

The Township Democrat

The Official Newsletter of the Winfield Township Democratic Organization

Volume 3, No. 1

www.winfielddems.org

Spring 2009

Conversations With The Township Chair

By Susan M. Lubonovich

WTDO Chair and Precinct 030
Committeeman

I welcome all of you to this, our seventh 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 an issue chock full of articles covering an interesting array of topics. Also, I only have two things to say: Please vote for **Tim Wyman** and **Doug Henk** in the April 7th Consolidated Elections and please help us continue publishing *The Township Democrat* in these very difficult and challenging financial times. But now, a moment of bliss, as we briefly recap the results of November 4th and our Township's role in our Nation's recent momentous Election.

As you know Winfield Township consists of thirty-five precincts. We are the smallest Township in DuPage County. But we demonstrated our mettle last November - Obama won 23 of our 35 precincts for an overall Township majority of 1664 votes; the Senator we could vote for, Dick Durbin, took 33 of our precincts with a walloping 3529 winning vote difference, while Bill Foster (IL-14) was elected to his own term, winning 17 of the 21 precincts of the 14th Congressional District in Winfield Township by 1783 votes. And then there is our own Dirk Enger, who handily defeated his two opponents by 1309 and 1272 votes respectively, to win a seat on the County Board. Not too shabby for "the little engine that could" Township. That's us folks - an organization brimming with dedication, perseverance and an abundance of shoe leather.

Now the Consolidated Elections of April 7th are upon us. Two years ago, I wrote in this space a column bemoaning our lack of LOCAL Democratic candidates running for LOCAL office. I speculated that perhaps "we were too small as a Township to field our own candidates." What a difference two years of diligent hard work brings: Dirk Enger, a sitting member of the County Board and two Democratic candidates running for Township Offices in the April 7th Election - **Tim Wyman**, who is vying for Township Highway Commissioner and **Doug Henk**, who is contending for Township Trustee. Two good and true Democrats who need our help in accomplishing our goal, the goal of having a voice in our LOCAL government. Tim and Doug need your help and support. Read their articles in this publication, put on a pair of thick walking shoes and help get the word out that we have two thoroughly qualified Democratic candidates running for Township Office and they need the support of all of us. And of course, we need the ultimate assistance in building a stronger LOCAL Democratic Organization that is able to help support our LOCAL Democratic candidates and have our voices heard in our LOCAL publication, *The Township Democrat*. We do need your help.

Please mail your contribution to

WTDO
P.O. Box 224
Warrenville, IL 60555

Your Township needs you. Please
Vote April 7th.

CALENDAR

MARCH 16-APRIL 2

EARLY VOTING

MORE INFO: (630) 407-5600

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25

WTDO MONTHLY MEETING

WINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY

7:00 PM

TUESDAY, APRIL 7

ELECTION DAY

MORE INFO: (630) 407-5600

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15

WTDO MONTHLY MEETING

WINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY

7:00 PM

SATURDAY, APRIL 25

EARTH DAY CLEANUP

VILLAGE OF WINFIELD

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

COMMITTEE

MORE INFO: 630-933-7100

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20

WTDO MONTHLY MEETING

WINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY

7:00 PM

GUEST SPEAKER:

COUNTY BOARD MEMBER,

DIRK ENGER (D-06)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

PLEASE VISIT

WWW.WINFIELDDEMS.ORG

Defining A Democrat

By Jill Morgenthaler

Col. US Army (Ret.)

When I announced my decision to run as a Democratic candidate for US Congress, I was confronted by people who told me that as a retired Army Colonel, I could not possibly be a true Democrat. They could not have been more wrong. I actively chose to be a Democrat at the age of 15 when I joined my mother as she volunteered for Head Start. While visiting poor and neglected neighborhoods, I realized that not every American is given an equal chance at receiving a good education, landing a good job with decent wages and living in a safe neighborhood. A few years later, I also realized I do not believe the government should be in our bedrooms. Simply put, I believe in life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all Americans.

The individuals mentioned above stereotyped military officers as staunch Republicans. Having to confront this stereotype has given me the opportunity to reflect on what a Democrat is and on the values we hold. As with most things in life, the difference between a Democrat and a Republican is not black and white, nor blue and red. Democrats, Independents and Republicans may find that their beliefs on different issues fall within a spectrum from true blue Democrat to red-blooded Republican.

