

<i>In This Issue:</i>	McCain/Palin3
Kirk's Endorsements .1	Photos4
10th Watches Obama .1	10th Dems Store . . .5
Dan Seals2	The Political Mind .6
Ellen Beth Gill2	Grand Jollification .7
Kirk Unmasked3	Please Join Us7

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Kirk's Endorsements: The Facts

A look at the leaders whom Mark Kirk has endorsed reveals far more about our incumbent congressman than any list of organizations that have endorsed him.

by Steve Sheffey

When you see ads telling us that Mark Kirk is a "moderate" and endorsements that supposedly prove the point, please keep these facts in mind:

Groups like Planned Parenthood, the League of Conservation Voters, and the Brady Campaign base their endorsements solely on how the incumbent votes on a certain minimum number of bills. They don't consider the challenger, and their endorsement does not imply that the incumbent is better than the challenger. To maintain their non-profit status, they must establish criteria that do not allow for judgment or subjectivity.

For example, Kirk lost the League of Conservation Voters endorsement in 2006, but

his historic inconsistency and his negative votes throughout his career won't be held against him by the League in 2008. That's just how it works. A poor record during the evaluation time will not result in an endorsement, but an endorsement does not mean the incumbent is perfect or is better than the challenger, nor does it imply a good long-term record. The League of Conservation Voters would endorse Kirk over Al Gore if Kirk met their voting threshold during the relevant time period.

That's why these non-profits don't—and can't—look at the bigger picture. But we can.

Kirk supports leaders whose agendas guarantee that the causes he claims to support won't go anywhere. He claims to be independent, but he jetted back to Washington when Republican leadership demanded a "yes" vote on the Terri Schiavo Restoration Act, which required the federal government to forcibly insert a feeding

continued on page 5



Tenth News

OCTOBER 2008 Illinois Tenth Congressional District Democrats Newsletter Volume 5, Edition 10

Tenth Dems Hosts Overflow Crowd as Barack Obama Accepts His Party's Nomination for President of the United States

by John Hmurovic

Nationwide, 38 million watched. In Denver's football stadium, 80,000 attended. And in Northbrook, nearly five hundred 10th District residents joined in to listen to Barack Obama's speech accepting the Democratic nomination for president.

Even though our U.S. Senator was hundreds of miles away, part of the loud cheer that filled the skies over America that night came from the gathering in Northbrook. People were on their feet, applauding, shouting their approval, and showing their enthusiasm, as they watched Barack Obama on two large TV screens set up in adjoining ballrooms of the Renaissance Hotel in Northbrook, as well as on two smaller monitors set up in the lobby to handle the overflow crowd.

Tenth Dems organized the free event, which also featured appearances by local candidates such as congressional nominee Dan Seals, state representative candidates Karen May and

continued on page 4



Dan Seals Deserves Our Votes Because of Who He Is and What He Stands For

by John Hmurovic

Voting against someone is an old tradition in American politics. It goes as far back as Thomas Jefferson telling people why John Adams shouldn't get a second term. But most of us, I would guess, would prefer to not only vote against a George Bush, John McCain, or Sarah Palin, but also to vote for someone we admire and respect as a political leader. We are fortunate. In the national election we have Barack Obama and Joe Biden. And in the 10th District, we have Dan Seals.

There are two reasons to vote for Dan Seals: Who he is, and what he stands for.

I can't claim to know Dan Seals well. But I do know him well enough to know that he will be an outstanding U. S. Congressman. You can see that when you meet him. The first time I met him was nearly three years ago, when he was first considering a run for Congress. Even then, without the benefit of the experience that comes with running for office, he was well versed on the issues and very articulate in his expression of his views. Everyone in the room was impressed by this man who was then a stranger to almost all of us.

