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The Jackson County DEMOCRAT

Newsletter of the Jackson Co. Democratic Central Committee

May 2005



WE'RE ON YOUR SIDE!

THE ULTIMATE RIVERSIDE CHAT

Over cups of tea and coffee, Nan Trout talked to the Laytons about their move away from the Rogue River.

As you read this Bill and Gloria Layton are hauling their household goods over the Rockies and across the Dakota plains to Minneapolis, Minnesota, home of some very special youngsters.

Meanwhile, back in the Valley we can be glad the Laytons chose to spend more than a decade on the banks of Rogue River enjoying 'country life' and attending to the rebirth of the Democratic Party of Jackson County.

He was the spark plug that focused everyone's energies and fostered our explosive growth. He built our email network and gave the JCDCC a more public face, reaching out to other progressive groups that are doing good work in Jackson County. He went to more meetings than anyone who isn't a public official! And he helped dissipate the notion that everything Democratic happens in Multnomah County so that we now have a stronger voice wherever state Democrats gather.

Now a new chapter is opening for them both in Garrison Keillor country, where they'll be living a few minutes drive from their 'above average' grandchildren. Their son Chuck has three children between 4 and 8, and their daughter's two teen age girls joined their folks and came out on their spring break to help Grandma and Grandpa pack up. The Layton's three bedroom apartment high in the Edina Towers is just a few minutes from downtown. It's about the size of their home on the Rogue, with plenty of room for visits from son Greg,



who will remain on the property in Oregon. On snowy days the in-house pool is heated, the exercise room is warm and the Southdale Mall is just a couple of blocks away. Do you suppose there are seniors trekking that mall in the early hours?

Gloria and Bill spent the '50s in Minneapolis and they have kept in touch with old friends who will welcome them back. They plan to live like urbanites and use the excellent public transit to get to the Guthrie Theater, the Minneapolis Symphony and the Walker Art Center. (The mere thought of all that pleasure made me green with envy!)

And does it surprise anyone that Bill plans to be spending time at Minnesota's Democratic Party Headquarters in midtown Minneapolis?

When I asked them how things had changed since they were a young active couple with a growing family, Bill remarked that he thought Democrats had lost their way and gotten too defensive regarding the future of the Democratic Party. Gloria

said, "I don't care if the Democrats look back, they are looking back on a damn good set of values!"

On the other hand, they are uneasy about falling into the Republican trap of equating morality with narrow sectarian attitudes and distorted notions of patriotism.

So, Bill's advice is, "Be assertive. Let folks know we care about their troubles, and have always been the party that finds ways to help them out. And before too long, we had better tell them what we plan to do about the mess we are in." Thanks, Bill, we won't let you down.



Did you notice the latest Republican 'victory'? A ridiculous budget passed by 3 votes in the House and 4 votes in the Senate ... moderate Rs on our side ... some MANDATE!

Keep agitating, emails are free and phone calls are cheap.

The Ad Hoc

Technical Committee *Is up to Speed!*

The JCDCC's new Technical Committee is hard at work booting the party into the latest 21st century technology. It has brought the new office computer systems on line, arranged for high-speed DSL service, and is arranging improved ISP and web site hosting services through Earthlink.

Ellen Champagne is our committee chairperson; a 21-year veteran of the software industry who holds a degree in Mathematics and Computer Science from the University of Arizona. A Boston native and former resident of California and Texas as well as Arizona, she has been a part-time Rogue Valley resident for six years and a full-time resident for two. Ellen escapes from the strictures of computerdom by writing fiction; several of her stories have been published online and in print.

The next big item on her committee's agenda is a complete overhaul of the county's web site. The present site will be abandoned, but a completely new, made-from-scratch site will include some essential content from the old site. Joining the committee in this effort are the PR Committee under **Bruce Borgerson** (content and design consultation) and Recording Secretary **Linda Colloran** (site design and logistics consultation). The goal is to have the new site online before the July DPO meeting in Medford.

