Message from the Vice Chair

Former Speaker of the United States House of Representative Tip O’Neill is widely credited with the phrase “all politics are local”. By that he meant if you want to be a successful politician you need to understand how issues, regardless of their scope, affect your constituents.

In our March meeting we will be examining both ends of the “scope” spectrum. At one end, we will be learning about the Trans Pacific Partnership, a proposed trade agreement among the nations of Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States and Vietnam. Although, the TPP covers a large part of the globe it will have impacts locally.

At the other end of this spectrum, we will have a teaser to our candidates’ forum next month, and hear from the candidates running for the new District 1 of the Seattle City Council. We will have them pick questions on issues of importance to local residents at random to answer.

Reminders for upcoming events: Our April meeting will be a full forum for candidates running for District 1 on the Seattle City Council. The May meeting will be held on a different day than normal. We will have this meeting on May 20th. We will vote on our endorsements at this meeting. Also, in accordance with our bylaws you must be a member in good standing (dues paid) by the end of the April meeting to be eligible to vote for endorsements.

Our Earth Day Fundraiser will be on May 3rd from 4:00 to 6:30 at the home of Russ Brubaker. Representative Joe Fitzgibbon will speak. More details will be on our website.

Finally at our upcoming meeting we will be asking for volunteers to help put on our annual Garden Party. It is a big event, but if we all pitch in a little it will be much more manageable.

Thank you for supporting the 34th!

Ted Barker
First Vice Chair, 34th District Democrats

Meeting Notice

March 11

6:30 p.m. Meet and Greet
7:00 p.m. Meeting
The Hall at Fauntleroy
9131 California Ave SW
Across from the YMCA

Meeting will be chaired by
Vice Chair Ted Barker

Discussion of Trans Pacific Partnership
With Guest, Elizabeth Stanton

Mini City Council Candidate Forum

Call for volunteers for the Garden Party

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Legislative Action Day in Olympia

We had 50 attendees.

Speakers at the King County Lobby Day were Senators Pramila Jayaopal, Maralyn Chase, Bob Hasegawa, Jeanne Kohl-Welles, Karen Keiser and David Frockt; Representatives Ross Hunter, Brady Walkinshaw, Carol Gregory, and Tana Senn

Lobbyists briefing us were Andy Nicholas from Washington State Budget and Policy Center, Darcy Nonemacher from Washington Environmental Council, Nick Federici leader of Washington United for Fair Revenue, Sarajane Siegfriedt on the State Policy Committee of Washington Low Income Housing Alliance, Steve Zemke founder of Tax Sanity and Brian Gunn, Chair of the Washington State Progressive Caucus, representing Move to Amend.
34th District Democrats Meetings
All meetings of the 34th District Democrats are open to any of our members.

Executive Board
Wednesday, March 18, 7:00 p.m.
Puget Ridge Co-Housing Common House 7020 - 18th Ave SW

PCO Committee
Wednesday, March 4 7:00 p.m.
Uptown Espresso in the Alaska Junction
Check with Les Treall for confirmation of date and place

Other Meetings or Events of Interest to Democrats

West Seattle Drinking Liberally
Tuesday, March 3, 6:00 p.m.
Pizzeria 22, 4213 SW College Street

Evergreen Democratic Club
Monday, March 9, 11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m.
Angelo’s Italian Restaurant,
601 SW 153rd St.

Second Tuesday Democrats
Tuesday, March 10, 11:30 a.m.
Daystar, across from Westwood Village on Barton

King County Democrats Monthly Meeting
Tuesday, March 24, 7:00 p.m.
Renton Carpenters Hall, 231 Burnett Ave, North

Burien Drinking Liberally
Wednesday, March 25, 7:00 p.m.
Mick Kelly’s Irish Pub
435 SW 152nd St.

West Seattle Democratic Women
March 26, 11:30 a.m.
West Seattle Golf Course
Meeting Program:
Discussion Group Subject: tbd – Meeting Program: How to Get Women to RUN and RUN SUCCESSFULLY for Public Office!!

