

*The Voice of Benton County Democrats*  
**THE DEMOCRATIC REPORTER**



**June 2009**

[WWW.BENCODEMS.ORG](http://WWW.BENCODEMS.ORG)

**HOTLINE 585-7682**

**2009/10 Officers**

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**From the Chair**

Our First 100 Days Celebration was a great success. I'll like to thank our Chair Ginny McIntyre, our Host, Speakers and all the support folks that graciously volunteered even during the event when asked help! If you have any comments related to the event, laudatory or otherwise, please sent them to me or leave them on our HOTLINE.

We're holding another **Workshop for Candidates & Campaign Supporters**. This time it's being held on a **Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup> in Granger about 50 minutes West on I-82, 1 – 7 pm**. More information on the workshop in on our website Calendar. The State Party Vice-Chair will be in attendance and others that are serious about running in Eastern and Central Washington in 09 and 2010. It's being sponsored by Progressive Majority and the State Party.

If you're interested in seeing the **DNC in action**, you'll have an opportunity **August 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> in Coeur d'Alene** where their Western Regional Meeting will be held. I'm sure a lot of elected federal House and Senate members will be in attendance from the 12 Western States in addition to DNC officials from the various states and national office as well. Bet on Caucuses being a hot topic along with some interesting speeches and side sessions as well. More information on our **Website Calendar**. We'll provide an Agenda when available on our Website.

Our Labor brothers and sisters need your help. When it comes to Democratic values I can't think of any group more worthy of our support than the men and women in organized labor. It's not that everything Labor wants should be lock step with Democratic policy. And it's not that Labor's record is unblemished, either. Seems everyone has a favorite story about the bad behavior or corruption of unions. But you only have to look at how organized and corporate businesses treat their employees when not represented, to see why organized labor is so important. When no one represents the best interests of working Americans we all suffer. It's no surprise to find the dramatic shrinking of America's middle class to parallel an equally dramatic shrinking in the ranks of organized labor.

No one speaks in support of working Americans more passionately than organized Labor. The thresholds of wage scales and benefits that we've come to expect for working Americans [not just union members] is in large part do to the influence of organized labor in our political process. That's why I find it interesting when our local Labor leaders ask for Democratic support in their struggles over wages, benefits, contract language, etc. little interest is shown. We've had numerous opportunities over the past few months to add our feet to the street by walking with union members in their struggles, but few Democrats respond. You certainly won't run into Republicans at such events, but it doesn't appear you'll run into many Democrats either.

**UFCW [United Food and Commercial Workers] Local 21** is holding an Informational Gathering **Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup> at John Dam Plaza, 5 to 6 pm in Richland** to bring visibility to their struggle to negotiate a fair contract with Tri-City Laboratories. At the same time TCL is celebrating their 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of opening their offices in the Tri-Cities. Show your support by joining the workers who helped make this anniversary possible.

There are many, many non-partisan races shaping up for municipal positions throughout the County. The filing deadline is June 5<sup>th</sup>. If you have any interest in such positions, PLEASE let us know, we'd be more than happy to support candidates that share our Democratic values.

## **Mid-Columbia Community for Change (MCC4C)**

Mid-Columbia Community for Change will hold its next meeting on Monday, June 15th at the Kennewick branch of the Mid-Columbia Library located at 1620 S. Union St. in Kennewick. The meeting will start at 7:00 p.m. We continue to explore ways to create positive changes in our community through political action, community service, education and social interaction. Please join us.

We ask people attending our meetings to bring donations for the local food banks.. Our donations last month helped to stock the pantry at the Vista Youth Center and were very much appreciated.

MCC4C will be participating in the June 6th house parties, which Organizing for America is promoting. The purpose of the house parties will be to kick off a grassroots campaign to make health care reform happen. Planning for a health care related community service project to take place on the next National Day of Service, June 27th, will occur during this gathering. MCC4C members Ann and Chuck Eaton have graciously agreed to host a house party. For information about their event and to sign up go to <http://my.barackobama.com/page/event/detail/gpcs8x>. Others are encouraged to host their own parties as well.

MCC4C is on Facebook - check us out!

### **From the Tri-City Democrats**

There are so many people to thank! So many people did so much to make the 100-day celebration party for the Obama presidency a success. They include planners, decorators, flower providers (Carol's hand-delivered tulips from W. WA!), wine providers, sound system engineers, speakers, chefs, food servers, wine servers, registration table workers, and post-event cleaners.

