

# Green Star

A quarterly publication of the  
Green Party of Pennsylvania

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## From the Editors

Greetings! The Green Party of Pennsylvania (GPPA) is growing and the Green Star editors are happy to be here to capture this growth. Over thirty PA greens ran for public office in the 2005 election. This included candidates for city council, school board, borough council and other important local offices. Adams County ran a slate of eight candidates and, in Berks County, Jennaro Pullano led a well-organized campaign, narrowly losing to a Democratic incumbent.

Springing from the momentum of these local races, GPPA is looking to the future. GPPA leaders have recently filed a ballot access suit to challenge Pennsylvania's oppressive ballot access laws. This suit is coupled with a massive petition drive to ensure a Green Party presence on the ballot.

The Green Star editors hope you'll get involved during this exciting time in Pennsylvania Green Party history! As always, we welcome your feedback, articles and suggestions! Submissions can be e-mailed to [pagreenstar@yahoo.com](mailto:pagreenstar@yahoo.com).

*The GPPA Publication Staff*

## In this Issue

- Green Election Results
- State Petitioning Effort
- 2006 State Convention
- And more!

## Pullano Makes Strong Showing

Heather Urkuski, Berks County

The final election result of one of the most well-planned and carried out Green Party campaigns in 2005 was a loss by just 51 votes. Jennaro Pullano who ran for Reading City Council lost the election to Democratic incumbent Donna Reed who earned 621 votes to Pullano's 570. Although Pullano was not elected he did win 4 out of the 8 precincts in his district, and came very close to winning another 3 precincts. The precinct that had the greatest impact on the election results was precinct 19-1, located in the neighborhood of incumbent Donna Reed. Pullano lost this precinct to Reed by 100 votes, a far greater margin than any of the other precincts.

In the days following the election Berks Green Party members reviewed the poll books and found that many of the voters in precinct 19-1 came from apartments that Pullano and campaign volunteers were unsuccessful at gaining access to. Also uncovered at that time were 22 highly questionable signatures; meaning the signature of the person who signed the poll book on election day did not even remotely match the voter's signature from the registration card already in the book. As a result of this review and arrogant comments made by one of the poll workers at precinct 19-1, former Green Party of PA Secretary Dave Baker filed a formal complaint with the Berks County Board of Elections.

Baker presented the questionable signatures to the Board of Elections at a meeting in December where County Commissioners Mark Scott and Tom Gajewski showed great concern and indicated they wanted this matter investigated fully. After reviewing 5 of the 22 signatures the Board recommended the case be passed on to the District Attorney's office for investigation. Currently Detective Weaver from the DA's office is handling the case and plans to run a full investigation, which will include going to people's homes, asking if and when they voted on November 8<sup>th</sup>, and for them to provide identification. Regardless of the outcome of the investigation there are not enough votes in question to overturn the election results.

The overall election results were not challenged because out of the 7 remaining precincts in Pullano's district that were reviewed only 5 signatures total were questionable, which makes the case of precinct 19-1 even more suspicious. In a related matter, 2 of the 8 precinct poll books were completely missing the initials of the election official who signs in the voters. Berks Green Party Co-chairman David Kurzweg is in the process of filing a separate complaint with the Board of Elections about this issue in order to demonstrate the need for more poll worker training in the county.

## Green Party of Pennsylvania Files Ballot Access Suit

Tuesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, the Green Party of Pennsylvania filed a suit against the Commonwealth in the Middle District federal court in Harrisburg. The Green Party is seeking relief from a burdensome law that requires them to collect over 67,000 signatures for their statewide candidates. The Constitution Party of Pennsylvania is also a plaintiff in the suit.

Under Pennsylvania law minor political parties must gather thirty-three times the number of signatures as Republicans and Democrats to get their candidates on the statewide ballot in 2006. Given the gross inequity in the number of signatures, the Greens feel that Pennsylvania is violating the 1<sup>st</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Amendments of the U.S. Constitution including the Equal Protection Clause.

