Moving Ahead on Health Care Reform

By Mike Kreidler
Washington State Insurance Commissioner

As our state moves forward in implementing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) many of the “patient protections” are already in effect. Kids with preexisting conditions can get insurance – and stay on parents’ insurance up to age 26. For those my age, Medicare now covers preventative services – without deductibles for essential screenings like mammograms or those for cervical or prostate cancer. Furthermore, as anyone watching Congressman Paul Ryan’s rant during the vice presidential debate knows, women are now entitled to many preventative services with no co-pay... including, yes, FDA-approved contraception methods and contraceptive counseling, but also things like breast-feeding support, supplies, and counseling and domestic violence screening and counseling. Unlike Ryan I think we can agree that’s an important gain.

Now comes the hard part... putting the “affordable” into effect. In a state with over one million uninsured residents, receiving over $1 billion in uncompensated care, coverage cannot come soon enough. Likely no fewer than 178,000 would qualify for Medicaid expansion paid for 100% by the federal government – assuming the state takes that good deal – while more will qualify for premium subsidies through what is called an “exchange” – a state-run Healthplanfinder – that will operate like Expedia.

For many of those buying their own insurance, premium costs will rise at least initially. That is because most in the individual market have what could be called “low” plans – of less than 50% actuarial value. That means they pay more than half their health care costs through co-pays or deductibles. Under PPACA they will pay no more than 40%, as they will have no less than what is referred to as “Bronze” coverage. Elevating plans to “Bronze” level will produce some sticker shock that may not be entirely offset by subsidies.

One way to help: Give my office the statutory authority that exists in other states to factor carrier surplus into rate review. Presently I must entirely ignore the fact that nonprofits like Premera Blue Cross and Regence Blue Shield are each sitting on over $1 billion in surplus in excess of their reserves. If only the state budget had that kind of extra cash, right? I should not have to ignore this elephant in the room.

We face critical time-lines. The Healthplanfinder is self-governing and must be operational by this October for 2014 coverage. My office must approve plan filings by then. The state’s Health Care Authority will be charged with Medicaid expansion – which I know Governor-elect Jay Inslee wants to pursue. To all of this is added the complexity of legislative power dynamics, the transition to a new governor, and a federal government without expertise in state-regulated insurance.

My foremost priority will be to protect consumers during this process. These are exciting times but challenging ones too. The transition will be bumpy and will require patience. I have no doubt lessons will be learned and adjustments made. But I think we will like the journey’s end.

Congressman Denny Heck Named to House Financial Services Committee

In a rare appointment for a freshman member of Congress, Thurston County’s own 10th District Congressman Denny Heck has been selected by his colleagues to serve on the House Financial Services Committee. The Committee is one of only four “exclusive” committees in the House. The others are Appropriations, Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce.

The House Financial Services Committee has jurisdiction over federal housing policy, Wall Street reform, consumer protection, and commercial insurance and banking issues. This committee was Denny Heck’s top request for committee assignment.

Due to the expansive list of policy concerns that fall within the Committee’s jurisdiction, members who serve on one of the four exclusive committees are not permitted to serve on other House committees. Accordingly he will give up his seat on the House Budget Committee, a non-exclusive committee, to accept this high-profile appointment. Only six other members of the 43-member freshman Democratic class were named to exclusive committees, and Heck will be the only member from the Pacific Northwest to serve on Financial Services.

“I’m thrilled to be named to the House Financial Services Committee,” Heck said. “No sustainable economic recovery can occur in this country without a strong start in the housing sector. The House Financial Services Committee has the opportunity to continue promoting the recent growth we’ve seen in the housing sector. I’m also looking forward to ensuring that the 2010 Wall Street reforms are implemented so that Washington families are protected from a repeat of the actions that led up to the 2008 financial crisis. With major employers, credit unions, financial institutions, and a burgeoning tech-start up industry, Washington has a tremendous and growing stake in the work done under jurisdiction of the Committee.”

To catch up on everything our congressman is doing for us, see his website at http://dennyheck.house.gov. You can also contact his Washington DC office at 202-225-9740 or his district office in Lacey at 360-459-8514.
So, like many others, I really liked President Obama's Inaugural Speech! It got even better when he announced on Tuesday that his fantastic Organizing for America – which turned into Organizing for Obama – had morphed into Organizing for Action. I am excited because that matches up with our efforts as we head into a very IMPORTANT election year.

