

7th Legislative District Democratic Newsletter

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7th LD Quarterly Meeting: Saturday, October 20th (10 am training; noon lunch; 1 pm meeting)

The next quarterly meeting of the 7th Legislative District is being hosted by the Okanogan County Democrats. The meeting will be preceded by a training session presented by Jack Miller on the voter file and the caucus process. The main item on the agenda for the 7th LD meeting will be the caucuses on February 9th and the State Challenge to us here in the 7th.

Jackie Bradley, Chair of the Okanogan County Democrats has arranged for us to have space in the Okanogan County Courthouse for the training session starting at **10 a.m.** Everyone interested in learning how to make the best use out of the very extensive resources available through **VoteBuilder** is invited to attend this training session. The address for the Courthouse is: 4th Street, Okanogan; go to the back of the building and enter through the glass doors. We will be on the third floor in Courtroom #1. There is an elevator.

At **12 noon** we are all invited to Jackie's home for lunch with the 7th LD meeting following at **1 p.m.** Jackie has graciously offered to host us for lunch. Please note that this is a location change. Jackie's home address is: **240 Crestview, Okanogan (422-3723).**

Don't forget to bring food items for the local **food bank.**

Eastern Washington Organizing Conference: Winning in the Rural West – Building a Movement of Hope:

A very successful conference was held October 12th-13th in Spokane that combined practical training with specific advice on how to win elections in the rural West – all of which left us richer and more informed than when we arrived. With great support from the State staff, an impressive local volunteer effort to notify people about the conference, and much prior planning, this third Eastern Washington Organizing Conference was a great event!

The conference started Saturday at 5 p.m. with a talented Spokane Indian family drumming group followed by a welcoming speeches from our own **Senator Maria Cantwell**; Washington State Chair, **Dwight Pelz**, and Conference Chair, **Jackie Bradley.**

Senator Cantwell stressed the importance of gathering enough votes to **override** the Presidential veto of the child medical care proposal. She commented that while insurance costs have gone up by 70%, wages over the same period of time have gone up by 19%. There is no way that average middle income families can continue to

provide the same level of health insurance that they use to be able to provide. She also stressed that it is critical to keep a Democratic majority in Congress in order to maintain oversight and the ability to investigate potential wrong doing, as well as ensuring that college education is affordable.

Dwight Pelz talked about the values of the land that Democrats in rural areas understand and support. He believes that people in the rural areas have finally learned that Republican values don't match the values of the West. It is time for Democrats to step up and talk about what they value.

Jackie Bradley, Conference Chair and the Chair of Okanogan County gave everyone an enthusiastic welcome to the conference and talked about the commitment that we have all made to the Democratic process.

With everyone invigorated, we selected training sessions that ranged from "Investing in Our Quality of Life" to "Supporting Agriculture and Protecting our Environment"; and "Recruiting Volunteers and Developing Leaders in Rural Areas" and "Lobbying 101."

In "**Supporting Agriculture and Protecting Our Environment**" we heard about the potential for a crushing plant for production of alternative energy in Eastern Washington. The value of canola as a potential alternative fuel was discussed including the fact that canola rotation has increased wheat production by 15% the following year and using the meal for dairy cattle feed increases milk production. **Kurt Fritts**, the Political Director for Washington Conservation Voters talked about the cycle of accountability: electing candidates, affecting policy, and rating officials on an Environmental Scorecard. He also talked about the environment as a conservative value, stating that 1 in 5 voters in the interior West ranks the environment as a high priority in 2007.

In "**Recruiting Volunteers and Developing Leaders in Rural Areas**", we had the privilege of hearing **Brad Martin**, the Political Director for the Democratic National Committee. It was obvious that he understood rural areas and had specific practical experience to support his opinions. The way to recruit volunteers in our area is to recognize that politics is personal requiring hard work, repetitive work, team work, and organized work. You need to motivate volunteers and you need to ask them to help, but once you ask for help, you need to have specific tasks identified for them to do. You need to be organized and know when you will need volunteers and how many you will need – in other words you must have a plan. He handed out a packet of information that provided material to assist in this process.

Gloria Totten, President of the Progressive Majority, was the Saturday morning breakfast speaker and gave us a great deal of information. She characterized rural voters as:

- Having a negative view of Democrats and Progressives;
- Valuing Faith, Family and Patriotism; and
- Frustrated with all politicians

Elections are about voters not about candidates. It is important to recruit a good candidate – one who is energetic, optimistic and knowledgeable and who is able to partner with a powerful neutral organization to address relevant issues.

Voters vote for people not issues so candidates must make cultural bonds with their constituents. A candidate must identify with change and against corruption. Economic populism works. Republicans can not talk about economic values because they are too aligned with wealth.

