



Democratic Party of Virginia Party Leadership Guide

Updated: February 2010

Section 1: Everything You Wanted to Know About Your Local Democratic Committee

I. Role of the Local Committee

City & County committees are the foundation of Party wing — the local organization of the Democratic Party — and have the closest contact with the people.

Section 8.8 of the Virginia Democratic Party Plan states:

It shall be the duty of every county and city committee, as well as each officer and member thereof, to seek the registration of voters, to perfect the Democratic organization within the county or city, and to do all within their power to aid in the victory of the Democratic Party's nominees in all elections.

II. Responsibilities of the Local Committee

Grassroots efforts are more effective with an active, engaged Local Democratic Committee (LDC).

The LDC has the following responsibilities:

- Establish a plan consisting of basic local Party goals and objectives
- Electing local party officers
- Establish a budget
- Establish standing party committees and appoint committee members
- Establish an Executive Committee as necessary
- Assist the county chair in recruiting active precinct chairs
- Recruit candidates for local and state offices
- Participate in Legislative (Senate/ House of Delegates) Committee meetings with the responsibilities of:
 - Selecting the method on nomination (mass meeting, firehouse primary, or primary)
 - Selecting the location, date, and time of nominating event
 - Spreading the word about the nominating event via various forms of media
- Voter Contact
 - Phone banking
 - Canvassing
- Conduct other related Election activities as set out by LDC

III. The Local Democratic Committee Chair

The LDC chair is the leader and presiding officer of the local Democratic Party. The LDC chair is responsible for a multitude of duties and, along with the Executive Committee, is responsible for organizing and strengthening the Party at the local level so that more Democrats can be elected to public office.

A county chair should be outgoing, self-motivated, and organized.

The LDC Chair's duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Recruiting enthusiastic, responsible people to serve as precinct chairs or precinct captains in every precinct in the locality
- Calling and chairing meetings of the Executive Committee
- Bringing together the diverse groups within the Democratic Party and local community
- Raising funds for the local effort
- Recruiting, training, and managing volunteers and volunteer program
- Organizing and assisting local Democratic clubs and organizations, e.g. Young Democrats
- Developing and maintaining a good working relationship with the local media and representing the Party with the media
- Representing the county Party to candidates, officeholders, and local, state, and national Democratic organizations
- Recruiting and developing candidates
- Preparing for conducting caucuses or conventions for local offices
- Establishing phone bank and canvassing programs
- DELEGATE!

Besides the responsibilities listed above, LDC Chairs assume critical legal responsibilities as well. State law requires that you fulfill the following duties in the table below:

CERTIFY	To the State Board of Elections:
For all offices, the names, addresses and telephone numbers of (i) primary election candidates; (ii) nominees for each regularly scheduled general election; and (iii) nominees for any special election to fill a vacancy. Prior to the filing deadline, the State Board of Elections (SBE) will forward the appropriate forms to you. The original of the form must be returned to the SBE.	
CERTIFY	To the Secretary of the Electoral Board of the County or City:
For local offices (governing bodies and constitutional offices) the names, addresses and telephone numbers of (i) primary election candidates; (ii) nominees for each regularly scheduled general election; and (iii) nominees for any special election to fill a vacancy. For this purpose, make a copy of the form(s) prepared for the SBE and send that copy to the local electoral board.	
PROVIDE	To each candidate and nominee:
The SBE's toll-free number (800/552-9745) so that each toll may obtain from the SBE all required forms for the office he/she is seeking. The SBE will send you the forms to certify candidates or nominees. At that time you will also receive a supply of forms for the <i>Certificate of Candidate Qualification</i> , the <i>Statement of Economic Interests</i> , the <i>Campaign Finance Disclosure Act Summary</i> , and <i>Candidate Campaign Contributions and Expenditures Reporting Forms</i> .	
ADVISE	Each candidate or nominee:
Of the filing deadlines applicable to the election type: primary, general, or special. The SBE will provide you with a <i>Candidate Information Bulletin</i> for each office for which an election is scheduled to be held in each calendar year.	
REMIND	Each candidate or nominee:
That postmarks are acceptable only for the <i>Certificate of Candidate Qualification Form</i> and the	

Statement of Economic Interests Form and then **only** if they are mailed by *registered or certified* mail, return receipt requested. A receipt indicating date of mailing **must be produced** if demanded by the office with which the forms are required to be filed.

