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GETTYSBURG AREA DEMOCRACY FOR AMERICA (formerly Adams Countians for Kerry)

Gettysburg Area Democracy for America

February Update

Dear Friend,

It's been quite a month! We sent out a press release about our February 2 Meetup, and got a really nice story in the *Evening Sun* on February 14 with the headline, "Area Political Group Backs "Progressive Thinkers." *The Gettysburg Times* also printed the news that we had 48 people at our meeting who voted to form the Gettysburg Area Democracy for America, an organization that is both aligned with Howard Dean's Democracy for America and supports the local Democratic Party.

Our mission is to:

- Form alliances with other organizations to champion social justice and a sane and moral foreign policy.
- Advocate and sponsor progressive initiatives.
- Recruit and support candidates for local offices who are both progressive and fiscally responsible.

Elected by unanimous consent were: Elaine Jones, Chair; Roger Lund, Vice Chair; Bert Herbert, Secretary; and Kerr Thompson, Treasurer. A Media/Communications Committee led by Warren Steen has already formed subcommittees who will work on a Newsletter, Letter Writing, Conversation Groups, Op/Eds, maintenance of the membership list and a Key Contacts list.

Emily Ricketts made the case for focusing on preservation of Social Security because of the scope and significance for the country and the economy, and because this is an issue where we can defeat the President. Privatizing Social Security is a centerpiece of this Administration's attempt to roll back government and reverse a program that has been most successful since FDR's introduction of the New Deal. Emily has created a local web site on the issue (www.grasshopperdesign.com/taskforce). More details about this task force below in this newsletter.

This month we were slapped again with Bush's *hubris* – a budget that slashes every social program most progressives favor – and increases the military budget, without even including the cost of the Iraq war or the cost of privatizing Social Security. All this is proposed in the name of recovering from the unprecedented deficit that Bush himself has created. In actuality the Bush Budget increases the deficit, while decreasing taxes permanently for the wealthy, and making government priorities all about "security" rather than sensibility. There is NOTHING compassionate in this budget. True Majority has made it easy to action on this budget. Just click on the link below:

<http://www.kintera.org/siteapps/advocacy/index.aspx?c=irKQL0NSE&b=371859&sid=43878649&action=1813&template=x.ascx> for more facts and an opportunity to contact Senators Specter, Santorum and Representative Todd Platts.

There is too much at stake for us to sit back and let this go forward unopposed. Join us at our next Meetup on March 2 at 7 PM. We have changed the location to Gettysburg College in the McCreary Building, Room 101 (Mara Auditorium). Take N. Washington Street (south of Chambersburg Street) and turn left on Constitution Avenue just below the railroad. McCreary is behind Gladfelter Hall, and is adjacent to the large parking lot off Constitution Avenue.

Come help us make our voices heard both locally and nationally. We need you!

Elaine L. Jones, Chair
Arendtsville

Special Interest Articles:

Letter from the Chair

Candidate Recruitment

Howard Dean Support

Social Security Task Force

Join a Task Force

Take Back Adams County



"Forty-eight people ages 18 to 80 were in attendance on February 2nd."

Candidate Recruitment by Roger Lund

"That government is the strongest of which every man feels himself a part."
-Thomas Jefferson



Petitions must be signed and returned by March 8.

An effort is underway to make sure that every race in Adams County has at least one candidate for office who adheres to the Gettysburg Area DFA philosophy of being socially progressive and fiscally responsible. We are asking you to consider running for an office yourself or to ask a friend or neighbor to do so.

A complete list of the offices available can be found at www.AdamsDemocrats.com/DemocraticMajorityProjectAdams.pdf. Petitions are available at the Adams County Courthouse beginning February 7, and must be returned by March 8.

Democracy for America was started by Howard Dean to help progressives "Take Back their country" from

those who are pushing an extreme agenda. Conservatives began thirty years ago to take control of the Republican Party and push out the moderates, and they largely succeeded, beginning at the local level. For years in Adams County, Democrats have let Republicans control the majority of elections without even recruiting progressive candidates for most openings on the ballot. We realize that this goal will take years to accomplish, but we must start now. For more information contact Roger Lund at (717-624-4860).

