



Calendar

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. The tentatively scheduled speaker for the meeting is newly elected State Representative Fred Clark from the 42nd Assembly District

April 2, 2009, 7PM, GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING in Reedsburg. Reedsburg Public Library, [370 Vine St.](#) Discussion and voting on resolutions to be submitted to the state conventions.

April 18, 2009, the 2nd and 3rd Congressional District Conventions. The 2nd CD Convention will be in Portage.

May 7, 2009, 7PM, GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING in Baraboo. Baraboo Civic Center, Room 18, [124 2nd Street](#).

June 4, 2009, 7PM, GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING in Sauk Prairie. The Town of Prairie du Sac Town Hall in Prairie du Sac, [S9903 U.S. Hwy 12, Prairie Du Sac](#).

a publication of The Democratic Party of Sauk County
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

Dear Sauk Democrats,

A year ago, when Barack Obama upset the pundits in Iowa, he did it with the quiet zeal expressed in the slogan, "Yes, we can."

"Yes, we can," captured a feeling and enthusiasm pent up for years. It cut through the cynical and expressed a new hope, grounded in faith, that no difficulty is too great, if we will simply work together and look after one another.

We face great challenges in America and in our own backyard. They appear new, but their solution is the same: together we can accomplish what would otherwise be impossible. "Yes, we can," now becomes an expression of hope for our future, and for our children, and for the world. It embodies the signal determination that the answers that eluded us individually will nevertheless be found, because we are willing to join together to find them.

The world is watching to see whether America can rebound, after the long winter of the past eight years. They want to know if we can be counted on in an emergency. Can we continue to hold out the promise of freedom by example practiced here at home?

Let our answer be, "Yes, we can."

Democratically yours,

Greg Sacra

Schools get a visit from a VIP

The Baraboo News Republic

<http://www.wiscnews.com/bnr/news/439415>

Wisconsin's first lady, Jessica Doyle, visited Baraboo schools Wednesday and summarized Governor Jim Doyle's budget proposal delivered on Tuesday night.

Meanwhile, state Republican senators sifting through the governor's proposal on Wednesday said they think the governor needs more schooling on the budget. Rep. Fred Clark, D-Baraboo, did not agree with Republicans on that point, saying the proposal is strong.

Officials all agreed that more time is needed to understand the proposal's details and generate questions. And as the proposed budget becomes a state-wide conversation, Baraboo students at least enjoyed an early personal introduction to the topic.

At Jack Young Middle School the first lady quizzed students on the governor's plan to address a \$5.7 million budget deficit in the next two years.

The first lady highlighted the governor's proposed \$426 million increase to the education budget, an increase which he plans to secure by taking advantage of federal economic stimulus money.

Looking around the middle school classroom, the first lady told the eighth-graders they were "in the most important part of life" as they approach high school and pick a career path.

They will also be the first graduating class eligible for the governor's proposed Wisconsin Covenant, which the governor proposed giving an additional \$25 million to, in order to increase the financial aid pool for these students to attend any college in Wisconsin.

"Wisconsin's key to our economic development is in our education," she said.

Grassroots Fest big success

by Bob Johnson

MAZOMANIE - Despite terrible weather, the Wisconsin River Valley Grassroots Festival was deemed a success by all. The Festival was a gathering of grassroots organizers from all over Wisconsin.

Speakers at the event included Ed Garvey. In his keynote address he stressed the importance of progressives uniting at events like this and the annual Bob Fest held every year in Baraboo.

The Chief, the Honorable Shirley Abrahamson, gave an impassioned speech outlining why she needs to be re-elected to the Wisconsin State Supreme Court. She received a standing ovation as she was introduced and as she departed from the podium.

Other speakers included re-elected Rep. Steve Hilgenberg (D-Dodgeville), 51st Assembly Dist., and the newly elected Rep. Fred Clark (D-Baraboo), 42nd Dist. and Kelda Helen Roys (D-Madison) 81st Dist.

The event took place at Wisconsin Heights High School located on U.S. Highway 14 between Mazomanie and Black Earth. Several inches of heavy snow fell, starting the night before and continued into the morning and yet attendance was judged by many to be excellent. Ron Biendseil, one of the facilitators, counted the crowd and he said he stopped counting at 100.

