

31st Democrats Newsletter

HEALTHCARE SHOULD BE A RIGHT, NOT A PRIVILEGE

(Organized by R. Craig Sanders-email: 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. Before you read any more, take some items out to the car so that it will be there when you come to the meeting.



The 31st L.D. Democrats will meet on
Wednesday:
May 20, 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 May:

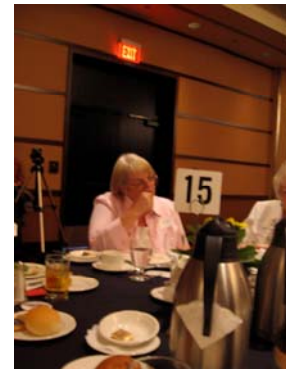
Dow Constantine: is 1 of 4 “Democrats” running for King County Executive to replace Ron Sims (<http://dowconstantine.com>). The other three candidates are Larry Phillips, Ross Hunter and Fred Jarrett. This is supposedly a non-partisan position, but as we all know everything is political. Dow Constantine was present at our Auburn Clean Sweep function. See picture below of Dow Constantine and Brian Gunn at the function.

Representatives of King County Conservation District (www.kingcd.org) and **Pierce County Conservation District** (www.piercecountycd.org) will discuss the function of these organizations in our county. These organizations are very important in the way that land is used in our respective counties.

Karen Willard will talk about the States desire to discuss the use of primaries vs caucuses in our election process.

PAST EVENTS

1. Rosellini Dinner-The 31st LD was really well represented (Karen Willard, Sandy Loveland, Brian Gunn, John Mayer, Sharon Hodgins and Patti Szot) at this yearly function. Hearing Jim Hightower speak was a highlight of the evening.



2. Green River clean-up: On May 2 Democrats Work helped the Green River Coalition in cleaning up the waterways along the Green River. Members of the 31st District include Brian Gunn, Mary Campbell, Jeanette Johnson, Shirley Smith and Frank Lonergan. Sorry, we don't have pictures of this event.

3. King County Executive Forum: On May 5, at the Carpenters Hall in Renton, all 4 Democratic candidates were present to field questions. For a review of this forum, please go to www.horsesass.org and look up Josh Feit's 5/6/09 article entitled "Candidates For King County Exec Square Off In Debate". Also present at the forum was MJ McGalliard, Tom Cramer, Brian Gunn, Craig Sanders and Patti Szot.

3. Auburn Clean Sweep: On May 9 the 31st and 47th Democratic LDs participated in cleaning up the on/off ramps of Highway 18 on "C" Street through Democrats Work. This was well represented by the 31st LD (Brian Gunn, Frank Lonergan, Shirley Smith, Craig Sanders, Colleen Sanders, Patti Szot, Sandy Loveland, Darlene Simpson-Brown). We also had Dow Constantine come and work at the function (see left picture below).



LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERT

Reichert Watch: A telephone message from Accountable America states that Dave Reichert voted **against** pay increases for the troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, while voting to keep wall street bonuses for AIG execs and multimillion dollar pay for bank execs who took taxpayer bailouts.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

1. Vote Builder Training. Brian Gunn our PCO coordinator will have a training session on the use of Vote Builder at DeVry University in Federal Way on May 13, 2009.

2. Health Care for All in 2009- Mothers Leading the Way!!!! A march for Health Care reform is to occur in Seattle on May 30th the march starts at 12:30 at Pratt Park (20th Ave S & E. Yesler Way, Seattle, WA 98144). The 31st will be there with our 31st LD Banner. Come join us and demand Health Care for ALL. For more information on this march go to www.may30march.org.

