



The Manitowoc Progressive

The Voice of the Manitowoc County Democratic Party

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May 2011



FROM THE EDGE OF THE CHAIR

Kerry Trask

Wisconsin has long had the most open, honest, fair, voter-friendly election system in the entire country and that accounts, in large part, for why we also have some of the highest voter turn-out rates anywhere in North America. In the 2008 election, for example, 70.89% of our voting age population cast ballots, down just a little from the 73.82% in 2004. In voter turn-out we have consistently ranked second highest in the country, just slightly behind Minnesota.

This is a gratifying reflection of the highly democratic character of our civic culture. But all this is about to change once the Republicans pass their Voter ID bill.

This legislation will require all eligible voters to have and to show an official photo ID card at the polls, beginning in 2012. On top of that, the Republicans intend to end same-day voter registration, increase residency requirements, eliminate the ability of voting a straight party ticket, and create additional barriers for voters with disabilities. When they have finished messing with the current system we will be left with the most restrictive voting system in the entire nation.

All of this, they declare, is urgently necessary to protect the integrity of our elections from the virulent threats of voter fraud.

Such trumped-up fears and bogus rationalizations have seldom been more unjustified. Indeed, in 2008 even our unusually zealous, right-wing Attorney General J. B. Van Hollen, righteously ranting about rampant electoral corruption in Milwaukee, was only able to find 11 suspicious ballots among the nearly 3 million cast. Upon further investigation that number was reduced to just three. Normally that should have ended all suspicions about the trustworthiness of our voters or the integrity of our elections, leading most rational people to conclude that the Voter ID is an unnecessary and costly solution desperately in search of a problem.

Continued on Page 2

Scot Ross

Executive Director of



MantyDems Meeting

May 23, 2011

7:00 PM

Manitowoc Senior Center
3330 Custer Street, Mntwc



Scot Ross, Speaking Out at the Madison Protest

Scot Ross is an insightful observer of Wisconsin politics, well known for his hard hitting, straight-talking commentaries. Highly informed and deeply concerned, Mr. Ross will speak to the Manitowoc County Democrats about the impact Governor Scott Walker's partisan agenda has upon our Wisconsin way of life: 'Scott Walker: A Serious Threat to Our Way of Life'.

Ross is Executive Director of One Wisconsin Now, a non-profit, non-partisan statewide communications network specializing in effective earned media and online organizing to advance progressive leadership and values. www.onewisconsinnow.org

From the Edge (continued from Page 1)

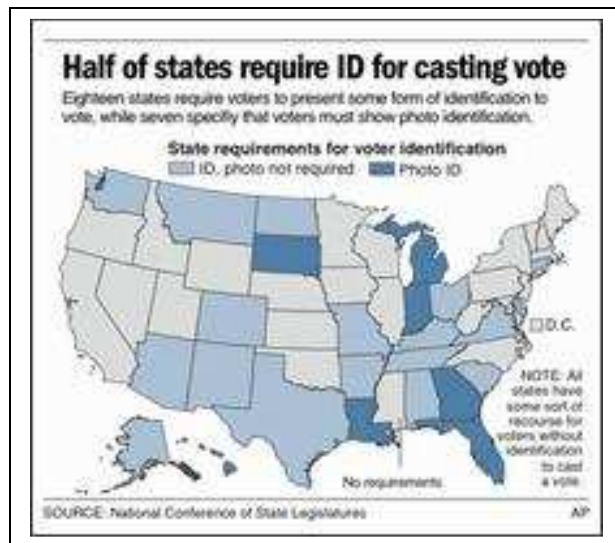
But legislators like Joe Leibham, the chief champion of this proposal, refused to be dissuaded by the facts. That is because his Voter ID plan has virtually nothing to do with election integrity or voter fraud—no more than Walker’s attacks on collective bargaining had anything to do with balancing the budget. The real and only purpose of this bill is to suppress voter turnout.

As introduced by Leibham, this bill is the most restrictive voter ID legislation in the nation, moving Wisconsin from the best to the worst.

The facts of most apparent concern to Leibham and his co-conspirators are those that clearly demonstrate how Democrats fare consistently well whenever voter turnout is high. And they also know it doesn’t take much to discourage people from voting. Therefore, the real purpose of Leibham’s Voter Suppression Bill is to frustrate and prevent large numbers of citizens—especially those most likely to vote Democratic—from casting ballots.

When Leibham’s Voter Suppression Bill is passed (and it will be passed) only a Wisconsin driver’s license or a Department of Motor Vehicles issued photo ID card will be acceptable as valid identification for voting. Consequentially the DMV will be empowered as gate-keeper to our voting rights.

The problematic nature of that situation is perfectly apparent to anyone who has ever tried to communicate with or stood in line at the DMV office. Throughout the state 26% of the DMV offices are open only one day a month or less, more than half are open just part-time, 3



counties have no DMV offices at all, and only one DMV office in the entire state is open on weekends. Remember, it doesn’t take much to discourage people from voting. Thus, it requires no intellectual brilliance to see just how daunting this system will be for rural people or those with disabilities or full-time jobs.

