



METROPOLITAN DEMOCRATIC CLUB of SEATTLE

NEWSLETTER April 2010

The Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle promotes good government through educational programming, social discourse, and support for progressive public policy, candidates and campaigns.

Conlin on transportation

Seattle gets four months to work on SR520 west side interchange; no special tax for seawall

The biggest problem with the replacement of SR520 is the west side interchange, Seattle City Council President Richard Conlin told the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle at its regular March 10 meeting. Therefore construction will begin on the east side to give Seattle four more months to work on it.

SR520 is the key east-west connector with 110,000 users per day, Mr Conlin noted, and the design of the its replacement is the decision of the Washington State Department of Transportation. The preferred design option, he said, is "A+," which calls for four lanes plus two for transit and high occupancy vehicles, and includes the capability of adding rail transit. It also contemplates a second bascule bridge adjacent to the existing Montlake Bridge.

Most of the city council is unhappy with the "A+" option Mr Conlin emphasized, because they say it doesn't work for the neighborhood. The city has hired a consultant to assist with the design of the west side configuration. He added that Mayor Michael McGinn wants to see rapid transit or dedicated bus lanes as part of the design.

The SR99 tunnel, another WSDOT project, is going forward, Mr Conlin announced, although with respect to the seawall, funding will have to come from the city. The mayor's



Seattle City Council President Richard Conlin updates MDC on transportation issues.

Bagshaw, O'Brien describe first three months in office

New Seattle City Councilmembers Sally Bagshaw and Mike O'Brien agreed that the council "gets along very well" as they described their first three months in office to the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle at its regular March 24 meeting. They both indicated that they like their jobs very much, although Mr O'Brien admitted that he hasn't quite figured everything out yet.

proposal for a special tax will not be on the ballot in May, he said.

Asked about the relationship between the council and the mayor, Mr Conlin replied that the council is still working through a "shake-down period" but is pleased that Mr McGinn is much more open and that councilmembers have more access to city departments.

Bender and Pelz to speak at Spring Forum, April 14

Rick Bender, president of the Washington State Labor Council, and Dwight Pelz, chair of the Washington State Democrats are special guests for the Spring Forum of the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle. They will talk about the strain in the relationship between Labor and the Democrats and what can be done about it.

The forum is scheduled to take the place of MDC's usual meeting, April 14, noon – 1:30 PM, and will be held at the Labor Temple, 2800 First Ave, Hall 1.

Ms Bagshaw has been appointed chair of the Parks and Seattle Center Committee and Waterfront Planning. She said she hopes to expand bike paths and other connections between parks. She also serves on the Education and Built Environment and Public Safety Committees.

Mr O'Brien chairs the Seattle Public Utilities and Neighborhoods

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Seattle City Councilmember Sally Bagshaw says she wants more connections between Seattle parks.



METROPOLITAN
DEMOCRATIC CLUB
of SEATTLE - Board



MDC meeting minutes

Mar 10, 2010

Officers

President Justin Simmons
VP Jack Whisner
Treasurer Anne Johnson
Secretary, Newsletter Editor
Eleanor Munro
Immediate Past President
Sen Pete Francis

Members

Jean Arnott
Joan Burton
Nelson Dahl
Pat Emerson
Carole Glickfeld
Kiku Hayashi
Lem Howell
Sen Jeanne Kohl-Welles
Roger Leed
Sen Eugene Lux
Mark Marshall
Dr Pat McCoy
Allan Munro
Bailey Nieder
Al Rasmussen
Dr David Rudo
Hon Cleve Stockmeyer
Joan Thomas
Janet Thompson
Harriet Wasserman
Michael Weisman

Lifetime honored members

Pat Emerson
Hon Nick Licata
Gov Mike Lowry

MDC meets on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. The MDC newsletter is published prior to the first meeting. Please send notices of upcoming events, letters, articles, and book reviews to Eleanor Munro at walkerel@msn.com no later than the Friday after the last meeting of the month. All contributions are subject to editing.

The meeting was chaired by President Justin Simmons. As usual the meeting started with introductions, allowing special guests running for office to speak for a few minutes. These included: Marcee Stone, who is running for Washington state representative in the 34th LD, and Willie Gregory, who is a candidate for Seattle Municipal Court judge.

