

Republicans endorse each other

By Benjamin Wachs

In a move that political observers called "shocking," Republican candidates for office in Dweedle County all endorsed each other this week.

Democrats said the move was an outrage, but, Republicans swear it was sheer coincidence that the best candidates for office - in their opinion - all happen to be Republican.

"What can I say?" asked Woeful Supervisor Jason Durnly. "I believe that (Republican Board member) Jack Johnson is the best candidate for town board. I'm sure I would say that if he

were a Democrat. Or an independent. This has nothing to do with party affiliation."

Rather, Durnly said, he made the decision after carefully studying Johnson's position on a number of issues.

"I remember (Johnson) said something once about not raising taxes, and I thought that was pretty good thinking," Durnly said. "You know, outside the box. Also, I know Jack voted against putting a stop light at the corner of Wemble and Troeg, and I'm adamantly opposed to such a stop light."

"Adamantly," Durnly then added. "Opposed."

Johnson expressed

relief upon learning of Durnly's endorsement. "Whew," he said. "I bet that was a close call for him. You can never tell how these things are going to go. I thought (Democratic challenger Alan) Brusel was going to get it for sure, what with him winning the Fields Medal and all."

For his part, Johnson said he heartily endorses Durnly for the position of Town Supervisor. "He's really good. Speaks in a soothing voice at all times, keeps his desk neat, flosses... this has nothing to do with the fact that he endorsed me, or that we both belong to the same party. I'm endorsing

him because he's a superior candidate."

County Executive Vincent Gardener likewise endorsed fellow Republicans Durnly and Johnson, as well as Town Board member Eunolia Glossip, Town Justice Eddie Calander, and Town Historian Eunice Palmer.

"Yes, Eunolia's a drunk, but, as long as she's sober once a month, she is fully qualified to discharge all her duties," Gardener said. "That makes her much more qualified than (Democratic Challenger) Chris Desan, whose work with homeless children could really interfere with his evening

schedule. We make board members earn that \$14,000 a year, and, he's always getting calls from suicidal teens. That has nothing to do with him being a Democrat."

Glossip, who likewise endorsed Gardener, Durnly, Johnson, Calander, Palmer, and Republican Doty Billings for dog catcher, said that she, too, chooses her endorsements by the candidate, rather than the party. "Eunice's dementia keeps her firmly rooted in the past, which is just what a historian needs in a town like ours," Glossip said. "Good thing for us she's a Republican. And, Jack

Johnson's frequent adultery keeps him in touch with the voters. I'd endorse him even if he were a Libertarian. Lucky for me he's a Republican, so I get to see him at all those fundraisers and party caucuses. Lucky. Yes, lucky. So very, very, lucky."



Republicans (above) congratulate each other on having the best candidates.

Satan's request for zoning variance stirs controversy at board meeting

Plans for renovation in haunted house upset neighbors, who say it is against code.

By Benjamin Wachs

Residents of the Hillson neighborhood say that the haunted house on Ash Avenue has left a trail of blood across the entire county, and should be contained or burned to the ground.

But Satan, Prince of Darkness, says that adding a second bedroom will make the residence more homey and allow him to have out of town visitors.

"I know this is a residential neighborhood, and would like to assure everyone that this is not for business purposes," Satan told the Woeful Zoning Board of Appeals at its Tuesday meeting. "It's also not for long term visits - I'm not trying to get around the code and have another resident."

The Hillson neighborhood has been zoned single family since 1947. Haunted by the souls of a 19th century industrialist, a 1920s novelist, a mime who perished in 1942, and Aaron Spelling, along with Satan, the house on 492 Ash Avenue is already at the law's maximum capacity for un-related occupants in a single family dwelling.

That's a red flag to neighbors like John and Marsha Green.

"That mime ate my child's brain," said Marsha Green.

"Sure, they may say he's not charging any of them rent," added John Green, "but, how do we know it's not under the table? I think Satan's up to no good."

According to documents submitted with his variance request, Satan plans to build a 40 x 40 guest bedroom on the first floor, adjoining the parlor and the room with hooks from the ceiling. Plumbing fixtures would be added so that a 10 x 15 guest bathroom could also be built. The walls would drip blood.



Satan tells the crowd at Tuesday's meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals that maggots will devour their flesh. The zoning board called such talk "inappropriate."

That's a hot point for some neighbors.

"Next, he's going to say he wants to add an indoor pool, possibly filled with acid, or maybe with some kind of giant squid in it," said neighbor Barney Amset. "Sure, we can look the other way and let him bend the rules, but, I think the code is very clear: thou shalt not have walls dripping blood."

In fact, the Woeful zoning code does not specifically forbid walls dripping blood. However, many neighbors think that the section preventing "New and Enlarged Uses" covers it.

Satan said that's just wrong.

"How is this a new and enlarged use?" he asked the board. "It's already a haunted house, and there's already a kitchen sink that drips blood, so, this isn't even really new. Would the zoning board like to choose my wallpaper, too?"

Board attorney Winston Fizek said that while dripping blood specifically might not constitute a new and enlarged use, a second bedroom

could if it significantly enlarges the home's "footprint," or involves human sacrifice.

Complicating the issue before the zoning board is that the house at 492 Ash Avenue is bigger on the inside than it is outside, and that according to property maps a substantial portion of the house resides both in Chalmers and in Hell, leading to a split jurisdiction.

"This is an unusual situation because Hell's zoning laws are far more liberal than anything in New York State," said Fizek. "We'll have to tread carefully if we don't want to open up the door to a host of damned spirits who flock into our plane in a macabre dance of madness, cursing our homes and our descendants to eternal torment. We may need to hire a consultant."