Furthermore, this policy will negatively impact some people more than others. Most white, middle class, middle aged, married, English-speaking, straight people (the ones most likely to vote Republican) will be fine. On the other hand, the people currently lacking the required DMV-issued photo ID cards or driver’s licenses, and who will have to fight the system to get one if they wish to vote, include: 23% of all citizens over 65 years old, 55% of all African American men, 49% of all African American women, 46% of all Hispanic men, 59% of Hispanic women, and a considerably large number of our university students. One thing all these people have in common is their inclination to vote for Democrats.

This shamefully brazen power play, which may cost as much as \$20 million to implement, is just part of a grander design including the dismantling of public employee unions, the flood tide of shady election spending made possible by the *Citizens United* decision, and the creative gerrymandering yet to come with redistricting. Altogether this will enable Republicans to achieve a decided advantage in their efforts to elect more and more of their reactionary, corporate-backed candidates eager to sell Wisconsin to the super-rich.

The Voter Suppression Bill is an ugly but revealing reflection of the anti-democratic character of what the Republican Party has become. Under Scott Walker it is a party without a social conscience, caring little for either the rights of our people or their well-being, caught up in its own lust for power and the creation of an autocratic corporate state based upon a vast concentration and control of wealth. ■



Educators Face Drastic Cuts

By Jim Protsman

Scott Walker's Budget Repair Bill (Act 10) severely impacts the teaching profession. Teachers will now have to pay one-half their contribution to the Wisconsin retirement system and in most cases they will have to pay a bigger share of the cost of insurance. State workers must pay 12.5% of their insurance cost under the new bill but for teachers there is no set limit and it could go above 12.5%. These extra costs will reduce monthly take-home pay for the average teacher about \$350 per month, or over \$4000 per year. This loss of take-home income will certainly adversely affect the local economy. Teachers magnanimously agreed early on to these two provisions due to the looming state budget deficit.

Since the 1950s teachers have worked to establish and expand collective bargaining rights with school boards in order to ensure decent pay and working conditions. Many of these rights have a direct bearing on the quality of education in our schools. Most of these hard-won collective bargaining rights have now been legislated into oblivion.

Bargaining for salary is now extremely restricted. Future salary increases will be limited to the cost of living index and applied to the base salary, or the salary a teacher is now receiving. If the cost of living for the past year is calculated at 2% then that is how much the base salary can rise. This creates a huge inequity in teacher compensation because a beginning teacher earning \$33,000 a year gets a 2% raise and a teacher with more seniority earning \$50,000 a year gets a 2% raise. School districts are now free to get rid of salary steps that permitted a new teacher to reach the top of the pay scale in about 10 years. If steps



disappear, teachers on the lower end of the pay scale will be locked into their low pay with no chance to get to the top of the salary schedule. Most School Boards cannot afford to keep seniority steps in their contracts.

Wiped out are collective bargaining rights when it comes to insurance coverage. School districts can reduce coverage and increase deductibles at will.

In addition to this there are no collective bargaining rights when it comes to (1) seniority, (2) layoff or bumping rights, (3) calendar, (4) work schedule (number of classes taught or hours worked), (5) class size, (6) grievance procedures, (7) mediation/arbitration, (8) personal leave days, (9) compensatory time or limitations for parent-teacher conferences, (10) required time for classroom preparation, (11) limitations on IEP (individualized educational plan) meetings for special needs children.

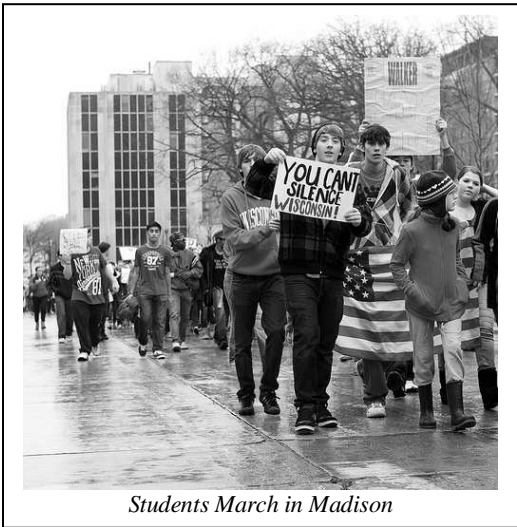
The Scott Walker budget reduces funding by \$800 million in the next two years from the general education fund, This in addition to a reduction of 5.5% in the revenue cap means Wisconsin school districts face a loss of 1.7 billion dollars. There will be some loss of funding for special education. The budget appropriates \$40 million to expand school choice and voucher schools. Experts concerned about funding for special education note that very few students with disabilities are accepted by private schools that benefit from the voucher system

The Manitowoc School District is reducing staff by about six teachers for the 2011-2012 school year and slightly raising class size due to cutbacks in state aid. In addition to this the district must make even more cuts in order to keep next year's tax increase as low as possible. [18 teachers are retiring – up from previous years.] ■



Sounds like Ziegelbauer.
He calls teachers the privileged class.

