Two Democrats, endorsed by the Green Party, were elected: Deborah Roselli Kelly to the Board of Education and Michael Buscetto to the Board of Assessment Appeals. Two Green candidates for the Board of Finance, **Kevin Kelly** and **Bill Collins**, were not elected.

In Windham, the most prominent of its Town Committee’s six candidates was **Jean**



(left to right) Baird Welch-Collins, Joshua Steele Kelly, Darcy Van Ness, Carl D’Amato and Andrew Frascarelli after being sworn in. (Photo: Baird Welch-Collins, Facebook)

de Smet, who ran for Mayor. De Smet, who was the running mate of Cliff Thorton’s gubernatorial bid in 2006, won the seat of First Selectman, now retitled Mayor, in Windham in 2007. This time, in a four-candidate race for Mayor, de Smet lost with 37 percent of the vote, with 41 percent going to the Democrat, who was also on the Working Families ballot line. Other Green Party candidates in Windham were elected in multi-position races: **Douglas Lary** (Board of Finance, 20 percent), **Cassandra Marineau** (Board of Education, 11 percent, and **Mike Westfield** (Board of Assessment Appeals, 17 percent). **Corey Krohn** (Town Committee, 13 percent) was not elected.

In Williamantic, another town in Windham County, **Dagmar Noll** won a town council seat in a six-person multi-position race, with 26 percent (771 votes) to 25 percent for the Working Families candidate and 24 percent for the first Democrat. Said De Smet of the showing in Windham County, “Dagmar Noll won a seat on the Town Council, which is a great achievement. Windham Greens won four out of six races, and we were the second highest vote getting party. We’re damned proud of ourselves!”

In Fairfield County, none of the Green candidates won. **Hector Lopez** was seeking re-election as Constable in New Canaan, while **John Amarillo** was another Constable candidate. In Stamford, **Brian Merlen** ran for Board of Representatives, **Jackie Pioli**

for Board of Education, and **Cora Santaguida** for Constable. **Leif Smith** lost re-election for Constable in Redding.

Mirna Martinez, a previously twice-elected New London school board member sought re-election. In two previous elections Martinez received the endorsement of the Republican Party. This time she ran solely on the Green ballot line. The election featured 15 candidates running for seven seats. Each voter could only vote for one candidate. Martinez won a seat with 1,160 votes, 7.2 percent of the vote, compared to the highest vote getter receiving 9.3 percent. **Erick Carrión**, also running for a school board seat for the first time, was not elected with 730 votes (4.5 percent).

The Shoreline Chapter, newly formed this past spring fielded four candidates. In the town of Madison **Charles Owen** got 12 percent running for the Board of Finance, while **Michael Abbondanolo** received five percent for a Board of Election seat. In the town of Clinton Hugh Birdsell ran for Board of Education while **James Connolly** ran for the Planning and Zoning Commission. None were elected.

Overall the Green Party of Connecticut is gaining ground for local political offices. In this election it added a total of nine newly elected candidates, plus Mirna Martinez’s re-election and the cross-endorsement of two elected Democrats, while losing two elected positions for Constable.



Connecticut Greens ran an unprecedented number of candidates for an off-election year.

state, caucus, and committee reports

State parties and GPUS Committees and working groups are where the nuts and bolts of party work gets done. We encourage short reports in Green Pages to let everyone know what you are doing. Send to greenpages@greens.org.

photos of local actions

Don’t just post to Facebook, send your photos in to Green Pages for inclusion in the next issue: greenpages@greens.org. Remember to include caption details, and photographer citation. Greens across the country appreciate knowing that they are part of a larger movement.

Stein/Baraka build the Green Party

A review of the effects of the 2016 presidential campaign

By Dave Schwab, Wisconsin Green Party

Jill Stein and Ajamu Baraka’s 2016 Presidential campaign was the Green Party’s most highly visible campaign since Ralph Nader and Winona LaDuke first brought the Greens to national prominence in 2000. The Stein/Baraka ticket won 1,457,226 votes, 1.1 percent of the 2016 total. This was the Greens’ highest share of the Presidential vote since 2000, when Nader and LaDuke earned 2.74 percent with 2,882,955 votes. Although Stein and Baraka didn’t get to paint the White House green, their campaign both set the party on a course for growth, and challenged it to harness the momentum of a national election.

