



The Compass

Harrison County Democracy for America Newsletter
Volume 1, Issue 2 Winter 2006

Howard Dean Visits West Virginia



Despite poor lighting, Denise Binion was able to get this shot of HC DFA Chair, Jerry McKeen with Governor Dean.

Several HC DFA members traveled to Charleston recently to attend the first visit of Howard Dean to West Virginia since becoming the Chairman of the Democratic National Committee. The event was held in the Pavilion Room at the Marriott Hotel and was also attended by Governor Joe Manchin and Congressman Nick Rahall. Senators Byrd and Rockefeller were unable to attend due to their Congressional schedules, but sent staff members to represent them and to read their prepared remarks. State Democratic Chairman Nick Casey was master of ceremonies and introduced the other state officials who were present. More than 300 guests were present to hear Governor Dean and the other guest speakers.

The leadership of Governor Dean is already making a difference in West Virginia politics. Following his recommendation that the party return to a grassroots approach to organization, the state party has been holding training sessions throughout the state to assist local Democratic Committees and other groups to re-establish a system of precinct coordinators and precinct volunteers in every voting precinct in West Virginia. Our state was one of the first to receive grant moneys from the Democratic Executive Committee to help in the precinct project by funding two state party field representatives to work with local Democrats. These grants were initiated for the first time ever by Chairman Howard Dean.

Governor Joe Manchin updated those present concerning the tragic events at the Sago Mine Disaster during his brief remarks after leading a moment of silence in tribute for the miners who lost their lives and asked for prayers and good wishes for the lone survivor. He also praised Governor Dean for making the long awaited trip to our state and congratulated him for his leadership in the reorganization of the national party. Manchin related his experiences during the Democratic Governors meeting when he had the opportunity to meet and express his support for the election of Dean as National Chairman.

When our members spoke with Governor Dean, he expressed his delight at having a DFA organization present at this occasion. He also accepted the Harrison County DFA business card and agreed to try to take a look at our web site. Those attending also promised that he would soon be receiving a copy of our quarterly newsletter and informed him of our participation with the Harrison County Precinct Project.

Among those from our group attending this event in Charleston were Nathan Drain, Donna Summerville, Jerry McKeen, Denise Binion, Tod Lewark, and Mary Ellen Sullivan, Norm Steenstra, and Gary Zuckett.

-- Jerry McKeen

Mark Your Calendars:

Harrison County Commission Candidate Forum and HC DFA March Meeting

March 8, 2006
7:00 p.m.
Village Square
Conference Center
Clarksburg, WV

Candlelight Vigil

March 20, 2006
6:30 p.m.
Harrison County
Courthouse Plaza
Clarksburg, WV

Primary Election

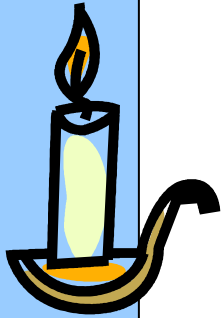
Candidate Forum and HC DFA April Meeting

April 5, 2006
7:00 p.m.
Village Square
Conference Center
Clarksburg, WV

HC DFA Meetings are preceded by an informal dinner at the Elks Club Restaurant at 5:00 p.m.

TRIBUTE TO THE FALLEN

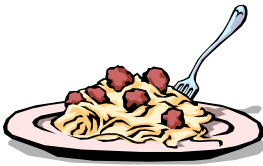
A CANDLELIGHT VIGIL IN CLARKSBURG



On the anniversary of the "Shock and Awe" attack on Iraq, the Harrison County DFA will hold the second annual candle light vigil and memorial program to honor the more than two thousand American soldiers who have lost their lives during this continuing conflict. **The event, which will begin at 6:30pm on Monday March 20th on the plaza of the Harrison County Court House in Clarksburg**, will feature a brief ceremony to pay tribute to all of these American heroes, with special recognition of those from West Virginia. The public is invited to join our members and the invited elected officials in this solemn tribute to our fallen American troops followed by a silent candlelight vigil in support of world peace.

