



# THE DEMOCRAT

Clark County Democratic Party Newsletter

Volume 19, Issue 2

*Serving Democrats with News and Opinion*

JFebruary 2010

## Democrat field for 3rd District rich, varied

At least six Democrats are beating the bushes, flailing the stalks, kicking the dust and pounding the hustings in bids to succeed U.S. Rep. Brian Baird as the 3rd U.S. Congressional District's chosen federal legislator.

All six so far insist they are determined to run the race all the way to the end of the first lap at the August primary, when voters will have the first opportunity to choose from the field two finalists for the November final. (If the top two in the August contest happen to be from one party, other parties evidently will have opportunities to put challengers on the general election ballot. That process has never been attempted in Washington.)

First out of the starting gate was Cheryl Crist, who challenged Baird in 2008 and really didn't pause for long even though she was way behind him in the primary.

Latest to come out was Kassandra Bessert, a youthful activist who was reared in Battle Ground and got considerable experience in the Obama campaign. She threw her hat in the ring toward the end of the Jan. 11 meeting of the Clark County Democratic Central Committee.

Second out of the starting blocks was 17th District Democratic Rep. Deb Wallace, who got an early jump when Baird informed her before most everyone else that he didn't plan to seek re-election. Wallace quickly lined up a good deal of heavy support and got an impressive organization rolling.

In a flurry shortly after Baird made his plan public, the field was joined by 49th District Democratic state Sen. Craig Pridemore, long-time veteran legislator and Olympia figure Denny Heck and local Hispanic organizer and activist Maria Rodriguez-Salazar, who put in her bid at the December meeting of the Clark County Democratic Central Committee.

By state party rules, the field could have been winnowed at the end of January when some four dozen committeemen and committeewomen from the 3rd District counties and legislative districts met in Seattle. (The meeting was conducted after this newsletter was published but before it was mailed to subscribers.) Rather than picking a preferred choice and disappointing the rest, as the previously

unused rule contemplated, the party officials seemed bent on leaving it all open and active at least until the state party convention in Vancouver in June.

Pridemore, Heck and Wallace are solidly in the front rank. Crist carries residual support from 2008 but hasn't picked up much more backing. Heck has raised the most early money and recently won the endorsements of Gov. Christine Gregoire and former 3rd District Rep. Don Bonker. Rodriguez-Salazar is pitching for what she calls blue-dog Democrats. Pridemore, Heck, Crist and Bessert all tried out their stump speeches at the Jan. 11 meeting of the CCDCC. Wallace was represented by Val Ogden, an early backer of her campaign. A supporter of Rodriguez-Salazar attended the meeting but did not give a speech.

### Legislative trickle down

The 3rd District possibility is stirring action at the legislative level as well. Wallace intends to give up her House seat. Monica Jurado Stonier's bid to replace Wallace has been impressive enough to close out several other Democrats who expressed some early interest. Besides caring for a young family and carrying a full teaching and coaching load, Stonier has been active in the campaign to pass a maintenance and operations levy for the Evergreen School District on Feb. 9. Moreover, she has appeared at most Democratic meetings in the county since she made her decision to run. Legislative leaders expressed concern, she said, about conflict should Wallace opt out of the congressional bid. Wallace quickly made it clear she is not going to back out of the federal race and seek re-election to her seat in the state House of representatives.

One of several Republicans bidding to take the 3rd District seat is giving up her slot representing the 18th LD in Olympia. Democrat Dennis Kampe, longtime director of the Clark County Skills Center, is gearing up an energetic campaign to contest that House seat. Several likely candidates are looking at the possibilities of challenging the other Republican legislator in the 18th District. Except for Wallace, the other Democrats representing Clark County in the state House — Reps. Jim Jacks, Jim Moeller and Tim Probst — all anticipate seeking re-election.

