



"Proud to be a Democrat"

Democratic Party of Door County

April, 2009 Newsletter

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Door Dems Deliver as Abrahamson and Evers Carry the County

Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson was re-elected for another 10 year term on the State Supreme Court, while Tony Evers was elected to a 4 year term as State Superintendent of Public Instruction in the general election on April 7th.

Members of your DPDC and other volunteers formed a phone banking corps to mobilize support at the polls for Abrahamson and Evers. Getting out the vote is specially important in the spring election because usually only about 20 percent of those eligible to vote actually do so. Volunteers took call lists for more than 3000 likely voters in the county, and demonstrated the power of grassroots politics.

Abrahamson won the state with 60 percent of the vote. In Door County, she received **72** percent! Evers had 57 percent of the vote statewide, and **65** percent in the County. These figures are particularly noteworthy because in the two recent contested Supreme Court Elections, candidates supported by far right special interest groups won both the state and Door County. What a great turnaround.

March Membership Meeting Informative and Productive

The March membership meeting featured two major activities, both instructive and productive.

Six of the 29 candidates in contested local spring elections responded to our invitation by making presentations seeking support from the members at the meeting. Candidates Diane Kirkland (Ephraim Village president), Jane Olson (Ephraim Village trustee), Terry McNulty (Forestville Village trustee), Frank Forkert (Liberty Grove Town Board), Charlie Most (Liberty Grove Town chair), and Ben Meyer (Sturgeon Bay District 1 alderman) spoke of their perspectives and goals.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to discussion and adoption of 10 resolutions out of the 15 prepared by Phil Hansotia and Rod Bohn with input from the membership. The photo shows Phil Hansotia moderating the lively discourse. Ten resolutions were approved in principle, to be sent by email to the membership. Modifications to the wording would be made in response to commentary from members. Titles of the 10 resolutions ultimately submitted to the 8th CD Convention are:



- School Funding Reform
- Support Feingold's "Improving Student Achievement" Act, and repeal "NCLB"
- Social Security tax on all earned income
- Mass transit
- Employee Free Choice Act
- State Supreme Court justice selection reform
- Universal single-payer health care
- Reform of FCC and use of public airwaves
- Legalization, taxation and regulation of marijuana
- Addressing non-violent crime

Authorized and paid for by the Democratic Party of Door County

To reach us: DCDems@hughes.net, on the web at www.DoorCountyDems.org, or PO Box 863, Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235

Upcoming Events

APRIL

- Apr 23 **April Membership meeting**, Sturgeon Bay Library, upper level, 7:00 PM. The Arab World Today, will be presented by Kate Wulle-Dugan who has extensive experience in the mideast and has just returned. See adjacent article.
- Apr 25-26 **Democratic Leadership Institute**, Devil's Head Resort, Merrimac, WI.

MAY

- May 2 **Kewaunee County Democratic Party Jack Kennedy Dinner**, Stebbins Hotel, Algoma, cocktails at 6:00 PM, dinner at 7:00. See adjacent article.
- May 14 **Executive Board meets**, Party office (62 S. 3rd Ave.) 6:00 PM. DPDC members welcome to attend.
- May 16 **Annual Democratic Party of WI Founders Day Gala**, Midwest Airlines Center, 400 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, 6:00 PM. See Article below.
- May 28 **2nd Annual DPDC Fun(d)raiser and "White Donkey" Sale**, The Board Room at Liberty Square, 7755 Hwy 42, Egg Harbor, 6:00 PM. See article on p. 5.

JUNE

- June 11 **Executive Board meets**, Party office (62 S. 3rd Ave.) 6:00 PM. DPDC members welcome to attend.
- June 12-13 **Democratic Party of Wisconsin Annual Convention**, Radisson Hotel, 2040 Airport Drive, Green Bay. Registration information is on the DPW website: <http://wisdems.org>. If you wish to be a delegate, contact Mary Horn (743-0009 or mchorn@dcwis.com) or Estella Lauter (839-2741 or Estella.Lauter@gmail.com).
- June 25 **June Membership Meeting**, location and program TBA.

Hear About "The Less Publicized Arab World" at April Membership Meeting

The April 23rd membership meeting will feature a presentation by Kate Wulle-Dugan on "The Less Publicized Arab World".

Ms. Wulle-Dugan has an extensive background in the mideast, having spent three years as a graduate student at the American University in Beirut, Lebanon as well as a Fulbright Fellow in Egypt.

She has traveled widely in the region, including to Syria, Turkey, Jordan, Egypt, Iraq and Kuwait. and has recently returned to the US.

The meeting will be in the Jane Green Room (upper level) of the Sturgeon Bay Library on 4th Ave., (**note change from previously announced location**), starting at 7:00 PM with a brief business meeting and report on the 8th CD convention before the presentation.

Lawton and Nelson to Speak at Jack Kennedy Dinner

The Kewaunee County Democrats' annual Jack Kennedy dinner will be held on Saturday, May 2nd at the Stebbins Hotel, 201 Steele Street, Algoma. Here is a great opportunity to join our fellow Democrats in celebrating our successes and rededicating ourselves to continue our efforts to elect progressive Democratic candidates.

Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton and State Assembly Majority Leader Tom Nelson have been invited to speak. They are both dynamic speakers, and leave their audiences inspired and energized. Local candidates will be honored, and may give us and indication of future plans.

The social hour begins at 6:00 PM, with dinner at 7:00. Cost is \$18 per person. RSVP (preferably by April 24th) to Melissa Huizenga (920-388-2353) or Bob Entringer (920-487-3814).

DPW Annual Founders Day Gala to be May 16th

The Midwest Airlines Center in Milwaukee is the site for the Annual Democratic Party of Wisconsin Founders Day Gala at 6:00 PM on May 16th. This is the Party's signature event and primary fundraiser.

The theme of this year's event is honoring Dave Obey's 40 years of service in Congress. Obey will also be the keynote speaker at the gala.

Tickets are \$125, and include a copy of Congressman Obey's book *Raising Hell for Justice*.

For more information or to order tickets, check out the website: www.wisdems.org/calendar_details.asp?id=154 or contact Mary Lang Sollinger at 608-260-2408 or maryls@wisdems.org.

Message from the Co-Chair:**Where Can We Lift the Most Political Weight?**

On April 15, 2009, conservatives around the country mounted protests against the stimulus package and federal budget on the grounds that such programs will raise taxes.

Aside from the fact that tax phobia is decidedly unbecoming in a democracy that depends on taxes to provide its services and civil liberties, the saddest thing about this movement is its misdirection of grassroots energy.

No one (least of all President Obama and the Democratic majority) wants to run up huge deficits for our grandchildren, but it seems disingenuous to push that issue now instead of in, say, 2005, when the cost of the Iraq War was already out of hand. It was Bush who drove our debt to \$11 trillion!

The world-wide consensus, based on world experience dating back to 1932, is that governments are the only forces large enough to counter the current crisis caused by deregulation and mismanagement of the private sector.

In fact, most economists fear that the present packages are not large enough, and some wonder if they address the right problems.

A recent article in *The Nation* (April 20, 2009) worries productively about both of these points. Leo Hindrey Jr. and Donald W. Riegle Jr., participants in the Smart Global Initiative at the New America Foundation, argue that "unemployment is by far, with no close second, the most important economic issue facing the country" (13). We need, they say, something like the Marshall Plan after WWII to create at least 24 million jobs!

"The right way to earn our way back to long-term prosperity is through stimulus efforts that will help develop, broadly deploy, fairly compensate, and fully employ our human capital, which will always be our greatest source of national wealth" (p. 13). We cannot do this, they say, by employing another form of trickle-down economics to the problem.

The facts are staggering—much worse than the evening news suggests. While the official unemployment rate is 8.1%, this figure does not include the 10.7 million underemployed (part-time



**Estella Lauter,
DPDC Chair**

or temporary workers) or the 3.7 million who have given up the search.

One indicator of our plight is that unions now represent only 7.6% of private employees. Another is that income inequality is higher than at any time since 1928.

Our middle class, the envy of the world from the late 1940s through the 1970s, was in large part the result of gains in wages and a standard of living that was negotiated by unions through higher productivity.

The campaign against unions that began under Reagan corresponds with many of the worst features of our present economy: the shift from manufacturing to service, the emphasis on massive profits for shareholders and CEOs, the dependence on credit to maintain a middle-class lifestyle, and the creation of one bubble after another to sustain the illusion of wealth.

The authors have some excellent suggestions for the Executive and Legislative branches of government: devote the next stimulus package entirely to achieving full employment; create a ten-year program to rebuild our national infrastructure; double the aid to state and local governments to fill lost jobs; and expand job training and apprenticeships in the skilled trades.

But their first recommendation is to pass the Employee Free Choice Act to allow workers to join unions without interference or intimidation. Now *there's* a cause we can champion with confidence, because it is part of our legacy as Democrats.

Of course the large corporations are dead set against this legislation because many more workers would unionize if they could. In the last thirty years, owners have perfected many ways to discourage workers from joining a union; the present hoopla about ensuring a secret ballot is only the latest in a long string of scams.

So if you haven't already written to Messrs. Kagen, Feingold and Kohl about this and related issues having to do with full employment as the best way out of the tunnel of recession, read about the Act and go to your phone or computer.

This is only one of many ways to refocus attention away from the financial sector and onto employment. Instead of protesting against our government, let's do something constructive to make it work for us.

8th CD Convention Successful, Lauter Elected 2nd Vice-Chair

The beautiful north woods of Forest County attracted 75 delegates to the 2009 8th Congressional District Convention, April 19th in Carter.

The glow of our 2008 victories permeated the proceedings, even as the speakers exhorted the delegates to start grassroots organizing for 2010 when Senator, Congressional Representative, Governor, State Attorney General, Assembly and State Senate elections will be held.

