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

Three Great New Buttons Available...

...along with many other items to help you make a political statement

by George Rosenblit

Tenth Dems now has three political buttons specially created for Illinois and 10th District residents. These are exclusive designs that cannot be purchased elsewhere. They all will become collectors' items, but you can enjoy wearing them right now to let everyone know where you stand on the political spectrum.



We have a three-inch diameter button featuring images of Barack Obama, Dick Durbin, and Dan Seals, and another with photos of just Obama and Seals. We also have a 2 1/4-inch diameter button picturing Obama and Durbin.

Politically-themed merchandise—buttons, mugs, hats, books, t-shirts, and much, much more—is available for purchase at events and on the Tenth Dems website. Show your true-blue color when you buy them for yourself or as fabulous gifts!

Two other recently designed exclusive buttons sport mottos instead of photos. One says, "UNDO

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Tenth News

AUGUST 2008

Illinois Tenth Congressional District Democrats Newsletter

Volume 5, Edition 8

Democracy in Action

by Ellen Beth Gill

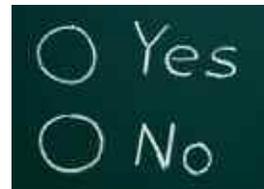
On July 23, I hosted 41 people for the Tenth for Obama platform meeting. Senator Barack Obama had called out to the grassroots to write and send in platform planks, and it seems to me that if you're asked, you should take advantage of the opportunity.

We started out talking about what a platform is and looked at a couple of plank examples. I had sent the 2004 Democratic National Committee (DNC) Platform to the group before the meeting and I included a copy of the 1932 DNC Platform as an example of shorter planks. I provided a sheet of hints about how to write platform planks at the meeting.

We set some ground rules:

1. "This is an exercise in civility and debate." (A suggestion from the Obama website.)
2. No speechifying.
3. If a group cannot come to a consensus, it can adopt two alternate planks. (As it turned out, this one was not needed.)

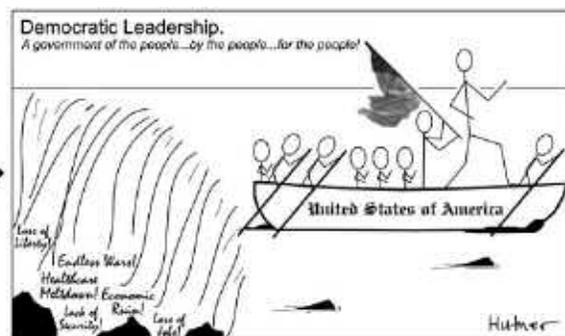
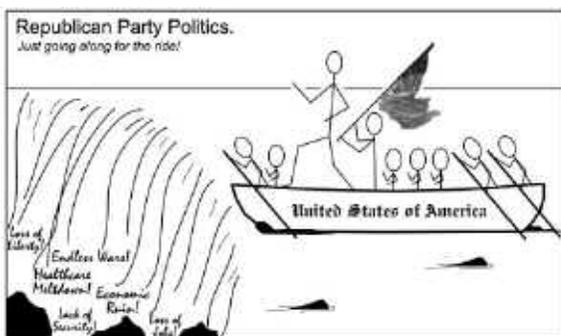
Then I did a call for issue planks, and people raised their hands, and as they spoke I wrote down their ideas on one of those big pads provided by the venue. We got a list of about 20 of various generality and specificity. Then we grouped a few together and then we voted. Participants got only one vote each, so they had to vote for their most cherished issue.



From the list of issues and potential planks, we chose eight, grouping some together when it made sense. Then we split up into groups. The groups quietly discussed their issues, deciding how broad and how specific to be and choosing from the huge number of possible areas of each issue. People were very intense, but always polite to each other, and I was blown away by their ability to come to consensus.

When the groups were done, each group chose a spokesman who

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"You cannot solve a problem with the same thinking that created the problem."
Albert Einstein.

Is the Electoral College Still Relevant?