The best means of defining a Democrat is not based on occupation, age, income or religious belief, but on the values that one holds and supports. I am proud to be a member of a Party that is focused on achieving equality and peace – a Party that supports affordable quality healthcare for all Americans, dedicates resources to world class education for every child, invests in American manufacturing, science and technology, rebuilds America's infrastructure, supports the rights of workers to organize, keeps promises to our Veterans, separates religion and government, protects the Constitution, combats terrorism and makes this world a safer place through diplomacy. To me, a Democrat puts the nation and Americans before self and Party. Contrast that to Rush Limbaugh's wishes of failure upon President Obama because Limbaugh cannot stomach a better nation under Democratic principles.

Recently, a few "Democrats" in Illinois have brought shame to our State and to our Party because they arrogantly put themselves before our citizens. I placed the quotes around Democrats because these politicians have not embraced the principles of service to others, personal responsibility, shared sacrifice and fair play. All said and done, I define a Democrat as one who dares to believe that we can make America a better place for all citizens, who has the courage to do so, who builds upon the best of who and what we are, and who strives to live the maxim, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." The Democratic Party is an inclusive organization not an exclusive club.

To those who would stereotype me because I was a Soldier, military officer, and a Colonel, I say I am proud that I protected America, I am proud that I served America and I am proud to defend our glorious freedoms, especially freedom of speech. And I am proud to be a Democrat.

A version of this article also appears in The Democratic Women of DuPage County Newsletter

www.dwdupage.com

“Public confidence in the integrity of the Government is indispensable to faith in democracy; and when we lose faith in the system, we have lost faith in everything we fight and spend for.”

Adlai E. Stevenson Jr.

Hey, Let Me Tell You a Secret

By Frank Malley

Precinct 015 Committeeman

Since it's just the two of us alone here, come close and let me pass a tidbit on to you. Apparently the US economy – heck, the world economy – sank into a crisis last fall.

Oh, you've heard about that. Me too, but just every waking hour. When I'm in the land of Nod, the story only haunts roughly half my time under my toasty feather comforter. I'm netting a good solid two or three hours of sleep every night.

And yet I pick up my Sunday morning newspaper, and the front page banner headline reads: "I only wanted the pain to end." Seems to be a story about a Mexican lady whose body was being devastated by cervical cancer. She came to the US illegally and stole someone's identity so that she could actually have her cancer treated, with Illinois Medicaid picking up the \$530,000 cost. Well, economic crisis or not, we have had the issue of immigration for a century or more. Some of my forebears faced help wanted signs that noted "Irish need not apply." We have had the issue of identity theft, with careless, bungling credit card companies and sophisticated internet thieves seemingly in a race to see which ones can destroy the most lives. And, whether or not you are an American citizen, it has become eerily commonplace for medical treatment to have a price tag of half a million dollars or more.

I go to the second section of my Sunday paper and encounter another headline: "A Culture of Violence." Seems young Chicago students are spending a lot of their free time being shot to death. Again, this is an issue that has been around for quite some time. Many years ago there was an astounding first: the first Chicago student to be shot to death inside a Chicago school! As I was commuting home, I listened stunned to the news radio interview of the school janitor who encountered the boy in his very last minutes of life: "He stumbled forward. He opened his mouth, which was full of blood. He fell." By the way, the lead story on all the local televised news shows that night was: "NFL strike ends."

I have to confess, too, that as a business owner, I am indeed making sure that my money is in safe banks and that I am twitchingly alert to the international value of the dollar and to indices of consumer confidence, but – as I always have – I have to attempt to stand on the constantly shifting sands of business relationships. Indeed, one serious challenge I have actually predates the current economic crisis.

My point is a simple one. When a family is struck with heart disease, for example, the medical problem is so consuming that everyone in the family comes to believe that if only the medicine works or if only a donor heart is found in time, all the problems the family has will be solved. Similarly, if a family has a teenager on drugs, the parents and the siblings believe that if that one uncontrollable nerve-wracking problem came to an end, life would be sunny. In both of these examples, perhaps death solves the all-consuming problem, or perhaps there is a happier resolution of the problem, but the aftermath is the discovery of financial problems or marital problems or whatever, that have been coexisting all along with that big problem.

