



GRASSROOTS

The Newsletter of the
Whatcom County
Democratic
Central Committee

Membership Meeting

SPECIAL DAY & LOCATION
Wednesday, April 15, 2009
7:00 – 9:00 pm
Whatcom Dems Office
215 W. Holly St, Suite B-27

All Democrats Welcome

PROGRAM: Discuss and adopt any resolutions we want to forward to the State Democratic Party meeting for consideration, including Caucus and Primary recommendations.

42nd Legislative District Democrats Meeting

Saturday, April 11, 10am-Noon
Machinists Hall, 2064 Vista Dr. Ferndale
AGENDA:

- Election of new Chair, as SueEllen Lawton has resigned. Electors are the PCOs in the 42nd LD.
- Forum on the Democratic Party's Presidential candidate selection process, specifically seeking input on
 1. Efficient management of large caucus turnouts
 2. Ideas about scheduling and access to participate, without negating the grassroots basis of a caucus
 3. Desirable and undesirable aspects of primary, caucus, and spread of public information for them

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Homeland Security 101

by Audrey Mei-Yee Tsui & Merry Schnell

The general membership meeting on March 11 hosted a panel of law enforcement officers to present "Near the Border: Homeland Security's Approach to Enforcement in our Backyard and the Run up to the 2010 Olympics," Representing some of the agencies that cooperate across jurisdictions were U.S. Border Patrol Chief John Bates, U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) Acting Service Port Director Lynn Gardner, Branch Chief of Enforcement Operations Chris DeMello (both from Blaine), and Whatcom County Sheriff Bill Elfo.

The panel briefly discussed their missions and the reach of their jurisdictions. Chief DeMello stated that CBP serves a dual purpose: to maintain and facilitate the flow of border traffic and to protect the country's security. Chief John Bates explained that his agency is the mobile, uniformed law-enforcement arm of the CBP within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Sheriff Elfo said that his office does not do immigration enforcement, but will report illegal immigrants when they are encountered.

With the recent raid on Yamato Engine Specialists in Bellingham by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials, this was on the minds of many audience members. R.B Porter and Bob Burr questioned the panel about the treatment of the workers seized because of the illegal immigrant status: why they were held for 72 hours without access to legal counsel? Where they were held during the 3 days between the initial arrest and arrival at the detention facility in Tacoma? Bates said that they were held during processing while they wait to go before a judge, and then either sent to detention or deported. Women and children are kept together. This process of deportation may take only 24 hours. Chief Bates said these questions should be answered by ICE in Seattle, who was

not represented on this panel. Bates made the distinction that the two agencies operate under different, yet overlapping, jurisdictions.

County Councilmember Bob Kelly questioned the panel about checkpoints extending 100 miles from the border, to which Bates replied that 100 miles was determined in a court case as "reasonable distance," and individual checkpoints are established according to threat based on intelligence. There are 30 checkpoints along about 40 miles of border in Whatcom County. Bates wanted to be clear that investigations are conducted based on reports from the citizens in the community and not randomly.

Some in the community worry about the possible deputization of local lawmen to carry out immigration enforcement in exchange for federal funds such as through "Operation Stonegarden." This operation is administered by Border Patrol and exists

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Eleanor Roosevelt Luncheon Set – Get your tickets early!

The Whatcom Democrats' annual Eleanor Roosevelt Fundraiser is set for Friday, May 29 at Northwood Hall in Bellingham. In addition to unveiling our 2009 Honored Democrat, our program features Washington State Progressive Majority Political Director, and veteran of the House Democratic Campaign Committee, Adam Bartz. Elected representatives; business, labor and party leaders, interested Democrats, and our "party faithful" are all invited, but seating limited.

Order tickets on-line at brownpapertickets.com or call 671-7661 (NOTE: All tickets must be purchased in advance.) Doors open at 11:30, program begins at noon. Thanks for supporting your local Democratic Party.

Volunteers keep the Democratic engine running

The office continues to be quite busy post election, with campaign data clean-up projects. We are also in full support of several new projects from several committee chairs and the PCO Coordinator and a complete update of the email newsletter lists. One project alone requires making over 4,000 telephone calls.

