

The Township Democrat

The Official Newsletter of the Winfield Township Democratic Organization

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Winter 2008

Conversations With the Township Chair

By Susan M. Lubonovich

WTDO Chair and Pct. 030 Committeeman

I welcome you to this, our fourth issue of *The Township Democrat*, the Newsletter of the Winfield Township Democratic Organization. This Conversation will be rather short, as we are fortunate to have a plethora of finely written articles for your perusal. I wanted to followup on my comments in our last issue:

We are the most improbable of nations, this great and grand experiment called America. America, until this Administration, has always resisted the temptation that has enticed and befallen so many other countries - to treat its written Constitution as a scrap of paper to be shunted aside, rather than as a sacred contract.

The Constitution of these United States is a sacred contract that many men and women, military and civilian, have fought and died to defend, or lived the rest of their lives severely wounded in mind, body and spirit. Make no mistake about it. American lives are not expendable; our Constitution is not a suggestion. But our America, our beloved country, is under a grave and frightening threat. Fueled by the turmoil of our era, this Administration has engaged in the politics of fear, ridiculing and vilifying all who are opposed to any aspect of the Conservative agenda as traitors. This must be addressed. The only thing more dangerous than a President willing to undermine our most fundamental freedoms is a Congress willing to let him get away with it.

This is where we as citizens of these United States must step in. We must hold

those whom we elect accountable. Frankly, I still do not understand why Conservatives, who have such a boundless contempt for the role of our government in our citizens' lives, should persist in trying to run this very same government? Unfortunately, the Conservatives are persisting to the point of driving our government to its knees, with their incompetence, corruption, greed and utter and complete disrespect and dismissal of all of us non-Conservative agenda folks.

This is our patch of America. This is where we have built our homes and are raising our families. We must prevail. Please help your LOCAL Democratic Party continue our work and our growth by "Kicking in for the Quarter". Help us as we build a stronger LOCAL Democratic Organization, support our LOCAL Democratic Candidates, have our voices heard, publish *The Township Democrat*, maintain our Website (www.winfielddems.org) and host our monthly meetings. We need your help - KICK IN FOR THE QUARTER. Financial support of your LOCAL Democratic Organization is the ultimate challenge.

At this time, I would also like to humbly and profoundly thank all of you readers who have supported our past "Kick in for the Quarter." Your generosity is deeply appreciated.

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

Your Township needs you. The Repubs will not be defeated by rhetoric alone. And folks, tomorrow really does begin today when you do not back down from what you know is right and true.

CALENDAR

JAN 14-31 – EARLY VOTING (FOR MORE INFO CALL 630-407-5600)

JAN 16 – WTDO MONTHLY MEETING; GUEST SPEAKER, BOB PEICKERT, CANDIDATE FOR COUNTY CHAIR

FEB 5 - ILLINOIS PRIMARY (2 BALLOTS FOR US CONG. DIST. 14)

FEB 20 – WTDO MONTHLY MEETING; GUEST SPEAKER, ROB BISCEGLIE, CANDIDATE FOR COUNTY CHAIR

MARCH 5 – COUNTY PARTY ELECTION

MARCH 8 – SPECIAL ELECTION IN US CONG. DIST. 14

MARCH 19 – WTDO ELECTION OF TOWNSHIP OFFICERS

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

WWW.WINFIELDDEMS.ORG

Time for Democrats to End the Capitulation and Occupation

By John Laesch

Democratic Candidate, 14th US Congressional Dist.

There are two kinds of people in politics, those who want change and those who want power. I have been involved in electoral politics for more than five years now because I recognize that our country needs new leaders who are willing to offer meaningful and lasting change. The last seven years of Bush's destructive politics must be stopped and reversed.

Perhaps it is a risky road to challenge the powers within our own party who have most recently joined President Bush's efforts in Iraq by handing the president yet one more blank check (valued at \$70 billion) to continue the occupation of Iraq.

This blank-check war funding finally hit home, as the same bill also had deep cuts to the budget for Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, located in an important part of Illinois' 14th District.

The pre-holiday passage of the Omnibus Appropriations Bill mirrors George Bush's misguided priorities, and is yet one more signal that we need new leadership in Washington.

