

April 2006

Volume 2, Issue 3

GETTYSBURG AREA DEMOCRACY FOR AMERICA

DFA at the Movies

“WHY WE FIGHT”

Majestic Theater, Gettysburg
Tuesday, April 11, 7 p.m.
with Director
Eugene Jarecki
(The 2006 Scharf Lecture
of Gettysburg College)

'Why We Fight' is an unflinching look at the military industrial complex and the rise of the American Empire. Inspired by Dwight Eisenhower's legendary farewell speech, the film surveys the scorched landscape of a half-century's military adventures, asking how -- and telling why -- a nation of, by, and for the people has become the savings-and-loan of a system whose survival depends on a state of constant war. The film moves beyond the headlines to the deeper questions of why -- why does America fight? What are the forces -- political, economic and ideological -- that drive us to fight against an ever-changing enemy?

The Majestic has set aside 50 seats for our group. Reserve your **FREE** ticket. Contact Kerr Thompson, cthompso@gettysburg.edu (note funny spelling) with subject “movie tickets” or voice mail at 337-6851. Or sign up at the April meeting

Connecting with National DFA ...

Have you wondered what lies beyond Gettysburg Area DFA? Why is there a need for a state group? A national group? Why do we want to make endorsements?

In the years I have been involved with DFA, I have discovered the value of connections with other people who share our values. And those connections are there, in every state and many countries around the world. But they share more than our values. They also share our frustrations and our uncertainties. In was in this "world" I learned how we can grow as a chapter and become stronger as progressive activists.

The source for these connections is DFA's constellation of websites, including www.democracyforamerica.com, www.dfa-link.com, and my personal portal of choice, www.blogforamerica.com. (The sites are all linked, so if you go to one, you can connect to the others). The national DFA uses the websites to give up-to-date news of the day, progressive perspectives, and links to current issues. Also, there is news about DFA chapters all around the country, and the site highlights educational opportunities, links to other progressive groups, and guidance for those who are interested in the candidate endorsement process. Occasionally, the site is used to raise money, both for DFA and for candidates whom DFA has endorsed.

IF HAVEN'T DONE SO ALREADY, GO TO www.dfa-link.com AND REGISTER! It's important for the national organization to know that you're affiliated with Gettysburg Area DFA. And your registration will increase our visibility **beyond** Adams County.

Blogging. Okay, it seems weird. It seems like something only sad geeks and college students check out. But the truth is, www.blogforamerica.com is a space where you encounter many wonderful fellow progressives and get many, many different ideas. Blogging may not be for everyone, but to tell you the truth, I could not be half the activist I am without it.

Talking to others via a blog is a great way to network. It is through the blog that I found volunteers two years ago to drive to Maryland to help with voter registration drives. It was the blog where we found out-of-state volunteers to help us in PA on the Kerry campaign.

My relationships through this site have built over the years. I have friends and contacts all over the country now. I can honestly say there would be no other way I could possibly know what I know about grassroots organizing without it.

So go to www.BlogForAmerica.com and hang out. Check out the links. See the services. Learn about DFA. Meet the people. Sign up for the updates. It's a tremendously powerful website that will help to increase your abilities and creativity.

Roger Lund
Vice Chair, Gettysburg Area DFA

Congressman Todd Platts in Gettysburg

--JoAnn Udovich

About 40 people attended the Town Hall Meeting hosted by Congressman Todd Platts at the G.A.R building in Gettysburg on Friday afternoon March 10th including several members of Gettysburg's DFA. Mr. Platts began with some statements before taking questions. He spoke concerning the lobbying scandal involving Jack Abramoff, communicating that he gave priority to meeting with constituents. He noted that the number of lobbyists on all sides of issues asking for his time (and staff time) is endless, so careful choices are made about whom to talk to.

Mr. Platts went on to talk at length about the line-item veto, indicating that he is the lead sponsor on a proposed constitutional amendment, and a co-sponsor of a bill that would allow the president to pull line-items out of a bill and send them back to congress for an immediate up-or-down vote. The latter approach would be a method for controlling these tack-on things (like the bridge to nowhere in Alaska), while getting around (perhaps) the Supreme Court decision that had negated the line-item veto passed during the Clinton administration. Mr. Platts said he expected a vote on this bill in the spring. Mr. Platts concluded his introductory remarks, by remembering the soldier from Gettysburg who died in the line of duty recently.

