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*The opinions expressed are those of the writers, and not necessarily endorsed by Tenth Dems*

# Primary Kicks Off 2005 Election Season

North of the Greenbelt Forest Preserve in Lake County, Primary Election Day, February 22, was a good day for incumbents. To the south, not so good.

To the north is Waukegan, where Mayor Richard Hyde won re-election by a comfortable margin (receiving 42 percent of the vote) over City Councilman Samuel Cunningham (29 percent), County Councilman Robert Sabonjian (24 percent), City Councilman John Balen (3 percent), and Alex Garcilazo (2 percent). Incumbent City Clerk Wayne Motley also easily won his race. Both go on to the April 5th election, where Hyde faces a challenge from a Republican city councilman. Hyde was appointed mayor early in 2002 to fill a vacancy and won a special election in 2003.



Mayor Richard Hyde



Leon Rockingham

To the south of Waukegan, in the city of North Chicago, incumbent Mayor Bette Thomas was defeated in her bid for re-election. Former City Alderman Leon Rockingham won with 48 percent of the vote, with Thomas coming in second with 24 percent. Former Mayor Jerry Johnson was third with 15 percent, and former Alderman James Harris finished with 12 percent. Rockingham's victory in the Democratic primary means he will become North Chicago's next mayor, since he faces no opposition in the April 5th election.



# Tenth News

[www.tenthdems.org](http://www.tenthdems.org)

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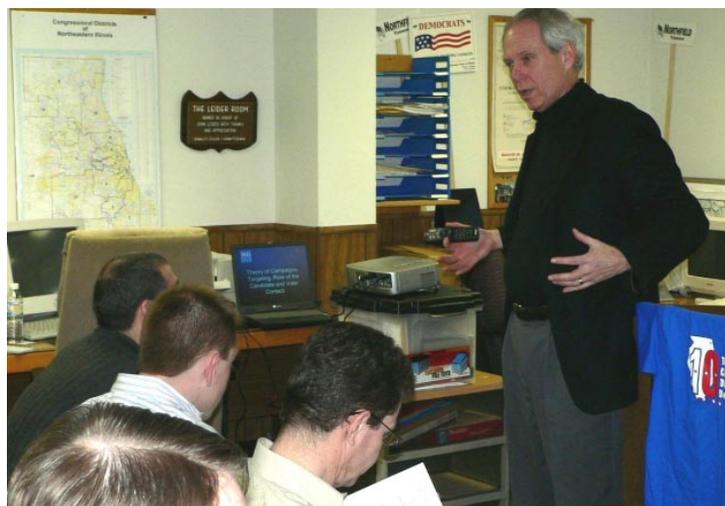
## Local Governments to be Chosen on April 5

by Ross Nickow

On April 5, local elections will be held throughout the 10th Congressional District. And these races, ordinarily turning out embarrassingly few voters, can be the beginning of the resurrection of not only the Democratic Party but of compassionate, responsible and responsive government. From Mighty Moraine to Powerful Palatine, candidates will be running for township supervisor, clerk, assessor and trustee, as well as school, park and library board, mayor and city council. Here is the nitty-gritty of grassroots politics at work.

Howard Dean, recently elected Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, lists as one of his major goals "strengthening state parties and the grassroots." Moraine and West Deerfield Township Democrats hope to do just that. For the first time in history a full slate of Democratic candidates are running for township government in Moraine, campaigning as a team of highly qualified and experienced office seekers. Mari Barnes, Democratic candidate for supervisor, says her slate has an agenda of "fair, open and visible government." In West Deerfield Township, Democrats are also running a slate of candidates for the first time, with four candidates running for trustee.

