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Donuts and Conversation

By Laura Saret

On Saturday, March 29, Tenth Dems hosted “Donuts and Conversation” with Congressman Brad Schneider at the Community Connection Office in Waukegan. The office was filled with more than 80 passionate Democrats who enjoyed good food as well as an opportunity to network with elected officials and other fellow Democrats.

In addition to Congressman Schneider, State Representative Rita



Congressman Brad Schneider chats with constituents at Tenth Dems Community Connection office.

Mayfield, Alderman Sam Cunningham (North Chicago), Mayor Leon Rockingham (North Chicago), and Lake County Board member Mary Ross Cunningham were in attendance.

In his remarks and in response to questions, Congressman Schneider discussed his legislative priorities.

He talked about growing the economy by continuing to bring overseas manufacturing jobs home and also emphasized the role of our

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Tenth News

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Rabbi Explores Links Between Judeo-Christian Values and Progressive Politics for TDU Audience

By Mark Rosenberg, M.D.

On April 3, Rabbi Jack Moline, the newly appointed Executive Director of the National Jewish Democratic Council, spoke to an audience of about 70 at the Deerfield Public Library.

The title of this Tenth Dems University presentation was “How I Learned to be a Democrat from Hebrew School and the Prayer Book.” However, Rabbi Moline’s theme was broader, as he discussed the Judeo-Christian values that drive a progressive political approach to issues.

According to Rabbi Moline, the fundamental Jewish values that support progressive politics include honoring one’s father and mother, acting with compassion, caring for the sick, and welcoming visitors. These personal values mesh with the societal goals of supporting Medicare, providing a safety net for those who need it, making healthcare available to all, and implementing a fair immigration policy, Moline explained.

These policies derived from Jewish values are equally consistent with Christian teachings. “Coming from a Catholic perspective, I was surprised at how close Jewish values were to those I had



Rabbi Jack Moline, Chair of the National Jewish Democratic Council, spoke at a Tenth Dems University (TDU) event in Deerfield about “How I Learned to be a Democrat from Hebrew School and the Prayer Book.” Every seat was filled.

been taught all my life in Catholic school,” said Tenth Dems volunteer photographer Claire Esker.

During the question and answer session following the presentation, Joel Spiegel, a precinct committeeman, questioned Rabbi Moline about

his interpretation of LGBT issues. In response, the rabbi recounted a discussion he had with his daughter, who had just graduated college, in which she maintained that a same-sex couple exemplified one of the most equal relationships that two individuals may have.

From LGBT issues to foreign policy, Rabbi Moline provided the unique perspective of a clergyman trained in theology who advocates a progressive political agenda. If you’d like to know more about or become involved with the National Jewish Democratic Council, please write to info@njdc.org. ■



SEE PP. 6-7 FOR MANY MORE PHOTOS
FROM THIS EVENT.



THE BRAD BEAT:

Fighting for Jobs and for Unemployed Americans

By Eleonora di Liscia

It's good for families. It's good for the economy. It's good for the country. Which means, of course, that most Republicans are against it.

"It" is unemployment insurance, and 10th District Congressman Brad Schneider has been fighting tirelessly to get it back for the long-term unemployed.

Last year, Republicans opposed a budget deal that would have extended these benefits past December 28. As a result, 2.3 million Americans, including more than 153,000 Illinois workers, lost the money they need to survive. Another 72,000 nationally lose benefits each week. Since the budget deal failed, House Republicans have refused to allow a vote on any proposal to restore long-term unemployment benefits.

"Failing to extend unemployment insurance, a critical lifeline for many of our families, is shortsighted and hurts our communities and businesses," Rep. Schneider said. "If my colleagues want to vote against the extension, I respect their right to disagree; but failing to even allow a vote goes against the very progress that families and our constituents demand. Partisan politics must not be allowed to get in the way of doing the right thing for our middle-class families."

On January 9, 2014, Schneider was one of 49 freshman congressmen urging House Speaker John Boehner to schedule an immediate up or down vote on extending unemployment insurance. Their pleas went unheeded. Brad further demanded that Congress not go on recess until unemployment benefits were renewed.

