



INDIVISIBLE MADISON

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THE NEW WISCONSIN DMV LOCATION IS A VOTING RIGHTS ISSUE

BY NICHOLAS DAVIES

This week the United States Supreme Court is hearing arguments about the constitutionality of our electoral maps, but we can't forget that those in power are also guilty of suppressing the right to vote. It's another way that politicians are choosing their voters when it ought to be the other way around.

A recently published study done in collaboration between UW Madison and the Dane County Clerk found that 11.2% of those who didn't vote in the last election did so because of the voter ID requirement. That includes people who couldn't get an ID in time or thought their ID wouldn't be valid. That would mean voter ID suppressed over 23,000 votes in Dane and Milwaukee counties alone; the projections statewide are larger but less reliable.

GETTING A VOTER ID IN MADISON IS ABOUT TO GET HARDER

As of August 10, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation announced that they'll be moving and consolidating their Madison west side locations from Odana Road and Sheboygan Avenue to 8417 Excelsior Drive. The move is expected to happen around the beginning of December. DOT has yet to provide a public service announcement with the specifics.

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WHY IS THIS A PROBLEM?

While there are other forms of state-issued photo ID that can be used for voting, most Wisconsin voters probably get their drivers license or other type of ID from the DMV. This means the DMV now serves an important function in the democratic process.

The current locations on the west side are accessible to drivers and non-drivers alike. At Sheboygan Ave, two dozen buses pass by between 8 and 9 AM alone. Those bus routes reach everywhere from Middleton to the isthmus, the south and west transfer points, and beyond. It's also a block from the bike trail that parallels University Ave.

The future location at 8417 Excelsior Drive is uniquely inaccessible by public transit, and isn't located near any major bike thoroughfares either. There are only two routes that travel down that stretch of Excelsior: bus 15 runs every half hour during rush hour, and bus 68 runs once an hour all day. The 68 is the only bus that stops directly in front of 8417 Excelsior.



This means that to get to the new site via public transit in the middle of the day, here's what you're expected to do:

- ▶ Get to the West Transfer Point.
- ▶ Take bus 63, which departs once an hour. Ride that bus all the way to the end, at Prairie Town Center, a strip mall out at Junction and Mineral Point.
- ▶ Wait for the 63 bus to turn into the 68 bus, and eventually take you to the DMV.
- ▶ Then when you leave, the 68 bus back to the West Transfer Point only comes once an hour. You could easily lose half a day to (hopefully) get a card that you'll then be able to use, on average, once or twice a year.

AREN'T WE LUCKY TO HAVE A BUS SYSTEM?

We are! It enables people to live and contribute to our city without driving or owning a car. But something that was convenient is going to become very inconvenient for any non-drivers, regardless of the reason.

There are a variety of reasons someone might not drive. They may have a religious objection; they may not have the money for a car, gas, insurance, etc.; they may have impaired mobility; they may have a lost or suspended license; they may simply have a lifestyle that doesn't require it. This location will also present difficulties for DOT staff who commute by bus, some of whom are coming from points east of Sheboygan Ave.

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

The site selection seems to be official, but the process is completely opaque. Who made the selection? What other buildings were considered? What criteria were considered? Did DOT seek input from any city officials, or from the public? I've submitted an Open Records Request, and I hope to get materials that will give some view into how this decision was made.

WE CAN ALL DO SOMETHING TO HELP DEAL WITH THE ADDED INCONVENIENCE:

- ▶ Register your availability to help others get their IDs, at **VOTERIDERS.ORG**
- ▶ Call your city council representative and encourage them to direct more bus routes past the future location at 8417 Excelsior.
- ▶ Become informed about what other types of ID can be used, so that you can possibly save someone the trip. 🗺️

ACT UP

JOIN THE RESISTANCE

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



Volunteers ready to organize!

Estimated time commitment: TBD

IM is in need of core organizers with a desire to facilitate the activism of others. You'll find there are no specific qualifications for the job and not ONE way we do it. Don't be shy! Send an email to contact@indivisiblemadison.org with LEADERSHIP in the subject line. Let's figure out how you can work with us as an IM organizer which feeds your goals and that works with your personal life.



Volunteer with css/wordpress coding and design experience. Let's take the website to the next level!

Estimated time commitment: Project, TBD

If interested, please email contact@indivisiblemadison.org with WORDPRESS in the subject line.



Volunteer to monitor comments and make posts in Indivisible Madison's Meetup page. (www.meetup.com/IndivisibleMadison)

Estimated time commitment: 1-2 hours a week

If interested, please email contact@indivisiblemadison.org with MEETUP MONITOR in the subject line.



Volunteer with web server experience (wordpress/php/mysql) to help maintain the website. Almost all content addition and editing takes place in wordpress and is already covered. Just need occasional assistance with the server side.