His competence was visible again when he faced off against veteran Congressman Mark Kirk in their only debate of the 2006 campaign. I was relegated to one of the overflow areas of the venue where the debate was held and by chance was standing next to a small crowd of Kirk backers. They appeared cocky and confident when the debate began, cheering

loudly after Kirk's first slam against Dan Seals, certain that their hero was going to quickly dispose of someone they viewed as a "lightweight." I impressed myself by controlling my irritation over their arrogance. But by the end of the debate, I was the only one smiling in our little viewing area. In my opinion, it wasn't until that debate that Mark Kirk and the Republicans woke up to the fact that they had a real challenge on their hands. Dan Seals handled every question well, and showed as much knowledge, poise, and skill as the veteran congressman. If you were

continued on page 5



Tenth Dems Recognizes One of Our Own *Ellen's Illinois Tenth Congressional District Blog Passes 100,000 Hits*

by Melissa Bigg

Ellen Beth Gill is one of the founding members of the Tenth District Democrats. She is a valued contributor to Tenth Dems University and the Tenth News. With her blog, she keeps discerning readers up to date on all that's going on in politics and government. Her motto is, "Using my free speech while I still have it." To commemorate her blog's 100,000th hit, we asked Ellen to tell us a bit more about herself.

What living person do you most admire?

There are a lot of people I admire, particularly the people who work so hard at the grassroots level working for something they believe in rather than fame or fortune. I've also been thinking a lot about Lisa Madigan. She came from an illustrious family but made her own way, starting out teaching in South Africa during apartheid. Now she fights, not for the politicians of the State of Illinois, but for the people of the State of Illinois. I particularly like how she is working to fight mortgage and other types of consumer fraud.

Who are your favorite writers?

Ken Follett for *World Without End*, a book about the plague and waning days of serfdom. I also like Howard Zinn for his *People's History of the United States*. For fun, I like the *Shopaholic* series by Sophie Kinsella. One cannot be serious all the time.

What qualities do you look for in a candidate?

Honesty, genuineness and a real calling to serve. I want them to do in office what they say they are going to do as candidates. I also want to see people who truly want to serve and don't just run for the job or the status.

What do you like most/least about politics?

Most: meeting great people. Least: when people speechify too much at events.

What is your greatest fear?

I am seeing so much worry and angst in my legal practice over job insecurity, real estate and investment losses, and the loss of a safety net for seniors as Bush's Deficit Reduction Act has taken a lot out of Medicaid. I am very worried about what would happen to the average American under a McCain/Palin administration.

Who are your favorite bloggers?

Locally, Larry Handlin, known as Archpundit, and nationally, Josh Marshall at *Talking Points Memo* and Glenn Greenwald at *Salon*.

What news sources do you trust?

None. I believe in researching original sources, and while I might initially find something in a news story, where possible I'll double check it on original sources like the *Congressional Record*.

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?

I wish I were more outgoing. I am basically shy in one-on-one situations, which makes phone banking and canvassing hard. Oddly, I can speak to a group of 500 more easily than I can to someone at his or her door on a canvass.

If you weren't a blogger/attorney what would you be?

A theatre manager or television director. I managed the Royal George Theatre for the original Chicago cast of *Lost in Yonkers* back in the mid-1990s, and worked in theatre all through high school and college. I was also one of the original producers/directors for the Chicago Bar Association's series *You and the Law*. I don't have any stage talent, but I do enjoy theatre and television technology and directing.

Thank you for all you do, Ellen!

Kirk Unmasked: Mark Kirk's Enthusiastic Praise of Sarah Palin Speaks Volumes



This is the seventeenth in an ongoing series.

For the last 16 months, this column has looked at critical votes cast in the House of Representatives by 10th District Republican Congressman Mark Kirk. Our examination has demonstrated that Kirk is not the independent representative he often pretends to be. Rather, Mark Kirk is a loyal supporter of the ultraconservative, Republican agenda that, led by the Bush White House over the last eight years, has taken our country backwards.

Supporting the passage of retrogressive laws, such as the Patriot Act, the Protect American Act, and the Military Commissions Act, Mark Kirk has helped to weaken our country's system of checks and balances, undermine the U.S. Constitution, erode our civil liberties, and gut consumer protections and environmental rights. In the process, he's played a key role in paving the way for the Bush administration's egregious expansions of executive power.

