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Three Shout-Outs by a Candidate on the Go

by Sharon Narrod

Sometimes as I am falling asleep at night (in that two-second span of time), I think about what I might be doing if I wasn't running for office. What tops the list usually includes food. Whether cooking it or eating it, there isn't much of it these days. In truth, I passed my childhood fantasy of eating as much popcorn and cotton candy as I wanted to about four weeks ago. My family has also grown a little weary of take-out.

The other things that have been missing, not necessarily in order of importance, are watching television (no big loss now that West Wing is off the air), working in the garden and volunteering. I mention volunteering, because it is the one activity that had previously taken up most of my time.

If you aren't the volunteer type, you are missing out on something truly unique. Without sounding Pollyannaish, money is not the only payment for a job well done. In politics, the payback is very clear cut: You work like a dog and when your

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A Candidate's Diary
Lake County Clerk candidate Sharon Narrod is making her first run for public office. Between now and election day she will give us a regular account of what it's like to be a candidate. This is Part 5 in that series of articles.



Sharon Narrod and Lake County Sheriff candidate Mark Curran listen to other candidates speak at a barbeque hosted by West Deerfield Township Democrats.



www.tenthdems.org

Tenth News

SEPTEMBER 2006 Illinois Tenth Congressional District Democrats Newsletter Volume 3, Edition 9

Dan Seals Invites All to a Labor Day Celebration ...And Other News on the 10th District Congressional Campaign

by John Hmurovic

Labor Day is the traditional start of the home stretch in political campaigns. It's the time when the media and the public start paying closer attention...and the time when the TV political ads start blanketing the airwaves. The Dan Seals campaign is celebrating Labor Day by bringing together its supporters for a barbeque picnic. Everyone is invited to join the fun and meet Dan. There will be food, drinks, live music, and entertainment by nationally known comedian Aaron Freeman. It is on **Sunday, September 3, from 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.** It will be held in front of the **Wheeling Park District Aquatic Center, 377 W. Dundee, Wheeling.**

Labor Day is also a good time to remember that while Mark Kirk voted to give himself a pay raise this year, he refused to back an increase in the minimum wage for the lowest paid Americans. He did, however, finally come around to voting in favor of a minimum wage hike, on the condition that the wealthiest Americans be given even more tax breaks. In his Congressional career, Kirk has consistently voted against the minimum wage, while voting for every tax break that has come before Congress for the wealthiest Americans.

Tenth District voters aren't the only ones noticing the Dan Seals campaign. *Congressional Quarterly*, one of the nation's premier publications on congressional politics, has moved the Seals-Kirk race up a notch, saying it is more competitive than they originally thought. "The Democrats have a credible candidate this year in Dan Seals, a marketing executive who had \$508,000 banked in his



Elizabeth Guscott-Mueller and Trude Roselle march through Lake Forest, August 2nd, with Dan and about 60 other supporters.

campaign account as of June 30." Although they still give Kirk the edge, CQ says that dissatisfaction with the Bush Administration could boost more Democrats, like Seals, to victory this year.

Seals said that the CQ report confirmed what he has been sensing on the campaign trail . . . that this race is tightening up. "I'm excited to see my campaign's hard work and our message of change are getting the attention of voters and independent observers," he said, "particularly a non-partisan source like *Congressional Quarterly*."

Chris Cillizza, a Washington Post reporter, also mentioned the 10th District race in his blog as one that might see a Democrat swept into

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Interest Group Ratings Show Us the Real Mark Kirk

By John Hmurovic

Although many 10th District residents are beginning to realize that Mark Kirk has been a poor congressman, everyone has to admit that he is an excellent politician. He has carefully crafted an image as a "Thoughtful, Independent Leader." He spreads the word on votes and actions that support that image, and hopes we are too busy with life to notice votes that do not.

For example, if you went to Kirk's campaign website in recent months, you would have seen that the National Education Association (NEA) reviewed his voting record in Congress and gave him a grade of A+. You couldn't miss that fact on his website. It was near the top of the homepage in big letters.

He showed you only what he wanted you to see, and he was not about to reveal the full story. In fact, Kirk did receive a 100 rating from the NEA for his 2005 votes in Congress. But what he didn't tell you was that the NEA gave him grades of 66 percent in 2001; 32 percent for 2003 and 2004; and 0 percent in 2002. Add 'em up, average it out, and he gets a grade of 46 percent from the NEA in his congressional career. In any school I've ever attended, 46 percent is not better than an F. But ... Kirk doesn't mention any of this on his website.

