

The Seattle Times

Wednesday, May 26, 2010 - Page updated at 12:31 PM

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Rossi: repeal health-care law & return to "limited" govt.

Jim Brunner

9:30 a.m. This post has been updated with comments from Murray campaign, Democratic and Republican senatorial campaign committees.

Republican Dino Rossi finally made it official this morning, entering the U.S. Senate race for the seat held by three-term incumbent Sen. Patty Murray (D).

In a five-minute video posted to his web site, www.dinorossi.com, Rossi reaches out to voters upset with the direction the country is headed, citing rising unemployment, plummeting housing values, "wasteful" stimulus plans and "massive new debt as far as the eye can see."

In language straight out of Ronald Reagan's playbook, Rossi says "America's best days" lie ahead if we "unleash the power of the people" and restore government to its "proper, more limited role."

He says he decided to run because he couldn't look his children in the eye if he did nothing "while this fundamental redefinition of America continues unchecked."

"I believe the policies of being passed in Washington D.C. have put us on the edge of a fiscal cliff. If we enact much more of this stuff, whether it's cap and trade, energy taxes or a value-added tax, then all the work and sacrifice our parents and grandparents did to make this country great for us will have been squandered."

Rossi's delivery is relaxed and friendly, though not without several minor verbal hitches. (The video's release was also slightly delayed this morning.) He looks directly into the camera, seated in front of what appear to be old family photos.

The speech hits notes familiar to anyone who followed Rossi's 2004 and 2008 gubernatorial campaigns.

He talks about his hardworking Italian immigrant grandparents and his own record as a state senator from Sammamish, who helped craft a difficult 2003 budget by working with fiscally conservative Democrats.

Rossi says he'd do the same thing "in the other Washington."

Rossi says he'd start by "replacing the Pelosi-Reid health care bill with something that will actually reduce costs and increase access," though he gave no specifics.

Rossi says he wants to restore the "American Dream" that his grandparents believed in.

"The dream was never a promise that everybody would have the same things or that government would provide you with everything you need no matter what. Our shared American dream was that you would have the freedom to rise as high as your talent and work ethic would take you."

Rossi's campaign has said he won't be holding a news conference or consenting to any media interviews today, but that he'll do some interviews Thursday.

The campaign is off to a very late start -- Rossi has said he was not thinking of running until recruited by national party leaders a few months ago. Still, his name recognition almost certainly makes him the front-runner among Republicans vying to face off against Murray in November.

Perhaps the clearest sign of Rossi's status has been the frenzied campaign by Democratic operatives, who have been pushing anti-Rossi stories for months with national and local media.

They haven't felt as threatened by Clint Didier, Don Benton, or the other Republicans in the race.

Jeff Bjornstad, Murray's campaign manager, sent out a statement framing a Rossi-Murray matchup as a choice between "putting people back to work" or "take us back to the failed Bush-era policies that got us in this mess."

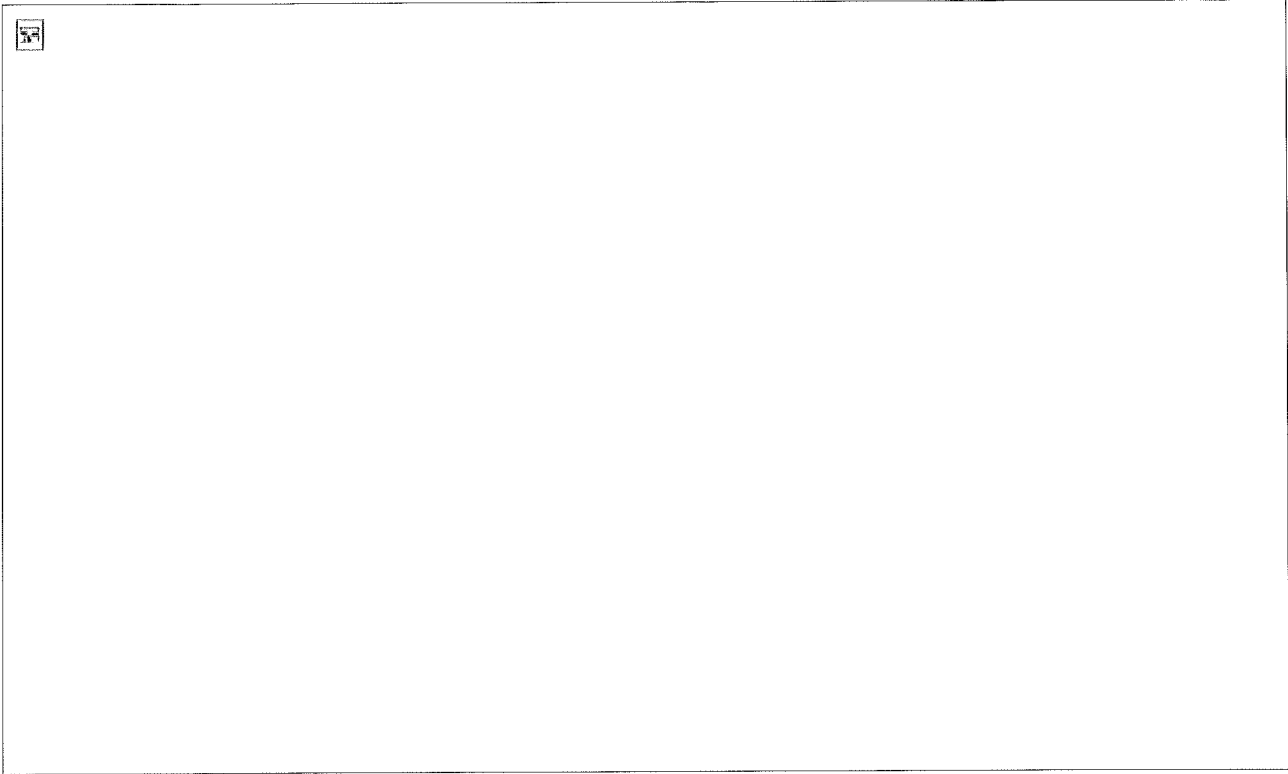
"Its (sic) a choice between who has stood up to special interests and who will cater to them. It's a choice between who is standing up for Main Street and who has gotten rich thanks to Wall Street. Its (sic) a choice between who is helping prevent foreclosures and who is profiting from them." Bjornstad said in a written statement.

Meanwhile, National Republican Senatorial Committee press secretary Amber Marchand carefully avoided designating Rossi as the presumptive GOP challenger to Murray.

"Yet another qualified Republican candidate stepped forward today to challenge Senator Patty Murray this November. No matter who the voters ultimately select as their Republican nominee in August, we are confident that Washingtonians will hold Patty Murray accountable for her long record fighting for higher taxes and out-of-control spending during her 18 years in D.C. Unfortunately, this former mom in tennis shoes has simply lost touch with her constituents during her nearly two decades in the Senate."

J.B. Poersch, executive director of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, sent a memo to reporters saying Rossi has refused to answer "several substantive questions on his ethical conduct," including an unpaid tax bill from his real-estate company and his participation in a seminar on how to profit from buying foreclosures.

The Stranger's Eli Sanders went to Rossi's real-estate talk last night and writes that it was "mostly motivational pabulum."



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Politics

Wash. Republican gov candidate to skip convention

By CURT WOODWARD, The Associated Press

2008-08-22 00:43:48.0

Current rank: *Not ranked*

OLYMPIA, Wash. -

Bracing for the final round of a tough re-election contest, Gov. Chris Gregoire has a little party business to take care of first: She's heading to the Democratic National Convention as a delegate for Barack Obama.

Republican challenger Dino Rossi, however, won't be on hand to see John McCain collect the GOP presidential nomination early next month. Instead, Rossi's hitting the road in Washington, trying to scare up enough votes to unseat Gregoire.

He's not alone. Several Republican U.S. senators facing re-election contests also are skipping the Republican convention in St. Paul, Minn., where a highly unpopular President Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney will make final appearances.

Democrats say it's a clear sign Rossi is trying to hide his party identity in a blue-leaning state. They also point to his primary ballot affiliation, "Prefers GOP Party," and local polling that indicates a quarter of registered voters were clueless about the Republican nickname.

Rossi's campaign, of course, calls the Democrats' theory hogwash.

When Republicans convene on Sept. 1, Rossi will instead be focusing on the battleground at hand - an appearance at the Black Diamond Labor Day parade, followed by fundraisers in Pasco and Olympia. He also plans a fundraiser with Louisiana Republican Gov. Bobby Jindal next month.

"There's no votes in Minnesota," spokeswoman Jill Strait told The Associated Press on Thursday. "We felt his time would be better spent on the ground here in Washington state."

True enough. But it's also a relatively easy political decision to avoid sharing a roof with the Bush administration, which is mired in very low approval ratings.

If it were just a question of appearing with McCain, attending the convention would be safer for Rossi, Western Washington University political scientist Todd Donovan said.

McCain built his national profile by crossing the political aisle and sometimes spurning Republican orthodoxy - the kind of playbook that works for statewide GOP candidates in Washington, where there's a sizable contingent of self-identified independent voters, Donovan said.

"(McCain's) not polling too bad here. Nobody thinks he's going to win it, but he's not as polarizing as George Bush," Donovan said. "Those Republicans that can make a claim of crossing party lines have always done really well in Washington."