In 2012, the Thurston County Democrats organized a “boots on the ground” strategy to elect our endorsed candidates, from President all the way to County Commissioners. By my count, 1186 Thurston County Democrats participated directly in our organizing efforts. They knocked on doors, made phone calls to voters, registered voters, attended rallies and fund raisers, attended discussion groups, had conversations with neighbors and colleagues at work, sent political messages to friends on their holiday greeting lists … and they VOTED.

Our combined efforts accomplished what all the election pros said was awesome – the drop off of voters, from the top of the slate to the end of the ballot, is viewed as successful if it doesn’t exceed 8%. In Thurston County it was less than 3%

The other sides’ Big Money lost to our own Boots on the Ground strategy. So when our President says it is time to ACT – he could be talking about the Thurston County Democrats.

Now it is 2013, and we have new challenges. This year we have critical elections in each of our cities, the Port of Olympia, and one very important Thurston County election.

The majority of seats in each city council are on the ballot. These elections are CRITICAL. We all know that actions taken in the Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater, Yelm, Tenino, Rainier, and Rochester City councils impacts all of us directly and immediately. In very significant ways, the decisions of these councils impact our quality of life. We will be actively organizing in each of our cities. We need to elect council members who are committed to our values – the values that we adopted at our last Thurston County Democratic Party Convention.

Two Port of Olympia commissioners will also be on this year’s election ballot. Fellow Democrat Jeff Davis is up for re-election and has earned our continuing support. We are now waiting to see who else enters the race.

With the election of Kim Wyman as Secretary of State, there is a vacancy in the Thurston County Auditor’s office. By law, the County Commissioners must select one of three candidates endorsed by the PCs in the political party of the person leaving the office. The Thurston County Republican Party has submitted three names, and the County Commissioners have conducted a public meeting to interview those candidates. The Commissioners expect to announce their choice on Jan 29. We know it will be a Republican. But there will a county-wide election to fill that office this year and we will be supporting a Democratic candidate. This means we will be cracking up countywide to elect our candidate.

We all know that in some places in our country there are actions to restrict participation of voters. There is no place for these in Thurston County. The Democratic Party is clear on this: We will tolerate NO requirements, rules or procedures that could be used to prevent any eligible voter from voting.

In the coming weeks and months I will be seeking ways to engage more voters in activities that will strengthen our party as we work collectively to make Thurston County’s quality of life even better than it is today. I am looking forward to working with each and every one of you to help make our vision come true.

Democrats Must Act!

By Roger Erskine
Chair Thurston County Democrats

The New York Times published “We must act” the day after Barack Obama was sworn in as our President. As many of you know, on the back of my business card I have included a quote that describes my view on life – “To live is not merely to breathe – it is to act.”

Looking Ahead

February 9 – Thurston County Democrats First Fundraiser of the Year: Champagne Brunch at the River’s Edge in Tumwater

February 18 – State Democratic Party PCO Training and Crab Feed at St. Martin’s

February 25 – Thurston County Democrats Monthly Meeting for February

March 25 – Thurston County Democrats Monthly Meeting for March

August 6 – Washington State Primary Election (ballots mailed on July 17)

November 5 – Washington State General Election (ballots mailed on October 16)
Thurston County Democrats

Roger Erskine, Chair

Roger was born in Minneosta. He and his wife Mary have 6 children, 13 grand- sons, and 1 great grandson. Roger taught high school political science and eco- nomics before working for the National Education Association teachers union. As its Political Director in Minneosta, South Dakota, and Pennsylvania, he managed two gubernatorial campaigns as well as numerous legislative campaigns.

As manager for organizing at NEA, he helped build the membership to 2.8 million and organized the Teacher Union Reform Network. His work in Seattle led business leaders to label him the most outstanding urban education leader in America.

Roger lectures and serves on several education-related boards, chairs the Center for Ethical Leadership, and is the VP of Washington Public Campaigns. He serves on the Washington State Democratic Central Committee, where he is the chair of the Elections Committee and VP of the Labor Caucus.

