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State Representative Roundup

Editor's Note: Each month the Tenth Dems Newsletter is taking a look at Democrats running for office this year. This month candidates for the Illinois House of Representatives are featured. Next month, candidates for the state Senate will be highlighted.

Rep. Karen May, 58th District

Education and the environment are priorities for state Rep. Karen May (D-Highland Park) who is seeking her third term in the General Assembly. She introduced legislation to increase access to health insurance for small businesses, increase school funding in districts where military bases take away local dollars from education, protect endangered natural wetlands, ban sniper rifles in the state and prevent the sharing of personal information by financial institutions. May was chief sponsor of the Wetlands Protection Act. She is also an active pro-choice advocate.



Sharyn Ellman, 62nd District

Lake County TV and radio personality Sharyn Ellman is stressing her depth of knowledge on the issues in her campaign for state representative, which focuses on health care, education and transportation issues. Her grassroots campaign has the support of Democrats, Republicans and Independents.



Ellman would like to use liquor and tobacco taxes as a way to fund health care for uninsured Illinois residents. She would also like to see an insurance oversight review board examine high health insurance costs.

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Tenth News

June, 2004 Illinois Tenth Congressional District Newsletter Volume 1, Edition 6

Obama to Speak at Tenth Dems Fundraiser

State Sen. Barack Obama (D-Chicago) will be the Keynote Speaker at a fundraiser for the Tenth Congressional District Democrats at 5 p.m., June 6, at the home of Tom and Donna Stone, 326 Cedar Avenue, Highland Park.

Anyone who would like to attend can go to the Tenth Dems website, www.tenthdems.org, click on the invitation, return it to the Tenth Dems and arrive at the event.

Chairman of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee, Obama also serves on the Judiciary, Local Government and Welfare Committees. He teaches Constitutional Law at the University of Chicago Law School and was the first African-American president of the Harvard Law Review.

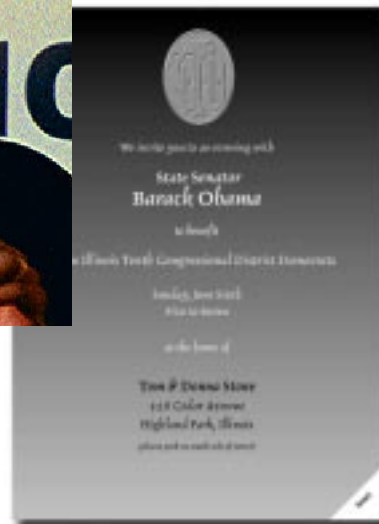
Obama will address members of the Tenth Congressional Democrats, a volunteer group dedicated to electing Democrats throughout Illinois' Tenth Congressional District. This is the Tenth Dems first major fundraising event and Obama's presence is testament of the group's fast growing influence.

"I served for several years with Barack in the state legislature and I'm pleased he will be joining us on June 6," said former state Rep. Lauren Beth Gash (D-Highland Park), Chair of the Tenth Dems and Tenth Congressional District State Central Committeewoman.

Gash emphasized that membership in the Tenth Congressional District Democrats is now available. Between now and the November 2 general election, a Founder's membership is available for \$1,000. Not only will a Founder be publicly recognized and receive two lapel pins, but Founders will receive two invitations to an annual event and its pre-reception with VIPs and elected officials.

In addition, a Benefactor membership earns one the right to one lapel pin and one invitation to an annual event and its pre-reception with VIP's and elected officials for \$500, while a Sustaining member receives one lapel pin for a \$250 membership. A Donor membership is available for \$100; a regular membership is \$35; and a student membership is \$10.

For more information on this event contact Sharon Narrod (847-433-0807) or go to the Tenth Dems website (www.tenthdems.org). SCS



Mark Kirk: Our Silent Congressman

By James Rosen

If you have an opinion about the treatment of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison and have expressed it publicly then you are quite different from Rep. Mark Kirk (R-IL).

The man who represents the Tenth Congressional District has given no public statement about the prison scandal. Why? Calls to his office to find out were unsuccessful. You can give your name and address and a letter on the issue will presumably be sent.

“Congressman Kirk, what do you think of the Abu Ghraib scandal and the way the military has been investigating itself?” That silence you “hear” is your answer.

While there has been nearly universal condemnation of the abuse that occurred at Abu Ghraib, a few public officials were not angry at the photos of U.S. soldiers mistreating Iraqi prisoners, a majority of whom the U.S. says were innocent of any crime. They were more outraged at the outrage than by the mistreatment. What does Rep. Kirk think



about this? I'm still waiting for my letter from his office.

Sen. John Warner, (R-VA), Sen. John McCain (R- AZ) and Sen. Lindsey Graham, (R-SC), an Air Force JAG attorney and former house manager of the Clinton Impeachment proceedings have been outspoken on this issue. Graham summed it up fittingly when he said, “When you are the good guys, you’ve got to act like the good guys.”

When you are a Congressman, Mr. Kirk, you’ve got to act like a Congressman. That means communicating your opinions publicly on the important issues of the day. How America deals with the abuse at Abu Ghraib and where it goes from here deserves answers, not silence.