Politicians spin, but thoughtful, independent leaders should have the courage to tell us who they really are. Mark Kirk spins his positions on environmental issues. He doesn't have the courage to explain why the League of Conservation Voters only gives him a 59 percent grade over his first five years in Congress. He wants you to know when he does support environmental efforts, but you will never hear a word about the votes he has taken to weaken environmental laws to benefit the oil industry.

In fact, if you look down a list of the ratings he receives from various interest groups, the real Mark Kirk emerges. Women's groups? The National Organization for Women (NOW) gives him an average grade of 43 percent over his career. Working people? The AFL-CIO gives him an 18 percent grade, while AFSCME rates him at just 7 percent in his five years in Congress. Civil rights? The NAACP gives him a career grade of 34 percent. Foreign policy? Peace Action rates him at 15 percent. Veterans issues? The Disabled American Veterans gives him a career average of 25 percent.

While Senators Dick Durbin and Barack Obama receive average grades in the 90 percent bracket from these groups, Mark Kirk's grades are closer to those of Mississippi Republican Trent Lott.

The picture that emerges of Mark Kirk from reviewing these grades from various interest groups is not that of a thoughtful independent leader, but of a loyal, follow-the-leader, partisan Republican. Of course, his hope is, you don't have the time to find out the truth about him.

Tenth Dems recently printed a Report Card for Mark Kirk. It contains grades given to him by various watchdog groups which have closely watched his votes in Congress. Unlike partisan voices (such as Mark Kirk or Tenth Dems), these groups give their independent views on how Kirk is doing in Congress. To see a copy of his report card, go to www.tenthdems.org



Abner Mikva, President Clinton's White House Counsel, to Speak to Moraine Dems

By Ross Nickow

The Hon. Abner Mikva will be the Keynote Speaker at the First Annual Fundraiser for the Moraine Township Democratic Organization (MTDO) on October 19th. Mikva formerly served as Counsel to President Bill Clinton, United States Court of Appeals Chief Judge, and U.S. Congressman (D-IL).



Details for the event, which will be held in Highland Park, will be announced shortly on MTDO's website, www.MoraineTownshipDems.org. The Moraine Dems are currently signing up people to be on the Host Committee for the event. Various levels of sponsorship include MTDO membership as well as tickets to the fundraiser. Information is available by calling 847-433-8344 or via email to info@morainetownshipdems.org.

The MTDO office is located at 580 Roger Williams in Highland Park. The office is used for many candidates and local Democratic groups to conduct field work, distribute campaign literature, organize outreach and get-out-the-vote drives, all to help elect Democrats at various levels of government. In 2005, the group worked to recruit and elect six Moraine Township officials. Candidates had *never* previously run as Democrats for Moraine Township offices.

MTDO has also put on many topical forums with distinguished speakers. Recent forums featured experts discussing topics such as Bush's Supreme Court nominees, global warming and health care. Last month, more than 100 people gathered to hear Jay Footlik, President Clinton's former Special Assistant and Jewish Liaison, analyze the current crisis in the Middle East. Also in August, author Mark Crispin Miller drew 150 in a talk about election integrity. And last March, most of the Democratic hopefuls on the primary ballot appeared before a packed pre-primary candidates' forum.

Mikva has an extensive and distinguished career of public service. In 1956 he began his first of five terms in the Illinois House of Representatives, which were followed by five terms as U.S. Congressman for the 10th District. Mikva was appointed to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit by President Jimmy Carter in 1979 and was confirmed over strong opposition from the National Rifle Association. He became Chief Judge in 1991. Mikva began his tenure as White House Counsel to President Clinton in 1994. He is founder of the Mikva Challenge, which encourages Chicago high school students to become involved in civic activities and elections.

Moraine Township includes most of Highland Park, parts of Deerfield and Lake Forest, and all of Highwood. MTDO is currently seeking members and volunteers to help support local Democrats. More information is available by calling 847-433-8344.

Seals *continued from page 1*

office this year by a national wave in favor of Democrats.