HC DFA Spaghetti Dinner a Great Success

HC DFA had their first successful fundraiser on December 4, 2005. Much work was put into making this dinner a success. Special thanks to "the Ladies" (Mary Malcolm, Louise Bartos, Thelma Defasio and Katherine Paugh) from Stonewood who volunteered their time and knowledge to show us the ropes of how to cook and organize an effective event. Thanks also go out to Marino Brothers who donated their resources and kitchen. The dinner was truly a community effort as members and volunteers came together to roll meatballs, boil pasta, bake desserts, donate food, sell tickets and serve the many guests the day of the event. **Thanks to everyone who helped to make this event a success!**



The Ways and Means Committee is now working on their next fundraiser....an **elimination dinner**. Stay tuned.
--Julie Rea

Media Matters, <http://www.mediamatters.org>, on online media watchdog, has named MSNBC's Chris Matthews, **Misinformer of the Year**. For the full story of how Matthews beat out the likes of Limbaugh and O'Reilly go to: <http://mediamatters.org/items/200512230005>. Some of Matthew's award-winning comments include:

- ["Everybody sort of likes the president, except for the real whack-jobs"](#)
Monday, November 28, 2005 7:38PM
- [Matthews: Breaking the law may be "part of the job" of president](#)
Friday, January 13, 2006 12:26PM



Misinformer of the Year,
Chris Matthews

Note from the Editor:

You might have noticed that the second issue of the Compass looks a little different than the first. As this is a new publication, I am experimenting with different styles and formats that work the best with the technology that I have available. Please bear with me and feel free to send any comments, suggestions, and submissions to:

Lori.Hostuttler@gmail.com



HC DFA Candidate Forums

Harrison County Commission Candidates

Wednesday, March 8, 2006

7:00 p.m. Village Square Conference Center

WV Legislature, All Other Offices for the May Primary

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

7:00 p.m. Village Square Conference Center

All candidates will be given the opportunity to make a five minute opening statement, after which there will be a forty minute open forum, with questions submitted by the audience in writing, and asked by the moderator. We will be inviting the news media and asking radio stations to post information on their bulletin boards, so that everyone interested can participate. These forums are for all members, their families and friends, and is open to the public. We need change, together we can make it happen.

North Central WV's New Democratic Organizer

The Democratic National Committee recently hired **Talley Sergent** to work with the West Virginia Democratic Party as its organizer for the North Central region of the state. As part of Howard Dean's 50 State strategy, Sergent will be working with Democratic elected leaders and concerned citizens in the North Central region to help them organize their efforts to establish and strengthen a strong Democratic presence at the polls and in the community. While Sergent covers the entire 1st Congressional district and portions of the 2nd Congressional district, she will be targeting the following counties: Barbour, Grant, Harrison, Lewis, Marion, Monongalia, Preston, Randolph, Taylor, Tucker, Upshur, and Wood.

Sergent served as a National Advance Staffer to John Kerry in the 2004 presidential campaign, where she worked with national and local press corps across the country as well as high-level campaign staff. Prior to that, she worked for Senator Jay Rockefeller in his Washington, D.C. press office, focusing her efforts on domestic policy communications. Sergent is a 2002 graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is a Huntington native. Ms. Sergent can be reached at talley@wvdemocrats.com.

What Are You Watching?

If you're fortunate enough to have a DishNetwork satellite TV system*, Free Speech TV (FSTV) is the new "Must See TV". This 24 hour network features a programming on a variety of topics including *Fallujah* a documentary created by American and Iraqi film makers to record the assault on the city and its aftermath; *INN World Report* on untold and underreported news stories; *Democracy Now*, news and analysis and others.

According to FSTV's website: "Today, 6 corporations dominate all broadcast media in the U.S. Their business is selling you, the audience, to advertisers. They use television to make you more active as a consumer. Free Speech TV wants you to consider being more active, not as a consumer, but as a citizen. Our programs expose perspectives ignored or misrepresented by corporate media, and give you the information you need to fight injustices, to revitalize democracy, and to build a more compassionate world."