Most candidates in 10th District townships will be listed on the ballot as Independents, and many slates and candidates are non-partisan. A candidate listed as an "Independent" could come from either side of the political spectrum, so it is wise to ask questions and research every candidate before voting for an unknown. Educated voters will



*A group of top political consultants, including Bob Creamer, President of the Strategic Consulting Group, conducted a candidate training seminar in Glenview organized by Tenth Dems. Among the 40 in attendance were candidates in the April 5 election, as well as others who are considering future runs for elective office.*

need to search out the races in their area and explore the experience and goals of the candidates. Here is a description of responsibilities of some of the key but lesser known local offices:

**Township Supervisor:** Acts as chief executive officer and chairs the board of trustees; also administers the general assistance program and is the treasurer of all township and road district funds. Serves as custodian of public monies and is responsible for paying bills and for all township financial affairs.

*Continued on page 6*

# The Spiritual Left is Coming

by Gregory Mysko

The time is coming for the rise of the Spiritual Left in American politics with a backlash against the condescending narrowness known as the Religious Right. Many Democrats have strong religious feelings and firmly believe in the separation of church and state. They do not mix their religion with politics. However, in recent years, on some levels, that may have been a mistake.

Peace activist Rabbi Michael Lerner speculated what would have happened if "John Kerry had been able to counter George Bush by insisting that a serious religious person would never turn his back on the suffering of the poor, that the Bible's injunction to love one's neighbor required us to provide health care for all, and that the New Testament's command to 'turn the other cheek' should give us a predisposition against responding to violence with violence".

Lerner proposed a challenge to Democrats. "Imagine a Democratic Party that could call for schools to teach gratitude, generosity, caring for others, and celebration of the wonders that daily surround us! Such a Democratic Party, continuing to embrace its agenda for economic fairness and multi-cultural inclusiveness, would have won in 2004 and can win in the future."

Lerner brought up ideas that have been too long ignored by liberals and progressives. We have dismissed spirituality from political discourse. Perhaps it is time to bring it back. I must give credit to the Religious Right for bringing the concept of God back into discussions. However, right-wing religious zealots use their political momentum to promote a crusade for their religion and attempt to impose their religious beliefs into law. That is bad. But there is a point to be made that ethics and morality should be taught in schools again. That is where the rest of us come into the picture.

A non-partisan group of ministers of various faiths called the Clergy Network has started efforts towards governmental policies that incorporate higher ideals. The group stated, "We seek a new commitment to active participation in the political processes of our nation by those members of religious communities who hold views larger than sectarian interests or narrow ideologies and who serve, beyond private advantage and any claim of spiritual superiority, the moral vision of the common good." That is one example of the type of energy needed to revitalize the Democratic Party going into 2006.

Democrats must begin to stand for ideals again. And to propose innovative policies that help uplift the nation and the planet. We need to articulate alternatives to the retro-thinking, narrow-minded ideology that hijacked the Republican Party in recent years and is running things in Washington for now. Democratic candidates running in next year's election should not shy away from bringing up thoughts related to spirituality and morality. That does not mean they need to be clones of the Religious Right, but challenge them wherever needed.



# Checking Out How Your Congressman Votes

by John Hmurovic

I'll give you a phrase, and you tell me which profession it brings to mind.

OK, here we go: "They say one thing, and then do something else."

Now, how many of you want to bet that the top answer to that question is "politician?" Of course, we don't know how to find out how others answered, just as most of us don't know how our congressmen vote once they get elected. But finding the answer to how congressmen vote is actually easy, thanks to the Internet.

If you want to keep track of how Mark Kirk, Barack Obama, and Dick Durbin vote in Washington, add [www.thomas.loc.gov](http://www.thomas.loc.gov) to your browser's bookmarks, and visit it frequently while Congress is in session.

There, you can see for yourself if Mark Kirk is as thoughtful and independent as he claims to be every election year, if he really is an independent Moderate Republican, or if he just votes the way George Bush, Karl Rove and Tom DeLay tell him to vote on most issues.

How's he doing in this young legislative session? The biggest win for the Republicans so far this year has been to protect big business from lawsuits from consumers.

