



# mark your Calendar

## April 11 – MDC meeting

Sustainability Initiatives: The Port’s Century Agenda

Seattle Port Commissioner Fred Felleman

## April 25 – MDC meeting

Whole Washington’s universal initiative 1600; formation of a statewide plan to cover all residents with net annual savings of \$9 billion.

Sara So, vice chair of initiative writing committee for Whole Washington.

## May 9 – MDC meeting

To be determined.

## May 9 – an MDC soiree

Climate change and China/United States relations will be the subject for discussion at the MDC’s first soiree of the year, 5:30 – 8 pm at the home of Kay Bullitt, 1125 Harvard Ave E. The discussion will be led by environmental lawyer and visiting scholar Phil Boxell, Dr Dongsheng Zang, director of the University of Washington’s Asian Law Center and Visiting Scholars Program, and Dr Jeremy Hess, co-director of the UW’s Center for Health and the Global Environment.

**Attendance is strictly limited to 50.**

To reserve a place email Eleanor Munro at walkere1@msn.com.

## May 23 – MDC meeting

To be determined.

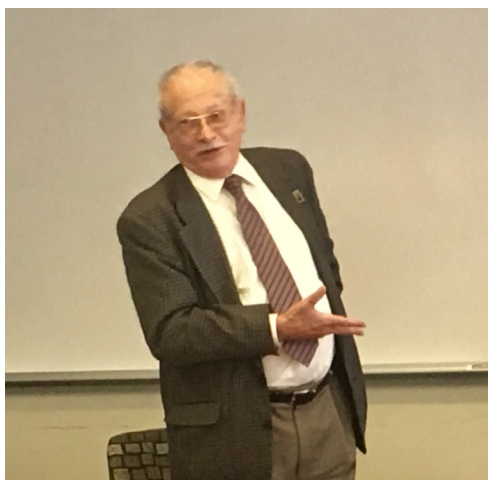
## June 10 – A Chautauqua Afternoon

Noon – 5 pm at the home of Ann and Tony Martin, 3618 SW Orchard. See page 4 for more information.

*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.*



# State ahead on health care



Lem Howell, left, introduces Phil Talmadge, speaker for MDC’s March 14th meeting.

When it comes to health care Washington is way ahead of the rest of the country, former Washington Supreme Court Justice Phil Talmadge told members and guests of the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle at its March 14 meeting. He noted an exception, Hawaii, a state that has universal health care coverage. In 1993, he explained, the legislature enacted the Health Care Reform Act that resulted in the Basic Health Plan. He served as a senator from the 34th legislative district at the time, chairing the Judiciary and Health

## Climate change, China subject of first MDC soiree

Climate change and China/United States relations will be the topic of discussion led by environmental lawyer Phil Boxell at the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle’s first soiree of the year. Mr Boxell, a visiting scholar at the University of Washington’s Gates Asian Law Center, is writing a book on the subject. Joining him in this discussion are Dr Dongsheng Zang and Dr Jeremy Hess

The event, sponsored by the MDC Climate Change Task Force, takes place 5:30 – 8 pm, May 9 at the home of MDC lifetime honored member Kay Bullitt, 1125 Harvard Ave E. Wine and light refreshments will be served. Attendance is strictly limited to 50.

Care Committees. A Health Service Commission was created to identify basic health benefits. This would have saved millions of dollars because the state would no longer have to pay premiums to the Children’s Health Insurance Program. There would also have been a reduction in the amount of worker’s compensation paid out because medical treatment costs would have been eliminated.

However, he continued, the subsequent Republican-dominated legislature repealed big chunks of the plan.

Mr Talmadge discussed some ways to move forward. He said it’s important to recognize some weaknesses in the Affordable Care Act, specifically the lack of a public alternative and the lack of cost containment strategies such as the ability to negotiate drug prices.

There are some other lessons to be learned concerning health care reform, he added.

## book review

# Adults in the Room

## My battle with the European and American Deep Establishment

by Yanis Varoufakis

Farrar, Straus and Girous, New York, 2017

Reviewed by Allan Munro

Yanis Varoufakis is an economics professor who was drafted to the position of finance minister in the left wing administration of the Syriza political party that won election in Greece in early 2015. His task was to negotiate a restructuring of Greece's massive debt with the "Troika" of the European Central Bank (ECB), the European Union and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The book covers the negotiations during the five-month period – February through July – that Varoufakis held the job.