In fact, Donovan said, Senate or governor candidates usually aren't too overt about tying their campaign to the party's presidential standard-bearer.

That doesn't mean Gregoire is shy about her allegiance to Obama. Gregoire was a relatively early endorser of the Illinois senator, and appeared onstage with him in a packed Seattle NBA arena during Obama's February caucus swing through Washington.

Obama's wife, Michelle, has raised money for Gregoire, and Obama has appeared in a pro-Gregoire radio ad and mailer. After Tuesday's primary election, in which Gregoire leads Rossi by about four percentage points, the governor was readily pitching herself as Obama's strong partner.

"They all see the polls - he's popular in Washington. It's not going to hurt to have the connection there," Donovan said.

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THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

June 13, 2010

'Party preference' line offers candidates a creative outlet

Jim Camden
The Spokesman-Review

OLYMPIA – Washington state's top two primary can bring out the creativity in some candidates, but not necessarily in the best way.

It pops up when some fill out a box in the form that will list their "party preference" on the ballot. The vast majority of the candidates pick the big two – Republican or Democratic party – and a few list some of the established minor parties, like Green or Reform.

But others this year tried to signal something else to the voters in the 16 characters allotted, like a stand on the issues, or maybe just the state of being.

Thus voters in Spokane County have a candidate for prosecuting attorney who prefers the Law & Order Party, although it's not clear if that's his stance on crime or a preference for a long-running television series. Voters in a coastal legislative district have a candidate who prefers the Lower Taxes Party, while those in the northern Puget Sound counties have someone preferring the Happiness Party.

Not sure if those two are mutually exclusive or essentially the same. For some people, it seems, lower taxes would lead to happiness; for others, higher taxes would be needed to buy the stuff of happiness.

Only one legislative candidate listed a preference for the Tea Party, which seems odd considering that's probably the most discussed political movement of the year. Maybe that's because most adherents realize the Tea Party isn't a party in the traditional sense; maybe it's because people within the movement don't agree on whether the first word in the label is an acronym, for Taxed Enough Already, or a historical reference to the colonial protest in Boston Harbor.

Even within the big two, there were a few attempts to signal something to voters who may be unhappy with the major parties' status quo, with candidates listing themselves as "Independent Dem" or "Reluctantly GOP."

GOP is the traditional abbreviation for the Grand Old Party, which means the candidates who show up on the ballot as preferring the GOP Party are guilty of a redundancy. Perhaps it was a concern for good semantics that led U.S. Senate candidate Dino Rossi, who listed himself as GOP Party in the 2008 governor's race, to Republican this year.

In any case, the top two system was adopted last week by California voters. With all the wacky creativity in the Golden State, one wonders if they know what they're getting themselves into.

Baird won't replace Baird

One of the most interesting developments on the final day of candidate filing took place in Washington's 3rd Congressional District, which is a crowded race for an open seat with the retirement of Brian Baird.

Filing Friday afternoon was one Bryan Baird, who would seem to have a bit of an edge, despite the replacement of an "i" with a "y." But elections officials eventually ruled the "y" Baird was too young to run.

Bryan won't be 25 until March. The U.S. Constitution requires a member of the U.S. House to be at least 25 when taking office. At least the younger Baird – who is no relation to the incumbent Baird – got his \$1,740 filing fee back.

Spin Control, a weekly column by veteran reporter Jim Camden, also appears online with daily posts, reader comments and videos at www.spokesman.com/blogs/spincontrol.

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Wednesday, August 20, 2008 - Page updated at 07:35 PM

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Handful of Wash. races to be one-party showdowns

By RACHEL LA CORTE
 Associated Press Writer

There were few surprises in Washington's first "top two" primary, but a handful of statehouse races spotlight one of the new system's most interesting facets: two people from the same party moving on to the general election.

Eight legislative races in November now are shaping up as one-party showdowns - six in the House and two in the Senate.

In some cases, like the race for the Senate's 11th District, there wasn't even a second-party challenger. In any other year, that would have meant Senate Budget Chairwoman Margarita Prentice running unopposed in November, after claiming 49 percent of the vote in Tuesday's primary.

Instead, under the new winnowing primary, Prentice, D-Renton, advances to face one of two Democratic opponents - Juan Martinez or Scott McKay - in the race for the 11th District, which includes south Seattle and suburbs. Martinez had 27 percent of the vote in early returns, and McKay had 24 percent.

Other contests had candidates from more than one party, but still saw two hopefuls with the same party preference moving on to November. One example: The 36th District House seat vacated by retiring Rep. Helen Sommers, D-Seattle, now being sought by Democrats Reuven Carlyle and John Burbank, who edged out Republican candidate Leslie Bloss.

For critics of the new top two system, these one-party general election ballots - and the opening for candidates not endorsed by the parties - isn't a good idea.

"It's a stretch to call this election a primary," said Washington State University political scientist Lance LeLoup, who is not a fan of the new system. "It's the first round of a general election. So the state of Washington, in a literal sense and historic sense, no longer has a primary. The parties really can't choose their own nominees anymore."

But Secretary of State Sam Reed called the election a success, and said the voters were the "big winners" because they'll be presented with the strongest candidates in a given district.

"They best represent the district because they're the top vote getters," Reed said Wednesday. "There's a certain logic that says they ought to be the ones squaring off in November. They'll have to campaign through November and be accountable to voters. That's healthy for our process."

The top two primary, which voters approved in 2004, was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court earlier this year. This was the first time since 2003 that Washington voters were able to skip back and forth along party lines to pick a favorite candidate for each office. The top two finishers advance to the general election on Nov. 4, regardless of party.

And since the top two is a winnowing primary rather than a nominating contest, candidates get to align themselves with whichever party label they want, even if they're not the "official" candidate of the state parties.

In the race for U.S. Rep. Brian Baird's seat for the 3rd District, Baird easily advanced, but the official Republican candidate, Christine Webb, was trailing behind fellow Republican Michael Delavar, in early returns.

The Democratic and Republican parties' concerns were mostly unrealized, with most of their preferred candidates in the top races, including governor, treasurer and attorney general, all moving forward.

Democratic Party spokesman Kelly Steele said regardless of that fact, the primary "offers voters less choice."

"We think the system has some problems," he said. "I'm not sure where it's going to go. We don't have any immediate plans to claim harm from what happened yesterday, in a legal sense. We'll see how this all pans out."

In its ruling, the Supreme Court noted that since a top two primary had not yet been carried out, there was no basis for the parties' argument that voters would be confused.

The political parties believe that leaves the door open for them, and they're still pursuing challenges on various aspects of the law in federal courts.

"I'm still optimistic we'll win that lawsuit and the top two will be found to be unconstitutional," state Republican Party Chairman Luke Esser said.

Reed originally predicted a 46 percent turnout for the primary, but he said Wednesday that it will likely be less due to lower-than-expected poll turnout in Pierce and King counties - the only two counties that still have poll sites.

With a range of 30 percent to 50 percent of the expected vote tallied in various races Wednesday, true turnout won't be known for sure until early next week.

But there weren't any surprises in the early returns.

With about 39 percent of the expected vote counted in the gubernatorial race, Gov. Chris Gregoire had about 49 percent of the vote, her Republican challenger Dino Rossi had 45 percent, and both advanced easily to the general election in November.

In the treasurer's race, Republican Assistant Treasurer Allan Martin, and Democratic state Rep. Jim McIntire, an economist and former House Finance Committee chairman, both moved on to November.

In the secretary of state's race, voters also advanced Republican incumbent Reed and Democrat Jason Osgood to the general election. Superintendent of Public Instruction Terry Bergeson and challenger Randy Dorn also moved on to the November general election in that nonpartisan contest.

Other races included lieutenant governor, where incumbent Democrat Brad Owen easily advanced. State Auditor Brian Sonntag and Insurance Commissioner Mike Kreidler, both Democrats, also advanced to the general election. All three face relatively weak opposition in November.


Republican Attorney General Rob McKenna faced Democratic challenger Pierce County Executive John Ladenburg, and Republican Public Lands Commissioner Doug Sutherland faced Democrat Peter Goldmark. All four advanced under the top two format, since there weren't any third challengers in either race.

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Washington state Secretary of State: <http://www.secstate.wa.gov>


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September 8, 2008 - 2:09pm

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House Republicans see good news in the numbers

By Bryan Bissell

Category: LocalTags: Toby Nixon, Terry Neally, Steve Litzow, Skip Priest, Roger Goodman, Mike Hope, Marcie Maxwell, Liz Loomis, Kevin Parker, Jan Angel, House Republican Organizational Committee, Bill Grant

Two weeks ago in Denver, Washington state Speaker of the House Frank Chopp (D-Seattle) **remained hopeful** of the Democrats' long term strategy for maintaining a large House majority, but after August's "top two" primary, House Republicans are as hopeful as ever.

Kevin Carns, the Director of the House Republican Organizational Committee, told *PolitickerWA.com* that, after analyzing an extensive series of numbers, House Republicans should be able to reduce the Democratic majority by at least two seats in 2008.

"From a macro perspective we are in very, very good shape," Carns said. "We are in a strong position to pick up a couple seats minimum."