Washington state Congressman Jay Inslee called it the "Enron protection bill," while California Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi said, "When Americans are injured or killed by Vioxx or Celebrex or discriminated against by Wal-Mart, they may never get their day in court," thanks to this

legislation. Democrats voted 147-50 against it, Republicans voted in lockstep with orders from the White House. It was 229-1 on the Republican side, in favor of the bill to weaken the hand of consumers who want to fight huge corporations in court. The 50 Democrats and one Republican who broke ranks from their party might be able to claim that they were thoughtful and independent on this vote, but not Mark Kirk...he voted "yes."

That's just one vote. It's still early in this session. Visit [www.thomas.loc.gov](http://www.thomas.loc.gov) regularly, and keep your own scorecard to see if Congressman Kirk says one thing in Waukegan, but does something else in Washington.

**Congressional Record**  
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 107<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION  
WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JUNE 28, 2001

Who was that masked man? John Hart.

The Honorable Jim Barcia  
of Michigan  
in the House of Representatives  
Thursday, June 28, 2001

MR. BARCIA: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the substantial and laudable Hollywood career of John Hart, a true cowboy hero. His work has spanned every aspect of the silver screen, from writing to acting, from directing to stunt work. But for thousands of fans, his name will forever be synonymous with the signature black mask of the Lone Ranger, the stirring strains of the "William Tell Overture" and a hearty "Hi-yo Silver, away!"

Growing up in the Los Angeles area with a dramatic critic for a mother, acting was introduced to John early in his life. After studying drama at Pasadena City College, John landed his first motion picture job working for Cecil B. DeMille in "The Buccaneers." After appearing in many gangster pictures, John was drafted into the Army, where he spent the next five years writing, producing, and directing touring shows for the Fifth Air Force.

Upon his return to Hollywood, John was destined to trade in his gangster's fedora for the good guy's white hat. He quickly discovered Westerns, playing the Lone Ranger in the television series for two seasons beginning in 1952. With his trusty sidekick, Tonto, played by Jay Silverheels, the Lone Ranger was heroic inspiration for children all across America as the pair vanquished bad guys in the fight for law and order in the Old West. John went on to play title roles in "Jack Armstrong, The All-American Boy," "Captain Africa," and, with Lon Chaney, Jr., "Hawkeye and the Last of the Mohicans." He has appeared in more than 300 television shows and movies and has a lengthy resume of behind-the-camera work.

In today's world, it is easy to forget the thrilling days of yesteryear when heroes wore white, villains were always brought to justice and the Lone Ranger rode again. How refreshing it is to recall that his silver bullets never killed anyone and that he never sought compensation or credit for his good deeds, in testament to his hero status, children everywhere brought Lone Ranger lunch boxes to school and wore his trademark black mask during imaginary Old West games.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I wish to commend John Hart for his role as an early pioneer in the film industry. Hollywood has changed greatly since the first motion pictures, but our expectations have not. We still look for the hero to ride off into the sunset after giving the villain his due. I ask my colleagues to join me in praising John Hart for a lifetime of honoring the Lone Ranger creed of justice.

# An Open Letter to Congressman Kirk

## RE: SOCIAL SECURITY

Dear Congressman Kirk:

I have yet to hear from you regarding a letter you wrote to me about WMDs in Iraq. You stated in that letter that your work with classified intelligence had given you privileged information about those weapons and you assured me that they existed. You have yet to explain this apparent mistake. Meanwhile, you have indicated that you are deeply concerned about the Social Security crisis. For a so-called "moderate Republican," it seems you are often defending an Administration which is hardly ever moderate in its policies.

We are aware that this Republican Administration believes that Social Security, as we have known it for the past 70 years, is a bad idea. While most Americans like Social Security, especially those who have benefited from those guaranteed monthly checks, our government is attempting to convince us that the sky is falling. While we wait for the sky to fall, they plan to dismantle the program and replace it with private savings accounts. If this weren't so laughable, I'd surely cry. I am fortunate enough to already have a private savings account. I bet most everyone reading this has one as well. Social Security was not designed to take the place of a private savings account nor vice versa. It was a guarantee that if all else failed, some of our hard-earned money would be there to see us through. It was a Rainy Day Account in case your private one didn't pan out like you hoped. But now we are being asked to trust our retirement to the same forces that Social Security insures against.

