



Calendar

April 2, 2009, 7PM, GENERAL

Chair's Corner

Dear Sauk Democrats,

MEMBERSHIP MEETING in Reedsburg. Reedsburg Public Library, [370 Vine St.](#) Discussion and voting on resolutions to be submitted to the state conventions. A speaker will not be scheduled for this meeting so that a proper discussion of the resolutions may be conducted. All at the meeting may participate in the debate but only party members will be allowed to vote.

April 7, 2009, Spring Elections. Important contests take place all over the county for school boards and there is an important State Supreme Court election.

April 18, 2009, 10AM, 2nd CD Democratic Convention in Portage. Best Western, 2701 County Road CX, Portage, WI 53901

April 18, 2009, 3rd CD Democratic Convention, Holiday Gardens Event Center, 101 Brewery Hollow Rd., Potosi, Wis. 53820.

April 25 - 26, 2009, 13th Democratic Leadership Institute, Devil's Head Resort, Merrimac.

April 26, 2009, Earth Day. Celebrate Earth Day at UW Baraboo/Sauk County, displays are open 10AM to about 3PM.

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

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.

A.I.G. and bonuses. The very idea of these two words in the same sentence makes our collective stomach turn. But it can stand as a reminder of where we are, where we want to be, and how to get there.

As a party, we abhor the use of our tax dollars to cushion the fall of the high handed and misguided "wizards" that have driven A.I.G. and the country toward financial ruin. This is rewarding failure at a time when the common man and woman struggles to keep pace. It is wrong.

But let's not forget that our friends were in office when this occurred and, from here on, bear the responsibility of protecting the public. There is a higher standard for our representatives than simply passing gargantuan spending bills without review and becoming outraged only after waste is exposed. This is Wisconsin and we expect better things from those Democrats elevated to higher office.

Please join me in sending a friendly reminder to our representatives that we cannot afford, and will not tolerate, immoderate and wasteful spending of our resources. They must do better. And it falls on us to say so.

Democratically yours,

Greg Sacra

St. Clare gets cut of stimulus pie

by Matthew Ryno

Recent investments in cancer treatment and women's health at St. Clare Hospital have been rewarded with \$461,000 of federal funds.

St. Clare Hospital officials credited U.S. Rep. Tammy Baldwin and U.S. Sen. Herb Kohl for setting aside the money that was approved when President Barack Obama signed the Omnibus Appropriations Act on March 11.

The president said the \$410 billion act was necessary to carry on the functions of government, but its passage was not without controversy. The bill contained about 8,000 earmarks, which are financial requests tacked onto a larger bill to support local projects.

Sandy Anderson, president of St. Clare Hospital, said this earmark will support the hospital's comprehensive cancer center and new services focused on breast cancer. These services were built into the hospital's Medical Imaging Department this year.

"These funds will go a long way in rounding out the diagnostic tools available locally to aid in the earliest possible diagnosis of breast cancer and thus improve the likelihood of successful treatment," she said in a prepared statement.

The center offers Ultrasound and MRI technology used to identify and evaluate suspicious lumps for signs of cancer. Computer-aided design systems for the MRI and mammography machines are also available.

"Because of the appropriations process, these federal funds were applied for nearly a year ago," Anderson said. "Not knowing if the project would be approved, we went ahead with plans to purchase the equipment in order to get our breast care services up and running for our community."

Pocan vs WTA

by John Nichols

State Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Madison, has sparred with the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance before.

Pocan has long argued that the WTA is little more than a front group for conservative politicians and organizations that seek to structure tax policies to favor big business and the wealthy at the expense of working Wisconsinites and public services.

"(They) are a corporate special interest that often, in my opinion, skews information to fit a specific agenda," says Pocan, who argues that, increasingly, the WTA's agenda has been that of the state Republican Party.

That is the group's right, Pocan suggests.

But reporters and editors should not, then, continue to add what he describes as "flowery, yet not factually accurate, descriptors to the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance. Words like 'non-partisan' and 'independent' are often placed in front of their name."

Drawing attention to the partisan and ideological character of the WTA's statements with regard to tax policy, to its close connections to corporate lobbies and to what he describes as the "overly simplistic, misleading (at least according to our briefing from the Fiscal Bureau) and slanted" WTA budget analysis, Pocan argues that Wisconsin media that reports on the WTA should "call them what they are: A biased special interest with strong ties to both a large business lobby and the Republican Party."

"However," adds Pocan, "if you are still inclined to use flowery, yet not entirely accurate, prose to describe them, let me offer a few suggestions I would appreciate you consider using before my name in the media: 'Exceedingly and uniquely independent,' 'Obama-like,' 'Strikingly handsome.'"

by John Nichols

Abrahamson scores endorsements from Jefferson County judges

If you are a circuit judge running for the state Supreme Court, the last thing you need is opposition from your fellow judges in the county where you serve.

So Jefferson County Judge Randy Koschnick can't be happy that not one but two Jefferson County judges have publicly endorsed the incumbent he is challenging, Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson.

Judge Ullsvik went a step further, releasing this letter to a pair of Jefferson County newspapers, the Watertown Daily Times and the Daily Jefferson County Union.

Does Koschnick have a base problem?

Jefferson County, traditionally a Republican bastion, has been trending more Democratic in recent years. Barack Obama won it last year.

But one would have thought that Koschnick, who is positioning himself as the conservative, Republican-friendly candidate in the nonpartisan race for the high court (he's been busily appearing at GOP county dinners and showed up on stage recently with right-wing icon "Joe the Plumber") would have his home county locked up.