In addition to spearheading the web site project, the committee is producing reports from Jackson County voter data and the DPO Astro database, and assisting with volunteer database technical issues. Working with Ellen on the committee are **Nick Tennant, Sean Curry, Cedric Buckingham** and **Tom Mathieson**. ▲

Call for Web Site Photos

The ad hoc web site committee is looking for a few **GREAT** photo images for the revamped site. These will be part of the permanent format and will help set the tone for the new site. We need the following:

>< Shots of recognizable Jackson County scenes other than Ashland. (We have plenty of those.) Examples would be Mt. McLaughlin, Rogue River, pear orchards, Jacksonville, etc.

>< Recognizable events, such as Pear Blossom Parade.

>< **OUTSTANDING** shots of common people, children, elderly, Hispanic, etc. Must be immediately engaging and very high quality, and with permission from 'model' to use it. (These need not be of Jackson County residents.)

NOTE: Send no more than three of your best shots. Since this is for the web only, JPG files need not be large: anything over 500 KB is way too big and should be reduced. **PLEASE** send only if you are a pro, or you honestly know these are great shots.

E-mail to: brewsbee@yahoo.com.

(The new site will feature an open photo gallery, which will be used for posting a wide variety of different photos of party activities and related events. But that's not what we want at this point.)



COMMITTEES

That low thrumming you hear is not the traffic on I-5 but the sound of Democrats working in committee to create outreach opportunities ahead.

Wellness Fair Booth Project:

The **Logistics Comm.** will construct, staff, & dismantle the booth. The **Content & Design Comm.** will create activities & materials to entice visitors and recruits to the booth and to Democratic activism. The **Future Projects Comm.** is planning ahead, creating volunteer opportunities for new and old recruits.

Each committee needs volunteers!

Contact: **Christine Haynie (773-1680) Logistics**
Carol Wilder (488-5475) Content & Design
Sharon Marler (488-0038) Future Projects

The **Bylaws Committee** is meeting every week in May to prepare a full revision for the JCDCC in June. **Gail Beason** is Chair.

The **Internal Audit Committee** - made up of our JCDCC officers - is reviewing the books and preparing an action plan for filling the resignation of Helen Hooper as Treasurer. Helen resigned just before the April meeting due to ongoing illness. Helen has worked hard at her job and helped mightily with our fundraising events during the last two years, and we are all grateful for her commitment. Get well soon, Helen.

Meetings are also being planned to train folks to talk comfortably within their precincts about how to frame what Democrats believe. This might seem hard to countenance, except that the Precinct Organization folks have heard some unease about all this "touchy-feely" talk. The emails will fly as soon as dates are set. ▲

STATE PARTY MEETING

Kurt Staicoff, our newly elected delegate to the 2nd Congressional District, reports on the adventures of eight JCDCC delegates to the combined Oregon Democratic Party / 2nd Congressional District Quarterly Meeting:

The Democratic Party of Oregon held it's quarterly meeting in Pendleton at The Wildhorse Casino outside of town, and it was quite a Political Roundup & Rendezvous! Threading the highways through Bend and along open stretches of eastern Oregon to Pendleton opened up for many of us an understanding of the problems in those Republican-dominated counties with whom we share the 2nd Congressional District.

It is revealing to attend the DPO meetings because there is so much going on around the state that we would not be aware of otherwise. Your delegates fanned out to attend as many committee meetings as possible. Finance, Organization, Public Relations, Campaign - these meetings and more were held simultaneously. One of the more energetic was the 2nd CD Caucus where counties shared their experiences. Another significant event was the forming of "The Rural Caucus" specifically designed to help those in the urban areas of Oregon (where most of the DPO lives) to understand and learn the cultural differences that exist between rural Oregon and the metropolitan areas.

Chuck Kiel, spent part of Sunday morning with all the other county chairs. He has come home quite enthused about starting a Jackson County Democratic Business consortium. Ask him about it.

Dan Davis was efficiently swift in organizing a veterans caucus. "The veterans of Oregon are a mighty force for progressive and political change. Many rose to the challenge in the last election, and more and more increasingly look on with dismay at what is going on in our country," he noted.

