



DEMOGRAM

Ed Smethers

A Remarkable Man, An Incredible Life

Ed Smethers turned 90 this month and we threw him a party.

Always an active member of his community, Ed gives of his time and resources with a generosity and kindness that the rest of us can only hope to emulate.

Ed was born in 1917, the eldest of six children. He attended gradeschool in Arizona and Montana, then found himself

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Making Democrat Ideas Their Own

By Mike Rechner, Chair, 20th Legislative District

Republicans in state government continue to tell us how great a state they want to make Washington. The leader of the Republicans in the State House of Representatives, Richard DeBolt, makes many of these points on his website. The only problem is the Democratically controlled legislature has already beat them to it.

On his website, DeBolts says, "House Republicans are making job creation a top priority." But Washington State currently has an all-time low unemployment rate. Seems the idea of prioritizing job creation is a little old.

DeBolt also says, "Republicans also want to create a government citizens can trust ... giving citizens a stronger voice in our state's onerous regulatory system."

The problem is Forbes Magazine recently ranked Washington the 5th best state for business, saying, "One of Washington's big strengths is reduced red tape. That's part of why Washington has had more

businesses open per capita the past three years than any other state in the U.S."

Again it seems the Republicans are making Democratic ideas their own.

Finally, DeBolt points out "New private sector jobs are the fuel for healthier economies throughout all of Washington. Strong, diversified economies offer security to working families and provide the resources that pay for better schools, police and fire protection, parks and other services that make Washington a great place to live." He is absolutely correct...but once again, the Democrats beat him to it. The article in Forbes concludes, "With a highly educated work force and a pro-business regulatory environment, Washington is poised to remain one of the best states to do business in--and to climb even higher on next year's list."

It seems the Republicans can't develop a plan of their own so they cling to the ideas developed by

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Voices and Viewpoints

The Saturday Vigil Group

By Bob Poteat, PCO, Alpha



You see them every Saturday. No matter what the season or the weather, they stand in front of the Centralia library on Pearl Street, silently holding up their signs, drawing both supporting and unwilling eyes to think about George Bush's Iraq War.

The Fire Mountain Chapter of Fellowship of Reconciliation has held a weekly vigil for peace since October of 2002. The vigil occurs every Saturday noon to 1 p.m. on Pearl Street by the Centralia Timberland Library. All are welcome to participate.

Attendance at the vigil was high before the beginning of the Iraq invasion. Many dropped out after the invasion for different reasons. Some who had hoped to avoid the war gave up. Others expressed a concern about being seen as disloyal to the troops. The attendance has been variable, but not a Saturday has been missed in nearly five years.

Reaction to the vigil was predominantly hostile from passers-by in the beginning. Now, reaction is predominantly positive, but many "tight jaws" still pass with no reaction. One wonders if they are conscious.

The vigil participants hope that their quiet persistence has contributed to the growing public consciousness that this war was initiated under false pretenses and violates international law. It is also hoped that the growing consciousness will further translate into future rejection of war as an instrument of foreign policy.

Members of Veterans for Peace participate in the vigil as well as a few others who belong to no organized peace group.



Gay Pride Celebrated in Lewis County

By Casey Dunivan,

In the 2006 mid-term election, after six years of George Bush and a resurgence of the religious right, the Democrats grabbed a hold of the legislature and quickly began turning back regressive policies of the Bush years. For many progressives around the country, this political shift has offered hope that our country is moving in the right direction again.

But it's not just national change that holds the promise of hope. Take a look right here in our own state, and you'll see how times are defiantly changing.

For many of us, especially in the gay community, the Domestic Partnership Bill and the Gay Rights Bill are clear signs that things are looking up. We've gone from DOMA (Defense of Marriage Act) to these landmark pieces of legislation in the course of just a few years. Governor Gregoire has shown solid leadership in our state, and Washington is now in a position to show leadership on the issue of gay rights for the rest of the country.

The political shifts that are occurring in Olympia and in our nation's capitol are the product of ordinary citizens standing up and making their voices heard. Parallel to the changes in government are the actions of grassroots movements, like the work of the Centralia College Gay Straight Alliance(GSA).

On a windy spring day, two or three dozen people came together and celebrated gay pride

in the heart of Lewis County. There was music, booths, speakers, and a grand parade to top it all off...well maybe not, but ten or fifteen people holding signs on the sidewalk is a start. While not as grand or breathtaking as the pride rallies in Seattle, Portland, or Vancouver, our pride meant a lot to a small group of people in this county.

