



New Paltz Nation Editorial Staff Endorses Green Party Candidate Malachy McCourt for Governor of New York State. Read our exclusive interview with Malachy McCourt, 74, writer, commentator, peace activist and actor and you'll see why NPN is backing McCourt in this year's Gubernatorial race. He's irresistibly charming, bright and politically salient. And he sings luscious Irish ballads to boot!

by [Erin Quinn](#) Posted on 6-21-2006

If you have the occasion to call Green Party New York State Gubernatorial Candidate Malachy McCourt, 74, — also a famous commentator, actor, author of eight books, and brother of Pulitzer Prize winning Frank McCourt—you'll be in for a treat whether he answers or not. If he does answer, you're like to hear a haughty Irish brogue that responds, "Tis McCourt here!."

If he's not at home, then you're still in for a haughty Irish answering machine message that says, among other things, "Don't waste your vote. Give it to me and the Green Party! May Blessings be on your cranium and one day at a time."

Yes, Sir Malachy has entered the race for Governor against Democratic candidate Elliot Spitzer and Republican challenger John Faso, both of whom he refers to as "Republicrats."

Although McCourt did vote for Green Party Presidential Candidate Ralph Nader in 2000, he said that by 2004 "Bush had gotten to me. So I worked for Kerry and I voted for him. But I'm pissed at him and I'm pissed at Hillary! I just spoke with Kerry's sister yesterday because I heard John's decided to run again. But I can't back him this time. No more, says I. I will not vote for the lesser of two evils and I will not settle for just hollerin'; that's why I accepted the invitation to run for political office on behalf of the Green Party."

It all started when McCourt, who does a show every so often on Sunday mornings for WBAI had a women call in and tell him that he ought to run for the New York Governorship. "I laughed and pooh-poohed the idea," he said. "But she persisted. And that got me thinking that it was time for me to stop hollerin' and get out there and do something. I realized that over the years the lesser of two evils syndrome had grown worse and it had not worked. "I'm going to stop this!" I said to myself."

McCourt has an analogy he likes to use, well, he has many analogies he likes to use as well as quotes from writers and poets, since he is primarily a writer and philosopher. "It's like deciding to sweep your side of the street. You sweep it clean. You don't sweep it over to the other side of the street and mess up someone else's sidewalk. Then maybe the person on your left or on your right will decide to sweep up their section of the sidewalk. And soon, your neighbor across the street decides to sweep his stoop as well and before you know it, everyone's sweeping!"

A longtime peace activist, McCourt's main platform consists of ending the war and protecting our environment. "The two are linked. All development starts with destruction and all war is destruction. We need to resolve our differences and difficulties by peaceful methods. There is never a winner in a war, there is never a victor and there is no such thing as a *just* war because in all wars, the majority of the people who are killed are innocent."

As for the environment, McCourt says that "the earth itself has a limited capacity to survive our degradation. We are sucking the life blood out of the earth. Oil is a lubricant of the earth and we are sucking it out and converting it into toxic emissions that we explode into the air. It's like someone who keeps sticking a needle in your arm to suck out the blood. Well, one day you will run out of blood and die... War is not a federal issue, the environment is not a federal issue. These are world-wide issues that do not end at the state border. And while our Exxon executives can still shepherd their children to little pieces of paradise or exclusive neighborhoods around the world, they too, one day, will suffer from our foul air and foul water."

McCourt's solution on a state-wide level? First, he wants all government vehicles, public vehicles to use alternative fuel. "We begin at the government level where we can do something if good, moral and principled people are elected. We require that all government transportation, whether cars, tractors, snowplows, dump trucks, school buses...run on alternative fuels. Nature in her generosity has provided us with sun, wind and water, which used judiciously can cut our oil consumption way, way down."

A champion of organic farming and healthy eating, McCourt would like the New York State government to provide subsidies to all farmers who "rotate their crops, use organic means of growing their produce and refrain from any chemical spraying."

He also would like to see all public schools "serve only organic food. Our children are suffering from the pollutants in our air and our water but they are also suffering from sugar and white flour and starch. We need to serve them only organic foods in our schools so that their minds and bodies can learn and grow healthy."

Beyond healthy school lunches, McCourt would like to require "anyone who does business with the state to offer healthy, organic alternatives. All those McDonalds and Kentucky Fried Junkie restaurants along our Thruway rest-stops would be required to offer organic alternatives and vegetarian alternatives to those traveling with children who do not want to put that rubbish in their bodies or their off-springs bodies! And I also want to find away to get rid of those garish arches that ruin the eyesight! We must take them down."

As for the National Guard, McCourt would like to demilitarize them and instead put them to work "guarding our State against corporate polluters."

