



Yavapai County DEMOCRAT

August/September, 2011

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Themes for August and September Accomplishments of President Obama and Economic Justice



President Obama's Birthday Party

On Thursday, August 4, 2011, Yavapai County Democrats gathered at Party Headquarters to honor President Obama on his 50th birthday. Although the President is being excoriated by both the Left for "giving in" too much to the Republican Right, and for not being "sensitive" enough to the families of fallen soldiers; and by the Right for all the usual reasons, we at YCDP felt a need to honor and celebrate this courageous, thoughtful, and caring President who we feel still holds the torch of hope for our country.

Here is a sample of the "Birthday Greetings" to President Obama generated at the party:

- "I am so happy that you have signed the bill to repeal 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell', and that you support the repeal of the 'Defense of Marriage' Act."
- "Thank you for trying to bring both major parties in line to help the USA, although there is not much hope there."
- "Thank you for Health Care."
- "Thank you for nominating judges that represent ALL of our country."
- "The environment is where it's at – please make that your mission – it provides jobs and innovation – it's another revolution and a way forward – no trashed Earth for the kids –thanks!"
- "Thank you for your courage in spite of extreme criticism constantly. You are wise, not conceited."
- "You have exposed the Republicans for the plutocrats, oligarchs, obstructionists, and democracy destroyers that they are!"
- "Thank you for: health care reform, union support, and bravery in the face of an insane Republican Party!"

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Letters, We Send Letters, We Send Lots and Lots of Letters!



Under the leadership of Chair Ben Furlong, the Messaging Committee has over the past six months transformed the political message environment in Yavapai County. Previously, the print and blog media published virtually nothing submitted by Democratic or progressive voices. Now, it is common to see several letters each month in either the Prescott Daily Courier or the Arizona Republic expressing our point of view. Our Democratic Clubs on the other side of the mountain have done equally well, getting letters published in Verde Valley and Sedona-based newspapers and blogs. These letters are featured monthly on our web site, www.yavdem.org, but this month we would like to share with you in the Newsletter some of the most recent work of our great messengers!

From Ron Woerner, Prescott

EDITOR: A recent Paul Gosar campaign speech, published as one of his Special to the Courier columns, follows Mr. Gosar's usual pattern of listing big numbers with no supporting evidence to give them credence, a lot of language designed to appeal to the Tea Party Republican base, and a smattering of faulty analogies. But one of his claims is an especially distur-

ing combination of fawning language and erroneous logic.

Mr. Gosar extols the virtue of a Balanced Budget Amendment (BBA) to the Constitution and his support of the proposed BBA. In order for any amendment to become part of the Constitution it has to pass both the House and the Senate with a two-thirds majority and be ratified by three-fourths of the States. There are a few other convoluted paths to ratification, but this is the path almost all amendments have followed. The President has no role of any kind in the process and no veto power. It is strictly up to the House, the Senate, and the States.

The BBA amendment has no chance of passage. Mr. Gosar knows, or should know, this. So why does he continue to promote it and himself along with it? There are two possibilities. One is that it is part of his campaign rhetoric and posturing. Although distasteful, that would be understandable. The other is that he truly believes passage is possible and worth all the time and effort going into it at the expense of other matters. Given his position and power, that lapse of judgment would be unforgivable.

EDITOR: In the debate surrounding raising the debt limit, President Obama offered plans that were long term, cut 4 trillion dollars from the deficit, raised additional revenue, and did not significantly harm social programs nor the military. These plans were highly favored in public polls, by the financial community, and by the stock market. The Republicans said no to every one. Their plan, finally adopted, was short term, had smaller cuts, no new revenue, and a committee to study the problem and make recommendations, a process sure to re-open the same debate that led up to a near U.S. default. Accord-

ing to most analysts, the Tea Party was the big winner in this battle.

So, America, how do you like your first taste of Tea Party economics?

EDITOR: In the discussion of the relationships among government spending, revenue, and deficit a bewildering array of numbers from an equally bewildering number of sources have flooded our lives. In self-defense, I used a few numbers that seem to make sense, some common sense, and personal experiences to try to sort it all out.

First, I found a broad consensus among the majority of people analyzing the problem that there is no way to take serious bites out of the deficit without increasing revenue. Government agencies, programs, and services could be slashed or eliminated, but the resulting loss of jobs and devastation to the health and safety of Americans would add to the problem, not decrease it. According to the polls, the group with the most common sense, the American people, agrees. There are a handful of numbers that seem to add up. In 2000 the U.S. had a huge budget surplus; by 2009 we had an equally huge deficit. During that same time period federal spending increased from 18.2 % of Gross Domestic Product to 24.7 %, while taxes decreased from 19.5 % of GDP to 14.8 %. In 2003 we had a major tax cut and launched a second war. In the following years both the deficit and unemployment increased, leading up to the 2008-2009 recession.