Tana Domecq-Davis talked with DPO Vice-chair Meredith Wood Smith about our local efforts to teach and promote the Lakoff linguistic theories, and for those of you at last week's JCCC meeting, you may have met Meredith Wood Smith, as she was there taking copious notes while the Lakoff inspired portion of our meeting was (*continues on page 4*)

JCDCC
MAY MEETING
THURSDAY, MAY 26, 2005
OEA OFFICES
2495 S. PACIFIC HWY
6:30 - 8:30 pm
MOVING
RIGHT
ALONG!

By the end of May it will be time to report on our plans for these volunteer projects:

Democratic Booth @ the Wellness Fair over June 18th-19th

Ashland & Central Point 4th of July Parades

Plans for the DPO quarterly mtg on July 16th-17th

Summer Jackson Co. Fair Booth

Our candidates, both successful and not-so-lucky, will give us a glimpse of what it's like to run for office; what kinds of support the party should and could offer, and what other strategies worked well for them.

We are looking for candidates for 2006!

(from page 3) going on.

One great piece of news is that Jason Leon, a DPO stalwart and former chair of the state Legislative & Finance Committee has just been hired as the Deputy Political Director to Howard Dean at the DNC. John McColgan welcomes this news, "We now have a valuable personal contact at the DNC," he says, "Jason understands the uphill battle that progressive candidates have in a conservative region." John also reports that the DPO officers heard a good deal of feedback that weekend from grassroots folks who were not particularly satisfied with the performance of the DPO or the DNC during the last election cycle. Yet, he notes, "There is tremendous optimism concerning the direction that Howard Dean proposes to take our party."

This optimism was expressed by DNC Delegate Jenny Greenleaf, who exhorted everyone on Sunday to "Keep fighting, keep pushing, and keep having fun while doing it." This was greeted with vigorous applause! Jackson County delegates could be seen everywhere, networking, taking notes, offering Southern Oregon insights, and spending long hours at the high stakes poker tables. (Ok,ok - I'm just kidding.)

Speaking of stakes, while much of the fund-raising activities associated with party building originate in the more populous cities, the Democratic Party of Oregon has several programs to raise money statewide. One project successfully tried in a number of areas last month were the Social Security House Parties. Modeled on the various candidate house parties initiated in the last election, in this instance the counties shared in a percentage of the funds. It was successful enough that the DPO will use it again for future issue-based house parties and it is a partnership we can pursue for our own funding. TAKE NOTE!

The conference ended Sunday afternoon, and we all headed home, via the Columbia Gorge or via the John Day Fossil Beds. I think most of us drove straight thru, getting home at 1 or 2 am. Jackson County's voice was heard, and Jackson County listened. It was a long way there and back again, but it was certainly worth it. ▲

TOWARD A TEN WORD POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Embedded in the Preamble to our founding charter are the values of our communal life. It has historically been considered a liberal document, and, according to George Lakoff, "the job of unifying progressives is really the job of bringing our country together around its finest traditional values." That was the message delivered by three women who spoke to the April meeting of the county central committee.

Frieda Friendentia, Pamela Chaddock, and Genevieve Windsor are volunteer field-workers using materials from the Rockridge Institute to develop programs for articulating what it is that Democrats care most about, and crafting the wording that gives those ideals power. The three have been working together for some time to 'channel their passion for *life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness*', and they invited us to look at the values we have been expressing in small

WE THE PEOPLE of the United States,
in order to *form* a more perfect UNION,
establish JUSTICE
insure DOMESTIC TRANQUILITY
provide for the COMMON DEFENSE
promote the GENERAL WELFARE
secure the BLESSINGS of LIBERTY to
ourselves & our posterity,
do ordain and establish this Constitution
FOR the UNITED States of America.

precinct gatherings and JCDCC meetings. Each of us can take on the job of "re-framing" and make it a habit; here's how. When you hear a term or phrase in the media or elsewhere which frustrates or angers you, such as, "Strong Defense", ask yourself what value is behind your emotion. Perhaps it is "responsibility" as in the need to responsibly allocate our resources to ensure a well-educated, healthy citizenry and to earn a true leadership position in the international arena which will gain us allies. Then frame a phrase to respond, such as, "Strong America" and be ready to explain what that means to you.