The HROC director cited figures from the primary that showed positive signs for a number of Republicans statewide. Every Republican incumbent and every combined Republican candidate running for retiring Republican open seats received at least 50 percent of the primary vote, and two Republican challengers, Mike Hope (R-Everett) in the 44th and Toby Nixon (R-Kirkland) in the 45th, hit the 49 percent mark against incumbents Liz Loomis (D-Snohomish) and Roger Goodman (D-Kirkland), respectively.

Meanwhile two Democratic incumbents, Rep. Don Barlow (D-Spokane) in the 6th and Geoff Simpson (D-Covington) in the 47th, were both under 50 percent in the primary. Barlow was on the other side of a competitive Republican race between Spokane's Kevin Parker and Mel Lindauer, and Simpson had Democratic opposition following a domestic dispute that resulted in an arrest, though all charges were dropped.

"I think we've got very good opportunities in the 6th Legislative District with Kevin Parker, and in the 26th with Jan Angel (R-Port Orchard) is a very, very strong opportunity for a pickup," he said of the former Kitsap County Commissioner. "She did very well in Kitsap County which is traditionally where we lose."

Carns was also very high on Mercer Island City Councilman Steve Litzow in the 41st and said that he had done better than any Republican in that district in the past fifty years. He also didn't rule out a surprise in the 16th Legislative District where Terry Neally is challenging ten term Rep. Bill Grant (D-Walla Walla) in an otherwise Republican-leaning district.

To help win these seats back, the House Republicans have developed a field accountability program for their legislative candidates. First implemented in 2006 but not fully on track until this year, it tracks doorbelling numbers, phone calls and letters to the editor weekly.

"We're pretty pleased with the results and I think it really speaks highly of how

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Rob Tornoe

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- ☐ Biden
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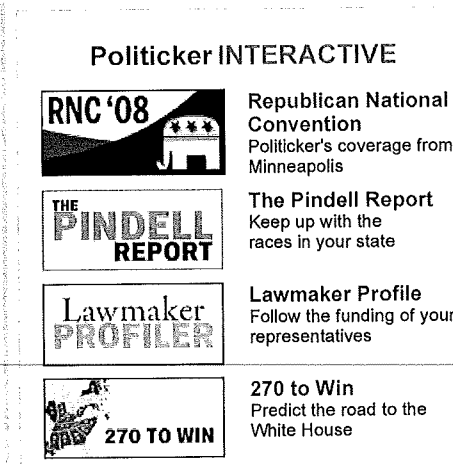
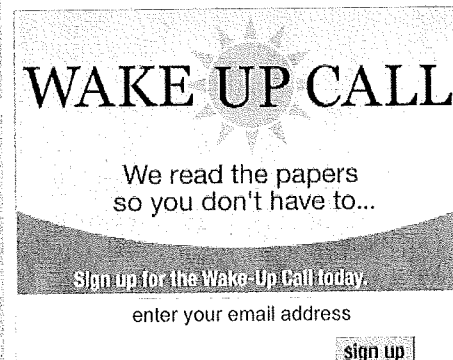
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hard our guys are working on the ground," Carns added.








Kevin Parker has reportedly knocked on 16,000 doors, and called Steve Litzow has bit 12,000 doors himself. Carns called Litzow a "campaign animal" who quite fittingly has been bitten by dogs twice already on the campaign trail, and still earned their owner's vote.

It is not just the challengers who are working hard, either.

"[Rep.] Skip Priest (R-Federal Way) is a doorbelling machine as an incumbent," Carns said of the Federal Way Republican. "Skip is a great example in our caucus that you can win in a district that doesn't necessarily lean your party's way. Skip works hard and he stands up for his community, but he doorbells like a madman."

It is exactly that madman-like ferocity the Republicans are counting on this fall, in part because of the significant money disadvantage they have compared to House Democrats.

"We're going to get outspent, clearly," Carns acknowledged. "But if you have good ideas and good people you can overcome that."

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Quote of the Day

September 9, 2008

"From a macro perspective we are in very, very good shape. We are in a strong position to pick up a couple seats minimum."

-Kevin Carns, the Director of the House Republican Organizational Committee, on the possibility that state House Republicans could reduce the Democratic majority by at least two seats in 2008

-PolitickerWA.com, 9/8/08

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Primary election results narrow the playing field

Wednesday, 27 August 2008

Election shows thin margins between "top two" winners

By JAMIE HENNEMAN
S-E Staff Reporter

As the primary election results were tallied up and reviewed last week, the dog-hair stand of contenders for several major races was whittled down to only a hardy, merchantable few.

Races for governor (10 candidates), congressional district no. 5 representative (6 candidates) state representative pos. 1 (5 candidates) were pared down to just the top two vote getters in the "no-affiliation" style primary. Washington Voters this year didn't have to claim an "affiliation" with any political party in order to vote for a candidate—they just marked the candidate they preferred with no strings attached.

Stevens County Election Coordinator Beverly Lamm said that Stevens County voters have responded positively to the "top-two" primary.

"People just love this style of primary and also seem to be responding well to the newer vote-by-mail system," said Lamm. "We seem to of had a better voter turnout since we started vote by mail and haven't had any complaints about the system."

Lamm said about 50 percent of the county's voters participated in the primary election, with 13,000 some votes coming into the elections department. The election results aren't official, however, until Sept. 3 after the "canvassing board" has a final chance to look over ballot errors. Common mistakes or omissions reviewed by the canvassing board include late postmarks, missing signatures and signatures that don't seem to match the name on the ballet.

Happily, the new style of ballots don't have any "hanging chads" but a handful of voters seemed to be confused about the meaning of the "top two" system because they marked two candidates for each position, said Lamm. The top two are actually determined by the number of overall votes the candidates get and voters can only vote once in each race.

The members of the canvassing board are determined by law (RCW 29A.60.140) and include the auditor, the county prosecutor and the chair of the board of county commissioners. These officials may appoint other members of their staff to attend the canvassing board if they are not able to attend.

Along with sorting out problem ballots by way of the canvassing board, the elections department will also continue to tally in ballots from military voters that have the proper postmark. The full elections results can be viewed at

<http://wei.secstate.wa.gov/stevens/Pages/default.aspx>.

The results from the major state and county races are listed below:

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WEDNESDAY AUGUST 27, 2008 Last modified: Monday, August 25, 2008 4:43 PM PDT

Why have primary elections?

Exactly what did we learn from the recent state primary election, actually the second one this year? The first one was ostensibly for president, which was ignored mostly by the political parties. Yes, it was early but that turned out to not mean much.

The August 19 primary was about state and local matters. We had a primary for governor and other state offices. In King County the incumbent Democratic governor got more votes which experience tells us that does not mean much for the November general election. For one thing, people in August are more concerned with a day (maybe) in the sun or when the kids get back from camp. Politics and elections are considered lightly, if at all.

There was an interesting idea about making several county offices nonpartisan, abolishing the largely symbolic party labels here. The people voted overwhelmingly to make the King County executive, assessor and county council members' races where party affiliation does not count.

Since when has political party mattered here for the past decade or two? Republicans in King County are as rare as igloos in Phoenix. The few that are around have moved so far to the left as to be considered rather quaint. That, in this newspaper's view, is not good for the citizens because all good ideas do not spring from a well-marked "Democrat."

But that non-partisan vote was only preliminary and we have to do it all over again in November to make it so. What's with this? We have an election to decide we will have an election to make something happen?

In West Seattle we had an election for members of the state House and Senate, but we had no choice. Only the incumbents were on the ballot. Democrats true, but not even a stray name with interest, say Goodspace Guy. Now that should not be interpreted to mean we don't think our legislators are doing a good job. Sharon Nelson of Vashon took over the House seat vacated when Joe McDermott was elevated to the Senate. Nelson, McDermott and Rep. Eileen Cody all do a respectable job, but we wish we heard more from them, as they are largely silent except for a newsletter once or twice a year.

The general election will pit Reuven Carlyle against John Burbank. Republican Leslie Bloss was overwhelmed by the two Democrats. Carlyle got 44 percent of the vote and Burbank 40 percent. We will talk to both and made a recommendation to voters before the November election, but we are unhappy that they will be virtually forced to tear each other apart and spend a long of money to take a job that pays only \$42,106 a year.

The real question is why we have these elections. One obvious reason was to wrest and keep control out of political party hands. When the courts invalidated our open primary, the Democrats and Republicans maintained they had a right to choose their own candidates, an argument that made some sense.

The state then came up with a primary election that required each of us to specify one of the two political parties we prefer in order to be allowed to vote. Virtually no one liked that and the question rang from the rafters, "Why do I have to be a Republican or a Democrat in order to vote in a state-paid election?"

So the top two was born here. It is better than having nonpartisan voters having to tell a white lie in order to exercise their election franchise, but it seems a bit unfair for Republicans in a state overwhelmed with Democrats.

That brings us to the question about whether it is a good idea to have an entire regions dominated by a single party. We wish there was a chance to remove some dead wood, but since they are Democrats they are in no danger at all - few Democrats want to run against fellow Democrats. (We note once possible exception as County Council member Larry Phillips is contemplating running against Executive Ron Sims.)

Elections cost taxpayers money. To have too few is cheating us from making important decisions, but too many is costly and lulls many into to figuring their vote may have some importance but not much. We should reconsider primaries having little reason for being.