The morning and afternoon breakout sessions featured experts in their fields. They gave practical advice to help people to advance their work promoting issues important to them. The issues ranged from energy to health care.

The day after the event, the lead organizer Nate Timm said "We received a lot of positive evaluations on our sectionals (breakouts) and on the overall event."

AP — 2/11/2009

MADISON - The co-chair of the Legislature's budget-writing committee is blasting Wisconsin's largest business group at its own meeting.

Democratic Sen. Mark Miller of Monona took the podium at a Madison gathering of Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce members to talk about the state's budget problems.

At the end of his speech he accused the business group of bad-mouthing Wisconsin's business climate over the last 15 years, discouraging business expansion. He then accused the group of destroying the state's reputation for clean politics and elections.

WMC typically pours millions into state political races in support of conservative candidates.

Miller's remarks drew "ooohs" from the crowd. WMC spokesman Jim Pugh says the group supports whoever is pro-business.

Editor's note: It has been argued by many that WMC has exercised undue influence in state elections including the last two Wisconsin Supreme Court races. Although the group has said they will not contribute money to the current Supreme Court race, many have speculated they may change that decision or finance ads for out of state "issue" groups

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by Mike Miller — 2/10/2009

Wisconsin's Democratic Senators praised the economic stimulus bill passed by the U.S. Senate Tuesday, Feb. 10, including items they fought to have included in the bill, but warned an economic recovery for the nation could take years.

"This bill provides both a short term boost for struggling families across the nation and tools for a more sustained, longer term recovery," Sen. Herb Kohl said after the Senate passed the bill. "We need to set the stage for recovery, knowing that it will be a multi-year process."

While Sen. Russ Feingold also praised the effort, he cautioned that the bill increases the national deficit, which he has generally opposed, but said the bill was the only way to solve the vast unemployment and other economic problems the country is facing.

Feingold noted fears of an increased deficit was one reason he opposed what he called the "flawed Wall Street bailout." But with the continuing rise in unemployment, "including the highest levels we've seen in Wisconsin in 20 years, we need to act quickly and responsibly to create jobs and get our economy moving."

"The economic recovery package is not perfect but it does take important steps to create or save millions of jobs while addressing our country's energy infrastructure challenges," Feingold said, but added that given the huge expenditures involved, "Congress must conduct careful over-sight to ensure taxpayer dollars are spent as effectively and efficiently as possible."

The Senate plan which passed on a 61-37 vote, costs \$838 billion compared to the House plan which has a \$820 billion price tag. The plans went to a House-Senate Conference Committee for negotiations to iron out the differences. President Barack Obama signed the bill on Tuesday, Feb. 17 in Denver.

The Fiscal Stimulus Will Pay For Itself

Ann Pettifor

Posted February 15, 2009

Rachel Maddow gets it. Economists and Republicans don't.

I watched Prof. Jeffrey Sachs on Rachel Maddow's show the other day. She asked whether the fiscal stimulus would work. "No" he said emphatically, it would not. "No one has the tools....to fix this.....the fiscal hole will cripple us for the long-term."

She tentatively mentioned 'the multiplier.' He brushed this aside with a counsel of despair. "We might have a few more jobs in the short-term but a massive deficit in the long-term..."

Scant consolation for 13 million unemployed and underemployed Americans. Their lives could be transformed by this fiscal stimulus.

And anyway, as Keynes once noted, in the long term we're all dead.

Sachs's analysis is overwhelmingly shared by mainstream economists. And by Republicans. These have been whipping voters into a frenzy with talk of 'generational theft.' Future generations, they argue, will be paying for this fiscal stimulus for decades to come. That is simply not true, as I will show below.

Meantime, these points are truly rich coming from the Republicans. Readers no doubt know that during the Bush-Cheney years the U.S. national debt doubled from \$5,700bn in 2001 to \$10,700bn today. Others may recollect that Mr. Cheney said in 2001: "Reagan proved that deficits don't matter."

So let's not hear any more from Republicans about deficits mattering or about 'generational theft.'

But to get back to history. The fiscal stimulus of the 1930's was positive -- both in the US and the UK. It dramatically lowered unemployment after 1933.

