

# Marion County Democratic Central Committee Newsletter

June 2009



## DEMOCRATIC VALUES

- Affordable Health Care
- Quality Education
- Fair & Equitable Taxation
- Healthy Air, Water, Land
- Family Wage Jobs
- Accountable & Fiscally Responsible Government

## Signs of Change

by John Maluski, Chair

President Obama is setting aside over \$630 billion over the next ten years to extend health coverage to the 46 million uninsured citizens, as well as for those who have health coverage. His plan calls for choice of health plans. This appears to be an approach toward full coverage for all citizens. I do believe his effort to initiate the plan is a fantastic first step. We all would like to see a plan whereby we have complete coverage, but we must remember the way President Clinton's plan was destroyed. Repeating that would be a problem for the current administration.

President Obama has a history of inviting diverse views when he approaches solutions to problems. This is a most astute technique. He antagonized those who thought he should not allow the conservatives to have a voice when he was the editor of the Harvard Law Review. He offered the conservatives a place to voice their concerns. Merely inviting them undermined their opposition. We saw the likes of Limbaugh and Hannity hyper-reacting to President Obama's actions. When he spoke to Hugo Chavez, the Limbaughites stumbled all over themselves because of the President's move toward rapprochement.

Our own party in Marion County, passed a resolution requesting the White House go on with the prosecution of those responsible for torture since 9/11. I do believe that President Obama has a plan whereby he offers some amelioration for staffers involved, yet, I think he will allow Congress to proceed with actions that abide by the Geneva Convention. Recently, John Podesta of

President Obama's staff wrote to House Judiciary Chair, John Conyers requesting that he "consider" holding impeachment hearings against Judge Bybee, a former official of the Bush Justice Department. Judge Bybee wrote memos justifying the use of torture.

This past weekend, former VP Cheney spoke with complete arrogance about the way President Obama has conducted his office. I am sure Cheney will continue to antagonize many, and that will work in favor of the Democratic Party. We can only hope for his comeuppance.

All the posturing by the Limbaugh/Cheneyites will help the Democrats. They will keep their party marginalized. President Obama as a master at undermining the opposition, whether it is the conservatives at the Harvard Law Review, the medical insurance industry, Dick Cheney, or the Republican Party itself. He will aid and abet them in their demise. We should trust his ability to lead us to a new, accountable USA that will, indeed, be returned to its previous honorable place in the world politic.

## Values in Action!

By Rick Hartwig

The Democratic Party of Oregon (DPO) has embarked on an ongoing project for Democrats to demonstrate their values, or "walking the talk". The goal is to be visible in the community. DPO is encouraging county organizations to become involved in activities demonstrating our values. These activities can happen at any time, but DPO has set up quarterly "Values In Action" days. These activities can be food drives, road

cleanups, or any green or community project. You can see what other counties are doing on the DPO website, [www.DPO.org](http://www.DPO.org).

So, what is Marion County doing to "walk the talk"? We have an ongoing food drive for the Marion-Polk Food Share. Remember to bring food items to all county activities! Collecting food in your precinct will promote networking and communication with neighborhood Democrats. Be sure to give them info sheets about us.

The Marion County Dems have begun an "Adopt-A-Road" program. Our area is I-5 North beginning at milepost 262, just north of Salem. Our sign is up and thousands of motorists can see it everyday. Our pickup dates coincide with the DPO Days of Action. Our next pickup day is Saturday, June 20. Meet at 8:30 A.M. at our headquarters, 250 Liberty Rd. SE and return by 12 Noon for pizza. If you are interested in this project, or you see need in the community for another project and would organize it, let Rick know. Call him at 503-364-0526.

Everyone can be involved with "Values In Action". We are restricted only by our own lack of action.

*It took a lot of blood, sweat and tears to get to where we are today, but we have just begun. Today we begin in earnest the work of making sure that the world we leave our children is just a little bit better than the one we inhabit today.*

Barack Obama

# Valuable Free Media: Letters To The Editor

by Roger Pike

“Letters to the editor” work. Newspapers like publishing them and they cost nothing. “Letters to the Editor” is one of the most read sections in the newspaper. They appeal to many more people than you might think.

Letters work for the writer too. They allow you to present an issue without it being filtered through a reporter and help you raise awareness about it.

