

# The Champaign County Democrat

MARCH/APRIL 2007



"You came here because you believe in what this country can be. In the face of war, you believe there can be peace. In the face of despair, you believe there can be hope. In the face of a politics that's shut you out, that's told you to settle, that's divided us for too long, you believe that we can be one people, reaching for what's possible, building that more perfect union."

— Senator Barack Obama, announcing his candidacy for President in Springfield, Illinois, February 10, 2007

## Rosales, Avery, Williams Win Place on April 17 Ballot for Champaign City Council

All three Democrats on the ballot for Champaign City Council won in the February 27 primary election and will advance to the April 17 consolidated election, where they will run for three at-large seats on the council. Incumbent City Council member Giraldo Rosales, former County Board Chairwoman Patricia Avery, and Champaign resident Annette

Williams are running against Republicans Deb Frank Feinen, Karen Foster, and Tom Bruno. Rosales has a strong record on the issues during his first four-year term, including support for the smoking ban. Avery and Williams also support the ban, which Feinen and Foster have said they will vote to overturn if elected. Candidates submitted the information below.

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### GIRALDO ROSALES



For the past four years, incumbent Giraldo Rosales has enjoyed serving as Champaign City Council Member at-large. Rosales is a dedicated, tenacious, committed public

servant representing all of Champaign's citizens. Rosales brings together a broad range of community, public service, and government experience spanning over 27 years. For 11 years Rosales taught Bilingual Education to immigrant children whose lives mirrored his own in the Chicago inner-city neighborhoods. Born in Havana, Cuba, where his father served under Fulgencio Batista, Rosales enjoyed an orderly early life. But by 1963, after Fidel Castro, the family was forced to flee and found their way to Chicago, right in the midst of America's Civil Rights Movement. Since becoming the first Latino elected official in Downstate Illinois, Rosales found similarities in his immigration experience, the role of a politician is not always a popular one. Rosales believes in achieving balance throughout the city--not only in the representation among public officials, but also in the agenda that is represented by them.

Website: [ww.giraldorosales.com](http://ww.giraldorosales.com).

Campaign: Giraldo Rosales for City Council, 618 W. Hill Street Champaign, IL 61821.

### PATRICIA AVERY



Patricia Avery was the first African American, first woman and first Democrat to be elected Chair of the Champaign County Board, serving in

that leadership role for two terms. Avery's eight years of County Board service and her experience as Chair of the Regional Planning Commission, county liquor commissioner, township appeals hearing officer and labor negotiator make her well-qualified for a city council seat. Avery is employed as the Executive Director of Champaign-Urbana Area Project, a community organization that provides youth programs to prevent juvenile delinquency. She has been a strong advocate for social justice and women's and children's issues.

Avery's priorities on the council are to promote economic development that benefits all residents, insure fiscal responsibility by balancing economic incentives with the city's need to fund infrastructure, roads, and other services, improve police and community relations, work to reduce utility costs, insure safe and affordable housing. She supports the creation of a civilian police review board and will uphold the smoking ban. She opposes a city gas tax.

Campaign: Avery for City Council, 1308 W. Clark Street Champaign, IL 61821.

### ANNETTE WILLIAMS



Life-long Champaign resident and former school teacher Annette Williams is known for her caring and conscientious values. Williams has enjoyed working with diverse groups

of people within educational, church and civic communities and will bring that experience to serve all citizens of Champaign on the council.

Williams supports the smoking ban as a public health issue and believes that the majority of citizens prefer a smoke-free environment. Williams believes there is a need to improve police-community relations and supports the creation of a civilian police review board. Williams will advocate for affordable, safe housing for all residents. She supports appropriate economic growth and would carefully evaluate the city's incentives to wealthy developers to make sure that tax dollars are available for needed services.

Williams does not support a city gas tax and believes that developers should help pay for arterial road construction. Williams is committed to working for the common good of all citizens and maintaining our community's quality of life.

