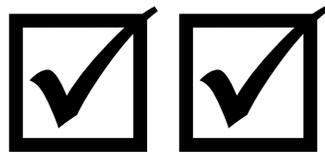

THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS

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

Presidential Endorsement Forum

and

Annual Club Elections



Thursday, January 19th

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

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

Volume 37, Issue 1

January 2012

District Leader's Report

Curtis Arluck

Election Calendar

--Petitioning for Presidential Candidates and Convention Delegates began January 3 and will end at the end of February.

--The primaries for Congress, state legislature and all other offices except President are likely to be permanently moved to June, which means petitioning would begin in March. The move from September is mandated because the traditional September date does not give enough time for overseas service members to receive their absentee ballots, a violation of the Help America Vote Act. This is true enough, but note that the Republicans only care about armed forces voters; they are trying to disenfranchise many others with phony claims about "voter fraud." This will be the subject of our February forum, unless we have to hold our endorsement meeting then.

--In order to hold legislative elections this year, the legislative districts must be redrawn. Redistricting is a lengthy and contentious process (see below) and the goal of coming to agreement on Congressional, State Senate and State Assembly lines while moving the primary date up three months seems almost impossible to achieve, especially if Governor Cuomo persists in demanding that the lines be set by an "independent" redistricting commission, which does not currently exist, and would have no statutory authority even if it did.

--One possible way of "buying" a few more weeks is for the legislature to cut both the length of the petitioning period and the number of signatures required for ballot access roughly in half. This would mean petitioning wouldn't begin until sometime in April—which is still just around the corner.

Redistricting Facts and Myths

1) Independent, nonpartisan redistricting commissions are not independent, they're not nonpartisan, and they do not produce better results. Look at our City Council districts, drawn by such a commission. Our (West 96th-125th) community, which is both ethnically diverse and geographically cohesive, is chopped up among three different City

Council districts, and receives no effective community representation from any of them. This is not to disparage the Council Members from these districts, Bob Jackson, Melissa Mark-Viverito, and Inez Dickens, all of whom I support, but their bases, their main offices, and their focuses are in West, East and Central Harlem respectively. Nationally, whenever there is an "independent", "nonpartisan" redistricting commission it is lobbied unto death by special interests of each party, the commissioners vote according to their personal political persuasions, and in the case of deadlock one or two commissioners decide the whole outcome.

2) There is nothing inherently wrong with legislators having the main voice in determining their own districts: *they know them better than anyone else!* Who knows and can fight better for the people of Manhattan Valley, Danny O'Donnell, who has worked with them for so long, or Common Cause, which wants to move them into the central Harlem AD, or the Puerto Rican Legal Defense fund, which wants to exile them to East Harlem? In each case, Manhattan Valley citizens who now only have to walk a few blocks to Danny O'Donnell's office would have to travel more than a mile into communities far from their normal paths. And once again, it is not the excellent representatives of these districts, Keith Wright and Robert Rodriguez, who want this idiocy; it is outsiders who have no knowledge of our community or its needs.

3) The solution, at least in outline form, is clear: legislators draw their lines, subject to veto from the Governor and/or some sort of independent oversight committee. Grossly partisan or gerrymandered districts would be rejected. Major communities would neither be chopped up nor annexed to geographically distant communities, especially for the smaller, more service-oriented State Assembly and City Council Districts. And recognition would be given to the fact that just because one legislatively drawn redistricting plan is bad—such as whatever the Republicans in the NY State Senate come up with every single decade—all such plans are not bad, and must therefore be replaced with a system which produces districts which are usually worse.

