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New Year, New Resolutions: Volunteer for Tenth Dems in 2010!

by Mary E. La Plante

Reactivating a gym membership, eating better, embarking on a weight loss program: all across the United States, Americans made these and other resolutions at the end of 2009. What about a resolution that goes beyond? One that helps build community and supports Democratic values? What about making and keeping a resolution to volunteer with the Illinois Tenth Congressional District Democrats?

Tenth Dems is a volunteer group that was formed to help elect Democrats at all levels of government within Illinois' 10th Congressional District. And because it's a volunteer group, it depends on your skills, talents, funds, energy, and support to flourish. Here are ways you can help volunteer your time and talent in 2010:

Are you known in your office or household for



your prose? Write for the *Tenth News*, the Tenth Dems newsletter.

Do you like knowing the ins and outs of hot topics? Help research important political issues.

Can you convince anyone of anything? Utilize those skills for Democratic public relations campaigns.

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Tenth News

www.tenthdems.org
 JANUARY 2010 Illinois Tenth Congressional District Democrats Newsletter Volume 7, Edition 1

Do Something Intelligent: Attend the Tenth Dems/WCPT Congressional Forum on January 23

by John Hmurovic

Some people decide who to vote for by picking a candidate with a name they like. A Murphy almost always trumps a Czgosz.

Some people decide to vote for anyone who appears to be like them, maybe someone of the same religious or ethnic background. Or gender. Women get lots of votes from women. Republicans get lots of votes from misguided middle-aged white men who admire Dick Cheney.

Some people grow weary looking at name after name on the ballot. Borrrrring! By the time they get past the races they care about, they just want to leave the polling place and do something fun. So they quickly cast their votes for the first names listed on the ballot for all of the "I-don't-think-it-really-matters-who-wins" offices. Or follow the list of endorsements they tore out of the *Pioneer Press*.

How do you decide who to vote for?

As residents of one of America's most educated congressional districts, we're different. We are intelligent voters, especially those of us who are active members of Tenth Dems.

Member or not, here's how to maintain your status as an intelligent voter, something you can do to earn street cred as a real political smarty-pants. Attend a political forum or debate. That's right. As you might know, most of our state's smart people attended the Lincoln-Douglas debates back in the day, rather than base their votes solely on the *Pioneer Press* endorsements.

We don't have Lincoln or Douglas to headline the event, but on Saturday, January 23, Tenth Dems is sponsoring a debate. Actually,

we're calling it a forum. Julie Hamos, Elliot Richardson, and Dan Seals (in alphabetical order) have been invited. As an intelligent voter, you know that these are the three excellent candidates vying for the Democratic nomination for Congress from the 10th District. They will certainly debate the issues, but it's going to be in a looser format than a standard debate. That's why we're calling it a forum—although, admittedly, if it had been called the Lincoln-Douglas Forum, most of us would probably little note, nor long remember, what they said there.



If a forum sponsored by Tenth Dems isn't glamorous enough for you, then you might want to know that this forum is co-sponsored by a big city radio station. Yep! WCPT, Chicago's Progressive Talk radio station (92.7 on your FM dial, or 820 on the AM side). And if you're a celebrity hound, you'll get a chance to see a real celebrity moderating the event who just happens to be a respected political journalist. Dick Kay, a veteran of nearly four decades reporting the news on Channel 5, now has his own talk show on WCPT and will be the forum moderator.

The forum is scheduled to run from 1:30 to 3:00 pm. The location will be announced soon, so watch your e-mail for that information. This promises to be an exciting live radio broadcast, so come early to get a seat, and come with questions for the candidates. Intelligent questions are preferred, of course, but we don't discriminate... right-wing Republicans (are there any other kind these days?) are also welcome to attend.

Meet the Candidates

The Tenth News invited Dan Hynes and Pat Quinn to use our pages to speak directly to the voters. The articles that follow are their submissions.



Pat Quinn

Pat Quinn for Governor

I have pursued a career in public service because I believe in honest and efficient government. I want to continue to serve as governor because I am the candidate most fit to guide Illinois through this difficult economic time and restore integrity to the Office of Governor.

My top priority is bringing jobs to Illinois. People in our state are hurting right now. Families are sitting around kitchen tables trying to figure out how they will make ends meet. We need to create good jobs in every community throughout our state.

Like President Franklin D. Roosevelt, I believe that there is no greater social service program than a job. I believe that creating jobs is the best way to reduce crime and promote public safety. That's why I am proposing my Jobs and Growth for Illinois economic plan, which is designed to create new opportunities for communities throughout Illinois. I think that, by offering people who are now struggling the chance they deserve to find good jobs, we can reduce crime, expand our state economy, and put Illinois back on track.

