

# **WILLOW VALLEY DEMOCRATS PLUS NEWSLETTER**

## **October 2024**

**Paid for by Willow Valley Democrats Plus Club  
Treasurer, Julia Powers  
Editor Ross Fairweather (rossfair63@gmail.com)**



## **Addressing the Issues**

### **IN THIS ISSUE**

#### **Political News:**

Writing Postcards to Voters Works 2

Our Local Candidates 5

#### **Club/Local News:**

Coming Events 9

Recruiting 11

Meeting Minutes 12

If you are not already on our mailing list, contact Jen Porter at [jenporter@comcast.net](mailto:jenporter@comcast.net).

# Writing Postcards to Voters Works

JOYCE VANCE

September 25, 2024

This afternoon, from 3:30 to 4:00 p.m., I had the amazing opportunity to spend half an hour with several hundred people who were in hour 22 of a 24-hour marathon postcard writing session. The event, formally known as **24 Hours in '24 Our Freedoms Are On The Ballot Postcard Around The Clock 3.0**, was a huge success.



The event kicked off yesterday, Monday, at 7:30 p.m. with Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi. The idea was to keep the participants going with a constant stream of interesting conversations so they could write POSTCARDS. I'm told some of the participants pulled an all-nighter. By the time they finish up tonight, they'll have visited with DNC Chair Jaime Harrison, Heather Cox Richardson, Senator Elizabeth Warren, and so many more! The joy is definitely back in politics.



Cont'd next page



## Writing Postcards to Voters Works (cont'd)

Three groups of activists who put the event together, Downtown Nasty Women Social Group, Markers For Democracy, and Team Min, have been working together since the start of the Trump presidency. The groups were founded in the aftermath of the 2016 election and the January 2017 Women's March. They've been writing postcards to voters since 2017 and have written so many postcards that they stopped counting several hundred thousand postcards ago.

Something that I love about these people is that they write postcards for races up and down the ballot, and they write all year round to make sure they focus attention on special elections and other elections that don't happen in November. They described the current moment we're in as "like tax season but for postcard writers."

My connection with these lovely people started with knitters. A knitter friend connected me with Julie Kern, one of the organizers for this event. Julie and I are best friends now because we've both knit this hat. This is how being a knitter works; I don't make the rules.

Knitters are also very effective political organizers as you can see.

If you're interested in writing postcards, there is a lot of information online. You can find Markers For Democracy [here](#). The website has lots of information, including a postcarding section, and from there, you can sign up and get involved.

[Data suggests](#) postcards [make a difference](#) in voter turnout.

My friend Marissa Rothkopf ([Secret Life of Cookies](#) on Substack) was on right after me, so I stuck around for her half hour and scooped this fabulous drink recipe y'all are going to want!



Cont'd next page

# Writing Postcards to Voters Works (cont'd)

The Blue Wave Cocktail (Serves 1)

## What You'll Need:

2 ounces tequila

½ ounce Amaro liqueur

Dash of bitters

1 ounce Campari (or similar)

½ teaspoon maple syrup

## To Make:

Fill a cocktail shaker halfway with ice.

Add the tequila, Campari, Amaro, maple syrup and the dash of bitters

Put the lid on the shaker and give the shaker, um, a shake. A few gentle shakes will do, there is no need to go all Tom Cruise on this one.

Strain into a glass over ice, write postcards and save democracy.

