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*The opinions expressed are those
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Democrats Will Be the Majority Party Again

by John Hmurovic

When Peter Giangreco was 18, he dropped out of college so he could help Gary Hart run for President. Hart didn't win, and Giangreco returned to school to finish his degree. Twenty years later, Giangreco is still helping Democrats run for President. On the day George W. Bush was sworn in for a second term, Giangreco predicted that the Democrats will again become the majority party.

Giangreco was the guest speaker at a counter-inaugural party in Glencoe organized by Tenth Dems. No one in the crowd of 70 was happy to see Bush sworn in for another term, but the comments and questions that followed Giangreco's remarks didn't indicate that anyone was giving up hope.

"We must have the audacity," Giangreco said, "to take the Republicans on, on issues that are supposed to be their strength." He said it's a joke, for example, that the Republicans claim to be the party of the small businessperson. "The greatest threat to the entrepreneur is the Republican Party and the multinational corporations that own them . . . We are the party that stands up for the little guy."

Giangreco is a partner in The Strategy Group, a Chicago based political consulting firm. He played a key role in John Edwards' strong showing in the Iowa caucuses, and has also worked on the campaigns of

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Tenth Dems gather at the Glencoe Women's Library January 20th.



Tenth News

www.tenthdems.org

February 2005 Illinois Tenth Congressional District Democrats Newsletter Volume 2, Edition 2

Democrats Ready to Choose a New Leader

When has a race for chair of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) ever received so much attention? That's an easy one. The answer is "never."

But after a painful loss in the Presidential race and losses in both the House and Senate, Democrats are looking for ways to turn things around. For many, that begins with the selection of a new chair of the DNC.

Terry McAuliffe is stepping down from that job, and on February 12, someone will be chosen to replace him. Five candidates for the job have emerged. A brief profile of the candidates is on page 5. Most analysts agree that former Vermont Governor Howard Dean is the frontrunner, and the "Anybody But Dean Movement" is still alive.

The chair will be chosen by members of the DNC. There are 440 voting members. It takes 221 (50 percent, plus one) to elect a new chair. To the right is a list of the 16 DNC voting members from Illinois.

Illinois DNC Voting Members

- Rev. Willie Barrow, 930 E. 50th St., Chicago, IL 60615
- Margaret Blackshere, 8150 W. Monroe St., Niles, IL 60714
- Joseph Cari, 31st National Plaza, Chicago, IL 60602
- Cardiss Collins, 1110 Roundhouse Ln., Alexandria, VA 22314
- Maria Garcia, 689 N. Ohio, Aurora, IL 60505
- Constance Howard, 432 E. 88th St., Chicago, IL 60619
- Thomas Hynes, 30 N. LaSalle St. Ste. 2900, Chicago, IL 60602
- Emil Jones, 11357 S. Lowe, Chicago, IL 60628
- Thomas Lakin, 301 Evans St., Wood River, IL 62095
- Michael Madigan, PO Box 518, Springfield, IL 62705
- Iris Martinez, 3154 W. Grace St. Apt. 1, Chicago, IL 60641
- Joe Moore, 7356 N. Greenview Ave., Chicago, IL 60602
- John Rednour, PO Box 428, DuQuoin, IL 62832
- Carol Ronen, 6033 N. Sheridan, Chicago, IL 60660
- Edward Smith, 1 N. Old State Capitol Plaza #525, Springfield, IL 62701
- Darlena Williams-Burnett, 1648 W. Warren Blvd., Chicago, IL 60612



President Bush and the Social Security Con

by Ron Weiner

Well, he's doing it again.

Just as he and his neo-con and Big Oil cabal piled untruths upon half-truths upon exaggeration upon distortion upon hyperbole upon outright lies to frighten America into an unnecessary and disastrous war, and then conned us and bludgeoned the Congress into a Medicare bill that will profit only Big Drugs while doing little to improve our health care or the costs of it, and then changed the tax code so that it benefits only the top two or three percent of the wealthy, George W. Bush is now going after our Social Security System, and all to the further profit of Big Business and his friends in the financial world.

As I attempt to shed a bit of light here, I promise not to dwell too long on the numbers. Let me instead approach this controversy from a less statistical viewpoint.