In addition, we urge you all to get on the Adams County Democratic Committee. There are many, many openings and they need our input. Simply contact Sam Giardullo (ACDC Chair)

sgiardullo1@yahoo.com with your name, address and precinct (if you know) and request appointment to the committee.

Finally, we would like to request participation from others on our committee. We need to do the work deciding what we mean by "socially progressive" and how we will weigh those values against candidate positions when it comes time for Gettysburg Area DFA to make endorsements. Please contact Roger Lund at the number above or at rlund@TheChristmasHaus.com.

Adams County Supports Howard Dean for DNC Chair by Elaine Jones

It didn't make the local papers, but we made history when the Adams County Democratic Committee voted to "highly recommend" Dr. Howard Dean for Chair of the Democratic National Committee. "We have never done this before," said ACDC chair Sam Giardullo when the motion was made on January 24. About 45 people who were NOT on the committee, came to the Democratic meeting at the VFW to show their support for Governor Dean, and in the end the committee

members present all voted in favor of supporting Howard Dean with just one abstention. A letter was sent to Governor Rendell and the Pennsylvania delegation asking for their support as well.

How will Dean's new position impact on the Democracy for America groups? In the words of Dr. Dean on February 8:

"Democracy for America has accomplished more and grown faster than I ever

imagined. You raised millions of dollars for good candidates, helped shape the national debate, and started hundreds of strong grassroots groups all over the country.

Most importantly, you have created a new model for political action. You have shown that ordinary people organizing locally have the power to make a real impact nationally. People have noticed – now other organizations look to the success of our model as a

blueprint for building a lasting Democratic majority."

The Gettysburg Area DFA is committed to the ideals of recruiting and supporting local candidates who are socially progressive and fiscally responsible, and we will also engage in activist and educational projects to promote progressive values and a sane and moral foreign policy.

On a Personal Note...

Tom Deloe is doing great! A few weeks ago, one of our strongest leaders in the Kerry Campaign collapsed after his usual four mile run. His wife, a nurse practitioner, saw Tom collapse and recognized that he had had a heart attack. Carol did CPR until an ambulance arrived about fifteen minutes later. Within days Tom had heart surgery that included five by-passes to open his arteries which were seriously blocked. The wonderful news is that Tom is doing very well, and can expect a complete recovery. The doctors said that they were amazed at how little damage his heart had suffered, and that his physical fitness and the quick actions of his caregivers are responsible for an excellent prognosis. We are delighted that we can expect Tom to return to help us with our new campaign.

Social Security Task Force – by Emily Ricketts (Task Force Leader)

There have been numerous letters to the editor published in the local papers about Social Security. We have done a great job of making sure that the anti-privatization view is heard in the community. The *Gettysburg Times* recently asked readers if they thought the Social Security system was in crisis and then printed an entire page demonstrating that the response was resoundingly NO. Thanks to everyone who wrote in and made his or her voice heard! This has been the first goal of our Social Security Task Force.

The Washington Post recently ran a poll to find out what Americans were thinking about the Social Security plans of the administration. The most interesting aspect of the results was that the majority who support Bush's proposal were easily moved once they learned more about the specifics. Many Americans wrongly believe that the costs of creating personal accounts are negligible. Once

they learn the true cost, they are much less enthusiastic about private accounts.

The cost estimate argument was the most effective to sway people away from supporting privatization. In addition, many Americans wrongly believe that the cost of living has been rising faster than wages. The reverse is actually true.

What does this tell us? If we take the time to educate those in our community about specifics, they will be more likely to oppose privatization. We should continue to write letters to the editor for both the *Gettysburg Times* and the *Hanover Evening Sun* and elsewhere, but we need to target specific aspects of the President's plan. Make sure everyone knows the true cost of conversion. Explain what that will do to the economy. We need to be specific and to point out the other solutions available for fixing Social Security (raising the payroll tax cap, etc.)