For much of the program folks did just that, looking for our own language to what Lakoff has dubbed a *ten word political philosophy*; that is, finding alternatives to the conservative mantra of Strong Defense, Free Markets, Lower Taxes, Smaller Government and Family Values. Naturally, we came up with dozens of phrases, not just ten! None of these will be lost, because we will

add our two-word phrases to all the notes we have been and will continue to collect as we meet and talk to each other. Frank Heiber and Nan Trout are the archivists who are keeping all our raw data for the Platform Committee to review. Keep planning small precinct or friends-and-neighbors meetings, and send any the notes you compile to nantrout@mind.net. There are at least two meetings set for May that we've heard of. For those of you who want to be part of such a gathering, contact your Precinct Captain and set one up!

And here is another use we will make of these words; we'll find a way to use them to solicit responses from visitors to our booths at both the Wellness Fair and the County Fair, and we'll keep working on methods to generate values rich phrases at the DPO quarterly meeting in Medford. Before long what we have generated here in the Rogue Valley could be duplicated in other portions of the state. And we are not alone! Other progressive groups are doing much the same. Keep your eyes and ears attuned to these activities and let everyone know we are all working toward the same goal - a return to the blessings of liberty promised in the Constitution. ▲

THE FRAMERS, RELIGION, & the SEPARATION of STATE & CHURCH

by Gerry Cavanaugh

By the time of the American Revolution (1776-1783) and then the Constitutional Convention (1787), those Americans who were educated in history and political theory had learned many lessons concerning the relationship of religion to the state. The very bloody religious wars between Catholic and Protestant states of the 16th and 17th centuries (1517-1648) were followed by religious persecution and oppression within states in the following century and one-half. By the end of the 17th century and increasingly into the 18th century, the arguments in favor of religious toleration grew stronger and louder, especially in Protestant states and particularly in England, whence most American colonists came. The most famous exponent of toleration, if only for Protestants, was John Locke.

The Framers accepted Locke's view of civil society as derived, not from god, but from the uncoerced coming together of free, rational individuals. They also accepted his view that, "A church is a voluntary society of men, joining themselves together of their own accord for the public worship of God...a man is and ought to be as free to leave a church as he was to enter it." Almost all were deists and were opposed to any state-church establishment - and to those who upheld the claims of revealed religion or, as David Hume enjoyed putting it, "the religious hypothesis." They were not ashamed of their opinions and of the reasons why they did not believe in religious practices in political settings that we tolerate today, as the recent conflicts over the Ten Commandments and the Schiavo case both demonstrate.

"No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United states." *United States Constitution, Article Six; Section 10*

When Americans began to talk about religious freedom in its modern sense, they were reacting not to the tyranny of Old England but to restrictive practices they had experienced at their own hands. Mark Douglas McGarvie, in his recent book, *One nation Under Law: America's Early National Struggles to Separate Church and State*, argues that, in understanding what the Framers intended in regard to religion, we must begin, not with the First Amendment but rather with Article 1, section 10, of the Constitution itself. The clause, in effect, separates state and church by protecting private arrangements from government interference. McGarvie explains that the Framers and most Americans "reconceived of

churches as private, voluntary associations, legally recognized as private, not public corporations." This legal change meant not only eliminating public support for religion but also stripping the churches of their traditional role as providers of public services. Within a generation after the adoption of the Constitution, every church had been disestablished and all churches were organized as private corporations under state laws.

By the time of the Constitutional Convention, James Madison had secured the passage of Thomas Jefferson's "Act for Establishing Religious Freedom" in Virginia, which effectively precluded the establishment, any establishment, of any religion. To Madison, religion simply must not be "an engine of civil policy", and he assumed that a general tax assessment was in fact an establishment of religion. The preface to Madison's (and Jefferson's) Statute for Religious Freedom emphatically declares "that to compel anyone to support religious opinions he did not share was tyrannical" and "that even the forcing him to support this or that teacher of his own religious persuasion, is depriving him of the comfortable 'liberty' of giving his money as he pleased." The enabling provisions of the Statute stated "that no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever..." Leonard W. Levy writes: "The significance of the statute is not just that it broadened freedom of worship opinion in matters of religion, but that it separated church and state in the context of protecting religious liberty."

