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# Jacqueline Herrera Giron for 9th Ward Alderman: A Tireless Advocate for Waukegan

By Eleonora di Liscia

Jacqueline Herrera Giron is the only Democrat running for 9th Ward Alderman in Waukegan. She is passionate about her city. She loves Waukegan and is proud of the city she grew up in.



"When I think of Waukegan, I think of opportunities. This is where my parents decided to create their home, to have a better future for their children, for me as an

immigrant. For me, it's a place of opportunity and of hard work. I see potential. There are hardworking citizens who live and care for Waukegan. I see their children going to school and aspiring to the same dreams I did when I first set foot here," she said.

Jacqueline is exceptionally well-qualified to serve Waukegan as an alderman. She joined her parents in Waukegan when she was seven years old and attended Lake Shore Catholic Academy and Waukegan East High School before graduating from Northern Illinois University. Then she taught first graders while attending law school at night, earning her law degree in 2003 from John Marshall Law School. After graduation, she worked in Chicago as an

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# Tenth News

[www.tenthdems.org](http://www.tenthdems.org)

APRIL 2015 Illinois Tenth Congressional District Democrats Newsletter Volume 12, Edition 4

## Local Democrats Express Ambitions for a Bright Future

By Claire Esker

On Sunday, March 8, Democratic supporters from Moraine Township gathered at Lucky Fish in Highwood to meet state and local elected officials and candidates for office. Moraine Township, one of 18 townships within the 10th Congressional District, includes parts of Highland Park, all of Highwood and Fort Sheridan, and parts of Deerfield and Lake Forest. As the more than 70 in attendance enjoyed fish tacos and crab quesadillas, they had the opportunity to mingle with fellow activists, elected officials, and candidates.

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## VOTE!

Election Day is Tuesday, April 7. Early voting is already underway.

To vote is a citizen's most precious right and most sacred duty. If we wish to have a voice in the life of our community, our state, and our nation, the very least we can do is vote in every single election – whether it's for President or a seat on a municipal board.

Let your voice be heard. Fulfill your duty as a citizen. Learn about the candidates and the issues.

VOTE!



FOR THUMBNAILS ON THE CURRENT OCCUPANTS OF THE REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL CLOWN CAR, TURN TO PAGE 8.

THEN, TO FIND OUT WHAT SEN. MARK KIRK HAS BEEN UP TO, TURN TO PAGE 10.



# Two Free Tenth Dems Events in April Focus on the Next Generation

April is the first full month of spring, and spring can be a poetic metaphor for youth. So it is apt that the upcoming Tenth Dems April events both focus on opportunities for talented and engaged high school students.

On Monday evening, April 13, at 7:00 p.m., Tenth Dems University presents Civic Action for a New Generation:

The Mikva Challenge and the Stevenson

Center on Democracy. The free event, at the Highland Park Public Library, 494 Laurel Avenue, will feature Judge Abner Mikva and former U.S. Senator Adlai Stevenson III. In addition, students from the Mikva Challenge program at Stevenson High School will share their experiences and reflections.



Then, on Tuesday evening, April 14, at 7:00 p.m., join us at the Ramada Inn, 200 N. Green Bay Road, Waukegan, for the Fifth Annual Tenth Dems Community Connection Poetry and Prose Competition Awards Ceremony and Open Mic. The young authors of prizewinning original works of poetry and prose will be honored while all contestants who attend will have the opportunity to read their short pieces aloud.

The competition, which closed on March 23, was open to students attending high schools in Waukegan, North Chicago, and Zion Township. This year, contestants were asked to write about "hope," a topic intended to inspire responses from young people facing a variety of challenges as they think about their post-high school lives. As vaccine pioneer Jonas Salk said, "Hope lies in dreams, in imagination, and in the courage of those who dare to make dreams into reality."

The Awards Ceremony MC, Kevin Lampe, is an internationally-known political strategist who has worked with such luminaries as President Barack Obama, former President Bill Clinton, actor Erik Estrada, and civil rights icon Rosa Parks. In the past, Lampe's warmth and charm have put the young people at ease, inspiring many to conquer their initial reluctance and come to the microphone to read. We expect this year to be no different.

The published writers who served on our panel of judges also will have the opportunity to read their own short, original works.

Both of these events are free, but space is limited. In fact, as this issue of *Tenth News* "goes to press," the April 13 event is nearly fully subscribed. To RSVP, go to [www.tenthdem.org](http://www.tenthdem.org), or contact us at 847-266-VOTE (8683) or by email at [events@tenthdem.org](mailto:events@tenthdem.org). ■



Tenth Dems Community Connection Poetry and Prose competition judges Heather Crain, Jacqueline Harris, and Lois Barr join the Tenth Dems planning committee to hammer out logistics for the April 14 Awards Night.