This appropriations bill cuts funding for science; with the cuts in the High Energy Physics (HEP) hitting Fermilab's budget the hardest. The \$62 million cut to Fermilab will result in zero funding for NOvA, a cutting edge Neutrino program, and the majority of funding for research and development for the International Linear Collider (ILC). The NOvA program and the ILC research and development were the basic plan for Fermilab's survival after the Tevatron was scheduled to shut down. These cuts greatly jeopardize the prospect of the ILC coming to the Fox Valley and the future of Fermilab itself.

Losing funding for Fermilab is not only bad for the Fox Valley, but it also reflects where we are as a society. Pouring money into the Iraq occupation at the expense of funding for science, education, and healthcare is no way to plan for America's future.

I did some math and figured out that the money slashed from Fermilab's budget will buy us an additional 6 hours of Iraqi occupation. I am sure

that our soldiers who have risked their lives while enduring the heat, frustration and lack of planning in Iraq will appreciate this move by Congress as much as the scientists at Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory will.

At this moment of reflection, I think that we need to step back and take a big-picture look at what is going on in Washington. Democratic leaders worked with President Bush to craft the \$555 billion omnibus spending bill that included an additional \$70 billion in unchecked funding for the war. As long as we continue to fund this war, we will continue to feel that pain here at home. The cuts to Fermilab are only the beginning.

At this critical juncture in our nations' history, I remain skeptical of the leadership coming from Congress. We need new leaders who recognize the long term impact of funding Bush's unending and unplanned war. We need leaders who have the courage to exercise the power of the purse and de-fund the ongoing occupation of Iraq.

As the only veteran in this race for Congress, I have been the only candidate, Democrat or Republican, who has consistently shown that courage; the courage to pledge to use my vote to oppose the continued occupation of Iraq by utilizing the power of the purse. I am also the only candidate who unequivocally opposed pre-emptive war with Iran, long before the NIE report.

The great news for the employees at Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory is that my skepticism is replaced by optimism. The special election in Illinois' 14th District is an enormous opportunity to send a new message to Washington. We can empower other lawmakers to join us in our fight to build a civilized society by pledging to fund education, healthcare and science instead of war.

The great news for the Democrats and the rest of America is that we will have at least one more leader in Washington who is committed to change and refuses to capitulate to the minority party and a lame duck president.

The John Laesch for Congress campaign can be reached by phone at 630-801-8900 by email at info@john08.com or visiting the website www.john08.com

Food and Health Care

By Jotham Stein

Democratic Candidate, 14th US Congressional Dist.

13 million children go to bed every night without food in their stomachs or unsure whether they will eat the next morning. That's more children going hungry in America than the entire population of Illinois.

8.3 million children don't have health care. That's more children without health care in America than eleven times the population of our 14th Congressional District.

It's immoral for America to let its children go hungry and die because of inadequate food and health care.

Some justify ignoring the problem by saying that the parents are at fault. But it's wrong to punish children even if their parents are at fault.

I will fight to change the law to require America to ensure that every child under the age of eighteen has food to eat and health care. If we change the law, our government will be required to feed our hungry children and provide health care to every uninsured child. This means that politicians will no longer be able to study the problem, debate what to do, and then do nothing – Instead, our government will be focused on the best ways to deliver food and health care to our children.

While waiting for passage of a law guaranteeing health care and food to all children, I strongly support full funding to the states for the Children's Health Insurance Program so that every child in America has access to health care. I support fully funding the National Immunization Program and Woman Infants and Children program. I also support expanding Medicare and Medicaid to cover every child in America.

I will negotiate with whomever it is necessary to negotiate with, and across and within party lines, to create programs that ensure our children always have health care and food. I passionately believe that America has a duty to provide this guarantee to every child. However, I am not wedded to any particular method of delivering on the guarantee.

What is important is that every child in America always has health care and food. I know that we, as a great nation working together, can deliver on this guarantee. In Illinois, we are fortunate to have

the All Kids program. All Kids guarantees health insurance to every child, and for those families in need, insurance is either free or premiums are low. However, not all states have similar programs and here in Illinois it is unclear that the money to fund All Kids will be available in the future. All Kids and similar programs also rely on the parents' voluntary participation in the programs.

A child's health care should not depend on parents' voluntary payment nor should it depend on politics in Springfield.

We need an affirmative guarantee of health care and food for all children. That way potentially underfunded state programs such as All Kids will receive federal funding (or be replaced with another funded program), and Congress will be required to choose the way in which it will guarantee food and health care to our children.

For more information, please visit
www.votestein.com

“As mankind becomes more liberal, they will be more apt to allow that all those who conduct themselves as worthy members of the community are equally entitled to the protections of civil government. I hope ever to see America among the foremost nations of justice and liberality.”

