

# THE DEMOCRATIC REPORTER

May 2007 Issue

[www.bencodems.org](http://www.bencodems.org)

509-585-7682

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## From the Chair....

The 90 days ARE UP! ... And I thank all of our loyal supporters for their patience through these winter months. I hope you used this respite to pursue other seasonal interests rather than worrying about ‘what’s happening to the Party’ or ‘whether we’ll have a Party’. We’re going to resume our Central Committee Meetings beginning on May 9<sup>th</sup> at the Richland Public Library, Gallery. It’ll begin at 7 pm.

During this hiatus I talked to a lot of people, reflected on our structure and organization and crystallized my goals in TWO principal areas: 1) To GROW THE PARTY and increase the number of actively involved supporters and 2) to ELECT DEMOCRATS to public office within Benton County.

With respect to GROWING THE PARTY, I’ve targeted three priorities: A) expand our base by attracting NEW supporters, B) expand our base by renewing the involvement of our existing base, and C) organizing an outreach to demographic groups in Benton County such as labor, the business community, the college and high-school communities, recently registered voters and newcomers, and the many diversity based organizations in our area. Many of these have been our traditional bases and I think over the years we’ve failed to maintain the integrity of our bridges to these organizations.

Regarding ELECTING DEMOCRATS to public office, let me explain that my principal goal will be to support the seating of Democrats in any and all community, city and county non-partisan public service positions, then move to municipal non-partisan governmental seats, then partisan County seats and finally on to the State and Federal level. It may be appear backwards to some, but to elect Democrats

to any positions; we first have to ‘grow’ Democrats with an eye toward future public service. I’ll be discussing these goals in more detail in future installments on the Website and here in the Newsletter.

Watch for the 2<sup>nd</sup> installment on the web and in the Reporter! In the mean time, keep your eyes open for Democrats that may be interested in becoming more involved in the party. Your OWN network of friends and associates is one of our best opportunities to get others involved.

See YOU on Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup> and bring a friend. And remember to check our Dem HOTLINE @ **585-7682** for the latest in meeting times, locations and other information. Our website is **bencodems.org**

## Spotlight

There’s much being said about presidential candidates in the press, blogs, and network media. It’s getting a lot of attention and sucking up a tremendous amount of capital. And much of the energy expended by many of the organizations like MoveOn, Progressive Dems, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Dems, etc. is used on national issues, missteps of this administration, and presidential candidates of all stripes.

If we spend all of your political energy in these areas, then what’s left for local politics? I’m not saying that such national and regional issues don’t affect us any less directly. Obviously they do! But I would hope that you’d reserve some of your political energy and capital for the local party.

It appears easier to get support for ONE issue or ONE candidate than it is for the Party. I find such support brings out the people, but interest quickly wanes in the shadow of the election.

Why do you think that is? And what can we do together to correct it?

## From the Editor

It is my pleasure to be a member of the Benton County Democrats and to serve as your editor. I have been a Democrat my whole life, but to become active at this time in our nation’s political history is very intriguing. I was raised by a Democratic father in Minnesota when Hubert

Humphrey and Walter Mondale were important. You will never have to worry about where I am coming from. My father was a union organizer.

I am a faculty member of Washington State University and focus on botanical issues and ecological restoration. I came to the Tri-Cities in 1985 to work at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and have been at WSU since 1996. I find myself doing science and writing faster all the time. If you read the Sunday Tri-City Herald you will find my Natural History column every five weeks.

I am an editor for other organizations and have written newsletters before, so I will warn you, that I expect you to give me your written contributions. Please view this activity as a responsibility and a pleasure for you. I believe the more motivated we are as a group the better we will be viewed by those around us. The more you write the better for the Benton County Democratic Party, for the Democratic Party, and for the United States of America. Don't be afraid. What you write here can also go the newspapers. I believe that Republicans read the Tri-City Herald. We need to speak to them. You need to speak to them. We need to figure out how to make them feel good, how to create hope, and for them to feel that being a Democrat is really where they were all the time. They should feel that they were misled. They were of course. Please say this to them in a positive manner. We will never gain support by accusing them of being criminals or worse, so please be positive.

