



THE DEMOCRATIC REPORTER

The Voice of Benton County Democrats

November 2010

www.bencodems.org

HOTLINE 546-8115

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FROM THE CHAIR

ELECTION RESULTS MUST BREED A NEW DIRECTION

In mulling over the election results for Benton County, it's again clear that whatever Democrats are perceived to stand for and represent, the voters of the County simply aren't receptive to it. Many if not most voters don't get past the letter after the candidate's name before they make up their mind. In door belling you frequently get the question, is the candidate a Democrat or Republican and the conversation degrades from there .. are they pro-life, pro-marriage, pro-gun, anti-government, etc. etc. After that kind of encounter understandably very few ARE willing to get in the race with a D behind their name. It would almost defies logic ... to develop your skills, build on a commitment to public service, and serve as a public servant only to be dismissed and insulted because of the letter next to your name.

Some may argue that a bias national perspective fostered through the media unfairly influences our local voters on how our Party's local and regional candidates are perceived. That may be true but in reality it doesn't matter. In spite of all the good work our supporters put

forth in terms of \$\$\$, time and commitment on our three Democratic campaigns, the results have changes little since '94. Murray's numbers were worse than '04 & '98, Moser's – worse than '08, Clough .. worse than Fearing in '08, Wright in '06 and Matheson in '04.

I often hear the comment, even from folks that have lived here a while - “I didn't know there even was a Democratic Party in the County.” It's at times as this that I truly begin to wonder. Let's see – we have monthly meetings, a PO Box, a monthly Newsletter, a HOTLINE, a Website, an outreach group - the Tri-City Democrats, a suite of officers, annual events, etc...but apparently no one knows we're around! So the question is ... do we REALLY have a Party? Or are we talking to our image in a mirror?

The past election cycle in Benton County wasn't even about D vs. R or the perceived values of those Parties, but more about R vs R^{TP}. Democrats had only 3 horses in the race! And I sincerely applaud those that ran the race for the courage, commitment and professionalism that they demonstrated. I hope the results haven't diminished their passion for public service in the future.

But we can't continue to do the same thing, year after year, listening to our own 'happy talk', looking backwards to past victories or West Side gains, and expect to change anything at the local level. We need a new direction and to find that direction we need energized leadership, youthful, motivated leadership with passions for issues important to them, to their generations, to their aspirations in life. It has to do with a different mind set, different perspectives if we're to move forward.

SIGNING OFF AS CHAIR ...

In our upcoming January Reorganization meeting, I'll neither seek nor accept any office or committee position within the County Party. I've battled enough windmills

and endured sobering election nights. In the remaining time I have as Chair, I will work to seek out candidates and encourage our incumbents for the 6 open positions. They're posted on our website with descriptions and responsibilities - under Article XII of our Bylaws:

Central Committee Reorganization

<http://www.bencodems.org/docs/Current%20Bylaws.pdf>

I sincerely hope that within the County there continues to be Democrats interested in leadership, who take their Party's values seriously and will consider running for these elective offices. I promise all the support I can muster for any new leadership that emerges as past office-holders had so graciously done for me, but it will be from a position on the sidelines.

Bob Parazin, Benton County Chair

25 ELECTED PCOs TO DETERMINE PARTY'S FUTURE

That's right, the decisions of 25 will determine our Party leadership as we proceed towards 2012. Because of the extremely poor responses to our call for PCO candidates, we have the decision on our future leadership concentrated in the hands of these 25. And there are NO PROXIES allowed when voting for Reorganization. So it will be incumbent upon these 25 to participate and vote.

To that end, each will be contacted by phone and e-mail, stressing the importance of their participation and encourage their attendance at our November 17th Central Committee meeting in preparation for Reorganization.

The Reorganization Meeting is planned for Jan 15th at 10am at the Richland Public Library. We'll be filling a total of 12 positions, 6 for the County and 6 for the 8th LD. The meeting is scheduled for Sat, Jan 15th, 10 am at the Richland Public Library. The 8th LD elections will follow the County.

FROM THE 8TH LD CHAIR

As we look over the election returns, it would be easy to be discouraged and even angry. We have two questions before us. 1) What is it about the Democratic Party's message that failed to resonate with our local voters? 2) What is it about our local voters that prevents them from recognizing the value of principles of the Democratic Party. As has been noted elsewhere, most of our voters actually know very little about the real values we hold dear. And I think a big reason for that is because so few actually have seen Democrats in action at the local level. They have no personal experience to counter what they hear from corporate-dominated media. That has to change. We have been trying to "get lucky" by fielding

good candidates for state and federal offices but without a foundation of broad grass-roots support our efforts have no assurance of success.

In one of his books, the evangelist Jim Wallis points out that the job of the politician is to put his finger in the air and see which way the wind is blowing. If we want to change who represents us in the government, we must change the wind. The recent history with the White House shows that the wind isn't changed from the top. The wind must be changed from the bottom. [Ed. Note: Earth's atmosphere is heated from the bottom up by re-radiated energy from land and sea.]

Our challenge at this juncture is to examine our actions and make whatever changes are necessary to be much, much, more effective at the most basic levels. As nice as it may seem to be a part of a larger state-wide party, we will achieve nothing if we do not become part of the fabric at the bottom. Let's find the way to advocate for Democratic values in our city governments, school boards and even home-owners associations. Let's advocate for Democratic values in our clubs, fraternal organizations, and even chambers of commerce.

