



DEMOGRAM

July 2006

Janice Orcutt, Lela McNutt and Stephen Barlow at the State Democratic Convention in Yakima.

It was not only an opportunity to mingle with like-minded folks from across the state, but a thought-provoking and valuable experience for all those who attended.



Lewis County Democrats go to State

By Connie McArthur

Several Lewis County Democrats served as delegates for the 20th Legislative District at the recent Washington State Democratic Convention in Yakima. Attending were: **Jan Nontell** (Lewis County Democratic Chair); **Stephen Martin** (1st Vice Chair); **Stephen Barlow**; **Janice Orcutt** (State Committeewoman); **Lela McNutt**; **Connie McArthur**; **Craig Sullivan** (Treasurer); **Bob Guenther** (Chair, 20th Legislative Democrats); and **Judy Guenther** 3rd Legislative District Representative to the WSDCC Executive Board.)

It was the first time most of us had participated in this event and a real eye-opener as to how the political process works. In fact, nearly two-thirds of those in attendance were “newbies,” there for the first time. So we had a LOT of company!

The bulk of the work is done behind the scenes, in committees, before the actual Convention convenes. The Rules Committee and the Platform Committees did the best they could to facilitate a

smooth-running event. The Platform Committee, despite its best efforts, was unable to distill the hundreds of amendments and resolutions that kept coming in until the time the opening gavel started business. Because of this, the Platform wasn't complete by the morning of the Convention.

We heard from a LOT of candidates, including a video address from Bill Clinton endorsing Maria Cantwell, but we didn't have enough time to complete the business we had been sent there to do.

Many people were frustrated, feeling that they did not have an adequate voice in the process. A lot of that was caused by the folks who tied up the microphones on relatively petty issues, thus preventing the Body from getting on with business. They wanted to finely debate the same issues that had already been considered and rejected or accepted during the committees' work.

We accepted the Platform as recommended by the Platform Committee with the understanding that

(continued on page two, bottom)

The Candidates: Jim Lowery, the newest Democratic voice in the Courthouse

It can be lonely sometimes when you're the only elected Democrat in the county, but District 1 County Commissioner Jim Lowery isn't discouraged or intimidated by his unique status.

In fact, he's complimentary of the way in which the other two sitting commissioners have accepted him and helped bring him up to speed.

"I've always felt that the key to good public service is threefold," Jim explains. "Cooperation, service and integrity. A little bit of cooperation can go a long way at any level of government."

The mutual cooperation between the three commissioners has already paid off big time for county residents.

When Jim first took office last January, the city of Centralia, the County, and the Port of Centralia were all embroiled in a dispute that looked to be headed to resolution through costly litigation.

Jim approached his fellow commissioners and asked for the opportunity to try and work the issue out with the feuding parties. "To their credit," he recollects, "Richard and Dennis agreed to let me take a shot at it, and we were able to work out a settlement that everyone could live with."

That sort of leadership has caught the attention of folks in the community and people from both political parties are stepping forward to support Jim in his first official election for County Commissioner.

Born and raised in Galvin (out by Lincoln Creek), Jim has over 40 years experience working with private sector, labor, non-profits and government agencies.

Most people know he served as Mayor of Shelton,



County Commissioner Jim Lowery with Senator Patty Murray

but many aren't aware that over the last 11 years he has worked on community and economic development for smaller rural communities and counties across the state.

Jim was recently featured in the Washington Grange Newsletter, where State Grange President Terry Hunt had this to say about him: "It's been my pleasure to work closely with Jim for many years. He definitely embodies the spirit of the Grange, giving many years and much effort to improving the community he lives in, and he has carried that out to the county and state levels."

Transportation, the increasing threat of meth, and Growth Management are some of the areas Jim sees as crucial to focus on. Find out more about Jim at www.jimlowery.com.

Lewis County Democrats go to State, continued

the Resolutions would be finished in committee under the auspices of the State Executive Board and accepted or rejected by the state committee men and women in open meetings.

There were organizational problems that could have been better handled -- for example, two meetings by the Platform Committee prior to the Convention was simply not enough time to do the work they were charged to do. But the simple truth of the matter is that we had an awful lot of people there who didn't know how the process was supposed to work.

