



Mountain Party News

www.mtparty.org

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June 2007

July Convention will guide our Party's Future

by Carol Ross, MtPty Commissioner

The 2007 Special Convention of the Mountain Party will be held on Saturday July 7th from 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM at the farm of Greg Carrol in Putnam County. (directions on page five). The meeting will be followed by a pot luck dinner, a "Mountain Party", and campout.

It is **important** that you be there. The Mountain Party and third parties in general have never had such an opportunity before to have a say and be listened to. A sanity and integrity crisis exists, with the need for a major change of direction becoming catastrophically more apparent every day. We – you, me, us - have a serious obligation to future generations to be a part of and a catalyst for that change. The structure is already in place: ballot access, a platform that offers an alternative to the "business as usual" of the other two parties, increasing name recognition, and a good-sized membership list.

Two particular items on the agenda will require considerable discussion. The first the proposal to affiliate with the National Green Party of the United States (GPUS). The Mountain Party Executive Committee agreed to forward this decision to our Convention. They will be pre-applying to the Green Party so that, if our membership approves the affiliation, we will be able to select and send delegates to their July 2007 convention in Pennsylvania. A separate newsletter article herein will provide further information. Informing yourself in advance about the GPUS can be done at www.gp.org.

The second issue we'll decide is whether the Mountain Party should

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A View from the Chair

by Jesse Johnson, MtPty Chair

Charleston - WV Breaking news, the Mountain Party of WV is going places! West Virginia's only 3rd party on the ballot is four times as large now than it was in 2004 and remains arguably the fastest growing 3rd party in the nation. Our campus crusade is on and taking root. Our ability to court the votes and support of voters from other parties has attracted attention far and wide. Voters are registering in record numbers as anything other than the two main parties that now function as a mammoth, singular corporate lobby for multi-national interests. Even in the "common knowledge" as reported in the once free, now corporate press, voter dissatisfaction is growing and maturing, change is inevitable and we all feel it. I intend to embrace our Party's new-found recognition and make use of it.

We remind the citizens of their power and responsibilities to be the guardians of liberty. We fight for progress. We fight for workers and their business. We fight for honest education. We fight for Constitutionality. We fight for sustainability. We fight for the health of our nation and most significantly at this time, our environment.

Here in WV, we are losing communities to Mountaintop Removal Mining that literally disappear along with their life sustaining potable water and air. If residents stay, they exist in a war zone. A ravaged culture and community lay in the wake of this reckless march for profit at any cost. We are painted as villain or traitor when we stand for our values instead of profit. It's not unlike Baghdad where the next sound you may hear may be the explosion that devalues or destroys your family home. You may become collat-

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Is It Time for Primary Elections?

by Frank Young, MtPty Treasurer

The Mountain Party chooses its candidates by party convention. Our party bylaws spell out how this takes place. But we have other options.

West Virginia election law allows minor parties (receiving less than 10% of the vote for its gubernatorial candidate) to choose its candidates by either party convention, or by candidate's petitioning registered voters, or by participation in the same primary elections with the Democratic and Republican parties.

Our state executive committee meeting in May agreed that the next Convention should decide if the Mountain Party should change its bylaws to allow its candidates to run in state-run primary elections, the same time as the Democratic and Republican primary elections.

I support this primarily for one reason. It would most likely encourage many more Mountain Party candidates to run for many more offices around the state.

Currently to become a candidate of the Mountain Party, one needs to know when the party convention is to be held, either attend the convention in person or have someone nominate him or her at the convention, and hope that the Mountain Party convention delegates- who are but a very small contingent of the party's total membership - will approve one's nomination. This is, despite its simplicity, a cumbersome process for potential candidates.

But if candidates were to run in a Mountain Party primary election, they would only need to go to their county courthouse, or to the WV secretary of State, as the case may be - register as a candidate and pay the appropriate filing fee. From then on their campaign would consist of whatever public campaigning they wanted to do - including perhaps directly contacting the Mountain Party members (and perhaps 'independent' voters - at the party's discretion) who would be voting in the primary election. Many of these primary elections at first would have only one candidate, making whomever registers a guaranteed spot on the November ballot.

