

John White

From: Deutsch, Joanie [jdeutsch@secstate.wa.gov]
Sent: Thursday, July 17, 2008 3:59 PM
To: Reed, Sam (Office); Ammons, Dave
Subject: RE: Primary
Attachments: Top 2 Key Messages.pdf; Sam's NASS presentation.doc

Well here are the key messages - that will help with getting something going.

Also, this is your stuff for NASS - she could pull something together from that too.

Joanie Deutsch | Policy Analyst
Office of the Secretary of State | Elections Division
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Phone: (360) 902-4182 | Cell: (360) 791-4239
www.secstate.wa.gov/elections

-----Original Message-----

From: Reed, Sam (Office)
Sent: Thursday, July 17, 2008 3:56 PM
To: Ammons, Dave; Deutsch, Joanie
Subject: FW: Primary

Do we have a boiler plate op-ed piece we could send to Kris Swanson?

-----Original Message-----

From: Swanson, Kris [<mailto:SwansonK@co.cowlitz.wa.us>]
Sent: Wednesday, July 16, 2008 6:00 PM
To: Reed, Sam (Office)
Subject: FW: Primary

Beat me to it, huh?

Got a staff member that could possibly help me out on the commentary piece?

-----Original Message-----

From: James Bross [<mailto:JBross@tdn.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, July 16, 2008 3:18 PM
To: Swanson, Kris
Subject: RE: Primary

Kris,
Sam Reed scheduled an edit board here about the Top 2 on Aug. 4 at 2 p.m. We'd be glad to see the two of you together. Also, I was thinking earlier that you might want to write a commentary (around 500 or 600 words) for us explaining the new primary for a Sunday op-ed page. What do you think?

(Will I see you parking cars on the morning of Aug. 2?)

9/15/2008

Thanks,
Jim

-----Original Message-----

From: swansonk@co.cowlitz.wa.us [mailto:swansonk@co.cowlitz.wa.us]

Sent: Wednesday, July 16, 2008 12:11 PM

To: James Bross

Subject: Primary

If you would like to have me come in or speak with you on the phone regarding the upcoming Top 2 Primary, I am ready when you are. Thanks.

=====

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9/15/2008



Secretary of State
SAM REED

Media Advisory

Secretary of State to hold media availability to discuss Top 2 Primary

Issued: August 1, 2008

Contact: Stephanie Horn
(360) 902-4193

Olympia... Secretary of State Sam Reed, joined by County Auditors, will hold media availability on August 6 and August 12, to discuss the widely popular Top 2 Primary.

Please join us at a one of the 4 locations nearest you, as we tour across Washington educating voters on the Top 2 Primary.

August 6, 9:30 am – 10:30 am

King County Elections Department

919 SW Grady Way

Renton, WA 98057

Joining Secretary Reed is Elections Director Sherril Huff.

August 6, 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

Spokane County Elections Department

1033 West Gardner

Spokane, WA 99260

Joining Secretary Reed is Spokane County Auditor Vicki Dalton.

August 12, 10:30 am – 11:30 am

Yakima County Elections Department

128 N 2nd Street

Yakima, WA 98901

Joining Secretary Reed is Yakima County Auditor Corky Mattingly, Klickitat County Auditor Brenda Sorenson, and Kittitas County Auditor Jerry Pettit.

August 12, 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

Benton County Elections Department

620 Market Street

Prosser, WA 99350

Joining Secretary Reed is Benton County Auditor Bobbie Gagner, Walla Walla County Auditor Karen Martin, and Franklin County Auditor Zona Lenhart.

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Washington's Top 2 Primary / Voter Outreach Campaign Messaging for Paid Media Effort

Mandatory Key Messages

- The new Primary election system gives voters the freedom and choice to "vote for the person, not the party."
- Voters can now choose any candidate on the ballot.
- The top two vote-getters will advance to the General election, regardless of their party preference.
- If there's a candidate you'd like to see in the General, make sure to vote in the Primary, [or] If you want to make the most of your choice, make sure you vote in the Primary.
- For partisan offices candidates can list a party they prefer.
- A candidate's party preference doesn't mean the party endorses or approves of that candidate.
- Washington voters approved a "Top 2" Primary by initiative in 2004.
- Your vote is your voice. Be heard by voting in the Primary election, August 19.
- To find out more, got to www.vote.wa.gov.

Mandatory "Avoidance" Statements

- Candidates should not be referred to as "Republican," "Democrat," "Independent," "Libertarian," etc.
 - Do not use the word "endorsed," "affiliated" or "nominated" unless a candidate has been officially endorsed or nominated by the named political party.
 - This is not the old "blanket Primary." Do not refer to it as a blanket Primary.
-

Sam's NASS presentation

Thank you for allowing me to share with you our unique experience in Washington State.

Our citizens, dating back to territorial times, have been fiercely independent. In fact, they demand it!

From 1936 to 2003, Washington voters cherished their blanket primary which gave them freedom to skip around the ballot and choose any candidate for the job. Washingtonians have always taken great pride in their ability "to vote for the person and not the party." They've thrown their support behind Republicans, Democrats, Libertarians, Independents, and minor party candidates alike in the same primary. Their party affiliation, if any, has been respected and kept private.

There's no question Washington is different than most states. We vote by mail. We don't publicly register with political parties. And, we reserve the right to champion any candidate for any job.

Our state's beloved blanket primary was declared unconstitutional in early 2004. My office, along with the State Legislature, went to work to find a replacement. The Legislature passed the Top 2 Primary and with a stroke of his veto pen, Governor Gary Locke gave us a Pick-a-Party Primary, forcing voters to chose only one political party's slate of candidates and vote only for the candidates in that party.

The state conducted our first Pick-a-Party Primary in 2004, and voters gave us a piece of their minds. In a 24-hour time period, voters flooded our office with more than 2,000 phone calls, an average of one new e-mail message every minute, and returning a publication, with their remarks, that was sent to each household to explain the new primary. [Play 2004 Ad]

In November 2004, an initiative was placed before the people to change the primary to a Top 2 style. As you can probably guess, the initiative passed with 60 percent voting yes.

The Political Parties in our state sued and we were stuck with the Pick-a-Party Primary until this year. This year, the United States Supreme Court upheld our Top 2 Primary in a 7 to 2 landslide. The voters will get their long awaited Top 2 Primary this year.

The Top 2 allows voters to choose among all candidates running for office. Voters do not have to declare a party affiliation to vote. The two candidates who receive the most votes in the Primary Election advance to the General Election. Candidates must receive at least 1 percent of the votes cast in that race to move on to the General Election.

When candidates file for partisan office, they may state a political party that he or she prefers. Here is the key point, though – a candidate's preference does not mean that he or she is nominated or endorsed by the party, or that the party approves of or even associates with that candidate. It is purely the candidate's party preference.

This makes it so Washington's primary is not a nominating primary; it is now a winnowing primary. The difference? In a nominating primary the purpose is to nominate one candidate from each major political party to advance to the General Election. In a winnowing primary the purpose is to narrow the field of candidates for each race down to two.

Even though our voters chose this primary, and we are confident they will love it, we must make sure it is not confusing for them. After all, it's the third style of

primary Washington voters have seen in the past five years and it's the only primary of its kind in the nation.

My office just launched last week, a full fledged media campaign to ensure voters understand this primary. We are using paid television ads, radio ads, the internet, newspapers, ethnic print newspapers for the minorities in our state, cable television and Comcast on-demand. We are also launching an earned media campaign targeting all news organizations in our state. We will utilize social media such as MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, and so on. Voters will receive their voters' pamphlet packed full of information they will need for this primary. When they receive their ballots in the mail, they will see an insert and their ballot will explain this primary.

