

## **Report from the Green Party Convention**

UNM Law School, Albuquerque, March 16, 2008

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Co-Chairs Kathy Sanchez and Cliff Bain opened the convention with their welcome and a moment of silence.

### **Daniel Craig, Veterans for Peace**

Daniel works in addiction counseling and is a doctor of oriental medicine.

The self-centeredness of the addict and the self-centeredness of the system of empire are very much alike. The system of empire is one where one species causes damage to every other species on the planet -- where a few benefit at everyone else's expense.

Addicts in recovery are people who want change and in their own small way are working for change every day. Changing a system starts with us as individuals. Daniel urged us to start by getting fired up to look at the system that exists and realize we are up against empire.

Creation of a system that will support a citizens-based culture will take more than intellect. It will take a spiritual connection with the earth and with each other. It will take speaking and working outside the boundaries of the system. The example of that in the work we do can then touch someone else, and their work touch yet someone else. Change begins on the inside of us, one person at a time, one day at a time.

Indigenous cultures have survived longer than empires by a process of values-based analysis. The Green Party is like an indigenous culture, a culture invested in changing a system that doesn't work.

Kathy Sanchez thanked Daniel Craig and acknowledged that we have to walk in two worlds at the same time. You have to walk in the physical world, but you also have to look at your spiritual rootedness. Working in line with our values within our sphere of influence will inspire others to be Green.

### **Alma Rivera, Campaign 2020 Youth Perspective**

Alma Rivera is Youth Organizer for Campaign 2020, a political action committee founded in 2005.

Alma was part of a group of young people who decided that if they wanted a better world in 15 years action is needed now so their children will not be victimized by their actions as parents. Young people have the choice to look at decisions that parents have made and make our own choices to bring people together for everyone's benefit.

The most important thing Campaign 2020 does is listen to young people's frustration, then focus their energy on creating change. Campaign 2020 has asked 1,200 young people from across New Mexico: What do you want? What are you willing to do to get it? Who else needs to be involved? They want reform of the education system, to get back all the important things that have been lost like art and music, reform the way history is taught to tell the history of common folks.

Campaign 2020 is very diverse, working with youth that have been marginalized, students too young to vote, incarcerated youth, and immigrant youth. It trains youth and involves them in legislative advocacy. Through participation their eyes are opened to the reality behind their frustration, and the possibility of real change. Young people don't feel represented by the two-party system because the private interests that control the system don't serve youth.

This summer 100 youth representatives from across the state will attend workshops to develop the first Youth Issues Platform for taking to adults and to the legislature. Campaign 2020 is planning an a March 29th youth-led discussion to address underlying causes. and school administrative response to an attack on Mexican students at Santa Fe High in February.

Alma closed by expressing that we all need healing on a personal level through spirituality, love, education. campaign2020\_@hotmail.com

### **Rick Lass, Voting Matters**

Rick Lass is the founder of Voting Matters, a 501C4 organization working on electoral changes.

In Santa Fe Greens were instrumental in getting city charter revisions passed that will bring ranked choice voting and public financing of elections to Santa Fe. Voting Matters members spent a year going to charter review meetings to help get the issues on the ballot. Then they ran a traditional campaign focused on who was likely to vote and all new voters. They spoke to several community groups and got an impressive list of endorsements. The groups then sent recommendations to their members. Efforts to get out their voters was successful and the amendments won by a substantial margin. Next, they will be researching the best way to implement these new charter amendments and keeping public pressure on officials to meaningfully implement the will of the voters.

Greens can bring fresh ideas and voices to the political debate, but we are told to go away because we are spoiling the system by doing this. If we want to make change at the state level we need to seriously 'spoil' some elections because our issues only get attention when we become a big force at the ballot box. There is a lot to be said for a Green out there talking about substantive issues that other candidates overlook.

Keep our party's presence. The victory of ranked choice voting will have repercussions we can ride on. Chalk this one up to the Greens and find good candidates to run in 2008. The Green message and platform is one that a majority of citizens embrace. Our next big challenge is to find the 80% of people who don't vote but largely agree with the Green platform, build up this constituency and find Green candidates for whom they can vote. [www.votingmatters.net](http://www.votingmatters.net)

### **Sustainable Solutions, Jesse Black-Garcia and Michael Hyde**

Change a bulb, change the world! Jesse Black-Garcia spoke with us about L.E.D. lighting, passed around samples of L.E.D. bulbs and offered his free home and business light energy consumption analysis.