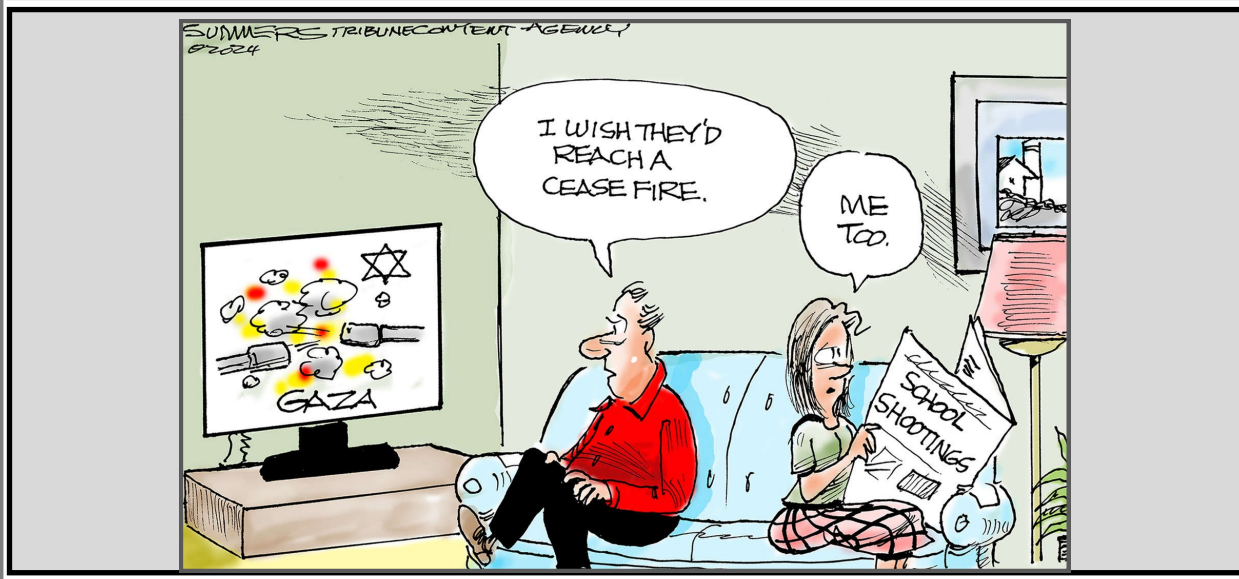
Thank you Marissa!

Some of you may remember the amazing victory of state Representative Marilyn Lands. Lands flipped a secure Republican district in Alabama blue in a special election in March of this year. You can read about it [here](#), and if you need a boost right now, this is a good story, it's a reminder that when abortion is on the ballot, (like it is everywhere this year), and when Democrats campaign hard (which we're all doing), we win. I've always remembered this lovely comment from a reader when I wrote about Lands' victory.

Tina, if you're reading tonight, I feel certain your postcard helped. And it's something we can all do between now and the election to help democracy win.

If you're looking for something to do, don't hesitate. The voters you reach out to may make a difference in their states' elections, which means you can make a difference.

We're in this together, Joyce



# Our Local Candidates

## **BOB RUDY for PA State House District 97**

Bob Rudy is running for the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in the 97th Legislative District to end political tribalism and foster unity. With over 40 years in radio, including his roles as Public Service Director and Community Affairs Director, he has dedicated his career to supporting non-profit organizations and community causes. Bob is passionate about education, animal welfare, and bringing transparency and accountability to government.



### **ON THE ISSUES**

- **End Political Tribalism:** Work across party lines to benefit all community members.
- **Animal Welfare:** Strengthen laws against animal abuse and regulate puppy mills.
- **Support Public Education:** Ensure every child has the opportunity to achieve their dreams.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Oppose the influence of lobbyists and special interests.
- **Community Engagement:** Continue to support local non-profit organizations and community events.

### **EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE**

Although I was literally one day away from dropping out of high school when I turned 16, I changed my attitude and my life overnight. Although I fell nearly a year behind my class, I entered the co-op education program, doubled up on classes, caught up and graduated with my class on time. I then went on to earn an AA degree from H.A.C.C., a BH degree in Communications from Penn State, and a Master's degree in Education from Penn State University.

In addition to my career in radio, my experience in education includes teaching courses in Communication and Speech at Elizabethtown College, Millersville University, and Lancaster County Career & Technology Center.

**THIS IS WHY SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION IS SO IMPORTANT TO ME!**  
I want every child to have the opportunity to reach for and achieve their dreams.

## Our Local Candidates (cont'd)

### TREX PROFFITT for PA Senate District 13

Trex has lived in Lancaster for two decades and is deeply connected to our community. He is a teacher and former business professor who is dedicated to our rights and preserving the progress Pennsylvanians have made while safeguarding LGBTQ+ rights, reproductive justice, and quality education.



Trex will stand up to MAGA extremism and give the 13th Senate District an alternative that promotes and promises #ProgressforPA.

I will listen to our community and represent you in important conversations in Harrisburg that affect all of us. This election year is important for so many reasons.

Together, if we contest every election, we can flip the senate.

Here are some things we can and *will* advance together when you vote for me:

- Save our democracy from election deniers and authoritarians
- Keep politicians out of people's private lives if there is no public interest
- Advance LGBTQ+ rights and freedom
- Protect your right to make your own reproductive health choices
- Promote reasonable gun reform to reduce the leading cause of death in children
- Support meaningful, accessible mental health care and treatment
- Create tax policies that favor most of us, not just the very rich and large corporations
- Promote responsible economic development that balances our natural environment and community priorities

I'm running to be your state senator. I'm a life-long educator with a career in higher education and more recently, teaching middle school at Lancaster Friends School. My family has made Lancaster our home for nearly two decades. My wife and I raised three wonderful children here and feel very connected to this community.

