



"Proud to be a Democrat"

Democratic Party of Door County

September, 2008 Newsletter

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Skare for Assembly 1st District

A strong Door County showing by Dick Skare swept the primary election to be the Democratic candidate for the 1st Assembly seat, 2,353 to 1,054 over Chris Baeb. Chris won in Kewaunee and Brown Counties, but could not overcome the large margin for Dick in Door County.

The primary election featured well-run positive campaigns by both candidates, with support for both from the DPDC in the form of office space and phone access.

Dick will face, and defeat, the incumbent who has served special interests at the expense of his constituents for too long. All Door, Kewaunee and Brown County Democrats must now unite behind Dick and our coordinated campaign to ensure his election in November, along with that of Barack Obama for President, and Steve Kagen for reelection to Congress.



Dick Skare at opening of the coordinated campaign office

Meet Our Staff and Volunteers

After some shifting of assignments, we now have a great team to help organize volunteer activity in our coordinated campaign.

Sondra Milkie, a student at UW-Madison, is taking time off from school to serve as the field organizer for the Obama Campaign for Change for Door and Kewaunee Counties. Maggie Huber, a recent law school graduate, is the field organizer for Kagen for Congress for the two Counties. Olivia Lowery, a dynamic lifetime resident of Door County and recent graduate of UWGB, is the Campaign Manager for Skare for Assembly.

These three dynamos are working about 18 hours a day organizing and coordinating campaign activities.

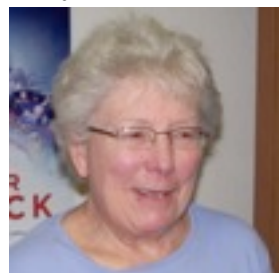
Central to our organizing efforts are two office staff volunteers, Irene Newkirk and Mary Horn. These two keep the office organized, field phone calls, enlist volunteers, and follow-up on volunteer assignment reminders. The best way to say "thank you" to these hard workers is to volunteer for one or more of the many available activities (see article on page 2).



Sondra Milkie



Maggie Huber



Mary Horn



Irene Newkirk



Olivia Lowery

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

SEPTEMBER

Sept 20 **Coordinated Campaign Canvass in Sturgeon Bay and Kewaunee**, 12:30 PM. **Volunteers needed**. See details in article p. 4.

Sept 21 **Bridge Opening Parade**, Starting at Sawyer Park at 3:00 PM, line-up at 2:15. See details in article p. 4.

Sept 21 **"Cheese Curds, Booyah, and Beer" Fundraiser for Congressman Kagen**, Jaycees Hall (off North 12th Ave.) 4:30-6:30 PM. See article p. 4.

OCTOBER

Oct 16 **Democratic Unity Rally**, At the Ladder House, 38 S. 3rd Ave, upper level, 7:00 PM. Congressman Kagen has been invited. Dick Skare, our Assembly candidate will also attend and speak.

Oct 26 **Book talk and signing by Len Zubrensky**, at the Bistro in Liberty Square, Egg Harbor, 4:00 - 6:00 PM. Mr. Zubrensky is a retired judge and author of the book, *Let the Hi-Jinks Begin, The Memoir of a Democratic Activist*. He has known and worked with every one of the historic Wisconsin Democratic icons, including as Senator Proxmire's first campaign manager. The book is filled with vignettes about Proxmire, Gaylord Nelson, John Reynolds and other Democratic giants. Wine and hors d'oeuvres will be served.

NOVEMBER

Nov 4 **Election Day**. Polls are open from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM. Every vote is critical in what will be three close races for President, Congressional Representative, and Assembly Representative.

Phone Banking and Other Volunteer Activities

The thought of "phone banking", calling perfect strangers on behalf of a political campaign might seem to be a "fate worse than death". In fact, it is easy, even fun when done as part of a team, and serves several very important purposes.

In a political campaign, phone banking takes place in phases, which may overlap. The first is gathering volunteers. That is, calling loyal Democrats to enlist their help. These are typically activists who are glad to be asked to undertake a specific volunteer activity. You can generally expect an enthusiastic response from the called individual.

The second phase is survey calls. What are we surveying and why?

Door County has about 22,000 registered voters. The Democratic National Committee has sponsored development of a voter file which fairly reliably identifies the political leanings of about half the voters. We don't have any information about the preferences of the other 11,000.