**Tenth Dems Community Connection  
5th ANNUAL**

**Poetry (and Prose) Contest  
and Awards Night**

Join us for a unique event featuring readings by high school students from Waukegan, North Chicago, and Zion!

Free Event • Refreshments

Tuesday, April 14, 2015  
7:00 - 9:00 PM

Help us applaud talented young people and celebrate our award-winners!

Ramada Inn - Waukegan  
200 N. Green Bay Road  
Waukegan, IL 60085

**RSVP**  
Register online at [www.tenthdem.org/poetry](http://www.tenthdem.org/poetry)  
By email [events@tenthdem.org](mailto:events@tenthdem.org)  
Or call 847-266-VOTE (8683)

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At the 2014 Poetry and Prose Competition Awards Night, Ayana Merrill accepts her award certificate from Tenth Dems Co-Chair Bonnie Berger-Neel.

## Local Democrats

*continued from page 1*

During the formal program, the importance of Democratic values in a changing society, and, indeed, as a catalyst for change, was emphasized by all speakers, who included Highland Park Mayor Nancy Rotering, Illinois State Senator Julie Morrison, State Representative Scott Drury, College of Lake County Trustee Amanda Howland, and candidates for local school boards. As Barbara Altman, one of the Moraine Township Democrats' vice chairs pointed out, many elected officials who achieve higher office begin their political careers in non-partisan, down-ballot races. It is important, she noted, that we support those who share our party's values.

Highland Park Mayor Nancy Rodkin Rotering, who is running unopposed for reelection and has announced that she will be running for Congress in the 10th District in 2016, said that Highland Park has had a balanced budget for four years and that, responding to residents' concerns, the city has installed new sidewalks in many parts of the community.

Dan Pierce, a former Highland Park mayor and currently a Democratic State Committeeman and President of the North Shore Water Reclamation District (formerly known as the North Shore Sanitary District), noted that Democrats are working toward solutions to global water shortages in our own back yard.

Education at all levels was a topic of concern. Highland Park's K-8 schools are slated to undergo a major reorganization that will be on the 2016 ballot for voter approval, and Superintendent Michael Bregy briefly spoke about the issues. Amanda Howland, the chair of the Board of Trustees of the College of Lake County emphasized the importance of this two-year public college as a resource for so many in our community. Candidates for school boards throughout Moraine Township also addressed the group.

Perhaps the most significant warnings about the urgency of employing our Democratic values came from State Senator Julie Morrison and State Representative Scott Drury. Senator Morrison noted that changes were coming to the Illinois budget that were extremely worrisome and that she and Representative Drury would be working to make sure that Illinois maintains a morally equitable budget.

Representative Drury warned that in the 2014 elections we saw a demographic shift and a change in the electoral landscape that necessitates a greater unity among Democrats and persistent, powerful campaign tactics. He also emphasized the importance of reading the electorate based on the 2014 results and of candidates acting accordingly in this new environment. ■

The image features a promotional poster for a "Spring Forward" event. The poster has a yellow background with a large blue title "Spring Forward" and a cartoon illustration of a hand turning a clock forward. Below the title, it says "with Moraine Township Democrats". A yellow box contains the event details: "Sunday, March 8, 2015 4:00 – 5:30 p.m. Lucky Fish 530 Sheridan Road Highwood". Below the details, it says "Meet and Greet Local Officials including Senator Julie Morrison Representative Scott Drury and Mayor Nancy Rotering". At the bottom, there is contact information: "For more info or to RSVP email [info@morainedems.org](mailto:info@morainedems.org), or call (847) 433-8344". The bottom half of the image shows a photograph of a social gathering in a room with brick walls and hanging lights, where people are networking and holding small flags.







## Jacqueline Herrera Giron

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advocate for immigrant groups before returning to Waukegan.

Most recently, Jacqueline served as director of the Fr. Gary Graf Immigrant Center, Most Blessed Trinity Church. After ten years working for nonprofit organizations, she has now started her own immigration law practice in Waukegan.

"Waukegan is home for me, and I think when you love a place and you identify it as your home, you work for it in a different manner. You work for it with passion and respect, and you look out for its best interests. I think that's important in the way you approach what you do for the city where you live," Jacqueline said.

