

# The Township Democrat

The Official Newsletter of the Winfield Township Democratic Organization

Volume 1, Issue 3

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

Autumn 2007

## Conversations With the Township Chair

By **Susan M. Lubonovich**

*WTDO Chair, and Pct. 30 Committeeman*

"MY FAITH IN THE CONSTITUTION IS WHOLE, IT IS COMPLETE, IT IS TOTAL." - Barbara Jordan, 1974

I welcome you to the third issue of The Township Democrat, the Newsletter of the Winfield Township Democratic Organization. I have opened this Conversation with Ms Jordan's soul-shaking quote because I too profoundly and primordially believe in our Constitution. I do not accept the notion that this document is merely a suggestion nor that it offers at most, a guideline for governance. Our Constitution is the bedrock upon which our Founding Fathers anchored the Ship of State that is these United States of America. Our Constitution's Framers understood that power is accrued through the evisceration of the system of checks and balances. Unlike the Framers of our Constitution, this Administration's mission, its reason for existence, is the transformation of limited government into a government that is not accountable to anyone.

It is beyond time to define today's conservatism itself, to talk in explicit terms about the consequences of the conservative, anti-government philosophy and what it says about the people who advocate, and make no mistake, profit from this ideology. Conservatives are the people who have degraded our government to the degree that it cannot effectively maintain our roads and bridges. Conservatives are the folks who have given control of our Defense budget to corrupt contractors who have stolen the very money that properly belongs to our troops. Conservatives are the people who send our

fellow citizens into harm's way and then balk at providing them the medical care they have more than earned and deserve when they return home. Conservatives are the people who sabotage and ridicule the renewal of a bipartisan bill to extend and, yes, expand, health insurance to low income kids. And the expansion bugaboo is simply this: there are more poor kids in America today than there were five years ago. And for that, we are profoundly grateful, conservatives. You have done a splendid job at creating poor people. Well done, folks, well done! We also must stand in awe of the continued failure to clean up the debris on the Gulf Coast in the aftermath of Katrina. Katrina is the signal conservative failure, (the sine qua non). America's conservatives can not govern due to their utter and complete contempt and disdain for our government. This attitude does not stop them from thrusting their snouts into the public trough, though. The trough that we, the people, pay for - after all, these conservatives are the untax and spend folks - particularly, since it is our money, and not theirs, that they are spending. What is there to say other than, regardless of how often the conservatives abjure it - there exists an American national community to which we owe mutual obligation and our mutual obligation is to our fellow citizens. The American lives we are losing at home in disasters and abroad in pre-emptive war are the product, the sum, the result, of conservative ideology put into practice. American lives are not expendable. We are not a You're-On-Your-Own (YOYO) culture. In total repudiation of the Bush Administration's specialized art of inflicting substantial damage to the infrastructure of accountability, WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER! - together in this great experiment named America.

(See **Chair**, p. 4)

## CALENDAR

**Oct 17, 7PM**

WTDO MONTHLY MEETING  
BOWLING GREEN CENTER  
30W150 ROOSEVELT RD.  
WEST CHICAGO  
**GUEST:** ROB BISCEGLIE,  
CANDIDATE FOR COUNTY  
CHAIR

**Oct 29-Nov 5**

FILING DATES FOR  
PRECINCT COMMITTEEMEN  
PETITIONS

**Oct 30, 7:30PM**

SPECIAL ELECTION  
DUPAGE COUNTY  
DEMOCRATIC PARTY

**Nov 10, 7:30PM**

WTDO ANNUAL BOWLING  
PARTY FUNDRAISER --  
BOWLING GREEN CENTER  
30 W 150 ROOSEVELT RD.  
WEST CHICAGO

**NO MONTHLY MEETING  
IN NOVEMBER**

**DEC 19, 7PM**

WTDO MONTHLY MEETING  
BOWLING GREEN CENTER  
30W150 ROOSEVELT RD.  
WEST CHICAGO  
BEER & PIZZA  
**GUEST:** BOB SAAR,  
EXEC. DIR. DUPAGE  
COUNTY ELECTION  
COMMISSION

*For more information*

*Visit our website*

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

## **Crisis in Iraq:**

# **More Leadership & Less Talking Points Needed**

**By John Laesch**

*Democrat for Congress, IL-14*

As a former intelligence analyst who served in the Middle East, I am often asked “how do we get out of Iraq without having it turn into a civil war?”