They had visions of standing up at the microphone and eloquently voicing their opinions.

It doesn't work that way; it CAN'T work that way. There's not enough time for 900 people to speak on all the issues. That's why we have Precinct Caucuses and County Conventions — so people can be heard by submitting resolutions and platform amendments in a timely manner.

The bottom line is that people must get involved for more than one event or issue to learn how to best be an effective part of the process.

The Candidates: Ken Norberg, Seeking a voice for the East County



County Commissioner candidate Ken Norberg with some of his supporters at the recent Winlock Egg Days Parade

Ken Norberg, Democratic Candidate for County Commissioner in District 3, cares deeply about his community.

"Lewis County is a great place to live and raise a family," he says. "I want to help make it a place where my kids and their kids will want to make a home and raise their families."

Ken has worked all over the county, from Toledo to Centralia, from Packwood to Pe Ell. "I've worked in a variety of industries," he says, "from logging and road construction to sales and small business ownership." A retired safety engineer from the Centralia coal mine, Ken feels his background will be beneficial when working with all levels of county government.

The Toledo resident is actively involved in his community, having served on the Toledo School Board for over 20-years, as well as the Evergreen Safety Council, the Governor's Safety Conference, and the Seniors' Advisory Board.

He feels pretty strongly about serving the needs of all the county's citizens—from kids to seniors.

"After 20-years on the Toledo School Board," he explains, "I have not lost my passion for strengthening educational opportunities for our children. We need to give our kids all the tools we can so they can become the qualified candidates that companies look for to fill good-paying jobs."

On the other end of the age scale, Ken champions the needs of senior citizens. "Our Seniors are an asset to our community. They have worked hard all their lives, bought homes, and continue to pay taxes

and shop in our stores. It only makes sense to provide services for them, and I will do everything within the scope of the office of County Commissioner to assist and support them."

Another area Ken hopes to address if elected County Commissioner is the level of representation for the east end of the county. "People out here WILL see me regularly after the election," he promises.

Growth Management is another important issue on Ken's list. "Growth will take place in Lewis County," he says. "It's our responsibility to ensure that it is sensible growth that brings good-paying jobs while at the same time protecting the area where we live.

"We have to take a look at what our responsibilities are to each other as a community—and that means not just one town or one area but the whole of Lewis County working together to create strong, stable resiliency."

Learn more at www.kennorberg.com.

Take the Lead

By Nancy Herzog

As an educator of 23 years, I am joining the Washington Education Association in promoting "Take the Lead" – a campaign to educate the public about the sorry state of school funding in the state of Washington.

Two decades of steady and widespread decline in education funding have put our school behind in the areas that hurt most—class size, spending per student and employee compensation. Washington's school rank far behind most other states in the country.

- Washington ranks 46th in the nation in class size. We would need 11,659 more classroom teachers to match the national pupil-to-teacher average.
- Washington ranks 42nd in the nation in education spending.
- We have \$2 billion less for schools this year because of the decline in state funding that began two decades ago.
- We spend \$548 less per student than we did in 1992 – before education reform

Continued on page 4, bottom

The Candidates: Mike Rechner, running for 20th District State Representative

“I’m running because I’ve been thinking about the future and I am worried about the direction this country is headed,” Lacey resident Mike Rechner says.

“I have two young sons, four and two years old, and I want to make sure that they – and all kids – have a secure future.”

Mike believes that to provide our communities with a secure future we must:

- Provide secure family wage jobs
- Make sure there is quality affordable health care for everyone
- Give our communities the best possible education system

“People shouldn’t have to choose between paying the rent and putting food on the table,” he says. “Our focus must be on finding incentives for businesses that provide family wage jobs.

Mike sees family wage jobs as a win-win solution. “Working families get higher pay and better benefits and businesses get a skilled workforce and a larger consumer base.”

Educating children is also part of the solution, according to Mike. “It’s one of the best investments we can make in their future and in ours.”

Mike already knows how to fight for children and families. He and his wife, Kim, brought legislation to help support new mothers when they return to work. For that effort, Mike and Kim were nominated for the 2005 Voices for Children Award, presented by the Washington



Mike Rechner (far left) with his McChord Air Force Base Squadron

Children’s Alliance. They were also recognized in a feature story and cover photo in the March 2006 issue of Puget Sound Parent magazine.

