

September, 2011

The Mason County Democrat

"Neighbors Working Together"

Notes from the Chair

by John Piety

Welcome back to the Mason County Democratic Party Newsletter.

Before I make any comments I want to acknowledge my respect for Commissioner Jerry Lingle. I did not know him or his family personally, but from the limited times I was at a meeting where he was participating I believe his earnest efforts to make Mason County a better place were making a difference in a good way. I felt he was doing his best to do what he believed was right for the county, without worrying about political considerations. He was still in the middle of a steep learning curve, but his strength and commitment were working. I would like to let his family know they can be very proud of what he had accomplished. I am extremely sorry he will not be able to continue this effort.

John

For interested Democratic readers we have a number of opportunities for you to help support your local Democrats!

We did receive a number of positive comments from the public at the booths we had at both Allyn Days and the Mason Area Fair. I believe participation at these events was worth the effort. The only concern is we could have used more volunteers. There will be a number of chances in the future to actually help.

It will not be too long before we have an

office where we can all gather to make calls and organize to help our Democratic candidates! A process is being developed where we will have outside speakers at our discussion sessions. This will give everyone an opportunity to participate during the hour before our regular meetings. A number of great Democrats are trying to see if we can offer a type of child care at our meetings. This will make it possible for members with children to attend without having to pay for a baby sitter, bring your friends as well.

I have asked folks reading this newsletter a number of times to please attend the general meeting. It is not hard for me to believe most of you understand why attendance is important, it's just that the majority of you do not follow through. It is important to attend to help prevent only a few individuals from dictating party policy and procedures.

Another process that will be coming up is how the party deals with the final redistricting. The county has gone from 57 precinct to 37. Since the PCO's are the voters in our party that make policy and endorse candidates how they are selected is very important. The state party is

just starting to discuss how to proceed. It would be a nice gesture if more of you could see your way clear to help.

Still, not everyone has had a chance to pay their dues. If possible, if you have not paid your \$25 can you please help us all by doing so. Michael is always available to collect your check or cash as best for you, also you can use Pay Pal on the website.

I am looking forward to the election year that is very fast approaching. If you want to make sure those elected support your way of having the political process work, I look forward to seeing you soon as well!

Upcoming Events

Wed, Sept 14, 7:00 pm—MCDCC regular meeting at Shelton's PUD3. Preceded by an open discussion at 6:00 pm With Mason County School Board members.

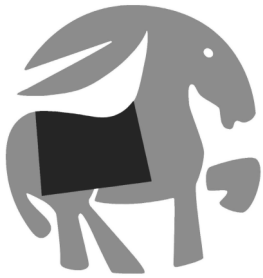
Mon, Sept 19th, 6:30 pm—DemoChat at Grove Street Brewhouse in Shelton. (Mason County Chapter of Drinking Liberally - NOT affiliated with MCDCC).

Wed, Sept 21, 11:30 am—Mason County Democratic Women's Club **WILL NOT MEET** in September.

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Deadline for articles, news, letters and photos for the October 2011 issue of the MCDCC Newsletter is 5 p.m. Friday, September 22.

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News from Around the Region

By Jane Roush

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Opinions expressed by our contributors do not necessarily represent the views of Mason County Democrats as a whole.

Voter ID:

Recently the states of Wisconsin and Texas enacted laws requiring voters to show official, valid photo ID in order to cast a ballot. There are now 12 states requiring photo ID in order to vote, including Florida, Kansas and South Carolina. Republican controlled legislatures in another 13 states are working to have similar laws enacted.

The proposed law revisions are not limited just to photo ID, but in some cases the changes will reduce the number of early voting days and/or tighten registration rules. Florida now has a law restricting third party voter registration organization and has shortened the number of early voting days. This change has resulted in the League of Women Voters in Florida ceasing to register voters.

Republicans are saying they want to weed out fraudulent votes and preserve the integrity of the ballot box. Florida Republicans have claimed large increases in the immigrant population forces them to take step to insure voters are legally entitled to vote.

Democrats say it is all about putting obstacles in the way of voters, especially young people, poor people and minorities. Usually these groups are less inclined to have driver's licenses, which are usually the main source of ID's. Older people often do not have driver's licenses.

Most states are accepting other types of ID, such as passports, military identification, or photo ID's from the state's Department of Motor Vehicles. The cost to retrieve copies of documents such as birth certificates will add another barrier to getting ID's.

Partisan politicians are driving the changes. Generally the states where the Republicans control the state legislatures are where voter ID

laws are being introduced and enacted.

However there also appear to be some instances where the parties are switching sides. In Rhode Island, the state legislature and governor positions are controlled/filled by Democrats. They enacted and signed a law-requiring photo ID for voting. The Ohio State legislature passed a similar bill and the Ohio governor was ready to sign the bill until the Secretary of State of Ohio objected. The Ohio SOS said that no bill was better than a bill that did nothing to control or detect fraud and legally filled voter ballots might not be counted. Republicans control the Ohio legislature and governorship.