**Meetings scheduled for February 2010 by the Clark County Democratic Central Committee and other Democratic organizations. (Check for updates at the county party's website: [www.bluedonkeys.com](http://www.bluedonkeys.com)).**

Monday, February 1	Executive board of Clark County Democratic Central Committee, 7 p.m. meeting at the Carpenters' Hall, 610 E. McLoughlin Boulevard.
Saturday, February 6	18th District Democrats meet at 9 a.m. in the clubhouse at Tri-Mountain Golf Course in Ridgefield.
Monday, February 8	Clark County Democratic Central Committee meets at 7 p.m. at the Longshore Hall on Ingalls Street a block west of the Clark County Jail.
Saturday, February 13	49th District Democrats meet at 9:30 am at the Wood Fire Restaurant, 4400 E. Fourth Plain Boulevard.
Monday, February 15	Washington State Democrats annual training for precinct committee officers followed by a crab feed, all starting at 10 a.m. at St. Martin's University Pavilion in Lacey.
Tuesday, February 16	Clark County section of 15th Legislative District Democrats will meet quarterly rather than monthly.
Monday, February 22	17th District Democrats meet at 7 p.m. in the Forum Room at the Waterford on Village Loop Drive.

# Wake up and work!

*By Dena Horton, Clark County Democratic Chair*

I'm sure you've been hearing that as a result of the loss of the Senate seat in Massachusetts and the Tea Party movement, we Democrats should be put on notice for major setbacks come the 2010 election.



It does not help that the media seem to keep reinforcing the framework of the conversation to become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The truth is that no election is promised to anyone. That is why we must work very hard each and every election to mobilize volunteers, raise funds and strengthen our message.

However, I refuse to believe that Democrats will lose across the board as doom-sayers are predicting. Democrats believe in helping people, not greedy corporate executives. Democrats are working to build family-wage jobs in America, encouraging clean energy development and supporting a robust educational system.

We have been trying in earnest to create an affordable and accessible health-care system for all, rebuilding a devastated economy, investing in American infrastructure. We will continue to persevere toward our objectives.

Our goals may be lofty, but they are worth fighting for and far superior to the lack of vision and constant obstruction we face as an alternative.

The time to begin is now. I hope you will consider volunteering and contributing to the effort to ensure that Democrats are elected to local, state and federal positions here in Washington.

## THE DEMOCRAT

Clark County, Washington  
**Editor: D. Michael Heywood**  
 (email [mikewrit@hotmail.com](mailto:mikewrit@hotmail.com))

The office of the publication and permanent home for the Clark County Democratic Central Committee is in the Carpenters' Union hall at 610 E. McLoughlin Boulevard. The phone number there is (360) 254-9116. The editor's home telephone number is (360) 693-8809. His cell number is (360) 771-0124

**Subscription Manager: Gail Pollock**, Phone (360) 695-4769

The Democrat is published monthly and Copyright 2010 by the Clark County Democratic Central Committee, which receives mail at PO Box 179, Vancouver, WA 98666. Standard postage was paid at Vancouver, WA.

The publication is produced entirely by volunteer effort. Recipients are encouraged to help defray the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter by sending at least \$15 a year to the Clark County Democratic Central Committee at the above post office box.

# County officials embark on election season

Except for two seats on the Board of Clark County Commissioners, the county sheriff and the county auditor, Democrats enjoy a solid representation in county government. Republicans are probing for any weak link in that chain.

Democratic County Commissioner Steve Stuart has launched a serious re-election effort after briefly considering the possibility opened by the retirement of U.S. Rep. Brian Baird. So far, he said, no active campaign against his election to a second full four-year term has surfaced. However, Republicans have rarely missed an opportunity to contend for the seat.

Longtime Democratic Prosecutor Art Curtis announced his retirement in December. He has endorsed election of his chief deputy, Curt Wyrick, a Democrat with a couple of decades worth of experience in the prosecutor's office. An assistant Vancouver city attorney and longtime Republican activist has announced that he will campaign to win the position. Tony Golik, Another Curtis deputy, also has entered the race.