Yes, we have an enormous financial crisis. Largely it is being addressed by talented men and women of good will. If their first attempts fail or only partially succeed, they will intelligently try something else. Partisanship has been exhilarating for us over the past several years and has fueled our work when our energies started to dissipate, but let us all give this our nonpartisan American best. Not just because this problem is so huge. But because all the other problems did not go away after this crisis struck.

**“Every man is guilty of
all the good he did not
do.”**

Voltaire

Better Roads Better Government

Tim Wyman

*Democratic Candidate for
Winfield Township Highway Commissioner*

Difficult economic times (property values falling, jobs lost), who needs higher taxes? Poor roadway pavement (potholes, cracks, bumps), who needs flat tires?

How do these two current issues relate? The current condition of our Township roads is not all due to the bad weather and freeze / thaw cycles, although this does speed up the road pavement deterioration process. What actually starts the whole process of potholes and flat tires (and front end suspension damage) is poor pavement materials, poor management of the inspection and testing, poor pavement patching and repair specifications and poor supervision of the workmanship of the patching and resurfacing or overlay process.

According to the current Township Highway Commissioner, Joe Jedlovec, "our township roads are on a ten year patching and resurfacing repair cycle." This however, is not the actual life cycle of the asphalt pavement. As a Civil and Licensed Professional Engineer in the State of Illinois and from my personal observations and inspections, the current actual life cycle appears to be more in the range of 1.5 to 2.5 years, leaving us with very poor pavement (potholes, severe cracking and crumbling) for the balance of this 10 year scheduled repair cycle or for 7.5 to 8.5 years. This scheduled repair cycle is self imposed by the Township Highway Commissioner due to what he says is a "limited road budget". By the way, the Township Road District budget is \$1.87 million.

As a candidate for Winfield Township Highway Commissioner and as a Professional Engineer, I would use and manage the current road budget more efficiently, work to be more fiscally responsible, and use the up-to- date Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) specified materials and processes such as "Superpav", a more flexible asphalt pavement

in place of the current recycled asphalt and use reflective crack treatment, which is a geotextile fabric that is "glued" down with liquid asphalt (tar) over cracks and joints in the pavement. Finally, I would enforce the stringent IDOT standards in the testing and inspection of all materials and workmanship.

I have been told by the incumbent Winfield Township Highway Commissioner that the current repair schedule is "to patch one year and resurface the next". I have witnessed, in some neighborhoods, that the patching was done up to two years ago while the resurfacing still remains undone and the current condition of these roads is very poor. A specific example of this is Ethel Street, three blocks east of County Farm Road and three streets north of Geneva Road.

I say, perform the full depth patching and use the reflective crack treatment immediately before the resurfacing – not 1 or 2 years later. This would keep the cracks and joints from opening up by the freeze / thaw cycle and would keep these ever increasing cracks and joints from reflecting up into and through the resurfaced pavement. This process alone would increase the pavement life cycle by as much as 3 or 4 years, saving the budget and my fellow taxpayers hundreds of thousands to millions of dollars in the long run.

There are other programs and processes that could also be put into effect, such as: rubber snowplow blade inserts versus carbon steel blade inserts, properly engineered roadway drainage, ditch grading, culvert repair and replacement of shoulder gravel to save the edges of the pavement. All of these practices would extend the pavement life cycle and once again, save us money in the long run.

Implementing these processes will save us money and result in fewer property tax rate increase referenda in these difficult economic times and give us better roads. What a great life cycle that would be!

Save money. Produce better roads.

For more information on these issues and my qualifications for candidate for Winfield Township Highway Commissioner, visit please my website,

www.WinfieldTownshipRoads.com

Henk for Township Trustee

By Doug Henk

*Precinct 007 Committeeman,
Candidate for Winfield Township Trustee*

Hello my name is Doug Henk. You may have seen my name on your ballot before: in past elections, I have run for a seat on the county board and for precinct committeeman in Winfield Township. My name will again be on the ballot on April 7th, this time as the Democratic candidate for Winfield Township Trustee.

The township board was conceived as the most democratic of the many levels of Illinois government. The township board is to be a source for immediate assistance for the residents of the township, to build and maintain roads for the residents, and finally to administer the property tax within the township.

The political parties within the township hold a caucus every four years to elect candidates for the board. This process was conceived to give the maximum number of residents a voice in the township and the opportunity to contribute. Although conceived for this purpose, the Boards of Trustees for Winfield Township and for many other Illinois townships ultimately do not meet this democratic ideal. The caucuses tend to be heavily influenced by core party leaders, and the township elections tend to result in township boards heavily controlled by a single party. Single-party rule leaves those who do not toe the party line without a voice.