As part of that effort, I also believe we must invest in education at every level, from early childhood programs through college. I believe that children who come to kindergarten ready to learn and excel are far less likely to take the wrong path as they grow up. As those students move through our public education system, they deserve safe, secure, well-maintained school buildings and well-trained, dedicated teachers, so they can graduate with solid educations. I further believe that we must invest in our community college system, the gateway to the middle class, so that new graduates have affordable access to higher education and older workers have

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Dan Hynes for Governor

With Illinois facing unprecedented crises, Dan Hynes is running for governor because he has a plan to implement progressive policies to put our state back on the right track.

Currently serving his third term as the Illinois State Comptroller, Dan is the only candidate for governor with a comprehensive plan to draw down our budget deficit today and restore fiscal prosperity in the long term. The Hynes plan focuses first on cutting waste from state government, while continuing to fund our state's social service programs and introducing a progressive structure to the Illinois tax code.



Dan Hynes

With the unemployment rate hovering around 11 percent in Illinois, Dan has issued a jobs plan that will put our state back to work as quickly as possible. Greg Hinz of *Crain's Chicago Business* called Dan's jobs plan "the most serious blueprint to rebuild Illinois' long-broken economy that I've seen from any major candidate of either major party in a very long time." Working families throughout our state have responded to Dan's proposals, as he has earned the endorsements of 16 labor unions representing more than 428,000 men and women.

As a vocal supporter of marriage equality, Dan has also received the endorsements of the Stonewall Democrats of Illinois and Obama for America LGBT Policy Chair Tobias Wolff, who said, "The choice in this race was a clear one for me. Dan Hynes's long commitment to LGBT equality, the leadership he has shown on marriage equality during this campaign, and the high regard in which he is held throughout the State have earned Dan my strong endorsement."

In 1998, Dan Hynes became the youngest statewide elected official in

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Solar Power

by George Rosenblit

This is the seventh article in a series seeking to investigate and report on sources of energy and their relationship to public health and global warming.



The sun is an ideal source of renewable energy. It's clean, it's free, and it's always there. A few issues need to be addressed to make it more viable:

On cloudy days and at night, there is no visible sun. The solution is to store the energy captured in daylight for future use. Also, invisible ultraviolet light that penetrates clouds can be captured with cells that are sensitive to that part of the light spectrum, even though they will produce less electrical output than visible light. There's a lot of activity and innovation going on in this field. Solar cells and their applications are off to a good start and are gaining momentum.

History of the Solar Cell

In 1839, French physicist A.E. Becquerel was the first to show that light energy could be converted to an electric current. His

"photovoltaic" cell was just a curiosity until 44 years later, in 1883, when the first solar cell was made. Then in 1946, 107 years after Becquerel's discovery, the modern semiconductor solar cell was made during research to develop the transistor, and it was patented. But it wasn't until 1954 that the first commercially feasible solar cell made of crystalline silicon was developed at Bell Laboratories. Becquerel's experimental cell had only one to two percent efficiency compared to six percent for the first Bell Labs product. Now, manufacturers of solar cells are reporting efficiencies of 40 percent, making them a more competitive source for alternative energy.

Conversion of DC to AC Power

Now, let's see how the direct current (DC) that is produced by solar cells is converted to alternating current (AC). First, we must start with a large enough array of solar cells wired together to produce the power needed. Then, that power must be stored in a bank of batteries sufficiently large enough for the intended purpose. At this stage, we still have DC power.

To produce AC, the DC must be connected to a device called an inverter, which is commercially available; the input is DC and the output is AC. It is important to be sure that the inverter can handle the

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House Passes Ambitious Financial Regulatory Reforms—No Thanks to Mark Kirk

With the overarching aim of preventing a replay of last year's financial crisis and ending the need for future bailouts, the House of Representatives has passed a broad and sweeping set of regulatory reforms in a single massive piece of legislation. The ambitious, 1000-plus page H. R. 4173, also known as the Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection (WSRCP) Act, passed the House of Representatives on December 11 in a nearly straight party-line vote.

Two hundred and twenty three Democrats voted for it. But even as Americans struggle with the dire consequences of the financial industry's reckless practices, 27 Democrats and all Republicans, including 10th District Congressman and Senate hopeful Mark Kirk, supported banks and financial institutions, at the expense of consumers and taxpayers, and voted against the much-needed reforms.

Kirk, who for so long falsely portrayed himself as a moderate, now seems to have entirely shed that mask. In his bid for the U.S. Senate seat now held by Roland Burris, he is making no secret of his close ties to special interests, including the banking, financial services, insurance, and pharmaceutical industries. (To wit: Kirk has played a key role over the past year in helping the insurance industry fight against healthcare reform.)