IV. Other Officers

Section 8.6 of the Virginia Democratic Party Plan states:

Following the election of its members as provided herein, each new county or city committee shall elect a chair, secretary, treasurer, and such other officers as it deems necessary no later than the second Wednesday in January.

The Party Plan does not stipulate the election of a position dedicated for outreach, but due to the Party's commitment to broaden our base we highly encourage the inclusion of such an office.

The following are suggested duties, and your LDC may choose to adopt any or all of them, and/or add to them:

The **Vice Chairperson**, in the absence or inability of the Chairperson, assumes the duties of the Chairperson. In the event of removal or resignation of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson assumes the office of Chair.

The **Secretary** keeps a true, accurate and complete record of the proceedings of the meetings; issues written notices in advance of all meetings of the Committee; and is responsible for the incoming and outgoing correspondence of the Committee. The Secretary is responsible for maintaining the mailing list of the Committee.

The **Treasurer** has the care and custody of all funds of the Committee; receives all incoming moneys and pays out all moneys for expenses, donations and other expenditures required in the conduct of the Committee's business; and keeps an accurate, up-to-date financial record. The Treasurer makes an annual report of the Committee's finances, and periodic interim reports as required.

The **Outreach Liaison** encourages full participation by all segments of the population, with emphasis on such target groups as African-Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, physically disabled, youth, the economically disadvantaged, veterans, and senior citizens, and works towards a balance between men and women on the Committee.

V. Local Committee Meetings

Section 8.6 of the Virginia Democratic Party Plan states:

All meetings of the county or city committee shall be open to the public. Such meetings may be called as follows:

- a) upon call of the chair of the committee; or*
- b) by at least ten percent (10%) of the members of the county or city committee if the signed call is filed with the chair at least fifteen (15) days before the proposed meeting date; or*

c) by a vote of the county or city committee at a properly convened meeting of the committee.

Meetings are usually held once a month. The most common practice used by many LDCs is to consistently hold meetings at the same time of month, time of day and location. To learn how to run a more effective monthly meeting check out the following tips:

- Meetings should have a single focus. **Don't** try to discuss everything.
- Provide a speaker to cover a national, state, or local issue. This makes the meeting a bit more interesting.
- Inform members in advance about the meeting by sending out an agenda.
- Provide an overview of the agenda before the meeting begins.
- Provide a hard copy agenda at each meeting.
- Start and end meetings on time.
- Keep control of the meeting and stick to the agenda. Unresolved details can be worked out "off – line."
- Make meetings a work session rather than a lecture. Use this opportunity to complete a mailing, canvassing packet etc.
- Restate the key decisions, next steps, and assignments at the end of the meeting.
- Schedule the next meeting, if a follow-up meeting will be necessary.

Today there are many factors competing for an individual's available time. Yet, individuals, especially volunteers, find time to do things they like or will advance their goals. To keep and attract members in a voluntary organization such as the LDC, meetings must broaden their appeal and fulfill several needs at once. A successful volunteer organization needs to mix business with pleasure.

Committee meetings should be held throughout the year, as necessary and with some regularity. The State Charter specifies that DTC meetings be held a minimum of four times a year. Towns will probably find they need to meet more often.

Examples of reasons for Committee meetings:

- to make the Democratic Party a visible presence in the area
- to plan project(s) of interest involving elections, community, schools, etc.
- to facilitate communications between members
- to keep the members working together
- to attract new members and keep existing members
- to set goals for the committee
- to maintain financial resources and find additional sources of funding
- any agreed purpose of the committee consistent with the Democratic Party

VI. Community Outreach

Community service can and should play a special role in your goal planning. This creates goodwill, publicity and image projection, a development of contacts,

establishment of political direction and furthering influence on the issues, development of skills and experience for the membership. The following are a few examples of community work that have a positive affect on the Party, the local Committee, and the community:

- Reach out by telephone and or letter to newly registered Democrats with neighboring local committees to evaluate shared elections (Delegate, State Senator., etc.)
- Organize a summer Democratic Rally/Baseball Game/Picnic.
- Invite Democratic elected officials and candidates to address some meetings.
- Offer workshops or campaign training sessions.
- Provide information and a forum for candidates in non-partisan city council races.
- Run an essay contest at Middle/High Schools in which the top three winners receive prizes and have essays published in the local newspapers.
- Talk to High School students about greater involvement in the Democratic Party.
- Explain to them what it means to be a Democrat.
- Assist with fundraising or volunteer work on a local cause
- Media Relations: Use Cable TV, Newspapers, Letters to the Editor
- Organize and coordinate a voter registration drive

VII. How Local Democratic Committee Can Help Candidates

A. Elections

One of the most important reasons to have a local committee engaged with the State Party, is to elect Democratic men and women to public office. The state and local committees can combine resources and provide:

- a plan based on a statewide party coordinated campaign which would help the entire Democratic ticket
- services to individual candidates that will help them run successful campaigns

B. The Coordinated Campaign

The Coordinated Campaign is a part of the State Party. It is designed to take advantage of the organizational structure of State and local Party to encourage grassroots campaign activity. It is also a vehicle for Democratic nominees to collaborate in a unified effort so that every Democrat wins in every district across the Commonwealth.

These are just a few of the ways the committees can help in the Coordinated Campaign. Work with the Democratic Party of Virginia to ensure electoral success. The local committees should develop a rapport by showing Coordinated Campaign's organizer the landscape. Here are a few things you can provide:

- Precinct Captains

- Have a precinct captain for each precinct and assign the members of your committee accordingly

- Call registered Democrats within the precinct and get volunteers for phone banking, lawn signs, visibility, etc.
- List the 10 most influential people within the precinct

- **Voter Contact**

- Identify voters in your locality
- What are the Democratic areas to GOTV?
- Voter registration
- Who will vote Democratic? Who needs a ride to the poll?
- Who needs absentee ballots?

- **Sharing your knowledge**

Sharing local knowledge and customs is probably one of the most important roles for a local committee to play. LDCs can show campaigns where its customary to post large 4x8 and normal lawn signs. They can provide assistance with identifying where turf is easy to walk. Additionally, they can help notify the coordinated campaign of events that a candidate or surrogate should attend. These are all examples of areas where a local committee's knowledge is invaluable.

- **Conclusion**

To make the Coordinated Campaign work, the participation of local committees is essential. Communication is critical, and must be two way — from the grassroots to the Coordinated Campaign staff, and from the Coordinated Campaign staff to the local Committees. Just as critical are enthusiasm and determination. Electoral success is impossible without the input and influence of local committees. Thanks to you, the DPVA is the embodiment of democracy, of citizen participation, grassroots organization and individual involvement. With the enthusiastic engagement of every local democratic committee across the state, we will continue to make gains in the Commonwealth.

Section 2: Fundraising & Finance

I. Fundraising

Raising money is necessary and difficult. Party and campaign financial needs are different, so this section deals with some basics that apply to both types of fundraising. Fundraising is best organized by a person or committee devoted to that function.

II. Budget and Goals

It is critically important to have an operating budget. A budget is developed by determining what activities are planned and estimating their costs. It is best then to set fundraising goals and raise funds to pay for these activities.

Below is a sample of an election year budget.

Balance from last report	\$1000		
Receipts:	This period	Year to date	Budget
Event	\$500		\$5000
Individuals	\$250		\$2000
Dues	\$250		\$1000
TOTAL	\$2000		\$8000
Disbursements			
Meeting Rental	\$50		\$600
Event	\$100		\$1000
Newsletter	\$100		\$400
TOTAL	\$200		\$2000
Ending Balance	\$1800		\$6000

III. Reasons to Give

The finance committee should develop and articulate reasons people want to contribute money.