This takes a tremendous amount of volunteer hours and we wish to extend warm, heartfelt thanks and appreciation to a superb group of volunteers who accomplish all these tasks. These folks are steady, willing, faithful, hard working and the very heart of the Whatcom Democrats' success as an organization and the work it accomplishes.

Sooooooooo - to this group: huzzah, hail, kudos, hugs, hurray, hurrah, woohoo and a woot! You are all greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Please consider joining these wonderful folks. An hour or two a week is all it takes. Call our Office Manager, Rebekah Lee, at 647-7661.

Emily Diaz, Sharon Alford, Jerry Brownfield, Emma Conlee, Laurel Cook, Ronalee Kincaid, Judy Mullenix, Jill Burton-Dascher, Bert Monroe, Cindy Szankiewicz, Carolyn Martin, Rosemary Woodyard, Colleen Fox, Sheila Hardy, Mary Greenough, Ellen Starcevic, Rosemary Hostettler, Velma Wendt, Rosalee Yachnin, Sherry Kew, Barbara Aiken, Martha Burns, Judy Cosky, Jean Brechan, Corrine Gimbel-Levine, Ellen Broad-Smith, Jan Claussen, Jean Dodd, Shirley Favor, Marion Heath, Susan Hetrick, Gene Hogan, Betty McClendon, Peg Wilke, Sherry Zielstra, Sonja Jansen, Gloria Lebowitz, Adam St. John, Nicole Porter, Judy Cosgrove, Jim Fox, Lisa Burn, Loretta Hogg, Julie Montrose, George Harrell, Ellen Starcevic, Ellen Ware, Katelyn Conway, Ben Flores, Morgan Montes, Liz Bernstein, Shelly Bernstein, Carl Pietrantonio, Ginny Hadd, Vikki Farbin, Elcey Cook, Kurt Waldenburg, Nancy Steele, Richard Donnelly, Gary Wade, Elizabeth Longwell, Trish Lyden, Pat Wickline, Karin Colgrove, Sharyl Forster, Janice Trafton, Stephanie Treneer, Brandon Martinez, Susan West, John Poggi, Pete Juhle, Barbara Hudson, Les Campbell, Jodith Allen.

Track Legislative Action

Washington Votes:
<http://www.washingtonvotes.org/>

State Senate Democratic Caucus
<http://blog.senatedemocrats.wa.gov/>

State House Democratic Caucus
<http://hdcadvance.blogspot.com/>

Urban/Rural Growth Revisited

by Merry Schnell

Whatcom 2031 was the topic at the 42nd Legislative District Democrats meeting on Saturday, March 14. Panelists Dave Pros, former County Planning Commission member, Ken Mann, County Planning Commission member, and Carl Weimer, County Councilman, discussed some of the issues concerning the process of developing a plan for 20-year growth. Among the issues facing the Commission are how realistic current population projections are, can growth be accommodated in the existing incorporated cities, and how growth in rural areas can be controlled to preserve farmland and open spaces.

The projected population growth for the county between 2011 and 2031 is at a maximum of 60,500 people, bringing the total population projection to around 258,000. These numbers are based on historical data and are allocated at a rate of 1.2% per year. The panel indicated that current city limits of Bellingham, Birch Bay, Blaine, Columbia Valley/Kendall, Everson, Ferndale, Nooksack, and Sumas would have the capacity to house these numbers of new people without redefining their city limits. The majority of the "in-fill" is expected to take place in Bellingham and Ferndale, while Lynden has the least amount of room for population in-fill.

Public perception that rural population growth has been too high in recent years matches the reality. The Comprehensive

Plan calls for 6.37% of growth in unincorporated areas, but actual growth has been closer to 20% of the total. The Council intends to control the future rural sprawl by driving the growth to cities through the use of impact fees, shoreline restrictions, and other regulations like the recently passed on-site sewage system codes. Areas outside the city's limits currently zoned for dense growth, called "Urban Growth Areas" (UGAs), may no longer be needed for future growth. The County Council will have to consider re-zoning these areas to rural density. For people who own property in these UGAs, expecting to see their property values rise with urban development, this change will not be popular.

