



Mountain Party News

www.mtparty.org

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Special 2011 Convention on May 1st Join US & let Your Voice be Heard!!

The 2011 WV Mountain Party State Convention will be held on **Sunday, May 1st**, starting at 11:00 AM, at the **Towne Square Market Cafe** in downtown **Sutton, WV**, near the center of the state. This special convention is being called because the state legislature has set a special election for the unexpired term of governor. You are cordially invited to attend the Mountain Party 2011 special convention.

The voice of Mountain Party members is vital on a number of important issues to be addressed at this convention.

This special convention will see two candidates vying for the Mountain Party gubernatorial nomination- Jesse Johnson of Pinch in Kanawha County, and Dr. Bob Henry Baber of Glenville in Gilmer County. **Towne Square Market Cafe** is located at 400 North 4th Street (the corner of 4th and Main) in downtown Sutton.

Attendees are encouraged to support our hosts at Towne Square Market Cafe by joining us for an all day lunch buffet, and which will include vegetarian fare. This restaurant is normally closed on Sunday. So we will have exclusive use of the facility for the entire day, with convention attendees paying individually for their own "all day buffet" lunch.

Credentialed delegates to this special Mountain Party State Convention will select a candidate to run for the office of Governor on the Mountain Party ticket.

And due to recent changes in West Virginia election law, the Mountain Party needs to reconsider how it will nominate its candidates for the state legislature and other public offices in 2012.

Also, Regional representatives will caucus and select Regional Chairs and Regional Delegates to the Mountain Party State Executive Committee for the next year.

State convention delegates will also be electing the state party's Chair and other Officers. (See inside of this newsletter for a more complete agenda for the convention.)

The Convention will begin at 11:00 AM and last until about 4:00 PM. A \$15 registration fee helps cover the costs of organizing and holding the convention, including this newsletter. Please help us plan better by pre-registering with the convention registration form just below.

The success of the Mountain Party depends on the active participation of its members. Attend the convention and ensure that your voice is heard within the Mountain Party and throughout the state of West Virginia.

DIRECTIONS: Take I-79 to exit # 62, then take Rt. 4 north about 2 miles to the "Y"; stay right at the "Y", going into town.

Towne Square Market Cafe is located at 400 North 4th Street (the corner of 4th and Main) in downtown Sutton. Since this is Sunday, there is no time limit street parking.



Nominations: Party Convention, or Primary Elections?

In 2007 the Mountain Party took two big steps. We formally affiliated with the Green Party of the United States. This move brought us some opportunities. But it also presented new challenges. And in 2007 we changed our by-laws and nominating method- for all offices other than governor- from party convention to primary elections.

At that time we believed that this made good sense because under state law back then, all of our candidates had to be nominated and actually filed and with filing fees paid by the day before the primary elections in May. But more recently the state legislature changed the law so that now a “third party” such as the Mountain Party need not have its candidates nominated and filed until August 1st of the year of regular general elections. This is for ALL offices- not just for governor. (This applies to regularly scheduled elections- every 2 years- not to special elections to fill a vacancy such as we are having this year.)

Since we need not have our candidates filed until August 1st in regular election years, some of us think it would be good to return to nominating ALL Mountain Party candidates by party convention. This gives us several advantages- including more time to recruit and nominate candidates and more time for candidates to raise filing fees. And very importantly, it allows a narrow window for progressive Democratic Party candidates (and Republicans, if any) who did not win their primary elections in May to “switch” to Mountain Party and become OUR candidate. This would allow the Mountain Party to consider them for nomination at its mid-summer party convention. This, a proposal to change party by-laws relating to nominations procedures, will be on the May 1st Mountain Party convention agenda.

“Up The Holler” with the Mountain Party

by One Citizen

Most voters don't realize it, but the Mountain Party's policy of refusing corporate donations severely handicaps the ability to raise enough cash to run an effective campaign in more ways than one. While that policy assures Mountain Party members that its candidates will most likely represent the people of West Virginia and protect them from the greed-driven excesses of the extraction industries, it is also an

extremely strong incentive for the mainstream media to never properly cover our candidates or their platform.