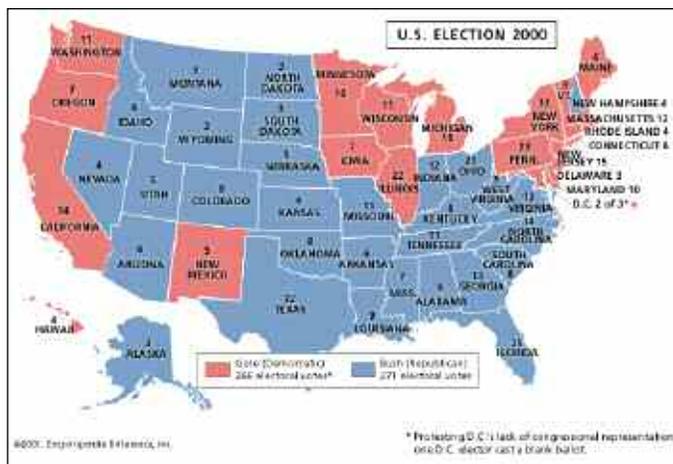
by Ben Struhl

As we fully enter the 21st century political landscape in America, it has come time to assess some of our nation's institutions originally conceived in our Constitution and examine whether they are still serving our interests as a nation. Naturally, no document could stay completely relevant over such a long period of time, and the founders, realizing this, included provisions to amend our Constitution when we saw the need. At the forefront of constitutional issues in need of major reformation is the Electoral College, which is tasked with actually selecting our president. A number of political experts and commentators argue that this single institution is the greatest threat to democracy in America and needs to be quickly and wisely reformed in order to avoid another election disaster like the one we had in 2000.

Many people are familiar with the basic premise of the Electoral College. Rather than calling for a tally of the vote of every person in the United States to elect the president, our Constitution calls for each state to be assigned a number of electors based on population. When the Electoral College convenes the December after the election, the slate of electors pledged to the candidate who won the most votes in the state casts its votes for that candidate. In this anti-democratic setup, the candidate who gets the most electors—not the most votes—wins the presidency. Though the two usually go together there are some very notable exceptions to this rule. Certainly it's hard to forget the latest occurrence in 2000, but the system had similar misfires in 1824, 1876, and 1888. And it almost failed in 1968 and 1976. As a system actually designed to subvert popular democracy, it's somewhat of a wonder that we haven't had even more problems with it.

When first founded in 1789, The Electoral College was conceived as an elitist society that would provide a bulwark against unwise decisions of the voting public (at the time a limited number of white males), which the Constitutional Convention deemed unfit to directly select America's commander-in-chief. Convention delegate George Mason put it this way, "[I]t would be as unnatural to refer the choice of a proper character for chief Magistrate to the people, as it would, to refer a trial of colours to a blind man. The extent of the Country renders it impossible that the people can have a requisite capacity to judge." This attitude is quite contrary, of course, to our current beliefs about the power and effectiveness of popular democracy, and clearly doesn't meet the contemporary standards of our nation. While it is a system designed by people living in a far different country and world, for some reason we continue to allow ourselves to be plagued by its myriad defects.

Beyond the potential for a disparity between the Electoral College vote and the nation's popular vote, there are so many other problems with the system that it likely cannot be saved. For one thing, as the rules of the system stand, the people selected as presidential electors could generally vote for whomever they chose, despite how the state they represent may have voted, and regardless of whether the person they selected was actually even on the ballot. While this problem has rarely reared its head and would be easy enough to fix, there is the further problem that not all states have the same ratio of electors to citizens. Each elector in California represents about 650,000 residents, while each elector in Wyoming represents about 170,000 residents, meaning



a vote in Wyoming counts about 3.8 times more than one in California. In a country where we claim to value the principle of "one person one vote" this system hardly seems tenable. Again, this could be easily fixed by reallocating electors more fairly, but the problem still remains in what happens if one candidate wins his or her states by wide margins, and the other wins more states by narrow margins.

Another lesser-known fact about the Electoral College is that if no majority is reached in the electors' vote, the election of the president is then

decided by state congressional delegations which means that the 53 representatives of California get as many votes as the one representative from Alaska. And, if a state has an equal number of representatives of each party, it gets no vote. This event has occurred twice in selecting our president, and in one of those instances (1824) collusion and political dealings decided the election, contrary to the popular vote, in the infamous "corrupt bargain." Even using best efforts to make the Electoral College fair, finding a way for it to contradict the popular will is never difficult.