George Washington

A Vision For The Future

By Bob Peickert

Candidate for Chair of the DuPage County Democratic Party

Dear Democrats:

Michelle Barton and I are running for the position of chair and first vice-chair of the DuPage County Democratic Party. Michelle serves as the Naperville Township Coordinator of Volunteers and Precinct Committeemen. I serve as 1st Vice-Chair of the Addison Township Democrats and Chair of OTDB. Our campaign motto, "Performance not Promises", illustrates what we will bring to the Democratic Party.

As members of Operation: Turn DuPage Blue, we have been recruiting precinct committeemen and precinct workers, increasing the visibility of the Democratic Party in DuPage County, encouraging participation by other interested Democrats, providing training for Democratic activists, supporting former Democratic candidates and other worthy causes, and supporting our township and county organization in their endeavors. All of that in just 10 months.

In 2007, OTDB directly contributed 115 of the 150+ new precinct committeemen who will appear on the ballot and as write-in candidates. We mobilized hundreds of Democrats to march in ten parades, highlighted by 110 Democrats marching in the Naperville, organized by Michelle Barton. OTDB brought in Camp Wellstone, a nationally renowned training institute named in honor of the late Senator Paul Wellstone, to conduct a weekend training program for 142 Democratic candidates, campaign staff and community activists. We participated in township and county recruitment drives. We attended or otherwise supported fundraising events for the county and township organizations. We raised money to provide financial support to former Democratic candidates when they needed it. All of this in only 10 months.

Our vision for the future starts with a leadership team consisting of current county and township leaders, OTDB steering committee members and other Democrats who are committed to electing Democrats. Our expanded cabinet represents an inclusive policy that invites ALL Democrats to share their expertise and talents. To review our suggested "cabinet" structure and our plan for the county, visit our website – www.turndupageblue.com.

New Leadership and Solid Experience: Re-Elect Our Leadership Team

By Rob Bisceglie

Candidate for Chair of the DuPage County Democratic Party

Over the years, I have spoken to many people about our representatives in DuPage County. One theme has emerged: "We have no voice in our own government!" My vision is simple and straightforward. Elected officials must listen to our concerns and then work to ensure our government works for us always.

As Chairman, my aim is to work with forethought, endlessly and collaboratively, alongside everyone within our County who cares about truly representative government. Unanimously elected Chairman during a special election October 30, 2007, I spoke about my vision. Five broad pillars will form the foundation for Party success. Already, we have seen action - vast and rapid progress. A few highlights:

Precinct Committeemen/Volunteer

Recruitment: During summer and fall, working with township organizations, OTDB and others, Democrats recruited a record number of PCs and volunteers. In January, we will send recruitment letters co-signed by myself, township chairs and Senators Durbin and Obama expanding our outreach efforts.

Candidate Recruitment and Support: In December, garnering considerable press, we organized the first-ever Democratic County Board candidate press conference opposing the County's doomsday budget.

Fundraising: Our First Annual Golf Outing in September raised over \$14,000. Our ambitious goal of \$100,000 for a new Local Candidate Fund will directly support countywide campaign efforts like never before.

Infrastructure: We have hired our first-ever Political Director. Jon Myers works long hours with much dedication, doing the things necessary to help create a professional and successful organization.

(See **Bisceglie**, p. 5)

Defining Ourselves Anew

By Frank Malley

Precinct Committeeman, Winfield 015

As I write this piece, I am flying back to Chicago from a business trip to China.

Chinese citizens are morphing into entrepreneurs, and their businesses are blossoming. I asked a Chinese associate what family businesses are like in China. He responded that I would have to wait a generation for an answer. After a textbook dictatorship of the proletariat, these businessmen and businesswomen are the first of their kind, and frankly they are still figuring out who and what they are.

I think that it is very important to understand that we in America also face the task of defining ourselves anew. We can behave like the British at the end of World War II and fruitlessly look backward nostalgically at the empire we once had, just as America's current leadership is striving to reprise the old successes of Henry Ford and the hearty, doughty blue collar working man. Following this model, many seek to be old-fashioned corporate and simply work to be the cheapest there is. Such an approach is futile, however, because someone else who is foolish and desperate will inevitably be even cheaper.

