

The Mason County Democrat

"Neighbors Working Together"

Notes from the 35th

by Nancy Frank

Notes from the Vice-Chair

by Andrew Graham

The big change for Mason Democrats this month is that Roslynn Reed has resigned as our Chair to take a position with the League of Women Voters. Roslynn's capable leadership has served us well these last three years and I wish her well in her new adventure. Transitions are always a challenge but we have a great group of people on the Executive Committee to make this happen smoothly, and this change won't hinder our goals of electing Democrats and promoting Democratic principles.

On another topic, two weeks ago I was flying over Greenland and for the first time in my experience the weather was clear enough that I had an excellent view. The ice cap was littered with dozens of glacial lakes, bright blue meltwater so shocking that passengers were jostling to get a view. I don't care if we call it global warming or climate change; I don't care if it's human-caused or part of a natural

cycle. Climate change is real and we have to deal with it.

I'll see you at the C.C. meeting in Memorial Hall, 7pm, Sept. 9.

Andrew Graham
Vice-Chair
Mason County Democrats

Federal Stimulus Dollars Received

The Mason County Board of Commissioners announced the receipt of federal stimulus dollars on two projects. The county received an award not to exceed \$350,000 to pave a portion of McEwain Prairie Rd. The contract was awarded the Ace Paving Co. Inc., of Bremerton in July 2009 for a total of \$262,089.

The second project was to purchase and install 15 solar street lighting systems. The award is not to exceed \$150,000. The contract was awarded to Taurus Industries, Inc, Tumwater for a total of \$200,150. Charlie Butros is the Director of Public Works.

... Jane Roush

To everyone who attended or helped with our August 8th picnic--Amazing job! Thanks to you, it turned out better than we ever expected. In fact, it was our best picnic fundraiser yet (by only a few dollars, but hey, it was still a record). And to Diane Arnold, the auctions and raffles made all the difference between good results and great results. Plus, at an average of nearly \$40 apiece, the dessert auction was a hit. And, of course two rides on the Moyer's boat added a huge boost to the total, too. Thanks again, everyone.

More exciting news—during the business part of the meeting, our PCOs elected Mark Biggs as our new Vice Chair. Welcome Mark and we look forward to working with you.

Our by-laws committee also submitted their recommendations for by-laws amendments for our review before the official vote at our October meeting.

Finally, our push to bring previous members back on board as dues paying members has been extremely successful, as has encouraging all non member PCO's to be aware that they also represent the 35th LD and that part of their duties includes participation in our meetings and events. Starting with 54 paid members we have gained 33 new members for a total 87 members at this date. That is an amazing increase of nearly 40% in only two months!

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Frank, Chair
35th LD Democrats

Upcoming Events

Tue, September 8th, 7 pm. - North Mason DemoChat meeting (*No Host*) at Fiesta Mexican Restaurant (in the Belfair Log Plaza) 23730 State Route 3 - Belfair.

Wed, September 9th, 7 pm - MCDCC Meeting, *Memorial Hall, 210 W Franklin Street, Shelton.*

Wed, September 16th, 11:30 a.m.—Mason County Democratic Women's Club at El Sarapé

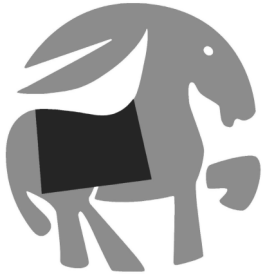
Restaurant in Gateway Center (across from McDonald's).

Mon, September 21st, 7 pm - DemoChat (*No Host*) at El Sarapé Restaurant in Gateway Center (across from McDonald's). (Mason County Chapter of Drinking Liberally - NOT affiliated with MCDCC).

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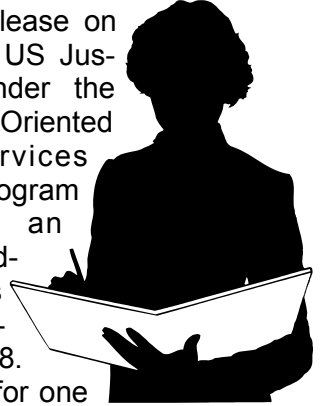
Deadline for articles, news, letters and photos for the October 2009 issue of the MCDCC Newsletter is 5 p. m. Wednesday, Sept 23.

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Ins and Outs

by Jane Roush
- PCO 214 Shelton 14



The Shelton City Commissioners at their August 3rd meeting delayed taking action on the interlocal agreement with Mason County. It proved to be a wise decision since the Mason County Commissioners at their next meeting tabled the agreement until some future date.