Estimated time commitment: 1-2 hours a week

If interested, please email contact@indivisiblemadison.org with SERVERSIDE in the subject line.

GROUND GAME

BY ED HEINZELMAN, Senior Editor at Blogging Blue

This newsletter's guest spot goes to Ed Heinzelman, Senior Editor over at BloggingBlue.com. Blogging Blue has been a strong source of progressive commentary since 2007, and was named by Washington Post's 'The Fix' blog as one of the best political blogs in the state of Wisconsin in 2011 and 2013.

"...OUR MOTTO IS, WHEN THEY GO LOW, WE GO HIGH."

An inspiring message from an inspiring American woman, Michelle Obama. And we've seen it spread across the country in memes and social media posts and speeches and blogs like this one...quoted by the entire spectrum of politicians and activists from the left...progressives, liberals and Democrats alike. But are we truly living up to the goal that we've set?

Over the eight years of President Obama's administration, the Republicans in the House and Senate honed their image as the Party of No. Immediately after the election of President Trump, the first response from the left was RESIST! By no means am I suggesting that we don't 'resist' the Trump agenda. It is certainly going to harm Americans no matter what the president claims his goal is. But can't we come up with a positive response? A positive alternative? A positive policy that shows Americans how their health, wellbeing, and safety can be improved instead of individually diminished?

Yes, I know the Democrats announced a "Better Deal." A policy agenda that even the New York Times labeled an "anemic restatement of common themes." It's apparently withered on the vine since.

The Republicans have tried three times to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act since January. Fortunately a few GOP Senators had the common sense to kill the bills. But it wasn't until the third attempt that Senator Bernie Sanders proposed his Medicare for All bill. Something he should have had in his back pocket during the primaries since it was a focal point of his campaign. I would have hoped it would have appeared first time round in full detail. Yes I understand it hasn't a snowball's chance in Hades of passing, but we aren't looking like an opposition party with ideas. I don't want to be the Party of New version 2.0.

WHERE WAS OUR FIX TO THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT BILL?

And the president has left the door open to participate even if the Republicans in Congress haven't. So when do we see the Democratic DACA bill (although while I am putting in the final edits the president

has reneged on his original agreement)? Tax Reform is hot in play, you know the biggest-tax-cut-in-history bill? Where is the Democratic alternative that will actually provide tax relief to the middle class? You know that Speaker Paul Ryan won't allow any amendments to his bill.

Not a single person in this country will deny that infrastructure shortcomings are a primary concern. The president ran on upgrades to the infrastructure and related jobs. Where is a Democratic infrastructure proposal? Come up with one that creates growth and reminds the nation that the president hasn't followed through.

One of the places that you would expect us to be truly positive in presenting our agenda is when we are talking to the faithful and asking for contributions. Yet the titles of these solicitations and their general content are aimed at scaring me half to death!

Medicare GUTTED! We WILL Fail. Devastating Setback. Disgusted. They stole WI for Trump! CRUSHING news! SERIOUS damage will be done, Ed!

Hey team, I am on your side. I understand the issues at hand. I understand the need for campaign contributions. I will respond but give me some hope. Give me something positive. Give me something to talk about. No more fear mongering...please.

I have talked to a number of campaign managers and they say these negative asks and scary messages are very effective. I find that rather sad. And I don't understand why we don't demand better from our electeds, our candidates, and the organizations that support them.

But it should be easy to provide positive substance in the age of President Trump. His agenda is constantly without specifics, without detail...a novel with chapter titles but no characters and no plot line and no story.

So here we are, the minority in Washington and Madison, out of the White House and the Governor's Mansion. Where do we go next? The 2016 elections proved that there is a new generation of activists out there...with new ideas...with new energy. Being at the bottom of the well it certainly feels like the right time to change directions...a generational shift.

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

End the internecine spats between the Sanders supporters and the Clinton supporters. Find a common ground and present a unified front. That doesn't mean giving up your ideals...it really doesn't. There are plenty of goals that we share that make sense to work together on. Bring the others along as the party grows. The lack of GOP policy wins hasn't been because of effective Democratic leadership. It's because of the dysfunction in the Republican ranks. Let's not be that either.

You can't make change from the outside. Get involved with the local party and your local candidates. It will take a little effort (surprisingly little) to get into local parties and campaigns and have an effect. It does require some patience and hard work. But get on those committees, attend the meetings, attend the conventions, run for officer positions. If you can't find a candidate you like, run for office. If you don't know where to start, ask for some help.

Remember all of those people who we are told felt disenfranchised in the 2016 election cycle? We need to listen to them. What are their real concerns? Jobs? Healthcare? Family sustaining jobs? Decent wages? Clean air and clean water? Affordable education? Lower property taxes? Healthy food choices? Make these our agenda, our policy planks, our goals. Don't let the policy wonks inside the party distract us with minutiae. And don't assume we know the answers until we've actually listened to the people. We all know that grassroots organizing works, so why would we do anything else?