I enjoy the progress our community has made but have been frustrated by the orchestrated rise of hate and division in our politics in recent years. As an optimist and person of reason, I believe strongly that hope unites, while fear divides. Hate has no place here, but we have to work to replace it with our positive dreams for the future. Let's do that dreaming together during this year's campaign.



# Our Local Candidates (cont'd)

## Jim Atkinson for U.S. Congress

My name is Jim Atkinson, and I truly believe that America's finest days are ahead of us, not behind us. I believe that together, we will overcome the threats which are now aligned against our democracy. I believe that solutions are found in new ideas and robust debate, not in endless corporate lobbying.

It's time to empower *the people*, not just the people with the most money.



### **Dedicated to openness and transparency**

Ever get the feeling your congressman has bigger priorities than YOU? You're not alone! Sometimes, the only solution is to elect a new congressman. I will be an accessible, fully accountable representative and *I WILL* hold Town Hall Meetings.

### **Is Your Congressman Keeping Your Social Security Safe?**

Did you know that in less than ten years, Social Security will face a solvency crisis? The Republican answer is to cut your benefits or privatize it (hand it over to our "friends" on Wall Street). I've got a different idea: why not adjust upward or even eliminate the income ceiling for Social Security contributions? Some people aren't aware of this, but you can look it up yourself: high income earners only pay Social Security contributions on the first \$168,600 of their income. Read here about a proposal to increase that ceiling and make Social Security more secure.

### **Campaign Priorities**

- Strengthening Workers' Rights
- Promoting Economic Prosperity
- Advancing Healthcare Access and Affordability
- Addressing Climate Change and Environmental Justice
- Advancing Social Justice and Equity

## Our Local Candidates (cont'd)

### Bob Casey for U.S. Senate

Bob Casey was born and raised in Scranton, where he still lives today. He brings the Pennsylvania values of hard work and perseverance to his service in the U.S. Senate every day.

The stories, struggles, and aspirations of Pennsylvanians inspire Bob Casey to keep fighting to level the playing field for our working families and deliver results for the Commonwealth.



### ISSUES

Bob brings the Pennsylvania values of hard work and perseverance to his service in the U.S. Senate every day. He believes that all of us must strive to make Pennsylvania a Commonwealth in life as well as in name, facing our biggest challenges head-on, and facing them together.

### COMMITMENTS:

- Protecting our Rights and Freedoms
- Supporting our Veterans
- Supporting our Seniors, Children and People with Disabilities
- Fighting for our Workers
- Lowering costs and fighting “greedflation”
- Fighting Fentanyl
- Safety and Security at Home and Abroad
- Standing Up for Rural Communities
- Preserving Pennsylvania’s Energy Legacy
- Safeguarding and Expanding Affordable Health Care



