



GRASSROOTS

The Newsletter of the
**Whatcom County
 Democratic
 Central Committee**

Membership Meeting

Thursday, March 18

7:00 – 9:00 pm

**Norway Hall
 1419 N. Forest St, Bellingham**
 (between Champion & Magnolia)

All Democrats Welcome

PROGRAM:

History of Mass Transit in Whatcom County

With the WTA Levy vote bearing down on us, we are going to make sure you are armed with a solid knowledge of the role of public transit, in the past and moving on into the future.

Planning Ahead

Besides the Grassroots Strategy Sessions March 6th:

April 10, 10am - 3 pm? – Whatcom County Democratic Convention and Legislative District Caucuses, Shuksan Middle School, Bellingham

April 27 – WTA Levy election

June 26 – WA State Democratic Convention, Vancouver, WA

March 2010

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 www.whatcomdemocrats.com
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Democrats Ready Their Thinking Caps

Join us March 6th

Are you ready to chart a course for the Democratic Party? We need your help to set the directions and priorities of your party. The Grassroots Strategy Sessions are being held from 10am to 12noon all around the county. They are an opportunity for you to meet your neighbors, get the word out about local elections and help us all define what it means to be a Democrat.

Check out the platform worksheets on the Whatcom Democrats website.

Take a look and see what best represents our values as democrats. We will come together and discuss how to best convey these values to our friends, neighbors and the public at large.

County Council Lurches Forward, and Backward

By Dan McShane

Democrats have been carefully following the new County Council that began serving in January 2010. The Council tilted to the Republican side at the end of December when County Executive Pete Kremen appointed Republican Ward Nelson to the Council. We quickly found out what our Republican County Council actually values when Mr. Nelson along with fellow Republicans Kathy Kershner and Sam Crawford voted against county funding for our local food bank.

What has been interesting about this new Council is the trouble the Council has been having with process and legal matters. However, it is not the new council members that are struggling but the veterans Nelson, Brenner and Crawford. At the very first Council meeting Barbara Brenner and Sam Crawford introduced an ordinance that would remove the professional inspection requirements and all ongoing inspections of any type for on site septic systems. The removing of the on-going inspection provision would have been a violation

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These meetings are in the style of the 2008 precinct caucuses and will be informal and relaxed.

Locations for the Grassroots Strategy Sessions are below, if you have any questions, call the Whatcom Democrats office at (360) 647-7661.

Point Roberts: Pt. Roberts Community Center, 1487 Gulf Road.

Blaine: Blaine Boathouse (Port of Bellingham), 235 Marine Drive. (102, 103, 104, 106, 107, 109, 301, 302, 303)

Ferndale: Machinist's Hall, 2064 Vista Drive. (110, 111, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505)

Lynden: Dutch Mother's Restaurant, 405 Front Street. (105, 108, 126, 157, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605)

Everson/Nooksack: Everson Senior Center, 111 W. Main St, Everson. (127, 129, 133, 136, 401, 701, 801)

Mount Baker: Van Zandt Community Hall, Hwy 9, 5465 Potter Rd. (134, 135, 137, 138, 143, 144, 145, 153)

Meridian: Chuck Chasteen's residence, 501 E. Smith Road. (112, 113, 128, 130, 131)

Lummi Island: Lummi Island Grange, 2220 N. Nugent Rd.

Northwest Bellingham: Shuksan Middle School, 2713 Alderwood Ave. (123, 124, 125, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208)

Downtown Bellingham: Senior Center, 315 Halleck Street. (211, 212, 213, 214, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 231, 232, 233, 234)

East Bellingham: Kulshan Middle School, 1250 Kenoyer Street. (132, 139, 140, 141, 142, 147, 148, 209, 210, 215, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229)

Fairhaven: Fairhaven Library, 1117 12th Street. (155, 241, 243, 244, 245, 246)

South Bellingham: Sehome High School, 2700 Bill McDonald Parkway. (154, 156, 230, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 247)

Precinct 242: Hue Beattie's home, 2104 McKenzie Ave.