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." *The First Amendment of the Bill of Rights*

Madison's and Jefferson's views on religion encapsulated the general consensus of the Convention and of the debates prior to its adoption as well as the debates concerning the Bill of Rights. Certainly, their words informed the consensus on the First Amendment of that Bill of Rights which very quickly followed the adoption of the Constitution. Madison's main concern was not with how to maintain the free practice of religion, but rather with, in his words, "religion's ability to become a motive to persecution and oppression." Establishments produced bigotry and persecution, defiled religion, corrupted government and ended in spiritual and political tyranny.

(continues on page 6)

(from page 5) The Constitution thus rejected any religious tests, rejected the notion of a 'Christian nation', and rejected any invidious distinctions between and among the various religions and philosophies of their day. And they did this in an age and place when eleven of the thirteen states actually had religious tests for public offices in the constitutions!

Our brilliant historian president, George W. Bush, may invoke the "Christian Fathers of our Country" but those Fathers would respond to such a claim with withering scorn...the Founders were after all 'Revolutionaries'. Their passion - especially regarding secularism - glows through their documents and personal correspondence."

Benjamin Franklin was as close to being an atheist as the limited science of the day allowed him to be. He rejected churches, rituals, and all 'supernatural superstitions'. George Washington was a Deist and Freethinker and never once mentioned the name of Jesus Christ in any of his thousands of letters; he pointedly referred to divinity as 'It'. The rare times he attended church, he always deliberately left before communion, demonstrating his disbelief in Christianity's central ceremony. John Adams was a Unitarian, inspired by the Enlightenment, and fiercely opposed to supernaturalism and damnation.

When, in 1943, the Jefferson Memorial was completed, it was adorned with some of Jefferson's

words, including the famous line: "I have sworn on the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man." It being wartime and it being nice to have god on our side, it was not made clear that what Jefferson was opposing in those words was the tyranny of priests and ministers.

If we today think about what the Framers carefully put into the Constitution and what they purposefully left out -namely any reference to any god or gods or to religious tests and duties - it seems impossible to avoid the conclusion that they were trying to insure that religion would never become "an engine of public law and policy", and that whatever free, religiously-inclined individuals might want, a religious motive or a religious/theocratic argument was not to be given any weight in determining the business of a secular state.

Of course, this position has never been accepted by religiously motivated people or churches in general. Consequently, despite the legal disestablishment of churches, the religious minded have always tried politically to nibble way at the 'wall of separation' and in their vainglory have continually sought to batter down, or at least quietly insinuate themselves through, around, over or under, that wall.

But wall there is and it was deliberately set up by the Framers. ▲

HEALTH CARE IN THE UNITED STATES

Bill Lucas, M.D., shares a speech he gave to the Mountain Meadows Democratic Club in April. He will argue, in three installments, that in the long run access for all of us to good health care is good for the economy as

In a socially just society the provision of good basic health care to all its citizens should be a moral imperative. In the 1960's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. expressed this philosophy in his usual succinct manner when he said "...of all the forms of injustice inequality of access to health care is the most inhumane and the most shocking." Unfortunately the moral argument for meaningful health care reform in this country has never held much weight in the halls of congress.

In 1883 Count Otto von Bismarck, then chancellor and "father" of a unified German Republic, introduced mandatory universal health care. One hundred and twenty-two years later every one of the 24 richest industrial nations in the world, with one exception, the United States, guarantee all their citizens good basic health care.

Why are we so reluctant to embrace universal health care when it is expected and guaranteed in so many countries that lack our economic strength? Alexis de Toc-

queville in his classic 1832 work, Democracy in America, discussed our every man for himself, frontiersman ethic – that every man should provide for his own needs and those of his family. Well, that may be a good core philosophy so long as health care doesn't become so expensive, that it is no longer affordable for about 3 out of 10 Americans, and has become a major reason for personal bankruptcies (up 2200% since 1980). Perhaps ideologically and politically we have less sense of community and social cohesion than exists in Europe, Canada, and Japan.