Business

Next meetings Seattle City Councilmembers Sally Bagshaw and Mike O'Brien will speak at our March 24 meeting. At our Spring Forum April 14 we will hear from Rick Bender, president of the Washington State Labor Council, and Dwight Pelz, chair of the Washington State Democrats. This meeting will take place at the Labor Temple. See page 1 and page 6 for more information.

Happy hour Several members are working on arranging for our first happy hour. Information about the venue and date should be available soon.

Tad Lutz Tad Lutz has resigned from the board as he has a new job and is moving to Mukilteo. He will therefore relinquish his role as chair of the bylaws committee. He says he will retain his membership and attend MDC functions as much as possible.

Website upgrade Mr Simmons explained that there was some confusion about the new MDC Facebook page and upgrades to the MDC website. There is no cost associated with Facebook, he explained, and we have accumulated more than 500 friends, some of whom have joined MDC. The proposed new website will allow more applications than our current website, such as the ability for new members to join online and the ability to view videos of our programs and events online. A motion to approve expenditure for a new website was approved. The initial cost is \$219 and the annual fee is \$89.

Resolution to recognize Vietnamese-American Heritage and Freedom Flag Linh Thai asked MDC's support for a resolution that would recognize the above-mentioned flag as the cultural symbol of the Vietnamese

Lihn Thai asks MDC to approve a resolution to recognize the Vietnamese-American Heritage and Freedom Flag.



community in Seattle and show support for the display of this flag at community events and at appropriate locations in Seattle. The complete text of the resolution appears on the MDC website. MDC will vote on this resolution April 28.

Program

Seattle City Councilmember Richard Conlin spoke about the SR 520 bridge replacement options and other transportation issues. See page 1.

March 24, 2010

The meeting was chaired by President Justin Simmons

Business

Happy Birthday Gov Mr Simmons suggested – and the members agreed – that MDC send a birthday card to Governor Christine Gregoire.

Weisman's house destroyed by fire Mr Simmons informed the group that Board Member Michael Weisman's house in Edmonds had burned to the ground.

President's report 1) Mr Simmons reported that an MDC Happy Hour has been scheduled for March 31. It will be hosted by Fran Abbott at Harbor Steps. Invitations with details will be sent immediately. 2) He also reported that our Spring Forum will feature Rick Bender, president of the Washington State Labor Council, and Dwight Pelz, chair of the Washington State Democrats, and will take place at the regular meeting time April 14 at the Labor Temple. See page 1 and page 6 for details.

Secretary's report 1) Eleanor Munro reported that she had compiled



Seattle City Councilmember Mike O'Brien shares with MDC some of his goals for Seattle.

- **Bagshaw** *continued from p1* -

Committee, serves as vice chair of the Regional and Sustainable Development Committee and serves on the Finance and Budget Committee. In addition to his committee work he intends to work towards a carbon neutral Seattle, empowering communities to get involved in government, and racial and social justice.

Asked if Councilmember Tim Burgess's proposed panhandling law would interfere with civil liberties, Ms Bagshaw, who admitted she supports the legislation, said it misses the big picture because there is funding to put more cops downtown, to deal with mental health problems and fund other services. Mr O'Brien replied that he did not think the legislation will be an effective way to address the problem, but said it does indicate that the council is concerned about the objectionable behavior. The emphasis, he said, should be on funding.

The two councilmembers also addressed questions about SR520, the selection of the new chief of police, neighborhood issues and underserved communities.



Executive committee formalizes process of electing board members

The executive committee has decided to formalize the process by which board members are elected for two-year staggered terms as required by the MDC bylaws. Therefore it is requesting that those who wish to serve on the MDC board for the 2010 – 2012 term submit their names to Eleanor Munro by April 28. These will appear on a ballot to be included in the May newsletter. The mailed ballots will be due shortly before the annual meeting, when the results will be announced. Members can also bring their ballots to the meeting to be counted.

The names of those currently serving on the board have been alphabetized and numbered. Those whose names are odd numbered are up for election this year; those whose names are even numbered are up for election next year for the 2011-2013 term. This year those who are up for election are Jean Arnott, Nelson Dahl, Carole Glickfeld, Lem Howell, Roger Leed, Mark Marshall, Allan Munro, Al Rasmussen, Cleve Stockmeyer, Janet Thompson, and Michael Weisman. These names will appear on the ballot only at the request of the board member.