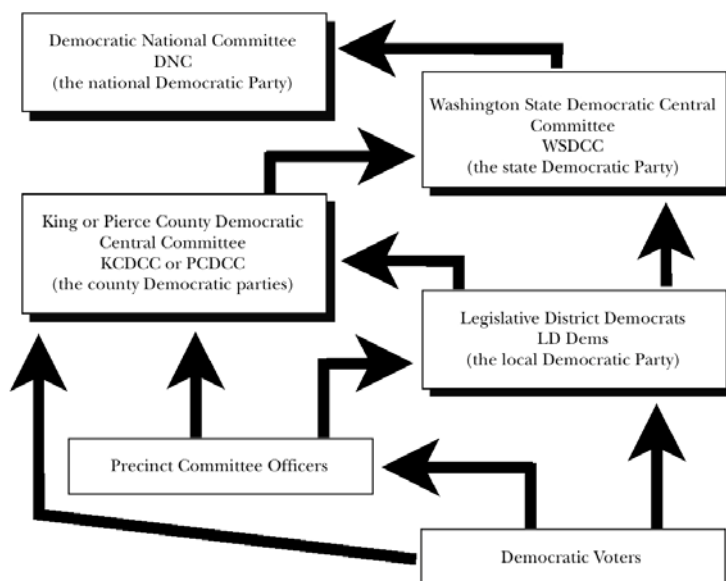
3. Washington Public Campaigns 3rd Annual Banquet-If you believe in public funding of our elections then come support the organization that is trying to bring that to the state of Washington. The Banquet is June 13, 2009 at the South Seattle Community College at the Brockey Center. The keynote speaker is Jim McDermott. For more information go to dinner@washclean.org or call 206-784-2522.

4. Agriculture and Rural Caucus Forum- Will be held on July 17-19 at the Okanogan Grange Hall, Okanogan. For more information about this forum please contact ARC Chair Jackie Bradley (509-422-3723) or ARC Secretary Larry Ludwig (509-738-4987).

Welcome to the Washington State Democratic Party (by Karen Willard)

Welcome to the Washington State Democratic Party! Now let me bury you in acronyms and terminology... All too often that is the experience for those of us first venturing into the world of party work. The neophyte experience is very fresh in my memory still, so please permit me to offer this Guide to the Democratic party organization in Washington and what the various levels of organization are called. Then you, too, can sound like an experienced hand, and go around

correcting those who misuse terms (no, no, you wouldn't do that, would you?)



First and most basic are the Precinct Committee Officers, or PCOs as we usually call 'em. They are elected in every even-numbered year by Democratic voters, or they are appointed in between elections. There can also be "acting PCOs" when the person so designated does not live in the precinct for which they are acting. "Actings," alas, get all the work and none of the privileges. (See the <http://31stDistrictDemocrats.org> article on Precinct Committee Officers for details.)

All PCOs are automatically members of the Legislative District Democrats within which their precinct is to be found. Non-PCOs, of course, can also be members of their local Legislative District Democratic organization. These Legislative District level organizations, LD's for short,

all will have Chairs and one or more Vice Chairs. All LD's have membership fees. All LD's follow the state party and state law for which things PCO-members-only are allowed to vote on and which things all LD members are allowed to vote on. All LD's have Executive Boards. The membership of the Boards is determined by that LD's By-Laws, which vary LD by LD. All LD Democratic Districts will elect representatives to two higher levels of the party: the County Democratic Party organization and the State Democratic Party organization.