Here is an example of what voters will hear. [Play 60 second radio ad]

The Top 2 Primary will change the political landscape in Washington. Because this is not a nominating primary, it is very similar to a nonpartisan election. Voters in Seattle may see two Democrats in the General, while voters in Walla Walla may see two Republicans in the General. In addition, minor parties are no longer burdened by the requirement to hold a convention and fill out petitions. Minor party and independent candidates will be placed on the primary ballot just like anyone else. This competition will be good for our state. It means we will see more viable candidates running in both the primary and the general.

In just the short time since the United States Supreme Court decided on this case, Oregon already has a proposed initiative for a similar style primary. I believe the Top 2 Primary may soon find its way into many states throughout the country. Every time you turn on the news you see how voters in our country are sick of partisan politics. This primary allows for the voter to decide who will advance to the ballot in November.

Thank you, and with that, I will open it up to questions.

John White

From: Deutsch, Joanie [jdeutsch@secstate.wa.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, July 23, 2008 3:58 PM
To: Reed, Sam (Office); Ammons, Dave; Zylstra, Brian; Siderius, Christina; Horn, Stephanie; Excell, Steve
Cc: Handy, Nick; Blinn, Katie; Hamlin, Shane; Pharris, Ingrid
Subject: RE: WA Top 2 Primary vs Oregon Initiative

Thank you Sam, I did the Louisiana analysis.

I will work on this comparison between the three when I return from Yakima.

Joanie P. Deutsch
Policy Analyst
Elections Division
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From: Reed, Sam (Office)
Sent: Wed 7/23/2008 3:54 PM
To: Deutsch, Joanie; Ammons, Dave; Zylstra, Brian; Siderius, Christina; Horn, Stephanie; Excell, Steve
Cc: Handy, Nick; Blinn, Katie; Hamlin, Shane; Pharris, Ingrid
Subject: RE: WA Top 2 Primary vs Oregon Initiative

Joanie –
How about doing an analysis of Washington's and Louisiana's Top Two Primary systems and Oregon's initiative. (You should find an analysis of the Louisiana Top Two in your files. I think Tami Neilson did it.) I find the points below to be much more important than whether states have party registration or not. In my opinion, the most important considerations are whether a voter can split her/his primary ticket and whether the top vote-getters move ahead or the top vote-getter in each party. So, I suggest listing these considerations first. Either bullet #1 or #2 should be expanded to explain that the voter can vote across party lines. Bullet # 4 should be made more explicit in respect to minor parties. Then put in your other points.

- Every registered voter gets the same ballot, listing all the candidates running for the office
- The voter can only select one candidate (presumably their favorite!)
- The top two advance, always (you cannot win with 50%+ in the primary)
- To get to the November ballot, you must file in the primary, and be one of the top two. No other way to get to the November ballot
- The two finalists might happen to be members of different parties, the same parties, or no party at all.
- The offices affected are all "state offices" elected on a partisan basis. (Existing offices, designated as "non partisan" like Supreme Court Judge and School Supt., are unaffected). These offices include: U.S. Senate and Congress; Governor and statewide offices, State Senator and State Representative; and certain offices, in certain counties without home rule charters, that are elected on a partisan basis.

Thanks.

-- Sam

From: Deutsch, Joanie

9/15/2008

Sent: Wednesday, July 23, 2008 9:44 AM

To: Ammons, Dave; Zylstra, Brian; Siderius, Christina; Horn, Stephanie; Reed, Sam (Office); Excell, Steve

Cc: Handy, Nick; Blinn, Katie; Hamlin, Shane; Pharris, Ingrid

Subject: WA Top 2 Primary vs Oregon Initiative

Hello Communications Team and Sam and Steve,

Attached, you will find a Top 2 Primary comparison between Washington's system and Oregon's initiative. As you will see they are incredibly different!

Ingrid, do you mind setting up a meeting for Sam, Steve, Nick, Katie, and I to discuss this? Thank you!

This needs to be discussed before we continue to say that Oregon is following our model, because they are not.

I'd be happy to answer any questions that you might have in the mean time.

Thanks!

Joanie P. Deutsch

Policy Analyst

Elections Division

Office of the Secretary of State

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9/15/2008

John White

From: Reed, Sam (Office) [Sam@secstate.wa.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, July 23, 2008 4:36 PM
To: Deutsch, Joanie
Cc: Handy, Nick; Ammons, Dave; Excell, Steve; Davis, Tami; Blinn, Katie; Even, Jeff
Subject: FW: Top Two Primary
Attachments: JUNE18FILEDVERSIONOPENPRIMARYINITIATIVE.doc

An interesting response from Secretary Keisling. He has some good points. Unfortunately, they move in a different direction from us. But, again, it sounds like it is the impact of Oregon's political heritage.

From: Phil Keisling [mailto:pkeisling@corsource.net]
Sent: Wednesday, July 23, 2008 4:30 PM
To: Reed, Sam (Office)
Cc: Handy, Nick; Deutsch, Joanie; Bill Campbell
Subject: RE: Top Two Primary

Oregon election law is pretty "undisciplined" about the word "nominating" and "nominee." – For example, we hold elections in May for non-partisan elections, for the expressed statutory purpose of "nominating" candidates to the November ballot. These candidates are described, in a number of places, as "nominees."

What they are NOT of course, are "party nominees," and an even better word might indeed be "qualify."

For our "voter choice offices" our initiative did deliberately take pains, where possible, to use words like "qualify" and "finalist." (Here's the filed version). The explanatory statement that we are proposing uses the word "nominee" for the existing system, but not for the new – we describe it, for example as a "run off between the top two finishers" from the May election." Look at Section 3 of our filed bill, for example – select "two finalist" candidates" – but then in Section 5, we do say the top two candidates....shall be "nominated" to the general election – again, this aligns with identical language for NON-PARTISAN offices.

I think there will be reporters and others who will not understand the distinction between "qualifying" and "nominating" – and some who do not WANT to understand the distinction, since it would undercut their argument.

In essence, we're fine with the VOTERS nominating candidates to the general election, rather than the PARTIES. We essentially ABOLISH the very idea of "party nominations" and "party nominees" – and say to the parties instead, "Look, you no longer can NOMINATE candidates IN the primary election – or TO the general election – but you can certainly ENDORSE candidates during either election cycle. We'll even inform voters of said ENDORSEMENTS (provided the candidate accepts – see Section 9).

Does that help?

Phil Keisling
Executive Vice President, Sales and Marketing
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From: Reed, Sam (Office) [mailto:Sam@secstate.wa.gov]

Sent: Wednesday, July 23, 2008 12:13 PM

To: Phil Keisling

Cc: Handy, Nick; Deutsch, Joanie

Subject: Top Two Primary

Phil –

One of my elections staffers is expressing concern about the description in the initiative of your Top Two Primary as a “nominating primary.” We successfully argued the distinction between a “qualifying primary” that the people can control and a “nominating primary” that according to the Jones decision the parties have a right to control. What is your position on that distinction?

-- Sam

9/15/2008

John White

From: Handy, Nick [nhandy@secstate.wa.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2008 8:28 AM
To: Ammons, Dave
Subject: RE: Primary Results

I have not done any analysis on this, but it appears to me that the Rs might be having a mild post primary night surge that is helping Sam and Dino. We've seen that in recent years.