- Jack Mayne

-- CLOSE WINDOW--

Strange Bedfellows

<http://blog.seattlepi.nwsourc.com/seattlepolitics/archives/147134.asp>

An about-face in Seattle's 36th District

When primary election results started coming in one week ago, it looked like John Burbank was slightly favored over fellow Democrat Reuven Carlyle for state representative in Seattle's 36th District.

Throughout the week, more votes were counted. Now Carlyle has garnered more favor with 44 percent of the district's vote, compared to Burbank's 40 percent.

Republican candidate Leslie Bloss came away from the primary with support from 15 percent of voters.

Because of the state's top-two primary system, Democrats Burbank and Carlyle will both advance to the general election.

Posted by **Amy Rolph** at August 26, 2008 10:48 a.m.

· [Return to An about-face in Seattle's 36th District](#)

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THIS STORY HAS BEEN FORMATTED FOR EASY PRINTING

Big-party fatigue shows in quirky candidate labels

AP Associated Press

By Curt Woodward, Associated Press Writer | June 19, 2010

OLYMPIA, Wash. --Fed up with the established political parties? In Washington state, so are some of the candidates.

Encouraged by the state's unconventional primary system, around 30 candidates on the Aug. 17 ballot have shunned mainstream politics to instead identify with very small or apparently invented parties. Among them: the "Lower Taxes Party," the "Bull Moose Party" -- or even "Neither Party."

The growing number of these candidates -- there are about twice as many on the ballot as in 2008 -- is a quirk of the state's "top-two" primary system in which all candidates, regardless of party affiliation, compete with each other. The two garnering the most votes for a given office advance to the November general election.

First used two years ago following a voter initiative, Washington's system allows candidates to be listed on the ballot as "preferring" any party they wish, though that preference doesn't imply the candidate has been nominated or endorsed by the party.

California recently adopted a similar open primary system, but candidates there will not list their party affiliation on the ballot. Instead, a candidate's party registration would be stated on the secretary of state's website.

In Seattle, a stronghold of liberal Democrats, Ray Carter is challenging a veteran state representative with a self-styled party brand.

Opposed to the GOP's stance on gay rights and really ticked off by the Democrats' fiscal policies, Carter has signed up as "Prefers Reluctantly R. Party" (a limit on the number of characters meant he couldn't spell out Republican.)

"I think that the number of people who are bad fits for either party is increasing," said Carter, who works for an electric-car seller. "And I believe that both parties are going to have to, after the election ... undergo some wrenching self-examination."

Office-seekers can't use profanity on the ballot but most anything else is fair game, even though elections officials urge candidates to avoid absurd or completely invented party names.

Despite their efforts, the system appears to be encouraging experiments in creative political identification. The number of people running under very small or invented party labels has doubled in two years, with Independents surging from just four to 15 in two years. The tally does not count Greens or Libertarians, who have some established presence in Washington.

Most have only a tiny chance of beating an establishment candidate this November. But in a year that has proven volatile for incumbents nationwide, antiestablishment candidates provide another glimpse at the foul mood awaiting political insiders at the polls.

"In general, I think the parties have too much power, and I don't think we need them anymore," said Bob Jeffers-Schroder of Seattle, a one-time Republican running as "Independent - No Party" in a climate-change-focused bid against Rep. Jim McDermott, D-Wash. "I think they do more harm than good."

With economic malaise running high, it's a decent time to try those kind of candidacies, Western Washington University political science professor Todd Donovan said.

"Third-party, independent candidates get more support when the economy's going bad -- people look for a protest vote," Donovan said. "If you assume that there's candidates who are savvy to that, it's a good time to get on the ballot."

This year's crop of nontraditional candidates also coincides with the rise of the tea party movement, the fired-up conservatives who often feel similar disdain for both big government and establishment political machines.

Among them is Rex Brocki of Union Gap, who filed as "Prefers Tea Party" to challenge longtime incumbent Congressman Doc Hastings, R-Wash.

"What professional political operatives will tell you is, (Republicans) don't have to worry about pandering to their base because, in their phrasing, 'Where else are they going to go?'" Brocki said. "Well, that's why I'm running: To give them somewhere else to go."

But even though cranky voters and upstart candidates might grow in a difficult year, the Democratic and Republican parties will remain the default choices for most voters, independent pollster Stuart Elway noted.

"The thing is, by the time we get down to voting, it's two parties," Elway said. "We have this two-party system, and it's all geared toward funneling people into one of those two parties. You can be frustrated with it, but when November comes, that's your choice." ■

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Bakke's grip on second place drops by one vote

Aug 31 2008 · **UPDATED**

Incumbent Republican Phil Bakke continues to win in the battle for second place on the November ballot in the District 1 Island County commissioner race.

With less than 25 votes left to count, Island County's election division reports that Bakke is leading no-party candidate Curt Gordon by 52 votes.

Bakke had led by 53 votes early Friday.

Democrat Helen Price Johnson is solidly in front in the four-person race, with 5,250 votes.

Republican Reece Rose remains in fourth, with 1,598 votes.

The primary election will be certified as official on Sept. 3. Under Washington's top-two primary, the two candidates with the most votes will advance to the general election in November.

Find this article at:

<http://www.pnwlocalnews.com/news/27719659.html>

☐ Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

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Thursday, September 4, 2008 - Page updated at 12:48 AM

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Love that top-two

The votes are in and Washington citizens overwhelming prefer the new, top-two primary.

So suggests an Elway poll of voters who voted in both the Aug. 19 primary, which let voters select among all candidates for office, and the 2006 pick-a-party primary that forced voters to confine their votes to candidates of only one party.

More than 70 percent of voters said they preferred the top-two qualifying primary, while a measly 20 percent preferred the partisan nominating primary. The parties are still attempting to litigate over the voter-approved top-two primary, but they do not have the support of most voters who identify themselves as partisans. About 68 percent of Democrats preferred the top-two, as did 66 percent of Republicans.

The Secretary of State's office won't certify the election results until Sept. 9, but turnout looks like a healthy 42.5 percent statewide — not bad for mid-August.

That's short of Secretary Sam Reed's 46 percent prediction, but nicely ahead of two years ago, when the primary was still held in mid-September. The 2006 turnout of 38.9 percent no doubt was depressed because many voters did not want to participate in the partisan primary the state parties had forced on them through litigation.

The stubborn political parties should take note of voters' desires, not to mention the Supreme Court decision that instated the top-two primary, and stop their unpopular efforts.

[SeetheElwaypollatwww.sectate.wa.gov](http://www.sectate.wa.gov)

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Ballot Access News

Edited by Richard Winger

Washington State Primary Turnout Worse in 2008 than in 2004

September 4th, 2008

The Washington Secretary of State's office is almost finished tallying the results of the August 2008 primary. According to the Secretary's web page, only 200 ballots remain to be counted. The Secretary of State's web page also shows that the 2008 turnout was 42.58% of registered voters. That figure might change a miniscule amount when the absolute final tally is finished.

In the last gubernatorial primary in Washington state, in 2004, the Secretary of State's webpage shows the turnout was 45.14%. In 2004, Washington state used a classic open primary. In 2008, for the first time, Washington used the "top-two" primary. "Top-two" proponents always argued that "top-two" would surely produce a higher turnout than any other type of primary. Secretary of State Sam Reed, who supports "top-two", had predicted before the August 2008 primary that turnout would be 46%.

One Response to "Washington State Primary Turnout Worse in 2008 than in 2004"

1. *Demo Rep Says:*
September 4th, 2008 at 8:55 am

At least **some** gerrymander district incumbents **surely** will have some real opposition in November — and thus **may** even lose.

NO primaries are needed.

Equal nominating petitions for ballot access in general elections.

P.R. legislative and Approval Voting - executive / judicial.

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Exhibit 246
Page 3 of 3

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Cut down 9 lbs of stomach fat every 2 weeks
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Sep, 3, 2008

ELECTIONS

Few votes invalidated in first top-two primary

SAM TAYLOR

Maybe it's something in the water: Whatcom County voters appear to be getting better and better about correctly filling out their election ballots, as only about 1.1 percent were declared invalid this primary.

The state's first top-two primary brought out 47.2 percent of Whatcom County's voters - a lower figure than Auditor Shirley Forslof's initial prediction of 55 percent voter turnout.

During the 2006 primary, about 4.5 percent of ballots were declared invalid. That number dropped to 3 percent in the 2006 general election. About 7.1 percent were declared invalid during the 2007 primary. That dropped to about 2.2 percent during the general election the same year.

The Auditor's Office automatically will have to conduct manual recounts for 10 precinct committee officer races that were tied, said Elections Supervisor Pete Griffin.

Nine of the 10 tied races involved Democratic PCO candidates, with one Republican race tied. Griffin said one precinct had five Democrats tied. Each had just one vote apiece.

If the races remain tied after the manual recounts, the Auditor's Office will conduct either a coin toss to break that tie or some other method where multiple candidates are involved. That could mean drawing straws.

Meanwhile, some 548 ballots out of 50,715 total votes received by the Auditor's Office were declared invalid for various reasons, including:

- No signature: 21.
- No signature match: 68.
- Late postmark/deposit: 444.
- Canceled: One.
- Deceased: One.
- Power of Attorney (can't be used to vote): One.
- Signed ballot (instead of envelope): 2.
- Envelope contained no ballot: 10.

