



33rd District Democrats

April 2019 Newsletter

Chair's Corner by Tim Clark

The year seems to be flying by. But the long-range plan is underway. Things are happening at all levels with the state and the new primary date, King County Democrats with an all new leadership team, and we have lots to do in the 33rd. Stacia Jenkins continues to work on the South King County Democrats dinner, scheduled for May 18 at IAM in South Park. Our work plan focuses on local races and our concern about city council makeups at present. We have some great rising stars among them, but various challenges and our connection with local leaders require our attention.

Our February meeting dealt with preparing for the changes due in our state presidential primary approach. State Committee delegates Dan Santon and Georgia Davenport went through the challenges. King County Democrats Chair Shasti Conrad stopped by to outline the goals for her team in changing the face of how the county Democrats are preparing for a challenging year. We were thankful State Representative Tina Orwell was able to visit with us. Our guest presentation was on the Homeless Issue Task Force efforts by the City of Kent. It represented a broad-based approach with reasonable police presence. Kent City Councilmember Satwinder Kaur was able to outline many of the actions undertaken for it.

Our March meeting was packed with guests. Leadoff was Congressman Adam Smith, who shared insights on several levels about current life in the nation's capital. We got an update from Don Bennett and Carol Ann Maiers on the new look of the King county Democrats. Superior Court Judges (both appointed this year) Ferguson and Sutton gave personal accounts of their

desire to serve and some things they learned along that journey. The Children's Alliance Sarah Domondon gave an overview of how children in need of public services are faring in Olympia and some insights on the challenge of growing numbers of homeless children. She reported an estimated quarter of our state's children face some disruption in retaining housing at some point in their young lives.

We approved a budget for the two-year cycle, recognizing that the 2020 cycle will require further investigation of resource allocation.

Our final presenter was Matt Kuharic of King County Dept. of Natural Resource. He opened our exploration of the threats of climate change by sharing the strategic plan adopted by the County Council. It covers many actions by county operations and efforts to coordinate with the many cities of King County. The goals of sustainability and environmental protection are evident in the scope of the plan, dealing with taking fossil fuels out of our transportation practices and working on sustainable energy sources. It was interesting to see they have even run a drill to deal with emergency management dealing with a heat wave, as that threat continues to materialize.

We will continue to look at what climate change demands of local governments as we go through the education of our membership on this current challenge and the questioning of local government candidates seeking endorsement on their willingness to be part of a larger plan of action on this issue. Please join us on the third Monday of the month at 7 pm to meet judicial, port and municipal candidates and show who will be exercising power upon election come November.

On Guest Speaker Congressman Adam Smith
By Vice-Chair Jackie Boschok

During his introduction of Rep. Smith, Chair Clark reminded those in attendance that he is a former Senator from our LD. Tim also thanked him for his generous financial contributions to our spaghetti dinner fundraisers in the past.

Representative Smith began by stating he had two important messages to share. The first is that the new Democratically controlled House has an opportunity to show what a progressive caucus can look like. That should begin by passing very aggressive legislation on issues like health care, gun reform, climate change and immigration. They can then build on this momentum into 2020. He reviewed that the House has already passed a modest criminal justice reform bill and HR 1, a bill to hold elected officials more accountable.

His dream is to build a durable, progressive majority. He shared his experience serving twice during a time when all three branches of government were controlled by Democrats. He described both times as “circling the wagons and destroying each other” so that most were quickly voted out of office. Smith agreed there is a great field of Presidential candidates out now. But what happens when Trump is defeated? He is concerned about promises being made that are divisive and unable to be kept if that candidate wins office. He wants a candidate that unites us all so that we can all win nationwide.

Smith ended by discussing how to hold President Trump accountable now. He decried Trump’s latest tweets against McCain and his use of hatred and bigotry to drive his message. He believes impeachment to be a dangerous step if not a bi-partisan move done with very strong evidence. His preference is to have Trump lose the next election by a strong majority.

Time for questions had Smith declaring he would

use his position as Chair of the House Armed Forces Committee to conduct more audits, spend less money more efficiently and to be less dependent on foreign oil. He agrees the border policy on separating children from their families was designed to be painful as a deterrent. And the lack of record keeping was very wrong!

King County Superior Court
Candidate Interviews
By Vice-Chair Jackie Boschok

Judges Aimeé Sutton and Marshall Ferguson attended the meeting as candidates for King County Superior Court. Chair Clark asked each to describe their experience as an attorney prior to any judicial position.

Judge Sutton was appointed by Governor Inslee to her seat in February 2019, is a product of public schools in King County and graduated from Garfield High. She became interested in Latin American culture at Mt Holyoke College, learned Spanish and lived in Mexico before returning to Seattle. After law school, her public defender experience work with non-English speaking clients led her to join the Latina/o Bar Association of WA, and she served as their president from 2017-18. She was a trial attorney with experience at all levels of WA State and Federal Courts. She is running for Position 49.

