

## NEWS AND NOTES - January 2018

Friend -

Since last we spoke, much has happened that impacts the direction of our Party locally - and much more is coming soon. Perhaps most importantly, we selected Mike Kerrigan from a field of very qualified candidates to serve as County Commissioner. Mike takes the place of a beloved, long time public servant in Maureen Frederick, and will need our support as he seeks to keep her seat in 2018.

In addition, the turning of the calendar to 2018 means a number of important deadlines are fast approaching. Chief among those is the deadline for candidates to file petitions to appear on the ballot at the May 8, 2018 Primary Election. All members of our Central Committee must file a declaration of candidacy with the Board of Elections by February 7, 2018 at 4pm. Our candidates for 2018 - Vicki A. Kline for Commissioner, Mike Kerrigan for Commissioner, Randi Clites for State Representative, and all other declared and undeclared candidates - must also file by that deadline.

That deadline will hit the accelerator on a very busy year for us. That is why we are also planning a Central Committee meeting for January 31st (details below). We must ensure that our Party has a clean slate and can hit the ground running after our candidates for the General Election (and our Central Committee's membership) are selected in May. It is my intention to do everything in my power to make sure we get that clean slate - and I hope you will join me.

Below are some additional events for you to be aware of as we move ahead, and news clips to catch you up. As always, if there's anything else you think we should include here, please don't hesitate to let us know by contacting County Treasurer Brad Cromes via [email](#).

Thank you for all you do, and I look forward to helping you build a sustainable success for our Party - this year and beyond.

Onward,

Craig Stephens, Chairman  
Portage Co. Democratic Party

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### CALLS TO ACTION - PETITIONS

County Treasurer Brad Cromes is circulating nominating petitions to help make sure Ohio's working-class champion, Sen. Sherrod Brown, can continue in his very important work in Washington. If you are interested in signing, please contact Brad [here](#). Petitions are due back to the campaign at the end of this week, so time is of the essence!

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A number of candidates who will appear on the ballot for countywide office in 2018 - including Commissioners Vicki A. Kline and Mike Kerrigan - are also currently circulating nominating petitions. If you are interested in signing their petitions, please plan to attend the Central Committee Meeting on January 31, 2018 (details below) at which many will be in attendance, or contact them individually.

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

[Sherrod Brown Fundraiser feat. Jason Kander](#) - January 24, 2018 - 2:30pm - 4pm - Popped!, [175 E. Erie St., Kent, OH 44240](#)

Please join special guest Jason Kander, The Portage County Democratic Party and The Kent State College Democrats at Popped! in Kent for an ice cream social in support of Ohio's champion for workers, Senator Sherrod Brown! Kander is President of Let America Vote PAC, and host of the Majority54 podcast (one of the fastest growing progressive pods in the nation). He is a former Missouri Secretary of State, candidate for U.S. Senate, and intelligence officer in the U.S. National Guard. He will share with us why it's so important to give Sherrod the support he needs to keep fighting for us in Washington. Suggested contribution levels range from \$25 to \$250 dollars. More information at the link above.

[Central Committee Meeting](#) - January 31, 2018 - 5:45pm - Italian American Club, [644 S. Chestnut St., Ravenna, OH 44266](#)  
The Portage County Democratic Central Executive Committee will hold a regular meeting beginning at 5:45

PM on Wednesday, January 31, 2018, at the Italian American Society Hall. This will be a very brief meeting but we have business to wrap up before the reorganization in May.

[NAACP MLK Breakfast - February 10, 2018 - 9am - 12pm - United Church of Christ, 1400 E. Main St., Kent, OH 44240](#)  
Join the Portage County NAACP for their annual celebration of the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Tickets are \$10/each, with students 18 years old and younger free. Call Frank Hairston for tickets at [330-296-3556](tel:330-296-3556).

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### **ELECTIONS UPDATES**

**CAMPAIGN FINANCE:** Annual campaign finance reports for 2017 are due to the Board of Elections on January 31, 2018. To find out whether or not you are required to file, please contact the Board at [330-297-3511](tel:330-297-3511).

**2018 CANDIDATES:** Candidates wishing to seek local offices in 2018 (including Central Committee positions) should wrap up that process as soon as possible. The filing deadline for petitions and declarations of candidacy is 4pm, February 7, 2018.

**POLL WORKERS:** The Board of Elections is also always looking for poll workers! Find out more about the job (and fill out an application) [here](#).

