



GrassRoots

Newsletter of the Whatcom County Democratic Central Committee

January 2008

www.whatcomdemocrats.com

647-7661

Vol 4, Issue 1

Warm Welcome for New Officers and Committee Chairs

At the December Central Committee meeting, the Precinct Committee Officers elected Natalie McClendon as Chair and Abe Jacobson as Vice Chair of the Whatcom Democrats. At December's Executive Board meeting the Chair nominated, and the Board confirmed, former Mayor Tim Douglas as Chair of Issues and Resolutions Committee, and Dave Willingham as Chair of Campaign Committee.

Central Committee meeting Wednesday January 9

7 p.m., Garden St. Family Ctr, corner of E. Holly & Garden Sts., Bellingham.

Democratic presidential candidates: Who's up? Who's down? Why?

We'll have guest political scientists sharing expert analysis, and candidate surrogates pitching their candidates. Show up and take part! It should be lively and informative. Right after IA, NH votes!

We will also elect a member for each of the following three Washington Democrats' statewide committees: Rules, Credentials, and Platform. This is a great year to participate at the statewide level, in view of the caucuses and platform activity.

Presidential Candidate local contacts

We have some local points-of-contact:

Biden: David Narsico, 714-1258

Clinton: Maggie Hansen, 733-2539

Kucinich: Larry Kalb, 927-2729

Obama: Stephanie Kontouros, 734-2686

This list will be updated on our website.

Please remove your flyer insert and post it where people can see it!

Key to Success: Inclusion

Natalie McClendon, Chair, Whatcom Democrats

In the spring of 2004, while on my morning walk with a neighbor, having one of many political discussions, I remarked that I felt life passing me by. Little did I know that my decision that day to get involved in the presidential campaign would lead to being elected Chair of the local Democratic Party.

My awareness of politics came early, as I expect it did for many who grew up in the '60s. For me it started at age 5 stuffing flyers in mailboxes for my mother's campaign for City Council. I developed a gradual understanding of the burnt stick in our front yard as my mother publicly supported de-segregation and a Black candidate for council.

Those early issues, as now, were often about inclusion, into society, into the economy, and into the Democratic Party. The responsibility of party leadership is to create an organization that promotes inclusion in the party. The major value of the Democratic Party is to promote inclusion in our society and economy.

My personal goal since 2004 is to build up the grassroots of the local party, through knowledgeable, active PCOs, a communication network to keep us connected, and effective campaign tools to win elections. It's the proverbial three-legged stool—we need all three to stand up.

I've been involved in the last three elections from inside the local party organization. I approached each as practice for the next. With the help of many other volunteers, each year has seen significant improvement in all three "legs of our stool."

We are now putting plans in motion to make the 2008 caucuses an inclusive event for all who share our values of inclusion. A number of new volunteers have stepped up to take leadership roles in caucus planning. We need each of you to carry our message of inclusion to your neighbors, friends, and co-workers. Please post the enclosed flyer so it can be seen in public.

If you haven't yet shared your email address with us, please sign up for email updates about the caucuses through our website. Check our website for the name of your precinct leader, and call him or her to volunteer.

If each of us gives one hour to distribute flyers in our neighborhood, Whatcom County voters will know they are welcome at our caucuses. Our precinct-level Presidential Caucuses are on Saturday, February 9. See you there!

What's a Caucus? - The Big Picture

Abe Jacobson, Vice Chair

A party's presidential candidate is officially nominated at that party's national convention, by the vote of "delegates." But how do we grass-roots voters have our say, prior to that climactic moment?

We influence the decision by determining who will be the delegates. In Washington State, the major political parties select national convention delegates by a "caucus" process. State lawmakers created a Presidential Primary two decades ago, hoping the parties would choose that method, but for now, the Democratic Party has chosen to stay with the caucus process of selecting delegates. This means the Presidential Primary on Feb. 19th will be merely a "beauty contest" for Democratic candidates.

"90 percent of life is just showing up"

We expect a large turnout at the caucuses, so please plan accordingly. We start at 1 pm, but sign-in begins at 12 noon, and ends at 1:30 (p. 3 for caucus sites). Most caucus sites are for several precincts, not just one. This adds some complexity, so be aware of the time requirements. It will take some time to sign-in, to be briefed on the caucus process, and to get yourself to the room where your particular precinct's caucus is meeting.