"Rep. Kirk votes over 91 percent of the time along the strict Republican Party line," Seals said, "which is certainly not the independent representation he claims to prove. The voters of the 10th District are not likely to forget or forgive that voting record."

National Internet bloggers have noticed that he's a strong candidate, and have tapped Dan as one of a handful that they are supporting this year. *Netroots*, a collection of various blogs, have been making a push to raise money for his campaign, and donations have been coming in from across the country. The original goal was to find 100 new donors for Dan. He's blown past that goal and has already gained over 140 new donors.

Locally, the news media initially brushed off any challenge to Mark Kirk's re-election as hopeless, and it devoted scant coverage to the race. But, now they are also paying attention. Eric Krol of the *Daily Herald* recently wrote a column headlined, "Race between Kirk and Seals taking on higher profile." He called it a possible "sleeper race in the suburbs this fall," and attributed that partially to "impressive Democratic newcomer Dan Seals," to the recent Democratic voting history of the district, and "partly due to dissatisfaction with the Iraq war and military expert Kirk's out-front support."

About Seals, Krol says, "the 35-year-old is good-looking, intelligent and engaging. He's raised \$770,000, with \$507,000 in the bank as of June 30. That's far more than any Democrat's been able to muster since the seat was last open in 2000 following Congressman John Porter's retirement."

Sharon Narrod, *Continued from page 1*

candidate wins, you can take responsibility for part of it. You could be stuffing envelopes, handing out literature at train stations or delivering yard signs. It makes no difference. I have yet to meet a top tier "staffer" who isn't getting the same exact feeling. It's being part of something larger than yourself, something that will hopefully benefit the greater good. I guess the reason I am going on about this, is that in my travels around Lake County, I have met an abundance of volunteers. My mantra for the past several years has been "voting is not enough." It takes more than a singular act to elect someone. It's all that leads up to the election that can make the difference between a swearing-in ceremony or a fading away.

So, with that thought in mind, I'll start early by thanking three organizations that have made a tremendously positive difference in my campaign:

Backyard Chat Come Meet Dan Seals Candidate for U.S. Congress

3pm, Sunday
September 10th
391 East Deerpath Rd
Lake Forest



(across from Lake
Forest Library.
Cancelled if rain.)

The *Chicago Reporter* also had an article on Dan, which said that "With his diverse heritage and a well-mobilized Democratic Party, supporters believe Seals may be in position to become the area's first-ever African-American congressman---and the first Democrat to win there in recent memory."

The article also mentioned that one reason Seals is in a better position to win is because of the fact that "recent Democratic Party organizing efforts have made political races at every level more competitive." The article by reporter Sean Redmond said that, "Part of this recent shift is due to the efforts of the "Tenth Dems," a political group founded by four-term state Rep. Lauren Beth Gash prior to the 2004 election. The Tenth Dems have worked to organize Democrats all over the district by holding forums and caucuses in every township, most of which had never before held Democratic caucuses."

Mark Kirk claims to be a "Thoughtful, Independent Leader." But do leaders hide when tough issues come up? Mark Kirk

has a record of avoiding conversations about the tough issues like the war in Iraq and Social Security reform. So, it's no wonder that he is avoiding Dan Seals' call for six debates. At best, the Kirk camp indicated that two debates might happen.

"I can understand Rep. Kirk's reluctance to debate," Seals said. "His record in Congress can't be defended easily, including not winning passage of any of the legislation he authored during his time in Congress. Instead, he is a Congressional enabler and cheerleader for the Bush administration. And he is out of step with the thinking of the 10th District voters who are clearly dissatisfied with the direction of the country."

1. McDonald's – Not for the food, but the bathrooms. Now don't get me wrong, I always buy something, but what's more important is the quantity of restaurants and having the peace of mind that if you've "gotta go," there's always one around.

2. Mapquest – My van is littered with pages and pages of Mapquest directions. I could not even imagine how I would have gotten to most places if I couldn't print out those step-by-step directions.

3. Starbucks – I'm a little embarrassed to admit this, because it seems so reflective of a certain personality type, but you try making six stops in five townships in four hours without a little caffeine. Plus, they pay health benefits to their baristas (usually young people in school). Anyone who knows me well, knows that I'm very rarely seen without my cup of Starbucks. Some Starbucks even have drive-thrus, a major plus. I'd also be unfair if I didn't mention that their restrooms are also pretty convenient.

