



“of the people, by the people, and for the people”

In this issue: Donna Miller, Democratic Leadership Institute, Good Luck President Obama

## Calendar

**F**ebuary 5, 2009, 7PM GENERAL

**MEMBERSHIP MEETING** in Sauk Prairie. Prairie du Sac Town Hall, [S9903 U.S. Hwy 12, Prairie Du Sac](#). Please join us in welcoming Nate Timm from the Wisconsin River Valley Grassroots Festival. Mr. Timm will preview some of speakers at the fest and some of the topics that will be covered in the smaller breakout sessions.

**February 21, 2009, 9AM, THE WISCONSIN RIVER VALLEY GRASSROOTS COALITION CONFERENCE**, Wisconsin Heights High School, [10173 US Highway 14, Mazomanie](#). This is an all day event, registration starts at 9AM. This is an opportunity to join in with others concerned about local issues and learn how to bring about change in your community.

**March 5, 2009, 7PM, GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING** at the Kilbourn Public Library, [620 Elm Street Wisconsin Dells](#). In an effort to continue the spirit and enthusiasm created by the Obama campaign and to reach out to Democrats in the Dells-Delton area this meeting is being held in a new location outside of Sauk County. All Democrats in Sauk and Columbia counties are invited.

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Editor: Bob Johnson; Opinion Editor Emeritus: Jack Ferver

Mission: to provide leadership and support for Democrats and like-minded citizens to translate our ideals into a government that is truly of the people, by the people, and for the people.

## Chair's Corner

**D**ear Sauk Democrats,

Tuesday was a great day; full of the pomp and ceremony that naturally attends the peaceful transfer of power in our great democracy. But there is a lot of work to be done and it didn't take long for President Obama to roll up his sleeves and get to it.

You have to be impressed with the president's prompt willingness to close Gitmo, one of the biggest foreign policy black eyes the U.S. has ever had. He has declared that science must be free of political interference, an essential for openness and honesty. He has set salary caps for his advisors and limited their ability to become lobbyists, two important conditions of transparent government.

Much has been said about the able advisors and cabinet President Obama has nominated and there is no need to repeat it here. But the selection of George Mitchell as special mid-east peace envoy deserves special attention. Former Senator Mitchell brokered the deal to end the troubles in Northern Ireland; a peace that still holds. He is said to be blessed with a Biblical sense of patience. What better application for that patience could there be than to work for peace between Israelis and Palestinians?

Around the world there is talk that it is again cool to be an American. At home, there is a modest, but sincere, satisfaction in knowing that democracy has worked its will and that a capable and energetic figure has emerged from seemingly nowhere to take his place on the international stage.

And this is only the beginning.

Democratically yours,

Greg Sacra

TUE., JAN 20, 2009

GEORGE HESSELBERG [ghesselberg@madison.com](mailto:ghesselberg@madison.com)

In Rock Springs — where last summer the flood refused to leave — the national day of service was stretched into three days of service, as Donna Miller's "Obama team" of volunteers not only had that much work to do but ended their shifts thinking of more ways to help.

"Our volunteers signed up for Saturday, Sunday or Monday," said Miller. About a half-dozen people joined up each day to join others from the recently formed Volunteers Organized Against Disaster to work on a flood-damaged home outside of Rock Springs in Sauk County.

"One of our volunteers has two service day sites to visit, he's the one with carpenter skills," she explained.

The workers were up and down ladders, mudding the walls, spackling and sanding and painting in Eunice Schneider's house. She has moved to Reedsburg while the house is being worked on, said Miller.

"We had a pretty easy time finding a project for my Obama team," she said. "One of our priorities when we met after the election was to do local service.

"We linked up to work with this house, and the need is so great that I think we could do as much as a service project once a month. The people were beaming after the time they spent here, the gears are whirring in their heads about what they want to do next," she said.

The whole first floor of Schneider's house was under more than 8 inches of water during the flooding last summer.

<http://www.madison.com/ws/mad/latest/433565>

## D

# emocratic Leadership Institute

Event: 13th Democratic Leadership Institute

Date: April 25-26th

Location: Devil's Head Resort in Merrimac , WI

Be challenged. Be inspired.