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### **FROM OUR OFFICIALS - Commissioner Mike Kerrigan**

*This section highlights the work of our local elected Democrats.*

*Mike Kerrigan, Jr. ran for County Commissioner in 2016, and lost a tough race in a difficult environment for Democrats last November. He was [appointed by the Central Committee](#) on December 28, 2017 to fill the seat of long time Portage County official Maureen T. Frederick, who served a decade as County Treasurer before becoming a Commissioner in 2004. She held that position until her death November 28, 2017, and Mike Kerrigan will attempt to do so this year, starting with the Primary Election on May 8th. We contacted Mike to hear about his background and plans for the office. A lightly edited version of our conversation follows.*

*Give us a brief primer on how you came to the office (background, your first race, etc.).*

"For as long as I can remember, public service has been my calling. With great support from family and friends, I left my hometown of Randolph and attended college at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. While there, I had the good fortune of working for The Ohio State University as well as three current and former Members of Congress, including Ted Strickland and Betty Sutton. After seven years in D.C., my wife and I returned to Ohio where I worked for NEOMED as their community liaison. After seeing there was a need for a different type of leadership and a lack of young people in county government, I decided to run for commissioner in 2016 to fill the seat of retiring commissioner Kathleen Chandler. Though unsuccessful in 2016, I am looking forward to applying the knowledge gained from my first race toward running again this year to hold the appointment I received in December."

*Why did you want this position?*

"Having worked or volunteered in positions with the local, state, and federal governments, it was clear to me that local government has the most impact on everyone's day-to-day life. More specifically, I was interested in becoming a commissioner not only because of the job's focus on crafting the policy direction of the county, but also because of my passion for deliberation and finding compromise. Having worked in Congress, I enjoy being a part of the legislative process, and although the Board of Commissioners has no authority to make laws, it is the closest thing to a legislative body at the county level in Ohio."

*What are you most focused on accomplishing in the early days of your term?*

"With only a two-week transition period between appointment and swearing-in, my current focus is on acclimating myself to the office and the staff, as well as learning more about the processes unique to the county - things you really cannot learn as a candidate and have to be in the job to experience."

*What challenges facing the County concern you the most?*

"There are two challenges facing the county that concern me most - budget and facilities. On the facilities side, many of the county's buildings are nearing the end or are already past their useful lives. It is impossible for the county to renovate and build new all at once, but we currently lack a functional capital improvement plan. One of my priorities will be to create such a plan to ensure that we have a better handle on construction and maintenance costs. This leads to our budget. In Portage County, we have both a revenue and a spending problem. There are many unique revenue generating models that I intend to investigate that would not require an increase in taxes. Further, with updated and streamlined facilities and processes, we can save money and use the savings to support some other long-neglected programs."

*What are your longer-term plans for the office?*

"Longer-term plans will hinge on my being elected to the remaining two years of the unexpired term, but I would like to look into new and more efficient ways of two-way communication with the public. Social media is now the number one method

through which individuals get information, yet the commissioners do not maintain an official presence on any platform. I also want to look into implementing a 311 system that could act as a one-stop phone number for all local government services, making it easier for citizens to receive what they need and express concerns. Such a system could also act as a reverse 911 system for those who live in cities, townships, or villages that may not already offer the service."

*What can we do to help you do your work most effectively?*

"The best way to help me do my job is to stay in touch with me ([mike@mikekerrigan.us](mailto:mike@mikekerrigan.us) or 330-577-3134) and share your thoughts (both good and bad) as well as your ideas. The only way I can truly represent Portage County is to know what people are thinking."

*For more on Mike's work as Commissioner and campaign to continue serving Portage County, follow his [website](#) and [Facebook Page](#).*

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## ICYMI - NEWS AND NOTES

Cincinnati Enquirer - [What's on the 2018 ballot? A lot.](#) - December 31, 2017

Year-in-preview article covers Ohio Governor and Senate races, as well as those down ballot.

Record-Courier - [8 News Stories to Watch in 2018](#) - December 31, 2017

Article features preview on local State Representative Kathleen Clyde's race for Ohio Secretary of State.

Chicago Tribune - [Supreme Court Takes Up Ohio Voter Purge Case](#) - December 31, 2017

"The main argument on behalf of voters whose registrations were canceled is that federal voting law specifically prohibits states from using voter inactivity to trigger purges. The state "purges registered voters who are still eligible to vote," former and current Ohio elections officials said in a brief supporting the voters."

Columbus Dispatch - [Joe Schiavoni Picks Stephanie Dodd as Running Mate](#) - January 2, 2018

"Joe Schiavoni is the first Democratic candidate for governor to select a lieutenant governor running mate, turning to Ohio Board of Education member Stephanie Dodd. The state senator from Boardman announced his selection of Dodd, an elected two-term state board member from Buckeye Lake, in an email to supporters on Tuesday morning."

The Atlantic - [The Future of Trumpism is On Campus](#) - January 3, 2018

"More than 70 people showed up to the first meeting of the Ohio State College Republicans in August 2016. The group had made it through the turbulent presidential primaries and the withdrawal of hometown boy Governor John Kasich. But members couldn't agree on whether—or how much—to support Trump. The candidate was hated by some in the group, and loved by others; so they never took a formal position. In the end, the group 'kind of didn't really do much.'"