*FSTV is also currently unavailable from any other cable or satellite provider in WV, but it wouldn't hurt to request it. Information and programming for the Free Speech Network is available at:

<http://www.freespeech.org/fscm2/genx.php?name=home>

--Denise Binion



HCDFA Members Become Candidates!

It should not be surprising that a political organization such as the HCDFA would have several of its members actually filing and running for political offices in the elections of 2006. We are pleased to announce the following members who have already done so and hope that you will do what you can to support their candidacy.

Of course we are also proud of our faithful members who are presently serving in political office and are running for re-election. House of Delegates Members **Ron Fragale** and **Tim Miley** have been active and supportive members of HCDFA for some time and have recently announced their plans to run in the May Primary Election. Entering the race for the Harrison County Democratic Executive Committee, are our members, **Nathan Drain**, **Greg Schillace**, **Martin Shaffer**, **Diana Noone**, and **Julie McKeen**. HCDFA Chairman, **Jerry McKeen** has filed for the State Democratic Executive Committee.

DELEGATE TIM MILEY



While Tim Miley may be a freshman in the West Virginia House of Delegates, he is no stranger to the people of Harrison County. A partner in the law firm of Romano and Miley, Tim added many folks to his already long list of friends, supporters and acquaintances when he ran for the House in 2004.

During the 2005 Legislative session, Tim became known as one of the most responsive and open Delegates in Charleston. He made a point of listening to his constituents and keeping them informed about what was happening in the capitol. Following the session, Miley attended an HCDFA meeting and spoke about his experiences as a first year legislator. He saw and heard much that surprised him during his first year as a legislator and shared some of his views of the way our state government actually works.

His second year as a Delegate has found Tim to be ready, willing and able to serve the people of Harrison County once again. He continues to keep in close contact with his constituency and has already announced his intention to ask the voters to return him to Charleston for two more years. Some of his major concerns as a representative include health care, the creation of employment opportunities, education, child welfare, and the interests of the residents of Harrison County.

Tim has been an active and involved member of the HCDFA since the early days of the organization.

DELEGATE RON FRAGALE



Ron Fragale, currently serving his seventh term in the State Legislature, has announced his candidacy for re-election. As a member of the WV House of Delegates, Ron serves on several important committees including the House Education Committee, Natural Resources and Agriculture, Industry, Labor, Economic Development and Small Communities as well as the Constitutional Revision Committee. A retired Harrison County schoolteacher and former coach, Ron lives in Clarksburg with his wife, Christine, and his daughter, Veronica.

Ron has been very active in the Legislature and was named "Legislator of the Year" in 2005 by the WV Nurses Association, and has previously received similar recognition from the WV Wildlife Association and the WV Association of the Blind. He also has been selected to represent the House of Delegates on the WV Holocaust Education

Commission.

Fragale feels that during this session of the Legislature, the expansion of gambling in our state will be a hot topic. "There will be a big push to allow county referendums to permit table games at the race tracks, but personally, I am a bit leery of what is becoming an increased dependence on revenues from gambling to balance the budget". Another topic that will receive attention and probably some action this year will be health care. Ron feels that affordable health care for all West Virginians is a goal that we must keep striving toward.

In addition to his background and long experience with state government, Ron has proven to be very much aware of the needs and interests of the citizens of Harrison County. He maintains open lines of communication with his constituents through his participation with the "Delegates on Duty" series of visits with the various communities in the county and making himself always available to listen to the concerns of his fellow citizens.

HCDFA has appreciated having Ron Fragale as one of our members and we look forward to working with him in the future.

-- Jerry McKeen

Speak Your Piece...

HCDFFA Members Voice Their Opinions

Today we have a government our grandparents would barely recognize, much less America's founders. America is no longer at a crossroads; we have traveled outside the safety of democracy. How did we get so far off track, how did this happen?