First or last, it's all the same.

The most recent example of censoring the message by ignoring the messenger was when award-winning journalist Paul Nyden of the Charleston Gazette chose to completely ignore two of Jesse Johnson's speeches on the capitol steps during two separate labor rallies held two weeks apart. At the initial rally Johnson was the first guest speaker to address the crowd, and his rousing speech was the only one which directly addressed the fact that West Virginia's public employees have no right to bargain collectively. In his second speech, Jesse was the last speaker at the podium, and although all of the other gubernatorial candidates were members of the Democratic Party, none dared to even mention that public employees have never had the right to bargain collectively in this state.

Although Nyden not only quoted virtually all of Johnson's opponents at the second rally, he somehow completely “overlooked” Johnson, despite the fact that he had ended the rally by leading a resounding “RIGHT TO STRIKE” chant which echoed across the capitol steps after having driven home the point that without collective bargaining rights, West Virginia's public employees are left with little more than the right to beg.

Unlike his corporate-financed opponents, Jesse Johnson actually dares to draw upon West Virginia's history to form solutions to numerous major problems which have plagued our communities for over a century. In both rally speeches, Johnson reminded the pro-labor crowds that West Virginians fought and died for the right to strike against blatant collusion between our political leaders and the coal operators at Blair Mountain, a battle which eventually resulted in national labor laws protecting the right for private industry workers to have safer working conditions and decent wages all across the United States.

Unfortunately (for us all), many, if not most of our states residents “never get involved in politics” - except to vote - sometimes.. If and when they do bother to go to the polls, more and more often it's to vote for “the lesser of two evils”. I know this because during the recent campaign to fill Senator Byrd's seat, I traveled with both Jesse Johnson and Ken Hechler all across the state to town hall meetings and “meet the candidates” forums. Time and again folks told us that they had never heard of the Mountain Party, only the “Tea Party”. Sadly, that attests to the success of those who run the media, the state, and the other two political parties to hide the fact that the Mountain Party

continued on page four

Not just one, but Many, We are the Mountain Party

by *Bob Henry Baber*

The **Mountain Party** isn't one lone voice
crying in what's left of the wilderness.
We are many voices—a diverse choir of believers
keeping the faith forever.
We're the voice of the Massey miners who are afraid
to speak out for safety
for fear of losing their jobs,
the voice of single working women
who can't make ends meet or pay their utility bills,
the voice of surface-miners who deep down
hate what they're doing to their mountains—
but have no viable alternatives to feed their families,
the voice of first generation low-income high school students
who can't afford to go to college or find a decent job,
but who can, if they want,
find Oxycontin aplenty around the next dark corner,
the unemployed factory workers whose jobs have fled
first to the right-to-work south, and then to China,
of seniors who can't afford their meds,
of the little first-grader riding a long strange bus
to a newly consolidated school far, far from home,
and we're the voice of small dying towns like Richwood and
Logan and Williamson
who have no capital and no advocate in either capitol to help
them get some so they can pull themselves up by their
bootstraps,
and we're the muffled sound of over-burdened headstreams
which no longer exist, except in memory or imagination,
and of trees that once stretched like waking cats
and grew into sunlight,
only to be ruthlessly pushed out of the way
and buried for nothing, to get at the coal,
and we're the haunting sound of isolated family cemeteries
crying in the lost grey sea of relentless stripping,
and we are
the angry witnesses of Blair Mountain labor and land
being both repeated...and erased
before our very eyes
but not forever,
for we are the collective body of reverence and remembrance.

The **Mountain Party** will not lick clean coal's filthy boots
and turn blackened teeth toward t.v. cameras and smile pretty
simply to win an election but lose history.
We will not say the emperor's is finely clothed
when his engorged belly extrudes the fat of profit
and his butt is showing when he stoops to new lows
and new lies.
We are not coal's enemy
unless its' profit motive sends 29 men directly to their death
and calls it "an act of God" just like they did after
Buffalo Creek.
For shame!