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# Green Party of Pennsylvania

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## Steering Committee

Paul Teese, Chairperson  
Katrina Brabham, Secretary  
Mike Rosenberg  
Steve Weisser  
Paula Bronstein  
Steve Baker, Treasurer



## PA Counties with local Green parties

- Adams
- Allegheny
- Berks
- Bucks
- Butler
- Cambria
- Chester
- Cumberland
- Dauphin
- Delaware
- Erie
- Lackawanna
- Lancaster
- Lehigh
- Lycoming
- Luzerne
- Montgomery
- Northampton
- Philadelphia
- Schuylkill
- Susquehanna
- Venango
- Wayne
- Westmoreland
- Wyoming
- York

## GPPA Sets Goal of 100,000 signatures

Blyden Potts

Having had a share of success in local elections last November, the Green Party of Pennsylvania needs to build on that momentum in the 2006 campaign season. It won't be easy. Getting Green candidates on the ballot will be more difficult than usual this year. Bob Casey Jr. received 3.3 million in his 2004 election as State Treasurer, which sets the number of signatures needed on nominating papers for minor party statewide candidates at 67,070. The Republicans and Democrats only need 2000 signatures to get their names placed on the Primary Election ballot.

The threshold might be lowered by Green Party litigation or Pennsylvania Ballot Access Coalition legislation (*see ballot access article, page 1*), but the GPPA is prepared for a massive signature drive. The number of signatures obtained will have to be sufficiently high and with a low enough number of invalid signatures to exceed the 67,070 threshold after being challenged by opposing parties. The GPPA petition planning team has set a goal of 100,000 signatures.

This is an ambitious but feasible goal. Collectively it may require over 650 persons, or slightly over 4% of all the registered Green voters in Pennsylvania, to spend an average of 10 or more hours gathering signatures over the season.

It will be a decentralized effort, distributed across the 26 counties with active Green committees, plus 12 other counties with significant Green presence. Each county has been asked to collect a number of signatures in proportion to the number of registered Green voters who reside in the county. To do this, each county will probably need petition volunteers equal to about 4% of the population of Green voters in the county. The county will need to recruit these volunteers, and train them in effective signature gathering. Each county will also need to designate someone to track the county's progress over the petition season. Counties are in various stages of finalizing their petition plans and preparing to implement them.

Petitioning is also a tool for local Green campaigns. Candidates for different levels of political office can share the same petition and contribute to the overall state signature totals. Petitioning is an opportunity to meet folks and campaign. It is also a chance to distribute voter registrations to new voters who are not already registered, although a person must be a registered voter to sign a nominating paper.

The GPPA petition team will help counties and campaigns to achieve their petition goals. There will be a training session at the Convention to coach people on signature gathering, including training on the legal requirements and paperwork. People who attend that session will be prepared to share that information in training volunteers in their own counties. Every volunteer will be provided a packet of instructions for petitioning. Nominating papers will be provided to every county petition coordinator. The GPPA petition team will track progress in signature gathering statewide, and provide support resources to counties, including help getting volunteers. The GPPA petition team includes: Paul Teese, Heather Urkuski, Dave Baker, and Blyden Potts.

*(continued on page 4)*

## 2006 State Nominating Convention

Jay Sweeney

The Green Party of Pennsylvania will hold its biannual Nominating Convention in Wilkes-Barre on the weekend of February 24-26 at the Genetti Best Western Hotel. This will be the first large gathering of greens in Northeast Pennsylvania. Saturday is planned to include workshops on a number of issues of importance to greens including ballot access and signature gatherings as well as other political and social issues. The public will be invited to learn more about the Green Party. Green business and others will display their wares. Sunday will be a day of green party business. Nominations for office will be heard and voted on.

## Philly Opt Out Alexander Gillett, Treasurer, Green Party of Philadelphia



From left, Debbie Bell, Carol Stein, Phyllis Gilbert, Norma Brooks, Carol Rick, Rosita Johnson, and Gail Hunter at Edison High School, just finishing handing Opt Out forms to arriving students.