“Winning in Spokane” – lessons and challenges for Democrats was a panel of local elected officials: **Bonnie Maeger**, Spokane County Commissioner; Representative **Don Barlow** from the 6th LD; State Senator **Chris Marr** also from the 6th LD; and **Peter Goldmark** who ran for the 5th CD in 2006 and is now running for Washington State Commissioner of Public Lands. This was a very interesting session with questions from the audience and lots of discussion by the members of the panel.

Our lunch speaker was **Kalyn Free**, President of **INDN’s List**. She spoke eloquently about the work that is being done to organize Native Americans. The values of Native Americans are the same as the Democratic Party: taking care of people who need help, educating children, and valuing a sense of community. The success that INDN’s List has realized in registering Native Americans to vote and involving them in the political process has benefited many Democratic candidates in the areas that have been targeted. Washington State will have a team for the 2008 election. This will be very helpful here in Eastern Washington.

The afternoon sessions were training sessions preparing us for the caucus process on February 9th presented by **Jaxon Ravens** and **Dwight Pelz** from the State Party, and more assistance on how to maximize the powerful tool VoteBuilder, our voter file resource, presented by **Wes Beal** from the State Party. All of these sessions were very helpful and provided the necessary information to help us get ready for a successful 2008 election cycle.

For us here in Eastern Washington it will be critical to focus on voter registration and voter identification. We need to know the voters who are Democrats and we need to make sure that they vote!

Our dinner speaker was **Pat Williams**, nine-term Congressman from Montana and founder of Democrats for the West. His speech held the audience enthralled and we all walked away with a deep sense of pride in being a Democrat. It was an honor to be able to hear him speak. It was a fitting end to a great conference.

Challenge from the State: What it will take to win in Eastern Washington

The Challenge from the State for the 7th LD is to get 500 new Gregoire votes in 2008. This breaks down for each of our counties to:

- **Ferry** needs 36
- **Lincoln** needs 37
- **Okanogan** needs 92
- **Pend Oreille** needs 51
- **Spokane** needs 121
- **Stevens** needs 162

We can do this! We must do this! Now is the time to volunteer to help. Please attend a training session.

Eastern Washington Field Manager Report: by Erik Horeis

During the last three months, highlights of my activities include working with other younger professionals in trying to start a Younger Democrats Chapter in Spokane and helping to create an Asotin County Democrats Local Party Organization. In August, I attended a National Organizing Summit in Cleveland with the DNC as part of the State Partnership Program. The conference was valuable because of the networking opportunities (especially with other organizers who are working in rural and conservative areas in the West). The training session also included information on the new VoteBuilder System, Rural Organizing and Volunteer Recruitment Techniques, Voter Contact, and the overall political strategy for winning the White House in 2008.

I also have expressed my willingness to conduct Vote Builder and Caucus Training throughout Central and Eastern Washington. The Yakima County Democrats have generously donated \$450 towards the purchase of a projector for the training sessions. So far, a good number of groups have demonstrated a strong interest in this opportunity.

Ferry County: I have attended two meetings with Ferry County Democrats. The group is very concerned about the role of its county commissioners in establishing and executing policies, especially as it relates to land use and natural resource issues. The group is actively searching for new PCOs and candidates. A caucus coordinator has been identified.

Lincoln County: I will be working with Darrel Brown, the County Chair, in the caucus planning process.

Okanogan County: I will be working with the county leadership in developing and implementing their caucus plans.

Pend Oreille County: The PO County Democrats, in conjunction with the Cattlemen's Association, had a very successful event with Governor Gregoire, with 475 people in attendance. I will be involved in the caucus process in the county.

Spokane County: Working with the 3rd, 4th, and 6th LD leadership, the county is aggressively pursuing the caucus process. I have worked with Marcus Riccelli in trying to start a Younger Democrats Group in the county. I have also been involved in multiple meetings with Representative Don Barlow's Re-Election Steering Committee.

Stevens County: The County Chair is excited and prepared to plan and train members for caucuses again this presidential election cycle. I have scheduled VoteBuilder training for December 1st.

Washington State Democratic Central Committee Meeting:

Training Sessions: The WSDCC meeting was held in Wenatchee on September 28-29th. Training sessions on both the **voter file** and the **caucus process** were given providing very helpful information for those in attendance to bring back to their areas and share with others. With more people becoming comfortable with the voter file and finding out just how easy it is to use to access information about voter identification in local areas, we will be offering more local training sessions so that all precinct committee officers can get going on voter identification and voter registration – the two key ingredients to a successful increase in Democratic votes in Eastern Washington. Hand in hand with this process are the up-coming caucuses on February 9th at 1 p.m. The caucus process is critical for us to gather more interested Democrats to help us succeed in retaining Christine Gregoire as our Governor and to assure that we elect a Democratic President in 2008. Nowhere is this more critical than here in Eastern Washington.