Generally, people are motivated to give money by the following:

- Personalities with charisma, intelligence, talent, and influence
- Power that comes from affiliation with a person or group
- Philosophy or ideology that supports what the contributor perceives is right and good

- Policies and programs that positively affect lives, serve interests, or confirm beliefs
- Political coalitions that advance causes and candidates
- Knowledge that their money will be used efficiently and effectively

A budget can be in itself an effective fundraising tool. Of course, the plan and budget should not be generally distributed, but it may be useful in discussions with business and professional people. It is useful to let other prospective contributors know exactly what their money can do, e.g., their \$25.00 contribution can buy 100 bumper stickers or a phone line for one month, etc.

IV. Asking for Money

What is the number one reason people give money? They are asked! There are several fundraising methods. The three most common methods are through personal contact, by mail, and events.

Personal Contact: Personal contact is the most persuasive method of solicitation. Face-to-face contact, especially with someone the contributor knows, is impossible to ignore. Potential contributors should be matched with solicitors to whom they would most likely respond.

Use the telephone to make appointments for in-person solicitations or to contact other potential contributors. Calls should be followed up by a personal letter from the person who placed the call, from a candidate, or from the finance chair or county chair. A follow-up letter should always include a reply card and a return envelope. You can also use your volunteer phone bank to solicit contributions or to remind people about upcoming fundraising events.

Mail: Mail reaches more people in less time and is the least intrusive type of solicitation. However, mail solicitation requires an up-front investment of money and can be very costly unless carefully targeted and designed to assure an adequate response. When re-soliciting consider people who have given to the local Party in the past, the expected response should be between 3 and 5%. The response from blind mailing ("prospecting") is closer to a return of 1%.

Fundraising Events: Events, especially during campaign season, create enthusiasm and visibility for the Party, our elected officials, and our candidates. Events also provide a tangible "deadline" for receipt of contributions. In addition, while some people will contribute without expecting anything but a "thank you," others are more likely to respond if they get something more tangible in return.

Start with a realistic projection of how many tickets and sponsorships you can sell and determine from that how much you can spend on the event itself. If you think you can sell 400 tickets at \$20.00 and 20 sponsorships at \$100.00, your projected gross will be \$10,000. Keeping your costs at 25-30% of that, or \$2,500 or \$3,000, means you've got a little more than \$6.00 per person to spend—on everything, including invitations, postage, hall, food, and decorations. That arithmetic should tell you that you cannot afford to have a catered dinner at a nice hotel unless you can get everything donated.

Low-cost activities, if well planned and publicized, can attract people and make a profit: bake sales, garage sales, carnivals, BBQs, ice cream socials, car washes, rent parties. Be shameless: Use every opportunity to ask people to help or to contribute.

V. Finding the Money/ Contributors

A. Individuals

The best potential contributors are people who contribute. That's not a typo; it's a reminder to target people who are likely to give because they've given in the past. Previous contributors in state races are listed on past campaign finance reports on the Virginia Public Access Project website at www.vpap.org. Presidential campaign contributors are listed by zip codes at www.fundrace.org. Sponsors of previous events are another source of contributors.

Phone banking only to Democrats in heavily Republican precincts typically yields better results than general blanket calling.

Be flexible with contributors. Someone who cannot give you \$100 in a single contribution might be able to give you \$25 a month during the campaign. Be sure to include on fund-raiser invitations the option, "I can't come, but here's my contribution of \$_____." Add a line to ask for occupation and employer of the contributor, see Financial Reporting. If someone says to call back in a week or a month, do it.

B. Political Action Committees and Groups

Many unions, business associations, corporations, and environmental and civic groups have set up political action committees to make contributions. It is necessary to research and find the groups in your area and make a special effort to contact each potential group contributor.

VI. Campaign Finance Reporting

Usually the Treasurer position of the LDC is responsible for all financial reporting aspects. Knowing when to file and filing on time are paramount of keeping your committee out of trouble. Additionally, knowing Dos and Don'ts during Federal Election (even) years can save you from one day walking around in horizontal stripes. Because the way you operate financially changes every year in Virginia, we've included the ***Local Committee Campaign Finance Guide*** to help with activity during Federal years and a presentation authored by an employee of the Virginia State Board of Elections. You can find them at the end of this document.

