



"Proud to be a Democrat"

Democratic Party of Door County

March, 2009 Newsletter

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Chief Justice Abrahamson Wows Door County

State Supreme Court Chief Justice Shirley Abramson attended two Door County receptions in her honor on Sunday, March 15th. In the midst of a hot re-election campaign, she impressed about 50 attendees at the Ladder House in the early afternoon, and another 55 at Bjorklund later in the day.

Her quiet demeanor and soft-spoken discourse could not hide her intense commitment to the law and the constitution, and her determination that our courts conduct their business in accord with the law. She was interrupted by applause from the enthusiastic crowd in attendance.

The Chief Justice expressed confidence in her re-election, emphasizing her support from Democrats, Republicans, law enforcement associations, County Sheriffs, District Attorneys and Judges. She cautioned that moneyed special interests were likely to fill the airwaves with "attack" ads in the last week of the campaign.

The importance of Judge Abrahamson's re-election and how to help are discussed in the article on page 3.



Chief Justice Abrahamson

March Meeting: Informative and Important

The March membership meeting will be very busy with two key activities. First, all 29 candidates in contested local elections in the county have been invited to come to the meeting and make a brief presentation. This will be your opportunity to hear candidates make their case for your vote.

Contested races for which candidate invitations have been extended are: Baileys Harbor Supervisor, Egg Harbor Supervisor, Ephraim Town President, Ephraim Trustee, Forestville Trustee, Gardner Town Chair, Liberty Grove Town Chair, Liberty Grove Town Board, Nasewaupsee Town Clerk, Nasewaupsee Supervisor, Sturgeon Bay City Council Districts 1 and 3.

Secondly, we shall select the 10 resolutions to submit to the 8th CD Convention. We have had 6 or 7 of our resolutions selected by the 8th CD Party and forwarded to the State Convention each of the past 3 years, so we have real influence over State Party principles. The resolutions committee has proposed 15 resolutions for consideration. Titles of the resolutions are:

- School Funding Reform
- Support Feingold's "Improving Student Achievement" Act, and repeal "NCLB"
- Social Security tax on all earned income
- Create renewable, sustainable energy policy
- Mass transit
- Affordable Housing
- Employee Free Choice Act
- Clear goals and exit strategy for Afghanistan
- State Supreme Court justice selection reform
- Universal health care
- Reform of FCC and use of public airwaves
- Legalize marijuana for medicinal/personal use
- Reduce prison population by finding other ways of addressing non-violent crime
- Appropriate taxes are necessary for a Progressive society
- Equal opportunity for jobs for all persons trained or educated in the USA

Resolutions may be submitted from the floor, but must be less than 100 words. In addition, 25 copies **must** be provided so that all members present can consider the wording. See also "Message from the Co-Chair", page 3.

The meeting will be Thursday, March 26th at 7:00 PM in the Jane Green Room, upper level, Sturgeon Bay Library on 4th Avenue.

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

MARCH

Mar 26 **March membership meeting**, Sturgeon Bay Library, upper level, 7:00 PM. Local candidates in contested races have been invited to make brief presentations. We will also select resolutions to be forwarded to the 8th CD convention. See article page 1.

APRIL

Apr 16 **Executive Board meets**, Party office (62 S. 3rd Ave.) 6:00 PM. DPDC members welcome to attend.

Apr 19 **8th CD Convention**, Indian Springs Lodge & Conference Center, 670 Hwy 32 North, Wabeno, WI 54566 (Forest County), 800-777-1640. For those wishing to stay over Saturday night, there is a special rate of \$59 for the Convention attendees. The Northwoods Casino is adjacent to the Lodge. See adjacent article.

Apr 23 **April Membership meeting**, Bertschinger Center, Hwy. 42, Egg Harbor, 7:00 PM. A Middle East Update, will be presented by Kate Wulle-Dugan who has extensive experience there and has just returned. See article p. 5.

