



"Proud to be a Democrat"

Democratic Party of Door County

June, 2009 Newsletter

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Obama Wows Green Bay

President Obama held a "Health Care Town Meeting" in Green Bay on Thursday June 11th, addressing an energetic crowd in the Southwest High School gymnasium.

Despite tight security, the gym filled smoothly with 1500 lucky ticket-holders. A number of Door Dems served as volunteer staff for the event, including Helene Diiuilo, Phil and Marilyn Hansotia, Mary and Elmer Horn, and Barb and Bill Perloff.

The President spoke for approximately 15 or 20 minutes about the need to reform the way we deliver and finance health care in the U.S., and the importance of having a "public" (read government-sponsored) program as one option. He believes this is essential to keeping the private insurers honest and providing real competition.

He then took questions from the floor, unscripted and randomly selected. The questions were pointed, and one of them had to do with education rather than health care. President Obama answered each with a well organized and logical response, showing how the answers to specific questions fit within the larger framework of his overall approach to the issue being discussed. It was an impressive demonstration of thinking on one's feet.

One of the questioners commented that he had taken his 10 year old daughter out of school to bring her to see the President. Pres. Obama said he would write an excuse for her to take to her teacher, and did so on the spot.

After more than an hour, Obama had to leave, but did so by walking around the divider surrounding the dais, shaking hands with the crowd. A few photos of the event are shown below.



Addressing the crowd



Answering questions from the floor



Writing a school absence excuse



Up close and personal

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

JUNE

- June 25 **June Membership Meeting**, Sturgeon Bay Library, upper level, 7:00 PM. Dr. Montgomery Elmer, candidate for the First District State Senate, will be the speaker. See the adjacent article.
- June 27 **Olde Ellison Days Parade**, 11:00 AM, lineup at Shepherd of the Bay Church at 10:00AM.
- June 28 **Little Sturgeon Days Parade**, 11:00 AM, lineup on Cty. C near the Little Brown Jug at 10:30 AM.
- June 30 **Fishboil Fundraiser for Congressman Kagen**, Green Bay Labor Temple, 1570 Elizabeth St., Green Bay. For more info call Brad at 800-255-9355 or by email at brad@kagen4congress.com.

JULY

- July 4 **Baileys Harbor Parade**, 10:00 AM, lineup at 8:30 AM on Summit Rd at south end of Baileys Harbor.
- July 4 **Egg Harbor Parade**, 1:00 PM, lineup on Church St., off of Cty. E after 12:00 PM.
- July 11 **Door Dems Annual Picnic, Potluck and Fundraiser with Special Guest Senator Russ Feingold**, Sawyer Park Pavilion, Sturgeon Bay, 12:30-3:00 PM. See adjacent article
- July 12 **Belgian Days Parade, Brussels**, 10:00 AM, lineup on Cty. C near the Catholic Church at 9:00 AM.
- July 15 **Executive Board meets**, Party office (62 S. 3rd Ave.) 6:00 PM. DPDC members welcome to attend.
- July 18 **Town of Sevastapol Sesqui-centennial Parade**, 10:00 AM, lineup at 9:00 AM.
- July 25 **Carlsville Days Parade**, 10:00 AM, lineup at Schopfs Dairy on Cty. I, at 9:30 AM.

State Senate Candidate, Dr. Elmer, to Speak at June Meeting

Dr. Montgomery "Monk" Elmer will be the speaker at our June membership meeting on June 25th, 7:00 PM, on the upper level of the Sturgeon Bay Library.

Dr. Elmer has announced his candidacy for the First District State Senate seat currently held by Alan Lasee.



Dr. Elmer

Monk is a well-known and highly respected family practice physician in Kimberly (Appleton area), where he is president of the School Board.

He was able to attend college only because of Pell grants, instituted by a Democratic Congress, and has been a strong Democrat ever since. He is running, not for "me," but for "all of us."

Following his presentation, Dr. Elmer will participate in small group discussions of key issues affecting our state.

Feingold to Attend Annual Picnic

Senator Russ Feingold will be a special guest at the Democratic Party of Door County Annual Picnic, Potluck and Fundraiser on Saturday, July 11 from 12:30 - 3:00 PM at the new pavilion in Sawyer Park (near the west end of the Oregon Street Bridge) in Sturgeon Bay.

Admission is \$10 per person and a dish to pass per family. DPDC will supply brats and soft drinks.

