



THE DEMOCRAT

Clark County Democratic Party Newsletter

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Serving Democrats with News and Opinion

September 2009

Baird, picnic, ball game all hot

As participants as well as visitors to the new version of the Clark County Democratic Central Committee’s web-site can attest, political activity abounded in August.

(The new site, www.bluedonkeys.com, is well worth a visit. Party officials aim to keep it accurate and up to date using a fresh set of tools.)

The CCDCC booth at the Clark County Fair was dandy thanks to the efforts of Eric Withee, Jeremy Zegas, Stephanie Liberman and a lot of other volunteers. Even without active partisan campaigns in the county, lots of visitors wanted to talk about health care. Some unfortunate incidents were reported. See, for example, Chair Dena Horton’s column on Page 2.

Much of the talk was stirred up around U.S. Rep. Brian Baird’s role in health-care legislation. He was on-again off-again as to holding a town hall session in the midst of professionally-organized national uproar and threat. When he did hold a series of public discussions they were more reasoned and useful than those held by a number of other congressional figures.

Horton reported about the August 18 session held in the largest available 3rd District venue, the Clark County Amphitheatre. Her full report is on the website.

She said, “It was an interesting night. People asked about a lot of different subjects. ...

“There was concern about the job market and whether we have enough doctors, nurses and other skilled professionals to take care of all these people. Small business owners expressed concerns over affordability of health care. Some business owners did not think business should be required to provide health care for workers.

“Baird pointed out that government already provides health care and social programs – Medicare, Social Security, Veterans Health Administration provides Tri-care for veterans and so forth.

“For the most part, people behaved and allowed others to talk. There was an occasional outburst, but for the



State Rep. Jim Jacks led the Clark County Democrats off the Memory Field diamond following a last-inning loss to the red team in the August 23 charity softball game.

most part, the audience was self-policing. Some statements would be greeted with cheers while others were jeered. Baird did very well in keeping his composure and allowing people to ask questions that supported opposing viewpoints. ... Overall, I believe people appreciated the congressman’s willingness to answer tough questions.”

The August 16 progressive political picnic at Hazel Dell Park was deemed a hit by those involved. A report about all of that is on bluedonkeys.com.

As for the August 23 softball game, it was good enough to suggest annual repetition. More than \$2,700 was raised for the chosen charity, Share House, and a great time was had by all.

The game ended with a 17-16 Republican win when a long ball sailed over the head of left fielder Sen. Craig Pridemore, who otherwise had a great game. The hit scored runner David Castillo. The game-winner was hit by the Republican pitcher, Larry Tibbet, whose political activity has heretofore been less than obvious. However, each team fielded several players whose skill at softball was more evident than their political credentials.

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy
Democrat, Massachusetts
1932-2009
R.I.P.

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

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| Saturday, September 5 | 18th Legislative District annual ice cream social (including hot dogs) starts at noon at Oxbow Lake Park in Woodland. (The LD organization will have a brief meeting at 10 a.m. before the social gets going.) |
| Saturday, September 5 | Nuptial events for Clark County Commissioner Steve Stuart and Heather Melton. Various times and places, by invitation. |
| Tuesday, September 8 | Executive board of Clark County Democratic Central Committee, 7 p.m. meeting at the Carpenters' Hall, 610 E. McLoughlin Boulevard. |
| Saturday, September 12 | 49th Legislative District Democrats meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Hometown Buffet at Vancouver Plaza south of Westfield Shoppingtown. |
| Monday, September 14 | Clark County Democratic Central Committee meets at 7 p.m. at the Longshore Hall. State Rep. Jim Moeller and a House Democratic Caucus staffer will talk about health care issues. |
| Tuesday, September 15 | Clark County section of 15th Legislative District Democrats meets at 6:30 p.m. upstairs at the Parker House in Camas. |
| Saturday, September 19 | Clark County Women Democrats meet for lunch at 11:30 a.m. at Boppin' Bo's in Vancouver Plaza. |
| Monday, September 28 | 17th Legislative District Democrats meet at 7 p.m. in the Forum Room at the Waterford. Use the main entrance on Village Loop Drive. |

Death threats deadly

By Dena Horton, Clark County Democratic Chair

While I was working my shift at our Clark County Fair booth, a man stopped by and asked which picture was Congressman Brian Baird.

I pointed to the photo on the wall and he replied, "Good, I just wanted to know what he looked like in case I ever get him in my scope."

I responded that I hoped he was joking because his comments could be considered a threat and he should be very careful about what he says because that is not something to joke about. The man then grabbed his wife's arm and took off quickly.

I let Baird's staff know about this incident and left it up to them as to whether or not to report it to the Capitol Police. I also discussed the incident with Clark County Republican Chairman Ryan Hart. Ryan recounted a story to me in which years ago someone made similar comments in reference to former Vice President Dick Cheney. Even though I disagree with just about every stance taken by Cheney, I was appalled by the threat. Neither of us was accusing the other of having anything to do with the comments made or blaming each other's political parties for those comments. I appreciate the fact that I can have respectful and friendly conversation with Ryan. And he was in complete agreement with me that death threats like these are totally inappropriate and serve no purpose. We are part of a Democratic Republic and civilized society in which elections, not bullets, are supposed to decide the direction of our country. Perhaps because I was not present at the Vancouver Rotary Club meeting, I do not have the full context of the conversation and comments. However, I am surprised that Republicans are attacking Baird for commenting on the nature of the death threats against him rather than condemning the fact that death threats are being made in the first place. Regardless of which political party an elected official chooses to affiliate with, threatening violence or death against an elected official is not the way to resolve philosophical differences.