By having candidates file for office in January - at the same time that other partisan candidates are scrambling to decide for which office to run, there could be a significant increase in Mountain Party political energy and participation, and that this would give the Mountain Party a much needed boost of morale and a sense that political competition is alive

again.

The Mountain Party needs to either grow, or expect to fade away, I do believe.

The Mountain Party is run by volunteers. We do not have the staff to develop or keep track of the hundreds of potential candidates that our ballot status provides. But by having our candidates run in primary elections, the related record keeping would fall primarily to County Clerks, Circuit Clerks, and to the Secretary of State's office- the state's candidate filing and election officers. The party leadership could then provide more direct help to candidates in their general election campaigns.

Are there potential pitfalls associated with going the primary election route rather than remaining in the nomination by party convention mode? Yes there are. Probably the greatest challenge is the potential for losing "control" of who the party's candidates are, and how loyal they would be to the party's platform. Just as the Democratic and Republican parties have constant problems with party identity and party loyalties, the Mountain Party could have similar challenges.

But the flip side of that is that opening nominations up to the whole party and even to 'independent' voters would be a far more broadly democratic exercise than the current convention process.

The current convention process effectively amounts to nominations actually being made by a small committee of party "insiders". New people with new ideas aren't actively recruited- if for no other reason than a lack of resources, including energy to recruit and organize.

But with a primary election process, every candidate for a Mountain Party nomination could be a party leader at some level. New people, new ideas, new energy, and a more democratic process- what more would we want to have the Mountain Party stand for?

Building The Perfect Party

by Jesse Johnson, MtPty Chair

In 2000 you did what dozens of other states only wish for - gained the ever-elusive ballot access, creating the Mountain Party. In 2002 the country was still in shock and the world aghast at the coup perpetrated on the people of this great nation. In 2004 you honored and charged me with responsibility to belay my personal fears and be the kind of democratic activist that I have longed to be.

Our accomplishments are many, if my run for

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governor in 2004 was supported by 100% of our party's membership, which no candidate expects, then I received nearly forty times that number of actual certified votes. This rated us at the top of the heap of third party races of its type nationally. We were only bested percentage wise by the Libertarian gubernatorial candidate from Delaware. We totaled over six thousand more votes than that Delaware race. They are one of the largest third parties in the nation and we are certainly one of the smallest. Imagine what is possible.

2006 was another good year for the Party, pulling more votes for the US Senate seat than the '04 governor's race. This brings us back to opportunities for '08 and the desire to build a better party. One that can once again be a model for the nation. One that sets the standard politically as to how to mine coal, protect the environment and usher in a new era of effective labor policies and corporate responsibility.

Now I need your help. The party needs your help. The state and nation needs your help. If all politics is local then organize locally. If you are concerned about our nation's trajectory downward from a position of honor and leadership then write us a check, a letter to the editor, call someone, host a fund-raiser. You only have one party that needs your help, so please get involved. Change always occurs from the bottom up, if it is truly a change that is good for the people. Remember, tyranny is a top down construct.

I have been quoted nationally, been asked to visit and speak at several venues in other states due to the seeds of justice and democracy that you have sown.

Help make this a better world for your children and grandchildren. They can't yet vote and support their best interests, but you can. The time is now. The place is West Virginia. God bless the Mountain State and thank you for making this a growing reality for us all. Come to the July convention and help us plan the future!

Mountain Party & Greens Unite!

Gary Zuckett, past MtPty Chair

Our convention will meet in July to make a decision with great import – should our Mountain Party form an alliance with the Green Party of the United States (GPUS)? Asked another way – should the Mountain Party connect with its roots? I say this because so many of the original (and current) organizers were (are) greens. We've always had a strong environmental justice ethic. If you look at the Ten Key

Values of the US Greens you'll find most all of them already described in our platform. The international Green movement recognizes four pillars – Grassroots Democracy, Ecological Wisdom, Economic Justice and Non-Violence. I say we share these values.