The sad truth is that in January 2001, not ONE senator supported the numerous members of the House of Representatives who contested the vote certification, even though there was ample evidence of voter suppression, and handed the presidency over to George Bush. Americans were embarrassed by those individuals who tried to make democracy work. Go along to get along became the motto. Apathetically, we joked about the Bush presidency, "How much damage can he do in 4 years?" The magnitude of that damage is now measured in thousands of dead and trillions of dollars.

We knew that Saddam Hussein's Iraq was not an "imminent threat" to the US. We knew that there was substantial proof from reputable sources that there were no weapons of mass destruction. Despite knowing this, Congress overwhelmingly gave George Bush the power to use force against a country that had no connection to the 9/11 attacks. With no end in sight some still believe we must "stay the course". And now the Bush administration is considering an attack on Iran.

We knew what was going on when the Abu Ghraib pictures first surfaced, but uttered only a weak protest and then fell silent. Now the Vice President openly advocates torture and the president defiantly issues a signing statement that he can ignore the anti-torture law if he chooses. Emboldened by the lack of accountability this president admits to spying on American citizens without a court order and declares that he will continue to do so.

We know of the Downing Street memo and the testimony of former administration members who revealed that the war against Iraq was planned almost from the beginning of the Bush administration. Yet there is no public outcry, much less a serious investigation.

There are reporters who knew about the illegal surveillance of America citizens before the 2004 elections and did not report it, knowing full well that it could have changed the outcome.

There are Democrats that refused to filibuster the Alito nomination, even though they voted against confirming him. Even in view of the facts presented by Alito's record and the character of the power-hungry president that appointed him, Senator Byrd voted for confirmation and to cut off debate. Even with the

knowledge that this justice will support expanded executive power and has already ruled against minority rights, the Democrats still could not muster enough votes to support a filibuster from members of their own party.

There are many within our ranks who wince when they hear Howard Dean forcefully speaking the truth and many have pretended not to hear Al Gore's call to action to save our democracy. These people turn a deaf ear to Michael Moore and Cindy Sheehan as they point out the truth about what our country has become. Some of us would like to hide from the truth and wish for it to go away or hope that everything will turn out all right. But as we should have learned in childhood - hoping and wishing will not make it so.

George Bush has declared that the Constitution "is just a goddamned piece of paper". How much longer will this administration continue to show its contempt for democracy, human rights and the rule of law? The answer is simple: As long as we, the people allow it.

Dean, Gore, Feingold, Moore, Sheehan, Kerry, Kennedy and others who speak truth to power are real patriots who do not fear the Bush administration or the spineless politicians within their own party. We the people should be standing up and speaking out along with them in defense of America.

We the people should no longer be in the flag waving "my country right or wrong" attitude that was America in the 1950s. We have crossed over into dark, dangerous territory and we are a long way from home.

We should be fighting this threat to democracy together. We should be defending those who speak out against the Bush administration's efforts to undermine our civil liberties and dismantle the Constitution. This administration's assault on our rights is a direct result of our unwillingness to offer resistance. What is it going to take to wake us up? When will we stand up and speak out? After another war is started? After another 2,500 soldiers die or maybe it will take 5,000 more. Maybe reinstatement of the draft will spur you to action when your loved ones are taken to fight Bush's war without end. When will we quit waiting for someone else to do it for us? Have you expressed your feelings about wiretapping without a warrant? Have you asked your representatives to support impeachment? Have you attended a peace rally or a demonstration to stop the war on Iraq? What did you do about the Alito nomination? As an individual citizen of the United States, when was the last time you called, wrote or emailed your senators and representatives? When was the last time that you wrote a letter to the editor or called, wrote or emailed a TV network about a misleading news report or demanded an investigation into government wrongdoing? There is no excuse to justify complacency. Ultimately, we the people are the only ones who will bring an end to this national nightmare. We are the only ones who can.

-- Denise E. Binion

The Progressive Wedge

Bernie Horn, Center for Policy Alternatives

Bernie Horn is policy director at the Center for Policy Alternatives. CPA is the nation's only nonpartisan organization working to strengthen the capacity of state legislators to lead and achieve progressive change. CPA empowers state legislators by providing values-based leadership development programs, distributing user-friendly policy tools on a wide variety of issues, and building a strong, coordinated network of legislators across the states.

