



Portage County Democratic Party News and Notes - April 2020

Dear %firstname%,

With Ohio's Primary Election coming to an end in a few short days, and the topic of how and when to return to normal from this virus outbreak fresh on all our minds, we find ourselves at a crossroads. The decisions we make in the days ahead will have an enormous impact on us as individuals, as a community, and as a nation.

The first and most important decision we can make is to continue doing all we can to slow the spread of this disease. Portage County currently ranks 4th in Ohio in deaths per capita from coronavirus. No matter what comes from Columbus and D.C., please: keep yourself and your family safe by practicing social distancing, wearing masks in public, and washing your hands.

The second critical thing you can do is vote. We have a number of strong candidates running at all levels. We are voting almost exclusively by mail...so if you've gotten your ballot, make sure you postmark it by 4/27 or drop it off at the Board of Elections by 4/28 (and if you haven't asked for one yet, please do so ASAP and make sure you return it)!

The month of May will no doubt bring with it many new challenges...but it also stands to be a time of growth for us as a Party, a community, and as individuals. We will move ahead, together, with a vision for Portage County that makes this the best place to live, now and always.

Forward,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "O. B. Benda".

Dean DePerro, Chairman

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Elections Updates

Primary Extended to 4/28. Due to the coronavirus outbreak, the March 17, 2020 Primary Election has been extended to April 28th. The remainder of the election will be conducted almost entirely by mail. Voters must request an absentee ballot, complete it, and either return it in person to the drop box at the County Administration Building in Ravenna by 7:30pm on 4/28 or mail it with a postmark no later than 4/27.

The quickest way to get an absentee ballot is to visit the Board's [website](#) and print off an absentee ballot request form, complete it, and return it ASAP. The Board requests voters only send one request, as multiple requests will slow down the process. The Board suggests voters ask for a ballot ASAP to allow time for transit through the postal service.

The Board Office in Ravenna will be open for limited in-person voting on 4/28 from 6:30am - 7:30pm. Only voters with a qualified disability or who cannot receive mail are eligible to vote in person. All others must vote via mail.

This situation is unprecedented, and the Board requests patience as it attempts to accommodate a significant process change on the fly and fulfill its mission to make sure every eligible vote is counted.

For more information, please call the Board of Elections at 330-297-3511.

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COVID-19 #TogetherWeStand Challenge

Our Chairman, Dean DePerro, recently challenged all our officeholders to join him in donating to Family & Community Services' #TogetherWeStand campaign - and now we're challenging you!

The campaign supports the important work F&CS does to ensure those in need

in our community have access to resources to get through. [Click here](#) to donate, and then pass it on to your friends and family!

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COVID-19 - Community Resources

Portage County Health District. The Health District is continuously updating its [Facebook Page](#) during the outbreak with tips on staying healthy, what to do if you or someone you love becomes sick, and more.

Job & Family Services. Portage County Job & Family Services has developed a comprehensive listing of community services and service adjustments in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. It can be accessed [here](#).

United Way of Portage County. The United Way of Portage County is working to develop a [COVID-19 Relief Fund](#) to help those in our community who need it most survive the financial crunch created by this crisis. They also continue their [2-1-1](#) service, connecting those in need to a variety of community services.

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COVID-19 - How is Portage County Operating?

On March 24th, the County Commissioners passed a resolution closing the County Administration Building indefinitely to the public (with limited exceptions) for the duration of the coronavirus outbreak.

Each Portage County office has posted information about their operations, and how the public can reach them for the conduct of essential business. A memo with that information is available [here](#), and will be updated regularly for the duration of the outbreak.

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Upcoming Events

[Ohio Dems Virtual GOTV Phone Bank - Now through April 28th.](#) We need your help to ensure voters in Portage County who asked for vote-by-mail ballots

return them in time to be counted! Click the link to sign up to make phone calls any time, any where using your mobile device.

[Ohio Dems Election Night Virtual Watch Party - Tuesday, April 28th](#). Ohio Democrats are having a virtual Election Night Watch Party on Facebook - and you're invited! Join special guests and statewide leaders as we celebrate the end of the Primary, and look ahead to winning this fall's General Election.

