

## 31<sup>st</sup> Democrats Newsletter

“The liberty of Democracy is not safe if we tolerate the growth of private power to the point that it is stronger than the Democratic State itself. That, in essence, is Fascism.”

FDR, 1938 Joint Session of Congress

(Organized by R. Craig Sanders-email: [z1n45rgiarc@netscape.com](mailto:z1n45rgiarc@netscape.com) and Patricia Szot)

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### ONGOING FOOD DRIVE

Please bring any food item (especially baby food) or toilet paper to the monthly meeting for our ongoing food drive to help others in our hard economic times.

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The 31<sup>st</sup> L.D. Democrats will meet on Wednesday:

October 21, 2009

Marion Grange

27725 Buckley-Sumner Hwy E, Buckley

Coffee Hour 6 PM

Meeting 7 PM

Committee Meeting 6:30-7:00 PM

Program for October:

The documentary made by “MAD AS HELL DOCTORS” entitled “HEALTH, MONEY and FEAR” will be shown. We will also be taking health care stories to post and send to our representatives.

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### Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> Election Information

**The 31<sup>st</sup> LD endorsed the following:**

“NO” on I-1033 (see commentary below and two newspaper articles:

[www.theolympian.com/opinion/story/995527.html](http://www.theolympian.com/opinion/story/995527.html) and

[www.spokesman.com/stories/2009/oct/07/nonprofits-oppose-i-1033](http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2009/oct/07/nonprofits-oppose-i-1033))

“APPROVE” Ref 71 (see Tacoma News Tribune article -

<http://www.thenewtribune.com/opinion/v-printerfriendly/story/914323.html> and article below)

Rob Holland-Candidate for Port of Seattle Commission, Position 3

Don Meyer-Candidate for Port of Tacoma Commission, Position 4

**The 31 LD Executive Board endorsed the following:**

Dow Constantine-for King County Executive

Max Vekich-Candidate for Port of Seattle Commission, Pos. 4

Lloyd Hara and Robert Rosenberger-Candidates for King County Assessor

Julie Anderson-Candidate for Pierce County Auditor

Mark Lindquist- Candidate for Pierce County Prosecutor

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## Up Coming Events:

Oct 14 (Wednesday) Ballots mailed to all active, registered voters.

Oct 14 (Wednesday), 7:30pm, Town Hall- Referendum 71 Debate. Tickets \$5 at [www.brownpaperticket.com](http://www.brownpaperticket.com) or 800/838-3006.

Oct 17 (Saturday), 1:00pm, Seattle Central Community College (Broadway and Pine)-  
March Against the War in Afghanistan.

Oct 17 (Saturday), 9 am-12pm, Democrats Work project to restore the Duwamish River, Tukwila, WA. Contact Brian Gunn at [gunnbl@comcast.net](mailto:gunnbl@comcast.net).

Link: <http://democratswork.org/index.php?page=events&view=eventdetail&eventid=716>

Oct 24 (Saturday), 350-International Day of Climate Action. Scientists say that 350 parts per million CO2 in the atmosphere is the safe limit for humanity. We have surpassed that number already. Go to [www.350.org](http://www.350.org) for a function to get involved in. There is a hike along the Carbon River to reduce carbon levels. There are many events occurring in Seattle (see the listing below). Join the rest of the world and get involved in one of these functions.

Oct 25 (Sunday), 2:00pm, Federal Way (848 South 320<sup>th</sup> St Library)-United for Single Payer Presents Michael Moore's "SICKO".

Oct 26 (Monday) Last day for new voters in Washington to register to vote in-person at King/Pierce County Elections

Oct 27 (Tuesday), Washington State Democrats 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Warren G Magnuson Dinner/Awards Ceremony. Special guest is Gov. John Kitzhaber , an emergency room doctor in rural Oregon before serving as Gov of Oregon from 1995-2003. Gov Kitzhaber has become a national leader for health care reform and is running for a third term as Oregon's Governor. Gov. Kitzhaber will speak on issues concerning the Pacific Northwest and the battle for health care reform.

Nov 3 (Tuesday) ELECTION DAY. Ballots must be postmarked or returned at a ballot drop box by 8 pm to be counted.

Nov 22 (Sunday), 3:30pm, Federal Way (848 South 320<sup>th</sup> St Library)-Robert Greenwald's "Rethink Afghanistan". Robert Greenwald has done a fantastic job of addressing the war in Afghanistan. AlterNet has a wonderful article describing this film on Oct 6 (<http://www.alternet.org>).