If the Mountain Party and GPUS are values-based movements with nearly identical values, it just makes sense to be working in tandem.

The big change affiliation brings for us is in the method we use to choose our candidates for president and vice-president. As a state affiliate, we would elect official delegates to the national GPUS convention where, along with all the other state parties, together we'd decide who our two candidates for national office would be.

Inside WV we'd still be the sole entity to determine which candidates represent the Mountain Party in all other elections and have the same autonomy as we do now. Although we also have another convention proposal to switch nominations over to the same primary election process that the R's & D's use. This idea has merit and I recommend it also be passed with the exception that we should continue to select our candidate for governor by convention as did in 2004.

In numbers there is strength. I suggest we agree to affiliate with a growing national movement whose goal is to fundamentally change the direction this country is headed – something that neither of the major parties seem capable of doing. It'll be a win-win for both groups. Come to the convention and let's continue to make history!

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continue our present convention system to nominate our candidates or go to a primary system instead. The pros and cons of these two options are also discussed elsewhere in the newsletter.

"Why are you voting for the Mountain Party? Do you think they can win an election?" These are the two questions I am frequently asked when political options are being discussed. The first is easy- it's the platform, my friend. I want my elected officials to stand up for : 1- Preservation of clean air, water and soil; 2- Government Accountability; 3- Retention of small schools and communities; 4 -Economic & Social Justice . The Mountain Party platform includes these as priorities. The other political parties are strictly "open for business".

As for the second question, -"Can the Mountain Party win an election? – the answer all depends on how many other people want to be able to express an alternate opinion at the ballot box. We all need to show up. See you on July 7th.

Your Party Needs Your Support!

Our grassroots Party is staffed by unpaid volunteers. This means that our treasury is not burdened with staff salaries and expense accounts. The Chairman, other officers and district party organizers pay their own telephone, travel and other expenses for organizing and leading the Mountain Party.

However, there are some expenses we simply cannot avoid. For example, having the Mountain Party web site means that we get a monthly bill for website maintenance and updating.

The largest single cost we incur is for printing and mailing the newsletter. At today's rates, this mailing will cost about \$1,000 to print and deliver to your door. Accordingly, we try to keep costs down by communicating more by e-mail and web site, and less by paper and postage. However, as election time

approaches, we do need to send out mail.

So we are herein "passing the hat" in hopes that you can help keep the Mountain Party growing. Statewide registration has almost doubled since the 2004 convention. Our costs of printing and mailing have increased accordingly - please do what you can to support the only independent party on the ballot in West Virginia.

As we complete this edition of the Mt. Party newsletter, our treasurer issues this urgent request for your financial contribution to the Mountain Party. Your registration as a voter affiliated with the Mountain Party is likely because you believe in the Mountain Party's social, economic and environmental justice platform. Thank you for sending in your contribution to support your Party!



WV Mountain Party

RR 1, Box 108, Ripley WV 25271

www.mtparty.org

Mountain Party Convention Registration & Dues Contribution

Saturday July 7th from 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM - Rustic Camping available Friday and Saturday

Name(s) _____

Address _____ City _____ St _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____ County _____

Registration Fee: \$15/person (\$10 student/low income):\$ _____ enclosed Additional contribution \$ _____

I am a registered Mountain Party Voter and I wish to be Credentialed as a Voting Delegate

I will fill out a voter registration change at the convention to become a Voting Mountain Party Delegate

I wish to attend the Convention as a participant without voting privileges

YES! I want the Mountain Party to succeed in promoting a clean environment and responsible government. Here is my membership contribution to help make it happen...

