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Voting for Obama on December 17— In Springfield

By Eleonora di Liscia

On November 6, 2012, the great state of Ohio put President Obama over the top, ensuring him a second term. And that occurred before the popular vote had been fully counted.

How? As most of you already know, the electoral college vote – not the popular vote – determines the winner of our presidential elections. Any presidential candidate needs 270 votes (out of 538) to win office, and on election night Ohio’s 18 electoral votes put Obama over that total.

What many people do not realize is that the electoral college tally does not become official until each state’s electors actually meet to cast their votes. As it happens, our own Hon. Lauren Beth Gash was among the 20 Illinois electors meeting December 17 in Springfield, Illinois, to cast their ballots for Barack Obama.



“I am very pleased to be able to cast a vote for President Obama’s reelection,” Lauren said. “Having served with him years ago when we were both Illinois state legislators, it’s a special honor. Many of us worked hard for his reelection and are so grateful that Americans chose to reelect the President.”

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Tenth News

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JANUARY 2013 Illinois Tenth Congressional District Democrats Newsletter Volume 9, Edition 1

Annual Party Kicks Off Holiday Season

By Adrienne Kirshbaum

The holidays are a time for homecoming, a time to get together with old friends and celebrate the warmth and joy of the season. Add to that the elation from November’s elections, and you have an idea of the mood that pervaded the overflow crowd at this year’s edition of the Tenth Dems Annual Holiday Membership Party.

The event was held at Cubby Bear North in Lincolnshire on Monday evening, December 10. The crowd that gathered was beyond Tenth Dems’ expectations. November’s mostly positive election news gave local Democrats a reason to party, and they were there in force to celebrate. Everyone enjoyed the delicious buffet that included appetizers, beef sandwiches, and home-baked cookies.

Tenth Dems was pleased that a number of candidates and elected officials took time from their busy schedules to attend. Among them were Melinda Bush, Daniel Biss, Laura Fine, Chris Kennedy, Julie Morrison, Audrey Nixon, Dan Pierce, and Terry Wilke. Also at the party were many who are running in township, municipal, and local elections in the spring.



The man of the hour, though, was Brad Schneider, newly elected U.S. Representative for Illinois’ 10th District. As Dan Pierce reminded us, he is the first Democrat to represent the southern half of our district since Abner Mikva, and the only Democratic Congressman the northern part of the 10th District has sent to Washington in more than 100 years. Congressman-elect Schneider said that his holiday wishes had come true back in November and

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Northfield Township's Democratic Slate Looks Forward to Another Historic Election

Northfield Township made history in 2009 when a Democratic majority and a Democratic clerk were elected to the township board. On December 4, 2012, the Northfield Township Democrats held their quadrennial Township Slating Caucus, and an impressive slate was adopted. This slate will work tirelessly to improve on its past history.



Left to right, Mary Reynolds, Joanne Licht, Karen McCormick, Richard Mullen, Carol Blustein, Dan Frey.

Current trustee Carol Blustein, a Northbrook resident, is the candidate for Supervisor. As a member of the relocation committee, she tirelessly pushed for the purchase of a property. This month, in another historic event, the township will finally purchase a building. Carol rewrote the employee handbook, developed a Pantry Advisory Board, and initiated an intern program. With the current Democratic majority, the township is moving into the 21st century, but there's much more to accomplish. Carol is looking forward to that challenge.

The current clerk, Karen McCormick of Northfield, is the slated candidate for clerk. A trustee since 2009, Karen was appointed clerk when Laura Fine vacated the position on December 11, 2012. Karen has extensive experience in the political realm as Managing Director for the Tenth Congressional District Democrats and was selected as a delegate for the prestigious Illinois Women's Institute for Leadership program.



Karen McCormick is sworn in as the Northfield Township Clerk.

Dan Frey, a Glenview resident, is the candidate for Highway Commissioner. As an attorney he specialized in commercial litigation and municipal law. His resume includes defending fire protection districts, police departments, and 911 call centers in civil litigation, wrongful death, medical malpractice, and commercial suits. Prior to completing his legal education, Dan worked as a paramedic. Dan is resolute in his belief that public agencies must be responsive to the taxpayers they serve.

Joanne Licht, who resides in Northbrook, is a candidate for trustee. Her commitment to community service was evident when, as a new resident of Northbrook, she became the Vice President of Membership for Congregation Beth Shalom. Joanne retired from a successful marketing career at DuPont Apparel Fibers/Invista. As a former resident of New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts, Joanne firmly believes that no matter where one resides it takes people as well as infrastructure to make a community a home.