Reach SAM TAYLOR at sam.taylor@bellinghamherald.com or call 715-2263.

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Today is **Thursday**,
Sept. 4, 2008

Lewis County Certifies Primary Results

No Surprises: Turnout of 51 Percent Far Exceeds State Numbers

Posted September 4, 10:46 am. E-mail this article to a friend.



By The Chronicle

It's official -- and there were no surprises -- as Lewis County certified it's Aug. 19 primary election results on Wednesday.

Voter turnout was just over 51 percent, compared with the state's total turnout of 42.5 percent, on par with recent years that included a presidential ticket.

For the county commission race, Republicans Bill Schulte and Lyle Hojem are poised to compete in November. After all votes were tallied, Hojem came out with 46 percent of the vote, to Schulte's 35 percent.

John Penberth, the former mayor of Pe Ell, received slightly more than 17 percent.

For the general election, the two remaining candidates will vie for the votes of the entire county, whereas the primary only involved voters from District 2, which encompasses Chehalis and West Lewis County.

It's the only same-party competition, despite the state's first top two primary which allows the two most successful vote-getters to advance to the general election regardless of their party preference.

For the state Senate seat in District 20, incumbent Republican Dan Swecker will face Democrat Chuck Bojarski, as he did in 2004. Neal Kirby and Ted Shannon -- two other Republicans in that primary race -- were knocked out.

If Kirby and Shannon's numbers are added, they make up a 2,400-vote (6.5 percent) advantage over Bojarski, which gives credence to Swecker's campaign theory that Shannon's late entry in the race watered down votes for a single Republican alternative.

The registration deadline for the Nov. 4 general election is Oct. 4. For those not previously registered in Washington, the deadline is Oct. 20.

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New Elway poll: Voters like Top 2 Primary

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News Release

Issued: August 28, 2008

OLYMPIA - A new statewide poll shows that Washington voters like the new Top 2 Primary and much prefer it to the "pick-a-party" system that required voters to restrict themselves to one party's candidates.

The poll, conducted by independent pollster Stuart Elway for the state Elections Division, showed:

- A heavy percentage of voters, 76 percent, liked the Top 2 system that made its debut last week. The new system, approved by the voters as Grange-sponsored Initiative 872 in 2004 and recently upheld by the U.S. Supreme court, allows voters to choose their favorite for each partisan office, without regard to party. Candidates are permitted to indicate which party they prefer, but that doesn't mean the party approves of, or associates with, the candidate. Top 2 is not a nominating process to pick a finalist from each party, but rather a winnowing election to send the two favorite candidates forward to the November finals. The Elway poll showed that 19 percent did not like the new system and the rest did not answer or didn't know.
- By a lopsided 67-28 margin, respondents said they didn't like the "pick-a-party" system that was used in the four previous years. That system, which allowed a voter to choose only among one party's candidates, resulted from then-Gov. Gary Locke's veto of the Top 2 plan passed by the Legislature in 2004. The "pick-a-party" system was the fallback system lawmakers had approved. Secretary of State Sam Reed, some County Auditors and the state Grange organization had promoted Top 2, first as legislation, and later, as a citizen initiative. Voters approved I-872 by 60 percent in November, 2004, but it was on hold while the parties challenged it in federal court. The state and its voters won on appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court in March.
- Asked which of the two systems they prefer now that they've been able to see both in operation, voters strongly preferred the Top 2 Primary _ 70.5 percent, to the pick-a-party system's 20 percent. The rest said "neither" or gave no answer.

The poll showed that respondents of both major parties and self-described Democrats prefer the Top 2 approach over the pick-a-party system _ 82 percent of the independents, 68 percent of the Democrats and 66 percent of the Republicans. On the Top 2 question, 83 percent of the independents said they liked the new system, 80 percent of the Democrats and 66 percent of the Republicans.

"The poll confirms the reports we received from election offices all around the state: the voters liked the Top 2 Primary," said Nick Handy, state elections director.

Reed said the clear and overwhelming popularity of the new system shows that it fits well with the state's long political tradition of independence and the notion of "vote for the person, not the party."

The poll was conducted Aug. 22-24 among 500 registered voters who voted in both the 2006 pick-a-party primary and this year's Top 2. Margin of error is plus or minus 4.5 percentage points. The poll participants, asked their party preference, split this way: Democratic, 39 percent; Republican 30 percent; 21 percent independent and the rest declining to answer or none of the above. The poll showed that 94 percent were aware of the new primary system and 75 percent said they had seen or heard news stories and public-service

ads about the new system prior to voting.

Elway said he wasn't surprised by the huge popularity of the new primary. He said his earlier polling on the old "blanket" primary showed similar enthusiasm for a system that allowed crossover voting and chose a nominee for each major party. That system was tossed by the courts after the parties sued.

"Before we switched to pick-a-party, we had the old blanket primary system for nearly 70 years _ almost no one now alive can remember anything else, other than our last few years with pick-a-party. Options that let people go across party lines to vote in the primary have been lots more popular here. It's pretty deeply rooted here. Significant majorities in both parties say they like this new system."

Ballots are still being counted in last week's voting, and total turnout is expected to top 42 percent. Over 1.4 million ballots have been tallied so far. Handy, the elections director, said turnout is fairly strong this year, despite the lack of many hotly contested primaries and the lack of a U.S. Senate race this year. The Top 2 system generated almost no voter complaints or questions about how the system works, compared with the heavy blowback from angry voters when the pick-a-party system was implemented in 2004, he said.

Grange spokesman Dan Hammock said the poll backs up what the Grange has been saying all along about the popularity of wide-open voting. "Washington voters are so independent-minded and they don't want to be limited. The choice couldn't be more clear, and the new poll just proves that. We're very pleased."

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Topline Data: Primary Election Evaluation

This summary presents draft response frequency distributions for the survey of Washington residents who voted in both the 2006 and 2008 Primary Elections.. Telephone interviews were completed with 500 such voters between August 22 - 24, 2008.

The overall maximum margin of sampling error is $\pm 4.5\%$. That means, in theory, there is a 95% probability that the results of this survey are within $\pm 4.5\%$ of the results that would have been obtained by interviewing all qualified Washington adults. The raw data have been statistically weighted by gender to bring this sample profile into line with the profile of the 2006 Primary electorate.

The data are presented here in the same order the questions were asked in the interview. The figures in bold type are percentages of respondents who gave each answer. The percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

FROM SAMPLE:

Congressional District:	CD1	CD2	CD3	CD4	CD5	CD6	CD7	CD8	CD9
	12%	12%	12%	9%	11%	11%	11%	12%	10%

COUNTY

NAME	%	NAME	%	NAME	%
Adams	0.4	Grays Harbor	1.2	Pierce	9.8
Asotin	0.2	Island	1.8	San Juan	0.0
Benton	2.0	Jefferson	1.5	Skagit	1.4
Chelan	0.8	King	27.5	Skamania	0.0
Clallam	2.0	Kitsap	4.8	Snohomish	9.2
Clark	6.0	Kittitas	0.0	Spokane	6.5
Columbia	0.2	Klickitat	0.6	Stevens	0.6
Cowlitz	1.4	Lewis	1.0	Thurston	5.2
Douglas	1.0	Lincoln	0.6	Wahkiakum	0.0
Ferry	0.4	Mason	1.6	Walla Walla	0.4
Franklin	0.8	Okanogan	1.2	Whatcom	4.9
Garfield	0.0	Pacific	0.4	Whitman	0.6
Grant	1.2	Pend O'reille	0.0	Yakima	2.8

Voted in '04 Primary.. **80%**

Voted in '05 Primary.. **54%**

Voted in '06 Primary.. **100%**

From Survey: Hello. I'm calling from Elway Research, an independent public opinion firm in Washington state. My name is _____. We are conducting a public opinion survey on behalf of the Washington State Elections Division about the recent Primary Election. You are one of 500 persons – selected at random – who is being interviewed across the state. We are not selling anything and your answers will be anonymous and confidential.

We are trying to keep our sample in balance, so my instructions are to talk to a [MALE / FEMALE] registered voter at this number who voted in the Primary Election last Tuesday.

1. Are you aware that Washington had a new form of Primary Election this year?

YES...94

SKIP TO Q3 ← NO...5

SKIP TO Q3 ← DK/NA...1

2. Prior to last Tuesday's election, had you seen or heard any advertising or news stories explaining the new Primary System – known as the Top Two Primary?

YES...75

NO...17

DK/NA...2

SKIPPED/NOT AWARE...6

3. As you may know, over the past four years, Washington state has used two forms of primary election. These primaries are called the "Pick A Party Primary" and the "Top Two Primary."

We want to ask your opinions about these two forms of primary.

ROTATE Q4 - Q5

4. The form used for the last several years is known as the "Pick a Party Primary". In this form, you were required to first pick a party and you were then allowed to vote only for candidates of that party. In general did you like or dislike that system?

LIKE...28 DISLIKE...67 [DK/NA...4]

5. In this year's primary, known as the "Top Two Primary", you could vote for any candidate for each race. You were not required to pick a party. In general did you like or dislike that system?

