THE
DEMOCRAT
Clark County Democratic Party Newsletter

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County gets three more legislators

Clark County's representation in the Washington Legislature jumps from 12 members to 15 members on Feb. 7 upon recommendations of the Washington Redistricting Commission.

That's the deadline for the Legislature to adjust the new maps, but legislators at this writing have no plan to fiddle with the lines the four partisan commissioners drew late last year and adopted unanimously.

Previously there were two legislative districts wholly contained in the county, the 17th and 49th. The 18th Legislative District reached north to include most of Cowlitz County, but its main population was in Clark County. The 15th Legislative District, with most population in Yakima Valley, reached into Southeast Clark County to pick up five sparsely populated precincts.

Now the 18th LD will be wholly within the county. The 20th LD will take the northwest corner of the county, six big precincts spanning from Woodland to Cougar. The 14th LD, with most of its population in the western half of Yakima County, will bite off three sparsely populated precincts on the eastern edge of the county between the East Fork of the Lewis River on the north and the Washougal River on the south.

The present tally for county representation is 11 Republicans and four Democrats. The future tally depends on how ably each party recognizes and works for the new representation.

The 49th has the best shot of holding to a three-Democrat delegation. State Reps. Jim Moeller and Sharon Wylie should be solid against Republican challengers. However, state Sen. Craig Pridemore has announced his candidacy for state auditor, and the Republicans could make his Senate position a high-level target.

The 17th LD has one solid Democrat, Rep. Tim Probst, determined to win re-election come November. A former 17th LD legislator is scoping out a challenge to incumbent Republican Sen. Don Benton. The other House seat has

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Uelmen, Haugen hitting hustings in 3rd CD challenge

A longtime Clark County educator and a Navy veteran airline pilot are seeking Democrats' support in their bids to challenge the first-term Republican incumbent in the 3rd Congressional District.

Elizabeth Uelmen's web page is at elizabethuelmen.com. Jonathon Haugen's is haugenvet.com. No other candidate has filed to run.

Although they differ on some issues, both come from military backgrounds.

Uelmen was born at Edwards Air Force Base in 1959. Her father was a master sergeant, and the family traveled the world before they settled in Vancouver in 1972. Elizabeth was graduated from Columbia River High School, started a family and returned to school at Clark College in 1987 to begin the process of winning a teaching credential. For the past seven years she has been an assistant principal in the Evergreen School District.

Haugen attended the U.S. Naval Academy and was graduated in the top third of his class before undergoing pilot training. He was a naval aviator for 24 years before retiring and becoming a pilot for Delta Airlines.

Uelmen is married to Mark Johnston, a fireman and head of the local firefighters union. Haugen's wife of 26 years is a registered nurse at Legacy Salmon Creek Hospital.

Uelmen has not previously sought election to public office. Haugen ran for the state Senate from the 18th Legislative District in 2008 but lost to the Republican incumbent.

So far it appears their widest disagreement on issues has to do with the Columbia River Crossing project. Haugen does not like the present plan including light rail. Uelmen's position follows the general acceptance of the CRC plans among local Democratic groups.

Meetings scheduled for February 2012 by the Clark County Democratic Central Committee and other Democratic organizations. (Check for updates at the county party's website: www.bluedonkeys.com).

Saturday, February 4	**18th District Democrats meet at 9 a.m. in the clubhouse at Tri-Mountain Golf Course in Ridgefield.**
Monday, February 7	**Executive committee of Clark County Democratic Central Committee meets at 7 p.m. at 610 E. McLoughlin Blvd.**
Saturday, February 11	**49th District Democrats meet at 10 a.m. at the Teamsters/Labor Hall at 2212 Andresen Road.**
Monday, February 13	**Clark County Democratic Central Committee meets at 7 p.m. at the Longshore Hall on Ingalls Street .**
Sunday, February 19	**Recently appointed Democratic Precinct Committee Officers meet at 1 p.m. at 610 E. McLoughlin for an orientation session.**
Monday, February 20	**State Democratic Party President's Day activities at St. Martin's College in Lacey starting with a grassroots forum at 10 a.m. and ending with a crab feed in the evening beginning at 5 p.m. The whole package is $65 a head. Details at** www.wa-democrats.org/crab
Monday, February 27	**17th District Democrats meet at 7 p.m. in the Forum Room at Touchmark (formerly The Waterford) on Village Loop Drive just south of the entrance to Fairway Village.**

Schedule some dates ahead

By Kathleen Lawrence, Chair
Clark County Democratic Central Committee

Right now I am looking out at grey, rainy skies and dreaming about summer sun.

For right now, however, Democrats have a full agenda of exciting activity before summer!

We will be holding precinct caucuses on Sunday, April 15 and our county convention and legislative district caucuses will be held on Saturday, April 28. The Congressional District Caucuses follow on May 20, leading to the Democratic State Convention in Seattle, June 1-3.

Precinct Committee Officers will train on March 10 to get ready for caucuses.

The campaign office opens in June, and the Hilton is booked for our Saturday, June 23 Jefferson-Jackson dinner.

Frenchman's Bar will be the venue for the second annual July 14 Democratic Picnic.

The Democrats will host the same corner booth location at the Clark County Fair August 3-12.

As our Democratic candidates announce, they will need your help and support. Also, your participation is needed in these many events.

Remember to fill out a Democratic Volunteer form. Let us know what **you** want to do.

Note: Clark County Democratic Central Committee meetings beginning on Feb. 13 will be back at the Longshore Hall on Ingalls Street after several months at the Labor/Teamsters Hall on Andresen Road.

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Material herein not otherwise identified is produced by the editor with oversight from a revolving panel of party leaders.