On the other hand, in terms of the Governor's race, the 60,000 votes King reports yet to count is slight more proportional than the 140,000 reported statewide. That suggests that Gregoire might have more votes left to count.

But, the 2 to 4% difference forecasted by the polls in that race seems to be holding up pretty well.

Looks like we will have between 1.4 and 1.5 million voters in the primary. That is a respectable showing and we still have a shot at Sam's 46% although my guess right now is that we will fall in the 44% range.

From: Ammons, Dave
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2008 8:21 AM
To: Handy, Nick
Subject: RE: Primary Results

Late Friday, Sam was ahead of Sonntag in percentage, too. Also note that Rossi-Gregoire is 2 percent spread at the moment.

Best,
D

David Ammons
Communications Director
Office of Secretary of State
o (360) 902-4140
c (360) 280-3944
h (360)357-8908

From: Handy, Nick
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2008 8:14 AM
To: Legislative Bldg - All
Cc: 'Sam S. Reed'
Subject: Primary Results

Team,
The election results for the first time are now showing that Sam has more votes than any other statewide elected official (with an opponent) running in the primary.

Sam just moved past Brian Sonntag in total votes received.

Sam has also crossed the 59% number. Sonntag and Sam are leading the state elected officials at 59%.
Nick

Nick Handy
Director of Elections
Office of Secretary of State
State of Washington
(360) 902-4156

9/15/2008

John White

From: Peter Callaghan [peter.callaghan@thenewstribune.com]
Sent: Friday, August 22, 2008 10:46 AM
To: Ammons, Dave
Subject: Re: Top 2 Primary Leftovers

Thanks,

The most interesting race is in the 27th, though. That is a case where there was a plan to take advantage of top two. As of now the two r's (including phony r Wiley) are getting 4,005. The second D , Smeall, is getting 4,022.

This is as close as the parties will get to showing they've been harmed.

Here's a blog item I did.

All Working to Plan in the 27th Legislative District

Posted by **Peter Callaghan** @ 09:15:03 pm

Opponents of the Top Two primary predicted all sorts of funny business if a system was created that let two candidates from the same party to advance to the general election.

But the only race in the state where something out of the ordinary is taking place is in Tacoma's 27th. Incumbent **Dennis Flannigan** is expected to win re-election and had he faced off against Republican **Dale Woodard**, Flannigan's chances would improve.

Hey, nothing against Woodard but it's a Democratic district that hasn't elected a Republican since 1962.

However, if a moderate Democrat was sent to the runoff with Flannigan, that candidate might be able to build a coalition of moderates, independents and Republicans.

So **Jessica Smeall** filed as a Democrat and her fiance-roommate **Brent Wiley** filed as a Republican. Wiley told me in June that he urged Woodard to drop out and when he didn't, filed against him to dilute the Republican vote. That would enhance Smeall's chances of advancing.

Wiley, despite taking a Democratic ballot in this year's presidential primary, touted himself in the voters pamphlet as a conservative who opposed state money for stem cell research.

"If you are retired you should vote for me because McCain and Wiley will take care of the aging! Thank God for your right to vote."

Early results have Flannigan finishing first, Smeall second, Woodard third and Wiley fourth. If all of Wiley's votes went to Woodard, he'd still be trailing Smeall, but it would be a lot closer.

Categories: Legislature, Voting, Campaign news • [Leave a comment](#) • [Edit...](#)

From: "Ammons, Dave" <dammons@secstate.wa.gov>
Date: Fri, 22 Aug 2008 10:41:33 -0700
To: Peter Callaghan <peter.callaghan@thenewstribune.com>
Conversation: Top 2 Primary Leftovers
Subject: RE: Top 2 Primary Leftovers

9/15/2008

Good point. I e-mailed KingCo to see if I can get more backstory from them. BTW, loved yr Top 2 piece today. Nicely done—especially since I totally agree with your conclusions!

Best,
d.

David Ammons

Communications Director

Office of Secretary of State

o (360) 902-4140

c (360) 280-3944

h (360)357-8908

From: Peter Callaghan [<mailto:peter.callaghan@thenewstribune.com>]
Sent: Friday, August 22, 2008 9:39 AM
To: Ammons, Dave
Subject: Re: Top 2 Primary Leftovers

Dave,

Where the heck are King County's votes?
They are sitting at a 23 percent turnout and even if all of their estimated ballots are counted they will barely crack 30 percent.

-pjc

From: "Ammons, Dave" <dammons@secstate.wa.gov>
Date: Thu, 21 Aug 2008 12:26:21 -0700
To: Peter Callaghan <peter.callaghan@thenewstribune.com>
Conversation: Top 2 Primary Leftovers
Subject: RE: Top 2 Primary Leftovers

I'm wondering Courtney Cox brings the Friends gang in to campaign with her! She'd better, since she only got 775 votes, to Mike's 15k.

Best,
dave

David Ammons

Communications Director

Office of Secretary of State

9/15/2008

- o (360) 902-4140
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- h (360) 357-8908

From: Peter Callaghan [mailto:peter.callaghan@thenewstribune.com] <mailto:peter.callaghan@thenewstribune.com%5d>
Sent: Thursday, August 21, 2008 12:17 PM
To: Ammons, Dave
Subject: Re: Top 2 Primary Leftovers

Good stuff Dave.

The Armstrong race is the oddest. A write-in of the same party!

From: "Ammons, Dave" <dammons@secstate.wa.gov>
Date: Thu, 21 Aug 2008 12:14:11 -0700
Conversation: Top 2 Primary Leftovers
Subject: Top 2 Primary Leftovers



Secretary of State
SAM REED

News Release

Contact:
David Ammons
Communications Director
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Washington's Top 2 Primary bits & pieces ...

ALL ONE PARTY PREFERENCE.

Under the provisions of the voter-approved Top 2 Primary, no party "owns" a slot on the November ballot and it is always possible that voters will send forward to the General Election two candidates who express the same party preference. There were no examples of this among the eight partisan statewide executive offices this week, but some legislative and local government contests will offer such matchups in November.

For the first time, eight legislative finals apparently will feature finalists who prefer the same party _ two Senate seats and six House races, based on partial and unofficial returns. This is eight out of 124 seats on the ballot this fall (26 Senate, 98 House). In some cases, that's because the only candidates who filed listed the same party preference. These include the Senate seats now held by Margarita Prentice in the 11th District and Karen Fraser in the 22nd. Both filed as "prefers Democratic Party" and will be challenged by fellow prefers-Democratic Party candidates, either Juan Martinez or Scott McKay against Prentice, and Erik Lee against Fraser.

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In Districts 7 and 8, only "prefers-Republican" or "prefers GOP" candidates filed and the Top 2 will face off in November. In the 12th, Rep. Mike Armstrong, who prefers Republican, faces a prefers-Republican write-in candidate, Courtney Cox. In the 27th, Rep. Dennis Flannigan and Jessica Smeall, both preferring Democratic Party, advance. In the 36th District race to succeed the dean of the Legislature, Rep. Helen Sommers, both finalists prefer the Democratic Party, John Burbank and Reuven Carlyle. And in the open race in the 46th District, the top vote-getters both prefer the Democratic Party, Scott White and Gerry Pollet.

_FINALISTS OTHER THAN PREFER-D OR -R.

In the 3rd District state Senate race, Majority Leader Lisa Brown, who prefers Democratic, will be opposed by John Moyna, who states no party preference. In the 37th District, Rep. Eric Pettigrew, who prefers Democratic, is challenged by Ruth Bennett, who prefers Libertarian. In the 38th, Rep. John McCoy, prefers Democratic, is opposed by Cris Larson, who states no party preference. Speaker Pro Tem Jeff Morris, who prefers Democratic, is challenged in the 40th District by Howard Pellett, who prefers Green; and in the 49th, Rep. Jim Moeller, who prefers Democratic, faces Mike Boman, who prefers Independent.