**No Child Left Behind Act Section 9528.** (E)ach local educational agency receiving assistance under this Act shall provide, on a request made by military recruiters . . . access to secondary school students' names, addresses, and telephone listings.

**A secondary school student or the parent of the student may request that the student's name, address, and telephone listing . . . not be released without prior written consent.** (Opt Out)

Lacking any candidates for election this past Fall, the Green Party of Philadelphia decided to do movement activities. Our basic purpose was to organize our Green base. Of course, the biggest movement activity is to oppose the war against Iraq. At one of our late Spring meetings we formed a small working group. As the leader of that group I wanted any action we undertook to be substantive, i.e. have a direct effect on the war effort. I suggested, since we have in excess of 20 store-front military recruiting stations in Philadelphia, that we make signs and stand out in front of these stations to discourage people from being recruited. This kind of action would give us the opportunity of talking with potential recruits, and not only try to discourage them, but learning why they were interested in the military. One of the problems I have observed with peace work in Philadelphia is interacting with young people, the primary source of cannon fodder. This seemed an excellent possibility to remedy that.

Two young women, Jasmine Halloran and Rosalie Yurasits took me up on this proposition, and actually did it. They reported back at the next Green Party general membership meeting that everyone who entered the station seemed to have been already recruited. They reported no "street" traffic. They suggested that we take the action to

high schools, where they thought the young people entering the stations had been recruited. We discussed this possibility, especially the problems of getting invited into the schools: contacts with Principals, teachers, parent groups. Then we hit on the Opt Out program which we had heard about on the net.

At just this time, the Philadelphia Crossroads Women's Center/Global Women's Strike for Peace was hosting an organizing meeting on Opt Out. The Green Party discussed a plan to hand a generic Opt Out form (clearly but not obtrusively labeled as from the Green Party of Philadelphia) to every 11th and 12th grade student of the public high schools in Philadelphia (estimated at about 20,000). We took this proposal, including a proposed form, to the meeting, and it was approved enthusiastically. This seemed to be a proposal for which people felt they could mobilize.

Jasmine Halloran and I took on the responsibility of organizing this campaign. We got lists of the public high schools and their putative enrollments. We found out when the first day of school was. We put together a kind of list-calendar for sign-ups, and at the next Crossroads Women's Center Opt Out meeting began to gather sign-ups. Our project was, roughly, for 2 volunteers to be at every high school at the start of the school day (7:30 a.m.) to hand out the forms to entering students. We hoped that some students might volunteer to hand out forms to their schoolmates in the coming days, freeing up volunteers for other schools, but this this did not happen. It turned out that the few seconds of contact with a student walking to school at that hour was too little to convince him/her to help.

Once we were able to count on minimal participation, the Green Party of Philadelphia committed to printing 20,000 forms at our union printer for about \$600.00. We were still not confident of this plan, to reach every high school student. We had been counseled by some to focus on just one school. "Don't risk failure by committing to covering the entire Philadelphia public high school system." Com-

(continued on page 5)

Since the first day of school, September 6, the Green Party of Philadelphia with the help of over 50 volunteers from the peace and justice community has been handing opt-out forms to the students of Philadelphia's public high schools, and their parents. Most students and parents had no knowledge of the part of the No Child Left Behind law requiring schools to submit personal information to recruiters.

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## **Green to Run in Special Election for State Representative**

### **Traci Confer hopes to fill Butkovitz's open seat in 174th**

Hillary Aisenstein

PHILADELPHIA - On Monday, January 23rd, the Green Party of Pennsylvania (GPPA) filed papers to run Traci Confer of Oxford Circle as a candidate for State Representative in the 174th District. She was nominated by unanimous consent of the GPPA Steering Committee a week earlier, on Martin Luther King Day. Confer, a longtime Environmental and Green Party activist in Oxford Circle, accepted the nomination because she feels that Northeast Philadelphia is ready to shake up Harrisburg.