Campaign: Williams for City Council, 505 Louisiana Ave. Champaign, IL 61820.

## School Board Candidates Seeking Democratic Support In April 17 Election

### CHAMPAIGN UNIT 4 SCHOOL BOARD



#### MELODYE BENSON ROSALES

618 W. Hill Street Champaign, IL

Melodye Benson Rosales is a candidate for Champaign Unit 4 School Board. She is an award-winning children's book author/illustrator, widely praised for her evocative illustrations for *Addy: An American Girl*. For over 30 years Rosales has worked with children, including at-risk youth, in projects aimed at improving literacy and performance through art and writing. Her involvement with the Champaign school system spans 17 years. As the parent of three children, Rosales believes Champaign schools have not resolved key issues. One is the reading performance of the students, which impacts student advancement to college. Another is the level of teacher compensation, affecting recruiting, retaining and adequately rewarding the high quality educators we should value. We also must insist on accountability for administrators to justify their roles and salaries. As taxpayers we look forward to having better access to public information, making the process more transparent. Website: [www.melodyerosales.com](http://www.melodyerosales.com)

### CHAMPAIGN UNIT 4 SCHOOL BOARD



#### MINOSCA ALCANTARA

3201 Weeping Cherry Drive Champaign, IL

Minosca Alcantara currently serves on the Champaign Unit 4 School Board. She is a civil engineering consultant with expertise in project and construction management, and works as the Associate Director for the Women in Engineering program at the UIUC College of Engineering. "I am running for school board because I believe that education is the great equalizer and is the single greatest predictor of life opportunities," she said. "A great deal has been achieved in Unit 4 to date but we all know that we have not reached our goal yet. As citizens we need to ask ourselves, are we willing to do what is necessary to educate all students?" Alcantara's priorities are to eliminate the achievement gap between minority and majority students, and to create policies to guarantee a successful transitioning from the current Consent Decree status. Other goals are to establish new programs to populate the underchosen schools, and to work on discipline prevention by adding more social workers to the schools.

### URBANA SCHOOL BOARD Sub Dist. 7



#### TRACY HEILMAN

1701 Briarcliff Drive Urbana, IL

Tracy Heilman is the mother of a kindergarten student at Urbana's Thomas Paine elementary school and is actively involved in a number of volunteer roles at the school. She provides leadership as a member of the PTA, serves as Chairperson of the Thomas Paine Library Committee and works in the school as a lunchroom volunteer. She has been a leader working to address the nutritional inadequacy of school lunches. Heilman is strongly committed to pursuing programs and policies that will eliminate student performance gaps based on race or family income and to creating an atmosphere in the schools that attracts and retains the best teachers. An ordained minister, Tracy is the Director of Religious Education at the Community United Church of Christ where her husband, Mike Mulberry is pastor and she is a trained educator in the Unitarian-Universalist/United Church of Christ comprehensive sex education curriculum. Heilman is running against John Dimit and Andrew Wilk for the Sub District 7 school board seat.

## B(log) On: Visit Our New Website at <http://champaigncountymocrats.org>

Champaign County Democrats have launched a new web site designed by Democratic precinct committee person Ben Grosser. The new site is found at <http://champaigncountymocrats.org> and will be used to post current information about Democratic events, meetings, candidates, elected officials and news. It allows users to sign up to volunteer or send a donation, and features links to state and national Democratic sites. The front page of the site features a blog, which will provide a forum for community members to exchange ideas and opinions on local, state and national issues. "Gone are the days when the establishment media hold sole control over the information landscape. Blog posts and web publishing have rapidly become primary source material on important issues of the day," said Grosser. I believe that Champaign County Democrats should have a voice within this new media landscape, and the blog on the front page of our website is a medium for it." Thanks to Ben for all his work on the site!



**BRAVING THE COLD FOR BARACK OBAMA IN SPRINGFIELD**  
Champaign County Democrats sponsored a bus trip to Springfield to hear Obama announce his candidacy for President. Even sub-zero temperatures didn't dampen the enthusiasm of UIUC College Dems.

