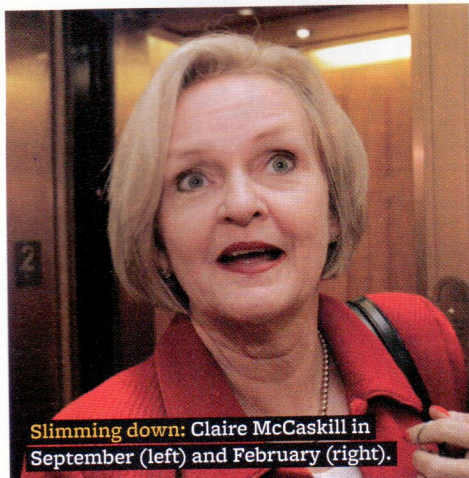


# Inside Washington

November 5, 2011



**Slimming down:** Claire McCaskill in September (left) and February (right).



## Mind Games

Health and fitness buffs are an increasingly common phenomenon in Washington. House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan, R-Wis., and Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., are devotees of Tony Horton's P90X workouts. In recent years, female senators such as Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., and Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., have achieved double-digit weight loss. The latest entrant in the health and fitness caucus is Sen. Claire McCaskill, D-Mo., who has boasted of losing 50 pounds ahead of her 2012 reelection battle.

The secret to McCaskill's success? St. Louis-based Charles D'Angelo, a 26-year-old motivational coach with a bachelor's degree in psychology (he is not a personal trainer). D'Angelo met with McCaskill for 30-minute talk sessions every two weeks to formulate a game plan. D'Angelo's method stands on a three-legged

weight-loss stool: diet, exercise, and mind-set.

The young coach is no stranger to politicians striving to lose weight—but his client base remains elusive. "I've helped many of her friends; I've helped many folks in politics who I can't name. I keep kind of a cone of silence, so unless a person publicly acknowledged their work with me, I never, ever will discuss them," D'Angelo told *National Journal*. His work caught the eye of former President Clinton after D'Angelo helped a couple of FOBs lose pounds and keep them off. In fact, Clinton wrote the front-cover blurb for D'Angelo's first weight-loss book, *Think and Grow Thin: The Revolutionary Diet and Weight-Loss System That Will Change Your Life in 88 Days!* coming out in January. "Charles gets amazing results," Clinton writes. "Read the book, follow it, and you will too."

Susan Davis

## REPUBLICANS RUTHLESS IN REDISTRICTING

The Republicans' take-no-prisoners approach to redistricting may be as old as Attila the Hun, but it's still effective. Witness Arizona GOP Gov. Jan Brewer's successful push to impeach the volunteer chair of Arizona's Independent Redistricting Commission to squelch a map she didn't like.

In North Carolina, Republicans initially considered pairing Democratic Reps. Mike McIntyre and Larry Kissell in one solidly Democratic district. Instead, the GOP went for the jugular, packing both members' districts with Republicans to try to quarantine Democrats

into just three of the state's 13 congressional districts. In Texas, GOP mapmakers could have easily drawn an additional two Latino-majority districts to reflect the state's exploding minority population. Instead, they split the burgeoning Latino community in Dallas-Fort Worth seven ways. And across the Deep South, Republicans have used the Voting Rights Act to justify putting as many African-Americans as possible into single districts so as to make multitudes of neighboring districts impossible for Democrats to win.

David Wasserman

## MURMURS

■ **Winging It** The debate this week over a House resolution reaffirming "In God We Trust" has led to some interesting exchanges. At Wednesday's White House briefing, spokesman Jay Carney was asked if President Obama's comment about God wanting to put people back to work was "a bit much." Carney sought divine inspiration from the Good Book. "Well, I believe the phrase from the Bible is, 'The Lord helps those who help themselves.' And I think the point the president is making is that we should—we have it within our capacity to do the things to help the American people." But Carney must have been thinking of a different book, because the official White House transcript, released hours later, led with this disclaimer about Carney's reference: "This common phrase does not appear in the Bible."

■ **Coming Attractions** With the 100th-anniversary celebration of the birth of North Korea's founder, Kim Il-sung, planned for the midst of the 2012 U.S. presidential campaign, some observers are predicting that the Hermit Kingdom won't be able to resist making trouble. The stars are aligning for North Korea to "probably conduct another nuclear test at some point in the coming months," says Dan Blumenthal, an Asia expert at the American Enterprise Institute. "They are already starting to drop hints about it."