Apr 25-26 **Democratic Leadership Institute**, Devil's Head Resort, Merrimac, WI. See adjacent article.

MAY

May 14 **Executive Board meets**, Party office (62 S. 3rd Ave.) 6:00 PM. DPDC members welcome to attend.

May 28 **2nd Annual DPDC Fun(d)raiser and "White Donkey" Sale**, Ladder House, upper level, 38 S. 3rd Ave., Sturgeon Bay. See article p. 5.

JUNE

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).

8th CD Convention in North Woods

The 8th Congressional District Convention will be held in Wabeno, WI in beautiful Forest County, at the Indian Springs Lodge and Conference Center on Sunday April 19th.

Registration, including lunch, for delegates, alternates and guests is \$25 if pre-registered by April 12th, and \$30 at the door. Registration fees should be sent to Kathy Groat, 8th CD Treasurer 420 East Parkway Blvd., Appleton, WI 54911.

The schedule is:

9:00 AM - Registration opens
 10:00 AM - Convention opens with speeches from elected officials and others
 12:00 Noon - Registration closes/Lunch served
 1:00 PM - Convention resumes with election of 8th CD officers and 2 members of Platform/Resolutions Committee

We need a strong delegate representation to support our resolutions, and keep at least one member of the DPDC on the Platform/Resolutions Committee. **PLEASE** contact Mary Horn (743-0009, mchorn@dcwis.com) if you would like to be a delegate.



Indian Springs Lodge and Conference Center

Scholarships to DLI Available

The 14th Annual Democratic Leadership Institute (DLI) will be held April 25 - 26 at the Devils Head Resort, Merrimac, WI.

The training course is an exciting primer on grass roots politics that receives rave reviews from attendees. There are 2 tracks: A youth track for future Democratic Leaders from 18-25 years old, and an activist track for Democrats over 25 years old.

Youth attend **free**, including lodging. The fee for the activist track is \$40 plus room cost. Applications are on the State Party website: <http://wisdems.org>, and click on "Dem Leadership Institute". Applications must be sent by April 3rd.

The DPDC is offering two \$100 scholarships to assist attending the activist track. To apply for a scholarship, send a brief paragraph to Estella Lauter (Estella.Lauter@gmail.com) indicating your reasons for wishing to attend, and how you will use what you will learn.

Support Abrahamson and Evers on April 7th

Your DPDC is endorsing Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson for re-election to the State Supreme Court, and Dr. Tony Evers as Superintendent of Public Instruction in the April 7th election.

Chief Justice Abrahamson has served on the State Supreme Court since 1976 and as Chief since 1996. Under her leadership the court has heard oral arguments in 17 cities, bringing wide access to the judicial process.



She has been recognized nationally as president of the Nat'l Association of Chief Justices. She is endorsed by leaders across the political spectrum including Melvin Laird, Barbara Lawton, Sue Ann Thompson, Patrick Lucey, the WI Professional Police Assoc., more than 40 District Attorneys, almost 300 judges from across the state, and many others.

Her opponent, a Jefferson County circuit judge claims that Judge Abrahamson is a "judicial activist", and "soft on crime", an echo of the Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce financed theme in the last two Supreme Court elections. He is endorsed by WI Right to Life and the NRA.

Dr. Tony Evers is currently the Deputy State Superintendent of Public Instruction for Wisconsin.



He has a 34 year record serving Wisconsin's children as teacher of gifted children, high school principal, district superintendent, regional administrator and Deputy State Superintendent. He was elected the President of the Deputy State Superintendent Leadership Commission by educators from all 50 states. He is endorsed by WEAC, AFSCME and the WI Alliance for Retired Americans.

Dr. Evers believes that a quality education is a birthright, and that the poverty-driven achievement gaps must be closed. He is opposed to the current test-oriented "No Child Left Behind" program, and favors funding reform to assist struggling districts.

His opponent, a former nurse, has no direct teaching or educational administrative experience.