Doug Bell, 1st Vice Chair

Doug is a native of eastern Washing- ton and graduated from Washington State University with a degree in mathematics. He has worked as a software engineer before retiring and moving to Olympia in 2010. He has been active with the Thurston County Democrats since then and was active with the 48th LD Demo- crats and the King County Democrats prior to that.

He volunteers in math tutoring, the Thurston County Parks Advisory Board, and other causes as his curiosities strike him.

Susan Herring, 2nd Vice Chair

Susan was raised in south Seattle and in 1971 she moved to Olympia to attend the Evergreen State College. She gradu- ated in 1975 and started working for state government. She soon joined the National Women’s Political Caucus and the Thur- ston County Democrats. She has served in many positions and was awarded the 2003 Democrat of the year award.

She is a strong proponent of civil rights and responsibili- ties and she continues to strive to make this a more just place for everyone.

Her favorite quotation: “Politics is only as good as the people who participate.”

Liberty Ryder, State Committee Woman

Liberty is a lifelong resident of Thurston County, currently living in Lacey with her husband. Lacey City Council Mem- ber Andy Ryder and their two children, Jesse (18) and Josie (8). This is her third term on the Thurston County Democrats Executive Committee, previously serving as Vice Chair. Liberty received the Thur- ston County Democrat of the Year award in 2009.

She is a small business owner who cares deeply about this community and sees her time on the executive committee as a chance to give back and make a difference in Thurston County.

22nd Legislative District Officers

Debby Pattin, Chair

Debby has been a four-term organizer of the Thurston County Democrats caucuses and county convention. During the 2008 election, she served as grassroots coordi- nator for the Obama campaign, traveling all over the NW to speak at meet ups and fundraisers and staffing the Obama cam- paign office, and was selected as a national volunteer with the DC Field Team. She also has young adult children who attended the 2008 inauguration, where they found themselves trapped in the infamous “purple tun- nel” – a term that has stuck with the campaign.

Debby’s political activism started in the 8th grade when she served on her junior high student council and success- fully lobbed the school board to allow girls to wear slacks to school.

As a semi-retired English and drama teacher, she fills in on various long term substitute jobs at Olympia and Capital high schools.

Debby is married to her college sweetheart, Bob Pattin, recently retired after 32 years as a longshoreman. They are the proud parents of Zack (26), a labor activist and casual longshoreman in Tacoma, and Rachel (23), who works in sustainable agriculture and plays old time fiddle, banjo and ukulele in Durham, NC.

Zach Smith, State Committee Man

Zach has been a Thurston County Democrat since 1996. He has also served on many committees and held several leadership positions in the Democratic Party as a member of the Washington State Democrats Executive Committee. With over 20 years working for the state employee’s union, Zach knows the importance of politics in the lives of working families. He feels it has a privilege and honor to serve on many cam- paigns at the county, state and federal levels, working with Democrats to win elections that shape public policy.

Zach met his wife, Selena, in 1998 and they have two children: Vincent, 12 and Selena, 15. The couple has a 1 year old son with disabilities who lives on Vashon Island.

Cheryl Selby, Interim Member-at-Large

Cheryl moved with her young daughters to Olympia in 1994 and jumped into the community through her job at the City of Olympia Parks Department and volunteer efforts with the Olympia School District. In addition to her many board positions over the years and another stint with the City of Olympia running a public safety program, she currently serves on the Olympia Downtown Association, the Olympia PBA Board, The Thurston County Chamber of Commerce, and the Olympia Art- space Alliance Board. Her passion continues to be creating economic vitality through the arts and running Vivala, her clothing shop in downtown Olympia.

Mizanur Rahman, Member-at-Large, Burger Booth

Mizanur has lived in Thurston County for the last 27 years. He has been involved with local Democratic politics over a decade and has been a four-term PCO for Lacey 18. He is currently serving his second term as a member at large on the Thurston County Democrats Executive Committee and is the Chair of the Burger Booth Committee.

He has a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and a pro- fessional degree in Culinary. He has been in food services for the last 30 years and has worked for the Military Club Systems at JBLM for the last 17 years as an executive chef.

He is a native of Bangladesh and has lived in America for the last 32 years. He is married with two sons, both of whom were born and raised in this area. The oldest son graduated from college and the youngest is in college.