Beyond all of the proposed changes are money issues. If funding is not available for the voter ID laws, many of these proposed changes will not be enacted.

Sources include: NY Times, "Voter Registration and Requirements," August 23, 2011; NY Times, "Republican Legislators Push to Tighten Voting Rules," May 28, 2011; and electionlineWeekly, August 18, 2011, 1. In Focus This Week, "Suddenly, the voter ID debate is unpredictable."

Speaker's Forums

The fall presentation of speakers/programs for the 6:00pm meeting of the MCDCC will kick off on September 14, 2011. The first program will be the elected officials for various school boards in Mason County. The speakers will talk about the duties and responsibilities of school board officials. They will also discuss how the administrative officials and staff work with the school boards.

OFA Update: Let Them Eat Cake

By Marcia Hamilton

August 4, 2011 was President Obama's 50th birthday and we wanted to celebrate it with joy! At a house meeting a month before, a volunteer had a great idea.



"Why not do a flash mob at the Shelton Thursday night concert!" Someone else suggested we do the hokey pokey putting our "left foot and left arms in and out." Then another person cautioned that we had better let the concert leaders know our intention and not do a flash mob, but just the song, and why not do "Happy Birthday."

Our event was born!

Our idea was to form a circle with everyone holding "birthday candles" (made out of IM IN signs) with a yellow paper flame. We ordered a real cake from Laura Lewis' Sugar Cakes Bakery and brought plenty of plates, forks and napkins so we could share the real cake with the concert-going crowd.

About two weeks before the concert I was successful in contacting the band leaders and told them what we planned. I asked if they would play *Happy Birthday* during intermission. The wife of the band leader said she'd ask her husband, but "she didn't think so because they were Republicans." She said she'd get back to me, but she never did.

Our plans went forward, the cake was ordered, baked, picked up and delivered to us in our practice park (Thanks Sheri!) where 25 of us had gathered at 6:00 p.m. to make candles and practice our 5-minute song and dance routine (Thanks Liz) —with real live saxophone accompaniment (Thanks Vanessa !). Everyone chipped in a few dollars and we covered the cake cost. We decided to do our song at the beginning of the concert—before the real music started, so we proceeded across the street toward the gazebo. We were ready to honor our President, make a video of his live birthday cake to send to him, and share the real cake with all of the concert goers.

However our song and dance did not go as planned. As we approached the



growing crowd, an irate man came up to me and said, "You can't do this here! The rotary has leased this park and our policy is no politics." I responded by saying, "All we want to do is sing happy birthday to the President, that's not political. He's our President." (I hadn't even mentioned the left-wing hokey pokey!) The man said, "You're not allowed here. You must leave!"

Sheri saved the day. She said, "Let's do it in the street. We know that's public property." Not to be dissuaded, we called the group together and formed a semblance of a circle. We led with "Left wing hokey pokey" and sang "happy birthday" second! Liz gave us our cue and we did our song and dance. We were definitely being political, but you couldn't tell, because the band started the concert 5 minutes early to drown us out!

What has this country come to? Why were we not welcome at the concert? Why couldn't they just say, "Sure....come on in." Why was singing *Happy Birthday* to President Obama seen as an affront? What about "free speech?" What about the right to assemble in a public park? I really believe the institution of the Presidency is disrespected. Where is the dignity to be afforded to the leader of our country—no matter who s/he is? Why is singing

"happy birthday" to our president seen as "political" and not seen as "patriotic?" (They didn't even know about the left wing hokey pokey when they threw us out!) Indeed, *not* being allowed to sing to him was in fact a political decision made by the Republican members of the Rotary to keep us from honoring our President. But all in all, had we been allowed to sing, it would have been such a nice community event. All we were was a bunch of folks dancing and singing happy birthday, and sharing red white and blue birthday cake. We would probably have even left the "left wing hokey pokey" out in the spirit of bipartisanship!

Instead, not being welcomed, we took our cake (and ate it too) across to the other park. We ate it all by our ourselves using Judy's fork-instead-of-knife method. And maybe that's the lesson....*they* don't want to share. So we'll just *take the cake* in 2012.

Happy Birthday Mister President Got it up on YOU TUBE.... Here is the link <http://youtu.be/eWXUojZmG2w>

Photo info: 25 Mason County Washington OFA team members formed a circular "birthday cake" with "IM IN" candles to celebrate President Obama's 50th birthday. Led by singer Liz Teisan and accompanied by Vanessa.