Lee's Legions Take to the Streets

Catching a window of sunny skies, 15 volunteers took to the streets of Glencoe and Winnetka on a Sunday afternoon in May to introduce Lee Goodman, their candidate for Congress, to New Trier Township voters.

On the third foray into the 10th Congressional District, Goodman and energetic volunteers, each toting a Lee Goodman for Congress book bag filled with campaign literature and donning campaign T-shirts, knocked on doors to spread the word.

This campaign, short on funds but long on enthusiasm, has already gone walking in Moraine Townships on two weekend days. This two-hour walk in New Trier will be the first of many here and elsewhere in the district.

“Our country is doing things that none of us thought we would ever do. We are torturing people.”
- Lee Goodman

Goodman said he hopes to take volunteers out every Sunday until the election. In a pre-walk pep talk, he asked each of the volunteers to commit to one Sunday a month or 10 more walking hours to help introduce his campaign to the people.

Like a word-of-mouth movement, the campaign hopes his legions will bring in friends and neighbors to generate offshoot walking troops to cover their own neighborhoods.

The perks: they get to keep the handy tote bag, plus support their candidate in what many consider a pivotal election year as our nation's war effort in Iraq falters under the weight of numerous setbacks and the prison-abuse scandal.

“Our country is doing things that none of us thought we would ever do,” Goodman told his volunteers assembled outside New Trier Democratic headquarters. “We are torturing people.”

And, he averred, Rep. Mark Kirk (R-IL), has not done enough to condemn the overall treatment of prisoners by the military, which includes human rights abuses.

Goodman noted that elected officials take an oath to uphold the U.S. Constitution, which accords rights to all people, not merely citizens.

After a round of applause, the group of volunteers, comprised of teens to seniors, split into pairs, took maps, prepared to pass literature, answer questions and hope for even more.

Marcia Burke, volunteer coordinator for the Goodman campaign, said walkers have accepted contributions to the campaign, but their main goal is to introduce the Goodman candidacy, not raise money.

On this day, the co-chairs of New Trier High School's Young Democrats Club, Ben Struhl, 17, and Shira Gordon, 18, both of Wilmette, added their efforts. Shira brought her mother, Patty Gerstenblith, a newly minted political activist, along for the ride.

Echoing the sentiments of many a volunteer, Struhl explained, “I want to make a difference.”

Anyone interested in volunteering for the campaign can contact Marcia Burke at volunteersforlee@earthlink.com. JEG



Tenth Dems Executive Committee member Chuck Knight (left) walks in New Trier Township with Lee Goodman.

Rep. Elaine Nekritz, 57th District

State Rep. Elaine Nekritz (D-Glenview) was the chief sponsor of legislation that made it easier for identity theft victims to set their public records straight and removes any wrongful criminal convictions done in their name. She also sponsored a bill that allowed state tax records to be made available for child support proceedings. As an avid sports bicyclist, Nekritz has earned a reputation as being the state legislature's foremost champion of bicycle transportation and safety issues.



Michelle Bromberg, 17th District

Skokie Village Board Trustee Michele Bromberg has gained a well rounded understanding of the many issues faced in state government. As a health care professional, she says she would bring an added perspective to health related issues before the General Assembly.

As a state representative Bromberg wants to bring to an end the waste in government draining money away from schools, price gouging by pharmaceutical companies and she wants to invest in job training for workers and give assistance to small businesses who provide the real job growth in the economy. She thinks the time has come to have the state stop giving handouts to major corporations.

Nancy Shepherdson, 51st District

Educator and businesswoman Nancy Shepherdson would like to see some major changes come to Springfield.

"I've become convinced that Springfield is not doing nearly enough to solve our area's major problems," she said.

Shepherdson would like to see property tax relief for homeowners, an increase in education funding by the state and transportation improvements in Lake County that include mass transit and environmental initiatives. She is a pro-choice advocate who believes the government should not be involved in abortion and birth control.

Shepherdson says her job as state representative would be a full-time commitment, unlike her opponent who also holds another governmental position.



Rep. Kathy Ryg, 59th District

First term state Rep. Kathy Ryg (D-Vernon Hills) is highlighting her advocacy for children and schools in her reelection bid. Ryg has worked to expand special education programs to meet the needs of children and their parents. She also wants to help all Illinois families obtain essential health care services, make prescription drugs affordable for seniors and guarantee safe and affordable long-term care.

Rep. Eddie Washington, 60th District

Economic development for Waukegan and North Chicago has been a focus of state Rep. Eddie Washington (D-Waukegan), who is seeking reelection. He helped develop the "Little David Bill" that requires fair treatment from banks in their lending practices.

Some of his other legislation included a bill that would give prescription drug discount benefits to elderly senior citizens, moving the age limit where youth can be tried as an adult from 17 to 18 and legislation regarding consumer fraud aimed at the elderly. Washington was named the 2003 Most Influential African American in Lake County.