I will take submissions by e-mail, or by letter. My home address is 4604 E. Robin Ct., West Richland, WA 99353. For those without computers, I assure you that I will type your contributions into the newsletter.

## A Natural Story

**Dr. Steven O. Link**

It was a sunny day and everyone was happy and very busy. Busy obtaining energy and resources for life. These needs are required by all and everyday without fail. The highly diverse native plant community had evolved together to acquire the sun's energy, water, and soil nutrients very efficiently. Some plants were very small and acquired their needs in the interspaces between their very large neighbors. Their very large neighbors (sagebrush, *Artemisia tridentata*) were able to access resources that their small neighbors could not and were even able to present water to their smaller neighbors. It may have been a simple transfer of wealth, but no one was hurt and the entire ecosystem was efficiently sustained.

Then a dark day came to pass. Somehow an invasive alien plant entered the ecosystem. I know why, but don't really want to blame the poor farmers who had no idea what they were doing to themselves. This little plant was able to move into any unoccupied niche in the ecosystem. Unoccupied niches were caused by and continue to be

caused by us as we continue to break the soil. The little devil cares little for its neighbors as is can do fine without them. It does need their resources though. It can make use of the large plant's ability to provide it with water and will move in to the large plant's open doors. At some point the little, survival of the fittest, competitor will catch fire and destroy the efficiency of the its new home. Although the weed will continue, the native species (sagebrush) will not. Under these circumstances the self-centered competitor will prevent native species from re-establishing and all the while letting valuable resources (water) leave the ecosystem to nobody's good.

How self-centered and inefficient! Cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) has a way of destroying diversity and wasting resources. Somehow I see the current crop of Republicans to be very similar to weeds and Democrats to be members of the efficient and diverse ecosystem. It is possible to control weeds and to return society to an efficient and diverse structure. Organized and cooperative "Democratic" behavior has a way of putting little troublemakers in their place! Let's continue our recent successes and convince more of those who been fooled that the future is bright!

## Response

**Bob Parazin**

Interesting analogy. I personally wouldn't call Dems efficient. More diverse ..... sure. Organized and cooperative Dem 'behavior'? I haven't seen much 'organized' behavior recently except for the 50 state strategy, the 'solid' Dem opposition to Social Security changes and possibly the 'Drug' bill. Even the 'Civil Rights Act of 64' wouldn't have been passed w/o some Republican support.

But aren't all plants committed to survival? If the environment is conducive to their survival plants will thrive. If the environment changes dramatically through circumstance beyond their control or to which they can't adapt, they will wither. Our political ecosystem or environment is always changing and parties just as plants must adapt or whither. Adaptation takes time and if the changes are slow enough, natural selection may be successful. But parties can do a number of things that plants cannot. They can influence their environment, reshape it and modify the elements of their being to exploit their new surroundings.

Plants that long for the soils of yesteryear must either find such soils through propagation/dispersal or eventually wither. Parties however do not.

The strength of the party IMHO has been its ability to adapt, to look forward, embrace new ideas and recognize that change is inevitable. The party that can recognize the unchanging basic human needs of Americans and build the necessary governmental infrastructure and institutions to accommodate them in a changing world will be

successful.

## **Barack Obama**

### **Bob Bowersock PCO Precinct 160.**

An avid reader I'm not, nor a fast reader either, however I am currently about a third of the way into Barack Obama's book, "The Audacity of Hope". I find his book to have a common sense approach to many of today's issues that concern me. The following quotation is from his chapter on Politics, "Most voters conclude that everyone in Washington (D.C.) is 'just playing politics,' meaning that votes or positions are taken contrary to conscience, that they are based on campaign contributions or the polls or loyalty to party rather than on trying to do what is right ....All of which leads to the conclusion that if we want anything to change in Washington, we'll need to throw the rascals out.

"And yet year after year we keep the rascals right where they are, with the reelection vote for the House members hovering at around 96%"

Another quote from an earlier chapter impressed me. ".....Because all of us are imperfect and can never act with certainty that God is on our side, and yet we must act nonetheless, as if we are certain, protected from error only by providence."