Nearly everyone in the room was anxious to ask a question. The first question concerned the Davis-Bacon Act which is legislation from the 1930s that requires contractors bidding on federal contracts to pay

their employees so-called "prevailing wages." The questioner said this legislation made it impossible for many companies to bid on federal contracts because in fact the so-called "prevailing wage" was much higher than what employees were normally paid. Platts (who was familiar with this issue) said he supported a repeal of Davis-Bacon, and that markets--not governmental regulation--should determine wages.

Questions followed on the subjects of tax reform, illegal immigration, Head Start and other education programs, tax cuts, debt (including the current account deficit), a constitutional amendment repealing the Electoral College, balancing the budget, student loans, and the post office.

April 22 is *EARTH DAY*

--Lou Hammann

The Gettysburg Area DFA Environmental Task Force, is leading a community-wide plan for celebrating *EARTH DAY*.

The centerpiece of the plan is to encourage the 60+ organizations that are committed to the Highway Pick-Up project in Adams County to "hit the road" on the same day. You have certainly seen those colorful signs on the shoulders naming the groups responsible for a section of the county roads? We are working in cooperation with the Gettysburg Borough Council, Clean Sweep Pennsylvania and Downtown Gettysburg to stage a rally at the Lion's Pavilion at the Rec Park before and after teams hit their patch of roadway.

From there, all of the assembled organizations will head to their assigned stretch of highway and clean up the trash. In the meanwhile, a comparable project will take place in Carroll Valley and in the Borough of Gettysburg. When the job is finished, the ETF will stage a rally at the Rec Park—with food, music and a celebration of a cleaner Adams County.

The Task Force would like DFA affiliates to be available to pitch in to help in the pick-up with other groups wherever needed. We will canvas the membership at the April meet-up to determine how many extra hands may be available.

The ETF has sponsored several programs and appeals focused on some of the large environmental issues. Now, we are putting our energy to work to deal with a most local project—to clean up the trash that pollutes our immediate space. Come by the Rec Park on Saturday, April 22 and plan to help clean up our town and roads.

Monthly Meetings

Casey Organizers

2nd Wednesday, 7 PM
62 Chambersburg Street

...

PA Watchdog Task Force

2nd Thursday
7 - 8:30 PM, Ragged Edge

...

Environmental Task Force

3rd Thursday
7 - 8:30 PM, Ragged Edge

...

Iraq Task Force

Last Wednesday
7 - 8:30 PM, Ragged Edge

Candidates on the May Primary Ballot for Democratic Committee

--reported by
Marianne Crouthamel

Out of 96 available slots, 40 have candidates who filed petitions, and DFA can take credit for about 28 of them. (Note: Not all precincts have candidates, and each precinct elects two representatives).

The Candidates are:

Katherine Elliott (Arendtsville)
Elaine L. Jones (Arendtsville)
William B. Lamb, Jr. (Biglerville)
Michael S. Pavlovich (Biglerville)
William Lane (Butler)
Robert M. Knight (Butler)
Alan Olson (Carroll Valley)
Emily Knowles-Kellett
(Cumberland #1)
Kristin L. Rice (Cumberland #1)
Marianne Larkin Crouthamel
(Cumberland #2)
Jeanne Duffy (Cumberland #3)
Kerr Thompson (Cumberland #3)
Lois Starkey (Franklin #1)
L. Patricia Hammann (Franklin #1)
John Rarig (Franklin #2)
Jill Schultz (Franklin #2)
Colleen P. Baumgartner (Freedom)
Roberta Sullivan (Gettysburg #1)
Harriet Marritz (Gettysburg #1)
Harry Stokes (Gettysburg #2)
Susan Naugle (Gettysburg #3)
Patrician Manning (Hamilton)
Gretchen Trostle (Hamiltonban)
Mark Berg (Highland)
Temma Berg (Highland)
Sam R. Giardullo (Latimore)
Stephanie J. Roelker (Latimore)
Elizabeth Lucy (Liberty)
Jan Marfyak (Liberty)
Herb Riede (McSherrystown #1)
Janet Riede (McSherrystown #1)
Nicole Muench Seidel (Mt. Joy #1)
Frank Seidel (Mt. Joy #1)
Marcia L. Wilson (Mt. Pleasant #2)
Portia C. Bosch (New Oxford)
Roger Lund (New Oxford)
Donna Maguire (Reading #1)
Warren Steen (Reading #1)
Bruce M. Neylon (Straban #1)
Jason P. Townsend (Straban #1)

What do You think? Vote "endorse" or "not endorse" at the April meeting

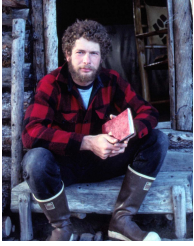
Recognizing the value of the prestige and fundraising potential that the Gettysburg Area Democracy for America can offer by endorsing candidates, the Candidate Development Committee recommended to the Steering Committee in March that we make formal endorsements of candidates for state and national office when appropriate. The Steering Committee agreed.