Instead we can evolve into a new America, drawing on the strengths we have: our considerable experience, our wisdom, our talents, and our technology. We know today that in Shanghai towering skyscrapers are being constructed at what almost seems to be a weekly rate, and this burgeoning does intimidate us, but how many of us know for example that it is American architectural firms such as Chicago's own Skidmore Owings and Merrill that are creating these handsome and dynamic homes of young industry?

Two experiences from my just completed trip show more about what we Americans are and what we have to offer. On the second day of our trip we sat in Shanghai's metropolitan airport for domestic flights and waited and waited for our flight to Ningbo, which in the end was three and one-half hours late. The departure board showed flight after flight delayed as consumers found seats on the floor of the waiting areas or leaned against walls and pillars. All the public address system told us was that there were air routing or air flow delays. Even one day afterward the newspaper

had no more details. Similarly we saw trucks and buses backed up in endless lines on the highway waiting for rationed diesel fuel. When our host drove our car into a gas station, he also faced a 100 RMB (\$13.50) limit on his gas purchase, which he deftly turned into a 200 RMB purchase by slipping the gas station attendant a 50 RMB bribe.

The tell-tale point of these two anecdotes is that virtually no Chinese asked why the delays occurred or why the rationing was happening. America's current leadership believes that spreading democracy consists of making the world's population behave and think the way we want them to. Democracy is, however, the simple vital task of asking why. We Americans have always been brash and have had an optimistic confidence in our selves and in our possibilities.

In the upcoming election we Democrats can be the party that says Americans do not define themselves by their fears of foreigners and of change. Americans can consciously and deliberately pursue the new role we have in the world, nurturing the growth of that role from the very real talents and profound tradition we have.

(Bisceglie, cont'd from p. 4)

Communications/Outreach: In November and December, we held our first Congressional Candidate Forum, a successful joint holiday party with OTDB and Precinct Committeeman trainings. In January, alongside our new electronic newsletter, we will have a new, content-rich website. We are also planning a straw poll event and a poll-watcher training – both firsts.

This March, we have a fresh and experienced team running for our three elected DuPage Democrats positions. Chris Hotchkin, our candidate for Vice Chair, brings experience as a Party leader. Bob Jeffers, our longstanding Treasurer, knows about full accountability.

Of course, no small group of people can succeed alone. We welcome all Democrats to participate in our grassroots efforts. Your energy, expertise and drive are needed and appreciated. As a unified Party, we can win in 2008, opening the floodgates to truly representative government!

Rob Bisceglie can be reached via DuPage County Democrats at 630-229-4108, or via email at rbisceglie@sbcglobal.net

Working Together

By Jill Morgenthaler

Democratic Candidate, 6th US Congressional District

The 6th District is home to people who work hard, who believe in their community, and in each other. We raised our children together. We see each other at church on Sunday, at the grocery store, or picking up our kids from school.

When I talk to my neighbors these days, I hear a lot of the same things. They worry about the high cost of health care. They can't believe how much it costs to send their kids to college. They're frustrated by how much it costs to fill up a tank of gas. Prices keep going up, and it seems like no one's doing anything about it.

These are real problems. And they're the kinds of things that Washington should be trying to fix. But instead of focusing on what matters to us, our elected representatives seem more intent on pointing fingers at each other and trying to score political points...and nothing gets done.

That hasn't stopped them from spending our money, though, and lots of it. And it hasn't stopped them from raising our taxes.

And while they talk about making us safer, 2,000 people cross the border into the United States illegally every day. They say they've got plans—to get our troops out of Iraq, to make health care more affordable, to reduce our dependence on foreign oil—but nothing seems to change.

My father fought two wars as a Marine. I served 30 years in the military myself. And one thing I learned early in life is that if you're willing to set aside your personal ambitions and work together, you can get things done that you never dreamed possible. I believe we can solve our toughest problems. But we've got to work together.

It starts with spending. You can't spend more than what you've got coming in. Anyone who has ever run a business or balanced a check book knows that—everyone, it seems, except our leaders in Washington. We've got to rein in out of control spending, and cut taxes. We all know how to spend within our means. We should expect Washington to do the same.

We need to take a new, fresh, and comprehensive approach to health care reform, putting a lot of ideas on the table. There's no perfect solution, but

we have to get every American covered with affordable coverage. I am firmly committed to that. From getting a handle on skyrocketing premiums, to protecting consumers' rights and safeguarding privacy, to using IT systems to improve quality, we have an enormous opportunity in the next Congress. If we elect the right people who are willing to break free from special interests, set aside the partisan bickering, roll up our sleeves and do the hard work, we can fix the broken health care system in a comprehensive way.

