



# The Lancaster County Democrat

April 2014

The Lancaster County Democratic Party is your Local Contact for Democratic Politics.



## Nebraska Statewide Primary Election!

Vote by Mail beginning April 7th: <http://lancaster.ne.gov/election/2014PrimaryAb.pdf>

Or Vote In Person at the Election Commissioner's office 601 N 46<sup>th</sup> St, beginning April 14th

Or Vote May 13th, at your polling place: <https://www.votercheck.necvr.ne.gov/VoterView/PollingPlaceSearch.do>

### Democrats who will appear on the Lancaster County ballot (by race, alphabetical listing for contested races):

#### US Senate

- David Domina
- Larry Marvin

#### US Congress

- Dennis P. Crawford

#### Governor

- Chuck Hassebrook

#### State Treasurer

- Michael J. O'Hara

#### Auditor of Public

#### Accounts

- Amanda McGill

#### Legislature, District 26

- Matt Hansen
- Larry Weixelman
- Justin Valencia
- Bob Van Valkenburg

#### Legislature, District 28

- Patty Pansing Brooks

#### Legislature, District 32

- Phil Hardenburger

#### Legislature, District 46

- James Michael Bowers
- Adam Morfeld

#### County Commissioner, Dist. 1

- Jane Raybould

#### County Commissioner, Dist. 5

- Patte Newman

#### County Clerk

- Dan Nolte

#### Public Defender

- Joe Nigro

#### Lower Platte South NRD, Subdistrict 6

- Deborah Eagan

- Maggie Squires

#### Hickman Mayor

- Doug Hanson

#### Hickman City Council

- Jack D. Scott

#### Waverly Board of Education, Dist 145 Ward 3

- Scott Claycomb
- Karen Morgan

#### Norris Board of Education, Dist 160 Ward 2

- Patty Bentzinger

#### Norris Board of Education, Dist 160 Ward 4

- Jim Craig

#### Palmyra Board of Education, At Large

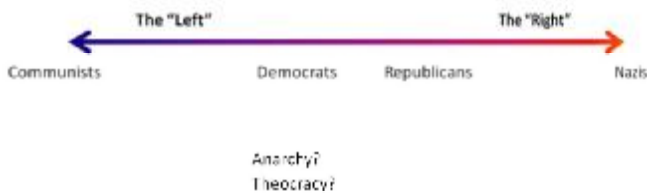
- Susan Stewart

## Meet Our Candidates

### Starting Together. Ending Together. Moving On! By Dave Domina, Candidate for U.S. Senate

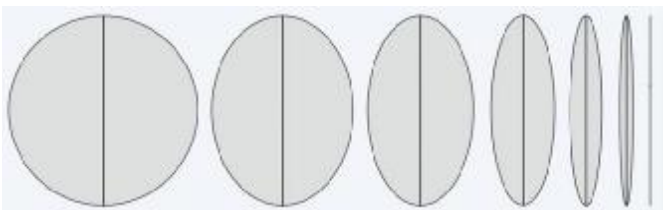


Political discourse is characterized as a flat line too often. The political earth seems, to most, to have a left, a right, and a middle aisle, along a 180-degree linear plane. This is the conventional view:



There is a better model for discourse and decision making in a democratic society.

Imagine a vertical line. It represents the diameter of a circle, extending from top to bottom. Place all of us at the bottom of the diameter line.



The goal is to reach the top, precisely 180 degrees; instead, we are separated by an issue. The bottom of the circle represents the beginning of discourse. The top is the solution.

One can choose between two routes from the bottom to the top—left generally around the circumference or right around the circumference on the way up. The original problem at the bottom of the circle is the same whether the left or the right course is chosen. So is the goal, resolving the problem satisfactorily with a middle position generally acceptable solution for all at the top of the circle.

There is a third route: to stay centered at the bottom of the circle and never become involved. This is the path of malignant apathy.

## Democracy

This model represents democracy.

Democracy modeled cooperatively in this way requires no abandonment of values. On the contrary, each step along the path chosen by each sojourner is a positive step. If the two sides match steps generally, they do not cancel one another; instead, they each climb higher. The longer the route and the better the discourse, then the bigger the circle becomes and more inclusive the solution is.

This is the model of democracy that the United States exemplified to the world for decades. Recently, we lost our way. Now is the time to come back on track.

I am a candidate for the United States Senate. I want to elevate discourse, model exchanges of ideas, climb upward, journey inclusively, and make the circle of involved persons bigger at every step. Near the end the solution is within a few degrees of the center, not far left or far right. It leaves no one out if it is a true solution.

Ours should be an honest, progressive, inclusive America. My America functions as a circle, including all. My America accommodates divergence, uses debate to climb upward toward a solution, and finds one. It celebrates resolving issues and then moves on.

At dawn, the next day after celebration, a new opportunity, at the base of a new circle, greets each of us. We begin to climb toward a solution.

This is democracy.

I think that you can disagree with people and debate over their positions with issues without engaging in the politics of personal destruction.

– Hillary Clinton

## Meet Our Candidates

---

### Chuck Hassebrook, Candidate for Governor



Lancaster County Democrats,

As you know, Election Day is right around the corner on Tuesday, May 13th. Though I am unopposed in the primary, it is still critical for you and other supporters to get out to the polls. Strong turnout in support of my campaign will make it that much easier to continue to raise the money we need for the general election in November.

Getting voters out to the polls in May will also help continue voter engagement in the campaign as we head towards November. That's why I need you to sign up to volunteer and help get out the vote! There are many ways you can help the campaign, and the Regional Field Director for your area, James Pauley, would be happy to tell you about all of them. You can reach James by e-mail at [james@chuckhassebrook.com](mailto:james@chuckhassebrook.com) and by phone at 402-312-5120. You can also sign up to volunteer on our website at [www.chuckhassebrook.com/volunteer](http://www.chuckhassebrook.com/volunteer).