The gay pride rally in Centralia represents the dawn of a new age for our county. A rebirth of the ideas of equality and justice is taking place, and ordinary citizens are re-examining their values.

I've come to believe that the winds that blew across the causeway of CC on that day were really a metaphor for whats happening in the world. Change is sweeping across our country, and for those of us who have sat quietly in the dark for so long, it is an enormous relief. Slowly but surely progress is being made, not only for political change, but for social justice and equality.

- Casey is a student at Centralia College

"The gay pride rally in Centralia represents the dawn of a new age for our county. A rebirth of the ideas of equality and justice is taking place, and ordinary citizens are re-examining their values."

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Making Democrat Ideas Their Own

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Democrats. You have to give them credit though. At least they used the ideas that Democrats have already delivered.

Maybe this inability to develop a plan of their own is why DeBolt wasn't able to pass any significant legislation this past session. His only sponsored bill would have allowed motorcycles to make left turns on a red light. Not the kind of legislation one would expect from the Representative of a district that just lost 600 high paying family wage jobs.

Oh yeah ... the Canadian company that laid them off employs DeBolt.



Saturday Think Tank Discussing Hot Issues

By Norma Schanz, Curtis PCO

We're back at the Carpenters Union Building after a few weeks with good folks and good food at the Matrix. Come by any Saturday at 1:30 for open discussion of current issues and events – and to encourage ourselves and others to speak out in local media and to our elected representatives. Here's some of our discussion last Saturday.

Immigration reform. Kelle found out firsthand that Congress heard from so many voters, the phone lines crashed. So did the bill. The reasons callers objected to the bill probably were as varied as the reasons this issue challenged us to be nice to each other while heartily disagreeing. This subject will not go away. We agreed to keep trying to figure out what we think.

Gold Star Mothers. Bill had an interim report from Lela, who is in Georgia with Cindy Sheehan and about 200 Gold Star Mothers on their caravan from Crawford, Texas to D.C. and then to New York City. Lela said the Mothers for Peace signs have been amended to convert **PEACE** to **IMPEACH**.

Veterans for Peace. Bob Poteat is in Olympia every 4th Thursday to host or help host VFP's live hour on KAOS. (For news rarely covered in major

media, a visit to the Veterans for Peace website is worth a visit. This is where we found most of the info for our handout and letters to the editor about the unpublicized risks associated with post-explosion exposure to armaments strengthened with depleted uranium.)

The Constitution. To strengthen our spines, we're hoping to download the discussion with the Constitutional Law attorneys on the July 13th Bill Moyers Hour (PBS.com).

Here's what leaped out at me from their discussion.. Some Members of Congress may not have read the Constitution in many years. If we don't remind them, they may rely more on endless repetitions of disinformation than on the actual words of the document that empowers them to represent us.

Thank goodness Don had come to the think Tank with his battered pocket-size copy of the Constitution and Bill of Rights. When he read aloud from the section on the powers of Congress, the words seemed to provide a clear path past the White House's interpretation of the Patriot Act.

We've procured 100 more pocket-size copies; stop by if you want one.

Developing City of Centralia Critical Areas Ordinances

By Dan Averill, commission member

I am the newest member in the nine-person City of Centralia Planning Commission, having joined the group several months ago. Not completely certain what to expect during a meeting, I have come to find our bi-weekly sessions interesting, challenging and sometimes frustrating. I have a fisheries and aquatic science background and thought I might be able to help with the current development of Critical Areas Ordinances (CAOs) for the city. There is much work to do with respect to reviewing, editing and approving CAOs by working with City staff, and ultimately forwarding completed drafts to the city council for approval. I am writing this letter to inform and update readers of current commission activities related to CAO development.

The majority of each meeting I've attended thus has been devoted to CAO public workshop sessions. A primer on CAOs: The state Growth Management Act (GMA) requires cities and counties to identify and protect the functions and values of critical areas within city or county boundaries. The GMA identifies five critical areas, including wetlands, aquifer recharge areas (drinking water related), frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, and fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas. Within the context of the GMA, identifying and protecting critical areas is important for public safety (including private property), meeting the GMA goals for protecting the environment, and preservation of environmentally sensitive areas valuable to humans, and ecologically. Utilizing best available science is an important component to this whole process. A final product is the creation of an actual ordinance (CAO) to ensure protection of critical areas.