## Coming Events

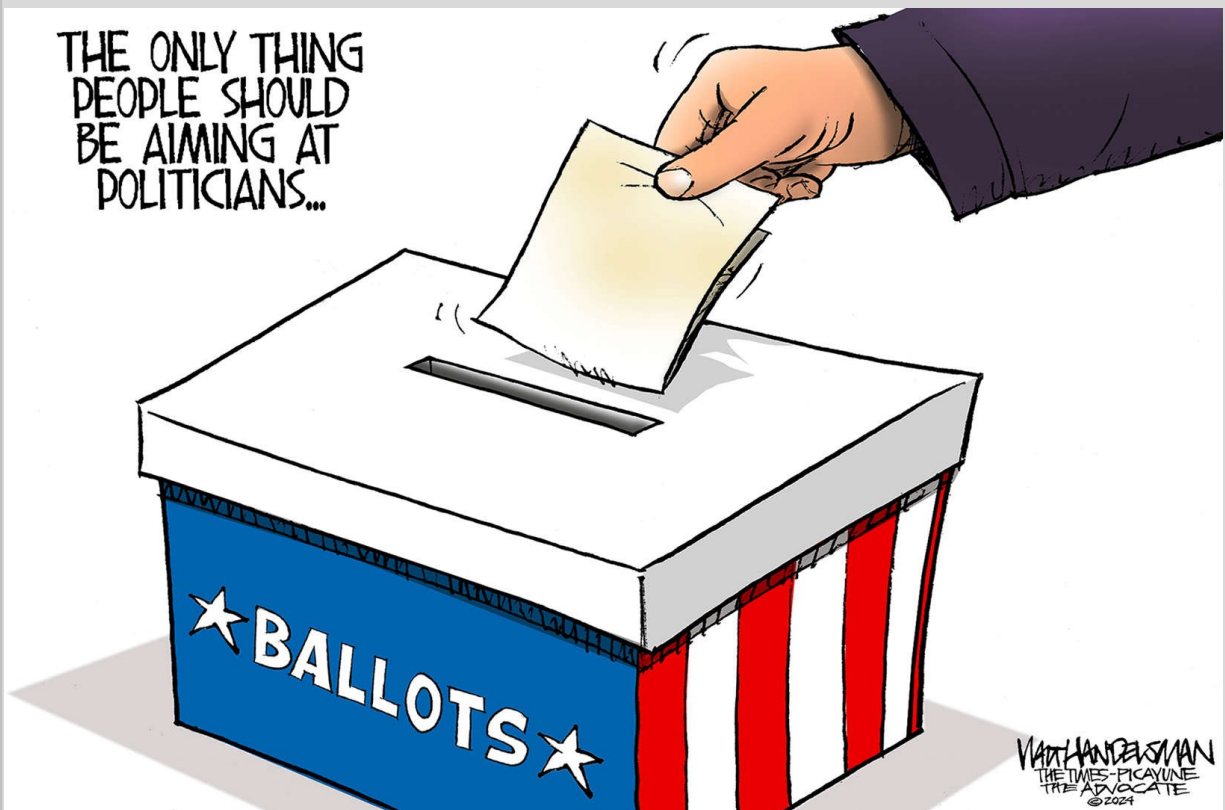
### Join our General Meeting on Wednesday, October 30th

10 AM Cultural Center Education Room

Our guest speaker is Kemika Campbell ...

- She's an executive consultant, a talk-show host and a community activist in Central PA
- She's been working to strengthen and amplify the positive reach and impact of Black voices.

Don't miss this session!



## Coming Events (cont'd)

### Join our Understanding Democracy Series

**on Tuesday, October 15th**

**10 AM Cultural Center Education Room**

#### **God & Country: A Film On Christian Nationalism**

Christian Nationalism is the belief that America should be defined as a Christian nation, with government adherence to this ideology. We will show the film *God & Country*; a 2024 American documentary film that discusses the emergence of Christian Nationalism and its close relationship with far-right politics in the United States, exploring its perceived threat to democracy and the politicization of Christianity. The documentary is based on Katherine Stewart's book *The Power Worshipers* (2020).

*God & Country* takes a closer look at the dangerous implications and explores how a base of Christians has stoked a movement erasing the line between Church and State. It features many prominent and well-respected voices of Christianity. We hope you can join us. Everyone is welcome.

**on Tuesday October 22nd**

**10 AM Cultural Center Education Room**

#### **Character and Fitness for Office Matter!**

Our guest speaker will be Ann Womble. Ann is Co-Chair of the Republicans for Harris initiative in Pennsylvania, along with former Bucks County Congressman Jim Greenwood. Ann was Chair of the Lancaster County Republicans from 2012 to 2014.

"The choice is very asymmetric," she said. "The issue of character and fitness for office outweighs everything I can imagine."

"I do not need a president I agree with on every issue," Womble, now a registered Independent, said. "I need a president I can trust." She can't trust Trump to "do what is right for this country". He's turned the Republican Party she once belonged to, into a "cult of personality." Please join us for what should be a very interesting forum. Everyone is welcome.

## Recruiting Club Chairs

### How'd you like to be our next Membership Chairperson?

**We're looking for candidates to take over being our Dems Plus Club Membership Chairperson.**

The objective of the role of Membership Chair is to recruit, maintain and grow Club membership. This entails recruiting new members, following-up with new visitors and prospective new members, welcoming new members, maintaining a list of current members, following up with those who have not yet committed to renew their membership. It also includes getting to know recruits and finding areas of interest for their Club participation.

This opening is effective January 1, 2025. Interested candidates should contact Jen Porter at 717-464-4449 or [jenporter@comcast.net](mailto:jenporter@comcast.net).



### How'd you like to be our next Webmaster?

**We're looking for candidates to take over being our Dems Plus Club webmaster. Maybe your son or granddaughter would be interested.**



The objective of the role of the webmaster is to create and maintain our Dems Club website. This opening is effective January 1, 2025. Interested candidates should contact Jen Porter at 717-464-

4449 or [jenporter@comcast.net](mailto:jenporter@comcast.net).