Section 3: Communications: Get the Message Out!

I. How to Get Your Message Out

There are many things that can be done to get out the Democratic message in your community:

Outreach: Attend meetings of other organizations, offer to give guest speeches, and participate when they have community forums, etc.

Letters to the Editor: Writing letters to the editor is an effective way to influence public opinion. Newspapers are more likely to publish a letter from a local resident than from the Communications Director of the Democratic Party of Virginia or even from an elected official.

Utilize Technology - Internet Web Pages, Blogs, E-mail Distribution Lists, Cell Phones, Pagers, and Text Messaging: Websites, blogs, webcasting and distributing information via e-mail distribution lists, cell phones, pagers and text messaging are excellent methods of distributing and displaying the Democratic message.

Distribute Press Releases: Press releases are used to distribute a Democratic message or invite the media to an event.

II. Outreach

Many organizations share the ideals of the Democratic Party. We can build more effective organizational or message efforts by getting our “allies” involved in the effort to elect those who champion our shared priorities. These are important ways to implement this effort:

- Join and work with allied groups, get to know their leaders and members, and get them involved in Democratic efforts. Invite them to events and to meet officeholders so you can conduct press events on “shared priorities,” etc.
- Identify key “allied” leaders to serve as “credible third-party spokespersons” on behalf of our candidates, our party, and our shared message
- Encourage allied nonpartisan groups to hold bipartisan forums on their issue priorities, providing us an opportunity to deliver our majority message to the broader membership and the media

III. Letters to the Editor

A letter to the editor is an effective method of delivering the Democratic message and an excellent vehicle for rapid response. Guidelines for submission are typically published. Abide by their rules of style and etiquette. Generally you can say what you really feel. Read letters to the editor to identify like-minded activists and enlist them in your cause.

Writing Guide: A good letter to the editor is like a three-act play. Set the stage in your first paragraph. Then lay out the evidence to support your point in a clear and concise manner. Finally, make your point based on the information you have outlined:

- **Write Tight:** Keep it economical—two to four paragraphs with one or two sentences per paragraph. Explain your inspiration for writing the letter or column then make your point. Do not worry about winning the Pulitzer Prize. Simply write the way you talk.
- **Stick to the Facts:** Be prepared. Make your case with solid information and facts. Use your talking points or newspaper stories you've clipped or pulled from the Internet as a background resource or primer for letters and columns.
- **Use Examples:** Examples of Democratic issues are the \$3,000 teacher pay raise and state health insurance plan for teachers, health care coverage for 600,000 uninsured children, and a prescription drug assistance program for seniors. Examples of failed Republican leadership are the insurance crisis and poor fiscal management that allowed a record state budget surplus to become a record state deficit.
- **Stay on message:** Do not get sidetracked. Stick to your central message and theme.
- **Be Confident:** Write it with pride, but don't let your emotions distract from your point.
- **Be Cool:** Even though you might not agree, respect the rights of others to express their opinions.

IV. Technology

Internet Web Pages - Blogs - E-mail Distribution Lists - Cell Phones - Pagers – Text Messaging: Electronic methods of distributing the Democratic message are relatively new but are playing an ever increasing role in the political arena. In some cases they require financial resources and/or technical expertise.

- **Web Page:** A web page is typically developed and maintained by a web master. It should have the following:
 - An eye-catching banner
 - Information about the Party or organization
 - Current news
 - Information on how to join or participate in Party or organization activities
 - Contact information
 - A calendar of events
 - Links to other websites and blogs
 - Frequent updates to maintain “freshness”
- **Blog:** A web log or blog is a website dedicated to posting messages typically focused on a point of view, issue or issues. Messages are controlled by a traffic manager. The blog should have the following:
 - An eye-catching banner
 - Information about the focus of the blog
 - Information on how to register and participate in the blog
 - Contact information
 - Links to other websites and blogs

- **Cell Phones - Pagers - Text Messaging:** These technologies allow for rapid distribution of information.

V. Press Releases

Press releases alert reporters about stands on particular issues or let the media know about particular events.