It was noted that office seekers fit into two categories, those who are elected locally within our region (these offices include US Congress as well as State Senators and Representatives), and those who are elected on a state-wide basis (Governor, US Senate). The recommendation was accepted at the Steering Committee meeting that candidates in the first category be voted on for endorsement before the primary election in May, since these are the candidates who spoke to us at the Candidate Forum in March.

The Steering Committee approved the following procedure:

1. Endorsements should be made by attendees at the general meet-up. A super-majority of **Two-Thirds** of those present will be required to make an endorsement.
2. Requests for endorsement shall be initiated by the candidate. Candidates who have achieved a ballot position by submitting appropriate numbers of signatures in March, and who spoke at the Candidate Forum, have been invited to fill out the Candidate Endorsement application form found on the DFA website.
3. The vote will be by paper ballot. Since Gettysburg Area DFA does not have a membership, everyone who attends the meeting will receive a ballot, and no one not attending the meeting will be eligible to vote.
4. Each candidate will be voted on separately. The goal is to develop candidates, not to choose between candidates. Therefore, the ballot will contain a synopsis of the application form with a section at the bottom which asks "endorse" or "not endorse."
5. **The vote will take place at the April general Meet-up.**
6. Those candidates who receive the super-majority of Two-Thirds of those present will receive the endorsement of Gettysburg Area DFA. Once the endorsement has been obtained, the candidate may check affirmatively on the application form with National DFA that they have been endorsed by a DFA chapter, and submit the form electronically to the National DFA. Candidates who have received our endorsement will be free to cite our endorsement in their campaigns.

Roads to Nowhere --Sue Bumbaugh



On March 23 the Environmental Task Force hosted the Alaska Wilderness League sponsored **Roads to Nowhere** slide presentation with about 33 attending. The guest speaker was Keith Nyitray, an Alaska resident, adventurer, and activist. Keith spoke on the unique environmental, cultural, and historical aspects of America's rare temperate rainforest, The Tongass and Chugach National Forests, and the threat to their sustainability.

Since the 1950s over 70% of the old growth trees, some over 1,000 years old, have been logged. Clearcuts and over 5,000 miles of roads to nowhere have damaged habitat vital for the survival of Sitka black tailed deer, wolves, grizzly bear, Bald Eagles and wild salmon. The practice has also threatened recreational activities and sustainable tourism.

Federal funding has encouraged the destruction with bad management of taxpayer's dollars. In 2004 alone the U.S. Forest Service spent nearly \$49 million of taxpayer's money on the logging program and logging roads. Yet, private timber companies paid the Federal Government only \$800,000 in return for the right to cut down hundreds of acres of old growth trees.

Update: It is profoundly concerning to report that, on March 16th, the US Senate passed a budget resolution, 51-49, which included drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Senators Specter and Santorum voted for drilling. The bill now moves into the next phase or the Budget Reconciliation Bill.

And regarding the recent oil spill in the Prudhoe Bay, Brett Snyder published an open letter to Congressman Todd Platts in the *Gettysburg Times*.

Well, Congressman Platts, I wonder if you would like to change your position now? Prudhoe Bay oil operations in Alaska, which averages more than 1 oil spill per day, just had the big one on Thursday, March 2nd. Estimates range up to 798,000 gallons this time, which would make this spill second only to the Exxon-Valdez debacle of 1989 (Exxon has yet to meet its responsibilities for that one).

As concerned citizens, many others and I have repeatedly tried to convince Congressman Todd Platts that drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is unnecessary, destructive, unhealthy, and a violation of human rights, animal rights and the public trust. Despite our repeated attempts, Mr. Platts has refused to believe the facts and instead has sided with Senator Ted Stevens and the liars in the oil industry and their "fuzzy math".

Here's a direct quote from a letter I received from Congressman Platts on September 28th, 2005. "In fact, the experience in Prudhoe Bay—which I personally toured along with the ANWR region—has proven that modern technology allows for responsible oil production without harming fish, birds, caribou or other wildlife".

This oil spill is another in a long line of "notarizations" that prove beyond any doubt that there is no safe way to extract fossil fuels from healthy ecosystems.