# General Meeting Minutes 09-25-2024

## Willow Valley Dems Plus General Meeting September 25, 2024

President Jen Porter opened the meeting at 10:05 and introduced guest speakers, three Democratic candidates running for office in the November 5 general election.

### **Bob Rudy: candidate for PA State House District 97**

Mr. Rudy gave three reasons for his decision to run against incumbent Republican Steve Mentzer:

- Failure of gun safety legislation and rise of gun violence
- Failure to ensure equal rights for all citizens, especially women, seniors, and children.
- Threats to public education by charter schools which drain revenue from public schools and the heavy reliance on property taxes to support public schools that leads to inequality

Mr. Rudy promises to work across the aisle in resolving problems in all areas.

### **Trex Proffitt: candidate for PA Senate 13<sup>th</sup> District**

Mr. Proffitt spoke of his goals in running against Republican incumbent Scott Martin. He will:

- Take on big money in politics which has corrupted the system
- Provide to Americans an optimistic attitude of our ability to fix problems, not wallow in them
- Promote Democratic response to issues currently facing Americans:
  - rights for LGBTQ+ and transgender citizens
  - gun safety regulation
  - a fight against proliferation of drugs in our population
  - job opportunities

Mr. Proffitt spoke of his goal to investigate what other states are doing that is working well to solve these issues.

Cont'd next page



# General Meeting Minutes 09-25-2024

**Jim Atkinson: candidate for U.S. House of Representatives, PA District 11, running against incumbent Lloyd Smucker.**

Mr. Atkinson gave a brief background of what drew him to run in 2024 – a carjacking that left him with a serious bullet wound. He believes that 2024 is a crucial election year for all Americans. He spoke of two major issues which motivated him to run:

- gun violence and lax gun safety legislation
- the power of Big Pharma and big money in Washington, DC.

President Porter thanked our guest speakers for their time and information and encouraged attendees to support them as candidates in November. All three candidates were available for questions with individuals after the meeting.

## **Business Meeting:**

**Treasury/Membership:** Julia Powers reported a balance of \$8,221.80 and a membership of 275 with 83 new members. President Porter announced the need for a new Membership Chair for 2025 and gave the job description for the position. Those interested may contact President Porter at 717 464-4449 or [jenporter@comcast.net](mailto:jenporter@comcast.net).

**Advocacy:** Barbara Bonanno and President Porter gave the report.

Four postcard campaigns are complete

- Get Out the Vote to Lampeter-Strasburg residents with instructions for mail-in ballots (1,436)
- From *Grandmothers for a Brighter Future* to encourage votes for Bob Casey, mailed last week (1,000)
- More cards for Trex Proffitt will be available for volunteers. Please consider volunteering for this important work.
- “Post Cards to Swing States” will go out in October.

The phone call campaign for new members held July and August is complete with 37 forms sent to those interested in joining WV Dems+.

President Porter explained the new process for postcard distribution and collection. Team Leaders in each community will contact volunteers expressing interest in writing the cards which the Team Leader will distribute and collect. Concierges will no longer be involved. A signup sheet was available for those interested in serving as a Team Leader.

Cont'd next page

# General Meeting Minutes 09-25-2024

President Porter announced that WV Dems+ needs a new webmaster for their site beginning in January 2025 and asked attendees to contact her if they or a family member may be interested.

The West Lampeter Fair is held September 25-27. All volunteer slots are filled.

Vice President Ross Fairweather will assume the distribution of the Club newsletter.

Following the business meeting, the floor was open for discussion with the three guest speakers. Questions arose about the possible weakening of plurality for Lloyd Smucker and the need to talk to friends and neighbors about the importance of voting in November.

**Upcoming Events:** all events are held in the Cultural Center Education Room at 10 a.m.

- **Tuesday, October 15**, *Understanding Our Democracy* session will present the movie *God and Country* about the rise and threat of Christian Nationalism in the U.S.
- **Tuesday, October 22**, *Understanding Our Democracy* session with former chair of Lancaster County Republicans Ann Womble. Ms. Womble is local chair of “Republicans for Harris,” a group for those Republicans who do not support Donald Trump.
- **Wednesday, October 30**, general meeting with speaker Kemika Campbell, executive consultant, talk show host, and community activist in Central PA. Ms. Campbell will speak on strengthening the positive reach and impact of Black voices.

Lucy Painter, Secretary