Second, it is simply wrong to suggest that the fiscal stimulus 'will cripple us long-term.' It will not. The fiscal stimulus will pay for itself. Here's how.

At times of high unemployment tax cuts may be saved and not spent into the economy. But when the government invests the bulk of \$789 billion in real, productive economic activity - it always gets its money back - plus some.

It works like this. Government invests in labor-intensive programs e.g. \$40 billion in energy efficiency and renewable energy programs, including \$2.9 billion to weatherize modest-income homes. \$27 billion for highway and bridge construction and repair and \$11.5 billion for mass transit and rail projects; \$4.6 billion for the Army Corps of Engineers; \$5 billion for public housing improvements; \$6.4 billion for clean and drinking water projects.

Next, something called 'the multiplier' kicks in. It's the A, B, C of economic science and it works.

To read the rest, go to: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ann-pettifor/the-fiscal-stimulus-will_b_167119.html

General Membership Meeting Minutes

The Town of Prairie du Sac, Town Hall
February 5, 2009

1. Present: There were 16 people present at the meeting held at the Prairie du Sac Town Hall, including officers G. Sacra, B. Johnson, D. Zeller, T. Scharbach, and B. Baker.
 2. Speakers: Nate Timm spoke about the Wisconsin River Valley Grassroots Festival due to be held in Mazomanie on February 21, 2009.
Bob Johnson addressed the campaign efforts of Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson. Ms. Abrahamson has been Chief Justice for 10 years and was appointed to the court by Gov. Lucy in 1976.
Alyssa Ziegler, an added speaker, attended the meeting to ask for support in her April 7th bid for the Sauk Prairie School Board. She presented her contact information (chefaly@charter.net) and welcomed comments, ideas and communication. Her opposition is Nathan Russell.
 3. Bob Johnson moved approval of the January, 2009 General Membership minutes; the approval was seconded, motion passed.
 4. David Zeller presented the treasurer's report with one additional check just received not included. A filing fee and payment to the state party for memberships have been made. Donations collected at the meeting totaled \$42.
 5. Special Topics: **a.** Spring Green Meetings are being reviewed as there seems to be decreased support and sparse attendance at the meetings held there. **b.** We need to establish a Fund Raiser/Social Event to allow officials (both Democrats and Allies) to socialize. **c.** Democratic Leadership Institute, April 25-26 @ Devil's Head Resort in Merrimac is a good educational/training opportunity for people working on elections, committees and candidates. Contact: dli@wisdems.org **d.** The Executive Committee Strategic Planning update is as follows: Evaluation of practices we have done well and want to continue for 2009 include: Effective General Membership and Executive Committee meetings that are regular, documented, have structure and encourage participation. **c.** Congressional District Conventions: The 2nd Congressional District Convention is scheduled for April 18th in Portage. Usually the 3rd CD meets prior to the 2nd verification and notification of date and location to follow. **d.** Resolution Committee for the 2nd Congressional District will be chaired by Bob Johnson. **e.** Membership Campaign is chaired by Tom Scharbach.
- Roundtable/Feedback/Concerns: **a.** Resolution to negotiate a fair peace in the Middle East was suggested and referred to the Resolution Committee for development. George Shalabi and Tom Scharbach to assist. **b.** Camp Wellstone was being held this Fri/Sat at UW-Science Hall Rm 175. **c.** Obama Change for America meets with local people once a month via conference calls to keep Obama aware of local issues/concerns. See the Obama website or saukdems.org to participate. **d.** Earth Day, 4/20, to be at the Baraboo High School. Possibly good for Dems to be represented. **e.** Local County issues: Open meetings, open records, bid practices, and spending issues presented. Reedsburg Obama Team has decided to continue working together with broad goals: local/national service, government accountability and Gov. transparency at all levels. Plan to work for the Chief Justice election (S. Abrahamson) and local service projects. Next meeting 2/17/09. Contact Donna Miller (608) 727-2266 or cell: (608) 574-6644. Conference calls instead of meetings was proposed. **f.** Discussion indicated that meetings were a valuable form of communication. **g.** Robo calls can be used for meeting reminders. callingpost.com and postcalls.com are cost effective and can be programmed with numbers and message for approx. \$.10/call.

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