**Join us for the
 “Walkers Against Walker Rally and March”
 June 11, 2011**



Students March in Madison

Please join us for a rally and march along the beautiful **Mariner’s Trail** on Lake Michigan to show support for Wisconsin working families, public safety, the environment, public education, and the fight to promote the democratic process in Wisconsin. This is a peaceful gathering of those wanting to take part in demonstrating these ideals. Come with signs to carry and bring your families and strollers; pets are also welcome!

When: Saturday, June 11, 2011;

Rally starts at 9:30 with

Dr. Kerry Trask, Chairman of the Democratic Party of Manitowoc County speaking.
 The march will follow.

Where: Meet in the park adjacent to the Farmer’s Market in downtown Manitowoc, on the corner of 8th Street and Quay Streets, just south of the bridge. The march will begin and end there.

Purchase a T-shirt: We will have T-shirts available for participants to wear the day of the event for \$10.00. The T-shirts will state “I Walked in the Walkers Against Walker Walk in Manitowoc- June 11, 2011”. We urge you to order a T-shirt and wear it proudly! Please come prior to the 9:30 rally to pick up your T-shirt. **To order:** please fill out the form below, and send it along with a check or money order made to Jena Kortens, PO BOX 2331, Manitowoc WI 54221-2331. **T-shirt orders are due by May 27, 2011.**

Register: If you plan on coming, but not purchasing a T-shirt, please let us know so we can plan for numbers. Please register by calling Jena at (920) 905-5446, email at jena.kortens@comcast.net, or send the registration form to the above address. Please feel free to attend even if you didn’t register ahead of time, it just is helpful for us to plan ahead as much as possible.



Detach and return to: Jena Kortens, PO BOX 2331, Manitowoc WI, 54221-2331
 T-shirts are \$10.00; make check or money order out to Jena Kortens

Name of Participant

Shirt Size (Adult and Youth LG, M and S
 are \$10.00, XLG and XXLG available for \$11.00)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Please include an email address, or phone number if you would like to get information about future events. If there are additional participants, just add their information on the back

The Manitowoc Progressive

The Voice of the Manitowoc Democratic Party

PO Box 1373

Manitowoc WI 54221-1373

Calendar of Events

Mon, May 23 rd	Monthly Meeting – ‘ <i>Scott Walker: A Serious Threat to Our Way of Life.</i> ’ Guest speaker Scot Ross from One Wisconsin Now. 7:00 PM, Manitowoc Senior Center
Fri-Sat, Jun 3-4	DPW State Convention – Milwaukee
Mon, Jun 6 th	Executive Committee Meeting, 6:00 PM, Pizza Garden
Sat, Jun 11 th	Think Tank – 9:30 AM, St James Episcopal Church
Sat, June 11 th	Walkers Against Walker Rally and March, 9:30 AM, Park adjacent to Manitowoc Farmer’s Market, 8 th and Quay Streets
Mon, Jun 27 th	The County Dems: County Democratic Elected Officials share their views and concerns about appointment instead of election – 7:00 PM, TimeOut Bar and Grill, Rapids Road
Tues, Jul 5 th	Executive Committee Meeting, 6:00 PM, Pizza Garden
Sat, Jul 9 th	Think Tank – 9:30 AM, St James Episcopal Church
Mon, Jul 25 th	The Donkey’s Bash and Family Picnic, Lincoln Park Cabin 2. Guest Speaker, - Mike McCabe from Wisconsin Democracy Campaign.
August 23-28 th	Manitowoc County Fair

MantyDems Officers

Kerry Trask, Chair
kerry.trask@comcast.net
chair@mantydem.com
920-682-1710

Jon Buggs, Vice Chair
fluggs@ameritech.net

Dick Ekstrom, Vice Chair
ekstrom99@msn.com

Sherrie Richards, Secretary
s.irene63@yahoo.com

Bob Jome, Treasurer
rjome@sbcglobal.net

Nan Hallock, Past Chair
nanhallock@sbcglobal.net

Members-at-Large:
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Fees include membership to both the State and County Parties.

\$50 per Month* \$75 per Year*

\$20 per Month* \$45 per Year Activist

\$10 per Month* \$35 per Year Pairs

\$25 per Year General

Other _____ \$10 Limited Income

*includes all family members

For monthly contributions – renew online — www.wisdems.org

Contributions are not tax deductible. Your contribution is subject to the limitations and prohibitions of the Federal Election Campaign Act.

Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions, in the aggregate, exceed \$200 in an election cycle. Please provide all information on the membership form.