Some commentators don't find it problematic that the Electoral College is anti-democratic, or say the few benefits that it confers are worth keeping, despite the shortfalls of the system. Proponents of the Electoral College often insist that the system ensures that smaller states also get attention, rather than all the attention going to big states such as California. Unfortunately, the current system fails on this front as well, with its focus on "battleground states" and neglect of most big states (California, New York, Texas) and small states (Rhode Island, Idaho, Alaska) considered already decided and not worth campaigning in. Other proponents of the Electoral College believe that the principle of states' rights inherent in the system makes it important enough to keep. However, a vast majority of Americans when polled disagree with this sentiment, and want the winner of the popular vote to be elected president. While Americans have never expressed approval of the Electoral College, disapproval has been especially high since the disastrous 2000 electoral win of George W. Bush.

If we are to consider ourselves a government by and for the people, it is incumbent upon us to change the way we select our president to reflect the democratic principles we most value. A number of innovative proposals have been put forward that would address the problem, varying in method of implementation and scope of reform. One possible state-level reform involves individual legislatures passing laws requiring that their electors vote for the winner of the popular vote. This remedy has the added benefit of not requiring the passage of a constitutional amendment. If a majority of elector-rich states passed such a law, the Electoral College would be effectively ended and the popular vote would determine the president. While this would be an easy way to deal with the problem, no state has agreed to such a proposal thus far, making the likelihood of this method being effective any time in the near future very small, unless Americans start paying more attention to the issue.

Most likely, the problems with the Electoral College will have to be addressed by a constitutional amendment, perhaps as a broader push to re-evaluate the anachronisms in our founding document.

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Dan Seals Brings Global Issues Home to the 10th District

by Carolyn Cerf

As a graduate in international relations and someone who has lived abroad for the better part of the last three years, it meant a lot to come home to the 10th District and the ongoing presidential and congressional campaigns. Many Americans are now stepping up to the plate to discuss and take a stand on issues that our friends abroad have long debated in our absence. One such American is Dan Seals, whose views can put the U.S.—and indeed the 10th District—back into a position of global leadership and progress. In fact, Seals's views make it clear that major national and global policy decisions are our business here in the 10th. From the economy to energy to foreign policy, Seals brings global issues home... and brings the 10th District to the policy-making table.

Consider economic policy. The decisions made by the U.S. Congress—to perform congressional oversight, to establish new banking and finance institutions, or to balance the budget—greatly affect economies all around the world, which in turn affect the United States. As I've heard many times, from both Oxford academics and Spanish market vendors, the world simply cannot afford to suffer American economic mistakes. The global and domestic economic strength will rely on a strong Democratic U.S. Congress in the coming years. Equipped with a master's in international economics, an MBA, and high-level experience in national commerce and international

trade and development, Dan Seals offers the 10th District a unique opportunity to have the best-qualified representation on economic and fiscal policy. When the 10th District has so much to protect during an economic downturn, now is not the time to continue to put our assets at risk by repeating recent economic blunders.

Likewise, citizens and their representatives throughout the world are grappling with climate change and the economic and security issues that come with it. Meanwhile, the United States has yet to seize the opportunity to lead and shape global initiatives on cleaner fuel sources and higher environmental standards. However, the time has come to be a part of the change. Just last month, the Senate debated the Boxer-Lieberman-Warner Climate Security Bill, which aims to provide the



Dan Seals with Senator Dick Durbin.

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Kirk Unmasked:

Mark Kirk Votes Against Impeachment, In Step With All but Nine House Republicans

This is the fifteenth in an ongoing series.

It's no surprise that Congressman Mark Kirk voted on July 15 to kill Dennis Kucinich's article of impeachment against George W. Bush. Kirk has long demonstrated that he would rather protect the Bush White House—even for actions that violate the U.S. Constitution and international laws—than American citizens and democracy itself.