These quotes and the book in general give me hope that there is someone out there running for president that has some insight as well as common sense in his approach to today's issues. If you agree or even if you don't, I recommend you read Obama's book. For me it answered the question as to whether or not he is presidential material.

## **January 6th BCDCC Reorganization Meeting Results**

A spirited turnout, a cloud of smoke and by a hearty 'by unanimous vote' ... all our open County and 8th Legislative District positions were filled (almost). Jim McCabe and Glynn Stevens battled for the State Committeeman position, with Glynn emerging the winner.

Here's the rundown of officers. For Benton County, Bob Parazin, County Chair, Regina Speer, Vice-Chair, Gloria Cummins Secretary, Mac Dillsi Treasurer, John Latta State Committeeman and Mimi Latta, our past Chair, State Committeewoman. For the 8th LD, Kendall Miller 8th LD Chair, Nancy Beitel Vice-Chair, Donna Ling Secretary, Tim Bloomster Treasurer, Glynn Stevens State Committeeman and Gloria Cummins State Committeewoman.

The 16th Legislative District Reorganization Meeting was held in Walla Walla at the Blue Mountain Mall on Saturday, January 20. Since a portion of the 16th LD falls in Benton County. We encourage all elected PCOs in the 16th to participate. We'll provide the results here as soon as they're available.

## **An Important Repeat from Mimi Latta**

I'd like to ask you to again consider the idea of supporting the BCDCC with a monthly donation. A yearly donation of \$120 is great, but not too many of us donate that much at one time. -Our newsletter goes out to around 1000 households. If 1 out of 10 would donate \$10 per month, we'd pay for the newsletter, website, and phone without a single fundraiser. If 2 out of 10 donate, we could have the above and \$12,000 to help candidates start up their campaigns. If only 3 out of 10 Democrats on our list would donate, we could also have a year-round office where we'd hold meetings, attract candidates and be a focal point. Please think about this as you decide whom to support with your dollars. Consider doing it for one year and then assessing the change your donation made in Benton County!

## **George Fearing**

Like Charles Dickens' Paris of the Revolution, running for the state legislature is "the best of times and the worst of times." The candidate encounters difficulty sleeping, worrying about what can be done to increase the odds of winning. The candidate suffers ignoble comments from the press and accusations from the public of being a crook. The candidate works long hours going from door to door to promote his candidacy and message, while his significant other accuses him of spending no time with her. Colleagues wonder what makes the candidate so special that he should run for office, as opposed to another party member.

The candidate encounters strangers, who say: "I have heard good things about you and will vote for you." The candidate is treated like royalty at debates and fora. Friends and colleagues donate money and volunteer time to assist in the campaign.

At the end of the campaign, the candidate can say he worked hard and did his best, no matter the outcome. I encourage everyone to run for political office, at least once in life.

## **Kennedy for Coroner**

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you for all the advise, encouragement and support that was bestowed upon me during my campaign. I could not have done a well as I did without you all.

I have put my signs in storage but I will gladly take them out again in 2010! ☺

**Kimberly Kennedy**

## **May 9 BCDCC Organization Meeting**

BCDCC Meeting, 7 pm Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup> in the Richland Public Library Gallery

Democratic Party Hotline for Benton County 585-7682 for the latest in Meeting and Event Information

**May Calendar**

**Upcoming Events**

- May 4 Tri-City Democrats (TCD) Separation of Powers, Rory O’Sullivan, Carpenters’ Hall in Pasco
- May 5 Cinco De Mayo
- May 9 BCD Central Committee Meeting
- May 18 First Day for Candidate Filing by Mail
- June 1 Richland Labor Temple Monday (TCD),
- June 4 First Day for Candidate Filing in Person
- June 8 Last Day for Candidate Filing
- June 30 Summer WA State Democratic Central Committee Meeting

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4 TCD	5 Cinco De Mayo
6	7	8	9 BCD	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18 Mail filing start date	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



**FLASH !!!**

The State Party has selected the Tri-Cities for their next WA State Democratic Central Committee Meeting June 30<sup>th</sup>! .. MORE TO FOLLOW!



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