2006 Democratic Candidate Profiles

Every month up to the November election, we will take a look at some of the Democrats on the ballot in 2006.

John D'Amico

State Representative
District 15
Residence: Chicago
District: Includes a small portion of Glenview



John D'Amico is serving his first term as state representative. A lifelong resident of the 15th District, John was born in Chicago and attended Northeastern Illinois University. John has been very active in the district. He is a member of the Journey Plumber's Union Local #130, City Club of Chicago, Mayfair Lions Club, St. Edward's Athletic Advisory Board, Edgebrook Community Organization and serves as a youth sports coach. As state representative, John serves on the Aging, Appropriations – Public Safety, Labor, Electric Utility Oversight, Transportation and Motor Vehicles committees, and is vice-chair of the Elections and Campaign Reform Committee.

dollars because they have high-priced, politically connected lawyers representing their needs, leaving homeowners to make up the difference. He's running because he believes homeowners need a real advocate on the Board of Review.

Del Parra

Lake County Board
District 15
Residence: Libertyville
District: Libertyville, Mundelein and Vernon Hills



Del Parra is a 12-year resident of Lake County and an active part of the community. He has been a Sunday School teacher, a coach, and a referee, as well as a member of the Lions Club, the Sierra Club, and the President of the Hispanic Democratic Alliance. He has worked as a teacher and in business, and has a track record of experience, dedication and community service that he will bring to the county board. Del believes board members should be more responsive to the needs of the community, and will promote a transparent government that answers to and meets the needs of all citizens, and one that will not allow Lake County to be shortchanged at taxpayer expense or taxed unnecessarily.

Trustee. She took tough stands on many issues and does not back down from doing what's right. She believes that state government is more crucial than ever, and says she will be a strong voice for improving education, protecting seniors, expanding small business opportunities, increasing access to health care and protecting reproductive rights.

Glenn Ryback

Lake County Treasurer
Residence: Wadsworth
District: Lake County



Glenn Ryback thinks that Lake County needs to come into the 21st century. One of his goals if elected as Lake County Treasurer is to modernize the office. He'd like to establish an automated phone system, an advanced e-mail system so residents can send questions, expand the payment centers throughout the county, upgrade the website ... and more. Glenn knows how government works. He has been a Wadsworth village trustee since 1993 and has been a part of the county's Solid Waste Agency and the Lake County Fair Association. He is also a licensed real estate broker.

Brendan Houlihan

Cook County Board of Review District 1
Residence: Palos Heights
District: Includes these townships within the 10th Congressional District: Elk Grove, New Trier, Northfield, Palatine and Wheeling



Brendan Houlihan, a former Vice President with Bear Stearns, now executes business for top-tier banks, Fortune 500 Corporations and pension funds at Fimat USA. Following in the footsteps of his late father, John J. Houlihan, who served as a state representative and in the Carter Administration, Brendan has devoted much of his life to serving the community as a volunteer and math and reading tutor. He feels that corporations have saved millions of

Judith-Rae Ross

State Representative
District 17
Residence: Skokie
District: Includes Glencoe, Glenview, Northfield, Wilmette and Winnetka



Dr. Judith-Rae Ross has a career that combines teaching, journalism, public service and political consulting. With a Ph.D in French intellectual history from the University of Illinois at Chicago, she currently teaches history at DePaul University. For 21 years she served as an elected Nilus Township

Todd Stroger

President of the Board of Commissioners
Residence: Chicago
District: Cook County

Prior to his election as a state representative in 1992, Todd Stroger worked as a statistician for the Chief Judge of Cook County. His professional experience also included stints as a jury supervisor with the Cook County Jury Commissioners and as an administrative assistant at the Chicago Park District. In 1994, he joined SBK-Brooks Investment firm as an investment banker. Since 2001, he has been Chicago's 8th Ward Alderman. Todd earned a B.A. Degree in History from Xavier University in New Orleans. He has been a major fundraiser for the United Negro College fund.