Katrina Wynkoop Simmons, Secretary

Katrina and her family have lived in Thurston County more than 25 years. She has served as PCO, Treasurer and Secre- tary for Thurston County Democrats and has volunteered in many campaigns.

Retired from the Washington State Department of Health, she owns a small business and works part time with the Adverse Childhood Experiences Partner- ship to reduce child abuse and neglect in our community.

Christine Garst, Treasurer

Christine, a native of Binghamton, NY, received her BS in Education from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadel- phia, and MA in Education from George Washington University. She has worked for U.S. Congressman Tom Harkin, Pre- ss (London, England), the Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery, Management Assistance Program for Nonprofits (Min- neapolis) and currently The Nonprofit Center (Tacoma).

She met her husband of 38 years, Sam, campaigning for George W. Bush and four years later served on the Washington State Democrats for Kerry Steering Commit- tee. She serves as a PCO, is an enthusiastic Burger Booth volunteer, and was named TD Democrat of the Year for 2012. She is also the editor of The Thurston County Democrat.

Debby is a retired state employee who has been a resident of Thurston County since 1965. He and his wife have been married for 25 of the 32 years they have been together.

Roger was shocked into political activism by the 2000 stolen election of George W. Bush and four years later served on the Washington State Democrats for Kerry Steering Commit- tee. He serves as a PCO, is an enthusiastic Burger Booth volunteer, and was named TD Democrat of the Year for 2012. He is also the editor of The Thurston County Democrat.

Jeff is a member of the Lacey City Council, appointed in early 2011, and elected in November 2011. His day job is Appraisal Division Manager of the Thur- ston County Assessor’s Office. He has been in the Assessor’s Office since 1986, and enjoys serving the public with all of the joys and responsibilities that come with public service.

He is a member of Lacey Rotary, an ambassador for the Safelight Capital Campaign, and is involved in fundraising for St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital. He and Meren, married for 32+ years, have successfully raised two sons. They have two wonderful daughters-in-law and a 3 year old granddaughter who is a constant source of enjoyment who makes her grandparents feel more special than anything else possibly could.

Cynthia Pratt, State Committee Woman

Cynthia has been a resident of Thurston County since 1966 and a Lacey resident for 39 years. She and her husband have two children, Beth and Brian, and four grand- children. Cynthia is a lifetime member of TCD. She has been a Lacey PCO since 2004.

Some of her committees included Thur- ston County Democrats Rules committee, State and County Convention Rules Committee, Campaign Services Committee, as well as being the 22nd LD State Committee Woman, the last two terms of which she served on the State Resolutions Committee. She is also a Lacey City Council member who will be running for a second term this year, and is a tireless Burger Booth volunteer.

Cheryl has served in many capacities in Democratic politics, including PCO, County Chair, Member-at-Large and Secretary of Thurston County Democrats, and Cam- paign Treasurer.

Dennis Mansker, Vice Chair

Dennis is a Washington native who was whisked away at an early age to be raised in rural Oklahoma. He was fortunate to emerge unscathed from that experi- ence. He is a disabled Vietnam veteran and author of A Bad Attitude: A Novel from the Vietnam War. He is also a 1973 gradu- ate of Western Washington University in Bellingham, where he was editor of the student newspaper, The Western Front.

He was shocked into political activism by the 2000 stolen election of George W. Bush and four years later served on the Washington State Democrats for Kerry Steering Commit- tee. He serves as a PCO, is an enthusiastic Burger Booth volunteer, and was named TD Democrat of the Year for 2012. He is also the editor of The Thurston County Democrat.

As a semi-retired English and drama teacher, she fills in on various long term substitute jobs at Olympia and Capital high schools.

Debby is married to her college sweetheart, Bob Pattin, recently retired after 32 years as a longshoreman. They are the proud parents of Zack (26), a labor activist and casual longshoreman in Tacoma, and Rachel (23), who works in sustainable agriculture and plays old time fiddle, banjo and ukulele in Durham, NC.

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Precinct Committee Officers Are Important to Thurston County Democrats

By Doug Bell
1st Vice Chair

The local precinct is the base unit of organization for our election process. It is the basis of our grassroots political activities and is vital to successful political campaigns.

Precinct Committee Officers (PCOs) are elected every two years in Washington State, in the even-year primary elections. In 2012, we had over 100 people file and get elected to the PCO position within their precincts. We are now trying to recruit PCOs to appoint to unfilled positions.

