



Portage County Democratic Party News and Notes - September 2021

Dear %firstname%,

With the official start of fall upon us, the sprint through Election Day for local candidates on the ballot this year has begun in earnest. As you know, Municipal Court Judges Mark Fankhauser and Kevin Poland are our countywide candidates up for reelection this year. Their track records speak for themselves, and we must do everything we can to keep them on the bench. Learn how you can help them at www.judgemarkfankhauser.com and www.judgekevinpoland.com.

In addition to those critical races, we will soon be electing mayors, city council and school board members, and township officials all over Portage County. The Party is doing all it can to offer those candidates the resources they will need to be successful. We encourage you to identify who is running in your area, and reach out to them directly with an offer of assistance down the home stretch.

Lastly, I want to nttake a moment to thank all of those who have put time and energy into the Party reforms we have worked on throughout this year. Thanks to our volunteers, we now have an updated constitution and bylaws, collected resources to support our members, regular opportunities for service, and more. We are making progress due wholly to your efforts, and I am grateful. They are:

Membership Committee:

Christopher Clevenger-Morris, Terrie Nielsen, Becky Doggett, Frank Hairston, Tyler Gardner, and Randi Clites

Constitutional Review Committee:

Bob Howard, Bruce Ribelin, Lisa Hirt, Denise Smith, Terrie Nielsen and Brad Cromes

Service Committee

: Samantha Stephens, Denise Smith, John Kennedy, Randi Clites, Greg Johnson, and Gloria Haven

Whatever you do this fall, I encourage you to stay active. We must be the change we wish to see, and I remain thankful to each of you for what you are doing to make Portage County the best community it can be.

Forward,



Dean DePerro, Chairman

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Call To Action - 2nd Annual Portage County Hunger Run

Last year, our candidate for County Commissioner John Kennedy saw a growing number of hungry families in our community and took action by organizing a run across every city, village and township in Portage County. He raised nearly \$4,000 to fight hunger - and he's at it again.

The next several weekends, John will reprise his run, and he needs your help to fight back against the continuing need in Portage County.

[You can learn more about John Kennedy's hunger run and how to support it here.](#)

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Call to Action - State School Board and "CRT"

Republican extremists in Portage County and across Ohio are organizing to prevent teachers from teaching history. They are scaremongering about so-called "critical race theory," and working to push the state school board to act.

This Tuesday, the state board of education will consider two resolutions to roll back diversity and inclusion standards in public education. [Please contact our state school board ASAP](#) and tell them you trust our teachers and want our kids

to have a real, accurate picture of our history so they can shape a better future for us all.

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Upcoming Events

Randolph Candidates Night - 9/27/21 - 7pm - 8:30pm - Randolph Township Community Center

Join the citizens of Randolph for their annual candidate's night. Hear from candidates for township offices, school board and more. Refreshments to follow.

[*Aurora Candidates Night - 9/28/21 - 7pm - 8:30pm - Moebius Nature Center, Aurora*](#)

Join the League of Women Voters of Northern Portage County to hear from candidates for Aurora school board, Aurora Mayor and Council, and more.

[*Portage Young Dems Day of Action Streetsboro - 10/16/21*](#)

The Young Democrats of Portage County are hosting "days of action" this fall to get out the vote for our candidates for Portage County Municipal Court and local offices. Follow the link to sign up for more information.

[*Portage Young Dems Day of Action Kent - 10/23/21*](#)

The Young Democrats of Portage County are hosting "days of action" this fall to get out the vote for our candidates for Portage County Municipal Court and local offices. Follow the link to sign up for more information.

[*Portage Young Dems Day of Action Ravenna - 10/30/21*](#)

The Young Democrats of Portage County are hosting "days of action" this fall to get out the vote for our candidates for Portage County Municipal Court and local offices. Follow the link to sign up for more information.

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Board of Elections Updates

[*Voter registration deadline is October 4th!*](#)

It's not too late to register to vote for this fall's General Election - but the deadline is fast approaching! Follow the link above to check and update your registration status and/or register to vote by Monday, October 4th.

