

The Township Democrat

The Official Newsletter of the Winfield Township Democratic Organization

Volume 1, Issue 1

www.winfielddems.org

Autumn 2006

Conversations With the Township Chair

By **Susan M. Lubonovich**

WTDO Chair, and Pct. 30 Committeeman

Welcome to the inaugural edition of The Township Democrat: our renamed, redesigned and resurrected Newsletter, home of the Winfield Township Democratic Organization. It is hoped that this is the first of many future quarterly publications. This Newsletter is a reflection of a keystone Township, the nexus of three Congressional Districts (6th, 13th, 14th), the entirety of both a State Representative's (95th) and County Board Member's (6th) Districts - and we have the people to elect to these offices, but we need your help! Please, take a moment of your time and meet these folks in the following pages of our Newsletter. They are people who are deserving of your consideration this Fall - as you make your own decisions in the privacy of your local polling location.

As Chair, I believe in the expression of the full spectrum of Democratic thoughts, ideas and values. I also know that we as a nation, as a people, have suffered under a catastrophic conservatism that carries with it an utter contempt for our government and its purpose (remember, of the people, by the people, and for the people?). Unfortunately, their hatred of government has not stopped these folks from collecting a paycheck, at our expense, but it has also allowed them to kill us with complete and utter incompetence (Iraq, Katrina, and every safety net ever set up over the last seventy years and, under Bush, shut down either by Executive Order, negligent appointees, or by a studious malignancy of ignorance and contempt). Have you ever lived through a longer 5 years? We have an opportunity to help change the environment in our Keystone Township. We can break through the culture of greed that has enveloped Corporate America and dominated our lives. We can stand up and say "NO" to the You're-On-Your-Own (YOYO) Republican culture. We are not on our own -

WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER! As Ben Franklin said, "If we don't hang together, we will surely hang separately". And we must hang together and work hard to elect our candidates. Read about them, support them and help bring about the change so desperately needed in our Township, in our County, in our State, in our Country: Vote Democratic - Vote!

And now, as Chair, comes one of my greatest challenges. I need to ask for your financial support. We have many regular and continuing expenses. These include: hosting our Monthly meetings (the third Wednesday of the month at Bowling Green, 30w150 Roosevelt Rd, West Chicago at 7:00 pm); informing our membership of our activities through our Meeting card notices and our new quarterly Newsletter (printing and postage). We have bought ads in local newspapers to invite the general public to events and to bring in more membership. We also have expenses participating in and showing the Township colors at our three local parades (Warrenville, West Chicago and Winfield Good Old Days). We need your support to continue to exist as the LOCAL, "grass roots" arm of the Democratic Party in our own neighborhoods. We receive no financial support from the National, State or County Party Organizations. Please HELP. Join the **"KICK IN FOR THE QUARTER"** Club! Can't come to a Meeting, can't march in a Parade, want to know what is happening, receive the Newsletter? - Please consider a quarterly donation to the Winfield Township Democratic Organization and support the **"KICK IN FOR THE QUARTER"** Campaign. Become a Charter Member. Support your LOCAL Democratic Party Organization. Help us build a stronger organization to support our local Democratic candidates and elect some real representation on our Township and County Boards.

Please mail your contribution to the WTDO at P.O. BOX 224 Warrenville, IL. 60555

The Township needs you. The Repubs will not be defeated by rhetoric alone.

CALENDAR

WTDO FALL BOWLING PARTY

OCTOBER 21 –
7:30PM
BOWLING GREEN CENTER
30 W 150 ROOSEVELT RD.
WEST CHICAGO

MEET YOUR CANDIDATES

Appetizer Buffet;
Soft Drinks;
Cash Bar;
BOWLING
(See p. 4)

EARLY VOTING

OCTOBER 16-
NOVEMBER 4

* WINFIELD TOWNSHIP OFFICE
130 ARBOR AVE.
WEST CHICAGO

* GRACE CHURCH OF DUPAGE
27W344 GALUSHA AVE.
Warrenville

ELECTION DAY

TUESDAY,
NOVEMBER 7
7:00AM-
7:00PM.