But if anyone still had any lingering doubt about Mark Kirk's true priorities and absolute lack of independence, that doubt was put to rest with his eager, enthusiastic support of Sarah Palin as his party's vice presidential nominee.

Just days after John McCain announced Palin as his running mate, Kirk was heard on WLS radio praising the vice presidential nominee for her opposition to the Bridge to Nowhere. Even though, as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Boston Herald* quickly reported, Palin actually endorsed the project and switched positions only after

political support for it evaporated, Kirk credited Palin for helping him with his efforts to kill the project.

Kirk's glib recitation of Republican talking points and his quick praise of Sarah Palin, a woman utterly unqualified to be a heartbeat away from the presidency, underscore his eagerness to support at all costs a continuation, if not an escalation, of the Bush administration's failed policies and assault on American democracy.

From the moment Sarah Palin's candidacy was announced, it was clear that she was chosen for her potential to garner votes, without any thought given to her qualifications to assume the presidency. As *Washington Post* columnist Richard Cohen wrote on September 17, McCain's "opportunistic irresponsible choice of Sarah Palin—the person in whose hands he would leave the country—is a form of personal treason...Palin, no matter what her other attributes, is shockingly unprepared to become president, and McCain knows that." ("*The Ugly New McCain*," <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/09/15/AR2008091502406.html>)

Mark Kirk knows that, too. According to *Politico*, here was his take on the Palin nomination on September 1:

There's going to be a fight over her definition. Her initial introduction was as a young, good-looking female governor —

continued on page 8

Here's What to Expect if McCain/Palin Are Elected

by Sharon Sanders

Many years ago, I developed a fascination for and fear of the Religious Right. I read everything I could get my hands on about the Second Coming, saving Israel for Jesus, End Time, absolute opposition to abortion for any reason, Creationism as a subject to be taught in public schools, viewing the United States as a "Christian nation," praise for the like-minded and disdain for the non-believers, and government as an instrument for maintaining religious values. And now, here is Sarah Palin, an avowed member of the Religious Right, the Republican nominee for Vice President of the United States. It's so incredibly scary that I've been waking up with nightmares, thinking I dreamed all this but, unfortunately, realizing in the morning that these nightmares are real. We only have two months to get Barack Obama, Dan Seals, and all our other Democratic candidates ahead in the polls. We need to do everything we can to stop a possible victory by McCain/Palin in November.

This is not a diatribe against religion. There are so many religious, moral individuals who believe a great democracy is only great if it tolerates all religions, or no religion at all—people who honor the First Amendment's separation of Church and State. They believe that the good deeds we do here on Earth are what make the difference. I had always hoped that our Constitution would be the wall that kept the extremists separate from the moderate voices in this nation, but as I watched the likes of Pat Robertson, Phyllis Schlafly, James Dobson and word guru Frank Luntz, I knew we were in deep, deep trouble.

And now there is Sarah Palin. If she became president, she would advocate the teaching of Creationism in the public schools, censorship in our public libraries, perhaps even removal of employees who do not adhere to her religious views. She would seek to overturn *Roe v. Wade* and ensure the Supreme Court is ultra-conservative, and even



make critical foreign policy decisions based on her biblical beliefs. In this very critical time, she is absolutely inexperienced, unprepared for the job of vice president, and a very dangerous choice.

We, as Democrats, have absolutely no time left to sit on our hands waiting for the winds to blow our way. If we don't work ourselves to the point of exhaustion to make sure that progressives are elected, we may never have the chance again in our lifetime. If nothing else, the desire of the Religious Right to appoint super-conservative judges to the Supreme Court should be motivation enough for us to make sure we don't lose this election. So, I don't know about you, but I'm scared out of my wits. For the sake of my children and grandchildren, I will do everything I can before November 4th. We need everyone, every Democrat, to join us in the battle to take back Congress and the White House. Time is running out.

