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NEWS

A monthly publication of THE METROPOLITAN DEMOCRATIC CLUB of SEATTLE



Allan Munro, left, counts votes at the MDC's primary endorsement proceedings.

No surprises in MDC's primary endorsements

The Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle sailed through its endorsement process to vote a slate of sole endorsements at its June 28 meeting. The proceedings were conducted by MDC Vice President Jack Whisner. Members voted by mail prior to the proceedings or voted in person during the proceedings. Endorseees were for the most part well known to the MDC and known to share its progressive values. There were no close calls.

Candidates who dropped in to observe or participate in the proceedings included MDC members Peter Steinbrueck for Port of Seattle Commissioner Position 4; Eden Mack for Seattle School Board Director District 4; and Seattle City Attorney Pete Holmes for reelection. Others were Sheriff John Urquhart for reelection, Port of Seattle Commissioner Position 3 Stephanie Bowman for reelection; Jon Grant for Seattle City Council Position 8; Andre Helmstetter for Seattle School Board Director District 5; and John Persak for Port of Seattle Commissioner Position 4.

Endorsed were the following:

Washington

Senate

LD 31, Michelle Rylands
LD 37, Rebecca Saldana
LD 45, Manka Dhingra
LD 48, Patty Kuderer

House of Representatives

LD 31 Pos 2, Nate Lowry
LD 48 Pos 1, Vandana Slatter

King County

KC Executive Dow Constantine
KC Sheriff John Urquhart
KC Council Dist 1 Rod Dembowski
KC Council Dist 3 John Murphy

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Burbank explains Seattle income tax

Our current tax system favors the wealthy and penalizes the poor and working class citizens of our state and city. But can we change that by establishing a Seattle income tax? Is such a tax constitutional? Opponents of a Seattle income tax will challenge its constitutionality in the state Supreme Court if it is approved by the citizens of Seattle, John Burbank told the members of the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle at its June 14 meeting. But that's what we want, he continued, because this provides a pathway to the Supreme Court to reverse its 1933 and 1935 decisions that equated income to property.

Seattle needs an income tax, he said, because Washington, which has the most regressive tax system in the country and has failed to fund its paramount duty (the education of all children), will not put in place a progressive state income tax anytime soon.

Seattle can achieve a progressive income tax, Mr Burbank explained, by passing an ordinance for an excise tax of two percent on total income in the excess of \$250,000 for individuals and \$500,000 for joint filers. This would bring in \$125 million annually and lessen the need to rely on property tax



John Burbank

levies. Fewer than three percent of Seattle households would be subject to the tax. Uses of tax funds would be restricted to lowering property and other regressive taxes, replacing lost federal funding, providing public services, creating green jobs and meeting carbon reduction goals, and implementing and administering the tax.

The ordinance could not be implemented, Mr Burbank continued, until any legal challenges have been resolved and if they are decided in favor of the city.

Mr Burbank is founder of the Economic Opportunity Institute. Before founding

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MDC Health Care Task Force Report

Health Care Funding: Between a Rock and a Hard Place

by the MDC Health Care Task Force*

Right now, the US Congress and the American public can't agree on who will pay for health care services and products. Why the debate? Of course, it's We the People who will pay, either with taxes and other public revenue, or with private health insurance, with prices set by mostly for-profit health care services and products: doctors, hospitals, drug companies, and other businesses. Many say that health care for everybody should be publicly funded, because health care for everybody is a must for modern life – like police, fire departments, highways, and government itself. Others say that government run health care would be (ugh!) SOCIALISM – and that's not the American Way.

But this sticking place about how to cover health care expenses is not all bad news. It reminds us, for now, to do no – or no further – harm by how we pay for our health care. We, like Lady Macbeth, should “screw our courage to the sticking place, and we'll not fail.” We must and can have publicly funded health care for everybody.

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KC Council Dist 5 Dave Upthegrove
Court of Appeals Div 1 Dist 1 Pos 1

Michael Spearman

Court of Appeals Div 1 Dist 1 Pos 5

David Mann

Seattle

Mayor, Bob Hasegawa

City Attorney, Pete Holmes

City Council Pos 8, Teresa Mosqueda

City Council Pos 9, Lorena Gonzalez

As you know, as of now, in Congress, the House has passed a nonsensical repeal of the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) with more nonsense about replace. The Senate leadership says they will try to rewrite that bill, or write new legislation for the same purpose, to send back to the House.

It's likely that most Senate Democrats and some Senate Republicans together will prevent that – for now.

Meanwhile in the States, California seems to be moving toward a single payer system for health care cost coverage. In Washington state there's now a campaign by 40 Health Care Advocate organizations (including the MDC) to get the public, and then legislators, to back a single payer system. Our sources in Olympia think there can't be any legislative action on this until at least 2020 for many reasons, such as the shaky Democratic majority in the House and the GOP deep freeze in the Senate, plus inaction on funding of public education. And a state income tax: *verboten* !

