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## Hillary Raises Roof for Dems <sup>[1]</sup>

By: LINDA LEUZZI

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It was the first time the Suffolk County Democrats ever hosted a presidential candidate and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton helped raise \$510,000 for the party, said Suffolk County Democratic Chairman Rich Schaffer at press time.

Clinton also attracted 850 supporters to the tightly secured Villa Lombardi's catering venue in Holbrook.

Clinton swung through back-to-back appearances on Monday, including a roundtable discussion in Port Washington on gun violence as well as a Glen Cove event hosted by the Nassau County Democratic Committee.

Doors opened at 4 p.m. and 75 people were lined up a half-hour earlier with ticket holders witnessing a SWAT Team and bomb-sniffing dogs that had conducted a sweep. Suffolk police conducted traffic.

Anthony Speelman from Medford, secretary-treasurer for UFCW Local 1500, said his group got tickets for a table a month ago. "We come every year, but it's a lot more crowded this year

than normal,” he observed, looking at the crowded room.

With a phalanx of supporters surrounding a perimeter area by the podium, Clinton appeared at 8:15 p.m. and was escorted out by Rep. Steve Israel (D-NY3).

But not before Schaffer urged the crowd to roar, ‘She’s on your side.’

Clinton advocated equal pay for women and increasing minimum wage support in her stances, but also spoke about her work in the Senate, including funding for breast cancer. A particularly poignant point was raised about veterans who were serving whom she had read about.

“We had young people whose families were eligible for food stamps and I said, ‘how can that be?’ Clinton said. “I told Steve [Israel] this is wrong and to find out what is going on because it matters. We’re going to keep reaching ahead and help people to get ahead and stay ahead.”

The families got the funding.

“I thought she did a good job of addressing the issues important to Long Islanders,” said former congressman Tim Bishop (D-Southampton). “She talked about strengthening infrastructure. She strongly supports higher education and is talking about pushing down student loan rates and I was one of the leaders who supported that. We got it down to 3.4 percent and now it’s north of 4 percent. She spoke about grant assistance from the federal and state, but unfortunately, the trend line is going in the wrong direction. They haven’t kept up with rising costs, so the grants that are available haven’t risen and she’s for increasing the grants.”

Tickets were \$300, \$250 for committee members. Schaffer said the money would help pay back a loan.

“Last year I and several of my close friends loaned the county committee money, about \$250,000, to keep the campaigns going for the legislature and my plan was to raise it back this year,” he said. “Almost all will be paid back.”

Clinton also commented on smart-growth measures that needed to be tackled thoughtfully. Not enough attention is put into what that looks like, she said. She specifically said she would take on the gun lobbies regarding intelligent legislation.

“She understands the federal government should respond to our needs for smart growth and preserves our quality of life in Suffolk County,” said Legis. Rob Calarco (D-Patchogue). “As a region we face a lot of challenges other areas do not deal with, if we’re going to improve life issues, including quiet and safe neighborhoods. Often they come up with programs that don’t specifically affect our environment and needs for our growth and she gets those things.”

Schaffer said Clinton had 9.3 million supporters in the primaries to date, Trump had 8.2 million and Sanders had 6.9 million. “It’s really about the numbers that should be significant to people,” he said. “One million more have pulled the lever or colored in the circle over Trump and 2 million more than Bernie.”

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