Dr. Evers' record and perspective deserve our support.

Your Party Needs YOU!



Yes, it's true. Your DPDC needs **your** help to maintain our high level of activity in support of progressive candidates and policies.

In the next 19 months we must work hard to re-elect Chief Justice Abrahamson, elect Tony Evers as Superintendent of Public Instruction (see adjacent article), support progressive Door County Board of Supervisor candidates, defeat State Senator Lassee, defeat Assembly Representative Bies, defeat AG Van Hollern, and re-elect Governor Doyle, Congressman Kagen and Senator Feingold.

What do we need to accomplish all of this? Our members to contribute time, unflagging energy and money. All three of these elements are critical.

Consider money. We have many ongoing expenses. One of them is our Party office at 62 S. 3rd Ave. in Sturgeon Bay that serves as a meeting place, a focus of activities, and a call center. Our newsletter is printed and sent via snail mail to our members without email, costing almost \$1 per newsletter. Support of individual candidates with money and in-kind contributions is obviously important, but expensive, with many worthy candidates at local, state and national levels.

What can you do? Clearly, your dues (which we must split with the State Party) are really only a "drop in the bucket". But you can "adopt" something on our "wish list", including office rent (\$200/month), a functioning printer (about \$200), internet access (\$60/month), two phone lines (\$50/month), newsletter costs (\$50/month), scholarships to DLI (\$100 each) or just contribute to our general fund.

One other way we raise money is with our "White Donkey" Sale of new and gently used items at our annual May "Fun(d)raiser". You can contribute items to the sale. **And starting now, let's establish a tradition that when we travel, bring back a souvenir of the trip to donate to the next White Donkey sale.**

Supporting your Party supports **all** of our progressive candidates. We will win in '09 and '10!

Message from the Co-Chair:**Join the Process of Making Resolutions for the Democratic Party**

The March meeting of the Democratic Party of Door County is nearly always reserved for the process of crafting 10 Resolutions to be sent to the District Convention in April. There, the many recommendations from the 13 county parties in the 8th CD will be whittled down to ten to be sent on to the State Convention in June.



**Estella Lauter,
DPDC Chair**

Door County has developed something of a reputation for its recommendations in recent years, as six or seven of the ten have regularly been selected by the district.

As I write, members of our IRS Committee are refining their preparations so that we will have 15 or more choices to discuss at our meeting on Thursday, March 26th.

After a careful discussion of each proposal in the large group, each person will rank the resolutions in their order of preference, and the top ten will be selected. The results will be printed in our next newsletter.

If you cannot attend the meeting, please send your top priorities for the Party to the IRS Chair, Phil Hansotia (phansotia@charter.net) as soon as possible, so the committee can incorporate your ideas into their recommendations.

WHY is this process so important? One answer is that the Democratic Party is still working its way out of the wilderness to which it was consigned in the last three decades. We have made enormous progress since 2005, not just in electing a President and legislators at all levels of government, but also in clarifying our vision of what our country should do and become after the debacle of "trickle-down economics" and other such Republican ideologies.

We are lucky in Wisconsin to have a Democratic Party that builds in a mechanism for the grass roots to influence the state organization every year and thereby to participate in the bi-annual construction of our Platform (visit www.widsems.org to read the 2008 version). Our opportunity was ensured by great WI Democrats such as Gaylord Nelson and William Proxmire. We must not let them down, especially since Wisconsin offers a positive model for other state parties that do not have these procedures in place.

But the even more important reason is that the country is experiencing a moment of shock during

which we especially need solid organizations to guide public response. In *The Nation*, Gary Younge writes that the present "balance of forces is precarious. Ideologically the left is strong. We have been elaborating a critique of this period of global capitalism for at least the past two decades. . . . But organizationally and electorally, we are weak. Generally speaking, we have no huge parties, our social movements have been decimated and our unions are in disarray" (March 16, p. 10).