LIKE...76 DISLIKE...19 [DK/NA...4]

6. Which of these types of Primary Election do you prefer:

Pick a party...20

Top Two...71

Neither...4

DK/NA...6

7. I have just a few last questions for our statistical analysis. 18-34...**5**
How old are you? 35-44...**11**
45-59...**36**
60+...**47**
[NO ANSWER]....**1**
8. Finally, if you had to register by party in order to vote, would you register as a...
- READ & ROTATE: Democrat...**39**
Republican...**30**
Independent...**21**
[No answer]....**10**
- SEX: Male...**46** Female...**54**

Thank you very much. You have been very helpful.

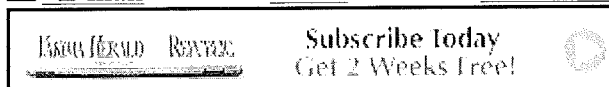
From the YakimaHerald.com Online News.

Published on Thursday, August 28, 2008

Updated tally shows high primary turnout
by Pat Muir
Yakima Herald-Republic

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Updated counts from last week's primary show relatively high voter participation and some subtle shifts in percentages, but no changes in winners and losers.

Thousands of voters apparently waited until the last day or two to mail their ballots to the Yakima County Auditor's Office. More than 16,000 of the 43,178 votes cast in the county arrived at the office on or after the Aug. 19 election day.

That late bump put the participation rate at just about 46 percent in Yakima County -- a little less than Auditor Corky Mattingly's 48 percent prediction, but still higher than in recent primaries.

By contrast, only 33 percent of registered county voters cast ballots in 2006, the last even-year primary. And only 37 percent cast ballots in 2004, the last presidential-year primary.

County elections supervisor Kathy Fisher attributed the increase to the new top-two primary. From 2004 until this year, voters had to pick a party and only vote for candidates from that party. The top two changed that.

"People weren't very happy with having to pick a party," Fisher said.

Hotly contested multi-candidate races for a 14th District state House seat and a District 2 Yakima County Commission seat also drove voter participation, she said.

The numbers in those races have changed since election night and will change again slightly over the next few days as county elections officials count the final few hundred votes. Through Wednesday afternoon, 42,632 of 43,178 returned ballots were counted, or about 98.7 percent. County elections officials will continue counting ballots until Sept. 3 when they certify the election. The state will certify the final numbers Sept. 9.

Democrat Vickie Ybarra lost a couple of points from her election-night lead but still finished first among the six candidates for an open 14th District state House seat. Ybarra had about 30 percent of the vote through Wednesday after finishing election night with about 32 percent. The second-place finisher and her general election competitor, Republican Norm Johnson, gained a little ground, increasing his percentage from 21 percent on election night to 22 percent in the most-recent count.

Perhaps more importantly looking forward, the total of Republican votes cast in that 14th District primary increased from about 68 percent to about 70 percent. That could be a factor in the general election, when it is only one Republican facing only one Democrat.

There was a similar shift in the county commissioner race.

Since election night, second-place finisher Democrat Jesse Farias lost a point to first-place finisher Republican Kevin Bouchey.

As of Wednesday, Farias had 28 percent of the vote to Bouchey's 41 percent.

On the Web:

http://www.yakimacounty.us/vote/PrimaryElectionResults1_003.pdf



From the YakimaHerald.com Online News.

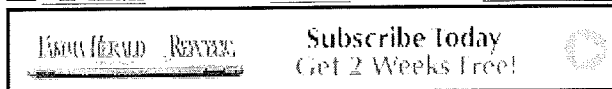
Published on Thursday, August 28, 2008

Top-two primary is a success for restoring choice

Yakima Herald-Republic

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Campaigns for state and local offices are in high gear, which means we're mobilizing our own news coverage and endorsement interviews to deal with them. And as we look forward to the Nov. 4 general election, we look back and say this year's first-ever top-two primary election was a solid success in winnowing down to two finalists.

Voter participation by nearly half of the registered voters in Yakima County and across the state was a welcome development and bodes well for turnout in the general in a presidential election year.

As unpopular as this state's brief flirtation with a "pick-a-party" primary was, it seems top two is what the voters want. It's apparently as close as we can legally get to the old blanket primary method ruled unconstitutional by the courts. With that method, voters could skip around on the ballot and vote for the candidate of their choice and the top vote-getter in each major party advanced to the general election.

Top two, on the other hand, allows the top two vote-getters -- regardless of party -- to advance.

Concerns that the new system would produce too many races with finalists of the same party weren't really justified. Only eight legislative races in November will now be one-party showdowns -- six in the 98-member House and two in the 49-member Senate. And not one of them is in Yakima County.

The only Eastern Washington races to produce same-party finalists were for a state House seat from Benton County and another from a multicounty district in the Wenatchee area. In a crowded 14th Legislative District race, Democrat Vickie Ybarra and Republican Norm Johnson, both of Yakima, advanced to the finals, leaving four Republicans in their wake.

Even a Yakima County Commission race, featuring three GOP candidates and a lone Democrat, produced a two-party face-off in November between Republican Kevin Bouchey and Democrat Jesse Farias. Incumbent Republican Ron Gamache did not make the finals, showing, at least initially, that top two also doesn't necessarily provide an incumbent's edge.

All things considered, we like the way this year's election process is working out: an earlier primary date in August, compared to the old one in mid-September, and the top two weeding-out preliminary that forces both parties to pay attention and field candidates voters will turn out for in the primary.

Both make the run-up to the general election more manageable with a more realistic time frame between the primary and general.

Now pay attention to the candidates and issues in the finals. The all-mail ballots for the general will be available Oct.

15, starting a 20-day window of opportunity for voting. And that will be here before you know it.

** Members of the Yakima Herald-Republic editorial board are Michael Shepard, Sarah Jenkins, Bill Lee and Karen Troianello.*



Wednesday, August 27, 2008

Property tax tale: PT says 'yes,' Brinnon says 'no'; it's Sullivan vs. Hershelman

By Patrick J. Sullivan, Leader Staff Writer

Wednesday, August 27, 2008

**VOTE
2008**

Voters in Brinnon have said no to raising property taxes to support fire district proposals, while voters in Port Townsend said yes to raising city property taxes to pay for the public library.

Results from the Aug. 19 primary vote in Jefferson County are not final until certification next week. Another batch of ballots that made the Aug. 19 postmark deadline will be counted Aug. 27, but election night results aren't expected to change.

The local ballot for the Nov. 4 general election is now set. It includes two contested races for county commissioner, a contested race for Public Utility District 1 commissioner, a Port Townsend School District 50 construction bond issue, and Proposition 1 to grant the PUD the ability to enter the electric utility business. Those ballots go in the mail Oct. 15.

Brinnon defeat

In Brinnon, Fire District 4 officials are wondering what could have been done differently to convince voters that supporting a fire levy increase and initiating an emergency medical services levy would have been the right choice.

Proposition 1 (fire levy increase) is failing with 278 yes votes (45.28 percent) compared to 336 no votes (54.72 percent.) It needs a 50 percent-plus-one majority to pass.

Proposition 2 (the district's first emergency medical services levy) is failing with 357 yes votes (56.94 percent) to 270 no votes (43.06 percent). Proposition 2 needs 60 percent voter approval to pass.

In November 2006, Fire District 4 voters rejected (63 percent voted no) a fire levy increase. Fire commissioners spent seven months in 2008 on a public process before bringing the two current issues before voters. There was scant public attendance and almost no negative comments. So why are both measures losing?

"I'm disappointed that the returns are not better," District 4 Chief Bob Herbst said Aug. 26, holding some hope that a mathematical miracle could occur with the Aug. 27 ballot count and at least one measure could pass.

"I think money and the economy is part of it, but I don't think these communities as a whole have a full picture of what the ramifications are without these funding measures," Herbst said.

Election Forums

Realtor association interviews candidates Sept. 3

Jefferson County Association of Realtors invites the public to attend interviews with state and local candidates at 9 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 3 at the Spruce Room, WSU Jefferson County Extension, 201 W. Patison St., Port Hadlock.

Chimacum Grange hosts commissioner candidates Sept. 10

Chimacum Grange welcomes the community to a candidates' debate at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 10 at the Grange, 9572 Rhody Drive at West Valley Road.

Invitees are candidates for Jefferson County commissioner Districts 1 and 2 and Washington state representative for the 24th District.

Questions will be taken from the floor. This event is open to the public; everyone is invited. Refreshments are served. Call 732-0015 for further information.

Exhibit 253
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Herbst is preparing information for the commissioners to review Sept. 12 to help determine how the district can decrease expenses and increase revenue. The board would probably need to make some decisions in October for the 2009 budget. One decision regards the chief: His contract paying \$41,000 a year expires in December. Herbst said he would like to stay.

Cost-saving options are painful, such as closing Station 42 (Duckabush) and/or Station 43 (Bee Mill Road), and surplus older equipment.

Closing either of those substations would dramatically affect homeowner insurance rates, Herbst said. Any property owner living farther than five road miles from a fire district station is subject to a higher fire rating for insurance purposes. The District 4 rating is presently an eight. Closing a substation would give people in the affected area a rating of 10.

"Home insurance rates would go up drastically because a 10 rating basically means no fire service," Herbst said.

The district today has 11 active volunteers, one semi-active volunteer and the chief. Voters were asked to approve tax measures that would have led to the hiring of three full-time firefighter/EMTs, and eventually a firefighter/paramedic.

