

# Greens spring forward in 2019 elections

## Sixteen of 33 Greens elected in local Spring races

By Mike Feinstein, California

Greens are often known as ‘thinking globally and acting locally. In Spring 2019, many Greens acted locally by running for municipal and county office, with almost half of them winning election, including eight of nine incumbents.

In Illinois, environmental scientist and Alderman **Peter Schwartzman** (Galesburg, population 31,000) was re-elected to his third consecutive term on the City Council.

In Wisconsin, **Barbara Dahlgren** was re-elected to the Wisconsin Conservation Congress from Milwaukee County in a two round run-off after the first round ended in a tie.

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress is a statewide statutory advisory body to Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources on how to responsibly manage Wisconsin's natural resources for present and future generations. Interviewed by Milwaukee's National Public Radio station on election night, Dahlgren said about her campaign “I really want to keep public spaces public and keep as much land open to the public as possible. The other thing that I said two year ago that I'm still in favor now is science-based techniques to figure out how to manage the land and the resources”

With an affordable housing crisis raging across the country, three Greens were elected to three Housing Authority seats, including incumbents **Annie Chambers** to the Baltimore Housing Authority in Maryland and **Edward Tar Lerner**, to Concord Housing Authority in Massachusetts

In Missouri, **Ed Williamson** was elected as a write-in candidate for the Board of Trustees, Health Board, Texas County. An Associate Professor of Education at Drury University School of Education and Child Development, Williams filed as a write-in after being approached by community members after no one filed for the seat.

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In Los Angeles, eight out of 12 Green candidates for Los Angeles Neighborhood Councils were elected. Neighborhood Councils in Los Angeles are advisory to the City Council on issues like development, homelessness and emergency preparedness; and are similar bodies to Advisory Neighborhood Councils in Washington, DC. and to Planning Groups

in the City and the County of San Diego.

Since 2003, at least 47 Greens have won Neighborhood Council seats, with many others appointed to vacancies. Offices like these are especially important entry points for Greens in local government in cities where city council and county supervisor districts are very large and populous.

### Schwartzman's Green agenda pays dividends for the economy and environment



*In 2011, Peter Schwartzman was elected to his first four-year term on the Galesburg City Council – finishing first of three candidates and defeating a local favorite (retiree of the Fire Department). In 2015, Schwartzman had one challenger. This year he ran uncontested – and all in a city where all the rest of the city council seats are held by members that are generally political conservative.*

*“I think people know that I am honest, approachable, empathetic, visionary and hard working,” Schwartzman told Green Pages after his re-election.*

*In his first term, Schwartzman convinced his city council colleagues to place a renewable energy aggregation option on the ballot. Passed by the residents, this has led to the City buying 100% renewable energy on behalf of its residents and municipal facilities, and already saving \$5 million over six years.*

*In his second term, Schwartzman led a successful effort for the City to take advantage of a new state renewable en-*

*ergy subsidy program to establish a large-scale solar array that will provide the City all the electricity necessary to send its aquifer water (from 30-miles away) to city residents. This energy has historically has cost Galesburg approximately \$400,000 a year, but this solar shift is expected to conservatively save the City several million dollars over the next twenty-five years. Because of Schwartzman's actions, there are additional plans to install two more large scale solar arrays to provide power to the City Government's operations, and to local hospital, colleges and residents.*

*And what is the historical context for Galesburg, that they are accepting of his green ideas?*

*“Galesburg has a long history”, explains Schwartzman. “Located 30 miles east of the Mississippi River and 180 miles Southwest of Chicago, Europeans moved into the area after natives were summarily removed after the Black Hawk War of 1832. Knox College began in 1837 the same year that the city incorporated. Galesburg has a progressive history as it was a destination for former slaves (on an Underground Railroad pathway) and boxcar workers from Central America as well as the home town of Carl Sandburg. Recently it lost Maytag due to globalization but it is making a bit of a resurgence with hard work and Midwestern spirit.”*

*Which makes Schwartzman's success that much more interesting, with residents seeing his green energy programs as part of their local economic vitalization—kind of a Green New Deal.*



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HIGHLIGHTS Summer 2019

## The Real Green New Deal

### Green Party plan needed more than ever!

By Mark Dunlea, New York State and Jill Stein, Massachusetts

Despite the many knock-offs of the Green New Deal (GND) now being offered by Democrats, the Green Party's real GND is the only plan providing a solution as big as the existential crisis we face. The need for the Green Party's full-fledged real GND is more urgent than ever, as the climate emergency grows more ominous by the day.

