

THE DEMOCRATIC REPORTER

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From the Chair

How serious are you about the upcoming Democratic presidential race? Have you prioritized the candidates? Have you listened to their ideas? Have you contributed any money to campaigns?

Many believe it's a foregone conclusion that no matter who the Republicans choose, no matter who the Democrats choose, the Democrat will win the White House. The likelihood of a 'dark horse' or compromise candidate born out of a backroom meeting at the Denver convention doesn't seem likely at the moment. It almost seems too cut and dried already. Clinton, Obama, Edwards are the possibilities. It's already a horse race among these three and these three only, with so and so in the lead. Real issues aren't being discussed. Even the debates are becoming less and less about issues and more and more about candidates and elect-ability.

We all know the Democratic Party will go through the motions, the state convention, and the national convention and arrive at a candidate. One that will be pretty well predicted by the first week of this coming February when more than half the states, the key states, (NOT including Washington by the way) will have already decided the nominee.

I'll admit there's a certain seduction with the hoopla and excitement surrounding such traditional political events and if you've ever participated, you know what I mean. But when one comes down to it, it's more 'show' than 'go'. Will it motivate YOU to put your hard earned \$\$\$ behind a candidate, to put out that yard sign or display that bumper sticker or pin? Or is the Party counting on you to rally, if for no other reason than your extreme dislike for this Republican administration?

I'm not certain where 'grassroots' local activism fits into this scenario. The luster of nickels and dimes coming to candidates through the Internet, etc. has waned. And it still appears to be all about big \$\$\$\$ contributors lining up, who like nothing better than to buy access to candidates.

All this conjecture may or may not be 'spot on'. I hope it isn't. There is still time for the scenario to change. There is the possibility of US aggression against Iran and unexpected events in Iraq. And there's the Vice-Presidential running mate, the Party Platform, the nominating speeches, etc. Maybe something will come out of this upcoming presidential year after all.

And maybe this is the year you put your \$\$\$ for national candidates in your back pocket and invest your time, energy, and \$\$\$ in local Democrats who are running for local offices. There is George Fearing challenging Hastings next year. And we have a few running in non-partisan November races and yes, they unabashedly call themselves Democrats. There's Kathy White running for the Kennewick School Board, Jim Dukelow running for the Richland School Board and Sheila Sullivan in a Richland City Council race.

I'm proud of these candidates. Democrats who are willing to seek the opportunity to serve the public and I 'unabashedly' ask that you support them all!

The Endangered Species Act

From the Editor

From the current Democratic Party Agenda, "The Democratic Party believes that it is our responsibility to protect America's extraordinary natural resources." Rare and endangered species are part of the nation's

extraordinary natural resources and are protected by the Endangered Species Act.

The 2004 Republican Party Platform states, "Modernizing the Endangered Species Act: The Endangered Species Act (ESA) serves a noble purpose, which Americans overwhelmingly support. Our Party remains committed to the goal of protecting species to enhance their chances for survival. Over the last 30 years, successes under ESA have been limited due to confrontation and polarization – including an ever-growing barrage of litigation preventing the Fish and Wildlife Service from protecting new species and recovering plants and animals already listed as threatened or endangered. Republicans believe we can achieve greater progress in protecting species for future generations through results-based cooperative conservation programs and voluntary agreements that encourage private stewardship. The ESA must be updated to reflect new approaches that focus resources on species in need of recovery, not lawsuits. As with other major federal environmental laws, ESA should require peer-reviewed science, so resources can be focused on the most pressing recovery efforts. Just as importantly, the Act should encourage expansion of voluntary agreements with private property owners while ensuring that ESA enforcement respects and upholds private property rights."

Unfortunately, while I am frightened by their platform, they seem not to follow their platform.

From the Web,

"Bush Administration Starves Endangered Species Program

Posted by Stephanie Taylor on July 5, 2007 at 09:43 AM

The division of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that is supposed to protect endangered species is being starved of resources and staff by the Bush administration, according to an article today in the *Los Angeles Times*.

There are 279 species that are now near extinction as they wait to be added to the official endangered species list. Another 200 of the 1,326 officially endangered species are also close to extinction, according to environmental groups, because funds have been cut for their recovery.

Bryan Arroyo, acting assistant director of endangered species for the Fish and Wildlife Service, acknowledges a 30% vacancy rate in the program's staff, and the fact that the agency's top position has been left unfilled for more than a year. "We have a national deficit, and we are in the midst of a war," he said. "We have to live within the president's budget."

The Bush administration has only added 58 species to the endangered list, and 54 of those were added in response to

lawsuits.

Meanwhile Julie MacDonald, the deputy assistant secretary of the Interior who was responsible for the endangered species program, resigned last month after the inspector general found that she had ordered scientists to change their findings, and shared internal documents with lobbyists for agricultural and energy interests.

And last week, Rep. Nick Rahall II (D-WV), chair of the House Natural Resources Committee, announced he would hold hearings to investigate whether Dick Cheney interfered in a dispute over the Klamath River.

According to a report in the *Washington Post*, Cheney objected to the amount of water withheld to preserve fish, and the water was diverted to irrigation. An estimated 70,000 salmon died, including a species listed as threatened in the region."

Oh well, I find this very depressing. I had one small job eliminated recently because rare and endangered species assessment apparently was no longer needed. I just count the days until a Democratic Congress and Administration are in place!

