

7th Legislative District Democratic Newsletter

April 2007 Vol. 1; No. 4

Hope to see you all in Reardan on April 21st!!

Ferry County Meeting:

Jack and I were invited to the meeting of the Ferry County DCC on March 31 to talk about the 7th LD and to present the plan for using the caucuses to build a volunteer base for the 2008 elections. There were over 25 energized people in attendance with great food and live music prior to the meeting! The food at county events in the 7th is always something to brag about, but live music! Ferry County has set a new standard.

Besides having an opportunity to meet and talk to committed Ferry County Democrats, we learned more about the proposed Ferry County Rail Trail, an effort to preserve a 28 mile rail corridor. The approach to this project is well thought out with the intent to "rail bank" the land leaving open the potential to re-establish an active rail line at some future time. In the meantime, the scenic strip can be used for non-motorized purposes such as biking, hiking, and horseback riding. This has the potential for economic benefits similar to other rail trail projects that have turned into recreational destinations. This is a project well worth supporting. If you want more information and/or would like to offer letters of support, take a look at their web site:

<http://www.ferrycountyrailtrail.com/fcrailcorridor.htm>

Washington State Democratic Convention 2008:

Spokane County is actively pursuing a bid to host the 2008 Convention in Spokane. This has the potential for being a huge benefit to Eastern Washington as political attention and energy is focused on our area. The timing is very good for us to host the Convention as national attention is focused on the Inter-mountain West and its strong purple tint. Having this energy focused here in Eastern Washington would be extremely valuable to all of our candidates and to our efforts to build the party.

The bid will be presented at the State meeting in Bellingham on April 27th. Although Spokane County is sponsoring the bid, we all will benefit. Individuals, legislative and county organizations are encouraged to support this bid proposal by sending letters of support to Andrew Brewer, Chair of the SCDCC Convention Planning Committee, andrewbrew@earthlink.net or 509-838-4224 for more information.

This proposal for Eastern Washington has two competitors: King County and Clark County. I strongly encourage you to become active in this project.

"Traveling Troop":

A group of active Democrats who believe in "walking the walk" have organized to help increase the visual Democratic presence at community events in Eastern Washington such as parades and fairs. At the moment most of the founding members are from Spokane County. They participated in several events last year outside of Spokane County and certainly made a difference. Not only did they have fun, they also created a great sense of "we are all working together" for the same goal. Those of us who saw them coming to join us on the parade route were really impressed and sincerely appreciative.

If you are interested in joining the Troop or if you would like to let them know about a community event that you want an impressive Democratic presence, don't hesitate to contact them and see if something can be arranged. This is a great way to meet new Democrats! I will be sharing all events that I know about in the 7th with them. <http://www.democrats.org/page/group/TravellingTroupe>

PCO and Voterfile Training:

If any meetings or groups would like to have a session on PCO and Voterfile training, an experienced group from the Spokane County Democratic Central Committee has offered to provide this for the 7th LD. I know that Okanogan County is coordinating with them for a date early in the summer and that Ferry County is

also interested. Please let me know if you would like more information about this very generous offer – another example of ***we are all in this together!***

5th Congressional District Organizational Meeting:

A meeting chaired by Bob Esvelt was called on April 14th to discuss the potential of creating an official 5th Congressional District organization. There was discussion about the benefits of having such a group to provide better communication and organizational support for candidates. A presentation from the 4th CD, the only organized CD in the state, was made providing information about the effectiveness of having a Congressional District organization especially in large geographical areas. The group present voted to establish a committee chaired by Gordon Ellis (Lincoln County) to recommend by-laws and a charter for a 5th CD organization. The committee will consist of representatives from all counties and legislative districts in the 5th plus three members-at-large. If anyone is interested in serving on this committee contact Gordon Ellis nellis@asisna.com

Caucus Process:

Bob Esvelt, our State Committeeman, has drafted an explanation of the Presidential Election Year Caucus Convention Cycle for the Democratic Party to help explain the process in a way that can be easily understood. Most of the efforts of the Party will focus on the caucus process from now until February. It is very important that we all understand the basics of what will be happening. Thank you very much, Bob, for doing this for us.

A brief overview:

The Caucus and Convention Cycle begins with Precinct Caucuses. Delegates and alternates elected at the Precinct Caucus proceed on to County Conventions, Legislative District Caucuses (in most cases), and can be elected as delegates to the Congressional District Caucus and the State Convention.

At all levels, people may participate in the caucuses and conventions only if they are willing to sign the sign-in sheet stating that they consider themselves to be supporters of the Democratic Party.

Precinct Caucuses on Presidential Election years:

Attendance at precinct caucuses is enhanced if the Precinct Committee Officer and other active Democrats encourage people to attend through phone calling, placing notices and publishing the event, time, purpose, and location of the event. Neighboring precincts may caucus together and discuss issues and ideas as a group, but each precinct must caucus separately for election of delegates and alternates to the County Convention level.