Marla Miller of Northbrook is another candidate for trustee. Marla serves on the Northfield Township Pantry Advisory Board. Before retiring, she worked at Kraft Foods as Senior Manager of Work Life and Human Resources Communications strategies. Her work crossed the disciplines of finance, information systems, technical training, management, and acquisition and divestiture.

Current trustee Richard Mullen, who resides in Northbrook, is also slated. At the December 11, 2012, Northfield Township Board Meeting, Richard was appointed to fill the vacancy left by Karen McCormick. Richard is the founder and owner of EDGE ShowTec, an audio visual staging company located in Northbrook. He brings expertise in marketing, management, finance, and warehouse space utilization to the township board.



Richard Mullen is sworn in as a Northfield Township Trustee.

Current trustee Mary Reynolds, of Northbrook, is slated for reelection. Mary has been a Northfield Township Trustee since 2009. She was a principal in revamping the human services commissions; thanks to her efforts, the commission does on-site visits before making funding recommendations. Currently Mary also serves as the Office Manager for Northfield Township Democrats.

Introducing the Democratic Slate for West Deerfield Township

l-r: Jack Strom, Ron Levitsky, Kristen Scott, Alyson Miller Feiger, Ron Schwartz, Tom Healy, John Lesiotis



The West Deerfield Township Democrats have selected a slate for the April 9, 2013 consolidated election that includes people from numerous walks of life and all parts of the township. The slate is committed to the mission of West Deerfield Township government and believes that local government can both be run efficiently and be a means to help people live better lives. Studies have shown that township government is far more efficient in terms of lower labor costs and less debt than larger forms of government. Under the current Democratic leadership, the West Deerfield Township has a record of fiscal responsibility while maintaining and even expanding services for those in need—the elderly, those with disabilities, and those who have fallen on hard times.

Four of the members of the slate are running for reelection: Tom Healy, Assessor; Kristen Scott, Clerk; and Ron Levitsky and Ron Schwartz, Trustees. Three members of the Democratic slate would be new to township government: Alyson Miller Feiger, candidate for Township Supervisor, and John Lesiotis and Jack Strom, candidates for Trustee.

Alyson Miller Feiger, candidate for Supervisor: Alyson brings 15 years of sales and marketing experience with 10 years as a managing partner. Her professional skills include budgeting, staff management, and direct contact with both Fortune 500 companies and small companies. She grew up in Deerfield, and her deep ties to the community give her an understanding of the multifaceted nature of our township. Alyson “looks forward to strengthening the township’s many successful programs by promoting communication about all of our services and by continuing to work in a manner that is both transparent and fiscally responsible. The services offered by our township will take on a more important role in our community as the state continues to cut programs.”

Tom Healy, Assessor: Tom is excited to be running for a second term as West Deerfield Township Assessor. In his first term in office Tom was honored by his fellow Lake County Assessors and elected president of the Lake County Township Assessor’s Association, a rare privilege for a first-term assessor. Tom makes his home in Bannockburn and is a lifelong township resident.

Kristen Scott, Clerk: Kristen is currently serving as Township Clerk and her responsibilities include voter registration, township recordkeeping, and overseeing the election process. Kristen also

represents the township at events such as Community Services Day and the township’s Halloween party for children with special needs. “The township is effective because everyone on staff is able to assist residents in most areas,” Kristen said. “It is a great atmosphere in which to work, and you feel you are making a difference.”

Ron Levitsky, Trustee: Ron is currently completing his second term as Township Trustee. A retired educator and businessman, Ron has served on the executive board of the Lake Forest caucus, has been a Special Olympics coach, and hosts a public access television program. As a current Township Trustee, Ron has taken the lead in creating an intergovernmental agreement on road projects, preserving our township historical archives, and sponsoring a mental health first aid clinic.

Ron Schwartz, Trustee: Ron is currently completing his second term as Township Trustee. Ron is an employment law attorney who has been practicing for over 30 years. He has worked with the Village of Deerfield’s “walkability” committee and has served on a District 109 task force to explore ways to introduce languages other than English to students before middle school. Ron says that “West Deerfield Township government works best when it fulfills a need not addressed by other governmental units.”

John Lesiotis, candidate for Trustee: John is relatively new to the township but has wasted no time making his mark on local activities. His involvement with a number of the local campaigns made him aware of the work being done in the West Deerfield Township office, and he wanted to help. John brings to the task a 25-year background in advertising.