Finally, during the lifetime of my family there have been times when expenditures exceeded, or threatened to exceed income. We cut everywhere we could, but if we wanted to provide food,

The Few at the Expense of the Many

By Ben Furlong

The financial status of Americans shifted dramatically over the past 50 years. The rich are getting richer; increasingly our dwindling middle class is paying for government and supporting the U.S. economy.

The growing income inequity is the worst in modern history. The income of the wealthiest one percent of Americans is one in four dollars earned, up from one in ten. The income growth of the rich has increased by 256 percent while the poorest households experienced an increase of only 11 percent. The increase for middle income families grew by 21 percent and would have been lower had it not been for two family members working.

The glaring disparity in income growth began in the

late 1970s. The relentless campaign that produced such inequality came through notable reductions in the top tax rates on capital gains, estate taxes and income taxes of those Americans most able to pay. Taxes paid by corporations have consistently dropped. Almost half of American corporations pay no income taxes. Indeed, corporations like Exxon-Mobil and General Electric receive money from the IRS.

The viability of the American economy is based on consumerism. It has been estimated that 75 percent of our economy is dependent on spending. Without a large relatively affluent middle class the U.S. economy is negatively affected. The income growth of upper financial class Americans is either being salted away or invested overseas. There is no evidence that increased wealth in this nation is being spent to create jobs.

The great wealth of this nation results from the contribution of many, each in his own way. Americans in many different walks of life, Americans doing many types of work are all essential

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Yavapai County **DEMOCRAT**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DATE	TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
August 25, 2011	6:30 - 8:30 PM	DOVV General Meeting Former Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick	Randall's Restaurant 891 S. Main St., Cottonwood, AZ
August 28, 2011	2 - 4:00 PM	DORR invites you to the First Annual AZ List Celebration of Women of Courage	Riordan Mansion 409 W. Riordan Rd. Flagstaff, AZ
August 29, 2011	6:30 - 8:30 PM	Helping Kids Succeed- AZ Style A Round Table Discussion presented by DORR & ASBA	West Sedona School Multipurpose Room
Sept. 8, 2011	5:30 - 8:00 PM	Yavapai County Democratic Party County Committee Meeting Republican Front Groups	Meals on Wheels Room Prescott Adult Center, Rosser Rd. Prescott, AZ
Sept. 15, 2011	8 - 10:00 AM	DORR Breakfast-\$11.00 Speaker TBA	Olde Sedona Bar & Grill 1407 W. SR89A, Sedona, AZ
Sept. 21, 2011	11AM -1 PM	Dem. Women of the Prescott Area Speaker: Quintana Zenaldo of Americans United for the Separation of Church and State	Wyndham Hotel, Route 69 Prescott, AZ
Sept. 29, 2011	6:30 -8:30 PM	DOVV General Meeting Health Care Forum	Location TBD

Expense, cont'd

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to a prosperous nation. Just distribution of the fruits of our labor should move back to the top of our agenda as a nation.

Aristotle posited that there is a causal link between the middle class and democracy. But we are currently caught in a revolution and haven't recognized it. "We are engaged in a war that is poised to topple what's left of Democracy. The war is being won by the power of wealth."

Obama, cont'd

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- "Thank you, Michelle Obama, for planting an organic garden at the White House and raising awareness of healthy food."
- "Thank you, President and First Lady Obama, for your dedicated work on behalf of our heroes, the veterans of our armed forces."
- "Thank you for my 97th birthday card!"
- "You are the most intelligent, wisest, most decent President we've had in my entire lifetime!"
- "You saved the U.S. auto industry – preserving thousands of jobs in the process."
- "I have insurance again! Thank you, President Obama."
- "Thank you for the Lily Ledbetter Act – pay equity for women."
- "Health Care Reform in my lifetime – YEA!"
- "Yes! You won – and you will win in 2012!"

From the Chair . . .

By: Lindsay Bell



The Obama Administration had significant successes in its first two years—the stimulus program, passage of health-care reform, significant improvements in oversight to financial institutions and repeal of “don’t ask, don’t tell”, to name a few. However, there was a backlash to these accomplishments during the 2010 election when many GOP hard liners were swept into office. Since the election, right wing extremists both nationally and within Arizona, have protected tax breaks for big corporations and the wealthiest Americans, attacked women’s reproductive rights, cut safety net programs and moved to undermine unions. Democrats are fighting back, but we need more Democrats in public office if we hope to break the frequent policy deadlocks and achieve more balanced public policy.

