

7th Legislative District Democratic Newsletter

July 2007

www.7ld.newa-democrats.org

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7th LD Quarterly Meeting Reminder: July 29th, Sunday, 10 a.m. at the Old Kettle Falls Park

Dwight Pelz, Chair of the Washington State Democratic Central Committee will be our guest speaker. Other items on the agenda include:

- A report on the state of the 7th LD;
- A report on the status of the 5th Congressional District formation;
- A report from our Eastern Washington Field Representative, Erik Horeis;
- Reports from our county chairs
- An opportunity for campaign representatives/candidates to speak

The meeting starts at 10 a.m. with the annual Stevens County 7th LD picnic at 12 noon. The picnic is a potluck.

Please remember to bring food items for the Stevens County Food Bank. This is a tradition that we have started as a way to recognize the support of the county hosting the 7th LD meetings.

Washington State Democratic Central Committee meeting – by Walt Kloefkorn

I attended the Washington State DCC quarterly meeting in Pasco on June 29 and 30. It was a chance to meet lots of new folks and put a face to many I knew only through email. The next quarterly meeting will be held in Wenatchee on 28 and 29 September.

I used the HomeStay program, where local Democrats provide a spare bedroom in return for a \$30 donation to the local party. I recommend it. It's a great way to meet some wonderful Democrats.

On Friday evening Caucus Training was held. The primary point of interest was the unveiling of a website which allows Democrats who are registered voters to cast a "practice" caucus ballot. The website, www.docaucus.com, can be an excellent tool to help build caucus attendance. Between now and the February 9, 2008 caucus, you can point people to the site where they can register their presidential preference. They can return and switch their selection at any time. Prior to the caucus, conveners and PCOs will be able to access the database and send post cards or make phone calls to remind folks of the caucus date and site. Note: The limitation on the site to registered voters was to allow use of the state voter database to do address verification and precinct identification. You do not need to be a registered voter to participate in precinct caucuses; however you must be a registered voter to become a delegate to LD, County, and CD conventions.

I also had the pleasure of hearing George Fearing, candidate for Congress against Doc Hastings in the 4th CD. He pledged support of public campaign financing and seems to be an excellent candidate. www.georgefearing.com

At the Ag & Rural caucus meeting the next morning, Dana Desoto, a board member of Washington Public Campaigns www.washclean.org made a presentation on public campaign financing in Washington State. If there is sufficient public outcry, it could pass in the 2008 legislative session. This organization will provide a guest speaker for the 20 August 2007 Stevens County monthly meeting at Polanski's in Chewelah. We also heard from farm labor specialists from WorkSource Washington and learned that there continues

to be a shortage of workers to harvest Washington crops. A nascent battle between dry land and irrigated wheat farmers was cut off due to lack of time, perhaps to be resumed in Wenatchee.

The Third Eastern Washington Conference will be held Friday and Saturday, 12 and 13 October, 2007 at the Convention Center in Spokane. An excellent lineup of speakers is planned and a \$50 registration charge will include both lunch and dinner on Saturday. The last EWC, at Moses Lake in 2005 was a great event, very informative and with tremendous networking opportunities. Please seriously consider attending.

Despite the great turnout to hear speakers such as Scott Ritter at the Met, Jim Hightower at Masonic Auditorium, Noam Chomsky at McCarthy Center, and Al Franken at the Big Easy, there was some reluctance to take a risk and go after speakers who charge a higher fee to keynote the conference. In particular, Laura Flanders of Air America Radio, was deemed too expensive at \$5000. In response, an ad hoc coalition of the 3rd, 6th and 7th LDs formed and is investigating the possibility of bringing Ms. Flanders to the Bing Crosby Theater in Spokane. It is hoped that this will kick off a series of popular liberal speakers between now and the 2008 elections, and perhaps beyond. David Sirota, Jim Hightower and others were suggested. I will keep you posted on developments, I hope many of you will have speaker suggestions and want to help produce these events.

I had the opportunity to speak at length with Laura Bonham, Web Content Manager of the Progressive Democrats of America. She is based in that bastion of liberalism, the great state of Utah, and has much political organizing experience relevant to the eastern Washington situation. She emphasized the importance of the doing the nuts and bolts of political organizing, contacting voters and building a database, starting a stream of good candidates by running for every office, and promoting our democratic values within the party and our communities.

Judith Shattuck, Washington State coordinator for the PDA, has promised to put me in touch with a potential 5th CD (or perhaps LD) candidate from Okanogan County. All I know at this point is that she has a background in the Peace Corps.