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## Take Action—Phone banking is needed for:

"No" on Initiative 1033. This is a Tim Eyman bill (do I need to say more) and if you want more information please go to <http://no1033.org>. If you want to help, every Wednesday and Thursday evening (5:30-8:30pm) until the election there is phone banking at the Federal Way SEIU 775 building (33615 1<sup>st</sup> Way S, #A, Federal Way, WA 98003). You can sign up at the website above under volunteers.

“YES” on Referendum 71. See description of this referendum below or

www.fusewashington.org. There are two places for phone banking: Tacoma at the Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest (813 MLK Jr. Way, Tacoma, WA 98405) Tuesday and Thursday until 8pm and Seattle at Fuse headquarters (1402 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave, Suite 510). Go to the website to volunteer or call 206-420-0133x112.

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**Protect All Families**



## APPROVE REF. 71

Just imagine that you are preparing dinner for you and your partner, love-of-your-life, soul mate or companion and the phone rings. It is a call indicating that your partner has been in a terrible accident and is in the hospital unconscious. You run to hospital, but because you are not related, you are not allowed to be at their side. The person you love could be dying, but you can't be with them at this point in their life due to hospital rules. Imagine that the person in the hospital bed is a policeman or a firefighter, who was hurt on duty protecting our community, but is denied access to the person they love. The Domestic Partnership Law that

Chris Gregoire signed will allow these people to go to that hospital bed and be with the person they love. That is why we need to APPROVE Referendum 71, to ensure that ALL FAMILIES are treated *fairly*. This is not a bill about marriage, which the right will have you believe. As typical the right has distorted this bill to anger those on the radical right who oppose same gender marriage- they claim it will hurt families when in reality **rejecting this bill will hurt families**. Of course some of the families are not the type of family the right wing will even consider to be a family. The bill is written as follows which will appear on the ballot:

Referendum 71

Statement of Subject: The legislature passed Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5688 concerning the rights and responsibilities of state-registered domestic partners [and voters have filed a sufficient referendum petition on this bill].

Concise Description: This bill would expand the rights, responsibilities, and obligations accord state-registered same-sex and senior domestic partners to be equivalent to those of married spouses, except that a domestic partnership is not a marriage.

Should this bill be:

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

REJECTED: \_\_\_\_\_

Notice the bill even indicates it is not marriage. This bill does not affect just same gender couples, there are many opposite gender couples age 62 and older that choose not to get married. Often senior who are widowed or divorced will suffer serious economic hardship if they re-marry. Under Social Security, there is a "marriage penalty" where seniors' benefits are put in peril if they re-marry. The Domestic partnership law allows unmarried senior couples to have the legal protections they need, take care of each other, be able to provide insurance or take family or medical leave if a partner is gravely ill, and make critical decisions for one another in times of crisis. This referendum is about treating people HUMANLY especially in a time of crises. I know it seems odd to vote yes when the radical right put up the referendum, but what you are doing is approving the law as it stands (see above). Lets prove that the people of this *state cares* about the people who live in Washington State, who protect our community and teach in our schools. "Approve Referendum 71" needs help reaching people, go to TAKE ACTION above for information for phone banking. For more information please go to [www.approveref71.org](http://www.approveref71.org).

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## NO on I-1033

I wrote about this initiative last month (see 31<sup>st</sup> LD website-newsletter), but will summarize how bad this initiative really is. First and foremost this is another TIM EYMAN gig that intends to really hurt this state. (If anyone ever meets him please ask him why he hates this state and the people so much). Many states have already voted this type of initiative down. The one state that actually instituted this type of bill- Colorado-has had to suspend it because of the devastating events it produced. So the basic jest of this bill is if you WANT LESS policeman, firemen and school-teachers go ahead and vote for it. Otherwise VOTE NO on I-1033 to help the state of Washington out of its economic woes. The non-partisan Office of Financial Management recently released a study showing that I-1033 will reduce revenues for education, health care, and other services by \$5.9 billion over the next 5 years. This year WA state has slashed school funding by \$1.5 billion, and as many as 3,000 teachers and education employees are facing layoffs. This Eyeman bill will make this situation even worse. Funding for nursing homes, in-home care and adult day health care services will be devastated if this initiative is passed. I-1033 will do more damage to schools and put seniors' health care at risk. Businesses, public school teachers, nurses, firefighters and policeman (as well as many other groups) are fighting to defeat this terrible idea. If you want to help, go to [Take Action](#) above and help with phone banking. For more information go to <http://no1033.com/understand>

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## Pierce Charter Amendment No 1

We need to defeat Pierce Charter Amendment No.1. If passed the amendment would extend term limits on the Pierce County Council. This is mainly Republican supported Amendment. It would in all probability mean the 31st would be subject to two more years of Shawn Bunney's dismal representation. Also, it would make it easier for the Republicans to continue their majority on the Council. Demo's in the 31st will not benefit from the passage of this amendment. Vote NO on the Pierce Charter Amendment No. 1.