Jack Strom, candidate for Trustee: Jack’s professional background includes managing the budgets, operations, and financing of six 100+ unit apartment buildings as well as a successful career in software development. Jack’s passion for the township is typical of the members of the slate: “I want to continue this board’s tradition of helping the elderly, the sick, and the less fortunate share in the services that our community has to offer. I feel that how we help those with the least power defines us as the community we wish to be.”

The West Deerfield Township Democrats are proud to rally round this fine slate of candidates.

Moraine Township Democrats Pick Slate for April Election



Front row l-r: Cynthia Plouché, Anne Flanigan Bassi, Gail Feiger Brown; Back row l-r: Cindy Wolfson, Dwayne Douglas, Amy Zisook, Olga Gomez Aguilar

The excitement was palpable in the standing-room-only crowd as Moraine township Democrats held their quadrennial Township slating caucus on Tuesday evening, December 4. After successful Democratic slates for Moraine Township government in 2005 and 2009, the overwhelming turnout at the Highland Park Recreation Center signaled Democrats are enthusiastic and willing to work for another impressive team of candidates in the April 9, 2013 consolidated election.

The following candidates were unanimously slated by the Democratic caucus to run in the April 9, 2013 General Election:

- Anne Flanigan Bassi, Township Supervisor
- Cynthia Plouché, Township Assessor
- Gail Feiger Brown, Township Clerk
- Olga Gomez Aguilar, Dwayne Douglas, Cindy Wolfson and Amy Zisook, Township Trustees

“We are fortunate that candidates of this caliber have stepped forward to run,” said Lauren Beth Gash, Moraine Township Democratic Organization Chair. “Moraine Township is statistically about 70 percent Democratic, and a Democratic slate lets voters know that this team shares the values of our community.”

“Our team represents a cross-section of the age, geographic, and cultural demographics of the township, and has devoted decades of volunteer effort to helping residents in our community,” noted Anne Flanigan Bassi, who has represented most of the Moraine Township geographic area on the Lake County Board for the last 10 years. “We can leverage our resources more effectively through partnerships, and my experience on the County Board will help us understand the regional resources available to help our residents here in Moraine.”

Cynthia Plouché, a Wharton MBA and Certified Illinois Assessing Officer running for Township Assessor, is committed to fairness and equity in the assessment process. “Residents have a right to understand their assessments, and I will work to ensure transparency in the process.”

“There is rightly a lot of discussion about duplicative and unnecessary layers of government in Illinois,” noted Amy Zisook, who has been slated to run for one of the Township Trustee positions. “However, township government is not duplicative of other levels of government, and is the only unit of government designed almost exclusively to address human needs. Other levels of government correctly prioritize resources for public safety, roads, and infrastructure; when resources diminish, basic human services often fall off the agenda.”

Observed Gail Feiger Brown, a past president of the League of Women Voters of Highland Park and longtime Welfare Council co-chair slated to run for Township Clerk, “Township government’s cost is less than \$50 a year for the average \$250,000 house, and nearly half of that amount goes toward the Assessor’s functions. The balance is used to fund general and emergency assistance, para-transit services for seniors, disabled and low income residents, a food pantry, township cemeteries, and grants that have kept our social service agencies afloat during difficult economic times.” Added Cindy Wolfson, long-time community activist and Township Trustee candidate, “Township government meets human services and needs in a way no other arm of government is prepared to do and does so efficiently and inexpensively.”

“We are fortunate indeed to live in a community where people genuinely care about their neighbors,” noted Olga Gomez Aguilar, an outreach worker at the North Shore Health Center, also running for Township Trustee, “and I look forward to serving the community in this new role.”

Dwayne Douglas, currently serving as a Moraine Township Trustee and also slated for the April election, looks forward to working with this new team to analyze where Moraine Township government might provide even better services to residents efficiently and economically.

Members of the team are committed to working hard to ensure that Moraine Township government operates with compassion to provide a safety net for our neediest residents.

That Darned Long-Term Reality

By Jack Altschuler

Nice election, but what if the real prize isn't won? What if we have to do something more or we're all screwed?



Look, it's a fairly simple thing. George Will explained it years ago in clear terms, saying that we want about \$300 billion per year more in services than we're willing to pay for. Seventy percent of self-proclaimed, hair-on-fire Tea Partiers want low taxes, our budget balanced, our debt reduced, Washington made irrelevant except for national defense and, oh, by the way, they want their Social Security and Medicare, too. Sadly, most of us are similarly wired.