We are all in this together, not just to win an election, but to make Nebraska a more just and perfect state; to strengthen our communities and broaden the middle class by creating good jobs and genuine opportunity for every Nebraskan in every community—rich and poor; big and small. I know I can count on your vote, and I hope I can count on you to support my campaign with a few hours of volunteer work between now and May 13th.

Thanks for your support and for all you do,

Chuck Hassebrook  
Candidate for Governor

## Meet Our Candidates

---

### Dennis Crawford, Candidate for Congress, District 1

#### Jeff Fortenberry Isn't Working For Nebraska



I'm running for Congress because Jeff Fortenberry isn't working for Nebraska. Electing Mr. Fortenberry to a sixth term won't end or fix the gridlock and dysfunction in Washington. It will only perpetuate it.

As a member of Congress, Fortenberry has voted with the extreme Tea Party faction the overwhelming majority of the time. Nebraska CD-1's current representative voted with the Tea Party to shutdown the government last year. That reckless government shutdown cost the national economy \$24 billion and 120,000 jobs.

Representative Fortenberry has voted three times to privatize Medicare and 50 times to repeal the ACA. If Fortenberry were to get his way, the health insurance market would be turned back over to the insurance industry. Medicare privatization would cost seniors thousands of dollars in additional out of pocket medical expenses. The total repeal of the ACA would allow insurance companies to discriminate against sick people and cancel policies for spurious reasons after somebody gets sick or injured.

Fortenberry has also voted to deregulate the big banks on Wall Street and return us to the days in which Wall Street could write its own rules again, putting Nebraskans at risk for future bailouts and returning to the conditions that caused the deepest economic downturn since the 1930s.

As a member of Congress, Fortenberry is keeping a part-time work schedule. The House of Representatives is only scheduled to work 79 more days this year and was only scheduled to work 113 days in the calendar year 2014. Most residents of Nebraska CD-1 will work harder this year than Fortenberry.

It's obvious that Jeff Fortenberry isn't working for Nebraska. He's working for somebody else and Washington is broken. It's time for a change. It's time for somebody who shares our values and will work for us. If you elect me, I promise that I will work full time and won't shut down the government.



## Meet Our Candidates

---

### Janet Stewart, Candidate for Attorney General



Nebraska's Attorney General is a constitutional officer leading a team of specialized attorneys and staff in representing our state in civil and criminal matters. In accepting this responsibility, our Attorney General enforces the law, protects our legal rights, advises on legal issues, and sits on the Board of Pardons.

I want to serve as your Attorney General. It is a responsibility I am both ready and willing to accept. I am an attorney with a strong background in business, economics, and management. I have also advocated on behalf of the most vulnerable Nebraskans, and never forget our American pledge of "Liberty and Justice for All."

#### POLITICAL EXPERIENCE

Over the last decade, I have taken on many leadership roles within the Nebraska Democratic Party – Nebraska Democratic Women's Caucus Chair, Dodge County Democratic Party Chair, and most recently NDP First Congressional District Chair. Many voters recall that I was a candidate for Secretary of State in 2010. I traveled the state, experiencing the challenges of a statewide race, and met many supporters who will commit to helping me in this campaign. I also supervised a NDP Coordinated Campaign office in 2012 adding to my knowledge of campaign fundamentals.

#### LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Following my graduation from Creighton Law School, I started my legal career at the Nebraska Commission of Industrial Relations. This agency enforces public employee collective bargaining rights. I learned how to supervise staff, prepare agency budgets, conduct elections, handle press inquiries, rule on evidence, make factual findings, apply statutes and case law precedent, and draft case decisions.

I then worked as a corporate litigation attorney for a total of 26 years; advising business clients and managing a state and federal court caseload in multiple jurisdictions throughout the United States, Puerto Rico and The Virgin Islands. I have supervised and directed all stages of litigation through trial and appeal. I became a skilled negotiator and represented clients successfully in settlement conferences and mediation. In managing

experienced trial attorneys and staff, I received a lot of formal management training and day-to-day experience; building and coaching high performance teams. Resolving consumer complaints was an important aspect of my job, and Consumer protection is a duty of the Attorney General's office where I can directly apply my corporate experience.

I have now been a private practice attorney in Nebraska for 7 years and a trained mediator for 20 years. This experience has given me a client-centered focus and appreciation of government's role in protecting individuals, families and organizations. I currently serve as a Guardian ad Litem in child abuse/neglect, truancy and juvenile law violation cases. My past experience working with children and families at the Child Savings Institute in Omaha, and the Domestic Abuse/Sexual Assault Crisis Center in Fremont, will help me lead the efforts on Domestic Violence and Child Protection issues in the Attorney General's office.

#### MY COMMITMENT AS ATTORNEY GENERAL

Unlike some recent Attorneys General, I have no desire to run for a higher office. Serving as your Attorney General will be the capstone of my career. I will give Nebraskans the professional and non-partisan representation we all deserve, and bring Independence, Experience and Integrity to the office.

#### HOW TO HELP

Please visit my website to join my campaign and remember to encourage your family, friends and neighbors to vote on May 13th. Lancaster County Democrats are truly the model of "best practices" for many other counties to follow. As always, you have my heartfelt thanks for everything you do, not only for my campaign, but for the Nebraska Democratic Party and all the people of our great State of Nebraska.

[www.janetstewart2014.com](http://www.janetstewart2014.com)

## Meet Our Candidates

---

### Allan Eurek, Candidate for Attorney General



My unique combination of education, military service, government experience, community involvement, and legal experience have prepared me for the demands of the office of Attorney General in a way that is unmatched by any other candidate in this race. With a proven record

of leadership and effective management, Nebraskans can trust me to hit the ground running, to focus all of my energy on being Attorney General, and not on being a candidate for some higher office.

