
THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS

◆ District Leaders: Curtis Arluck, Paula Diamond Román ◆ President: Joe Nunley ◆

OPEN DISCUSSION

*A chance to think
about the issues
and speak your mind.*

Thursday, December 8th

Meeting starts at 8:00 PM

Forum begins 8:30 PM

Bank Street College

610 West 112th Street (between Broadway and Riverside Drive)

THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS

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Volume 36, Issue 10

December 2011

President's Corner

Joe Nunley

Let's Get Ready

News flash: Obama is NOT a socialist, fascist, jihadist. He's an American serving his country in high elected office. And guess what? He is a rational man who has done a lot of things right.

The Senate voted last week to keep a controversial provision letting the military detain terrorism suspects on US soil, holding them indefinitely without trial. Diane Feinstein (D-California) said, "Congress is essentially authorizing the indefinite imprisonment of American citizens without charge. We are not a nation that locks up its citizens without charge."

Objecting to this provision, President Obama has threatened to veto the bill.

The DANGER TO AMERICA the Republican contenders for the White House represent should not be underestimated.

During a recent debate, Mitt Romney said, "If we re-elect Barack Obama, Iran will have a nuclear weapon. And if we elect Mitt Romney, if you'd like me as your next president, they will not have a nuclear weapon."

Romney urges "crippling sanctions". But the only crippling sanction would be a blockade of Iranian petroleum exports, sending the price of petroleum through the roof and that would be an act of war. Russia and China will not cooperate with "crippling sanctions" at the UN. The sanctions would be purely American and Western European, ultimately ineffectual without a military blockade. And surely that would lead to war.

Romney cannot stop Iran's nuclear enrichment program (a nuclear weapons program has not been proven to exist). His promise to do so is either dishonest or belligerent because he must

know that only an invasion and occupation could accomplish this goal. A mere military strike on some centrifuges would not stop the Iranians, and it could possibly set off another Mideast War.

Romney is actively campaigning on a "we're going to war again" platform. This statement should be taken very seriously. He supports all aspects of the GOP agenda, calls Occupy Wall Street "dangerous class warfare", and says the government should let the foreclosure crisis hit rock bottom.

Newt Gingrich WANTS TO ABOLISH the Congressional Budget Office, calling it "a reactionary socialist institution".

This assertion is nonsense. Policy analysts from both sides of the aisle say the CBO is one of THE FEW analytical institutions left in government one can trust implicitly. Gingrich hates the CBO for long standing in the way of Republicans being able to make up numbers to justify whatever they want to do.

For example, Republicans have frequently asserted that tax cuts, especially for the rich, generate so much economic growth that they lose no revenue. This theory has been thoroughly debunked, most recently by the tax cuts of the George W. Bush administration, which according to CBO, reduced revenues by \$3 trillion. As

Please join us for the

Annual

Broadway Democrats

Winter Holiday Party

Date: Sunday, December 11, 2011
Time: 2:00-5:00 PM
Address: Martin's Residence
390 Riverside Drive, Apt. 12D
(entrance on 111th St.)

Speaker of the House, Gingrich abolished really useful Congressional agencies, decimated committee budgets, and now wants to do more DAMAGE. Gutting what's left of Congress's in-house expertise is an act of nihilism. Any politician recommending such things is unfit for office.

Most of us wanted President Obama to be more like Franklin Roosevelt, giving vision and actions to reorganize dynamically America's social, foreign and economic policy. He inherited a country in economic collapse, 800,000 American's losing their jobs during his first month in office, and he's had to deal with the most obstructionist, Anti-American, corporate-owned Congress in history.

If Obama's presidency is not all that it might have been, we are partially to blame. We didn't hold his feet to the fire, all over the nation. And since we've done so, he has become a better president. Occupy Wall Street has helped him and us, as have the hundreds who were arrested protesting the Keystone Pipeline and at the Supreme Court and elsewhere.

Obediently looking the other way when democratic electives act as Republicans places part of the responsibility of their actions on us. How can we accuse Obama of being spineless when we continually lack spine ourselves? This spinelessness enables our electives to be spineless. When we speak out and organize we bring an exceedingly positive and productive energy to OUR PARTY.

President Obama's job bill with infrastructure rebuilding is on target. His plan for student loan reforms is outstanding. He has shown the ability to keep America safe and her enemies at bay. He established the Credit Card Bill of Rights preventing credit card companies from imploding arbitrary rate increases on customers.