Meaningful Movies In West Seattle
Pay to Play
Saturday, March 7, 6:30 doors open, 7:00 movie
PAY 2 PLAY follows filmmaker John Ennis’ quest to find a way out from under the Pay 2 Play System, where Politicians reward their donors with even larger sums from the public treasury – through contracts, tax cuts, and deregulation. Along the way, he journeys through high drama on the Ohio campaign trail, uncovers the secret history of the game Monopoly, and explores the underworld of L.A. street art on a humorous odyssey that reveals how much of a difference one person can make.
Movies are free; donations and snacks gladly accepted.

White Center Food Bank
10829 8th Ave SW
Wednesday, March 25
5:00 p.m. to around 8:00 p.m.
For several years now, the 34th District Democrats have had a regular contingent of our members and friends working at the food bank on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Those who have been doing this work will tell you how much fun it is as well as how rewarding. If interested, contact Aileen Sison at 206-747-0802.

Camp Wellstone in Seattle
Registration Now Open
Camp Wellstone is a 2 1/2 day training running from 3–9 p.m. Friday; 9 a.m.—6 p.m. Saturday, and 9 a.m.—3:30 p.m. Sunday. It is open to anyone interested in gaining practical skills in progressive political action. Camp Wellstone will provide focus areas based on your role in progressive organizing, each with a distinctive curriculum taught by some of the nation’s leading experts in grassroots politics and organizing.

The cost to attend is your choice of registration fee of either $150 or $300. We believe in training everyone, regardless of income – so while the true cost of Camp Wellstone is actually greater than $300, we strive to keep our trainings affordable for progressive leaders at all income levels – and we look to you to decide what’s fair, based on your personal circumstances. If you have difficulty paying either of these fees, please contact Mysti to discuss scholarships. No matter the level you choose, the benefits are the same (training, customized materials, one of our books, and 3 meals during the weekend).
In Case You Missed  Our Last Meeting . . .

This is a summary of our last meeting. The minutes of the meeting are available on our website.

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 by Chair Marcee Stone-Vekich. After the approval of the minutes and agenda, Treasurer Karen Chilcutt discussed the budget for November and December. We had $11,045 on November 12 and ended with $11,873 on February 19.

Marcee began her Chair Report by thanking Tom Rasmussen, who is not running for City Council this time, for his many years of service. She then recognized the VIPs in the room, and greeted new members and asked them to stand.

Our endorsement meeting will be held in May. The filing deadline is May 15, two days after our usual meeting time. In order to make sure that all candidates are included, the date for the May meeting has been changed from May 13 to May 20. We will have two or three forums, in West Seattle, Burien, and possibly a co-sponsored forum with candidates for other districts in Seattle.

We will have candidate questionnaires and film interviews to post on the 34th website. District 1 has more candidates running than any other district.

Candidates seeking our endorsement must publicly state that they are Democrats. They will be expected to complete the King County questionnaire and the 34th addendum. They will not be considered for endorsement unless they do so. Friends of candidates must join by April 20 in order to vote.

Vice Chair Ted Barker spoke about Mayor Murray’s candidate for Superintendent for Parks and Recreation. Jesse Aguirre held a similar position in Washington DC and has been a teacher. Jesus discussed what the Parks Department can do to help kids be ready to learn.

Program

Housing Crisis Panel Facilitated by Marcee Stone-Vekich. Panel members included Eliana Horn, Tenants Union of Washington; Roger Valdez, Smart Growth of Seattle; Sharon Lee, Low Income Housing Institute.

The first question asked why the King County Night Out count showed a 14% increase in the number of homeless from the previous year. Sharon answered that Seattle has some of the highest rent increases in the country; people need to earn $21.60 an hour to afford an apartment in Seattle. King County and Seattle are no longer putting general fund revenue into affordable housing. Roger felt that there is enough housing, but our leaders are not focused on the greatest needs, not enough housing built for low income earners. Eliana believes that we need to keep the current housing we have and regulate the market. The system at play keeps the homeless in place.

Are tent cities really an answer? Mayor Murray proposed four more. Elena answered that encampments provide support. Sharon answered that neighbors support tent cities when they become familiar with them. They are a crisis response, part of the solution. It’s embarrassing.