Please Join Us for the

# Democratic Spring Dinner, Sunday April 1, 2007

Featuring David and Claudia Gross's Terrific Political Pin Collection & Other Surprises...No Foolin'

**Laborers Hall**

108 E. Anthony Drive, Urbana

Social Hour 5:00 pm

Dinner 6:00 pm

\$35.00 per person, prepaid

\$40.00 per person at the door

Make reservations now with Mary Klein by phone (384-5371) or by email to [Dinner@ChampaignCountyDemocrats.org](mailto:Dinner@ChampaignCountyDemocrats.org) Or by mailing your check (payable to Champaign County Democrats) and this form to: Mary Klein, Champaign County Democrats, PO Box 1455, Champaign IL, 61824-1455.

Free Kids's Room with advance reservation. Children (ages 2-12) are welcome, free meals and caregivers provided, but you MUST reserve space for them by March 16!

## R.S.V.P. Please make reservations by March 16

Reservations are requested by March 16 due to Spring Break, but will be accepted up until March 26. To make a phone reservation after March 16, please call Gerri Kirchner at 384-0547, by March 26.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

- PATRIOT** Reserve \_\_\_\_ tables for 8 @ \$350 per table
- BENEFACTOR** (includes two dinner tickets) \$250.00
- PATRON** (includes one dinner ticket) \$150.00
- SPONSOR** (includes one dinner ticket) \$100.00
- DINNER TICKETS** for \_\_\_\_ persons @ \$35 each: \$\_\_\_\_\_
- Please provide complimentary meals and caregivers for \_\_\_\_ children
- Contribution to support attendance by students and others: \$\_\_\_\_\_

*Paid for by Champaign County Democratic Central Committee. A copy of our report is or will be available at the Champaign County Clerk's office, 1776 E. Washington St., Urbana, 61802.*

## Democratic Meet Ups Focus on Issues: School Funding Reform, Health Care, The Environment

Illinois ranks 47th in the nation in the level of state support for education, according to Vickie Mahrt, Illinois Education Association board member who spoke at the February 15th Democratic Meet Up on school funding reform, held at Democratic headquarters. Mahrt said per pupil spending ranges from \$23,000 to \$4,500 across the state, and these inequities are drastically compromising the quality of education for many Illinois students. Illinois State Senator Mike Frerichs also spoke at the Meet Up about a bill he recently introduced to address adequate school funding, and Champaign School Board President Margie Skirvin provided a local perspective.

Democrats who attended the meeting were provided with extensive information and everything they needed to write letters to state legislators advocating school funding reform.

The Democratic Meet-Up Committee hosted the event, the first in a series of monthly meetings that will present an informational program on a specific is-

sue and provide the optional opportunity for volunteer action.

The March 14 Democratic Meet Up is scheduled for 7:00 pm at Democratic Headquarters and will examine the Future of Health Care in Illinois. Jim Duffet, Executive Director of the Campaign for Better Health Care will review health care legislation in Illinois.

The April Meet Up is scheduled for 7:00 pm on April 11 at the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, 3301 Boardwalk Drive in Champaign. Al Gore's award winning documentary film about global warming, *An Inconvenient Truth*, will be shown, followed by a panel discussion led by UIUC Professor David Kovacic. A pre-Arbor Day tree planting is planned for Saturday, April 14. See the calendar for details on these events.

Thanks to Peggy Kovacic and Meet Up Committee members Astrid Berkson, Brandon Bowersox, Mark Morenz, Dorothy Neumann, Cameron and Helen Satterthwaite, Debra Schrishuhn, Julie Thene and Laura Wetzel for their efforts on this!



## Richards Appointed to County Board Dist. 6

Champaign Democrat Mike Richards will serve in county government after all. The 2006 Democratic County Clerk candidate has been appointed to fill the Champaign County Board District 6 seat that was vacated by Tony Fabri when he was appointed County Auditor.