I tried to send thank you notes to the people we don't see every day, but I know I missed some, specifically, the volunteers who helped serve food. We want to thank Robbie Sherburne for her generous donation of 2 cases of wine. We want to thank Harlow Archibald again for her kitchen magic. Her generous food prep helped us keep the budget reasonable and allowed us to actually net about 700 dollars, which local Democratic groups will split. (It was not even a fundraiser.)

If you did not receive a thank you note in the mail, please know that the Tri-City Democrats are grateful to you!

I will emphasize to each of you that we would love for you to attend our TCD meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month (except July, which will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday as it is a special event: hosting the Pastors for Peace group as they sweep toward Cuba for their annual sharing of medical

and other supplies). Please check the [www.bencodem.org](http://www.bencodem.org) website for updates on locations.

### **Update on Organizing for America:**

Dustin Lambro, Chair of Organizing for America, WA State, was here to host a Listening Tour. He listened to us voice concerns and offer advice on healthcare, energy, and education. It was in line with the house parties and tea parties we hosted earlier this year. More people will be hosting house parties in the next weeks.

Preceding the Listening Tour meeting, we had a hike up Badger Mountain and raised about 175 dollars for the Second Harvest. The Second Harvest personnel were very glad for the proceeds. We had already supplied 3 local food banks with hundreds of pounds of food earlier this year. We hope to continue with such donations in the future -- to even more organizations.

Thank you so much, hikers and donators. Thank you so much, Erik Horheis and Mimi Latta for helping with data entry.

FYI, Organizing for America is the official group that formed from the original national Obama campaign. They are turning toward community service to help the country recover from the last few years of economic and altruistic stagnation. We hope you will choose to attend some events and offer your energy and insight to this growing, dynamic group!

### **The Value of Opposition**

Kendall Miller, 8th LD Chair

Every day seems to bring another speech, comment, or action in which the Republican Party proves itself to be more unconstructive and irrelevant. Specter and Powell indicate that their party has abandoned many of their supporters.

I'm really going to miss them. Not because they are interesting. But because of the dangers posed by unchecked Democrats. Not every idea proposed by a Democrat is a good one. Ideas must be refined and tested. They must be tempered by sound criticism. Sharp turnarounds happen when pendulum swings too far. In a sharp turnaround, the fluid middle gets forgotten. A turnaround is deceptive. It can appear that the mandate is greater than it really is. This was the Republican mistake and it can turn into the Democratic mistake. It gets so bad that it doesn't take much for the folks in the middle to jump to the other side in a quantum shift.

As a party we need to be ready to welcome disenchanted Republicans into our fold. But in time we need to be ready to let them free again to rebuild a more reasonable Republican party when the current madness has run its course. In the long run, we should learn to be

comfortable with a fair-sized chunk of undecided voters in between the two parties. Those voters should be targeted not to bamboozle them into voting democratic to win an election here and there. But rather they should be targeted as the constituency to whom and for whom we need to make the case for progressive policies.

It's not enough to just have a good idea. As a governing party one needs to be able to articulate and defend that idea in a way that is understandable by the independent middle. One of my favorite physics professors told us that one really doesn't know atomic physics unless one can explain it to one's mother. Think about what sort of analogies one might use to explain the behavior of electron shell energy states to someone from a different generation with a completely different educational background. Similarly, if Democrats are to win and keep the middle they must explain progressive ideas in ways that makes good common sense to an independent-minded voter.

If there isn't a viable opposition party gunning for that middle too, Democrats will become lazy. They will get used to winning elections by default. A case in point is the fire and energy of the Spokane democrats where elections are still a toss-up compared to the democrats of a place like Bellingham. In the former, the democrats have to make the case for going green in the first place. In the latter the only discussion is about relative levels of greenness.

The other side of the coin is that in Benton County , the Republicans are in that lazy state. Here they win elections by default because of the paucity of viable Democratic candidates. Because of our own inability to speak to the independents, the Republicans have been able to put into office a batch of truly out-of-touch people that verge on being a laughing stock in the statehouse and Congress. (Colonel Klink, indeed.) In Franklin County the Republicans are beginning to consume their own.

Even though winning elections is important, I think the party needs to be circumspect about playing political games to just get into or stay in office. The best policy for continued power and influence is to govern well. And quite frankly, when the opposition becomes irrelevant or ineffective, we run a high risk of beginning to use power for the sake of maintaining continued power. While we decry those tendencies in others we, all too often, fail to recognize the roots of those actions in ourselves.

It is my hope that the Republican Party comes to its right mind soon. Not for their sakes but for the sake of accountable governance.