Despite our recent victories at the polls, in the state of Wisconsin, members of the Democratic Party comprise less than 1% of the voting public!

Younge notes the wave of demonstrations all over the world. A recent issue of *The Christian Science Monitor* covered a large one in Atlanta *against the stimulus package!*

We run a serious risk of populism led by the new brand of "know-nothings," the talk show hosts who are paid obscene salaries to mouth the fears of corporate sponsors in a version of street language that they could not possibly justify for themselves. Incited and emboldened by such loose cannons, people who are losing their homes and livelihoods may very well find the time to go to the streets — not for positive goals but against whatever the government does. This would be a tragedy.

One way to prevent this from happening here is to speak out about our priorities and to build a strong consensus within recognized organizations that have the structures to develop our ideas and to lead responsible movements against the tendency to riot. The Democratic Party of Wisconsin is, arguably, just such a responsible organization with the potential to mobilize educated responses to the kind of tactics that the Rush Limbaughs of the country favor in the wake of their electoral defeat.

There are many ways for you to participate in the process of stating your priorities for our collective future, including the many surveys you receive from various single issue groups; but the process of forming resolutions through your local Party is the only way I know where you can originate the idea and argue it through a set of steps yourself to a conclusion.

You can do this not only by submitting your ideas to the local committee and coming to the membership meeting where they are discussed, but by attending the District and State Conventions as a delegate, and by repeating the process every year until your ideas are heard.

Talk about a model for participatory democracy! We have it. Now let's use it.

Phone Banking Returns to Door County

Do you remember how effective, successful, and downright fun phone banking was during the '08 election campaigns? No? How soon we forget.

Well, it is time for some phone banking in support of Shirley Abrahamson and Tony Evers' campaigns.

Here is the situation. In Door County less than 25 percent of registered voters actually vote in the typical April Supreme Court election, about 1/3 of those that vote in a presidential election. So the key to winning is to mobilize supporters to vote. That is where phone banking becomes important: identifying supporters, persuading the undecided, and GOTV (getting out the vote).

We have identified almost 6000 Door County voters who are reasonably likely to vote on April 7th and are potential supporters of the Chief Justice and Dr. Evers. And so, we need volunteers willing to make some phone calls, using a script we have prepared, to identify those who support our candidates and get them out to vote. In this setting every vote **really** counts.

Please contact the Board member in your area of the County to volunteer (Board member phone numbers are shown on page 1):

Egg Harbor and points north: John Franz, Charlie Most, Bill Perloff, Patti Podgers

Town of Sturgeon Bay north to Jacksonport (near north): Estella Lauter, Olivia Lowery

City of Sturgeon Bay: Jim Adams, Rod Bohn, Dennis Skahen

South of Sturgeon Bay: Terry Bobbe, Mary Horn, Michelle Jacobsen

We anticipate that one evening of calling between now and the election is all that would be required. This is a great way to have a real impact on the elections and Wisconsin's future.

Feingold Campaign Gearing Up

2010 is fast approaching and with it will come Senator Feingold's re-election campaign (as yet not formally announced).

Paula Zellner, Russ' state field director, has already met with our Door-Kewaunee steering committee to begin campaign activity. A campaign office will open in Green Bay in August.

To join the steering committee for the Feingold Campaign contact Paula (715-340-6567 or zellner@russfeingold.org).

Future newsletters will have extensive updates on Senator Feingold's activities and issue positions.

April Meeting Features Presentation About the Middle East

The April 23rd membership meeting will feature a presentation by Kate Wulle-Dugan on an Update on the Middle East.

Ms. Wulle-Dugan has an extensive background in the region, 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.

The meeting will be at the Bertschinger Community Center on State Hwy. 42 in Egg Harbor, starting at 7:00 PM with a brief business meeting and report on the 8th CD convention before the presentation.