My response is simple, “Iraq is already embroiled in a civil war and levels of violence will only continue to grow if the United States military continues to occupy the country.” The sad reality of Bush’s war in Iraq is that there are bad solutions and worse solutions. The good options for Iraq disappeared when Bush invaded the sovereign country in March, 2003.

While Congress debates timelines for withdrawal, troop levels and diplomatic benchmarks, few stop to recognize that all of this discussion falls into the category of unwanted advice once it hits President Bush’s desk.

There is only one action that the United States Congress can take that will bring President Bush to his senses and that is to cut funding for the continued failed policies in Iraq.

Our forefathers established three separate and equal branches of government with the understanding that absolute power corrupts absolutely. We are at a point in American history when Congress needs to exercise its constitutional right as a separate and equal branch of government as a check on the perceived absolute power of the president. Congress needs to take the lead in Iraq by firmly pulling on the reins of Bush’s runaway foreign policy by pulling the purse strings closed.

The best way to support our troops is to bring them home and pass a mandatory VA budget to make sure that Veterans of this war and every war are given the best possible health care available.

As your Congressman from Illinois’ 14<sup>th</sup> District, I will work tirelessly to bring our troops home safely and immediately and I will make VA healthcare a top priority. I hope that you make these two issues a priority for every candidate you meet. Ask them

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

## **Unexpected Consequences**

**By Bill Foster**

*Democrat for Congress, IL-14*

For a generation, Paul Simon and Bill Proxmire represented the face of progressive policies in the Midwest. They were famous not only for progressive policies, but also for insisting that taxpayer dollars were well spent. As Paul Simon famously said, “just because you are a liberal does not mean that you have to be a wastrel.”

There are three main ways in which our tax money is misspent: 1) outright waste, fraud and abuse; 2) incompetent or self-serving policy decisions taken at a high level; and 3) through the unintended consequences of well-meaning policy decisions.

**1) Waste, fraud and abuse** - How many of you remember the Bush Administration’s “President’s Management Initiative” announced with such great fanfare in 2002? It was largely a scheme to privatize large swaths of government, and thereby achieve the miracles of free-market competition and efficiency to save taxpayer dollars. In practice, it has yielded a cesspool of no-bid contracts to politically connected contractors and tens of billions of dollars of waste, fraud and abuse – particularly in military contracts. According to a recent report in the Tribune, \$6 billion of military supply contracts for Bush’s GWOT are under review by criminal investigators, with an additional \$88 billion being audited for financial irregularities. For any of you who still doubt that our government is not in need of a major change, I recommend the DVD “Iraq For Sale.”

**2) Incompetent High-level Policy Decisions** - Of course, the single fastest way to waste taxpayers’ money is to make a single, wrong-headed high-level policy decision. Bush’s decision to invade Iraq towers over his other blunders. This war is not accomplishing our goals in Iraq and is making our country less safe. Each year, the money spent on this war is enough to pay for universal health care – which would also, by the way, keep this money in the US. However, Bush also provides many examples of foolish high-level decisions. Just to pick one: George Bush’s insane command to NASA to begin preparations for a Mission to Mars – without increasing the budget – has virtually destroyed morale and crippled the scientific program at NASA.

**3) Unintended Consequences of Well-meaning Policies** - Unfortunately, well-meaning but

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

## **Enger Management Support Our Troops**

**By Columnist Dirk Enger**

*Precinct 04 Committeeman*

I have tried to be patient and trusting with this Administration and Congress, but as a Veteran who served my country twice in service, I feel that enough is enough. We hear our President and Congress saying that they support our troops.

Let's look at the facts:

We cannot supply our troops with the 3,500 IED proof vehicles that we promised them back in 2004 in the DOD budget. Why is this? Because we cannot ship them over there due to the lack of transportation logistics..

We can have over 600,000 veterans waiting between 6 months and 1 year for their initial VA visit. Why? Because this Administration has under-funded the Veterans Administration budget and made historic closings of VA hospitals and clinics. The money from the sale of these properties should have gone back into the VA budget, but instead has gone into the Department of Defense budget.

Our armed forces still do not have the equipment, such as body armour and IED-proof equipment that they have been promised. The equipment used is recycled from person to person instead of providing new equipment for the incoming soldiers.

Should there be a terrorist attack stateside, we do not have the manpower nor the equipment necessary to protect and perform under homeland security standards.

This is what we have accomplished in these two wars:

Over 50,000 wounded, not the 27,000 as was first reported by the DOD before they reclassified what is considered a combat wound.

We have the highest amputee rate of any war.

Our own state is rated 48<sup>th</sup> out of 50 for our low rate of disability compensation. We are 50<sup>th</sup> out of 50 for our high unemployment rate among veterans age group 21-34 years of age.

