

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



September 2009

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

HOTLINE 546-8115

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**Re-Elect Tom Moak , 586-4093**

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**Newsletter** - With this issue, we welcome our NEW newsletter editor Ed Rykiel. As editor he becomes part of our Executive board and I'm pleased to have this long time Democrat as part of our organization. I fully expect to see some changes in our newsletter and this would be a opportune time to provide your comments to [newsletter@bencodems.org](mailto:newsletter@bencodems.org).

Speaking of our newsletter, we spend more than \$200 each month sending our some 550 copies of our print newsletter. It's probably one of our largest costs in maintaining our supporter communication. In conversations with our new editor, I found it difficult to answer his questions regarding how effective we've been in reaching our supporters through the mail.

### From the Chair

Capping off a busy August, and looking forward to the November 3rd Elections. We have only one candidate running for a partisan position in this off year. Laura Grant is the incumbent aiming to return to the State Legislature from the 16th LD Position 2. She's spent a fair amount of time in the Tri-Cities these past few months. In addition to a number of meet & greet events, we walked with her in Pasco's July 4th Parade, she attended the Democratic Picnic, August 14th, the County Fair Parade on August 22 and our Fair Booth this past Saturday. Now the 16th LD race is down to Laura and Republican Terry Neely. She's the right candidate for Eastern Washington and she shares the Democratic values of her farther Bill who served for 22 years as a true farmer/legislator until his death in January.

Vote for Laura Grant Position 1.

Let's not forget about the incumbent Mayor of Kennewick, Tom Moak. Though not in a partisan race for the Ward 3 Council Position, Tom's a committed public servant serving in the position since 1998. He exemplifies the dedication to public service that constituents recognize across party lines and ideologies. Amid all the 'begg'in letters' that fill your mail box, please consider supporting these candidates that support our Democratic values. Here's their contact information.

**Committee to Retain Laura Grant**  
1038 Penrose, Walla Walla, WA 99362  
[www.votelauragrants.com](http://www.votelauragrants.com)

In the past we've asked supporters that are interested in subscribing to the newsletter to underwrite its cost, but that met with little result. We also thought of sending out an announcement that says something like "THIS WILL BE YOUR LAST MAILED DEMOCRATIC NEWSLETTER UNLESS YOU RETURN THIS POSTCARD". I wonder what kind of response we'd receive.

What's your opinion on this? Please let our NEW newsletter editor Ed Rykiel know at [newsletter@bencodems.org](mailto:newsletter@bencodems.org), or PO Box 636, Richland, WA 99352, or leave a message on our HOTLINE 546-8115.

### Democratic National Committee Western Regional Meeting Report

It's not too often that the DNC meets a few hours drive from Benton County. The last meeting Annie and I traveled to was in 2005 when it was held in Helena, Montana. This year it was held in Coeur D'Alene, Idaho, August 7-9 at the Coeur D'Alene Resort and Casino. It was a fine event with superb accommodations. Nearly ALL western states were represented by their Chairs and major party officials. Eastern Washington was represented by your own Benton County Chair and Secretary, the State Party Vice-Chair, Sharon Smith, a large contingent from Spokane County and neighboring Districts and Counties.

We particularly enjoyed the presentations by a number of campaign specialists that talked about the various '08 elections held around the region. California, Washington and Oregon Initiative challenges were dissected as well as key senatorial and congressional races throughout the west. Communications Professor David Domke from the U of W talked about the major elements and lessons learned from Obama's victory and the significance of the under-35 vote. Hopefully he's writing a book based on his insights to capture this important topic.

When you represent a County that failed to elect ANY Democrats in '08, I find it inspiring to be around folks that have 'walked the walk' and have a number of notches in their belt to show for their efforts. In a way, it may dramatize the challenges we face here locally and in Eastern Washington in general, but it's still enjoyable to be around political success stories.

A case in point. I talked at length with a California Party official from Sacramento County. They have TWO brick&mortar Party Headquarters, an overhead budget of about \$150K, a paid staff of 6, fundraisers that net \$60K and an A list of donors that can be relied upon for a few thousand at almost the snap of the finger. It's certainly not Eastern Washington and I don't know if I'd be comfortable with such an operation. But it IS something to think about.

## All Democrats Picnic

The second annual all Tri-City Democrats picnic was a rousing success. On an almost perfect August evening, in a magnificent riverfront park setting, 110 plus local democrats were treated to a gastronomic feast of shrimp, corn, sausage, potatoes, assorted salads, and multiple desserts.

