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## Doctor wants Rep. Davis' seat

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**FORT WRIGHT** - Northern Kentucky Democratic Party leaders and activists got their first look Monday night at the candidate who wants to beat Republican Congressman Geoff Davis.

Dr. Michael Kelley, a pediatrician and internist from Oldham County near Louisville, spoke at Christmas parties in Fort Wright and Hebron held by the Kenton County and Boone County Democrats.

Two top Campbell County Democratic leaders - committee chairman Ken Mullikin and women's club President Diana Darnell - also heard Kelley at the Kenton County party.

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Kelley, a virtual unknown and a first-time candidate, is trying to win the 4th Congressional seat held by Davis, a two-term Boone County Republican.

"The last seven years (of the Bush administration) have shown me what poor quality leadership and bad ideas can do to damage our country," Kelley said at the Kenton County gathering, at Walt's Hitching Post in Fort Wright.

"And because of that, I felt I can't sit on the sidelines anymore," he said. "I need to stand up and try to make a difference."

Kelley said he favors a quick withdrawal of the American military from Iraq, an expansion of the children's health-care program known as

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"We have the best military in the world, but they cannot build a government for Iraq, and they cannot win a civil war," he said. "And the more time goes on, the more soldiers we are losing, and the more of our budget we are pouring into that country, the more we are digging our children into debt."

Kelley also said voters want changes in Congress.

"Right now, 80 percent of Americans don't really much approve of the job Congress is doing," he said. "They see Congress as being driven by big money and special interests. We need to reform that system.

"We need to figure out a way to get rid of big money so that Congress is for the people, not for special interests."

Davis has said that even though Kelley is a first-time candidate, he plans to take his campaign seriously. Davis has already banked more than \$500,000 for the 2008 election.

During the Boone County Democratic Party Christmas gathering, Kelley spoke with party chairman Howard Tankersley and Northern Kentucky labor leader Jim Cole.

Kelley also met former Boone County Judge-executive Bruce Ferguson, former state lawmaker Bill McBee and former Congressman Ken Lucas, who defeated Davis in 2002 but lost to him in 2006.

"Those are the three icons in Boone County," said Roger Auge, a Covington Democratic activist who was escorting Kelley.

Kenton Democrats also heard from Nathan Smith of Fort Mitchell, the former leader of the county party who Saturday was elected vice chairman of the Kentucky Democratic Party.

"These are my friends, these are the party I started working with in the party 20 years ago," Smith said after giving brief talk. "This was my first speech as vice (party) chair, and it's special to be able to give it here to these people."

The Kenton County Democratic Club also installed the following new officers Monday night: president, Ron Cropper; vice president, Virginia Johnson; treasurer, Paul Huffman; recording secretary, Jamie Earl; corresponding secretary, Linda Hornsby; sergeant at arms, Wyona King.

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