

# 31<sup>st</sup> Democrats Newsletter

(Organized by R. Craig Sanders-email: [z1n45rgiarc@netscape.com](mailto:z1n45rgiarc@netscape.com) and Patricia Szot)

## ONGOING FOOD DRIVE

**Please bring any food item (especially baby food) or toilet paper to the monthly grange for our ongoing food drive to help others in our hard economic times.**

The 31<sup>st</sup> L.D. Democrats will meet on Wednesday:

June 17, 2009 At:

Marion Grange

27725 Buckley-Sumner Hwy E, Buckley

Coffee Hour 6 PM

Meeting 7 PM

Committee Meeting 6:30-7:00 PM

### Program for June:

**Karen Willard** (PCO in the 31<sup>st</sup> LD and State Committee Person for Pierce County) will be taking questions and comments from us (people of the 31st LD) concerning the issue of whether Caucuses or Primary should be used to pick our next Democratic Presidential Candidate. Come to discuss the pros and cons of each. Bring your concerns/praises concerning the 2008 caucus.



Larry Phillips

Dow Constantine



## PAST EVENTS

**Dow Constantine vs. Larry Phillips.** The 31<sup>st</sup> LD decided at our last membership meeting to give a sole endorsement to Larry Phillips for King County Executive.

**Parade for healthcare.** On May 30<sup>th</sup> there were two local marches to help bring the



crisis concerning healthcare to the forefront. There was a march in Tacoma earlier in the day supported by Americans for Solidarity. A second march was later in the day in Seattle supported by Mothers for Healthcare for All. The 31<sup>st</sup> LD had its banner present (as the picture indicates) and we were well represented (MJ McGalliard, Karen Willard, Sandy Loveland, Kathy Lorimer, Brian Gunn, Boniface Kamoto, and Patti Szot). It was a great march for a great cause. The Seattle Times indicated that there were approximately 2,500 people, but I have been in several rallies over the years and I figure there was a lot more than that. Senator Patty Murray gave a speech prior to the march and during a portion of it the crowd started to chant “single payer”. I hope she got the drift that the people want to have single payer placed onto the table for discussi

on and thought about as an option. The statistics concerning the devastation of health care cost are astounding. A Harvard Study

([www.consumeraffairs.com/news04/2005/ba/ckruptcy\\_study.html](http://www.consumeraffairs.com/news04/2005/ba/ckruptcy_study.html)) has estimated that approximately 50% of all bankruptcies are related to a healthcare issue and of those approximately 50% had some degree of health care coverage.



Our own Brian Gunn has added a story concerning the health care situation of someone he knows and addresses the need for health care reform (see below).



## Award to Tim Pearson

An award was presented to Tim Pearson (the previous LD Chair) in appreciation of his work in leadership as Chair of the 31<sup>st</sup> LD. See picture on next page.

## LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERT

### Reichert Watch-

Latest phone message is from Working Families Win reporting that Dave Reichert refused to support Federal budget reforms for healthcare coverage for uninsured families similar to the healthcare that Congress enjoys. Dave Reichert has taken thousands of dollars in contributions from the large healthcare insurers and big drug companies. Please call Dave Reichert at 206-275-3438 and tell him to support healthcare coverage for uninsured families and to quit taking contributions from the healthcare industry which is trying to derail healthcare reform.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

(If anyone has upcoming events that they would like to have posted, please email me.)

1. June 14 Pierce County for Change at the Spiritual Living (206 North J St-corner of Division St, Tacoma, WA) will be talking about single payer health care plans. This function starts at 3PM.
2. June 23 Organization for America (OFA) is having a Public Forum to Achieve health Care for All!!! This function is at the First United Methodist Church (621 Tacoma Ave S, Tacoma, WA 98402) and starts at 7PM. Panelists include State Senator Rosa Franklin (29<sup>th</sup> LD), Patty Rose and Craig Salins (WPC).
3. June 27/28 Buckley Log Show in downtown Buckley. The 31<sup>st</sup> LD will have its summer booth up. Come by and say hello.
4. July 4<sup>th</sup> Event in Auburn. Every year Auburn has a 4<sup>th</sup> of July festival at Les Grove Park (next to the King County Public Library in Auburn). Come by to say Hi.
5. **Our next membership monthly meeting is going to be a Potluck at the Edgewood Gardens.** This will be a rare opportunity for those who are currently regulars, those who have been regulars when their lives would support it, and those who are there to provide extra support whenever we have really needed it to get together in a beautiful location to enjoy each others company.