First, a bit of history: About 70 years ago, President Franklin Roosevelt set up the Social Security Administration to manage a trust fund based on payroll taxes that would provide a sort of annuity policy for all Americans at their retirement. It has worked fine since then with just a "tweak" or two – such as occurred in the 1980s when the payroll tax was increased in order to accumulate a surplus that would make the future of the fund more secure. It will continue to work (notwithstanding President Bush's dire predictions), with perhaps another nudge now and again, for many years into the future.

In other words, to borrow from the old saw, "IF IT AIN'T BROKE, WHY FIX IT?"

Forward, now, to the present and the Bush proposal that columnist Molly Ivins calls "irresponsible and unnecessary," not to mention "loony, radical and bizarre."

Let's begin with the President's recent statement that the system will run out of money in 2018. He based it on the 1994 prediction that, if left to its own devices, it would go broke in 2029. But last year, based on the Social Security trustees' model, doomsday was put off until 2042 (the Congressional Budget Office has set that date at 2052 – and even then, they tell us, it will cover 81% of promised benefits). But let's do the math using the gloomier trustees' forecast: If every ten years the "busting point" advances 13 years, then 50 years from now (2054) it will advance to 54 years from then, or 2108. That's why many economists have been saying that the Social Security Trust Fund could quite possibly last forever! Forgive my "what me worry?" attitude, but that sounds pretty good to me.

The Bush objective, as we all know by now, is Privatization: his scheme is to allow taxpayers to have their employers place a portion of their earnings (right now, depending on whom you listen to, anywhere from one-third to two-thirds of their payroll taxes – currently at 6.2% of their earnings – up to a cap of between \$1000 to \$1400 dollars per year) into privately managed investment accounts on the theory that the stock market out-earns the Social Security Trust Fund.

(Pause, for a moment, to consider the increase in costs to businesses as they find they must increase staffing in order to try to deduct the right amount from each payroll and deposit it into a private account for each worker in a timely manner. Think they'll like that?)

Back to Privatization: The government, aware that these private accounts, having grown over the years to a goodly sum, will be available to wage-earners upon their retirements, now figures out that these good folks won't be needing as much from the Social Security Trust Fund, so the government can feel comfortable in paring down the benefits that they, the retirees, might have needed if they didn't have the proceeds of those private accounts to fall back on.

Now for some arithmetic (only a little, I promise): If we assume a national employee-base of 150-million, each of whom chooses to have his employer deposit, say, \$35 every month or, say, \$400 per year, into a private account, and assume further that the fees or commissions charged by banks, brokers and investment counselors for managing these accounts is, say, only 10 percent, that could mean a mini-bonanza in the neighborhood of \$6-billion (did I call that a *mini-bonanza*?) every year to Mr. Bush's friends in the world of finance.

Now, placing aside the happy news for Smith and Barney, and Merrill and Lynch and the rest, what good is all of this to our government? Well, the money that has been sitting around in the Social Security Trust Fund earning interest, has really not been just sitting there at all. No, we (that is, our government) has been borrowing from that fund to pay for all sorts of things – I mean, after all, it's backed by our own government's bonds, isn't it? It's all from the same pile, isn't it? And we do have to pay it back, and of course and most certainly, we will – if we need to do so. But, listen, if we don't need as much for Social Security benefits, since so many retirees are getting so much from their private accounts, we won't need to have as much to pay back to the trust fund as what we borrowed – Right?

(One more slight pause to consider that if all of this is just so much muddly thinking on the part of our present administration, well, in four years some other bunch of election-winners will just have to deal with it. Right?)

Oh, and those private accounts? The ones that are bound to earn much more than the Social Security Trust Fund? No risk there, right? Like the Energizer Bunny, they'll just keep going, and going, and going... Up, and up, and up...right? Right?



Book Clubs Start Up

by James Rosen

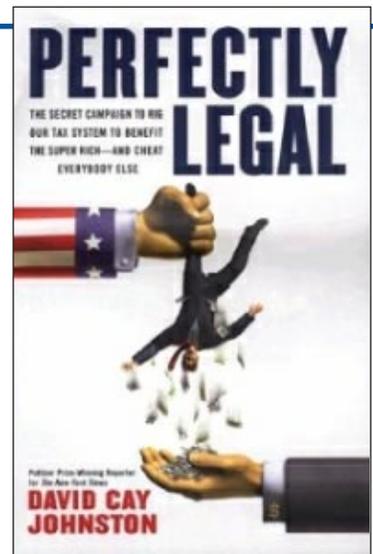
If you're like me you prefer paging through books with titles like, *"What's the Matter with Kansas?"* rather than *"Confessions of an Heiress"* by Paris Hilton. And while more people might show up to talk about Paris Hilton than U.S. foreign policy, Tenth Dems has started a political book club to see if that's true. On **February 9, at 7:00 p.m. at the Border's bookstore in Highland Park**, Tenth Dems will host its first book discussion. Interested members and non-members alike will gather to discuss and debate *"Perfectly Legal: The Covert Campaign to Rig Our Tax System to Benefit the Super Rich – and Cheat Everybody Else"* by David Cay Johnston.