2nd Annual Fun(d)raiser and "White Donkey" Sale Coming in May

Our first Fun(d)raiser and "White Donkey" (certainly not white elephant) sale was such a success, and so much fun that we could not let the tradition die.

So, the 2nd Annual event will be held on March 28th at the Ladder House, upper level, 38 S. 3rd Ave., Sturgeon Bay, at 7:00 PM.

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 hear Patti Podgers and Jim Johnson's account of the inauguration, which they viewed first-hand. The picture, taken two days before the inauguration is a small preview of their photo record of history in the making.



Please start gathering donations for the "White Donkey" sale. New and gently used items are needed. We will have more information about collecting the items from you in the April newsletter.

We will make this year's event even more fun and successful than last year.

Did You Know?

We recently received an illuminating email from MoveOn.org about President Obama's plan to roll back the Bush tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans.

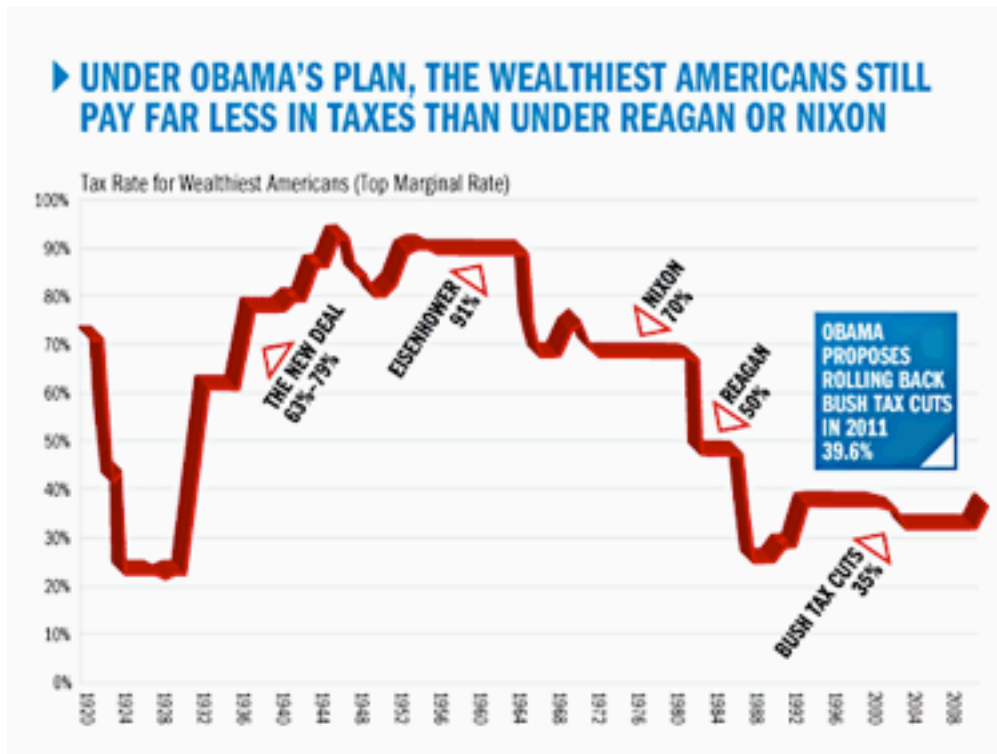
Some in the media, and Republican mouthpieces are bemoaning the "socialist" redistribution of wealth they see in this blow to our wealthy citizens.

The chart below puts this into perspective. It shows the top marginal tax rate since 1920. It

makes President Obama's plan seem "wimpy" in terms of taxation.

In fact, as MoveOn.org wrote "...for all the whining about rolling back Bush's irresponsible tax cuts, the truth is that Obama's plan *cuts* taxes for 95% of working Americans. Further, it closes huge tax loopholes for oil companies, hedge funds and corporations that ship jobs overseas so that we can invest in the priorities that will get our economy back on track."

So, a little equity for a change will be a good thing and will only hurt those who deserve it.



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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