But public pressure for single payer is

a must, now and continuously until and beyond 2020. Some Chinese sage is said to have said “A journey of ten thousand miles starts with a single step.” Well, we've been taking steps toward single payer for more than a century, since the time of Teddy Roosevelt – a Republican! So, let's keep moving!

* *This is the first of forthcoming reports from the MDC Health Care Task Force about where things stand, and what's changing, about single payer health care. Members of the Task Force are Lem Howell, Vinod Goswami, Seth Armstrong, Bert Wyman, Pete Francis, Dean Fournier, and Charlton Price.*



MDC elects directors for 2017 – 2019 term

All candidates for board of directors of the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle were reelected to serve for the 2017 – 2019 term. They include Sen Pete Francis, Nicole Gomez, Vinod Goswami, Kiku Hayashi, Eleanor Munro, David Rudo, Harriet Wassermann, Jack Whisner and Bert Wyman. There were no new candidates.

There are now 19 members of the MDC serving on the board of directors. The MDC bylaws call for between 15 and 29 directors. See bottom left of this page.



Seattle School Board

District 4, Eden Mack

District 5, Andre Helmstetter

District 7, Betty Patu

Port of Seattle Commission

Position 1, Claudia Kauffman

Position 3, Stephanie Bowman

Position 9, Peter Steinbrueck

City of Shoreline

City Council #7, Christopher Roberts



METROPOLITAN DEMOCRATIC CLUB of SEATTLE – Board of Directors
Executive committee President Eleanor Munro ▪ Vice President Jack Whisner ▪ Secretary Nicole Gomez ▪ Immediate Past President Kiku Hayashi ▪ Director of Information Technology Jayson Morris ▪ **Directors** Bill Bradburd ▪ Joanna Cullen ▪ Dan Fievez ▪ Sen Pete Francis ▪ Judi Gibbs ▪ Vinod Goswami ▪ Lem Howell ▪ Peggy Maze Johnson ▪ Mark Marshall ▪ Allan Munro ▪ Dr David Rudo ▪ Elizabeth Stanton ▪ Harriet Wasserman ▪ Bert Wyman **Lifetime honored members** Kay Bullitt ▪ Sen Pete Francis ▪ Hon Nick Licata

From the editor

Please send notices of upcoming events, letters, articles, and book reviews to Editor Eleanor Munro at walkere1@msn.com or 1925 41st Ave SW, Seattle WA 98116 no later than the fourth Wednesday of the month. All contributions are subject to editing. For more information call 206-370-1374.

book commentary

Whither the Democratic Party?

Listen, Liberal: Or, What Ever happened to the Party of the People by Thomas Frank, Picador Books NY 2016.

The Limousine Liberal: How and Incendiary Image United the Right and Fractured America by Steve Fraser, Basic Books 2016.

by Al Rasmussen

These books assail the Democrats for having largely turned their backs on their historical constituency, the working class.

Beyond neglect of them has been Obama's attack on teachers unions in the form of embracing charter schools and deploying Teach for America's enthusiastic graduates of highly ranked colleges after only minimal training in teaching.

Frank and Fraser suggest that liberals in general and the Democratic Party in particular should look inward to understand the sorry state of American politics.

Too busy attending TED talks and vacationing in Martha's Vineyard, Frank argues, the Democratic elite has abandoned the party's traditional commitments to the working class.

He asks, "What does it mean when the dominant constituency of the left party in a two-party system is a high-status group rather than the traditional working class?"

The two recent administrations of Democratic presidents, Bill Clinton's (1993-2001) and Barack Obama's (2009-2017), have largely forsaken them. Clinton's crime bill, welfare reform, repeal of Glass-Steagall, and promotion of NAFTA were injurious to the middle and lower classes.

Also was Obama's failure to rein in Wall Street, from which he was the first Democratic presidential candidate to receive more campaign funds than his Republican opponent.

They have largely abandoned the working class in favor of the professional class. They stand in sharp contrast to FDR's policies, which were impelled by political pressure from below. Such pressure existed since then, but was largely thwarted by the latest two Democratic administrations.

Frank's recent columns argue that the Bernie Sanders movement offers a last-ditch chance to save the corrupted soul of the Democratic Party. Disaffection with the Democrats was likely what fueled the defection in 2016 of many voters in states with formerly strong union membership.

Compared with the administration that im-



Al Rasmussen

mediately preceded it and the one that immediately followed it, Obama's was a paragon of civility and probity, but nevertheless it facilitated partial partisan realignment.

Its practical accomplishments, however, were substantial as it:

- halved unemployment to under five percent
- signed Affordable Care Act, extending coverage to 20 million
- ended war in Iraq and helped negotiate a landmark Iran Nuclear Deal
- supported the Paris Climate Accord
- began normalization of relations with Cuba
- reversed Bush era torture policies
- supported the fight for marriage equality
- repealed "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy
- saved US auto industry
- expanded embryonic stem cell research
- signed Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act
- signed Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act
- signed Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, sparing five million from deportation
- commuted unjust and outdated prison sentences of about 1200 drug offenders
- nominated Sonia Sotomayor to Supreme Court, its first Latina

How can the MDC exert more influence on the Democratic Party?