After satiating their appetites, Representative Laura Grant, state party chair Dwight Pelz, vice chair Sharon Smith, and local non partisan candidates gave presentations on health care, party building, legislative accomplishments, and candidate introductions. The attendees were also treated to exploratory fourth congressional district candidacies. The evening was finished with a successful auction of several baskets contributed by local democrats.

A special thanks to our chefs for the evening, Glynn Stevens and Dale Fuller and all the committee members who contributed to this event.

## State of the the State [Party]

Those of you that attended the picnic may have heard mention the depleted assets of the State Party. Because of the heavy burden of last year's elections INCLUDING the staging of the caucuses and the bitter fight for the governorship, our state party is in pretty bad shape.

They've reduced staff at Headquarters and cut out some events they've traditionally supported and are tightening the use of the Party's Voter File. The State Party is in the middle of a challenge called the "Write or Raise \$1000 for the State Party". We covered it briefly at our last Central Committee and E-Board meetings but didn't come to the point of acting on it. One Motion was introduced to donate \$500 to the party, but no action was taken since a quorum wasn't present.

Here's my thought on it. This past year, largely due to the windfall we received as a result of the Primaries and the endless hours of hard work we put into the Primaries, we broke all recent donation records. I was quite surprised when the Party didn't ask for compensation at that time for the large volume of printed materials, publicity, etc. that were provided to us for the events.

Every cent we collected as a result of the Primaries went into our bank account. That said, I think it's only reasonable to 'give back' some of the largess to the State Party during these hard times. Please give this some thought and bring your comments and votes to the Central Committee Meeting on September 16th location TBD [hopefully at the Richland Public Library].

## Benton County Fair Booth

Every year you can shake hands with real, live, declared Benton County Democrats at our booth in Building 2 at the County Fair. I'd like to thank Anne Muggli and Mickey Beary for co-chairing the event and all those that helped with the construction, removal and decorating of the booth particularly John and Mimi Latta, Chuck LoPresti, Vince Donihee our resident 'trucker', and Dennis and Ellen Fillion for storing our Fair equipment.

I was pleased that we had a number of new faces behind the counter as well as our 'regulars'. I have to apologize for any misunderstanding that volunteering for manning the booth included a complimentary ticket to the fair. We have to purchase passes for those workers that service the booth every day and limited tickets for our senior volunteers and college students with limited funds and those that work for more than one day. With the increased pricing in general admission and a reduced senior rate [ adult @ \$12 vs. senior @ \$5] we didn't have the right mix of tickets. Next year that'll be corrected.

We didn't do much selling at the booth this year. But we DID sell raffle tickets, a few bumper stickers and pins and handed out a lot of stickers to the kids. None of the non-partisan candidates running in '09 distributed or displayed any signs. Our only partisan candidate in Benton County, Laura Grant, spent a good part of the day at the booth and at the bus stop on Saturday, Aug 29th. And all in all the crowd was pretty civil. Not much heckling or shouting about issues. We DID go through a number of handouts on health care and immigration. We also registered more than 40 new voters and two pages of sign-ups for our newsletter.

## Good News/Bad News

This is one of those “good news / bad news” situations. The good news is that we have control of the White House, House of Representatives, and the Senate as well as a majority of Democrats holding seats in Washington State. The bad news is that we don’t have volunteers and activists turning out for events or actions here in Benton County.

We’ve asked for volunteers for many of the committees in the Benton County Central Committee and even though we called many of our lists, only a few show up and those tend to be the people who always show up. We could have used more assistance with the summer picnic, we asked for help setting up and taking down the fair booth and yet there were only a few people to do all the work on the Sundays before and after the fair. Where is everyone who might take the heavy lifting off of the shoulders of women nearing 60? We still managed to do it, but I’m not sure I’ll volunteer next year as I have for the past 15.

Perhaps we need to have an honest discussion about what kinds of activities local Democrats think are worthwhile. Maybe having an entry in the Cinco de Mayo, July 4th and County Fair parades doesn’t get us the attention you want. Maybe handing out literature, registering voters and providing a venue for our Democratic candidates isn’t enough reason to set up, staff, and take down the county fair booth. Perhaps you have better ideas on how to reach area voters.