_UNUSUAL PARTY MONIKERS.

Before filing week opened, Secretary of State Sam Reed urged candidates to "play it straight" and not list a preference for made-up or quirky names. Some of those who didn't take his advice didn't survive the primary. Example: Candidates of the Salmon Yoga Party and the True Democratic Party didn't move forward, and neither did hopefuls from startup parties called America's Third Party and the Party of Commons. Some did move forward through, including candidates who said they prefer the Cut Taxes GOP Party and the Progressive Dem Party. One well-known county Republican leader, Curt Fackler, ran for state insurance commission without a party preference label, and lost a runoff spot to someone who touted the Republican brand, albeit with the historical-sounding name of John Adams.

_BY THE NUMBERS.

In this year's Primary, there were a total of 288 candidate races throughout the state: congressional - 9; statewide executive - 9; legislative - 124; State Supreme Court - 3; Court of Appeals - 7; multi-county Superior Court - 7; single-county Superior Court - 52; county commissioners, county PUD commissioners and other county races - 77.

_WHAT WAS THE TURNOUT?

Good question. The number is hard to project because so many ballots still are in transit and counties continue to process ballots, including some from military and overseas voters. As of Thursday, over 930,000 ballots had been counted, or 27.3 percent of the 3.42 million registered voters who were sent mail ballots or, in King and Pierce counties, allowed to vote at polling places. Counties have estimated they have well over 300,000 ballots in hand or expected _ and this number does not include populous Pierce County, which did not submit an estimate. Counties have until Sept. 3 to certify their returns and the state will certify the election by Sept. 9. The turnout still could exceed 40 percent, a fairly average turnout. Before the election, Reed's office predicted a 46 percent turnout, based largely on the wide use of convenient mail-in ballots, the popularity of the wide-open Top 2 system, and the heavy advertising and voter interest in the close races for president and governor. Some counties later downgraded their initial predictions, based on lighter-than-expected return of ballots.

_NEXT UP.

_Deadline for mail-in or online voter registration or updates for the general election is Oct. 4.

_Deadline for in-person new registrations is Oct. 20.

_General election ballots for overseas and military voters must go in the mail by Oct. 5 and must be available in-person for other voters by Oct. 15. Ballots for most voters will be mailed by Oct. 17 and many voters will get them over that weekend or on Monday, Oct. 20. Election Day is Nov. 4.

For more information, visit www.vote.wa.gov <<http://www.vote.wa.gov/>>

###

September 15, 2008 - Yakima, Washington 29



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14th District Winners Look Ahead



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Story Published: Aug 20, 2008 at 5:41 PM PDT

By Steve Wellman
[Watch the story](#)

It's the day after the election, and 14th District Republican candidate Norm Johnson is out checking his signs. They'll need to stay up now until November. "Maybe I can straighten it up a bit," he says. Then Johnson adds about his win in the primaries, "I was elated to say the least."

Democrat Vickie Ybarra is back at work, safely in place for the fall runoff. "I learned that running for the state legislature is a lot different than running for the school board," Ybarra grins.

The two will now face each other for the showdown, far different from the original field of six. There's a tale in the numbers. With 15,736 votes counted, Johnson got just over 21% to Ybarra's 32.4%.

Johnson says, "I pretty much assumed that Mrs. Ybarra would be one of the six because she was the lone Democrat running."

However, if the race goes forward along party lines, Johnson could capture most if not all of the tally for the other original Republicans. That could be a November blowout for Johnson's camp.

Steve Wellman says, "Both Johnson and Ybarra say walking neighborhoods like this and meeting the folks had a lot to do with their initial success. But now that the list of candidates is narrowed down, their strategies are going to have to become more concentrated."

"Being down to one opponent will help us focus a little more," Ybarra confirms. "It will help us get out our message that this election is about the future of Yakima."

Norm Johnson tells Action News "I think for one thing we'll have to define the differences between Mrs. Ybarra and myself." But both Ybarra and Johnson claim their overall goals in the general election will remain unchanged.

"Healthcare, education, and economic development," says Ybarra. "We talked with voters who let us know those are their priorities as well."

And Norm Johnson states his themes: "No new taxes, and that we balance our budget to live within our means."

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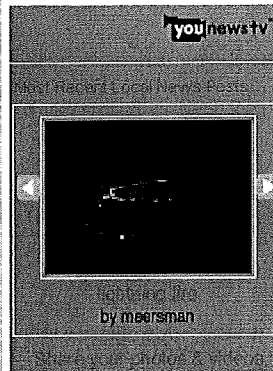


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CBS

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Published September 12, 2008

Battleground? GOP hopes to pick up a few state legislative seats

Plenty of states may be legislative battlegrounds in the 2008 election cycle, but not Washington.

This state was not even close to landing on the National Conference of State Legislatures' **list of top 10 battleground states**. The list put out this morning mentioned Delaware, Indiana, Montana, New York, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and Wisconsin as places where legislative control could swing.

It's true. We're a thousand political miles from 1999-2001 when the Washington House was tied 49-49, the Senate had a narrow Democratic majority, and each election threw open the chance of a power swing.

As it stands before the Nov. 4 election, Democrats hold a 63-35 edge in the Washington state House of Representatives and 32-17 in the state Senate. Even with a strong Republican candidate for governor in Dino Rossi, Republicans don't expect to make much of a challenge to Democrats' overarching power in the halls of lawmaking.

"I still predict we'll come back with 19 or 20" Republican senators, Senate Republican Leader Mike Hewitt of Walla Walla told a few reporters he ran into on the Capitol Campus this week.

If Hewitt were right, he'd get a pick-up of just two or three seats. He said his team is eyeing the seat of Senate Transportation Committee Chairwoman Mary Margaret Haugen, D-Camano Island, and Sen. Marilyn Rasmussen, D-Eatonville. (Haugen faces Republican Linda Haddon of Oak Harbor, and Rasmussen is challenged by Republican Randi Becker of Eatonville.)

The third? Hewitt won't say — likely because he's just hoping there is a third.

In the House, it's not a dramatically better situation for the GOP, which has steadily shed seats in recent years like some men lose hair. Democrats also have outdrawn Republicans on the money front, but the GOP is hopeful.

"At the end of the day, we're looking to pick up three or four. The national trends, all the polling is looking good. Dino is looking strong," said Kevin Carns, leader of the House Republican Organizational Committee.

Carns is carefully watching such places as Mercer Island, where a Democrat gave up his seat to run for Senate, Gig Harbor where Rep. Pat Lantz retired, and Kirkland where former Rep. Toby Nixon is making a comeback. He's also eyeing Democratic Rep. Geoff Simpson's position in Covington, but there are others.

Clearly that's better from the GOP perspective than 2008, but it's only a best-case scenario for a troubled party, some of whose members recasting themselves as GOP candidates instead of "Republicans."

Democrats aren't conceding seats. Rep. Sam Hunt, an Olympia Democrat, chairs the House Democratic Campaign Committee and has been studying the angles for races statewide. He doesn't think the GOP wins either of the Senate seats Hewitt singled out, and he said he has good, hard-working candidates in many of the contested House races.