Sudden Valley: Adult Center, Gate 1. (149, 150, 151, 152)

Rep. Dave Quall Announces Retirement

The Whatcom Democrats would like to thank Rep. Dave Quall from the 40th district for his 18 years of service in the State Legislature. He announced that he would be retiring this year, and his leadership and public service will be sorely missed.

Before running for state legislature, Dave Quall was a Mt Vernon High School teacher and counselor. His passion for education on the statewide level lead him to chair the House Education committee for 12 years. During that time he wrestled with how to best enact the WASL, fought to preserve small classroom sizes, support for the teachers and programs that prepared students for the business world. Thank you so much for your public service, Dave.

Four Democrats Running for Quall Seat

With State Representative Dave Quall's retirement at the end of the year, the 40th Legislative District Democrats are gearing up for their nominating convention and endorsement meeting. The Candidates Committee is holding its first meeting this week, as is the Nominating Convention Rules Committee. The Nominating Convention will be held on May 8 at the Croation Cultural Center in Anacortes. This convention will determine the Democratic Party's official nominee to replace Quall. Only PCOs from the 40th LD can vote at the nominating convention.

Separately, the 40th District will make its endorsement(s) in the race at its June 12 membership meeting (Bellingham location TBD). All current members--not just the PCOs-- of the 40th LD Democrats who have joined by June 5 will be eligible to vote at the endorsement meeting. Endorsement will also be considered in the 2nd Congressional District at that time. To join or renew a membership in the 40th LD Democrats, go to wa40dems.net/home.html and click on the "this pdf file" link in the "Who Can Join" section. Or, you can join at our County Convention on April 10.

So far, four Democrats have indicated they will seek the nomination: Tom Pasma of Bow, Kris Lytton of Anacortes and Thomas Boucher and Pedro Perez, both of Mount Venon.

Whatcom Dems Endorse WTA Levy

Whatcom Democrats voted to endorse the WTA Transit Levy at their February membership meeting. Together, we believe that a strong transit system serves our community best. Let me turn this over to what Jason Heck, campaign manager for the WTA Levy had to say to the body last week because it deserves repeated:

"As Democrats, we value the role that public transit plays in our lives: environmentally and socially. Offering all citizens a viable alternative to the single-occu-

pancy vehicle is laudable but there is also the ability to allow young people, seniors, those who can't afford a car or fuel prices—and all others who don't drive—the chance for autonomy, to participate in the work force and our community, and to support themselves. To deny a grandmother her ability to visit the grocery store on Sunday, or a teenager a way to get to his first job, or a blind person who cannot drive in a reliable manner to get around is to limit their freedom and their ability to contribute to the world"

In short, this levy is about fighting for our values as Democrats. To help, you can contact Jason Heck at (360) 220-5914, or at Jason.b.heck@gmail.com. We could use all the help we can get and every little bit of time, money or materials goes a long way.

International Women's Day: March 8th

International Women's Day 2010! Join women, men and children in celebrating women's accomplishments and struggles as a new decade begins. The theme for the 2010 celebration is "Celebrating Globally; Celebrating Locally: Women's Ways of Leading". This year there will be three different activities to attend.

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m: Program at City Council Chambers with reception and displays in the lobby from with coverage on BTV10.

5-8 p.m: Celebration at St. Lukes Community Health Education Center, 3333 Squaticum Parkway. Mystica Feminina opening, art, food and workshops

9 - 11 p.m: After party fundraiser for Haiti Reconstruction at Radio Museum.

For further information or to participate please, call Catherine Chambers at (360) 647-3888

Whatcom Dems Criticize Senators over Drug Re-importation Bill

At the February membership meeting, the Whatcom Dems passed a resolution stating that while we are supportive of Sens. Cantwell and Murray and their overall voting records, we would have criticized them over their vote against the Sen. Dorgan Drug Reimportation amendment, which would have driven down costs for prescription medication by allowing re-importation of medication from Canada.