In May of 2016 there were 216,200 registered Greens in the United States, a 15-year low. By August 2017, the number was 257,389, a growth of 41,189 or 19 percent. The Green Party is America’s 4th-largest party, after the Libertarians, and the largest that doesn’t accept corporate money. While still small compared to the Democratic and Republican parties, the Green Party’s recent growth demonstrates a staying power that few national parties have achieved in the US.

In 2017 the Green Party had the most candidates running for office in an off-year election in 12 years. With 44 Greens getting elected it brought the total number of Greens in office to 137. Two State Representatives in Maine joined the Greens this year, a new landmark for one of the first state parties (see article page 6). Many candidates who didn’t win nevertheless made a big impact, such as Jabari Brisport, who set a new record for a Green running for New York City Council with 29 percent against an established Democratic incumbent (see article page 8).

Hard work and campaign donations put the Stein/Baraka ticket on the ballot in 44 states and Washington DC, and earned write-in status in 3 additional states. Only 3 states did not allow a Green vote for President. This was the closest Greens have yet come to achieving national ballot access in the face of discriminatory ballot access laws. With the help of the presidential campaign, state Green parties retained ballot status in 21 states. Since then, Utah Greens have gained ballot status and North Carolina has lowered its requirement from 94,000 signatures to 12,000, making it likely that Greens will soon get on NC’s ballot for the first time in history. The Green Party’s Ballot Access Committee is working to add additional ballot lines in 2018, including states like Nevada and Indiana where Greens missed



the ballot in 2016.

New state parties have come online in states where the party hadn’t been active before 2016, including Utah, Montana and Nevada. Greens in Missouri, previously split between the Progressive Party and a St. Louis chapter affiliated with Green Party USA, have reunited as the Missouri Green Party. Many established state parties have experienced an influx of both new members and reactivated veteran members.

The 2016 campaign was particularly successful at using social media to bypass the gatekeepers of corporate media and reach the public directly.

On the national level, the Green Party of the United States now employs 5 staff members: an office manager, web manager, media director, fundraiser and national political organizer. Although several state parties employ at least one part-time staffer, both the state and national parties remain overwhelmingly volunteer-driven organizations.

The national party has 5 accredited caucuses: The Women’s, Black, Latino, Lavender, and Youth Caucuses. Indigenous and Disability caucuses are in the process of forming. The Youth Caucus has experienced particularly solid growth, with close to 200 dues-paying members on the caucus’ online forum, and an active presence on more than 50 college campuses and in almost every state, including states such as Alaska, Idaho,

Oklahoma, and New Hampshire which otherwise have low activity or even no affiliated state party.

While the national party doesn’t keep detailed fundraising records, the party has roughly 7,500 donors over the past two years, including 1,400 monthly sustainers. However, the party has not yet managed to harness the fundraising potential tapped by the presidential campaign. A November 2016 ballot access email acknowledges: “We are entering a key election year, yet we have remarkably low financial reserves and are facing cuts to our party’s proposed budget across the board.” This raises critical questions about what steps the party must take in order to sustainably fund a national organization.

The Green Party’s media presence grew thanks to the 2016 campaign, which saw landmarks such as the first hour-long CNN town hall devoted to the Green presidential ticket. While much of the coverage was antagonistic and focused on how Greens threaten the lesser-evilism of the two-party system, it nevertheless opened channels for independent thinkers to learn more about the party.

The 2016 campaign was particularly successful at using social media to bypass the gatekeepers of corporate media and reach the public directly. This insurgent presence on social media demonstrated enough support for the campaign that the corporate media had to grant at least a small amount of coverage, if only maintain the illusion of an objective free press. In April 2016 Jill Stein joined the top trending topics on both Facebook and Twitter, and when interviewed live on Facebook by ABC News she shattered their previous record for viewership ten times over. Twitter has verified

the accounts of the national party as well as 23 state parties and 2 caucuses, a new recognition of legitimacy from a social media platform that has become a high-profile venue in US politics.