Hunt thinks Fred Finn, the Thurston County Democrat, can hold off Republican Randy Neatherlin in the 35th district, despite Neatherlin's strong showing in the primary against a much-higher-spending foe. (The 35th sprawls from west of Olympia to Bremerton and includes Mason County in between.)

Hunt is instead keeping an eye on a couple of first-term Democrats, including Rep. Don Barlow in Spokane's 6th district, Rep. Liz Loomis in Snohomish County's 44th, and Rep. Roger Goodman of Kirkland in the 45th, who faces Nixon's challenge.

On the other side, Democrats hope John Driscoll can take out Rep. John Ahern, R-6th, and that Tim Probst can beat Republican Joseph James of Vancouver to replace Jim Dunn in the 17th. Hunt also has hopes for Vicki Ybarra beating Republican Norm Johnson of Yakima for the position of retiring Rep. Mary Skinner in the 14th, and for Carol Moser's battle against Republican Brad Klippert for retiring GOP Rep. Shirley Hankins' seat in the 8th.

"I think we're cautiously optimistic about how we'll come out in this cycle," Hunt said today. That could mean a gain of a couple seats — or not.

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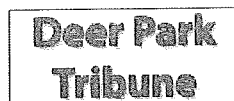
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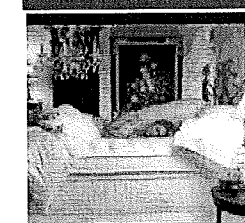
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It's official: Short vs. Madsen in November

Thursday, 11 September 2008

If last month's primary election is any indication, the 7th District legislative race will go down to the wire. In the final primary election results, Shelly Short edged Sue Lani Madsen 8,072-7,973 in the five-Republican candidate race for the seat being vacated by Rep. Bob Sump (R-Republic).

The primary election results may be somewhat skewed as many of the mail-in ballots were returned before Short's family legal troubles came to light. Her husband, Mitch, faces aggravated first-degree theft for cash shortfalls discovered during his time as president of the Northeast Washington Fair.

Short, an Addy resident and former legislative aide for U.S. Reps. George Nethercutt and Cathy McMorris, outpolled Madsen in Stevens (3,316-2,853), Pend Oreille (849-799), Okanogan (1,808-745) and Ferry (732-322) counties.

Madsen, an Edwall architect, was stronger in Spokane (1,538-907) and Lincoln (1,176-460) counties.

Since the primary, Madsen announced the endorsement of Deer Park's Mike Davis, who finished third in the primary with 5,150 votes.

Kettle Falls' Kelly White placed fourth (4,797) and Harrington's Peter Davenport finished fifth (4,223).

Madsen said she and Davis share an agriculture and small business background.

"Mike and I are both committed to an open government that takes care of today's needs while planning wisely for the future," she said.

Short recently received a public endorsement from Stevens County Commissioner Tony Delgado. The endorsement comes as somewhat of a surprise since most incumbent officeholders have stayed on the sidelines, since the general election features a pair of Republicans.

Last Updated (Thursday, 11 September 2008)

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Thursday, Aug. 21, 2008

Moser, Klippert in lead for 8th District seat

By Chris Mulick, Herald Olympia bureau

Brad Klippert narrowly widened his lead Wednesday over fellow Republican candidate Skip Novakovich in the race for an open state House seat in Benton County's 8th Legislative District.

Updated primary election numbers released by the county auditor's office show Democrat Carol Moser well out front with 7,996 votes, or 40 percent. She'll advance to the Nov. 4 general election and face the top Republican in a field of four who have split the GOP vote.

On Wednesday that still was Klippert, a Benton County sheriff's deputy who hasn't reported raising or spending a dime on the race. He was getting 3,722 votes, or 18.6 percent, to Kennewick businessman Skip Novakovich's 3,377 votes, or 16.9 percent.

The 345-vote lead is up from 279 on election night.

"It's spreading instead of getting closer," Klippert said. "I'm proceeding with caution."

Richland School Board President Rick Jansons was getting 2,602 votes, or 13 percent, and Benton County restaurateur Steve Simmons was getting 2,316 votes, or 11.6 percent.

The new tally only includes votes from ballots received by the auditor's office through Monday. Ballots that were mailed Monday or mailed or dropped off Tuesday still haven't been counted.

"Quite a few," Auditor Bobbie Gagner said.

Updated tallies are scheduled to be released daily. The county is scheduled to certify the results Sept. 3.

Klippert and Novakovich have been complimentary of the entire Republican field and aren't making predictions about how things will settle out.

"It's hard to say which way it's going to go," Novakovich said Wednesday.

"All I can do is remain positive and hope for the best."

Exhibit 228
Page 2 of 2

Published June 12, 2008

Holm faces party scrutiny

Jeremy Pawloski

Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney Ed Holm, who is running for Thurston County Superior Court judge, might have violated the state's code for judicial conduct when he described his and his opponent's political affiliations.

In a story on Page A1 in Saturday's Olympian, Holm described his philosophy as being different from his opponent's because "I'm a Democrat. I think he's more of a right-wing Republican."

Holm's opponent, Superior Court Judge Gary Tabor, responded in the story that judicial races in Washington are nonpartisan.

Canon 7 of the Washington's code for judicial conduct states, "Judges shall refrain from political activity inappropriate to their judicial office." It continues, "(1) Judges or candidates for election to judicial office shall not: ... (e) identify themselves as members of political party, except as necessary to vote in an election."

Holm said Wednesday that his comment was in response to a reporter's repeated requests that he elaborate on his philosophical differences with his opponent. He said he also thinks his conversation with a reporter was "a little bit different" from how it appeared in the story, although the reporter's notes support the quote as it appeared.

Holm added that "I knew I said too much when I said I'm a Democrat." He added that he has no idea what Tabor's party affiliation is and that when he talked to The Olympian on Friday, "I'd been running (for the judgeship) for about 10 minutes."

Holm said he regrets the comment and will make no more statements about party affiliation.

Kurt Twitty, senior counsel for the Washington Commission on Judicial Conduct, said Tuesday that his office does not have jurisdiction over alleged breaches in conduct by candidates for judicial office who are attorneys, and he referred questions to the Washington State Bar Association.

Judy Berrett, spokeswoman for the state bar association, confirmed that the bar's rules for professional conduct require candidates for judgeships to follow the code for judicial conduct. She wouldn't say whether her office has received any complaints about conduct violations, saying initial complaints are kept private. Records of prior disciplinary actions or sanctions by the bar against an attorney are public, however, and Berrett said there is no record of such actions being taken against Holm.

Berrett said in an e-mail to The Olympian, "The WSBA would defer any investigation of campaign-related allegations until after the election — it would be inappropriate for the State Bar to interfere in any way with the public election process."

"If an individual is elected, then it would be a matter for the Commission on Judicial Conduct to address," the e-mail continues. The American Bar Association has guidelines for imposing sanctions on attorneys, and they do not specifically address election issues, Berrett's e-mail states. But "as a general guideline, when/if discipline is imposed, a less severe form of discipline is generally appropriate when the lawyer's conduct is an isolated incident and causes little or no actual or potential injury to a client, the public, or the legal system," Berrett's e-mail concludes.

Jeremy Pawloski covers public safety for The Olympian. He can be reached at 360-754-5465 or jpawloski@theolympian.com.

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SOUTH WHIDBEY RECORD

UPDATE: Island County commissioner's race a battle between Bakke and Gordon for second spot on ticket

By MICHAELA MARX WHEATLEY
South Whidbey Record Langley
Aug 19 2008 · UPDATED

It's too early to call, but first vote counts indicate that incumbent Republican Phil Bakke and no-party candidate Curt Gordon will duke it out for the second spot on the November ballot, while Democrat Helen Price Johnson took an early lead in the primary election.