Jacqueline says she learned her Democratic values in Waukegan, as well as "how to be a volunteer, how to knock on doors to participate in democracy." To that end, Jacqueline has volunteered at her church and at a local hospital. She has served on several nonprofit boards including Center for United Workers, United States Leadership Conference, and Lake County United. She now serves as president of the Waukegan Public Library Board and is proud that the library was recently awarded the National Medal from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Jacqueline is a proven leader. Her ten years of experience with nonprofits and her training as an attorney provide her with qualifications that neither the current City Council nor her opponents possess. Her nonprofit experience entailed scrutinizing budgets to cut expenses while maintaining services and creatively seeking new sources of funding. As an attorney, she can more readily interpret the codes and ordinances that the city enacts and find creative solutions to the city's problems. Jacqueline also has the rare gift of bridging differences which would allow her to help the city council reach consensus on many of the difficult issues facing Waukegan. And as a Latina, Jacqueline understands the issues that affect the many minority groups in this diverse community.

If elected alderman, Jacqueline would focus on building the revenue base "because as homeowners we're feeling the pain in our pocket because our taxes are going up. There needs to be more work in the development of Waukegan, especially in the 9th ward, so that businesses will come and stay for the long term and invest," she said.

Jacqueline would also strive to foster the relationship between the city and the school board, in order to facilitate "graduating students at a higher percentage with the skills to attract more businesses and to have a good work force available," she said.

Jacqueline also wants to make sure that budget priorities don't threaten public safety. The city was recently forced to cut the neighborhood watch program.

Jacqueline Herrera Giron has the background, experience, and values that Waukegan needs in an alderman. If you can help elect Jacqueline Herrera Giron as 9th Ward Alderman on April 7, you can contact her campaign at [jacklynehegiron@gmail.com](mailto:jacklynehegiron@gmail.com) or visit her website at [www.jackiefor9thward.com](http://www.jackiefor9thward.com). ■

Jacqueline  
Herrera  
Giron  
with her  
husband,  
Airon Giron.



## Jacqueline Herrera Giron para el Concejal del 9 distrito: Defensora incansable para Waukegan

By Eleonora di Liscia, as translated into Spanish by Jacqueline Herrera Giron

Jacqueline Herrera Giron está postulándose para el Concilio del 9 distrito de Waukegan. Ella se apasiona por Waukegan y está muy orgullosa que se crio en esta ciudad.

Jacqueline dice, "Cuando pienso en Waukegan, pienso en las oportunidades. Este lugar es adonde mis padres crearon

su hogar, para un mejor futuro por sus hijos, y yo como inmigrante. Este lugar significa oportunidad y trabajar duro. Yo veo potencial. Aquí hay muchas personas trabajadoras que viven y se preocupan por Waukegan. Yo veo a sus hijos que van a la escuela y aspiran a los mismos sueños que yo tuvo cuando puse un pie en este país."

Jacqueline es muy calificada y una líder excepcional para ser concejal de Waukegan. Ella se reunió con sus padres en Waukegan a la edad de siete años. Asistió a Lake Shore Catholic Academy y Waukegan East High School antes de graduarse de Northern Illinois University. Después fue maestra de primer grado cuando estudiaba derecho por la noche y se graduó como abogada de John Marshall Law School en 2003. Después trabajo duro como defensora de inmigrantes en Chicago antes de regresar a Waukegan.

Recientemente, Jacqueline fue directora del Centro Padre Gary Graf, de la Iglesia Santísima Trinidad. Ahora después de 10 años trabajando para organizaciones sin fin de lucro a abierto su oficina para ejercer leyes de inmigración.

Jacqueline nos dice "Waukegan es mi hogar, y creo que cuando amas algo trabajas para ello en una manera diferente y con mucho amor y respeto. Buscas el mejor interés para la comunidad porque lo quieres."

Jacqueline dice que ella aprendió sus valores Democráticos en Waukegan, y también "como ser voluntaria, ayudar al prójimo y participar cívicamente en la democracia."

Jacqueline ha sido voluntaria de su iglesia, y comunidad. Ella ha participado en muchas organizaciones sin fin de lucro como Centro de Trabajadores Unidos, United States Leadership Conference, and Lake County United. Ahora es presidenta de la mesa ejecutiva de La Biblioteca de Waukegan y está muy orgullosa de su conocimiento por recibir la Medalla Nacional para Bibliotecas y Museos un mérito reconocido por la casa blanca.

Jacqueline ha probado ser una gran líder en nuestra comunidad. Sus 10 años de experiencia con organizaciones sin fines de lucro y su entrenamiento como abogada demuestra que Jacqueline posee las cualificaciones que necesita el concilio de la ciudad y que no tienen sus contrincantes. Su trabajo requería que ella detallada mente

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# The Top 10 Republican Presidential Candidates – The Cast of a New Reality TV Show?