And let's do what we can to get new faces in public office. What we've been doing the past 20 years is becoming less and less effective. It's time to do something new and do it with new elected officials at all levels of government. The entrenched incumbents don't know how to do things differently. Push the dinosaurs like myself out of the way (LOL)!

Look to 2020 but don't overlook 2018, and please, please don't overlook the local off-year elections in between. They are fertile ground to develop candidates, grow experience, and build a ground game that can be scaled up. 

REGULATION AND RIGHTS

BY PAULA RIESCH

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The Las Vegas shooting is at the top of tragic news this week, while The D continues the systematic dismantling of reproductive and other human rights. This week saw directives and legislation further restricting abortion, birth control, and LGBT protections.

Is my uterus really more dangerous than an AK-47? The GOP continues to regulate and control our collective uteri with righteous and religious fervor, while staunchly defending the right for any and all Americans to amass semi-automatic weaponry — weaponry designed for the purpose of killing. What about our right to feel safe while going to a movie, going to a concert or going to school?

Posts on Social Media suggest we should store guns in our vaginas; at which time they would immediately be subject to strict regulation.

(There's nothing the GOP hates more than an unregulated, rebel pussy.) The GOP seem to believe that while anyone and everyone is responsible enough to own an AK-47, women are not responsible enough to manage our own reproductive organs.

Other social media posts suggest that prospective gun-owners should go through the same hoops that a young woman is required to endure when seeking an abortion. Given the incidence of gun deaths in our country, if someone is truly 'pro-life,' it seems that they would be a staunch advocate for restrictions on gun ownership.

One doesn't have to search far to see the hypocrisy of lawmakers who deny reproductive freedoms to others while quietly paying for birth control and/or abortions to cover their own indiscretions. Just this week, a staunch opponent of choice (I refuse to use the term 'pro-life' to describe this perspective), Tim Murphy, was found to have encouraged his mistress to get an abortion¹.

Joan Chittesh, author and Catholic nun summed up the hypocrisy well:

“THE GOP SEEM TO BELIEVE THAT WHILE ANYONE AND EVERYONE IS RESPONSIBLE ENOUGH TO OWN AN AK-47; WOMEN ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE ENOUGH TO MANAGE OUR OWN REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS.”

“I do not believe that just because you're opposed to abortion, that that makes you pro-life. In fact, I think in many cases, your morality is deeply lacking if all you want is a child born but not a child fed, not a child educated, not a child housed. And why would I think that you don't? Because you don't want any tax money to go there. That's not pro-life. That's pro-birth. We need a much broader conversation on what the morality of pro-life is.”

This weekend, I saw The Battle of the Sexes movie — a dramatization of the real-life tennis match between self-proclaimed male chauvinist pig Bobby Riggs and tennis/feminist phenom,

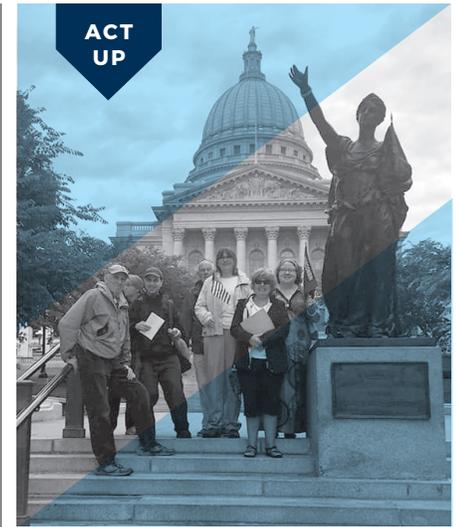
Billie Jean King. The match took place in 1972 and served as a reminder that, not so long ago, it was acceptable to mock female athletes, or to publicly describe women as weak and inferior.

We owe a debt to Billie Jean and others who braved public ridicule and worse to speak up against the blatant

misogyny of the day. While we've made strides since that time, we are currently experiencing a rollback of hard-fought progress for women and other oppressed groups. How will we respond?

I hope and pray for the day that my own granddaughters will look back at this time and be shocked by the culture of hate and divisiveness — a culture that (hopefully) contrasts with their future reality. I hope they will be proud of how we, their parents and grandparents, responded to the current crisis of human rights. After all, our generation of voters made this mess — we need to do our best to clean it up. ♦

¹ <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/politics/ct-gop-lawmaker-mistress-abortion-20171003-story.html> Murphy Story



RESIST
TRUMP
TUESDAYS



Join us on Resist Trump Tuesdays (RTT), we visit various legislative offices at the capitol. Watch for emails announcing which offices we will be visiting, and what key issues we will be addressing.



**ALL ARE WELCOME,
SO BRING A FRIEND!**



If you'd like to contribute to the online blog and potentially be featured in our newsletter, submit your writing to IndivisibleMadison.org/submissions.