Assessor Linda Franklin has drawn a Republican challenger who received a laudatory story in the local paper. She intends to seek re-election anyway.

County Clerk Sherry Parker said at the January meeting of the Clark County Democratic Central Committee that she isn't quite ready to announce plans for re-election to a second four-year term, but she left little doubt that she has such intentions.

County Treasurer Doug Lasher said he's going to run hard and scared as usual even though he has faced few serious challengers in his more than three decades in the office. He hasn't had an opponent on the ballot since 1992.

At this writing, Republican County Sheriff Garry E. Lucas and Republican Auditor Greg Kimsey have not announced re-election plans. Nor have Democrats stepped up to challenge either. Both offices have been past political battle grounds. The auditor's slot in particular has been a stepping stone for several Democratic stars over the years.

## Hold the date for the Clark County Democratic Central Committee Mini Short Course about the duties and privileges of Precinct Committee Officers and other volunteers.

Saturday, April 3, 2010, from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Longshore Union Hall, 1205 Ingalls Street (where the CCDCC meets monthly)

### Program:

- Understanding American parties and their structure, with Dan Ogden
- Duties and advantages, with PCO handbook and Peter Aller
- Using and enhancing Vote Builder, with Peter Aller
- What candidates expect from volunteers, with Val Ogden
- Role Playing for at least 45 minutes.

This course is designed to serve volunteers including new or nearly new PCOs. All activists are welcome, whether they have had previous training or not. Successful Veteran PCOs are particularly encouraged to participate in the role-playing session. Those with laptop computers should bring them for the session on use of Vote Builder.

To reserve a seat and a packet of materials for the short course, please call Dan Ogden at 360-254-8886 or email him at [danogden@comcast.net](mailto:danogden@comcast.net) by March 27.

# THE DEMOCRAT

PO Box 179  
Vancouver, WA 98666



## Paul Stuckenschnieder can help work things out

**This is the fifty-ninth in a series of introductions to some local Democrats. Send suggestions for subjects of future columns to [mikewrit@hotmail.com](mailto:mikewrit@hotmail.com).**

Although he retired from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service nearly six years ago, Paul F. Stuckenschnieder still spends a day or two a week helping people work things out as a free-lance mediator and arbitrator.

He and his wife Linda moved to Clark County a dozen years ago after they found acreage for the family horses two miles east of La Center. Paul got active in the local Democratic Party and served several terms as Democratic Committee Officer for Precinct 525. Local party officials came to count on him as a reliable worker.

Born in Nebraska in 1934, Paul had to drop out of high school in 1949 to help support his parents and six siblings after his father had a heart attack. For two years he worked at gasoline service stations in Missouri, then got a job at a commercial refrigeration plant in St. Louis. There he joined Local 93 of the Sheet Metal Workers. He joined the Army, went to Korea, then returned to the refrigeration company. In 1962 he was elected business agent for the local. His work there over five years included negotiating and policing 22 labor agreements. In 1967 Paul was hired by the Sheet Metal

Workers International Union as an organizer and was appointed research and education director of the International Union in Washington, D.C. in 1972. In 1977 Paul was appointed commissioner of the FMCS in Portland. He spent the next 27 years helping solve labor-management problems in the Northwest and nationally during a stint as assistant director of the National Mediation Agency from 1990 to 1994. He then returned to the Portland FMCS office and retired in 2004 at age 70. The Northwest Oregon Labor Retirees Council inducted him into its Labor Hall of Fame.

Although he is determined to continue working in the Democratic Party, he has lately been upset with the Democrats' performance in Washington, D.C. After the election of President Barack Obama and solid majorities in both houses of Congress, he said, he had high hopes for real reform, including a single-payer insurance scheme. Now, however, he agrees with Howard Dean that the package of supposed reforms is little more than a welfare or subsidy program for the health, insurance and big pharmaceutical industries. "We can't give up," Paul said. "Our free society depends on our working for the many reforms needed for our and our descendants' survival and well being. We have a lot of work to do."