The DCC general meeting itself was somewhat anticlimactic, after a day of meeting new folks and great discussions. Several new CD reps were selected but no significant decisions were taken.

As is usual when a group of Democrats convenes, there were plenty of great bumper stickers in the parking lot. My two favorites were on the same Toyota Prius: "Impeachment-It's not just for blowjobs anymore," and "Frodo Failed! Bush Has the Ring."

Caucus Process 2008:

You will be hearing a great deal about the caucus process as we get closer to the end of the year, but all of us as active Democrats should be fully aware of the caucus process and the value this system has to building our party. By choosing the caucus system Washington State Democrats made a statement that we are a Party driven by grassroots activism. Let's make the most of this opportunity!

I have commented before that State Party Chair Dwight Pelz says it best when he states that **"Our state will continue to be a place where Presidential candidates must win support through grassroots organizing rather than through expensive television ads."**

We are being provided with some great tools to help make this process work. The new voter file is a much improved resource. For those of you who are Precinct Committee

Officers, please check your account at <http://www.votebuilder.com> to be sure that you are able to log in and begin working. If you are having any difficulty with access, contact your county chair or me emiller@gmail.com for assistance. We can verify your user name and assign you a new password if needed.

More information will be coming out about how to hold a caucus and the importance of the caucus process to the foundation of the party. A change to the caucus process will be the fact that platform recommendations will not be formally discussed at the caucus. Instead any recommendations will be turned in at the caucus and will be reviewed, combined, and polished before being voted on at a later date. More information on this process will be forthcoming also. Erik Horeis is working with us to help create a training session for those of us working in the rural areas of the State.

Summer Events:

We have a very active group that is attending as many public events this summer as possible to show the Democratic colors. They call themselves the **Traveling Troupe** and are committed to visibly demonstrating Democratic solidarity in our community events. The last events that I attended were the Newport Rodeo Parade; the Post Falls Democratic picnic; and the Medical Lake Founder's Day Parade. Each of these events was very positive with lots of applause and "thumbs up." Perhaps the Newport event was the most entertaining with the one Republican entry just in front of the larger Democratic entry that had the Eastern Washington Democrats banner carried by two walkers and a Pend Oreille County Democrat float complete with large US and Washington State flags and people handing out candy and live music.

There are parades every weekend this summer throughout Northeastern Washington. We have multiple events on some weekends, so there will be lots of opportunities for who those of us who find it fun to get together, enjoy the down-home community events, and spread the word that there are many Democrats in Eastern Washington. The applause and smiles that greet us is really invigorating. And having an excuse to visit our amazing Eastern Washington communities is an opportunity not to be missed.

If you are interested in participating in any of the events, check out the calendar on our website www.7ld.newa-democrats.org or send Brian Sayrs bsayrs@msn.com or me emiller@gmail.com an email and we will provide you details. Bring friends and family – dogs are also great attention getters!

Fundraising:

We have posted a donation form on the website www.7ld.newa-democrats.org We are hoping that as people use our website more, they will be willing to contribute to help spread the word in Eastern Washington that there are strong, active Democrats who are willing to work hard to make a difference.

Many of our residents do not have email. With postage rates increasing, the cost to send out information in the paper format is significant. Please help us to spread the word. Consider making a donation to support your fellow Democrats in Eastern Washington and help them stay connected. Ask your favorite Democrat if they are on the email list for the 7th LD. If not please pass along their contact information and I will be very happy to add their email address to our list.

5th CD Meeting:

Walt Kloefkorn was elected Chair of the 5th Congressional District Democratic organization at the meeting on July 14th. There are many opportunities to assist this newly established group. Please consider volunteering! It is always exciting to be involved in the beginnings

of an organization. Contact Walt wkloefkorn@yahoo.com if you would like more information.

Also at the meeting the proposed by-laws were approved and committees and committee memberships were discussed. The committee responsible for finding candidates is to have a representative from each of the counties and legislative districts in the 5th CD. If anyone is interested in serving on this committee for the 7th please contact me as soon as possible.

Dates to Remember:

July 21 Davenport parade 10 a.m.

July 28 Deer Park parade 10 a.m.

July 29 7th LD meeting at Old Kettle Falls Park hosted by Stevens County, 10 am

October 13-14 Eastern Washington Convention, Convention Center, Spokane

October 20 7th LD meeting at the Okanogan Grange Hall hosted by Okanogan County

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