The commissioners approved action on the proposed renovation/rebuilding of the old Public Safety Building and building a new fire station. The commissioners awarded the \$3.1M contract to Johns & Roberts Co, Olympia. The contract is contingent upon approval of a loan from the US Dept. of Agriculture Rural Development Office for approximately \$2.8M. At the August 10th meeting, it was announced the cost for the total project was actually \$4.6M. The commissioners agreed to increase the loan request to the Department of Agriculture by an additional \$1.1.

The commissioners also heard from staff members regarding the cost for use of park facilities and city services for special events. For some of the special events, such as the Forest Festival, the pancake breakfast and baseball tournaments, the costs quoted in the current agreement with the sponsoring organizations are not covering the actual costs. The commissioners expressed their concern about public perception if costs are raised, but acknowledged that the city cannot afford to pick up the costs for overtime, trash hauling and other similar expenses. The commissioners punted again and did nothing.

In a news release on July 29th the US Justice Dept under the Community Oriented Policy Services (COPS) program announced an award of Federal stimulus dollars totaling \$261,748.

This grant is for one police officer. The Shelton City Police Chief, Terry Davenport, told the city commissioners at the August 24th meeting that the funds would cover the salary and related expenses to retain an officer for three years. The city must agree to pay the officer's salary for an additional 12 months. Chief Davenport said he had requested funds for three officers and is still looking for other funding sources for the two positions.

The city is also looking for grant money to improve the sidewalks in front of the old Armory. This is a joint project with the Mason Transit Authority but the city appears to completing and submitting the grant applications.

Also this month the commissioners approved an agreement with PUD # 3 to extend water and sewer lines on John's Prairie Rd. It is anticipated the sewer lines and required annexation of property in the area will not be realized for over 20 years, if ever.

The commissioners earlier in the month held a public hearing on the proposed rebuilding of the wastewater treatment plant. I said I had a hard time justifying a 40 year loan on equipment that might only last 20 years. The commissioners also passed a revised land use ordinance that generally updated current subdivision law.

MCDCC Executive Committee

Andrew Graham Vice Chair
Linda Thomson Secretary
Michael O'Day Treasurer
Cathi Bailey State Committee Woman
Mike Mosbarger State Committee Man
Janis Snoey Parliamentarian
Adrienne Amar Sergeant-at-Arms
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Opinions expressed by our contributors do not necessarily represent the views of Mason County Democrats as a whole.

Op-Ed: Rethinking our Expectations

By JOHN KOMEN

It seems a long time ago. All those precinct caucuses, crowded with people who had never before attended a party caucus. Sobered and angered by events wrought during too many years of Bush, young and old of Mason County turned out by the hundreds, the thousands really. Crowded meetings in school gymnasiums were wall to wall with those who had never before taken themselves as serious members of the Democratic Party.

Yet here they were, energized by events, motivated by Democratic Party candidates the country had not seen before in its history.

There was the young man of mixed ancestry, a person so charismatic that he seemed to outshine all the celebrities in this celebrity-driven nation. And there was, finally, a woman of great and unusual capacity whose political toughness uniquely enabled her to lead a troubled America.

And America truly was troubled. Caught up in a bloody and expensive conflict that the vast majority of Americans didn't want and bedeviled by worsening signs of a sickened economy, the people turned serious about the political process. And so they came to their caucuses.

The process took its course. And they chose the young man. We exulted in the hope and promise embodied in the election that gave the nation its first mixed-race president. Even his unusual, foreign-sounding name held out a promise to renew America's damaged image. Vast populations with people bearing similar sounding surnames joyfully reacted around the world. It was a shining moment, and we looked forward to great events that would bring us back to the America we once knew.

Was too much expected of this new, young and unusual president? It is becoming clear that we

did indeed expect too much. And it is even more sobering to realize he too expected too much.

Bailing out the banks and the billionaires, taking over bankrupt insurance companies, confiscating outmoded car makers and rescuing corrupt mortgage brokers were never envisioned. Nor did Americans foresee a wearying, complicated imbroglio over health-care in a lobbyist-driven Democrat-controlled inept Congress.

Certainly this wasn't expected by this energetic leader. His expectations, and ours, still ring out in echoes of his signature chant of "Yes We Can!" But reality has set in. Our naivety has been revealed.

And in a sad way it has been underscored by a recent death. "An Era Ends," declared the Wall Street Journal in its lead story on the passing of Sen. Ted Kennedy. And truly it seems to be so. As faulted as he was, Ted Kennedy was our link to that former America to which we yearned to return. It was a yearning we entrusted to Obama to achieve.

We asked for too much.