We are not coal's enemy
until it lops off entire mountain ranges
and calls it good and reclaimed.
And we will be heard above the black din of commerce
masked as progress and heralded by the coal association
in slick press releases circling like vultures
around the gilded dome.

The **Mountain Party** is not an apologist for the past,
but the harbinger of the future.
We are not the party of the privileged,
but have the privilege to speak for those whose voices have
been drowned out by big money.
We are the party of bluegrass music, rock salt and stone,
blood, kin and bone.
We are the pen of the budding Appalachian poet
about to re-write flowers into existence,
the clear-cut forest striving to regenerate itself,
& polluted mine run-off trying to lick itself clean.
We are young entrepreneurs with ideas
that will change West Virginia and the world for the better,
we are emergency workers going on midnight calls
to save lives,
the committed teacher at a small rural school
helping to create yet one more inspired student,
state workers conscientiously and consistently doing their jobs
sometimes under harsh conditions and with little thanks,
cooks, waiters and waitresses,
surveyors, pharmacy technicians, and nurses,
tree cutters and tree huggers
all on the same page of paper
proclaiming fundamental change.

We are not one voice, but many.
We are the party of celebratory dancing and
peaceful evolution.
We are the voice of electronic change
skittering across the internet,
the voice of righteous anger
directed towards for the greater good.
We are the voice of the common man and
the common place—
both of which are uncommonly good and worth preserving.

Now we will sing together in many colors
calling forth a future:
bright as daylight
clean as a hillside spring,
and true as a million maple leaves
rustling in the crisp fall wind.
We are throwing locust logs that will burn long and hard
on the fires of environmental and social justice.
Not just one, but many,
we are the **Mountain Party**.
Bob Henry Baber

A Word of Thanks

I want to thank all of you who have generously donated time, money (and your registrations from other parties) to support and grow the Mountain Party and my campaigns. You are our sustainers and since we are all about sustainability as a party, I am forever grateful.

The tide is changing. What was once just a dirty little secret here in Appalachia has now become a national story. Since, 2007, I've travelled all over the country to urge people to look at Mountain Top Removal as our collective problem. I'm not alone. Many of us have contributed to create this awareness, but no one else has forged the path to make this time for our party possible. I have fought to keep our ballot access, and for access to media and debates.

Believe me; no one is doling out attention to our party. I have had to fight for every inch and it at every turn. Our efforts have changed the conversation in our state and nation for the first time. Finally, the covers are pulled off and the clear answer is we need someone in office who represents our values, who knows how to set an agenda for a new and different coal economy, who can weather the brutal negotiations issued by our corporate controlled media and who accepts the sacrifices inherent in standing up to king coal.

I am excited at the chance to draw upon the experience and momentum of all of our previous campaigns to "make history" once again in 2011. While our wins have been limited in the past, the time is nye when we will truly change the game and everyone will know. This special election offers West Virginians a chance to stop the environmental degradation once and for all by nominating a Governor who puts people before profits, courage before corporations and justice before just jobs. I am that person.

Since winning your nomination in 2004 I have devoted the lions share of my life to this party because I have long been convinced that we cannot be passive in the electoral arena where policy is actually made. Civil disobedience is having the people wake up to their true power and is how you make history. We have been doing just that for more than a decade now. We doubled our votes from 2000 to 2004 to 2008 garnering nearly 5%, the highest amount of any third party nominee for Governor in WV history. Each of my campaigns have, in their cycle, been national best for a third party. The ideas proffered got us invited to speak at national and international conferences. The "Citizens Energy Dividend" which we developed under the tutelage of former U.S. Senator Mike Gravel was

so well accepted in 2008 that the Republican nominee even claimed it. Fortunately, the DC Metro news correctly credited me and the Eastern Economic Association (the largest and most influential gathering of economists in the world) asked me to come to NYC to speak, as well as be a panelist. The platforms and ideas I have presented have led to an impressive list of endorsements from politicians, media personalities and well respected authors. Our campaign team wants to continue to build on that momentum. These volunteers have believed in me enough to suffer peril at my side and to join us for the next step.