Tenth Dems Hosts Overflow Crowd

continued from page 1

Daniel Biss, and county candidates such as Lake County Board nominee Michelle Feldman.

But the star of the night was Barack Obama. Many Americans have just been getting to know him, but he was no stranger to the crowd in Northbrook. Four years ago, Obama was the keynote speaker at the first fundraiser for Tenth Dems. For him, the crowds have grown significantly from four years ago. And for us? Judging from the smiles on the faces of the crowd that attended in Northbrook, our enthusiasm for Barack Obama has grown, and our pride in this son of Illinois is greater than ever.

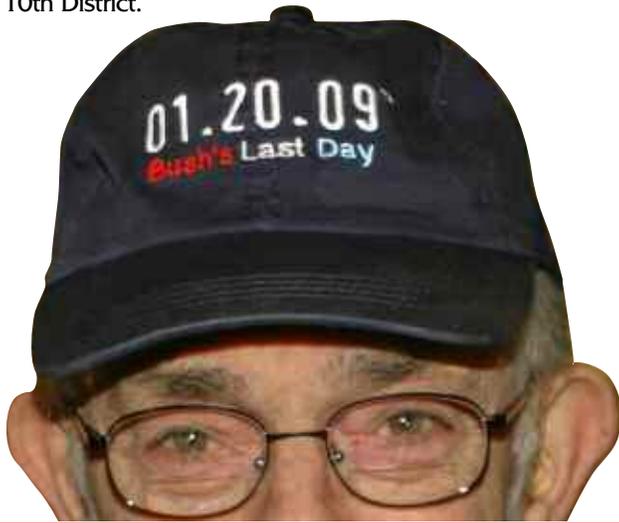




Wear Your Support! New Buttons Now Available

Pin a button on your collar, paste a banner on your bumper, stick a yard sign in your lawn, wear a rakish cap.

Shop online for these items and more at www.tenthdems.org (click on "Tenth Dems Online Store" or go to the MTDO office at 442 Central Avenue in Highland Park, on the second floor above Enaz Boutique). Proceeds support Democrats throughout the 10th District.



Dan Seals *continued from page 2*

at that debate, you know what I mean. We all were smiling, all proud of the job that Dan Seals had done.

Despite his obvious skills and intelligence, Dan Seals is not a pretentious man. He is always friendly, always open to strangers, and he listens when you speak to him. I've watched him at numerous events over the past two campaigns and have always been amazed at the patience he exhibits as person after person steps up to claim time with the candidate.

Being smart, talented, articulate, friendly, and sincere are traits that are good in anyone in any profession. But personal traits are only part of the package most of us look for in candidates. We also want to know what they believe in. Republicans and other conservatives believe that government needs to be shrunk to a size where it will be easy for them to drown it in a bathtub. Democrats and liberals believe that government has a role to play in making life better, not for just the well-connected and the politically and financially strong parts of our society, but for all of us. No matter how much Mark Kirk tries to pretend to be a moderate, he is still a Republican who casts the overwhelming majority of his votes with his Republican colleagues. That is the fundamental difference between Mark Kirk and Dan Seals. Kirk wants to shrink government and make it serve the needs of the corporate powers; Seals wants to use government to help all Americans have an equal chance for success.

Dan Seals is against the war in Iraq. He would not have voted, as Mark Kirk has done, for every step the Bush administration has taken

in that war—including the ill-advised decision to get into it in the first place. Dan Seals stands for a responsible withdrawal from Iraq and for supporting the men and women who served in that war by providing them with essential healthcare—something that Kirk has also consistently voted against.

Dan Seals lists healthcare as one of his priorities. After eight years of ignoring the problem, it's obvious that Kirk does not feel that it is a major concern. Dan Seals doesn't believe that anyone who is satisfied with a healthcare plan should be forced to change it. But he believes the government needs to make sure that those who are uninsured or underinsured are receiving at least a basic level of care, and he would base his model coverage on Medicare, a government program that has helped millions of Americans afford the care they need.