To win in 2006, progressives must frame the election as a choice between an equal opportunity economy and a trickle-down economy. "It's the economy, stupid"—but unlike 1992, it's not a matter of economic growth versus stagnation. This time it's about fundamental fairness. While the rich are getting richer, for the rest of us, the American Dream is slipping from our grasp. There are other issues that motivate voters, of course. The Bush administration and its right-wing enablers are making America less free and less secure. But voters are predisposed to give conservatives the benefit of the doubt on freedom and security. Equal opportunity is the American "value" most clearly owned by progressives. So this year, progressives should focus on policies that are (1) principally about economics, (2) popular with a large majority of voters, and (3) framed in such a way that conservatives will have to oppose them. That's the definition of a progressive wedge issue—a political position where we are strong and they are compelled by their corporate benefactors to side against the American public.

Where can progressives find wedge issues that yield proven results? In the states! State legislators have tested, debated and enacted a number of policies that promote equal opportunity and fundamental economic fairness. These issues would benefit any progressive candidate at the state or federal level:

Fair Share Health Care: Overriding a Republican governor's veto, the Maryland legislature recently enacted the first Fair Share Health Care Act. Fair Share Health Care requires a state's largest businesses to spend a minimum percentage of their payroll on workers' health care costs, relieving taxpayers of that burden. Already, legislators in more than 30 states plan to introduce similar legislation. Nearly 80 percent of Maryland voters support Fair Share Health Care. In a campaign, this policy provides candidates with one response to spiraling health care costs, allows them to attack a politically-unpopular company (Wal-Mart),

and offers an opportunity to decry corporate welfare and tout high-road economics.

Minimum Wage: Because the federal minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour has not increased since 1997, its real, inflation-adjusted value is at its lowest point in 50 years. This minimum wage leaves working families far below the poverty line. So far, 18 states have responded by enacting a minimum wage higher than the federal rate. Because Americans believe in rewarding work, about 85 favor a higher minimum wage. Referendums in Florida and Nevada have proven that the cause is politically potent even in "red" states. It is a superb campaign issue not only because of voter approval, but because opponents can't successfully mischaracterize the measure—voters understand the minimum wage and know that Americans can't live on \$5.15 per hour.



Energy Efficiency: Energy efficiency legislation exploded across the states in 2005, propelled by outrageously high fuel prices. There are two popular measures that candidates can use in 2006: renewable energy standards, which require utility companies to increase their use of clean energy sources like wind and solar systems, and green building standards, which require new public buildings to conform to a set of environmental guidelines. Voters are naturally inclined to favor energy efficiency—it's common sense. More important, efficiency reduces demand which, in turn, reduces price. That provides candidates with an opportunity to get red-faced about energy prices, which is obviously good politics.

Privacy and Identity Theft: Under this administration, everyone's privacy is at risk. States have responded with two types of privacy legislation. The first is identity theft protection—requiring companies to notify individuals when a security breach makes them susceptible to identity theft and empowering consumers to place a security freeze on their credit reports. The second is financial privacy—requiring financial services companies to obtain affirmative permission before selling customers' nonpublic account information. Voters almost unanimously side with progressives on these issues. Privacy and identity theft legislation allows candidates to champion individual privacy, attack sneaky corporate data-sharing tactics, and lead the fight against the fastest-growing type of crime in America.

Continued on page 7

Iraq War: Getting the Numbers in View



A sign to remind everyone of the human cost of the Iraq War.