Greens around the world have made the great strides, achieved high offices, but it was done after repeated attempts. People of vision have built parties and successful campaigns in the very manner that we now entreat you to do. I therefore humbly but most sincerely ask for your support once again. Hard work and experience is what I have to offer. I want to fight for you. Let's take our next evolutionary step together and keep our party secure and growing. I urge every one of you to start your exploratory campaigns for one of the offices that can advance ecological wisdom and social justice across WV and bring real choice and sustainability to your very own community.

Thank You, Jesse Johnson for Governor 2011

Up the Holler, continued from page two

exists.

During every election they shell out millions to the mainstream media to convince you that the "lesser of two evils" is the best West Virginia has to offer, and to ignore the voice of the one candidate who is willing to take on those whose campaigns are financially cuffed to the vested interests of their corporate masters.

The very existence of the Mountain Party threatens how our local media has operated for at least a hundred years. Yet despite the best efforts of the various extractive industries to bury West Virginia's sordid political history of screwing citizens for corporate profits, we (the Mountain Party) still understand and value the true power of the concept ONE PERSON = ONE VOTE.

Those who run West Virginia's other two parties aren't the only ones who see the concept ONE PERSON = ONE VOTE as a direct threat. The media has a vested interest in persuading us all that, without tons of cash backing a candidate, there can only be failure. That's why their big business bosses recently threw literally hundreds of thousands of dollars at our local major news outlets to flood our airwaves and our headlines about the "differences" between two candi-

continued on next page

dates who, with regards to every major issue that affects West Virginia, were the closest of any opposing national candidates anywhere in the nation, at least according to The New York Times' political analyst Nate Silver.

During the last election, Jesse Johnson's proposal to transition away from our current fossil fuel extraction industry mono-economy and bring back manufacturing wasn't addressed by his opponents at any of the forums. However, it was well received by fellow citizens at town hall meetings all across the state. Johnson's message was so potent that, in an obvious attempt to quash his rising popularity among voters, Marshall University ("MU") hired a political consulting firm to conduct a push-poll just before the election. Although neither Johnson's name nor the Mountain Party appeared on MU's poll script of questions asked, in its press release the chair of MU's political science department stated that Jesse Johnson's candidacy received zero percent of support among those polled. Seriously, according to her analysis, Johnson had zero percent chance of winning even though his name was never mentioned to those polled. (editor's note: How do you spell "self-fulfilling prophesy?") Even worse, she stated unequivocally that it had been thoroughly analyzed and it was a very scientific poll. This was a particularly disturbing assertion, since the only person listed as a consultant in MU's press release regarding that poll was Dr. Robert Rupp, **chairman of the State Elections Commission!**

During the last election our team discovered that Johnson's name never appeared in any polls published by our local media. So we decided to try to figure out how to effectively reach out to more voters despite our party's lack of corporate campaign finances. During the course of several informal meetings with Frank Young, Jesse Johnson, Charlotte Pritt, and others, I decided to put together a website that can be used as a tool for fellow West Virginians to become more aware, and more active.

That website, like its name, uptheholler.com (UTH) is unique in its duality.

The term "up the holler" is the name (Appalachian dialect) for that special place nestled between two mountains where true mountaineers can naturally feel as protected as within their own neighborhood. The website uptheholler.com is also where friends, neighbors, and family members can freely UP THE HOLLER (raise a ruckus) with his neighbors to take Appalachia back.

That's why the *Jesse Johnson for Governor Exploratory Committee* pages have been developed and are being finalized as a major part of UTH. It's

where like-minded Appalachians will be able to virtually reach out and actively improve our entire state. In a matter of days, UTH will have on-line pages individually designed to accommodate folks who live in each of West Virginia's senatorial districts. While each district's *Front Porch* page is for locals and visitors who may just want to read news about their neighborhood and even take part in conversations about them, the Woodshed is where folks who wish to more actively do something about their situation can flesh out their ideas with other concerned friends and neighbors, with the guidance of experienced and dedicated Jesse Johnson for Governor exploratory team members.

