



THE DEMOCRAT

Clark County Democratic Party Newsletter

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Serving Democrats with News and Opinion

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Bad stuff ends up on state ballot

Tim Eyman and the Meanie Right have planted a couple of nasties on the November ballot in insidious efforts to stymie the will of the people as expressed by legislative action.

They are Initiative 1033 and Referendum 71.

Democrats and progressives in general are organizing to stifle both bits of blatant demagoguery. Costly but necessary efforts to beat them in court failed, and now the efforts to beat them in the hearts and minds of voters will subtract political capital from more meaningful and worthwhile pursuits. Thus the right-wingers win points even if they end up losing in the ballot tallies.

The Clark County Democratic Central Committee on Sept. 14 voted without contrary vote to oppose Eyman's Initiative 1033 and to sustain the Legislature by supporting an affirmative vote on Referendum 71.

I-1033 is a deviously tricky effort to anchor governments at all levels on the grim bottom of the economic cycles by limiting growth of government at every level to a combination of inflation and population growth. That may sound like a noble idea, particularly to those of Republican bent. Its effect, however is to rob the poor to help the rich get richer. Public services from schools to police to parks would be cut back so that people rich in property could further pad their portfolios.

Eyman's self-aggrandizing pandering to wealth at the expense of society has trudged along for more than a decade. While he has lost as many as he won, the cumulative effects of his efforts have meant layoffs and service cuts from little cemetery districts to the state's largest educational institutions and municipalities. His latest round, according to the state Office of Financial Management, would reduce state general fund revenue by \$5.9 billion, cities' revenue by a total of \$2.1 billion and county revenue by \$694 million between 2010 and 2015. The legislature could modify the effects starting in 2012, but only by a two-thirds majority. Individual political subdivisions could inch the cap up—but only by costly elections.

While Eyman attempts to stifle public service, the smug defenders of cultural repression are attempting to strip away newly approved decency for domestic partnerships outside the bounds of traditional marriage. The self-righteous traditionalists managed to put Ref. 71 on the ballot with a minimum of signatures in hopes that voters will renege on the decent protections for domestic partnerships afforded by the Legislature. An "Approve" vote is recommended by most progressive organizations and thoughtful individuals. Those who joined the effort to put this on the ballot are fighting in court to keep their names secret.

Could state political party structures be dead?

Less than five months away from the usual beginning to the political party cycle in precinct caucuses, organized partisans in Washington still cannot be sure that the process will continue — or even that political parties will survive non-partisanship.

Voters in the state have consistently opposed party structure and state support for partisan activities. Voters agree with the Washington State

Grange and other organized special interests that the multi-interested groupings of activists known as Democrats, Republicans and Libertarians should be stripped of political clout.

Courts have generally agreed, although Federal District Judge John Coughenour ruled in August that the parties could keep fighting for life. He said the new qualifying primary law — the top-two primary — could not

be struck down, but he narrowly limited the scope of the challenge the state's major parties could make.

The Washington State Democratic Central Committee met in Walla Walla over the last weekend in September to decide what to do about all that. Perhaps there will be a report in the next issue of this newsletter about all that — supposing there is a next issue of *The Democrat*.

Meetings scheduled for October 2009 by the Clark County Democratic Central Committee and other Democratic organizations. (Check for updates at the county party's website: www.bluedonkeys.com).

Saturday, October 3	18th Legislative District Democrats meet at 9 a.m. in the clubhouse at Tri-Mountain Golf Course in Ridgefield.
Monday, October 5	Executive board of Clark County Democratic Central Committee, 7 p.m. meeting at the Carpenters' Hall, 610 E. McLoughlin Boulevard.
Saturday, October 10	49th Legislative District Democrats meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Hometown Buffet at Vancouver Plaza south of Westfield Shoppingtown.
Monday, October 12	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.
Tuesday, October 13	Clark County section of 15th Legislative District Democrats meets at 6:30 p.m. upstairs at the Parker House in Camas.
Tuesday, October 20	5:30 p.m. fund-raiser for 17th Legislative District Democrats at Applewood, 212 NE 162nd Avenue. Several candidates may share views and opinions. Wine will be tasted. (Note: This supplants the regular 17th LD meeting usually held on the fourth Monday of the month.)