The thin volunteer crew was evidenced Sunday by a series of calls. At 7:22 a.m. Aug. 24, Herbst and two volunteers responded to a victim of a possible stroke at a home south of the Canal Tracts, south of Brinnon. That person was being transported to Mason General Hospital in Shelton when dispatch at 8:46 a.m. toned out that two people were in the water off Seal Rock.

A district volunteer at Boy Scout Camp Parsons organized a response with the help of a nearby boater, and they proceeded to retrieve the two people and their overturned boat.

Then at 9 a.m., an aid call came for respiratory arrest at a home in the Canal Tracts. The Brinnon aid car was still at the Shelton hospital, so mutual aid was requested from District 2 (Quilcene). However, District 2 asked that District 3 (Port Ludlow Fire & Rescue) respond. As it turned out, the Brinnon aid car returning from Shelton arrived at the home at 9:46 a.m., about the same time as the Medic 33 unit from Ludlow.

There's a false sense of security in a rural community to believe that enough volunteers are always available to handle the rising level of medical calls, on top of fires or other emergencies, Herbst noted.

"With the staffing that could have been in place with the levies, we could have provided the services" to cover multiple incidents at one time, Herbst noted.

Commissioner races

The Aug. 22 ballot count made it clear that Independent Sandy Hershelman is advancing with incumbent County Commission Democrat David Sullivan for countywide vote in November.

Sullivan gained a few votes Friday. Sullivan ended the week with 1,808 votes to Hershelman's 1,381, and Republican Richard Hild pulled up third in the top-two District 2 primary with 1,041 votes.

District 1 voters set the pace in the primary with incumbent Democrat Phil Johnson well ahead of challenger Republican Dennis Schultz - with the race to be decided by countywide vote in November. Johnson had 2,500 votes to 762 votes cast for Schultz on Tuesday. Johnson had 3,213 votes as of Friday, and Schultz earned 898 votes.

There were 21,296 voters eligible to cast votes in Tuesday's election. As of Friday, 13,480 ballots have been counted. The 63.3 percent turnout exceeds Auditor Donna Eldridge's prediction of 62 percent.

City library

In the City of Port Townsend, a proposed permanent lid lift of the general fund in support of library operations is passing with room to spare. The proposition was passing at 64.5 percent; it needed 50 percent.

As of Friday's ballot count, there were 2,666 in favor and 1,467 opposed. The measure increases property taxes over a three-year period and provides a dedicated funding source for public library operations.

"We are feeling jubilation," said Fran Post, levy lid lift campaign chairwoman, said Tuesday night. "It's not just the library that will benefit from this. I am so grateful for all of the people who came together for this campaign. It was a labor of love for all of us."

(Staff writers Allison Arthur and Barney Burke contributed to this story.)

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Republicans make strong showing in Pierce Legislative races closer in Gig Harbor area than Kitsap

Paige Richmond
of the Gateway

Published: 12:31 PM August 27th, 2006

If the results of last week's primary election serve as an example, the 26th Legislative District is earning its "swing" reputation. The leading candidates in the two state Representative races after the Aug. 19 vote are from opposing political parties.

Jan Angel, a Republican Kitsap County Commissioner, edged out her opponent, Democrat Kim Abel, by nearly 9 percent overall in the race for State Rep. Position 1. That seat had been held for six terms by Democrat Pat Lantz, who had endorsed Abel after announcing her retirement in March.

Democrat Larry Seaquist, the first-term incumbent currently holding the Position 2 seat, is 10 percent ahead of his opponent, Republican Marlyn Jensen.

The results of the primary, and the possibility of having representatives from opposing political parties in Olympia next year, were not surprising to Seaquist. It was something he dealt with during his 2006 campaign.

"This is the swing 26th," he said. "It's a district that's evenly split between Republicans, Independents and Democrats, so candidates here have to work to get elected."

Angel also credits hard work — both in her current office as Kitsap County Commissioner and in her State Representative campaign — for winning her the primary.

"I think the most important thing with the voters is that I've been meeting people at their doors, in groups and at their business(es)," she said. "A lot of them have already heard of me or know of my record or performance."

The results show voters are split in the Pierce County area of the 26th Legislative District, an area comprised of Gig Harbor, the Key Peninsula and Fox Island. The margin in both legislative races was closer in Pierce County than in Kitsap, with both Republican candidates making their strongest showing here.

Angel, for example, received about 10 percent more votes than Abel in Pierce but only 7 percent more in Kitsap.

The gap is even narrower between Seaquist and Jensen. Although Seaquist edges Jensen by almost 15 percent in Kitsap, he maintains only a 6 point lead in Pierce — the closest margin in either race so far.

There is an explanation for that, said Jensen, a longtime Gig Harbor resident. While she's noticed the Gig Harbor area is "probably" more traditional and conservative than Kitsap County, she doesn't credit party alliances alone with gaining her votes.

"I'm not real well-known in Kitsap County. I'm the new girl on the block," she said, adding that she's done more doorbelling in Pierce County.

Jensen said she plans to spend more time in Kitsap County between now and the November general election, when she expects the outcome will be in her favor.

Abel, the former mayor of Port Orchard, also predicts that November will bring different results in the race for Position 1. She said her campaign strategy "was to win in November, not August" and that the months leading up to the general election will help voters "see the difference" between herself and Angel.

In 2006, Lantz, the incumbent at the time for Position 1, won the primary over Republican Becky Krantz by 13 percent. Just months later, she won the general election by a near-identical margin: 13.37 percent.

But that margin was narrower in Pierce County. Lantz was ahead by 23 percent in Kitsap and only 3 percent in Pierce during the primary; by the 2006 general election, Lantz was 17 percent ahead in Kitsap and 9 percent in Pierce.

Krantz fared better in Pierce County than in Kitsap in 2006, receiving nearly 4 percent more votes in the Gig Harbor area than she did farther north.

"(Gig Harbor) is moving toward a little more Republican," said Seaquist, who won the area by 9 percent in the 2006 general election and Kitsap by almost 11 percent. "It's balanced by a little more Democrat in the Port Orchard (and) Bremerton area. But it's a very small difference."

Some of the 26th District's candidates are anticipating that the general election could be different story than in years past. Both Jensen and Abel credit changes in this year's primary — a Top 2 system and a month earlier date, for example — as reasons why some voters may have stayed away from the polls in August.

Jensen expects more people will turn out in November.

Even with a more than 30 percent turnout in Pierce County at the primary, Seaquist expects "two to three times" as many voters in the general election.

While the candidates may disagree on the election's outcome, they do agree on one thing: Gaining bi-partisan support is key to success in the 26th District.

Angel said working with both parties is something she's dealt with as the sole Republican on the Kitsap County Board of Commissioners — and something her supporters recognize. While at an event at Canterwood Golf & Country Club earlier this month, Angel said she was approached by one citizen who planned to vote for her, even though he was a registered Democrat, because she had "the strongest experience."

"We all have to think about how we are going to work together to help (the citizens)," Angel said, citing hard economic times as a concern she's heard from voters. "You have to negotiate and try to work out the best solutions for your citizens."

Breaching the party divide is a skill that could come in handy if Angel wins the election in November, since it would be the first time in more than a decade that a Republican has held the seat.

Like the other three candidates, Angel is looking toward November and what she can accomplish, if elected.

"That's why we all ran for office to start with," she said. "Our goal is to make it better."

Primary results

Republican candidates for the both state Representative positions in the 26th Legislative District fared better in the Pierce County area of the district than in Kitsap County.

The Pierce County area includes Gig Harbor, the Key Peninsula and Fox Island.

Position 1

Pierce County: Republican Jan Angel prevailed against Democrat Kim Abel by 9.78 percent.

Kitsap County: Angel's lead is 7.34 percent.

Position 2

Pierce County: Democrat Larry Seaquist, the incumbent, leads Republican Marilyn Jensen by only 5.8 percent.

Kitsap County: Seaquist's margin of victory was 14.48 percent.

By the numbers

All of the numbers reflected in the story are drawn from the Secretary of State's primary vote counts as of 9 a.m. yesterday. At that time, more than 95 percent of statewide ballots and nearly all of Pierce County's ballots had been counted.

The Secretary of State has until Sept. 3 to count all of the ballots and certify the results.

Voter turnout in Pierce County is already higher this year than it was in the 2006 primary. More than 32,000 people voted in 26th District Legislative races in the 2008 primary; only about 25,000 voted in 2006.

Reach Reporter and Columnist Paige Richmond at 253-853-9243 or by e-mail at paige.richmond@gateline.com.

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Vote typical of 2008 elections

Published: 11:42AM August 27th, 2008

THE recent primary election results show that the Gig Harbor area reflects the current mood of the state and, perhaps, the nation. The Democratic and Republican candidates for state House representative positions split relatively evenly in our area, at least more so than in the traditionally Democratic portions of the 26th Legislative District in Kitsap County. And that means a tight race right down to the last vote.

The situation is similar for the governor's race, as Christine Gregoire and Dino Rossi also seem headed for a photo finish, although we can only hope to avoid another controversial recount.

The close voting may represent a conflicted electorate, but it is also a predictor of something much more practical: Every vote will count. When races hang on the choices of 25 or 50 ballots, each potential voter makes a difference. Just casting a ballot this year has the potential to swing the outcome in the 26th District.

