

The Washington Times

Inside the Beltway

By [Jennifer Harper](#)

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THE REAL DEAL

A picture is worth a thousand words, sound bites, talking points. House Speaker [John A. Boehner](#) hails from a large Ohio family with much loyalty shared among three sisters and nine brothers. Ten of them showed up Wednesday to witness [Mr. Boehner's](#) great gavel moment, when he was handed the hefty icon of congressional power by outgoing Speaker [Nancy Pelosi](#).

"It's still just me," [Mr. Boehner](#) assured the chamber soon afterward.

Meanwhile, group photos of the Boehner clan surrounding their powerful brother have emerged. True to [Mr. Boehner's](#) more humble mien, his office simply posted the images as "Speaker [Boehner's](#) Photostream" on Flickr for all to see. Humble, yes. Practical, too.

The photos also came with a disclaimer reading: "The photograph may not be manipulated in any way and may not be used in commercial or political materials, advertisements, e-mails, products, promotions that in any way suggest approval or endorsement of the Speaker of the House."

THE REALITY CHECK

"Now the heavy lifting begins," says [Republican National Committee](#) Chairman [Michael S. Steele](#), of the 112th [Congress](#).

PLANE SPEAKING

Let the snarling begin. Rep. [Rush D. Holt](#), New Jersey Democrat; Libertarian Party executive director [Wes Benedict](#), perpetually angry activist [Ralph Nader](#), veteran security expert [Edward Luttwak](#) and [Cato Institute](#) information policy guy [Jim Harper](#) are among the many speakers at a public conference titled, "The Stripping of Freedom: A Careful Scan of [TSA](#) Security Procedures." Within the august halls of the [Carnegie Institute in Washington](#) on Thursday, the group will parse public distaste for [Transportation Security Agency](#) pat-down pitfall the legal implications, and how we can go about "restoring sanity," among other things.

"[TSA](#) agents strip-scan and grope us when we want to take an airline flight. We need to treat their security theater with just as much scrutiny. Terrorists win by tricking us into letting government trample on our rights," observes [Mr. Benedict](#).

MEDAL FOR METTLE

Maybe things haven't spiraled out of control completely. The Boy Scouts of America, Boys' Life magazine, the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation and the Society of America's living Medal of Honor recipients have

joined forces to recognize a Scout with the foundation's American Spirit Award for "extraordinary skill, professionalism and a spirit of excellence in a challenging situation" — an honor that previously went to airline pilot **Chesley B. Sullenberger** of "Miracle on the Hudson" fame, among others.

A quartet of Scouts has been nominated for deeds that include some old-school virtue, heroism — two have saved lives — and hard work, like cleaning up Chaplain's Hill at Arlington National Cemetery. See these young men — and vote for the winner — here: <http://boyslife.org/americanspiritaward>.

ADDRESS BOOK

Republicans are deft at social media, and there are some telling updates for those who revere the tweets, [Facebook](#) postings and blogs of the powerful. Sign up for e-mailed missives, and yes, read the blog of House Speaker [John A. Boehner](#) here: <http://speaker.house.gov>.

For those of you keeping score: "For the 112th [Congress](#), House Majority Leader **Eric Cantor** of Virginia takes over the account once held by Speaker-elect [Boehner](#), who will now tweet as @SpeakerBoehner. Majority Whip-elect **Kevin McCarthy** of California will take over @GOPWhip," Mr. Cantor's office advises.

It is still odd to associate words like "tweet" and "blog" with the likes of [Mr. Boehner](#), but no matter. We have moved beyond the Reagan era, when a fountain pen was considered a powerful communications tool.

"Americans can also 'like' House Chamber on [Facebook](#) and receive the House's weekly and daily floor schedule, as well as schedule updates in real-time throughout the day as [Congress](#) debates and votes on legislation to address the major challenges confronting our nation," the Cantor advisory also notes.

MEN, MEN, MEN

Heavens. The ladies of "The View" are about to get another dose of Republican manhood. No, it's not Fox News pundit **Bill O'Reilly**, who irked **Whoopi Goldberg** and **Joy Behar** so much that they stormed off the glittering set in high dudgeon. This time, Sen. **Scott Brown** of Massachusetts and likely presidential hopefuls **Tim Pawlenty** and **Mitt Romney** will appear in January and February on the ABC daytime talk show.

"The View' has established itself as an important player in the political process," explains executive producer **Barbara Walters**.

POLL DU JOUR

- 42 percent of likely voters say it is a positive attribute if a candidate is described as "politically conservative."
- 21 percent call it a negative quality, 36 percent say it's "in-between."
- 31 percent say a "tea party candidate" is a positive attribute.
- 32 percent say it is negative, 33 percent place it somewhere in-between.
- 22 percent say a progressive label is positive.
- 34 percent say it is negative, 41 percent in-between.

Source: A Rasmussen reports survey of 1,000 likely voters conducted Jan. 3-4.

- *Yeas, nays, family photos to jharper@washingtontimes.com*