I hope that you understand your district is not so dumb as to fall for this scam. Certainly there are those who believe Social Security, like Public Education and Medicare, are all bad ideas. They would prefer to privatize those programs so that ownership of them would "engender responsibility" (so say the Administration Republicans; what do you say?). Or, in other words, we deserve the retirement, education and health care we can afford. But more of us believe that a society is only as good as the most fortunate treat the least fortunate. We believe that our security is jeopardized when we make others less secure. We believe that Social Security is a pact between generations, a promise that regardless of what the future brings, we will care for our parents. In fact, Social Security has always been akin to the commandment to honor our parents. Administration Republicans ask us to honor the rich, which doesn't fulfill any commandment I can think of.

My private savings account hasn't panned out as well as I had hoped and I am counting on the money I have paid into Social Security over the years. Please be careful. Social Security has been a successful and compassionate program. Be certain that what is proposed as a fix isn't its demise. Be sure first, that it needs fixing. Remember, you were wrong about those WMDs.

-Carol Jones

## How to Contact Your Congressman and Get Your Opinion Counted

by William J. Fireside

You own a computer. You can play games, send and receive mail, buy and sell things and spend your days developing "carpal tunnel syndrome." But wait -- this is a newsletter about "good government" in general, "politics" in vague terms and "Democratic politics" specifically. You're the kind of person who has something to say or to ask of your member in Congress. So let's get to it.

A most important website, is <http://www.house.gov/writerep/> It is a magic link to any congressman you wish to reach. It also provides information about commissions, task forces, education, employment, bills that are pending, visiting the capital and other links to a world of information that you didn't even know existed. It even has a link to the U.S. Postal Service so that you can look up your nine digit ZIP code.

I entered mine into the system and it told me that my representative is: The Honorable Mark Steven Kirk, 1717 Longworth, Washington, D.C. 20515 (202) 225-4835. Clicking on his name took me to his website, which includes the address and phone numbers of his offices in Deerfield and Waukegan. On his website were a variety of things in which he is interested and his particular stance on the issues. If I have something that I want him to know about, I can find out if it is on his agenda and how he feels about it. Most importantly, I can write or call his office to get my feelings known.

If you live outside the 10th District it's just as easy to find your representative in congress on this website. You can get a listing of every congressman and their particulars. You can find the leaders in congress and enough information to keep you busy for months.

On the senate side, go to [http://www.senate.gov/general/contact\\_information/senators\\_cfm.cfm](http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm) for contact information for Senators Richard Durbin and Barack Obama. I was able to get the same type of information on this website about my senators that I could on the other one about my congressman, and access their websites by clicking on their names.

In a nutshell, I no longer have an excuse for not making my opinions heard or my questions answered. I have taken the first step in good citizenship -- leaving my comfortable seat in the "silent majority" and taking an active role in helping to form opinion in a government that doesn't always please me.

If you want to contact your representative in Congress, there are at least four ways to do it. You can mail a letter, make a phone call, send a fax or send an e-mail via their websites. Here are the details you need to reach them in any of those ways.

### Sen. Richard Durbin

322 Dirksen Senate  
Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
202-224-2152  
202-228-0400 - fax  
<http://durbin.senate.gov>



### Sen. Barack Obama

Dirksen Senate Office Building  
SD-B40  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
202-224-2854  
202-228-5417 - fax  
<http://obama.senate.gov>



### Rep. Mark Kirk

1717 Longworth House  
Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
202-225-4835  
202-225-0837 - fax  
[www.house.gov/kirk](http://www.house.gov/kirk)



# (ALMOST) Everything You Wanted to Know About Social Security

by George Rosenblit

## Q: When was Social Security legislation enacted?

A: In 1935 during the Great Depression, caused by the disastrous stock market crash in 1929.

## Q: Why was Social Security established?

A: To provide a safety net for workers and their families in case of job loss, and in their retirement.

## Q: How is it funded?

A: Currently, 6.2 percent of wages are taken from the worker's pay check, and that is matched by the employer, for a total of 12.4 percent.