Leading off the presentations will be a representative from "Organizing for America" (OFA) to tell us about the opportunities offered by OFA.

OFA is a grassroots organization sponsored by the Democratic National Committee. One does not have to be a Democrat to belong and participate in its activities, but its main purpose is to support the policies and initiatives of President Barack Obama. We will learn what we can do now to advance the President's agenda. For a preview, sign up on the national web site barackobama.com.

At 1:30 PM, Senator Feingold will join us to share his views on current key issues, answer our questions, and preview the upcoming campaign. For more about that, see the letter from Russ on page 6.

PLEASE contact Michelle Jacobson (920-536-0178, or shelleyjx@sbcglobal.net) or Bill Perloff (920-839-9282, or wperloff@hughes.net) to let us know if you will attend, and what dish you will bring. We need this information to be sure we have enough food for everyone. See you there!

We need volunteers to march and ride in the parades listed above. PLEASE come out and help us establish a strong presence at these important events.

Contact Eileen Andera 920-743-2683 to volunteer so we can plan for each parade. Thanks!!

The DPW Convention Energizes Dems to Emulate the "Lombardi Sweep" by Estella Lauter

The Democratic Party of Wisconsin (DPW) met last week at the Radisson Inn in Green Bay (on the Oneida Reservation). The place was abuzz with excitement over the successful Town Hall Meeting with President Barack Obama at Green Bay's Southwest High School on Thursday, June 11th--a first for NE Wisconsin (see article page 1).

The Convention drew 564 delegates from Wisconsin's 72 counties, and guests brought the total in attendance up to 777, a good number for an off-election year. The Friday evening program included speeches by Party leaders, including Rep. Steve Kagen, Lt. Gov. Barbara Lawton, Sen. Russ Feingold and Gov. Jim Doyle.

Rep. Kagen set the tone of the Convention with his repeated phrase, "we've got a lot of work to do in Washington D.C." Kagen presented Democrats as a Party that is more concerned about people than profits, about community than oneself, focusing on the President's three requirements for health care reform as the prime example of our commitment to responsible government. Our health care system must cost less with no sacrifice to quality, it must be accessible to everyone regardless of pre-existing conditions, and it must preserve the principle of choice.

Lt. Gov. Barbara Lawton emphasized the contrast between Democrats who believe that "governance is an act of collective imagination" directed toward the solution of real problems, and the alternatives, which at the moment include little more than foot-dragging. She praised specific WI people and businesses--such as the mayor of Wausau who contributed \$1 million to buy foreclosed homes, fix them up and sell them at a profit to the city.

Her "To Do List" for us is long, and she encouraged us to see ourselves as authors rather than recipients of change. She also pledged to fight the kind of hatred exemplified in the two stunning ideological murders that filled our news in recent weeks.

Sen. Russ Feingold emphasized the difference we made in the country because of what we did in last fall's election. He pointed to a set of achievements--the nomination of Judge Sotomayor, the President's Cairo speech (one of the greatest speeches he has ever heard in his lifetime), the executive order against torture, the move toward more effective checks and balances, the serious discussion of a public option for health care--and admonished us to "keep the pressure up; it's working!"

He also praised Wisconsin, especially for our Senior Care program, our role in passing the Great

Lakes Compact, and our new clinics for veterans. And he confirmed that GM has stated that the workers at the Janesville and Kenosha plants were the best in the country. He ended by asking us for our help in his re-election campaign, which he expects to be particularly nasty. He has a newsletter, and active web site, and plans for many grass roots activities across the state. (See the article on page 6).

Governor Doyle asked us to adopt the tactics of the "Lombardi Sweep," a play that called on every Packer to do what they were supposed to do well; it was unbeatable. That kind of teamwork is what we need to win in the current economic crisis.



**Governor Jim Doyle
addressing the Convention**

The stakes are high. In April 2009, state tax revenues were down 35% from 2008, and unemployment was up to 9%, the highest level since the Great Depression.

Still, in good times and bad, every child deserves an equal education; able workers deserve jobs; everyone deserves health care; vets deserve to be honored for their service. It is our responsibility as citizens to make sure that these things happen.

The leader of the opposition Party in WI has recently said "I don't have to solve that problem"! Doyle likened this response to offering nothing but criticism to the Good Samaritan who pulls your car out of the ditch after you have crashed it.