Agricultural and Rural Caucus: Although there are over ten different official interest groups that meet at a Central Committee meeting, I traditionally attend the Agricultural and Rural Caucus. There is always a speaker that provides timely information about issues directly related to people in the rural areas of the State. This time was no exception. **Mike Gempler**, Executive Director of the Washington Growers League, talked about their non-partisan collaboration that focuses on farm workers' and growers' issues and needs. As we all know, it is imperative to have a workable resolution to the issues related to immigration reform.

Mr. Gempler provided some interesting statistics about the agricultural workforce. There are currently 140 million individuals employed in agriculture related jobs with 10 million individuals being undocumented workers. While we tend to think of agricultural jobs as being row crops such as wheat and corn, 58% of agriculture is produce. He went on to talk about the fact that there are more jobs than there are workers and how that is hurting agricultural production throughout the United States but certainly here in Eastern Washington.

Most of his discussion was on the critical need for effective immigration reform for four main reasons: national security; document control; protection of the economy; and fair treatment of individuals. He talked about how we all have a stake in immigration reform especially as it relates to food security. This affects us directly since it is important to know where the food is grown to assure the food is safe and most importantly so that we are able to provide our own sustainable food supply.

In addition the ARC voted to send a letter of support for the **Simple Majority for Our Schools #4204** removing the requirement for a 60% vote to approve school levies. Please remember the importance of supporting this initiative when your ballots arrive next week! Please vote **Yes!**

Ellie Webb summarized the very successful conference sponsored by ARC in Moses Lake earlier in September. The topics at the conference ranged from information about child labor laws to migrant workers rights.

Eastern Washington Conference Committee: I also attended the Eastern Washington Conference Committee meeting to find out about the final plans for the

conference that was scheduled for October 12-13th. The speakers looked great, the training sessions were good, and all that needed doing was to round up more people to attend the conference. All of us at the meeting accepted assignments to help get the word out, and as you read in the article above, we were successful! It was a great conference.

Business Meeting: The business meeting of the Central Committee included a report from the Chair, **Dwight Pelz**. As we work to increase the Democratic vote, Dwight wanted us to hear about what is most effective – mailing, phone calls, or face to face interactions. He informed us that it takes 389 pieces of mail to change a vote. It takes 460 phone calls to change a vote. And it takes only 14 visits or face-to-face interactions to change a vote. It is startlingly apparent that person to person contact is the most important for us to begin to change the voting habits of the majority of voters in Eastern Washington. What this means for us with our largely rural area is that it will be critical to use the new voter file, VoteBuilder to assist us in maximizing our effectiveness as we work to get out the Democratic vote in 2008. We can use VoteBuilder and our committed Democrats together very effectively to get more Democrats out to vote.

We also needed to elect a replacement to fill Karen Marchioro's term to the Democratic National Committee. Four very fine candidates ran for the position: Cathi Bailey, Di Irons, Sharon Mast, and Lila Smith. **Sharon Mast** was elected. It was a pleasure to see her at the Eastern Washington Organizing Conference. She has certainly gotten right to work.

Several resolutions were passed including **opposition** to Initiative Measure **960** (the latest Tim Eyman measure). Several resolutions sponsored by groups in Eastern Washington were acted on. A measure recommending the establishment of a position of State Party Historian was referred to the Executive Board. The resolution creating a Washington Farm Corps was referred to the Agricultural and Rural Caucus, and the resolution on police certification expense be covered by the State was passed.

Dates to Remember: for details, including a map, go to our web site www.7ld.newa-democrats.org and select the Calendar option, then select the date of the event.

October 20: 10:00 a.m. – 12 noon Voter File training; Okanogan County Court House, 4th St., Okanogan

October 20: 12 noon - 1:00 p.m. Lunch at Jackie Bradley's home, 240 Crestview, Okanogan

October 20: 1:00 – 3:00, 7th LD meeting at Jackie Bradley's home, 240 Crestview, Okanogan

October 20: 6 pm. Pend Oreille County Democrats Annual Fall Dinner & Pie Auction, PO Fire District #3 Sacheen Station on Hwy 211, mile marker 6, across from the Krogh Family Farm

November 10: 5 p.m. NAACP Freedom Dinner; Northern Quest Casino, 100 N Hayford Rd., Airway Heights WA

December 1: Voter file training, Colville, WSU Extension Center, More details soon

December 8: Voter file training, Lincoln County, TBA

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