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MAY 2015

NEWS

A monthly publication of THE METROPOLITAN DEMOCRATIC CLUB of SEATTLE



Left, Jackson Ravens, chair of the Washington State Democrats, explains what it does. Photo by Jonis Davis. Right, Cleve Stockmeyer, constitutional rights lawyer, tells the MDC about the Honest Elections campaign. Photo by Bill Bradburd.



Ravens optimistic about 2016, urges unification

Jaxon Ravens, chair of the Washington State Democrats, is optimistic about 2016, he told the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle at its April 8 meeting. He said it feels as if the “air is coming back into the room.” After the elections of 2004, he noted, it felt as if the “air had been sucked out of the room,” and Democrats felt a sense of deflation and defeat.

Since then, Mr Ravens said, the party has made progress on marriage equality, gun control, minimum wage, health care and environmental issues.

The values that drive the Democratic Party, he said, derive from what the Party is all about; faith, justice, labor unions, awareness of the world at large, celebration and fun. The Party is all about promoting progressive values and beliefs, he concluded.

To promote progressive values, we must elect Democrats, which means we must recruit and support good people to be candidates, he asserted, and to do that we need to attract volunteers and build a strong infrastructure and organization.

Where are we now? Mr Ravens asked and answered his own questions: “in locked battle.” The Republicans won’t even hear bills. What are we doing about it? Something the Party has never done before – considering communication paramount and assigning greater resources to developing data essential to improving communication.

He warned the audience about refusing to support a candidate because of one issue, adding that we have to be united in support of our candidates.

Honest Elections? Honestly!

Getting big money out of politics is the goal of more than one effort or campaign. Instead of trying to overturn Citizens United with a constitutional amendment, Honest Elections Seattle is using the initiative process. Seattle Initiative 122, explained MDC member Cleve Stockmeyer, a constitutional rights lawyer, aims to reform political campaigning with a system that uses Democracy Vouchers.

Every citizen would be given four \$25 vouchers to donate to the candidate(s) of their choice, Mr Stockmeyer explained, and the candidate redeems the voucher for campaign funds. The candidates must qualify to receive the vouchers, he continued, by participating in six debates, abiding by spending limits, and other requirements.

Some of the advantages of this voucher system, Mr Stockmeyer said, are

- more regulation on money flowing into campaigns;
- maximum contributions are lowered from \$700 to \$500;
- more disclosure of campaign finances;
- signature gatherers are required to wear a badge if they are being paid;
- candidates may not accept

contributions from any city contractor that earned more than \$250,000 in the last two years; and

- elected officials are banned from lobbying the City for three years after leaving public service.

The cost is about \$3 million a year, he said, and is based on property value; the owner of a \$400,000 home would pay about \$.85/month.

At the conclusion of his presentation, a motion was made to endorse the signature-gathering of the Honest Elections campaign. The membership will vote on the motion at its May 13 meeting.



May 13...

**Hear Nick Licata
and
Darel Grothaus
speak on the
Meeting the Goals
of a Public Bank.**



mark your MDC Calendar May - August 2015

All regular membership meetings occur on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, noon – 1:30 pm at the Plaza 600 Building #205, 600 Stewart St, Seattle, unless otherwise noted. The MDC welcomes guests at all membership meetings and events. All members are welcome to attend all MDC committee meetings and events.

Single Payer Task Force meets immediately following regular meetings.

May 13 Membership meeting Topic: Meeting the Goals of a Public Bank. Speakers: Seattle City Councilmember Nick Licata and Darel Grothaus, consultant on financing affordable housing.

May 21 MDC Salon, a potluck social for MDC members and friends. When/where: 6:00 – 8:00 pm at the home of Cleve Stockmeyer, 8056 Sunnyside Ave N, Seattle. For more information contact Eleanor Munro, 206.370.1374 or walkere1@msn.com.

May 27 Membership meeting Topic: A revenue-neutral carbon tax for Washington. Speaker: Dr Yoram Bauman, environmental economist and the world's first and only standup economist. Serves on executive committee of Carbon Washington.

June 4 Board Social (details to be confirmed).
June 20 A Chautauqua Afternoon The MDC hosts a festive outdoor gathering of progressives to hear campaign speeches prior to its primary endorsement proceedings. All candidates invited to speak, mingle and distribute literature. Other progressive organizations are invited to set up tables and distribute their literature. The MDC opens ticket sales for its annual raffle. Keynote speaker, master of ceremonies and venue to be determined.

June 24 Membership meeting Business: MDC's primary election endorsement proceedings. Announcement of results of board of directors election.

July 8 Membership meeting (details to be confirmed).

July 22 Membership meeting (details to be confirmed).

July 23 MDC Salon: a potluck social for MDC members and friends. The MDC provides beverages. When/where: 6:00 – 8:00 pm at the home of Harriet Wasserman, 1247 20th Ave E.

August 4 Progressive Election Night Prefunk (details to be confirmed).

August 13 Seattle City Council Forum (details to be confirmed).

To join the MDC or for more information contact MDC President Eleanor Munro at 206.370.1374 or walkere1@msn.com or visit metrodem.org or facebook.com/metrodem.

May What's happening

May 7 Fundraiser for Seattle City Councilmember Mike O'Brien for District 6, 5:30 – 7:30 pm, at the home of Alice Woldt, 6514 12th Ave NW. RSVP on Facebook.

May 8 Wedgwood Meaningful Movies presents *Pay to Play*, a comedic documentary about the problem of money in politics, 7:00 pm. 8900 35th Ave NE. Free and open to the public. A facilitated discussion follows. More information, wedgwoodmeaningfulmovies.org.

May 11 Seattle City Council District 2 Candidates Forum, 7:30 pm, Rainier Valley Cultural Center, 3515 S Alaska St. Sponsored by 37th District Democrats.

May 12 Celebration of the release of the book, *Gang of Four*, 6:30 – 8:30 pm, MOHAI, 860 Terry Ave N. Followed by book signing and author meet and greet follows. Open and free to the public.

May 12 Seattle City Council District 3 Candidates Forum, 6:30 pm, Mount Zion Baptist Church, 1634 19th Ave, Free and open to the public. Tickets available at 43rddemocrats.org.

May 13 Fuse presents *In the Market for Change*, an evening of political "comedy from the Great Northleft," 6:00 pm, Melrose Market Studios, 1532 Minor Ave. Tickets available at fusewashington.actionkit.org.

METROPOLITAN DEMOCRATIC CLUB of SEATTLE - Board

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Lifetime honored members Pat Emerson ▪ Sen Pete Francis ▪ Hon Nick Licata ▪ Gov Mike Lowry ▪ **Representative to WAmend** Seth Armstrong

New members

The MDC welcomes
new members
Kathleen Flynn
Dean Fournier

Membership renewal date appears on above label

May 2015

METROPOLITAN
DEMOCRATIC CLUB
OF SEATTLE



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