



Lewis County

# Demogram



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## Brian Baird team ready to run

The Brian Baird for Congress organization is up and running in all counties in the Third Congressional District - 16 months before election time. Paige Richardson of Portland has signed on to coordinate the Baird Campaign.

Baird, Third Congressional District candidate for Congress, has the endorsement of the National Democratic Party organization. Party pundits in "the other Washington" are so impressed by Baird's candidacy that they have provided him with unprecedented early support.

In June, Baird made a sweeping tour of the Third Congressional District, visiting in Pacific, Grays Harbor, Cowlitz, Clark, Thurston and Lewis Counties. While here in Lewis County, he met with the Centralia Port District Commissioners, toured downtown Centralia businesses, and ate at a Mexican restaurant. While there, he ventured into the kitchen and chatted with workers in fluent Spanish.

The Lewis County Baird for Congress Team held its initial meeting on July 11. Jan Leth and Sean Grubb are the Lewis County Coordinators. The organizational structure and chairmen include a Fundraising Team; Electronic Communications Team (Tom White); Voter ID Team; Mailing Team (Ed Smethers and Rita Cleary); Yard Signs Team (Brian Dow and Ron Jennings);

Youth Outreach Team (John Simpson); Labor Team (Pat and Cat Underhill); and Liaison to the Third Congressional District (Michaëlle Fries).

The next meeting of the Lewis County for Brian Baird teams will be Friday, Sept. 19, at 6 p.m., at the Lewis County Democrats' Office in Carpenter Hall. Bring your own snacks. Beverages will be provided.

The Lewis County Team needs lots of help from Baird supporters from all the corners of the county. Many minds and many hands make the work lighter for all of us and point us toward our successful mission. We are committed to increasing the vote for Brian in this county. We need your help to do it! Do you have contacts with organizations and/or individuals whom you would like Brian to meet? The Baird campaign has the luxury of having the extra time before next year's elections to travel through the district to meet and talk with constituents.

Let's get the job done this time! Let's send a Democrat from the Third Congressional District back to Washington, D.C., to represent us! It is about time! We need all of you in Lewis County to help in some small way. Call Jan Leth (360-736-5610) or Sean Grubb (360-864-4661) for information or to volunteer now!

## Patty Murray works for people

Sen. Patty Murray spent her first term fulfilling the commitments she made to the people of Washington state when she ran for office. Consequently, she has been an advocate for the issues that touch the center of people's lives: our children, our jobs, our safety, our environment and our rights as individuals.

- Sen. Murray introduced the Teacher Technology Training Act of 1997 to add technology to the training of new and existing teachers. The bill, among other things, would require surplus government computers be made available to schools across our nation. Legislation she introduced in the Senate would also add technology to the curriculum for training teachers. We must work to make sure teachers can build technology into their teaching, Murray says. We should also take advantage of the best teachers and train them as master teachers rather than moving them into administration.

- Sen. Murray co-sponsored the McCain/Feingold Bill, a bipartisan effort to control the amount of money spent in elections by restricting the influence of political action committees and giving candidates free television time in exchange for voluntary spending limits. Sen. Murray serves in a leadership task force designed to re-evaluate and mend antiquated campaign finance

laws.

- Sen. Murray introduced the Time for Schools Act of 1997, which allows parents 24 hours during each year to attend their children's school events. This extended the Family and Medical Leave Act, which Sen. Murray co-sponsored and helped pass.

- Sen. Murray promoted the state's timber industry by sponsoring and passing a bill restricting the export of federal timber, while advancing the export of privately-owned timber. She introduced a bill to establish a permanent program to enable timber companies to salvage dead or dying trees on public lands.

- Meanwhile, the U.S. Supreme Court has struck down the 1996 Communications Decency Act, supported by Sen. Murray, which sought to restrict access by children to objectionable material posted on the internet. The court struck down the law because it would also impinge upon the First Amendment rights of adults.

U.S. Senator Patty Murray said she intends to introduce new legislation, called the Childsafe Internet Act of 1997, which would ensure that every parent has access to filtering software. The proposed legislation would also create a parental warning alongside copyright protections on home pages, and establish incentives for web page authors to rate their pages for content.



# What exactly is a living, family wage?

By Pat Underhill

I was asked to explain exactly what the terms "living wage or family wage" really mean. Well rather than making this article too long, I will give some statistics and points to ponder and let you come to your own conclusions.

First, when I was #\$\$@ (young) early 19702, the minimum wage was \$2.25 per hour. Since that time the cost of living has increased 300 percent. You take \$2.25 times 300 percent and that equals \$9.00. So why are the politicians arguing over \$5.00 per hour? I thought the minimum wage was for beginning workers or unskilled. Why is this considered a standard wage in Lewis County?

Furthermore, can someone tell me what I keep hearing, what is cheaper in Lewis County?

Housing, food, gas, clothing, entertainment? I am still trying to find out. Oh, you say taxes, which one? Sales tax? Gasoline tax? Automobile tax or tabs? Or maybe property tax? Well, okey. Maybe that last one as long as we keep voting down things like better schools, better roads and better service from our local government.

Or let's look a little closer at property taxes. Who pays them? Property owners. How many homeowners do you know that went to the bank and got a mortgage earning \$8.00 per hour, let alone

the 10 to 20 percent required to put down on a house?

But back to the topic at hand. What is a decent (living or family) wage? Shouldn't it be where a person is earning enough for all of his/her needs and still have enough to start saving for his/her wants? So what do you think? \$25,000 per year? \$30,000 per year? You tell me.