The WSRCP Act strives to protect consumers and the overall financial system from the kind of excessive systemic risk-taking that triggered last October's meltdown and the ongoing recession. Its central features include:

- The creation of the Consumer Financial Protection Agency, which will have responsibility for protecting Americans from unfair and abusive financial products and services. Among its key charges will be ensuring that marketing and financial disclosures are easily understandable to consumers. The WSRCP Act outlaws predatory mortgage lending practices and requires mortgage lenders to make loans that benefit the consumer by ensuring borrowers' ability to repay.
- The establishment of a Financial Stability Council charged with identifying—and holding to heightened standards—financial firms whose size and risk exposures have the potential to put the entire



financial system at risk.

- The establishment of an orderly process for shutting down—rather than bailing out—large, failing financial institutions while preventing contagion to other parts of the financial system. The Act includes provisions designed to prevent banks and financial institutions from becoming too big to fail.
- The opening of the Federal Reserve to public oversight.
- Regulation of the \$600 billion over-the-counter (OTC) derivatives market by requiring that all standardized swap transactions are traded and cleared on an exchange or electronic platform.

The WSRCP Act also creates accountability for hedge funds and other previously unregulated players that were central causes of the 2008 global financial crisis. And it attempts to rein in incentives for recklessness by requiring additional disclosures of incentive-based compensation schemes and golden parachutes.

As numerous consumer advocates have remarked, the WSRCP Act passed by the House on December 11 falls considerably short of its objectives. Thanks to behind-the-scenes work of financial industry lobbyists, the bill provides for key exclusions, especially with respect to the use of derivatives by non-financial institutions. It also contains gaping loopholes that weaken the consumer protection agency by allowing certain financial products to fall outside its jurisdiction. These include financing provided by automobile dealers and credit-related products provided by insurance companies, smaller banks, and credit unions.

As WSRCP moves on to the Senate, much work will need to be done “to assure that the interests of Main Street trump Wall Street in the final version,” the U.S. Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) said in a December 11 press release.

At least for now, Illinoisans can count on both of their senators, Democrats Richard Durbin and Roland Burris, to take the right

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Volunteer *continued from page 1*

Do you love chatting with people? Sign up for door-to-door canvassing.

Are you adept at persuading people to write a check for a good cause? Help us with fundraising campaigns.

Is your cell phone glued to your head at all times? Join our next phone bank.

Do your friends tell you how hospitable you are? Host a Democratic event at your home or in a restaurant.

Are you good at detail work? Meet new people and make new friends at our next mailing.

Are you tech-savvy? Use those talents to help us with our website.

Do you have good organizational skills? Help us organize issues forums.

Do you enjoy being outside? Call us and we'll drop off yard signs for Democratic candidates for you to distribute.

And, most important, do you share a desire to work for a progressive and tolerant America, an America that is open to people of all races,

religions, and beliefs, an America that leads by working with our allies on issues as varied as poverty, disease, the environment, and peace? If so, we invite you to contact us to learn how your skills, talents, and energy can make a difference in 2010!

Tenth Dems Executive Director Maureen Wener says: “Volunteering provides you with an opportunity to support a cause you believe in: Democratic politics. Volunteering allows you an opportunity to share your skills and gain new ones. Volunteering—especially with Tenth Dems—allows you to know that you are doing your absolute best to ensure that those who represent you do so in such a way that supports your Democratic values. Democratic is defined as: ‘characterized by or advocating or based upon the principles of democracy or social equality.’ Through your volunteer work and support of these principles, you might meet a new friend who shares similar values, allowing you to have meaningful conversations, develop bonds, and dedicate time to an organization that has a mission you can embrace.”

To volunteer for Tenth Dems, call or e-mail us at 847-266-VOTE (8683) or info@tenthdems.org. Join us in 2010 to work together to build a stronger Democratic Party in the 10th District.

Filibuster, Cloture, and the Healthcare Debate



by George Rosenblit

The word “filibuster” originated from the Dutch word meaning “pirate.” It became popular in the 1850s when the Senate floor was held captive in order to delay or block a vote on a bill.

In the early years of Congress, representatives as well as senators could filibuster. As the House of Representatives grew in numbers, however, revisions to the House rules limited debate. In the smaller Senate, unlimited debate continued on the grounds that any senator should have the right to speak as long as necessary on any issue.

Senator Huey Long from Louisiana used this rule to stall bills that he thought favored the rich over the poor. There was no rule to limit the content of the debate, so he read passages from Shakespeare and recipes, frustrating his colleagues and entertaining spectators. Long once held the Senate floor for 15 hours. The record for the longest individual speech goes to South Carolina’s J. Strom Thurmond who filibustered for 24 hours and 18 minutes against the Civil Rights Act of 1957.