Due to the ongoing coronavirus outbreak, all in-person political events have been postponed indefinitely. In the interim, we invite you to follow our local Party on [Facebook](#) for updates as we have them.

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ICYMI - News and Notes

[Cleveland.com - Federal judge blocks Ohio officials from using health order to ban abortions - 3/30/20](#)

"A federal judge has temporarily banned Ohio officials from using a public-health order forbidding nonessential surgeries during the coronavirus pandemic to restrict providers from performing abortions within the state."

[Record-Courier - Bored at home? Fill out your Census form - 4/3/20](#)

"If you're stuck at home with nothing to do, Ravenna Mayor Frank Seman has a suggestion: fill out your Census form."

[Yahoo News - Brown praises DeWine, blasts Trump responses to coronavirus - 4/7/20](#)

"Sen. Sherrod Brown is praising his state's Republican governor's response to the coronavirus pandemic, while at the same time criticizing President Trump's 'incompetent' handling of the situation."

[Record-Courier - State identifies coronavirus cluster in Portage - 4/8/20](#)

"A map depicting clusters of coronavirus cases in Ohio puts Portage County in the cross hairs of a 'strong cluster' of cases in the northeastern corner of the state."

[Yahoo News - Ryan: Halting WHO funding 'one of the most irresponsible decisions in the history of the presidency' - 4/14/20](#)

"We are just not getting the presidential leadership that we need on some of these issues. That's the reality of the situation. So we're all trying to figure this out without, you know, the top dog helping us make this happen," said Ryan."

[Record-Courier - Judge Becky Doherty reprimanded for drunk driving last year - 4/14/20](#)

"The Ohio Supreme Court has publicly reprimanded Portage County Common Pleas Judge Becky Doherty for a February 2019 drunken driving incident and for repeatedly reminding the arresting Brimfield officer that she is a judge...Doherty faces independent Mike Noble in November."

[Spectrum News 1 - Gap in COVID-19 money leaves small Ohio communities in need - 4/16/20](#)

"...Mayor Luke Feeney of Chillicothe, said local government employees not only keep communities running, they keep contributing financially as long as they are working and getting paid."

[Record-Courier - Portage County hires its first administrator - 4/17/20](#)

"Gene Roberts has been named as Portage County's first administrator. Roberts, director of water resources since 2016, was hired out of a field that included four other county department heads."

[Columbus Dispatch - Ohio Dems question GOP moves to reopen the state so quickly - 4/17/20](#)

"Some Ohio Democrats are questioning how - and how fast - Gov. Mike DeWine wants to reopen the Ohio economy after the coronavirus crisis."

[Cleveland.com - Larkin: Voter suppression looks likely to be GOP's fallback strategy for November - 4/19/20](#)

"When you lose the popular vote in six out of seven presidential elections, it's more than a coincidence. It's a trend. For Republicans, desperate times call for desperate measures - especially given the near certainty that, no matter who wins the presidency Nov. 3, the nation's voters will run the popular vote losing streak to seven of eight."

[MarketWatch - Ryan: One \\$1,200 check won't cut it; give Americans \\$2,000 a month to fire up economy - 4/20/20](#)

"How far do politicians think one \$1,200 check can stretch?"

[Record-Courier - Portage now has state's 6th highest number of virus deaths - 4/21/20](#)

"The county ranks fourth in Ohio for per capita deaths with 18.4 per 100,000 people."

[Daily Kos - These four state supreme courts are key to stopping GOP gerrymandering - 4/22/20](#)

"Bottom line: Democrats can flip the Ohio Supreme Court from Republicans."

[Columbus Dispatch - DeWine builds economic case for reopening; health case a work in progress - 4/22/20](#)

"Gov. Mike DeWine continued Wednesday to build a case of economic justification for gradually reopening the state beginning May 1...but the public-health case that DeWine has build for reopening amid a lack of testing and failure to meet federal guidance on recording a decline in infection numbers remains a work in progress."

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For more news and notes on the activities of Democrats from around Ohio, sign up for the Ohio Democratic Party Daily Update [here](#).

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