## Q: Where does the money go?

A: Benefits are paid to current retirees as Social Security income, and to the disabled workers and survivors covered under the program. The surplus is paid into the Social Security Trust Fund which purchases government bonds to pay for future obligations.

## Q: Is the Social Security program flat broke or bankrupt?

A: NO! It is still creating a surplus!

## Q: Is it in crisis?

A: NO! It has been reported by the Congressional Budget Office that Social Security benefits paid in 2019 will exceed the payroll tax income. However, the Trust Fund is projected to have a surplus of more than \$6 trillion in government bonds at that time. This is projected to provide full benefits until 2052.

## Q: What happens in 2052? Do all benefits stop?

A: NO! - Benefits could be continued at a reduced rate of about 80 percent of scheduled benefits, funded with annual revenues.

## Q: So what is all this fuss about?

A: It would be prudent to act now or in the near future to find a way to extend full benefits beyond 2052.

## Q: What is the proposed privatization approach?

A: To allow workers to take part of the payroll tax to invest in stocks, bonds and/or funds.

## Q: Is privatization the way to go?

A: NO! - For many important reasons:

1. Privatization will leave less money in the system. The Social Security safety net would be degraded. Benefits to 12 million disabled workers and survivors will be cut, and those who opt out

of privatization will have a lower retirement nest egg than if privatization had not occurred.

2. Those who accept privatization will be at risk. The promise of great financial rewards in the stock market for retirement income can be misleading and possibly disastrous. If the market is down at retirement, then retirement income will be down.
3. The cost to manage Social Security in its present form is about 1 percent. Under privatization, the fees charged by financial institutions to give advice, manage and/or process the privatized funds could take a big bite out of the money available to invest. The greedier the institution, the less money will be available for investment. And the greed factor is there as evidenced by New York Attorney General Spitzer's revelations and negotiated settlements.
4. Transition costs are forecast to be \$2 trillion over the first ten years, and \$4.5 trillion over a 20 year period. Testimony at a televised Congressional hearing on Social Security disclosed that there will be additional transitional costs for 60 years!
5. Other countries have bad experiences with privatization. For example, Britain's Pension Commission warns that "those who think Mrs. Thatcher's privatization solved the pension problem are living in a 'fool's paradise.' A lot of additional government money will be required to avoid the return of widespread poverty among the elderly!" Oops, we were never told that.

## Q: What is the way to go without privatization?

A: A number of ways have been mentioned. Raising the cap on income for paying payroll tax from \$90,000 per year to \$140,000 is one option. This would extend full benefits to about 2075. Another approach proposes taxing people at the upper 2 percent of income level to produce the same effect. These and other proposals should be examined closely for the optimum method.

Social Security was never intended to be the sole source of retirement income. Pensions and personal savings are the other two important sources. The Administration would do well to ensure the stability and safety of pension plans. Younger workers should be allowed and encouraged to save in tax deferred 401k accounts or IRAs with other sources of money, not with Social Security funds.



## Tenth Dems Book Group Meets

Tenth Dems member James Rosen (far left in photo) led the discussion in February at the first Tenth Dems Book Discussion. This month, the book to read is *"The Lexus and the Olive Tree,"* by Thomas Friedman, in which the *New York Times* columnist looks at the implications of the global economy.

Discussion of that book will take place at **7pm on Wednesday, March 16, at the Border's bookstore in Highland Park.** All are welcome. You don't have to read the book to be a part of the discussion...but it makes it more fun.

# Latino Leaders Mobilize the Grassroots

by Jane Goldenberg

The Latino community, whose strength in numbers could potentially swing some elections in the 10th Congressional District, has been hard at work organizing to improve voter registration and participation.

One of the first goals of Latinos in Waukegan, where they comprise 45 percent of the population, is to improve representation on the school board and township offices, according to Carlos Sanchez, of Waukegan, a founder of the New Americans Initiative, which is working to encourage Latinos eligible for citizenship to take those last steps to become citizens and vote.