The other Republican candidate Reece Rose finds herself in last place.

With 35.77 percent counted, Price Johnson got 3,191 votes with 6,979 votes counted in the race.

Incumbent Republican Commissioner Phil Bakke was in second, with 1,413 voters.

No-party candidate Curt Gordon was third in the four-way race, with 1,333 votes.

Republican Reece Rose has 1,036 votes.

While her supporters milled around a laptop and bemoaned the lack of vote results for nearly 30 minutes, Price Johnson kept busy by bringing in plates of cold cuts, fruit and desserts from a car in the parking lot at Neil's Clover Patch Cafe.

When asked why she wasn't hovering over a computer herself, she laughed and said she would be able to easily figure out how the vote was going by the noise in the room.

Finally, the computer screen revealed the long-awaited results.

"We were hoping for something that clear," Price Johnson said. "But we didn't know with all mail-in, the top-two primary and a four-way race."

"I'm glad that we do. It's nice," she added.

District 1 traditionally leans toward Democrats, she said. She will now target swing districts and traditional Republican strongholds.

First stop: Oak Harbor on Wednesday, she said.

Price Johnson added that these areas of Island County are ready for her message and that the primary results in the District 2 encourage her, where Democrat Angie Homola had 1,448 votes to Republican incumbent Mac McDowell's 1,796.

"I'm pleased with Angie Homola's result. That indicates that voters would be receptive of my message," she said.

If Price Johnson's success transfers beyond district borders and she wins the support of all of Island County, she will be the first woman commissioner in the county's history and Democrats will gain the majority on the three-member board of commissioners.

Even though Price Johnson worked with a professional consultant on her campaign, she credits her supporters for her success and the district's desire for change.

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Even though she has gathered almost as many votes by herself as her opponents combined, she said there is no time for a break from campaigning.

"We have 70 days till the general election," she said.

"It's just a milepost in a long-distance race."

Curt Gordon is only 80 votes behind incumbent Bakke after the first count.

Gordon said he is pleased with the results, adding that he has high hopes to pass Bakke.

"We're not winning, but we're not that far out of second place," Gordon said Tuesday night.

"It looks promising," he said from China City in Freeland, where he awaited the results with some supporters.

"A lot of party line voters vote early. Independent, open-minded thinkers vote later," he said, adding that he is counting on their votes.

However, he has no doubt that his "People, not politics" message was heard.

"What it comes down to is that we have sophisticated voters in this district. They studied the candidates, studied the ballot and voted for the person not the party," he said.

"It's a statement about our district being progressive enough to put votes to a party-unaffiliated candidate."

"We definitely made a statement," Gordon said.

Rose finds herself trailing 292 votes behind Gordon.

"I'm dragging behind, what can I say?" Rose said.

Rose added that the race is still close, considering that more ballots will arrive in Coupeville in the days following the primary.

"That could change," she said of the narrow gap between herself, Bakke and Gordon.

"That's what they have today. They have to open their mail tomorrow," she said.

"There will be more coming in tomorrow and the next day."

Rose also said that as many as 20 percent of the ballots cast are mailed at the last minute.

Bakke declined to comment when called by a reporter Tuesday night.

The four-way race focused on county finances, affordable housing and property taxes.

A total of 15,928 votes were counted Tuesday night.

South Whidbey Record Langley Michaela Marx Wheatley can be reached at mmarxwheatley@southwhidbeyrecord.com or (360) 221-5300.

Find this article at:

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Exhibit 229

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Seattle Post-Intelligencer

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Democrats tops in two Seattle districts

Wednesday, August 20, 2008
Last updated 9:37 a.m. PT

By AMY ROLPH
P-I REPORTER

John Burbank was leading Tuesday's early primary returns in the much-watched race for Seattle's 36th legislative district, though it's not clear that Burbank's primary lead will change much as he and fellow Democrat Reuven Carlyle continue on to the general election.

The battle between the Democrats is one of two Seattle legislative races that have emerged as examples of the kind of intra-party conflict that could become a staple under the state's newly approved top-two primary process. The other is the race for the 46th District, where frontrunner Scott White and Gerry Pollett, both Democrats, will advance to the November ballot.

The 36th district, incorporating the neighborhoods around Queen Anne, Fremont and Ballard, has so far spawned unprecedented fundraising efforts and rifts within the Democratic Party.

As Carlyle and Burbank head to the general election, they'll likely need to double their fundraising, knock on twice as many doors and possibly brace for a fair amount of negativity from their opponent's backers.

"I think it's a good start," Burbank said from a campaign victory party Tuesday. "I actually expect the turnout to be more progressive in November, and so I would expect there will be an even stronger vindication of my efforts in this camping for public service."

Carlyle said he wasn't surprised that early returns showed Burbank, whom he calls a party-insider, up with primary voters. He said his opponent might have more sway with party activists who show up for the primary vote, but that he expects support from the rest of the district in November.

"I have targeted the Nov. 4 crowd from the minute the Supreme Court changed our primary system," he said.

Burbank is the executive director of the Economic Opportunity Institute, a policy think tank that has championed across-the-board paid family leave and a higher minimum wage.

Carlyle is a wireless entrepreneur who serves on the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges. He drafted a recently enacted bill to fund the college education of former foster children.

In some ways, the primary vote likely won't change much for the candidates in the 36th or the 46th, since it has been widely predicted for months that the historically Democratic districts would advance two candidates from that party.

But now Leslie Bloss, a Republican candidate in the 36th District who never raised more than \$250 in cash donations, will not be eligible for the general election ballot. Nor will Keith Ljunghammar, a "Cut Taxes G.O.P. Party" member who struggled to raise more than \$2,000 before Tuesday's primary.

Without a Republican moving on in either contest, state GOP Chair Luke Esser said the races are an example of the downside of the new primary system. Voters essentially get a choice between "French vanilla and vanilla bean," Esser

<http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/printer2/index.asp?ploc=t&refer=http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/37568...> 9/11/2008

said.

"I think it's a crying shame that on the general election ballot, the voters will not have a genuine, meaningful choice between (candidates)," he said.

While Republicans have failed to bring in party money and private donations, Democratic candidates have been awash with donations. Pundits have speculated that fundraising levels in the 36th could soar to a collective \$500,000 by the general election, drawing criticism from Democrats who think that money could be spent on political races where the party isn't all but guaranteed victory.

Carlyle has raised \$176,000 in cash contributions, according to the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission. Burbank, who has lagged in fundraising since the beginning, has brought in just under \$137,000.

The Lake City-anchored 46th District hasn't seen the same kind of powerhouse fundraising, though White's \$84,000 cash-contribution tally is uncommonly high for a state-house race. Pollet's cash total is about half that of his opponent: \$40,500.

White is a former chief of staff for the Seattle City Council, and a former 46th District party chairman. His campaign has emphasized bipartisan cooperation, and he has spoken often of maintaining a "healthy business climate" in Washington. He did not immediately return a call seeking comment Tuesday night.

Pollet is an environmental activist and who has long promoted the cleanup of the Hanford nuclear reservation.

Before primary results were posted Tuesday night, Pollet said he was hoping for a close race -- not necessarily a lead -- and that he was hopeful about his post-primary chances.

"We're pretty sure he won't be able to buy this election," Pollet said.

The top two primary, reinstated earlier this year by the state Supreme Court has proved to make the campaign process longer for the Democrats. Most decided to run before the court's decision, and expected the race would be decided by the August primary.