The chief's also being backed by 65 other Jefferson County citizens, giving Abrahamson campaign manager Heather Colburn an opportunity to chirp: "The Chief Justice is committed to ensuring that the Supreme Court is free of personal agendas and partisan politics, and that is why so many Jefferson County judges and residents endorse her candidacy."

by U.S. Senator Russ Feingold

Much of the focus in Washington has been on getting our country back on the road toward economic stability, and rightfully so. The problems we face in this area are enormous and it's going to take policy makers working together to ensure that we come out of this recession in a fundamentally better position than we were going into it.

However, before the week is over I wanted to take this opportunity to highlight again my commitment to a strong and stable America abroad as well. I am pleased that President Obama has announced plans to significantly reduce the U.S. military presence in Iraq by August 2010. What a world of difference from the previous administration, which refused to even discuss reasonable time lines.

I am concerned, however, that as many as 50,000 U.S. troops may remain in Iraq beyond that time, and question some of the purposes for which troops will be used and whether those purposes will further the stability of the region or our own national security.

After years of a failed foreign policy that distracted us from defeating al Qaeda and its affiliates, I am encouraged that President Obama and his administration have chosen to increase their focus on where the 9/11 attacks originated - Afghanistan.

However, a military escalation there, without an overall strategy in place that will actually work in Afghanistan, could alienate the Afghan people and make it more difficult to achieve our overall goal of defeating al Qaeda, which has a safe haven along the Afghan-Pakistan border.

After too long, we finally have the pieces in place to get our foreign policy right. Now is the time.

Resolutions

We will be voting on resolutions to present for adoption at the 2nd and 3rd Congressional District conventions at the next General Membership meeting. Only party members can vote. Here is a preview of the resolutions we will be voting on. From the 15, the membership will pick 10 to present to the conventions.

1. Relationship with Afghanistan
2. On being Good Global Neighbors
3. Campaign Finance Reform – take out big money.
4. Global Warming Problem – fixing the problem and not denying it.
5. Healthy Wisconsin – Medical care for everyone.
6. Saving and Supporting the Viability of Family Farms
7. Prohibit Prescription Drug Advertising in Public Forums
8. Reducing Violence in Public Schools
9. Protecting GLBT Families
10. Resolving the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict
11. Save Our Schools – reforming school financing
12. Using Inclusive Language and Reasoning Together
13. Single Payer National Health Insurance
14. Truth Commission – a full investigation of the Bush Administration's crimes.
15. Universal National Service with Options

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General Membership Meeting Minutes*

Kilbourn Public Library, Wisconsin Dells, March 5, 2009

*abridged minutes, complete minutes available at the next GM meeting

1. Present: Sacra, Johnson, Scharbach, Zeller, Baker and 25 others including Ray Frey, Columbia Co. Party chair; Diane England, Adams Co. Supervisor; Tom Kriegl, Sauk Co. Supervisor; Krista Ledbetter, Tony Evers campaign; and Fred Clark, 42nd Dist. Assembly Representative.
2. Speaker: Fred Clark, Vice Chair of the Committee on Tourism, Recreation, & State Properties Mr. Clark stated that currently the committee has an open agenda and he would welcome input. He sought feedback regarding what the state can do to support business, employee needs, and community investments. Feedback included: Concern regarding the effects of the smoking ban laws; delayed filling of Lake Delton; Dells employee concerns (impact of minimum wage increased housing, transportation, etc.); ideas for promoting, increasing, and marketing Dells' business. Mr. Clark was supported in his decision to return the state pay raise due to a concern regarding the state's financial situation.
3. Guest Comments: Krista Ledbetter promoted Tony Ever's campaign and reminded everyone to vote on 4/7. Ray Frey honored the first soldier from Portage to die in Afghanistan – Mr. Thompson.
4. New Business:
 - a) Earth Day; April 26 at U. of Wis. - Baraboo; 10-3 – Contact Greg at saukdems.org if anyone is able to assist with a booth. Booth appl. Deadline is 4/10.
 - b) Robo calls to be used for meeting reminders.
 - c) Supreme Court Election: Shirley Abrahamson's qualities of common sense, integrity, and hard work presented. She bases her decisions on the law. A request for assistance with her election and a sign up sheet presenting multiple opportunities to help was circulated. Request that letters be written to the local papers was made. Vote 4/7. (d) Fund Raiser / Social: A party has been suggested to be held on 5/2 Possibly at Monk's in Baraboo to celebrate Obama's first 100 days in office. Details to follow.
5. February minutes: B. Johnson moved to approve; D. Zeller seconded. Minutes approved.
6. Treasurer's report: Adequate amount in the account with all bills paid.
7. Committee Reports:
 - a) Membership: There are 41 renewals and letters are being mailed to previous members. The EC will meet on 3/14 to identify people to contact. Total of 200 members is a goal.
 - b) Resolutions: Resolutions (15) have been identified and will be presented to the members for a vote prior to presentation to the two CD conventions on 4/18.
8. Democratic Leadership Institute; April 25-26, Devil's Head resort, Merrimac, WI.
 - a) DPSC voted to give each youth member a scholarship (\$150) to attend with a total of 5 scholarships available. Motion by T. Scharbach, seconded by J. Scherneck.
 - b) Lesleigh Lippitt (Merrimac 608-393-2323) has offered to provide housing for 6 youth during the institute.
9. Roundtable / Feedback / Concerns:
 - a) Donna Miller addressed flood recovery – Volunteers Organized Against Disaster. A new project begins in New Freedom on 3/15. They will be doing building repairs. Contact Ron Kruse or Donna Miller at miller.donna72@gmail.com.
 - b) Tom Kriegl addressed the issues of county finance regarding the county jail and the proposed shooting range. For additional information contact him at (608) 356-4373 or tkriegl1@centurytel.net.

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