Folks can get into The Woodshed only if they're invited by a member of the Jesse Johnson for Governor Exploratory Team. It will take either a commitment of volunteerism, or else a campaign donation to get a password for each district's "Woodshed" during this election season.

Each district's "Woodshed" has listed a number of tools and links specific to that local district. It also grants committed activists and/ or Mountain Party candidates for each "Neighborhood" special access to Jesse and his team, granting that locale's activists greater leverage to focus on, and address, each district's own problems.

Whether you're the type that likes to sit and muse on the Front Porch about coal sludge ruining your well water, or you want to get serious in The Woodshed about stopping the lethal toxins within the hydrofracking fluids leaching into your water table, this new media format is focused on bringing social justice to every neighborhood of our nation's fourth most resource rich state in the country.

Because ***it's Time***

More than ever, West Virginia voters are beginning to connect the dots why our poorest communities in the state are where our resources are being extracted. After all these years under the two party system, our most resource-rich counties are still dragging the rest of the state into the economic ditch. From coal slurry injection to mountain top removal, the focus of our political leaders have never been to develop communities, but rather to run all of us surface squatters off their minerals. No one seriously believes that under this same two party system harvesting the Marcellus Shale will be any different, even though that's exactly what all of the major candidates for governor in the Republican and Democratic parties are selling.

Support Jesse Johnson of the Mountain Party for Governor by making uptheholler.com your homepage. It's just common sense, folks.

Who's Going to do this Work?

by Frank Young, Mountain Party Treasurer & Co-Founder

This article is pretty much my belly-ache for this newsletter. I will be blunt. Unless more people get involved in actually helping to keep the Mountain Party organized and functioning, it will continue to only limp along as it has been. It will take more than one or two people to keep the Mountain Party going. We to staff and work on several party committees. We have a State Executive Committee, and a Finance, Communications, Nominations, Constitution (by-laws), and Platform Committees. But these committees are in much need of new energy and revitalization.

We need a Finance Committee that makes an annual budget, assists the Treasurer, and either raises funds or helps form a fund-raising committee to raise funds. Our meager funds are such that even the costs of publication and distribution of this newsletter are done with "borrowed" money.

We need a Communications Committee that connects with the news media- but most of all that communicates with our members and others who make inquiry about what the Mountain Party is about and how folks who offer energy to work for the party can fit in.

We need a Nominations Committee that recruits many potential candidates- from both within the ranks of Mountain Party members, but also progressives from other political parties whose candidates are effectively blackballed by their own party because they do not walk in lockstep with the existing West Virginia political oligarchy. Progressives from other parties who lose their party primary election are a prime source for recruiting to the Mountain Party. But, like the old tom cat, we've got to be "on the prowl" for these folks.

And most of all we need a Mountain Party that demonstrates that it can WIN AN ELECTION- even if only for one political office. Out of 134 legislative seats, for example, surely we can put our collective energies into winning just one of those seats. Were that to happen- win one partisan office- the media and the other parts of the existing political apparatus could no longer ignore us. Nothing succeeds like success. A win would re-energize our members and serve to increase our numbers several fold.

Secretary Karen Grubb and I are the WV Mountain Party Delegates to the Green Party of the United States (GPUS). More than half the states that constitute GPUS do not even have ballot status! But the WV Mountain Party DOES have ballot status- for every

partisan office in West Virginia at county, state and federal levels. Karen and I can assure you that the WV Mountain Party is the envy of every state Green Party without ballot access.

Now the WV Mountain Party has had ballot access for more than 10 years. What have we done with that? Typically, we run two or three candidates for the state legislature every couple years, a candidate for governor every four years, and a U.S. Senatorial candidate now and then. Except for the "mother" of the Mountain Party, Denise Giardina, who's run for governor in 2000 gained us ballot status, we have had the same male candidate every time for these state-wide offices of governor and U.S. Senate. Where is our gender, diversity? Where is our new political blood? In short, when will we break out of our stale inertia- out of our political malaise?