I was trusted with leadership roles at an early age, which stirred in me a passion for public service. I challenged myself to pursue a less traditional post secondary education at the U.S. Naval Academy, and I graduated in 1973 with a Bachelor of Science in analytical management. I was also commissioned as a naval officer and assumed positions of increasing responsibility both at sea and ashore. I was selected as second in command of a naval ship at the age of 25, a position offered to only a handful of officers of my junior officer grade. I separated from active duty in 1978 to seek a career in public policy or law.

Upon returning to Nebraska, I pursued graduate training in Public Administration and earned my law degree from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. While practicing law, I continued my service in the Naval Reserve for 15 years, serving twice as a commanding officer, and retiring with the rank of Commander.

I have broad legal experience over a 32-year career practicing law. I have tried both felony and misdemeanor criminal cases. I have successfully challenged State agency regulations and I have prosecuted claims against the State under the State Tort Claims Act, the Contract Claims Act and before the Equal Opportunity Commission. My experience extends to having prosecuted successful appeals to the Nebraska Supreme Court.

Beyond my courtroom experience, I have rendered legal opinions on free speech, due process and equal protection while advising the Southeast Community College Faculty Association for over nine years, and assisted them in bargaining collectively with the College. I brought individual consumer protection actions when the Attorney General's office refused to prosecute them, including cases involving mortgage fraud.

I am no stranger to the demands of running a State agency in a leadership position. In 1992, I was appointed by Governor Nelson to serve on the Nebraska State Personnel Board and in 1994 left to accept his

appointment as a Commissioner on the Nebraska State Racing Commission where I served until 1999. Both of these leadership roles I gave me direct experience adopting and implementing regulations, and conducting contested case due process hearings under the Administrative Procedures Act. My leadership on the Racing Commission was recognized with my election to the Board of Directors of Racing Commissioners International, an association comprised of state and foreign country horse racing regulators.

I have a plan of action when I am elected as Attorney General:

• **I will make the State's legal business a priority.** Our sitting Attorneys General have run for U.S. Senate four times and Governor once during the last 20 years. Clearly, they view the office as a launchpad for a future political career. While taxpayers pay a full-time salary to these officials, we receive a part-time effort as they focus on their campaigns. As Attorney General, I will not use the office for political posturing. I will devote all my time to fulfilling my constitutional duties as your Attorney General.

• **I will restore integrity to the Attorney General's Office.** Do you believe an Attorney General can co-own a vacation home with industry executives he is suppose to regulate and maintain his objectivity? Can he make millions of dollars personally by investing with friends who are regulated by his office? Can you participate privately in the Banking Industry and still regulate and oversee Banking practices? As Attorney General, I will end any activity that gives even the slightest appearance of impropriety. I will adopt a code of ethics for the office to insure its integrity, and provide transparency for oversight.

• **I will renew our focus on public safety.** The primary concern of the Attorney General is the safety of Nebraska's citizens. I will ensure all County Attorneys have the assistance from my office to prosecute major crimes. I will work to ensure that those released from incarceration are not mentally ill and dangerous.

• **I will be a strong voice for fiscal responsibility.** I will end the State's participation in frivolous lawsuits initiated for the personal political benefit for an opportunistic Attorney General. The use of state-paid attorneys to attack federal legislation to generate campaign contributions, or gain advantage over a political opponent, will end on my first day in office.

As a Naval Officer, I have been held to the standard of ethics espoused by John Paul Jones more than 200 years ago: that is, "the highest sense of personal honor, and the soul of justice." As an Attorney, I have been held to the Supreme Court's standard of Character set forth in the requirements for admission to the bar: "a high degree of honesty, integrity and trustworthiness ... with respect to all legal obligations."

I am confident my record of ethical conduct and proven leadership for more than 40 years, my relevant legal experience of more than 30 years, and my government service of nearly 10 years, makes me the strongest candidate to run, and win, in the General Election against a Republican opponent. I am asking for your support and your vote in the May 13th Democratic Primary Election. Together, we can restore the trust of all Nebraskans in the integrity to the Attorney General's office. For more information or to become involved in my campaign please visit [www.eurekforattorneygeneral.com](http://www.eurekforattorneygeneral.com).

### **The Joys and Benefits of Leafleting During the Election Cycle** By Amy Birky

Do you need more time to spend with your friends and significant others? What about walking with your kids and grandkids?

I have fond memories of driving with my husband around neighborhoods. I remember, happily, my grandson on his skateboard and my younger granddaughter learning her numbers as we delivered the slate cards for Democratic candidates.

Make your memories and help our candidates win in the May 13th primary by taking our message to the homes of voters.



## County Party History

### **Patriots' Dinner Back in the Day** By Michael Wylie

In the beginning years of my involvement with the Lancaster County Democrats, perhaps in the 1970s, the Patriots' Dinner was held at the Malone Center. It was in late winter like it is now. The dinner was a much simpler affair then. It included a pasta dinner served on disposable plates. There were sauces either with meat or without. A piece of garlic bread, celery and carrot sticks, a cookie, and a choice of beverages came with the meal. Attendees at the dinner paid \$5 per person in the beginning years. The price was raised in dollar increments in subsequent years.

To pull off the Patriots' Dinner in those days required the work of numerous volunteers. It was always viewed as a party—a spirit-building activity—until the final years when the numbers became unwieldy.

Volunteers completed tasks that included procuring pasta from Gooches and pasta sauce from the Paul Newman Corporation. Union members who worked at Gooches obtained the pasta for free. Contacting the Paul Newman Corporation allowed the Party to get the pasta sauces free. Hamburger for the meat sauce was purchased from a local vendor.

