



Lewis County

Demogram



July, 1993

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Democrats to host Insurance Commissioner

Washington State Insurance Commissioner Debra Senn will be the guest speaker Thursday, July 22, during the monthly meeting of Lewis County Democrats.

The meeting will be held at the King Solomon Restaurant, Centralia, starting with a no-host dinner at 6 p.m. The regular business meeting will follow at 7 p.m.

Senn, a Seattle attorney and regulatory expert who has advocated and litigated on behalf of consumer and women's groups, is Washington's seventh State Insurance Commissioner and the first woman elected to the office.

As Insurance Commissioner, Senn has underscored her commitment to consumer protection and strong regulatory oversight. She lists health care reform as her number one priority.

During the past 16 years, Senn has represented consumer groups, labor unions and small businesses in utility rate increase proceedings. She

also worked as an attorney for state House and Senate committees on telecommunications. She took a break from her legal career at one point to serve as a consumer affairs reporter for a television station in Anchorage, Alaska.

As an attorney, Senn fought for and won fair rates for gas, electric and telephone users, saving consumers millions of dollars. She lobbied successfully to increase funding for the support of battered women and children. She promoted legislation to rewrite Washington state laws dealing with child sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

Commissioner Senn holds bachelor's and master's degrees in history and political science from the University of Illinois. She earned her juris doctor degree from Loyola University of Chicago.

During her free time, Senn enjoys outdoor activities which include hiking, skiing and mountain climbing.

Coming Events

July 22, 1993 - Lewis County Democratic Central Committee, King Solomon Restaurant, Centralia, 6 p.m. no-host dinner, 7 p.m. meeting. Special guest speaker for the occasion will be State Insurance Commissioner Debra Senn.

July 26, 1993 - Thurston County Democratic Central Committee, 7 p.m., Thurston County Courthouse.

August 7, 1993 - 18th Legislative District Committee, 9 a.m., Kessler Inn, Kelso.

August 9, 1993 - 7 p.m., 20th Legislative District Committee, Hacienda Restaurant, Grand Mound.

August 17-22 - Southwest Washington Fair, Fairgrounds, Chehalis.

Sept. 18, 1993 - Noon, Lewis County Democratic Salmon Bake, 376 Highway 508, Chehalis (home of Bob & Judy Guenther). Tickets \$15. Take freeway exit 71 and go 1.3 miles east on SR 508.

Sept. 18, 1993 - Third Congressional League meeting will be held in conjunction with the Lewis County Democratic Salmon Bake at the home of Bob and Judy Guenther, 376 Highway 506, Chehalis.

Oct. 28, 1993 - Lewis County Jefferson-Jackson Dinner, time and location to be announced.

March 5, 1994 - Annual Lewis County Democratic Auction.

Democrats urged to support newsletter

The Lewis County Democratic Central Committee (LCDCC) needs your help to maintain publication of our newsletter, the Lewis County Demogram.

The newsletter, as you may know, is produced by Democrats for Democrats in an effort to keep our people informed about party activities, meetings and issues of interest.

The newsletter is assembled by unpaid volunteers. They contribute their time and talent by writing and designing the newsletter and then labeling and mailing it. Each issue of the newsletter consumes many hours of volunteer time.

Each issue also requires an expenditure, at the minimum, of several hundred dollars for printing and postage. As you might guess, printing and postage remain the chief unavoidable costs associated with distributing the newsletter.

That is why the LCDCC Executive Board

voted recently to ask all people receiving the newsletter to contribute \$10 for a one-year voluntary subscription.

Our only option was to continue mailing the Demogram without charge, which would quickly deplete our small budget, or to ask people receiving it to pay a small annual subscription charge.

Your voluntary subscription to the Demogram will enable the central committee to continue distribution of the newsletter and, additionally, to send it to other Democrats who have not received it in the past.

In the future, revenues derived from newsletter subscriptions and advertising will also be deposited in a separate newsletter account. Use of newsletter funds will be dedicated for the express purpose of producing and distributing the Demogram.

Please join us now in subscribing to and supporting the Lewis County Demogram.

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'Balance' was key to state budget

State legislators struck a balance between spending cuts combined with some tax increases in order to achieve a leaner state budget that maintains essential programs such as basic education and crime fighting, according to the office of State Rep. Jim Springer, D-Kelso.