This is your chance to become an active member of Wisconsin politics.

Hosted by the Democratic Party of Wisconsin, the 13th Democratic Leadership Institute will provide you with the tools and connections necessary to become part of the next generation of party leaders.

With both Activist and Youth (18-25) tracks, DLI is an essential experience for those looking to jump-start their political career or simply become more effective grassroots activists. Campaign training sessions, distinguished speakers and social networking opportunities make DLI one of the DPW's premier leadership weekends.

Access our brochures below, or email Laura at [dli@wisdems.org](mailto:dli@wisdems.org) for applications and more information.

Go here for the brochure:

[http://libertycontrol.net/uploads/wisconsin\\_dems/Brochure\\_Youth\\_App.pdf](http://libertycontrol.net/uploads/wisconsin_dems/Brochure_Youth_App.pdf)

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## Supreme Court

## Citizens of Sauk County,

We've had some amazing victories to celebrate in 2008 and today, I'm hoping you'll join me in making sure we have another victory to celebrate on April 7th.

I'm supporting Wisconsin Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson in her re-election campaign and I urge you to do the same. I'm proud to join with thousands of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents who recognize we need to keep Chief Justice Abrahamson on the Wisconsin Supreme Court. I am proud to be a part of her bipartisan base of support because making the Wisconsin Supreme Court partisan is not what the citizens of Wisconsin want or deserve.

Shirley Abrahamson has been an outstanding, innovative leader of the Wisconsin court system, establishing strong programs to assist children and families in the courts, helping to keep homeowners with foreclosures in their homes, and ensuring that everyone has fair and impartial access to the courts.

I'm sure you remember what happened in the past two Supreme Court races. Special interest groups have taken over these races, spending millions of dollars on negative attack ads. The opponent's campaign is being run by the same partisan political operatives who ran the last two negative campaigns, and they are using the same divisive and distorted rhetoric against the Chief Justice.

Because of Wisconsin's strong judicial code governing judges, Shirley Abrahamson cannot and will not ask for money for her campaign. Please help Wisconsin reelect one of its finest citizens—Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson by making a contribution today.

Best wishes,



U.S. Sen. Russ Feingold

[www.abrahamson2009.com/contribute](http://www.abrahamson2009.com/contribute)

## State News

## State Lost 33,600 Jobs in Dec.

The Capital Times — Jan. 22, 2009

<http://www.madison.com/tct/news/stories/434269>

Department of Workforce Development Secretary Roberta Gassman had a blunt assessment for the latest rise in unemployment figures in Wisconsin.

"We will get through this," the secretary said as she released the monthly report, which showed Wisconsin's unemployment rate for December was 5.8 percent, up 0.5 percent from November and 1.2 percent from December 2007.

Wisconsin lost an estimated 33,600 jobs for the month of December and showed a loss of 62,600 non-farm jobs for the year, with manufacturing down 26,500. The losses could have been worse, but the educational and health services sector added 5,900 jobs over the year.

"We continue to see further impact from the national recession that began a year ago," Gassman said, adding that the impact includes "a higher unemployment rate and lower job counts across most industries."

Still, even with its heavy manufacturing sector suffering continual losses, Wisconsin has an unemployment rate smaller than the national unadjusted rate of 7.1 percent for December, which is up 2.3 percent from a year ago.

"While our rate is below the national unemployment rate, we face major challenges," Gassman said. "With a talented workforce and diverse economy, we will get through this. At DWD, we will do all that we can to strengthen Wisconsin's workforce, connect employers and skilled workers, and help spur an economic recovery."

The December survey of Wisconsin households showed 25,000 fewer employed compared to November, and 36,400 fewer employed than a year ago.

## **State Debate: Good luck, Mr. President, says the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel***

<http://www.madison.com/tct/opinion/433672>

Compiled by Lynn Danielson — 1/20/2009

The Obama administration will deal with problems unprecedented in form and global in scope. Given the shockingly huge dimensions of this country's problems, expectations will be high for this next president.