Last year as part of an organized door-to-door campaign, Sanchez helped register 2,000 new voters in the 10th Congressional District, mainly in Waukegan, North Chicago and Highwood. The Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, based in Chicago, estimates it registered more than 27,000 new voters across the state before the last election, according to its website.

Sanchez's new initiative could potentially add even more people to the voter rolls. According to the U.S. Census, Latinos make up 12.3 percent of Illinois residents. But when counting only citizens, Latinos comprise only 7.1 percent of Illinois' voting age population, according to the Almanac of Latino Politics 2004, published by the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute of Chicago. The Almanac estimates that about 275,000 unregistered Latinos remain an untapped reservoir of potential voters in Illinois.

Currently, Latinos have no representation on the Waukegan School Board and only one elected trustee for Waukegan Township: Mario Pena.

"I think we can always get stronger," noted Rosa Reyes-Prosen, president of the Latino Coalition, a non-partisan organization in Waukegan that works to advance the interests of Latinos. Still, she notes, many people have traditionally avoided getting involved in politics. The coalition works to show them that, "Yes, their votes make a difference."

"What we try to do within the coalition is to try to educate as much as possible," said Reyes-Prosen, noting that voter participation is beginning to improve in the Latino community. "We're learning to find our voices."

Reyes-Prosen, who also serves as a trustee for the College of Lake County, noted that two Latinos are running for the Waukegan School Board in the upcoming election.

Delfino Parra Gutierrez, known as Del Parra, is involved in several activities to improve voter participation, including the Hispanic Democratic Alliance, which works to bring members of the community into the Democratic Party.

A top issue for Parra is immigration reform. In particular, he wants to help keep families together in the face of increasing pressure since 9/11 to deport people who may have arrived

in this country illegally even though they have since had families here. Parra would like to see an end to the practice of deporting mothers or fathers while their children remain here.

"We're looking for legalization, not amnesty," he said.

Prosen noted that polls run by the Pew Hispanic Center found education and the economy to be the top issues among Latinos.

Parra said most Latinos he knows support the Democratic Party, which he feels is a natural fit, especially with its traditional support of labor issues such as payment of overtime and a higher minimum wage. He noted that Rep. Mark Kirk voted in favor

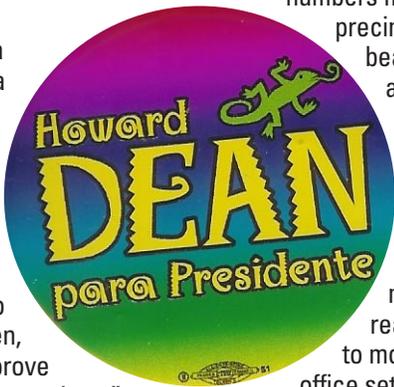
of Hispanic issues only 20 percent of the time. He said Lee Goodman did well among Hispanics in the race for congress. According to numbers from the Lake County Clerk's office, in the 20 Waukegan precincts with at least a 40 percent Hispanic vote, Goodman beat Kirk 62 percent to 38 percent. Flip those numbers for an approximation of the vote for the entire 10th District.

For the district as a whole, Latinos comprise more than 40 percent of the vote in four other precincts outside of Waukegan Township, two in Wheeling, one in Moraine (mainly Highwood) and one in Vernon.

Reyes-Prosen said Kirk, who attended the recent annual meeting of the Latino Coalition, has done a good job reaching out to the community. Reyes-Prosen, whose goal is to mobilize community involvement among Latinos, helped his office set up a Latino advisory board.

Sanchez had a different experience. He said Kirk had been unresponsive and refused to meet with his organization last year.

The Hispanic Democratic Alliance is working to educate Hispanics that "it's possible to accomplish as many things as we want, especially in the political arena," added Parra. The Alliance is now supporting candidates for school board, trustee, and for mayor throughout Lake County. There are also plans to meet with elected officials in the coming months and continue to work on improving voter registration and participation.