The Edgewood Gardens are an amazing environment. Just take a look:

<http://www.edgewoodgarden.com/>

This will be a potluck. There is a committee coordinating everyone's efforts in bringing food and overseeing the activity. This is a unique place that will create a truly wonderful experience. We hope to see everyone there, and we will be using RSVP Email Patti Szot at [szot.patricia@gmail.com](mailto:szot.patricia@gmail.com) if you and other family members plan on attending). While the facilities can support 2 ½ times our normal

attendance at a monthly meeting, this event, in this unbelievable location, may easily generate interest beyond the capacity of the resources.

#### Directions:

##### **From Tacoma:**

- From northbound on I-5, get off at the 20th exit.
- Turn right at the bottom of the exit, then get into the left hand turn lane and turn left onto 20th.
- Stay on 20th all along the valley and go straight up the hill. The street changes its name a few times, FYI.
- At the top of the hill, Meridian/Hwy 161 has a stop light, go straight through it.
- In about a mile, turn right onto 122nd (at the blinking red light).
- Go a few blocks to 32nd St. Turn LEFT onto 32nd street.
- Follow 32nd about two blocks to the end. We're the large gate on the left in the cul-de-sac.

##### From Seattle:

- Going south on I-5, get off at the Enchanted Parkway (Exit 142B).
- At the bottom of the ramp, turn right and immediately get into the left hand lane.
- At the first light turn left onto Enchanted Parkway.
- Enchanted Parkway becomes Meridian (also known as Hwy. 161). Go approximately 3 miles to the commercial district.
- Turn LEFT onto 8th St E. (immediately after Jovita Blvd., the second light after the McDonald's on your right.)
- Follow 8th St E straight and then as it bends to the right and becomes 122nd Ave E.
- Go 24 blocks to 32nd St E and turn left.
- Follow 32nd about two blocks to the end. We're the large gate on the left in the cul-de-sac.

##### From Eastside:

- Get on I-405 South and go to Hwy 167 South. (as if you were going to Kent).
- In about eleven miles, you will cross Hwy 18 and pass an exit for Algona/Pacific.
- Take the following exit ( four miles past Hwy 18); it has several labels: Edgewood, 8th St E, Milton, & Pacific.
- Turn right at the bottom of the exit. There's a light almost immediately (W. Valley Hwy).
- Go through that light and then go up the hill to the next light which is 114th Ave. E.
- Turn left and go to the first stop sign (school on right---Alice V. Hedden Elementary).
- At the 4-way Stop sign, turn left onto 8th St.
- Follow 8th St E as it bends to the right and becomes 122nd Ave E.
- Go 24 blocks to 32nd St E and turn left.
- Follow 32nd about two blocks to the end. We're the large gate on the left in the cul-de-sac (Edgewood Estate sign).

## Caucus or Primary?

By Karen Willard

The Task Force to review the Caucuses and Primary met this past Sunday. We've been asked to report back to our LDs and ask feedback from the rank and file democrats. The overall organization of our task is to find out "Lessons Learned" and "Proposed Remedies".

Because a "remedy" might involve switching to a primary system in order to determine our nominee for President, we are instructed to make it clear that the door is not shut on the idea of a primary (though many folks like the caucus system and only want to improve it, not get rid of it).

In August the Task Force will convene once more to write our final report to the Executive Committee of the state party. The Executive Committee will review our report and pass on their recommendation concerning our report to the State Central Committee at the September meeting, which will be in Walla Walla.

