

Sarah Palin. Eureka!

First, let it be said that I don't think Sarah Palin is "hot." Nor do I think Paris Hilton is "hot." Who I think is "hot" might surprise readers and I'll stick with that remaining a mystery. I will keep my notion of whom is a "hot" woman to myself.

I do think Sarah Palin is capable. I think she has the right experience, albeit limited experience, to handle the presidency if thrust into it and she certainly can handle the vice presidency. Remember the "warm spit" line? With the almost single-digit approval rating for the current VP, she could not be more unpopular or more disrespected than the current VP.

It is rather amusing that, with two US Senators at the top of the two major party tickets, anyone is questioning the VP candidate's lack of experience. The reason voters in the US do not elect Senators is that their experience is not what we're looking for in the White House.

A Senator makes no decisions that result in anything. They cast votes that, along with another 50 or so, may decide the outcome of an issue. But it is up to someone else to make things happen - be it the president or a government agency.

Not since the election of John F. Kennedy in 1960 have American voters chosen a sitting US Senator to become president.

The choice has been either a governor (former governor) or a vice president (or former vice president) or the incumbent. Never a Senator, even though Nixon and Johnson had earlier been Senators. Gerald Ford is the only president to have come from the US House. Enough said about that path to the White House.

- 1960 - Kennedy - Senate
- 1964 - Johnson - incumbent, had been VP
- 1968 - Nixon - had been VP
- 1972 - Nixon - incumbent
- 1976 - Carter - former governor
- 1980 - Reagan - former governor
- 1984 - Reagan - incumbent
- 1988 - Bush the Elder - vice president
- 1992 - Clinton - former governor
- 1996 - Clinton - incumbent
- 2000 - Bush the Younger - former gov
- 2004 - Bush the Younger - incumbent

Experience was not the deciding factor

in the 2008 Democrat primaries. One after another after another of the more experienced Democrat candidates fell by the wayside until only the least experienced presidential candidate in recent history remained standing. Joe Biden, Chris Dodd, John Edwards, Bill Richardson, Dennis Kucinich, Mike Gravel, Hillary Clinton ... all were eliminated by the glib junior Senator from Illinois, a Senator who owed his election to a sealed custody file.

Then, John McCain, at 72 the third oldest presidential candidate in history, behind Bob Dole in 1976 and Ronald Reagan in 1984, who were both 73, chose Sarah Palin to be his running mate.

Ronald Reagan's choice of George H.W. Bush and John F. Kennedy's choice of Lyndon Johnson were surprises. But, both of those running mates were chosen for their "ticket balance" and both were known to most Americans.

Sarah Palin made the seismometer register "Epic." A virtual unknown, and not the predicted choice by any media pundit, Palin has changed the complexion of this year's presidential election. Never, repeat, **NEVER**, has a vice presidential pick sent such waves of excitement and anticipation through voters as this one. There have been surprising choices but nothing like this one.

At first, many thought it a desperate action of a man falling in the polls and with no one to throw him a lifeline. Rumors had McCain choosing a running mate as boring and predictable as Joe Biden. Joe Lieberman's name was floated. The two of them would have constituted the oldest combined pair ever at the top of the ticket. Not to mention Lieberman was just the vice presidential candidate on the Democrat side and was elected to the US Senate from Connecticut last time as an Independent. Wishful thinking by the Dems. Guiliani maybe? Oh, yeah, he did so well in the primaries. The American people didn't consider him America's Mayor after all. More like Buford's mayor.

Tom Ridge? Again, this pairing would have been the oldest ever and Ridge is a pro-choice Republican. That couldn't happen. Mitt Romney, Florida Governor Crist or Minnesota Governor Pawlenty?

Any of those choices would have brought a collective yawn at the Convention.

John McCain may have taken a gamble. But, oh how that gamble has paid off!

It's hard to tell who is in the second spot and who is on top of the ticket. Voters who had grown tired of the never-ending campaign can't get enough of Sarah Baracuda. The sisters who are only remaining original members of *Heart* didn't like their song (*Barracuda*) being used at the Convention but Sarah Palin will be around long after Ann and Nancy Wilson are forgotten. Not that these gals are hard to get along with but there have been 23 other band members and six record labels since forming Heart in 1974. Their last Top 10 single was 21 years ago.