"When the e-mails went out telling people the first topic of the book club was about taxes I got responses saying things like, 'Taxes! Ugh!' But once they started reading the book I got e-mails saying 'Great choice of books – really interesting and easy to read,'" said one of the book club organizers. "I may choose the next book or let the group vote on it," he added. "One thing is for sure, since President Bush is proud of not reading I don't think we have to worry about him showing up," he said with a laugh.

Even those who don't get a chance to read the books are welcome to come to the discussions. A moderator will lead the group and may even play "devil's advocate," taking an opposing view to test and challenge the group about what they read. Ideas on how to use the book discussions to help build a stronger Democratic party will also be a focus. Tenth Dems plans on having a book club meeting

every month or so depending on turnout. "That should give people enough time to read the book," said a Tenth Dems member. "Personally, I'm a slow reader but this will give everyone a deadline to finish each book and talk to others who are interested in political books and political discussions. We hope to inform, educate and reach out to those people who share our goals. We've got great books and great people. It should be fun," he said.

Tenth Dems aren't the only ones offering a political book group. Vernon Township Democrats recently started book discussions. "It grew out of the monthly John Kerry Meet-up system in May," said Marti Stamper, Vice-Chair for Vernon Democrats. "It was a way to invite all members of the community to get informed about issues and learn about what actions were available to them." Their next discussion will be **February 24, 7:00pm at the Caribou Coffee on Half Day Road in Buffalo Grove**, to talk about *"don't think of an elephant!"* by George Lakoff. All are welcome to attend.



Books For the Democratic Reader

by Ross Nickow

In the months before the election, the political pulse of the country could be measured from week to week by checking out the front shelves of your local book store or studying the *New York Times* non-fiction best-selling book list. The list was stuffed with political literature, with Al Franken, Molly Ivins and other liberals duking it out with the "Swift Boat Liars." There was barely room on the list to squeeze in a *South Beach Diet* cookbook.

Now, with more than a diet needed to settle the stomachs of Democrats and Progressives looking with nausea toward a second Bush term, many readers have lost their taste for Bush-bashing books. But some new books, as well as paperback reissues of the more informative, previously issued ones, lay out a progressive vision. The vision draws on history as well as today's issues and tactics to help formulate ideas, and plans to take back the country from the deranged ideologues occupying the White House.

There's no shortage of books with ideas to help rethink the strategy of the Democratic Party and encourage those who might never

before have been involved in the political process to start now. Two paperback books provide a good introduction: *"don't think of an elephant! Know Your Values and Frame the Debate,"* by George Lakoff, and MoveOn's *"50 Ways to Love Your Country."*

A holdover on the bestseller list from before the election that may help explain the Democrats' misreading of the red-state mindset is *"What's the Matter with Kansas? How Conservatives won the Heart of America,"* by Thomas Frank. And more specifically, one view of the moral values issue is analyzed in the newly released *"God's Politics: Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It,"* by Jim Wallis, who recently appeared on "The Daily Show."

Reviewing history is a useful way to reflect on the mistakes and successes of the past. Biographies and autobiographies of presidents and historical figures from George Washington to Bill Clinton and from Benjamin Franklin to Barack Obama can offer insight into the inner workings of the political mind. One of the more intriguing titles is Eric Alterman's *"When Presidents Lie: A History of Official Deception and Its Consequences,"* which astonishingly is not a biography of George W. Bush. It analyzes four crises handled by presidents from Franklin Roosevelt to Ronald Reagan. It examines how cover-ups and misrepresenting the truth backfired with