Other organizations on the progressive left have started to show an increasing interest in the type of independent politics championed by the Green Party. Democratic Socialists of America, which has drawn attention as the largest socialist organization in the US with over 30,000 dues-paying members, shares many goals with the Greens and supported a number of Green campaigns in 2017. Our Revolution, the organization founded by Senator Bernie Sanders after his Democratic primary run, even endorsed several Greens. Many Sanders supporters gravitated to the Green Party after the Democratic Party’s blatant efforts to deny Sanders its nomination, while others who initially considered forming a new party are deciding to go Green rather than reinvent the wheel.

The historic unpopularity of the establishment parties’ 2016 nominees inspired a groundswell of support for systemic changes to the US political system. A September 2016 Suffolk University/USA Today poll found that 76 percent of Americans wanted the Green and Libertarian candidates in the presidential debates, although the people’s will was predictably overruled by the DNC/RNC-controlled Commission on Presidential Debates. A September 2017 Gallup poll found that 61 percent of Americans — a record high — agree the Democratic and Republican parties do such a poor job representing the people that a new major party is needed.

In Maine, 52 percent voted in 2016 to enact Ranked Choice Voting at the state level, the first statewide victory for the growing voter choice movement. Long years of dogged Green organizing played a critical role building up to this win, including campaigns for statewide office as well as the successful campaign to use Ranked Choice Voting in Portland, Maine’s largest city. Now Maine Greens are gaining momentum and members in the fight to defend Ranked Choice Voting from the bipartisan establishment, which quickly went to work to sabotage the people’s will.

Jill Stein joined the top trending topics on both Facebook and Twitter, and when interviewed live on Facebook by ABC News she shattered their previous record for viewership ten times over.

The 2016 campaign played an unmistakable part in revitalizing the Green Party, and inspiring new members, chapters and candidates across the country. It also revealed continuing challenges the party faces in harnessing the energy of campaign seasons to build the independent political force for people, planet and peace over profit that the current historical moment so urgently demands. To break through the faltering two-party system to real power, Greens will need to engage in revolutionary self-criticism about how to organize a party that can mobilize the rapidly growing number of Americans who share the vision of a better world.

Dave Schwab served as the Communications Director for the Stein/Baraka campaign, and now serves as a Co-chair of the Wisconsin Green Party.



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A peace dividend: end war, get paid!

Commentary by Daniel Martin, Green Party of Pennsylvania

Ajamu Baraka, Green Party running mate in the 2016 presidential election recently wrote “Urgent: we need an anti-war movement to curtail the U.S. rogue state which continues to be a danger to the whole world.” Nothing could be more true. Before we can solve any of our domestic problems, it makes sense to work towards the single-most effective way to simultaneously save lives, free up money to invest in a greener economy, and directly take care of people: ending wars. Shouldn’t this be the number one focus of the Green Party, and that which most sets us apart from the parties in power?

But perhaps the prospect of ending war may not be enough incentive alone for the majority of Americans to take action. As a seasoned activist in the antiwar movement, I’ve observed various strategies fail over the years. Some of us try to explain the impracticality of our wars to people, others try to appeal to conscience. Some flaunt their idealism and share their utopian visions of world peace. None of these things seem to have enough widespread appeal to connect with the masses. War has become so ingrained in our culture, and our oligarchs have so effectively sold the threat of terrorism and “evil” dictators, that most people turn a blind eye. And because it is waged far across the globe and with minimal American casualties these days, war is an abstraction to the majority of the populace.

Now imagine passing by an antiwar rally and seeing a sign that said “Peace Dividend: End War, Get Paid!” Would this get your attention? What if a candidate for U.S. House, Senate, or President promised to introduce a bill or action that would not only end wars, but give people money . . . a share of the money we’d be saving by not going to war, and that the government retroactively owes us for 16 years of trillions of dollars wasted on these doomed-to-fail ventures? John

Rachel, author of *The Peace Dividend*, writes: “To get the plan underway requires that we package peace in an entirely different way, that instead of only appealing to pity and conscience, we focus on personal self-interest. This is not meant to be cynical. It’s not that people don’t care about suffering. It’s that most individuals care first about the suffering of those immediately around them, not those in far flung nations they can barely find on a map.”



Anti war march, Washington DC, 2007 (Photo composite by David Doonan)

Many will be skeptical of this idea. Jill Stein ran on a platform which included cancelling student debt. Many of us had high hopes for the popularity this might gain for Greens, but were profoundly disappointed on election night. But there is a huge difference between promising to eliminate debt for a small subset of the population, and promising, say, \$14,000 to every American household.