## A Note From a 31<sup>st</sup> LD Member Concerning Health Care

A friend of mine injured his back several months ago. In the emergency room, he was told that the x-ray alone, not including any course of treatment, would cost \$6,000. He did not go in for the x-ray or further treatment. Today he suffers from back pain on a daily basis. He does not have free movement of his arms or neck, and as a result he is losing muscle mass in his arms and upper body. Like millions of other Americans, he has no health insurance at his job, and he cannot afford to pay for the medical treatment he needs. Any private insurance he has been able to find excludes coverage for pre-existing conditions, even supposing he could afford to pay the exorbitant premiums.

**Our health care system is broken.** Even people who have insurance are going into bankruptcy when they get sick because they find out their plans don't cover the cost of the treatments. Losing a job means losing coverage. Anyone who has priced a COBRA plan knows this.

We have everything we need to fix the problem: we have strong Democratic majorities in the House and Senate, and Barack Obama is in the White House. **All that is lacking is the political will to make health care reform a reality.**

Spurred by the urgings of the President, there is a growing movement in Congress to enact Health Care Reform this year. So what are our elected officials considering?

**The President has called for a plan** that will: 1) reduce costs, 2) guarantee choice of plans and doctors, and 3) provide affordable care for all. In a letter to Senators Kennedy and Baucus, Obama also advocates for the creation of a "health insurance exchange," where individuals and small employers could compare plans and buy coverage. Many think this "exchange" is almost certain to be a feature of any new legislation that will be introduced.

Whether and what form a public option for health insurance will take remains the question. The term 'public option' or 'public plan' is being used to refer to a federally funded plan that is available as an alternative to private insurance.

The President supports this idea, stating in his letter of June 2, 2009,

*"I strongly believe that Americans should have the choice of a public health insurance option operating alongside private plans."*

But conservatives and corporate lobbyists are already hacking into the public option idea, because it competes with private plans, and requires all plans, public *and* private, to offer coverage to everyone without regard to pre-existing conditions. Private insurers want to remove these restrictions so that they can continue to "cherry pick" healthy consumers and avoid offering coverage to those who would actually use it. There is even a movement afoot (the so-called 'trigger' plan) to put the public option on the back burner until certain conditions are met. I wonder just how bad they think the situation needs to become before they will be willing to concede a public option is necessary. My guess is it would never happen.

**But there are already some good bills out there.** John Conyers, D-Mich., has introduced [HR676](#) to expand Medicare to all US residents regardless of their employment, income or health care status. This not-for-profit, single payer, universal health insurance program would be publicly financed, but privately delivered, meaning that it would be paid for with taxes, while doctors would not become

government employees, as they are in Great Britain. Tax rates would be less than most folks pay annually for insurance, co-pays and deductibles. All medically necessary services would be covered without co-pays or deductibles. Private insurance companies have already balked at this proposal since they would be prohibited from selling insurance that duplicates the benefits of the public plan. As of this writing, there are 78 co-sponsors of HR676.

Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Washington State's own Jim McDermott have also introduced universal, single-payer plans each with a slight twist. Sanders bill ([S703](#)) would be federally funded and state administered, while McDermott's bill ([HR1200](#)) would be funded and administered solely by the states.

Single payer plans envision substantial savings (estimated at \$350 - \$400 billion annually) from reduced administrative overhead, bulk purchasing and minimal advertising. Imagine a world in which 30% of claims are not rejected on first submittal (because there is a profit to be reaped from denying coverage at each and every level of the process) requiring an army of administrators in doctors' offices and hospitals to chase after the money. Savings from public options alongside private could see some cost savings if not gutted by the insurance lobby, but only single payer cuts out the profit motive entirely. Some people believe health care professionals oppose single payer. If you believe that, find out more about [Physicians for a National Health Program](#).

**So what can you do?** Learn as much as you can about the bills and plans being formulated and figure out what you think will work best. Then contact your senators and representatives. Or join a group like MoveOn.org or Organizing for America or the 31<sup>st</sup> Legislative District Democrats and add your voice to the growing chorus of like-minded individuals.