At the precinct caucus, issues are discussed and potential Platform Planks and Resolutions can be proposed and passed. Platform Planks are statements that help define the Party's values, viewpoints and goals. Resolutions are calls for action at all levels of government to further the causes of the Party and local will.

Delegates and alternates are elected to attend the County Convention and in most cases the Legislative District Caucuses. Every precinct is allotted a certain number of delegates and alternates. On presidential election years, each delegate is elected according to Presidential Candidate preference with delegate numbers for any candidate determined by preference of attending Democrats. Any presidential candidate choice that does not receive at least 15% of the caucus attendance does not receive a delegate and those voters can then change their vote to one of the other candidates (this rule applies at all levels of the caucus/convention cycle).

Platform Committee:

Each county appoints a committee to compose a platform and list of proposed resolutions. This committee considers input from each of the Precinct Caucuses, past platforms, the general view of our membership, etc. and composes a Platform for consideration at the County Convention. Resolutions are condensed and listed for the convention, and the committee can make 'do pass' or 'do not pass' recommendations on each resolution.

County Convention:

Delegates and alternates from the precinct caucuses attend the County Convention. Other Democrats are welcome to come and observe and comment, but do not have a vote in the proceedings. The County Chair organizes the proceedings and begins the meeting as “temporary chair” then a “permanent chair” is elected (it can be the serving county chair or another Democrat).

The main business of the County Convention is to discuss and compose a County Platform, beginning with the recommendations from the platform committee, though I have attended conventions where the platform was rewritten in entirety. Resolutions are debated and passed resolutions are placed as an addendum to the Platform. County Conventions are the only source of Platform and Resolution documents that are forwarded to the State Party Platform Committee and then for consideration by the delegates to the State Convention.

In some areas, where the county is in a multi-county Legislative District (for example, the 7th and 9th LD's), the Delegates to the Congressional District Caucus and State Convention are elected at the County Conventions. Once again, each area, whether it is the entire Legislative District or a County within an LD the number of delegates and alternates are allocated according to voters and past voting performance for the party in the last Governor and Presidential races. Delegates and alternates are chosen according to presidential preference, and again, any presidential candidate receiving less than 15% of the vote does not receive a delegate for the CD Caucus and State Convention, and the County delegates supporting that candidate can change their vote. In counties where a multi-county LD (that elects their delegates at the County level) includes a portion of the county, that portion of the LD caucuses separately after the business of the County Convention to elect their delegates. Democrats do not have to be delegates to be considered for election to the next level of the Caucus/Convention Cycle and this applies for election to the Delegation to the National Convention as well.

Legislative District Caucuses:

In LD's where the entire or most of the district is in one county, the Legislative District holds a caucus to elect delegates to the Congressional District Caucus and the State Convention. Issues can be discussed, but the platform has been formed at the County Convention. Delegate selection proceeds as above.

Congressional District Caucuses:

Delegates elected at Legislative District Caucuses or County Conventions proceed to the Congressional District Caucuses. The primary order of business is: Election of Delegates to the National Convention. In the 5th Congressional District we were allowed 5 delegates and one alternate in both the 2000 and 2004 cycles. Delegates are divided by gender and are elected according to Presidential preference, possibly including uncommitted. The 15% rule applies again.

Anyone that wants to be considered for election as Delegate to the National Convention must file a statement of candidacy designating their Presidential Candidate choice (including uncommitted) to the State Party in early May. These delegate candidates will be submitted to the campaigns and approved candidates will be considered for election at this meeting.

Election of Presidential Electors (one Elector, one Alternate)

Election of 2 Washington State Democratic Party Judicial Review Board Members. This board resolves disputes within the party.

At the Congressional District Caucus we often have speakers, including the CD candidates and others to fill the time when the Credentials Committee is performing its duties and counting votes.

State Democratic Party Convention:

The State Democratic Party Convention is always quite an event with lots of motivating speakers, events, etc. The primary goal of the Convention is to debate and write a State Party Platform and Resolutions. At this convention, some at large delegates to the National Convention can be elected, so those that want to go but didn't get elected at the CD Caucuses can still have a chance. There is an emphasis on fulfilling our affirmative action goals in these decisions. Other automatic delegates to the National Convention include

elected Democratic Congressional and Senatorial representatives and our Governor, as well as some other important Democrats.

If you have any questions please feel free to call or e-mail me. Please participate, it's YOUR party.

Thanks, Bob Esvelt, 509-738-6530, besvelt@centurytel.net

Dates to Remember:

April 21st – 7th LD General Meeting, Reardan Community Center, hosted by Lincoln County, 12 noon lunch, 1 p.m. meeting

July 29 at Old Kettle Falls Park hosted by Stevens County

October 20 at the Okanogan Grange Hall hosted by Okanogan County

Contact Us: Your 7th LD representatives

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