Caucus Nuts and Bolts

At 1 p.m. the real action begins, to elect delegates to the Legislative District Caucuses. How many delegates from a precinct? Basically, there are one delegate and one alternate for each fifty votes (or portion thereof) cast in that precinct for John Kerry in the 2004 general election.

Either the Precinct Committee Officer (PCO), or if necessary, a stand-in designated by the County Chair, will call the meeting to order at 1 p.m. sharp. First the attendees elect a "permanent chair" who will then appoint a secretary. The permanent chair presides over these specific items of business:

(a) Elect delegates and alternates to the Legislative District Caucus and county convention.

(b) Discuss and act on resolutions. Precinct-level resolutions may be presented and discussed. The permanent chair forwards them in writing to the County Chair after the caucus.

(c) Prepare minutes of the caucus (secretary's job), that are approved and signed by the chair. These minutes include the full and accurate text of all presented resolutions. The minutes, along with the registration sheet and all ballots from the precinct, are transmitted to the County Chair.

How to Elect Delegates

Here are the steps:

1. Declare Presidential Preference when signing in
2. Tally preferences (1st vote)
3. Calculate number of delegates per candidate

4. Participants lobby each other to get them to vote for their candidate
5. Take second vote; participants may change votes
6. Re-calculate the number of delegates per candidate
7. Elect delegates to the Legislative District Caucus in April, for each candidate

To figure votes: First, each delegate receives the whole number of delegates in the fractional allocation. For example, if she receives 7.38 delegates, at this stage we'll give her 7.

Second, to deal with those pesky leftovers (the .38 in this example), we allocate a delegate to the candidate with the highest total of leftovers, a candidate to the next highest, etc, until no delegates are left. If there is a tie, we settle it by drawing lots.

Plus: Resolutions and Platform proposals.

Caucus site list on p. 3 & our website.

Please remove your flyer insert and post it where people can see it!

Year-end Membership Review

Steve Schuck, Membership Chair

Thank you Judy, Jerry, and Bob for getting the Renewal Notices, Reminders, and Thank You letters out on time.

WELCOME to nearly 150 brand new members who joined during 2007. Our overall membership (active plus lapsed) is close to 1,100.

Thank you all, for responding promptly when you received your renewal notice (that's nearly everyone who is reading this). And welcome back to our lapsed members! With your active participation, we're looking forward to a very successful 2008, starting with your precinct caucus on February 9th.

Whatcom Democrats Executive Board

Chair	Natalie McClendon	671-6851
Vice Chair	Abe Jacobson	734-5019
Treasurer	Peggy Borgens	384-0861
Recording Sec.	Joan Ging	758-4190
Corresponding Sec.	Roni Beall	756-1405
Affirmative Action	Rosalinda Guillen	738-0893
Campaign	Dave Willingham	
Candidates	John McGarrity	738-9695
Finance (Co-chairs)	Roni Beall	756-1405
	JoAnn McNerthny	441-2728
Issues/Resolutions	Tim Douglas	676-8530
Membership	Steve Schuck	733-1063
Communications (acting)	Abe Jacobson	734-5019
Technology	Satpal Sidhu	398-7906
State Committeewoman	Maggie Hanson	733-2539
State Committeeman	Hue Beattie	671-5597
Women's Club	Catherine Chambers	360 381-5091
Western Democrats (WWU)	Annie Jensen	wwudems.org
42 nd Legislative District Rep.	Frances Badgett	527-1097
40 th Legislative District Rep.	Tom Pasma	(360) 661-4485

Holiday Party Success

Roni Beall, Finance Co-Chair (Fundraising)

Despite the snow, more than 130 Democrats attended the Whatcom Democrats' Holiday Party at the Elks Lodge in Bellingham. Gene Knutson was our most gracious and marvelous host. Many people helped to make the event good fun for all, AND a successful fundraiser.

Thank you to Lynn Evich for handling pre-event ticket sales, and to Peggy Borgens for "event-day" ticket sales.

Incoming Chair Natalie McClendon gave out the 1st ever "Board Awards" recognizing Judy Mullinex as outstanding "Newcomer of the Year", Jean Brechen as "Phone Caller Extraordinaire", and Diane Foster for "Outstanding PCO of the Year".

