



Calendar

Jun 24, 2009, 6:30PM-8:30PM,

Chair's Corner

Dear Sauk Democrats,

RUSS FEINGOLD HOUSE PARTY. Donna Miller is hosting this fund raiser event for Senator Feingold. Come when you can, leave when you must. However, you may miss the conference call from campaign manager George Aldrich if you come too late. He will be giving us the inside scoop on the campaign. Now is the time to get your bumper sticker for Russ among other things to gear up for the campaign. We cannot afford to lose Russ as our senator and as in the past, Russ depends on individuals like YOU to fund his campaign. For details, contact Donna, miller.donna72@gmail.com.

July 4, 2009, 10:30AM, WITWEN PARADE. The start location is at the intersection of Hwy 0 and E. [Click here to see a map.](#) The parade units line up along Hwy 0 from the intersection and west out of the village. For more information, contact Bob Johnson, 608.513.7935, robertj1@charter.net or Barb Bair, 608.356.6194, bbair47@hotmail.com.

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.

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.

One year ago, we had the prospect of a summer every Democrat had dreamed of: an outstanding presidential candidate, a groundswell of support, and an opposing party that had shown its true colors.

This summer, we have a popular Democratic president, facing the difficult choices of governance. We knew it would not be easy. Progress is not always linear, nor is it always without setbacks. Though there are signs of the ending of the current recession is bottoming out, we know that we will be dealing with its fall out for years to come. Though there has been progress in Iraq, we can not say that the world has become an overall safer place. But there is hope.

Some of the best minds in business, like Warren Buffet, believe that the Obama policies are just what is needed to shore up the economy. America is also beneficiary of a wave of international goodwill occasioned by the election of Barack Obama. In our day to day concerns, we can sometimes forget the signal importance of the corrective steps already taken.

Now, more than ever, I am convinced that the presidency is in good, capable hands and that we can be proud of our small efforts to bring change to our country.

Democratically yours,

Greg Sacra

by Brian D. Bridgeford/*News Republic*

Demands for a single-payer health care system, disdain for the use of torture, concerns over local flood recovery efforts and one injured veteran's need for medical care were all issues raised as U.S. Rep. Tammy Baldwin sat with Baraboo-area residents Wednesday.

Baldwin, a Madison-based Democrat representing Wisconsin's Second Congressional District, met with about 40 people in a packed room at the Baraboo Public Library for one of her regular listening sessions.

Concern about efforts to develop a national health care plan was one of the top items raised by constituents at the meeting.

Paul Anderson said he is frustrated because President Barack Obama has not supported the idea of a single-payer national health insurance plan in which a government program would replace private health insurance companies.

"He says it's disruptive to the status quo," Anderson said. "I think it's disruptive for people to go bankrupt because of their health care bills."

Anderson's comment brought applause many of the people present.

Town of Greenfield resident Nichelle Martin told Baldwin farmers are already under immense pressure because prices they get for producing milk are very low. On the other hand, the costs of inputs they need to run their farms have risen drastically, she said.

The farmers' problems are compounded by the high cost of health care and the difficulty of getting insurance coverage because they are family businesses, she said.

<http://www.wiscnews.com/bnr/news/452791>

by Tom Murphy, AP

Employers who offer health insurance coverage could see a 9 percent cost increase next year, and their workers may face an even bigger hit, according to a report from consulting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Costs will rise in part because workers worried about losing their jobs are using their health care more while they still have it, the firm said in the report released to The Associated Press. The report also said rising unemployment is driving up medical costs.

Health care reform legislation currently being hashed out in Congress likely will have little impact on next year's costs, said PWC principal Michael Thompson. But he noted that the intense focus on health care may slow price increases.

"Nobody wants to be front page news when all the lights are shining on your industry," he said.

The report projects the expected cost increase per person for employee benefits plans, and it factors in things such as price increases, as well as utilization changes.

Businesses confronted with increases will likely pass some of the burden to employees via higher premiums, deductibles or copays, Thompson said.