Speakers included Penny Bernard Schaber, elected to the State Assembly from Appleton in 2008; the first Democrat elected there in 90 years. She talked about how the Republicans in the Assembly are disavowing any connection with the genesis our present huge budget deficit.

Mike Tate, candidate for Chair of the DPW (to be elected at the DPW Convention June 13th) spoke of the importance of knocking on doors to tell voters what we are doing for them. He also emphasized that we are in the electronic age, and need to communicate with younger voters via electronic media such as facebook and twitter.

Congressman Kagen pointed out that the President's budget is a statement of priorities:

1. Reforming health care
2. Educating our children
3. Energy independence
4. Environmental protection

He emphasized the risk of losing seats in the 2010 elections; we need to convey the message that we are on the side of traditional American values.

Kagen believes we need to get out of Iraq and Afghanistan, redirecting the huge costs of these wars to domestic needs.

Tom Nelson, Assembly Majority Leader, gave a rousing pep talk about the effectiveness of legislative activity now that the Republicans can no longer obstruct progress. He promised that the budget would be passed by the required deadline in June.

Other speakers included Paula Zellner, State Field Representative for Senator Feingold's re-election campaign, and Melissa Schroeder, representative to the DNC.

Officers for the 8th CD for the next year were elected. They are:

- Chair - Sid Vineburg
- Admin. Committee Rep. - Dottie LeClaire
- First Vice Chair - Melissa Huizenga
- Second Vice Chair - Estella Lauter
- Treasurer - Kathy Groat
- Secretary - Susan Baxter

Kevin Kuhl was also elected as the 8th CD representative to the state Platform and Resolutions Committee.

Rod Bohn and Estella Lauter then led a discussion of the 45 resolutions submitted for consideration. These were to be reduced to 10 resolutions by vote of the delegates present. Voting was done by paper ballot, and results are not yet available at press time (4/21/09).

Following the vote, the meeting was adjourned. The photos below show some vignettes of a most successful meeting. Compliments to Sid Vineburg, 8th CD Chair, and the organizing committee.



Sid Vineburg



Mike Tate



Penny Bernard Schaber



Rod Bohn and Estella Lauter



Congressman Kagen



Rep. Tom Nelson

Gala Fun(d)raiser and "White Donkey" Sale in May

May 28th is the date, the Board Room at Liberty Square in Egg Harbor is the place, and our second annual May Fun(d)raiser is the order of the evening.

The \$25 per person admission includes a light supper, the evening's entertainment, and the white donkey sale.

The theme of the evening will be a retrospective of the first 100 days of the Obama administration in the words of President Obama himself.

To start the retrospective, we will see photos and hear Patti Podgers and Jim Johnson's account of the inauguration, which they viewed first-hand.

Mike Tate, candidate for the Chair of the Democratic Party of Wisconsin will also speak. Mike

is a former president of Wisconsin College Democrats, a member of the DPW Administrative Committee, and was chair of the "Fair Wisconsin" Campaign in 2007.

Mike brings youth and vigor to our Party leadership, and deserves a careful hearing about his candidacy.

Please start gathering donations for the "White Donkey" sale. New and gently used items are needed. The sale was a huge success last year, and will be so again if we all find those items we no longer want or need that others may treasure. **To donate, please contact Barbara Perloff (839-9282, wperloff@hughes.net).**

Please Renew Your Membership, We Need YOU!

NOW is the time to renew your membership in the Democratic Party of Door County (DPDC). This is **really important** because the number of delegates from Door County to the State Party convention is determined in part by the number of **paid-up** members for 2009. Also, if you wish to be a delegate at the State Party convention, you must be paid-up for the current year.

The renewal form is below. Please print out the form and mail it to our DPDC P.O. box (the address is on the form). When you join the DPDC, you are also automatically a member of the Democratic Party of Wisconsin. So, If you have received a renewal card from the State Democratic Party, you can use that card, but please be sure to **return it to our P.O. box**. We will forward it to the State Party.

Renew now, and please feel free to make a generous donation to the local Party in addition to your membership dues.

We must split membership dues with the State Party, but can retain contributions in their entirety for our local Party. And as you know from reading the March newsletter, we depend on generous contributions to build the Party and support Democratic candidates. We are already laying the groundwork for the 2010 elections.

Our new membership committee chair is Olivia Lowery (920-562-1772, olivia.lowery@gmail.com). Please contact her for membership questions. If you have not renewed for '09, Olivia and her committee will be in touch.

A special "thank you" to the 145 new and renewing members who have (re)joined for 2009!

or Renew



Yes, I'll Join the Democratic Party and Help Democrats Win!

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State _____

Zip _____

Phone _____

This is a Cell Phone Home Phone

Email _____

County: Door

Sign me up for:

- \$10 Senior/student/limited income
- \$25 Individual general membership
- \$35 Pairs (includes 2 memberships)
- \$45 Activist family (includes up to 3 memberships)
- \$75 Family supporters (includes all family mem's)

I would also like to join:

- LGTB Caucus Black Caucus
- Latino/Hispanic Caucus American Indian Caucus

Return to: **Democratic Party of Door County**
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