We find out about their preferences by calling them and asking. Some people slam down the phone, which gives us a pretty good idea of their party preference. But most folks are quite willing to tell us their party and candidate preferences.

The result is quite important. We know we don't need to persuade strong Democrats, and there is no point in trying to persuade Republicans. So we can concentrate persuasion efforts on the independent and undecided voters.

Persuasion calls are the next phase. These are focused on those who are potentially persuadable, and are only one form of contact with these voters. We also canvass their neighborhoods, and candidates knock on their doors.

At the end of the campaign we make "get out the vote" (GOTV) calls to strong and leaning Democrats to help ensure they actually get to the polls and vote. Only 60-75 percent of eligible voters do vote in a presidential election, so mobilizing voters who favor Democrats but might not actually vote is crucially important. These calls fall on sympathetic ears and are usually well received.

So, phone banking is not really intimidating. We provide scripts, lists of voters to call, refreshments, companionship and a sense of making a real difference.

Other jobs are important too: data entry of the results of the phone calls, providing refreshments, working in the office scheduling volunteers, sending out mailings, and neighborhood canvassing.

In 2004 Kerry won Wisconsin by 3 votes per precinct. On November 5th it will be too late to say "I wish I had done more". VOLUNTEER!

**VOLUNTEER + VOTE
= VICTORY**

In an article on huffingtonpost.com on September first, George Lakoff (*Don't Think of an Elephant*) wrote that the Palin choice was a shrewd attempt on the part of Republicans to shift attention away from the issues of this election toward a set of symbols designed to make extreme views from the Right seem more acceptable to ordinary people. She is a "pretty woman" who has lived out the slogans of "pro-life" ideology and gives them sex appeal—the stuff we still use to sell cars and trucks. Symbols play well in our media. If we are not all the way back to "God, guns and gays" in this campaign, we are getting close.



**Estella Lauter,
DPDC Chair**

Lakoff recommends that Democrats take this situation seriously. In fact, he recommends a full press against the extreme nature of the positions now being touted by McCain's campaign—mainly by identifying how extreme they are.

The truth is that a solid majority of the voting public supports the balance struck by *Roe v. Wade* on the issue of abortion. To continue business as usual with the oil industry is suicidal, both in relationship to the environment and the Middle East. The Supreme Court may have read the Constitution as allowing hand guns, but most people don't want them in our schools and grocery stores. Most people don't want polar bears to become extinct.

The question is how to hold Republicans accountable not only for the bad ideas being offered by the McCain campaign but also the outright lies. The McCain ad that says "Ready to Tax, Ready to Spend, But Not Ready to Lead" is a case in point. In fact, Obama's tax plan proposes tax cuts for 90% of the people in the country and he fully intends to cut spending. (Go to www.barackobama.com for short and highly readable position statements.)

I think Lakoff would say, however, that setting the record straight is only half the answer. For example, in my two-minute radio broadcast for DoorCountyDailyNews.com this month, I chose to speak about Obama's tax plan as part of the Democratic focus on **Fairness**: fair wages, fair markets, health security, retirement security, equal justice for all. You can get material for discussion at Obama house parties this fall at www.ourfuture.org.

In other times, it might have been sufficient to have an excellent platform and to present it clearly. Now, maybe not. Lakoff says we need to go on the offensive to identify the extreme alternatives that McCain is offering—programs that are no less extreme for having been practiced during the past eight years.

Maybe you are thinking that we should not have to speak out at all, to say nothing of going on the offensive. After all, we are already the responsible ones who vote and follow the news. Isn't that enough? No. Not this time. Our media have proved to be more concerned with "access" to the halls of power than with the truth or with democracy over the past eight years.

I told my son about the Lakoff piece, and his response was instructive. "That's all well and good, Mom, but we also have to be willing to identify the lies that are being told and to speak out against the liars." The McCain campaign has said it is "not about the issues." It is about symbols and character assassination and frontal attack on any strengths the other side may bring to the table. We don't have to assassinate anyone's character to "call out the names" of people who engage in these tactics. (For example, who put Anti-Obama sites on the Google list for Obama campaign "chum"?) That is not as easy as it sounds when the press is controlled by large corporations who stand to profit from a Republican government. But we have the Web.