Other members who wish to serve on the board may submit their names as well. There is no limit to the number of candidates who can compete for board membership. The bylaws allow a maximum of 29 board members. Members may vote for any number of candidates not to exceed 15 this year and 14 next year. Any candidate receiving a simple majority of the total number of votes earns a place on the board.

The reason for instituting this process is that in the recent past

board members have been elected in an informal voice vote at the annual meeting without anyone knowing who has served two years and without knowing whether only eligible members are voting. This will allow us to keep track of the staggered terms required by the bylaws and ensure that eligible members are the only ones who vote.

Those who submit their names for election may also submit a statement of no more than 50 words, which will also appear in the ballot for the convenience of the voting members. Names can be submitted by mail, email (walkere1@msn.com) or telephone, 206-937-9825.



- **Minutes** *continued from p2* -

a list of all those elected officials up for office this year, declared candidates, and initiatives. She will email invitations asking those who seek our endorsement to schedule a time to present at our regular MDC meetings. 2) She distributed a replica of the draft of the new MDC brochure and asked that comments and suggestions be sent to her by Friday. 3) As she has been performing the function of executive secretary (in addition to her elected positions as secretary and newsletter editor) since 2007 without pay customarily accorded to the person who performs that function, Mr Simmons proposed that the sum of \$100 be paid to her each month. Vice President Jack Whisner moved that the amount be increased to \$200. The motion was approved.

Program

Seattle City Councilmembers Sally Bagshaw and Mike O'Brien reported on their first three months in office. See page 1.



MDC sponsors first happy hour

“This is fun. We’ve got to do this again.”

This and similar phrases were repeated numerous times at the first happy hour sponsored by the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle. About 40 members, elected officials, candidates, and guests gathered at Harbor Steps for conversation, beverages and snacks Wednesday evening, March 31.

Jack Whisner won the door prize of a bottle of Black Stallion pinot grigio, donated by hostess Fran Abbott. A second door prize, also a bottle of wine, was won by Anne Focke.



Members converse. From left, board member Nelson Dahl, our hostess Fran Abbott, and member Anne Focke.



Willie Gregory, candidate for Seattle Municipal Court judge, talks with MDC board member Lem Howell.



Guest Kari Feeney, member Bob Rosenbeger, MDC President Justin Simmons, member City Attorney Pete Holmes and guest Kimberly Mills.



King County Assessor Lloyd Hara fills out his MDC membership form.



MDC board member Pat McCoy and Secretary Eleanor Munro.

book review

The Breakthrough: Politics and Race in the Age of Obama

by Gwen Ifill

Anchor Books, New York (2009)

review by Al Rasmussen

This 245-page book is a sweeping summary of changes through the past 60 years, of the race-gender conflict and of the question of being "black enough" versus being "too black."

Ifill is a journalist, both print and TV, moderator and managing editor of Washington Week and senior correspondent on The News Hour With Jim Leher.

In Gallup polls, in 1958 more than half of Americans said they would not vote for a black candidate, by 1984 only 16 percent and by 2007 in a Newsweek poll only 4 percent. Obama got 43 percent of the white vote, compared with 41 percent by Kerry. There is a long chapter on how he finessed the race issue.

In the early 1990s polling began documenting a generational divide among black Americans: "a quarter described themselves as conservative, nearly a third as moderates, 48 percent as liberal." Blacks born in 1960s and 1970s "lived in a world shaped by access instead of denial." Those "who marched then often turn out to be the biggest critics of those who are poised to take over now."

Several case studies illustrate the generational transition, most notably the conflict between Jesse Sr. and Jesse Jr. in Illinois. While the father "thinks back to the arc of a movement that started in the 1950s, the son is more



Al Rasmussen

focused on saving black folks from the sins of their fathers." Jesse Jr. said, "There is a place for the agitation and protest politics of a Jesse Jackson, Sr., and an Al Sharpton, but it is not here. Not now."

Individual short chapters detail the smoother transitions between the Fords in Tennessee, the Patersons in New York, the Clays in Missouri, the Mallorys in Ohio, the Meeks in Florida.

"Aspiring black leaders are often commanded to transcend race, even though no one ever asked, say, Hillary Clinton to transcend gender." Shirley Chisholm, who in 1970 had both race and sex hurdles, maintained that sex was the more difficult one. Carol Moseley Braun concurred, as did Baltimore mayor Sheila Dixon, and speaker of California Assembly Karen Bass.

