

Defiance Dems

News You Can Use

September 2005

Know Your Candidates ...

Circle the date ... Monday,
September 19

Enjoy a relaxing sit-down dinner,
with fellow Democrats and meet
candidates for Ohio Governor,
Attorney General, and Supreme Court.

In our county, 19 Democrats will run
for office on November 8. Fifteen are up
for township trustee, village council or a
school board, and so will not appear on
the ballot as affiliated with a political
party—*know your team* so you can be an
informed voter. With 52 registered
Republicans in the race, those Democrats
who buck the tide *must* prevail.

Precinct representatives look forward
to one-on-one time with constituents.

(If your precinct is not covered, talk with an
At-Large representative)

The modest profit on ticket sales will
help fund yard signs, flyers, and other
campaign expenses. There will be a
drawing for a ceramic piece created by
Defiance College art professor Steve
Smith, a candidate for Central Local
School Board.

Defiance Co. Democrats
Candidate Forum Featuring
Congressman Ted Strickland

September 19, 2005
Meet & Greet 6-7 PM
Dinner 7-8 PM
Candidates 8-9 PM

UAW Hall
2120 Baltimore Rd.
Defiance, Ohio

\$15 - All Tickets

Paid for by Defiance Co. Democratic Party, Vic Vogel, Chairman

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Look up www.defiancedems.org on
the web for more details on candidates,
including news articles. You can even
check on the local weather forecast there!

For tickets or other information, call Vic
Vogel, 784-4021, or Pat Walter, 784-3475

UNLESS someone like you
cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get better.
It's not.

Dr. Seuss, in "The Lorax"

How It Is

About 4,000 registered Democrats are in Defiance County ... would that that we could be in touch with all of you! That being impossible at this stage, we have selected names randomly for our initial newsletter.

Although there are TWICE as many registered Republicans, we could still elect our candidates and put this country back on track IF we exercise our precious right to vote. Many "tuned out" in reaction to the rampant fraud in the last elections, but this is what the Administration wants: low turnout works in their favor. So, *don't tune out ... turn out!*

The Newsletter

Strong feelings about what you would like to see in this newsletter? Please share them (Newsletter, 825 Lincoln Dr, Defiance .. or defiance.democrats@gmail.com) If you are able to help on the newsletter, let us know. ... If you wish to subscribe, please send a \$5 check for Defiance Cty Democratic Party - newsletter, to Roger Schomburg Treasurer, 21911 Roehrig Rd, Defiance OH 43512.

The Website

If you have internet access, please visit the website (www.defiancedems.org). You'll see local/national news, articles, quotes, reprinted letters to the editor, and much more. Give us a hug by becoming a member online. Some features will be accessible by members only.
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The Message Thing

The New York Times .. Op-Ed Aug 4, 2005

By **JIM WALLIS** [*an evangelical, resident of Washington DC, who has taught at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and at the Harvard Divinity School, author of bestseller "God's Politics"*]

Since the 2004 election, there has been much soul-searching and hand-wringing, especially among Democrats, about how to "frame" political messages. The loss to George W. Bush was painful enough, but the Republicans' post-election claims of mandate, and their triumphal promises to relegate the Democrats to permanent minority status, left political liberals in a state of panic.

So the minority party has been searching, some would say desperately, for the right "narrative": the best story line, metaphors, even magic words to bring back electoral success. The operative term among Democratic politicians and strategists has become "framing." How to tell the story has become more important than the story itself. And that could be a bigger mistake for the Democrats than the ones they made during the election.

Language is clearly important in politics, but the message remains more important than the messaging. In the interests of full disclosure, let me note that I have been talking to the Democrats about both. But I believe that first, you must get your message straight. What are your best ideas, and what are you for - as opposed to what you're against in the other party's message? Only when you answer those questions can you figure out how to present your message to the American people.