A veteran of the first Gulf War, Mike has a degree from Penn State in meteorology and a Masters Degree in Environmental Studies from Evergreen State College. He works for the Department of Natural Resources in the Aquatic Resources Division.

Mike is active in his community, a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and is a Commissioner and Secretary for the Tanglewilde Park and Recreation District in Lacey.

Learn more at www.mikerechner.com.

Take the Lead, continued

began in our state.

- We are dead last in compensation among the five West Coast states – and well below the national average, too.

We’ve fallen behind, even though our state’s constitution declares education funding to be Washington’s paramount duty.

We’ve fallen behind, even though the demand for greater student achievement grows every year.

We’ve fallen behind, even though the funding shortage leaves its mark on every classroom, hall-way, gymnasium, lunchroom, teacher’s office, and public school facility across the state.

We’ve fallen behind, even though opinion research consistently confirms that the public believes strengthening communities, preserving our quality of life and economic prosperity depend on improving public education in the state.

"Take the Lead" will challenge the Governor, the Legislature, local elected officials, policy-makers, opinion leaders, business leaders, parents, taxpayers and citizens to join together in new thinking to bring school funding back to the level our children deserve.

I urge you to let your elected officials know that it is time to step up and let Washington Schools Take the Lead.

How will my generation pay off the National Debt?

By Lisa Herzog

As the National Debt quickly approaches 8.5 trillion; yes, that is trillion, with a T; I wonder where that money will come from. And no matter how I look at it, I come up with a terrible answer, it's going to come from me and my generation, Generation Y.

We should start saving up now, because it might take a while to pay off 8.5 trillion dollars. I've come up with a crack list of ways for today's kids to start making money to pay off the debt. So here are **"10 Ways to Raise Money for the National Debt!"**

- 1. A Lemonade Stand:** It's the classic—whenever anyone thinks of a hot summer day, the picture always includes a young, bright eyed child selling lemonade at a home made booth at the top of the drive way. Up until now, all this money ever buys is Bazooka Bubble Gum and licorice rope, but now this money can go to a better cause. If all the children in America open up a lemonade stand, and sell each cup for \$.25 it will only take 34,000,000,000,000 cups of lemonade to pay off the debt.
- 2. Babysitting:** There comes an age when kids are just too old for a lemonade stand, but once they reach 12 or so, they're ready to baby-sit. This is one of the first real jobs for almost every child. While some families will pay huge amounts of money, most will pay about \$5 an hour. At that rate it will only take 1,700,000,000,000 hours of babysitting to pay off the debt.
- 3. Walk Dogs:** How many adults enjoy going out every day to walk their dogs? Not many. Like most adult Americans, their time could be better spent watching reruns of *Friends*. The children of America need to capitalize on this fact. A willing kid can make \$3 an hour per dog, and they can walk more than one dog at a time. If every kid walks dogs for 1 hour it will only take 2,833,333,333,334 dogs to pay off the debt.
- 4. School Play Admission:** Each year grade schools put on school plays. These shows are normally free, but it's about time that kids start making money off these performances and using that money to pay off the debt. If it costs \$7 per person to get into a show it will only take 1,214,285,714,286 tickets to pay off the debt.
- 5. Girl Scout Crafts:** Everyone knows about Girl Scouts selling cookies, but that is only what they do for part of the year. The rest of the year is spent making crafts that pile up in the back of their parents closet. Instead of giving these crafts to parents for free, Girl Scouts everywhere should sell these crafts at swap meets or flea markets. Everyone can have a few crafts; they only become overwhelming at 10 or more a week. And other kids could buy them as a cheap birthday or holiday present for their parents. If beaded geckos and macaroni necklaces are sold for \$1 a piece it will only take 8,500,000,000,000 sales to pay off the debt.
- 6. Allowance:** Kids need an allowance. This plan will not only get all those kids allowances, it will also pay off the National Debt. If children were given \$5 a week, kids would be happier and they could give \$2 a week to the Debt; you really can't expect kids to give all their money, they need something to buy candy with. At that rate it will only take 4,250,000,000,000 weeks to pay off the debt.
- 7. Car Washes:** Sports teams, church groups and school clubs have been utilizing the car wash as a money making machine for decades; it is about time that this money be used for something to help the country. My generation could set up a car wash on every block and charge \$6 a car. It would only take 1,416,666,666,667 cars to pay off the debt.
- 8. Mow Lawns:** No one likes to mow lawns. People are willing to pay high prices to escape this chore. A kid could start a mini empire with lawn mowing; a single kid could be mowing the lawns of an entire neighborhood in 1 day. Imagine if all America's children were mowing lawns—there would never be grass over 2 inches long! At the average rate of \$10 a yard, it would only take 850,000,000,000 lawns to pay off the debt.

