



Calendar

June 4, 2009, 7PM, GENERAL MEM-

BERSHIP MEETING in Sauk Prairie. Prairie du Sac Town Hall, [S9903 U.S. Hwy 12, Prairie Du Sac](#).

June 12 - 13, 2009, DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF WISCONSIN STATE CONVENTION, Radisson Hotel & Conference Center, [2040 Airport Drive, Green Bay](#).

June 13, 2009, BUTTERFEST PARADE. Show your Obama pride and join your fellow Democrats in the parade.

July 4, 2009, WITWEN PARADE. Another opportunity to march with fellow Democrats.

July 8 - 12, 2009, SAUK COUNTY FAIR. Contact Barb Bair to volunteer to work at the Democratic booth 608.356.6194 bbair47@hotmail.com

September 3, 2009, 7PM, GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, tentatively scheduled for Spring Green.

The Democratic Party of Sauk County

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Chair's Corner

Dear Sauk Democrats,

It is said that politics makes for strange bedfellows.

On the national scene, it means that when Pres. Obama holds a conference on how to reform the broken healthcare system, Blue Cross and Blue Shield participated and announced that it would do its part in trying to hold down healthcare costs. BCBS, for all its promises now, has for years made its money by collecting premiums, while effectively limiting/denying coverage. Now, BCBS wants a seat at the table and “help” guide the debate toward healthcare reform.

The question is not whether BCBS has seen the light and wants to help. The question is whether our Democratic representatives, from the president on down, know that they have our support in standing up the BCBS and the other insurance giants. We need to remind them that they do.

Let us tell our representatives that it is no longer acceptable for the United States to rank 37th in the world in healthcare, between Costa Rica and Slovenia. We deserve better.

Democratically yours,

Greg Sacra

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.

from *The Sauk Prairie Eagle*

Rep. Steve Hilgenberg (D-Dodgeville) received the Gaylord Nelson Human Services Award from the Wisconsin Community Action Program for his advocacy addressing the needs of working families and low-income people. He also assisted in bringing dental services to low-income families and children. The award was presented to Rep. Hilgenberg by Asset Development Coordinator Jeff Segebrecht and David Vobora, business development coordinator.

Resolution Vote Count

by Bob Johnson

There was a question asked at the last General Membership Meeting about the actual vote count regarding the resolutions that were adopted by the Democratic Party of Sauk County. At the time, the vote count numbers were unknown and presumed lost. However, they recently turned up as one member of the executive committee was recently going through a notebook and found the vote totals. The adopted ones are underlined. Here are the actual results (vote total in parenthesis):

1-Calling Upon President Obama to End Religious Proselytizing and Discrimination in all Governmental Programs (7), 2-Campaign Finance Reform (14), 3-Global Warming (13), 4-Prohibit Prescription Drug Advertising in Public Forums (12), 5-Protecting GLBT Families (14), 6-Relationship with Afghanistan (8), 7-Resolving the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (10), 8-Save our Schools (11), 9-Saving and Supporting the Viability of Family Farms (14), 10-Supporting a Wisconsin Single-Payer Health Care Reform Bill (13), 11-Truth Commission (8), 12-Universal Voluntary Public Service (9), 13-Single Payer National Health Insurance (9), 14-Using Inclusive Language and Reasoning Together (4), 15-Violence in Public Schools (6).

by Dave Zweifel, *The Capital Times*

Like many of us, former President Jimmy Carter can't understand why Congress allowed the ban on semiautomatic assault weapons like AK-47s, AR-15s and Uzis to expire five years ago.

In a New York Times op-ed, Carter pointed out that he -- along with presidents Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton -- all supported a ban on those firearms, and one was finally passed when Clinton was president in 1994. When the 10-year ban was set to expire, hundreds of police groups from around the country urged Congress and the second President Bush to renew it. Instead, it was allowed to die.

Since then, the proliferation of assault weapons has been widespread and, in particular, the sale of the weapons by U.S. gun dealers is being blamed for arming the rampaging drug cartels in Mexico, where widespread violence has spilled across the border into the United States.

The former president blamed the National Rifle Association for misleading "many gullible people into believing that our weapons are going to be taken away from us, and that homeowners will be deprived of the right to protect ourselves and our families.

"The NRA would be justified in its efforts if there was a real threat to our constitutional rights to bear arms," he added. "But that is not the case."