"The race was supposed to be over now," Pollet said.

P-I reporter Amy Rolph can be reached at 206-448-8223 or amyrolph@seattlepi.com.

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Print Page

Republican candidate opposes war in Iraq

By Steven Friederich - The Daily World

Friday, August 15, 2008 10:38 AM PDT

Third in a series on the candidates for Congress in the 6th District.

Had he been in Congress, Doug Cloud says he never would have voted to go to war in Iraq. Bucking the Republican Party line, Cloud favors a "quick withdrawal of troops from Iraq."

Cloud is running against 16-term Congressman Norm Dicks, a Democrat from Belfair.

"We definitely need some sort of timetable, even if it's flexible, to get out of there," the Gig Harbor attorney said. "We just have too many issues to deal with at home."

He is a fan of GOP presidential contender Ron Paul, who has taken a strong anti-war stance and a libertarian bent. "I strongly feel the Republican Party needs to get back to its small government, individual freedom roots to do battle with the prevailing trend toward a socialist tyranny where you cannot do anything without some bureaucrat telling you 'no' or 'You need a license for that,'" Cloud said.

Cloud also has some kind words for Dicks' other two challengers, Democrat Paul Richmond, an attorney from Port Townsend, and Green Party candidate Gary Murrell, an instructor at Grays Harbor College.

"I really think any of the three of us could be a better voice for this generation," Cloud said. "Maybe we don't agree on everything, but I do think we all agree that it feels like Norm has been mailing it in for the last 10 to 20 years. ...

"I don't think Norm is listening.

"My generation has been shut out."

The top two candidates, regardless of party, advance to the November General Election. Ballots are due by Aug. 19.

Cloud said he took it personal when Dicks opted not to participate in a number of League of Women Voters' forums for the primary. All three of Dicks' challengers have been participating, but Dicks has sent campaign staffers to speak for him. Dicks says he'll participate in forums in the General Election, but his plate is full right now and he's confident of advancing to the finals with ease.

Third try

This is the third time Cloud has been on the ballot with Dicks. Two years ago, Dicks took 70.5 percent of the vote. It was rare for him to get anything less than 64 percent.

"But this time it's different," the Republican said. "Where before I was a last-second filing, this time I'm taking it more seriously. And each time I run, it costs me money and reputation and people look at me like I'm an idiot. But I think there's a deep sense of dissatisfaction with the current leadership, and Norm Dicks is vulnerable as a result."

Like the other challengers, Cloud said he thinks the voters' misgivings about the war in Iraq will be heard loud and clear.

"It is a dangerous world out there. We do have to defend freedom on occasion, but the decision to go to Iraq was too high a risk for too low of a reward," Cloud said.

"Now that we're there, we need to get out as soon as possible. We simply cannot have an open-ended stay there. We need to get back home and deal with our economic issues. This war has been a drag on our economy — any war is —but this one has made people miserable."

Not only would Cloud support withdrawing troops from Iraq, he would also be in favor of closing overseas military bases. That's a position Ron Paul has also taken.

"It's post World War II. Why are we still responsible for the defense of Japan and Germany? We are subsidizing their countries and transferring our wealth overseas when that money could better be spent at home."

Cloud said the war has led to a "sickness of spirit" that also drags down the economy.

"I wouldn't call us a nation of whiners, but there's an element out there that need to take control of their lives," Cloud said. "These financial institutions are pleading for a bailout from the government when they should be out there ready to stand or fall on their own two feet. And that's the same attitude that we should have for people who are living on a government check. There are some who have no recourse but to get government checks. But for the most part there are a lot of able-bodied and young people among us who receive a lot of government assistance who need to take control of their lives."

"Corruption"

Meantime, Cloud said when it comes to Indian gaming, the federal government, and to a lesser extent even the state government, is full of "rampant corruption"

"The tribal gaming industry is a blatantly racist institution that shovels millions at the Democratic Party to preserve its corruption," Cloud said. "In return, they get a billion-dollar monopoly. Doesn't anyone else see how unfair and unconstitutional it is to grant an economic monopoly to a group of people based solely upon the color of their skin? It sounds like 'Jim Crow' again to me."

Cloud said an effective congressman is a lot like an effective attorney.

"You're not running for dictator, it's for representative, which is almost like being an attorney. You have to identify what your clients or constituents really need. And you have to exercise your own judgment, but it's a job of representation and I don't want to forget that. But I think Norm Dicks has."

For more information, see dougcloud.com

Steven Friederich, a Daily World writer, can be reached at (360) 537-3927 or by e-mail at sfriederich@thedailyworld.com

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Editorial: Top Two Primary provides you with freedom of choice

Published: 02:33PM August 13th, 2008

It's been four years since voters approved Initiative 872, which created the Top Two Primary system in our state. A lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of I-872 put the system on a temporary holding pattern, but this past March, the U.S. Supreme Court rightfully upheld voters' voices.

Now you get to experience it for the first time.

The Top Two Primary is light years ahead of the previous pick-a-party system, when voters were forced to swear allegiance to one side of the aisle or the other and vote accordingly. In fact, the Top Two Primary puts more power in your hands: You get to choose who qualifies for the general election, not just the top Republican and the top Democrat.

The parties, successful in their fight to overturn the "blanket primary" system that allowed voters to make their choices regardless of party affiliation, fought the Top Two idea in the same manner. They say they should be the ones to choose who represents their specific organization. They want to make it clear to voters — on the ballot — which candidate they support.

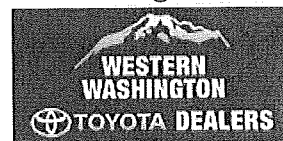
But isn't advertising enough? Aren't their messages painfully clear with each political ad you see in newspapers, on television or radio? We think so, and we're not the only ones.

Immediately following the Supreme Court decision in March, state Attorney General Rob McKenna said there is no evidence that political parties would be harmed in the Top Two process. McKenna said the ballot is not the only source of information voters have about any candidate.

Outside of advertising, news coverage highlights platforms and differences between candidates. In this day and age, nearly all of the candidates have their own Web sites. There are also blogs, voters guides with official candidate statements, as well as public forums or debates, where you can hear candidates speak for themselves.

The bottom line is you have the freedom to choose the candidate you prefer, whether it's a Democrat in one race and a Republican in another. And the two candidates with the most votes — regardless of party affiliation or endorsement — will advance to November.

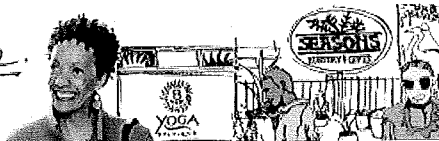
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June 11, 2008 3:35 PM

When is a GOP member a Republican?

Posted by Kate Riley

Oh, horrors! Stop the presses. Republican gubernatorial candidate Dino Rossi is trying to "rebrand" himself as a member of the Grand Old Party. How sinister.

The real horror here is the state Democratic party's attempt, in a press release today, to invent a scandal out of nothing -- and, worse, the premise for their argument is founded on an apparent belief that voters are too ignorant to know that "GOP" and "Republican" are the same thing -- or that they will live in a cave between now and the general election, missing what will likely be another tortuous high-profile campaign where each candidate is thoroughly dissected.

Worse yet, party officials are using their breathless, outraged press release to hide their own duplicitousness. This looks like just another of the Democratic party's efforts to undermine the state's new top-two primary and get it overturned. Again.