The recent Democratic victory in New York’s 26th district, a traditional Republican stronghold, is only the first of what can be, with your help, a wave of

Republicans turned out of office in 2012. Freshman Representatives Gosar, Quayle and Schweikert are vulnerable following their vote to end Medicare as we know it. And with the validation of over 10,000 signatures on recall petitions, even Arizona Senate President Russell Pierce is facing a recall election. Even with these hopeful signs, there is much work to be done to ensure that President Obama is re-elected and that more Democrats are elected to Congress and to the AZ legislature in 2012. That work requires money and volunteers.

Please join the Yavapai County Democratic Party in delivering the Democratic message and electing Democrats in 2012 who reflect our values and who will honor promises made on healthcare, education and the economy. Your contribution can make the difference. You can support us by contributing to our annual Yavapai Blue fundraising campaign in one of two ways:

- Contribute regularly through your Visa, Mastercard, cash or check—monthly, quarterly, semi annually
- Make a single 2011 contribution by check, cash, Visa or Mastercard.

To kickstart the 2011 Yavapai Blue campaign, several Yavapai Democrats have pledged to match the first \$5000 in contributions received on a dollar for dollar basis.

We hope you will make an investment in the Yavapai Blue Fund. This newsletter includes a contribution form you can use to make a gift to the YCDP. Thank you so much for anything you can do to help us prepare for and move toward a successful 2012 election season.

Letters, cont'd

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clothing, shelter, and health care for our family we had to have additional income. When we reached those points we worked it out, but we never believed we could do it without more funds. We weren't that foolish. Apparently, many in Congress are.

From Ben Furlong, Prescott

EDITOR: Representative Debbie Lesko of Glendale is leading efforts to fund "scholarships" for 30 Arizona legislators. The scholarships will pay for attendance at a conference in New Orleans put on by the American Legislative Exchange Council—ALEC.

ALEC is an organization funded by oil companies like Exxon, tobacco companies like Phillip Morris and R.J. Reynolds, and pharmaceutical giants like Pfizer and Glaxo and others. ALEC crafts legislation that it gives to right-wing legislators to take back to their states and try to pass into law. This past year over 800 model laws were distributed to legislators throughout the United States.

Over the years, ALEC has promoted legislation to make it easier for big banks to foreclose on homes, to prohibit Americans from buying American-made drugs cheaply through Canada, to deregulate utility companies like Enron (which then defrauded us of billions of dollars), to allow cable companies to maintain their monopolies and to allow tobacco companies to advertise more freely.

ALEC is currently expanding its political activities by promoting laws that enhance voter suppression and nullification of voter referendums. The organization is also seeking repeal of the Affordable Health Care Act and is promoting new legislation that worsens the welfare of working Americans. Despite its obvious right-wing political agenda, the

American Legislative Exchange Council is allowed to continue its status as a 501c3 corporation allowing tax deductible contributions for political purposes.

Arizona legislators ought to be talking to working Arizonans for legislative ideas, not fronting for the special interests of multinational corporations.

From Glenn Miller, Prescott

EDITOR: This is in response to the letter from Bernard Cygan on 07/18. I don't have room to respond to all the inaccuracies and distortions he wrote in his article. I know and do share many of the views of Mr. Bob Lynne, whom he attacks. He doesn't quote any statement from Mr. Lynne to support his insinuation that Lynne has conducted "character assassination" towards the "successful" members of our society participating in our economy. Mr. Lynne has criticized those in the financial industry whose shenanigans did lead us into the current economic crisis. Cygan associates John Maynard Keynes ("socialist/Marxist dictates") with Communism, when any economist knows that Keynes is the single most important capitalist economist in the 20th century.

Examine Keynes's General Theory of Income, Interest and Inflation and see if you find evidence of socialism or Marxism. His views were instrumental in guiding the New Deal, which immediately restored growth in the economy by deliberate deficit spending, which lasted until 1937. Then, a recession was brought on by pulling back towards a balanced budget. A more massive stimulus in 1941 brought on by rearmament (anticipating war) finally brought us to the kind of growth that ended the depression (below %15 unemployment). This all

could have happened sooner with non-military spending, but politics wouldn't allow it. Because of this transformation of the macro economics we practice as a nation, we have not had a depression since 1940 (71 years). Previously we had endured 5 since the beginning of the Republic (150 years). These happened every 15-30 years and lasted typically 5-7 years. Economic history is part of economics.

From Susan Lanning, Prescott Valley

EDITOR: Raising the debt ceiling? The Republicans are saying they have plans but President Obama and the Democrats don't. Okay, let's look at this. Never before has raising the debt ceiling been tied to budget cuts. It's been raised time and again in order to save our economy and our status in the world. Reagan raised it a total of 17 times, Clinton raised it — though the Republicans threatened to put the country in a tail-spin back then. Both the Bushes raised it without question. Now, once again, the Republicans are playing Russian Roulette with the economy — after having brought it to a crisis to begin with. And they're saying the Democrats and the President don't have a plan? The reason is because the responsible people in Washington never wanted to play games with our debt ceiling in the first place.