We've been doing that kind of free-lunch fantasizing for decades and have the national debt to prove it. While there always have been huge spenders and creators of enormous debt in Washington, we can attempt to point the finger of blame in any direction we like and it will always be a divining rod that points to us, because we as a society voted for the people who legislated the debt.

Now, that debt is causing otherwise (sometimes) sensible people to suggest crazy things. It's time for a national "get real" conversation about priorities, and perhaps that is what is starting in D.C. But we have to do more than hope that's happening, which means that we all have to participate.

America needs a tax system that is congruent with what we decide to spend. Given that historically we've had top rates as high as 90 percent and still grew as a nation, a few points over the current marginal rate aren't going to kill the golden goose and, really, they won't make a dent in the lifestyles of the richest two percent.

Comment for the richest two percent: Please stop trying to sell the fiction that you're the job creators and that trickle-down economics is anything other than a fraud. And tell your legislative buddies to do the same. The rest of us are tired of your 30-year attempt to manipulate us with those fictions.

We really don't need to spend more on national defense than the next 17 countries (some say all the rest of the world) combined. The Cold War is over, and we don't need to defend against a Soviet invasion of Europe. World War II has been over for 47 years, and we don't need to defend against a Japanese invasion of anywhere. The people in the Pentagon don't want the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter that they have refused every time they were asked, so Congress can stop authorizing still more billions for it. You get the idea—we have to stop defending against threats that no longer exist and buying toys we don't need. That's just a starting short list for pruning our absurd national defense budget.

That "get real" conversation has to include our willingness to shift our national priorities from lots of guns to a reasonable consumption of butter. And as unrealistic as we Americans can be, we need to recognize that there are a few things we must do—these are not optional.

We absolutely have to encourage, support, and advance education. Were we to follow through with the outrageous cuts that have already been made and with the other proposed cuts to our education system, we would be metaphorically eating our seed corn. We would be ensuring that we will be unable to compete in a world that is increasingly better educated than us, sentencing our young to a dismal future. And enough already with the bashing of teachers and teachers unions. It's way past time to stop looking for a boogey man and instead construct an education system that serves our young for generations to come.

We cannot let our infrastructure continue to deteriorate. If you have doubts about such a statement, check with Minneapolis residents about the importance of maintaining bridges for our interstate highways. All of the survivors and all the loved ones of those who died as a result of the I-35W bridge collapse a few years ago wish that we had done a better job of upkeep. You'll wish the same if a bridge collapses near or on you, like one did in Northbrook last Fourth of July, killing a couple in their car.

Here's another way to look at our infrastructure: We can't afford the 25 percent loss of electricity traveling through our grid. We need to build a smart, efficient way to transmit electricity. It's a national priority if you're going to be able to plug in your electric car, your computer, your blender, your cell phone, your lights, your dishwasher, and everything else that runs on electricity and have them work at an acceptable power cost. And it's critical to have that smart grid if we are to shift away from fossil fuels and stop melting the planet.

About the global warming denial thing—the flat-Earthers need to get a handle on reality, because if we don't do what is necessary to counter that global threat, we can kiss good-bye all of our cities by any seashore.

Memo to those who want to curtail, cut, eviscerate, bend, fold, and mutilate Social Security and Medicare: We as a society are going to pay those costs one way or another. If we kill Medicare we'll take our seniors away from practitioners who would otherwise provide early treatment for seniors' ailments. Instead we will send them directly to the emergency room. That way we will provide healthcare in the most expensive and least effective method on the planet. In addition, lots of those seniors will die much younger than they would have. Social Security cuts will produce parallel results. If you want America to save money, forget about abandoning those programs.

All of these issues require our thinking beyond the near horizon. The upcoming sequester business is the foolishness of writing a budget with a meat cleaver. We have to stop focusing on the short-term stuff that tweaks our current senses and instead we must do our best to imitate adult behavior and plan for our future.

Get real, America. Demand grown-up behavior from your legislators. Tell them to leave their tantrums behind them and start having the conversation about the future of America and do it on an adult level. Tell them you require them to make good choices for tomorrow, because tomorrow most assuredly will come. The only question is whether we'll be ready for it.

At Last, A 10th District Congressman Worth Watching

Brad Schneider's November 6 victory over one-term Congressman Robert Dold marks a major turning point in the 10th District's political history. For the first time in 32 years, Democrats in our district have good reason to expect our voices to be heard and our values to play a role in shaping public policy and law.