Regardless of how the County plans for the influx of people, they know that it will be very hard to please everyone. The County Council has a deadline to put a plan in place by the end of June or face fines and loss of grant money. And inevitably, once a plan is put in place, sectors of the public will be outraged that "it" is happening in their backyard.

"The best way to influence the process is by getting involved early and participating often," said Ken Mann.

Public workshops on these issues were held in late March, and more will be scheduled in the coming weeks. You can see meeting dates and find background information at www.whatcomcounty.us/pds/2031/.

Whatcom Democrats Executive Board

email: add @whatcomdemocrats.com

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Vice Chair	Bill Newmon	733-5386	demvchair
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Technology	(Vacant)		
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Young Democrats	Andrew Lamb	(425) 374-9686	
40 th LD Representative	Bob Burr	671-8862	
42 nd LD Representative	Steve Lydolph	384-5414	

2009 WA Legislative Update

Every two years we get together as Democrats in caucuses and develop a Platform that sets out our values and goals. Below is a list of some legislation now moving through the State Legislature that directly effect our core values.

Passed and sign by the Governor

SB5164 – Protecting consumers from harassment by Payday lenders trying to collect debts. This is one step in re-regulating the Payday Loan industry.

SB5344 - requiring oil tankers and other large vessels to pay for the Neah Bay Response Tug, which would respond to a catastrophic oil spill on Washington's coast or Puget Sound

The following bills have passed one house, and now must be passed in the other house, before April 17, 2009.

SB 6035 - Prevents groups like the Building Industry Association of Washington from keeping a portion of industrial insurance overpayments for some non administrative purpose without their members' consent. BIAW practice had been to use these funds to build a campaign war chest, used to aid Republican campaigns and launch independent expenditures against Democratic campaigns.

SB 5943 privatizes DSHS Child Welfare Services agency. Opposed by the Washington Federation of State Employees and the Foster Parents Assoc. of WA.

SB5895 - the home buyer's warranty

Homeland Security 101, cont. from p.1

through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). There is some concern that such activities will transform the county into a militarized zone. Chief Bates reassured the audience that his agency values cooperation from the community in reporting suspicious or criminal activity. But at the same time, people should not take matters into their own hands, and certainly groups such as the "minutemen" are not authorized to play an enforcement role.

Law enforcement agencies should perform their duties in a professional manner and be held accountable for their actions. All of the panel members expressed their desire to alleviate the public perception that law enforcement was not will to be held accountable. The all encouraged the public to report instances of disrespect, racial profiling, and other violations of constitutional rights.

bill, that requires builders to stand behind their work for several years, giving buyers of new single family homes the assurance that if a defect is discovered, the builder will be coming back to fix it

SB5735 – Would have set up a "cap and trade" system to measure pollutants, enforce limits and set up a way for industry to swap pollution credits. Final version passed by the Senate is basically a study of how to meet goals set last year.

HB 1490/SB5687 – Transit-Oriented Communities, would amend the Growth Management Act to require densities and transportation planning that would encourage walking and/or use of public transit. Both companion bills passed with watered down amendments.

HB 1747 and SB 5854 - Efficiency First – Would require the development and implementation of a strategic plan for enhancing energy efficiency in and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from buildings. Companion bills in both houses passed, but both watered down.

HB 1517 – Intended to restore voting rights for felons once completed prison sentence and probabtion. Bill that passed eliminated the provisions to automatically restore voting rights to felons and directs the Sec. of State to develop and recommend a solution to the 2010 Legislature.

SB 5688 - State registered domestic partners to be treated the same as married spouses. Sen. Dale Brandland, R-42nd LD, voted for the bill, and has been criticized by conservative Christian groups.

SB 5629 – Requires state agencies seeking federal funding to fund only medically and scientifically accurate pregnancy prevention programs.