By Steven Gan

One of the things I like about Facebook is that it gives me a wonderful opportunity to debate with my conservative friends all the issues that we so passionately disagree on. Whether the topic is gun control, women's reproductive health, marriage equality, immigration, climate change, my days and weeks can be filled with exhausting and pithy back-and-forth banter. With a few of my conservative FB friends, at least the ones who haven't unfriended me yet, the debate threads sometimes go on and on: we're like two boxers who are barely standing by the 10th round.

But when, recently, one of my stalwart opponents made a final comment to me, for perhaps the first time we found ourselves standing on common ground. "Unfortunately, the GOP doesn't have a single, clear, and popular candidate who can really enthuse and rally the party and its supporters," he said.

To read my Facebook antagonist's honest assessment was almost shocking, but anyone who follows the silly antics, outlandish comments, and bizarre perspectives of the GOP candidates can easily come to the same conclusion. Let me take a moment to give you a quick rundown on my top 10 Republican candidates for 2016 and point out why they're nothing but part of the cast of the next new reality TV show.

## 1) Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker

According to a nationwide Quinnipiac poll released in early March, Walker has recently been leading the GOP pack with 18 percent of Republican primary voters. That's impressive, considering that he's really not well-known nationwide.



In February, Walker went off to England to obtain some semblance of foreign policy credentials. When asked by one UK reporter whether he believed in evolution, he responded.... well, actually, he had no response. I suppose he just didn't want to go down a path that could alienate the religious conservatives of his party.

But I got more insight into how Walker's mind works when he was asked recently at the annual Conservative Political Action Conference how he would handle ISIS. His coy response was, "If I can take on 100,000 protesters, I can do the same across the world." Comparing the teachers, firemen, policemen, and other union supporters who were peacefully protesting to radical terrorists who commit heinous, violent crimes just makes me cringe.

## 2) Former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee



While the rest of the country is moving forward, accepting marriage equality and being open-minded about other social issues, Huckabee is digging in his heels. His new book, *God, Guns, Grits, and Gravy*, is nothing but camouflage for his religious liberty crusade.

I was watching one of Huckabee's comical interviews when he declared, "Forcing people opposed to same-sex marriage to

accept it is the same as telling Jews they have to serve bacon-wrapped shrimp in their deli."

Mike, if you're reading this, just for the record, no one is forcing any kosher deli owner to sell shrimp wrapped in bacon. Just as you can marry someone of the opposite sex, if you prefer. However, if you were to walk into a kosher deli, you could not be refused service, no matter how repugnant your ideas.

## 3) Former Texas Governor Rick Perry

Talk about delusional. When you're under federal indictment for abuse of power and you still think you have a chance to become President of the United States, something upstairs is amiss.



I know Rick Perry is very good at leading thousands in prayer, and maybe he thinks that this talent will somehow save him from going to trial, but the reality is that he'll drop out of the GOP race as soon as the Feds set a trial date, most likely once the campaign season gets underway. It's all about perfect timing.

## 4) New Jersey Governor Chris Christie

The George Washington Bridge traffic rerouting scandal is probably not going to matter all that much anymore. What will probably hurt Christie is not anything to do with his policies or the fact that New Jersey's bond rating has been downgraded a few times since he's been governor. Instead, he'll pander to the Tea Party element of the GOP, telling them that he's the "real conservative," while the other candidates keep showing pictures of him embracing President Obama right after Hurricane Sandy.



## 5) Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal

I once thought Jindal was not as entrenched in GOP ideology as the others, but since he's been thinking of throwing his hat into the ring, I hear him espousing the conservative line more and more. Jindal is currently fighting with his own party over how to, on the one hand, fill a \$1.6 billion budget hole and, on the other hand, maintain his anti-tax bona fides. Republicans like to think of each state's economy as a microcosm of the U.S. economy. If you can't balance the budget in your own little corner of the world, then what makes you think you would be able to balance the budget of the entire nation?



## 6) Kentucky Senator Rand Paul

For several months, Paul was kind of leading the GOP pack. His "outreach" to the African-American community and his anti-interventionist foreign policy seemed to make him a little more palatable. Then came his statements in support of parents who withhold vaccination from their children. Followed by rapid back-pedaling.



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# Distributed Solar: The Best Renewable Energy

By Donnie R. Dann

Several forms of "green" energy may do more harm than good. So what types of renewable energy are better? Is there a renewable energy source that is both wildlife-friendly and relatively low cost? Yes, there is: "distributed solar."