Thank you to John McGarrity for his help bringing in our event sponsors:

Ron and Roni Beall
City Councilman Terry Bornemann and Jennifer Richmond
Barney Goltz
Democratic State Committeewoman Maggie Hansen
Gene and Eleanor Hogan
Abe and Carole Jacobson
Michele Kämmerer and Janis Walworth
County Councilman-Elect Bob Kelly
City Councilman Gene Knutsen and Jan Knutsen
State Representative Kelli Linville and Will Roehl
Ken and Amy Mann
Jasper and Tiffany MacSparrow
Bob Mongue
State Representative Jeff Morris
County Treasurer-Elect Steve Oliver and Teresa Oliver
Bellingham Mayor Dan Pike
Democratic State Committeeman RB Porter
State Senator Harriet Spanel
Leslie Veitch
City Councilman-elect Jack Weiss

We also enjoyed giving all '07 endorsed candidates "Outstanding Candidate" buttons. Not everyone won, but in our eyes, each and every one of those who stepped forward to run is a winner in our eyes. Thank you Catherine Chambers for making this happen.

The Honeybees serenaded as the event ebbed and we began clean up. We netted over \$1500 which will definitely help with caucus costs, though stay tuned, as more will be needed.

Whatcom for Obama

We are a grassroots, not-for-profit group that is working to increase awareness and support for Barack Obama in Whatcom County. Join our local group: <http://my.barackobama.com/page/group/WhatcomCountyforObama>

For more information, call Stephanie Kontouros, 734-2686 or email whatcom4obama@gmail.com

2008 Caucus Locations

Each precinct will caucus as a separate and distinct unit, but some precincts will meet in the same building. Below is a list of the locations around the county where Democratic precinct caucuses will meet. They are listed generally from NW County to SE County.

An interactive version of this list, with maps, precinct look-up tools, etc., can be found on our website,

www.whatcomdemocrats.com

Also listed on the web is your PCO or Caucus Captain and phone number. They could use your help with neighborhood publicity or caucus logistics. Or call our office at 647-7661 for information.

Point Roberts: Community Center, 1487 Gulf Road, Precinct 101
Blaine: American Legion Hall, 4580 Legion Drive
Precincts 102, 103, 104, 106, 107, 109, 301, 302, 303
Ferndale: Horizon Middle School, 2671 Thornton Road, Precincts 110, 111, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505
Lummi Peninsula: NW Indian College, Log House, 2522 Kwina Road
Precincts 120, 121, 123
Lummi Island: Grange Hall, Nugent Road, across from Post Office
Precinct 122
Lynden: Fisher Elementary School, 501 N. 14th Street
105, 108, 126, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605
Meridian: Ten Mile School, 960 E. Hemmi Road
Precincts 112, 113, 128, 130, 131
Nooksack: Nooksack High School, 3326 E. Badger Road
Precincts 127, 129, 133, 136, 401, 701, 801
Mt. Baker: Mt. Baker High School, 4936 Deming Road
Precincts 134, 135, 137, 138, 143, 144, 145, 153
NW Bham: Shuksan Middle School, Northwest Avenue at Alderwood
Precincts 124, 125, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205
Cornwall Park: Parkview Elementary School, 3003 Coolidge Drive
Precincts 208, 211, 212
E. Sunset Drive: Sunnyland Elementary School, 2800 James Street
Precinct 209
Van Wyck: Caucus site to be announced
Precincts 132, 139, 140, 141, 210
Columbia, Lettered Streets: St. Paul's Episcopal School, 3000 Northwest Ave, Precincts 206, 207, 213
Downtown to Alabama Hill: Bellingham High School, 2020 Cornwall Ave., Precincts 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 223, 224, 227
North Shore Lake Whatcom: Silver Beach Elementary School, 4104 Academy Street, Precincts 142, 225, 226
Lakeway Drive to Geneva, Yew Street Road: Kulshan Middle School, 1250 Kenoyer Dr., Precincts 147, 148, 154, 220, 221, 222, 228, 229
Lakeway/Holly west of I-5: WECU Education Bldg, 511 E. Holly St
Precinct 232
Sehome: Garden Street Family Center, 1231 N. Garden St.
Precincts 231, 234
Boulevard: St. James Presbyterian Church, 910 14th Street
Precincts 230, 235, 236
WWU: Viking Union, 516 High St, Precincts 233, 237, 238
Happy Valley, Ridgemont to Lake Samish: Happy Valley School, 1041 24th St, Precincts 156, 239, 240, 242, 243, 247
DT Fairhaven: Fairhaven Park Pavillion, 107 Chuckanut Drive
Precinct 241
Edgemore, Chuckanut Dr: Fairhaven Middle School, 110 Parkridge Rd, Precincts 155, 244, 245, 246
Sudden Valley, So L. Whatcom: Sudden Valley Barn, Gate 2, L. Whatcom Blvd. Precincts 149, 150, 151, 152
Newhalem: Seattle City Light Currier Hall, Precinct 146