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**Reichert Watch-** Congressman Dave Reichert is helping to allow the recession and increased unemployment to continue by voting against both extending the unemployment benefits and lowering taxes on 95% of working Americans. More than 7 million people have lost their jobs. He did vote to support millionaire CEO bonuses for Wall Street firms that received taxpayer bailout money, though. When will he stop being a RUBBER STAMP for the Boehners and Cantors of Congress? Hasn't Reichert hurt America enough? Why can't he be more like Olympia Snowe. Can't he hear history calling?

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## 350 Carbon Dioxide Levels

October 24<sup>th</sup> is a really important date this year. This is the date for world-wide recognition of the importance of the number 350 with regard to carbon dioxide levels. Events all around the world are being used to focus attention on the specter of the planet warming to a degree (pun intended) that is incompatible with life as we know it. Citizens are asked to participate in activities using the number 350 around their community, in their state, in the nation or in the world. Local events in the Seattle-Tacoma areas include the following:

Olympic Sculpture Park and Cascadia Work Party  
Climate Action at University of Washington  
Earth Ministry Gathering  
350 Twitter Hours  
Midnight Salmon Run for Climate Action

Sea Level Rise and Seattle Shoreline

350 Climate Action Festivals

“Granny Squares” by ditsy seniors

Bainbridge Island

Seattle Space Needle

World Beats and Urban Streets

Carbon River Hike for Carbon Reduction

Information on these and other events can be found at the website [www.350.org](http://www.350.org) . The only activity, thus far, in the 31<sup>st</sup> LD area is the Carbon River hike. Ideas for other activities within the 31<sup>st</sup> LD can be submitted to [350.org](http://350.org) .

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## EDITORIAL-As I See It

By R. Craig Sanders

### GLOBAL WARMING

Global Warming is not a good term to describe what’s happening to our planet. It makes it sound as though we’re going to have nicer summers and milder winters. Sounds pretty good, right? Global Warming should really be called terms like Worldwide Climate Instability, Catastrophic Climate Change or Global Climate Deterioration. Global Warming really means less stable climatic conditions. Climate will change more rapidly and inconsistently and be more severe. Droughts, hurricanes, snowstorms, etc. will all be more often and of greater severity. The economical meltdown that we’re currently in will be as nothing compared to the consequences of Global Warming.

Global Warming is real. I know that in the main-stream media (MSM), it’s presented as if half the scientists completely believe it and the other half don’t. It kind of reminds me of when it seemed as though half the scientists thought cigarettes caused cancer and the other half didn’t. As Upton Sinclair said, “It is difficult to get a man to understand something when his salary is dependent on his not understanding it”. But, like cigarettes causing cancer, the truth is that an overwhelming number of scientists not only believe in Global Warming, but are now finding out that it is approaching much more rapidly than even the most dire, cynical (sky is falling) predictions made only a few years ago. Scientists estimate that for many generations throughout history, the level of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in the atmosphere had been between 265-285 ppm. Carbon dioxide stays in the atmosphere for about 40 years. So, our present problems started when the industrial revolution began back at the turn of the twentieth century (about 1900). Currently, the worst polluters are industry and the military.

Twenty years ago, scientists believed that, as long as the world kept CO<sub>2</sub> levels below 550 parts per million, human life could be sustained on this planet. With more data, they revised the number to 450 ppm. Now, the critical number to sustain life has been lowered to 350 ppm. Unfortunately, the production of CO<sub>2</sub> is increasing by 2 ppm a year and is currently at 390 ppm. Already, signs can be seen that Global Warming has begun to change the environment. The Arctic is melting, the range of the tropics has increased by 2 degrees from the equator, the 10 warmest summers on record have all occurred since 1995, weather patterns are becoming more erratic, etc.