He signed the Children's Health Insurance Reauthorization Act providing 4 million previously uninsured kids with insurance. He increased minority access to capital. Ironically, he even created more private sector jobs in 2010 than Bush did in eight years. He has accomplished even more. And the Republicans are dangerous.

Let's get ready for 2012!



District Leader's Report

Curtis Arluck

Republicans Imploding...

It has been a delightful few months for those of us who want to see President Obama re-elected. In this time, there have been four front-runners or co-front runners with Mitt Romney:

1) Michelle Bachman, who has proved herself too much of a right wing loonytoon even for the Republican electorate, and whose latest idiocy was to denounce the Obama administration for having an Embassy in Iran, which we haven't had for more than 30 years.

2) Rick Perry, who is even more uninformed and incoherent than Bachman.

3) Herman Cain, who is even more uninformed and incoherent than Bachman and Perry, and is also clearly personally unfit to be President.

4) Newt Gingrich, the current front runner, with a massive lead in the polls over Romney as this is written (though the way things are going for the Republicans, perhaps not by the time it is received), a shallow thinker who has enriched himself feeding from the public trough, with more flip flops than Romney and a more disgusting personal history than Cain.

And then there is Mitt Romney. The only positive thing one can say about the Republican electorate is the fact that they keep preferring wildly unsuitable candidates shows how unappealing Romney is, even to them. It can't be that they dislike his politics: in every debate, he takes the most right wing stance on every issue. It's his lack of sincerity, lack of moral compass, willingness to change his positions at will to agree with whatever audience he is addressing. Interviewed by Fox News of all people, he sounded like Captain Queeg on the witness stand: shifty, testy, upset when the interviewer pointed out that he wasn't answering the questions. It is hard to see this creepy nonentity posing a serious challenge to Obama; it is all but impossible to see Gingrich, with all his baggage, winning more than a handful of states.

...But the Democrats Still Have No Economic Message

Today's news is that Democratic leaders and the President are calling for financing the payroll tax cut—which many liberal economists dislike because it undermines the funding of social security—with a tax increase on millionaires.

Sorry, but this approach *is* class warfare, raising one class's taxes to pay for another class's tax cuts. It plays right into the Republicans' hands, implying that tax cuts create jobs; it is just not a winning argument to say that we should cut working people's taxes because this creates jobs while raising rich people's taxes, which won't cost jobs. The whole "tax cuts create jobs" argument is a loser and should be avoided. There are four *good* reasons why we really need to cancel the Bush tax cuts on upper income earners: 1) to pay for spending on infrastructure programs which will immediately create jobs; 2) to avoid further cuts to federal, state and local agencies which would immediately cost jobs; 3) to restore funding to programs that aid education, environmental protection and help the neediest, all of which have unconscionably been gutted; and 4) to reduce the deficit.

Obama and the Democrats hardly ever make any of these points, instead chirping on about the payroll tax cut. Worst of all, the Republicans would pay for the payroll tax cut by—this is true—*cutting 200,000 government jobs!* We create jobs by cutting jobs. Positively Orwellian. And yet the Democrats don't pounce on this contradiction. Even with the worst Republican field in history, they could still blow it. Stay tuned.



Assembly Member Reports

Daniel O'Donnell

While the Assembly's legislative session has not yet begun, a number of state-wide issues have generated a large amount of interest and discussion in recent weeks.

Talk regarding the coming year's budget has begun to pick up in earnest, and the fight to extend the so-called "millionaire's tax" has been a central part of this debate. I strongly believe that we must maintain our state's current progressive tax structure and ensure that the shared sacrifice so frequently referenced in budgetary discussions is truly shared by all. I have made sure the current governor, as well as the two previous governors and my colleagues in the Legislature, are well aware of my position on this issue. I plan to continue fighting efforts to allow the surcharge to expire as budgetary discussions advance.

A second issue of pressing concern is the drilling practice of hydraulic fracturing, or "hydrofracking." Hydrofracking remains a dire threat to our environment, water supply, and community's wellbeing. I was pleased to submit testimony in opposition to hydrofracking in NY State to the Department of Environmental Conservation on November 30th. We need to continue pressure on the DEC and Governor Cuomo to stop this potentially disastrous practice. It is simply too risky, and the impacts too unclear, to proceed.