High school guest speaker assumes students care

By Benjamin Wachs

Gary Callahan, who owns "Callahan's Box Factory" on Cross Street, began his presentation at Leonardo DaVinci High School assuming students gave a damn about anything he had to say.

Callahan spoke to 400 students in the high school auditorium on Wednesday, kicking off the district's "Red Ribbon Week," which uses fabric to convince students not to do pleasurable things.

Callahan believed that his experience as a local businessman and member of the Chalmers Rotary Club would help inspire the students to "shoot straight."

But junior Trenton Posner said that it was only years of practice hearing an estimated 70 other motivational speakers urge him to be drug free that let him know when to clap during the presentation.

"Usually, when they shake their fist in the air, that's a good clue," Posner said. "And, if they ask you something about pot, which they sometimes call marijuana, or cannabis, you probably should shake your head, like you're disturbed or some-

thing."

Sophomore Julie Kowalski, who was high during the speech, used other clues. "They do this thing with their voices, where they like raise them up and lower them down, and that usually means they've made an important point, so, you shouldn't start giggling," she said. "And, during the whole section where they talk about valuing yourself too much to do drugs, do not fall asleep. I swear, they watch us extra hard then."

Senior Paul Martin said experience has taught him that if a speaker for Red Ribbon Week, or "Don't Do Drugs Day," or "National Self-Esteem Month" ever asks him a question, the best course of action is to "look down at the floor, and say, 'yeah, I have a friend who does that, and I'm really worried about him.' That'll get you through almost anything."

Principal Chuck Palmer said that he tries to bring in speakers that will inspire the students. "(Callahan) is really a classic American success story," he said. "He must have doubled the number of boxes they sell over there after his father made him acting manager, and his struggle to over-

come chronic migraine headaches is really inspiring. Kids need to know that other people have problems to overcome, too. Even adults."

Callahan said his own goal was clear. "This isn't so much about drugs as about something deeper," he said. "I want the students to value themselves enough to know they shouldn't do things like that. Self-worth is cool, that's my motto."

And Callahan was confident that he's reaching students. "I've given this speech at several area high schools, and at every one, I can see kids nodding - some of them clearly disturbed - and I always get a big round of applause afterwards. It's a message they're ready for."

Palmer, too, said he was confident that Callahan's message hit home. "I asked several students what they thought of drugs now that they'd heard his speech," he said, "and they confided in me that they have friends who do drugs, and now are really worried about them. You can't fake concern like that."

Candidate makes no sense

Opponents ask for clarification so they'll know what to attack.

By Benjamin Wachs

Democratic town board candidate Mason Bruno made incomprehensible remarks for nearly 20 minutes yesterday at a campaign function in Sumner Park.

"I, too, am concerned about terrorism and taxes," Bruno said midway through his speech to a small crowd, "which is why I say that schools are the only way to keep costs high. If we act as neighbors together, in concert, there's nothing that the American way can't shoot for one and all."

Republicans say they were baffled.

"Is he for or against schools?" asked Town Supervisor Jason Durnly. "I wish I knew. I've been trying to figure it out for hours, now. Diagraming the sentence doesn't help."

Other Republicans said they were both baffled and disappointed.

"I had a response ready to nearly anything I thought he could come up with, but, when I heard that, I just said 'screw it,'" said Republican Town Leader Colin Dade. "I'm just going to put a yard sign on somebody's lawn and call it a day."

Democrats, on the other hand, were both confused and supportive.

"That part, where... where he said the thing about the terrorists?" said Democratic Town Leader Matt Brooks. "If that's something I support, then, I'm in favor of it."

This is not the first time Bruno has made no sense. In the last month alone, he launched a major campaign initiative outside his

district, published a prospective budget with numerous subtraction mistakes, and confused over 20 residents at the Canterbury Court Old People's Home.

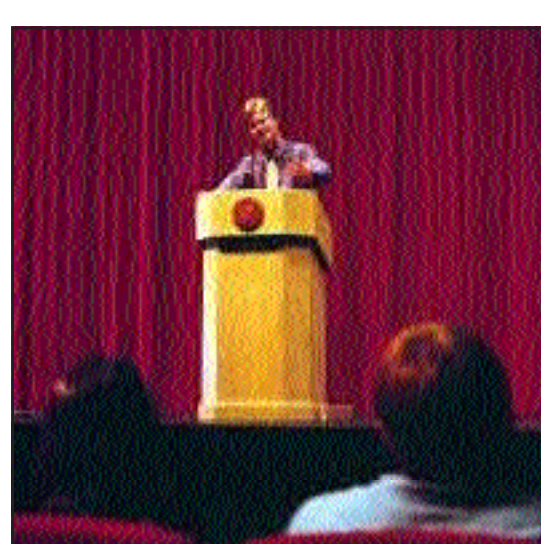
"You can't die in peace after hearing something like that," said Myra Boyle, 89. "The thought that he could cut my prescription drug prices to feed his donkey is just terrifying. I hope he doesn't come back."

Resident Manny Kooly blamed his hearing for the problem. "That must be it," the 91 year old veteran said. "I haven't heard so good since the Nixon years. That Kennedy was a nice young man."

A spokesman for the Bruno campaign was unapologetic. "Mason speaks his mind to the voters, and he will continue to do so, regardless of opposition, or money, or grammar," he said. "I think Mason has made it very clear that two kinds of apples can't be compared to the national budget when the Republicans celebrate the Fourth of July."

Town Board member Jack Johnson said it's this kind of thing that makes him not want to have a debate.

"What am I supposed to do, stand up there are pretend to understand?" Johnson asked. "We'll both look like idiots. I'll just pass out literature, instead. I don't like taxes. See? That wasn't so hard."



Gary Callahan speaks about clean living to high school students, who pretend to care.