The significance of 350 ppm CO<sub>2</sub> is that it is thought to be the tipping point for Global Warming. In the Arctic, the white polar icecap reflects 80% of solar radiation. Blue water, on the other hand, absorbs 80% of solar radiation. So, by melting the polar ice, the planet goes from reflecting the majority of solar radiation to absorbing most of the radiation. As more ice melts, the more absorption occurs and the process feeds on itself and speeds up. Additionally, as the arctic permafrost melts, it releases methane, which is another greenhouse gas, approximately 20 times worse than CO<sub>2</sub>. Once the methane is released, it cannot be locked back up.

This is why October 24<sup>th</sup> is such an important date. The actions to take being discussed now regarding Global Warming are not aggressive enough. If fundamental change is not achieved by 2012, then it may be too late. It may already be too late, but not choosing action is choosing. We may not ever be able to recover.

## CORPORATE PERSONHOOD

How can a corporation be considered a person? A corporation exists to make money. It doesn't live and breathe, it doesn't have emotions, and it doesn't sleep. It doesn't get hungry, get old and it doesn't die. More frightening is that it can't go to jail if it harms people. Granting personhood to a corporation allows it to lie, cheat and steal, just like a real person. Is a corporation a person? The obvious answer is no. Yet this is a landmark non-decision that has been made and may soon be reconfirmed by the conservative United States Supreme Court, if Justice Roberts has his way.

The idea that corporations should have the same rights as mortal persons has been argued since the United States was first born. The concept that corporations should have the same rights as a living, breathing person was consistently denied throughout the first 100 years of our nation. But it all started to unravel in 1886 with the case of *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad*. In this obscure tax case, corporate lawyers were arguing that the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment (the amendment that gave equal rights to former slaves) should also be applied to corporations. This question had been argued many times prior and had always been rejected. Cases in 1809, 1819 and 1839 all essentially stated that a corporation was not a person. The Supreme Court avoided the whole "corporate personhood" question altogether in 1886. It was the court reporter, however, a J.C. Bancroft Davis, in summarizing the case, declared "the defendant corporations are persons within the intent of the clause in section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment...". This is why I call it a non-decision. Since that time, the Supreme Court has leaned in the direction of the idea of "corporate personhood".

During the 2008 presidential primary, a non-profit corporation attempted to distribute a film that was critical of then-presidential contender Hillary Clinton. The Federal Election Commission (FEC), in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, sought to bar the distribution of this film. The Supreme Court sided, at the time, with the FEC and the film was barred. More recently, however, the Supreme Court has ordered the re-arguing of this case (an unusual step) and has requested further briefing and argument on the much broader question of whether the previous decision should be overruled that supported Congress's power to restrict corporate speech.

We've all seen what laissez-faire capitalism has done to this country lately. Now, it seems that the conservative Supreme Court is poised to unleash laissez-faire politics where anything goes and there are no rules. If you thought corporations have too much power and influence now, just wait until the Supreme Court votes to thoroughly change the rules.

What this means is that, like a person, a corporation can lie, cheat and steal. However, unlike a person, a corporation cannot be thrown in jail for lying, cheating or stealing (how does a building go to jail?). So, the corporation now has all of the advantages of personhood, but none of the responsibilities or consequences. Like a person can, a corporation could spend money supporting candidates that will be favorable ('bought off') or criticizing candidates that it doesn't like. If you think that corporations have too much power now, the conservative Supreme Court decision that may be coming will enable corporations to completely dominate the political process. The money that the corporations will feed into politics will not be their own money. It will be the money of people that owns stock in the stock market or has a 401k that will be used to further the corporations. It's kind of like trying to compete at an auction when the other person is bidding against you with your money. We may, very soon, become a Democracy in name only.

I think that conservatives and liberals alike agree that large corporations have too much power. This isn't a question about government. When you have large corporations you have small government and vice versa. Some people are always parroting the complaint against big government, but they never address whether they're in favor of big corporations. Personally, if the choice comes down to big government or big corporations, I would always choose big government. At least with big government,

there are pathways that can be followed to get redress. With big corporations, it's basically a kingdom. There are no democratic processes with a corporation.

Conservatives talk about the specter of liberal activist judges. Activist judges are already on the Supreme Court, but they're activists for the corporations, not the liberals. It is indeed fortunate that Justice Sotomayor has now been approved to sit on the Supreme Court, the highest court in the land. Already, she has been questioning whether corporations should have as much influence on politics as they presently have. If money becomes equal to free speech and corporations have the right to free speech, then corporations that spend the most money will put their person into office every time. It's the opposite of publicly-funded elections. Soon, even local elections will be "won" by people that are bought off and will do the bidding of the corporations. This sounds too much like a puppet government to me. Keep you eyes and ears open for the decision from the Supreme Court in the next few months.