Finally, this year is one of both redistricting and of state and federal elections. Primary dates have not yet been set and the newly drawn district lines not yet finalized. Despite this uncertainty, I am hopeful that our community will go through the process intact and with appropriate representation. However, it's possible the final lines will drastically impact the physical integrity of our community and change how it has been represented for the past decade. Importantly, the new district lines could be finalized very shortly before a related primary; thus, immediate action by the club once lines have been released may be necessary to help maintain our community's continuity and level of representation. I will keep you updated when I receive further information on this topic.



State Committeeman Reports

Daniel Marks Cohen

State Committeeman, 69th AD

At a State Committee meeting in mid-November in Albany, two resolutions were submitted for consideration, the first, a resolution on tax policy, the other, a second try at getting a strong position against gas fracking when the first effort was tabled.

Despite assurances that the leadership—in the form of both Jay Jacobs, the chairman, and Charlie King, the Executive Director—who attended the Reform Caucus the night before in what was then perceived as an attempt to reach out to us, the resolutions were immediately tabled at the meeting the next day. Several of us attempted to force a hand count or roll call to confirm that the resolutions had been successfully tabled by a voice vote, and we were denied. That

action was patently illegal, according to parliamentary procedure, and delightfully, the state party's actions were all caught on tape and so we are now assessing what is our next course of action, including a potential lawsuit. The irony in all of this is that if the leadership had allowed the resolutions to be voted on to the floor, we might have lost (many downstate people, presumably supporting our resolutions, did not attend the Albany meeting), but by attempting to suppress us and subverting the democratic process, they made a bigger story out of a tiny one. We got coverage in all papers, several on-line news feeds and websites and now have a bit of attention we undoubtedly would not have received otherwise. I had my 15 minutes of fame here:

<http://www.capitaltonight.com/2011/11/democrats-frack-the-vote/#.TsW9GIMydzM.email>, and separately, the *Albany Times Union* (<http://blog.timesunion.com/capitol/archives/89368/democrats-table-resolutions-on-taxes-fracking/>), and *The New York Times* reported the debacle as well: (<http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/11/17/hints-of-tension-chip-at-a-heros-welcome-for-cuomo/?scp=1&sq=jay%20jacobs&st=cse>).

The resolutions, which were printed in last month's newsletter, are relatively benign. But Governor Cuomo, in his bid to control everything and perhaps facilitate his ambitions for higher office, instructed his forces to stop them from "embarrassing" the administration (so said Jacobs in the *Times*), but if embarrassing the Governor is necessary to get him to take the correct position on tax equity and gas fracking, so be it. It doesn't have to be this way—but the Governor's intransigence is only making us more resolute in our determination to get these resolutions passed. See you all in December.



RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY MEMBERSHIP AT NOVEMBER FORUM:

- Support of the NYC Living Wage Bill
- Support of the Obama Job Bill
- Support of Re-instating the surcharge tax on millionaires in New York State

DECEMBER FORUM

A chance to think about the issues and speak your mind.

Read over the list of issues below, then come to the forum on Thursday, vote for your top three choices, and participate in an open discussion.

Topics

- Is the governmental system broken?
- Tax justice
- Youth and education
- How would you devise an equitable way to ration health care?
- Maintaining family connections for prisoners
- Fixing our dysfunctional legislatures
- Campaign finance reform
- The affordable housing crisis in New York
- The role of charter schools in public education
- Rebuilding a broken economy
- Climate change
- The role of progressives in a new Democratic Party

"Tropical Sensation"

Fundraising Toys Drive Dinner (for Children's Family Center)

Sponsor: Hispanic Community Organization for Life Inc.

Where: 107 St and Amsterdam

Date: December 7, 2011 5-7PM

Contact Person: Martina Garcia
1 917 405 8997
Martina30sun@yahoo.com

UPCOMING:

Club elections will be held at the January 19, 2012 meeting.

Membership

In order to vote in club elections (endorsements, elections of officers, judicial convention, amendments), you must be an eligible, voting member of the Broadway Democrats. You must have attended at least one of the previous nine monthly public meetings and you must pay your dues. Dues partially defray the costs of presenting forums and putting out this newsletter. Dues are \$20; senior dues are \$5.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Special Interests: _____

The Broadway Democrats
P.O. Box 1099
Cathedral Station
New York, NY 10025

FIRST
CLASS

Assemblymember: Daniel O'Donnell
District Leaders: Curtis Arluck,
Paula Diamond Román
President: Joe Nunley
Newsletter Editor: Gretchen Borges

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Open Discussion: Come vote on topics to discuss, then speak your mind!

Thursday, December 8th 8:00 p.m.

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