Dan Seals is a strong backer of environmental protection who would not (as Mark Kirk has done) vote to cut funding for environmental programs. He is solidly in favor of focusing America's technological talents on finding cures to our oil addiction, and he would not vote (as Mark Kirk has done) solidly in favor of protecting the interests of the oil industry at every turn.

I can go on and on and talk about Dan Seals and his complete support for Israel, his desire to invest in early education and to overhaul No Child Left Behind, his plans to make college education something all families can afford, or his emphasis on returning Washington to some sense of fiscal responsibility. But you are better off reading about it in his own words, on his website, www.dansealsforcongress.com. Go there and see for yourself. His positions on these issues and more are all there for you to read.

If you believe in what the Democratic Party stands for, and you go to his website and read his positions, there is no doubt that you will come away with many reasons to vote for Dan Seals.

Kirk's Endorsements *continued from page 1*

tube into a woman who had been in a vegetative state for 15 years, against the wishes of her husband.

Kirk claims to support thoughtful leadership, yet his re-election would guarantee a vote for John Boehner (R-OH) for Speaker of the House, which would mean a solid anti-choice, anti-gun control, anti-environment agenda.

Kirk was an early backer of John McCain, who vows to overturn *Roe v. Wade* and who believes that gun control is unconstitutional, and who told us he wasn't kidding with his selection of Sarah Palin. If Kirk is so proud of his recent League of Conservation Voters rating, why does he support McCain and Boehner, both of whom received ZERO ratings from the same group?

Kirk supports Israel, yet the week after Kirk was re-elected in 2006, he voted to elect Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA) to the post of Republican Policy Committee Chairman. Issa had previously referred to Israel as an "apartheid state" and called for the U.N. to redraw Israel's borders. But Kirk voted for Issa anyway. Fortunately, Kirk's fellow Republicans rejected Issa by a two-to-one margin.

Do you want McCain, Palin, Boehner, and Issa running the country and setting an agenda that is not ours? Kirk does. He's proven it.

We can't afford the leadership Mark Kirk endorses. It's disingenuous to separate the positions Kirk claims to hold from the leadership he follows. Kirk claims to be pro-choice, pro-gun control, and pro-environment, yet he supports leadership diametrically opposed to those positions. Kirk follows the wrong leaders. We need a congressman who will not only vote the right way, but also support leadership that will get our issues on the agenda. We need a congressman who will support leaders committed to fighting for our values, not leaders committed to thwarting them. We need Dan Seals.

George Lakoff's New Book Offers New Insights into the "Political Mind"

by Neesa Sweet

I read George Lakoff's new book, *The Political Mind*, the week of the Republican Convention. It led to an odd sense of déjà vu. Normally, I would have been bewildered by what was happening—the fact that truth and integrity didn't seem to matter, for example, or that the more know-nothing the comments, the greater the applause. But Lakoff's book made it all seem frighteningly clear, and not surprising.

Lakoff is a cognitive linguist at the University of California at Berkeley. This book is the latest of several he has aimed at elucidating the political differences between conservatives and progressives. Four years ago his best selling book, *Don't Think of An Elephant*, a shorter and more accessible version of his previous book, *Moral Politics*, presented two key ideas—the importance of "frames" in language and the two-family model of America.

Frames are words that instantly activate sets of feelings and ideas. Once evoked, they can't be negated, hence the elephant title. When Nixon said, "I am not a crook," Lakoff notes, everyone thought of him as a crook.

The two-family model notes that most Americans think of the country as a family. Conservatives activate a strict father model with values of authority, discipline, and obedience, while progressives envision a nurturant parent and values such as empathy and responsibility.

In *The Political Mind*, subtitled "Why You Can't Understand 21st Century Politics with an 18th Century Brain," Lakoff adds recent neurological research to provide something of a physiological explanation for why frames and metaphors work. Neurons in our brains fire off and form links with other neurons as we experience life. We may think we are thinking with the logic of the Enlightenment but our brains are forming associations in patterns and metaphors through neural bonding.