The resolution was introduced with the intent of starting a discussion with our elected officials on how we can ease the burden of rising medication costs.

Whatcom Democrats Executive Board

email: add@whatcomdemocrats.com

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Finance	Roni Beall	756-1405	
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Technology	Shane Roth	922-0442	
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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	

County Council Lurches Forward, and Backward

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of state law. Two weeks after this illegal ordinance was introduced, the council held a public hearing on the illegal septic ordinance. Much of the testimony focused on the illegal dropping of septic system monitoring. Hence, Crawford and Brenner caused a lot of angst over something they

Very Busy Year at Bellingham City Hall

by John McGarrity

Transportation: Beyond Endorsing the Transit Vote. The newly formed Transportation Commission is expected to help shape the future of Bellingham by taking a long-range, strategic look at transportation issues and providing recommendations on policy choices and investment priorities. The Transportation Commission absorbs the advisory responsibilities of the City's Parking Commission and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, both disbanded at the end of 2009.

The City of Bellingham will work on the every-7-year update of the Comprehensive Plan, to be completed by the end of 2011. The update will need to address, at a minimum, these issues:

- new 20-year planning period, to 2031
- new 2031 population, housing and employment growth forecasts
- revisions to the urban growth area boundary made by the County in 2009
- new policies related to land uses near Bellingham International Airport
- new Shoreline Master Program goals

A new limited-term task force, Capital Facilities Task Force, will provide a forum for evaluating and prioritizing the entire range of City capital projects. The task force will establish City capital spending priorities and recommend appropriate funding mechanism(s) to accomplish the prioritized projects. 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 6 - 8 p.m. Mayor's Board Room, City Hall.

Initial agenda for the Capital Facilities TF include infrastructure needs for sewer and roads, possibly library. Other facilities needs can be suggested by the public.

City Council and some committee meetings are broadcast live on Cable channel 10 (BTV10) and also available on demand from the city's website, cob.org.

could not legally do.

Sam Crawford continued his pattern of wanting to eliminate any social safety net programs the County funds by voting against funding \$20,000 to help support the Loneliness and Isolation Program. The Northwest Regional Council (NWRC) identified the single greatest un-met need of seniors living at home was loneliness and isolation. This modest program mostly supported by volunteers and the Interfaith Coalition is critical for helping seniors stay in their homes as long as possible saving tax payers and seniors money. This action by Mr. Crawford along with his callous view towards funding the food bank provides an interesting insight into his priorities.

A rather innocuous County Planning staff proposal to align the County's land clearing dates in the Lake Whatcom watershed with the City of Bellingham's land clearing dates triggered an interesting discussion. Council member Crawford offered amendments to allow a longer period of time for land clearing. He had a majority in support, but the Council was informed that Mr. Crawford's proposal would require a public hearing and based on that inconvenience Ms Brenner withdrew her support.

But the real kicker was Kathy Kershner's statement that "Phosphorus in Lake Whatcom does not affect the drinking water quality". Apparently Ms Kershner was not unaware that drinking water treatment plant filters were plugged by algae last summer due to phosphorus in the lake, and is likely not familiar with the harm to water quality large algae blooms have on our drinking water.

There is good news from the Council though. At the last Council meeting the majority of the Council supported continuing a moratorium on the creation of new lots in the lake Whatcom watershed. Alas Sam Crawford opposed this wise approach.

Ken Mann and Carl Weimer need our continued support. If you want to stay up to date, Carl has started a great blog at <http://carlvotes.blogspot.com> that discusses up coming issues. Carl's blog is particularly informative and provides lots of great information supporting his views. It's great that with Carl and Ken we have rational, thoughtful members on the Council. We could use a couple more.