Think about what you are going to write. Make it something you want to see written and would be interested in reading. It should be very detailed and contain what the reporters need to write their pieces.

A. Structure and Form of a Press Release

You should consider the following structure and form when writing a press release:

- Use the organization's letterhead for press releases
- Type "For Immediate Release" on the top left corner and type the date below that
- Type the contact information on the top right corner. Include name of organization and the phone numbers of two contacts. Ensure that these contacts can be reached easily. Include home numbers if appropriate. Cell phone numbers and e-mail addresses are appreciated
- Type "MORE" at the end of each page when your press release is more than a page long
- Type the contact information on successive pages as well
- Type "###" at the end of the press release. This is how journalists indicate the end of news copy.

B. Distributing a Press Release

You must make sure the press release gets to the proper people:

- Send a press release a week before an event and send it again the day before the event.
- Press releases may be faxed, e-mailed or some combination of the two.
- Most importantly, make follow-up calls. Make these calls the day before or the morning of the event. Have a copy of the release handy and ready to be faxed when making these calls.

Section 4: Ongoing Local Party Activities

Success for the Democratic Party is winning elections. We must elect people who can make a positive difference in our communities and our nation and pass laws to protect our rights, create a more secure nation, and provide fair opportunity for everyone. The key to this success is giving individuals a reason to join us at a grassroots level to turn out voters.

Achieving this goal requires year-round coordination. It cannot be accomplished in only the 60 days before an election. Our year-round effort must involve our core constituencies first and then reach out to new constituencies and voters who share our fundamental commitment to our communities.

I. Create relationships

In Virginia even the best candidate cannot spend five minutes with each voter or shake everyone's hand. This is one reason that candidates are often seen as out of touch with the individual. We should work to provide opportunities for our candidates to meet people. Then it is our job to represent our candidates and shake the hands of the people in our communities.

II. Encourage activity and keep activists involved

Never wait until September of an election year and the traditional Labor Day campaign kick-off to start organizing. Volunteers should be kept active and interested throughout the year. This will raise awareness for the few months of the election cycle so that our organization is ready to go when the primaries are over.

III. Get and stay organized

We need to make a concerted effort to gather and distribute information. An effective flow of information provides a means to motivate precinct chairs and recruit new chairs.

IV. Activity Suggestions

Activists and organizers should remain active throughout every year. The following activities are very helpful to the Party and our candidates.

A. Parades and Community Events

- Send information about parades, festivals, neighborhood meetings, etc., to candidates and party affiliates, including local Democratic clubs
- Encourage people to host community-based activities (BBQs, coffees, parties, etc.)
- Send representatives to as many events as possible
- Show that we are active by participation
- Create a personal relationship between individual voters and the Democratic Party

B. Democratic Party Meetings and Functions

- Activists, elected officials, and candidates will want to do the following things:
- Attend meetings of local Democratic clubs and organizations
- Find out their plans, especially for the fall election

- Create personal relationships
- Seek active support and volunteers
- Encourage personal growth by urging group members to participate in different functions

C. Labor Meetings/Functions

Labor has always been an important factor in the Democratic Party. These are among the ways Labor can help.

- Provide lists of all Central Labor Council meeting dates, times, and locations
- Have representatives attend as many events as possible
- Help create personal relationships between Labor and the candidates and workers
- Provide information about activities and encourage participation
- Provide information about candidates to members of Central Labor Council

D. Meet-and-Greets with NEW People

Reach out to new people all year with some of the following activities:

- Organize fish fries, BBQs, fiestas, etc.
- Invite Democrats in the area
- Mingle, talk to people one-on-one
- Make events fun—some of these events might also work as fundraisers

E. Create a Supporters List

Lists of voters and potential voters are extremely important, and the following techniques can help maximize their use:

- Group identified supporters by useful criteria (e.g., Hispanic, African American, female, lawyer, etc.) into as many groups as appropriate for each voter.
- Send update or issue-watch e-mails tailored for group interests, e.g., news of a Planned Parenthood endorsement to all women supporters. Updates keep our people abreast of what is happening and reach a more targeted audience than press releases. Supporters can also easily share this information with friends, colleagues, and family, helping us to reach a wider audience with a more personal touch.
- Assume that all mailed and e-mailed information will fall into Republican hands. Don't send anything you wouldn't mind seeing on the front page of your newspaper.