It now looks more likely that the primary will be held in August rather than June (or September as it's always been), which would mean petitioning would probably run early May to the middle of June. This gives the political process more time to work out the thorny redistricting issues, but sets the primary at a time when many people won't be here. Stay tuned

For Barack Obama

Broadway Democrats will endorse for President at our January 19th meeting. We have changed our usual format from speaker/question and answer to a group discussion; this is not about what someone from the podium thinks, it's about what *you* think. Like you, I have had my disappointments with our President. Most heartbreaking for me is that he should have been more supportive of the Democrats in Congress, especially in the House; Nancy Pelosi was a wonderful Speaker and it's a shame she was cast out without much support or recognition from the President. We all know how terrible the Republicans are: all but Huntsman would be the most reactionary, destructive and simply vile President since Andrew Johnson. But enough about the bad guys. Barack Obama deserves re-election for his own ideas, achievements, character. *He* passed the health care bill, and millions of young adults and people with preexisting conditions are now insured. *He* reversed the collapse of the American economy caused by the policies of his predecessor and began the slow process to recovery and job creation. *He* saved the American auto industry. *He* enabled gay men and lesbians to serve openly in the military. *He* got us out of Iraq. *He* directed the elimination of Osama Bin Laden. And he did it with the eloquence and grace that made us proud of him, proud of ourselves, proud, once again, to be Americans.



President's Corner

Joe Nunley

The present Republican front runner, Mitt Romney, has a two front campaign attack on President Obama: capitalism and militarism.

His solution to capitalism is more capitalism. His solution to a system where the banks and Wall Street run wild is to continue to help them be even more uncontrolled.

He is all for business being unregulated. He stands against protecting worker's salaries, pensions, benefits and health insurance, as well as their right to unionize, not to mention, he is also against protecting our clean air and water acts.

His solution to the greatest economic crisis in our time is to embrace more FULLY the very ideas that CREATED this crisis in the first place—the dismantlement of New Deal era regulations that protected the nation. He wants to perpetuate outrageous tax cuts, tax breaks and subsidies for the one per cent.

Romney wants to have a military much stronger than it is. He wants to be able to fight two wars at one time. He wants us to be so strong that no nation would dare attack us.

I have news for Mr. Romney. We already have all that. We can fight two wars at once. We can fight three if we want to. But here's the thing: What nation is a threat to us? Answer: No nation. No nation on earth including North Korea, Iran, China, wants to be our enemy. (We decide who our enemies are.) In fact, we create enemies because we have a war machine that requires enemies.

Do we have enemies? Of course. We have extremists who have banded into groups and consider the US and the West a threat to their hegemony, their belief systems, their freedom and their self determination. And we are a threat to most of these things. We arm and continue to arm the most brutal dictatorships on earth as they inflict violence and hardship on their own people and torture their dissidents (e.g. Saudi Arabia who we just made a \$60 billion arms deal with.)

Romney believes in a foreign policy that will continue to bully and impose its will on the world and nations in particular whose natural resources we covet. Even as we collapse at home he wants to continue our colonization activities abroad.

Never mind that the two wars, unpaid for, helped create our staggering debt (\$3-5 trillion worth) Never mind that any invasion and occupation of Iran (bombing won't achieve our supposed objectives) will cost an estimated \$9 trillion. This, combined with the sheer lunacy of not increasing taxes, particularly on the wealthy, and the opposition to any government produced job program, will bury us

So, even though our military expenditures (Iraq and Afghanistan being separate items) are almost more than every other nation in the world combined, Romney wants to increase it. And even though he wants to cut spending and presumably our national debt, regarding the military, which is responsible for 50% of our discretionary spending, he wants to increase spending.

America must begin to recover itself. We are out of control. We are the most militarized nation on the planet. It has seeped into every element of our culture. One can hardly watch a football game or a basketball game on television without at some point, the announcers of the event itself, honoring the military. Each politician, at his campaign stops, takes a moment to honor the military in the audience. I never see human rights workers honored. I never see whistle blowing journalists honored, nor doctors, nor teachers, nor social workers, nor labor organizers. The wealth and the talent that our country diverts to the military and away from human need is astonishing.

As a nation we're out of control. We've got to understand that. Eisenhower warned us of the military industrial complex. Like Nazi Germany, we've taken a huge chunk of our collective wealth and put it into the military when no nation on the earth threatens us! We cannot continue to send our brave troops into preemptive, illegal, immoral and unnecessary engagements to impose puppet governments, make huge profits for our corporate entities and get control of their valuable energy resources.