There have been numerous attempts in the United States, dating back to 1918, to introduce universal health care. Presidents Wilson, Roosevelt, Truman, Johnson, Nixon, and Clinton all failed. It was the strenuous opposition of organized medicine that defeated the attempts of the first three. In the case of President Johnson, the public relations spokesman for the American Medical Association was a Hollywood actor named Ronald Reagan. He ended his speeches attacking the pending (*continues on page 7*)

(from page 6) Medicare legislation by saying “...if we allow this legislation to pass, in our sunset years we will be telling our children and grandchildren what it was like in this country when men were free.”

Fortunately for those who now enjoy the benefits of Medicare, especially those who live under strained financial circumstances, Johnson had a majority in congress, and he offered the medical profession the carrot of Medicare Part B which paid doctors for their services. For almost two decades payment was more or less “open ended”, though very uneven on a state by state basis. Doctors could charge their “usual and customary” fees, with annual increases as they saw fit. So for a time Medicare proved to be “the goose that laid the golden egg.” Doctors’ incomes climbed substantially.

Nixon’s proposal had the acronym CHIPS (Comprehensive Health Insurance Program), and might have had a good chance of passing if Watergate had not intervened. The Clinton plan was “dead on arrival” because of the secrecy in which it was crafted, cutting out congress and organized medicine from the deliberations; and because of the op-

position of those two lobbying giants, the for-profit health insurance and pharmaceutical industries. Many of you probably remember the Harry and Louise ads. In the last analysis it was not a very good bill for at least two reasons - cost controls were weak and several new levels of bureaucracy were created.

Neither President Bush’s or Senator Kerry’s reform proposals during the recent election cycle came close to achieving meaningful reform. Kerry’s plan reduced the number of uninsured from 45 to 28 million, but it was also too costly and left the for-profit insurance industry in control.

The United State spends substantially more on health care than any other country. Currently we spend \$6200 per capita per year. This amounts to \$1.8 trillion a year, or 15.4% of our annual Gross Domestic Product. No

other country spends more that 10% of its GDP on health care, and most spend in the 5% to 9% range, while still managing to provide universal care. The per capita spending elsewhere averages around 50% of ours. In addition we are the only country that lacks effective controls on the cost of services, prescription drugs, and insurance premiums.

Because the cost of health care is rising at an annual rate of 10 to 15 %, more and more businesses are shifting an ever larger share of the cost to their employees, and even renegeing on retiree health care benefits altogether. The federal General Accounting Office estimates that by 2014, at the present rate of increase, health care costs will take up 19% of the GDP – an unsustainable amount.

The cost of Medicare is projected to rise 28% from the present level of \$332 billion, to \$425 billion in 2006. This is largely due to the cost of the so-called “Medicare Drug Benefit Bill” (actually the Medicare Reform Act), which has risen rapidly from the administration’s \$396 billion estimate made when the bill passed the House of Representatives after much arm twisting of reluctant supporters, to the present estimate of over \$700 billion. There

are almost no controls on the cost of drugs, which is bizarre when you consider that the Veterans’ Administration and the Department of Defense routinely negotiate drug costs. And of course, importation of drugs from Canada is prohibited.

As of 2004 the Medicare trust fund began paying out more that it was taking in and is projected to be depleted by 2019. Even so, the New York Times reported on March 23, 2005, that at the 11th hour a rider was slipped into the budget bill (now in the Senate) to repeal an income tax on Social Security benefits that applies to the wealthiest 20% of beneficiaries and which is dedicated to the Medicare hospital trust fund. By repealing this tax the date of demise for the fund will move forward to 2015. Next month we will discuss some of the reasons for rising health care costs, and what we get for the money spent on health care. ▲



DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS
328 South Central Ave. Medford 858-1050
Hours: 11am –3pm, Tuesday—Saturday

Jackson County Democratic Central Committee

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Gail Beason, *Vice-chair* 512-0699

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**MAY JCDCC
MEETING**

**Thursday, May 26, 2005
6:30 - 8:30pm @ OEA Offices
2495 S. Pacific Hwy
Medford**

**MOVING RIGHT
ALONG!**

Volunteer for upcoming events; we need your willing hands and organizing skills. So come along, take up a task... and talk with our successful and not-so-lucky candidates about how to run for office, what kinds of support the party could and should offer.

WE'RE ON YOUR SIDE!



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Jackson County Democrats

May 2005

Democrat

The Jackson County