Local votes important

By Dena Horton, Clark County Democratic Chair

Plenty of folks got involved in politics thanks to President Barack Obama. As some running for local positions found out, however, it was easy for people to vote at the top of the ticket and neglect the local races.



It is an unfortunate trend where we see the voter turnout and participation drop in local races, particularly during off major election years. While the national races receive a great deal of attention and drive the direction of the country at large, local races have significant impact to what happens in your own backyard and should not be ignored or downplayed.

The county government provides land-use planning and zoning, transportation and other public infrastructure services, election services, district and superior court system, emergency services, regional parks, family, health, mental health, and youth services and so forth.

The city government (using Vancouver as an example) has the power to enact ordinances and create policies; provides fire, police, and public safety services, maintains roads and other public infrastructure, and can raise taxes. Local government has purview over how our property can be developed, the water and wastewater systems we use, the roads we drive on, the parks we play in, keeping our neighborhoods safe, etc. and they have to power to raise taxes and institute fees to pay for services and programs.

The responsibilities of local government are numerous and close to home for citizens. Therefore, attention should be paid to ensure those elected to run local governments are responsible and accessible and have our interests at heart.

While many county positions are partisan races, city councils and mayors are typically non-partisan. As mentioned in the previous issue and on the following page, we have quite few strong Democrats running for some of these local races, so I encourage you to get and stay involved and continue to help Democrats get elected at all levels of government.

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Clark County, Washington

Editor: **D. Michael Heywood**

(email mikewrit@hotmail.com)

Phone at headquarters (360) 254-9116. Editor's home phone number is (360) 693-8809. His cell number is (360) 771-0124

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

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Party activists on general election ballot

Five active Democrats will be on Clark County ballots for the non-partisan November municipal election. All jurisdictions have converted to all-mail voting, and the ballots should arrive at voters' homes about Oct. 15. Ballot tallies will be reported after 8 p.m. on Nov. 3.

Three of the active Democrats are on the Vancouver City Council ballot. One is on the Battle Ground City Council ballot. The fourth is on the ballot for one of the seats on the Woodland City Council.

Incumbent Jeanne Harris, an active Democrat who ran for a legislative slot and challenged a Republican on the Board of Clark County Commissioners in 2008, prevailed in her three-way primary with a solid 57 percent tally. Her campaign website is found at www.jeanneharris.com. She is facing off against Anne McEnery-Ogle, who has sought and won some labor and Democratic support. Anne also has attended many meetings of Democratic groups. Her website is mcenery-ogle.com.

Former Vancouver councilman and sometime Democratic legislative candidate Jack Burkman led a four-way primary with 36 percent of the votes cast. His final contest is against Bill Turlay, listed as "leaning Republican" in a voter analysis. Burkman's website is found at www.burkmanforcouncil.com.

David Michael Heywood, editor of The Democrat and chair of the 49th Legislative District Democrats, is seeking to unseat solid incumbent Councilwoman Jeanne E. Stewart, some of whose campaign materials have identified her as holding "Republican values." Heywood is endorsed by Harris and Burkman as well as by retiring Councilwoman Pat Jollota. Most of the supporters listed on his website, mikeforvancouver.com, are active Democrats.

In Battle Ground, Democratic activist Michael Dalesandro is bidding to unseat incumbent Councilwoman Lisa Walters. This is Dalesandro's first try for office although he was elected a Democratic precinct committee officer. County Democratic officers think Dalesandro would be a dandy candidate for the state Legislature in some future cycle. His campaign website is at www.mikeforbattleground.com.

Only 50 Clark County voters will receive ballots for the Woodland City Council Position 2 contest in which longtime leading Democrat Al Swindell faces three other candidates in the general election. One person originally filed for that seat during filing week at the end of June but withdrew his name at the last minute. That opened up a special three-day filing window.

Swindell filed for the office. So did Suzanne Taylor-Moore, Al Ryder and Darwin K. Rounds. The Cowlitz County Elections Department had already sent the primary ballot to press, so all four candidates were deemed eligible for the general election.