Current energy generation sources are primarily large-scale coal- and gas-fired power plants, massive hydroelectric dams, and nuclear generating stations. Even renewable energy mostly originates from industrial-scale wind farms or multi-acre solar arrays. But with distributed solar, the energy generators are spread out, dispersed, or decentralized. Think rooftop photovoltaic panels on suburban homes, urban factories, or even rural farm buildings.

Distributed rooftop solar systems send power directly to the user — no power plants and no power lines are needed to get it there. The user is "off-the-grid." Moreover, installing these systems does not require erecting structures that destroy habitat or displace, injure, or kill plants and animals. On the contrary, distributed solar fills in otherwise unused space on rooftops. Last, and perhaps most obvious, distributed rooftop solar systems avoid fossil fuel use to the extent that they displace power that would otherwise need to be purchased from coal- or natural gas-fired power plants.

But is solar energy a practicable solution for the U.S., a country with significant areas of cloud cover? Yes, according to the experience of Germany, hardly a very sunny country. Germany currently produces more than 23 gigawatts of solar energy, which provides over 50 percent of the country's electricity.

Some critics also claim the solar solution is impractical because their roofs are not south-facing. As Michael Richard has pointed out, a west roofline orientation may be even more suitable. (<http://www.treehugger.com/renewable-energy/doh-most-solar-panels-are-facing-wrong-way-new-study-shows.html>)

As to the cost of solar, there is no doubt that the downward trend has been significant. David Roberts writes that "the rapidly falling cost of solar PV [photovoltaics] is the clean-energy story to beat all clean-energy stories!" (<http://grist.org/climate-energy/renewable-energy-is-getting-cheaper-and-cheaper-in-6-charts/>) Many companies make the financing of solar installations relatively painless by applying the utility bill savings to the lease cost.

In Illinois, energy-conscious consumers have an additional incentive. In addition to the federal solar tax credit, Illinois passed legislation in 2014 authorizing up to \$30 million for supplemental "distributed generation for solar procurement." Other states have similar incentives.

Considering the benefits of passive solar, the rapid advances in solar storage capacity, and the decline in installation costs, there is little uncertainty that this technology is not just the wave of the future, but is also the best way we can provide efficient, benign power today. ■

## The Top 10 Republican Presidential Candidates

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Paul has had a history of making outlandish and highly provocative comments, only having to explain them later. That said, he seems to be probably the only one who can appeal to the hardline conservatives and then try to soften up his libertarian and Tea Party credentials for the general election.



### 7) Texas Senator Ted Cruz

You may be surprised to learn that I didn't think Cruz would run for President. I thought he just enjoyed letting everyone think he might run. He should know he doesn't have a chance. He's caused way too much destruction to this country (leading the government shutdown) and has fomented endless turmoil within his party. His obsession to repeal the ACA drives him. He has done nothing but be an obstructionist on every issue no matter the damage. His claim to fame is that he knows how to read Dr. Seuss's book, *Green Eggs and Ham*.

### Honorable mentions



### 8) Dr. Ben Carson

One might expect some scientific insight from a former neurosurgeon. That's why Carson's recent assertion on CNN that men go into prison straight and come out gay, which he offered as scientific proof that being gay is a choice, is so appalling.



### 9) Former Hewlett-Packard CEO Carly Fiorina

Fiorina has been toying around with the idea of running for President since 2008. The problem is that she has never held any public office and seems to think that, having been a corporate CEO, she can just waltz right into the presidency. Talk about having hubris.

By the way, wasn't she forced to resign as CEO of Hewlett-Packard? And hasn't she ranked as one of the worst tech CEOs of all time?



### 10) Former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin & Mogul Donald Trump

I'm lumping these contenders together. Neither has any real intention of ever running, and both love the attention they get by feeding into any speculation they might give it a try.

As horribly inarticulate as she is, Sarah Palin is probably smart enough to know that she's way out of her league running for President. As for Donald Trump, it's all about doing what he can to increase ratings for *The Apprentice*.

With the above pool of illustrious candidates, no wonder my Conservative FB friend and I agree that this line-up is a television station's reality show dream team come true. ■

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for them!**

# Kirk Signs Open Letter to Iran; Goes Along with Republican Leadership on Abortion Restrictions and Anti-Immigrant Homeland Security Funding Bills



By Barbara Altman

It's early days for the 114th Congress, but already Illinois' Republican Senator Mark Kirk has made it clear that he does not plan to behave like the thoughtful independent he claims to be. Nor has he demonstrated any intent to exert a moderating influence on the right-wing controlled Republican caucus.