Fact is, Rossi was among 22 candidates filing for state and local offices who stated their party preference as "GOP." About another 120 stated their preference was "Republican." My colleague David Postman discusses the issue [here](#).

Here's the state Democratic party's press release in part.

Dems call on Rossi to stop trying to deceive Washingtonians
 If Rossi won't be transparent voluntarily, Sam Reed should force his hand

SEATTLE - Washington State Democratic Party Chairman Dwight Pelz today called on Republican Dino Rossi to voluntarily amend his ballot choice from the confusing, deceptive, and redundant "Prefers G.O.P. Party" to his true party label - Republican. Rossi has until 5pm today to alter his ballot listing, which appears to be a "re-branding" effort he's undertaken to avoid discussing that he's a Republican in the mold of George W. Bush. (Does it stand for "George's Old Policies"???)

Republican Sam Reed has said he disapproves of Rossi's scheme, and Rossi is the only statewide candidate in the Republican Party to employ this deceptive tactic. Reed has cautioned against "funny business" on the ballot, but his responsibility as the top elections official in Washington state obliges him to put the power of his office behind enforcing his rhetoric.

The release goes on to cite the Wall Street Journal's decision to stop using "GOP" in 2002. But they

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neglect to mention that both Seattle newspapers continue to use "Republican" and "GOP" interchangeably.

First of all -- and this is no news flash -- under the new Top Two Primary, it doesn't matter one whit what your party is. Washington has a qualifying primary now, which means the top two vote-getters advance to the general election, no matter what their party preference. This is the voters' primary -- no longer the party's nominating primary.

Second -- under the new primary, candidates can describe their party preference in any socially appropriate way as long as its within 15 characters. In fact, attorneys defending the top-two primary in court argued candidates would be exercising their First Amendment rights by stating their preference.

Third -- By the time November rolls around, voters no doubt will be well grounded in the differences between Dino Rossi and the incumbent Gov. Chris Gregoire. By then, they will probably *want* to go hide in a cave.

The state parties for the Democrats, Libertarians and Republicans want the new top two primary overturned because it takes them out of the voting equation. Too bad. They successfully sued to overturn Washington's popular blanket primary because it did not afford the parties enough control over which candidates got on the general election ballot. Voters revolted when they were forced to have a partisan primary and embraced the top-two primary, and the U.S. Supreme Court, 7-2, sided with the voters -- against the parties. And none other than Chief Justice John G. Roberts wrote a concurring opinion with suggestions for how to do it without running afoul of the law.

But the parties are back in court trying to overturn the new primary on other grounds. And they are doing whatever they can to prove voters are confused by the new primary to give them more grounds to overturn it.

Voters are smarter than Democratic officials are giving them credit for. After all, voters approved the top-two primary, didn't they?

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Posted by michael	2:46 PM, Jun 12, 2008 Kate, relax and take a breath. It's only a hullabaloo if the media choose to bite and turn it into one.
Posted by Don B. Sea	2:59 PM, Jun 12, 2008 Kate, Kate, Kate. It's not so much that people do or do not know that Republican and GOP are used for the same thing in articles, etc., but the attempt of these assorted individuals to HIDE from the word Republican on their posters, flyers, etc., that is the issue. Sneaky as ever. If you are a Republican, have the guts to stand up and have that work plastered proudly on all of your forms, papers, etc. If not, don't run for any office. Sit home and let others with some guts try running this year with Republican attached to their good name. Ha!
Posted by Kate Riley	3:22 PM, Jun 12, 2008 Michael, Thanks for your comment. Guilty. Though I was "biting" on the media hullabaloo, not the invented scandal.

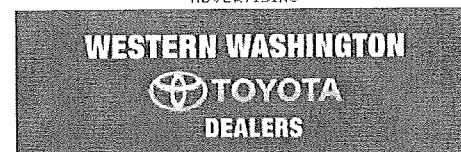
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	<p>The beauty of the top two is that it deliberately makes party affiliation so much less important. This silly exercise of lining everybody up on either side of one line is counterproductive. I'm a firm believer that the solutions are in the middle -- and anything that can be done to make the parties and other special interest groups weaker is a good thing.</p>
Posted by Richard Pope	<p>3:43 PM, Jun 12, 2008</p> <p>Someone should actually organize the "G.O.P. Party" as a bona fide minor party, and run a President/V.P. ticket under that banner in the November general election. Maybe the Ron Paul people will do this, or perhaps someone can do this as a protest type of ticket. Whoever does this, gets the "G.O.P. Party" line at the top of the ballot, several hundred words for the voters pamphlets, and sets the pace for the handful of "G.O.P. Party" candidates running for lesser offices.</p> <p>That way, Dino Rossi will be on record as preferring some fringe/joke "G.O.P Party" come November. That would be a lot more embarrassing to Rossi, than having to associate with the semi-respectable John McCain and the at least slightly respectable Washington State Republican Party.</p>
Posted by Independent Voice	<p>11:38 PM, Jun 12, 2008</p> <p>Democrats lie in a press release and bloggers defend them? Yuck.</p> <p>They must be campaign staff...</p>
Posted by jan	<p>5:02 PM, Jun 13, 2008</p> <p>No problem with the top two here.</p> <p>However, I think it does say something about a Republican candidate if he or she decides to put GOP instead of Republican next to their name on a ballot. Same for a Democratic candidate.</p> <p>Conventional wisdom is that 2008 is a bad year to run as a Republican. It looks like some Republicans are aware of that fact (there's lots of data to back the bad Republican year theory) and making a switch on the ballot.</p> <p>Data also demonstrates that lots of voters don't read newspapers but do read ballots and voter guides. In 2004 the state voter guide included a statement from Dino Rossi, Republican. There was no mention of the term GOP or Grand Old Party.</p> <p>There's no GOP caucus in Olympia. There are two Republican caucuses. It is the Washington State Republican Party, not the GOP. Republican is a term used much more in press coverage on radio, tv, print and the web.</p> <p>Consider me among the folks who consider the method a stunt, a deceit, and a comment on the character of the candidates who do it. It's just a bad political move that will turn people off. Rossi has already suffered run-ins with truth and a tendency to evade. This won't help him.</p> <p>I don't care what they put on their campaign materials. I do not like the idea of state tax dollars being used to participate in the stunt on a ballot. I'll bet Sam Reed at least wondered about the same thing.</p>
Posted by JimD	<p>2:16 PM, Jun 14, 2008</p> <p>Rossi is attempting to re-brand his republican association with the more editorial term, "GOP".</p> <p>His reasons for doing so, and what that says about how he wants voters to view him and his candidacy, is fair game.</p> <p>It's not so much about whether it will fool voters, or if that was his sole objective - which I suspect it was not.</p> <p>Rather, it's about what kind of man would put lipstick on a pig for ANY reason.</p>

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MAY 26, 2010, 12:08 PM

Rossi Makes Senate Bid for Murray Seat

By BERNIE BECKER

As expected, Dino Rossi has jumped into the Senate race in Washington State.

Mr. Rossi, a two-time Republican nominee for governor, announced his decision in a Web video, in the process slamming the new health care law and other Democratic policies coming out of Washington, D.C.

“I know I won’t be able to look my children, and some day their children, in the eye if I do nothing while this fundamental redefinition of America continues unchecked,” said Mr. Rossi, also a former state senator.

Mr. Rossi is the preferred candidate of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, but he joins a crowded Republican field that also includes Don Benton, a state senator, and Clint Didier, the former NFL tight end who has the backing of Sarah Palin.

The Republican nominee will face Senator Patty Murray, a Democrat who was first elected to the Senate in 1992.

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