George's Summer Vacation

Mimi Latta

The George Fearing Campaign has been very active through the summer. After speaking at the Building and Construction Trades Convention in July, George and his supporters have attended county fairs in Adams, Benton-Franklin, Chelan, Douglas, Grant and beginning Friday, Yakima Counties. They have been in the Pasco 4th of July Parade, the Benton - Franklin Fair Parade, the Ellensburg Rodeo Parade, the Wapato Labor Day Parade, and as of Saturday, Sept. 30, the Yakima Sunfair Parade for the Central WA State Fair. At all of these parades and county fairs, George has introduced himself to the communities and handed out literature detailing his upbringing as a minister's son and explaining his views on issues such as the Iraq War (he would vote to begin bringing them home immediately), fair trade vs. free trade, Global Warming, Health Care, Veteran's Benefits, American dependence on foreign oil, etc. He attended the summer picnic for Walla Walla and Columbia County to say hello because he ran in the 16th Legislative District (LD) last year and the Franklin County picnic as well. He just attended the Klickitat County/15th LD kick-off meeting in Dallesport last Friday night. George has also been attending the meetings of union Locals throughout the 4th Congressional District. He's met with IBEW in Wenatchee and Kennewick, the Carpenters in Yakima and Pasco, the Hanford Fire Fighters, and the Teamsters in Pasco. He, or his campaign manager, Mimi Latta have talked with Union leaders for SEIU in Yakima

and Seattle, UFCW in Spokane, Yakima and Kennewick, and the Teamsters in Yakima.

One of the main tenets of George's campaign is that union labor built the 4th Congressional District's dams and irrigation systems as well as most of the infrastructure and has provided a solid, middle class lifestyle for most residents of the 4th. He believes that merchants and other goods and service providers have prospered as a result. George door-belled in Bridgeport in Northern Douglas County with five supporters thanks to an invitation from Kathy Humphreys, his Douglas County volunteer coordinator. Another early volunteer in Douglas County is Eleanor Clark, wife of the Douglas County Chair, Dave Clark. In Chelan County, Matt Hedmann and his mom, Mary Hedmann, are working to help elect George. In Chelan County, George also received help and encouragement from Ted Higley, our 4th Congressional District representative on the WA State Democratic Central Committee and Pat Notter, one of WA State's DNC representatives.

George, his fiancée, Deborah Feurborn and Mimi Latta all attended the all-day forum on immigration issues sponsored by the WA State Democratic Agricultural and Rural Caucus. Because this issue directly impacts the 4th, George thought it well worth his time to investigate what the farmers, businesses, and workers' representatives had to say. It was an enlightening experience because there was very little of the hostility and ugly rhetoric heard on talk radio and the Lou Dobbs program on CNN. Instead, the participants earnestly talked about how to maintain America's borders while dealing with the numbers of workers necessary to perform the various jobs in the district and wage issues that stem from those jobs.

George considers it a privilege to get to meet so many residents of the 4th Congressional District as he runs for the Representative seat. His view is broadened and educated by the concerns and opinions of those he talks to and that should help to ensure that he truly will be a Congressman for the people.

Website Update

Frank Schmittroth

The Benton County Democratic website at www.bencodems.org has been given a facelift. Many of the changes are under-the-covers so to speak and won't be visually apparent. The old site was built with a proprietary tool that tended to lock in its structure and appearance. The proprietary dependence was

replaced with standard up-to-date web technologies to facilitate site updates. As a result, we can better respond to the changing needs of Benton County Democrats.

Please visit the site and let us know what you think. Comments on both content and ease of use are desired. Likes as well as dislikes. Is the text font easily readable? Are links easily identifiable? You can contact me at webmaster@bencodems.org or our Chair, Bob Parazin, at chair@bencodems.org.

A major change is the elimination of the Forum page which was overwhelmed by obnoxious spam. I've added links to a couple of local blogs on the Links/Blogs page that you might like to visit for local commentary. We could also add a link to one of the blogging sites on the internet if a Benton County forum is desired. A secondary problem likely caused by the spam is a corruption of Google searches to the point where it is difficult to find our site on the internet.

The Home page was significantly changed to show announcements and links to candidates with less scrolling. The use of the BCDCC acronym was mainly replaced by its full text: Benton County Democratic Central Committee. The use of text in the top banner should also help make the site more visible to Google. Most of the changes to secondary pages were cosmetic. The Links/Blogs page was reviewed for outdated links and, as noted, links to local blogs were added. Let us know if you have a site you think should be included.

Finally, as noted on the home page, support for maintaining the site is needed. That includes simple non-technical tasks such as noting outdated content, broken links, and collecting events for the calendar. More complex assistance includes adding/revising web pages, adding newsletter content to the site, sending out emails for notification of newsletter updates and other Benton County Democratic events.

Upcoming Events **(see Calendar and HOTLINE)**

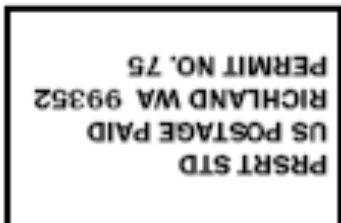
October

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 *Drink Liberally Shilo/O'Callahans 7pm	3	4	5 Tri-City Democrats, Richland Labor Temple, 6 pm PL, 7 pm program	6
7	8 Candidate Development, 6:30 MCLU	9 * Executive Board Mtg , MCLD 6:30 pm	10 Outreach Committee Mtg 6:30, RCC	11	12	13
14	15	16*	17 Central Committee Mtg 7 pm MCLD	18 Organization CommitteeMtg 6:30m, RPPL	19	20
21	22	23 * Finance Comm Budget/Fundraising Mtg 6:30 RPL	24	25	26	27
28	29	30*	31			

***Drinking Liberally - Every Tuesday at the Shilo/O'Callahan's in Richland - 7 pm soft drinks and water are available!**

RPL --- Richland Public Library RCC -- Richland Community Center MCLU -Mid-Columbia Library 16th & Union

MCLD --Mid-Columbia Library 405 Dayton St, Kennewick in Keewaydin Park



Return Service Requested
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