The song they didn't want used by Republicans topped out at No. 11 on the charts in 1976. Thirty-two years ago! The writers of the song want it to be used. They appreciate the royalties. The McCain campaign continues to use it.

Two weeks ago, Barack Obama was speaking to a Denver football stadium full of devoted Democrats and the liberal media was already measuring for the length of his scepter and size of the crown for this soon to be coronated King.

Then Sarah Palin came along. And everything changed. Obama's "change" mantra went out the window with his choice of a running mate. Joe Biden arrived in Washington when Richard Nixon was president.

Fewer people watched the Joe Biden speech than watched the Caveman sitcom. When Mike Huckabee jokingly said at the Republican Convention that Sarah Palin had gotten more votes for mayor of Wasilla, Alaska than Joe Biden had received in his failed bid for the Democratic nomination, Dems were upset because, while they knew Huckabee said it in jest, they couldn't be absolutely sure without looking it up that she hadn't.

For years, I have told anyone who would listen that the first female president would be a Republican, but this year it looked for a long time like a Dem would at least have a chance to be at the top of the ticket. Sorry, Hillary, it just wasn't meant to be. Someone was looking out for my predication and Sarah Palin will be the first female President of the United States.

This election is bound to break the jinx on Senators. This will be the first election in 48 years to select a Senator for president. There is no choice. The running mate will likely decide which one.

The Democratic candidate (Barack Obama) has much in common with Al Franken (who won the Minnesota Democratic Senate primary election today). They both speak well. Speaking well is not a prerequisite to serving in political office. Teddy Kennedy once excitedly said "Mike McGwire" and "Sammy Soser" were having great years.

Like her or not, Sarah Palin will be the focus of campaign coverage until the election. For those who worry that she won't do well at the vice presidential debate in October, she'll do more than fine. Biden will run out of time on every answer - he can't shut his mouth once he engages it. And, when Biden reminds Sarah and a national audience that he arrived in the Senate when she was nine years old, voters will be reminded of just how old he is and how long he's been in Washington. And, Delaware Joe can be counted on for multiple gaffs in this single debate.

Sarah Palin is not only a Tina Fey lookalike, she can deliver lines with the same comedic timing as Ms. Fey. And, should the unimaginable happen and Democrat Biden do well in the vice presidential debate, remember what it did for the Michael Dukakis / Lloyd Bengsten Democrat tandem in 1988. Nada.

If everything goes according to expectations, within a year after the November 4, 2008 election, expect to see Joe Biden on *Dancing with the Stars*. This year, the show has Cloris Leachman. Next year it will be Joe Biden for the senior citizens.

Polls are showing that white women are switching sides in this race. Some are surprised at that - with the conservative views of John McCain and Sarah Palin.

Give me a break. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott and Susan B. Anthony led a seventy year fight for women's suffrage. Women finally won the right to vote in 1920. There are women who will overlook major differences in philosophy with a woman candidate to cast a vote for that woman. However loud the denials, that will happen in November. Often.

Sarah Palin will bring votes to the Republican side from women who disagree with her strongly on either her pro-life or pro-gun stands. If you're surprised by that likelihood, you will also be surprised to know that we have a national drug problem, underage drinking is rampant AND there is premarital sex.

Footnote: All four candidates for the highest two offices in the land are on the public payroll. None of them has resigned, as did Bob Dole in 1996 to seek the presidency. McCain and Obama were elected in 2004 and Palin in 2006.

Joe Biden will also be on the Delaware ballot, seeking a seventh US Senate term. He apparently lacks confidence he and Obama will win and he has not removed his name from the Delaware ballot. Dole did an unusual thing by resigning to seek the presidency. Most run as incumbents already on the payroll (Bush 1/Quayle, Clinton/Gore, Bush 2/Cheney, for examples) or Senators who do not resign (Gore/Lieberman, Kerry/Edwards. Edwards did not seek re-election in NC. Few run when they are not on the public payroll - George W. Bush, George H.W. Bush, Dick Cheney and Jack Kemp come to mind.

It is reasonable that a candidate would not run for two offices at the same time. That shows a lack of confidence.

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