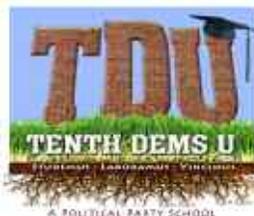
In 1917, President Woodrow Wilson urged the Senate to allow ending a debate with a two-thirds majority vote, a device called “cloture.” This new Senate rule was first put to the test in 1919, when the Senate invoked cloture to end a filibuster against the Treaty of Versailles. Over the years, the number of senators needed to invoke the cloture rule was altered several times, and now 60 votes are needed. (See http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/briefing/Filibuster_Clature.htm.)

Now, let’s examine the importance of cloture at this time. There are 58 Democrats in the Senate, so they are two votes short to invoke cloture. Since they cannot depend on the votes of the two Independents, Senators Joe Lieberman (I-CT) and Bernie Sanders (I-VT), they may need to convince two moderate Republicans to vote for cloture.

Fortunately, with regard to the healthcare bill, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) was able to secure the votes of both Independents. The result is that the full Senate was allowed to debate this bill. Assuming that Reid can hold this coalition together to invoke cloture to bring the bill to the floor for a final vote, its passage will be determined by a straight up or down vote via a simple majority of 51 votes. If there is a 50/50 tie vote, Vice President Joe Biden, as president of the Senate, is empowered to vote to break the tie.

So, we can see the importance of retaining that Senate seat, vacated by Obama, as a Democratic seat. If the seat is won by a Republican, and the Independents do not vote with the Democrats, it will be even more difficult to secure cloture in the future.

It is therefore important for voters to become involved in the political process, to carefully examine the pros and cons of every candidate in the primary, and to volunteer to be an active supporter of the candidate of their choice. Support means providing money as well as time. TV ads to get the message out to the public are costly, but necessary. And, we should not lose sight of the objective—the winner of the primary must be capable of facing the GOP candidate and winning the general election.



TDU Classes Put Focus on February Primary

TDU Meets U.S. Senate Candidate Jacob Meister

by Adrienne Kirsbaum

The weather forecasts were dire, but a good number of brave souls ventured out during a winter storm watch on Tuesday evening, December 8, to attend Tenth Dems University. They gathered at the Highland Park Country Club, where Jacob Meister presided over a “Meet the Candidates” class.

Meister is a graduate of American University, with a law degree from the University of Wisconsin. A 44-year-old attorney who has practiced in Chicago for 20 years, he is seeking the Democratic nomination for U.S. Senate. He entered the race to provide a progressive voice from outside the political realm, and his campaign’s main thrust is the economy. He wants to bring jobs to Illinois and to prepare our students for new green industries and advanced technologies by restructuring the educational system. He advocates reregulation of the banking and financial industries and a return of the United States to its former standing as a leading exporter of material goods.

Meister spoke of what he terms his “20/20 Vision” plan of action. Components include educational policy, job creation, labor reform, environmental protection, and banking and securities regulation. If he is elected to the senate, he promises to pursue this vision.

After his remarks, Meister opened the class to questions, and a spirited discussion ensued. Issues were raised about the economy and differing opinions were voiced. Because of the threatening weather, the class was adjourned before the crowd got too rowdy.

As a postscript, the heavy snowfall that was predicted never came, and all agreed that they had learned a lot about Jacob Meister and his policies.



Jacob Meister

TDU’s “Meet the Candidates” Presents Dan Hynes

by Judith Tefter



Illinois Comptroller and gubernatorial candidate Dan Hynes at TDU.

On Monday, December 14, at the Highland Park Country Club, Tenth Dems University introduced Dan Hynes at one of its “Meet the Candidates” events. Currently serving his third term as Illinois’ Comptroller, Hynes is running for the Democratic nomination for governor, facing current Governor Patrick Quinn in the February 2nd primary. Before becoming Illinois’ Comptroller, Hynes was a healthcare attorney for a Chicago law firm. He holds an undergraduate degree in economics and computer applications from the

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From Ft. Hood to White Hoods

by Ron Levitsky

Immediately following 9/11, verbal and physical attacks and other forms of discrimination against Muslims, or those perceived to be Muslims, increased dramatically. For example, an airline insisted that three men who looked Middle Eastern deplane before the flight took off. Ironically, these men, the father and brothers of one of my former students, were Assyrian, a Christian minority in the Middle East that itself has faced persecution over the centuries.

Although hate crimes continued against Muslim-Americans, such activities decreased over time.