That's true of renewable energies, too. The way we power our country doesn't make any sense. The countries who sell us their oil don't like us. And our reliance on oil and other fossil fuels is helping to drive climate change, casting a shadow over our children's future. We've got to make a lasting commitment to renewable fuels. We can develop them right here in Illinois, creating good jobs across different sectors of our economy, from our farmers to high tech.

We also have to secure our borders. I was Illinois' homeland security chief for two years. I know our borders are porous – both North and South. There's no easy answer to our border problems, but it starts with tougher and more advanced border security and we can get it done.

And we have to find the responsible way to bring our troops home from Iraq.

Our troops have performed heroically. I served along side many of them. I have seen firsthand what they are up against. The only way to achieve lasting peace in Iraq is for the warring factions to summon the political will to forge a settlement. That is not something we can do for them.

It's time for Congress to come together, not as Democrats, not as Republicans, but as Americans, to find the responsible way to bring our troops home, turn Iraq over to the Iraqis, and stabilize this region.

These are real challenges. But I believe we can solve them if we remember something that Washington seems to have forgotten: that working together, we can achieve great things. That's the spirit of the folks who live in the 6th District, and it's the spirit that I'll bring with me to Congress.

For more information, please visit
www.jillmorgenthaler.com

Position Statements

By Stan Jagla

Democratic Candidate, 6th US Congressional Dist.

End the War in Iraq and bring our troops home.

The war in Iraq is over; therefore, we must bring our troops home safely with fully-funded withdrawal and replace them with United Nations peacekeepers. The next Congress must investigate war profiteering, corporate and oil companies' influence on the origin and conduct of the war, and then turn any evidence over to the U.S. Attorney General. We owe loyalty to our troops and not to oil companies and war profiteers. We must bring our troops home safely.

Protect Unions and Small Business. Trade unions and the small business sector are under assault from foreign outsourcing. Jobs and whole companies are unfairly outsourced to foreign countries. The U.S. economy cannot prosper without vibrant unions and small businesses that provide gainful employment and technological innovation. We must strengthen our middle class by promoting jobs in America and workers' rights. We must guarantee an equal right to a livable wage for everyone.

Bring Balance to Globalization. Replace "free trade" with "fair trade." While globalization can help underdeveloped countries and create new markets for American goods and services, we must insist on decent wages and working conditions and environmental safeguards in those countries. At its worst, globalization masks a selfish agenda that exports whole companies and legalizes tax evasion on profits earned here. Every corporate tax haven overseas unfairly shifts the tax burden back onto middle-class Americans. We have exported millions of jobs overseas under the current administration.

Restore Fair Taxes. Special tax breaks for large corporations and the very rich not only hurt the poor by forcing cuts in key services; but they also burden the middle class with higher taxes. We must restore the progressive income tax system that has served us well since 1913 (the more you make, the higher percentage you pay, because you have a greater ability to pay and a larger financial stake in the country's economic soundness). We must freeze taxes on the middle-class, and restore fair taxes on corporate America.

Make Healthcare Affordable to All Americans.

We are all at risk when 46 million of our friends and neighbors go without health care protection. We must find a practical way to make healthcare affordable for everyone. The best plan is to offer health insurance to those who do not have any, such as the current All Kids healthcare program offered by the State of Illinois (in which premiums based on income and the difference financed from the general revenue budget and not by new taxes on employers), with free choice of one's provider, the same as Medicare. We also need to outlaw the preexisting condition clause that unfairly enriches health insurance companies at the expense of patients, doctors and hospitals that get stuck with unpaid bills.

Defend Citizens from Abuse. Congress must stand up against abusive, dishonest government, and guarantee all citizens an equal right to pursue happiness, prosperity, a livable wage and economic stability. We must hold elected officials accountable for their promises and actions.

For more information visit
www.stanjaglaforcongress.com

"It is not the fact of liberty but the way in which liberty is exercised that ultimately determines whether liberty itself survives."

Dorothy Thompson

Labor Update

By Doug May

Precinct 001 Committeeman

First a word of thanks to our friends at the **North Central Labor Council** and **IBEW Local 701** for their continued support. Without their contributions, publication of this newsletter would not be possible.