Mr Varoufakis and Syriza, lead by Alex Tsipras, wanted to find a way to stay in the Eurozone, but not at the price of perpetual debt slavery, which was the constructive result of the conditions laid down by the Troika for a bailout. Known by the general term "austerity," these conditions used in prior bailouts caused an economic depression in Greece. When Syriza took over in early 2015, after the second failed bailout, unemployment was at 26 percent, over 40 percent for young workers and national income had fallen over five percent a year.

With precision and clarity Varoufakis shows:

1)The bailouts were not of Greece, but of German and French banks. In fact, the bailout money never got to Greece; it went directly to some of Greece's creditors.

2)The bailouts were a mechanism for transferring the burden of the debt from private banks to taxpayers.

3)An alternative that would have allowed Greece to resume economic growth and eventually, honor most of the debts existed.

With a mass of evidence Varoufakis shows:

4)That Europe's leaders knew the austerity program would not work because it was causing a contraction of the Greek economy that would reduce Greece's capacity to make payments. European leaders like Wolfgang Schauble, Angela Merkle, Christian La Grande would admit this in private to Varoufakis and his assistants, but deny it in public.

5)The Troika did not bargain in good faith. They refused to unflex on any of their unmeetable demands. But they continued to accuse the Greeks of not making (any) proposals. In fact, Varoufakis had launched many detailed, reasonable proposals.

6)The European leadership had lied to their voters, to have negotiated in good faith would have amounted to a public admission of those lies.

The Troika argued this was necessary to save the Eurozone currency. If leniency had been shown to the Greeks, then countries like Portugal, Spain and Italy would have demanded concessions. This is another example of the people of Greece being sacrificed to save the system.

In fact, the Eurozone system is flawed. The Maastricht Treaty requires all Eurozone members to balance their governmental budgets. This requirement controls regard-



Allan Munro

less of the state of a member government's economy. Member countries are, therefore, denied the Keynesian remedy of fiscal deficit funded stimulus programs. Greece could not devalue because it was using the same currency as the creditors.

After Varoufakis was removed, Greece got a third bailout, but this was just kicking the can down the road ("extend and pretend" according to Varoufakis). The Eurozone flaw has not been fixed. Conclusion: The Eurozone will experience another financial crisis in the not-too-distant future.

[Incidentally, Varoufakis relates getting inquiries and support from Senator Bernie Sanders. I wish I had known this during the primary season of 2016.]



## Election 2018

### upcoming campaign events

#### April 26

A conversation with Andrea Chin, candidate for Seattle Municipal Court Position 2, 5:30 – 7 pm at the home of Harriet Wasserman, 1247 20th Ave E. RSVP to [harriet@wasserman.net](mailto:harriet@wasserman.net).

Please send information about 2018 campaign events to Eleanor Munro at [walkere1@msn.com](mailto:walkere1@msn.com).

## From the editor

Please send notices of upcoming events, letters, articles, and book reviews to Editor Eleanor Munro at [walkere1@msn.com](mailto: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.

### METROPOLITAN DEMOCRATIC CLUB of SEATTLE –Board of Directors

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- Health Care continued from page 1 -

For example, we need to recognize that the English-style single-payer model of paying for health care is not within reach; it would cost Washington state \$10B. We could, however, gradually expand the Basic Health Plan and eventually get to a single-payer system. The problem will be “the cost of getting from here to there,” he said, as Washington’s tax system is the most regressive in the nation.

## “single-payer not within reach”

Candidates will be using health care this year as a wedge issue, he maintained. In the next four years we have to educate people about the cost of health care; they don’t realize how precarious their health care coverage is, he added.

Mr Talmadge served in the Washington state senate 1979 – 1995 and on the Washington Supreme Court 1995 – 2001. He earned his bachelor’s degree (magna cum laude) from Yale University and his JD from the University of Washington. He has taught appellate advocacy at the Seattle University and UW law schools.



- Climate continued from page 1 -

To reserve a place email Eleanor Munro at [walkere1@msn.com](mailto:walkere1@msn.com).

Mr Boxell has practiced environmental law for more than 30 years, mostly in Boston and Philadelphia, and recently spent four years teaching and researching climate change issues in Beijing. Dr Zang is director of the University of Washington’s Asian Law Center and Visiting Scholars Program and author of China’s “Attitude” Toward Human Rights: Reading Hungdah Chiu in the Era of the Iraq War. Dr Hess is co-director of the UW’s Center for Health and the Global Environment.

As preview to the upcoming discussion, Mr Boxell says, “These are obviously turbulent times here and in China. Climate change, in my opinion, presents a transcendent threat to human existence.”