## Local Governments

continued from page 1

**Township Clerk:** Responsible for election functions including certification, registration and absentee voting; safeguarding township and road district records; and posting legal announcements for the township and road district. Takes roll call on votes and keeps minutes of the proceedings of all township meetings. Administers oaths when necessary. Annually certifies to the county clerk the amount of taxes needed to be raised for all township purposes. Although a non-voting member of the board, the clerk may cast one vote in the case of a tie vote to fill a vacancy in a township office.

**Township Assessor:** Establishes values on all parcels of property within the township. Assists property owners with homestead exemptions and appeals.

**Township Trustees:** They make up the township legislative branch. They set policy and have voting rights over all policies and issues not under the jurisdiction of the assessor and the highway commissioner. They prepare the township budget and appropriation ordinance and have power to audit accounts of the supervisor and highway commissioner.

**Highway Commissioner:** Responsible for maintenance of all roads and bridges in the road district that are not part of other governmental road systems.

**School Board Members:** Involved in all policy decisions—financial, philosophical and educational—of the school district.

# A Few Tips on Who to Vote for on April 5th

by John Hmurovic

In November, 76.5 percent of 10th District voters showed up on election day. Almost no one expects turnout to be even half as good on April 5. Typically, voter turnout here is 20-something percent for local elections.

It seems strange that the races that are closest to home, the ones that have a direct impact on our schools, libraries, property assessments, roads, and the poor and elderly who need assistance, draw virtually no interest. On the other hand, in a democracy, if you don't have much information on the candidates how can you vote?

Candidates spend millions in presidential and senate races, and you can expect to be bombarded with ads during next year's race for governor, but candidates for township and municipal offices don't have campaign donations pouring in. They usually have to get their message out with nothing more than a leaflet which they deliver to as many doors as they can knock on in these last weeks of winter.

Unless that leaflet is delivered to your door or arrives in your mailbox, you have little to base a vote on come April 5. A voter, in other words, has to work a little harder to gather information on the candidates, and as the turnout numbers show, very few do that. But if you want to make an effort, here are some ways you can learn more about the races on next month's ballot.

- **Who Is Running For What this Year?** Go to your county clerk's website ([www.voterinfonet.com](http://www.voterinfonet.com) in Cook, [www.co.lake.il.us/cntyclk](http://www.co.lake.il.us/cntyclk) in Lake) to find the list of offices and candidates.
- **What Do The People In These Offices Do?** Again, the Internet is our friend. Go to [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), or your search engine of choice, and type in the name of the office that's up for election. Virtually every township, municipality, school, library, and park district in

our area has a website. The sites usually explain the responsibilities of these government bodies, and give you an idea of what they are doing. The websites also list the names of the current officeholders, many of whom are up for re-election this year.

- **How Do You Find Out More About The Challengers?** Unless the individual campaigns find a way to reach you, odds are you won't learn much about the challengers or incumbents in the upcoming election.

Newspapers are the best source of information. The more local the newspaper, the better the chance you'll have of getting some news about the candidates. The Pioneer Press newspapers, with their many local editions, are a good source. The Lakeland Press papers, the News Sun and the Daily Herald are other options. But even here, at best, some races will only be covered in one story.

- **Letters To The Editor May Be Your Best Source** Maybe the best way to learn about candidates is to read the Letters to the Editor in the newspapers mentioned above. Candidates encourage their supporters to write letters to the newspapers, and as election day nears the "Letters" pages are actually the place for the best debates you'll find before the election. Many of the writers are close supporters, friends, or relatives of the candidates, so you'll essentially be reading the arguments that the candidates want you to hear.

No one said that living in a democracy is easy. Local elections test our commitment to democratic government. Anyone who casts a vote in these elections is a true believer in the democratic process, and anyone who works to find out more about the candidates in these races is a rare breed... an educated voter.

## Write To the 10th Dems Newsletter

If you have a comment or thought you'd like to be included in the Tenth Dems Newsletter, email us at [comments@tenthdems.org](mailto:comments@tenthdems.org). We will gladly consider letters, articles, or columns from our readers. Please include your name and phone number for verification, as well as your city of residence.