2007 was a year of mixed results for Labor. The Autoworkers, despite some brief strikes, managed to negotiate concession-laden contracts that will ultimately reduce the living standards for all new and many existing workers. In GM's case, they will be able to offload their responsibility for their workers health care onto the Union. Not only is the company permitted to underfund the plan, they are able to use GM stock to fund it, effectively making the UAW a major stockholder of GM. To me, this would seem to cause a huge conflict of interest.

The Teamsters at UPS did not fare well either. Reported by Mark Brenner in Labor Notes,

"In mid-November Teamsters (IBT) at United Parcel Service approved a controversial five-year agreement, more than eight months before the expiration of their current contract.

The new contract will pull 44,000 Teamsters out of the union's multi-employer Central States pension plan, and end conversion of part-time into full-time jobs at UPS. It also widens the gap between full-time and part-time standards, freezing part-timers' starting pay and forcing new part-timers to work for a year before they are eligible for health care coverage.

These givebacks were accepted in spite of the company's healthy bottom line, UPS reported more than \$4 billion in pre-tax net income last year.

Negotiators traded these concessions, along with several others, for solid annual increases in the wage and benefits package for full-time workers, as well as bargaining rights at the company's non-union freight division UPS Freight, which was created when UPS acquired Overnite Transportation two years ago."

The Postal unions all managed to get contracts done this year, either through negotiations or binding arbitration. These contracts expired in November of 2006, so we've been without one for some time.

The split of the "Change to Win" coalition away from the AFL-CIO has not changed things a great deal on the local level. In most cases, local unions and Labor Councils are working together on political issues regardless of affiliation. We'll certainly have our work cut out for us in 2008.

The Illinois State **AFL-CIO** has endorsed the following candidates for Congress locally:
Jill Morgantaler (6th)
Scott Harper (13th)
John Laesch (14th)

The Democratic-led Congress has had difficulty passing legislation, primarily due to the frequent use of the filibuster in the Senate to block bills from passage. That, combined with Bush's newfound use of the veto, has derailed most of the bills coming out of the House. With the recent filibuster of the Omnibus spending bill, a new record was set for filibusters for any term of Congress. Keep in mind, the session is only half over.

Eric Lotke, Campaign for America's Future research director, calls the obstruction a "deliberate strategy." He observes that the congressional Republicans block legislation, then blame the Democrats for getting nothing done. "It's like mugging the postman and then complaining that the mail isn't delivered on time."

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

"All progress depends on the unreasonable man – the reasonable man adapts himself to the world."

George Bernard Shaw

Vote Your Paycheck!

By Scott Fletcher

Wayne Township Resident

We have always been the party who stood with the working man and woman, the party of hope who stood with the needy, the party of compassion who stood with the young and the old and the frail. It is who we are." -John Edwards

My name is Scott Fletcher and I am a union member who votes his paycheck.

In 2002 and 2003 unemployment was bad – the worst my union, IBEW Local 134, experienced in a long time. We had roughly 1200 A-card and 300 C-card members out of work. I was one of those unfortunate ones. No job, no insurance, and my unemployment ran out. I thought to myself, if we can hold out until 2004, Bush can't possibly win again and we can get back on track. Well, we all know how that turned out.

As I talked to people at my union, I was surprised to hear that many union brothers and sisters, not only electricians but all trades, voted for Bush. I'm sure you're asking yourself the same question I did. Why? What happened? What could possibly make a union member vote against the party that stands up for the working class? The standard answer that I received was "Democrats want to take my guns away." I don't recall ever hearing that the Democrats wanted to take away our Second Amendment rights. Now I don't know about you, but myself, I can honestly say I need a paycheck more than I need an automatic weapon.

So, my friends, come this election cycle, think about that family member, neighbor or friend that lost their job. Think about the struggles they endure day in and day out, how they worry about how they are going to feed their family or pay their rent or mortgage and remember to vote your paycheck.

Also equally important, remember to thank your local organized labor movement. Without them we would not have weekends.

Functional County Government

By Dirk Enger

Democratic Candidate, County Board Dist. 6

My name is Dirk Enger and I am running for DuPage County Board District 6. District 6 covers parts of Naperville, Warrenville, Winfield, Carol Stream, Bloomingdale, Wayne, West Chicago, Wheaton and Bartlett. Recently, I have sat through several County Board budget meetings and saw a Board vote for a budget that continues to cut government departments by 20%, laying off County employees and putting public safety and educational services below the County's own needs.