Featured PCO: Alpha's Bob Poteat

This is condensed version of an interview of Bob by Don Reinseth, LCDCC Secretary. Read the complete story on our website at www.lewiscountymdemocrats.net

Bob, what were your early years like?

I was born in in 1933. The height, or depth, of the depression. I was the son of a tenant farmer in North Carolina who later got his own small farm. Hard scrabble. As a 5-6 year old kid, I remember carrying buckets of breakfast to Dad and the older siblings who were already working the fields before breakfast.

By seventeen I had had it with that life and joined the Navy before finishing high school. The Korean war started while I was on a train to boot camp.

I was lucky. I had always made either best or second best school grades in my classes, and I got selected for electronics school in the Navy. Before I was 21 the Korean War was ended, my enlistment ended, and I was honorably discharged.

What was civilian life like after that?

The first priority was employment. Using my service education it was easy to get a 1st Class Radio Telephone License from the FCC which led to employment in radio and TV broadcasting. The next priority was to aggressively pursue formal education assisted by GI Bill. I got a high school diploma and began college at the University of North Carolina. I moved to Chicago, transferred credits, and continued at the Illinois Institute of Technology.

TV had a limited career path, and I switched to industrial employment working as an electrical engineer in manufacture of military field telephone equipment. On medical advice, I chucked that job. I moved to San Francisco, and let my brother hire me as an elevator mechanic's helper. The company was Westinghouse.

As soon as I got past the union probationary period, I was elevated to temporary mechanic and sent to "adjust" elevators. From there to Construction Superintendent in Puerto Rico, to Regional Field Manager in Seattle. In 1980 I was demoted to Project Manager on a large building in San Francisco. That situation was untenable for me, so I resigned, obtained a union card, and went back to work as a construction mechanic. I retired in 1985.

It's a long way from engineering to monetary



reform. You've been named one of the most knowledgeable people on the subject.

In 1971, Richard Nixon declared a wage and price freeze. It caught me in a peculiar situation that exacerbated my astonishment that such a dictatorial thing could happen in a "free market" economy. I began to notice more and more contradictions.

I began looking for answers to the contradictions outside conventional educational, media, and political channels. I do not remember where I got it, but a short article on the money system got into my hands. It was written by Ted Thoren, an engineer. If true, it answered a lot of questions.

What changes do you think are necessary?

Our "money" consists of coins, Federal Reserve Notes, and bank credit. Contrary to popular belief, banks do not lend money that has been deposited with them. They create money as loans which are then deposited. These new deposits become the "reserve" basis for making more loans by a process called fractional reserve banking. When loans are repaid, the process is reversed and deposit money is canceled out of existence.

What we have, then, is money issued by private banks for profit. We have the ridiculous situation of the government borrowing privately issued money when it has the full Constitutional authority to issue its own.

The proposed solution is to write a new mon-

Chair's Corner: Stand up to the lies

By Jan Nontell, Lewis County Democrats Chair

It is time to wake up to the truth. I realize that may be difficult for those who get their 'news' from FOX, Rush and The Chronicle. But we, as a country and as a community, need to wake up to what is truly going on.

The American people are being lied to on a daily basis. As intelligent and informed voters, and as Democrats, we need to stop being polite. It is time to stop trying to take the high road, stand up, demand the truth, and call a lie a lie.

Karl Rove and his clones think Americans are fools and believe their lies. They are working non-stop to make Americans associate the labels "Cut and Run" and "Pro-Abortion" with Democrats. Tell a lie often enough and people start believing it. I think Americans are smarter than that.