In the only partisan primary on any Clark County ballot Donicio Marichalar of Grandview faced off against John Gotts for the right to take on Republican Rep. David Taylor, who was appointed to the 15th Legislative District seat in the state House of Representatives when long-time incumbent Dan Newhouse was appointed state agriculture director by Gov. Christine Gregoire last year.

Although Marichalar won in the five 15th LD Clark County precincts by a vote of 218 to 156, Gotts prevailed district-wide by a vote of 2,364 to 2,038. Taylor got nearly 66 percent of the total tally, about the same margin by which Newhouse usually won the district every two years.

Just before the primary, Gotts announced he really didn't want the seat and was moving to California. After the primary tally was reported, however, he told a reporter at the Tri-City Herald he was interested after all. That lasted a month. On Sept 15 Gotts emailed The Herald to say he had concluded he really had no chance against Taylor and was again moving to California. However, he added that he was planning to move back to Washington State in 2012 and might run for the 4th Congressional District seat now held by Republican Doc Hastings.

The non-partisan race for Vancouver mayor continued to stir passions among Democrats after Charley Stemper was eliminated by primary voters. Incumbent Royce Pollard came out of the primary fewer than 50 votes behind challenger Tim Leavitt. Both have courted leading Democrats; Pollard's tally is deeper.

In the money race, Pollard led by a small margin before the primary but has surged farther ahead in the weeks since. As of the most recent report from the Washington Public Disclosure Commission, Pollard had raised \$72,911 while Leavitt trailed at \$61,264. Each campaign had spent more than \$47,000 as of mid-September, eclipsing by far all previous Vancouver municipal political spending records. On P.D.C. reports, Leavitt's heaviest backers are Jeanne Caswell of El Dorado Hills, Calif., and the Asian American Hotel Owners Association based in Georgia. Pollard's biggest backers are SEH. America and prominent Vancouverites Edward Pietz, Ed Lynch and Steve Oliva.

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PO Box 179
Vancouver, WA 98666



Melton-Stuart nuptial fest links political savants

This is the fifty-fifth in a series of introductions to some local Democrats. Send suggestions for subjects of future columns to mikewrit@hotmail.com.

When Clark County Commissioner Steve Stuart officially tied the nuptial knot with Heather Melton Labor Day weekend, they formalized a five-year political relationship that started at a Clark County Conservation Voters 2002 board meeting in his basement office but didn't feel the spark of romance until two years later.

Steve wrote, from an internet café in Costa Rica, where they honeymooned, "Our first date was getting together at her place to watch the documentary 'Winged Migration.' We tell people to this day that our first kiss was while watching 'Winged Migration.' Lets you know both how geeky we are, and how perfect for one another."

Even as they celebrated in Central America, they couldn't help but fire off a few emails, Heather in her capacity as local organizer of the campaign against Initiative 1033 and Steve as a public official gearing up for a 2010 campaign.

In seven years Heather has built a stellar reputation as a political planner and organizer. The peak of that career to date was her management of the successful campaign to elect Peter Goldmark as state commissioner of Public Lands. She

also was field director for Steve's 2006 election to commission Clark County. She was graduated from Evergreen High School in 2000 and went on to win a bachelor's degree in environmental science from Portland State University. She showed up for the meeting in Steve's basement as a possible volunteer for the conservation group — and left as co-chair.

"Within half an hour of getting to the meeting," Steve wrote, "Heather had started laying out a plan of action for the organization. Of course, she suggested that she and Ken (her friend) would be happy to co-chair the board (that they'd just joined) to implement this plan. I thought, 'Who the heck does this woman think she is, barging into my basement and taking over?'... but I grilled Heather and Ken for awhile about how they'd help make CCCV successful, then happily supported their coup."

Steve, a Ridgefield product with a subsequent law degree, has been Democratic committee officer for Precinct 110 since 2005 and serves as state committeeman for the 49th Legislative District Democrats. He chaired the Clark County Democratic Conventions in 2006 and 2008 and went to Denver as an Obama delegate in 2008. And he is planning to announce his candidacy for re-election next year to the Board of Clark County Commissioners.