This, in turn, has propelled me to run for this seat. I cannot stand by and watch those who are supposed to lead by example take all these jobs away and not begin with a pay cut themselves. This Board has placed so many County employees' lives on hold and left their futures uncertain by proposing to lay off those who do such a professional and necessary service for the residents and taxpayers of DuPage County. Our current Board has put all of its eggs in one basket by proposing a retail tax hike, with no backup plan whatsoever, should this Referendum fail. Such a plan just does not seem like smart, fundamental government. The Board has shown a lack of consistent and strong leadership that ensures the well-being of the residents and tax payers of DuPage County.

Here are a few of the issues that I would address as County Board Member District 6:

- Cut the Board from 18 to 6 members;
- Reduce the salary to reflect what Board members in neighboring counties receive;
- Bring back full accountability of all County department budgets;
- Ensure that all residents of DuPage County receive the services that their taxes so dearly pay for. It is absolutely unacceptable that the safety and well-being of the residents and taxpayers of this County have not been put first.

I will work with all Board members to make sure that sound judgement and fiscal responsibility return to County government. Not even the magician, David Copperfield, can make the "Doomsday Budget" disappear until those responsible are held accountable. I have touched on a few of the issues that I would address when I am elected. I am running because I deeply believe that Together We Can Make a Difference.

Please contact us with your input and support: **Citizens for Enger**: P.O. Box 593; Winfield, IL, 60190; 630-588-0344

Thank you and God Bless Us All.

Enger Management Our Neglected Veterans

by Columnist Dirk Enger
Precinct 004 Committeeman

I have continued fighting tirelessly to try to obtain the benefits truly due and owed to our Veterans. I wish I could say that our Veterans are receiving the help and benefits that they need, now more than ever; but, I cannot.

Since my last column, the media has finally released reports on the suicide rate of Vets returning from Iraq and Afghanistan in 2005. It is a staggering number, a horrific number, of our heroes who have taken their own lives - 6,250. I wish I could say I was shocked, but I am not. This Administration has known for years that the VA could not handle the backlog of servicemen and women with psychological problems resulting from these wars. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a devastating psychological condition that demands daily treatment. The VA does not have the capability to handle even half of the caseload reported to date. Many Veterans are put on waiting lists - just like the 600,000 Veterans waiting for healthcare last year alone. Most Vets will wait up to six months for their first appointment. This for a condition that escalates in severity. This is completely unacceptable.

The New England Journal of Medicine says that one out of every three Veterans returning would have some type of PTSD. We have suggested that the VA restructure its psychological treatment program and offer private facilities in order to shorten the wait time and lessen the caseloads. Although we proposed this to the Illinois Congressional delegation, there was little action taken to improve this problem.

The VA is planning on building facilities in the future to try to get a handle on this crisis, but what is needed is help now for our Veterans. We should structure a program using private practices to treat our Veterans.

We have read and heard of many Vets pleading for help, only to be placed on a waiting list; and in turn, they are taking their own lives because, in their utter despair, they see no other alternative.

Surely those who so unselfishly and willingly

volunteer to serve for our country deserve better.

The unemployment rate in Illinois for returning Vets is double the national average of 16.2%. Our Shelter has seen this first-hand during this past holiday season with both Iraq and Afghanistan Vets' families asking us for help. Many of these Vets are unemployed and unaware that their Veteran status qualifies them to be priority one at employment agencies - meaning they should be first in line for jobs. It is a disgrace that one Vet who served two tours in Iraq and his family of six have had to reach out to our Shelter for food and donations in order to keep his family off the streets. To see him and his wife cry when we bring food and money collected for them is not the way it should be for any soldier's family. Where is our government for them?

My wish this New Year is that sooner, rather than later, this nation and all who reside in these United States and enjoy the freedoms given to them by our Veterans will do the correct and moral thing: Demand from our elected officials what is rightfully owed to these men and women. We cannot change the past; we can only work in the present to try to improve the future. Please take five minutes to vote to improve our Veterans' future and make sure you thank a Veteran everyday for your freedom. It comes at the cost of many tears and much bloodshed. Make sure you respect and honor those who have given you this freedom.

God Bless You and Yours

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

“During times of universal deceit, telling the truth becomes a revolutionary act.”

George Orwell

Proud to be Your Democratic State Central Committeewoman

By Julia Kennedy Beckman

*13th US Congressional Dist. State Central
Committeeperson*

Election night, March 2006 – I was pleased and proud to learn that I had won the position of State Central Committeewoman, 13th Congressional District. I believed then and now that it is an honor to represent the Democrats of the “Thundering Thirteenth”. (How do you like the nickname?)