Without getting too much into the de-

tails of how we would pay for it, consider the following:

1. In a report by the Department of Defense (DOD), it estimates that the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria cost each U.S. taxpayer \$7,500.
2. According to the War Resisters League, 28 percent of our multi-trillion income tax revenue goes towards current military expenditures, with another 20 percent for past military costs, including veterans’ ben-

toward actual “defense.” Moreover, the article cites a 2011 University of Massachusetts study indicating that “military spending is the worst way to create jobs ... Putting the same money into any other area—from infrastructure to transportation to alternative energy to health care or education—creates up to twice as many jobs as military spending does.”

4. A Michigan State University study detailing DOD and Housing and Urban Development budgets between 1999-2015 found \$21 trillion unaccounted for, on top of our already \$20 trillion deficit. Former Assistant Secretary of Housing Catherine Austin Fitts explains, “This is \$65,000 for every man, woman and child resident in America.”

The point being, the money exists and can be made available for a peace dividend. But there are many people who are not at the starting point yet of realizing how wasteful and unjust our last 16 years of warfare have been. This is an opportunity to educate them about the fiscal costs of war, in addition to the concepts of blowback, the sham of the so-called “war on terror” which has only exacerbated terrorism, the consequences of regime change, the real reason we went to Iraq, PNAC, neoconservative ideology, etc.

Money talks, and people listen, it’s really that simple. If national level candidates run on this platform, could the media really continue to ignore us? Will people really vote against their own self-interest? Could the Green Party finally win seats, and move our country closer to peace?

Daniel Martin is a two-time Stein supporter and voter, and three-time contributor to Counterpunch.org. Active with his local, Lancaster County Green Party (PA), he is a member of 1040 for Peace, and a board member of Peace Action Network of Lancaster.



End-of-life options an important civil rights issue

Commentary by Dawn Lentz, Green Party of Delaware

sion with their doctor. This means that they might obtain prescriptions to send them into permanent sleep and eventually stop their hearts, allowing them to die with dignity.

Terminal patients’ inalienable civil rights need to be recognized by allowing them the freedom to choose their end-of-life options with the aid of their physician.

Opponents call this bill assisted suicide legislation, but this is not so. It provides for an educated decision to be made between a terminal patient, two doctors and the patient’s family. It informs insurance companies that these patients were terminal, meaning that they were definitely going to die. The question becomes when, and how.

Many tears will be shed, but they will be shed either way. This legislation will give terminal patients the opportunity to have a lit-

tle bit of control, where now they have none. Why do I find this issue so important? I am a terminal patient.

I’ve been diagnosed with a rare disease called Spinocerebellar Ataxia (SCA). SCA is a hereditary, degenerative, neurological condition; I will eventually die from complications such as aspiration pneumonia. I will be completely aware of my body’s inability to perform the most basic functions, like bathing and eating. Ultimately, even talking will be impossible. I fear these final months the most, when I will watch my loved ones cry and listen to hushed conversations about me from a tomb-like body.

There’s no cure for what I have. No miracle will save me. My only hope of not having to endure months of distress and being a constant burden to my family is the possibility of having a doctor help me to safely and painlessly go to meet my creator.

This summer, GPDE collected 280 signatures on a petition explaining how terminal patients’ rights are being infringed. GPDE supports HB 160, and agrees that terminal patients’ inalienable civil rights need to be recognized by allowing them the freedom

to choose their end-of-life options with the aid of their physician.

We recognize that advances in science have created medical interventions that often increase suffering and prolong the dying process. We believe in securing social justice for all people, and so believe that citizens have the right to choose their end-of-life options. Medical aid in dying enables a mentally competent, terminally ill adult other options in the face of unbearable, inevitable suffering. We recognize that the choices a person makes at the end of life are inalienably grounded in that individual’s life experience and values.