Yet, even though “letters” can be a powerful tool, many folks don’t write them. Often, it’s because they think they don’t know how, or where to begin. Here’s my advice:

- Identify publications in which you want to share your opinion. Keep track of these publications so you are aware which are appropriate vehicles for your letters.
- Keep your letter short, pointed, and free of “jargon”. Most newspapers limit the length of letters. Keep your focus tight, on one issue, and stress only one or two thoughts.
- Put your power up front. Many readers won’t go past a line or two unless you’ve grabbed their attention. Opening with your most powerful argument is your best shot at influencing them.
- Don’t insult anybody no matter how you feel. That turns most people off and they won’t pay attention to the rest of your letter.
- Don’t write about yourself unless you know something that enhances your opinion. State it briefly. For example, when you write for a candidate, you might say something like, “I’ve known Sue Smith for 10 years and worked with her on the successful bus expansion project”.
- Use paragraphs. Sentences should be short and clear. Proofread and edit your letter before you hit send. Use exclamation points sparingly—never more than one at a time!
- One of the best techniques in letters is to compare elected officials or candidates. For example, use an opponent’s voting record to show opposition to benefits for workers, and contrast it to your candidate’s position on protecting worker rights.
- Be prompt when responding to a particular article or event. The closer to it your letter is, the more likely it will be published. If you’re responding to an article, say so up front, and include its date, if you know it.
- Include contact information required by the publication.

Never be discouraged! Even if your letter isn’t published, it means a lot to news editors. It can influence them to post another letter like yours on a topic they might have ignored. At the very least, it puts your issue on their radar.

Letters to the editor are a great way to generate buzz. They are a terrific opportunity for you to keep alive the spirit of “change we can believe in”.

# Wishing won’t make it so, but Action will!

by Wayne Baum

Ideas for moving the party forward in 2009 flowed like water at the January Central Committee meeting. Unfortunately, ideas, like water, can flow downhill fast unless we channel them into useful action. The Executive Committee and Central Committee members responded with several projects that speak to the concerns voiced earlier in the year. Now it’s time for you who make up this great party, to step forward and help make it happen.

You said you wanted more out-reach to “Obama Volunteers”. We’re doing that. The Membership Committee is planning to woo them into Central Committee activities. It won’t be successful unless some of you will volunteer to make phone calls, canvass neighborhoods, plan social events, or greet new folks at gatherings.

You said our actions should reflect our values. Vice Chair Rick Hartwig is organizing our “Adopt a Highway” a clean-up and food collection for the Marion-Polk Food Bank. Because of his efforts, we now have a sign on I-5 emblazoned with Marion County Democrats as sponsors (and clean-up crew) for a small stretch of highway. We are collecting food, but it’s only a trickle. If you didn’t help with the clean-up last time, volunteer for the next one, June 20<sup>th</sup>. If you haven’t donated a can lately, bring a few to the office. Better still, take an hour and ask your neighbors to donate as well. We can tell you who the Democrats are in your neighborhood and you can invite them to the next meeting – thereby achieving both outreach and good deed goals!

You said you wanted to keep the office open and fix it up. We still have the office, but keeping it open requires people and money. Michael Miles agreed to be the office manager, but he needs more volunteers for regular, office hours. He needs more people to take a few hours and re-decorate the place – the bunting is a year old! Get the word out that we have buttons and bumper stickers to sell. You can put them on your Visa! Ideas for more fund raising?

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## Wishing won't make it so, but Action will! (cont.)

We need people for the Fundraising Committee.

If you want the office to be around in 2010, we have to raise a lot more money than is currently anticipated.

You said you wanted more and better communication. Roger Pike needs help with the Communications Committee – People to write for the newsletter, our expanding web site (thanks to Mr. Miles again), and to blog on our future Facebook site.

Speaking of Facebook, I'm poking you. Can you feel it? Let's get to work people! 2010 is around the corner and there's a lot to be done.

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### 2009 Political Outlook Series

**Marion DemoForum**  
Welcomes

#### State Treasurer Ben Westlund

*Speaking on State Investments and Public Policy*

**Wednesday, June 17 Noon to 1 PM**

**Kwan's Cuisine,**

**835 Commercial St SE, Salem**

**Reservations Required (Deadline Tues June 16)**

**Cost - \$11 includes a buffet lunch, tea & gratuity**

Marion County Democratic Central Committee  
PO BOX 13835  
Salem, OR 97309-1835

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## Calendar

**Marion County Democratic Central Committee  
Meeting: 6/15/09 7:00 pm**

**Marion DemoForum: 6/17/09 12:00-1:00 pm**

**Happy Hour at Bentley's: 6/18/09 4:00-6:00 pm  
(special guest: Fritz Graham, field rep, Wyden)**

**Adopt-A-Highway Event: 6/20/09 8:30am-1:00pm**

**We will be meeting at the Marion County  
Democrats headquarters to organize our quarterly pickup  
on I-5 at milepost 262. We will return for pizza and pop at  
noon. RSVP to Rick at 503-364-0526**

**Legislative Committee: 7/7/09 7:00-8:30 pm**

**Membership Committee: 7/2/09 7:00-8:30 pm**

**Communication Committee: 7/6/09 6:30-8:00 pm**

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