Winfield Township has changed a great deal in the last fifty years. The make-up of the Winfield Township Board of Trustees has not. It is time to make this change. It is time for the Township to take advantage of the talents that exist within the Democratic Party of Winfield Township.

Democrats and independents within Winfield Township represent a valuable pool of talent and generosity. However, many of these residents feel disconnected from the current process. I know this to be true from my work with the annual prairie path clean up. I have found numerous people anxious to help who had simply never been previously approached

because they belonged to the “wrong” political party. As Township Trustee, I will welcome the participation of each and every resident, with gratitude and respect.

Each time I have walked my precinct and many others within the Township, I find more and more support for the Democratic candidates whose literature I carry. Like me, our neighbors are in support of more transparency in government at all levels. This must begin with township government. The township must be responsible for publishing a clear accounting of the money spent, of what we receive for our tax dollars and a fair assessment of the value of what we have purchased. Only then can we judge the value of existing programs. In the end, the question is, are we doing enough?

I would like to ask you for your vote on April 7th. More importantly, I would like to ask you for your participation in the process here in Winfield Township. Thank you.

“Every great and commanding moment in the annals of the world is the triumph of some enthusiasm.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

COD Trustee Election

By Tom Wendorf

Candidate for COD Trustee, District 502

It's About Jobs!

No, not the unpaid job of Trustee! This COD Trustee Election is about your job, your neighbor's job, and the jobs your sons and daughters hope to have one day. I'm Tom Wendorf, and I'm a candidate for the 6-year term for Trustee of College of DuPage. I have been a resident of the district for 20 years, was formerly a corporate executive, sat on a corporate board and have been a small local business owner for the past 10 years. When my family settled in Glen Ellyn, we came for that corporate job. My wife, who had been a tax and financial planner in Kansas City, came with no prospects for employment. She decided to take a couple of accounting courses at COD. That start, 20 years ago, eventually brought her to where she is today – an Instructor of Accounting at DePaul University. Hers is a common story at COD: people come to COD and find a new path, new training and new inspiration to pursue satisfying work and provide for their families. Her job gave us the security that allowed me to leave the corporate world and pursue my dream of business ownership. College of DuPage has the power to transform lives and help folks, especially in a bad economy like we have today.

College of DuPage has a clear, specific function to play in the educational arena and an important service to provide in the economic arena. Approximately 8,000 of the 28,000 enrolled students are headed to 4 year schools. These are the traditional high school graduates pursuing a 4 year degree. College of DuPage currently services this group well. It can improve this function by establishing more transfer agreements with 4 year schools. Ease in transferring to a 4 year school is very important. As a candidate for Trustee of College of DuPage I want it known that I strongly oppose that College of DuPage should strive to offer 4 year degrees.

Once again the economy is restructuring. There are new and innovative businesses that may not come to DuPage because we do not have a workforce trained for those jobs. Our sons and daughters, who may not qualify for a 4 year

college degree, need a place to learn the skills to fill this workforce need. Our unemployed and underemployed neighbors, who must find new or better employment, need a place to learn those skills as well. College of DuPage is such a place. This is why COD was founded and is supported by your tax dollars. Moving College of DuPage to 4 year status is wrong. It is specifically prevented by state law. I oppose any attempt to change that state law and make it possible for COD to offer 4 year degrees. Keep the mission of COD where it belongs, as an important gear in the engine of economic growth and prosperity.

I am not a politician. I am like you – a concerned citizen. I have never run for office before. I am concerned that COD might not remain the great institution it has been in the past. I started attending Board meetings the month after the unexplained removal of Dr. Sunil Chand as president of COD last May. I continued to attend meetings and speak out about the ill-considered actions of a Board that was tone deaf to the voice of the community and its other constituents.

My platform is pretty simple:

Affordability – Keep costs down for students and taxpayers

Academic Excellence – Prepare citizens for the jobs of tomorrow

Accessibility – Offer education on campus, at satellites, and online

Accountability – Restore trust and collaboration between the board, faculty, administrators, students and community.