He concluded: "The gun lobby and the firearms industry should reassess their policies concerning safety and accountability -- at least on assault weapons -- and ease their pressure on acquiescent politicians who fear NRA disapproval at election time. We can't let the NRA's political blackmail prevent the banning of assault weapons -- designed only to kill police officers and the people they defend."

<http://www.madison.com/tct/opinion/449720>

by Marcy Wheeler, *Salon.com*

The Bush administration's Torture 13. They authorized it, they decided how to implement it, and they crafted the legal fig leaf to justify it.

On April 16, the Obama administration released four memos that were used to authorize torture in interrogations during the Bush administration. When President Obama released the memos, he said, "It is our intention to assure those who carried out their duties relying in good faith upon legal advice from the Department of Justice that they will not be subject to prosecution."

Yet 13 key people in the Bush administration cannot claim they relied on the memos from the DOJ's Office of Legal Counsel. Some of the 13 manipulated the federal bureaucracy and the legal process to "preauthorize" torture in the days after 9/11. Others helped implement torture, and still others helped write the memos that provided the Bush administration with a legal fig leaf after torture had already begun.

Between 9/11 and the end of 2002, the Torture 13 decided to torture, then reverse-engineered the techniques, and then crafted the legal cover. Here's who they are:

1. Dick Cheney
2. David Addington
3. Alberto Gonzales
4. James Mitchell
5. George Tenet
6. Condoleezza Rice
7. John Yoo
8. Jay Bybee
9. William "Jim" Haynes
10. Donald Rumsfeld
11. John Rizzo
12. Steven Bradbury
13. George W. Bush

<http://www.salon.com/news/feature/2009/05/18/torture/index.html?source=rss&aim=/news/feature>

by Victoria McGrane, *Politico.com*

When the clock strikes midnight on Dec. 31, 2009, Rep. Paul Broun (R-Ga.) hopes you'll be ringing in "the Year of the Bible."

Broun's simple congressional resolution aimed at honoring the Good Book has produced a push-back of biblical proportion in the blogosphere, with critics dismissing it as either unconstitutional or a waste of time. Jews in Congress and atheist activists are dismissing the resolution, while none of the many Democrats in Congress who are Christian have bothered to sign on as co-sponsors.

According to GovTrak.us, the resolution is among the most- blogged-about pieces of legislation, with most posts less than complimentary in nature.

"Does that mean 2009 is not the year of the Bible?" mocked Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.), who is Jewish. "What is 2012 the year of? The Quran?"

"That's an endorsement of religion by the federal government, and we shouldn't be doing that," said Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.), even though he has introduced his own legislation dealing with religion.

"Republican lawmakers with apparently too much time on their hands and no solutions to offer the country are pushing a resolution that will not address the nation's problems or advance prosperity or even untangle their previous governing mistakes," blogged the Progressive Puppy.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/politico/20090522/pl_politico/2832

Guest Editorial

So that the membership has in writing the facts and position held by approximately one-third of the 31 member Sauk County Board, I submit this information for consideration and comment.

Able, articulate and with the financial resources to tailor her position, Kathryn Schauf noted the following cuts expected in funding from the State of Wisconsin in the coming budget which total \$800,000 (rounded up figure.) The cuts will likely be in these programs: Children and Family Aid, Mental Health funding, Youth Aids, Income Maintenance and Skilled Nursing Aid

Ms. Schauf did not note that the Libraries have already been cut from 13% to 7% of their budget by the state. In 2008, while granting the Sheriff his \$18 million, Sauk libraries were cut \$28,000 by the leaders of the Sauk County Board, which has resulted in reduced hours and services across the county. No one in this county works harder and provides more services than the libraries.

The entire amount of state cuts is available, and more, in the current and projected 2010 Sauk County Budget allocation solely to "renovate" the existing shooting range grounds and building in the amount of \$900,000.

Mark and Marion Bergman of Reedsburg, made a superbly researched and prepared presentation before the Sauk County Board, (please phone & thank them) where, similar to our own meetings, they were limited to 3 minutes, regardless of the importance of the issue. The Bergman presentation stands unrefuted that the cost to Sauk County to have their deputies qualify annually using the Dane County Shooting range would be \$1,600 a year.

The Sheriff, who presents his budget requests with no time limits with five(5) paid employees at each meeting before the Law Enforcement Committee and three to five in appearances before the County Board, offered no conflicting evidence.