Fortunately, Kucinich didn't need Kirk's support. The article passed the House in a 238:180 vote. All House Democrats and nine Republicans who, unlike Mark Kirk, were willing to deviate from the party line, voted in favor of the article.

Citing numerous documents that demonstrate the White House knew it was making false statements, the article alleges that President Bush deceived Congress with fabricated threats of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and role in the September 11 al Qaeda attacks. It also asserts that the President's use of misrepresentations to obtain Congress's authorization to use force against Iraq violates the U.S. Constitution, making him guilty of an impeachable offense.

"There can be no greater offense of a Commander in Chief than to misrepresent a cause of war and to send our brave men and women into harm's way based on those misrepresentations," Kucinich said in a letter to congressional colleagues. "Impeachment as a remedy falls short, but represents at least some effort on our part to demonstrate our concern about the sacrifices our troops have made."

On July 25, the House Judiciary Committee, headed by John Conyers, held a hearing on "the limitations of executive power," and impeachment was more than a subtext. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said the committee will not vote on impeachment, but impeachment advocates increasingly are hopeful that the hearing

will encourage more members of Congress to support their effort to hold George Bush accountable.

"A thoughtful review of [the] information, in a formal setting, will make clear the extent of which this president and those around him have engaged in precisely the sort of wrongdoing that the founders imagined when they gave the House the power to impeach members of the executive branch," John Nichols wrote in *The Nation* blog "The Beat" (See <http://www.thenation.com/blogs/thebeat/337249>).

Kucinich has long been pressing for impeachment hearings. He previously introduced 35 articles relating to President Bush and three articles relating to Vice President Cheney. Kucinich has said that if this new article is tabled, he will introduce another.

His vote against the Kucinich article of impeachment is hardly the first time Mark Kirk betrayed his oath to defend the U.S. Constitution in order to defend the unconstitutional activities of the Bush administration. Last July, for example, Kirk was one of just 32 Republicans to vote against holding former White House counsel Harriet Miers and Presidential Chief of Staff Joshua Bolten in contempt of Congress for refusing to provide critical documents related to the investigation of the dismissal of U.S. Attorneys from the Justice Department.

Mark Kirk's continued willingness to protect and defend the Bush administration in the face of mounting evidence of its expansion of executive power in violation of the U.S. Constitution makes it imperative for citizens of the 10th District to vote him out of office in November and replace him with Dan Seals—someone our district can count on to support Barack Obama in restoring the balance of power in our government.



What Does McClellan's Book Have To Do with Mark Kirk?

by Ellen Beth Gill

Mark Kirk is in the middle of Scott McClellan's charges against the Bush administration. Here's why.

First, Mark Kirk ran in 2002 and 2004 and some in 2006 (but he was less able to get away with it then) as someone personally in-the-know on Iraq. He didn't run as someone who trustingly believed the intelligence from the White House. He ran as someone who had personal knowledge that Iraq had WMD and based his defense of the invasion on that knowledge. He loudly berated anyone who questioned the invasion and he actually wrote to a Tenth District constituent back in 2003:

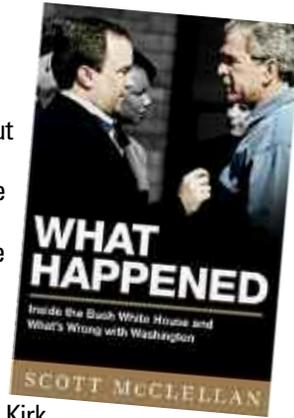
[After detailing his own personal experience with Iraq, Kirk went on:] With this experience, I developed a detailed knowledge of the intelligence regarding the Hussein government and its attempts to violate the will of the international community as formally expressed in over 15 unanimous UN Security Council Resolutions.

Earlier, he also spread the story of Adnan Ihsan Saeed al-Haideri, an Iraqi from Kurdistan who claimed that he was a civil engineer who had helped Saddam's men secretly bury tons of biological, chemical and nuclear weapons. The illegal arms, according to al-Haideri, were buried in subterranean wells, hidden in private villas, even stashed beneath the Saddam Hussein Hospital, the largest medical facility in Baghdad. The story, which Kirk repeated to the House on October 8, 2002, was not true.

