



IDCCA  
May  
2017  
Newsletter

Issue #16

NEWS FROM AROUND THE ASSOCIATION

IN THIS ISSUE



## President's Message

By: Doug House, President IDCCA  
Chairman, Rock Island County Democratic Party

### The Enemy Within!

We are a little under a year until the Democratic Primary Election for Governor and you can see the momentum building up across our great state. Each of the candidates are attending forums, rallies, County Party events and media interviews. I am excited to see how each of the candidate's campaigns is taking shape and the issues they want to champion. There is something else that is brewing and it is something that I want to address with each of you.

In today's political environment of social media and instant cable news, it is easy to see campaign rhetoric get heated quickly. We are starting to see this in our Governor's race and that is why I am cautioning everyone. I am not singling out any one candidate but recently the tone has started to change. Whisper campaigns, back biting and other malicious comments lose us elections. It is very easy to quickly turn against each other when we have a heated

primary. Primary fights can be a good thing if they help energize our Party. What we are seeing now is not that.

Some of this rhetoric is being fueled by activists, strategists and staff that are supporting our candidates. I believe that individuals who perpetuate these types of activities are "The Enemy Within" the Democratic Party. Their actions leave deep scars that no nominee can heal and hand elections to the Republicans.

I have met with all our great candidates for Governor. I have even met our current Governor once at the Capitol. I can say without hesitation or reservation that any of our candidates are far superior to Governor Rauner. Rauner has used his unlimited resources to exploit, engrain and fabricate a false narrative of who we are as a Democratic Party. All the Democratic candidates are good people with good ideas about a vision forward for our state.

[Continued on page 2]

[Presidents Message](#) —Page 1

[Illinois Comeback Agenda](#)—Page 2

[Democrats in Illinois unseat a Whole Bunch of Republicans](#)—Page 2

[Illinois Climate Table Update](#)—Page 3

[Leveraging Emerging Outreach Technology](#) —Page 4

[Running a Successful Rural Field Operation](#) —Page 5



### Precinct Committeeman Recruiting

We are recruiting Democratic Precinct Committeeman statewide to assist with the grassroots effort to build the Democratic Party in Illinois. If you are interested in being a part of this grassroots effort, please email [dan@ildcca.org](mailto:dan@ildcca.org) with you name, address, phone, email, county and precinct. Your County Democratic Party Chairman will contact you immediately!

The Illinois Democratic County Chairman's Association is a state wide, grassroots Democratic political organization. It is made up of the elected Democratic County Chairman in all 102 counties in Illinois. The mission of the IDCCA is to help elect Democrats in each county while continuing to grow the Democratic Party in the State of Illinois. Rock Island County Chairman Doug House is the President of the Illinois Democratic County Chairman's Association.

Paid for by the Illinois Democratic County Chairman's Association. A copy of our report is (or will be) available for purchase from the Illinois State Board of Elections, Springfield IL

[Continued from page 1]

Furthermore, let me be crystal clear about this. The IDCCA's goal is to make sure that a DEMOCRAT wins the Governor's race in 2018.

We cannot, as good Democrats, do the Republicans work for them. It will be harder to unite our Party and win if the Republicans are running ads against us using comments made in this Primary Election. Our candidates, their supporters and staff must focus on what this Governor has done to hurt our state. They must focus on sharing their vision to fixing the problems that Rauner has created. They must connect with voters and share their stories.

The Democratic Party is considered the "Big Tent Party". We accept different points of view and are willing to work with individuals from all backgrounds to advance our message of fighting for the Middle Class. The politics of division will fail us as a Democratic Party. We are better than that and citizens of Illinois deserve better than that.

If you think about our Democratic Municipal candidates that won last month, what is the one trait that each of the campaigns share? They worked together with several different groups towards a common goal. They shared their vision for the communities and worked hard to communicate that vision to the voters. Their efforts were rewarded when communities resoundingly elected Democrats in all corners of our state.

When we focus on a common goal and not tearing each other down, we can do great things. So, when you hear a candidate, staff, surrogate or fellow Democrat say anything disparaging about any of our candidates for Governor, please ask them to stop it. Please ask them to share their vision for our state and how, working together, we can fix it. The Democratic candidates for Governor have some great ideas and we should all be supporting them as we work to fix our broken state from the mess that Rauner has created.