Get set for April precinct caucuses

Precinct caucuses will be conducted by Clark County Democrats at 11 different locations midday on Sunday, April 15.

Before that will come at least two training sessions for the Democratic precinct committee officers charged with chairing the caucuses. Arrangements are being made by a committee chaired by Mike Turnauer assisted by Dan Ogden. At this writing they have tentatively identified the locations and have named a coordinator for each location. . Along the way they will recruit a team of volunteers to produce and assemble the packets of documents used at each caucus including credentials for each of the delegates elected for the county convention and legislative district caucuses on May 20 at Hudson's Bay High School.

Their task is complicated by the process of redistricting. The Washington State Democratic Central Committee at one point ordained that the caucuses would be held by the jurisdictional lines drawn following the 2000 census. Later the state party suggested that the new maps should prevail. Ogden and Turnauer are making plans on the latter suggestion. There will be three caucus locations in each of the legislative districts wholly contained within the county, the 17th, 18th and 49th. There will be one group caucus location in the eastern part of the county for the precincts attached to the 14th LD and another location for the precincts attached to the 20th LD. The locations for the 14th and 20th may not have to be within the legislative district boundaries.

New boundaries accommodate population change

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yet to attract a solid Democratic challenger for the first-term Republican incumbent.

The 18th LD will have at least one opening because Republican incumbent Rep. Ed Orcutt is not a resident of the new district and has suggested he'll seek election in the 20th LD rather than move south into the newly drawn 18th LD. Republican Sen. Joe Zarelli and first-term Rep. Ann Rivers could be vulnerable, having lost the Cowlitz County constituents who have long leaned heavily toward Republicans.

Both current delegations for the 14th and 20th legislative districts are solidly Republican. The 14th LD legislators are Sen. Curtis King and Reps. Norm Johnson and Charles Ross. The 20th LD incumbents are Sen. Dan Swecker and Reps. Richard DeBolt and Gary Alexander. None of the six has ever had any particular reason to get to know anything about Clark County. Alexander does not live in the redrawn 20th LD and has indicated he will not move in order to qualify. His seat is a possibility for Orcutt.

The 14th LD could present the ripest opportunities for Democrats. It was drawn by the commissioners so as to include a majority of minorities, mostly Hispanics, and mostly amenable to Democratic values rather than to the upper-class warriors of the Republican Party — typified by King, Johnson and Ross. The bite of Clark County included in the 14th LD won't likely be part of such a revolutionary move. Fewer than 3,000 registered voters reside in the three precincts of eastern Clark County allocated to the 14th, and few of those are deemed to be likely Democratic voters — just six of the 182 voters in Precinct 606, 70 of the 1,044 voters in Precinct 930 and 105 of the 1,522 voters in Precinct 940.

Change in the shapes of many county precincts is possible at the end of February. Tim Likness, head of the election department in the Clark County auditor's operation offered the following:

"At this time it is our plan to prepare a proposal for any necessary precincts changes required by the legislative redistricting, and Board of Clark County Commissioners redistricting and to reflect the new requirement that precincts have fewer than 1,500 registered voters. (Likness later noted that as many as 12 precincts in the 49th LD are at or near that number and thus may see some boundary adjustment.)

"We expect to have that plan before the commissioners for their approval around the end of February. As soon after that as possible, we will begin to make the changes approved by the board. Our hope is to have new voter identification cards to the voters (who are) changed during the last two weeks in April.

"The one problem we foresee in this process is the proposal that the governor is making to have a special election on a sales tax increase sometime this spring. If we have to conduct an additional special election in March or April, we will not be able to move forward with the necessary changes in order to have it completed by the end of April."

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We can win anywhere if we work well at it

By Maureen Gustafson
Volunteer Systems Committee Chair

When voters learn the truth about what the parties have to offer them, and when we increase registration and voter turnout, we can win anywhere!

Pundits predicted the Republicans would retain power in 2006, but progressive groups made an all-out effort and Democrats captured the U.S. House of Representatives, the Senate and a majority of governorships and state legislatures from the Republicans. Enough of us made calls to voters in such states as Missouri, Montana and Virginia to make a profound difference in the direction of our country.

We now have a newly defined 3rd Congressional District that some say makes our district more Republican. It may make winning more challenging, but Democrats can win the new 3rd. The district has lost Olympia and gained Klickitat County. In 2008, Klickitat County voted for President Barack Obama. So did Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania, Pacific and Wahkiakum counties, which together comprise six of the seven counties in the new 3rd. Satisfaction with Congress is at an all-time low, which works to the favor of the Democrats in the 3rd as we organize to replace Jaime Herrera Beutler.

The 18th Legislative District, with its all-Republican legislators for some time now, has been helped by redistricting "by a couple percentage points" according to a calculation reported in the Jan. 2 Columbian. In the 2008 state Senate campaign, the Democrat received 45 percent of the vote. With the percentage points we just gained, and with an increased volunteer effort, Democrats can surpass the 50 percent threshold. The 18th keeps becoming more urban and ethnically diverse, both factors that help Democrats.

In 2008, 64 percent of voting-age citizens voted in the United States. That leaves 36 percent of adult citizens who can be targeted for
registration and get-out-the-vote drives." Portions of the 20th and 14th legislative districts are now in Clark County, and their votes will affect every county-wide election we have. We need to support Democrats who live in these rural parts of our county by reaching out to them with sign-waving during campaign seasons, and other Democratic events between campaigns.

If you live in the 20th or 14th, please contact me so we can bring more blue donkey spirit to these parts of Clark County.

With your help, we can win anywhere! Please e-mail me at maureenhello@gmail.com if you would like me to send you a Volunteer Interest Form.