In local elections, the PCO is a primary conduit to carry the messages for our Democratic candidates to the voters. Personal communication from someone the voter knows is one of the most effective campaigning methods. In the recent November election, our candidates were able to perform well up and down the ticket very effectively. Our grassroots efforts relied heavily upon the PCOs to help distribute our message and relay back to the campaigns what messages were well-received and what could be improved. Without such strong support and effort, it is likely our fortunes on election night would have been less favorable.

At state and national levels, Democratic Party candidates are consistently outspent by our opponents. The best way to counteract that advantage is with "feet on the ground", explaining our policy proposals and values. Those proposals and values are preferred by voters, and personal contact is an effective means to distribute our message to -- and connect with -- the voters.

The following responsibilities are suggested to all Precinct Committee Officers as basic to the performance of any PCO in his/her elected or appointed capacity.

To canvass or telephone poll your precinct in coordination with election strategy.

To coordinate with campaigns in educating voters and generating interest in the election on behalf of candidates and ballot measures.

To attend the Legislative District and County Central Committee meetings.

This is the minimum effort level for a PCO to function adequately. There are many other avenues of service to the Democratic Party (committees, etc.) in which PCO’s are welcome and encouraged to participate.

We have over 100 Precinct Committee Officers now, and we are trying to recruit more PCOs to appoint to more than 50 unfilled positions. There is an application form on our website (see the PCO pages at www.thurston-democrats.org). You may also contact our 1st Vice Chair, Doug Bell at info@thurstondemocrats.org or 360-754-1535.
Why Should I Join the TCD?

By Dennis Mansker
TCD Editor

If you enjoy reading the Thurston County Demo-
crat, it might be time for you to consider helping
your local party, your com-
munity – and yourself – by
becoming a full dues-paying
member.
If I join, what will that do for
the local Democratic Party?
Thurston County Demo-
crats’ main goal is to get
good Democratic candi-
dates elected to office, and
that takes money. We also
want to educate and orga-
nize in Thurston County to
help citizens become knowl-
edgable about important
local issues. That takes
money. Too.

We have many ongoing
expenses that have to be
met, from rental costs for
meeting space to advertis-
ing our fundraisers, from
stocking the Burger Booth
to printing the newsletter, from
insurance expenses for our
various activities to paying
our utility bills, from post-
age costs to office supplies.
Most of these expenses
happen “behind the scenes”
and people don’t immedi-
ately think of them, but they
are always there and always
waiting to be paid.

Okay, what’s in it for me?

Local political parties are
the basic grassroots level of
our democracy. You can’t
get any closer to the pulse
of the people, the needs of
the citizens and the drive
for “small-d democracy”.
Through our local party we
build campaigns, fight for
progressive causes and
collectively ensure that our
democratic values are para-
mount in the elected officials
who lead the city, the county,
the state and the nation.
Your membership in TCD
allows you to help decide
your party’s support on the
many issues and candidates
that regularly come before
our monthly meetings. Only
dues-paying members of
Thurston County Democrats
have a voice in those deci-
sions.
You will also get an unpar-
alleled opportunity to meet,
talk with, and become friends with a group of like-
minded yet diverse fellow progressives who are all
dedicated to making Thur-
ston County a better place
to live.

Will I have to go to meetings?

Only if you want to. Many
people prefer to be “silent
members”, who support the
party with their member-
ship dues but don’t have the
time – or the inclination – to
be more active. And that’s
okay. We understand that.

But isn’t it expensive?

Membership is just $25
for a full year. That’s less
than seven cents per day.
You probably spend more
on coffee drinks every month
than you’ll pay for a full
year’s membership in TCD.
This nominal membership
fee will help us safeguard
campaign funds raised
through the Burger Booth,
Champagne Brunch, Ken-
edy Dinner, etc., so that
those funds can be used
more for campaigns and
less to pay for the costs of
running the organization.
You can also think of it
as a kind of union member-
ship in a so-called “right
to work” state, organized
labor bargains for good
wages, hours and working
conditions for workers, but
non-union members get a
free ride on the backs of
union members and get the
rewards for themselves
without the work. Your paid
membership in TCD will help
us maintain a vital, dynamic
and active progressive voice
right here in Thurston
County.