Other volunteers cooked the pasta and hamburger for the meat sauce beginning at 8:00 in the morning of the Patriots' Dinner. It took all day to cook up enough pasta to fill a 50-gallon, sanitary garbage can full of cooked pasta. Other volunteers prepared relish trays of celery and carrot sticks; sliced loaves of French bread for garlic bread; and set up the dining hall with long, folding style bench tables.

Still other volunteers were needed to serve the dinners as attendees filed through the serving line where they could ask for any of about six of the different Newman Pasta Sauces. Someone baked the 300 cookies needed for the proletariat affair in the beginning years, but as the numbers increased, purchased cookies were used.

The dinner did not raise a large amount of money for the County Party; but it was viewed as a party-activist, solidarity activity. The cost was such that anybody who worked on Lancaster County Democratic activities could afford to attend the Patriots' Dinner, AND DID!

When the decision was made to have the Patriots' Dinner catered by a local vendor who was popular at Democratic events, it was a difficult and big step for the County Party to move away from the all-volunteer prepared dinner.

## Meet Our Candidates

### Patty Pansing Brooks, Candidate for State Senator, Legislative District 28



#### Democrats Celebrate Patty Pansing Brooks for Legislature!

I am honored that **many** Democrats attended the Campaign Party for me at the home of **John and Beatty Brasch**. Attendees included **Mayors Chris Beutler, Don Wesley, Coleen Seng, County Commissioner Jane Raybould, and City Council**

**Member Leirion Gaylor Baird**, each of whom I am grateful to say has wholeheartedly endorsed me!

I've met many of you now, whether through events or while out walking the District. It is gratifying that lots of you have volunteered to assist the campaign, by taking a yard sign, offering to place signs, making calls, or going door-to-door. Your support is wonderful and I know that we can make a difference for Nebraska together. The next few weeks are incredibly important. **I need your help!** I need you to help me inform the voters in LD 28 about your support of me and I need you to help me get the voters out to vote. Most important, make sure you vote early in the **Vote by Mail, beginning April 7th, or on Primary Election Day, May 13th!**

I have always been a hard worker for Education in our state, and I am pleased to be the **only** Candidate endorsed in District 28 by the **Nebraska State Education Association**, and the **Lincoln Education Association**.

I am also grateful to be the only LD 28 Candidate endorsed by the **Nebraska AFL-CIO**. Better jobs and living wages are critical for the future of Lincoln and our great state.

Many leaders in the community have also endorsed me, including Mayor Beutler, many State Senators, the entire Lincoln School Board, City Council Members, and many, many more. Please take a look at my website at [PattyPansingBrooks.com](http://PattyPansingBrooks.com) for a more complete listing. New names are being added regularly. I am also working hard to raise money and am overwhelmed by the generosity of friends, neighbors and constituents!

We have a busy five weeks ahead of us. We will be

working hard reaching out to you. If you haven't

volunteered to help the campaign yet, please come join us. Also, feel free to contact me at <mailto:Patty@PattyPansingBrooks> if you have any questions or if you would like to volunteer.

Thank you again for your kind support and don't forget to encourage your friends and family to **VOTE for Patty Pansing Brooks for Legislature** in the upcoming May Primary!

If you do politics the right way, I believe, you can actually make people's lives better. And integrity is the minimum ante to get into the game.

– Joe Biden, Promises to Keep: On Life and Politics

“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.”

— Eleanor Roosevelt



## Meet Our Candidates

---

### Patte Newman, Candidate for Lancaster County Board – District 5



Serious campaigns cannot be run on sound bites. TV and radio ads, tri-fold brochures and slogans have to be quick and simple, but well-informed voters should demand more details of candidates.

My intention each month, is to share an in-depth explanation of what is driving me to return to public office after one term on the City Council years ago.

If you know me, you know I've never been a seat-warmer. When I devote myself to a cause I am driven by my passion to make things better for my neighborhood and community. There are several things that got me interested in running for County Board.

For five years, I worked with more than 50 groups or agencies on substance abuse issues in the prevention, treatment and criminal justice fields. While some of the work seemed hopeless and depressing, one of the bright lights in this very frustrating field of addiction was learning more about the Lancaster County Adult Drug Court (LCADC) and Nebraska's Specialized Substance Abuse Supervision (SSAS) program.

Many of us (quite happily keeping our distance from anything in the criminal justice field) are not aware of the programs and how successful they have been. Instead, we hear that popular mantra of "being tough on crime" which often means punishment and not problem solving. Drug courts have existed nationally for about two decades with research showing they work better than jail or probation or treatment alone. Drug courts are not an "easy out" for individuals charged with drug related non-violent crimes. They are proven to be a very effective means to hold individuals accountable for their actions and to take responsibility for their obligations to society. National estimates are that for every dollar invested in Drug Court approximately three dollars are saved in the justice system and twelve times that amount in medical care, foster care and other losses.

Locally, the mission of the LCADC is to "increase public safety by providing a program that facilitates access to treatment, implements intensive case management, decreases substance abuse and returns law-

abiding, productive and responsible citizens to their families and the community."

In May 2008, a proposed \$65 million jail bond issue was on the ballot. Despite being rejected by 54% of the voters, the Lancaster County Board moved forward on building the jail anyway. Capital costs aside, the cost of incarcerating drug offenders in Nebraska is estimated at more than \$30,000 per person/year. Annual drug court costs are estimated to be around \$7,000. Treatment, supervision, drug testing and frequent court appearances work to help get an addict clean and sober.

Adult, juvenile and family drug courts in Nebraska have served over 6,300 participants since 1997. An average of 650 people are being supervised at any given time in drug courts across the state. Chief Justice Heavican encouraged more funding for problem-solving courts in his 2014 Judiciary address to state lawmakers citing a review of SSAS statistics showing 91% of graduates remained crime-free one year later. A similar statistic for LCADC shows a one year rate of 94.8% since inception of the program in 2001. Recidivism rates for incarceration alone do not reflect this degree of success.