He and others have had to make some hard decisions in order to protect high priority programs such as Senior Care (which costs half of Medicare's Plan D because we negotiate with drug companies!), keeping four-year-old kindergarten, offering support for parents of autistic children, providing tax credits for businesses that do important work for the environment, modernizing our transportation system, keeping college tuition constant for families that earn less than \$60,000, treating teachers like public employees, and much more.

He noted that the new budget, which will come in on time, will contain no tax increases of any kind for people who earn less than \$300,000 per year!

(continued on page 4)

DPW Convention Report Continued from Page 3

As usual, after the speeches delegates and guests were invited to Doyle's reception with music, Russ Feingold's famous sloppy joes and to Rep. Kagen's signature ice cream social with Barbara Lawton. And who knows what delegates may have won or lost at the casino! One only hopes that they got up in time for Sen. Kohl's healthy breakfast on Saturday morning at 8:00 a.m.

On Friday, The Women's Caucus heard about an exciting new group, Emerge Wisconsin, that is offering a training program for women who wish to run for local or state offices. Similar meetings of the Black, Hispanic, American Indian and LGBT caucuses occurred. The County Chairs Association met to elect a new slate of officers.

On Saturday morning, the Convention turned its collective attention to passing most of the 60 or more resolutions that had been submitted by county parties to the eight district Conventions. Discussion was lively on several issues.

Because the candidates for Party offices were unopposed, the Convention elected the slate by acclamation, approving the youngest Chair in the Party's history, Mike Tate (a speaker at our May fund raiser), who has excellent ideas for building the Party at the grassroots.

The formal program was followed by more small group meetings, including one with the new Director of Organizing For America--a group that will be

extremely active this summer on behalf of health care reform (see the article on page 2).

In summary, it was a stimulating meeting with plenty of opportunities for discussion of issues, problem-solving behavior, and plans for creative action. The new Rural Caucus selected a steering committee and began to work on the problem of reaching voters in areas that fall between county stools, such as the towns of Scott, Green Bay and Humboldt where the District # 1 Assembly election was lost in 2008.

No one in Wisconsin's Democratic Party is resting on any real or imagined laurels at the moment. The WI Assembly members were hard at work all day and night on Friday into Saturday morning on the state budget; Majority leader Tom Nelson left Madison for Green Bay at 5:00 a.m. The Radisson was literally full to overflowing with interesting people and ideas.

The Radisson turned out to be an auspicious place for this meeting, perhaps because of the tradition of government by consensus among the members of the Iroquois Confederacy, of which the Oneida were a part for hundreds of years. We thank them for their excellent example.

As all the speakers said in one way or another, it is a great time to be a Democrat! Roll up your sleeves and get to work on the project of your choice. You will not be alone.

May Fun(d)raiser Fun for All

True to our Door Dems' tradition, we succeeded in raising much-needed funds and had a grand time doing it at our Fun(d)raiser and "White Donkey" silent auction at Liberty Square on May 28th.

The setting was elegant, the food delicious, and the service gracious, all of which complemented great speakers and a host of treasures available at the White Donkey auction.



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. He brings

youth and vigor to our Party leadership, and spoke about the need to engage the next generation by communicating in the social networking media they understand. He supported the importance of County Parties grassroots organizing.

Patti Podgers gave a moving photo presentation of the Obama inauguration.

The success of the fundraiser was assured with a net of more than \$1,200 for our party, that will go toward mounting campaigns for the upcoming 2010 elections.



Our Co-Chairs Mary Horn and Estella Lauter got the proceedings started and introduced Mike Tate, candidate (and now elected) for Chair of the Democratic Party of WI.

Message from the Co-Chair:**Can We Achieve a Civil Society?**

Although no one used the term "civil" at the Democratic Party of Wisconsin Convention last weekend, the event made me think about what it means to be a member of a civil society.

On one end of a continuum, it is a matter of civility, which involves not only respect for the legal and culturally accepted rights of others but also some degree of politeness.

Last fall, when followers of McCain-Palin shouted "kill him" at a campaign event, they went way beyond acceptable boundaries in any democratic society ruled by law.

The recent ideologically motivated murders of a doctor who performed abortions and a security guard at the Holocaust Museum are so far off the scale of civility as to be monstrous. And the behavior of Rush Limbaugh and other talk show hosts this spring strains the credibility of our claim to a civil society.