1. The County Democratic Party organization consists of all PCOs residing within that county, and all persons elected by the LD's to represent them on the County Party's Executive Board. Some county organizations also, like LD's, have a mechanism by which non-PCOs and non-elected-to-the-Board persons may be simple members of the – pay attention now to a new term – County Democratic Central Committee, CDCC for short. That is the official title of the county-level Democratic party organization. So we in the 31st LD Democrats, being part of two counties, have dealings with the Pierce County Democratic Central Committee, PCDCC, and the King County Democratic Central Committee, KCDCC. In addition, the Pierce County Democratic Central Committee recently changed their By-Laws to allow for anyone who considers themselves to be a Democrat and who resides within Pierce County to become a member of the Central Committee. All county-level Democratic organizations have membership fees. The county organizations generally meet quarterly, with their Executive Boards meeting more often. Our two county orgs' websites are: <http://www.piercecountydems.org/> and <http://wa-demchairs.org/kcdems/>
2. At the state level, we have the Washington State Democratic Central Committee, or WSDCC. All LD's elect one man and one woman to represent them to this level, hence the terms "State Committee Woman," SCW, and "State Committee Man," SCM. Each county Democratic Central Committee also elects a SCM and SCW to the WSDCC. The WSDCC meets several times a year, at locations around the state (to spread the pain). Exactly how often is spelled out (incoherently) in the state party By-Laws and is currently a matter of debate. The WSDCC also has an Executive Committee. The members of this committee consist of the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and those individuals who have been elected to represent the state party to the Democratic National Committee, DNC, plus individuals elected to represent each Congressional District in the state, plus a couple miscellaneous folks. Every two years the newly elected SCW and SCM, at their first state party meeting, will congregate by which Congressional District they live in and elect from among themselves one person to be on the Executive Committee. For example, those SCM and SCW living in the 8th Congressional District elected Di Irons, the SCW from the 5th Legislative District Democrats, to be on the state's Executive Committee. This past January, State Committee Members also elected Dwight Pelz to be state party chair, Sharon Smith as Vice Chair, Luis Moscoso as Secretary, and Habib H. Habib as Treasurer. As their individual terms expire, the State Committee Men and Women will elect our state's representatives to the DNC. The state party's website is <http://www.wa-democrats.org/>

The state party solicits membership dues from everyone, not just State Committee Members. When you donate to the state party, you are sent a membership card. In reality, this is merely a thank you note, and it does not mean you are now a member of the State Central Committee. The national party does the same thing: they solicit donations and might even call them a membership fee and when you send in money you might get a nice "membership card" in the mail. But this, too, does not mean that you are now a member of the DNC. It means you put your money where your mouth is with one or more of the Democratic Party's organizations and is a wonderful thing to do. But don't get confused over terms.

The state party budgets for paid professional staff at the state party office. These include monumentally useful folk like Executive Director Jaxon Ravens, Online Communications Director Misty Shock, and Technology Director (aka Votebuilder) Patrick Mead.

There is a somewhat separate level of organization that happens every two years. We have caucuses. At these caucuses (let's keep it simple and not discuss what happens during presidential election years), anyone who considers them self to be a Democrat can come to the precinct caucus and from among themselves elect a Delegate to the County Convention and also to the Legislative District Caucus. At the County Convention, the process of putting together the state party's biennial Platform is begun. At the LD Caucus, the delegates elected at the precinct caucus elect from among themselves the delegates to the State Convention. According to the state party's By-Laws, the state Convention is the highest authoritative body of the state party. I, myself, am not crystal clear on the different duties and the different business conducted at the state party meetings for state committee women and men, and the state convention for state convention delegates. So that'll be our next essay!

EDITORIAL-As | See It

By Craig Sanders

We the People need single-payer healthcare now! Overall healthcare in America ranks about 37th worldwide (behind Cuba) even though we spend twice as much as any other developed nation. Almost 50 million people in this country out of 325 million don't have health insurance. With the current downturn in the economy, the number of people that are uninsured will only increase. Even people that have health insurance are in danger. Claims may be denied even with insurance. A significant number of the bankruptcies occurring these days are due to a catastrophic illness in a family that had health insurance. People can't afford to move to new jobs because they risk losing their insurance by switching or being denied because of "pre-existing conditions".

Healthcare providers seem to be involved in a conflict of interest. It's becoming clearer that the best way for healthcare corporations to make a profit is by denying coverage. The greater percentage of healthy people they insure, the more profit they reap. The sicker or more aged a person is, the less likely they are to be granted healthcare coverage. While I have no issue with corporations making a *reasonable* profit, a line is crossed when a business decides that profit is the Holy Grail of their existence and that all else falls by the wayside to achieve that goal.