Judge Marshall Ferguson was also appointed by Inslee in 2018. Prior to that, Ferguson was in private practice in King County – most recently as a partner at Williams Kastner & Gibbs where he focused on commercial litigation in areas such as real estate and aviation disasters. The turning point for his decision to enter public service was the 2016 Presidential election and his growing concern for protecting the independent press and judicial system. While growing up on Lopez Island in San Juan County he observed how a District Court judge could make a difference in a small community with fair rulings and efforts to address the root of problems to reduce jail times. He is running for Position 31.

Chair Clark then asked both candidates to share what other experience and skills did they bring to the position they were running for. Judge Ferguson responded that he is a pilot and attended the Air Force Academy for one year before it was determined his eye sight made him ineligible to be a jet fighter pilot. He viewed his one year there as comparable to being in the military with their loss of personal freedom and liberty. That experience provided him with great empathy towards prisoners experiencing harsh detention and drives him to “cut them any slack” he is able to provide under the law.

Judge Sutton shared that she grew up with a single parent and her Mom had trouble collecting child support from her Dad because of his financial difficulties. Then her first assignment as a public defender was to defend “dead beat Dads”. She described them being treated with contempt when their only defense is, they can’t afford to pay. This has resulted in her now recognizing the importance of treating all defendants with respect and dignity.

The next question given each candidate was if they supported the use of treatment approaches such as ‘drug court’, and if so, how often and in what situations would they refer defenders with drug and alcohol related charges to drug court, rather than incarceration. Judge Sutton answered that therapeutic courts are one of the most important reforms of today. She wants those convicted of crimes kept in their community, while keeping their community safe. She stated that evidence-based principles must be used to determine the best candidates for these special courts. The goal must be to keep these individuals with their families and to prevent jail time from derailing their future.

Judge Ferguson agreed totally with Suttons statement. He believes most crimes in this court are driven by addiction and that it is better to get to the root of the problem than just jail time. Treating the condition provides much better outcomes. Chair Clark then discussed the history of the construction of a court and detention center in Kent

with the pledge to build one on the Eastside, as well. Citizens were also told then that newly released prisoners would be given a ticket home and would not remain in the Kent community. Now many prisoners are homeless with nowhere to return. His question based on this scenario is how the court can address their influence on perpetuating cycles of poverty.

Judge Ferguson responded that some convicted of crimes must just stay in jail. Laws do favor releasing them and families are impacted by incarceration. Conviction records do make it very hard to get jobs. He believes that things must be done to reduce incarceration rates. And more must be done to both create ways to cleanse conviction records and make this process more well known to those who need it.

Judge Sutton answered that she supports ending the cash bail system and addressing the post-conviction consequences of the legal financial obligations many are unable to pay. She noted the standard sentence fine in Superior Court is \$600 with high interest payment rates.

March 18, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Presentations by candidates:

Marshall Ferguson

- 1) Military Academy: liberty and freedom
- 2) Yes, to Drug Court
- 3)less conviction

Aimee Sutton

- 1) Raised by a single mother. Defending “dead beats” father in child support contempt cases; recognizes people’s humanity
- 2) Drug Court rather than incarnation: a program to keep folks in community while keeping with community safe
 - Need evidence-based principles
 - In favor of therapeutic courts and programs
- 3)anti-cash bail

King County Democratic Update

Bylaws – February 9th Bylaws

- Stream Live meetings
- Meeting of passing bylaws

- If Chair will be able to have executive seat on King Dem Executive.
- Electronic meetings so PCOS can vote
- King County Conservation District Elections: Need to request a ballot from the King County
 - 6 votes total
 - <http://kingcd.org/about/board-of-supervisors/elections-and-appointments/>
- Ombudsman’s Office
- King County Should not interfere with Legislative District

Resolution of Support for Medicare for All- Georgia Davenport

- Dan motioned and Resolution was adopted.

Other Candidates

- Port Commissioner Fred Felleman:

Emijah Smith/Early learning issues

- ECAP (early and preschool)
- WCC- Working for

Motion to adopt the Budget was passed.

Matt Kuharic - King County Climate Change Issue

- 2.1 million residents, 39 cities, regional government and unincorporated
- 11.7 mill budget
- Be prepared for earthquakes and take climate action

9pm adjourned



UPCOMING MEETING NOTICES

Monday, April 15: 33rd District Democrats Monthly Meeting 7:00 pm Laborers Local 242
22323 Pac Hwy S, Des Moines WA 98198

Monday, May 13: 33rd District Democrats Executive Board 7:00 pm Location to be announced

Monday, May 20: 33rd District Democrats Candidate Endorsement Meeting 7:00 pm Laborers Local 242
22323 Pac Hwy S, Des Moines WA 98198