Chatting with Lancaster County's next Public Defender, Joe Nigro, at the Patriots' Dinner last month, I was encouraged to hear how our ideas for a better-working criminal justice system align. He wants to expand problem-solving courts and is a staunch proponent of drug court. Currently Drug Court works with Behavioral Health Jail Diversion Program to ensure participants with dual diagnosis (mental illness and substance use disorder) get services that are needed. I want to work with Joe to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of Lancaster County, as the state, led by Senator Ashford and approved by our Unicameral, concentrates on prison reform. Judicial reinvestment in drug court programs has proved to be cost-effective in saving taxpayer dollars and is successful in reducing crime and addiction.

It's time for the State of Nebraska and it's time for Lancaster County to put more resources into increasing capacity of these programs. Drug Court saves money and people at the same time.

**All I need is your vote. And of course, if you would like to help in my campaign in any way I would welcome your help.** [pattnewman2014@gmail.com](mailto:pattnewman2014@gmail.com)

For more information on my priorities, please visit my website (coming soon) at [newmanforcountyboard.com](http://newmanforcountyboard.com).

For more information on the Lancaster County program go to [www.lancaster.ne.gov](http://www.lancaster.ne.gov) with key word: drug court.



The 30th Annual  
Patriots' Dinner  
was held March 15, 2014  
at the  
Center for People in Need,  
Lincoln, Nebraska



**2014 Patriots' Dinner Award Winners**

Rick Hoppe, Tim Becker, Megan Mikolajczyk, Roger Eschliman, Steve Kangior



State Senator Bill Avery, Beatty Brasch, State Senator Danielle Conrad

## Meet Our Award Winners

---

### **Rick Hoppe, Patriots' Award Winner** **By Jennifer Brinkman**

I met Rick when he was the Executive Director of the Lancaster County Democratic Party back in the early to mid-90s. I was working in Don Wesely's legislative office and Rick ran at least one, if not more than one, of Don's races for re-election then. He left the party and became Don's Legislative Aide. Somewhere around that time we became fast friends and spent a lot of time working together on Democratic causes, especially efforts to harness the volunteerism of young Democrats in Lincoln. I vividly remember spending too much time at Shoe's Bar & Grill down in the Haymarket when Rick was running campaigns for Jerry Shoecraft for City Council. This must have been 1995/1996, because it was just prior to the 1996 Campaign.

I also remember getting ready to attend the 1996 Patriot's Dinner at the Lincoln Station. As I left work on Friday, Rick very cryptically said, "Be prepared." He was trying to warn me that I was receiving a Volunteer Award the next evening. He was a great champion and friend.

We drove to Chicago for the 1996 Democratic Convention together. I don't think Rick was a delegate, but he attended and I have a good number of pictures with Rick in them from the convention. There is a great one of the two of us with now U.S. Senator Al Franken and one of us with Ted Sorenson.

In 1998, Rick ran for Lancaster County Board. I remember it well because I was living in Denver at the time and it was the first time I had ever written a check for \$100 to any candidate. He was defeated by Bob Workman in the General Election that November.

When Don Wesely was term-limited from running for Legislature in 1998, he embarked on a campaign for Mayor of Lincoln. Rick was his campaign manager and they defeated City Councilwoman Cindy Johnson. By this time, Rick had opened up his consulting firm, Hoppe & Associates. He continued to run campaigns, advise candidates and work on progressive issues in the Lincoln area. He also worked on a number of statewide ballot issues and, with national firms, lobbying Congress on several issues. He was an adviser to the Lincoln Firefighters Union and we worked closely on the ballot issue that attempted to repeal the decision to have the Lincoln Fire Department take over all ambulance service in Lincoln while I was an Aide to Don Wesely in the Mayor's office.

I'm sure most political observers would agree that one of Rick's most notable accomplishments was as Campaign Manager of the Coleen Seng for Mayor race in 2003. Don Wesely decided not to run that year and left Coleen very little time to organize her race. After losing the primary, Rick orchestrated a brilliant campaign strategy that led to her defeat of Glenn Friendt in the General Election only four weeks later.

Rick went to work for Coleen Seng as an Aide to the Mayor in 2005. He was very interested in trying to ensure that the network he had built as a consultant would benefit Democratic clients into the future. He approached me and his protégé, Hadley Richters, who had worked with him on several races including the Seng Mayor's race, and asked if we would like to take over his firm. We agreed and created Alchemy Associates, which became Richters Brinkman in 2008. Rick subsequently ran Chris Beutler's campaign for Mayor in 2007 and became his Chief of Staff that same year.

If there are attributes or anecdotes to share, I would say the following:

- Rick Hoppe is a master strategist. He understands that you can't make progressive change if your candidates aren't in office to lead and cast the deciding votes. While many don't understand the skill it takes to become a vote counter, Rick has it and has used it to great effectiveness in his career.
- Rick is also a champion of others. He has continually nurtured and developed the skills of other talented people. He is always looking for the next bright young person willing to do the hard work of campaigning and he provides other opportunities to take on extra responsibility in an effort to build the bench of willing campaign staff and candidates for political office.
- Finally, it is important to acknowledge Rick's dedication to his family. He works long and hard, but I think it is fair to say that he does all of it to take care of his family. He has been married to his college sweetheart, Janelle, for over twenty years. She has suffered serious health challenges and I know those struggles have informed Rick's continued work to implement progressive policies at every level of government. Rick and Janelle have two kids, Nathan and Madeline.