If you haven't registered to vote, there's still time.

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Today is **Thursday**,
Aug. 28, 2008

Delavar Plans Self-Directed Trip to Iraq

Waiting for a Visa: Challenging Baird, Anti-War Republican Congressional Candidate Hopes to See the 'Real Iraq'

Posted August 27, 10:26 am. E-mail this article to a friend.



By Dan Schreiber
The Chronicle

Republican congressional candidate Michael Delavar has a lot to say about why the U.S. is wrong to be in Iraq, and now he wants to see it for himself.

As last week's primary results solidify, second-place finisher Delavar says he'll independently visit the country before the general election in November.

The self-described Constitutionalist is poised to challenge incumbent Democratic U.S. Rep. Brian Baird, who supported last summer's 20,000-troop surge, much to the vexation of his party.

Baird's position on Iraq also drew opposition from the staunchly anti-war Olympia Democrat Cheryl Crist, along with Republican favorite Christine Webb, a party activist from Tumwater.

The four-person race was subject to the state's new primary system, in which the top two vote-getters move on to November regardless of their party preference. As expected, Baird dominated the race with more than half the vote in five of the district's seven counties, and nearly half the vote in sturdily Republican Lewis County.

The unofficial primary results point to a familiar Republican versus Democrat scenario, but voters who want clear party lines on the war would need to move out of Southwest Washington before the registration deadline.

Delavar says the U.S. military operation is a violation of Iraq's sovereignty and if elected, he would support a phased withdrawal of troops. Baird, who voted against the 2003 invasion, says the increased manpower has been effective in calming violence outside Baghdad's green zone, and the current drawdown to a pre-surge level is appropriate.

Baird has visited Iraq twice to talk with Gen. David Petraeus, the top U.S. commander in Iraq, along with Ambassador Ryan Crocker and coalition troops.

Although Baird says the war was one of the worst foreign policy decisions in U.S. history, the congressman strongly advocates that Iraq be stabilized before a complete pullout.

Delavar, who declined to reveal specific travel plans for security reasons, said he wants to see the "real Iraq."

"My trip is going to have a different flavor than his because I'm not going there as an elected congressman, and I don't have the same connections he has," Delavar said. "The question is whether this is a war or an occupation. I believe that the only people who can give an honest answer are the Iraqi people themselves."

Baird said the issue of sovereignty is moot considering the former rule of Saddam Hussein.

"A brutal dictator who represses his own people has limited sovereign authority," Baird said, adding that there has been no official request from the elected Iraqi government that the U.S. military leave the country.

Baird said while he didn't get a chance to meet with many regular Iraqi folks on his trips, he had a variety of meetings that were

crucial to his understanding of a complex situation.

"We didn't just meet with diplomats and soldiers. We met with Iraqi leaders, Iraqi soldiers and representatives from major factions -- whether they were Sunni, Shia or Kurdish," Baird said. "I doubt (Delavar) will have access to those people."

Baird said although Delavar's desire to understand Iraq is admirable, the Republican will likely only attempt to confirm his preconceived notions about the conflict.

"If you go listen to people tell you what you want to believe, you're not going to learn very much," Baird said. "Maybe he'll learn something, but it's not quite as simple as the rhetoric."

Baird also said Delavar might be putting himself and U.S. forces at risk.

"He might endanger the lives of our soldiers who might have to protect him, and that has to be weighed seriously," said Baird, who scoffed at Delavar's suggestion that he was led by military leaders to see only a polished picture of the war. "They bend over backwards to try to make (meetings) happen. There's all this nonsense that they lead you around by the nose and only show you what they want you to see."

Delavar, who is currently applying for an Iraqi visa, said Iraq's sovereignty is being violated despite the fact that there has been no official request that the U.S. end operations.

"If we're the reason why that elected government remains in power, the mere fact that they're not requesting we leave has more to do with our ability to meddle in their internal affairs than the will of the people," Delavar said.

Crist, who disagrees with Delavar on almost every issue but the war, said she currently won't throw her support behind a particular candidate, but she admires the Republican's effort.

"I have got to admire Michael Delavar's courage because he is seeking the truth," Crist said. "I'm not trusting the rosy scenario we're getting from mainstream media and Brian Baird."

Delavar said the Iraq trip depends on his success at gathering private donations dedicated specifically for the travel and logistics involved. He says he has a lot of work to do. If the primary is any indication, Delavar would have to gather all the votes of pro-war Webb and anti-war Crist to be competitive.

Baird said he said plans to visit with local troops in Iraq again in November -- after the election.

...

Dan Schreiber covers county government and environmental issues for The Chronicle. He may be reached at 807-8239 or dschreiber@chRONline.com.

by Timothy Schmidt
August 27, 1:55 pm

Mr Delavar,

I urge you to not go to Iraq due to the pressure of an American Servicemember having to provide security for you on your trip. I am a Soldier awaiting deployment, and no offense, I would not want that detail. You want to go to Iraq to se it for real? Enlist or apply for a commission and you will be sent. Better yet, beceom a journalist and become embedded with a military unit.

If you are duly elected, then go. The daily duty in Iraq is hard enough without a non elected civilian on the ground needing protection because he os she by the rules of war are not allowed to carry a weapon, even in self defense.

by icymudpuppy
August 27, 2:48 pm

Hey Timothy, I'm a soldier too, and I support his visit. He is not requesting a troop detail. He wants to visit Iraq independently. That means he doesn't want a troop detail.

Add a comment to this article:

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This is a printer friendly version of an article from www.peninsuladailynews.com
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Article published Aug 27, 2008

Clallam election turnout nearly 53 percent

By Tom Callis, Peninsula Daily News

The Clallam County Auditor's Office has tallied 3,443 ballots since its last count on Thursday in the Aug. 19 primary election, and will count more today.

The additional votes that have been counted changed no outcomes.

About 23,400 of the 44,119 ballots mailed in the all-mail primary election have been returned.

The voter turnout is about 53 percent.

About 5,000 ballots have yet to be tallied.

The approval margin for a property tax levy lid lift for Olympic Medical Center now is 8,894 yes votes — or about 54 percent — with 7,642 no votes, or about 46 percent.

The levy will raise the lid on the hospital operations levy from 11 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value to 44 cents.

The increase will mean a jump from \$2.29 a month for the owner of an average-value, \$250,000 home to \$9.17.

The change will take place January 2009. **Other results**

In the race for Clallam County Commissioner District 2 seat, incumbent Mike Chapman will face Terry Roth in the Nov. 4 general election.

Chapman, who ran as a Republican to win his first two terms, but who is running now as an independent, leads with 2,790 votes, or about 51 percent, in the latest count.

Roth has received 1,497 votes, or about 27 percent.

Democrat David Fox has received 1,190 votes, or about 22 percent.

In the race for Clallam County Public Utility District No. 1 Commission District 2 seat, incumbent Hugh Haffner will face Bob Jensen in the general election.

Haffner leads, in the latest count, with 2,012 votes, or about 51 percent.

Jensen has received 1,299 votes, or about 33 percent.

Tom La Rosa has received 604 votes, or about 15 percent.

In the Governor's race, Republican Dino Rossi will face incumbent Christine Gregoire, Democrat, in the

general election.

Statewide, Gregoire has received 670,657 votes, or about 48 percent.

Rossi has received 643,968 votes, or about 46 percent.

None of the other eight candidates have received more than 2 percent of the vote.

In Clallam County, Rossi is still leading Gregoire with 8,947 votes, or about 49 percent.

Gregoire has received 8,266 votes, or about 45.5 percent in Clallam County.

Incumbent Norm Dicks, Democrat, will face Republican Doug Cloud in the general election for the 6th Congressional District.

Districtwide, Dick has 93,114 votes, or about 58 percent.

Cloud has 48,078 votes, or about 30 percent.

Democrat Paul Richmond has 14,119 votes, or about 9 percent.

Green Party candidate Gary Murrell has 5,680 votes, or about 3.5 percent.

In Clallam County:

- Dicks has received 7,623 votes, or about 43.5 percent.
- Cloud has received 7,009 votes, or about 40 percent.
- Richmond has received 2,218 votes, or about 13 percent.
- Murrell has received 689 votes, or about 4 percent.

In the race for Court of Appeals Division 2 District 2 position — which was decided in the primary election — Robin Hunt has won 102,635 votes, or about 64 percent.

Tim Ford has 57,932 votes, or about 36 percent.

Within Clallam County, Hunt has received 8,547 votes, or about 60 percent.

Ford has received 5,593 votes, or about 40 percent in Clallam County. _____

Reporter Tom Callis can be reached at 360-417-3532 or tom.callis@peninsuladailynews.com.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 07-08-044, filed 3/28/07,
effective 4/28/07)

WAC 390-05-275 Definition--Party organization. "Party organization," as that term is used in chapter 42.17 RCW and Title 390 WAC, means a bona fide political party as defined in RCW 42.17.020 and applied in WAC 390-05-196.

NEW SECTION

WAC 390-05-196 Bona fide political party--Application of term. An organization that filed a valid certificate of nomination with the secretary of state or a county elections official under chapter 29A.20 RCW in any year from 2002 through 2007 is deemed to have satisfied the definition of bona fide political party in RCW 42.17.020.