To highlight the urgency, Brad hosted a roundtable in Waukegan. Local families recounted the difficulties they had finding jobs and the despair of not making ends meet despite a full-time search for work. Because hunting for a job is itself a full-time job, extended benefits had enabled some of the mothers present to search for work after they lost jobs because of surgery or lay-offs.

"Some who oppose it say it's a disincentive to look for work, and that's not reflective of what I am hearing," Brad told participants.

On March 12, Brad spearheaded the drive to renew benefits by introducing a discharge petition that would end the gridlock and force a House vote. So far, the petition has more than 190 members, but it needs 218 to move forward.

On April 7, the Senate reached its own compromise bill which would restore the benefits. Brad applauded that action.

"The Senate's bipartisan deal to renew unemployment insurance is a strong step forward for the two million Americans who lost their unemployment insurance," Brad said. "Now it's the House's turn to act, and I'll continue fighting to force a vote."



On April 10, Brad again led the fight. He, along with California Rep. Jim Costa, in a letter signed by 131 other representatives, called upon Republican House Speaker John Boehner to immediately bring extended unemployment insurance benefits up for a vote.

The failure to renew long-term unemployment benefits has cost an estimated 160,000 jobs and could cost 240,000 jobs in 2014, according to a White House report. A House Ways and Means Committee report revealed that the economy lost \$3 billion in January and February alone. ■



The Wheeling and Palatine Township Democrats held their 7th Annual Pat Botterman Breakfast at the Chevy Chase Country Club on February 23rd, and Tenth Dems was happy to again be sponsoring the breakfast.



Getting a lot of good work done at this Tenth Dems leadership meeting. This old-school, grassroots office space never fails to inspire!

Professor Paul Green at Tenth Dems University

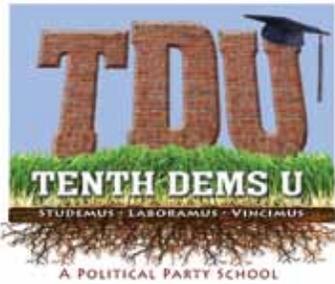
By Carol Hillsberg

Professor Paul Green is not only the Director of the Institute for Politics and Arthur Rubloff Professor of Policy Studies at Roosevelt University, he is also a presenter at Tenth Dems University. Professor Green offered his insights and commentary on Wednesday, March 19, in the wake of the Illinois primary election.

Dr. Green focused most of his analysis on the results of the Republican gubernatorial primary, in particular the victory of the political novice Bruce Rauner. Dr. Green described several factors that led to this outcome. First, Mr. Rauner benefited from the crowded field he faced. That is, the other three candidates, Kirk Dillard, Bill Brady, and Dan Rutherford, divided the opposing votes, enabling Rauner to win with a plurality of 40 percent. Second, to quote Dr. Green, "The only endorsement that counts is at the bottom of a check." Candidate Rauner spent millions of dollars of his own money to support his run, saturating the media with ads that resonated with primary voters.

Dr. Green also observed that Rauner was shrewd in focusing on economic issues and avoiding social issues in order to appeal to the Republican base. Apparently, Republican Senator Mark Kirk agreed, as quoted in the *Chicago Sun-Times*, "If you are a social moderate and a fiscal conservative, you're likely to win in Illinois."

On the other hand, Professor Green noted that Rauner's strengths as a candidate are mitigated by the fact that Rauner has never run for anything, not even student council. According to Dr. Green, Governor of Illinois is not an entry-level position. This means that for Governor Quinn, Rauner is the issue, particularly his complete lack of experience governing.



This means that, for Rauner, the economy must be the issue. According to Dr. Green, government is a three-legged stool composed of revenue, expenditures, and the management of both, and the candidates need to demonstrate their understanding of all three.

Professor Green lamented the low turnout in this primary and other nonpresidential elections, comparing the election judges to Maytag repairmen. He agreed with Larry Sabato, a political scientist at the University of Virginia, that it is chilling that more of the citizenry is not involved in elections. The two most loyally



Paul Green with some of the Tenth Dems leaders who organized the event.

Democratic groups in national elections, young people and minorities, don't vote in off-year elections.

Dr. Green also lamented that political compromise now means that you are a wimp, a sell-out, making effective governing in a democracy very difficult.