[See www.house.gov/kirk/iraq.htm and "The Man Who Sold the War," *Rolling Stone*, Nov. 17, 2005, www.rollingstone.com/politics/story/8798997/the_man_who_sold_the_war]

With McClellan's revelations, we have to wonder if Kirk knew it wasn't true at the time, or if he just didn't care enough about accuracy over campaigning to check it out first. All by himself, Mark Kirk put his personal credibility on the line for the Iraq invasion, so his personal credibility should be considered at stake now that the story has not only completely fallen apart, but also has been characterized specifically as propaganda by a Bush administration insider.

This is not to say that Mark Kirk was personally in charge of the Iraq invasion. However, he sold himself to us as our congressman on his



personal, specific, and exclusive knowledge, and that knowledge was not only wrong, but also in step with a strategic propaganda campaign. When many of us tried to warn Kirk that this was the likely case, he arrogantly and dismissively rejected our input.

Second, McClellan talks about the permanent campaign, where everything done is done, not for the good of the country, but as part of the campaign for the next election cycle. I think Mark Kirk is engaged in a permanent campaign of his own. His push for the Iraq invasion was part of his permanent campaign. He also plays the procedural votes to build a voting record he can describe as conservative in Palatine and moderate in Northbrook. He obtains release from his party to vote with the Democrats

when his vote doesn't matter on the numbers and then tries to use these votes to prove a moderate record. I'd like to have seen him step up to the moderate plate when his vote really did matter, like when his vote enriched the pharma companies at the expense of seniors or when his was the deciding vote to cut student loan subsidies and freeze Pell Grants. Also, he plays on constituent fears by talking about the dangers of the Internet to children left home alone by parents who have to work two and three jobs to survive in the very economy Mark Kirk helped create with his support for outsourcing and tax cuts that move wealth from the middle to the very top. Finally, his campaigning in synagogues with Holocaust imagery while supporting hate groups on immigration issues smacks of nothing better than permanent campaigning using fear over common sense.

McClellan's message is that future leaders need to avoid the permanent campaign. I agree with him there and have been pointing out the problem with the Bush administration sales pitches for many years now. So, as a commenter on my blog pointed out about us liberals, everything we said was so was so, and everything we said would happen happened. A pretty good track record for the liberal politicians and bloggers, but make no mistake, we take no pleasure in our government choosing the wrong path and continuing to so choose. Time for a change. Heck, even loyal Bushie Republican Scott McClellan is exploring voting for Obama as he told Keith Olbermann. Until more Republicans understand that country is more important than party, they don't deserve our votes.

Europeans Right on Obama

by Gary Lukens

There was a time when a visit by an American president to Europe carried an aura of goodwill that spread far and wide across the countryside.

Such revered presidents as Wilson, Roosevelt, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Reagan have traveled to Europe and basked in the hospitality of our Old World brethren. Enormous crowds once lined posh boulevards for a chance to see the leader of the free world. Sadly, that popularity has waned.

One reason for this may be the candidate's name. For the first time in two decades, the name Clinton or Bush will not be on the election ballot for President of the United States.

Perhaps that might explain the "rock star" like treatment given recently to Barack Obama by a cheering throng of ecstatic Germans. Granted Europeans, other than American citizens, do not vote in our presidential elections; but quite a few have relatives here who do vote.

This is why I feel Senator Obama would be much more effective than Senator John McCain in international relations. Moreover, I welcome

the attention he received in Europe and can only hope he receives a more enthusiastic reception as our 44th president.

Does this type of wishful thinking make me less patriotic? Have I disgraced our troops by wanting a president who creates and cultivates bridges instead of building walls? Apparently, Mr. McCain thinks so. I imagine he will paint the hysteria and jubilation of Obama's European visit from the same canvas as Bush's "swift boat" canard.

Still, let him pander to those who think war is the answer. That is not the mantle of my President. My President will know and understand international culture and etiquette. My President will not have a vice-president showing up at the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz in a parka and hunting boots.

Europeans carry the same hope as Americans that our next president will be a good president. With strife circling about the Middle East and a global recession looming on the horizon, there is much at stake for Europe.