Do we need a more robust safety net or mandatory inclusionary zoning? Roger explained we already have inclusionary zoning, but the council is moving away from the multi-family tax exemption. They need to continue to support and expand it. Sharon says Seattle has a spotty record of support for it. Elena explained that most developers don’t include affordable housing on site.

Why do some communities react by criminalizing the homeless instead of creating solutions? Sharon blamed fear based reactions, founded or unfounded, separating them into “deserving and undeserving poor.” Providing supportive housing saves us money. Eliana adds that we choose to get the problem out of the way by locking them up. Roger blames fear, but efforts to create tent cities makes it harder to create longer term solutions.

Is micro housing a solution or a means for developers to make more money? Roger believes it is an important solution to create affordable housing. Eliana and Sharon say no. Developers are finding loopholes with design review and property tax exemptions, and they benefit from converting apartments to micro housing.

Do we need rent control? Roger says no. Rent control creates inflationary conditions. We need more housing and we need to subsidize it. We should not limit it by creating disincentives. Sharon supports rent control because of the limited supply of homes. Buildings that need upgrades could provide subsidies on conditions of controlling rents. Eliana believes environment controls are important but we shouldn’t be distracted by them.

Should we be concerned about green affordable housing? Sharon and Roger believe lower energy costs are important. Eliana agrees, but we shouldn’t be distracted by them.

Seniors are being economically evicted from their apartments. Should they be protected? Roger says that we need to identify and move to protect them, but there is not a conspiracy to punish seniors. There is legislation in the works to require tracking. Sharon suggests offering first right of refusal to tenant to keep affordability. Eliana explains that it isn’t just happening to seniors. Some people are seeing 100% rent increases.

Sharon fears that Seattle is becoming a whites only city. Where is the affordable housing across Seattle? South King County, Southeast King County and South East Seattle are areas to focus on for affordable housing close to Metro. We don’t have the leadership right now.

Eliana reminded us that Veterans Levy was approved by voters but its become apparent that the goal won’t happen. Why and what can be done? The Mayor is not committed to ending veteran homelessness.

Roger—Are linkage fees making developers pay into affordable housing the best way to address the problem? No. They will end up driving up prices. We need to look at the current need, and add subsidies for people less than 30% of median income.

Good of the Order

Ivan Weiss says that The West Seattle Mafia term referring to our Olympia legislators is a compliment; we have high quality representation. He also asked us to support Lisa Herbold for City Council.

Several candidates for City Council spoke about their qualifications to be on the Seattle City Council. Amanda Kay Helmick asked members to sign a petition to put her on the ballot to avoid paying a filing fee.

After Good of the Order we adjourned to the West Seattle Brewery.
The meeting was called to order approximately at 7:00 PM by Chair Rich Erwin. The agenda and the minutes from the January meeting were approved.

The first order of business was to elect officers for positions vacated in February. While the credentials report was being prepared, there were several speakers.

Claudia Balducci, the Mayor of Bellevue, has recently declared her candidacy for King County Council in the 6th District. She will be running against the Republican 20-year incumbent Jane Hague. The 6th district is now much more Democratic than when Hague was first elected. Balducci stressed her work on transportation as part of the Sound Transit Authority Board of Directors as well as her work in the area of public safety, and said that she would continue those efforts at the county level if elected.

An aide for Congressman Adam Smith announced that the annual “Taste of the 9th” will be held on March 12, 6:00-7:30 pm, at the Lakewood Seward Park Community Club in Seattle.

Tim Burns, Chair of the 30th LD Democrats, asked for donations to the 30th LD so they can prepare for a special election for State Representative Position 2 in November. Carol Gregory was appointed to fill the seat of Roger Freeman who passed away days before the 2014 election. Gregory has not announced that she will seek election, nor can she accept contributions while the state legislature is in session. The Republican candidate has raised $10,000 to date.

Following the credentials report, the election for the position of Treasurer was held. Sole candidate Barbara Witt was elected by acclamation. Sara Franklin and Linda Seltzer vied for the position of 3rd Vice Chair. Sara Franklin won with a vote of 25 to 10.

A Code of Conduct for the KCDCC was put forth for adoption. There was no discussion. It was adopted with a voice vote.

