



Portage County Democratic Party News and Notes - July 2021

Dear %firstname%,

Some see this part of the summer as the "dog days," the hottest part of the year when stagnation and malaise set in. It may be hot outside, but our local Party is anything but stagnant - in fact, we're just warming up.

Below, you will find information on what's coming in the weeks ahead. There's a lot there, so make sure you read all the way to the bottom of the newsletter. I'd highlight for you that we are currently looking for volunteers to assist with our presence at Garrettsville's Summerfest the first weekend of August, and at the Randolph Fair August 23rd - 29th. [Please contact First Vice Chair Denise Smith](#) if you can help.

If you have additional ideas for how we build back better, or upcoming events you'd like us to share, please contact 2nd Vice Chair Brad Cromes [via email](#).

Thank you once more for all you do to help us serve the people of Portage County more effectively. I look forward to putting in the sweat next to you again this month.

Forward,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dean DePerro". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial "D".

Dean DePerro, Chairman

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Call To Action - Community Mapping for Redistricting Reform!

This year Ohio will draw new district maps for Congress and the General Assembly. These maps are supposed to be drawn using new rules overwhelming approved by voters to make the process more fair...but Statehouse Republicans are working to game the system. The Kent League of Women Voters is engaging in a community map drawing exercise this Thursday, 7/29 at 6:30pm at the Kent Free Library. [Sign up here](#) - it's free, and will help us make the case for fair maps!

REMINDER: Our office is now open for this important work and more, Monday and Wednesday 10am - 2pm and 5pm - 7pm, Friday 10am - 2pm, and Saturday 11am - 1pm. Stop in and let's make sure we get the fair districts we deserve!

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Volunteers Needed - Garrettsville Summerfest, Randolph Fair Booths

Your Portage Co. Democratic Party will once again be making its presence felt at Garrettsville's Summerfest, August 6th - 8th, and the Portage County Randolph Fair August 23rd - 29th. We need a few good folks who are willing to help us talk about the good things Democrats are doing for our communities at these events. [Sign up with First Vice Chair Dense Smith ASAP](#) - and feel free to share with others in your network who might help!

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Upcoming Events

Membership Standards Listening Session - 7/29/21 - 5:30pm - 7:30pm - Reed Memorial Library, Ravenna

Our Membership Committee is nearing the end of its work developing a handbook for members of our Central Committee. It's been a huge undertaking...and they're excited to get some feedback! If you have thoughts on what the elected members of our Committee should be doing to move Portage County forward, stop by and share them.

[Portage CARES Donation Drive - 7/31/21 - 9am - 12pm - Portage Co. Court House](#)

Portage CARES will be donating personal hygiene items to benefit those served by Root House and PARC. Donations can include deodorant,

toothbrushes/toothpaste, soap, bodywash, and more. Help us pack the bus with items to help those in need in our community!

[*Tim Ryan for Senate Virtual Listening Session - 8/2/21 - 8pm - 9pm - Zoom*](#)

Tim wants to hear from you on how to win the Ohio Senate race in 2022. He wants to hear about what campaigns have gotten right and wrong in the past, and what you think we need to do to win in Portage County. Details at the link.

[*RepresentUs Tailgate for Democracy - 8/3/21 - 5:30pm - 7:30pm - Kent Flexspace, 200 W. Williams St. Kent*](#)

Join RepresentUs for a casual tailgate barbeque and optional sign painting to meet others who are passionate about defending our voting rights and passing the For the People Act.

[*Garrettsville Summerfest - 8/6/21 - 8/8/21 - Various Shifts - Downtown Garrettsville*](#)

Garrettsville's annual summer party was delayed by COVID - but now its time to celebrate! Help us get the word out in northern Portage County about the good work Democrats are doing in move this community and our country forward by volunteering to work a shift in our booth. Email First Vice Chair Denise Smith ASAP at the link above.

[*FDW Candidate and Elected Official Meet-and-Greet - 8/14/21 - 12pm - 3pm - Fred Fuller Park, Kent*](#)

Join the Federated Democratic Women for a meet-and-greet event featuring our endorsed Municipal Judges Kevin Poland and Mark Fankhauser, along with other Portage County elected officials. Grab a hot dog, learn a little about what our elected officials are working on, and help ensure Democrats stay on the job for Portage County!