F. Create an Issues Section on the Website

The following will help you create a better website:

- Work with a talented volunteer or professional to create or update your website if you don't have one for your county party or yours was designed more than two years ago
- Include a reference to your website on printed literature about your local Party
- Post new information at least twice a week
- Create a section where people can choose which issues matter to them and submit their e-mail addresses. Include local or area issues as possible choices.

- E-mail the people who have chosen a certain issue whenever the party does something related to the issue. The e-mail addresses can also be used for general information about events and campaign activities.
- Check the website and respond regularly to the info/ contact account.

G. Sign-Up Program

- Challenge supporters to sign up ten people to be on the e-mail update list
- Mail a bumper sticker to everyone who signs up
- Reward our supporters who meet the challenge (even if it's only a thank-you e-mail)

H. E-Newsletter

- Update supporters monthly or weekly about events, happenings on the campaign trail, news they might have missed
- Include issues section, especially if you don't have time or people to do targeted e-mails to different groups

E-Newsletters can be simple. Check out a sample that regularly goes out in Hampton County from their Chair.

Good Day,

**Back by popular demand 2010 HDC Updates.....please read updates and enjoy this weeks..inspiration, (this weeks funny will be back ...in time)
Please keep the citizens of Haiti in prayer.**

2010-

Gov. McDonnell delivered his first State of the Commonwealth address.. Watch the promises- Two faced Bob strikes again... Gov. McD said Va will be the Greenest state on the east coast and in the same breath, he talked about off shore drilling, coal ect....

During the campaign, Gov. McD said, he was a moderate and will not fall to party lines..... a few days later, he agreed to give the National Republican response to Pres. Obama's State of the Union speech. .

However, Va State Senate Majority leader Sen. Dick Saslaw and HDC's own Sen. Mamie Locke delivered a dynamic Democratic response.

If you missed it- please read speech and see video.
<http://www.whsv.com/news/headlines/81998022.html>

President Obama's State of the Union Speech - Weds- Jan. 27

Tomorrow- President Obama will deliver the State of the Union speech-9pm

I encourage you to please watch the speech with your neighbors. It's time to reinstitute the Neighborhood Watch parties

Also, please visit www.whitehouse.gov to get the FACTS!!

Washington Post article

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/25/AR2010012503549.html>

From Politico-

On Monday, Obama unveiled a series of five proposals intended to help middle-class families, including a near-doubling of the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit for families making under \$85,000 a year, creating a system of automatic workplace IRA contributions, and expanding help for families with elderly relatives.

This is cool...The Cabinet Reporting to the President ... and to You - Daily chat online

Posted by Chris Lu on January 26, 2010 at 11:34 AM EST

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2010/01/26/cabinet-reporting-president-and-you>

Healthcare...well, I'll save that for the next update...:)

Upcoming events and meetings:

HDC February Monthly meeting- 2nd Tuesday of every month- Feb. 9,2010 6:30 pm- Hampton Library on Victoria blvd

HDC Executive board member Sandy Harris - will host a community event to raise money for the citizens in Haiti.- Saturday- Jan. 30th 11am-3pm @ her Liberty Tax office.35 Town Center Way but it is best to say at Hampton Roads Center Pkwy and Big Bethel by Farm Fresh in AMC 24 lot

This week's inspiration:

As I close this update- McDonnell was sworn in as the 71st Governor and Scott Brown won Sen. Kennedy's seat- Please don't be discouraged. Dem's will be back stronger and better! Enjoy the video in it's entirety.... Impossible is nothing....

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n799U0hmV7o>

Until Next time,

Gaylene Kanoyton

Chair, Hampton Democratic Committee

I. Block Meetings

- A block meeting at your home is one of the most direct ways to recruit and organize Democratic voters in your precinct
- Block meetings are an excellent venue for introducing local elected officials and candidates to neighbors. Persuade the official or candidate to make a short presentation.