## Meet Our Award Winners

---

### **Tim Becker, Patriots' Award Winner** **By Don Wesely**

Tim Becker was my Legislative Aide while I was a State Senator after he left the Kerrey Administration in January 1987. Tim worked in my Legislative office until he went to work for newly elected Governor Ben Nelson in January 1991. Tim served Governor Nelson first as his Director of the Governor's Policy Research Office. Tim then followed Kim Robak who followed Sandy Scofield as Nelson's Chief of Staff. When Nelson left the Governor's office, Tim worked with him in the private sector. Then when Ben Nelson was elected to the U.S. Senate, Tim became his Chief of Staff. Tim is probably one of the longest serving Chiefs of Staff to a Governor—Larry Bare would be longer, I believe—and to a U.S. Senator.

Tim Becker and I have been good friends for over thirty years. We also worked together closely for most of that time. Tim is tough and competitive. He works hard and is very driven to succeed on behalf of his employer or clients. Tim is an invaluable ally and a fearsome opponent.

I also know Tim to be devoted to his wife Traci and his kids, Andrew and Emily. He is close to his parents and all his family. As my friend, he has always been someone I can confide in and know it will remain confidential. He gives sound advice. If I ever need help, Tim is there for me. You can count on and trust Tim.

Here's one of many stories I can tell about Tim. When he worked for me while I was in the Legislature he didn't come into work promptly one morning. Tim was so punctual and reliable I wondered why, so we called his home, then Traci and his parents. His mother went over to his house and found him in pain on the floor. A virus had attacked his pancreas and he suffered from internal hemorrhaging. 911 was called. He received immediate care and recovered. However, he was told his virus had attacked so aggressively that had he not been found and cared for so quickly he could have died.

Here's the bottom line: Tim has such a strong work ethic it saved his life. Tim also has a deep ethical concern for people in need. Because of Tim's compassion and work ethics, I know through his efforts, both in my office and in Ben Nelson's offices, countless lives were saved.

Tim is a good man and a good friend.

## Meet Our Award Winners

---

### **Roger Eschliman, Winner of the** **Edward J. O'Neill Volunteer of the Year Award** **By Bennie Shobe, Jr.**

After the 2012 Nebraska Caucuses, Roger Eschliman began volunteering with the Lancaster County Democratic Party and there has seldom been a more gracious and willing volunteer.

Last year Roger made phone calls for the Lincoln City Council coordinated campaign, as well as for the individual candidates' campaigns. He made phone calls numerous times at the Nebraska Democratic Party for various events and has already started volunteering for Chuck Hasebrook for Governor.

Roger has done all of this while also serving as the Secretary for the Lancaster County Democratic Party and staffing the office several days a week.

His hard work, dedication to Democratic politics and willingness to do anything to help the party is what makes him this year's winner of the Edward J. O'Neill Award Volunteer of the Year Award.





## Meet Our Award Winners

---

### **Beatty Brasch Receives the Hank Balters Outreach Award at Patriots' Dinner**

**By DiAnna Schimek**

Beatty is the most value-oriented person I know. She is absolutely passionate about making the lives of low-income people better. She has worked a better part of her adult life, often pro bono, to that end. To Beatty, no one is a stranger, and she has a huge network of friends and advocates in the community. She is a tireless worker and strives to help those less fortunate, whether monetarily or just by trying to help those in difficult situations. She and her husband John have been known to befriend those in prison, those who are new to our community, those who are hungry and in need, and those who have nowhere else to turn.

Beatty's sense of humor and love of fun and practical jokes would probably lead her to tell you that she has never been accused of a felony except by her closest friends. Her husband would tell you she couldn't be trusted with a checkbook because she would give it all away. And she can't be trusted with other people's property because she would give it to someone who needs it more (Robin Hood mentality). You have to watch your wallet around Beatty because she likes to raise money for people who need it more. Despite these disclaimers, Beatty is someone who exudes integrity and adherence to honesty in relationships and in life.

Beatty hates discrimination and finds politics as a way to influence the lives of low-income people. She doesn't believe low-income people should be marginalized or dismissed.

One of the first things Beatty did after she and John moved here in 1969 was to become active in the community immediately. When she found that people charged with misdemeanors were sitting in jail because they couldn't afford attorneys, she helped found Justice, Inc. Eventually the group was successful in convincing policymakers to provide legal assistance.

In 1972, Beatty became the organizer for the Lancaster County Democratic party. Her responsibilities were numerous, but one of the unique things she did was to write a campaign manual for local candidates that gave those interested a roadmap to public office. This experience led to her nomination and selection as Lancaster County Deputy Election Commissioner when Kay Orr was governor and, eventually, as Election Commissioner when Bob Kerrey was elected governor in 1982. During her tenure, new voting machines, Optical Scanners, were chosen which have stood the test of time. More voters were registered when additional voting sites were made available, and a new culture of service was created when Beatty chose to emphasize that

voters were "customers" who should all be welcomed and treated fairly.

In 1974, Beatty was asked by local churches to be the organizer for providing goods and services to the tribes who were in Lincoln for the Wounded Knee trials. She did that very successfully for the duration of the trials. *(See sidebar on page 13.)*

Beatty managed Helen Boosalis' two campaigns for mayor of Lincoln in 1975 and again in 1979. Both were successful and required great organizational skills. Beatty delivered.

Over the years, Beatty has been active in so many charitable and civic causes it would be hard to mention them all. At present she is on the boards of the YWCA, Nebraska Appleseed, the Human Services Federation, and the Centro de las Americas. She has also served on the Lincoln/Lancaster Commission on the Status of Women Commission and was Secretary of the Friends of the Commission. She was President of the Directors of the United Way Agency Director's Board.

Just a few of her awards are the YWCA Tribute to Women Award, the Alice Paul Award given by the LLCWC, Voices for Children's "Super Star for Kids Award," the Floyd Taylor Award given by the Indian Center, and the Interfaith Council Award. She was recently nominated for and became a fellow of The Purpose Prize of the Encore Careers Program. John and Beatty attend numerous charitable fundraisers and have been generous contributors to many in the community.