You may ask, what are these values? There are many takes on that but here's mine. The highest value is the worth of persons. No individual is any more important than another and sovereignty lies with the people and no other entity. Persons have the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. In that pursuit "there should be no arbitrary restriction of a person's ability to better themselves through individual efforts" (Thom Hartman). These rights are fragile. Powerful individuals and organizations tend to think that it is in their interest to erode the rights of the less powerful. Democrats have to be the ones who make sure that the less powerful are protected.

The reason I participate in the Democratic Party isn't to win elections for people on my side. The thing that keeps me going is that I want to fundamentally change the world. I believe in democracy. I believe that fully expressed democracy is the way to justice and peace in society for today and posterity. I participate in the Democratic Party because it "gets it" more than any other organization in politics. If they didn't, I would go elsewhere in a heartbeat. I feel a moral obligation to continue this fight 'til my last breath.

And finally to business. On January 15th we will have our Reorganization Meeting for both the County followed by the 8th Legislative District. Each organization will elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, State Committeewoman, and State Committeeman.

Kendall Miller, 8th LD Chair
MOVING ON ... TO 2012

Only two years until election day! And, we need that time to make sure 2012 isn't a re-run of what happened this week: Many good Democrats have been working hard to get the message out and to get out the vote, and there were important races and issues on the ballot this year. Unfortunately, it appears only about 44% of the registered voters in Benton County bothered to turn in their ballots. How many of the remaining 66% would have voted for Carol or Jay? Our Get Out The Vote efforts, good as they were, were not effective enough.

PCOs need to find out who the Democrats are in their precincts so the candidate and GOTV campaigns can help those voters get their ballots in on time! There is work to do if we're going to make that possible. And there's time.

So, good Democrats, take a breath, take a break, and be ready to go at it again after the holidays. To keep a healthy democracy the voters must vote!

John Latta, Benton County State Committeeman

[Ed. Note: The Mayan calendar has been corrected and the world will not end on December 21, 2012 so there will still be time to vote.]

Carol's Final Thoughts

I had no illusions going into this campaign of what we were up against. As the season heated up, I think the going got tougher given the national backdrop of our economy and the seeming "failed policies" that were attached to all Democrats, fairly or unfairly.

Especially after the Primary election results, we had a daunting task. We could have given up at that point, thinking all was doomed, but instead, we dug deeper. And that is a characteristic of people who do this out of conviction; they find the courage to not give up. And that's who we are, and that's how other people saw us. By all accounts tonight, we are the victors;

We raised more money, had better messaging, knocked on more doors than our opponents, waved more signs, had way more letters to the editor, had a better website, radio ads, and commercials. And we got peoples' attention. We were the better team, what we lacked were supporters.

What we lacked were more Democrats!

Maybe there is a lesson to be learned about 2 years. 2 years was not enough time for Obama to fix our economic crisis, a situation that took 8 years to develop.

2 years perhaps, is not enough time for this community to change is flavor, to grow more democracy, to grow other opinions than the status quo. We were close in

2008. We lost ground in 2010. It's like one step forward and two steps back, but the good news is, we are still moving forward, and we are still growing.

It takes a lot of time and energy to steer a ship in a different direction. We too, have to be patient and stay involved to help guide it in a different direction. But stay in the game, we must, or the precious ground we have made will be lost, and that progress made more difficult in the future.

I especially thank my husband Ken, and Mimi Latta, who have been beside me every step of the way; the heart and soul of my campaign. My campaign committee and staff, you were amazing. Mimi Latta, Ken Moser, Stan Spohr, Chuck LoPresti, Bob Parazin, Brad Taylor, Sarah Widder, John Latta, Mark Smith, Marc Spinner, Jessica Ward, Kristin De La Rosa, Cindy Shaw, Karl Pitts, and Madison Storm. Never give up!

CAROL MOSER

[Ed. Note: The big picture results of this election demonstrate to the Editor that neither the quality of our Benton County Democratic candidates, nor our Democratic values were at issue in this election.]

Rada Fund Raising Event

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Democrat of the Year Selection

Please consider your nomination for "Democrat of the Year". Submit your **nomination suggestion** and the **reason why** to ... vicechair@bencodems.org. We'll also send out a reminder to our mailing lists. Awards will be given at our Holiday Party in early December.

NOVEMBER 2010 CALENDAR

Thu Nov 4	10:00 AM	Newsletter assembly and mailing @ Shilo Inn
Sun Nov 7		Daylight Savings Time ENDS
Tue Nov 9	7:00 PM	Drinking Liberally - Shilo Inn - O'Callahan's, 50 Comstock, Richland
Thu Nov 11		Veterans Day
	6:30 PM	Executive Board Mtg – Richland Community Center
Fri Nov 12		Hanford Friday OFF (site-wide)
	6:00 PM	Tri City Democrats Meeting - Richland Labor Temple
TBD		Dismantling and cleanup of HQ in Kennewick
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Tue Nov 16		Drinking Liberally - Shilo Inn - O'Callahan's, 50 Comstock, Richland
Wed Nov 17	7:00 PM	Democratic Central Committee Meeting
Tue Nov 23	7:00 PM	Drinking Liberally - Shilo Inn - O'Callahan's, 50 Comstock, Richland
	8:00 PM	Last Day for Newsletter Submissions
Thu Nov 25		Thanksgiving
	10:00 AM	Newsletter Assembly and Mailing @ Shilo Inn
Fri Nov 26		Hanford Friday OFF (site-wide)
Tue Nov 30	7:00 PM	Drinking Liberally - Shilo Inn - O'Callahan's, 50 Comstock, Richland



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