The GMA-CAO relationship may seem familiar to some of you: over the past couple years Lewis County has been out of compliance with GMA, in part because best available science was used sparingly, or not at all, during development of the county CAOs. This is a problem, and one which the Growth Management Hearings Board will make

sure the county works through before emerging from the microscope they currently reside within. This is not a situation or path the city wishes to follow. So, despite being late in developing the CAOs as per GMA requirements, the city (our commission) is not only cognizant of paths to avoid, but is actively working to develop CAOs. This is a good thing.

What will these CAOs look like? Will they actually be protective of critical areas? Good questions, and ones I cannot fully answer today, but my hope is they will achieve their intended goal. We are not developing each of the five CAOs (listed as critical areas above) from scratch. This would entail the city hiring consultants to develop each, and city funds do not exist for this task. Instead, the city staff working with our commission have adopted language from existing and approved CAOs from several cities (Bremerton mainly, but also some from Tumwater and Cashmere), and commission members review the language and tailor the specifics for Centralia. Thus far we have reviewed the Geologically Hazardous areas CAO language and are currently working on the Fish and Wildlife CAO. As you might expect, the Fish and Wildlife CAO contains language that would potentially impact development near wetted areas (e.g., buffer distances from streams and rivers), and thus will require more time to sift through the specifics. Luckily, best available science dictates acceptable buffers per state requirements, so we will be required to approve a protective distance.

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2007 Executive Board

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1st Vice Chair: Vacant

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Treasurer: Connie McArthur

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State Committeewoman: Judy Guenther

When in doubt, follow the money!

Who is Richard DeBolt Representing?

When people like George Washington and Thomas Jefferson got together over 230 years ago to form our great nation, it's hard to imagine that they could have foreseen the issues we now face. With a President who can't listen to the people, a bloody war raging out of control, and a lot of problems we need to solve here at home, we need our elected officials to work for us and help make Washington as great as it can be.

We all know that using foreign oil is hurting our economy. So why did our State Representative, Richard DeBolt, vote to increase our dependence on foreign oil by voting against improvements in using home-grown energy like bio-diesel (HB 1303)?

You'd think we'd all want to send our energy dollars to the Midwest, not the Middle-East. So

why would Richard DeBolt vote to help Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, rather than American families?

Maybe it's just a coincidence that DeBolt took more than \$4000 from the Big Oil Companies before the vote (WA PDC).

Maybe it was another coincidence that he accepted over \$44,000 from the insurance industry before voting to allow them to unfairly deny claims (SB 5726). Instead of making the insurance companies play fair, he voted to let them run loose and have customers like us foot the bill.

What we need in Olympia is someone who will fight for US, not someone representing the people who gave him the most money. There's already a position for that; it's called "lobbyist."

Developing Centralia Critical Areas Ordinances

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Perhaps the most contentious of all CAOs is Wetlands. This is coming up next, probably in the next month or so.

My take home messages about Centralia and CAOs is this: a) developing and approving CAOs is a positive step for this community. Once we have these approved, state grant money (and other sources) will be available for a variety of needs. To my knowledge, these types of grants and other funding sources are currently not available to Centralia, and b) the public workshops for CAO development are in fact, public. I gaze out at many empty seats every second and fourth Thursday of each month. I encourage readers to sit in on a meeting or two, and maybe even familiarize yourself with the draft language so you can become engaged.

I'll be sure to report back to you folks in a couple months, after we've run through the remaining CAOs.

Calendar of Events

AUGUST

* August 14-19 - SW Washington Fair (clean up and spruce up the booth: August 6-7; decorate August 12, beginning at noon.)

* August 23rd - Lewis County Democrats Monthly Meeting – Adams Family Restaurant, Randle

SEPTEMBER

* September 5th - Deadline for Fall Demogram

* September 9th - Salmon BBQ – 1:00 pm – Toledo City Park

* September 27th - Lewis County Democrats Monthly Meeting – Carpenters Hall Centralia

OCTOBER

* October 13th and 14th -- Training and Strategic Planning

* October 25th - Lewis County Democrats Monthly meeting – Place TBA

NOVEMBER

* November 17th - 2007 JJ Dinner – Place TBA

Celebrating Ed Smethers

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in Hoquiam for the seventh grade. He spent all his high school years at Aberdeen.

Ed modestly says, "I have no formal education. I took four years of Mechanical and Architectural drawing in high school. I also enjoyed Biology."

Ed is well known for his beautiful Martha Washington Geraniums, so the biology interest paid off big time!