Three cases in point for this month's column: 1) the Republicans' unprecedented interference in U.S. negotiations with a foreign government by writing An Open Letter to the Leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2) their effort to restrict the right of victims of human trafficking from terminating unwanted pregnancies, and 3) their failed attempt to extort President Barack Obama into abandoning his executive actions on immigration by attaching a poison pill to the bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security.

## *Kirk and the Open Letter to Iran*

"An Open Letter to the Leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran" dominated much of the news in March. It essentially announced to the Iranian government and the rest of the world that there is no point in negotiating with an American President because the Congress, or a future President, might just abrogate any agreement reached. All but seven of the 54 Senate Republicans signed the letter. So did Mark Kirk.

Spearheaded by 37-year-old senator-since-January Tom Cotton (R-AR), the letter is childish in both its tone and its content. It is less than one-fifth the length of this column, so you can read all 271 words and draw your own conclusions. (<http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2015/03/09/text-of-gop-senators-letter-to-irans-leaders-on-nuclear-talks/>)

The letter begins with a decidedly condescending tone: "It has come to our attention ... that you may not fully understand our constitutional system." It ends on the same note: "We hope this letter enriches your knowledge of our constitutional system."

And what is the main point about our Constitution the letter seeks to convey? Not that it includes a Bill of Rights that protects the individual rights of our people. And certainly not that the Constitution gives the U.S. President the power to conduct our foreign policy. No, the main point about the Constitution is that the current U.S. President, Barack Obama, has only two more years in office: "For example, the president may serve only two 4-year terms, whereas senators may serve an unlimited number of 6-year terms. As applied today, for instance, President Obama will leave office in January 2017, while most of us will remain in office well beyond then — perhaps decades."

Read those two sentences aloud. Are you hearing in your head a

final "nyaah, nyaah, nyaah, nyaah, nyaah"?

Can Mark Kirk really believe that it is in the interest of the United States to tell the world that our nation should not be expected to abide by any international agreement it enters into because our president is term-limited? It appears that Senator Kirk didn't give signing onto such a statement much thought. Shortly after the letter was issued, he was quoted in the March 12 edition of *The Washington Post* as remarking, "The letter has been a surprising controversy that came up."

Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) called the letter "virtually unprecedented," "cynical," and "a new low." He said that it "weakens America's hand and highlights our political divisions to the rest of the world." Durbin continued, "Understand that if these negotiations fail, a military response to Iran developing their nuclear capability becomes more likely. These Republican Senators should think twice about whether their political stunt is worth the threat of another war in the Middle East."

Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), a sometime critic of the President's foreign policy, agreed. "We can and should and must disagree with the president... but when war holds in the balance and specifically when nuclear war hangs in the balance should members of the United States Senate be in the position of publicly undermining the president of the United States to our enemies" she said. <http://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/politics/2015/03/10/gop-letter-iran-michigan/24704999/>

Apparently Senator Kirk had no compunction about publicly undermining the President of the United States to our enemies. After his initial surprise at the "controversy that came up" dissipated, he issued a statement in which he tried to justify his action by expressing concern that the Obama administration, along with an international coalition that includes the U.K., France, Germany, China, and Russia, may negotiate a bad deal: "A better deal, with bipartisan congressional backing, is the best insurance policy against a nuclear Iran, a destructive arms race, and war in the Middle East." But the letter Kirk signed has hurt bipartisan efforts in the Senate to assert greater influence on the negotiations, and Debbie Stabenow is not the only senator who has been critical of the President on Iran to say so. As Tim Kaine (D-VA) said, the open letter to Iran "weakens our president, weakens our country, weakens our credibility."

Turning from policy to politics, Michael Gerson, a former speechwriter for George W. Bush, called the letter "a stunt rather than a strategy," positing that many who signed did so unthinkingly, for no other reason than because Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) did.

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# Congress Watch

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I doubt that many of the voters in Illinois' 10th District who supported Mark Kirk when he ran for the Senate in 2010 expected him to do whatever Mitch McConnell does.

The more I think about the irresponsible behavior of these Senators, the more I realize that the scariest sentence in the open letter Mark Kirk signed may be the one that says that he and the other signatories could remain in the Senate for decades. We should make it our business to make sure that Mark Kirk doesn't remain in the Senate beyond 2016.

## Kirk on Reproductive Rights of Victims of Human Trafficking

In mid-March, Kirk voted to bring to the floor anti-trafficking legislation to which fellow Republicans had added new abortion restrictions.

