

MINNESOTA

# Outspoken Bachmann Opens White House Bid

BY BRIAN BAKST  
Associated Press

WATERLOO, Iowa — Outspoken tea party favorite Michele Bachmann cast herself as the “bold choice” for the Republican presidential nomination as she formally kicked off her campaign Monday in her Iowa home town.

Outside a sun-splashed historic mansion in Waterloo, Bachmann told a crowd of more than 100 family members, friends, supporters and others that she is waging her campaign “not for vanity,” but because voters “must make a bold choice if we are to secure the promise of the future.”

The three-term Minnesota congresswoman railed against the Democrat she hopes to oust — President Barack Obama.

“We can’t afford four more years of Barack Obama,” she said.

Bachmann steered clear of specific proposals she’d advance as president, a day after suggesting that the concerns over averting a debt crisis were “scare tactics” that could be solved by paying only the interest on U.S. obligations while lawmakers work on a deal to cut spending as part of a new debt ceiling. The idea has been dismissed as unworkable by Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner.

She reminisced about her childhood in a Democratic household — and her own volunteer work for Democratic President Jimmy Carter’s 1976 campaign. But she made clear her allegiances long ago shifted, stressing her tea party connections.

“The liberals, and to be clear I am not one of those, want you to believe the tea party movement is just the right wing of the Republican Party,” she said. “Nothing could be further from the truth.”

As a new Iowa poll this past weekend signaled she’ll be a force in the state that opens the Republican nomination contest, Bachmann hopes to reshape the GOP field and how she’s viewed by voters. After the formal Iowa kickoff, she planned to shift her focus to New Hampshire and South Carolina, other early voting states with traditions of separating the viable contenders from the political also-rans.

Bachmann, 55, has many wondering if the edgy side that turned her into a conservative star will be the one she shows on the presidential campaign trail. Her say-anything approach has earned her a loyal following but also plenty of guff from detractors who see her as a fringe politician prone to missteps.

In March, she famously flubbed Revolutionary War geography. She told a group of students and conservative activists in Manchester, N.H. “You’re the state where the shot was heard around the world in Lexington and Concord.” Those first shots of the Revolutionary War

were fired in Massachusetts, not New Hampshire. She later admitted she made a mistake.

For this campaign, she has surrounded herself with no-nonsense veterans of national politics, some of whom have deep ties to the political establishment Bachmann typically eschews.

Striking a less contentious tone, Bachmann told the Iowa crowd.

“Our problems don’t have an identity of party, they are problems that were created by both parties,” she said, adding, “Americans aren’t interested in affiliation, they’re interested in solutions.”

Bachmann’s unswerving style provides a sharp contrast with the more measured way of 2012 rivals, such as former Govs. Mitt Romney, Tim Pawlenty and Jon Huntsman and former House Speaker Newt Gingrich. Others vying for the nomination are ex-Sen. Rick Santorum, Texas Rep. Ron Paul and businessman Herman Cain.

Possible late entrants include Texas Gov. Rick Perry and 2008 vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin.

A Des Moines Register poll published Sunday showed Bachmann and Romney far out front of the others in Iowa.

Some at Monday’s event said they were giving her a hard look and could see supporting her at February’s caucus.

Marv Dillavou, a firearms salesman, said he’s not ready to commit to a candidate but likes what he’s seen from Bachmann.

“I’m happy to see a serious female candidate. She’s very accomplished,” Dillavou said. Critics, he added, “make too much of every word, every innuendo gets blown out of proportion. It’s good that she speaks her mind.”

Cedar Falls retiree Terry Kizlyk was also impressed. “She speaks from here,” Kizlyk said, pointing to her heart.

Bachmann’s political climb has been swift, brushing off a school board race defeat just 12 years ago and moving rapidly from Minnesota’s state Senate to Congress. In Washington, Bachmann vaulted to prominence by trying to block and now promising to repeal President Barack Obama’s health care law. She has also tangled with GOP House leaders over her concerns they are too timid on federal spending cuts.

She’s staunchly conservative on social issues, too, calling for more abortion restrictions and constitutional amendments to ban gay marriage.

In her latest national introduction, Bachmann has played up a softer side by highlighting her role in raising five children and 23 foster kids. But she’s also gone hard at Obama, laying federal debt and deficits at his feet and accusing him of pushing the nation toward socialism.

## Bachmann’s Statements Held Up To Scrutiny

WASHINGTON (AP) — Michele Bachmann’s claim that she has “never gotten a penny” from a family farm that’s been subsidized by the government is at odds with her financial disclosure statements. They show tens of thousands in personal income from the operation.

And, on a less-substantive note, she flubbed her hometown history Monday when declaring “John Wayne was from Waterloo, Iowa,” and “that’s the kind of spirit that I have, too,” in running for president.

The actor was born nearly 150 miles away. It was the serial killer John Wayne Gacy Jr. who lived, for a

time, in Waterloo.

Those were among the latest examples of how the Minnesota congresswoman has become one to watch — for inaccuracies as well as rising support — in the Republican presidential race.

Bachmann’s wildly off-base assertion last month that a NATO airstrike might have killed as many as 30,000 Libyan civilians, her misrepresentations of the health care law, misfires on other aspects of President Barack Obama’s record and historical inaccuracies have saddled her with a reputation for uttering populist jibes that don’t hold up.

## Mead

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She said each of the French-style roof tiles will be checked to ensure they are secure. Many of the nails are corroded, allowing the tiles to fall out of place. The fasteners for each tile will be replaced, as well as any tiles that are broken.

“The clay tiles that are on there that are not broken are perfectly sufficient to stay on the building for another 100 years,” she said. “They’re a good product, and we intend to continue to use them as such.”

Mensch-Nelson said that while the plans for the roof are in place, work has yet to begin.

“We’re finalizing a couple of funding sources to fund the rest of the roofing project. It’s more or less waiting to cross the t’s and dot the i’s,” she said. “Once we get the final figures from those donors, we will be able to sign the contract with our roofers and get started. We still hope to get that done before the snow this year. That’s the goal.”

The latest grant is the second \$25,000 matching grant that the project has received in 2011. In February, the YCHS was awarded the same amount from the City of Deadwood.

Mensch-Nelson said the funds would help a great deal with the renovations.

“The \$50,000 was a great start, and we are very appreciative to have that money as an assistance for materials,” she said.

The Mead Building, located on

the southern side of the Human Services Campus north of Yankton, was built in 1909 and was originally the women’s hospital. It was named after Dr. Leonard C. Mead, who served as superintendent of the center from 1891-1920. Constructed in the Renaissance style, it is characteristic of many of the buildings on the campus with its symmetry and rear open courtyard.

After being vacated in 1980, it endured 30 years of deterioration. In 2009, it was named one of the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s 11 Most Endangered Places in America.

The YCHS has leased the building from the state with the intent of rehabilitating the structure into a museum and cultural center.

“If people would like to continue to follow what’s going on with the Mead Building and at the museum, they can certainly check us out on Facebook,” Mensch-Nelson said. “And if they really want to know what’s going on and keep tabs on things, it’s pretty cheap to be a member of the historical society.”

For more information about the YCHS, call (605) 665-3898.



GLEN STUBBE/MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE/MCT  
Republican presidential candidate Michele Bachmann greets supporters in Waterloo, Iowa, Monday. The Minnesota lawmaker on Monday officially announced her bid for the 2012 presidency.

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