In sharp contrast to party-line Republican predecessors Robert Dold and Mark Kirk (now Illinois' junior senator), Schneider is a Democrat who supports core Democratic values, including a woman's right to choose, healthcare reform (he's a proponent of the Affordable Care Act), repeal of the Bush tax cuts, restrictions on the possession of guns, measures to address climate change, and other environmental protections. During the campaign he was endorsed by both the League of Conservation Voters and the Sierra Club, not only because of his opponent's poor environmental voting record but also because of his own proven support of environmental causes.

On foreign policy Schneider supports President Obama's timetables for withdrawal from Afghanistan, "broad and deep" sanctions on Iran to encourage the end of its nuclear weapons program and sales to terrorist organizations, and increased economic cooperation with China, while still holding the Chinese accountable for human-rights violations. A vocal supporter of a strong U.S.-Israel relationship, Schneider also says he will advocate for peace between Israelis and Palestinians, for maintaining the durability and quality of peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan, and for peace with Israel's other Arab neighbors.

Among Schneider's top priorities for his first term is to support policies aimed at spurring economic growth and creating jobs. He favors targeted tax incentives for small- and medium-sized businesses, public- and private-sector partnerships to increase development of new infrastructure technology, and policies to boost manufacturing innovation and, in turn, give American industry the tools it needs to invent products for export around the world.

Throughout the campaign, Schneider echoed the President's call for bipartisan compromise. Brad will be a leader who will be instrumental in ending gridlock in Washington. "I've gotten the success I've had in life by working collaboratively with others. I think that's what will make me successful in Congress," he said. "For better or worse, I'm just a nice guy who really believes that people working together can get anything done."

Schneider supports long-term comprehensive tax reform that shifts a heavier burden to higher income taxpayers. He also is open to spending cuts across the budget including discretionary, defense, and entitlement spending.

From now on, we will have the privilege of following the legislative career of our first-in-decades Democratic congressman. We are thrilled at the prospect of being represented by a Democrat with strong progressive values who will work tirelessly to protect the interests of the American public and to strengthen and grow the middle class.



Annual Party Kicks Off Holiday Season

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he graciously thanked all his supporters for their help. "I could not have done it without every one of you," Schneider said.

Schneider announced that he had recently determined the site of his district office, which will be on Barclay Boulevard and Route 22 in Lincolnshire near the geographic center of the 10th District. He also announced that his office in Washington, D.C., is in the Cannon Building, Room 317, which happens to be an office that John F. Kennedy occupied when he was a congressman from Massachusetts. Schneider promised that the doors to both offices will always be open to his constituents.

The warm holiday glow, the camaraderie, the tasty food, and the good news about the 2012 elections made this a memorable party. The energy and enthusiasm of 10th District Democrats bode well for the future. Many partygoers signed up to volunteer for Tenth Dems. With a new infusion of talent, Tenth Dems will continue its mission, ensuring that our party will be a successful presence in district politics for years to come.

On the Campaign Trail

Or How I Spent My Summer Vacation Worrying About the Polls

By Mark Rosenberg

After leaving clinical practice, I decided that I would spend my summer and fall working in the Obama reelection campaign. I signed up for the Organizing for America summer fellowship to learn the ropes of campaigning, joining about 100 other “summer fellows” in Chicago.

I was the oldest in the group, being about three times the age of most other fellows. Learning the ins and outs of Votebuilder, the campaign tool for identifying voters, was not always easy for a low-tech pediatrician like me.

After training completed, most of us were assigned to geographic areas within Illinois. We were first tasked with making phone calls from weekly phone banks to bring in new recruits to the campaign. We also made weekly day trips to Iowa, canvassing voters in a battleground state crucial to the election.

As summer progressed, I sought a more active role, so I moved to Iowa for the fall. There I was housed with a wonderful family in rural Scott County, just outside Davenport.

Our initial assignment was to identify undecided voters and sway them to vote for Obama, as well as to recruit more volunteers as we neared Election Day. While Obama had won Iowa in 2008, the economy, although relatively stable in Iowa, was the major issue. Many voters were disillusioned by the inaction of Congress and the building negative rhetoric of the campaign. We learned how the campaign’s goals were to get our voters to the polling place on Election Day, and all efforts soon hit stride as November approached.