Unfortunately, as a result of the Ft. Hood shooting rampage by Major Nidal Malik Hasan, a Muslim, hate crimes are on the rise again. For example, in mid-November in Tampa Bay, when approached by a bearded man in a robe who needed directions, a Marine Reservist chased the man for three blocks, hit him with a tire iron several times, pinned him to the ground, and called 911 to report that he had captured a terrorist. The Marine said that the man was shouting, "Allahu Akbar," Arabic for "God is great," which several witnesses said that Hasan had shouted during the Ft. Hood shootings. In reality, the victim was a Greek Orthodox priest. Thank God the Marine hasn't seen me walking down my driveway to get the morning newspaper, when I fit the same general description as the priest.

About the same time as the Marine attacked the priest, in a supermarket in Tinley Park a woman accosted Amal Abusumayah, a Palestinian-American born in the United States. According to Abusumayah, the woman exclaimed, "The man that did the shooting in Texas was from the Middle East!" The woman tugged at Abusumayah's headscarf, trying to pull it off. What especially upset Abusumayah was the other woman's attempt to connect a mass murder to Islam, because "as Muslims and Arabs we do not tolerate these kinds of actions."

Major Nidal Malik Hasan, is, indeed, a Muslim. He was vocal about his belief that Shari'a, Muslim religious law, superseded the Constitution. During lectures that were supposed to deal with healthcare, he proclaimed that the War on Terror was in reality a war on Islam. He is also a deeply disturbed individual who continually received poor evaluations yet was promoted, perhaps because the army feared being accused of being politically incorrect. To use Hasan as a symbol of Islam is a little like Yale University using George Bush to advertise its intellectual rigor.

My personal encounter with Islam occurred in the summer of 2001 when I attended, and for a week resided at, a World History seminar hosted by a Muslim educational center in New Mexico. Although the hosts were welcoming and kind, I found the seminar itself to be biased against Israel and uncritical of despotic actions by Muslim rulers of the past. However, I also became friends with a man who did odd jobs at the center, a New Yorker who had converted to Islam years before. He was a simple man who thrived on helping others.

This man invited me to attend the prayer services given five times daily in the adjacent mosque. Initially, I was put off by women being separated from the men and worshipping behind a screen. Of course, women are also segregated from men in Orthodox Jewish services.

Out of curiosity, I attended several services at various times of the day, sitting in the back of the room in what might best be described as a half-lotus position. I was impressed by the egalitarian nature of the service; one man called out the prayers but remained with the group, and each person seemed to know what to do without any assistance. At one point, each man turned to his right and then to his left, nodding each time. Later, I learned it was to greet the angel on his right shoulder recording all his good deeds and the angel on his left shoulder recording his bad ones. At the conclusion of prayers, the men shook one another's hand in fellowship. They all made it a point to shake mine. It was beautiful, and I felt the presence of God.



In his article, "Interfaith Engagement, qur'anic perception" (*Interreligious Insight*, July 2009), Dr. Mohammad Habib utilizes Qur'anic passages to argue that the image of Islam as a threat to Christianity, Judaism, and Western civilization is erroneous. For example, the Qur'an states, "For you is your faith and for me is mine." And the better known passage, "Had Allah wished He could have made you one community. But that He may try you by that which He has given you (He has made you as you are). So vie with one another in good

deeds." As for religious violence—"We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you; our God and your God is one, and we are committed to observe peace before Him."

Dr. Habib admits that Muslim jurisprudence, which oversees a devout Muslim's daily life, was created during the medieval period, "where things were mainly settled by the sword and in the absence of any socio-political concept of human rights." He believes that, while such jurisprudence must follow the Qur'an, it also needs to reflect the 21st century desire for a peaceful society and the safeguarding of each person's basic human rights, "as peace is the central doctrine and very meaning of the word Islam."

Another Muslim scholar, Jamal Rahman, who recently spoke at Common Ground in Deerfield, seems to believe that Islam can best move forward by returning to its spiritual roots. For example, while many Muslim societies currently discriminate against women, Rahman argues that the Prophet Muhammad was, for his time, a radical feminist, giving women the right to property and divorce. He notes that currently in Iran more women than men hold PhDs, and contends that the next great international advance in women's rights will come from the Middle East.

Although a small minority of Muslims use words of hate and commit acts of terror, in every faith believers misinterpret core theological teachings, often with tragic results. Devout Christians have bombed abortion clinics and murdered doctors who perform abortions. It was a devout Jew who assassinated Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

That is the exact opposite of what religion should do, which is to bring peace, love, and understanding. When Malcolm X began his political career as a Black Muslim, he assumed through personal experience that all white people were racists. In 1964, having left the Nation of Islam, he became an orthodox Muslim and undertook the Hajj—pilgrimage to Mecca—a journey that transformed him. Observing a true brotherhood, regardless of race, among his fellow pilgrims, he wrote in his autobiography, "We were truly all the same (brothers)—because their belief in one God had removed the 'white'

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Kirk Flip-Flops on Terrorism

by Steve Sheffey

A prominent Illinois Democrat has observed that, "like a weather vane, Mr. Kirk's votes on the issues can be predicted by the direction the political winds are blowing at this time."