Doug House  
IDCCA President  
Rock Island County Democratic Party  
Chairman  
@ILDCCA @RiCoDemocrats



## Illinois Comeback Agenda

By Rep. Will Guzzardi

Dear fellow Democrats,

Over the last few years, we've had a Herculean task ahead of us in Springfield: standing up to Governor Rauner's anti-worker, pro-CEO agenda. And despite all the money and all the rhetoric he's thrown at us, we've stood tall. It makes me proud to be a Democrat — and your support on the ground has been critical in our successful resistance.

Starting last fall, a group of us legislators put our heads together and started thinking that we wanted to do more. We've been successful at saying "no" to Rauner's Turnaround Agenda, but we want to tell people what we think is wrong in Illinois, and how we as Democrats propose to fix it.

Of course, our party has great answers to those questions. If we want to fix Illinois, we need to advance policies that will put our people ahead of the CEOs. Good jobs, a living wage, great public education from birth to college, and a budget that funds the services we need.

To that end, a group of 20 of us in the House and Senate put our heads together and came up with the Illinois Comeback Agenda. It's a bold agenda, broken down into five areas. In each category, we've got several statements of principle, and one bill we're working to advance this session in the legislature. Read the full plan at our website: [www.comebackil.com](http://www.comebackil.com)

We think it's a pretty important and powerful set of ideas. But for this agenda to have an impact on the discussion in Springfield, we need people to know about it. We're hoping you all can help us spread the word to Democrats around the state: our party has a vision, we have a plan, and we're working to make it happen.

I've made a short video explaining what the Agenda's about, which you can share: <https://www.facebook.com/WillGuzzardi/videos/1436954189708060/>. You can direct folks to the Agenda website ([www.comebackil.com](http://www.comebackil.com)). Or, maybe most importantly, you can discuss this with your friends, colleagues, fellow volunteers and

organizers and community leaders. Tell them we've got a plan.

Bruce Rauner will spend the next eighteen months trying to paint our party as obstructionists who are standing in the way of his sensible reform agenda. If we want to beat him, we need to send the message that we have a clear vision of the kind of changes our state needs. We know things are broken in this state. We know people are struggling.

Let's tell the people of this state that if they entrust us with their votes, we'll accomplish some real reforms, the kind that will make it easier to live and work and raise a family here in Illinois.

Thanks for your help,

Will Guzzardi  
State Representative, 39th District

## Democrats in Illinois Just Unseated A Whole Bunch of Republicans

By Jennifer Bendery (Article originally published in The Huffington post April 13, 2017)

WASHINGTON — In a spate of local elections last week in Illinois, Democrats picked up seats in places they've never won before.

The city of Kankakee elected its first African-American, Democratic mayor. West Deerfield Township will be led entirely by Democrats for the first time. Elgin Township voted for "a complete changeover," flipping to an all-Democratic board. Normal Township elected Democratic supervisors and trustees to run its board — the first time in more than 100 years that a single Democrat has held a seat.

"We had a pretty good day," said Dan Kovats, executive director of the Illinois Democratic County Chairmen's Association. "We won in areas we normally would win, but we also won in areas Republicans never expected us to be competitive in. They were caught flat-footed."

[Continued on page 3]

[Continued from page 2]

These may seem like relatively small victories — we're talking about municipal races in towns with tens of thousands of people — but they fit with a broader pattern that should have Republicans on edge ahead of the 2018 elections: Progressive grassroots activism, exploding with energy since President Donald Trump's win in November, is fueling Democratic gains in GOP strongholds.

This week, a Democratic congressional candidate in Kansas nearly pulled off a shocking win in a heavily Republican district. In Georgia, 30-year-old Democratic newcomer Jon Ossoff is outpacing his GOP rivals in a race to replace former Rep. Tom Price. The seat has long been Republican and was once held by former Speaker Newt Gingrich. These races come after a Democratic state Senate candidate in Delaware, buoyed by anti-Trump activism, annihilated her GOP challenger in an election that's traditionally been close.

We won in areas we normally would win, but we also won in areas Republicans never expected us to be competitive in. They were caught flat-footed. Dan Kovats, executive director of the Illinois Democratic County Chairmen's Association

In the case of Illinois, a number of Democrats who just won got a boost from a program launched by Rep. Cheri Bustos (D-Ill.) called Build The Bench. It's an all-day boot camp that offers nuts-and-bolts details for running a successful campaign. Bustos came up with the idea last year when she noticed a dearth of new Democratic candidates for Congress, and decided the best way to help build up her party's ranks was at the local level.

She's held two boot camps in her district so far — The Huffington Post attended one of them in March — and she's already seeing tremendous payoff. Twelve Build The Bench alumni ran for local seats in this election cycle, and eight of them won. A ninth alum, Rita Ali, lost by one vote in her race for Peoria City Council.