Because the Republicans, with the help of the religious right, have captured the language of values and religion (narrowly conceived as only abortion and gay marriage), the Democrats have also been asking how to "take back the faith." But that means far more than throwing a few Bible verses into policy discussions, offering candidates some good lines from famous hymns, or teaching them how to clap at the right times in black churches. Democrats need to focus on the content of religious convictions and the values that underlie them.

(to read the entire article, which goes on to list 5 specific areas where Democrats should change their message, go to the website or send self-addressed, stamped envelope). **For email recipients, here's the rest of the article:**

The discussion that shapes our political future should be one about

moral values, but the questions to ask are these: Whose values? Which values? And how broadly and deeply will our political values be defined? Democrats must offer new ideas and a fresh agenda, rather than linguistic strategies to sell an old set of ideologies and interest group demands.

1. To be specific, I offer five areas in which the Democrats should change their message and then their messaging.

First, somebody must lead on the issue of poverty, and right now neither party is doing so. The Democrats assume the poverty issue belongs to them, but with the exception of John Edwards in his 2004 campaign, they haven't mustered the gumption to oppose a government that habitually favors the wealthy over everyone else. Democrats need new policies to offer the 36 million Americans, including 13 million children, who live below the poverty line, as well as the 9.8 million families one recent study identified as "working hard but falling short."

In fact, the Democrats should draw a line in the sand when it comes to wartime tax cuts for the wealthy, rising deficits, and the slashing of programs for low-income families and children. They need proposals that combine to create a "living family income" for wage-earners, as well as a platform of "fair trade," as opposed to just free trade, in the global economy. Such proposals would cause a break with many of the Democrats' powerful corporate sponsors, but they would open the way for a truly progressive economic agenda. Many Americans, including religious voters who see poverty as a compelling issue of conscience, desire such a platform.

Second) Similarly, a growing number of American Christians speak of the environment as a religious concern - one of stewardship of God's creation. The National Association of Evangelicals recently called global warming a faith issue. But Republicans consistently choose oil and gas interests over a cleaner world. The Democrats need to call for the reversal of these priorities. They must insist that private interests should never

obstruct our country's path to a cleaner and more efficient energy future, let alone hold our foreign policy hostage to the dictates of repressive regimes in the Middle East.

Third) On the issues that Republicans have turned into election-winning "wedges," Democrats will win back "values voters" only with fresh ideas. Abortion is one such case. Democrats need to think past catchphrases, like "a woman's right to choose," or the alternative, "safe, legal and rare." More than 1 million abortions are performed every year in this country. The Democrats should set forth proposals that aim to reduce that number by at least half. Such a campaign could emphasize adoption reform, health care, and child care; combating teenage pregnancy and sexual abuse; improving poor and working women's incomes; and supporting reasonable restrictions on abortion, like parental notification for minors (with necessary legal protections against parental abuse). Such a program could help create some much-needed common ground.

Fourth) As for "family values," the Democrats can become the truly pro-family party by supporting parents in doing the most important and difficult job in America: raising children. They need to adopt serious pro-family policies, including some that defend children against Hollywood sleaze and Internet pornography. That's an issue that has come to be identified with the religious right. But when I say in public lectures that being a parent is now a countercultural activity, I've found that liberal and conservative parents agree. Rather than fighting over gay marriage, the Democrats must show that it is indeed possible to be "pro-family" and in favor of gay civil rights at the same time.

Fifth) Finally, on national security, Democrats should argue that the safety of the United States depends on the credibility of its international leadership. We can secure that credibility in Iraq only when we renounce any claim to oil or future military bases - something Democrats should advocate as the first step toward bringing other countries to our side. While Republicans have argued that international institutions are too weak to

be relied upon in the age of terrorism, Democrats should suggest reforming them, creating a real International Criminal Court with an enforcement body, for example, as well as an international force capable of intervening in places like Darfur. Stronger American leadership in reducing global poverty would also go a long way toward improving the country's image around the world.

Until Democrats are willing to be honest about the need for new social policy and compelling political vision, they will never get the message right. Find the vision first, and the language will follow.

Jim Wallis, the editor of [Sojourners magazine](#), is the author of "[God's Politics: Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It.](#)"