How true.

Every week seems to bring a new flip-flop from Mark Kirk. You'd think he was trying out for the U.S. gymnastics team rather than running for Senate.

Last November, Kirk criticized a proposal to transfer detainees from Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to the Thomson Correctional Center in Illinois. Kirk wrote a letter joined by Rep. Don Manzullo and other Republicans telling President Obama that "If your administration brings al-Qaida terrorists to Illinois, our state and the Chicago metropolitan area will become ground zero for Jihadist terrorist plots, recruitment and radicalization."

The *Washington Monthly* explained that this "is sheer idiocy. Maybe Manzullo and Kirk know better and want to create a panic for political reasons; or maybe they're just cluelessly popping off. Either way, there's really no excuse for federal lawmakers to be this wrong...the United States has already tried and convicted literally hundreds of terrorists. They're held in federal detention on American soil. The prisons have not become magnets for terrorism; there have been no escapes; there have been no attempted escapes; and there have been no efforts at breaking anyone out of any of the facilities. It's not an academic exercise—it's reality."

Federal facilities in America currently house 216 international terrorists and 139 domestic terrorists, none of whom has escaped or been broken out of prison.

It's bad enough that Kirk is playing on our legitimate fear of terrorism to drum up right-wing support for his Senate campaign. But in October, Kirk voted in favor of the Obama administration's position that certain detainees should be transferred to American soil for prosecution. Only a month before hysterically claiming that it was too risky to allow the United States military to imprison alleged terrorists in American prisons, Kirk voted to allow the Obama administration to move foreign terrorist suspects from the Guantanamo Bay prison to the United States mainland.

As Adam Blickstein of the *Huffington Post* wrote, "The bottom line is Kirk was for bringing terrorists to America for prosecution before he

was against it. And under his skewed logic from this week, the Mark Kirk of October seems to have voted to 'invite al-Qaida to make Illinois its number one target' and 'endanger American citizens.' Is this really who Illinois wants to send to the Senate?"

For those of you keeping score at home, here are some of Mr. Kirk's other recent changes of heart:

1. After supporting the selection of Sarah Palin for Vice President, Kirk received letters from constituents objecting to Palin's extreme right-wing views. Kirk then said that he would not have picked her for Vice President. But now Kirk wants Palin's support. If you have a minute—literally one minute—watch this informative video:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=syJ8BkR8yUI&feature=player_embedded If you have only 30 seconds, watch this new video:
<http://dsc.org/truck>
2. After narrowly winning re-election by misleading his constituents into believing he was pro-choice, on November 7, Kirk voted in favor of the Stupak Amendment to the Affordable Health Care for America Act. This amendment bars any insurance plan that is purchased with government subsidies from covering abortions, and with Kirk's help, it passed. As a result, NARAL Pro-Choice America now opposes his candidacy:
<http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2009/roll884.xml>
3. After leading people to believe that he supported gay rights, Kirk came out against gay marriage, in favor of the Defense of Marriage Act, and in favor of the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy
4. After telling people to vote the person rather than the party and touting himself as an independent, Kirk went on to take the Republican position on EVERY major issue this Congress has faced. Says who? Says Kirk for Senate:
<http://thecapitolfaxblog.com/sidebysideGOPDem.jpg>
5. After voting for cap and trade because, according to Kirk, "national security" required it, Kirk announced that he had only been voting "the narrow interests of my district" and that he'd vote against it the next time. If you have half a minute—literally 30 seconds—watch an amazing flip-flop:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kPL0dIL2BD8>

Illinoisans in the know will not vote to send a weather vane to the U.S. Senate.

Solar Energy *continued from page 2*

power expected of it and that the AC produced is a pure sine wave. If an impure sine wave is produced, there can be a large loss of energy when the inverter is put into service. (Read the information on the nameplate, in *Specification Sheets and Manuals*.)

This AC power is identical to what we now have in our homes, and so it can be used to operate electrical lights and appliances. In some areas, excess power can be sold to a local electric utility company; this opportunity to sell excess power will become more available in the near future due to federal subsidies.

An installation should be capable of storing DC power for at least three days use to meet electrical needs when days are overcast.

Environmental Considerations

President Obama wants a "clean-energy economy" that relies on renewable sources, such as solar and wind power, instead of coal and oil. He wants to put these new utilities on federally owned lands; for example, a stretch of the Mojave Desert, one of the sunniest places on

Earth. The administration wants to lead the way by taking advantage of its vast holdings, which account for 20 percent of all land in the U.S., mostly in the West. Obama's goal is to meet 25 percent of the nation's energy needs from renewable resources by 2025. Today, the figure is 11.1 percent, according to the Department of Energy.