"I am incredibly proud that the majority of our graduates who were on the ballot in April municipal elections won their races," said Bustos. "If we want to be successful in the heartland, we need to connect Democratic candidates for office at all levels with the best practices, skills and expertise needed to run winning campaigns."

Chemberly Cummings and Arlene Hosea are among the Build The Bench alumni who recently won races. They both made history by becoming the first black members of Normal Town Council and Normal Township Trustee, respectively. That is no small feat in a predominately white, Republican region of the state.

"There's this concept in Bloomington-Normal that everybody is conservative," said Cummings, a 34-year-old State Farm employee. "But we are a group of people who are actually concerned about the issues in our community. I also think ... when you have the representative of a party who is negative, I think you'll start to see some things change. Nobody wants to be associated with something negative. They want to be associated with the positive."

Hosea, a 57-year-old former Illinois State University employee, came out of retirement to run for her seat. She hadn't planned on going into politics, but was deeply affected by Trump's divisive tone all last year.

"I am a descendent of slavery," she said. "I saw and heard on the campaign trail so much awful rhetoric. My mom is still alive, she's 90, and she faced racism through all of her childhood. I thought, 'Arlene, you have to do more. You have to be the change that you want to see.'"

As someone born and raised in the area, Hosea said she takes pride in being able to give back to her town's next generation. She got choked up thinking about how far she and her family have come, recalling how her mom lived through Jim Crow in the South and once watched the Ku Klux Klan drag her uncle out of the house and "almost beat him to death" in front of her when she was a child.

"Even if it's just my seat at the table, they get to see me at that table. I have a voice," Hosea said, her voice cracking. "In this community, no one has done it. So, it's time."

Of course, not everyone can win their first campaign. Jodie Slothower, a Build The Bench attendee who HuffPost met in March, lost her race for Normal Township clerk. She is disappointed, of course, but she's already onto her next project: fueling the progressive momentum to oust more Republicans, like Rep. Rodney Davis (Ill.). She started a grassroots mobilization group in November, Voices of Reason, and it's up to 2,000 members.

"We have events planned all the way through August," Slothower said. "We're going to keep up the pressure on the congressman. We're figuring out how to take what we've learned here and bring it to other communities. We have a lot of work to do."



## Illinois Climate Table: Future Energy Jobs Act Implementation Update

By Jennifer Walling,  
@ilenviro

In the waning days of 2016, after more than two years of persistent advocacy and tough negotiations, significant clean energy and climate legislation was passed in Illinois. The Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA) is momentous not only for what it does, but also for the signal it sends: that even while the new federal administration insists on promoting a regressive, uneconomic, and unhealthy energy agenda, states can assert themselves as leaders in building the clean energy economy. So, what does FEJA do?

In terms of clean energy development, the Act fixes the broken renewable portfolio standard and puts Illinois back on track to acquiring 25% of its energy from renewable sources by 2025. New provisions set explicit, long-term new build requirements that will ensure that renewable energy credits are supplied by new construction of wind and solar projects in the state, including community solar, low-income solar, brownfield solar, and distributed generation projects.

The energy efficiency provisions contained in FEJA will give Illinois the distinction of having one of the top programs in the nation. Illinois is served by two utilities, Commonwealth Edison (ComEd) and Ameren. Under FEJA, ComEd (which serves Chicagoland and is one of the country's largest utilities) will be required to reduce energy demand by 21.5% by 2030, while Ameren is committed to achieving a 16% reduction. The act also requires that a minimum of \$25 million per year be spent on programs to increase the efficiency of low-income households and includes on-bill financing options.

[Continued on page 4]

[Continued from page 3]

While roughly 70% of the program dollars allocated by FEJA fund the renewable energy and energy efficiency provisions described above, it also includes support for two of Exelon's nuclear plants in the form of a new "Zero-Emission Standard" (ZES). Needless to say, the Illinois Climate Table was not thrilled about this portion of the bill, nor that it received the lion's share of media coverage. Ultimately, however, the Climate Table voted overwhelmingly to support the final bill.

Currently, the Illinois Climate Table is currently focused on implementing the Future Energy Jobs Act to ensure the aspects of the bill we care about are carried out successfully and lead to substantial job creation, greatly reduced emissions, and empower disadvantaged communities to participate in the clean energy economy. We are doing so by working with solar businesses to shape the Illinois Solar for All programs, pushing Ameren to fulfill its obligations, and representing the interests of the Illinois Climate Table in front of the hearings being held by the Illinois Commerce Commission and the Illinois Power Agency.