Nick Chrisos, 53rd District

While making his first run at elected office, real estate attorney Nick Chrisos would like to participate in a reform process in Springfield that would open up public office to more people.

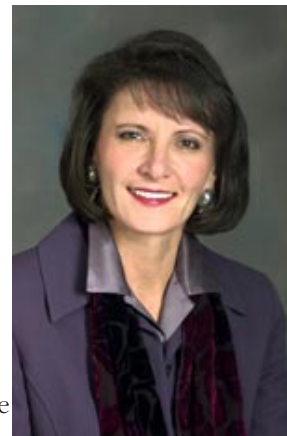
"I am not looking for a career in politics," said Chrisos. "So I cannot be bought and sold."

Chrisos opposes federal intervention in education and thinks the state government should be in control with local supervision. For health care, he supports drug importation, insurance coverage for children, and mandated mental health care benefits. Chrisos is a strong environmentalist who would like to maintain funding for conservation, renewable energy, recycling and "green" public transportation.



Rep. Julie Hamos, 18th District

Since 1999, state Rep. Julie Hamos (D-Evanston) sponsored key legislation with benefits to Illinois consumers. They include Consumers Guide to Health Care that allows patients to "shop around" for high quality health care through a state website, Hearing Screening for Newborns that requires all hospitals to conduct hearing screening for newborn infants prior to their discharge from the hospital, Child Support Reform which reorganizes the state's inefficient, fragmented child support system, Homelessness Prevention through which families experiencing short-term emergencies receive small grants for rent, utility payments or security deposits, allowing them to remain in their homes and avoid homelessness. Hamos also sponsored legislation related to tax relief and utility regulation. *GM*



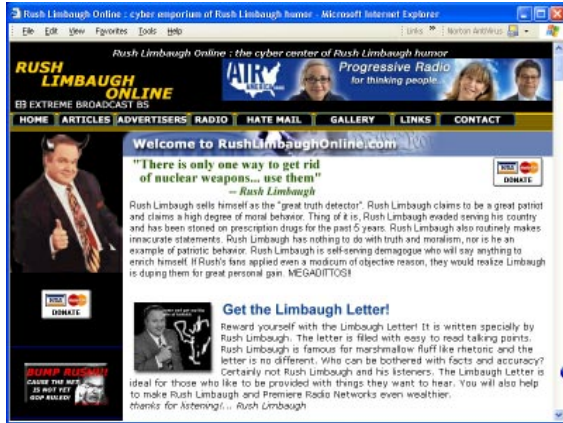
www.RushLimbaughOnLine.com? You Must Be Kidding!

You look down the list. Everything looks normal. This is, after all, www.tenthdems.org. It's a Democratic group's website, and you expect that its list of 40 links will take you to www.ReDefeatBush.com, or www.TrumpFiresBush.com. But then the eyes freeze. The blood pressure rises. Whats the !*!#! is that doing here!!!? www.RushLimbaughOnLine.com!!!?

No, the Tenth Dems list of links hasn't been hacked by dittoheads. RushLimbaughOnLine.com looks like the official website of that right-wing bag of hot air, but looks can be as deceiving as Rush Limbaugh himself.

A tenth district resident, created the website and he is not a fan of the conservative talk radio host. "What bothers me about Rush," he said, "is that he peddles propaganda as analysis. He's misleading his listeners."

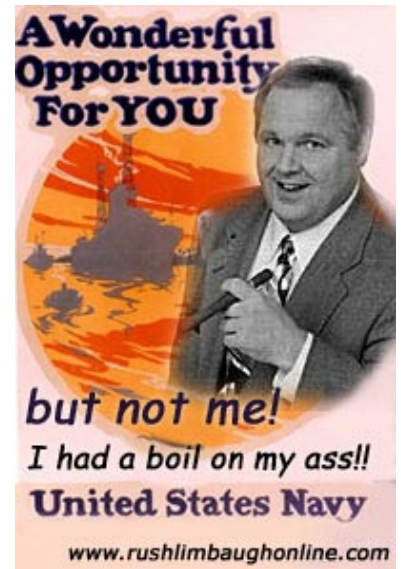
Almost four years ago, he decided to do something about it. He is a web designer who takes politics seriously, so he created a Rush Limbaugh parody site.



seriously, so he created a Rush Limbaugh parody site.

Fortunately for us, he doesn't take Rush and his dittoheads seriously. "Sixty percent of my e-mails are negative. Some are filled with hate." (Which is why we aren't using his last name.) "What they don't grasp is how much their letters make me laugh."

He posts many of those letters and his responses on the website. The hate mail is the most visited part of RushLimbaughOnLine.com. The website also has a collection of Limbaugh "wisdom" ("There is only one way to get rid of nuclear weapons...use them"), links to liberal radio alternatives, a list of Rush's sponsors (in case you're in the mood to boycott), and a gallery of anti-Rush art. One warning: after just a few minutes on the website, a strange sensation may overcome you. For the first time in your life you may feel an urge to use the words "enjoy" and "Rush Limbaugh" in the same sentence. *JMH*



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