For this reason alone America needs a president with magnetism. And while it is certain Palestinians will not embrace Israelis like brothers the moment Obama arrives to break bread, perhaps our kindred spirits across the pond see something not yet fathomed here in America.



Everyone loves a parade! Tenth Dems were seen all around the 10th District celebrating Independence Day by marching for their candidates.



Stand Up for Dan

by Steve Sheffey

“We can't all be heroes because somebody has to sit on the curb and clap as they go by”

~ Will Rogers

But on July 4, my youngest daughter and I decided to be heroes, and we marched for Dan Seals at the Highland Park parade.

Many Dan fans turned out, both to march and to watch. Part of the fun of marching was seeing so many people, including friends I had not seen in years, giving me the thumbs up as I walked by holding my Seals sign.

I saw one old friend at the parade and then a few days later at the Aquapark. He said at the pool that he noticed me marching for Seals and he was surprised. He thought I was “a pro-Israel guy.” I reassured him that I am as pro-Israel as ever, and that’s why I’m supporting Dan. But if I hadn’t publicly supported Dan, we might never have discussed it.

Please show your support for Dan. Put a sticker on your bumper. Put a yard sign on your lawn. Wear a Seals button on your shirt or your purse. Wear a Seals t-shirt (perfect for the health club when it’s too cold to wear outside). Write a letter to the editor. Speak up when you hear people talking about the election. Hit “reply to all” when you get political emails. These work. People’s votes are influenced by familiarity, and people who see more Seals yard signs and bumper stickers are more likely to vote for him. Also, if your friends know that YOU are supporting Dan, they are more likely to ask you for information when they receive misinformation from the other side. Remember that next to Dan himself, YOU are the best advertisement for Dan in your circle of friends and acquaintances.

If you aren’t comfortable with any of these suggestions, that’s fine too (that’s why we have secret ballots). There are other ways to help, and if you call Dan’s office I’m sure they’ll find something productive for you to do that you’re comfortable with.

Will Rogers also said “I’m not a member of any organized political party. I’m a Democrat!” Let’s get organized. We can win this election. By showing our support for Dan, we can encourage others to support him too.

The Time Has Come for Marriage Equality

by Ilya Sheyman

Forty-one years ago, the Supreme Court ruled that “[m]arriage is one of the ‘basic civil rights of man,’ fundamental to our very existence and survival.” At the time that the Loving decision struck down miscegenation laws that had prohibited marriages between mixed-race couples, popular opinion stood firmly against such marriages. But, that’s the beauty of our government — the notion that the rights of the minority should never be subject to the whims of the majority.

It is not merely popular opinion that has often stood in the way of equality. It is also the frequently used argument of tradition. Tradition dictated slavery, Jim Crow segregation, the lack of inter-religious and interracial marriage, and male-only suffrage. Marriage equality is no different.

There are more than 1,000 rights and benefits that unmarried couples don’t receive but married ones do. From survivorship benefits and hospital visitation rights to adoption and filing joint tax statements, the discrepancies in rights, responsibilities, and benefits at all levels of government highlight the need for a one-size-fits-all solution that recognizes the equality of homosexual and heterosexual couples. And, if the state is willing to recognize the sanctity of such a long-term committed relationship, why not allow the couple to enter the same civil institution as a heterosexual couple? Ultimately, the concept of marriage is a civil rather than religious one. No church will have to accept marriage equality any more than a church has to accept divorce.

Despite the current debate, it is almost a certainty that marriage equality will be a reality in America within a generation. The youngest Americans — those rushing out to the polls to vote in record numbers for new leaders like Barack Obama — recognize the injustice of the current system and consistently express more tolerance to their fellow citizens, regardless of sexual orientation.

This summer, California, the largest state in the union, officially began recognizing marriage equality for all couples, regardless of sexual orientation. This decision provides an opening for the United States to regain its role as a beacon of light, hope, and progress for the world. Over the past decade we’ve seen Belgium, Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, and even South Africa leap ahead of us in providing this basic human and civil right.

Now the time has come for full marriage equality in America.