"If the underlying costs go up by 9 percent, employees' costs actually go up by double digits," he said, noting that will have a "major, major impact" when many employers also are freezing or cutting pay.

A total of 42 percent of employers surveyed said they would increase employees' share of costs.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20090618/ap_on_bi_ge/us2010_health

The Health Care Debate

Dr. Farley's Rx: single-payer

an Editorial from *The Capital Times*

Dr. Linda Farley, the local physician and nationally recognized advocate for health care reform who died this week (June 9), had long championed the replacement of the current for-profit health care system with a single-payer plan. Such a plan would guarantee that all Americans have access to quality care while at the same time cutting costs associated with insurance and health care industry profiteering.

But we have also been informed over the years by Farley's reminders that our current broken system does not merely make it harder for ailing Americans to get care and for healthy Americans to maintain their fitness. It also imposes incredible economic hardship on Americans who fall ill.

The extent of that hardship was revealed last week in a study that will be published this summer by the American Journal of Medicine. According to the study, medical problems contributed to almost 62.1 percent of all bankruptcies in 2007.

Worse yet, the data from the study show that, from 2001 to 2007, the proportion of all bankruptcies attributable to medical problems rose by 49.6 percent.

That's a particularly unsettling notion, as the current economic meltdown is all but sure to have caused an expansion of the crisis. Thus, as many as two-thirds of the 1.5 million Americans who are being forced into bankruptcy annually end up there because they made the "mistake" of getting sick.

<http://www.madison.com/tct/opinion/454232>

The Health Care Debate

\$113 million reasons

by Dave Zweifel, *The Capital Times*

The Wisconsin Democracy Campaign's Mike McCabe said it best: There are 113 million reasons why our national politicians can't get a grip on health care reform.

Those 113 million reasons represent the \$113 million that the insurance industry, the pharmaceutical companies and the for-profit hospital corporations lavished on politicians in 2008 alone.

That's a huge amount of money and anyone who thinks politicians don't pay attention to it when they cast their votes needs to take off his or her blinders.

As McCabe points out in his column today (June 19) in the Cap Times, any political leader with any sense of humanity would jump at the chance of reforming the nation's shameful health system. They've been told heart-wrenching stories of families plunged into financial ruin and losing loved ones because they couldn't afford the costs. They are more than aware of what really brought down the American auto industry -- the out-of-control costs of health insurance premiums. They're heard testimony from small-business owners and their employees over how they can no longer afford health insurance.

Yet we're witnessing another round of twists and turns in Washington as every special interest -- checkbook in hand -- does its best to throw a monkey wrench into plans that would actually help those that the politicians are supposed to serve -- the average American citizen. Instead of backing up the citizens, the politicians take the money and grovel at the feet of those who want to continue reaping the profits from our broken, dysfunctional system.

<http://www.madison.com/tct/opinion/455391>

The Health Care Debate

Here is another excerpt from the *The Capital Times* editorial cited above "Dr. Farley's Rx -- single-payer -- is the cure"

And here is where things get downright scary. According to the study [to be released from the AMA]:

- *Most of those bankrupted by medical problems had health insurance. More than three-quarters (77.9 percent) were insured at the start of the bankrupting illness.*
- *Most of the medically bankrupt fell into income categories that the authors of the study identify as "solidly middle class before financial disaster hit." Two-thirds were homeowners, and three-fifths had gone to college.*
- *In a substantial number of instances, high medical bills coincided with a loss of income as illness forced breadwinners to lose time from work. Often illness led to job loss, and with it the loss of health insurance.*

I hope that when you are talking to your friends and neighbors you can use this information to win the argument that the U.S. needs to make MAJOR changes in it's health care system.

All of the articles are intended to help you to become an active advocate for health care reform. 113 million reasons that you have to make your voice heard or BIG MONEY will win again. A 9% increase of costs projected for 2010 is only the tip of the iceberg. When Congresswoman Baldwin made her latest visit to Baraboo, the health care debate was the top issue.