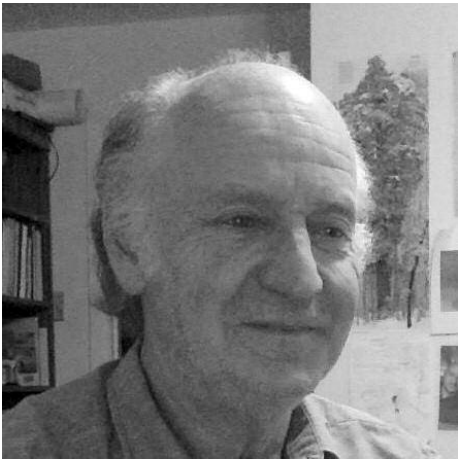
In summation, GPDE is committed to supporting civil rights, which are protected under our constitution. I urge other Greens to begin inquiring about adopting end-of-life options legislation in your state. This isn’t about what you personally agree with: It’s about addressing terminal patients’ civil rights.

Dawn Lentz is a member of the Green Party of Delaware and the founder of the MOT Lower Delaware Local of GPDE.

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On the necessity of the Green Party addressing adultism

Commentary by George Reiter, Green Party of Texas

politics that arise from the mistreatment of children make progressive politics nearly impossible. The tendencies to see things in terms of good and bad, others as enemies, and to punish those we hold to be 'bad', are regarded as unobjectionable and righteous when applied to children. These attitudes have become internalized in adults for whom growing up being punished for being 'bad' was a way of life.

I would suggest that progressive politics needs to be based on the assumption that love is the ground of being of all human beings, that there are no intrinsically evil people, and that the differences between us that lead to conflict are there as the result of growing up in an oppressive culture. That culture is internalized through misinformation and mistreatment at an early age. The mistreatment has systemic aspects that serve to reinforce racism, sexism and deference to the upper classes, the latter through the destruction of our inherent sense of self-worth, to be replaced by an endless striving to be 'good' enough. If we are to end these "ism's" in the culture, we will have to stand against adultism, the means by which they are installed in us as children. If we intervene now, the children being born today will be far more able to create a world out of their love for it, rather than their fear of others and authority. In the short term, let us stand

for making corporal punishment of children illegal, (as it is in 51 other countries). Beyond that, we need to stand, and be seen standing, for the welfare and full humanity of children, in every issue with which we are involved.

If we intervene now, the children being born today will be far more able to create a world out of their love for it, rather than their fear of others and authority.

There is also work we need to do on ourselves. We do not usually see the extent to which we have internalized attitudes about ourselves and the world as a consequence of the hurtful treatment we had to accept (from mostly well-intentioned adults) as children. These attitudes and patterns of behavior, limit our ability to think and cooperate with others. We hold on to our anger, resentment, sadness, embarrassment and fear from times when we felt powerless in relation to the adults around us. These past experiences lie in wait. The emotions and the

coping mechanisms we put in place when we were children take over when something in the present triggers a hurtful experience of the past. When triggered, we fight with each other over perceived slights that aren't intended, see people as antagonists to be dominated by better arguments, by outvoting them, by outmaneuvering them, rather than reaching for them to see what they are needing from us and their world.

We were not always that way. As children, before we got too hurt, we were willing to love and be loved by anyone we met. This is our inherent nature, covered over by the pain inflicted by a culture that didn't know who we were. We need to take responsibility for our past hurts, not act on the feelings they evoke when triggered, and let the feelings surface to be released when it seems safe enough to do so. Healing is possible, and we need to find a path that works for us as we work to heal the society.

Here is something that works for me, reminding me of who we are. If you are up for it, try making warm eye contact with young children you meet. You will find they are mostly delighted to make contact with you, and I am guessing you will be delighted with them as well.

George Reiter is co-chair Harris County Green Party in Houston, Texas.

How to get Universal Health Care

By Ursula Rozum, Green Party of New York State

Universal health care is a political idea which is finally getting the attention it deserves. There are now single-payer healthcare bills in several state legislatures. At the national level, the Improved and Expanded Medicare for All Bill (HR 676) has more Congressional cosponsors than any previous year. The 2018 campaign season is well underway and the future of healthcare will be a primary election issue across the country in state and federal level races.

A commitment to establishing a universal, public health program runs deep in our Green Party DNA. The Green Party has always had the right position in support of universal health care but how can we move beyond being right and holding the right position to building the power necessary to transform the healthcare system into one that is human and democratic?

Many self-described progressives are already familiar with the concept of "single payer" health care. "Single payer" refers to the process of paying health care providers. The idea is simple: 1) people and businesses pay into the healthcare system (the more money you have, the more you are asked to contribute) 2) the government administers a public health care fund to pay doctors and hospitals and 3) everybody is covered. Universal, single-payer health care is on the radar of those who are engaged in political activism and who are organized in some sort of organization. National and state level single-payer bills are endorsed by labor unions, faith communities, physicians organizations, and community groups.