**Citizen action really does make a difference.**

If thousands of people across America take action, the people who represent us in Congress will be forced to listen and to act.

**Only if that happens will we see progressive legislation enacted to fix our broken health care system.**

Brian Gunn  
Democratic Precinct Committee Officer  
AUB 31-0062

Plight of the Poor

By: Eric Sanders

As nice as it would be, an apple a day isn't likely to keep the doctor away but the incredible cost of simply visiting your physician, let alone treatment, discourages many Americans from seeking the medical attention they need. Some problems may go away by themselves without medical attention but all too often a seemingly inconvenient twinge of pain or lump if left alone can resolve itself into a crippling or lethal condition. To live healthy lives people need access to medical care which should be affordable regardless of income. Health care coverage is a vital part of a developed society. Secure coverage is essential for providing those less fortunate with access to quality medical treatment, so that they do not have to live their life debt ridden over medical expenses, or risk going without necessary

treatment. A poor old man dies because he chose to purchase food over medication, many people feel sympathy but take no action to change the structure which is destined to prey on millions of Americans across the nation. Many companies are unwilling to provide their employee's with health care coverage, small business cannot afford it, and corporations would rather return the revenue to the investors. Turning to private corporate health care providers is an equal recipe for disaster, the companies goal is to make a PROFIT and the cost efficient way of doing this is jacking up prices and denying coverage whenever possible. Capitalism is driven by making profits and in a day and age when medical procedures are expensive companies cringe at the idea of providing this expensive service. With corporations slashing health care coverage it is clear that the National government needs to step up and provide what is needed for the average American; quality health care coverage.

With the government footing the bill for health care coverage there is no conflict of interest that occurs in the private sector. However due to the Bush administration and the current economic crisis the exact opposite is occurring. This economic crisis has hit our government hard. Less money flowing around means legislature need something to cut. Amputate the nonessential expenditures! Hack them from the budget! There is no money for nonessential things including health care. Simple fact of Wall street over the average Joe. Recently the Seattle Times reported that the proposed budget in Washington state is cutting 40,000 people from the states basic health plan in order to save 255 million (Garber and Sullivan). On the national level discretionary funding (money that our government has direct control over how to spend) of health care has steadily dropped from 6.4% in 2003 to 5.3% in 2009 (Shah). Politicians claim that there simply isn't enough money to go around, and only raising everyones taxes would accomplish national health care. The real problem however isn't a lack of money, it is instead shifting WHO is being taxed and WHERE the tax money is going. During the Bush years both income and corporate taxes were repeatedly slashed allowing the rich to reap higher profits and shifting the economic burden away from the elite and settling straight on the backs of the working class. These tax cuts can and should be reversed. The extra tax revenue provided from the rich could easily provide both expanded health care coverage and create more jobs that would stimulate the economy. Another large obstacles for national health coverage is how congress spends its discretionary funding. While health care dropped in priority during the bush administration, military expenditures expanded in the same interval from 51.6% to 54%. As of 2008 the United States spent a grand total of 711 billion dollars on its military budget which comprises roughly 44% of what the entire WORLD spends on military spending (Shah). The money being funneled to the military is too massive and could easily be cut to provide expanded health care to Americans while not jeopardizing our security in the slightest.

Now that the problems blocking national health care coverage have been identified it would seem a simple matter of changing them for the improvement of health in the majority of Americans. Sadly, however corporations donate millions of dollars to political campaigning while the common man contributes only his one vote. As a result government is more attentive to the interests of the rich and protecting corporate profits abroad through military force. The only way to minimize the gap between rich and poor is by the people banding together to demand their right for health care coverage. It took Civil Rights movement and millions of people to actually pressure legislation to provide equal rights. This battle will be no different. So I encourage you write your congressmen talk to your coworkers make it apparent that the United States cannot and should not continue to treat the poor as second class citizens. Fight for the benefits you deserve or watch your country fall into depravity.

Andrew Garber and Jennifer Sullivan. "Proposed budget cuts hit schools and health care, but parks would remain open." *Seattle Times* 4/23/2009 Web.6 May 2009.