Interns Dan Murphy and Vlad Voskoboynikov proudly march with the Tenth Dems banner.

Tenth Dems U Presents Alexi Giannoulas

by Adrienne Kirschbaum

On Tuesday evening, July 8, Tenth Dems University offered a class on the impact of young voters in the 2008 election. Illinois Treasurer Alexi Giannoulas, the youngest statewide elected official in the nation, was our professor for the night. Who better to examine the importance of youthful voters to this year's contest than this man, who ran for office at the age of 29 after working as a banker for all of his short professional life? Now, at just 32 years of age, he stood before us to talk about his friend, Barack Obama, and about the young people who work in and support Senator Obama's presidential campaign.

Mr. Giannoulas ran for office because he wanted to make an impact on people's lives, and he says he still possesses the same idealism. He feels it is important to get young people involved in the political process and surrounds himself with those who are committed to what they are doing and who mirror his enthusiasm and idealism.

Mr. Giannoulas, who played some professional basketball in Greece, first met Barack Obama on a local basketball court. They formed a friendship. Both faced the same criticisms during their respective campaigns. They were told they were too young and that they lacked experience. But Mr. Giannoulas recognized Senator Obama's special qualities from the start and feels that he has transformed the political process and gotten a new generation of voters involved.

Historically, young people don't participate in the electoral process, but Senator Obama was determined to change that. Many young

people have been at work in his campaign. As for voters, the numbers speak for themselves. A record number of people under 30 took part in the primaries. More than half of the voters in the 18- to 24-year-old age range are Democrats. (Only about one-third are Republicans.) This age group made up 14 percent of the total vote in the Democratic primaries, which is up from nine percent in 2004. And 60 percent of those young voters cast their ballots for Obama.

The youth of our country are growing up in a difficult era. They see families in economic trouble and friends going to war. They want to change things, and they respond to the issues that Senator Obama talks about. They want to be proud of their country, and they are eager to participate in the most important election of our time.

After his remarks on the Obama campaign and the impact of young voters, Mr. Giannoulas took questions from the class. A six-year-old girl named Sarah was in the audience. When he spotted her, Mr. Giannoulas said that she was the most important person in the room

continued on page 8



TDU interns and young voters Jordan Silver and Vlad Voskoboynikov with TDU professor Alexi Giannoulas.

Electoral College *continued from page 2*

The constitutional amendment could range in simplicity and effect from simply striking the whole notion of the College from our election system and relying solely on popular will, to awarding a large number of additional electors to the winner of the popular vote, assuring that this person won a plurality of the Electoral College every time, while preserving the traditional and federally based system that once existed.

The continued use of the Electoral College is an issue that gets remarkably little attention but is enormously important and needs rapid

attention before it again messes up an American election. Consider this—the Electoral College (among other election mishaps) gave us the Bush administration in 2000 and ushered in an era of preemptive war, economic recession, environmental destruction, undermined civil rights, governmental inefficiency, massive spending deficits, and cuts to valuable social programs. Regardless of which issues matter most to you, we must have an actual democracy where votes directly and fairly translate into who ends up serving as President of the United States, and that cannot happen dependably with the Electoral College. When we start updating our Constitution—and we should—the Electoral College needs to be the first thing we change.

Buttons and More *continued from page 1*

THE DAMAGE – VOTE DEMOCRATIC." The other proclaims, "TAKE BACK AMERICA – Vote Democratic in 2008."

The prices for all buttons are: one for \$3; two for \$5; five for \$10 and 10 for \$18, and they can be mixed for purchase. Buttons are ideal, low-cost, novel gifts.

But that's not all.

Obama bumper stickers are available for \$3 each, and a combo of a bumper sticker and any button is priced at \$5.

Three popular books will keep your family and friends amused, from smiles to outright laughing. "Bad President" contains real, unretouched photos of Bush and his inner circle. The captions are hilarious, and you'll want to show them to anyone within calling distance. Buy one for yourself and more for gifting. Price: \$10.

"Why Mommy is a Democrat" and "Why Daddy is a Democrat" are both written for children three to six years old. Reading aloud is a great way to form a bond between young children and parents or grandparents. These books make great gifts for showers and birthdays. Price: \$10 each.