My promise to you is that I will honor your vote with my devoted service and keep your concerns a top priority. I have no other agenda but the well being of our community and of College of DuPage. During this campaign, I have come to know three other candidates that have like concerns and values. I ask you to vote for the four of us: **Tom Wendorf**, **Kim Savage**, and **Nancy Svoboda** for 6-year terms and **Sandy Kim** for the 2-year term for Trustee of College of DuPage on April 7th. We thank you for your consideration.

COD Board Race Captures Attention

By Kim Savage

Candidate for COD Trustee, District 502

Local races often go unnoticed by our communities, unless pervasive problems affecting the financial health or policy implementation catch the attention of voters. The College of DuPage Board of Trustees is among those entities where information regarding the issues is not readily available to voters, thus resulting in the election of mediocre or poor Trustees by a small percentage of voters.

The College of DuPage Board of Trustees race is of extreme importance. Over the past several years, enrollment has gone down, state funding has declined, building projects have come in over budget and staff morale is at an all time low. In addition, due to the current Board's personnel decisions, the College is currently paying three presidents: Sunil Chand, who was abruptly fired in May 2008; Harold McAnich, who was hired as Interim President; and Robert Brueder, who was hired in January 2009. Two Trustees have resigned from the Board citing intimidation and micromangement by the Board. Controversy over proposed policy changes that restrict freedom of speech and also move curriculum decisions under the purview of the Board have raised fundamental concerns among many groups in the community. The Board has raised tuition twice in the past three years. These issues have not gone unnoticed by national higher education publications and organizations. On top of everything else, one of the current Board members filed objections to the petitions of six candidates; all of them, people who do not have strong connections to any of the current Board members.

All of these issues combined have the potential to impact the educational quality and reputation of the College. The College of DuPage is one of our greatest community assets, with a tradition of high academic quality. It requires competent stewardship by Trustees who can be trusted to make wise decisions to sustain the core values that are important to the people: affordability, accessibility, accountability and academic excellence.

A group of citizen-candidates has emerged that

reflects the values of our community and they have been endorsed by the Friends For Education, COD's Faculty Association Political Action Committee after extensive discussion with all candidates who sought this endorsement. For the two-year term, **Sandy Kim** is the recommended candidate. For the six year term, **Kim Savage, Tom Wendorf and Nancy Svoboda** are recommended. We ask for your vote on April 7th.

For more information on the candidates endorsed by the COD Faculty PAC Friends For Education please visit,

friendsforeducation502.org/candidate.html

tomwendorf.com

kimsavage.org

www.nancysvoboda.com

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

**Letters, opinions, jokes
(keep'em clean, folks!)**



WTDO

PO Box 224

Warrenville, IL 60555-

0224

info@winfielddems.org

The Way Forward

By Bob Peickert

Chair, Democratic Party of DuPage County

I want to take a few lines to thank everyone who has worked so hard this past year in helping the Democratic Party of DuPage County grow into a stronger and more viable organization. I want to thank all of you for your support, cooperation and assistance during my first year as Chair of the county organization. Without that, we would not have achieved what we have.

Now the big question, "Where do we go from here?" A frequently asked question following the election of our 3 Democratic country board members deserves an answer. Some joke about the old saying "What do we do now?" when one suddenly and unexpectedly achieves an elusive goal. The Democratic Party of DuPage County, along with our 9 Democratic Township Organizations, now has that elusive prize under its belt and is well prepared to move forward.

Let me say a few words about this past year and what I see ahead for this organization. The results and successes in 2008 were the direct result of the talent and input of many. No one individual made this possible. We engaged many people in various areas of needs based on their interests and skills. Our success in the future will again depend on our ability to bring in skilled, talented, interested and committed individuals who want to see Democrats playing a role in shaping and defining the policies of DuPage government. With just 3 Democrats in office, we have made a significant impact on making that become a reality. Imagine what we will be able to achieve with 3 more, 6 more, and so on.

As we think about the future of the DPDC, I am reminded of what Abraham Lincoln had to say about the future. He said: "The best thing about the future is that it comes one day at a time." The future of our organization is a day-to-day project along with short and long- term goals. And, we all may have different ideas of what we want the DPDC to look like in the future. Success is a product of inclusion, failure that of exclusion; and what we need is a unified vision. If you have an idea, bring it on. We need to share information, share ideas, reach out beyond the boundaries of DuPage, explore different approaches, challenge ourselves,

engage others, and never think that we have all the answers. Each day becomes a learning experience. Do not be afraid to change course if we see that change is necessary. Admit mistakes, but do not dwell on them.