Larry Suffredin

County Commissioner District 13

Residence: Evanston

District: Includes Glencoe, Glenview, Kenilworth, Wilmette and Winnetka

Larry Suffredin was elected Cook County Commissioner in November 2002. Rare for a freshman member, Suffredin was named Chairman of the Board's Legislation & Intergovernmental Relations Committee, which is charged with recommending county positions on state and federal legislation, tracking state and federal funds earmarked for the county and reviewing appointments to county boards and commissions. Suffredin is a lifelong resident of Chicagoland, and is a highly successful attorney with a legal career spanning nearly three decades. He has extensive state and federal trial experience, and has argued cases before the United States and Illinois Supreme Courts.



Carrie Travers

Lake County Board District 13

Residence: Lake Forest

District: Lake Forest, Lake Bluff and Knollwood

Carrie Travers and her family have lived in Lake Forest for over 11 years. Carrie is an active community leader in the Lake Forest Public Schools. Prior to motherhood, Carrie worked for a nationally recognized commercial printer, first in labor relations and then in sales. Having a strong business background and a record of local volunteerism, Carrie will take her experience, energy and drive to the county board. She also plans to work for a more open and accessible county government, by holding neighborhood coffees on a regular basis, an interactive website and an online subscriber newsletter.



Bulletin: GOP is Weak on Defense

by Mark Paul

After nearly 50 years on defense, Democrats finally have a chance to take the offense on national security. Republicans have verifiably made us weaker. And Mark Kirk's been along for the ride.

Probably the most difficult thing to do in a democracy is for the out party to take control during a war. The Republicans have done it twice, however, and there's a lesson to be learned from how they did it.

Eisenhower said, "I will go to Korea," and not much more. Of course, he had enormous personal credibility as the liberator of Europe.

Nixon claimed he had a "secret plan" to end the Vietnam War. No one really expected him to present a position paper that laid out his plan. And he couldn't because he didn't have one. But just below the surface was this message:

The people who took us into this mess are not capable of leading us out of it.

Slogans such as "Out Now," "Out In 12 Months," or even "Responsible Withdrawal" are extremely seductive, especially to those of us who remember the Vietnam disaster. Calling for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Vietnam was viable because it was a geo-strategic backwater. Not much happened, in fact, when we finally pulled out of Vietnam. It's not so simple in Iraq, smack dab in the middle of the largest oil reserves in the world in the peak oil era.

This is not at all to say that we don't need to withdraw our troops from Iraq almost as fast as the planes can take off. We must, however, remain engaged in the region in other ways, and Americans know this every time they fill their tanks.

In this case especially, semantics are important. "Out Now" always requires a disclaimer that Democrats are not isolationist, but attention spans are not reliably long enough to be certain voters will always hear that disclaimer.

Furthermore, the mess isn't just Iraq. It's Iran, Lebanon, Syria, and Afghanistan. It's North Korea. Relations with our allies are in disarray. Even the British are unhappy.

And once the Israelis sense Bush is weak enough, we'll hear from them too. They're accustomed to Americans urging them to take it slow, but this time the Neocons were eager to see the Israelis join the blood frenzy. As soon as the bombing began, NSC staffer, convicted perjurer, and all-around Cheney stooge Elliott Abrams flew to Jerusalem. About a week later, stories appeared in Israeli newspapers both right and left-of-center reporting that unnamed administration officials were encouraging the Israelis to bomb Syria.

Once the rationale for invading and occupying Iraq switched from WMDs to democratic nation-building, I wondered why anyone would start that project in Iraq rather than Lebanon, a cosmopolitan Mediterranean society that already had an elected but weak government.

Apparently the State department doesn't have a good answer, according to this Aug. 11 report from the McClatchy (formerly Knight-Ridder) Washington bureau:

"Perhaps it [Lebanon] has needed more energy than it has been given," Rice told reporters during her recent Middle East trip.

"We did nothing, we did absolutely nothing to bolster the weak Lebanese government

after the Syrian withdrawal," said a State Department official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the comments contradict official policy."



The consequences aren't limited to the death and destruction suffered by the two combatants. Almost 90 percent of Lebanese said that the United States is not an honest broker, according to a July 29 survey by the Beirut Center for Research and Information, compared with 38 percent who supported a U.S. role in a January survey, reported the *Washington Post* on Aug. 13.

On the domestic side, the FBI still doesn't have a computer system as we approach the five-year memorials for 9/11. Bush's summer reading list included a book about the Manhattan project. Perhaps he noticed that those technical warriors began with little more than some highly theoretical physics, yet it took them only three years to conceive, design, and build three operational bombs.