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Legends and lore by Eleanor

Let's return to the 60s and 70s for a moment. Seattle was experiencing a period of civil unrest and violence unprecedented in the city's history. Edwin Pratt, executive director of the Seattle Urban League, was assassinated on his front porch in 1969 shortly before Wes Uhlman took office as Seattle's youngest mayor. Both were members of the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle.

One of the approximately 600 bombings that occurred during the early months of Mr Uhlman's term occurred at the home of soon to be president of the MDC, Representative Dave Sprague, Democrat in the 37th legislative district. That was enough to encourage Mr Sprague to refrain from running for reelection. He did, however, serve as president of the MDC until 1985.

During these early years of the MDC many of its members were active in promoting laws against discrimination in employment, housing, and voting. One of these was Sidney Gerber, who was appointed chair of the Washington State Board Against Discrimination in 1957 by Governor Albert Rossellini. Mr Gerber worked tirelessly in the cause of open housing until he died when he crashed his plane in 1965. With him were Seattle City Councilmember Wing Luke, another member of the MDC, and his friend, Kay LaDue, first paid secretary of the MDC. Both died in the crash. It was three years before the wreckage was found.

Another member of the MDC who was very active in the political scene and in promoting racial equality during these years was attorney Ken McDonald, who in 1961 succeeded Mr Gerber on the Washington State Board Against Discrimination. There were many, many more members of the MDC who worked for racial equality and other progressive issues.

Some of those who joined the MDC in the 60s are still with us. This year is the 50th anniversary of MDC membership for Allan Munro and Lem Howell, who worked together on many progressive causes such as Choose an Effective City Council (CHECC) and revoking Washington's blue laws. Also on board that decade was Senator Pete Francis whose name first appears on the MDC rolls in 1968 and who served as president in 1988 and 2003-2008. Some of the first women whose names appeared on the MDC membership rolls were Kay Bullitt, Fam Bayless and Harriet Wasserman. They would have joined earlier but membership was not opened to women

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Proposition 1 expands access to arts, science

Jack Sorensen of the Access for All campaign spoke briefly about King County Proposition 1 at the June 28 primary endorsement meeting of the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle. Proposition 1 is the only measure to appear on this year's primary ballot.

Proposition 1 expands access to the arts, science and heritage by providing stable

funding and free or reduced admission to theaters, museums, and cultural and historical centers.

As the measure didn't appear on the MDC's primary endorsement ballot, members will be asked to vote by email.

For more information see AccessForAll-WA.org.



- Legend continued from p3 -

until 1967. They were awarded status as honorary founding members at the MDC's first Chautauqua Afternoon in 2014.

It's good to remember our roots. The MDC came into being in response to the aftermath of the McCarthy era and related issues such as negative loyalty oaths. If our founders were here today I have no doubt they would be in the forefront of the resistance. If we want progressive values to prevail we need to follow their lead.

Sources

www.blackpast.org/aaw/pratt-edwin-t-1930-1969

www.historylink.org/File/7854

Sidney Gerber: *Opening Doors Shut Against Blacks in Washington State* by Douglas Shaw Palmer,* unpublished manuscript, copyright 2006.

The archives of the MDC.

And the capacious memory of Allan Munro.

*member of the MDC



- Burbank continued from p1 -

EOI, he served as project manager of the Sand Point Community Housing Association, political director of the Washington State Labor Council, and staff coordinator for the Washington State Senate. He has a faculty appointment with the Department of Health Services, University of Washington, as a Clinical Instructor in Community-Oriented Public Health Practice. He has a master's degree in public administration from the Graduate school of Public Affairs at the University of Washington and a bachelor's degree from Evergreen State College.



New members

The MDC welcomes new members Eden Mack, candidate for Seattle School Board District 4, and Seattle City Councilmember Lisa Herbold.

mark your

MDC calendar

July - August

MDC meetings take place noon – 1:30 pm, the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at the plaza 600 Building #205, 600 Stewart St unless otherwise noted.

Wednesday, July 12 – program to be determined.

Deadline for declaring candidacy for MDC officer (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer). Please send your declaration to Eleanor Munro, walkere1@msn.com.

Thursday, July 27 – program to be determined. **Please note: this meeting is on Thursday, not Wednesday.**

Wednesday, August 9 – Cathy Allen of the Connections Group will speak on “Women’s Progress: the International Status of Women.”

Wednesday, August 23 – program to be determined.

Deadline for submitting photos and candidate statements for officer ballot. Ballots will be inserted in the September issue of The MDC News.



Have you paid your dues? Check the date above your name on the address label. That's your due date.

Membership renewal date appears on above label

July 2017

METROPOLITAN
DEMOCRATIC CLUB
OF SEATTLE

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