Don’t wait. Join us today.
You can do it easily and pain-
lessly through our website,
www.thurstondemocrats.
org. Click on Membership
and then click on Annual
Membership at the start of
the third paragraph, where
you can pay with a major
credit card.

Who is John Galt? The Pernicious Influence of Ayn Rand

By Dennis Mansker

In 1957 a book was pub-
lished that was destined
to have an overwhelming
effect on the political be-
liefs of three generations. Atlas Shrugged by Ayn
Rand turned half of three
generations into radical lib-
ertarians, anti-government
conservatives, and today’s
Republican Party.

Who is John Galt? That’s
the annoyingly-repeated
question scattered through-
out the first two thirds of
Atlas Shrugged, and it is just
as annoyingly repeated on
the waving placards of the
Teabaggers at their rallies.
So then, who is John Galt?
It turns out that he is a one-
man larger-than-life beacon
of hope for the producing
class, the industrialists, the
captains of industry, i.e., the
“makers”, standing firmly
against the onslaught of col-
lectivism as promoted by
lazy slacker socialist para-
sites intent on sharing the
wealth, i.e., the “takers”.
Does that ring a bell? It’s
the spirit – and some of the
words – behind Mitt Rom-
ney’s now-infamous “47%”
speech at an expensive
fundraiser attended by the
“makers”, and surreptitiously
filmed by a “taker”. And Paul
Ryan was notorious for his
many “makers-and-takers”
speeches.

It’s a long book and it’s
hard to get through. It’s
chock full of ledean prose
and wooden dialogue from
two dimensional characters
plodding through unrealistic
situations, all of it larded
over with a stomach-churn-
ing mess of sophomoric
half-baked “philosophy” that
decrees collective action,
exalts the producing class
over the parasites, and cul-
mates in a “strike” by the
capitalist industrial class
which firmly reestablishes
its control over the masses.
She called her philoso-
phy Objectivism, which she
describes as “rational self-
interest”. As she explains in
the pages of Atlas Shrugged,
“My philosophy, in essence,
is the concept of man as a
heroic being, with his own
happiness as the moral
purpose of his life, with pro-
ductive achievement as his
noblest activity, and reason
as his only absolute.” That
doesn’t leave much room
for the great unwashed
masses, the “takers” she
decrees as virtual parasites
living off the wealth of the
“makers”.

This philosophy can have
a profound resonance with
those who already think of
themselves as The Elite. In
the cold hard facts of rea-
ality, however, it can be boiled
down to the deathless words
of Gordon Gecko in the
movie Wall Street: “Greed is
good.”

Ayn Rand herself was a
bundle of contradictions, an
anti-collectivist who decried
Social Security for its social-
ism, but ended up depending
on it herself in her old age.
A hero to the Religious Right
who was herself an athe-
ist. A Russian-born rabid
critic of the Soviet Union
who nevertheless exercised
a Stalinist control over her
own followers. A book
died in 1982 but her influence has never
waned. If anything, it’s got-
ten stronger. Ironically,
despite her paramount reli-
ance on rational thought,
the current followers of her
philosophy are anything but
rational. We see it all the
time in the Republicans, the
city of climate change deniers,
young-earth creationists
and historical revisionists.
In the words of a popu-
lar t-shirt slogan, “You can’t
argue with crazy”. Instead of
trying to reason with these
people, we need to concen-
trate on electing enough
Democrats to office, at all
levels, so that the Repub-
licans and their Ayn Rand
philosophy will be cast into
the dustbin of history.
Thurston County Democrats
Annual Champagne Brunch

You’re Invited!
Come join old and new friends
to celebrate our successes
and plan for the future!

FEATURING!
Congressman Denny Heck, keynote
Leg Updates: Senator Karen Fraser,
Representatives Sam Hunt and Chris Reykdal
Local Candidate Announcements!
Elected Officials Serving!

Saturday, February 9th
9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

River’s Edge
Restaurant, 4611 Tumwater Valley Dr.

$25.00 Person Prepaid
$30.00 At Event

THURSTON COUNTY
DEMOCRATS
Register and pay online at: www.thurstondemocrats.org/events
Mail check: TCD, PO Box 164, Olympia WA 98507-0164

TCD MEMBERSHIP CAN BE PAID WITH BRUNCH TICKETS!
The Republicans and a New Election “Reform” Scheme

As we have seen in the last two presidential elections, the Republican Party is having some difficulty getting a sufficient number of Electoral College votes to put their candidate into office.