So it's not clear how confident we should be when the FBI says they couldn't find anything in their file cabinets to indicate anyone stateside was involved in the liquid explosives conspiracy. The British, by the way, uncovered the plot through the most ordinary police and intelligence technique: Someone called with a tip.

The arrests once again confirmed the utter

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Green Is Good

Energy Efficiency Is Sound Fiscal Policy

by Jacqui Barrett

Almost immediately after taking office, President Bush withdrew U.S. support for the Kyoto Protocol, an amendment to a United Nations treaty that assigns mandatory reduction levels of greenhouse gases to the countries that have ratified it. Chief among his stated objections was the unsubstantiated claim that the imposed targets would severely damage the U.S. economy.

Several individuals have found just the opposite, however. Rather than serving as a financial burden, the adoption of environmentally friendly technologies has actually opened up new opportunity for profit.

What started as a direct response of several American mayors to the federal government's abdication of responsibility for the environment soon crystallized into savings for some taxpayers. Across the country, 266 mayors have signed the U.S. Climate Protection Agreement as a way to minimize the impact that their municipalities have on the environment.

By making easy adjustments, such as replacing existing lighting with energy-efficient alternatives, purchasing hybrids for city vehicles or insulating public buildings properly, these mayors have reduced energy costs for the citizens of their towns.

In Salt Lake City for instance, the implementation of both Light Emitting Diode traffic lights and compact fluorescent bulbs in city office buildings saves \$86,000 annually while reducing CO2 emissions by 844 tons.

Mayors such as Houston's Bill White have committed to transforming city fleets to hybrid vehicles. Such changes not only reduce carbon dioxide by 43 tons, but also give the city a savings of close to \$2000 for each vehicle.

The implementation and creation of environmentally friendly products by corporate America has led to profits rather than losses as well. Companies such as DuPont are racking up cumulative savings adding up to billions of dollars since 1991 when they first tried to address greenhouse gas emissions.

Several companies have also found the creation of new energy-efficient products to be lucrative. In order to meet the demand for technology that reduces carbon emissions in countries that have already ratified Kyoto, international corporations such as General Electric have pioneered new product development. And considering



Toyota's increasingly large share of the United States automobile industry at a time when Detroit automakers face declining sales suggests that the former owes at least some of its success to the adoption of higher mile-per-gallon standards.

Individuals are able to embrace the same energy-efficient technology to reduce their contribution to global warming. The simplest way to reduce carbon emissions is to replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs. Although the cost of the former is lower, the latter only uses a quarter of the energy and lasts five times as long, leading to significant net savings.

This year, purchasing hybrid cars has also become more reasonably priced for those in the market for a new car. The federal government currently has tax credits for hybrid vehicles that offset the extra money needed to purchase one. This, coupled with reduced gasoline consumption, actually makes hybrid cars more affordable than cars that run only on gas.

Environmental websites such as www.stopglobalwarming.org offer even more suggestions on reducing carbon diode emissions while also saving money.

Despite the assertions that reducing greenhouse gases would cripple the economy, the examples prove otherwise. Regardless of your feelings about global warming, adopting technologies that conserve energy is the smart choice, even if only to save money.

Besides committing to reduce your own impact on the environment, there are several other ways to make a difference. A good place to start is locally. Currently only five mayors in Illinois have signed the Climate Agreement. If your mayor has yet to do so, urge your public servant to commit to efficiency.

Encourage members of the State Legislature to follow the lead of California and the Northeast states and pass legislation which puts caps on carbon emissions. The more examples of success that are seen in the country, the more pressure will be placed on the federal government to serve as a leader in fighting against climate change.



Defense *Continued from page 5*

stupidity of Mark Kirk's support for targeting young Muslim males just for being young and Muslim. Kirk blithely alienates the people who will walk in with information about a Hezbollah cell and offer to infiltrate it.

The difference in national security policy between Democrats and Republicans was well expressed in sequential *Washington Post* op-eds early last month by Clinton's U.N. ambassador, Richard Holbrooke, and former Speaker Newt Gingrich.

Both succumbed to the dubious temptation of historical analogy, but their choices were telling. Holbrooke sees the potential for another World War I, in which a few minor mistakes lead to a cascade of miscalculations and a war far larger and more destructive than anyone imagined. Newt gleefully announces World War III already has begun and he's eager to slug it out with anyone willing to challenge American will.