Missing from the movement to pass universal health care are those most impacted by the disparities of the system: immigrants, people of color, the poor and working class.

To build a movement that can win universal health care, the next step is to engage those who have the most to gain from transforming the system and bring them into the leadership of this fight. But how?

Health care is an issue that impacts all of us. Everyone has a personal health care

story to share and our personal experiences are the most powerful tool we have to put the current market-based health care system on trial. Sharing our health care stories is a first step in exposing the degree to which the current system erodes our human dignity and creates unnecessary emotional and financial distress. Asking people about the challenges they have faced is a powerful way to raise consciousness about how the current system is broken and to invite them to join in the fight to advocate for the system that meets our collective needs. Because everyone, regardless their political ideology, utilizes the health care system and has loved ones who use the health care system, sharing about our experiences is a way to build trust and bridge political divides.

Asking people about the challenges they have faced is a powerful way to raise consciousness about how the current system is broken.

In New York, the Green Party of New York is an endorser of the New York Health Act, a bill to establish a state-wide public health program, modelled on the national Improved and Expanded Medicare for All Bill in Congress (HR 676) The key features of the New York Health Act are:

- Everyone, including the unemployed and undocumented, is covered;
- No more out of pockets costs: no deductibles, no copays, no premiums;
- About 98% of New Yorkers would spend LESS on healthcare than they do now according to an economic analysis conducted in 2015;
- Provides comprehensive care that is equal to current Medicare/Medicaid and current state insurance standards, including: primary, preventive, specialists, hospital, mental health, reproductive

health care, dental, vision, hearing, prescription drugs, lab tests, medical supplies, trans services, etc.

- No narrow networks or insurance company bureaucrats telling us which doctor we can see or telling doctors what treatments will be paid for.

The New York Health Act would be paid for by progressively rated taxes. Employers will pay 80%, employees pay 20%. People who earn less than \$25k/year pay nothing. It will cost less than current system because we will save money from not paying high administrative fees to private insurance companies and because New York will be able to negotiate for much better rates with drug companies. Also, when we don't have to worry about "user fees," the out of pocket costs associated with going to the doctor, we're more likely to go in for wellness visits, catch health problems early, and need less specialty or emergency care.

Disagreements exist within the healthcare reform movement and in the Green Party of the specific demands that we should be making, whether to fight for a bill at the state or the federal level. When we shift our organizing to focus on the challenges and struggles we face in the current system, the stories we tell and the relationships we build will be valuable for fights at both levels. The opposition, led by the insurance and pharmaceutical industry, claims that universal health care would be too expensive and that it could never work. We know that the opposite is true, that the current system is inhuman and unsustainable and does not work to meet our collective health care needs.

As mainstream political support grows for universal health care bills at the state and national level, it becomes more and more likely that political elites will try to push through legislation that in name, claims to be "universal health care" but really does not transform the system in the way that is necessary to establish a sustainable system that reigns in costs and guarantees care for all. In New York, the campaign to pass the



New York Health Act developed the following principles to help frame our demands:

Universal: Everyone is included and can meet their healthcare needs and there are no out-of-pocket costs (also known as user fees).

Comprehensive: Full benefits, choice of doctor and covering all medically necessary care as determined by the patient's health care professionals.

Equity: Funded fairly, based on ability to pay, with access to high quality care assured for all and everyone, regardless of income or wealth, is covered by the same health plan.

Accountability and Transparency: The people running the plan will be accountable to the public and the health program will be run according to public policies and laws.

Participation: Everyone has a meaningful voice in decisions that impact us all.

Public opinion is on the side of universal healthcare and it's steadily growing. According to a June 2017 Pew Research poll, 60 percent of Americans say the federal government is responsible for ensuring health care coverage. Winning universal health care will be liberating for the vast majority of Americans. It's a reform that will shift power to working class people who will no longer be tethered to jobs just for the benefits or at risk of losing life savings due to an illness. Few issues allow us to connect with as many people as when we discuss health care. Organizing around our health care experiences is key to building strong local movements that will help us win the right to health care and the many other changes we wish to see in our communities.