[*Randolph Fair - 8/23/21 - 8/29/21 - Various Shifts - Portage Co. Fairgrounds Randolph*](#)

There's no place like the Fair! Help us get the word out in southern Portage County about the good work Democrats are doing in move this community and our country forward by volunteering to work a shift in our booth. Email First Vice Chair Denise Smith ASAP at the link above.

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Board of Elections Updates

Filing deadline next week!

The filing deadline for candidates for village, township, and school board offices is next Tuesday, August 4th at 4pm. All petitions must be submitted by that date and time. If you have questions, call the Board ASAP at 330-297-3511.

[Help us recruit poll workers!](#)

Poll workers are the backbone of our election system, and the guardians of our democracy. We need a few good folks to join us for this important role this fall and in the elections to come next year for Governor and other statewide offices. Learn more and sign up at the link above.

[Request your absentee ballot!](#)

It's not too early to request your absentee ballot for this November's General Election. Follow the link above to make your request, and call 330-297-3511 with questions.

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ICYMI - News and Notes

[The Portager - Florida tech company pitches commissioners on livestreaming services - 6/23/21](#)

"Portage County commissioners heard a proposal from a Florida tech firm for livestreaming and recording their meetings."

[Record-Courier - Citing 'epidemic' suicide rate, Portage coroner makes case for additional investigator - 6/27/21](#)

"Portage County Coroner Dean DePerro said there have been 18 ODs and 14 suicides so far this year."

[Record-Courier - Portage County commissioners revive sales tax talk, issue unlikely to be on November ballot - 7/9/21](#)

"Portage County commissioners will host two public hearings 'in the near future' to discuss putting a sales tax back before voters."

Editor's Note: The sales tax being contemplated was initially passed on a short-term basis as a response to the opioid crisis. It is now being considered in response to large budget increases sought by Sheriff Bruce Zuchowski.

[The Portager - Land Bank's expanded programming promises long-term growth, leaders say - 7/12/21](#)

"This arrangement prevents speculation, incentivizes project completion and opens up opportunities for ownership to those who may not otherwise qualify for them,' Land Bank Chair Brad Cromes wrote in the report."

[Record-Courier - Spreadsheet blamed for \\$140K error cited in labor contracts for sheriff's workers - 7/15/21](#)

"But after the contracts were approved, Christian-Bennett said the numbers didn't look right to her, so she asked Joe Harris, the newly hired head of budget and finance, to look over them. Harris determined that the contracts will cost \$140,000 more over the three-year length of the contract than previously thought."

[Record-Courier - Error discovered in Portage County phone bills could save more than \\$1 million annually - 7/16/21](#)

"A Portage County employee has found the reason why the county has been overpaying for phone service, and fixing those problems could save the county more than \$1 million annually...Lloyd Alger, chief information officer for the county, had been investigating high phone bills."

[The Portager - UH Portage secures funding for a \\$1 million Breast Health Center - 7/19/21](#)

"Through a Community Projects Funding application, U.S. Rep. Tim Ryan obtained nearly \$18 million for projects in the 13th congressional district, including \$1 million for UH Portage. The grant will fund equipment updates and facility renovations...Ryan, a Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate, visited Portage County on Saturday, meeting with local political organizers and candidates for office."

[Record-Courier \(Paywall\) - Despite protests, conversations, Black leaders in Portage say little progress has been made - 7/25/21](#)

"Many leaders in Portage County's Black community say there hasn't been much change, and important conversations on the subject haven't happened."

[Akron Beacon-Journal - Portage Co. Sheriff uses department social media to condemn Cleveland baseball name change - 7/25/21](#)

"On the department's official letterhead, Portage County Sheriff Bruce Zuchowski issued a one-page statement Saturday criticizing 'another attempt of trying to erase our history due to the outcry of the few that affects the many.'... 'We in local government have work to do for the citizens we serve. We should be focusing on those things and not the culture wars distraction issues that come up from time to time,' said Portage County Treasurer Brad Cromes."

[The Portager - Marjorie Taylor Greene event 'postponed' with no new date - 7/28/21](#)

"An August event set to feature U.S. Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia as a speaker has been postponed, said Portage County Republican Party Chair Amanda Suffecool."

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