The Republicans actually want to make things worse.

Let's MoveOn

Using the Internet to win

by Marla Sundh

MoveOn.ORG
POLITICAL ACTION

When George Washington became president, there were no campaigns, position papers, or press conferences. The candidate "stood" for election – as opposed to running for office – to avoid appearing too ambitious. George Washington had no opponent, and was selected by the electoral college. Things were a lot simpler back then.

The political process evolved as people seeking public office began to make speeches and debate their opponents. As technology developed, candidates extended their reach to the electorate. In the 1920s and 1930s, the advent of radio allowed voters to hear what candidates were saying and how they sounded when saying it. In the '50s and '60s, the development of television showed how physical appearance and demeanor could impact the outcome of an election. Commercials were the first "sound bites" of the time, and the medium adapted easily to the electoral process.

Today, the birth of the Internet has been the most significant development in political communication since the invention of television. The advent of on-line campaigning and political fund raising enables candidates to reach a greater number of potential voters at relatively low cost, to engage in two-way dialogue with supporters, and to combat voter apathy and low turn-out in elections.

The exchange of ideas takes place without leaving the home or office. Instead of griping in the shower, voters find that others share their ideas. The groundswell

of enthusiasm and activism thus flows back and forth.

MoveOn.org is an example of an organization specifically designed for political activism. In the late 1990s, MoveOn was formed by two California businessmen. Today, it boasts more than 3 million members. Meetup.com is another group that links people with others having similar interests, such as politics. Another is TrueMajority.com, founded by half of the Ben & Jerry's ice cream empire.

In 2003, Governor Howard Dean, in a ground-breaking effort, showed how the Internet could be used. He formed a grassroots team of supporters in huge numbers, which was a springboard taking him from a little known governor of a small state into the national spotlight. His software broke down barriers and engaged people in ways never seen before. Dean raised more than \$20 million on-line, switching the focus from well-known large donors, to an anonymous, yet powerful pool of small donors.

Governor Dean was also the first to use blogs as part of the communication strategy with voters. Previously, blogs were used within the academic community for the exchange of ideas, and few people outside of that arena had heard of them. Voters, energized by the ability to engage in dialogue with politicians, visited Governor Dean's blog in numbers up to 30,000 a day.

What was the impact on the 2004 presidential election? It was reported, in a study by the Johns Hopkins Institute, that

while Governor Dean failed to become the Democratic candidate for president, the Kerry-Edwards campaign adopted Dean's strategy and raised more than \$82 million. Wesley Clark, John Edwards and Joe Lieberman did the same. The study concluded that the technique of on-line campaigning will continue to evolve and become a more critical technique in coming elections. Candidates who fail to embrace, or at least understand the power of the Internet will be left behind.

The Internet also benefited political fundraising in an unprecedented way, leading to donations increased by more than 50 percent between 2000 and 2004, according to the Johns Hopkins study.

In 2006, the world of on-line campaigning has shrunk (or you may say expanded.) By nurturing the relationships created on-line, voters from Illinois, for instance, can help campaigns in Iowa. By reaching out to friends, relatives, and newspapers in far flung places, activists can make a significant contribution to elections. Traditional media has caught on to this phenomenon, and most have created on-line services for readers and listeners.

The fast growing resource that is the Internet is in its infancy for activating grassroots teams of supporters and has great untapped potential for affecting the outcome of an election. As technology constantly changes, so too will the Internet's place in the political arena. Only time will tell how effectively this tool will translate to victory at the polls.

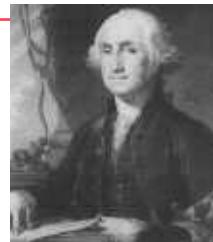
The Curator of Our Freedom, Not The Law

by Gary Lukens

The reason why George Washington was the greatest President in our history is not because he was the best administrator, or the best general, or even the best communicator with an infantile congress. In fact, Washington abhorred the stuffy doctrine of the presidency and wished only to retire to his home in Mount Vernon.

The reason why I and many others hold Washington in the highest esteem is because at our nation's most vulnerable moment – when all heaped such fanfare and praise upon him that he might have walked on water – George never allowed himself to become King George.