Politics Colliding

SB 5446/HB 1528 - Worker Privacy Act to allow workers to choose whether or not to participate in employer communication on issues of individual conscience, including politics, religion, charitable giving, and unionization. This bill is a top priority of the Washington State Labor Council and is endorsed by the Washington State Democratic Party. Unfortunately, it is opposed by our Democratic leadership in the Legislature, and our Governor. The bill was not passed by one house before the cut-off, so is essentially dead for this session, but the WSLC is working to get it revived.

'09 Honored Democrat Nominations Sought

The '09 Honored Democrat Selection Committee is seeking nominees that exemplify significant dedication to our local party and long-term involvement. State Committeeman Hue Beattie is heading up the selection committee, which will forward one or more nominees to the membership for a vote. Members will decide on the 2009 Honored Democrat at our May membership meeting, and presentation will be made at the Eleanor Roosevelt Luncheon on May 29th.

You can download nomination forms at whatcomdemocrats.com, or call out of office at 647-7661 for details.

Join Suffragettes in Local Parades

Whatcom County Democratic Women would like to invite you to participate in re-creating the Suffrage Parade Entries from the early 1900's This year marks the beginning of the Centinennial Celebration for Women's Suffrage in Washington State.

We will be participating in the Ski to Sea Parade and the Old Settlers Parades in costume and would like you to join us.

An organizational meeting will be held on April 18th from 11:30-12:30 at the Fairhaven Library, Fireplace Room. Please stop in and get all the information how you can participate in this event!

Contact Catherine Chambers, 647-3888, for more information or to sign up.

Collecting
Now
for Fall Sale!



Household Goods, Working Electronics, Smaller Pieces of Furniture, Clothing in Good Condition, Collectibles

Drop off at 215 W. Holly Street, Suite B-27 (enter on Bay) M-F, 10 am to 2 pm

For details call 647-7661 or email events@whatcomdemocrats.com



Plant Sale

Dig for Democrats

Friday, April 17, 3-7 pm
Sat., April 18, 9am-3pm

Help us reach our 2009 fundraising goal by potting up your extra plants. We'll even help you if you've got a lot to offer us.

Peggy Borgens will be leading the digging and potting crew, and Jo Pullen will coordinate the sale itself.

To let us know you will have plants to donate, if you would like help digging, and to volunteer for this project, call our office at 647-7661 or email events@whatcomdemocrats.com



Whatcom County Democrats

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

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APRIL 2009

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
We don't have room to give you lots of details on these community events, so go to our website calendar (whatcomdemocrats.com) or call our office 647-7661 for more information.			1	2	3 5 pm - 42nd LD Dems EBoard Mtg	4
5	6 7 pm - Evening with David Suzuki	7 8 pm - Young Dems, Rudy's Pizza, 1232 N. State, Bham	8	9 7 pm - 42nd LD Affirmative Action Cmte Mtg.	10	11 10am - 42 nd LD Dems Mtg, PAGE 1
12	13 11:30-1pm - Women's Club, Anthony's Hearthfire Grill 7-9pm - Finance Cmte Mtg, office	14 7pm - Drinking Liberally, Horseshoe Cafe	15 4:30-6pm - PCO Steering Cmte, Cordata Food Co-op 7 pm - Whatcom Dems Membership Mtg, Dems Office. SEE PAGE 1	16	17 7:45 am - The Future of Business, WCC 3 pm - Plant Sale, see above	18 9 am - Plant Sale, see above 9:30a-2:30p - Health Care Forum, LWV, Bham Library 11:30a - Parade Planning, See p. 3
19	20	21 1 pm - Great Decisions, 1st Congregational Church, B'ham 8 pm - Young Dems, Rudy's Pizza, 1232 N. State, Bham	22 12n - City Club, Northwood Hall, Bham	23 7pm - United for National Health Care mtg, 1700 N. State St, Bham	24 Newsletter copy deadline	25 8am - WA Dem State Mtg, Tacoma
26	27	28 7pm - Drinking Liberally, Horseshoe Cafe	29 7 pm - Whatcom Dems E-Board Mtg, Office.	30		