Richards was selected by unanimous vote of the District 6 precinct committeepersons in their caucus on February 4, and his appointment received the unanimous support of the Champaign County Board at their February 22 meeting. Thanks to District 6 Caucus Chairman David Gross for his leadership, and congratulations to Mike!

# The Champaign County Democrat

Champaign County Democratic Central Committee  
P.O. Box 1455 Champaign, IL 61824

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## All Democrats Are Invited!

### March Social: Friday, March 30

5:30-7:30pm at the home of Gina Jackson  
907 N. Fifth St. Champaign



### Spring Democratic Dinner: Sunday, April 1

5:00-8:30pm at Laborers Hall  
108 E. Anthony Drive Urbana

### April Social: Friday, April 27

5:30-7:30 pm at Laurel Prussing's Office  
2034 Burlison Dr. Urbana

*Paid for by the Champaign County Democratic Central Committee. A copy of our report is available for purchase from the Champaign County Clerk's office, 1776 E. Washington St., Urbana.*

## CALENDAR

### Democratic Office Hours

14 East Washington Street, Champaign  
Phone: 359-3760 Office Open Mondays  
& Thursdays 11:00 am-1:00pm

### Wednesday, March 14 DEMOCRATIC MEET UP

7:00 p.m. at Democratic Headquarters  
14 East Washington Street, Champaign  
The Future of Health Care in Illinois

### Wednesday, March 28 CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING

7:00 p.m. at Democratic Headquarters  
14 East Washington Street, Champaign

### Friday, March 30 DEMOCRATIC SOCIAL

5:30 p.m. – 7:30 pm at the home of Gina Jackson  
907 N. Fifth Street, Champaign  
All Democrats welcome. Please bring a snack to  
share if you can. Suggested donation \$8.00.

### Sunday, April 1 DEMOCRATIC SPRING DINNER

5:00-8:30 pm at Laborers Hall  
108 E. Anthony Drive, Urbana. Reservations  
Required by 3/26, call Mary Klein at 384-5371 or  
Gerri Kirchner at 328-0547. Tickets are \$35 per  
person prepaid, \$40 at the door.

### Wednesday, April 11 DEMOCRATIC MEET UP

7:00 p.m. at IBEW Hall, Local 601  
3301 Boardwalk Dr. Champaign  
Showing Al Gore's film, "An Inconvenient Truth"

### Saturday, April 14 Pre Arbor Day Tree Planting Meet Up

Champaign County Forest Preserve District For  
more information, call Debra Schrishuhn, 384-5763

### Tuesday, April 17 VOTE! CONSOLIDATED ELECTION

Election for Champaign City Council, Champaign  
and Urbana school boards, library districts, park  
districts and community college boards

### Wednesday, April 25 CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING

7:00 p.m. at Democratic Headquarters  
14 East Washington Street, Champaign

### Friday, April 27 DEMOCRATIC SOCIAL

5:30 – 7:30 pm at the office of Laurel Prussing  
2034 Burlison Drive, Urbana  
All Democrats welcome. Please bring a snack to  
share if you can. Suggested donation \$8.00.

## DEMOCRATIC MEET UPS

All Democrats welcome. Beverages provided,  
people are invited to bring snacks to share.  
For information call Peggy Kovacic, 359-3760.

### Wednesday, March 14 7:00 pm

Democratic Headquarters  
14 E. Washington St. Champaign  
Issue Discussion: The Future  
of Health Care in Illinois  
Jim Duffett, Executive Director of Cam-  
paign for Better Health Care

### Wednesday, April 11 7:00 pm

IBEW Hall, Local 601  
3301 Boardwalk Dr. Champaign  
Early Celebration of Arbor Day  
Showing of Al Gore's Academy  
Award Winning documentary film,  
*An Inconvenient Truth*

### Saturday, April 14

Pre-Arbor Day Tree Planting  
Champaign County Forest  
Preserve District  
Call Debra Schrishuhn, 384-5763