Dr. Green believes that Illinois is now a blue state because suburban Cook and the collar counties have become increasingly Democratic. As the press will focus on the Governor's race and not the Congressional race in the 10th District, it is important to raise money for direct mail and to have a strong field organization in support of Brad Schneider in order to maintain Illinois' dark shade of blue. ■



Young Authors Read Original Works Inspired by the Topic “Changes”

By Cynthia Plouché

The evening of April 10, a standing-room-only crowd watched as athletes, math and history students, ballerinas, and future teachers and entrepreneurs used the power of the written word to evoke mermaids, ghosts, loves lost, friendships renewed, and identities found. More than 20 talented students attending high schools in North Chicago, Waukegan, and Zion took the stage to read their original poetry and prose pieces about “Changes” during the Tenth Dems Fourth Annual Poetry/Prose Awards Ceremony and Slam.

Prior to the event, volunteer judges Jackie Harris and Wendy Harrison, themselves both published poets, performed the unenviable task of selecting the winners of cash prizes from among the more than 200 works submitted.

The evening’s live reading was emceed by international political strategist Kevin Lampe and brought to life by hard-working Tenth Dems volunteers. The event was a true community affair; the young writers were surrounded by family and friends who enthusiastically applauded their readings.

To get the evening started, the Waukegan High School JROTC Color Guard and Drill Team presented the colors and precisely performed its rhythmic routine.

Emcee Lampe presided over the awards ceremony and live reading with a genial and welcoming manner that encouraged students to read their works aloud, including many who initially were reluctant to take the plunge.

At evening’s end, Ms. Harris took the microphone to declare just how difficult it had been to select prizewinners from among the many creative works submitted. She praised the young writers’ honesty and artistry and encouraged them to continue to let their voices be heard and to follow their passions.

It was a memorable evening. ■



★ WATCH FOR PUBLICATION OF THE FOURTH ANNUAL SPECIAL POETRY/PROSE SLAM EDITION OF TENTH NEWS FOR AN EXTENSIVE PHOTO ALBUM. THIS ISSUE ALSO WILL FEATURE ALL OF THE PRIZE-WINNING AND HONORABLE MENTION WORKS OF THESE TALENTED YOUNG PEOPLE. ★

A Discriminatory Animus

By Steven Gan

Monday, April 14, 2014, marked another small victory for marriage equality in this country. U.S. District Judge Timothy Black ruled that Ohio's prohibition against recognizing same-sex marriages from other states was unconstitutional and unenforceable. In addition, Judge Black declared that Ohio lawmakers and voters who supported a ban against same-sex marriage had acted "with discriminatory animus and without a single legitimate justification."

Unfortunately, the Ohio Attorney General, Republican Mike DeWine, has said that he would appeal Judge Black's ruling, stating that "the state has banned same-sex marriages, and has not recognized same-sex marriages from other states, under a constitutional amendment approved by voters in 2004."

I was not surprised that Judge Black's ruling will be appealed but I'm hoping that his phrase, "discriminatory animus," will be food for thought for Attorney General DeWine.

As the number of states approving marriage equality, and in which judicial rulings have declared same-sex marriage bans unconstitutional, continues to increase, those states whose attorneys general continue to fight against marriage equality are showing themselves to be on the wrong side of history. I believe they also display bigotry, discrimination, and ignorance.

Over and over, I hear the same argument from state attorneys general who decide to appeal rulings protecting marriage equality: "The voters in this state approved a marriage ban, and I was elected to defend the voters' will." Nevertheless, there are several attorneys general who have opted not to appeal judicial rulings striking down bans on marriage equality.

In 2011, United States Attorney General Eric Holder announced that the federal government would no longer defend the "Defense of Marriage Act" in court. This position was extended to marriage equality in general when the federal government joined the American Foundation for Equal Rights' case against California's Prop. 8 when it was before the U.S. Supreme Court in the spring of 2013. Jerry Brown, then California Attorney General, wrote, "Proposition 8 must be invalidated because the amendment process cannot be used to extinguish fundamental constitutional rights without compelling justification."

More recently, less than two weeks after he took office, Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring refused to appeal a judicial ruling upholding the right to marriage equality. He stated, "As attorney general I cannot and will not defend laws that violate Virginians' rights. That's what I have pledged over and over to do, is to put the law and put Virginians first. ... It's about what the law requires here, and we have concluded, I have concluded, that the law here is unconstitutional, and I think the Supreme Court ... would find the law unconstitutional."