I’m afraid we’re fading away here Benton County. Strong advocates from the past are aging and not being replaced by new faces with fresh ideas. Older activists are tired of bearing more than their share of the burden. We believe in Democratic values and want to work to elect great candidates like Carol Moser, Kathy White, Tom Moak and others, but we can’t do it alone.

We can’t make you pick up the phone when you read about an event in the newsletter. We might not even be able to call you every time there’s a local activity. If you want to see more Democrats in office in Benton County, you’re going to have to volunteer. Elections are hard work. That hard work only becomes easier when there are many people to share the load. If you’re shocked that a terrible candidate like Brad Klippert beat Carol Moser, come out to walk your precinct. If you want to re-elect Kathy White to the Kennewick School Board, make phone calls to your neighbors as part of her campaign. No one LOVES to phone call or knock on doors, but it’s the only thing that works. The Republicans find the volunteers to do the job – the question is whether we can find the volunteers to beat them at it.

Mimi Latta, Benton County State Committee Woman

**Website:** [www.BenCoDems.org](http://www.BenCoDems.org)

## Giant Wine Barrel Raffle Winner

Congratulations to Franklin Co, Vice-Chair Shirley Morrow on winning the Giant Wine Barrel Raffle that was featured at our Picnic and Fair Booth. And I’d also like to thank Ginny McIntyre and Roger for assembling the Barrel with all the goodies into a fine presentation and all those that helped with its transportation.

## Tri-City Democrats will meet Friday September 11

Details and location are TBD. There have been a few offers to organize this meeting, which will occur while the TCD Chair is out of the country, but the people volunteering could use your help. Please contact Bob Parazin if you are willing to help -- and remember, everyone is always invited to the TCD.

## Editor’s Hello

First, I thank Dr. Steve Link for his kind words in introducing me as the newest newsletter editor. I hope I can serve you as well as Steve did.

I am eager to hear any suggestions (and even criticisms) you have for the newsletter. I hope this first effort lives up to your expectations.

Finally, thanks to Bob for giving me this opportunity. And keep those news items coming!

-- Ed Rykiel

## Calendar

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



**Hotline:** (509) 546 - 8115

## September Calendar [check Website Calendar or HOTLINE for LATEST INFO]

Sat Sep 5 -6 Community Action Network & Tumbleweed Music Festival - 500 Amon Dr. Richland,

Mon Sep 7 Labor Day

Tue Sep 8 7 pm – 8:30pm Drinking Liberally ..... - Shilo Inn - O'Callahan's, 50 Comstock, Richland,

Wed Sep 9 10am – 12pm "Mad As Hell" Doctors Care-A-Van - 505 McMurray, Richland, WA 99354

Thur Sept 10 7pm – 8:30pm "Sick Around the World" Presentation & Open Discussion - 505 McMurray, Richland

Thu Sep 10 6:30 pm – 8:30pm E Board Meeting - Conference Call Meeting

Fri Sep 11 6pm – 8pm Tri-City Democrats Potluck & Program - TBD

Mon Sep 14 7pm – 8pm Mid Columbia Community 4 Change Monthly Meeting - 1620 S. Union, Kenn

Sep 15 7pm – 8:30pm Drinking Liberally ..... - Shilo Inn - O'Callahan's, 50 Comstock, Richland,

Wed Sep 16 7pm – 9pm BCDCC Central Committee Meeting - TBD

Mon Sep 21 8pm – 9pm Last Day for Newsletter Submissions

Tue Sep 22 7pm – 8:30pm Drinking Liberally ..... - Shilo Inn - O'Callahan's, 50 Comstock, Richland,

Thu Sep 24 10am – 11:30am Newsletter assembly and mailing - Shilo Inn Board Room .. in Richland

Fri Sep 25 3 pm –m Fall State Committee Meeting - Walla Walla, Washington

Sat Sep 26 8 am Fall State Committee Meeting - Walla Walla, Washington

Tue Sep 29 7pm – 8:30pm Drinking Liberally ..... - Shilo Inn - O'Callahan's, 50 Comstock, Richland,

Sat Oct 3 Last DAY for voter Registration for the Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> Election

Tue Oct 6 7pm – 8:30pm Drinking Liberally ..... - Shilo Inn - O'Callahan's, 50 Comstock, Richland,

Thu Oct 8 6:30 pm – 8:30pm E Board Meeting – Conference Call

Fri Oct 9 6pm – 8pm Tri-City Democrats Potluck & Program - TBD