I call on you, Mr. Platts, to stand up and accept the mandate of overwhelming public opinion, and endorse the protection -forever- of the last undisturbed wilderness that the people of this country own, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge including the disputed 1002 Area. Handing over public land to private corporate oil, mining and timber interests is one of the hallmark actions for which the Bush Administration will be forever remembered. Do you really want to be directly linked to that?

Brett Snyder (Biglerville, PA)

Adams County Democratic Breakfast

-Elaine Jones

If you missed the Candidate Forum on March 1, you missed a great event. I don't remember a similar pre-primary event for progressive candidates and challengers in our region. Gettysburg Area DFA gave voters a chance to meet the Democratic candidates who want to change the face of politics in Pennsylvania and Washington, and talk with them personally about their ideas and concerns.

You will have yet another opportunity to meet most of the candidates! So save Saturday morning April 8th for the Adams County Democratic Breakfast at 8:30 am at the Gettysburg Hotel.

We are very pleased that the speaker will be the Democratic candidate for the US Congress, **Dr. Phil Avillo**. Avillo is a Vietnam veteran who chaired the school board for many years in York and teaches history at York College. Avillo is a strong and energetic candidate who can help us take back the House and Senate in 2006. (Bob Casey was expected to be the guest speaker, but had to withdraw since he has accepted a debate challenge in Butler, PA—near Pittsburgh—that night against his primary opponents.)

The fundraising event will also honor John W. White for a "Lifetime of Outstanding Service" to the Democratic Party in Adams County. Disturbed by the direction President Reagan was taking our country, White joined the Democratic Committee and has worked to stir up local Democrats and get them to the polls for 25 years.

Please join us on April 8th. Price for the breakfast is \$35 per person. Checks should be made out to ACDC, and sent to ACDC, Box 4001, Gettysburg, PA, 17325. As a member of the Ways and Means Committee, I can assure you that funds raised will be used to promote all our exceptional Democratic candidates, and to have a visible headquarters and phone bank where we can organize and challenge the right-wing extremists, who have controlled national and Pennsylvania politics for far too long!

Gettysburg Area DFA Newsletter is published each month via mail, e-mail and website posting.

To add your name to the mailing list, contact EvelynASteen@aol.com or Elaine Jones at (717) 677-9442.

Submissions should be sent to JoAnn Udovich, editor, udovich@cvn.net, (717) 642-8311.

Why Does the State Democratic Committee Matter?

-Roger Lund

It has been many years since there has been a contested race for Democratic State Committee representative in Adams County. I want to share with you why this seat matters, and why I decided to run.

The state Democratic Party sets policy on what types of candidates are recruited, and how well those candidates and others are supported. That "support" is often financial, but can also be in the form of staff and operational support for the campaign.

It is no secret that the focus of the state Democratic Party has been on the major cities with large Democratic registrations. That strategy, in my opinion, does not go far enough. The State Party needs to adopt the strategy of Howard Dean and the national party to set up operations in every congressional district, not just those where Democrats are sure to win.

*Clearly our 19th Congressional district is one that sits on the back burner. We are viewed as so heavily Republican that the Democratic Party sees no need to put time and resources into the area. **That must change.** And, truthfully, I think the atmosphere is ripe for that change. The current chair of the state Democratic Party is open to dialog and has a sound relationship with the national party. I intend to build on that.*

We need someone at the state level who understands the value of cooperation and coalition building, who can work well with others, and who can listen to a variety of views and build consensus. My record speaks for itself on this regard. I have been involved with DFA since the beginning (i.e., the actual beginning, when it was Dean For America.) I have been a member of the state coalition and was invited to be a member of a national DFA coalition group. In addition, I am on the ACDC, and a board member of the New Oxford Chamber of Commerce.

I want to bring these coalition building skills to the State Committee where we can begin the dialog to raise awareness of the needs of the parts of Pennsylvania beyond the cities of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. The ONLY way we will get Democrats in office is to try. But one person can not do that alone. We need to build a coalition.

I believe I am the person to lead the coalition building. I will need the support of my friends at DFA to make that happen on May 16th.

Together, we can make a difference.

GETTYSBURG AREA DFA

P.O. Box 489

Arendtsville, PA 17303

www.gettysburgareadfa.org

Gettysburg Area DFA General Meet-Up

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

Follow-up on Candidate Forum

** Pre-Primary Endorsements for Congress and the State Legislature**

Be sure to be present to cast your vote

**Also, Planning for Earth Day, April 22 (Environmental Task Force), and
Persuading Congress to Consider the "Discharge Petition" (Iraq Task Force)**

**Room 206, Valentine Hall
Gettysburg Lutheran Theological Seminary, 7- 9 p.m.**