This means a particular issue can become "bound" to a larger worldview. For example, a progressive Christian may see God as a nurturant parent and the entire church as an empathetic institution where people have the responsibility to help the hungry or homeless, whereas a conservative Christian may see God as a strict parent, threatening punishment for violating commandments as interpreted by clergy (authority).

Lakoff describes "reflexive cognition," the near instant connections we make to frames, as opposed to "reflective cognition," which involves higher cognitive processes and takes more time. These instant reflexive associations occur in the "cognitive unconscious" and are usually hidden from view both from ourselves and from public discourse.

These hidden processes are very powerful. And they become more powerful the more they are invoked. Use of a frame over and over strengthens that frame, which is why it is possible to repeat something over and over until people think it is true.

Most people have both progressive and conservative worldviews in different aspects of their lives. When people are "biconceptual," the use of one mode of thought becomes neurally bound to a worldview in an area, shutting off the other frame. Someone can think conservatively on foreign policy and progressively on domestic policy, for example. What conservatives did, notes Lakoff, was to use language, ideas, images, and symbols repeatedly to strengthen conservative thought and inhibit progressive thought in people who had both. This literally increased the synaptic strength of the neurons in the conservative thought circuitry and did the opposite to

progressive thought. This made people more and more conservative.

Lakoff notes, however, that progressives can reverse the process, since many people who call themselves conservatives or independents actually have progressive views already on many issues, and thus a progressive frame that can be strengthened. The idea is to move biconceptuals to progressive framings of issues by activating the progressive mode of thought they already have.

Lakoff describes his vision of a "New Enlightenment" in which this knowledge is applied.

One interesting example is using the frame of "privateering," a blend of privatization and profiteering. In privateering, the capacity of government to carry out critical moral missions has been destroyed from within the government itself, as we've seen in arenas ranging from the environment to the military to pharmaceuticals to the mortgage meltdown. Sometimes functions are transferred to private companies (privateers) who have no accountability, as we've seen in the military.

If liberals used the word privateering to talk about these activities it would set off a frame, particularly building on the associations the word has for many people with old-time piracy.

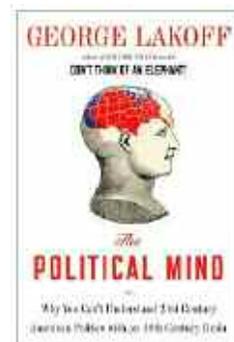
In another example, Lakoff talks about healthcare. Progressives often argue in the conservative frame—that it is about the healthcare "marketplace," as if healthcare was a product. It is more powerful to talk about healthcare as health protection, a concept akin to fire or police protection. Citizens would not expect the fire department to ask for their "fire card" before putting out a fire or the police to make sure a citizen is covered for robbery before chasing a mugger.

Lakoff notes that progressives, often still tied to enlightenment thinking, sometimes appear to fear framing. For example, Lakoff argues that when Bush said he was the "decider" progressives needed to say over and over that Congress was the decider. But progressives feared that the conservatives would blame progressives for wanting to pull out of Iraq too early. Lakoff contends that this could have been overcome and a larger battle won.

"Framing the truth so that it can be understood is not just central to honest, effective politics. It is central to every aspect of human life. It takes knowledge and honesty, skill and courage. It is part of being a full human being. It is not just the province of political leaders; it is the duty of a citizen," Lakoff says.

A recent article by Lakoff appeared on the site CommonDreams.org (go to the site and scroll down to the article called "Don't Think of a Maverick"), which he wrote post the Palin nomination and in which he offers advice to the Obama campaign based on his work.

My belief is that Lakoff should be required reading for anyone making phone calls or ringing doorbells between now and November. Oddly, and to my surprise, I've spoken to political consultants who note that while Lakoff's work was in vogue four years ago, campaigns have not found successful ways to apply his work, and he has fallen somewhat out of favor as a consultant. Nonetheless, I think there is value here. On one level, his work explains the seeming madness of why truth may not really matter and provides a perspective from which "illogical" behavior may be understood. On another level it provides tools of language that can be used in conversations and phone calls.