The highlight of my time in Davenport was an unexpected visit by the President one day in October. All of our teams were led by young volunteers who were directed by full-time campaign workers not much older than they were. As we worked the crowd that day, my team leader asked me if I wanted to go out to lunch, where a “special guest” would also attend. Jumping at the opportunity, I went to a small Mom and Pop restaurant in downtown Davenport and had lunch with President Obama, accompanied by a dozen Secret Service agents and twice as many press. The President sat at a table and talked with a few older women, a key demographic, of course. Upon leaving he saw my Chicago White Sox cap and stopped to say hello and autograph a book.

It was all downhill from then until Election Day. We worked the streets and back roads of Scott County, collecting mail-in voting requests and registering voters. When I began working in Iowa in the summer Obama’s lead was six points, and after thousands of phone calls and hundreds of doors knocked, that was the final election outcome.

It was hard work, counterbalanced by good friendships and camaraderie among the many, many volunteers. After years of lobbying on behalf of children, both in state government and Congress, this retired pediatrician learned that the difference in elections is boots on the ground and talking to real people.

Two Great Organizations

By Phyllis Goldman

As a member of both Tenth Dems and Move To Amend Greater Chicago (MTAGC) I can appreciate the marriage of the goals of these two great organizations. As a matter of fact, MTAGC may have been born out of some *Let’s Talk Politics* discussions sponsored by Tenth Dems.

Both Tenth Dems and MTAGC have as their goal good governance. Tenth Dems does it by working for the election of Democratic candidates, people who exemplify the best motives for governing. Both organizations are comprised of people who want to see this country move forward, people who want to see the resurgence of a strong middle class where wages are commensurate with societal contributions, and people who value the meaning of democracy.

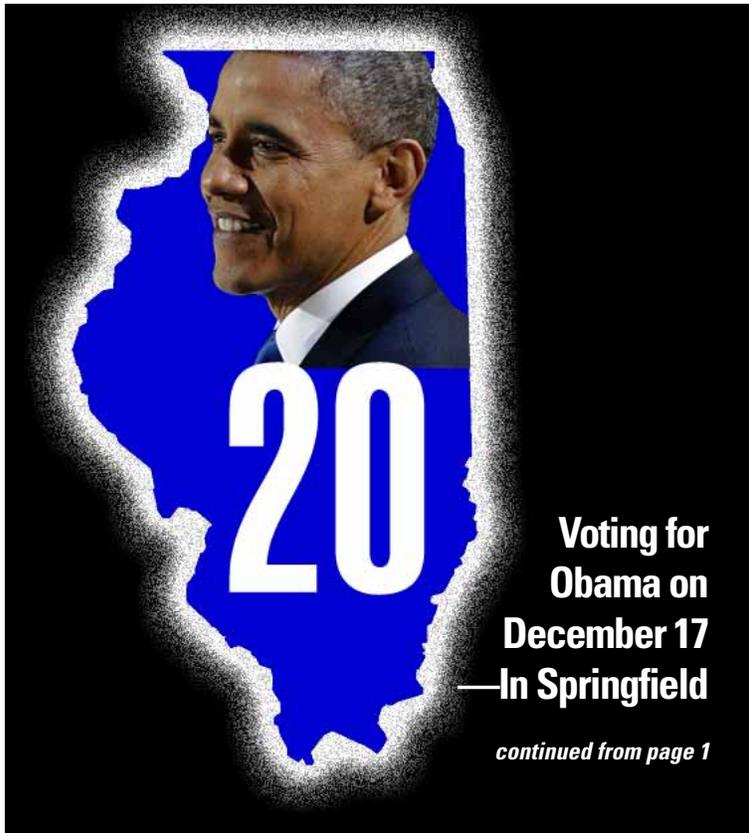
Tenth Dems believes in We the People. MTAGC envisions a country where the candidates who have good governance as their goal, candidates who are not purchased by the SuperPACs and corporations, win elections. Because of the 2010 Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United* (as well as some earlier ones), many of us in both Tenth Dems and MTAGC feel our democracy is being undermined. MTAGC is working to reverse *Citizens United* by educating the public and by having the state adopt a resolution asking Congress ratify a constitutional amendment that in effect states that corporations are not entitled to the rights of “natural” citizens and that money is not speech and can be regulated.

Tenth Dems has been supportive of these goals, and we wish to thank you for helping us pass nonbinding referenda in four of our local townships. Passage of these referenda will give us leverage in getting the support of the state.









**Voting for
Obama on
December 17
—In Springfield**

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