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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 run in non-partisan elections

Four active Democrats will be on ballots for the November municipal election in Clark County.

Three of the active Democrats are on the Vancouver City Council ballot.

Incumbent Jeanne Harris, an active Democrat, survived her three-way primary with a solid 57 percent tally and will face Anne McNerny-Ogle, who has sought and won some labor and Democratic support. She has also attended many meetings of Democratic groups.

Former councilman and sometime Democratic legislative candidate Jack Burkman led a four-way primary with 36 percent of the votes cast. His final is against Bill Turlay, listed as “leaning Republican” in a voter analysis, who placed second in a four-way primary..

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.

In the only partisan race 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 Gregoire last year. Marichalar won in the five 15th LD Clark County precincts, but Gotts beat him soundly elsewhere.

One non-partisan contest has generated considerable consternation in party ranks. Incumbent Vancouver Mayor Royce Pollard has been endorsed by Gov. Christine Gregoire and her husband in his race against Councilman Tim Leavitt, a local supporter of Republican gubernatorial candidate Dino Rossi. Leavitt has support from several prominent Democrats including County Commissioner Steve Stuart, former state Sen. Dean Sutherland and Clark County Chair Dena Horton.

Pollard’s campaign is being managed by Marsha Manning, treasurer of the Clark County Democratic Central Committee. She and other Democrats were upset when Leavitt said during a candidates’ forum that Gregoire is an “Olympia bureaucrat from 200 miles away” who had no business intruding on Vancouver issues such as the proposed new Interstate 5 Bridge. Pollard’s dozen and more high-level Democratic supporters include most of the other elected Democrats in the county apart from Stuart as well as such luminaries as former state House Speaker Bob Schafer.

Gorini really was one of the ‘Good Folks’

Karen Sue Schmidt Gorini’s obituary, written by family and friends for publication last month, said she “passed peacefully from this world the way she wanted: in the comfort of her own home, surrounded by loved ones, cats and beautiful flowers, with big band swing and jazz playing softly behind her.” The full story is available at Columbian.com.

She was a few months shy of 70. Her memory was honored during a gathering at her Bernie Drive home on August 20.

Although she had not recently been an active participant in Democratic Party organizations, she had long been a stalwart. Along with several others similarly inclined and similarly involved in getting Democrats elected, she helped organize “The Committee for the Good Folks,” a dinner and auction to raise money for

the party. After several fairly successful years, that evolved into the Jefferson-Jackson Dinner and Auction, the current annual effort to build support for the Clark County Democratic Central Committee.

fundraising auction/dinner, which raised money for Democratic political candidates and incumbents who were doing good jobs for their constituents.

She was born and raised in Aberdeen before attending Washington State University. Her early career in social work included a stint at New York City’s Settlement House, where she met Martin Luther King Jr.

She met her husband in Seattle and they relocated to Vancouver. They had two sons and busy careers. She spent 20 years as a children and family social worker and served as shop steward for AFSCME/WFSE Local 313. She was a longtime YWCA mainstay.

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PO Box 179
Vancouver, WA 98666



Howard Leighty takes lead in single-payer fight

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

Howard Leighty, a nearly lifelong Democrat and union activist who was reared in California and spent most of his working life in Oregon, came to the attention of Clark County Democrats last summer when he waged a write-in campaign to be elected Democratic Committee Officer for Precinct 325.

He snared one more signature than did veteran PCO Mary Renaud. His tally was insufficient for certification by the county, but his appointment to the post was endorsed by 49th Legislative District Democrats and the Clark County Democratic Central Committee. He has since been active in both groups, notably with his fervent support of a national single-payer health-care insurance commission.

His interest in health matters has been sharpened in part by his 10 years practicing chiropractic medicine in Oregon. That career came amid other stints as a Eugene city employee (where he was shop steward for AFSCME Local 1724-A), occasional college instructor, and electronic engineer for Intel. When he left Intel in 2002, he reports, "I formed a corporation, Future Solutions Now, Inc., in March of 2003. That

corporate entity is primarily engaged in technology, especially computer repair, backup and networking services for small business, families and individuals. See the website at <http://fsnowinc.com>."

He married Joan McNeil in 2001 and moved to Vancouver. Between them they have four children and eight grandchildren. He was born in Los Angeles, the first of six children in his family. After graduation from Canoga Park High School in 1960 he spent four years in the U.S. Navy. Following discharge he attended college on the GI Bill, ultimately graduating from the University of Oregon with a BS in mathematics in 1973. Ten years later he began to study chiropractic; he began practicing in 1989. Although no longer active he still maintains his chiropractic license.

He is passionate about holding the Democratic Party to its platform promising a single-payer national health care insurance system. He said he considers himself a progressive in the liberal wing of the Democratic Party and he isn't at all shy about continuing to advocate progressive positions even when some of the rest of us caution moderation.

Only once did his passion take him out of the party. In 1968, to protest Lyndon Johnson's bombing of Cambodia, Leighty joined the Peace and Freedom Party for a year.