John Laesch: Formidable Challenger

Democrat for US Congress Dist. 14

By Susan M. Lubonovich

WTDO Chair, and Pct. 30 Committeeman

John Laesch, Democratic candidate for the 14th Congressional District, is a clear-eyed, resolutely Progressive Democrat. He faces a gargantuan opponent in Dennis Hastert, the most powerful Republican running in this Fall's midterm elections. At the risk of being over-confident, this writer states that Mr. Laesch is unequivocally up to the challenge.

His background is impressive - the son of Missionaries, he was raised in Monrovia, Liberia. There, he witnessed first-hand "abject poverty and its destructive effect on human beings and their society". He looks at life through "the lens of economic and social justice". John served as a

(See **Laesch**, p. 7)

Duckworth Eager to Lead

Dist. 6 Democratic Candidate Brings it All Back Home

By Barry Dredze

Pct. 18 Committeeman

Tammy Duckworth visited Winfield for an open-house on Sunday August 20, arriving in an E4-fueled Ford F150 pickup truck, which bodes well for energy and environmental concerns having a legitimate voice in the campaign. Exiting the bio-fueled pickup, Duckworth gets around by wheelchair or prosthetics, which bodes well for Iraq, healthcare, and veterans' concerns having a legitimate voice in our next US Congress.

It makes a certain amount of sense that Tammy Duckworth's campaign for Illinois US 6th Congressional District Representative tends to attract significant attention over the Iraq War. The story is increasingly well-known how Duckworth lost both her legs when the helicopter she piloted with the Illinois National Guard was shot down in Iraq. Yet much of Duckworth's campaign touches upon the greater notion of public service. At a time when the political trend toward deregulation and privatization has led to an environment of diminished safety standards for mine workers, sell-outs of public lands for resource extraction, and sweetheart deals for energy corporations, it is

(See **Duckworth**, p. 6)

Joe Shannon

Q&A with the Democratic Candidate for Congress - 13th District

By Frank Malley

Pct. 15 Committeeman

Frank Malley caught up with Joe Shannon in Warrenton on the campaign trail for 13th US Congressional District Representative, and submitted the following summary of the candidate's comments - eds.

What caused him to run for 13th District Representative?

Joe Shannon's family has a tradition of public service. When George Bush was elected for a second time, Joe Shannon felt he could not leave problems in our country up to "other people". In lock step with the rest of the Republican Congress, Judy Biggert has taken the country from a budgetary surplus to record debt and has cut Medicare, Medicaid, and student loans. With wages stagnant and with energy and health care costs going through the roof, the Republicans have stopped making America work for the middle class.

What are the major issues in this election?

First, health care must be made more affordable, and this is not achieved (for example) by creating a senior pharmaceutical program that forbids the government to negotiate prices with the pharmaceutical companies. Second, oil companies must be kept from engaging in price gouging and from continuing to receive government subsidies. Energy legislation should be oriented toward alternative sources of energy. Third, we need to make college more affordable, and this is not achieved by cutting student loans by \$12 billion. Soaring costs in health care, energy, and education are essentially taxes on the average family.

What is his analysis of the war in Iraq?

The administration decided to invade Iraq even though there was no link with the events of 9/11 and even though the administration had no plan for the peace after the invasion. Bush Sr. went into Kuwait with hundreds of thousands of troops, but George W. Bush went into Iraq itself with 100,000 soldiers, many of whom lacked necessary body armor. Iraq has now descended into civil war. When Joe Shannon arrives in Congress, he will lead the demand for the administration to finally present a real plan for this war.

What specifically does he offer to the voters of the 13th District?