In 2008 Barack Obama handily defeated John McCain by an electoral vote of 365 to 173, by all accounts a landslide. In 2012 it was a little closer, with Barack Obama defeating Mitt Romney by a vote of 332 to 206. Maybe not such a landslide, but close enough.

It was still a resounding victory for the Democratic candidate, no matter how you look at it. So what do you do as a political party if you just can’t seem to win elections?

Same thing a five-year-old does when he can’t win a game: Change the rules.

The way it is now, each state (with a couple of exceptions) casts all of its electoral votes for the candidate who wins the popular vote in the state.

In the aftermath of their defeat in last November’s election, the Republicans have come up with a new strategy to win electors. They call it “Redmapping”, and it consists of dividing up the electoral college votes by congressional district.

Okay, it seems to make a weird kind of sense in that it initially appears, on the surface anyway, to be more small-d-democratic. But when you peel back the bright and shiny packaging and see what’s inside, it gets ugly pretty fast.

In a lot of states the Republicans have been very, very good at gerrymandering safe districts for their incumbents and candidates. Unfortunately, most states do not have the kind of bipartisan commission for redistricting that Washington has. Instead they operate more or less on the old Spoils System – to the winners belong the spoils.

This explains why there is still a 66-member Republican majority in the House of Representatives, in what should have been a landslide year for Democrats all across the board.

It’s also not hard to imagine a situation wherein one candidate could get an overwhelming majority of the popular vote but still fails in the Electoral College. (Think urban vs. rural and you’re almost there.)

If this plan had been in effect in 2012, you’d be seeing a President Romney boning up for his State of the Union speech. The final result would have been 262 for Obama and 273(!) for Romney.

And in Washington State? In 2012 of course all 12 of our electoral votes went to Barack Obama, but had the Republican plan been in effect last year, Romney would have gotten two of those electors. From the 4th and 5th Districts. Which likely comes as no surprise to you.

Representatives are a hard sell to politicians who can see a few years down the road, knowing that the demographics are against them, when their states and their districts become more Democratic and less Republican, and there is the possibility that it can come back and bite them. But Republicans, by and large, seem to be incapable of seeing the Big Picture.

Admittedly, it can be kind of a hard sell to politicians who can see a few years down the road, knowing that the demographics are against them, when their states and their districts become more Democratic and less Republican, and there is the possibility that it can come back and bite them. But Republicans, by and large, seem to be incapable of seeing the Big Picture.

Campaign Kick Off!

Cheryl Selby
FOR CITY COUNCIL

Working Together to Stand Up for the Issues That Matter

Celebrate with Cheryl, family and friends as she embarks on her race for Olympia City Council! The evening will showcase the local talents of:
- Mijas Catering
- The S.O.G.O. MOJO Quartet
- Wine Bar!
- Danielle Westbrooke and Friends
- Plus a select Visual Arts Auction

CAMPAIGN KICK OFF PARTY
Wednesday, February 27 - 5:00-7:00 p.m.
The Steam Plant, 113 Thurston Ave NE, Olympia WA 98501

Visit my Web site for Campaign Details
WWW.ELECTCHERYLSELBY.COM

Paid for by the Committee Cheryl Selby, 100 State St. NE, #211, Olympia, WA 98501

7 January 2013 THE DEMOCRAT
Picture, so watch for this to gain momentum as we count down to 2016.

Our job here in Washington is to keep an eye on our own legislature, and if they try to introduce a bill that would divide up our electoral votes, let our Democratic legislators know that we oppose it and that we are behind them 100% when they fight it.

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### Membership Form

(The TCD respects your Privacy Rights for any personal data received.)

Name: ____________________________ Precinct: ____________________________

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Best time to call: ____________________________

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Membership dues:     

☐ 1 year $25          ☐  Life time $500

Amount enclosed:  

$ __________ Additional Donation to TCD:  $ __________

Total Amount Due:  

$ __________

Credit card payments are accepted at our website: www.thurstondemocrats.org/membership

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THURSTON COUNTY DEMOCRATS