So, what is the basic Republican plan? Get rid of entitlements, education, and all of the protection agencies and regulations. But when increasing revenues through taxes is suggested, well, they simply walk out of the proceedings and the President and the Democrats are left to clean up the mess.

Letters, cont'd

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Now, there are plenty of intelligent, sensible Republicans in this country and even some in Congress as well. But the threat of the radicals – the Tea Party group – is keeping them quiet, making them lie low. And what of this group of radicals? They seem to have no concept of the complexity of the world and of basic finances. Apparently they think you can do this, this, and this and all will be fixed. And somehow they are in a position to have a huge influence on a large portion of our government.

I understand the basic conservative point of view that government wasn't meant to handle so much. But the country has changed since the days of our forefathers. Indeed, the whole world is different. It's true we could do with fewer agencies – the scores of small ones that accomplish little and use too much money. But if we are to be a civilized nation, if we are to be the leader of the free world as we've been in the past, then the government has an important role to play in our lives.

That's something Democrats and President Obama seem to understand better than the radicals who want to take us all back to 1776. And they're doing it by playing childish games with the debt ceiling.

EDITOR: I'm finding it incredible that people complain about how Democrats cater to supportive unions – unions that helped build a strong middle class in America. Take a look at who the Republicans cater to – wealthy businessmen, big banks, Wall Street, corporations that take all and give nothing back. Certainly not jobs in the U.S. Isn't it a bit duplicitous to complain about supporting those who actually did the building of this country?

Here are a couple of things to consider:

1. Those big corporations don't like unions because the unions have forced them to share a little of the wealth made on the backs of their workers.

2. People cite corruption of the unions when the people running large corporations are far more corrupt themselves.

3. If the Republican Party is successful in killing unions, which will destroy the middle class, which in turn will diminish the number of consumers, what will happen to commerce in the U.S.?

The corporations are moving their jobs overseas, their money to banks overseas, their purchases of yachts and villas overseas. If they're giving back nothing to this country, paying no taxes and doing nothing to create jobs or in any way help their native country, why are they allowed to live here? They take all and give back nothing.

Get rid of the unions? I say get rid of the freeloading corporations and those Republicans who do the dirty work for them.

EDITOR: Is greed the real culprit? There's a fallacy about unions that the Republicans and the rich they work for are promoting. They say the big corporations had to take their jobs overseas because the unions were asking for impossible wages. The truth is that company bosses weren't satisfied with making 40 percent more than their workers. They wanted 400 to 500 percent more. Which they now have with cheap labor abroad.

I can only wonder what they'll do when China and India and the others discover unions. Is Somalia the next destination for the jobs market?

EDITOR: Who pays the big taxes in this country? There's been a hue and cry about the nation's top 2% paying the lion's share

while the bottom 48% pay nothing. All right, let's see what the facts are.

First of all, the bottom 48% don't pay taxes because they earn almost nothing or are out of a job! Remember the recession? I guess that's one advantage to being poor or jobless – no taxes to pay.

What of the top 2%? Theoretically, they should be paying the greatest amount because they have the most money. However, what they really have is innumerable tax loopholes and tax breaks and expensive lawyers to find them even more. Look at GE – one of the largest companies in the world and they paid nothing in taxes this year. The oil companies not only are paying virtually no taxes but they even get billions in subsidies from the government. These are only a few examples of the endless line of wealthy exemptions, so that the top 2% end up paying little more than the bottom 48%.

So, who pays the real taxes? You guessed it, the middle class, those of us who earn a decent living, who are still working by the grace of God. (Certainly not because of those "job creators" among the wealthy.) We, the middle class, are carrying this country on our backs.

But maybe not for long. The Republicans are doing their best to strip unions who have struggled all these years to give workers a fairer wage from wealthy companies who make billions off their backs. They are also stripping government jobs across the nation and adding none in their wake.

Now, if the poor can't pay taxes and the wealthy get their huge tax breaks, what happens when the middle class is diminished to nothing? What happens to our country? Do the math.



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The Yavapai County Democratic Party coordinates activities and fundraising with our Democratic partners. We encourage you to support these organizations, and if you so designate, we will share up to 20% of your YCDP donation with one or more of the following Democratic groups.

Please designate 5% 10% 15% 20% of my YCDP contribution to:
 Arizona Democratic Party Democratic Women of the Prescott Area
 Democrats of the Red Rocks Democrats of the Verde Valley

If you wish to make a direct donation to or receive information about YCDP's Democratic Partners, please contact:

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