(See Enger, p. 4)

## **Universal Health Care: How to Do it; How to Sell it**

**By Scott Harper**

*Democrat for Congress, IL-13*

Very little is more important than our health or the health of our family members. And yet in this country we have let this most important service be managed by a market determined to extract the maximum profit from it. Sure, we have filled in around the edges – for the poor, for seniors, for veterans. But many (as many as 15% of us) are still uncovered by medical insurance, and many more ration their own care because they can't even afford the medication or the fraction of the cost they must pay out of pocket.

The time has come for a change. There is a growing consensus that something must be done, but the question is what. Democratic presidential candidates are expected to have a health plan. And they all differ. Here is one more.

I think that there is a way to have fairness, universal coverage, choice and excellence. That is to nationalize insurance coverage, and to keep the medical infrastructure private. The nationalized insurance is known by different names. Sometimes it's called single-payer. Other times it's called Medicare Plus. The name doesn't matter. The concept is that everyone has a health insurance card, and it guarantees payment at any medical facility. Reimbursement rates would be established for every procedure, and the government would pay when the service was performed. No co-pays, no hassle. Paperwork would be simplified, preventative care would be available for all, along with the interventions that are needed, of course.

On the provision side, in my view, we would be best served by a network of hospitals, clinics, doctors' offices, and pharmacies that would compete in terms of quality of care and excellence of service. If a given office or hospital was not competitive, they would have to close their doors, and in theory at least, another would open up (or buy the hospital infrastructure and reopen). Some would be in it out of a sense of mission or service, others for profit. The market would soon tell the community which was the

(See Harper, p. 6)

(Enger, cont'd from p. 3)

We have 20,000 out of the 300,000 homeless veterans in the United States (35% of our homeless population is veterans).

The armed forces have reported the highest ratio of suicides and divorces among all forces serving in any of our previous wars.

The one thing that I find absolutely disgraceful is that with all of the problems with funding help for our veterans, this Administration is in the process of building the world's largest US embassy in Iraq.

I have a suggestion for any candidate and politician – stay away from the slogan “Support our Troops.” As far as I am concerned, all political officials have failed our veterans disgracefully; and until you wear their boots and sacrifice like those who proudly serve and wear the title, you do not deserve to use the veterans for political or financial gain.

Our elected officials have failed the Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans.

We have appealed to Senator Barack Obama of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee and Senator Dick Durbin of the Senate Appropriations Committee to help secure appropriation money for operational costs at the Shelter. But for the second year in a row, no funds were secured by these committees. We have lobbied, working both sides of the aisle on the federal level, and our grant writers have worked relentlessly in retaining the VA grant back in November of 2006. We have still not received the check that was promised and awarded to us. If we cannot count on Congress, who are we supposed to turn to? It is a shame that Congress cannot see the real picture of what is happening to our veterans, our wounded and those serving in our armed forces overseas.

It is time for us to fulfil our obligation to our veterans; they have fulfilled their end by serving and are only expecting what was promised to them.

I would encourage you to call your Congressmen and Senators and speak up for our Veterans. I also encourage you to thank a veteran and cherish your freedom.

God Bless America

*Dirk Enger is a USMC Desert Shield/Desert Storm Veteran and Co-Chairman of Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans.*

*For more information, please visit...*

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

(Chair, cont'd from p. 1)

Thus, the ONLY purpose of the Winfield Township Democratic Organization is to assist ALL Democrats elected in the Primary to win against Republicans. That is why THIS Organization, as a component of the Democratic Party, will work to accomplish its one and only purpose - ELECT DEMOCRATS! Our responsibility is to promote the ideals of the Democratic Party and to help elect Democrats to political office, thereby ensuring the continuation of our two-party system. But our responsibility does not end at this point. It is our duty, our job, our role as citizens, as we the people, as we the electorate, to hold those folks whom we do elect to the fire of the values and standards of the Democratic ideal. Electing these folks is not enough - doing the job, the work - must count, and if they do not perform, then we, as citizens, need and must, call these public (tax-payer supported) servants to account. It is our job as citizens of these United States of America to do no less. And in order to forward these goals, I am asking you to "KICK IN FOR THE QUARTER". Help us build a stronger Organization to support our LOCAL Democratic candidates, have our voices heard, publish this Newsletter, maintain our Website ([www.winfielddems.org](http://www.winfielddems.org)) and host our monthly meeting. Financial support of your LOCAL Democratic Organization is the ultimate challenge.