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar says he runs "the real department of energy." After decades of allowing private companies to lease public lands for coal and oil, "we have started a new beginning" to make room for solar mirrors and wind turbines. As with the older leases, operators would pay to use the land. Salazar has designated 24 tracts in six western states as possible solar project sites. There are currently none on federal lands.

The Interior Department will open offices to eliminate a five-year backlog of applications. There are 158 pending solar projects on 1.8 million acres of public land. If they all went through, they could power 29 million homes. Not all will be approved, Salazar says, because of environmental and other concerns. Still, the White House plans to

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Candidates *continued from page 2*

Quinn *continued*

opportunities for training to help them succeed and prosper in the 21st century workplace.

I believe I have made a good start toward those goals in the last 10 months. Every day, I have tried to put the state of Illinois' best interests ahead of any other considerations—including possible risks to my own political future. I trust the voters of Illinois, I think they know that I am sincerely committed to getting us out of these tough times, and I look forward to continuing to work to make Illinois a stronger, greener, more prosperous state.

Hynes *continued*

Illinois in more than fifty years when he won election to the Office of Comptroller.

In that role, Dan emerged as the state's leading voice for fiscal responsibility. In 2000, he successfully spearheaded the creation of the state's first Rainy Day Fund to mitigate the effects of a financial crisis and opposed Governor George Ryan's record of fiscal irresponsibility. Throughout Governor Blagojevich's time in office, Dan led the struggle for greater fiscal restraint—proposing structural reforms and prophetically warning that the state would soon be facing a severe financial crisis. And over the past year, Dan has been fiercely advocating responsible budget solutions from cutting bureaucratic waste in state government to finding alternative revenue sources to address the state's massive budget deficit.

As Comptroller, Dan also expanded the reach of his office to cover additional policy areas. In addition to championing stem cell research, Dan has been the leading voice for ethics reform in Illinois. In 2005, he proposed a package of legislative reforms to attack "pay-to-play" politics, beginning a three-year effort that resulted in the passage of the ban on pay-to-play politics in 2008. The Illinois Campaign for Political Reform awarded Dan the Paul Simon Public Service Award in recognition of his commitment to good government.

Dan lives in Chicago with his wife, Dr. Christina Hynes, and their three sons, Charlie, Liam, and Finley.

Ft. Hood *continued from page 5*

from their minds, the 'white' from their behavior, and the 'white' from their attitude."

Malcolm X believed that he could not find that kind of brotherhood in the United States because of bigotry. Let's hope that times have changed. A few years ago, Fareed Zakaria wrote an op-ed piece in *Newsweek*, in which he contended that a major reason why there hadn't been more post-9/11 attacks on U.S. soil is because of American principles of equality and tolerance. Unlike other nations that either bar or make it extremely difficult for immigrants to become citizens, our nation accepts immigrants and their children as citizens, with the same rights as other Americans. For every Nidal Malik Hasan, there are thousands of American Muslims who love both their country and their religion and see no contradiction in doing so.

All of us should be careful of making summary judgments of others—pulling on a woman's headscarf or chasing a bearded man down the street. After all, the angel on our right shoulder and the one on our left are keeping score.

Author's note: In the December issue, in my "Bleeding Heart" article, I misspelled a person's name. I referred to her as "Sally Pia." Her name is "Sally Pla." I regret the error. RL

TDU Classes *continued from page 4*

University of Notre Dame and a J.D. from Loyola University School of Law. He is 41 years old and married to Dr. Christina Kerger Hynes. They have three young children.

Hynes spoke of the tough challenges facing our state in the light of recent scandals in state government. He referred to a general lack of trust in government and a lack of leadership in the current administration. He asserted his own ability to lead and to restore a sense of confidence in state government. As examples, Hynes cited his leadership in state funding of stem cell research and his introduction of the bill that ended "pay-to-play."

Hynes proposed to eliminate the state's deficit in three years. He would do this with a combination of short and long-term proposals that include spending cuts in such areas as lottery advertising; cutting operational costs of state agencies back to 2005 levels; bringing additional money to the state through a \$1 increase in the cigarette tax and expanding the sales tax base; and making the income tax progressive, replacing the current flat tax.

The candidate cited his qualifications, including an extensive knowledge of budget matters, consistency of policy, and a commitment to doing what he considers to be right. He said he would bring leadership based on sound proposals and would not waver from making "the right decisions for the right reasons." Declaring that he would not make re-election his priority, Hynes said he would never "take the easier course."