He says he didn't particularly have any heroes when he was growing up outside of his parents. He did admire Charles Lindberg. "At the time he accomplished it, I thought Lindberg was some-

Didn't read THIS in The Chronicle, did ya?

DeBolt fined for faulty files

From the Daily Olympian:

The state Public Disclosure Commission fined House Minority Leader Richard DeBolt \$300 on Thursday for failing to file accurate personal-finance reports in recent years.

Agency Commissioner Ken Schellberg suspended half of the fine on the condition that DeBolt, a Chehalis Republican who leads the minority caucus, file accurate reports for the next two years.

DeBolt had failed to list assets from the sale of a house or his wife's income from substitute teaching, said Doug Ellis, assistant director at the PDC.

... DeBolt said he told Schellberg he understood what he did wrong and asked for a clarification on the listing of members of nonprofit groups' boards.

"The bottom line is I will get more diligent to filling out that form in the future," he said.

DeBolt dismissed the complaint during the election as mudslinging and said Democrats were dodging issues. He had pointed to the Democrats' revelation that he had purchased his home in 2002 for \$260,000, about \$18,000 less than the previous owner paid in 1996.

Both DeBolt and the home's seller worked for TransAlta, the Canadian company that operates the Centralia power plant. DeBolt had argued that the home sat unsold for three years.

thing special when he flew the Atlantic Ocean non-stop in the Spirit of St. Louis.

When asked who he would identify as a

"hero" now, he responded, "Joyce Barnes for her many years of unrelenting dedication and donated hours to keep the Centralia Pearl Street Pool open, and Eugene Butler for the considerable work, time and expertise he has contributed to keep the Realtors and Chamber of Commerce from gutting the Growth Management Act in Lewis County."

Ed married Winifred (Win) Lee Thompson in 1938 and they had three children, Tedford, Bill and Sally Ann. Ted is a retired school teacher, Bill works for a church in San Jose, and Sally Ann works in inventory control for Bon Macy.

Influenced by his father, Ed has always been a Democrat. In his first Presidential election, he cast his vote for Franklin D. Roosevelt.

"I have identified with the Democrats from an early age. I'm a Democrat because I think the Democrats in most cases are more representative of the working class of people, of which I am one." The President he admires most? Jimmy Carter. Ed describes Carter as "a man who did his best to make the country a better place for the common people."

Ed is pretty modest about his accomplishments, only saying, "I'm a long-time board member and presently the Treasurer of Mayfield Lake Youth Camp Association. I donate a lot of my time to keeping the Centralia Pearl Street Pool open. And I serve as a member and Chair of the Centralia Civil Service Commission."

Oh, yeah--he's Treasurer for the 20th Legislative Democrats, Precinct Committee Officer for Centralia Precinct #10. And he's been a Red Cross "Real Hero." And a bunch of other stuff he's too modest to talk about.

But mostly, Ed Smethers is an exemplary human being. We wish there were more like him.



Viewpoint: Democrats Don't Understand School Funding

“Whoa! Maybe the people in those school districts ought to bear a little more responsibility LIKE VOTING FOR THEIR LEVIES!” -- Lewis County Demogram.

This was the comment written in the Demogram in March while critiquing the Chronicle's support for continuing timber money support for rural school districts in this county.

I often worry about building support among our voters and taxpayers, and this comment leaves me thinking the Democrats have a long ways to go before understanding the tax issues and bread and butter issues our county's taxpayers face.

I am more used to critics out of King County berating voters in poorer areas for not supporting higher school levies. The facts are rural schools have far higher tax rates and their taxpayers pay a far higher percent of their personal incomes in state and local taxes than richer taxpayers in Pugetopolis. And even in Pugetopolis, Pierce, Thurston, and Snohomish counties pay far more than King County.

The statewide pattern shows institutional discrimination against the poorer students and Hispanics in our state's school funding system. Districts with a poor tax base have lower levies, older curriculum, larger classes, less training, and fewer per student specialists, counselors, educational assistants, administrators, and other staff helping teachers in the classroom. Is it any wonder that the poorest schools and Hispanics have by far the lowest test scores?

To solve the problem, policy makers need to see it. Washington Learns, Governor Gregoire's education finance study team, did not study or suggest solutions to the educational service differences and taxation inequities caused by the levy system. On the other hand, the League of Women Voters has done extensive work in this area on all local government services and taxes.

Education Week research showed Washington was 42nd in overall per student funding, which is used extensively in advertising. The same report, though, also showed Washington had the 34th largest gap between the poorest and richest schools and this is never reported. EW also said 24% of our students have per student funding above the national average. It's the rest of us that are below the national average.