\$5/month \$10/month \$ _____/month I'm sending it all at once, Enclosed is \$ _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ St _____ Zip _____

County _____ E-mail _____

Send to: Mountain Party, RR 1, Box 108 Ripley WV 25271

View, continued from page one

eral damage in a war against your home, health and community that rages 24/7 nearly every day, year in and year out, with no end in site much less, declared. This is our heritage and the whole country is now starting to take note of our arduous plight.

An affiliation with the national Green Party (GPUS) had been discussed at the 2006 Convention of the Mountain Party. Preliminary talks were initiated under the watchful eye of our out going State Party Chairman Gary Zuckett. I was elevated from my position as Vice Chair to fill some pretty big shoes. Mayor Bob Henry Baber has been elected to assume the position of Vice Chair.

The Co-Chair of the GPUS accreditation committee is delighted to hear that the Mountain Party Executive Committee has unanimously voted to recommend affiliation with the Green Party of the United States! This important decision will be made in July at our Convention by Mountain Party delegates from across the state.

The next formal step is for the Accreditation Committee to review our application. They will ultimately make a recommendation to the Green National Committee. The weekend after our Convention, the various state delegates to the GPUS Annual Convention in Reading PA may have the opportunity to vote on accrediting the Mountain Party as a "member state party" in GPUS.

This summer, if our Convention on July 7 votes to ratify the decision of the Executive Committee, we'll be sending two voting delegates to the National Convention 2007 of the Green Party US. At that point, the Mountain Party would also qualify for two seats on the Green National Committee.

These are exciting times and with your help I intend to take this fight that we did not instigate to a whole new level. We the people are the ones with the true power so let's work together to make this happen. For the sake of the kids.

Campus Mountain Party

The Mountain Party of WV is launching a "Campus Mountain Party" crusade across the state. "Mountain Party Campus chapters are designed to raise the awareness young voters have today in our ever changing political climate," explained Jesse Johnson the party's Chair. Jesse will be working with Eric McLaughlin as state wide coordinators. Faculty advisors and student organizers are being identified in nearly every college and university in the state.

New registrations across the state and nation are

running four to one favoring independent or third parties and younger voters tend to be even more independent.

Campus organizations can be an effective tool not only to spread awareness and membership, but also to create social networks and sponsor activities that have a positive effect on the community and the Party.

Student organizations have shown the ability to have tremendous impact in past elections—the efforts of the College Democrats, for example, are partially credited with bringing John Kerry an impressive 54% of the youth vote in 2004.

Students and community members involved in Campus Mountain Party organizations will have the opportunity attend discussions for raising issue awareness, voter registration, social outings, fund-raising activities & more.

For more information about a Mountain Party group at a campus near you, contact Eric McLaughlin at eric@mtparty.org or (304)-288-1896.

Directions to Mountain Party Convention at Greg and Susan's

From Charleston -on the Freeway - Go West on I 64 (toward Huntington) and get off on the Hurricane Exit. Turn left (over interstate) and go to traffic light (past gas stations). Go right at intersection (light) and right again at next light (about a block). That is Lynn St. You go about a block on Lynn St and take a left on Virginia Ave. Go all the way through the residential part of Hurricane on Virginia about 2-3 miles. (Warning when you are on Virginia Ave, pay attention to the speed limits of 20 and 35 mph - it is enforced!) On your left you will see a big company called GREIF Bros and across the street is Benedict Rd. Turn right on Benedict (Check your odometer) and go EXACTLY 4 miles. The house sits on the left . It has lots of windows and steps and a ramp to the front door.

From Huntington. Coming from the west on 64, Get off at the Milton Exit. Go right to Route 60. Go left (east) on 60. About 1/4 mile past the Culloden Post Office which is on the left side you will come to the little Exxon station and turn left onto Virginia Ave. In less than 1/4 mile turn left onto Benedict Rd. (Go EXACTLY 4 miles) Benedict road is paved for a mile and then a good gravel road the rest of the way. Stay on the main road but whenever there is a fork in the road stay to the left. The house sits on the left. Call Gregg's at 304-562-3075 if you get lost...