Many have asked, “So-o-o-o what do you do?” The short answer is that I am one of 38 committeemen and women from 19 congressional districts throughout Illinois who are charged with creating the Illinois party’s platform, finding and supporting candidates for office. However, the really meaningful and rewarding part of this position is working with all 14 diverse townships of the District. They stretch across large portions of three counties, from Lyons, Orland, Palos, Homer and Lemont Townships in Cook County to Lockport, Plainfield, Wheatland and DuPage Townships in Will County to Naperville, Lisle, Downers Grove and parts of York and Winfield in DuPage County. (DuPage Township is not in DuPage County – just one of the many quirks of Illinois government!)

I attend as many township meetings as I can, as well as fundraisers, picnics, parades and the all-important walking precincts. As I’ve learned to know more of you (how cool to have so many new friends!), I can see that for all our diversity – occupations, interests, ethnic backgrounds – we share the overarching goal of electing Democrats so that we can improve the lives of all the people of Illinois. We must never lose sight of that goal – so many in need are depending on us.

I certainly don’t have all the answers (not even close!) I see myself as the messenger – listening to you, taking notes on your victories and passing them on to others. Please don’t hesitate to contact me with ideas, words of wisdom or just to say “Hello”. Soon I hope to have our website up and running, so that we can stay in touch more easily. Until then, contact me at beckman110@comcast.net or **630-985-4688**.

GOP Flips on War:

That Was Then, This is Now

“I had my doubts about the bombing campaign from the beginning. I didn’t think we had done enough in the diplomatic area” —Trent Lott (R-MS), May, 1999

“The president ought to open up negotiations and come to some sort of diplomatic end. When Ronald Reagan saw that he had made a mistake putting our soldiers in Lebanon... he admitted the mistake, and he withdrew from Lebanon” – Tom Delay (R-TX), May, 1999

“I cannot support this military action in the Persian Gulf at this time. Both the timing and the policy are subject to question – Trent Lott (R-MS), Dec. 1998

After months of lies, the president has given millions of people around the world reason to doubt that he has sent Americans into battle for the right reasons” – Representative Dick Arney (R-TX), Dec. 16, 1998

“Let’s see if we can’t find a way to get the bombing stopped, get Milosevic to pull back his troops, find a way to get the Kosovars [to] go back in” – Trent Lott (R-MS), May 1999

Collected from CNN, Dec. 16, 1998; and from “Give Peace a Chance,” by William Selatin, Slate.com, May 7, 1999.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Letters, opinions, jokes
(keep’em clean, folks!)



WTDO

PO Box 224

Warrenville, IL 60555-0224

info@winfielddems.org

Winfield Township Democratic Organization Post Office Box 224 Warrenville, IL 60555-0224		
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The Electoral Process

By Gordon Brand

West Chicago Resident

By the time the 2008 general election arrives in November the American public will have been subjected to 20 months of political campaigning which is a tad too much. Much as I would hate to see the federal government intervene any further in the election process it may be necessary. Some of the states seem to be out of control in setting dates for primaries or caucuses. What next, 48 months of campaigning?

As a suggested solution the general election date should be moved to the 1st Sunday in October. Better weather and a possible bigger turnout of voters. A lame duck president can do too much damage in the two months presently allowed. The winning candidate would be sworn in 30 days after the election. In this day of electronic technology the tabulation of votes could be done in several days at the most.

The primaries would all be on the same date. The first Sunday in August. Campaigning for the primaries or caucus could not start before the first Sunday in May. If a candidate can not present his platform, views, goals and how to achieve them in that time, that candidate would probably not make a good president or office holder. I would hold the same date for all offices, state and federal.

On funding for these elections, the pundits will advise that the candidates with the most money stand the best chance for winning. Not completely wrong barring extraordinary events; the bookmakers will probably give you better odds on that assumption. However, a formula

could be determined for each state based on the number of registered voters as of a specific date in that state. A dollar value would be assigned to each voter times the number of voters. This would establish the maximum dollars that could be spent on campaigning in that state. Each candidate would be bound by that limit. If the candidates were limited to what they could spend in each state it would certainly put a ceiling on the garnering of big bucks which create unwholesome obligations. I do not see the federal government subsidizing candidates but I certainly see control of their spending.

Worth considering...?

"An imbalance between rich and poor is the oldest and most fatal ailment of all Republics"

Plutarch