<[http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2009112434\\_webbudget23.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2009112434_webbudget23.html)>.

Shah, Anup. "World Military Spending." *Global Issues*. 01 march 2009. Global Issues. 6 May 2009  
<<http://www.globalissues.org/article/75/world-military-spending#InContextUSMilitarySpendingVersusRestoftheWorld>>.

## Our Country Has Lost A Wonderful Person

On May 31<sup>st</sup> the murder of Doctor George Tiller as he entered his church is an example of **TERRORISM** in this country, terrorism performed by a religious right zealot. Dr. Tiller did not break the law in what he was doing. He did something that some people think is wrong-he performed abortions. Dr. Tiller was born at a time when providing an abortion meant saving that person's life. Dr. Tiller continued to perform abortions even after being shot in both arms in 1994. But it is OK for certain right-wing individuals to kill another individual because they disagree with their actions. I guess their view is the correct one! Because of the harassment of the religious right, very few clinics and doctors actually perform the controversial late-term abortion. In my view the person (Scott Roeder) who murdered Dr. Tiller is similar to the religious individuals that flew planes into the twin towers. If you think politics does not play a part in it, you would be wrong. Look at the statistics provided by the Huffington Post.

During the entire Bush administration there were no murders of doctors that perform abortions. No Bombings, no attempted murders.

During the Clinton era (1994-2000) there were 6 abortion providers and clinical staff murders and 17 attempted murders. There were also 12 bombings or arsons.

In the last year of the Bush administration there were 396 harassing phone calls to abortion clinics.

In the first 4 months of the Obama administration there have been 1401 harassing phone calls to abortion clinics. Now 5 months into the Obama administration there is the murder of a doctor.

I sure hope this isn't a trend, but this isn't a great beginning to a democratic administration.

Patricia Szot

Vice Chair of King County

Fair Coordinator

PCO 31-3335

## Our Representatives-how to get hold of them

Senators: **Patty Murray (D)** and **Maria Cantwell**

Patty Murray- DC office phone: (202) 224-2621

Seattle Office

2988 Jackson Federal Bldg.

915 2nd Avenue

Seattle, Washington 98174

Phone: (206) 553-5545

Fax: (206) 553-0891

Maria Cantwell- DC office phone (202) 224-3441

Seattle Office

915 Second Avenue

Suite #3206

Seattle, WA 98174

206-220-6400

206-220-6404 – FAX

Tacoma Office

950 Pacific Avenue, Suite #615

Tacoma, WA 98402

253-572-2281

253-572-5879 FAX

8<sup>th</sup> CD Representative-Dave Reichert (R)  
Dave Reichert- DC Office phone (202) 225-7761  
District Office  
2737 78th Avenue, S.E. Suite #202  
Mercer Island, WA 98040  
(206) 275-3438  
(206) 275-3437 Fax

9<sup>th</sup> CD Representative-Adam Smith (D)  
Adam Smith-DC office phone (202) 225-8901  
District Office  
2209 Pacific Ave, Suite B  
Tacoma, WA 98402  
(253) 593-6600  
(253)593-6776

State Senator-31<sup>st</sup> LD

Pam Roach (R)  
POB 40431  
Olympia, WA 98504  
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State Representatives-31<sup>st</sup> LD

Chris Hurst (D)  
POB 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504  
Office: 360-786-7866  
Fax: 360-786-7317  
Email: [Hurst.Christopher@leg.wa.gov](mailto:Hurst.Christopher@leg.wa.gov)

Dan Roach (R)  
POB 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504  
Office: 360-786-7846  
Email: Roach.Dan@leg.wa.gov

Occupation Statistics (<http://www.antiwar.com>)

4,311 US Military Deaths (Iraq)

700 US Military Deaths (Afghanistan)

31,327 US Military Wounded (Iraq)