Rich Erwin presented a short Chair’s Report that was an appeal to the LD committeepersons to submit their ranked three choices for committee assignments. While these delegates are free to volunteer for any committees they wish to serve on, the Chair will have final say.

The 2015 Budget was put forth for adoption. It was noted that the estimated revenue from the KCDCC picnic was on the low side and it will be adjusted upward. It was proposed that the KCDCC set aside a $5,000 reserve going into 2016 in anticipation of caucuses. The motion failed when put to a vote. A motion to set aside $10,000 for candidate donations also failed. The budget was passed with the picnic revenue adjustment.

Several changes to the KCDCC Bylaws were put forth for adoption. A change in the description of the duties of the Treasurer was passed that would require the Treasurer to provide a written financial report to the Executive Board seven days prior to each meeting, with printed copies available upon request. Changes to the Purpose and Powers of the Executive Board, Endorsement Authority and Endorsement Procedures were also proposed. A motion to adopt these alterations passed.

A resolution encouraging Washington voters not to sign I-1366, which would impose via constitutional amendment a 2/3 majority of the state legislature to pass tax increases, was passed.

Omaha Sternberg discussed fundraising opportunities. We are looking for major draws for events like our May 30th formal dinner and holiday party. Serving beer and wine at meetings could also raise money.

The Committee Chairs reports centered primarily on recruiting volunteers to serve on their various committees. There was no report from the Committee on Disabilities.

Robert Loeliger is working on a non-partisan candidate questionnaire and seeks input.

Andrew Villeneuve spoke to the need of better communication to the public and local media. He would also like to produce a King County Democrats newsletter.

Sarajane Siegfriedt made notice that the next meeting of the LAC will be 2-4 pm, March 15, at the Renton Carpenters Hall. Lobby Day was a big success with 50 people attending.

Andrew Villeneuve announced that the Northwest Progressive Institute will hold its 2015 Spring Fundraising Gala Friday April 10 at 6:30 pm at the Mercer Island Community and Events Center.
Contact Information and Committee Assignments for Our Legislators

Senator
Sharon Nelson
Senate Democratic Leader
Rules Committee
316 Legislative Building
PO Box 40434
Olympia, WA 98504
(360) 786 - 7667
Sharon.nelson@leg.wa.gov

Representative
Eileen Cody
Health and Wellness Chair
Appropriations
303 John L. O'Brien Building
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504
(360) 786 - 7978
Eileen.cody@leg.wa.gov

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Joe Fitzgibbon
Environment Chair
Finance
Local Government
305 John L. O'Brien Building
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Joe.fitzgibbon@leg.wa.gov

PCO Committee Report
Attending: Martha Koester, Marcee Stone-Vekich, And Les Treall
We discussed ways to get people to step up to becoming PCOs and other ways to get involved. We talked about the obvious method of always asking folks we meet. We also decided to include Les on new member thank you letters so he can email them a welcoming letter and present opportunities for them to engage with the organization. Les will draft several options for possible use (now in conjunction with Joy Pakulak, Membership chair).

We spoke briefly on what we will need to do for the caucuses next spring, include training of PCOs on how to run their caucus and recruiting of possible caucus chairs in precincts without PCOs. The caucuses are a long way off so this was a limited discussion.

It was decided to not do membership renewal calls from this committee and that that would be conducted by members of the Executive Board.

King County Democrats Committee on DisAbilities
The newly formed King County Democrats Committee on DisAbilities is seeking interested disAbled persons and allies to staff the Committee, which helps people obtain their accommodations within the Democratic Party, educates on ableism, and works on legislation pertinent to disAbilities.

One does not have to attend the full County meetings to participate. Committee meetings will be four times a year. Our first meeting will be March 23rd at 7:00 p.m. 206-632-2868 between noon and 11:00 p.m. for more information. (The capital A in the word disAbilities is deliberate.)
**Resolution to Oppose Appointed School Boards**

The following is a summary of a resolution that was presented to the membership by Cecilia McCormick. The resolution was approved by the membership at our February 11 meeting:

Washington State Representative Eric Pettigrew (D) proposed house bill 1497 that would allow for two out of seven school board directors to be appointed by the mayor.