J. Democratic Clubs and Organizations

There are many Democratic clubs and organizations across Virginia, each with its own focus. The memberships of these clubs and organizations should be encouraged to be active in party building activities throughout the year. The following is a report on a practice by the James City County Democrats with Democratic clubs:

NEIGHBORHOOD DEMOCRATIC CLUBS

A great tool here in James City County has been the formation of neighborhood Democratic clubs. We now have one in each of the three gated and semi-gated communities—Kingsmill, Ford's Colony and Governor's Land.

Each group has its own leaders and operates totally independently from our Democratic committee, although we cooperate closely.

At Kingsmill and Ford's Colony, the larger communities, the clubs now have over 100 members each.

The Kingsmill Democrats have their own web site. They organize regular social events: Christmas party, fund raisers for local candidates (and even distant ones--they had a successful event for Boucher running in Virginia Beach), and dinners with speakers. They open some events to all area Democrats.

Kingsmill gave active support to George Drummond in his campaign for supervisor, including fundraisers and phone banking. With their help George almost took out a long time incumbent Republican.

Similarly, Ford's Colony had a large turnout at a fund raiser for all local candidates and John Miller in Newport News this fall. They also had a smaller function for our House of Delegates candidate earlier in the campaign season. They have holiday parties and picnics from time to time.

All three of the groups now take charge of staffing our presence at their voting locations. This year they have agreed to take responsibility for their entire respective districts, even including precincts where they do not vote. In effect they serve as precinct captains for their communities and beyond.

The groups were easy to get started. In each case a good Democrat or two took the lead, talked to friends and organized a meeting. Once the effort was underway word of mouth brought in many more people. Even in well off areas there are quite a few Democrats who have the time, motivation, and means to help make a difference.

It could be that the neighborhood club approach would not work in less affluent or in rural areas. But I think it probably could be replicated in quite a few cities around Virginia. It would be easier to do in a well-defined neighborhood such as Queen's Lake in York County or in Kiln Creek in Newport News.

In any case, with minimal effort on my part Democratic candidates are introduced to people they would not otherwise reach. The clubs have proven to be a significant help in fund raising and volunteering for candidates. They are very useful in other ways, such as staffing the polls election day and in organizing large groups to attend our annual banquet.

Section 5: Eight Things You Can Do in '10 and '11

8. CHANGE YOUR VOICE-MAIL GREETING. Several people hear your voice on your answering machine at home or your cell phone voice-mail each day. When the election nears, update your voice-mail greeting with a reminder to vote for your local and statewide candidates and include early vote and election-day dates.

7. TAKE YOUR CANDIDATES WITH YOU WHEREVER YOU GO. We meet people every day who need to hear about the Democratic Party and our agenda. We have materials to help. Pass out flyers in your neighborhood. Use talking points and issue papers to persuade friends and family. Give signs and placards to fellow supporters.

6. RECRUIT MORE VOLUNTEERS. Always keep your eyes open for individuals or groups willing to work for the Democratic cause. Keep lists current and be sure to contact volunteers often and keep them involved. Focus on young people; they are the future of our party.

5. MAKE A DONATION. Any donation, large or small, to your state and area parties will help. Every cent matters in Virginia's ongoing election cycle. Make a contribution at www.vademocrats.org or call the DPVA at 804.644.1966.

4. MAKE THE WINNING CONTACT LISTS. Candidates will always need help with local phone banks and canvass programs. Be sure area phone banks start early and that you have enough volunteers to knock on all the doors, so we have time to identify ALL supporters before the election.

3. REACH BEYOND. We need to create relationships outside of our normal circles.

2. TAKE ELECTION DAY OFF. Actually, we want you to work on Election Day, but instead of going to your job, help lead the Democrats to victory. The pay is low and the day will be long, but it will all be worth it when we celebrate on election night.

1. VOTE EARLY AND NEVER VOTE ALONE. We all know several people who have to be reminded repeatedly to go vote. Make it a social occasion. Gather your friends and go vote early as a group, and then go out and have some fun. Encourage folks to vote early via absentee ballot in order to help out on Election Day.