The latest scientific reports—as well as everyday experience—make painfully clear, the accelerating crisis allows no room for halfway measures.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, we've just had the hottest five-year period on record. Midwest farms have been underwater for months, while unprecedented monsoon flooding is displacing millions. Antarctic ice melt has accelerated fivefold in two decades. The critical Thwaites ice sheet, which holds back the flow of adjacent ice sheets into the ocean, has been discovered to contain a hole nearly the size of Manhattan, indicating risk of collapse that could raise sea level abruptly by 2 feet, followed by another slower 8-foot rise. Himalayan glacier melt threatens the water supply of hundreds of millions of people by 2030, and 1.5 billion people by 2100. This is the result of a one-degree Celsius warming, yet we're now on track for 3-5 degrees by the end of the century.

Clearly, there is no time to lose. The IPCC report from the United Nations was overly optimistic—compromised by the polluter nations like the US and Saudi Arabia—in stating that we have 11 years left for effective worldwide mobilization to combat climate chaos.

Unlike the Democrats' watered-down spinoffs, the real GND contains measures needed for a response commensurate with the enormity of the problem. Only the Green Party's GND provides an immediate ban on

all new fossil fuel infrastructure, calls for the end of fossil fuel use and 100 percent renewable energy by 2030, and delivers an economic bill of rights. This includes a guaranteed living wage job, single payer health care, affordable housing, and free college tuition. It also calls for public ownership and management of the energy sector; 50 percent cuts to the bloated military budget along with democratized finance to provide needed funds; and democracy reforms to overcome the current corporate stranglehold on U.S. policy.

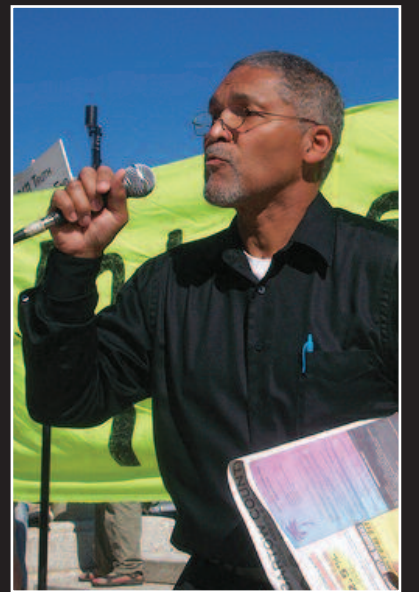
**As more Democratic politicians and allied organizations adopt the GND branding, the details have become progressively weaker.**

The U.S. Green Party began calling for a Green New Deal with Howie Hawkins' 2010 campaign for Governor of New York. Scores of other Green candidates nationwide joined in the call. This was based on a similar, earlier call by the European Greens and other allies in response to Wall Street's global financial meltdown.

In 2012 and 2016, the GND was the centerpiece of Jill Stein's presidential campaigns, bringing the proposal for the first time to the U.S. national stage.