It's likely true for this new president that, at least on the matter of further racial progress, expectations are supersized -- absolute racial justice with a large order of decreased economic and educational inequality on the side.

Should Americans invest so much faith in one man? Perhaps not. But these are worthy goals for a nation with our particular racial history.

This legacy is why we will take enormous pride in Tuesday's oath of office and the man who takes it, even as we analyze his future actions on their merits. And the threats arrayed against the nation are why every American should invest in him those supersized hopes for success.

*The Wausau Daily Herald* says the new president will inspire Americans, and that we will have to step up to help solve the country's problems.

Millions of Americans are looking to Obama to solve our problems and solve them fast. He cannot do that -- not single-handedly, and not as quickly as some people would prefer.

Millions of us are looking for Obama to wipe the slate clean so we can begin writing a new chapter in our nation's history.

But truly that is our chapter to write. And it almost certainly will begin with Obama borrowing a thought -- a thought that drove King and that President John F. Kennedy focused on 48 years ago, during his inaugural address.

"Ask not what your country can do for you," Kennedy said. "Ask what you can do for your country."

*The Kenosha News* describes today as one of great expectations.

Rarely in the history of our republic has a president taken office with higher expectations or with more support. According to one poll, 79 percent of Americans were optimistic about the next four years.

Millions believe that our first African-American president will ease if not eliminate altogether race as a divisive force in our society.

Overseas, the expectations are almost as high -- that the United States will forsake the swaggering ways of the Bush presidency and instead act as a uniting, stabilizing force in world politics. Rarely indeed has an American president been the recipient of so much international good will.

Without serving a day, Obama has been compared to two of America's greatest presidents -- Franklin Roosevelt, for the difficult economic times in which he takes office; and Abraham Lincoln, for progress on race and their Illinois origins.

## General Membership Meeting Minutes

Baraboo Civic Center  
January 8, 2009

1. Present: There were 10 people present at the meeting held at the Baraboo Civic Center, including officers Sacra, Johnson, Bair, Zeller, Scharbach.
2. Representative Fred Clark thanked Greg, Judy and others for their part in making the Monday, January 5 inaugural celebration at the Baraboo Garden Party restaurant a success. An estimated 90 people attended. Rep. Clark has hired an experienced legislative aid as his staffer. The office number is 418 North. He will serve as Vice Chair of the Wisconsin Assembly Forestry Committee and as Vice Chair of the Tourism Committee. He will also serve on the Natural Resources and the Rural Economic Development committees, plus an education work group. Fred reports that work on the budget is moving along and a stream of lobbyists have been visiting his office. Those present discussed several issues expected to move forward this session.  
  
Fred thanked Sauk County Democrats for helping to hold together the connections between the Presidential and local Assembly campaign, and knowing how to put all the volunteers to work when they showed up. Participants discussed how we will use all that we learned locally during this election cycle. Our strengths were good internal and external communication, flexibility, agility, and good data.
3. Preview of spring elections. Greg reminded people of the dates for the February primary and April elections. Someone will speak at the February meeting about the Supreme Court race. There are many good candidates running for school board in local communities. As individuals we need to step up and actively support strong local candidates.
4. The Wisconsin River Valley Grassroots conference is scheduled for February 21 at Wisconsin Heights High School. Nate Timm asks that everyone help promote the event.
5. Bob Johnson moved approval of the December 2008 General Membership minutes; Scharbach seconded, motion passed.
6. David Zeller reported a healthy balance in the treasury. Membership renewals are starting to come in. David attended training about new reporting requirements and methods.
7. Greg provided brief background and then opened the question about adding Lake Delton to the meeting rotation and dropping Spring Green. Maybe instead of having 2 meetings per year in Spring Green we could hold one in Lake Delton and one in Spring Green. Tom suggested that if a meeting is held in the Delton area, it needs to be off-season and could be held in cooperation with Columbia County Democrats. Ben suggested that a meeting in Spring Green could be held in cooperation with the emerging Iowa County Democrats.
8. Next meeting: Thursday, February 5 in Sauk Prairie.

*The Voice* is authorized and paid for by the Democratic Party of Sauk County, WI, David Zeller, Treasurer.