For more information about Mr Boxell and his work, visit his website, [willclimatecollapse.org](http://willclimatecollapse.org).



# Smith concerned about threats of war, budget

Congressman Adam Smith is worried that President Donald Trump will “stumble us into a war.” “Diplomacy and partnerships are the best way to deal with threats,” he told members and guests of the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle at its March 28 meeting.

Mr Smith, in his 11th term in Congress, is ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee. He expressed two main concerns.

First, he is worried about a pre-emptive strike in North Korea. This concern is enhanced by the fact that John Bolton has just been appointed national security adviser. The War Powers Act, he said in answer to a question from the audience, is unlikely to be used to restrain Mr Trump and Mr Bolton. It is probably unconstitutional and is not very effective in preserving the power of Congress to declare war, he added.

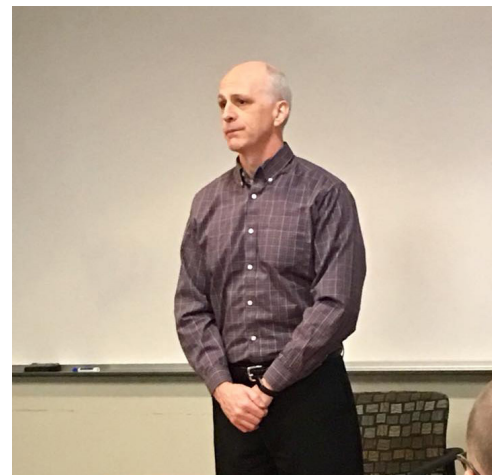
Mr Smith’s second main concern is the budget. We are \$22 trillion in debt and about \$600 billion short on infrastructure funding. He says this deficit undermines every Democratic policy initiative, as well as our ability to address just about every aspect of government. He doesn’t think we need to balance the budget but thinks we do need to get on a more secure footing in the event of an emergency.

According to polls, Mr Smith explained, the public wants to balance the budget but avoid cutting spending and raising taxes. Thus, there is no political pressure to balance the budget.

“The deficit doesn’t have constituents,” he said.

Why are we in this hole? Over the last 35 years in Congress interest groups have gotten very good at advocating for issues, he said. He suggests we look at the big picture, at broader interests, and not just at personal issues.

In answer to another question from the audience Mr. Smith acknowledged that the Democrats had been very effective in accomplishing their priorities during the recent budget negotiations in Congress.



Congressman Adam Smith takes questions at the MDC’s March 28 meeting.

## New members

The MDC welcomes returning member Jim Street, former Seattle City Councilmember.

## A note to members of the MDC

If you know something, say something! Specifically, about candidates for the 2018 primary.

We want to include as many candidates as possible in our invitations to A Chautauqua Afternoon. If you hear that someone has declared or announced that they will not run again, please let me know. Also provide me with any campaign contact information for candidates. Send information to my email, [walkere1@gmail.com](mailto:walkere1@gmail.com)

Thanks – Eleanor Munro



Speakers, April programs.



*Seattle Port Commissioner Fred Felleman will speak April 11 on the Port's Century Agenda.*



*Sara So, vice chair of Whole Washington's initiative writing committee will speak April 25th on I-1600 – the universal health care initiative.*

Membership renewal date appears on above label

# Meeting notes

## March 14

### Early endorsement

A motion was made to grant an early endorsement to Senator Maralyn Chase of the 32nd legislative district. She is a member of the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle.

### Northwest Progressive Institute Spring Fundraiser

As announced in the March edition of The MDC News, a drawing was held for two tickets to the Northwest Progressive Institute's Spring Fundraiser. The winners were Kiku Hayashi and Allan Munro. The MDC received the tickets as a benefit of its sponsorship of the event.

## March 28

### Early endorsement

A vote to grant an early endorsement to MDC member Senator Maralyn Chase passed unanimously.

### An MDC soiree

President Eleanor Munro announced that the MDC would hold its first soiree of the year May 9. See details on page 1.



# A Chautauqua Afternoon

Your opportunity to hear the candidates speak prior to the endorsements

The MDC's fifth annual

Chautauqua Afternoon

noon – 5pm, June 10th

a festive outdoor event with a bounty of classic picnic food and beverages

at the home of Ann and Tony Martin  
3618 SW Orchard

Optional donation \$25

Sponsorship \$125  
Can be purchased online

at metrodem.org or  
Send your check to  
Eleanor Munro  
1925 41st Ave. SW  
Seattle, WA 98116

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April 2018

METROPOLITAN  
DEMOCRATIC CLUB  
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