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

In light of supporting your LOCAL Democratic Organization, the Winfield Township Democratic Organization is delighted to welcome our four new Precinct Committeemen who have generously decided to volunteer their time and their shoe leather for our LOCAL Democratic Party. They are John Wiggins, WNF: 014; Margaret McKenzie, WNF: 020; Leah Goodman, WNF: 028; and Dale Harris, WNF: 032. Welcome aboard, fellow Democrats! These are your neighbors, working our patch of America. Your LOCAL Democratic Organization receives no support from the County, State, or National Democratic Organizations. We need your support - KICK IN FOR THE QUARTER.

## Putting Out Fires With Gasoline

By Barry Dredze

*Precinct 18 Committeeman*

On September 18, Israeli Vice Premier Haim Ramon proposed that Israel cede control of Jerusalem's Arab neighborhoods. On September 24, at the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee Meeting at the United Nations in New York, Israeli Foreign Minister Tziporah "Tzipi" Livni declared that, "A Palestinian state is an Israeli interest."

My last visit to Jerusalem overlapped with that of then-Secretary of State James Baker III, who was in the region to promote the regional conference that eventually took place in Madrid. What I saw there at that time was a cautiously optimistic Israeli electorate outgrowing the hardline policies of its leadership, Yitzhak Shamir of the Likud Party. Say what you will about the Bush XLI administration, but Baker's diplomacy arguably built a bridge from a period of regional military and diplomatic cooperation in Desert Shield/Desert Storm to the promise of the Oslo peace process during the Clinton administration. And say what you will about the Oslo process, but at that particular point in the history there had existed a tremendous amount of potential for broadening the diplomatic reach of the US among the nations of the region and to scale back the dependency of Israel upon US foreign aid.

But even as US weapons manufacturers dominate the arms trade in the Middle East, having cornered over half the market, the Bush administration is moving toward implementing a \$30 billion arms deal with Saudi Arabia, Israel, Egypt and Gulf states, moving forward an even more militarized vision of the Middle East than the current grim reality.

National self-determination for both Jews and Arabs in former British Mandatory Palestine has never been mutually exclusive. Partition plans respecting the national rights of both Jews and Palestinians have existed since the 1920s. But throughout most of the conflict, the disputes have been allowed to be fixed into a zero-sum, winner-take-all formula. The Middle East conflict

has never been a simple two-party dispute, but this stubborn dynamic has enabled all parties to sustain the conflict.

US Middle East policy is like the old joke about the guy who falls down whenever he tries to walk and chew gum at the same time. For a relatively brief but productive period in the 90s, however, the perspective of mutual benefit from a diplomatic resolution of the overall conflict appeared substantial enough to yield tentative achievements. Shortly before his assassination in 1995, for example, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin returned to Jerusalem from a diplomatic tour of Oman and other Gulf states to begin facilitating the desired cultural, economic and political integration of Israel within the broader scope of the region once dominated by the radical rejection of the Jewish state. The region needs much less weaponry, and much more diplomacy.

"The work of building the future Palestinian state must be a collective effort," said Livni in New York. "This requires more international, regional and Palestinian efforts to open up the Palestinian economy to the Arab market, to create employment opportunities and to promote wide-ranging and sustainable regional cooperation."

The Democratic administrations of Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton have been in the forefront of advancing a less militarized vision for the region. Each Democratic candidate in the current field approaches the issue with such vision.

**"The sad truth is that most evil is done by people who never make up their minds to be good or evil."**

**Hannah Arendt**

(Laesch, cont'd from p. 2)

how they plan to get out of Iraq and ask them if they support a mandatory budget for our veterans healthcare system.

I would like to welcome any residents from the 14<sup>th</sup> District to visit our website at [www.john08.com](http://www.john08.com) to learn more about my positions on other important issues like the economy and health care.

You are also welcome to contact our campaign office at 46 W. Downer Place in Aurora, Illinois by calling (630) 801-8900.

(Foster, cont'd from p. 2)

technologically naïve politicians on both sides of the aisle are equally vulnerable to this type of waste. Here's one example: earlier this year while I was working in a congressional office on Capitol Hill, the House began considering legislation for an enthusiastic, overdue, but often technologically naïve set of proposals to promote alternative energy. Take one example: Taxpayer funded incentives to modify pipelines, gas pumps, and storage tanks capable of withstanding the corrosive effects of ethanol. This could be a very good idea, assuming that ethanol is really the best long-term choice for a gasoline replacement. However, many experts on biofuels feel that the best long-term biofuel will be butanol – a chemical very similar to ethanol but is nearly a “drop-in replacement” for gasoline in existing automobiles, gets better mileage than ethanol, does not evaporate as fast, and does not have the corrosive effects of ethanol. Butanol avoids many of the environmental problems that an ethanol-based economy would face (another unintended consequence!) So, if butanol is indeed the long-term choice for a biofuel gasoline replacement, then all of this anti-corrosion spending will be a waste of time and taxpayers' money.