It is past time to break from our stale inertia to become the vibrant new and thriving party we were in 2000- and in 2002- when Vince George, our very first candidate for the House of Delegates, drew a whopping 39 percent of the vote in the General Election!

But, for any of this to happen, someone is going to have to take on the task of communicating better with our members, with the outside media, and with the many folks who make inquiry of us- but who are left wondering why we do not respond. Someone is also needed to Chair an active and effective finance committee

The Mountain Party Chair cannot possibly do all of this alone. Then, the question is, 'Who is going to do this work'? There is only one answer: WE are- all of us. We who care enough to be a registered Mountain Party voter are the core of the Mountain Party. Come to the convention on May 1st. Let the meeting room overflow with people who don't know where to start but who want, as many of you have said, to help the Mountain Party grow and succeed. But the work will not end after the party convention. Yes, we'll nominate a gubernatorial candidate, maybe change a small part of our bylaws, elect party officers, talk, and then go home. But it is not over then. It will have just begun. To succeed there has to be much, much more work being done BETWEEN conventions and between state Executive Committee meetings than what is done at the convention. Of course not everyone can come to the convention. If you can't come, you can organize a local Mountain Party County Executive Committee. Also you can send an e-mail message to info@mtparty.org telling us some of the tasks or committees you can be active with as relate to the above.

Finally, I invite you to read a short commentary about the Mountain Party by our progressive Ohio friend, Tom Anderson, on page ???? of this newsletter.

Your Party Needs Your Support!

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

At today's rates, this mailing will cost over \$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. **So send your e-mail to info@mtparty.org and get on our E-List - you'll get MtParty news sooner and save funds.** However, as election time approaches, we do need to send out this snail mail.

Your financial support 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 Mountain Party voter shows you believe in the Party's social, economic and environmental justice platform. Thank you for sending in your member contribution to support your Party!



WV Mountain Party

RR 1, Box 108, Ripley WV 25271

www.mtparty.org

Mountain Party Convention Registration & Membership Dues

Name(s) _____

Address _____ City _____ St _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____ County _____

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

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...

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$ Other Total Enclosed is \$ _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ St _____ Zip _____

County _____ E-mail _____

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

West Virginia Mountain Party
RR 1, Box 108, Ripley WV 25271
www.mtparty.org



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*See inside for exciting news of the upcoming
2011 Convention*

Draft Agenda Highlights for the Special Mountain Party Convention

- * Call to Order & Introductions
- * Determination of Convention Rules and Agenda
- * Recess for Regions (by Senatorial District) to Select Official Convention Delegates
- * Reconvene and take Regional Committee Reports on Convention Delegates
- * Consideration of Possible Changes to Article VII of the Mountain Party bylaws relating to procedures for Selecting Mountain Party Candidates for Public Office in General Elections
- * Other Committee Reports, if any.
- * Report of the Nominations Committee on Candidates for Mountain Party Nomination for Governor
- * Brief Speech from Candidates for Mountain Party Nomination for Governor
- * Convention Elects the Mountain Party's Nominee for Governor for the 2011 Special Election
- * Election of Party Officers for terms ending in 2012
- * Any Other Matters that may come Before the Convention

An unused tool is an artifact

*Guest commentary by outside political
consultant and observer, Tom Anderson*

You, members of The Mountain Party, have my admiration,
and my scorn.

The Mountain Party is a gift from those who worked long
and diligently to secure a legitimate third party in the state
of West Virginia. It is the most wonderful, powerful
democratic tool you could have ever been given.

It is your shining gift.

What are you doing with it?

It lies dusty, mostly unused.

I dare you to have the fortitude of the founders who forged
this tool of The Mountain Party-
who forged it for YOU to use.

I live in Ohio and have no such tool.

Will you not use your tool and participate?

Will you not do something for yourselves?

For your community? Your state? Your environment?

For your fellow Humans?

There it is. **THE TOOL- THE MOUNTAIN PARTY.**
Pick it up! Use it! Work with it- for Mountain Party
candidates and for yourselves.

Despair is for those with no resources, no tools.

You have everything you need. Get to work!

Tom Anderson