The Plain Dealer - [Cleveland Judge Announces Ohio Supreme Court Candidacy](#) - January 3, 2018

"Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court Judge Michael Donnelly announced Wednesday that he will run for a seat on the Ohio Supreme Court in this November's general election. Donnelly, a Democrat and former prosecutor, has been on the Common Pleas bench since 2005...Donnelly is perhaps best known for his public crusades to curtail plea agreements that lead to defendants admitting to crimes they didn't commit."

Toledo Blade - [Kucinich makes move toward governor run](#) - January 8, 2018

AP - [Cordray, Sutton Merge Governor Campaigns](#) - January 8, 2018

"Former federal consumer watchdog Richard Cordray will join forces with former congresswoman and Obama-era official Betty Sutton on Wednesday in the race for Ohio governor, a Democrat close to the campaign told The Associated Press. The move comes as Democrats position to win back control of the key battleground state in November.

The new team is expected to draw big-name Democratic support that could include former President Barack Obama, former Vice President Joe Biden and Massachusetts U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren."

Record-Courier - [Kerrigan Takes Office, Looks To The Future](#) - January 10, 2018

"On Wednesday, Mike Kerrigan took the oath of office, becoming the newest county commissioner in Portage County.

Kerrigan joins fellow Democrat Vicki Kline and Republican Sabrina Christian-Bennett in office."

The Plain Dealer - [Clyde Outlines Plans to Beef Up Ohio Election Security](#) - January 12, 2018

"State Rep. Kathleen Clyde, a Democratic candidate for Ohio secretary of state, said Wednesday she's preparing to introduce a pair of bills designed to safeguard the state's elections against cyber attacks. Clyde spoke about the bills at the Ohio Association of Elections Officials annual conference in Columbus. She was motivated to draft the legislation after it was reported that Russia attempted to interfere in the presidential election in 2016."

Cincinnati Enquirer - [Dayton Mayor Whaley Drops Out of Governor Race, Endorses Cordray](#) - January 12, 2018

"Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley is expected to drop out of a crowded Democratic primary for Ohio governor and endorse her competitor, Richard Cordray, on Friday. Whaley, 41, announced an event with Cordray Friday in Dayton. Her campaign would not confirm the details but Democrats indicated she would leave the governor's race."

Washington Examiner - [The Rise of Tim Ryan, Rustbelt Democrat](#) - January 14, 2018

"Ryan is working on several high tech projects that have not been finalized but could help reshape the direction and hopes of the area. 'Communities like Youngstown; Scranton; Gary, Indiana; Johnstown; and Toledo missed the technology and automation [of the] global economy as it moved forward. We were unplugged from that,' he said."

Record-Courier (Editorial) - [Ignorance Not Acceptable from Commissioners](#) - January 14, 2018

"We're not sure what's more disturbing. The complete lack of any due diligence by Portage County Commissioners when appointing members to important county boards and commissions. The uninformed Dec. 19 decision of commissioners

Sabrina Christian-Bennett and Vicki Kline to appoint a convicted felon to the Portage County Board of Developmental Disabilities just weeks after a controversial strike ended. Or Christian-Bennett's defense of the appointment at Thursday's meeting where several residents showed up to voice their concerns to commissioners following Sunday's Record-Courier report on the fiasco."

The Plain Dealer (Letter to the Editor) - [Renacci's Allegiance to Trump](#) - January 16, 2018

"With reference to President Trump's 'shithole countries' remark, Representative Jim Renacci defends Trump's racism and vulgarity by insisting Trump is only saying what people are thinking. I don't agree. Speaking as a person, I am not thinking that. My family and friends are people, and they are not thinking that either. Coincidentally, just this week Mr. Renacci was encouraged by the White House to drop out of Ohio's gubernatorial race and run in the Republican primary for Ohio's Senate seat so he could oppose incumbent Senator Sherrod Brown in the November election. By securing the support of Mr. Trump, Mr. Renacci has struck a Faustian bargain, and now his allegiance, first and foremost, is to President Trump. Integrity, decency, honor and patriotism be damned. How will that be good for Ohio?"

Marion Star - [Pillich Picks Local Mayor as Running Mate](#) - January 18, 2018

"Former state Rep. Connie Pillich of Montgomery Thursday picked Marion Mayor Scott Schertzer as her running mate in the Democratic primary for Ohio governor...Schertzer is serving his third term as mayor of Marion, a city of about 36,000 people located about an hour north of Columbus. The surrounding county is largely rural and Republican."

Dayton Daily News - [Crowded Field Puts Democratic Governor's Nomination Up For Grabs](#) - January 20, 2018

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For more news and notes on the activities of Democrats from around Ohio, subscribe to the Ohio Democratic Party daily update [here](#).

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#### **The Portage County Democratic Party**

<http://www.portagedemocrats.org/>

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