For decades, Congress has prohibited federally-appropriated funds from being used to pay for an abortion. However, the anti-trafficking legislation is not funded by appropriations; the money to help victims of human trafficking comes from the traffickers themselves, in the form of court-ordered fines and forfeitures. Adamant that victims of sexual trafficking should be free to terminate unwanted pregnancies, Democrats have been filibustering the Republican bill, demanding that the abortion restrictions be removed. On March 17, 18, and 19, Senator Kirk voted five separate times to end the filibuster.

If Kirk were for reproductive choice and against human trafficking, as he often claims, he wouldn't be trying to get this particular bill to the floor. Democrats are against human trafficking, but they oppose this legislation because it is anti-choice. Without the new abortion restrictions Republicans tacked on, the anti-trafficking legislation would pass with a large, bipartisan majority. By his refusal to break with his caucus on March 17, 18, and 19, Kirk once again showed that he elevates party over policy.

## Kirk on Immigration

The big news out of Congress in February was the near-shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security on February 27. If you wondered where Senator Mark Kirk stood during that crisis, you wouldn't be alone. Mostly, he missed votes.

Some quick background. In 2012, President Obama implemented DACA. Standing for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, DACA essentially provides legal status for certain undocumented immigrants who arrived in the United States as children and have lived here continuously, are in school or have a high school diploma or an honorable discharge from the armed services, and have no significant criminal record.



A year later, in June of 2013, the Senate passed a bipartisan immigration reform bill that would have codified some of what DACA has done for undocumented young people. Back then, Senator Kirk voted for the immigration reform bill, and he touted this vote in a press release that began, "U.S. Sen. Mark Kirk (R-IL) today applauded Senate passage of a bipartisan immigration reform bill that first secures the border and then creates a tough but fair path to citizenship for undocumented

immigrants." But the bipartisan bill died when Kirk's fellow Republicans refused to bring it up for a vote in the House.

Then, last November, the President announced a second program, DAPA (either Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and legal permanent residents or Deferred Action for Parental Accountability). DAPA (whose implementation is on hold pending further court action) would protect from deportation certain undocumented immigrants who have a child who is a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident, as long as the immigrant parent meets certain criteria, including passing a background check.

We all know what happened next. With majorities in both houses of Congress, Republicans decided to use the need to fund the Department of Homeland Security as leverage to shut down DACA and DAPA. Although the House easily passed the bill that wed an anti-immigration reform poison pill to funding Homeland Security, filibusters kept the bill from coming to a vote in the Senate.

DACA and DAPA further the same policies as the immigration reform bill that Senator Kirk supported in 2013, support that, at the time, he deemed worthy of a self-congratulatory press release. So one might think he would stand up in favor of DACA and DAPA.

However, on February 5, the first time Republicans tried to break the Democrats' filibuster of the DACA/DAPA-destroying Homeland Security funding bill that had passed the House, Mark Kirk was right there, voting with his party. That is, Senator Kirk joined the Republican effort to get the House bill through the Senate and to the President's desk, to force the President to kill programs fully consistent with the same immigration reforms that Kirk announced he supported in June 2013.

After that cloture vote failed (despite Kirk's joining in with his anti-immigrant caucus), there were no fewer than three additional tries as Democrats held firm. For each subsequent unsuccessful cloture vote, Senator Kirk is listed as "not voting."

Whether something kept Kirk from the floor during these roll calls, or he simply ducked out to avoid difficult votes, one thing is certain: Mark Kirk failed to take a principled stand on this important issue. He showed no support for the immigration reforms he claimed to be for in 2013, and he issued no statement to explain his stance (or lack thereof).

The 10th District—indeed, all of Illinois—deserves better. ■

# **Believer by David Axelrod: A Story of Politics as a Calling**

By Mark Rosenberg

If you are reading the *Tenth News*, chances are that you are deeply interested in politics. The political atmosphere here in Illinois is precisely what drew David Axelrod from Brooklyn, New York, to attend college at the University of Chicago and remain here after he graduated. From a serendipitous start in journalism at the *Hyde Park Herald*, followed by a stint as a political beat reporter at the *Chicago Tribune*, Axelrod quickly grew attached to