151,000-1,320,110 Iraq Civilian Deaths

EDITORIAL-As I See It

by Joe Valek

Not too many years ago, the Democratic Party was in the wilderness that the Republican Party finds itself in today. The problem then as it is now was one of image and solutions. The Democrats worked hard and consciously to offer real solutions to problems and to embrace a big tent to welcome in former democrats, to recruit independents, and even to embrace disaffected republicans. Much of this came about by learning to tolerate one another and to be cautious not to alienate people of divergent opinions. We're still a fractious lot and we don't agree on everything. Our President told us at Notre Dame that there may continue to be differences between the pro-choice camp and the pro-life camp, but there are things that both should work together on. Why then alienate our veteran and

armed services personnel when, for the first time in a very long time, they too are looking to see if there is room in that tent for them as well?

You see above you a constant refrain that appears in this newsletter of the 31st District Democrats. It has appeared gratuitously in each of the four prior publications of this newsletter. It reflects---what? A body count? A reminder of the human cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan? As a vet I get it. War takes lives. But who bears the suffering? The editor of this newsletter? The Executive Board of the 31st District Democrats? We, the American people? No. The cost of this is borne by those in our Armed Forces, and their families and friends. They bear this cost for us. As a veteran of Viet Nam I know firsthand what it was like to come home to an ungrateful nation. And much to our credit my generation vowed not to visit that on our warriors of today. But here in this newsletter we perpetuate an ongoing harassment. I have spoken out against this since the first appearance of this commentary. Not a single member of the eboard can see this as an affront. Am I alone? Is it only me? Suppose the editor was as opposed to abortion as he is to war. The headline would read "LABOR STATISTICS" and the body counts would reflect the number of abortions performed, and the referenced website would be anti-abortion site instead of an anti-war site. Would this be acceptable. I would hope not. So then why is there no sensitivity shown for those who were sent to those far off places and failed to come back alive, or who were traumatized in awful ways as a consequence of being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Contrary to anti-war dogma, it is an honor to serve in the Armed Services of this country. And that honor should be reciprocated. Those who have served and especially those who have served in combat deserve to be respected, and to be honored for their service. They deserve more, but that goes beyond the reason for this rebuttal. My compatriots on the eboard tell me that this honors those who died. Really? How? Like many I too was opposed to going to war in Iraq and opposed the prior regime for lying us into this unnecessary conflict. Remember when we were told of WMD, and ties to Al Quaida, and how the people would welcome us with open arms? Oh yes. I had my doubts, but I too accepted the lies. Those who served there however did so honorably and professionally with few exceptions. They went when they were ordered to go. So why do the 31st Dems choose to remember their sacrifices as an ongoing body count. The May edition could have been an eloquent paean to the fallen for Memorial Day; this edition could remind us of D-Day (June 6); the anniversary of the founding of the Army (June 14); of the recognition of the Pledge of Allegiance (June 22); or the signing of the GI Bill (June 22). It could include a simple Happy Father's Day. But we have instead a constant drip, drip, drip on the body count. It must be disappointing when there isn't much increase to show. For those who say there is no harm, think about the nightly death count from Viet Nam, think of the daily reminder of those who were held captive in Iran, and think of the power exercised just recently by the press to remind us of Bush's failed Iraq policy. But even they have stopped, but not so the 31st Dems.

As I said above we are a big tent and there are people who have different views on various topics. I just find it disconcerting that the views of some are expressed as if they were intended to be the view of all. I am grateful to have had this opportunity to express publicly what I have said privately. And while I had asked to provide rejoinder each time this section of the newsletter appeared, I am constrained by being allowed only this one singular rebuttal. Because no one else on the eboard has expressed any concern on this matter but me, it is accepted that this position accurately reflects that of the 31st Dems. Is that so? How do you all feel on this matter?