Under similar circumstances, attorneys general in Nevada, Pennsylvania, Oregon, New Mexico, and Kentucky have acknowledged that state laws prohibiting marriage equality cannot be defended as constitutional:

Nevada Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto has stated, "After thorough analysis and review, the arguments grounded upon equal protection and due process [against marriage equality] are no longer sustainable."

Pennsylvania Attorney General Kathleen Kane has stated, "I cannot ethically defend the constitutionality of Pennsylvania's version of DOMA as I believe it to be wholly unconstitutional."

Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum has stated, "The ban cannot withstand a federal constitutional challenge under any standard of review."

New Mexico Attorney General Gary King has stated, "New Mexico's guarantee of equal protection to its citizens demands that same-sex couples be permitted to enjoy the benefits of marriage in the same way and to the same extent as other New Mexico citizens."

Kentucky Attorney General Jack Conway has stated, "From a constitutional perspective... and in light of other recent federal decisions, these laws [against marriage equality] will not likely survive upon appeal. We cannot waste the resources of the Office of the Attorney General pursuing a case we are unlikely to win."

Right here in Illinois, our own Attorney General Lisa Madigan has stated, "A ban on same-sex marriage violates the state Constitution's equal protection clause. The law does not allow the state or federal government to create a separate class of marriage based on a person's sexual orientation. There is no other way to describe this than to call it discrimination."

I don't agree with Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine's logic. The fact that the majority of voters in Ohio passed a state constitutional amendment in 2004 doesn't mean that the amendment is consistent with the U.S. Constitution, or even that, 10 years later, the state's voters would continue to support a provision that marginalizes a segment of the population for no reason other than disapproval of their sexual orientation. The real measure of an attorney general, or any person in a position of authority, is not whether he continues to defend legislation that has been declared unconstitutional, but whether he can acknowledge developments in constitutional law (not to mention in societal attitudes in general) and do the right thing. And sometimes, the right thing is to do nothing. In this case, DeWine should let Judge Black's ruling stand. ■

Rabbi Jack Moline, Chair of the National Jewish Democratic Council, spoke at a Tenth Dems University (TDU) event in Deerfield about "How I learned to be a Democrat from Hebrew School and the Prayer Book." Every seat was filled.



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We the People

of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Article I

Section 1. All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

On Citizenship: Affordable Care Act Navigators Exemplify Good Citizenship

By Jane Goldenberg

When an email appeared in her inbox asking for volunteers to help sign people up for health insurance at the new Affordable Care Act (ACA) online marketplace, Marguerite Hampton “asked to be a part of it immediately.” Ever ready to throw herself into a cause she believes in, Hampton soon joined the all-volunteer program run by Moraine Township.

“I have always believed passionately and deeply that people in the United States should have the right to health security through basic healthcare,” Hampton said, noting this wasn’t remotely possible until the ACA marketplace opened last fall.

Hampton began her training last summer, which entailed a two-day in-person class and more than 40 hours of online coursework for both the federal and state governments. Trainees must pass the course with at least an 80 percent on all tests to receive a license issued by the Illinois Department of Insurance. They also must pass a background check.

After juggling these requirements with her full-time responsibilities as a small business owner, along with her other volunteer job as co-chair of Tenth Dems, Hampton earned her certification at the end of last year and went to work. She started working eight hours a week, but as she grew into the job and the needs became clear, she amped up her commitment to where she was eventually working 24 hours a week.

The Moraine Township program uses 20 volunteer Navigators like Marguerite, including several from the Township staff, according to Township Supervisor Anne Flanigan Bassi, who started the program after becoming supervisor last May. Bassi, herself a Navigator, said many of her volunteers are, like

Hampton, accomplished professionals, including a former health insurance attorney, a retired international banker, and a retired University of Illinois dental instructor.

Bassi calls working as a Navigator “the most satisfying volunteer work.” No wonder the Navigators keep coming back and work such long hours. “Our volunteers stay as long as it takes,” she said.