On the other end of this continuum, we have models like the DPW Convention (see the report on the Convention on p. 3), which was chock full of people exercising their rights to disagree with each other on a variety of important issues; to speak freely about perspectives that are not universally accepted (even within the fold of one political party); to elect leaders and treat them respectfully while they are in office; to observe customs but also to change them by adding new groups and functions; and to pay the dues of democracy in the form of responsible thought and action on behalf of other ordinary citizens.

The expectation of the Convention, best stated by Steve Kagen, was that we will "care more about people than about profits, and more about our communities than ourselves." Barbara Lawton added, "Governance is an act of collective [read "civic" or "civil"] imagination."

The sense of responsibility to the whole community of citizens was palpable not only in the speeches of elected officials but in the organizations represented at the tables and in the breakout meetings, where plans were laid by OFA to support the President's health care reform policies, and by Emerge Wisconsin to elect more women to local and state offices—among many other initiatives.



**Estella Lauter,
DPDC Chair**

It became clear from this experience that those who remain on the sidelines of democracy in an era such as this one, where the ship of state has foundered and must be put back on course, run a high and unnecessary risk.

There are many ways to participate in the work of governance besides exercising the right to vote. Grassroots initiatives are in evidence everywhere now for the first time in my experience since the early 1970s, when the fear of civil demonstrations shut down our democracy to its detriment.

It also became clear that the current abdication of responsibility for the state budget, stated by one of the Minority Leaders and apparent in our own 1st Assembly District Representative's views of the budget, borders on the un-civil. When one is elected to office, one has the responsibility to work for the good of the people one represents—not simply to withdraw from the discussion and wait to be returned to the majority while casting aspersions at the ideas others put forward.

While ordinary citizens who sit on the sidelines run the risk that their problems will not be addressed by elected officials (exactly what happened in the Bush era regardless of how vocal we were), elected officials run the greater risk of being thrown out of office in the next election.

Until we learn how to treat our differences with civility—neither taking the law into our own hands nor abdicating our responsibilities when the going gets rough—we will not have achieved a civil society.

Now is our chance. Conditions have never been more auspicious. Join in the discussions of health care this summer and bring a friend with a different perspective! Host a house party for your neighbors, no matter what they believe at the outset. Let's go all out for this ideal. Even if we don't get exactly what we want in the health care legislation, we will have a more civil society at the end of the process.

The "Voice" of the Republicans

"Forget that 'country first' crap! We're in it to keep the party numero one-o."

Thanks to John Fox

A Letter from Senator Russ Feingold

Dear Wisconsin Democrat,

I wanted to take a moment to once again thank you for all of your hard work leading up to last years' election. I couldn't be more pleased to be working with a President who understands what is needed to get our country moving back in the right direction. There is a lot to be done to fix the problems we face as a nation, but I have faith that President Obama and his administration will do everything they can to bring our country through the current situation so that we can come out stronger on the other side.

While I continue my legislative work in the Senate, my reelection campaign is already in gear looking ahead to Election Day 2010. We have an office in Middleton and we recently expanded our Milwaukee office. We also plan on opening an office in Green Bay next month – taking another bold step in putting together a strong campaign structure. We have a newly redesigned website: www.russfeingold.org, where supporters can sign up to volunteer, see what issues I'm working on,

what is happening with our campaign, and be kept up to date on what we'll be doing next.

But none of this can happen without your support. I've relied on Progressives like you in each campaign I've ever run and this time is no different. We need you involved in our race and all of the different aspects of a strong grassroots campaign. To get involved, you can sign-up on our website: www.russfeingold.org or contact my Field Director, Paula Zellner, by email at zellner@russfeingold.org, or by phone at 715-735-7811.

Thank you again for everything you have done and will continue to do on behalf of Progressives across Wisconsin. I look forward to seeing you and working with you in the weeks and months ahead.

Take care,



Russ Feingold
United States Senator
www.russfeingold.org

"We've Got a Lot of Work to Do"

So said Congressman Steve Kagen, and he knows whereof he speaks.

The 2010 elections loom large on the horizon when we need to re-elect Sen. Feingold, Rep. Kagen, and Gov. Doyle, and elect Democrats for State Attorney General, State Senator for District 1, State Assembly Rep for District 1, Door County Sheriff and several other local positions traditionally in Republican hands.

All of these are important to continuing the progressive agenda we started with the '08 election and keeping Door County "blue". The only way we can do this is with a strong, energetic, committed and well financed Democratic Party.

So if you care about electing Democrats, please take a moment to renew your membership for 2009 by completing the form below and sending it to the address shown. Thanks to the 175 folks who have already done so!

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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