## EDITORIAL-As | See It

By R. Craig Sanders

I guess that the posting of these numbers was initially a response to the idea that George Bush would not allow the flag-draped coffins returning from Iraq to be photographed. To me, this was not telling the American people the real cost of the conflict. The coffins were snuck into the United States at Dover Air Force Base in the middle of the night with no parade, no 21-gun salute, no publicity. A Seattle Times photographer lost their job by submitting a picture which was published on the front page of the Seattle Times. The real question is what does it serve to post these numbers? I believe that it is erroneously thought that some glee comes out of it that I am causing some pain to people that I don't even know. That couldn't be further from the truth. The idea that these men and women who gave their lives for their country should have to be snuck back in to the USA like something embarrassing so that the illicit Iraq occupation can continue and corporations such as Halliburton can continue to rake in our tax dollars is extremely offensive to me. By posting these numbers, I thought I was, at the very least, acknowledging their sacrifice for our country and not trying to sweep under the rug that human beings were dying.

This isn't a game to win or lose. These are lives we are talking about. Taking these numbers down is not going to get them home any sooner before more people have to die. But by pricking the conscience of the American public once a month as to what we are accomplishing in Iraq and Afghanistan, maybe 1 less person will end up being buried or 1 less family breaking up. Whether these numbers are posted or not does not mean that casualties are not occurring. It just means one less time that we have to think of the people risking their lives so that we can continue our daily existence unencumbered by the acknowledgement of their sacrifice. I think we owe them at least that much.

## Response to Joe Valek's Editorial

By Mark Boswell (PCO and Program Chair)

Next month, in the July 31<sup>st</sup> LD Newsletter, I will respond to Joe Valek's editorial opposing the inclusion of Middle East casualty figures in the 31<sup>st</sup> LD Democrats Newsletter. While I understand where Joe's positions derive from and empathize with the emotions that power them, there are much larger issues at stake. Consequently, I do not agree with Joe's position. In fact I adamantly oppose Joe's position. My response will address his arguments point by point.

I too have a military background. In serving our democracy and defending the Constitution of the United States of America some of my activities involved significant physical risk. This is the nature of a large portion of military service. I was fortunate that none of the risky activities I participated in cost me my life or even serious injury. Some of my friends and classmates were not so fortunate.

While I was on active duty I got a chance to see a fairly significant portion of the World. What I saw and experienced caused me to doubt many of the things I was taught while I was growing up. More significantly, it caused me to see that there were forces at work that threaten the very existence of our democracy. It caused me to pursue decades of study of history and numerous other topics. What I discovered surprised me, and caused me to become an active Democrat, even while I continued my research.

Serving our country is important, but only one of the important responsibilities that sustains our democratic society. The forces threatening our democracy are not the citizens who oppose the United

States getting into unnecessary wars. These citizens are serving our democracy in an essential way. They are shining light on efforts democracy's enemy. The forces threatening our democracy are those who are promoting unnecessary conflict and war for personal profit.

Waving the flag of the United States provides cover for their activities while they personally profit from the unnecessary wars they are instigating and facilitating. This enemy owns our mass media, and its editors prevent any information from getting out that threatens our enemies profit plans. The Republican Party, which has not been the "Party of Lincoln" since the 1880's, is a wholly owned subsidiary of our democracy. Unfortunately, this enemy also owns a small portion of the elected officials claiming the Democratic Party. These individuals who are the enemy of our democracy do not care about service people at all.

The greatest ally the enemies of our democracy have in their self-serving endeavor is an uninformed public. Democracy requires an informed citizenry. Next month I will break down the threat to our democracy and how we have at least temporarily avoided a fascist suppression of our democracy. Additionally, I will list the actions we must initiate to remove this threat of fascism for the foreseeable future into its most important components, providing quotes from our nation's greatest leaders, including the founders, to reinforce the importance of each of the components.

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## **DO YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR LOCAL POLITICAL SYSTEM?**

### **YES!! Join us**

Fill out the form below (questions are required by the state Public Disclosure Commission) and hand it in to one of our volunteers or mail it in (31<sup>st</sup> District Democrats, 20825 SR 410 E #130, Bonney Lake, WA 98391). You can pay dues now or later by check (made out to 31<sup>st</sup> District Democrats) or on-line by credit card. Dues are \$31 per year (January-December), but members can pay what they can afford with a minimum of \$5.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address (if different from above) \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
Employer \_\_\_\_\_