In addition, we should point out items that are truly in crisis in this country: health insurance, Medicare, the economy, the war, and so much more. Let's use Social Security as a jumping off point. If we can educate our neighbors, we will be taking the first steps to stopping Bush in his tracks.

The administration is up for a tough fight on Social Security. So far, the indications show that Bush is retreating and regrouping a bit. Many Republicans aren't convinced of the Bush plan that he has made his first priority, much less any Democrats. But we can't sit

back just yet. Karl Rove is now officially a policy maker. We can't assume that the fight is won. We need to keep writing targeted letters and more. If we can beat Bush on Social Security, his "mandate" will evaporate.

To read more of the *Washington Post* story, as well as many other articles about the Social Security issue, please visit www.grasshopperdesign.com/taskforce. We need to educate ourselves first, then take our case out to the community.



Get Involved – Join a Task Force!

Gettysburg Area DFA is not about talking. We want action! Call Elaine at 677-9442 and volunteer for one of the following committees or task forces, or suggest a new issue task force that you can help us convene. Task Forces will research topics, plan campaigns, organize educational forums, generate letters to Congress, write Letters to the Editor, and host events.

Standing Committees (to date)

- Steering Committee (Elaine Jones)
- Media/Communications (Warren Steen)
- Candidate Recruitment (Roger Lund)
- Educational Forums: (Pat Hammann)
- Fundraising (Elaine and Kerr Thompson)
- Special Events (TBA)

Task Forces in progress

- Social Security (Emily Ricketts)
- Iraq and/or foreign policy (Alan Olson)
- Environment (Mac Heebner, Susan Bumbaugh)
- Senate Seat 2006 (Elaine and Bill)
- Lessons learned in 2004 (John Rarig)

Gettysburg Area DFA Newsletter will be published each month. If you have an e-mail address that we could use for delivery of this letter to help us save on cost, please e-mail GADFA1@YAHOO.COM so we can put your address on file.

Editing, Layout & Design are handled by Jason P. Townsend – Please contact me at the return address if you find any of this information to be incorrect.

GETTYSBURG AREA DFA

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Have you ever thought of running for office? Help us Take Back Adams County!

Howard Dean created the Democracy for America Movement to revive the Democratic Party through grassroots organizing and by electing fiscally responsible, socially progressive candidates. DFA backs candidates who support universal health insurance, a foreign policy that represents our Democratic moral values, early childhood education, and strong environmental policies. As the new chair of the DNC, Dean is committed to uphold basic American values of equality, opportunity, and social justice.

In Adams County, we can begin by responding to the invitation of the Adams County Democratic Committee to "Take Back Adams County" by running for a local office. At least one Supervisor in each Township, every Mayor, four school directors in six districts, and at least two Council Members in each Borough are up for re-election in 2005. If you would like to know what offices are up in your area, or you know what office you are interested in but don't know what it takes to run, contact the Democratic Party or the Adams County Courthouse.

If you do not have time for a larger responsibility, consider joining the Adams County Democratic Committee as the representative from your precinct. At present we have at least 40 vacancies – and it is as easy as making a phone call to ask to be appointed to fill that vacancy.

ACDC has recently welcomed the following members who worked on the Kerry Campaign: Barry Kunkel, Mac Heebner, Elaine Jones, Thomas Glusaskas, Alan Olson, Frank Seidel, Warren Steen, Evelyn Steen, Kerr Thompson, and Jason Townsend. To join the Committee, call Chairman Sam Giardullo at 528-8833 and tell him of your interest. You will be expected to come to one meeting a month, usually the third Monday at the VFW on High Street.

The next Gettysburg Area Democracy for America Meet-Up is scheduled for Wednesday, March 2 at the Gettysburg College in the McCreary Building, Room 101 (Mara Auditorium) at 7 PM. We invite you to come out and get involved in "Taking Back our Country."