So, what is the solution here? The average American does not have the time to study the technological issues that drive almost every policy issue today. Like it or not, our leaders must look into the future and make their best estimates of the technological winners and losers. Even if something is scientifically possible in the laboratory, it may not be economically reasonable and may never make business sense. We are unlikely to get the results we want unless we send progressives with the best technological skills, the best business sense, and the best management experience to Congress.

(Harper, cont'd from p. 3)

best model, and hopefully all would thrive. That seems to me to be the best model of public sector – private sector partnership.

Now how do we sell this type of plan? Clearly, the health insurance companies would fight it unless we allowed them to administer it, or if we bought them out. Either of those might be arranged. But other business interests could be sold. Currently businesses are less globally competitive than they could be, because they have a 30% charge on all their personnel costs. And that costs America jobs – both high paying manufacturing jobs and administrative jobs. So the unions would like it, because they would have more jobs in the United States, and they wouldn't have to negotiate over health care, and could turn their bargaining sessions to other priorities. Doctors, nurses and pharmacists would like it because they could treat all who needed their services. Other parts of the insurance and financial services industries would like it because it would lower their costs and provide a one-time increase in the value of American business.

Although I feel that this is an issue of basic fairness, and would support such a move on that basis, I think that the business benefits have not been adequately examined, nor the business community brought into the coalition to change the way we organize health care. Business could hire and grow without the constant worry of health care costs spiraling out of control, and either laying off workers or reducing coverage to such an extent that their employees are at risk.

The final thing I will mention is the unleashing of entrepreneurial potential that such a policy change could accomplish. Some people with pre-existing conditions are held in corporate jobs when they would like to work for a small company or start their own. I have experienced this personally when recruiting people to work for my small company. When companies are small, the only health care available is individually underwritten. Each employee has to have a physical exam and the insurance rate is determined by the health of each person. And pre-existing conditions are either not covered, or they result in very high premiums, or both. So we have an abundance of entrepreneurial talent that is locked up in our corporate offices for lack of a sensible health policy in our country. Let's work together to change what is clearly not working.

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## Soldiers of Solidarity

**By Doug May**

*Precinct 01 Committeeman*

In early August 17,000 Union members and their families sweated it out in the heat to attend a candidate forum at Soldier Field hosted by the AFL-CIO. Six of the seven Democratic candidates were present. The only one not attending was former Senator Mike Gravel. The Republican candidates were invited, but none chose to attend. That alone speaks volumes. Face it, if you're not worth several million dollars, you shouldn't vote for Republicans. They truly have no interest in issues facing working/middle class families. They feel any problem can be solved with an income tax cut at the federal level. That policy has worked very well for the top 1% - 5% of income earners, but it's done little to solve the problems of deteriorating infrastructure, health care issues, veteran's issues and many other issues that were brought up during the forum. While the candidates did not have a lot of time to address the issues presented, it's clear that they would put the interests of working Americans ahead of those of the wealthy elites, who have been cleaning up during the Bush administration.

The United Auto Workers (UAW) staged a brief 2-day strike against GM. They reached a tentative agreement with more concessions by the union. GM is trying to slough off its obligation to its retirees, as well as implementing a two-tier workforce where new employees will start at a lower wage, and never enjoy the pay of current employees. Keep in mind that GM has posted millions in profits, and given huge bonuses to the

management. The Auto Workers basically built the middle class and nearly all benefits we currently enjoy, such as the 40 hour work week, health insurance, and overtime, were a result of their efforts years ago. The contract is now subject to ratification by the membership. There are a large number of dissidents in the UAW, who are strongly advocating voting it down. They feel that they've given back far too much in the last contracts and are fed up with the current leadership of the UAW. It's too early to tell how the vote will go, but if GM gets its way, there will be increased pressure on all employers to screw their workers and retirees. To learn more about their struggle, check out

<http://www.soldiersofsolidarity.com/>

*Doug May is a member of the National Association of Letter Carriers, Branch 825 and a Precinct Committeeman in West Chicago.*

**“There is nothing wrong with America that can't be fixed by what's right with America.”**

**Bill Clinton**