President Obama needs our help to get major reform done. Call your representatives and let them know what you want: Rep. Baldwin: (202) 225-2906, Rep. Kind: (202) 225-5506, Sen. Feingold: (202) 224-5323, Sen. Kohl: (202) 224-5653.

60 years of market place style health care coverage has put us in the situation we are in now. Whatever we want to call it, government based, single payer, public plan, there has to be something done to put pressure on the for-profit insurance companies or we will be stuck with another decade of "more of the same".

Who and when was it decided that health care in the U.S. had to be for profit? Why do people have to die because they are too poor to pay for care?

-ed.-

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<http://saukdems.org/>

General Membership Meeting Minutes*

Prairie du Sac Town Hall, Prairie du Sac, June 4, 2009

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

Present: Sacra, Bair, Zeller, Scharbach, Baker and 6 others.

1. **Welcome and Announcements:** This is the last regular meeting before summer break.
 2. **Additions to the Agenda:** There were no additions and the agenda was approved by acclamation.
 3. **Speaker:** Timm Zumm, representing the Friends of the Lower Wisconsin river (FLOW) spoke on the group's mission and projects. Basically their mission is to be advocates for the river: to preserve it from pollution, keep it relatively undeveloped, and to help protect the environment. His philosophy regarding these issues extends out from the actual footprint of the river to surrounding lands and hopes that the principles practiced in the group will be used as examples for the country. While the immediate focus area of this group is the 92 miles of the Wisconsin River between the towns of Prairie du Sac and Prairie du Chien. FLOW works with many groups – Private Land Owners of Wisconsin (PLOW), DNR & the River Way Board-by emphasizing issues and working together to address concerns. The main area of focus for FLOW at this time is the dumping of CLEAN water into the river and the frequent water testing of the river. FLOW helped with the problems related to last year's flooding – relocation of residents; cleaning the river of debris while saving the local areas money. Keeping the river pristine increases the recreational use and economy. Mr. Zumm asked everyone to get involved. His contact information is: E5392 Jones Rd, Spring Green, WI 53589; (608) 575-0325; timmusa@hotmail.com. Contact FLOW at www.geocities.com/wisriverfriends or email @ wisriverfriends@yahoo.com .
 4. **Approval of May Minutes:** Judy Spring moved to approve the minutes; seconded by D. Zeller.
 5. **Reports:**
 - a. Treasurer's report: \$2250.66 in checking. Office Supply bill of \$193 approved.
 - b. Membership Committee: Many membership calls completed. Greg S. indicated that by joining a person actually commits themselves to making a difference.
- Business:
- a. Summer events (Butterfest & Witwen Parades, County Fair and Fighting Bob) Volunteers were requested to contact Barb Bair and asked to wear a blue or campaign shirt. Barb corrected the date of Butterfest. It is Saturday, June 20th. A new e-mail was sent.
 - b. State Convention: June 12-13, Green Bay. Greg Sacra plans to attend Fri. evening and Saturday. Convention agendas were distributed. Convention info: Tom Crofton has formed a rural county caucus; rural county assembly members plan to meet; chairman's meeting.
 - c. Noah's Ark Tickets: Columbia Co. donated 10 Noah's Ark tickets for Father's Day.
7. **Roundtable / Feedback / Concerns:**
 - a. Location of the Democratic banner sought. Money (\$200) approved for new banner. Greg Sacra and Barb Baker will purchase. Est. requested from Signature Signs and others.
 - b. B. Baker will request B. Johnson to add the website to the newsletter contact information.
 - c. The Sauk Co. and Wis. State Democratic constitutions & by-laws are now posted on the web site.
 - d. A life-size Obama figure was purchased to use for pictures at the Sauk Co. Fair.
 - e. There is a Civil War battle reenactment on June 20-21; 9-5 in Derlith Park, Sauk City.
 - f. Badger Ammunition Plant visitor center/museum volunteers call B. Stehling (608)643-0397.

Respectfully submitted, Barbara Baker, Secretary, DPSC