While legislators work to address concerns for being 42nd with new funding for all schools, few are showing any concern for the huge gap between the poor and rich

districts. They often simply berate the rural voters for not supporting their levies even more.

Senate Bill 6080 sponsored by Senator Jim Honeyford (R-Sunnyside) would double levy equalization and bring us closer to Vermont, but not even a hearing was held in the Democratic dominated Senate. Why does it take a Republican to seek greater equity for poorer schools and poorer rural taxpayers? Senator Marilyn Rasmussen was the only D to sign onto the bill.

Governor Christine Gregoire has proposed significant improvements for all schools to address being 42nd in per student funding, but her solution for rural schools is a salary bonus meant to slow higher teacher turnover in poorer schools. This ignores huge disparities in educational services that cause the higher teacher turnover.

The added \$10,000 would go to teachers who get national board certification and also work in schools with over 70% poverty rates. Very few rural teachers have this board certification and simply providing \$10,000 raises to these teachers won't solve the workload problems in rural schools. Supplemental pay in richer districts would still provide far more overall pay to all their teachers than the teachers with board certification in the poorest buildings.

Teachers in rural schools work in some of the toughest situations and shouldn't have to do an added year of intensive certification work to get the same pay as teachers in richer districts.

While the state teachers union repeatedly says the greatest teacher turnover is in urban areas, extensive US Department of Education research is clear: Teachers leave poorer schools due to working conditions, not pay. They move for a greater chance at professional success in wealthier districts where there are more resources and fewer poor and minority students who get the lowest scores. Supplemental pay for a handful of teachers in poor schools won't change things much.

What Lewis County Democrats need is an understanding of the conditions our voters face. We need leaders in our party in this state like the Democrats of Vermont to address the gross inequities. Rural Democrats need to understand our unique issues if we are to appeal to our voters and get our issues addressed by the party and Democratic legislative leaders.

--Neal Kirby

This letter was so long that we had to cut it to fit. The entire letter, along with the Demogram Editor's response is available at www.lewiscountymdemocrats.net.

Chair's Corner: Send in the Clowns

by Jan Nontell, Lewis County Democrats Chair

When I was a little girl I was afraid of clowns. Terrified. As a two-year old I had a frightening experience with a group of clowns and it stayed with me. I would do anything to be safe from clowns. My mom knew this and would threaten me with it ... letting me know that the clowns would get me if I didn't mind her or if I questioned her (and I was such an inquisitive kid!).

Then one night when my Dad came to tuck me in, after story and hugs and good night kisses, I burst into tears and promised that I would always be good, I would never disobey, I would stay in the house and that he and mom could have everything but he had to promise to keep the clowns away.

I will never forget the look on his face as he wrapped me up in my favorite blanket and pulled me up onto his lap and into the protection of his arms. He looked so concerned. He rocked me and acknowledged my fears and then he told me that if I was willing to give up so many of the things that made me the special child I was then I would always have the clowns chasing me.

He said if I was going to spend my life so afraid that I was willing to give up everything, then he couldn't protect me and my life would be so sad. He told me that my heart and my life was stronger than any clown ever was and as long as I had faith and was not willing to run and hide and leave everything up to my mom and him then even if clowns came to our town I would have nothing to fear because I would have my own strength to add



to his and between the two of us we would be fine.

Now, 47 years later I look around me and I see that one terrifying incident has left so many people in this country afraid. I am saddened by the fact that people are willing to give up their rights as American citizens, stand back as the Constitution is torn apart by executive order and lose their collective voices because they are afraid.

I had a daddy who told me to stand up and be brave, to not let fear be a part of my life.

We have an administration that tells us to cower and be afraid. That there are terrorists out there and we have to be terrorized. My Dad told me to use my voice and my mind. This administration tells us to be quiet and be good and never question anything.

My dad told me we can do anything together and that what we did would always be done proudly and in broad daylight. Our administration sneaks into phone calls and emails while reminding us that the only thing we have to fear is everything. My dad told me to think for myself and never back down from what I believe is right. This administration tells us to let them deal with it and that works is more efficient than what is right.

My dad (a good Republican) raised a daughter who is a strong Democrat because she followed his teaching. My dad would be so sad to see what his party has become and the fear that it uses.

And my Dad would laugh at me because there is still a part of me that is afraid of clowns – especially the ones without the makeup and big, red noses.

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