"I'd like our national guard to patrol, investigate all of the industrial and chemical plants in our state to make sure that they are not polluting our air and our water. And we

could then turn those armories into wonderful places for Senior citizens to be served hot, healthy meals and convert the grounds into play areas for children. We could take all of the steel from their jets and tanks, trucks, Hummers and guns and recycle them. We could turn those buildings into joyful places for our citizens.”

When it comes to the Rockefeller Drug Laws, McCourt is quick to quote Mark Twain. “If that is the law then the law is an ass!”

“Justice must be done here,” he said referring to the antiquated drug laws which place the same penalties and jail time for marijuana users as heroin dealers.

“These are sweeping, unjust laws that penalize someone who has sold a bit of marijuana the same as someone who has sold a ton of heroin. They are equal in the eyes of the law. Well, those laws must be repudiated and discretion returned to the judges to look at each individual case. And we must help fund and encourage rehabilitation for those citizens who are addicted to drugs. It is much cheaper to rehabilitate a drug user than it is to keep them in prison for \$50,000 a year only to have them return to society with the same problems they had going in.”

As for education, McCourt would like to inculcate our society with the age-old veneration of public school teachers that he believes has been lost and degraded by a cultural much more impressed by actors, ball players and the salaries of CEO’s than of our teachers and librarians.

“How many times have you heard someone say that he or she is ‘only a teacher’ or ‘only a librarian?’ Do you ever hear people say, ‘He is only a professional baseball player or only a famous actor? Why in God’s name do we have such respect and adoration for someone that dresses up in pajamas and swings a bat and can run faster than I can? Because he makes \$80 million a year? Someone has to enlighten human kind that our teachers and our librarians and our social workers are what help to build an educated, just, and productive society. Those wonderful people who set out with a passion for educating and illuminating the minds of our young. They are heroes!”

McCourt is as outraged by National Politics as he is by his challengers positions on the death penalty [which Spitzer supports] and abortion [which Faso opposes.]

“We have these yahoos and wankers in the White House encouraging a culture of violence by their pre-emptive wars and their talk of ‘Bring it on’ and ‘We’re going to win this war’ and we’re going to ‘smoke them out of their holes!’ Well, if that’s the message coming from our leaders—that it is somehow just and morale to bomb the women and children of Iraq, then why is it not okay for a man to beat up his wife or child? Our president says that he abides by the 10 Commandments. But he does not! Thou Shalt Not Kill is fairly succinct wouldn’t you say? What part of it doesn’t Mr. Bush understand?”

As for his Democratic rival, New York State Attorney General Elliot Spitzer he said this. “What makes a prosecutor, a man whose job it is to punish people qualified to

be governor of New York State? And someone, who supports State sanctioned murder. They're saying now that anyone who kills a police officer should face the death penalty. As if that would somehow bring the victim back? We all know that. The moment you inject the culprit with the lethal serum the victim will walk right through the door and say, 'I'm back!' My son Connor is a Police Sergeant with the NYPD and I've said and Diana [McCourt's wife] agrees, that it would do us not one bit of good, if Connor was murdered, to have the person that killed him murdered. What good could it possibly do? Murder is murder. And If I'm elected I'll make Elliot Spitzer my executioner. Because if you believe that the state should be in the business of cold blooded murder than you should be willing personally to give the injection!"

As for Faso, who is pro-choice, McCourt says that "When I'm elected Governor I will appoint him to scout for loving homes and families that are willing to take in all unwanted children."

What McCourt says he finds not only disturbing but outright absurd, is that the "two biggest issues facing our country, according to Senator Bill Frist, is gay marriage and flag burning. I know that many of our Congressmen, like me, wake up in the middle of the night, in a cold sweat worrying that there are two married gay men who are threatening to ruin our heterosexual marriages. They're outside my door with bats, ready to break-up my 40 year marriage to Diana!"

"As for flag burning, you know that the American Legion offers to burn your flag for you if it's been tattered. So I think that flags talk to each other. They're very sensitive and communicative and they whisper to each other, 'I sure hope that the American Legion burns me up instead of those radicals!'"

The Green Party has already seen a steep rise in registration since McCourt has entered the race. They need 50,000 votes for McCourt to secure ballot status again in New York State. But McCourt feels that his race will be victorious only "if the principals I subscribe to and the Green Party subscribes to are widely disseminated. I want you to know that I will listen to you and that your vote does count and that you should act on conscience and principles. If we don't win the race, we will still triumph!"

This colorful, witty and downright courageous political rebel will be peddling his platform and his principles all the way to election day, while still spending time with his family and granddaughter and anchoring down in Woodstock NY for the summer.