In less than six months, on January 20, 2009, Bush will be gone; he will be history and I can hardly wait for the day. I wear both the Bush

hat that says "Bush's Last Day - 01.20.09" and a T-Shirt with the same message. These are very popular items. Price: \$20 each.

Eye-popping Coffee Mugs - Pure Magic! Here's an item worth drinking to! Just pour a hot beverage into any of the three mugs described below, and you'll see an attention-getting disappearing act. When the beverage cools, the mug returns to its original state. Entertain family and friends with these fun mugs. Red state/Blue State Mug - Watch red states turn blue. Bill of Rights Mug - Our civil rights disappear... The ones Bush took away. Global Warming Mug - Land mass disappears as world temperature rises. Price: \$15 each.

"Mission Accomplished" Poop Scoops for dog owners. Bush's image is on one side and Cheney's on the other. These are great conversation starters when you meet up with other dog walkers. They also make an ideal gift for dog-owner friends. Biodegradable. Price: \$10 per package of 50 bags.

All of these products are available at our online store. Go to www.tenthdems.org and click on "Tenth Dems Online Store" in the left column; or shop in person at the Moraine Township Democratic Office, 442 Central Avenue, 2nd floor, Highland Park. Office hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and other unscheduled times. Our office is staffed by volunteers, so be sure to call 847-433-8344 to verify that the office is open.

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Seals's Global Issues *continued from page 3*

U.S. with the very framework for transition to world-class environmental and energy policy. The bill is likely to come up for amendment and a vote in the 2009 legislative session. In addition to such crucial legislation, major international cooperation, such as talks on the Kyoto Protocol, will define America's role in global climate change initiatives and the establishment of new international institutions. These challenges are both global and local. The task calls for a fresh and earnest approach under increased Democratic leadership. Represented by Dan Seals, the 10th District can ensure that taxpayer resources are focused on the future of the U.S. economy, energy security, and technological advancement. Dan Seals believes that by leading by example and engaging with the Kyoto signatories, the U.S. can ensure the cooperation of developing nations like China and India, which have so far been able to rely on U.S. inaction to continue disastrous energy policies. His representation of the 10th District in Congress will mean a welcome break with recent policy because he sees the opportunity to lead in a time of global change.

Of course, no area of U.S. policy is more hotly debated abroad than foreign policy. For many abroad, U.S. foreign policy is the linchpin of global stability and the mark of a civilized superpower. As Dan Seals sees it, the Iraq War detracted attention and resources from the greater global war on terrorism, thereby defeating the aim of increased national security in the post-9/11 world. As we have all learned in recent years, achieving homeland security will require a comprehensive, dynamic strategy. A strong Democratic Congress can best represent the wisdom of the majority of Americans. They, along with Dan Seals, believe that America can reclaim the position of strength and credibility required to address the foreign policy issues that continue to threaten global stability. It will take America's best

leaders to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, help stabilize the Middle East, address a rising China, protect our borders, stabilize underdeveloped regions, and pass legislation in areas ranging from counterterrorism to foreign aid. These are daunting tasks. To countless people at home and abroad, the end of the Cold War offered the hope of U.S. leadership on such issues and it is time for the 10th District to contribute on the frontlines of foreign policy.

It is sometimes difficult to relate such major policy issues to local or individual action. But for the 10th Congressional District, the coming election is clearly a chance for our views to shape America's face to the world. Dan Seals represents these views and offers us a voice at the forefront of major change.

Giannoulis *continued from page 7*

because the results of the election would impact her generation the most. He answered all the questions put to him with sincerity and grace, and he charmed the class with his openness and honesty. Youthful voters aside, there was one young man in the room who is sure to have a bright future. We look forward to hearing more from Alexi Giannoulis.

Democracy *continued from page 1*

read the planks written by the group. A couple of changes were requested and discussed and one was made. Generally, the groups were very pleased with each other's work. The kicker is that we did all this in one hour and 45 minutes, as that was all the time we had until the venue closed.

It was so exciting to see real democracy in action. It is possible. We proved it in the Illinois 10th District that very night.