The bulbs can be made to have any natural spectrum. There are bulbs for most all uses including dimmable ones and replacement for fluorescents. They are expensive, but since they use far less energy (like 7 watts for a 60 watt equivalent incandescent) and have many year lifetimes, with normal use they pay for themselves in only a few years. They are more directional than incandescents generally. They contain no mercury. The bulbs come with a 3 year warranty. Michael Hyde demonstrated—and we sampled results from—the smoothie peddler, an bicycle powered all-natural smoothie maker.

[www.sustainablesolutionsnm.org](http://www.sustainablesolutionsnm.org), [michaelhyde1949@yahoo.com](mailto:michaelhyde1949@yahoo.com)

### **Announcements**

- Contact Bruce Trigg if you want to help organize to get Ralph Nadar on the ballot [trigabov@aol.com](mailto:trigabov@aol.com)

- Contact Carol Miller if you would like to help in her run for congress in the third district as an independent [www.carolmillercongress.com](http://www.carolmillercongress.com)
- Rick Lass has been in touch with the Brennan Law Center about the possibility of the Green Party being part of a law suit claiming that requiring people who register voters to register first with the state disenfranchises voters.
- Rick Lass will be going to the worldwide Green Convention in Brazil.

### **Election of State Officers and Membership Chair**

The following officers were elected by acclamation:

- Female Co-Chair: Michel Mudd
- Male Co-Chair: James Olmsted
- State Treasurer: Russell Tyldesley
- Secretary: Nina Scalora
- Membership Co-Chair: Marion Seymour
- Green Party National Representatives: Rick Lass and Robin Wakeland

The following were recommended to GPUS:

- Eco Action Committee: RJ Rorbach and Nancy Campbell

The Nominating Convention date was set as June 7, 2008, location to be determined.

### **Reports**

Cathy Sanchez, Co-Chair

The actions we take in our spheres of influence adds up to what we do as a party, and this will be described by the locals. We have had major political actions in healthcare and will bring the Green voice to the public testimony about Los Alamos Labs. Identify as a Green when you testify.

Cathy was thanked with a small gift for her fine leadership as New Mexico Green Party Co-Chair for the 2007-08 term. Her firm yet positive representation of the Party has modeled constructive action for the more democratic and sustainable future it stands for.

### **Marion Seymour, Membership**

- We have locals in Santa Fe, Taos and Bernalillo. There is a potential for locals in Las Cruces and Las Vegas. A Membership Committee is recommended to support the membership chair
- Recognize Bobbi Page who volunteered to do the website and has done a good job
- Greens need to consider running for office. Dean Williamson will run for Surveyor in Santa Fe County.
- We need a strong party to support people who are out there doing it. We need to keep growing leaders. Think of ways in your counties you can give people responsibility to gain confidence and run for office.
- We will be updating our state brochure.
- Welcome to everyone at the convention who is new to the Green Party.

**Carl Hansen, Santa Fe County**

- We have been active this past year tabling at events, passing out literature, talking to lots of people, taking signups We hosted a speaker series including Bruce Trigg who talked about single payer healthcare.
- We co-sponsored movies at the SF Film Center—documentaries with discussions after the film

### **John Otter, Santa Fe County**

The Green Party started as a movement and this element is still often the way Green action is done in Santa Fe. Green party members were key supporters for issues having other lead sponsors, such as

- The Living Wage
- Charter Revisions to improve elections and are instrumental in the new organization
- Democracy Santa Fe which working on eliminating the ability of corporations to trump the rights of citizens.

### **Michel Mudd, Bernalillo Local**

- Has actively tabled at Earth Day events and at the University
- Is working on reinvigorating the Campus Greens
- Is working with the Guild Theater on a film & speaker series

### **Jim Olmsted, Bernalillo**

Plans include:

- Forming an environmental club at CNM and at UNM which will take on a Green presence.
- Invigorating college students
- Strategizing the best places to table and strategy at the tables
- Taking lots of photos

### **Cliff Bain, Taos**

Greens are involved in progressive efforts and as activists

Convention adjourned at 2:33 pm

Suzanne Otter, Santa Fe Green Party, recording secretary