Democrats in Olympia Work to Preserve Essential Services

Our elected Democrats down in Olympia are working hard right now to preserve our essential services during this time of economic uncertainty. Recently, they voted to suspend Initiative 960, the law that handicapped the ways in which we could find new sources of revenue. With this added flexibility, and over Republican obstructionism, our Democrats are fighting to build a budget that preserves our values. There will still be some cuts, that is quite clear. With a budget this far in the hole, times will still be tough. Social services and education are the main responsibilities of the state government and things are going to be rough. But Gov. Gregoire and our Democratic leaders in Olympia are working to make sure that we make it through to the economic recovery. Please call your state legislators and let them know how you feel about the state budget.

Kelli Linville has been making the hard choices, as chair of the Ways and Means committee, and has been getting some serious noise from Republicans. Give her a call and thank her for her hard work protecting our values this cycle. Call her office at 360) 786-7854.

Election Observers Ensure Accountability

"If you can't trust the way your vote is counted, nothing else makes much difference" (M.Beddill)

Washington state law and the Whatcom County Auditor encourage citizens to participate in the vote counting process as Citizen Observers. A training session provides necessary background. You then observe according to your own schedule. This is an unique opportunity to participate in the operation of one of the better-run voting systems in the entire USA. An incredible civics education is included gratis. For more information, contact Jim Fox, jffox7777@aol.com, or Steve Schuck, skschuck@peoplepc.com.

March 29 is the Deadline for mail and online voter registration and in-state transfers for April 27th Special Election on the WTA Levy.

2nd Annual
**Plant
Sale**



April 16 & 17

Time to Dig for Democrats

Help us reach our 2010 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 again this year, and Ronalee Kincaid will coordinate the sale.

DROP OFF locations:

Bellingham, 2920 Eldridge Ave (671-2612)
Ferndale, 5648 Orchard Dr (384-0861)

Please label plants as best you can, common name, botanical name, color, etc. We will accept potted or unpotted plants, and plastic pots.

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



Whatcom County Democrats

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

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March 2010 Check whatcomdemocrats.com for details

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 11:30am-Women's Club Mtg, On Rice, 1224 Harris Ave.	2 6pm- Young Dems Mixer, at Honey Moon 1053 North State Street, Bham.	3 12n- World Issues Forum, Fairhaven College Aud 5pm Green Drinks	4 9am-Project Homeless Connect, Downtown Bham	5 8am- Young Dems State Convention at 200 Taylor Ave N, Seattle 7pm- "Global Trends" RE Sources 2309 Meridian St, Bham.	6 10am- Grassroots Strategy Sessions, see the location list on Page 1
7	8 Intl Women's Day See page 2 12n -Rep. Larsen, Chamber of Commerce, Lakeway Inn, Bham	9 6pm- "Renewal" at RE Sources, 2309 Meridian St. Bham. 7pm - Drinking Liberally, Horseshoe Café	10 6pm - Platform Cmte, office 7pm- Iraq War Anniversary, David Rovics, 100 E. Maple St, Bham.	11 6pm- OFA Organizing Mtg. at BTC, Building G	12	13 10am- 42 nd LD Dems Membership Mtg, 2064 Vista Dr., Ferndale,
14	15	16 1pm - Great Decisions, 1 st Cong. Church, 2401 Cornwall Ave, Bham. 6pm- Young Dems, Rudy's Pizza, 1232 N. State, Bham	17 7pm - Whatcom Progressive Grassroots Network 926 Mason St, Bham.	18 7 pm- Monthly Membership Mtg. See Page 1	19	20 9am-Lynden Dems Mtg, 115 E Homestead Blvd 9:45am-League of Women Voters, Bham Public Library, 210 Central Ave
21	22	23 7pm - Drinking Liberally, Horseshoe Café	24 12pm- City Club, , 3240 NW Ave, Bham	25	26	27
28	29	30	31 7pm- E-Board Mtg, Whatcom Dems HQ	Happy April Fool's Day Sam Crawford Announces Run for President	2	3