In 1987, Beatty headed in a new direction and took the position of Executive Director of the Lincoln Action Program (LAP) where she stayed until 2002. During her tenure at LAP, she had an opportunity to expand opportunities for low-income people and Beatty took the challenge with phenomenal success. When she took over management of LAP, there were 14 employees and a budget of less than a half-million dollars. When she left, there were 175 employees and an \$8 million budget.

Along the way, she started after-school programs, Early Head Start, mentoring programs, computer classes, and food and clothing programs, among many others. She also insisted that each client who came in the door be offered a cup of coffee and be made to feel welcome.

After several moves over the years, Beatty led a successful effort to build new facilities on West O Street that would provide space for the growing number of programs and clients. Beatty spent evenings scouring the Federal Register for grants for her programs and her clients.

During the time she was at the Lincoln Action Program, Beatty became aware of a program called "Gifts in Kind" which made all kinds of products (e.g. personal care items, household supplies, winter clothing, and school supplies) available to agencies to give to clients. The problem was that there were too many products for any one agency to use so, when she left

LAP, she started a new organization called Center for People in Need which instituted Truckloads of Help, based on the “Gifts in Kind” program. Through this program, Beatty turns \$1 into a \$100 worth of goods. On average, the Center purchases merchandise worth \$22 million a year. These truckloads of merchandise, in turn, are sorted by volunteers and made available to public agencies and tribal reservations throughout the state.

It didn’t take long for this program to require more space, so the Center now owns a huge warehouse on North 27th Street in Lincoln. The space has given the Center for People in Need room for many more programs. As many as one hundred low-income people are employed per day. There are skill-building programs for unemployed and underemployed people. There are back-to-school backpack programs, Thanksgiving Dinner and Christmas gift selection programs, and neighborhood food distribution programs. The Center partners with other groups to bring as many services to the Center as possible. They also offer low cost printing services to other community agencies and have a very effective public policy advocacy group that has been organized since the Center started. There are always new things happening at the Center for People in Need.

Beatty Brasch exemplifies high standards and has spent most of her adult years making our community a better place to live. She has helped more people, especially those most in need, than other people would be able to help in a hundred lifetimes. By advocating for low income people and providing a hand up, she has had a terrific impact on Lincoln and indeed in the state. Not one to solicit thanks or recognition, nevertheless Beatty has always realized the importance of thanking people and acknowledging their efforts. I remember the Phoenix awards instituted at LAP when she was director. It was a public ceremony to recognize people who had overcome tremendous odds to make a success of their lives. It was always a very inspirational ceremony. I think it is past time to give Beatty the recognition and thanks for all her hard work and efforts. She truly is an inspiration to others.

### **The Wounded Knee Trials United States v. Banks and Means**

In 1973 civil rights activists led by the American Indian Movement occupied Wounded Knee, South Dakota on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation for 71 days. During this time one FBI agent was paralyzed and two protesters were killed.

When it was determined that a fair trial would be impossible in South Dakota, the federal trials were moved to other states. Some consolidated cases were moved to Lincoln, Nebraska in 1974 where Judge Warren Urbom presided. Urbom was praised for his fair and compassionate treatment of nearly 150 activists and his respect for Native American cultural traditions.

Of the six activists found guilty, charges of assaulting a federal officer and interfering with a federal officer were upheld but charges for most of the other activists were dismissed due to a lack of sufficient evidence.

### **Meet Our Award Winners**

---

#### **Rolf Shasteen, Winner of the Chair’s Award By John Yoakum**



Rolf Shasteen, a Lincoln lawyer, has been a supporter of the County Party and Democratic candidates for years.

Seven years ago Rolf stepped up and let us use a building he owned at his cost. In fact, I think he lost money on the deal. Having a physical presence at an address has allowed the County Party to grow in many ways.

Rolf Shasteen is a native Nebraskan who graduated from the University of Nebraska –Lincoln College of Law. He is a member of the Nebraska State Bar Association and the Nebraska Association of Trial Attorneys.

Rolf practices in the area of personal injury and trial law with a special emphasis on workers’ compensation. He understands the needs of blue collar workers as he has been a member of the local laborers and hot roofers union. He has also been a bartender, waiter, brick tender, dump truck driver and machine tool operator.

Rolf is very deserving of this award.

## Meet Our Award Winners

---

### **Steve Kangior, Winner of the Labor Award By Bennie Shobe, Jr.**

When I think about an individual currently volunteering for the Lancaster County Democratic Party who represents Union Labor, I think of Steve Kangior with IBEW 265. Steve started volunteering with the County Party several years ago by walking slate cards door to door. What I should say is by “biking” slate cards from door to door. Every election cycle, Steve would stop by the office and pick up bundles (plural) of slate cards and head out to distribute them.

What Steve would do is drive to the neighborhood or precinct he was “walking” and then jump on his bicycle and ride to each house. During the 2012 election cycle, I don’t think there were many people who distributed more slate cards than Steve did.

Steve’s support for the County Party is not limited to the weeks just before elections. The only person working in the office more hours than Executive Committee members is Steve Kangior. If there is something that needs to be lifted, toted, folded, mailed or moved, as in the entire office earlier this last month, Steve is ready to help out.

From helping to set up tables and chairs for the County Central Committee meetings at the IEBW 265 Union Hall to staffing a booth for one of the several Democratic events, you can count on Steve to help out. Late last year, Steve agreed to serve as Co-Legislative District Leader for LD 26.

I know we can count on Steve to represent the Lancaster County Democratic Party and the IEBW Local 265 in a positive way. That is why this year’s Labor Award Winner is Steve Kangior.