As long as I am chair of the DPDC, I will continue to offer my ideas and suggestions for what we need to do to make sure that the success of the DPDC was not simply the result of the Barack Obama tsunami. We need to listen to the wants and needs of others and mold our own plans based on those wants and needs. It is sometimes a very challenging process especially when we have divergent views on what needs to be done and how it gets done. However, I believe that this is the best process we have going and will continue to facilitate that process.

The DPDC now has frequent meetings of the leadership of the county and township organizations to define our goals and implement our strategies. Our 9 township organizations are growing in terms of increasing the number of precinct committeemen, enlisting more Democrats, expanding participation at township meetings, attending township government meetings, raising funds for activities and candidates, becoming more visible, etc. The county organization has expanded its operation by bringing in more volunteers and employing an Executive Director. Our partnership with labor unions has been elevated to another level. More people have assumed responsibility over key projects and committees. Our collaborative work with other organizations has allowed us to make better use of our time and volunteers. We are working with our State Representatives and Senators on important legislative matters. There is more to do and we need all of the help we can assemble. Join us.

I do not profess to have all of the answers nor am I afraid to ask for help. We can best achieve our goals by bringing together people who share a common cause, not a personal agenda. The future of our organization is not based on my vision but rather OUR vision. Let's continue working together as we paint the picture of what our future will look like in one year, 5 years, 10 years and beyond. I look forward to the challenges. I'm ready and I hope you are as well. Good luck on April 7th, and beyond.

Jobs in Energy

By Scott Harper

US Congressional District 13

As I contemplate our great District in this time of economic crisis, it is clear to me that no issue is more important than jobs for our citizens. Our business leaders, our teachers, our tradesmen, our bankers and doctors, all contribute mightily to the fabric of our community and its well-being. No job is unimportant. Every job is not only a chance to serve, but the wherewithal to raise a family and tend a home. And if we zoom out to view the last 200 years of economic history, it becomes clear that economic success and its attendant wealth has been built in waves on new technical advances. From shipbuilding to steam, to gearing, to textile automation, to rail, to automobiles, to microprocessors and genetic engineering, we have harnessed ideas and turned them into organizations.

Many who have looked even a short distance into the future have seen that energy technology is likely to be the next great global industry. On its foundation the next burst of great jobs will be built. To the country that does the most to harness, nurture and aggregate these types of enterprises will go the lion's share of the benefits. And into the region of that leading country that can attract the scientists, engineers and builders, the capital and the educated work force will flourish. In the 13th Congressional District, we have some of the lattice-work already in place that can make us the 'Silicon Valley' of energy technology. We have Argonne National Laboratory with its mission to develop the next generation of power and energy. We have thousands of brilliant scientists working in scores of fields from materials to systems to fundamental physics – all seeking to understand how nature can yield more efficiently what human beings can use to make our lives more rich and varied.

We have Fermilab on our northern border and many of her brilliant physicists make our district home. We also have a wealth of universities, colleges, community colleges and vocational schools whose research and talented graduates make our district the envy

of the nation. We have leaders in waste heat recycling, wind energy, battery technology and more already here. With that foundation, we have what it takes to become the nation's leader in the next globally competitive industry.

No issue is more important to me as one seeking to be the Representative of this District in our nation's capital. If we can become the center for the next globally important industry, we will have jobs for our young people and wealth for our communities. I am committed to fighting for the policy changes and the resources to make this vision a reality. But it is not just traditional political work that makes this happen; it is catalyzing the network of people that makes the difference. Visionary mayors, perceptive venture capitalists, courageous entrepreneurs, socially engaged scientists, all must have a reason to meet and turn individual initiative into common purpose. This is what I am focused and determined on making happen.

“Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs even though checkered by failure, than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much because they live in the gray twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat.”

Theodore Roosevelt

Labor Update

By Doug May

Precinct 001 Committeeman

The Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) has been introduced into Congress. President Barack Obama has pledged to sign it if passed. What this bill would do is make it simpler for workers to organize their workplace. It would also put some teeth in the existing law by increasing penalties for employers who violate the rights of employees working to organize their workplace.