## **Tri-City Democrats & Unitarian Church Host Caravan to Cuba**

Please mark July 9<sup>th</sup> on your calendars! The Pastors for Peace Caravan is coming through the Tri-Cities bound for Cuba. The event will take place at the Community Unitarian Universalist Church at 2819 W Sylvester St. in Pasco on THURSDAY, July 9<sup>th</sup> with a potluck at 6 pm and a presentation by the Caravanistas and the folk singers, Shannon & Mike Truex.

The speaker is Lisa Valanti who has traveled to Cuba over 20 times. Among her many accomplishments was facilitating the University of Pittsburgh's Semester at Sea which traveled to Cuba. This group of over 700 students was the largest number of students to visit Cuba. Lisa was on two historic campaigns of Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization/Pastors for Peace: the 23-day fast, which won the release of the "Little Yellow School Bus" that had been seized by the US Treasury Department (1993); and the 94-day Fast for Life, which won the release of 400 medical computers also destined for Cuba and also impounded by the US government (1996). In describing her participation with Pastors for Peace US-Cuba Friendship Caravans, Lisa explained, "It's what I do to put my deepest prayers for peace into action."

Please join us for an informative evening, good food, and conversation

## **Web Calendar**

<http://www.bencodems.org/calendar.shtml>



**HOTLINE 585-7682**

**Website**

**www.bencodems.org**

# June 2009 Calendar

**Mon Jun  
1 June 2009  
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Calendar**

**June 2009 Calendar**

<b>Tue Jun 2</b>	<b>7pm – 8:30pm</b>	<b>Drinking Liberally .... Shilo</b>
<b>Thu Jun 4</b>	<b>5pm – 6pm</b>	<b>UFCW Local 21 Informational Gathering - John Dam Plaza, Richland</b>
<b>Fri Jun 5</b>		<b>Final Filing Day - Benton County Auditors Office</b>
<b>Sat Jun 6</b>	<b>12pm – 2pm</b>	<b>Organizing for America - House Party for Health Care - 2309 Davison Ave. Richland</b>
<b>Sun Jun 7</b>	<b>1pm – 7pm</b>	<b>Candidate &amp; Campaigning Workshop - KDNA, 21 Sunnyside Ave., Granger, WA. 98932</b>
<b>Tue Jun 9</b>	<b>– 8:30pm</b>	<b>Drinking Liberally .... Shilo , Special GUEST . DWIGHT PELZ, State Party Chair will 'drop in'</b>
<b>Thu Jun 11</b>	<b>6:30pm – 8:30pm</b>	<b>E Board Meeting - IBEW 77 Central Kennewick on Clearwater</b>
<b>Fri Jun 12</b>	<b>6pm 7pm – 8pm</b>	<b>Tri-City Democrats Potluck &amp; Program – Richland Labor Temple, Goethals &amp; Knight St. Richland</b>
<b>Mon Jun 15</b>	<b>7pm – 5:30am</b>	<b>Mid-Columbia Community 4 Change Meeting – Mid-Columbia Library, 16<sup>th</sup> &amp; S. Union, Kenn</b>
<b>Tue Jun 16</b>	<b>7pm – 8:30pm</b>	<b>Drinking Liberally .... Shilo</b>
<b>Wed Jun 17</b>	<b>7pm – 9pm</b>	<b>BCDCC Central Committee Meeting - IBEW Local 77, Central Kennewick on Clearwater</b>
<b>Sun Jun 21</b>		<b>Father's Day</b>
<b>Mon Jun 22</b>	<b>8pm – 9pm</b>	<b>Last Day for Newsletter Submissions</b>
<b>Tue Jun 23</b>	<b>7pm – 8:30pm</b>	<b>Drinking Liberally .... Shilo</b>
<b>Thu Jun 25</b>	<b>10am – 11:30am</b>	<b>Newsletter assembly and mailing - Shilo Inn</b>
<b>Sat Jun 27</b>	<b>8am – 1pm</b>	<b>Organizing for America - Tri-Cities Day of Service - Place to be Determined</b>
<b>Tue Jun 30</b>	<b>7pm – 8:30pm</b>	<b>Drinking Liberally .... Shilo</b>
<b>Sat Jul 4</b>		<b>Independence Day</b>
<b>Tue Jul 7</b>	<b>7pm – 8:30pm</b>	<b>Drinking Liberally .... Shilo</b>
<b>Thu Jul 9</b>	<b>6:30pm – 8:30pm</b>	<b>Caravan To Cuba, TCD Potluck 6 pm, Program 7, Unitarian Church, 2819 W. Sylvester, Pasco</b>
<b>Fri Jul 10</b>	<b>6pm – 8pm</b>	<b>E-Board Meeting, IBEW Local 77, Central Kennewick on Clearwater</b>