

The St. Lawrence County Branch AAUW organized two major candidate forums in October 2008 as part of their ongoing voter education work. We worked with two partner organizations, the St. Lawrence County Branch BPW and Clarkson University's Media Center, to produce a forum to fill the open NY's 118th Assembly District seat. The forum was filmed and later broadcast on WCKN, Time Warner Cable Channel 30, several times prior to Election Day. Questions were asked by a local media panel as well as questions that submitted in writing and screened for duplication and clarity from the live audience present.

The following week there was a Candidate Forum between the contenders for the NYS-23rd Congressional District, John McHugh, Republican and Michael Oot, Democrat. That forum was cosponsored by AAUW, BPW, Clarkson University and SUNY Potsdam. The forum was one of only three scheduled in the 23rd District, which takes in all or parts of 11 counties in the northern part of the state. This forum was also filmed and broadcast on WCKN several times prior to Election Day. Questions were asked by a local media panel, with a young woman SUNY Potsdam student asking the public's questions in order to ensure gender balance on the panel.

There was plenty of pre- and post- event publicity generated for both of these events (see attached samples). All the PR articles are linked on the branch website and can be viewed at

Pay equity was one of the public's questions that were asked at the Assembly forum; although a pay equity question was submitted at the Congressional forum, it did not make it into the rotation of questions.

We made voter registration materials available to college students: SUNY Potsdam registered 300 new voters, 350 got absentee ballots; 250 Clarkson University voters were registered.

We write/wrote a continuing series of Get Out the Vote/Voter Education Op-Eds that are/were published in the local papers ().

Congressional Debate In Potsdam Soon

By LARRY ROBINSON, POTSDAM—The attack on Potsdam will host a debate between members of Republican and Democratic House of Representatives. John M. McHugh and Don Stewart challenge Mike Oot's next month, marking the first time the local community has been home to a congressional political forum to recent memory, according to organizers of the event.

Don H. Stuckbridge is challenging long-time Republican incumbent John M. McHugh. R Pierrepont Manor for the 23rd Congressional District seat.

The 23rd Congressional District spans some 15,000 square miles making it one of the largest districts east of the Mississippi River and the 54th largest congressional district in the United States. The district includes all or part of 11 New York state counties, including St. Lawrence County.

The district includes Clinton County, part of Essex, Franklin, part of Fulton,

"This is the first time we've had a congressional debate in Potsdam in living memory."
Donna Seymour

Candidate J. Brian Lewis, part of Oneida, DeWitt, Madison and St. Lawrence.

Its seat is in the town of Madison County and goes north as far as Ogdensburg and Malone and west along the Vermont border.

The 47-year-old Oot is a partner of Oot & Strawn, a law firm with offices in East Syracuse and Sherburne. He has been a lawyer for 20 years.

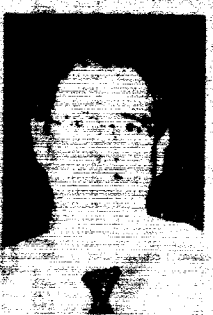
The veteran McHugh was first sworn into office in 1997 and began his eighth consecutive term in July 2007. He was born in Webster and maintains his residence in Pierrepont Manor. Oot's website greets his



JOHN McHUGH

residence for office located in Madison. McHugh is a member of both a church and a synagogue in the Pierrepont Manor district.

Donna Seymour is spokeswoman for the St. Lawrence County American Association of University Women. She said the debate will be one of the first things she will do between the two candidates who have been in the race for the seat of Pierrepont Manor and in Water



MIKE OOT

Clinton University campus.

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Seymour said the congressional debate in Potsdam is expected to mark the first time that the community has hosted a political forum for a congressional race.

"This is the first time we've had a congressional debate in Potsdam in living memory," said Seymour. "At least as far as I know."

The other sponsors of the event are the St. Lawrence County Business and Professional Women's organization, Clarkson University and SUNY Potsdam.

The candidates will hold their campaign events in the town of Pierrepont Manor, and the debate will be broadcast on Clarkson's radio channel WKXS.