Confer, who ran on the Green Party ticket for State Senate in 2002, believes that she offers a fresh perspective on politics compared to the two major parties. "The Democrats and Republicans in Harrisburg are not offering the answers needed to address our most basic problems," said Confer. "If elected, I will work to implement practical solutions on issues such as healthcare, the environment, and healthy neighborhood development."

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## **GPPA Sets Goal of 100,000 Signatures**

*(continued from page 2)*

Nomination papers may be circulated starting March 8 through the end of July. The GPPA petition team hopes that over 75,000 signatures can be obtained by the end of May. Each county should plan on getting at least 75% of their signatures by that time, particularly planning to gather signatures at polling locations on Primary Day, May 16.

By getting sufficient volunteers and preparing them ahead of time, starting promptly in March, and tracking our progress, the overall signature goal can be reached. The Green Party of Pennsylvania needs you to volunteer to collect signatures this Spring. It only takes a few hours per month for a couple months and the effort you put in will be crucial to getting GPPA candidates' names on the ballot and retaining our status as a political party in Pennsylvania. It is an opportunity to campaign, get others involved, and share your political vision with other Pennsylvanians. Most of all it will demonstrate what we can do as a party and continue the GPPA's growing momentum.

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## **York Leads Nation**

Steve Baker, York County

Not only did Pennsylvania lead the nation in number of Greens elected in 2005, but York County lead the nation in the number of Greens elected from a single county. The local party ran five candidates for Inspector of Elections, with four of them winning the seats.

"There weren't a lot of opportunities in this off-year election, stated Steve Baker spokesperson for the local party, so we took the strategy of seeking many entry-level positions".

"Unbeknownst to us at the time, said Baker, our Inspector of Elections position will have a higher than usual level of responsibility because of the introduction of electronic voting machines in 2006." "I think we can bring more Green values to the County by making sure that people are comfortable and not disenfranchised with the new voting machines."

The four Greens elected to Inspector of Election in York County are Brenda Jo Samryk (York Twp.), Michael Mangles of the York College Campus Greens (York City), Shawnya Calp (Penn Twp.), and Stephen Baker (Springettsbury Twp.)

The total number of Greens holding office in York County now stands at nine.

***See page seven for more GPPA Election Results!***

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## Philly Opt Out

(continued from page 3)

forted by the enthusiasm of the people at the Opt Out meeting, we went ahead. We contacted several progressive labor unions in Philadelphia to pay for the printing of the forms, and two, members of District Council 47 of A.F.S.C.M.E. agreed to pay for a portion. Our organizing goal here was to forge a link between the Green Party and organized labor. A Quaker Action Group (AQUAG) also contributed.

From August to early September volunteers continued to come to the project, hearing about it from friends, colleagues, or on the Internet. We kicked off on September 6, 2005, the first day of classes. Our records are sketchy, but over the next three weeks, we covered every large high school, perhaps 40 in all, and several smaller schools, with more than 50 volunteers from more than a dozen local peace and justice groups. We had half a dozen unaffiliated volunteers. Jasmine and I drove piles of forms to individuals scattered over the city. I delivered forms to volunteers who were attending a Utah Phillips concert. Several groups, notably Veterans for Peace and Crossroads Women's Center were troubled about using forms with the name of Green Party printed on them, so they printed their own forms. This freed up some of our pile of 20,000 for distribution.

We had urged from the start that the Opt Out program could be coupled with the peace and justice messages of our various groups, and certainly every volunteer would be willing to hand out information from member groups, but no one took us up on this. I think, honestly, no one thought we could put together enough volunteers who would get up at 6 a.m. to go into inner city neighborhoods, some plagued by gun violence, and hand out Opt Out forms to mostly minority students. We missed a few small (enrollment less than 150) schools because we did, finally, run out of volunteers and time.

Press coverage was very bad because we spent no effort on it initially. Near the end of the campaign we lurched halting to a 7 a.m. press conference at Edison High School (famed because more graduates of this school were killed in Vietnam than any other). We had one T.V. camera person, and got air time that night. I realized, after calling dozens of newspapers and T.V. stations, that it is essential that the Green Party establish and maintain relationships with reporters and editors if it every hopes to get coverage of its actions. We are trying to remedy this in 2006.