A “Grand Jollification”

by Carol Hillsberg

Events during the last week in August in Denver epitomized a “Grand Jollification,” although those words were not uttered by Tom Brokaw, *et al.* “Grand Jollification” was a term used in the 19th century to describe a political celebration and, as such, this appellation was used to describe the celebration of Adlai Stevenson I’s 1892 victory as Grover Cleveland’s vice president. The vice president’s son, Adlai II, was the Democratic candidate for president in 1952 and 1956. He was an elected official from Illinois (the governor), a celebrated orator and intellectual, running against a war hero. He was accused of being naïve and weak about America’s enemies, and he lost both elections to Dwight D. Eisenhower, a major architect of the Allied victory in World War II. Richard Babcock details this history to draw a comparison between Adlai II and Barack Obama in an article in September’s *Chicago* magazine. But, he also describes in detail the significant differences between these campaigns in the 1950s and the historic, inspiring candidacy of Barack Obama in 2008.

Adlai II is an iconic figure in Illinois and in the United States, despite his defeats in the two presidential races. He served as Ambassador to the United Nations under Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, where his intellectual and oratorical skills were evident. His son, Adlai Stevenson III, served as senator from Illinois from 1970 to 1981, continuing the family tradition. The respect and admiration inspired by the Stevenson family have now culminated in the creation of the Adlai Stevenson Center on Democracy, a non-profit corporation whose goal is to enhance global understanding and practice of democracy. “Non-partisan and non-ideological, its integrity will enable it to challenge conventional wisdom with inconvenient truths when necessary, in keeping with the legacy of Adlai E. Stevenson II.” The Center is located at the Stevenson farm in Libertyville, now a property of the Lake County Forest Preserve District, restored with a grant from the State of Illinois.

“The American National Nominating Process—Then and Now” was the focus of a panel discussion, the inaugural event at the Adlai Stevenson Center on Democracy, on Sunday, August 10. Program moderator Bill Kurtis introduced the panel members beginning with Senator Adlai Stevenson III, who welcomed everyone to the grounds of his father’s former home. He contrasted his father’s experience in 1952, when there were no contested primaries, and in 1956, when television ads first started, with the situation today. He emphasized his belief that democracy is fragile and susceptible to various phenomena, such as war fever over fictitious events. The Center on Democracy will bring politicians and scholars together in nonpartisan, non-ideological events to strengthen the democratic process. The next program will be “Media, Information, and Democracy.”

The panel this day was nonpartisan in that along with Democrats Adlai III, Reverend Jesse Jackson, Alderman Edward Burke, and Senator George McGovern, Republican Senator Richard Lugar and Independent John Anderson participated. Each commented on the state of the American nominating process.

After being warned by Bill Kurtis that the microphones were live, Jesse Jackson, two-time presidential candidate, described the process as too costly and too long, with the media setting the agenda.

Anderson, who served ten terms in the Congress and ran as a third party candidate for president, has studied electoral reform and would like to reorganize the primary process, treating all states evenhandedly.

Senator Richard Lugar from Indiana, the minority leader of the Foreign Relations Committee, ran for president in 1996, when Bob Dole secured the nomination. He thought the year he spent campaigning was a wonderful education for him, believing that the long primary season is beneficial because some candidates are not well known. However, he argued that the Stevenson Center should tackle the problem that it takes two years to raise the money and that it’s quite difficult to hold office and run simultaneously.

George McGovern, himself a hero to many as the Democratic candidate for president against Richard M. Nixon in 1972, considers Adlai II his first political hero. Inspired by Stevenson’s candor and intellect, as well as by the insight gained at Northwestern University where he majored in history, McGovern entered the political arena. He is quite proud of the reforms he sponsored in the convention process, changes that opened the Democratic Party to more women, Blacks, Hispanics, and people under the age of thirty.

