

## Familiar faces to lead Campbell Co. Dems



Written by

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Two familiar faces have taken the helm of the Campbell County Democratic Party.

Fort Thomas attorney Paul Whalen has been elected party chairman, and Linda Nesbitt of Cold Spring has been elected vice chairwoman. Both have been involved with the party for several years.

"I'm looking forward to the challenge," Whalen said. "I think we as Democrats have some good opportunities, particularly with (Gov.) Steve Beshear at the top of the ticket (in November). I think he'll do very well up here."

Campbell County is one of the few Democratic strongholds left in Northern Kentucky, with five Democrats in countywide office and two holding statehouse seats.

Several will be on the 2012 ballot, and Whalen said their re-election will be a priority.

But his immediate goals are to get Democrats to the polls this fall and get more people involved in the party, with Republicans nipping at its heels in registered voters.

"I think you're going to see more emphasis on turnout and voter registration," Whalen said. "But the main focus is going to be re-electing Steve Beshear and the rest of the ticket."

Whalen, 56, is an attorney who works for the federal government. (He said the Hatch Act allows him to be party chair, but bans him from discussing specifics about his job in the course of party duties.)

He has been involved with the party for several years, chiefly on campaigns, and heads the progressive group Campbell County Change.

Whalen also served on the Fort Thomas school board for 12 years, followed by a term on the state Board of Education from 2000 to 2004.

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Nesbitt, 61, recently retired from Northern Kentucky University. She has served on the party's executive committee for several years.

Her focus has been in communications: expanding the party's online presence via social media like Facebook, and revamping how the party communicates with its members.

"We're ready to roll up our sleeves and continue the work. We've got a good team, and we're looking forward to this election cycle," she said.

Nesbitt succeeds Jim Cole of Southgate as vice chair.

Whalen succeeds Sue Orth of Cold Spring. She stepped down for personal reasons last week after 10 years on the executive committee, nearly three of them as chair.

"I enjoyed my time as the Democratic Party chair and am proud of the work that we accomplished during my tenure," Orth said. "We have brought the party on-line and have implemented many of the new forms of social networking needed to continue to build the party base.

"The page has turned and its time to start a new chapter. Paul and Linda both know that they have my full support. I know they will do a great job."

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