The Philadelphia Inquirer in an article on Opt Out indicated that the percentage opting out in 2004 was 15.5 %. In figures available for this year, the percentage might have gone to 22. We are not clear on how the 2004 statis-

tic is calculated, but the 2005 figure is the percent of 11th and 12th graders enrolled who opted out. The person who is responsible for Opt Out in the Philadelphia School District is the head of Jr. R.O.T.C. He said the District accepted our forms, and any forms indicating a clear intent to Opt Out.

The remarkable thing to me was the enthusiasm of the volunteers. Many of them volunteered for other schools after doing their first. Many of them are working on their own right now to establish contacts with Home and School associations in the District. Many ask about the 2006 Opt Out campaign. The Green Party of Philadelphia had a fundraiser and party on December 11, and all the Opt Out volunteers were invited. A dozen either attended or sent a check. I believe we will get new registered Greens from this action. I expect we will get volunteer petition gatherers for this Spring. The volunteers reported that they had a wonderful time meeting and talking to students. Some met parents who were eager for their message. Several were ordered off school property, and a couple had confrontations with Principals. Usually these occurred well after the start of classes when the forms had already been handed out. Many were approached by security guards and teachers for copies of the forms for their own kids. We are well underway on the 2006 Opt Out campaign.

One thing I observed as I spoke to students: they are repelled by any mention of the war against Iraq, and will flee rather than listen to an explanation of the Opt Out form. So we tended to be obscure until the form was in their hands. I went over the list of our 2,000+ dead and noted that they do not come from cities like Philadelphia. In the second 1,000, I noted 8 dead from Philadelphia. The military gets its fodder from Middle America, towns like Johnstown and Reading and Uniontown, and smaller towns and villages. I think it is essential for the Green Party in these towns and counties to organize an Opt Out campaign to protect their students. I think it would be an excellent party organizing tool.

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# Poetry Corner

## Election Night

**Robert Small**

**Delaware County Green Party**

Losing, we decided,  
means never attempting  
Losing, we realized  
means accepting defeat  
accepting it  
means

you'll never make the playoffs.

"Hi, my name is Bob Small  
and I'm the Green candidate for  
Judge of Elections"  
became my mantra and womantra as I  
handed out the  
campaign lit

lit the campaign  
first Greens to run in Delaware  
County, Pa.

next time  
be the first to win  
in Delaware and  
County.  
started out at 7am  
stopped at almost 9pm  
with short times to con-  
vulse.

thinking I might win  
thinking I might lose  
thinking what mattered  
was bringing Green Politics  
to a  
shattered  
world  
I was on the far right on the ballot  
First time



I was not on the far left  
in any damn thing

Green table on the left  
Dem table in Center  
Repugs on right  
as in life  
as in life

Left before the counting  
knew that mattered least  
knew this ending  
was more of a beginning  
left before the  
Whigs and the Tories could cele-  
brate  
Knowing that Winter is coming  
for some  
for others,  
Spring is tomorrow

## **Green Party Candidates win Forty-Percent of 2005 Municipal Elections**

Thirty Green Party candidates throughout Pennsylvania ran in the 2005 municipal races. Forty-percent or twelve of these candidates were elected to serve public office for positions such as Borough Council, Auditor, Mayor and Inspector of Elections. Adams County ran eight candidates with three of the eight winning their races. In York County, five candidates ran for Inspector of Elections positions, winning four out of the five races and leading the nation in the number of Greens elected from any one county. Berks County Green Party candidate Jenaro Pullano narrowly lost to the Democratic incumbent in a groundbreaking election. While not all Green Party candidates won, they certainly helped to spread the Green Party message, provide voters with a choice and represent views that are often absent from the political arena. These candidates, and those who assisted with their campaigns, are to be commended for the time, energy and commitment that it takes to run for public office. The GPPA continues to be among the most successful states in the country and we can continue to grow when we foster and support future candidates. For full election results, please visit the Green Party of Pennsylvania website at [www.greenparty.org](http://www.greenparty.org).