(See **Shannon**, p. 7)

Together For Enger

Gulf War I Vet Competes for State House 95th

By Dirk Enger

Democratic Candidate for 95th Dist. State Representative

"Together we can make a difference"

These words say it all about what our campaign is about. I am Dirk Enger, the appointed Democratic Candidate for District 95. This District covers Parts of Wheaton, Winfield, Warrenville, West Chicago, Naperville, North Aurora, Geneva and Batavia. This District has seen the loss of 30,000 jobs in the past 5 years. The poverty rate has risen from 3.8% to 5%. Property taxes are increasing so rapidly that we are pricing folks out of their homes and retirees are being forced to go back and get low paying jobs just to survive. What has happened is plain and simple, a lack of accountability. Our elected state officials have lost touch with the needs and concerns of our District. When I am elected, there will be no doubt that I am in touch with and representing this district and its people. Our elected officials cannot just march in parades and attend county fairs and say that they know what is happening in this district. We need someone who will reach across the aisle and work together no matter what party label they wear. Then they can be part of the solution and not the problem. I will return to this district on a regular basis and attend city council meetings, county board meetings and educational board meetings. I plan to have town hall meetings and public forums to address points of concern from the citizens of my district.

Some of my plans as State Representative are to investigate plans to stop funding education solely from property taxes. We need a state funded education system. Our children are the building blocks of our future and they deserve better.

Another one of my issues is Veterans Benefits. I am a Desert Shield/Desert Storm Veteran who served my country twice in the USMC. It saddens me to see so many of our veterans forgotten. We have a history of VA hospital closings in our nation and this is unacceptable. I have worked for, and will continue to help, my fellow veterans. I am the Co-chairman of The Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans, which is due to open in October of 2006. We have made a huge bi-partisan step in getting help for this shelter and educating the public on the crisis of our veterans. We reached out to all of our elected federal officials and put the ugly side of politics aside, concentrated on the human factor and accomplished what was needed to get this shelter off the ground.

These are just a few of the issues that I am running on. When elected I will give all of you the respect and sincere dedication that you, as my employer, deserve. Our motto is "Together we can make a difference." I am asking for your vote, so that together we can make a difference. Please check out my website at www.enger4rep.org

God Bless You All,

Dirk Enger

Winfield Township Democratic Party Candidates

US Congress:

(6) **Tammy Duckworth**

(13) **Joe Shannon**

(14) **John Laesch**

Illinois House:

(95) **Dirk Enger**

County Board:

(4) **Richard Dunn**

(5) **Dan Bailey**

(6) **Fred Chavez**

(Write-In Candidate)

Forest Preserve Board:

(4) **Tom Grimston**

**"Never doubt
that a small
group of
thoughtful,
committed
citizens can
change the
world; indeed, it
is the only thing
that ever has."**

Margaret Mead

(Duckworth, cont'd from p. 2)

reassuring to have a viable candidate with tremendous respect for the public interest.

With a so-called unitary Republican White House riding roughshod over the legislature and judiciary, it is encouraging to hear Duckworth talk about congressional oversight of labor and environmental standards in international trade agreements. "This administration," she said "actually cut the budget for the office that goes after enforcement by 80% this past year. So we have been pursuing violations of trade agreements at 25% the rate that the Clinton administration pursued violations of trade agreements, and they didn't do a very good job to start off with."

When it comes to the federal budget, the candidate clearly recognizes the case of misplaced priorities since President Bush and some Republican Congressional leaders have expressed a strong interest in resuming their efforts to privatize Social Security. "I absolutely do not support privatization of Social Security, let's just make that clear from the beginning," Duckworth said. "We have a \$9 trillion debt and we're funding things like the war in Iraq and tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans because we're borrowing from the Social Security trust fund. First thing we can do is balance our budget. That'll help. If we can balance our budget Social Security will be solvent for another forty years."

Tammy Duckworth's father fell in love in, and with, Southeast Asia while serving in Vietnam. His work moved the family around the region, and when her father's company went bust, the furthest they could afford to travel back to the US was Hawaii. There Tammy finished high school and graduated from the University of Hawaii, and moved to Washington DC to earn a

Master's degree from George Washington University. She fell in love with the Midwest while working on an advanced degree in Southeast Asian Studies at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb.