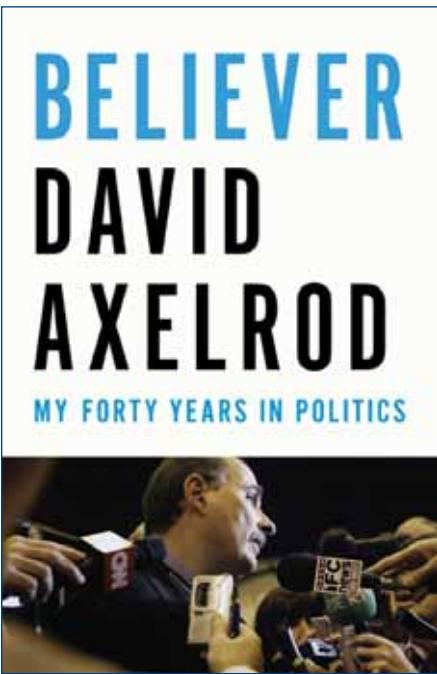
Chicago politics, waiting for the chance to jump to “the big one,” a presidential campaign. Family commitments led him to miss out on the Al Gore campaign of 2000, so he attached his career to that of a young black state senator from the south side of Chicago named Barack Obama. That began what Axelrod called “an improbable journey” for both men.

The title of *Believer* refers to Axelrod’s insistence on working only for candidates whose political philosophy matches his own personal convictions. Personal convictions led Axelrod to reject working for Rod Blagojevich’s gubernatorial campaign. As Axelrod tells it, when he asked Blagojevich why he wanted to run for Governor of Illinois, the candidate responded, “You can help me figure that out.” Axelrod then said, “If you can’t tell me why you are running, I can’t help you explain it to others.”

We all know what kind of convictions ended Blagojevich’s political career.

Filled with anecdotes like how Axelrod noshed his way to a weight gain of 25 pounds during the 2008 campaign, and honest self-assessments of his missteps along the way, the book is a story of how two individuals crafted a message and a relationship. Axelrod is unrelenting in his admiration of the sincerity and honesty of Barack Obama, as reflected in this quote, “He was an incomparable client—not perfect by a long shot; but brilliant and honorable and motivated by the best intentions; a good friend and fellow idealist. I had been spoiled.”

Nearly half of the book is a description of the relationship between David Axelrod and Barack Obama, from Obama’s 2004 Senate campaign through the West Wing years that Axelrod spent as advisor to the President, helping him craft his message. As expected, much of that period contains the rich anecdotes of Axelrod’s contacts



with the White House team, especially the frequent encounters with Rahm Emanuel, Chief of Staff, and presidential advisor Valerie Jarrett, whose role often led to head-butting between the two of them.

His language may be crude at times, but David Axelrod documents the sacrifices he made as his family with a special needs child survived the long campaign absences. One significant flaw in the book, to my mind, is how generous Axelrod is with his assessment of client Richard M. Daley’s accomplishments as Mayor of Chicago, glossing over the state of the city’s finances following his term.

In an era of gridlock politics, it is refreshing to reflect on the career of a campaign maestro like David Axelrod and to see that there are some whose idealism drives their careers. In Axelrod’s words, “After a lifetime of rough and tumble, I still believed: in politics as a calling; in campaigns as an opportunity to forge the future we imagine; in government as an instrument for that progress.” ■

## **Jacqueline Herrera Giron (en español)**

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examinara los presupuestos y cortar gastos y al mismo tiempo mantener los servicios y creativamente buscar recursos para mantener los programas. Como abogada, ella puede interpretar códigos y ordenanzas que la ciudad implemente y buscar soluciones creativas para los problemas de la ciudad.

Jacqueline también posee un don de crear puentes cuando hay diferencias que le permitirán ayudar al concilio obtener consenso cuando la ciudad se enfrenta con decisiones difíciles. Jacqueline como Latina entiende los problemas que le afectan a una comunidad de minorías y tan diversa.

Si eligen a Jacqueline para el concilio ella se enfocara en buscar recursos para incrementar los ingresos “porque como dueña de casa yo también siento el dolor en mi bolsa cuando los impuestos suben.” Es necesario trabajar para tener más desarrolló en Waukegan, especialmente en el distrito 9 para que los negocios puedan invertir en nuestra comunidad por el largo plazo.

Jacqueline fomentara relaciones con la ciudad y la mesa ejecutiva escolar, dice que “a si todos trabajan para que haya un porcentaje alto de graduados a si poder atraer más negocios y tener trabajadores con habilidades disponibles.”

Jacqueline quiere asegurarse que las prioridades del presupuesto no ponen en peligro la seguridad del público. Ya que la ciudad acaba de cortar el programa comunitario de la policía.

Jacqueline Herrera Giron tiene la experiencia y los valores que Waukegan necesita en un concejal. Si tú puedes ayudar a elegir a Jacqueline Herrera Giron para Concejal del 9 distrito tu puedes contactar a su campana por correo electrónico a jacklynehegiron@gmail.com o su página web a www.jackiefor9thward.com. ■