But one thing I do know it is definitely not the infamous \$6.00, \$7.00 or \$8.00 per hour that the leaders of our communities keep trying to convince us of.

## Enbody & Dugaw

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# Dispossessed need protection of Democratic Party

By John Simpson

In American, there are many groups whom we can target for recruitment to our Democratic Party. All of these groups need protection which cannot be found in the Republican Party.

We could list some of these groups as: old lower middle classes, now in an unprecedented stage of frustration and fear, menaced by humiliation, dispossession, and poverty.

They come from provincial and traditional non-political groups in our population, jolted from apathy into near hysteria by their shock of economic collapse.

They come, in the main, from the ranks of the self-employed who, as farmers or shopkeepers or artisans, felt threatened by

organized economic power, whether from above, as in banks and large corporations, or from below, as in trade unions.

To a considerable degree, they came from the evangelical denominations; years of bible reading and fundamentalist revivalism had accustomed them to millennial solutions. In sum, they seem to represent old America in resentful revolt against both contemporary politics and contemporary economics.

As yet, their leadership divided them rather than united them. We should step in with our exciting possibility of regeneration for their economic future, the mystique of which the demagogues have failed to supply.

Time is of the essence. We must act in an organized manner.

## State Campaign Training School

There will be a campaign training school put on by the State Democratic Party for candidates, campaign workers and volunteers on Saturday, Oct. 11, 1997, at Seattle Pacific University, Seattle.

The state party contact person is Joby Shimomura (206) 583-0664. If you are interested in going, we can get more particulars for you, such as costs, time, etc.

## Letter committee forming

To respond to issues in the news media, we are forming a letter writing committee. The first meeting of this committee will be on Thursday, Aug. 28, at 6 p.m. just before the regular Central Committee meeting at 7 p.m. at the King Solomon Restaurant.

All are invited who are interested. Those persons who wish to attend, in addition to John Simpson, Ed Smethers, Gene Butler, Mary Michael Pancake, Brian Dow, Ron Jennings, Bill Ullom, Bill Henry, Pat Underhill, should be there at 6 p.m.

Besides the letters to the editor, we will be discussing the merits of a volunteer newspaper and the possibility of guest writer options with information on both topics from Tom White, our newest precinct committee officer from the Crego precinct.

## Saturday Nite Bath

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# Reported overpayments curiously equal to Medicare spending cuts

By William M. Ullom

With great fanfare and much posturing on August 1, Congress sent to the President a bill to balance the budget by 2002. Leaders proudly proclaimed "the first balanced budget since 1969" and noted it contained something for everyone.

For our young adults, there was aid for higher education. For parents, there was a tax break for each child. For those with large portfolios of stocks and bonds (don't most all of us own huge ones?) there was a nice cut in the capital gains tax. A really nice little bag of goodies for everyone.

Well, most everyone. Congress rewarded 38 million senior citizens by letting them bear a major part of the burden to come up with some dough to cover their largesse. Medicare will be cut \$23 billion each year for the next five years as a means of providing revenues to offset tax cuts and breaks.

On July 30, only two days before congress finished work on the Budget Bill of 1997, the inspector general of the Department of Health and Human Services has issued the first-ever audit of the Medicare Program.

It seems, admitted a spokesperson, that Medicare overpaid \$23 billion in 1996 on claims by hospitals, doctors, and other health care providers. They could not say if the claims were inadvertent mistakes, or were examples of abuse within the program, or were outright examples of fraud. Recovering most of the funds would be almost impossible, the spokesperson said.

The identical amount - \$23 billion in losses and a like amount

for cuts - may be coincidental only, but it does point out the fact that Medicare will take a double hit of \$46 billion unless Congress stems the losses to the program. The question is will they act at all, or is this to be the end of Medicare's funding problem for this Congress?

There you have it - a program disbursing hundreds of billions of tax dollars annually which for 32 years has had no effective oversight or quality control! Would a person be wrong to liken the Medicare program to a Fort Knox with the doors wide open and not a guard in sight? It is the job of Congress to provide oversight for all expenditures of public funds. Where have there 535 members of Congress been for three decades? Are none of them outraged?

Medicare is vitally important to America's elderly. It surely was not intended to be a cash cow for health care providers by those who created it. Nor was it created as a branch of welfare. The elderly - all 38,000,000 of us who pay for and receive benefits from Medicare - must force Congress to stem the hemorrhaging of funds from within the program.

Congress declared that with the passage of the budget bill, its work was ahead of schedule. And they then left Washington to escape the heat. It is time to show this august group of elected officials what real heat is. Let them deal with this horrendous problem.

We have one question of Congress. Why was this allowed to happen? Why?

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## Paige Richardson will manage Baird campaign

Third Congressional District Candidate Brian Baird has hired Paige Richardson of Portland as his campaign manager. Richardson ran the successful 1994 campaign of Oregon Democrat Elizabeth Furse, who survived a Republican tidal wave. Richardson also served as political director for Tom Bruggere's 1996 Senate campaign. She'll be based in Vancouver, Washington.

## 20th Leg. District

Big news from the Twentieth. Cody Arledge has resigned his office of Chair due to a great promotional opportunity on the job. Jeff Cash has been elected to serve as the new Chair. This leaves a vacancy for a man to serve in the Second Vice Chair position.

(Continued next page)

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## Lewis County AIDs Walk '97

will be Saturday, Sept. 13, 1997 - 7th Annual AIDs Walk. Park your car at the Centralia College parking lot at Locust & Rock. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. at St. John's Parish Hall, across from Brownings on Rock Street.