Tammy Duckworth is quick to recognize the contrasts between the cities of her youth, like Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur, and the attraction and opportunity in this country. The traditional acceptance of immigration is something to be celebrated and guarded, and not something to be abused and exploited for political and financial gain. "I think having a guest worker program where you have some sort of ID card, or some way to verify a person's status, is important so that we can actually go after the people who continue to hire illegals and use temporary agencies and things like that to get around hiring Americans at fair wages."

Duckworth became a helicopter pilot in the Illinois National Guard because it was the only combat duty available to women. Although she has since questioned the wisdom of invading Iraq before the mission in Afghanistan was completed, she respected the legitimate orders from her Commander-in-Chief and has learned much from the view from her Army Blackhawk helicopter. "We need to continue to work with our allies," Duckworth said, recognizing the cooperation it took between the American and French delegations to the United Nations Security Council to reach the recent tenuous ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon. "We need to work with our partners, we need to work with our allies, and we need to work with the United Nations more fully, and that's going to be a long process. We lost a lot of respect from our allies and a lot of countries around the world when we invaded Iraq." If the Republicans want to raise questions about her patriotic

service, as they have been known to do when confronted with opposition to GOP policies, "they don't have a leg to stand on," she said, adding, "Well, neither do I." Duckworth laughed and continued, "I actually have three pair."

For a complete transcript of our interview with Tammy Duckworth visit www.winfielddems.org

Chavez Wages Write-In Campaign County Board Dist. 6

At press time, Fred Chavez had filed the necessary paperwork with the DuPage County Election Commission for a write-in candidacy in the race for District 6 DuPage County Board.

"I hated to see only one candidate running for office in the county," Chavez said. "That's what really bothered me. Enough was enough."

Chavez has been working as a Registered Diagnostic Medical Sonographer for 30 years. He has also owned and operated his own Medical Ultrasound business for several years. He is a veteran of the Army, having joined in 1967. He was trained as a Pershing Missile Computer repairman and Military Instructor.

As a member of the DuPage County Board serving the 6th District Fred Chavez will advocate for open government, environmental priorities and a more realistic approach toward property tax reform and responsible spending.

(Laesch, cont'd from p. 2)

Naval Intelligence Analyst in Bahrain. His performance was such, that he rose five ranks in three years. He is also a graduate of Illinois State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science in History, with minors in Political Science and Communications.

John believes very strongly that we have overstayed our welcome in Iraq. He states, "It is past time for us to get out and bring our heroes home. We have lost the trust of the Iraqi people. We have become an occupying force instead of a liberating force. We are building the largest Embassy in the world in Iraq".

I asked John what he would do when the Republicans began their hateful, lying attack campaigns. He stated quite firmly, "The untruth must be called out, the lie must be exposed". He further explained that we "must not answer with their language. We must use our own language, i.e., by invading Iraq, the Republicans showed they did not understand terrorism; they, in effect, grew terrorism. We must use our own language concerning the failure of this administration to secure our borders and our ports after 9/11".

We all acknowledge that border security is a part of our National Security. John has always opposed NAFTA. He realized, "it would lower wages and deteriorate working conditions for American and foreign workers alike". Since NAFTA passed, 28% of the Mexican population has been pushed into poverty. "NAFTA is the pipeline Big Business uses to leave and cheap labor travels to come in. What does a worker making \$5.00 a day with no benefits do with the prospect of making \$5.00 an hour with no benefits?" He crosses the border.

John strongly believes in a "Sweat Shop and Slave Labor Ban". The United States "will not trade with any country that uses sweat or slave labor and undermines worker rights, human rights, woman's rights and environmental standards."

When John is elected to the Congress from the 14th Congressional District, he would like to serve on the Educational and Workforce Committee; the Intelligence Select Committee; and the Veteran's Affairs Committee. I close with a quote from John Laesch:

"Every hard-working American should have the opportunity to provide for their family's safety, health and economic well-being. Economic security, National security and Health care are the three greatest concerns of the residents of Illinois' 14th Congressional District, and I will make finding a rational solution for these three issues my top priority in Washington, D.C."

