

## (Progress) Notes from **National Meeting Green Party, Tucson AZ**

Delegates: Craig Bergland, David Curtis, Charles Imboden

GPUS needs financial assistance. Fund-raising efforts are not keeping pace with the level of spending at the National level. All the States need to consider how they can best help sustain the national version of the Party. I think I heard GPUS is about \$10K short per month. So that would mean the States need to raise about \$300 each to send to US per month. (If the states were of equal size). They passed the hat, I gave GPUS \$50 on behalf of NV.

Utah has a lingering dispute involving two entities both wishing to have a place/vote at the National level. Both sides are asking for an investigation to determine what happened to create the situation and how best to resolve it. Delegates saw a need to know how to address when States have multiple entities seeking affiliation with GPUS.

I attended a workshop on non-violent communication techniques. The facilitator asked for examples of issues people have had in State/Local meetings. I conveyed how it seemed that there is always at least one dominator type communicator at the meetings. Its not always the same person. Some times they just show up once and then at the next meeting it's a new dominator. The facilitator gave an example of non-judgmental observation statements: John is speaking at X decibels. Rather than: John is too loud. Another example was of trying not to see people as enemies. I'll make up an example: suppose W attended a green meeting. In theory, we should still be able to have a green meeting, even with W present. (It would help us determine how much we believe in non-violence). The facilitator (a self proclaimed progressive Democrat) was surprised at how much violent communication she saw in Peace groups. I presume this has a lot to do with anger motivation.

I also attended a workshop on radical restructuring of the built environment. The facilitator suggests this should involve redistribution of wealth and coming up with completely new visions for the built environment. I was surprised to find myself advocating salvaging suburbia to some extent. I used the example of Wright's Usonia which was basically the suburbs but included food producing gardens within the suburban context. Co-op gardens. I am theorizing that if more of us can define home-based work, there is less of a need to abandon our built things. We will need to take them off the grid though, which major solar projects are already doing.

Craig Bergland attended a workshop on Immigration issues, and how best to respond to arguments on this matter. The key to this issue seems to be finding the common Humanity of natives and immigrants. The Friday evening Pima dinner featured AZ greens sharing stories of those who have died while attempting to walk to the US through the desert. There are ongoing humanitarian actions of placing drums of water in strategic places along the routes into the US. These drums are sometimes sabotaged by others in an attempt to thwart the watering efforts. After dinner the group walked to a ramada where the names of the dead are listed. Names were read from the wall.

The bulk of the plenary was spent hearing pronouncements of the dire financial condition of GP

National, committee reports and reports from states. US is currently budgeting around \$30K per month for its activities.

Candidates for Steering committee and other offices were elected. There was a **lengthy** explanation of the method used for voting. My reaction is that there are those among us that enjoy complicated. It was not clear to me why we couldn't just have a show of hands for yes kind of deal. Anyhow, officers were elected.

NV sat in on some California delegate meetings. This was well received by California delegates and looks like it could lead to collaborative approaches to future events. NV (CB) is hoping to attend a GP meetings in Tahoe regarding shared resource issues. One of the CA delegates gave Craig a campaign donation of \$100.

Craig gave a speech to the press as most/all candidates did. I believe it was videotaped, hopefully we can get a copy of it.

One of the questions that occurs to me was whether the GP **should** run a presidential candidate. If we are grass roots, shouldn't we mostly act locally? Shouldn't we mostly focus on local offices first? What's the point of using a fairly small, loose, underfunded group to attempt such a big deal as electing a president? Some people spoke about how significant it would be to have even one Senator who is Green, or a Congressperson or three.

I gave a NV State report. (They gave each State two minutes...) I spoke of Craig's campaign. The perpetual issue of Yucca mountain and how it was every State's issue. I spoke of the optimism of the major Solar projects happening in Nevada. I spoke of our small numbers of active greens and how we hoped to best use the few people who were showing up to meetings. I spoke of our potential use of the First Friday event for spreading green ideas.

Food Not Bombs had a table in the Courtyard. The founder of FNB was well aware of the issues happening in LV with the City's ill conceived ban on food sharing in public parks. He said he has been speaking with Gail Sacco in LV a lot on the phone.

I met the director of the (name) school that is housed in the basement of the Historic Y. The Y is a significant resource for Tucson. It has in excess of \$800K annual budget (more than double GPUS). The school provided GP access to over a dozen laptop computers so we could have internet capability during the events.

Cliff (name) Congressional candidate from Connecticut made some convincing arguments for legalizing drugs as a way of taking the profit out of them for dealers. He argued the money being spent on the "drug war" is wasted, and legalizing would accomplish much more with much less money. The only downside I could see is: would I want a heroin addict flying my plane? And it might mean even more advertisements, if that is even possible. At the Superbowl in addition to beer commercials we would also be subjected to marijuana ads, cocaine ads, heroin ads etc.

It was humbling to hear some of the tasks other states were attempting. **Illinois requires parties to run a full slate of candidates.** I was so impressed hearing they had a full slate, then I learned it wasn't an option not to...Illinois also got challenged by the Democrats to a lengthy signature verification process to get ballot access.

In New York the signature requirement for access is many tens of thousands of signatures compared to NV's couple hundred or three. They are uncertain if they will get it done.

The more I get into this the more I understand why third parties have stayed small.

end notes

David Curtis, Nevada Green Party delegate, August 2006