## Meet Our Award Winners

---

### **Megan Mikolajczyk, Winner of The Donna Karnes Young Democrat of the Year Award By Bennie Shobe, Jr.**

Last spring, on very short notice, Meg Mikolajczyk entered the Lincoln City Council race when we needed someone to complete the slate of candidates.

Using the County Party offices as her headquarters, Meg got her campaign up and running in short order. She was able to rally a wide range of volunteers and energized dozens of high school and college students to work for her campaign while also introducing them to the Lancaster County Democratic Party.

Meg continues to serve the Lancaster County Democratic Party as a member of the Fundraising Committee and has agreed to serve as Co-Legislative District Leader for LD 26.

Her support of the County Party and involvement in the community will be a positive influence in Lincoln and Lancaster County for years to come. That is why this year’s winner of the Donna Karnes Young Democrat of the Year Award goes to Megan Mikolajczyk.

## The Watchful Citizen

---

In case you haven’t discovered the County Party TV show on community access TV, check us out! The show airs on Time-Warner Cable Channel 13, at 10:30 p.m. on Tuesdays, 6:00 p.m. on Wednesdays, and 12:30 p.m. on Saturdays. We have an interview style format. Guests are Democrats chosen by party leaders, sometimes because they’re politically well-known but occasionally they are just ordinary citizens who have a message to give their audience. We are currently featuring candidates for office, concentrating on local races such as NRD and the legislature.

Check our video archive on Youtube:

<http://www.youtube.com/LancasterCountyDems>



## Columnist

---

### Odds and Ends in this Year's Election!

By Rick Boucher

I don't know what to make of it. Are there any Nebraska candidates for state or federal office jostling for the Latino and Hispanic vote? I haven't seen mention of a record or even rhetoric that might draw Hispanic support. As Democrats, we can paint the Nebraska Grand Old Party (NGOP) as hostile to Hispanic, Latino and other minorities by their tough language on immigration, denying a vote on Medicaid expansion and even skirmishes over voting rights.



Friends in Lincoln and Omaha not known for hyperbole say Republican Mayor Jean Stothert is reaching out and showing concern with minority issues. She has favorable long-term prospects with the growing minority demographic. Are any campaigns tweeting in Spanish or do they have a Spanish-language website? The silence of the NGOP's leading campaigns on minority voters sure seems like they don't even acknowledge a need to adjust their "pinstripes" a wee bit. NGOP claims Hispanics share many of the same positions on abortion, low taxes and minimal regulations. If that's true, it might be enough unless Democrats can meet, greet and let minority voters know they are needed to make a real difference in Nebraska.

Hispanics and Southeast Asians own many small businesses in Nebraska and they appreciate keeping the money they earn. Minority voters might be up for grabs if both parties ignore or are indifferent to every person or group's desire to "be needed." Republicans like Senator Charlie Janssen should lose Hispanics on both rhetoric and the issues. The evolution of Governor Heinemann's position on Medicaid expansion from "No" to "Hell no" should be enough to mobilize Democrats to get out the minority vote in every corner of the state.

I have no idea what percentage of Nebraska's voters are Hispanic or Latino who identify as Democrats, but I hope the County and State Parties do. Nationally, 21 percent identify as Republican, while in red states like Texas the percentage is higher with 27.

Religion might play an important role in the race for the State's top spot—Hispanic, Latino and Southeast Asian voters are largely Catholic. I believe Auditor Foley will be the Republican nominee. He is a devout Catholic and will draw from around the state including Omaha,

Lincoln and the Interstate 80 corridor. He merits serious consideration for many reasons including his faith and depth of devotion.

Democrats can attract moderate Republicans and Independents on a handful of other issues—XL Pipeline, Medicaid expansion, Death Penalty and Prison Reform. On Medicaid expansion, many NGOP members will side with the clarity, dedication and bona fides of Republican Health Committee Chairperson Kathy Campbell. Her popularity is well deserved for her outstanding career in public service. On the Democratic side, Jane Kleebs has brought Democrats, Republicans and Independents to break bread over XL Pipeline versus the sanctity of water, land, air and quality of life.

Senator Ashford has melded a similar "justice" constituency with prison reform and the death penalty. Both issues were elevated in stature for NGOP members by Auditor Foley's qualified support for "economic" reasons—no cost containment, guaranteed inefficiencies, delay, and the absence of any light at the end of the tunnel.

It's a great year to be registered voter and a more than casual observer of Nebraska politics!

The real differences around the world today are not between Jews and Arabs; Protestants and Catholics; Muslims, Croats, and Serbs. The real differences are between those who embrace peace and those who would destroy it. Between those who look to the future and those who cling to the past. Between those who open their arms and those who are determined to clench their fists.

— Bill Clinton



*Lancaster County  
Democratic Party  
P.O. Box 83213  
Lincoln NE 68501-3213  
402-476-2268*

[www.LancasterCountyDemocrats.org](http://www.LancasterCountyDemocrats.org)

Printed In-House with Donated Labor

**Return Service Requested**

PRSR STD U.S. Postage PAID Permit #1067 Lincoln, NE
---

## ***Join the Lancaster County Democrats today!***

Your membership helps support party activities including GOTV efforts, candidate support services, political forums and the *Lancaster County Democrat*.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$15 Student/Limited Income

\_\_\_\_\_ \$30 Basic Membership

Return this coupon to the Lancaster County Democratic Party, PO Box 83213, Lincoln NE 68501-3213.

Make check or money order payable to Lancaster County Democratic Party or charge to:

\_\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_\_ MasterCard # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer to get my newsletter (please check one): \_\_\_\_\_ via e-mail or \_\_\_\_\_ via US mail.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I would also like to volunteer: \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare Mailings \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Banking \_\_\_\_\_ GOTV \_\_\_\_\_