There is no Democrat in Congress who wants to "cut and run." Democrats believe that we need a plan for Iraq; one that includes a timetable for leaving. The Commanders in our Armed Forces agree. We were lied to about the reasons for the Iraq war and when one lie quit working we got another one to take its place it is time for the lies to stop.

Pro-abortion? Nope, I don't know of one Democrat anywhere (and I know a lot of Democrats) who is for abortion. But most Democrats are realists. Women have been having abortions almost as long as they have been having babies. Overturning Roe v Wade will not stop abortion. What it would mean is that when a woman has no hope for the future, no hope for a decent life for her unborn child and makes that heart-wrenching decision to have an abortion, she may pay for that decision with her life. And that seems to be just fine with some rabid members of the Radical Right. If you really want to stop abortion vote Democratic. Historically abortion rates go up under Republican administrations and come down when Democrats are in office.

Here's another big lie: Democrats can't be Christians and Christians can't be Democrats. The reason that I AM a Democrat is because of my strong faith and my understanding that being a Christian involves much more than telling people that homosexuality and abor-



tion are wrong. I want to be a Christian in every sense of the Word, not just because of 16 verses. There are a lot of us like that. We need to stand up and be counted.

You hear that Democrats do not support our troops. That's a load of elephant dung. To Democrats, 'supporting the troops' means making sure they have what they need to do the job they were sent to do and having medical and mental health care if they come home. It means making sure there are family wage jobs for them to come home to and striving for a plan that will bring them home safely. To this administration "support our troops" means give to Halliburton and slander the troops who speak out against the war.

Then there is the biggest lie of all – "We aren't taking away your Constitutional rights, we are keeping you safe." The Constitution and the Bill of Rights have served us well for 230 years. When is the last time you read them? When is the last time you understood what your rights are? Too many American's are willing to give up their right to privacy and free speech if they can pretend that doing so will make them safe from terrorists.

People, it is time to wake up. Democrats, starting with us, must take a stand against the abuses of this Republican Administration! We can no longer afford to remain passive and silent. If we do, there will come a day when, as Al Gore says in "An Inconvenient Truth," we will have to answer the question put to us by our children and grandchildren: "Why didn't you do something when you could have made a difference?"

Featured PCO Bob Poteat, continued

etary act that:

1. Puts the Federal Reserve System into the Treasury.
2. Ends the fractional reserve process and requires banks to do what everyone thinks they do now; only lend money that has been deposited for that purpose.
3. Directs the Treasury through the former FRS infrastructure to issue money directly for physical and human infrastructure taking judicious care to neither inflate nor deflate.

Monetary reform is not utopia, the Holy Grail,

or a “once size fits all” panacea. What it would do is provide the opportunity to address social, energy, and environmental needs in a rational way. Infrastructure repairs and environmental cleanup would provide a lot of good jobs.

Without monetary reform we simply repeat the insanity of doing the same old thing while politicians promise different outcomes.

What monetary reform is up against is entrenched power. It will not be easy. The halls of Congress will be wall-to-wall with alligator shoes.

Paying off the National Debt, continued

9. **Paper Route:** A paper route might be the highest paying job a kid can have. They can make about \$20 a week and it is a constant job. Plus it gives the child lots of exercise and improves their throwing arm. The paper route could make even more money when you add in tips. A truly patriotic child might even donate these earnings to help the debt. But using only the weekly salary, it would take only 425,000,000,000 weeks to pay off the debt!
10. **Clean House:** Even though kids won't clean their own room, they'll clean other people's rooms for money. Most kids won't want to do this job, but it pays well and it is all for the good of the nation. The charges will vary depending on the size of the room, and extra will be charged for toilets and windows, but \$4 an hour it would only take 2,125,000,000,000 hours of house cleaning to pay off the debt!

So there it is, “**10 Ways to Raise Money for the National Debt!**” On behalf of Generation Y, especially the later half, I'd like to thank President George W. Bush and his administration and all those who voted for him. Your generation may have caused this problem, but my generation will be the one to clean it up. After all, we're always up for a challenge.

Lisa Herzog will be a Junior at WF West in the fall. She will be the editor of the school newspaper.

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