Whatcom County Democrats Calendar

January

- 7 Caucus Steering Committee meets, 5-7 p.m., WD office.
- 9 Central Committee meeting, 7 p.m., Garden St. Family Center, corner of N. Garden and E. Holly, Bhm. All Democrats welcome.
- 14 Caucus Steering Committee meets, 5-7 p.m., WD office.
- 14 Finance Committee meets, 7 p.m., WD office.
- 14 Whatcom County Democratic Women's Club, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Arlis's Restaurant 1525 Cornwall Ave., Bhm. Catherine Chambers, 381-5091.
- 16 Rescheduled E-board meeting, 7 p.m., WD office, Bay St. and W. Holly, downtown Bhm. (Note: meeting normally will be last Wednesday of each month.)
- 17 Let's Talk Discussion Group, noon, Lychee Buffet at Lakeway & King Sts., Sheila McCandlish 647-3351.
- 21 Caucus Steering Committee meets, 5-7 p.m., WD office.
- 28 Caucus Steering Committee meets, 5-7 p.m., WD office.

February

- 4 Caucus Steering Committee meets, 5-7 p.m., WD office.
- 9 Sat. Precinct Caucuses. Doors open at 12 noon, convene at 1 p.m. See site locations page 3.
- 13 Central Committee meeting, 7 p.m., Garden St. Family Center, corner of N. Garden and E. Holly, Bhm. All Democrats welcome.

Upcoming Democratic milestones

- Jan 3 Iowa Caucus
- Jan 8 New Hampshire Primary
- Jan 19 Nevada Primary
- Jan 26 South Carolina Primary
- Feb 5 Super Duper Tuesday
- and then the big one:
- Feb 9 Washington Caucuses

Platform, Issues, & Resolutions: Closing the loop

Tim Douglas, Chair, Issues & Resolutions

Each presidential election year Whatcom Democrats adopt a Platform. Through it, we express positions of importance to caucus-convention participants. We then expect those Democrats we elect to honor the Platform's content.

That is a tough assignment! Our platforms run for pages, reflecting issues both of the moment and longer-term. Even the most dedicated Democrats in office could not possibly address everything in the Platform. Instead, they have to prioritize and take advantage of every opportunity to advance the issues. And should they wander from the script, we often are quick to chastise. For 2008, I'm proposing that we work even harder to close the loop between what's in our Platform and what those we elect are trying to accomplish. This has to be a two-way street. We need to be clear about our top priorities. And we need to draw upon our elected Democrats' insights into what's



Questions about the
caucuses?

Sign up for email
notifications at

whatcomdemocrats.com

Whatcom County Democrats
215 Holly Street, Suite B-27
P.O. Box 3095
Bellingham, WA 98227

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Allied group events in Whatcom County

January

- 3 Obama Iowa Returns Party, 7 p.m., Callaloo Caribbean Kitchen, 1212 N. State St., Bhm. 98225. Stephanie Kontouros, 734-2686.
- 15 Obama social gathering, 7 p.m., Café Akroteri, 1219 Cornwall Ave, Bhm. 98225. Stephanie Kontouros, 734-2686.
- 24 United for National Health Care meets, 7 PM at Labor Hall, 1700 N. State St., Bhm. Aileen Satushek, 398-2295.

achievable—where our best opportunities lie.

We took a step in this direction at the December Central Committee meeting. Senator Spanel and Representative Linville were on hand to predict what's coming in the 2008 legislative session. The more we find common direction, the better we and our Democrats in Olympia can successfully boost our issues.

In the coming few months, the Issues and Resolutions Committee will draw in those we have helped elect. Programs will update us on critical Platform issues. Timely exchange of information will increase our influence on the process and improve our outcomes. We're convinced this approach will invigorate our Central Committee programs. It will get us involved at the right time to make a difference. Want to help? Please contact Tim Douglas, Issues & Resolutions Committee Chair. We're looking for eager, energetic members!