With no staff to examine and inspect the unique accounting and requests by the multi million dollar Sheriff's Department. County Board members, except for Tom Kriegl, are no match for this bloated department. In fact, Kriegl can not even get Records from the Sheriff to fulfill his legislative duties. Accordingly, the Sheriff's budget has ballooned in the past eight years by 450%, to \$18 million while Sauk County without the Sheriff's budget has increased 16% to \$90 million.

Some of the signs of a bloated Sheriff's budget are: 1 jailer for less than 2 inmates; one out of every 4 Sauk County employees works for the Sheriff, etc.

With the Sheriff being accorded virtually free rein on his budget, the predictable targets that have their budgets cut are libraries, Boys and Girls Clubs, and the social services list Kathryn Schauf presented, above.

If average citizens, to say nothing of Democrats, are not upset enough to confront their County Board representatives, and write letters to the editor about such a pervasive misuse of taxpayer money and gutting of rehabilitative and social programs, celebrating in parades and honoring the day of the guy commonly derided as the "agitator", Fighting Bob LaFollette, seems rather pointless.

Progressively yours,
Jim Scherneck, Reedsburg

To see the full text of the letter go to: <http://tinyurl.com/q3dnkf>

General Membership Meeting Minutes*

Baraboo Civic Center, Baraboo, May 7, 2009

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

Present: Sacra, Johnson, Bair, Zeller, Scharbach, Baker and 14 others including County Supervisor Tom Kriegl and Sauk County Administrative Coordinator, Kathryn Schauf.

1. Welcome/Announcements: Condolences to Senator Miller on the passing of his mother, Midge
2. Speaker: Kathryn Schauf, Sauk Co. Administrative Coordinator spoke on the anticipated effects to Sauk County by the Federal stimulus bill and the Wisconsin governor's budget. The county government provides specific services at the local level and is an arm of the state government. The county governing body is the Board of Supervisors. The annual budget is the biggest decision the board of supervisors has to make and this year there are fiscal challenges. The county's revenue is negatively impacted by: Shift of social services responsibility from the state to the counties; increased demand for social services as a result of current economics; changes in wage laws; decrease in the interest that can be charged on late taxes; and a decline in sales tax receipts. Human Services and skilled Nursing will see budget shortfalls. The state mandates the level of care required while cutting the assistance. The county doesn't know how the Federal stimulus money will be distributed by the state. Stimulus money could be used to offset shortfalls in the school and road budgets. The county continues to research grants for any that may apply to county services and to look for new revenue streams. County agencies are looking for ways to consolidate services and overhead costs. Using purchasing contracts (some in use now) and a uniform accounting system were suggested to save costs. While the county agencies use the same basic accounting system, the variety of services and costs in each necessitates different categories.
3. There was Controversy regarding the agenda format; Robert's Rules of Order; and whether there could be a rebuttal to the county budgetary concerns. An amendment was proposed by J.Schernecker to amend the agenda to include a 15 min. rebuttal to Ms. Schauf's presentation. D. Zeller moved to approve the agenda as written; Bob Johnson seconded the motion; and the majority of those present approved. The agenda stood as printed.
4. Approval of April Minutes: The minutes were approved (B. Johnson, motion,;D. Zeller, 2nd)
5. Reports: a. Treasurer's report: \$2250.66 in checking. The Fair booth fee has been paid.
b. Membership Committee: Spring membership drive this month. EC to make calls.
6. Business: a. CD conventions/resolutions: They will be printed in the Newsletter.
b. Summer events (Butterfest & Witwin Parades, County Fair and Fighting Bob) – Volunteers please contact Barb Bair and wear blue. Does anyone know the location of the Democratic banner?
c. Election results: B.Johnson will try to obtain the actual numbers of the Sauk Co. vote.
d. Democratic Leadership Institute: Only youth who were Seniors could attend.
7. Roundtable / Feedback / Concerns: Concerns were expressed by T. Kriegl and J. Schernecker relating to the county Sheriff's budget for the underutilized county jail and a new shooting range. Both men felt that county monies used for these two items should be used to offset the shortfalls in the social services, library, schools, etc. and were frustrated that the Democrats weren't actively supporting this concept. As DPSC is part of the state party, there are constraints on its activities. DPSC is a partisan organization and, as county government is non-partisan, the DPSC cannot support the issue. An article on the issue could be submitted to the newsletter and announcements for members to call their board supervisors or to present information could be made at meetings. Individuals were encouraged to form a separate group to achieve change. The DPSC constitution will be posted on the web site.

Respectfully submitted, Barbara Baker, Secretary, DPSC

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