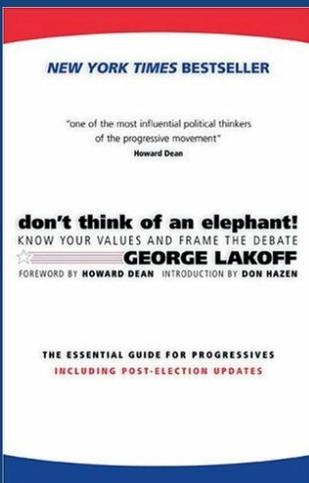
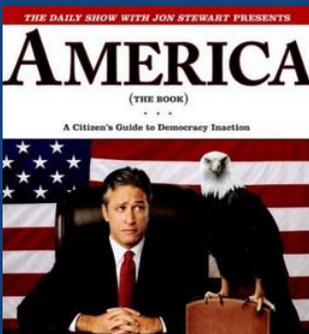
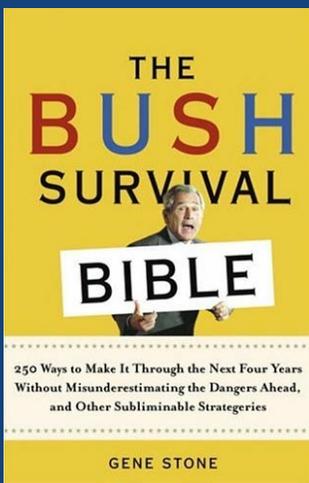
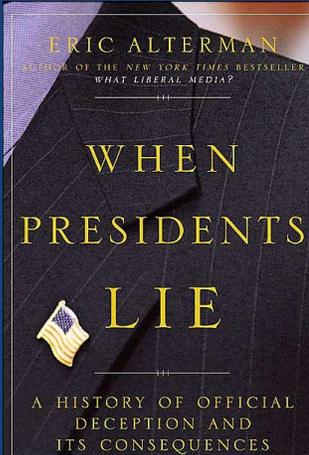
devastating repercussions here and abroad. The book ends with a discussion of Bush's "Post-Truth Presidency."

For readers who just want to rest their brains and escape while gearing up for our fight to bring the Democrats back to positions of power, the hottest book on the shelves is *"America (The Book): A Citizen's Guide to Democracy Inaction,"* by Jon Stewart and the writers of "The Daily Show"—a "text book" that captures the offbeat humor of the best "news" show on television. And *"The Bush Survival Bible: 250 Ways to Make it Through the Next Four Years Without Misunderestimating the Dangers Ahead, and Other Sublimable Statergies,"* by Gene Stone will keep you laughing and get your mind off—at least for a few minutes—the crushing realities of the uphill climb to retake our country before more damage can be done to our environment, courts and civil liberties.

And of course, as a last resort, if you're so depressed and without hope that no amount of reading, volunteering and planning for our future will help, you might want to visit the international travel section of your local bookstore or library. The Tenth Congressional District Democrats need your help now, but we'll understand and be happy to welcome you when you return to the US in four years.

See Book List on the following page

A Progressive Democrat's Book List



Guides for Activists

MoveOn's 50 Ways to Love Your Country: How to Find Your Political Voice and Become a Catalyst for Change

don't think of an elephant! Know Your Values and Frame the Debate, by George Lakoff

What We Do Now, edited by Dennis Loy Johnson and Valerie Merians

Had Enough?: A Handbook for Fighting Back, by James Carville

Voices of A People's History of the United States, edited by Howard Zinn and Anthony Arnove

Unemployed Former Bush Staffers Turned Authors

The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, The White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill, by Ron Suskind

Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror, by Richard A. Clarke

It's My Party, Too: The Battle for the Heart of the GOP and the Future of America, by Christine Todd Whitman (just released)

Political Personalities

Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance, by Barack Obama

Cooking with Grease: Stirring the Pots in American Politics, by Donna Brazile

Who Let the Dogs In?: Incredible Political Animals I Have Known, by Molly Ivins

Frightening Fiction

The Plot Against America, by Philip Roth

Collections of Critical Columns

Bushworld: Enter at Your Own Risk, by Maureen Dowd

The Great Unraveling: Losing Our Way in the New Century, by Paul Krugman

Horrifying Historical Perspectives

Chain of Command: The Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib, by Seymour M. Hersh

House of Bush, House of Saud: The Secret Relationship Between the World's Two Most Powerful Dynasties, by Craig Unger

Big Lies: The Right-Wing Propaganda Machine and How It Distorts the Truth, by Joe Conason

Bushwacked: Life in George W. Bush's America, by Molly Ivins and Lou Dubose

A People's History of the United States: 1492-Present, by Howard Zinn

Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance, by Noam Chomsky

The Republican Noise Machine: Right-Wing Media and How It Corrupts Democracy, by David Brock

Humor (but is it really funny?)

Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them: A Fair and Balanced Look at the Right, by Al Franken

Obliviously On He Sails: The Bush Administration in Rhyme, by Calvin Trillin

Homegrown Democrat: A Few Plain Thoughts From the Heart of America, by Garrison Keillor

Lesbian Love and Serial Killers

Sisters (1981), by Lynne Cheney (hard to find but worth the effort)

Those Who Trespass: A Novel of Murder and Television, by Bill O'Reilly

Candidates for Chair of the Democratic National Committee



by John Hmurovic

Howard Dean (Vermont)

Credentials: Former Vermont Governor; Former Presidential candidate

Ideas: Wants to remake the Democrats as a Party of "centrists," not "mini-Republicans." He says he will build the Party in all 50 states, not just the swing states, and stand up for its moral values.

Endorsements: Illinois U.S. Representatives Jan Schakowsky and Jesse Jackson Jr.



Synopsis: Considered the front-runner, but he has been in that position before, hasn't he? Rumors are that Bill Clinton is working behind the scenes to fuel an "Anybody But Dean" movement. Dean has been running hard for this job and has won endorsements from several state party chairs. Even though he insists he's a centrist, much of his support comes from the party's liberal wing. One opponent concedes that Dean will easily win one-third of the vote, but can he get to 50 percent, plus one?

For More Info: www.democracyforamerica.com

Donnie Fowler (South Carolina)

Credentials: Former campaign manager for Wesley Clark; Headed the Kerry campaign in Michigan. He has run campaigns in 14 states as a Democratic Party strategist.

Ideas: His strength is his work as a grassroots political worker and strategist. He says the Democratic Party needs to woo rural and religious voters in "red states" by speaking to the emotions of voters and by building local party organizations from the bottom up.

Endorsements: Ex-Sec. of Defense William Perry

Synopsis: At 37, he's the youngest vying for the job. He dresses and looks like an outsider, which emphasizes his theme that the Party has to free itself from the grip of political consultants who have too often led it down the path to defeat. He's backed by those who like his emphasis on grassroots organizing. He's considered to be a moderate, and has emerged as Dean's top rival.

For More Info: www.changetheparty.com



David Leland (Ohio)

Credentials: Ex-Ohio Democratic Party Chair. National Director of Project Vote, a 501 (c)(3) which registers and turns out the vote among minorities and low income voters.

Ideas: Like most of the others, he wants to build the state party organizations, but as the former head of the Ohio Democratic Party he's the only one with experience at leading a state organization.



Synopsis: He is trying to appeal to the liberal wing by saying there should be more Presidential caucuses rather than primaries so that the nominee is picked by activists, making it more likely that the nominee is a liberal. But Dean is getting the bulk of liberal support, making Leland the darkest of the dark horses.

For More Info: No website. See www.projectvote.org/index.php?id=118 for biographical information.

Tim Roemer (Indiana)

Credentials: Former Congressman; Member of the 9/11 Commission

Ideas: He wants to adopt a "Big Tent Approach" to welcome people with diverse views into the Democratic Party. He says the Party needs to campaign in all 50 states and should do this by building strong state parties.

Endorsements: Ex-Sen. John Breaux; Ex-Sen. Max Cleland

Synopsis: His candidacy is being attacked because of his pro-life views. Roemer vows that he will not change the Party's stance on abortion, but says Democrats must reach out to those who differ with it on this and other issues. His selection might also alienate the pro-Israel lobby, unhappy with his opposition to aid for Ariel Sharon's conservative Israeli government. Supporters say his work on the 9/11 Commission has made him a strong spokesman on national security.

For More Info: www.timroemer.com



Simon Rosenberg (Washington, D.C.)

Credentials: Founder of New Democratic Network, he has been a leader in making the Internet a Democrat-friendly resource.

Ideas: Wants the DNC to be "a community of millions of people" active in the party. He plans to do that through the Internet and new media. He emphasizes rebuilding the Party from the grassroots up.

Endorsements: Former DNC Chair Joe Andrew; former Dean Campaign manager Joe Trippi; Ex-Clinton Press Aide Mike McCurry; Ex-Alabama Governor Don Siegelman

Synopsis: He has worked well with both the moderate and liberal wings of the Democratic Party, although liberals might be wary of his moderate positions. He appeals to those who see the importance of Democrats staking out a strong position in the new media.