A citizen’s right to vote is the cornerstone of our democracy and should not be dismantled at federal, state or local levels. Citizens have a right to elect their representatives, and most researchers agree that when mayors take charge of public schools, the role of parents and the community, especially among minority groups, can be marginalized.

There is no guarantee that a political appointment will be based on expertise in education or commitment to public education, but may support a political agenda and may not have a commitment to public schools. Appointed boards are not accountable to the voting public and are under no obligation to respond to parent concerns.

The City of Seattle does not have the capacity, jurisdiction or expertise to manage public education. Seattle is grappling with its own unresolved challenges and does not have the capacity, jurisdiction or expertise to manage public education.

Research indicates that partnerships between cities and school districts work better than mayoral appointments and mayoral control in other cities have resulted in a proliferation of charter schools and other highly controversial initiatives. Seattle voters did not approve charter schools.

Mayoral control of education in other cities has become highly controversial. In Chicago, hundreds of citizens have rallied to demand restoration of elected school boards. In Chicago, the opportunity gap has expanded since the school board was appointed.

The number of appointed and mayoral controlled boards in urban cities have been in decline because they have not served the citizens.

House Bill 1497 does not provide a mechanism to recall appointed school board directors or provide any other measure of accountability to the public.

Mayor control of education is a distraction from fully funding education via McCleary.

Former US Assistant Secretary of Education, Diane Ravitch states: “Anyone who looks to mayoral control of urban schools as a panacea will be disappointed.

Therefore, the 34th Legislative District of the Washington State Democratic Party hereby opposes and rejects HB 1497 and any other proposals to appoint school board members.

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**City Council Candidate Forum**

**Sponsored by VieWS in Partnership with the West Seattle Senior Center**

**Saturday, March 14, 9:00 a.m.—12:00 Noon**

**At the West Seattle Senior Center**

**4217 SW Oregon Street**

**9:00—10:00 a.m. Social Time**

**10:00—10:30 welcome Candidate Forum 10:30 - Noon**

This is the second forum held in District 1, and as of February 28 has grown from four candidates at the first forum sponsored by West Seattle Blog, to nine as of March 1.

There will be other forums, including the mini forum the 34th District Democrats will have at our March meeting, and the forum at the April meeting. Other forums are in the works for Burien and perhaps a forum in conjunction with other districts.

The candidates as of this date are listed below in the order in which they announced their candidacy.

Chas Redmond,  
West Seattle for Chas|Facebook

Amanda Kay Helmich,  
amanda4d1.com

George Capestany,  
Email: george4district1@outlook.com :

Phillip Tavel  
philliptavel.nationbuilder.com

David Montour  
daveforcitycouncil.com

Brianna Thomas  
www.peopleforbrianna.org/

Shannon Braddock:  
www.shannonford1.com/

Lisa Herbold  
www.facebook.com/district1forherbold

Tom Koch  
info@tomforcitycouncil.com1,206.409.9285
Join the 34th District Democrats!

Sign up by filling out this form and mailing it with a check made payable to the 34th District Democrats, to Membership, 34th District Democrats, 6523 California Ave SW, Box 183, Seattle, WA 98136-1879

Name:____________________________________________________ Phone ___________________________

Address_______________________________________________________ Zip _________________________

If you use a P.O. Box, do you live in the 34th District?  Yes________       No________

Email: ______________________________________________ * Occupation __________________________

*Employer __________________________________________   * Employer City _____________________

*Required by Washington State Public Disclosure Commission/ Contributions are not tax deductible.

If interested in paying your dues in monthly installments, contact the treasurer for more information.

$34 is the actual cost per member of running the organization

☐ $15 Basic Dues ☐ $3 Living Lightly ☐ $34 Friend of the 34th ☐ $50 Sponsor

☐ $100 Benefactor ☐ $250 Sustaining ☐ $500 Underwriter ☐ $1,000 Endowment

Add Additional Household Member $10 each    Name(s) ________________________________________________

In the interest of protecting our environment and building funds to support endorsed candidates, the 34th District Democrats wishes to communicate electronically

Please check this box if you do not have access to electronic communications and need to receive a mailed newsletter ☐