Rational people must support Barack Obama. Compared to Mitt Romney, who wants to derail even Obama's tepid effort to regulate Wall Street, and who is intent on even more wasteful increases in military spending, President Obama seems relatively enlightened. Clearly, President Obama will do more to challenge the kleptocracy of corporate dominated governance than will Mitt Romney. Romney's ideas if implemented will put our nation over the edge.

☞

State Committeeman

Daniel Marks Cohen, 69th AD

Greetings all – I had a chance to see many of you at the numerous holiday parties this season, but if I

missed you, best wishes for a happy and healthy new year.

It has been a whirlwind of a year, recapping briefly, I began my position as State Committeeman in September 2010 and it has been a fascinating, maddening, invigorating experience. I intend to seek re-election this year and hope to have your support.

When I first started the most immediate question then was whether Jay Jacobs would remain chairman of the State Party. That issue is resolved affirmatively, somewhat to our detriment though, as his behavior has not been the most inclusive or (small d) democratic.

And Cuomo's first year was mixed – good on some social issues, particularly marriage equality, and more recently on the taxicab bill. And he continues to make encouraging statements that he intends to close Indian Point. On fracking, he is coy, flirting with both sides while counseling patience while the State's environmental agency completes its work. But media reports and individual meetings with west side activists have shown, the agency is not prepared for the environmental damage likely to ensue if fracking is approved.

The Reform Caucus of the State Committee has met repeatedly over the past 16 months and we have been invigorated by the State Party's recent attempts to prevent us from passing resolutions submitted in favor of progressive taxation and against fracking. Considering that usually that the press generally ignores the resolutions of the State Committee, the recent heavy-handed actions by the aforementioned Mr. Jacobs have only fueled the issue. We have demanded, and been granted, and audience with the Great Oz next month, where we will press our case that unless the State Party allows our resolutions on the floor, and a hand-counted vote, we will sue for our rights under the State's open meeting laws.

Redistricting is lurching forward, and despite broad and deep dissatisfaction with LATFOR (the state's legislative task force on redistricting), with testimony by many westsiders, including me, the committee has drafted new lines, and early feedback is that they are awful. The governor has proposed vetoing the lines, but it remains to be seen if he will follow through with his threat.

So we enter a new year with much uncertainty, although with also some positive glimmers –

Obama was widely considered in trouble at the beginning of 2011, and he has ended in a much better position, largely as the result of the GOP imploding with multiple flavors of the month (gosh, I MISS Herman Cain). Romney is still likely to be the nominee, and as a result, likely to give the President a run for the White House. But I feel that the mood of the country is such that it would be difficult for Mitt "Mr. One Percent" Romney to get elected in 2012.

And rounding out the whirlwind of 2011, I got engaged over the summer and I am scheduled to be married in early January 2012. I may miss seeing some of you at January meetings due to a short honeymoon, but I hope to see you on the petitioning trail for Obama in 2012!



**Interested in local,
state, or national
issues? Consider
running for the
Steering Committee.**

**The Broadway
Democrats want you!**

Elections

It's January, time to elect the Broadway Democrats' officers for the next year. Individuals nominated thus far are listed below. Further nominations may be made from the floor.

President: Joe Nunley
Vice President: Gretchen Borges
Treasurer: Norm Levine
Secretary: Luis Román

Steering Committee:

Martina Garcia
Katie Hanner
Sarah Martin
Persio Mavera
Lew Moses
Nick O'Neill
Zoila Marte
Richard Siegal

Balloting Procedures

To be eligible to vote, you must have attended at least one of the previous nine monthly public meetings and you must pay your dues.

Votes may be cast in person or by proxy, limit one proxy per voting member. A proxy must be written. The proxy giver must state the name of the proxy holder (i.e., the name can't be filled in later by the proxy holder). The proxy must be signed or verifiable, as by electronic transmission stating the person's name.

As per the club constitution, there will be only one ballot. The winner will be selected by "Instant Runoff Voting"; "no endorsement" is still a ballot option.

Come to the Forum!
Vote for Your Club Officers!
ENDORSE PRESIDENT OBAMA!

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

Presidential Endorsement Forum and Club Elections
Thursday, January 19th 8:00 p.m.
Bank Street College of Education
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