There has been a massive PR campaign sponsored by business groups, notably the Chamber of Commerce, telling Americans that this law would take away the right of workers to vote in an election with a secret ballot. This is a lie. Under current law, there is no requirement for a secret ballot election. In fact most union organizing over the last few years has been accomplished without holding a formal election. What the EFCA would change is to allow the workers to decide whether to vote on the union either with a formal election process or a simplified method, similar to signing a petition, also known as card check. The issue that has the business groups up in arms is that it would allow the workers to make that decision. Currently, that choice resides with the employer, and they do not want their workers to have this right. Business is terrified of having to deal with its employees on a level playing field. Their argument of protecting workers' rights is quite phony. For years they have been stripping away rights in the workplace with the help of President Bush's business-friendly Department of Labor led by Elaine Chao, the wife of current Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY). They have even won the right to fire people who meet up for drinks after working hours.

While business groups have been spreading the big lie about secret ballots, several other provisions of the bill are not being reported. Two in particular are noteworthy. The first is the provision that would create real penalties for firing workers involved in organizing the union. In recent years, employers have been routinely firing organizers. This is an illegal practice, but typically the penalty is only to reinstate the worker with back pay, and maybe post a flyer on the bulletin board saying they won't do it again. Mike Elk, with the Campaign

for America's Future, wrote, "If the penalty for robbing a bank was you had to post a piece of paper saying you robbed a bank, we'd all be bank robbers!"

The EFCA would also require the parties to negotiate a first contract in a timely manner. If no agreement is reached, then the contract will go to arbitration. This would encourage both labor and management to negotiate in good faith, as it is in no one's interest to go to arbitration and have a third party make decisions affecting the workplace.

Organized Labor has been in decline over the last few decades. The most famous example was President Reagan's firing of the Air Traffic Controllers in the early 80's. The EFCA would go a long way towards leveling the playing field for workers, who generally have no say in their working conditions.

It should be noted that Rep Bill Foster (D-14) has signed on as a co-sponsor. Local labor groups worked hard to get Bill elected and it's refreshing to have a local voice working for us in Washington. Our other local Representatives, Peter Roskam (R-06) and Judy Biggert (R-13), are both opposed. Rep. Biggert introduced a bill several years ago that would have eliminated overtime pay for most people. Please thank Rep. Foster for his support and do not be afraid to contact your representative and urge them to support the EFCA. Contacting the Republicans may seem pointless, but if they do not hear an earful from you, they will not know what you think.

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

“Other lands have their vitality in a few, a class, but we have it in the bulk of our people.”

Walt Whitman

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| Winfield Township Democratic Organization Post Office Box 224 Warrenville, IL 60555-0224 | | |
| Return Service Requested | | |

The Vital Importance of Net Neutrality

By Barry Dredze

Precinct 018 Committeeman

When we turn on our cable TV, we understand that our choices are limited by the package we have chosen, usually based on our tastes in entertainment and the prices we want to pay. On the other hand, when we log on to the internet, we have every right to believe that we can go anywhere we want to go on the worldwide web. Further, we have every right to believe that we can access any site, from international news media to a neighborhood blog, without discrimination by our internet service providers. What makes these assumptions possible is the principle of a free and open internet, called network neutrality – or “Net Neutrality.”

By definition the internet is an interconnected system of networks that connects computers around the world by telecommunications protocols. From its development in a coordinated effort between academia and government, (particularly the Defense Department) the internet has grown into a global commercial medium. Telephone and cable companies, like AT&T, Verizon, Comcast and Time-Warner, provide and maintain most of our internet service. We tolerate a certain amount of discrimination in our cable TV viewing that we do not expect in our use of the internet. If we chose not to

subscribe to HBO, we did not expect to keep up with *The Sopranos*. If Net Neutrality was eliminated as a guiding principle of internet service, these companies would be the gatekeepers, determining which content providers were guaranteed speedy delivery of their data, and discriminating in favor of their own proprietary search engines, internet phone services, streaming video, etc., while slowing down those of their competitors or else blocking them entirely; and deciding which websites load quickly or slowly and which will not load at all.

All this brings us to a political choice between the information super highway or a telecommunications tollway that limits our access to information data based upon commercial and economic circumstances beyond our control. There are narrow private interests of the communications industry and there is the broader public interest in a free and informed electorate, and politically we may choose only one or the other to prevail. Because our democracy depends on an informed electorate, it was determined by the Founders that free speech was essential to the public discourse. When narrow private interests dominate our communications media, the public interest is threatened.

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