[*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

[*Record-Courier \(Paywall\) - No plans to institute mask mandate in Portage County administration building, offices - 8/7/21*](#)

"A masked elected official spoke to three unmasked Portage County commissioners on Thursday, asking if they would require face coverings now that Portage County has a 'substantial' transmission rate of COVID-19. County Treasurer Brad Cromes asked commissioners to require employees and visitors to wear masks inside all county buildings, including the administration building where Cromes' office is housed."

[*Columbus Dispatch \(Paywall\) - Pat DeWine drops out of race for Ohio Supreme Court chief justice, will run for reelection - 8/31/21*](#)

"Cincinnati Republican Pat DeWine, who is the governor's son, won't be running in a GOP primary for Ohio Supreme Court chief justice against fellow jurist Sharon Kennedy."

[*The Portager - Portage County Community Action Council provides housing assistance to hundreds of local families - 9/3/21*](#)

"The Portage County Community Action Council has been swamped with families seeking housing assistance since the start of the pandemic. And this is just the beginning...Those in need of assistance, rent relief or otherwise, can refer to the Portage County CAC's website and reach the office via email at info@portagecac.net or phone at 330-297-1456."

[*Mass Transit Magazine - Sen. Sherrod Brown touts benefits of infrastructure bill for public transit at SARTA - 9/9/21*](#)

"U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown used Tuesday morning's visit to the headquarters of the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority to highlight the roughly \$39 billion that would fund public transit nationwide if the U.S. House approves a \$1.2 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill passed by the Senate nearly a month ago."

[*The Portager - Portage County organizations launch Pack the Bus campaign to fight child hunger in food deserts - 9/10/21*](#)

"You may remember our recent story about the Rural Relief Mobile Food Pantry, which operates a big bus bringing bags of food to parts of our county that are under-served by supermarkets and other pantries. Well, they're starting a new program called Student Snack Sacks, specifically to supplement kids' diets on the weekends and holidays."

[*Cleveland.com \(Paywall\) - Democrat Justice Jennifer Brunner's campaign for Ohio Supreme Court chief justice will focus on good-government reforms - 9/14/21*](#)

"Democratic Supreme Court Justice Jennifer Brunner said Tuesday her campaign for chief justice next year will center on a number of good-government initiatives."

[*Washington Post \(Opinion\) - A deeply cynical moment in gerrymandering from the Ohio GOP - 9/16/21*](#)

"There are fewer uglier and more cynical political processes than redistricting and gerrymandering. But even by those standards, what's taking place in Ohio is extraordinary."

[*The Portager - Windham students are forming an NAACP chapter to combat racism in the community - 9/17/21*](#)

"On Wednesday, 32 Windham High School students filed into the gym during 5th period for the first meeting of the Windham High School NAACP High School Chapter. This is the first NAACP chapter for students in Portage County formed in recent decades, Portage County NAACP President Geraldine Hayes-Nelson said."

[Record-Courier \(Paywall\) - Commissioners plan to add staff to sheriff's, coroner's offices - 9/20/21](#)

"Portage County Commissioners plan to add staff to the sheriff's and coroner's offices after learning a projected shortfall is less than once thought."

[WFMJ - Congressman Ryan, son test positive for COVID - 9/23/21](#)

"Ryan, who attributes his mostly mild case of Covid to getting the vaccine, says he's felt symptoms for over a week and took several tests before testing positive."

[New York Times - Voting rights groups sue Ohio over a Republican-controlled version of state voting districts - 9/23/21](#)

"The American Civil Liberties Union and other voting rights groups filed a lawsuit on Thursday challenging the newly drawn state legislative districts enacted last week by a Republican-dominated commission in Ohio, an opening salvo in what is likely to be a series of confrontations across the country as the once-in-a-decade redistricting process unfolds."

[The Portager - Celebrate Portage honors award winners at 7th annual event - 9/24/21](#)

"Celebrate Portage held its annual awards dinner Wednesday night at NEOMED, announcing the community organization's class of winners...Community Service Award: Portage CARES Community Food and Supplies Drive." (

Editor's Note:

Portage CARES is a project headed by Common Pleas Court Judge Laurie Pittman that marshalled local Democratic elected officials and friends to fight hunger in Portage County in 2020. The work is on-going, and more food drives are scheduled soon!)

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