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# Green Party of Pennsylvania Files Ballot Access Suit

(continued from page 2)

“Pennsylvania has one of the most oppressive ballot access laws in the country,” says Marakay J. Rogers, Green candidate for Governor and Plaintiff in the suit. “Not only does it grossly hamper our efforts to get candidates on the ballot, but it can eliminate choices for the voters and stifle fresh ideas from entering into the political arena.

The suit suggests using a ballot access system similar to Delaware’s law where a party’s candidates can appear on the ballot simply by attaining .05% of the overall state voter registration. Another remedy suggested in the lawsuit states that minor political parties simply collect the same amount of signatures as their Republican and Democrat counterparts which is 2,000 for statewide candidates.

“Even if you are not a Green,” says Steve Baker, Co-chair of the York County Party, “we all should be outraged that the State Legislature is attempting to suppress fair and democratic competition.”

Along with the lawsuit, Greens and other minor parties have formed a PA Ballot Access Coalition which has been meeting with the PA House State Government Committee and the Governor’s Election Reform Task Force to petition

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## The Green Party Needs YOU!

Do you want to see an end to corporate domination? Do you want to see real election reform? Do you want a true alternative to politics as usual?

Then, support the Green Party of Pennsylvania!

We don’t take money from corporations. In order to build a real progressive voice for Pennsylvania, we need support from average citizens like you. Please consider making a generous donation today!

- \$50 can pay for a registration fee to table at an important event
- \$100 can pay for the meeting space for our Bi-Monthly Business Meeting.
- \$250 can pay for one printing of the *Green Star*

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Amt. Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \*see instructions box for more info

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I would like \_\_\_\_\_ copies (\$15/ea.) of the “Party with a Purpose” CD whose cost will be deducted from my donation, including shipping and handling (no tax)

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### Donation Tips & Instructions

- Make checks or money orders payable to the Green Party of Pennsylvania
- Please include all contact information
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- Individuals may only donate \$2000 in a given year
- Donations are not tax-deductible
- CD orders will have a cost of the quantity ordered plus \$3 for shipping deducted from their donation
- Mail form to :

**Green Party of Pennsylvania**

**P.O.Box 11962**

**Harrisburg, PA 17108-1962**

## **A Young Green Makes His Mark on Pittsburgh City Council Race**

Katrina Brabham

It has been several decades since Pittsburgh has elected an official who was not a Democrat...and it looks like a Pittsburgh Green Party member may be able to end all of that. Using the momentum the Greens generated during last year's mayoral race, Jason Phillips, 24, of the South Side of Pittsburgh has been making his mark on the special election campaign scene. Looked at as one of the two frontrunners in the race of 10 announced candidates for City Council District 3, Jason is looking to break a tradition of undemocratic Democrats ruling the city on March 14.

Jason, a University of Pittsburgh Political Science major, is focusing his campaign on quality-of-life issues and the city's fiscal problems. Phillips has taken staunch stands such as coming out against bringing slot machine gambling to Pittsburgh. Additionally, he has been the voice of college students in the council district who faced disenfranchisement when the Special Election date was originally set to fall during their spring break. Many residents look to Jason as if he is already fighting to protect the constituents of the district cause of his efforts to keep the current City Council President from creating barriers for voters.

Concerns from residents of the Council District 3 have been various in their nature. The city's finances, slot machine gambling, absentee landlord abuse, public safety, and protecting and advancing neighborhood green spaces have all become items of frequent question. Jason's platform has covered all of these issues and has plans to accompany them with bold actions.

Grassroots politics is showing its strength in Pittsburgh City Council District 3. Candidates with much more campaign cash are seeing the low budget machinery working to win an election that many originally thought to be an unfeasible task. Jason has vowed to keep with the National Green Party's stances on campaign fundraising.

More information on the campaign of Jason Phillips can be found on his website [www.JasonForCouncil.com](http://www.JasonForCouncil.com). Biographical information as well as information on the issues and how to make an electronic contribution are all easily accessible.

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