In 2018 the GND was embraced by Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's congressional campaign, though she failed to acknowledge its origins. It soared into national prominence this year when AOC joined the Sunrise Movement protesting at Speaker Nancy Pelosi's DC office, urging the House to set up a GND

### Bruce Dixon



*Bruce Dixon, cochair of the Georgia Green Party, co-chair of the Hawkins 2020 Presidential campaign, a founder and the Managing Editor of Black Agenda Report, husband, father, grandfather, lifelong socialist and mentor to many in the movement for a just peace, died on June 28 after a three-year-long battle with leukemia.*

*Louis Proyect, on Counterpunch, wrote: “We lost a giant ... I will miss his political clarity, his guidance, his candor, his warmth and his humor. Bruce was a legendary organizer. He was old school—organizing person-to-person and always willing to provide assistance. It's hard to believe you are gone, Bruce. The world is a better place for you having been in it. Rest in Power.”*

committee. Congressional Democrats rebuffed the effort and effectively put the GND on the shelf. AOC subsequently introduced a weaker resolution with Senator Markey. Many of the Democratic presidential candidates have since expressed support for a GND.

As more Democratic politicians and allied organizations adopt the GND branding, the details have become progressively weaker. AOC's initial support for a 2030 target date morphed into 2050 in the joint resolution. Many Democrats just use the GND label to make the point that investing in renewable energy is a better way to create jobs than fossil fuels, while ignoring the 2030 deadline and the economic justice imperative.

Many workers are skeptical about a GND because previous promises for job creation have been unfulfilled, as the economy fails working people on a massive scale.

In response, the Green Party's GND promotes an urgently needed ecosocialist transformation to prioritize people over profit. This would end the capitalist pursuit of maximum private profit, limitless growth, plunder of natural and human resources, and endless war in the quest for markets and resources. Instead, the real GND calls for fundamental system change including public, worker, and community ownership in a democratic control of the energy system.

In contrast, most Democrats want to "better align" private markets, merely increasing subsidies to private firms to build renewable energy within a fundamentally failed,



rapacious capitalist economic system.

The Green Party's GND calls for a World War II scale emergency mobilization. The federal government transformed a quarter of US manufacturing capacity during the war in order to turn industry on a dime to build the "Arsenal of Democracy". This time factories must be put into the hands of workers and communities, not into the hands of the global elite to maximize their profits.

The Greens would fund the GND by diverting at least 50 percent of the military budget, as well as with health care savings from the elimination of fossil fuels, a progressive carbon tax, and other taxes on the super-rich as needed. The Green Party would turn our current Offense Department into a true Defense Department, and transform the manufacture of weapons into Green production including wind turbines, solar panels and energy efficiency technology.

A \$250 billion military budget would still leave the US as the world's largest military

power. Eight of the next 10 biggest military spenders are US allies.

It is the poor—both at home and abroad—who are the principal victims of the climate change driven by the industrial polluter nations. As the leading historic polluter, the U.S. has a moral obligation to redirect substantial funds to cut global warming and assist the poor in surviving it.

Greens are rightly encouraged by the outpouring of public support for a GND. Now the survival of the Earth may depend on having this policy implemented to its full scope and urgency. To do so, a Green political uprising is needed. As the Democratic establishment, with the help of corporate media, shows all the signs of ramming another corporate centrist through their presidential primary, the failure of the two-party system continues unabated. With the prospect of another Demexit and a huge block of stay-home voters again looming large, that Green political uprising may be closer than it appears.

## More Democratic Choices Coming to the US Maine and Pennsylvania make strides in electoral reform

By David McCorquodale, Delaware

Developments in Maine and Pennsylvania within the past few years will help bring fairer elections to this country. Greens were involved in bringing about both.

In Maine the voters in a 2016 referendum passed the use of Ranked Choice Voting in state elections and it was used in a general state-wide election for the first time in 2018. Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) was initially implemented in 2011 in Portland, Maine. Portland has a strong Green Party presence with several Greens having served in city council positions.

Following success in Portland, a committee for Ranked Choice Voting was formed to push for statewide use. One of the leaders for RCV on the committee was Green Party member John Eder, who had previously served



*Rep. Ralph Chapman, a Green Independent from Brooksville, spoke at length on the ranked-choice voting measure discussed during a 2017 special session of the Legislature. (David Leaming/Press Herald)*

in the state legislature.