Washington Daily Times

Wednesday, October 1, 2008 85

McHugh aggressor in debate with Oot

U.S. HOUSE SEAT: Democratic challenger links Republican incumbent to Bush's policies, unpopular issues



Rep. John M. McHugh, left, and Michael P. Oot debate Wednesday night at Clarkson's Old Shell Auditorium in Potsdam.

By COREY FRAM

POTSDAM—In contrast to the norm, the incumbent in Wednesday's debate was the aggressor, repeatedly leaving his podium, pointing his finger and questioning his opponent's opinions.

U.S. Rep. John M. McHugh, R-Pierrepont Manor, walked in front of his podium to answer almost every question at the debate for the 23rd Congressional District seat at Clarkson University while Democratic challenger Michael P. Oot, Madison County, stayed put until the end and portrayed himself as a common man and Washington outsider who had the federal govern-

ment's reputation in the knowledge he's worked for 16 years in the House of Representatives. Oot, a term he repeatedly threatened to be approximately 30 minutes later, declined to portray McHugh as a ditherer with the inner workings of Congress.

The government president of Congress, but let me help you understand it, please.

During the question he criticized McHugh for a previous topic, which surprised the challenger to interrupt. McHugh threw his palms up and nodded at the moderator before he spoke to McHugh.

Longer interrupted by McHugh, he said, "I would like to

that we could see a shadow of that here."

Mc Oot has lost Mr. McHugh for several of his votes, but he raised most of his criticisms on Bush's administration policies and general congressional strategy. Oot repeatedly told Mr. McHugh to "back off" and "let the congressman lead" to "control" the "strong" economy. He also urged voters to "re-elect" him.

"I don't know how long it's been since you've asked your voters if you are better than the other candidates," Oot said.

The crowd cheered at his responses as he directed questions to Oot. Oot's speech lasted for a total of

See DEBATES

Cantwell Joining Debate Against His Opponents

By LARRY ROBINSON
POTSDAM—The Republican candidate for the 118th Assembly District has announced that he will participate in a scheduled debate against his two opponents for office, set to be held at Clarkson University on Oct. 22.

Bob Cantwell, 54, of Canton, is a Democrat. Opponents include Assemblyman Doree Antonicelli, a Republican, and independent candidate James Lewis. News of the debate was first reported by the county. He recently said:

"I'm pleased that District 118 will be represented by an Assemblyman Doree Antonicelli. I believe she can be successful in a campaign for the 118th Assembly District. I'm also pleased that Bob Cantwell, a former State Senator, will be running for the 118th Assembly District. I believe he will be successful in a campaign for the 118th Assembly District."

Cantwell suggested earlier this week he was still unsure if he would attend the three-way debate at Clarkson set to be televised on the university's cable channel WCKN.

However, yesterday Cantwell confirmed his intent to participate in the debate. He said he will be in the debate.

"I'm pleased that Bob Cantwell is running for the 118th Assembly District."

Cantwell said he has been a member of the Clinton Town Board, which also meets weekly, since he was elected to the board in 2004. He said he was elected to the board in 2004. He said he was elected to the board in 2004. He said he was elected to the board in 2004.



BOBBY CANTWELL
 Republican candidate for the 118th Assembly District

Cantwell is currently the executive director of the St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce.

The Oct. 22 debate is scheduled for the 118th Assembly District race in being sponsored by the St. Lawrence County American Association of University Women and the County Business and Professional Women's organization.

Theresa Servino, executive director for the AAUW in St. Lawrence County, said she and the other organizers hope that the debate will be a success for the 118th Assembly District race.

The debate is scheduled for 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. We are delighted that all three candidates will be there, and we expect a lively discussion.

What's A Good Paying Job?

118th Assembly Candidates Disagree Over Job Creation

By LARRY ROBINSON
POTSDAM—Three candidates for the 118th Assembly District are vying for the job of creating good-paying jobs in the county. The candidates are Bob Cantwell, Doree Antonicelli, and James Lewis.