The Huffington Post (listed above) has proved to be a good source of information about lies. See Joseph Romm's article from Sept. 5 titled "In His Big Speech, McCain's 10 Energy Lies Top Palin's 4 Energy Lies." But for an overview of the situation, Google McCain Watch and go to www.democrats.org for a short course in the art of hypocrisy, or to www.feeds.dailykos.com, or www.pol.MoveOn.org/mccainwatch/ for updates.

So when someone sends you an Obama smear, try sending back some real information, but also identify the lie and the liar. "Swiftboating" worked in 2004. Not in 2008!

This is an epoch-making election like the one in 1932—a decisive turning point. Wisconsin will play a major role. Door County needs to help make up for the counties outside Milwaukee, Madison, Kenosha, Racine, Eau Claire, La Crosse and a few others, where progressive voices are barely audible. Make your voice heard loud and clear, join us in speaking out in word and deed!

Convention Watch Party Energizes Campaign

Fifty enthusiastic Democrats watched the last night of the Democratic convention at the Ladder House on August 28th, and were inspired by Senator Barack Obama's acceptance speech. The stirring vision for America presented by Senator Obama excited and energized the group to sign up for volunteer activities in our coordinated campaign. Members left the party committed to work hard and win.

Office Volunteer(s) Needed

Thanks to Irene Newkirk and Mary Horn, our DPDC office is staffed Monday - Friday mornings until 1:00 PM. We very much need one or more volunteers to staff the office weekday afternoons, and during weekends.

Please consider volunteering for some or all of the time. The work is varied: calling to remind volunteer phone bankers of their scheduled shifts, greeting visitors to the office, selling buttons, signs, etc., and generally helping smooth the flow of activity.

It is fun, rewarding, and an opportunity to work with very appreciative colleagues. To volunteer, call Estella Lauter (920-839-2741) or Bill Perloff (920-839-9282).

Canvass and Parade Volunteers Needed

Saturday, September 20 our coordinated campaigns will be conducting two big neighborhood canvasses. Volunteers are needed!!

One canvass will be in Sturgeon Bay, starting at the Campaign office, 62 S. 3rd Ave. at 12:30 PM.

The second canvass in Kewaunee will start from The Cork, also at 12:30.

Sunday, September 21, before the Kagen Fundraiser, we will march in the Bridge Opening Parade at 3:00 PM. Meet in Sawyer Park at 2:15. We need a strong showing. The Republicans will be there for sure!

To volunteer for fun, meeting your neighbors, and helping to elect our Democratic candidates, contact Maggie Huber (309-558-5525, or by email at margaret.a.huber@gmail.com).

DPDC Fundraiser for Kagen "Cheese Curds, Booyah, and Beer"

The DPDC September meeting will be held on Sunday, September 21st, from 4:30 - 6:30 PM at the Jaycees Hall, and will be a fundraiser for Congressman Steve Kagen. It will be fun for all as we show our support for Steve.

Featuring "Cheese curds, booyah and beer", an original song made famous by our own American Folklore Theater in the musical play *Belgians in Heaven*, the cheese curds will be squeaky fresh, the booyah thick and tasty, and the beer foamy.

Booyah is a Belgian thick chicken soup, prepared by a variety of recipes. There will be several versions of booyah to try and vote for, along with cole slaw, rye bread, and Door County cherry pie.

Tickets are \$15 for an individual, \$25 per couple, and \$30 for a family, and can be obtained at the DPDC office, 62 S. 3rd Avenue, from Maggie Huber (309-558-5525 or by email at margaret.a.huber@gmail.com), or by calling Todd Grocki at the Kagen Campaign office (1-800-255-9355, or todd@kagen4congress.com).

Included in the ticket price are the food and soft drinks. Beer will be available from a cash bar.

Proceeds, after expenses for the hall, will go to the Kagen campaign. For those who are able, larger contributions (\$50, \$100, or \$250) will be gratefully accepted and acknowledged. Even if a larger contribution is not possible, please consider taking a book of 10 tickets and selling them to potential supporters.

Steve will speak at 5:15, with the festivities continuing until 6:30. This will leave plenty of time to get home for the Packers' kickoff.

The Jaycees hall is at 340 N. Jaycee Court, off of North 12th Avenue.



Cartoon by John Fox