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## Our Representatives-how to get hold of them

**Senators: Patty Murray (D) and Maria Cantwell**

Patty Murray- DC office phone: (202) 224-2621  
Seattle Office  
2988 Jackson Federal Bldg.  
915 2nd Avenue  
Seattle, Washington 98174  
Phone: (206) 553-5545  
Fax: (206) 553-0891

Maria Cantwell- DC office phone (202) 224-3441	
Seattle Office	Tacoma Office
915 Second Avenue	950 Pacific Avenue, Suite #615
Suite #3206	Tacoma, WA 98402
Seattle, WA 98174	253-572-2281
206-220-6400	253-572-5879 FAX
206-220-6404 – FAX	

8<sup>th</sup> CD Representative-Dave Reichert (R)  
Dave Reichert- DC Office phone (202) 225-7761  
District Office  
2737 78th Avenue, S.E. Suite #202  
Mercer Island, WA 98040  
(206) 275-3438  
(206) 275-3437 Fax

9<sup>th</sup> CD Representative-Adam Smith (D)  
Adam Smith-DC office phone (202) 225-8901  
District Office  
2209 Pacific Ave, Suite B  
Tacoma, WA 98402  
(253) 593-6600  
(253)593-6776

## State Senator-31<sup>st</sup> LD

Pam Roach (R)  
POB 40431  
Olympia, WA 98504  
Office: 360-786-7660  
Fax: 360-786-7173  
Email: [Roach.Pam@leg.wa.gov](mailto:Roach.Pam@leg.wa.gov)

## State Representatives-31<sup>st</sup> LD

Chris Hurst (D)  
POB 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504  
Office: 360-786-7866  
Fax: 360-786-7317  
Email: [Hurst.Christopher@leg.wa.gov](mailto:Hurst.Christopher@leg.wa.gov)

Dan Roach (R)  
POB 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504  
Office: 360-786-7846  
Email: [Roach.Dan@leg.wa.gov](mailto:Roach.Dan@leg.wa.gov)

## Film Review

### CAPITALISM-A LOVE STORY

Everyone needs to go see Michael Moore's new move "Capitalism-A Love Story". It's probably his best movie so far. The movie relates how, historically, America was doing pretty well after World War II. At this time, the income of one person would be enough to have a home, have kids and send them to college. The tax rate on the rich back then was about 90%. In spite of that high tax rate, there were plenty of wealthy people. Not as many people were wealthy then as there are now, but that's probably because now, the tax rates on the wealthy have been dropped lower than they have been since the "roaring twenties". You remember what happened after the roaring twenties, don't you? So, since Reagan, worker productivity has been increasing dramatically while wages have remained relatively stagnant. The price of most commodities has also increased, so that now, a worker is more productive and yet able to buy less goods and services than (s)he could 30 years ago. No wonder that it now takes 2 incomes or 2 jobs to live decently anymore. Meanwhile, the rich have enjoyed great increases in their wealth. This disparity between the rich and the poor has not been seen since, you guessed it, the roaring twenties.

Did you know that FDR attempted to get a 2<sup>nd</sup> Bill of Rights pushed through Congress? It would have guaranteed the right to a job, a livable wage, universal health care, a good education, an affordable home, paid vacation time and an adequate pension. Unfortunately, he died before he could get these rights approved. Anyway, go see the film. There's a lot more in it than I've discussed. If Republicans aren't afraid to go see a Michael Moore movie this time, they may finally learn that the real battle is between the rich and the rest of us.

R. Craig Sanders

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## Occupation Statistics

(<http://www.antiwar.com/casualties>)

4,348 US Military Deaths (Iraq)

871 US Military Deaths (Afghanistan)

31,527 US Military Wounded (Iraq)

151,000-1,339,771 Iraq Civilian Deaths



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## DO YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR LOCAL POLITICAL SYSTEM?

### YES!! Join us

Fill out the form below (questions are required by the state Public Disclosure Commission) and hand it in to one of our volunteers or mail it in (31<sup>st</sup> District Democrats, 20825 SR 410 E #130, Bonney Lake, WA 98391). You can pay dues now or later by check (made out to 31<sup>st</sup> District Democrats) or on-line by credit card. Dues are \$31 per year (January-December), but members can pay what they can afford with a minimum of \$5.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (if different from above) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_