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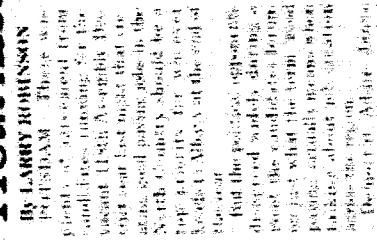
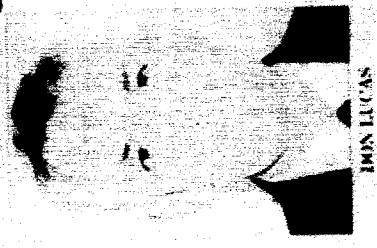
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BOBBY CANTWELL
 Republican candidate for the 118th Assembly District

DOREE ANTONICELLI
 Republican candidate for the 118th Assembly District

JAMES LEWIS
 Independent candidate for the 118th Assembly District

TERESA SERVINO
 Executive Director for the AAUW in St. Lawrence County

Assembly Debates Replayed

POTSDAM—The 118th Assembly District race is a rematch of the debate, which was held by Clarkson University on the 118th New York State Assembly District race and the 2007 Congressional District race.

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The Opinion Page

Economic Issues

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY is looking at Day approaches, the authority for the bill is a key issue at stake for AMW's board. Since its founding 127 years ago, AMW has provided its leadership positions on the frontlines of the day - educational, health care, and social. AAWW continues to bring research, education and economic barometer to the table.

St. Lawrence County is being led by the U.S. Labor Department's report that the unemployment rate is expected to rise to 10.1 percent in August, the highest since the September 2003. According to the Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR), which has been cited by the business, with a rise in unemployment to 10.1 percent, workers at all educational levels will be laid off. Their unemployment rate will rise to 10.1 percent. Their unemployment rate will rise to 10.1 percent. Their unemployment rate will rise to 10.1 percent.

The percent of NYB women living in poverty has increased since 2005. In 2005, 17.2 percent of women lived above the poverty line, but by 2006 only 83.4 percent lived above the poverty line. During this time New York's rank fell from 36th to 40th in the nation with regards to women living above the poverty line. Today 15.2 percent of New York's women live below the Federal Poverty Threshold (\$19,000 for a family of four; two adults and two children), and 35.8 percent of all female-headed households with children live below the poverty line. The dire economic situation for women in New York and the downward trend are not isolated problems. Poverty creates ripple effects in the detriment of the entire state, impacting whole families, particularly impacting vulnerable children, elderly family members and whole communities.

The St. Lawrence County Branch of AAWW urges all women to carefully examine the economic positions of the candidates for state and federal office and look at their specific positions on other issues of concern to women and their families. The branch will be holding candidate forums in October and working to highlight issues before Nov. 4.

AAWW advocates equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research. For more information about AAWW locally contact President Lisa Wilson at 363-2613 or e-mail wilsonl@stlawrence.edu, or Program Vice President Sue Bellor, 769-7158 (h) or e-mail sbellor@stlawrence.edu. AAWW, with its nationwide network of more than 100,000 members, more than 1,000 branches conducting programs in communities across the country, and 260 college and university partners, has been a leading advocate for equity and education for women and girls since 1881.

The Opinion Page

AAWW Gets Out The Vote

POTSDAM AAWW members and supporters around the country worked hard to get out the vote and educate voters about key issues before Nov. 4.

Electing Day to elect a special member of staff to the public and to the state of the day. St. Lawrence County was elected the first African American woman to the United States. Once again, women made the difference in the election. Obama won 59 percent of the women's vote versus 45 percent of the men's vote. Youth voters, 18-29, also had the greatest impact on this election, making up 25 percent of the total electorate. Obama won the electoral college, 36 to 19, by winning 16 percent of the female public. Women are a political force and will pick the next president in Congress and in state legislatures. The country's rich history, culture, and values will be the result of the choices we make in New Hampshire on the first day of the body's inauguration in January in the City of the United States.

Seventeen women in the U.S. Senate will serve as the parliamentarians. This includes the first woman to win Senate election, thus putting a woman in the White House. The first woman to win the White House will be Michelle Obama. The first woman to win the White House will be Michelle Obama. The first woman to win the White House will be Michelle Obama.

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