Single-payer healthcare (similar to Medicare) has always seemed like a simple solution ever since I first heard of it. Whereas the overhead for private insurance is in the neighborhood of 20-30%, the overhead for Medicare-like insurance is 3-5%. This means that with a single-payer system, \$95 out of every 100 dollars would be going straight to caring for the ill (instead of only \$70). In this program, people would see a doctor approximately once a year for checkups. Keeping people healthy is far cheaper than tending to people once they have become ill. When people become ill, they would go to their doctor and possibly pay a small co-pay, with the rest of the bill being taken care of by the government. The bill for the doctor is only a fraction of what the bill would be if the patient went to the emergency room. Another advantage to single-payer healthcare is that the emergency rooms would benefit: since the patients are not going to the hospital, the emergency room would not be crowded and would return to being a place where only emergency cases are handled.

The United States of America is the only developed nation in the world today that doesn't have generally socialized medicine. They're not perfect programs, but the perfect system has yet to be produced. One of the arguments against single-payer healthcare is that it would be rationed. Don't look now, but healthcare in the US is already rationed. Unless it's an emergency, people almost always have to wait to see the doctor or have surgery. We already accept that. Another argument is that it's "socialized" medicine. Individuals in the military and in Congress have been "suffering" from socialized medicine for many years now and they don't seem to be complaining. Another advantage to single-payer healthcare would be to help businesses. For example, if \$2,000 of a \$20,000 car is attributed to healthcare, that car would cost \$2,000 less if we had national healthcare, so that the company could sell the car for \$18,000. In fact, I don't understand why all of the major corporations aren't demanding that we move to single-payer national healthcare. Yes, there are going to be people who abuse the system, but there are always people who abuse whatever system is in place. Their numbers are insignificant compared to the advantages of moving to single-payer healthcare. I believe that about 70-80% of Americans are in favor of single-payer nationalized healthcare.

Everyone thinks their taxes are going to go up if we have national healthcare. If we do it wrong, that's probably correct. But if we go to a single-payer Medicare-like system and we do it right and efficiently, costs should actually go down.

Of course, the large corporations (health insurance, drug companies and others) are circling the wagons and are all ready to fight this tooth and nail. They are fighting for their very lives (if a corporation was alive). The corporations may tell us that they're ready to compromise, but they had their chance and America passed that point when Hillary Clinton tried to get healthcare reform enacted. A compromise could have been made fifteen years ago, but now the healthcare situation is so serious that there is no solution other than a single-payer healthcare system. It's as if a cancer patient spending thousands of dollars on chemotherapy could have saved that money with a simple trip to the doctor years before. The patient needs emergency procedures to be saved that could have been spared with proactive measures. If we compromise and put a band-aid on the patient, the patient will not survive. I feel that the patient--We the People--needs drastic emergency care now and half-measures will not succeed.

Here's a prediction: "We the People" are not going to push hard enough for single-payer healthcare. We are going to get some sort of "reform" but the big corporations will still be telling our politicians how it's going to play out. So, we will have "reform", but it won't be anything like single-payer healthcare. "We the People" will still be either without healthcare or paying through the nose to get healthcare where you still can be denied coverage. Either way we're going to end up paying for it out of pocket; taxes will increase or healthcare will continue to decline. The Democrats will be blamed for all of this and "We the People" will start seeing Democrats lose elections because the Democratic Party did not deliver on their promise to give us affordable healthcare.

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

8th 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

9th 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-31st LD

Pam Roach (R)
POB 40431
Olympia, WA 98504
Office: 360-786-7660
Fax: 360-786-7173
Email: Roach.Pam@leg.wa.gov

State Representatives-31st LD

Chris Hurst (D)
POB 40600
Olympia, WA 98504
Office: 360-786-7866
Fax: 360-786-7317
Email: 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-US-Casualties>)

4294 US Military Deaths (Iraq)

682 US Military Deaths (Afghanistan)

31249 US Military Wounded (Iraq)

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

If you are interested in reading a series of diaries or tributes to our fallen hero's in Iraq or Afghanistan please go to the DailyKos. Daily Kos has a section called "I Got The News Today" which posts the voice of military families who just learned that they lost someone (<http://www.dailykos.com/tag/IGTNT>).