(Shannon, Cont'd from p. 2)

Joe Shannon is himself a Naperville business owner and a father of five children. He wants to make sure that our government collects the taxes the country is owed. He cannot understand the logic or efficiencies of the seeming attempts of the administration to privatize the IRS. He wants people to be assured a dignified retirement. This means that pensions should be protected and be portable. Lucent has now been acquired by a foreign corporation. Will the pensions of Lucent workers be protected after this acquisition?

What should we be doing with regard to the global economy?

Despite tough talk by the Republicans, the Bush administration has a poor record in enforcement of immigration laws: in a recent year fining only 3 or 4 employers for employing undocumented workers, as compared to hundreds of fines by the previous administration. Also, we cannot keep putting new free trade agreements in place when the U.S. trade deficit is increasing.

What is the health of the American economy?

There is enormous pressure on the average person. Health care and energy costs are hugely inflating. There is clearly a feeling of insecurity in the country. Wages are stagnant. Congress has failed to raise the minimum wage. Our veterans, who have put their lives on the line for our country, are seeing their benefits constantly shortchanged by Congress. Many members of the National Guard are serving in Iraq while their families back home lack health insurance. Congress continues to fund "Bridges to Nowhere". Joe Shannon believes that any Congressional appropriation should be voted on by itself, not hidden in other bills.

Joe Shannon strongly believes that the American people have the will to do whatever is asked of us. We just need leadership that is sorely lacking in the administration and in the Republican Congress.

**"Tug on anything at all and you'll find it connected to everything else in the universe."
John Muir**

A Unionist's Perspective

By Doug May
Pct. 1 Committeeman

In the not too distant past, Labor unions were a strong political force. Most workers were unionized, especially in manufacturing. This created an opportunity for people without expensive schooling to rise into the middle class. There were huge gains made in the standard of living during the 50's, 60's and 70's for almost all workers.

With the change to Republican control of the government, this "golden era" of rising living standards has slowed considerably, if not stopped altogether. Recent data shows that wages are not keeping up with inflation. The minimum wage has not been raised since the 90's, health care costs are rising far faster than can be sustained. College costs have risen to the point where it's becoming more difficult to afford to send our children to further their education

Labor unions were formed to counter abuses in the workplace. Over the years, with primarily Democratic support in Congress, it has produced laws banning child labor, the right to overtime pay, the 40-hour workweek, pensions, and other basic protections that we take for granted today. Many early organizers and activists lost their lives in the struggle for workers rights.

By and large, Labor is a solid supporter of the

Democratic Party and its candidates. The benefits we have today are a result of these struggles in the past. Some unions support Republicans for office. This is because, in some cases, there is a perceived short-term benefit in additional jobs that may result from their policies. Typically these jobs are tied into projects such as road building, attempts to drill for oil in Alaska, and the like.

In my opinion, supporting Republicans for office does nothing but undermine the Labor movement. If we've learned nothing else from the Bush administration, it's that they can't be trusted to do the right thing for working families. From privatizing Social Security (with a substantial cut in earned benefits), to lack of enforcement of existing labor protections, workers always get a bad deal with Republicans in charge. Auto parts maker Delphi, with the help of Republican appointed judges, has been manipulating the bankruptcy laws to throw out negotiated union contracts, drastically cut the pay of their workers (up to 65%), dump their health plan, and renege on their pension obligations. They are making money, but with little regulation of their financial operations, are allowed to shift their profits overseas and create the illusion of a company in trouble. Of course, management is in line for millions of dollars worth of bonuses and a sweet pension plan. This tactic started with the steel industry, and has spread to the airlines, and now the auto industry. And if the Republicans remain in power, you can bet that it will continue to expand to your own industry or occupation. They are equal opportunity thieves!

Vote for a better future. VOTE DEMOCRATIC!

Doug May is a member of the National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 825

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NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, October 18