Cheryle Robinson Jackson Visits Tenth Dems University

by Adrienne Kirshbaum

On Thursday evening, December 17, at the Highland Park Public Library, Tenth Dems University welcomed Cheryle Robinson Jackson to its "Meet the Candidates" series. Ms. Jackson, who is seeking the Democratic nomination for U.S. Senate, took her turn as guest professor and met her students, residents of the 10th District, eager to learn who she was and what she would do as a senator. She was more than up to the task, first telling her class about her accomplishments and ambitions and then answering questions.

Ms. Jackson talked about her father and the influence he had on her life. She said that when she was young, he moved his family to Memphis, Tennessee, to follow a job opportunity, only to find that he would not be hired because of his race. Finding the job market closed to people of color, he decided to go into business for himself. He was an accountant, and he became a consultant, working with small businessmen from the African-American community and helping them to develop and expand their businesses. Ms. Jackson believes that America's entrepreneurial spirit and small businesses are important keys to solving our economic woes.

As president of the Chicago Urban League, she has seen firsthand the devastation that our failed economy is bringing to families in the Chicago area. They are losing their jobs and their homes. They are unable to continue their children's educations. Single women are among those having the most difficult time. Many of them are divorcees who are unable to balance the demands of rearing children, running a home, and working full time. When they lose their jobs, they have nowhere to turn.

Because of her experience dealing with these issues, Ms. Jackson feels that she is ideally suited to run for the U.S. Senate. She has dealt



Cheryle Robinson Jackson

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Solar Energy *continued from page 6*

streamline approval for at least 10 solar plants it hopes will create 50,000 jobs by 2011.

Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) wants to build a solar plant on government land in the Mojave Desert along four miles of the Mother Road that connected Chicago and Los Angeles long before the interstate system was built.

However, David Myers of the Wildlands Conservancy is against that proposed program. Renewable energy projects like this one—which could power 224,000 homes—sound good in theory, he says, but if they tear up pristine vistas, they're not "green." That idea is creating a rift among environmentalists, who favor renewable energy but are at odds over where to produce it. Some are willing to compromise with utility companies to build large power plants on remote federal lands to accelerate the transition to clean energy. Purists such as Myers are dead set against disturbing pristine landscapes. He worries that the government will industrialize the desert with acres of solar mirrors, trampling treasured landscapes.

On the other hand, groups such as the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) say that large, centralized projects are needed to speed the shift to non-polluting energy. "It's hard, because many of us have fought to protect the very lands" that could be affected, says Johanna Wald of the NRDC. Wald, the NRDC lawyer, says the government is taking a balanced approach. She spent 35 years battling the oil and gas industry and now is working with them to find appropriate sites for wind and solar plants. (See http://www.usatoday.com/money/industries/energy/environment/2009-09-07-renewable_N.htm?csp=DailyBriefing.)

China Leapfrogs U.S.

While America fiddles, China burns...with the desire to become the world leader in the renewable energy field. The U.S. company First Solar has signed a deal with the Chinese government to develop what will be the largest photovoltaic (solar) power plant in the world. This installation will generate 2,000 megawatts of power when it's built in the Mongolian Desert, and it will power three million Chinese homes. It will cost about \$5-6 billion, according to projections. But the cost isn't stopping the Chinese government from giving this project the go-ahead to break ground next year.

The agreement calls for ground to be broken on the first 30-megawatt phase of the project by June 1, 2010, followed by 100-megawatt and 870-megawatt additions to be completed by the end of 2014. A final 1,000-megawatt phase is scheduled to go online by December 31, 2019.

It's also notable that a U.S. company was able to land such a big deal in China—a country notoriously protective of its fast-emerging renewable energy market. But the move, of course, benefits both parties: it has the potential to open up a huge market for solar power in China, and a plant to produce the solar cells will be opened on Chinese soil. (See <http://www.treehugger.com/files/2009/09/worlds-biggest-solar-power-china.php>.)

China is surging ahead. It looks as though it will also soon be home to the most impressive solar array in the world. We in the United States will need to get moving if we hope to catch up, to be a leader in the solar energy industry. By doing so, we can not only help solve our own energy problems, but we can also make significant inroads in easing unemployment by creating large numbers of quality Green jobs right here at home.

Congress Watch *continued from page 3*

position on this important effort to protect consumers, taxpayers, and the entire financial system. This, however, won't be the case if Mark Kirk succeeds in his bid for the U.S. Senate. Ensuring a Democratic victory in the 2010 Senate race must now become a top priority for all Illinois Democrats.

Cheryle Robinson Jackson *continued from page 7*

with joblessness and home foreclosure at the ground level. They are not just news stories or statistics to her.

When Ms. Jackson finished her introductory remarks, she took questions. She was asked about such far-ranging subjects as free trade, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, healthcare, and Israel. She answered them all, and when class was adjourned, everyone in attendance had a better idea of who Cheryle Robinson Jackson was and what she would do if she were elected senator.