Mason County Democratic Women's Club Update

by Marilyn Sayan

Democratic Women's Club President / PCO 122 Miller

The Democratic Women's Club will not meet in September. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, October 19, 2011 at El Sarapes Restaurant beginning at noon. We don't have a program set yet so specifics about the program will be included in next month's newsletter.

State Representative Fred Finn was our speaker at the August 17th meeting. At the outset, Fred announced that he would not seek another term, noting that it was a difficult decision because he has enjoyed serving in the Legislature and working on the many difficult issues facing the state. As vice chair of the Community Development and Housing Committee, Fred's recent visits to numerous emergency transi-

tional and low-income housing facilities emphasized the need to improve the policies dealing with those efforts since one single approach doesn't work for all communities. Fred also spoke about the impact declining revenues had on the legislature's efforts to address funding of transportation and education programs. After responding to questions from the floor, Fred reminded us that he still has another year left in his term and that he would continue working hard for the 35th District through the end of 2012. We all know we can depend on Fred to live up to that commitment and thank him for his great work thus far!



Fundraising Reception for Kathy Haigh

Please join friends, family and supporters at a fundraising reception in support of Rep. Kathy Haigh's 2012 re-election campaign for State Representative in the 35th district! Show your support for Rep. Haigh and help get the campaign under way by making a contribution of \$35, \$50, \$100, or whatever you can afford. Light appetizers and complimentary beverages will be served.

Tuesday, September 13th, 2011

5:00-7:00 pm

Grove Street Brewhouse

233 S 1st Street Shelton, WA 98584

To RSVP or for more information please contact Mina Mercer at mina@hdcc.org or (206) 381-1220.

Can't attend the event? Campaign contributions can be mailed to Committee to Re-Elect Kathy Haigh, 81 SE Walker Park Rd, Shelton, WA 98584.

Maxine Waters Faces Up to the Tea Party

Compromise requires a partner, writes Leonard Pitts Jr. After you have reasoned with the bully, bargained with the bully, tried to appease the bully, sometimes the only remaining option is to punch the bully in the nose. That's what Maxine Waters just did to the tea party. Good for her.

I am pleased to report the sighting of an artifact so rarely seen among Democrats that it has become the stuff of legend and conjecture, like Bigfoot or the Loch Ness monster. It is called a spine.

Said spine was briefly glimpsed a little over a week ago at a "jobs summit" in Inglewood, Calif., in the person of Rep. Maxine Waters. "I'm not afraid of anybody," the California Democrat said. "... And as far as I'm concerned, the 'tea party' can go straight to hell."

Her words left the Tea Party Patriots sputtering about the need to play nice. "The president and all leaders of the Democratic Party, who have called for civility in the past, are neglecting to censure their own," the group said, according to The Washington Post. "Is civility only required from their opponents?" Which is funnier than a Bill Cosby monologue, coming from the

folks who turned town hall meetings into verbal brawls and threw rocks through windows because they opposed health-care reform.

I intend no blanket lionization here of Rep. Waters, who is the object of a protracted ethics probe and whom I have for years privately dubbed "Mad Max," in both consternation and admiration of her feistiness. Moreover, as hypocritical and self-serving as the Tea Party Patriots' statement is, it is also correct: Telling people to go to hell is about as uncivil as it gets. I could never, in ordinary times, applaud such conduct.

But no one will ever mistake these for ordinary times.

These are, rather, times in which the nation's civic dialogue, the ordinary political business of give and take, has been made hostage to the whims of a loud, incoherent minority that has used its very extremism as a weapon. Seventy percent of us, according to a Gallup poll, think both tax increases and spending cuts ought to be used to reduce the budget deficit. That reasonable, balanced approach was not a part of the debt-ceiling deal because the tea party threatened, credibly, to push the nation into default rather than allow it.

Republicans have been shamefully complaisant toward this behavior, unable to produce a stateswoman — or man — willing to stand up for the sim-

ple idea that one should put national welfare above ideological purity.

Democrats have been their usual hapless, communicatively challenged selves, the congressional equivalent of the kid in school who walks around all day with "Kick Me" taped to his back, then wonders why people keep kicking him.

The need of a viable third party has seldom been more apparent. What is lost here, though, is not simply points for a given party but, rather, our very ability to compromise, which is, after all, the soul of politics. Nor, obviously, will Waters' intemperate remark do anything to bring that ability back.

But it does acknowledge a reality President Obama refuses to accept: Compromise requires a partner. When the other party's bottom line is that you fail, when that is the opponent's prime directive, the most important item on their agenda, then you lack both that partner and any basis for negotiation.

To put that another way: after you have reasoned with the bully, bargained with the bully, tried to appease the bully, sometimes the only remaining option is to punch the bully in the nose.

That's what Maxine Waters just did. Good for her.

Miami Herald columnist Leonard Pitts Jr.'s column appears regularly on editorial pages of *The Times*. His email address is: lpitts@miamiherald.com