For More Info: www.simonforchair.org



Democrats Are on the Ballot in Township Races *by Ellen Beth Gill*

Don't forget to vote! No, this is not a reprint of an old article. We have local elections on April 5th and at the forefront for Democrats are the township races. We have some historic races in the Tenth because no one can remember when the last Democratic slates were run in some of the townships. The townships with Democratic slates this year are Moraine, Palatine, West Deerfield and Waukegan.

Moraine Township Democrats, led by Chair Lauren Beth Gash, are running a full slate of candidates including for Supervisor: Highland Park City Councilwoman Mari Barnes; for Clerk: businesswoman and volunteer services director Ellen Gussin; for Assessor: Deputy Assessor Trish Lenzini; and for Trustee: Jeff Zaluda, Bryna Gamson, Margoth, Moreno and Cynthia Plouche.

In Palatine, Sue Walton, the Democratic Committeewoman and Supervisor candidate, is proud of the diverse Democratic slate, including for Trustee candidates: Alan Prochaska, James Sheehan, Margareth Smid and Vickie Menck; for Township Collector candidate: Patrica Montanez Gomez; and for Clerk candidate, Thaker Basati.

In West Deerfield, township Democrats caucused for the first time and slated four Trustee candidates: former banking executive Adrienne Schwarzbach Johnson, attorney Ron Schwartz, teacher Ron Levitsky and Bob Rosenbacher, a retired print company executive.

Wheeling Township is running an independent slate with several Democrats including incumbents Joy Fisher, for Trustee, and Kim Peterson, for Clerk. New Democratic candidates are: for Supervisor, Mark Walker; for Collector, Michael Portman; for Highway Commissioner, Carolyn Jarosz; and for Trustee Kathleen Sances.

In all townships, Democratic candidates are concerned about the lack of communication between officials and residents. Moraine Clerk candidate Ellen Gussin pointed out that township meetings are held during the afternoon when most residents cannot attend. Palatine Democrats are concerned about the lack of debate on the township budget and want to end what they feel is an "old boy's club." In West



West Deerfield Township: from left, Bob Rosenbacher, Adrienne Schwarzbach Johnson, Susie Krasnow, Ron Schwartz, and Ron Levitsky

Deerfield, the candidates are concerned about the lack of communication with the community and the narrow focus of services provided by the township.

Ellen Gussin wants to move Moraine's meetings to the evenings and create a citizens' committee to conduct pre-vote reviews of budgets. Jeff Zaluda believes township government is in a position to provide funding for the neediest and to create unique programs. The Moraine slate believes the township should run more like a foundation, and their candidates have the experience to make that happen. In Wheeling, Joy Fisher voiced concerns about potential service cuts despite a budget surplus.

Ron Schwartz of West Deerfield wants to see the township communicate its services to the community better through an improved website and community bulletin boards, and Adrienne Schwarzbach Johnson wants to see open, efficient and fair allocation of resources and to encourage citizen participation.

In other townships across the 10th District there are a number of Independent or Non-Partisan slates. Even though some of those candidates may be Democrats, they are not labeled as such on the ballot. In Northfield Township, for example, there are two Democrats on the Non-Partisan slate.

Majority, *continued from page 1*

Barack Obama and Rod Blagojevich, among many others. His advice for the Democrats is to concede nothing to the Republicans. That not only means fighting them on supposedly strong Republican issues, but taking the campaign to all 50 states, not just the swing states.

"We should not be afraid to go into 'red states' and speak from our heart. Every issue facing America today is a 'values' issue." He said American values are on display in our military, which has the belief that we should never leave our sons and daughters on the battlefield.

Those same values should be carried into the debate on Social Security, and we should make a national vow "to never leave our mothers and fathers behind in poverty," as Bush's plan to end Social Security will do to many elderly Americans. Giangreco said the Bush claim that there is a Social Security crisis is as phony as his claim that there was a weapons of mass destruction crisis in Iraq that required an immediate American invasion.



Members of the Northbrook Peace Committee at the dedication ceremony on January 8 of an anti-war display at Triangle Park. The banner has been vandalized or stolen on several occasions since it was put in place, but it has been promptly replaced according to Lee Goodman, the group's leader.