In short, while our new president considers new ways to undermine environmental protections and panders to those abandoned by teetering coal companies, Illinois is busy building the foundations of the future energy economy.

If your organization is interested in the climate table or the Illinois Clean Jobs Coalition, please contact Jen Walling at [jwalling@ilenviro.org](mailto:jwalling@ilenviro.org) to get more involved.

Jennifer Walling is the Executive Director of the Illinois Environmental Council



## Leveraging Emerging Outreach Technology

By Ben Head

It has been repeatedly demonstrated, through a variety of disciplines, that the most effective way to reach voters is to have real conversations with them. Large-scale direct voter contact programs can,

however, be difficult to implement and maintain.

Exciting data management and communications technologies are now enabling tech-savvy campaigns to do this work more effectively and efficiently than ever before, but they can be daunting to navigate for the first time. These technologies can help you: manage your contact data, target voters and create outreach lists based on this targeting; increase the number of volunteers you can contact per volunteer per hour; and help manage your social media, community-building, and volunteer recruitment efforts.

### Managing Your Data

**Votebuilder ([votebuilder.com](http://votebuilder.com)):** A good voter database is the foundation of any modern campaign. Votebuilder, a tool provided through the Democratic Party of Illinois, is available to Democratic campaigns and organizations at a reduced cost. Votebuilder gives users the capacity to manage their entire voter file, track and analyze data, create outreach lists, and so much more. While Votebuilder is not a new tool, it is a necessary one, providing the base of information on which the following technologies, and your campaign efforts more broadly, are based.

**Deck ([deckapps.io](http://deckapps.io)):** Deck is a web app that makes predictive analytics more accurate, affordable, and actionable for state and local Democrats. It provides customized data modeling that can be used to supplement or replace traditional polling and data analytics, which can be expensive and beyond the reach of many organizations. This app matches a candidate's profile with data about media coverage, fundraising, and election history at the census block level to provide accurate and detailed data modeling in real time that users can leverage to target outreach, craft a message, and guide paid media strategy.

### Making Outreach More Efficient

**MiniVAN ([ngpvan.com/go/minivan](http://ngpvan.com/go/minivan)):** MiniVAN is a canvassing tool that's free to

download and use in conjunction with Votebuilder, which replaces a paper walk sheet and clipboard with a smartphone. Field leaders upload lists directly to a canvasser's MiniVAN app, which features a Google-powered in-app map and a list of doors remaining on the user's list, making navigating unfamiliar neighborhoods very easy. MiniVAN is synced directly into Votebuilder by canvassers during outreach, avoiding data loss from lost or unreturned worksheets.

**Hustle ([hustle.life](http://hustle.life)):** Hustle is an innovative new smartphone app that allows users to quickly communicate with voters via text and manage those conversations in real time. It is especially useful for recruiting volunteers, raising funds via small dollar contributions, promoting event attendance, and GOTV efforts. Hustle boasts a higher contact completion rate and contacts-per-hour rate than phone banking, especially for younger target voters, but can only be used with a cell phone to contact voters through their cell phones.

### Communicating with Volunteers

**Hootsuite ([signup.hootsuite.com](http://signup.hootsuite.com)) and Sprout ([sproutsocial.com](http://sproutsocial.com)):** Social media and email communication are the core of how we create community and communicate with our volunteers. HootSuite and Sprout are programs that help you manage multiple social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and more) in one place. They allow users to schedule posts, track cross-platform mentions and analytics, and collect/analyze data from each of their accounts in one place. This allows for a more thoughtful, holistic social media strategy that takes advantage of the different strengths that each platform provides and helps make productive use of the data that users' social media accounts are gathering.

[Continued on page 5]

[Continued from page 4]

Amplify (getamplify.org) and Gadfly City (gadflycity.com): In today's age of information overload, having a communication channel dedicated to organizing volunteers and supporters is very useful. Amplify and Gadfly City are apps that allow users to quickly and easily disseminate their events and actions out to volunteers who have downloaded the app and signed up. These technologies create a "command center" where users can create and communicate tasks or events to their active volunteer and supporter networks. Users can promote events, elected official call-ins, fundraisers, and any other volunteer action/activity that they are hosting.