A dimension with strong tension is between being seen as "black enough" and being "too black." One feature of the Obama effect is that "whites are more

Dues must be current if you want to vote

Many MDC members will be ineligible to vote in the annual board election (see page 3) unless their dues are paid 30 days prior to the June 13 annual meeting. This is because, according to the bylaws, they are no longer considered active members and therefore they are not eligible to vote. (*Article II Membership, Section 1 Classes ...Active members are persons who have paid current dues ...*)

Membership dues are due each year January 1 and are current only until the end of the year in which they are paid.

Please check the label on your newsletter. If it reads "Please renew by 1/1/2011" you are current. Otherwise you need to complete the form on page 5 and mail it with your check as directed. Or use the blue form available at all meetings.



comfortable with black candidates who do not seem (to harbor) anger, while blacks are often more suspicious."

Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick said, "You can't be black enough if you speak the King's English." Nader called Obama an Uncle Tom for trying to "talk white." Kendrick, (US Rep FL) said blacks "want to know that the people they elect -- with their Ivy League degrees and new power -- have not forgotten their roots." Separate chapters dissect this tension in the case of Patrick and of Newark Mayor Corey Booker.

The writing is superb: several characters -- some unknown to this reviewer -- come alive on the page.



METROPOLITAN DEMOCRATIC CLUB - MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Date: _____ New member _____ Renewal _____ Returning _____

Name: _____

Address: _____
street city zip

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Dues: Sponsorship \$100 _____ Membership \$30 _____ Low income/student \$20 _____

Membership dues are current until the end of the year in which they are paid.

Detach and mail with payment to: Eleanor Munro, 1925 41st Ave SW, Seattle WA 98116.

mark your MDC Calendar:

April - June 2010

April 14, Spring Forum, noon – 1:30 PM, Labor Temple, 2800 First Ave, Hall 1. Rick Bender, president of the Washington State Labor Council, and Dwight Pelz, chair of the Washington State Democrats, will talk about the strain in the relationship between Labor and the Democrats and what can be done about it.

April 28, noon – 1:30 PM, Tower Building # 403, 1809 7th Ave, Seattle. Governor Mike Lowry and Professor James Gregory, Harry Bridges Endowed Chair of Labor Studies of the University of Washington Department of History, will speak about the economic and budget crisis and ideas for solutions and reform. We will also hear briefly from Lihn Thai and vote on the resolution to recognize the Vietnamese-American Heritage and Freedom Flag; State Senator Ken Jacobsen (LD46) for re-election; Richard Curtis for US Senator; and Cindi Laws for I-1068 (legalization of marijuana).

May 12, noon – 1:30 PM, Tower Building # 403, 1809 7th Ave, Seattle. Business meeting.

New members

MDC welcomes new members King County Assessor Lloyd Hara, Amiee Le, Darcy Nothnagle, Brendan Patrick, Tara Peattie, Peter Sherwin and Marcee Stone.

May 26, noon – 1:30 PM, Tower Building # 403, 1809 7th Ave, Seattle. Rep Ruth Kagi and founding member Dave Wood will talk about child welfare in Washington state.

June 9, noon – 1:30 PM, Tower Building # 403, 1809 7th Ave, Seattle. Presentations by candidates and campaigns seeking MDC endorsement for the primary election.

June 13, annual meeting, election of board members, 3:00 – 6:00 PM at the home of Anne Johnson, 3649 42nd NE, Seattle.

June 23, noon – 1:30 PM, Tower Building # 403, 1809 7th Ave, Seattle. Primary endorsement meeting.

All members are invited to attend. Guests are welcome. For more information contact President Justin Simmons, 206-736-9882, or visit www.metrodems.org or www.facebook.com/metrodems.



MDC President Justin Simmons and the late Audrey Gruger at Bluefields, Nicaragua in 2006.

Audrey Gruger 1930 – 2010

MDC member Audrey Gruger, former King County council member and state representative, died March 24. She served on the council 1982-1993 and represented the first legislative district 1976 – 1981. She also participated in many community activities throughout her long career.

It is suggested that remembrances be made to Plymouth Housing Group, 2113 3rd Ave, Seattle WA 98121 or any charity of your choice. A private service will be held for her family and friends.

Label Shows Date Dues Are Due

April 2010

METROPOLITAN
DEMOCRATIC CLUB
OF SEATTLE
NEWSLETTER

Eleanor Munro
1925 41st Ave SW
Seattle WA 98116

Return Service Requested