A large part of the Navigator’s job involves education, since many people don’t understand the complexities of the law. “We also find out they’ve gotten so much misinformation. So many people are so surprised the process is so much simpler than they’d been led to believe,” said Hampton, who helps people compare costs and benefits of available plans and also explains about the wellness services that are available free of charge to all individuals who enroll in health insurance plans.

Moraine’s volunteers have proven to be essential resources, working additionally for Enroll Lake County, which employs 80 Navigators. In fact, Project Manager Terri Olian began as a Moraine Township volunteer. A lawyer by training, Olian previously had served as a member of the Highland Park City Council and the School District 112 Board. Soon after starting as a Navigator, she was asked to head up the project for the County and now works an average of 60 hours a week.

After a few months volunteering for the township, Hampton sought a larger market in which she might have an impact and in March joined Enroll Lake County, which can pay Navigators under a grant from the State of Illinois. Hampton continued to volunteer with the township, as well.

While the initial enrollment period closed at the end of March, those still in line had two additional weeks to finish signing up. Those eligible for Medicaid, as well as people undergoing a major life change such as a divorce, a new baby, or loss of a job, can enroll at any time. So the demand for Navigators is ongoing.

As of mid-April, Lake County Navigators have signed up 7,300 out of 50,000 uninsured Lake County residents, 85 percent of whom

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Donuts and Conversation

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local community colleges in training our residents for these jobs, as well as the importance of on-the-job training.

Congressman Schneider believes that we must be stewards of our environment to protect it for the generations to come. In response to a question about the local environment, he discussed the cleanup of Waukegan Harbor as well as his promise to “never allow drilling in Lake Michigan.” Answering a question about alternative energy, the Congressman pointed out that “we are already doing it,” citing wind and solar energy as well as continued development of thermal electric and compressed natural gas vehicles.

Congressman Schneider touted his 100 percent voting record on women’s rights and marriage equality, emphasizing his belief in the importance of all people having the freedom to be “who they are,” to live life with their partner of choice, and not to lose their jobs because of their choices.

He talked about his love of bike riding and how he has gotten to know constituents throughout the 10th Congressional District on his rides. Within our district, he has visited some of the best and worst high schools in our country and some that are failing. He believes that “every school must graduate kids ready for success,” and he is working with local communities to make that happen.

Commenting on the upcoming election, Rep. Schneider said that he believes it will be a “long, hard battle, but that we will win because we have a better message which will lead to a better future for all.” ■



Photos continued on p. 10.

Tenth Dems' Donuts and Democrats event at our Community Connection office featured Congressman Brad Schneider and included a packed house of enthusiastic attendees and local leaders, such as Waukegan Mayor Wayne Motley, Lake County Clerk candidate Janet Kilkelly, and David Bonner, one of Community Connection's founders.



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Tenth Dems Donuts and Democrats



Photos continued on p. 12.

Tenth Dems Donuts and Democrats

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Affordable Care Act Navigators

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were eligible for expanded Medicaid. So there's a lot more work to do.

The Navigators seem to be drawn to the program because they're genuinely interested in helping people get health insurance. "It's about people who care," Olian said. "It's a labor of love."

Hampton exemplifies this idea. When she noticed a need, she didn't hesitate to hike her work hours.

As many people with a cause know, the spark of inspiration can be a personal connection, and for Hampton it was her own family's experience with the health insurance industry. "We've lived through the pitfalls of the individual marketplace," she said. Hampton learned that any preexisting condition, however minor, could increase costs. Even worse, before the Affordable Care Act, insurers could refuse to pay for any services they deemed related to a preexisting condition. Consequently, another side effect of the way it used to be was a consumer's chronic anxiety that an insurance company would claim that a newly-diagnosed malady was somehow related to a preexisting condition.

The Affordable Care Act made it illegal to deny insurance coverage or raise premiums based on a preexisting condition, which the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimated in 2011 affected at least 50 million and as many as 129 million non-elderly Americans.

Another benefit Hampton likes is that people "are no longer locked into their job" just so they can keep their health insurance. "They can become entrepreneurs."

The best thing about being a Navigator is seeing "people's reactions when they leave. Knowing they now have healthcare. People have been so happy. Just one person getting health insurance makes it all worthwhile," Hampton said. "We get hugged. Sometimes there are tears, laughter." ■



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