Most people aren't thinking about the war on a daily basis. To remind them, and make them think about what it means, I have been displaying the count of soldiers killed in Iraq on my truck since Veterans Day. I found a picture of a helmet on a rifle in Google Images, pasted that into a Word document, and in 72 point type, put in the number of dead of the day from www.michaelmoore.com, followed by The War is a Lie, and in smaller print on the next two lines, www.michaelmoore.com and www.truthout.com, (that's all that will fit on one page) in case anyone wants to know more, because they sure won't find out by reading the Clarksburg Exponent-Telegram. Then I saved the document and printed it. The number can be changed whenever you want to update it. When I do, I add 10 to the daily number so it will be close to right longer. Nobody who sees it will know if you're off a little.

I taped the page in the back window, but it didn't show up well

through the tinted glass. After several weeks, I worked out a way to put it on the tailgate with my bumper stickers. Here's how. Get a 15-pack of 8 ½ x 11 sheet protectors and a bottle of rubber cement for about \$5.00. Cut the margin with the holes off with scissors. Get two lawyer magnets from your phone book and cut them in half. Put a light coat of cement on the plain side of the magnet pieces and put them inside the sheet protector in the corners on what will be the back side. Leave on the fridge overnight to dry. Print out your poster and stick it in the protector. I tucked the open edge of mine under the overlapping edge of the bedliner on the tailgate. You may want to seal yours with some tape. So far it has lasted through a month of winter weather at up to 70 mph. If someone asks if that is the least you'll take for the car, you'll have some explaining to do.

Your message may vary. Perhaps the number and "How many more?" like Cindy Sheehan's t-shirt, or "Wounded 16,500, Killed 2,500, Who wins?" It's just a matter of time before I add one that says "Wal-Mart is the Anti-Christ" but that's not our biggest problem right now. Here's a link and blurb from Truthout about Cindy Sheehan's shirt.

http://www.truthout.org/docs_2006/020606R.shtml
She suggests, if nothing else, write the number on a piece of tape and wear it on you shirt next to your heart. Don't let them think everything is o.k. The now famous black shirt with white lettering that Cindy Sheehan was wearing on January 31st to the State of the Union address originally read: 2000 Dead. How many more? That shirt was made by Veterans for Peace on the occasion of the 2000th US soldier killed in Iraq. That tragic number was reached on September 25th, 2005.

-- Tod Lewark

Progressive Wedge continued

Prescription Drugs: Medicare Part D began in January 2006 and it is quickly turning into a political disaster. By November, voters—especially seniors—will likely resent the profiteering pharmaceutical companies and welcome alternative policies. There are several good state prescription drug measures which encourage bulk purchasing plans, disclose unethical drug company gifts to doctors, and prohibit the practice of selling lists of prescriptions written by individual doctors to drug company marketers. Any prescription drug legislation that sets progressives against pharmaceutical companies and the conservatives who do their bidding will benefit our candidates in 2006.

A Warning: Progressives must not get caught on the wrong side of the eminent domain debate! Americans strongly oppose the Supreme Court's 2005 ruling in *Kelo v. City of New London*. Progressives should follow the California legislature's example and support a moratorium on takings of homes in the name of economic development. We can't allow eminent domain to become a powerful wedge issue for conservatives.

Nationwide polls demonstrate that American voters strongly believe the right-wingers in Washington have steered our country onto the "wrong track." Polls consistently show the popularity of progressive economic policies. And progressive leaders in state legislatures have given us a roadmap toward success.

The opportunity beckons. Let us elevate progressive wedge issues. Let us talk to persuadable voters about policies that they both understand and appreciate. Let us frame the 2006 election as a debate over an equal opportunity economy.

Winter Reading @ the Progressive Bookstore



Get Your Winter Reading Material and Help Support HCDFA

Just a reminder to visit the Progressive Bookstore to purchase your winter reading material. The purchase of any book, CD, or video, through our Amazon.com portal provides a small profit to help support the HCDFA website.

Books of interest to our readers can be found at http://www.hcdfa.com/the_progressive_bookstore

Two recent additions to the store are: *Lost Mountain, Radical Strip Mining and the Deforestation of Appalachia* and *Censored 2005, the 25 Top Censored Stories*.

"There is danger from all men. The only maxim of a free government ought to be to trust no man living with power to endanger the public liberty." -- John Adams, 1772



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