Several factors complicated the task, such as an announcement by the Boeing Co. that it planned to lay off 20,000 workers. That factor alone is expected to dampen economic activity in the Puget Sound area, uproot families and result in the loss of additional jobs that support Boeing.

The decrease in employment is projected to decrease state revenues by \$600 million, Springer's office said, at a time demand for state services is increasing.

For instance, the state's prison population has grown dramatically. During a four-year period, the number of prisoners incarcerated rose by 40 percent. Jails as well as prisons are overcrowded, the result of tougher laws enacted in recent years.

The larger prison population is projected to cost the state an extra \$200 million during the next two years.

Another factor influencing state spending is the need to provide for education, as required by the state constitution. During the next two years, the public schools population is projected to increase by 54,000 children.

This factor alone, Springer's office said, accounts for 66 percent of the growth in the state budget.

Rising health care costs have also pushed state budget numbers up. A decade ago, health care costs accounted for 14.6 percent of the budget. Today, health care costs account for 21.4 percent of the budget.

In order to meet the challenge of maintaining basic services during a time of dwindling revenues, the legislature adopted deep cuts in many programs. So far, spending cuts total nearly \$1 billion and Springer's office expects more cuts will be made in the future to promote greater efficiency and further streamline state government.

Some of the specific savings enacted in the new budget included:

- A \$36 million reduction in spending for supplies, equipment and overhead.
- Layoffs at upper and middle management levels, resulting in a savings of \$33 million.
- Reductions in travel, resulting in a savings of \$14 million.
- Combining departments to save \$6.2 million.
- Reducing administrative staff and legislative staff to save \$90.5 million.
- Eliminating state employee pay increases to save more than \$400 million.

News from U.S. Rep. Jolene Unsoeld

By Congresswoman Jolene Unsoeld

When we work together to save jobs, it's remarkable what we can accomplish. On June 8, Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) and I introduced legislation to reimpose a ban on the export of raw logs from state and other public lands in the west.

The ban, which was struck down by a May 4 court ruling, had saved an estimated 6,100 jobs in our timber communities since being enacted in 1990.

A united Northwest delegation backed the bill, and by June 14 it was through the House. By June 17, it had been approved by the Senate. And by June 19, it had already arrived at the White House for signing! By the time you read this, the ban will have been restored and signed into law. This effort by our "Team Northwest" was inspiring.

Plan aids timber workers

The House Education and Labor Committee, of which I am a member, recently passed the President's National Service Trust Act, including a couple of key provisions I worked on.

Under the plan, one of every two dollars received

by states will go to economically distressed areas, and timber-dependent communities will specifically qualify for those dollars. I've been urging the Administration and my colleagues to develop programs to restore watersheds and stabilize damaged slopes. My hope is that some of the young people who serve in the National Service program would meet these needs. I believe it would be a perfect fit.

Infant Mortality Crisis Clears Key Hurdle

Since 1988, there have been 26 pregnancies on the Shoalwater Indian Reservation in Tokeland, Washington. Of those 26, only nine children remain alive. It is an infant mortality crisis that threatens the very survival of this 150-member tribe in Pacific County.

Rep. Norm Dicks (D-WA) and I have been pushing the Indian Health Service to assist the tribe...and recently a U.S. House appropriations subcommittee responded to our plea. The panel earmarked \$300,000 for the tribe in the 1994 Interior Appropriations bill, along with increasing Shoalwater funding through the

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News from U.S. Rep. Jolene Unsoeld

Indian Health Service (IHS) by \$186,500.

That funding would give the tribe a good start on providing a full-time nurse and mental health counselor, and on renovating a tribal center into a medical clinic. While the funding must go through several more stages, I'm very hopeful we can keep it in the bill. To do nothing for a tribe facing an infant mortality crisis of this magnitude would have been the biggest tragedy of all.

Work Fairness Act

Recently the U.S. House voted to pass the Cesar Chavez Work Fairness Act, which would prevent employers from hiring permanent replacement workers to scuttle the fundamental right of workers to strike. I was an original co-sponsor of this legislation

and serve on the Education and Labor Committee that passed it to the House.

The bill is intended to restore balance. Members of labor unions go without salaries they need to feed and clothe their families; management goes without profits it needs to stay in business. But that balance is skewed when management undercuts a strike by hiring permanent replacements. Workers shouldn't have to live in fear that they will lose their jobs by exercising their legal right to strike.

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