Finally, sadly, there is Afghanistan. He pledged to get us out of Iraq. And he's doing it. Yet he is exchanging Iraq for Afghanistan. We are into another bloody quagmire that threatens to engulf us in more blood and debt.

Those caucuses of hope and promise were a long time ago.

—

John Komen was an Obama delegate to the 2008 Democratic Party State Convention in Spokane. He is a former reporter, editor and television journalist. Retired after 40 years in journalism, he lives with wife Diane on Mason Lake.

To all PCOs

Roslynne Reed resigned as Party Chair at the Mason County Democrats' meeting of August 12, effective at the end of that meeting. Currently, Vice Chair Andrew Graham is serving as acting chair. However, our bylaws require an election for Chair the month after the office is vacated. **We hope you will attend this important meeting.**

The election for local Party Chair will occur at the regular monthly meeting. 7 pm, Wed., September 9. This meeting will be held in a different location: Memorial Hall, which is behind the Shelton post office and across the street at 210 W. Franklin Street. Some of you may remember attending our holiday party there.

According to our Party's rules, only Precinct Committee Officers (PCOs) may vote in an election for officers of the organization. Further, Janis Snoey, our Parliamentarian, says that state law defines PCOs as those living within the precinct they serve, who were either elected at the polls in the previous election year, or appointed since then.

Other members of the Mason Democrats who are not PCOs are not eligible to vote for officers, but may vote on most other business of the local Party, and are encouraged to come to this meeting as we witness the democratic process in action.

Roslynne was recently elected as Vice-President for 2009-2010 of the Mason County League of Women Voters, and will begin serving in that capacity in September. According to the current LWV President Sandra Herndon, "During their term, officers of the League do not hold elected or political party office."

Mason County Democrats are grateful to Roslynne for her service as Chair since 2006, and wish her well in her new role.

Sincerely,

Linda Thomson, Secretary
Mason County Democrats

Personal Sacrifices Forgotten

By Greg Case

The personal sacrifices made by the 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence often are overlooked. If lucky, they are a footnote in history. "... [W]e mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor." This closing statement, immediately preceding the 56 signatures, is forever engrained in our national history and was a statement of truth and not exaggeration as shown by the sacrifices that each of these men and their families made.

Five of the signatories were captured, tortured, and as a result died. Upon learning that his house had been burnt and nearly everything lost, Lewis Morris from New York, pondered the news, rose from his seat and proclaimed, "Damn the consequences. Give me the pen." In signing the Declaration, he changed New York's vote from abstention to an "aye" vote for Independence, thus making the Declaration unanimous with all thirteen colonies approving the document. Later during the war, Morris' wife was captured, jailed, and eventually died.

Eleven other signatories also had their houses burnt to the ground. Nine signatories died in

battle during the Revolution, four of them lost children in battle, but it was perhaps New Jersey's Signatory John Hart who had to leave his dying wife at her bedside as the British approached that is the most heart breaking. He left with their thirteen children and was forced to live in caves and forests, until returning a year later to find his house destroyed and his wife long dead. He died two weeks later from exhaustion and a broken heart.

Thomas McKean, understanding the colonies were strapped for cash, refused to be paid for his services. He felt that American Independence was far more important than any luxury for himself. He had to move his family constantly, assuming aliases, and even after all of his possessions were taken from his house, still refused any compensation. He died in poverty, never allowing any charity to be given to him.

During the Battle of Yorktown, Virginia signatory Thomas Nelson Jr, found out through intelligence that British General Cornwallis was encamped at Nelson's house and was using it as his headquarters. Nelson urged Washington to attack the headquarters and not worry about any consequence that would affect him. Washington opened fire on Nelson's house and destroyed it. Nel-

son died bankrupt and forgotten, like so many of the signatories.

These men did not have everything to gain in a revolution, but had everything to lose. They lived comfortably before the Revolution, but were stricken with poverty in the outcome. What is amazing is that there is no record of any of them ever regretting what they did. Many knew their individual sacrifices would be forgotten, and in the case of James Wilson, that is exactly what he wanted. Most were not seeking fame and glory; they were seeking something more profound. They were seeking liberty and freedom - these same liberties and freedoms that were later guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution - these same liberties that we so often take for granted.

So, on the next 4th of July when we hear and see fireworks, think beyond the celebration of Independence, let each of us remind ourselves of the personal sacrifices that were made by each of the 56 signatories along with every individual who fought to secure and preserve our freedom.

NOTE: Jane Roush's analysis of Mason County Republicans' forum on health care appears on our website:
www.masoncountymocrats.com.

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