If used correctly, each of these technologies allow campaigns to work smarter, faster, and more effectively, enabling a smaller team to accomplish larger goals with minimal cost investment. When used as part of a comprehensive voter outreach strategy, these tools can be a force multiplier. An experienced campaign manager can very quickly log into Votebuilder, export a voter list into Deck, use that data to create targeted text and knock lists for Hustle and MiniVAN, and then recruit volunteers for these actions via Hootsuite/Sprout and Amplify/Gadfly City—taking targeted, comprehensive outreach from concept to reality within a matter of hours.

very few of my friends, all equally involved with politics and civic duty, had ever done something like this, which I think speaks to the incredible value that we found in this march.



## Running a Successful Rural Field Operation

By Nolan Drea

No matter what office you are running for, a strong field operation can be the difference between tears of joy and tears of sadness on election night. Running a successful field operation is difficult in any environment, but there are even more challenges in rural counties. Below, I'll review the challenges of running a field campaign in a rural area and some ways to overcome them.

But first...

### What is field?

A field operation is the best part of any campaign – getting out and talking to voters about your candidate and their stances on the issues. It's knocking on doors and making phone calls to explain why you are supporting your candidate, and later reminding your supporters when and where they need to vote.

### Use your time wisely

It can be tempting to want to knock on every door or call every voter, but it's important to develop a targeted universe of voters to contact. Especially in rural areas where houses are more likely to be farther apart, this can take up a lot of unnecessary time.

Using past election data from the County Clerk or Votebuilder, build a universe of people that are likely to vote and are likely undecided voters. I could write an entire column on building a universe, but choosing voters that have voted in 2 of the last 3 general elections is a good place to start.

### Writing a field plan

After you've created your universe, it's time to write your field plan. Ideally, someone from your campaign will be able to attempt to contact every voter in the universe at

least twice before the election. Calculate the number of doors and phone calls your campaign will need to hit each week to reach this goal and do your best to stick to it.

Typically, you can knock about 50 doors in two-three hours. If you have 1,000 doors in your universe and 12 weeks until the election, you know your campaign will have to spend about ten hours a week knocking doors to complete the entire universe twice.

Especially in rural areas with older populations, it can be hard to find volunteers to help you knock on doors. When writing your field plan, I would suggest the campaign staff and candidate focus on hitting the more rural areas themselves during the week, and encourage volunteers to help with the more populated areas on the weekend.

A sample field plan would look something like this, with the precincts, door counts and phone counts listed each week below. As you can see in Week 1, Taylorville would be suggested weekend walk with volunteers, with Pana being the suggested coordinated walk in Week 2.

#### Week of June 1:

Doors:  
Taylorville 5-150 doors  
Taylorville 3-100 doors  
Assumption 1-80 doors  
Morrisonville-75 doors

Phones:  
Bear Creek-100 phones  
Mosquito-200 phones

#### Week of June 8:

Doors:  
Pana 1-120 doors  
Pana 3-140 doors  
South Fork 1-50 doors  
Edinburg-75 doors

[Continued on page 6]

[Continued from page 5]

Phones:

King-75 phones

Rosamond-50 phones

Greenwood-60-phones

**Note:** In rural areas especially, phone banking is extremely important to getting your message out. Instead of taking hours and using up gas driving around the country to talk to voters, it's a much better use of time to call them instead. If a community isn't large enough to have 50 households in your targeted universe all together, I would suggest calling the whole community.

### Messaging

Now that you have a targeted universe and a field plan, you need to develop a messaging plan for people to use when talking to voters, but also in local media.

The message when talking to voters should take no more than 45 seconds to a minute to say. A quick background about

the candidate and 2-3 points about why they are running is sufficient. Something like:

"Hi, my name is John Smith and I'm running for County Board. As a lifelong resident of our community, I know the issues we face. I'm running for County Board to work with local businesses to create jobs, support the senior center and repair our roads."

This should be the same general messaging you use at the doors, on social media and in the press.

### Other ways to communicate

In addition to knocking on doors and making phone calls, there are a few other easy ways to communicate with your voters.

- Letters to the editor – Work with supporters to have them write letters to the editor on your behalf. This is especially effective in towns with smaller newspapers that are looking

for material to print. Plan out a weekly schedule with authors and subjects for letters in advance.

- Friends and family letters – Work with supporters to send pre-written letters to their friends and family on your candidate's behalf. This can be especially effective with older people that may not be on social media.
- Social media – Debatably the easiest, cheapest way to get your message out and recruit volunteers.

### Plan it out

In the end, while running a field operation in a rural area does have a specific set of challenges, with a little extra work and planning you can be successful.

Nolan Drea is a member of the Senate Democrats Communications Staff and has worked on campaigns for Andy Manar and Sheila Simon



An amazing turnout for the Democratic Party of DuPage County Gala