

## **Nancy Greens Campaign Speech for the election of Chapter Chair of the Berlin Chapter of Democrats Abroad Germany on February 3, 2009**

Barack Obama has been elected president ...Wow... How did this happen?

It was no accident!!

Of course there are many factors that lead to the outcome of this historic election ... which will be analyzed at the local Stammtisch and by scholars and institutions far into the future.

One thing **I** can say from my perspective here in Berlin is.

We had something to do with it. And people like **us** had something to do with it.

From Berlin and Munich, Heidelberg, and Landstuhl, to Rome, Vancouver, London, Madrid, Ukraine, Lebanon and Israel, to Denver.... Democrats all over the world had something to do with the outcome of this election.

We also had some help .... George Bush.... Sarah Palin, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld John McCain... I could go on and on, but I only have 10 minutes...

The missteps of the Republican Party are one major factor. Other factors include the Organization of the Democratic Party the Obama Campaign, The leadership of Howard Dean and people like us at the grass-roots.

Then there is Barack Obama himself, who has inspired millions.

Change has come about because we have had leadership.

We are here because we care about our country and, adhering to the basic principles of the Democratic Party, we want to bring about changes in our nation's policies regarding, to name only some the economy, health care, education, the environment, equal rights, scientific research, support for the arts, foreign policy, Iraq, Quantanemo and Habeus Corpus.

This election has inspired Americans all over the world to get involved. Each of us finally said, "Enough is Enough", and we came out in droves to vote and we **found** each other. Our membership has soared and we have become a galvanized and respected organization with limitless potential.

I am here because I am asking you to vote for me to provide leadership as your chapter chair. So... I will tell you a few things about myself and my participation thus far in our organization.

I'm from Texas and lived in New York City for many years. I am a classical musician, pianist and singer. I have a master's degree from New England Conservatory and one from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. I originally came to Germany because I was offered a contract in an opera house, and I've had a respectable opera career singing leading roles in Europe and the U.S, and since coming to Berlin, I have been singing and teaching singing in my voice studio.

In the year 2000, I was horrified to realize that people were actually taking George Bush seriously as candidate for President. I had recently met Bill Downey and he said he had gotten involved in politics and had founded this "group"....I asked him... "What are we going to do about this....this ...Bush guy?" Bill said to me, "The first thing you can do is vote, and I can help you register!"

So I did, I voted. I joined Democrats Abroad Berlin, and since then I have gotten more and more involved and it has become an integral part of my life. It has also been an honor to get to know you and work with you over the years.

At one turning point in my life I asked myself, ... "what can **I** do to somehow make a positive contribution to society?"

I worked with a youth group and helped arrange to take these "eager yet skeptical" teenagers to different international youth conferences. I believed then, and still do, that a meaningful way to contribute to global

understanding and cooperation is by influencing young people to look beyond themselves and reach out to people of other cultures and religions.

This enriches all our lives. And this is what Barack Obama **personifies**.

As a longtime Al Gore supporter, I was devastated by the circumstances that got George Bush into the White House. This created a more urgent need for me to work toward making a difference ... and I shifted my focus to the **political** arena.

My commitment to the democrats intensified. I got more active and step by step accepted more and more responsibility and now I am your "Events Coordinator".

I have helped organize and facilitate our members in several events that have strengthened our bonds with one another and have heightened our visibility. Some highlights are: The 2005 boat party honoring Bill when he stepped down as chair and we ate, drank, and laughed our way through Berlin's waterways on the Nostalgie, ...our 2006 voter-registration kick-off rally, where "Donkeys in the Desert" (Democratic soldiers in Iraq) joined us, the 2007 Annual General Meeting of Democrats Abroad Germany, a three day event where we welcomed members from all over Germany. Karsten Voigt, Germany's coordinator for German-US Relations was our special guest speaker, and we had guests from the US Embassy speak at our Sunday brunch.

Coordinating that event required me to develop my skills at organizing not only the event, but **us**. Through **our** work together I've gotten to know you and **your** skills and I've been amazed at your commitment, your talents, creativity and your dedication. We've done some great work together, and I look forward to continuing that with you and future members.

We have also presented here some wonderful and relevant films which I have been actively...and **technically** ....involved with.

2008 saw Democrats Abroad shift from a caucus system to a global primary in most countries. Some of us struggled to decipher the complicated DA guidelines to create our first Global Primary Voting Center of which I was the manager on Super Tuesday. We had a fantastic turn out, and that event put us on the map ...so to speak. Then there was the tent day on July 5<sup>th</sup> at Pariser Platz which we pulled off on 3 days notice and registered many Americans to vote and continued to raise our profile.

July was an extraordinary month, and although the Obama Campaign was officially an entity separate from Democrats Abroad, **we** were there when **He** was **here!**

Then....the November 4<sup>th</sup> election night party, which found Berliners crying in one another's arms when it was announced that Barack Obama was our President-Elect. ....I also worked in cooperation with Corbett Santana, Michael Steltzer, the US Embassy and **you**, to make our inauguration event at the Goya our most successful event to date, ...and....it was **one** of, if not **the** largest inauguration celebration outside the United States!

I am an at-large member of the Executive Committee of Democrats Abroad Germany, so I'm involved in the leadership of our organization at the country level.. I have attended our last 4 Annual General Meetings and I urge all of you to join us in Munich for our March meeting where Michael Steltzer is running for Vice Chair.

In 2007, I attended the Annual Meeting of Democrats Abroad International in Heidelberg.

In March 2008, I went as an elector to our Regional caucus in Brussels, where I was a candidate to become a delegate to the Democratic National Convention, but we electors from Germany agreed to vote as a block for Shari Temple, and were very proud to get her elected as our delegate to Denver.

I have made it a point to learn how our organization functions from the broader levels down to the grass roots, and having this overview has been very valuable in coordinating things here in Berlin.

It's taken a few tries, but we now have one of the coolest and most active Young Dems groups in Democrats Abroad. I've been a small link in that chain and have been very impressed with the brilliant

talents, and enthusiasm, not to mention... **IT skills**, our younger members have brought to our chapter. As chair I would continue to involve them at all levels. They are the ones who will carry our democracy into the future.

Taking our cue from Barack Obama we have empowered our younger members. Another step we have already taken is to reach across the aisle here in Berlin to the Republicans Abroad. That step has directly led to an opening in the door to our Embassy. Because we initiated a bipartisan event, they were able and more than willing to get involved in our inauguration celebration and I'm sure this connection will lead to future cooperation.

There are new doors opening to us everywhere and let us be reminded... not only are we democrats, we are ambassadors for change, and we can achieve more through cooperation than polarization.

George Bush may have been the catalyst that has helped us **find** each other, but Barack Obama has given us the inspiration we need to **stay** together and become part of the change we have all been so hungry for.

I believe I can offer the kind of leadership that will empower our chapter as we continue together on the path we have begun as we enter the gate that has finally been opened to us, the gateway to the future, and I am asking you to vote for me for chair of Democrats Abroad Berlin.

Thank you

Nancy Green  
February 3, 2009