After initial passage of the law and a favorable ruling in court, the state legislature could not agree on how to amend the constitution to accommodate RCV and had effectively set up a situation to kill it. But the committee for RCV stepped in to gather more than 80,000 signatures opposing the legislature's action. While RCV voting has been used in June elections, a funding issue has prevented it being implemented in presidential primaries and the general election. Legislators hope to fix that problem next January. This type of voting will allow Greens to run without being depicted as spoilers.

Greens also spearheaded a move to bring greater election integrity to Pennsylvania. Jill Stein took the lead in putting the state

to task. She challenged the state in a lawsuit after the 2016 election, alleging that without paper ballots the results were vulnerable to tampering.

In the fall of 2018 the suit was settled when the state agreed to purchase new voting machines that would leave a verifiable paper trail by 2020. Within two years after purchase the state will begin to audit voting results. This is a major step towards election

integrity, as Pennsylvania is the last state to move to obtain voting machines with verifiable paper backup ballots.

Bruce Dixon in his commentary on Black Agenda Report said about Stein's lawsuit, "Fact is, the lawsuit contributed mightily to what is now a broad and nonpartisan groundswell against faith-based electronic voting, that includes Republican candidates for office as well as Democrats and Greens."

## Green Wave in Europe Greens gain nearly 70 seats in European Parliament

By David McCorquodale, Delaware

*The Green Wave has swept across Europe. We want to thank everyone who has voted for change and climate action. Green parties have exceeded expectations in countries such as Germany, France, Ireland, Denmark, Finland and Austria and will play an ever more important role in shaping the political debate across Europe over the coming years. This trust given to us by voters is both a task and a responsibility to put green policies into action. —Ska Keller, President of the Greens /European Free Alliance (EFA) and leading candidate for the European Green Party.*

As elections are not about personalities, but about issues of concern, recent events have helped to strengthen the showing of Greens, particularly in Western Europe. In all, Greens together with the EFA party, a progressive party with which Greens have joined forces since 1999, won 69 seats. Germany had the greatest increase with 22

seats and the Green Party there is now the most popular party in the country.

Elections in Europe are much different from those in the United States. Voting is for a party, not a particular candidate; multiple parties participate; and seats in the European Parliament are awarded according to the proportion of votes a party receives in each country. As Green Parties across Europe gain seats, up 20 seats from last term, members think the Green Wave can even build larger.

Increasing concerns about climate change, including large public demonstrations, have made the Greens' platform more appealing. Greens in Europe have strengthened their appeal by tying social justice and human rights with the ecological crisis.

In addition to the success of the German Greens Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, Greens won 12 seats in France and 11 in the United Kingdom. The Netherlands is experiencing

Unfortunately, late insertions into the PA legislation authorizing the funding by the Republican legislature, which would eliminate straight-party ticket voting, caused the Democratic governor to veto the legislation. The governor has ordered a bond issue to help counties pay for the new voting machines. Despite delays, paper backup ballots is another step towards an electoral process that is less corrupt and more democratic.



*German Greens Sven Giegold and Annalena Baerbock in Berlin. (Schwartz/AFP/Getty)*

its fourth successful election in a row and are proving leaders for the progressive movement in all of Europe.

Also it is the first time in 15 years that the Irish Green Party has been represented in the European Parliament. On election night, the Ireland Green Party posted on social media, "Having topped the poll with 63,849 first preference votes, @CiaranCuffe has exceeded the quota and is now deemed elected as an MEP for Dublin."

**Greens in Europe have strengthened their appeal by tying social justice and human rights with the ecological crisis.**

Throughout Europe, voters reported that their children were urging them to vote Green. In France and Germany, voters under the age of 25 were the strongest supporters of the party. Danish voters elected 21-year-old Danish student Kira Peter-Hansen, making her the youngest MEP in history.

The Green Party is now focusing on the Green Parties of Central and Eastern Europe where few Greens were elected and planning to increase the Green Wave even more.



*The Swedish Greens celebrate their electoral success on election night (Miljöpartiet de gröna)*