Finally, Alderman Edward Burke reminded those present that there is nothing in the Constitution about party conventions, but, nevertheless, Chicago has been host to twenty-seven of these events, more than any other city. As the co-author of two books, including *Inside the Wigwam: Chicago Presidential Conventions, 1860 - 1996*, Alderman Burke believes that these gatherings are celebrations of a democracy that endures and, as such, part of a grand political tradition.

The panel discussion in August in Libertyville, and the reference to the historical Grand Jollification, helped inform my view of the party conventions several weeks later. These conventions, in my view, are so completely partisan and so inspiring to the believers in each party, that they energize and activate the base. And there is something to be said for that. As a Democrat inspired by the events in Denver, I was reminded of the brilliance and wisdom of our candidate, Barack Obama. Watching the goings-on in St. Paul, I was reminded of how much I disagree with the ideas and tone of the Republicans. Given the half-truths proclaimed by the Republican candidate for vice president, I was reminded of the words of Adlai Stevenson II, “Trust the people with the truth, all the truth.”

Please Join Us!

Sunday, October 19, 2008

Tenth Congressional District Democrats
Annual Fundraiser &
Dan Seals Debate Victory Party

Deerfield Hyatt

4:30 PM - 7:00 PM

Minutes after Dan Seals wins his debate against Mark Kirk on October 19, Tenth Dems will host a Debate Victory Party.

Democrats are energized like never before, and we’ll be even more energized after Dan Seals shows us why he is the only choice for 10th District Congressman.

After the debate at Deerfield High School (2:00 PM - 4:00 PM), we will get together at the Deerfield Hyatt to review, rave, strategize and celebrate the strength of Democrats in the 10th District.

Have fun, have food, meet and talk with other Democrats, and get recharged for the final days of this long and hard-fought campaign.

To join the Host Committee or help with the event, contact events@tenthdems.org or call 847-266-VOTE (8683).

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Kirk Unmasked *continued from page 3*

and that created a positive impression. And the second impression is she killed the bridge to nowhere, and that was huge... That was my battle.

Some of her social issues, though, they won't be in favor of. It will be a huge job for her what to say. But if she goes out and says, "I threw out of office another corrupt, old bull Republican," my voters will think anti-George Ryan; they'll like it. "Then I killed the bridge to nowhere," then they'll hear fiscal conservative. "Then I wiped out the executive jet"; they'll hear ego-free. On the other hand, if we emphasize the social issues, they won't be there.

This is political calculus, not statesmanship. That Mark Kirk still is willing to endorse Palin's candidacy demonstrates that far from being the independent politician he claims to be, Kirk is a loyal member of the extreme right wing of the Republican Party that has led our country astray over the last eight years.

Kirk's willingness to embrace, rather than condemn, Palin—an embodiment of ultra-conservative, extremist ideology—also shows just how unfit Kirk is to represent the progressive voters of the 10th District.

Sarah Palin's values are an anathema to the voters of this district. She staunchly opposes a woman's right to choose to have an

abortion—even in the case of rape and incest. In the words of one NPR commentator, "Sarah Palin represents a false choice for women." A woman herself, her conservative ideology promises to roll back decades of hard-earned progress on women's rights.

As Mayor of Wasilla, Alaska, showing complete disregard for the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights, Palin tried to ban books from the public library and fire the librarian who refused to cooperate with her. Palin believes that not just Creationism, but the Book of Genesis, should be taught in public schools. Her ties to the oil industry and "drill baby drill" philosophy fly in the face of the 10th District's support for environmental protections. And, as a lifelong member of the National Rifle Association, Palin opposes reforms to improve gun safety.

Mark Kirk's eager, enthusiastic support of Sarah Palin's candidacy highlights his utter lack of commitment to fighting to protect our democratic system of government. It shows that his top priority is his own political ambition; and for this he is willing to serve as a rubber stamp for a continuation of the Bush administration policies that took away our freedoms, unraveled our economy, caused our financial institutions to collapse, and weakened our democracy.

This is why 10th District voters must unite in November to elect Dan Seals—someone who embraces our values and promises to fight to reverse the disastrous policies of the last eight years.