Moreover, Washington's foremost objective as our first president was to uphold the virtues and values of our



Constitution as though it was written by God Himself. He understood that the president is not the law, but the curator of our freedom. He realized that there is a fine line between personal ambition and the grace to allow a country to set a precedent against tyranny.

George Washington not only pushed aside the whims of those who wanted to enact dangerous language in our Constitution which would limit our individual rights, he guarded the letter of the law with the same sanctity he worshipped God. Unlike the president named George, who today is chipping away at the foundation of our sacred Constitution, Washington understood that the basis of liberty remains, and always will be, the personal freedom it creates.

Free Speech & Letters to the Editor

by George Rosenblit

Article I of the Amendments to the U.S. Constitution states that Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press.

This is my preamble to a discussion of our right and obligation to express our views and grievances with respect to the actions or inactions of our government, and more specifically, with respect to activities or lack thereof by our Representative in Congress, Mark Kirk.

How can Mr. Kirk possibly be our true representative if he does not know about our views and grievances concerning a wide range of very important issues such as the Iraq war; education; health care; the deficit; the environment; food stamps; rights for children, women, and seniors; wage issues; job losses (as well as outsourcing); issues pushing more people below the poverty level; cuts in social programs; and ethics (the Republican House's "Culture of Corruption")? He has not had a series of well-publicized Town Hall Meetings throughout our District to measure the pulse of his constituents, to listen to our opinions and questions, to provide answers, and to justify his actions in Congress.

Just because Mr. Kirk won the last election, he has not been anointed to operate in a vacuum and do as he pleases. He has failed to champion our views and to be a true representative in Congress. So, it is our right and obligation to educate Mr. Kirk via the press, the newspapers which are distributed within the 10th District.

Many individuals have contacted me to say that they want to write a letter to the editor (LTE), but they do not know how to do it. My short answer is to "just write about what is on your mind, and then tweak it." I then add that "it must come from the heart in your own words." To get further ideas, read some LTEs. If you feel so inclined, reply to LTEs. It's important that you become involved in the political process at the grassroots level, and writing LTEs is one way to do it.

If you want to do some research about what's really going on in Congress (since Kirk doesn't provide this information, as he should), it's not difficult. The gateway to this information is via the Internet at <http://thomas.loc.gov> – this will bring you to "Thomas," the home page of the Library of Congress.

There, you can search for a bill text by title or by some key words in the title, or by Bill Number.

Also, Roll Call votes can be accessed directly from Thomas's home page. Just click on "Roll Call Votes." On the next page that appears, click on the session of interest – for example, the 2nd Session of the current 109th Congress contains the latest activity. On the next page that appears, click on the Roll number if you know it, or, click on the Title/Description if you know it. If you click on the Bill number, you will access Title, Sponsor, Related Bills, and the Latest Major Actions. You can also access a wealth of information here including the Text of Legislation, Summary and Amendments.

With a little practice, you will become expert at looking up congressional information. Then, your letter writing will be more authoritative. Enjoy!



Take Advantage of Your Right to Free Speech

All area newspapers accept letters to the editor on candidates and the issues in this campaign. It's your chance to voice your views, and maybe influence a few voters with your thoughts. You can write about any candidate on the ballot, but here are excerpts from a few letters to the editor on the Dan Seals /Mark Kirk race.

All of the papers have details on how to submit a letter on their websites. But if you need help figuring out the process, contact Tenth Dems at volunteers@tenthdems.org, or call 847-266-VOTE (8683).

Budget cuts will hurt the needy

Congressman Mark Kirk voted to give himself a \$3,300-a-year pay raise. He has received a pay raise every year since he entered Congress.

Meanwhile, medium household incomes have fallen five years in a row after being adjusted for inflation. Health-care costs have risen almost 50 percent and the minimum wage remains at \$5.15.

*Karen Truskowski, Lake Forest
Waukegan News-Sun*

Kirk votes don't back up his speech

Mark Kirk came to Winnetka . . . and gave a speech thanking veterans for their service to our country. Kirk's speech was ironic, because over the last eight months, Kirk has had four opportunities to vote for increased health and financial benefits for veterans. Each time, he voted against these benefits which could have helped veterans of the Iraq war face the future (including Iraq veterans from Kirk's own district).

*W. Kent Wilson, Glenview
Pioneer Press*

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