

Josephine County Democrats

August 11, 2020

Monthly meeting via ZOOM

The meeting began with a quorum present and a flag salute at 7 p.m. The agenda and minutes were approved without changes. In the absence of the Treasurer, Brian gave the Treasurer's Report, saying our current balance is \$8,324, with a total income for July of \$1,028. Donations, the sale of campaign signs and merchandise and a raffle last month helped bring in revenue.

Reports: Brian reported that the Democratic Party of Oregon is concerned about mail-in ballots as Trump is trying to sabotage the U.S. Post Office. They are advising people to use drop boxes in their community or mail them very early. Drop boxes should be monitored as well, he said, to make sure no one takes off with one loaded with ballots.

The collection of signatures for State Senate candidate Jerry Allen was very successful, Membership Chair Geri Ventura reported. They needed 200 and got about 500, which will assure he will still have plenty when vetted. She said CD2 Candidate Alex Spenser is seeking signatures, with the deadline very near. See her website at [SPENSER2020.com](https://spenser2020.com) for details.

Brian said Biden campaign signs are disappearing, some after just one day. Regardless, people are calling the office requesting signs in record numbers. He had 12 requests last week and will be ordering more as they go out the door as fast as he gets them in.

He also reported the DPO has a place on its web site <https://dpo.org/caucuses/conventionsignup/> to sign up to attend the National Convention from home. This has never been done before and gives everyone a chance to be a part of the Convention Across America. The convention is being held remotely this year because of COVID-19. There will also be some campaign strategy sessions during the on-line convention as well.

Brian said the county clerk is taking sign-ups for people interested in watching the ballot counting process. He urged Democrats to get involved. Office Manager Sheri Morin indicated an interest in doing so. He also reported the new camera monitors are up and running outside the office but he has to figure out how to get volunteers access.

Geri said she is working to get Precinct Captains and Neighborhood Leaders organized to start phone banking and writing postcards to get the vote out. There will be no door knocking this year, so we will really be depending on other ways to contact people, she said, including texting them.

Caucus Reports: Lynda Spangler continues to monitor environmental legislation and for the Environmental Caucus but meetings have been postponed for now. Kat Stone commented that the DPO Gun Owners Caucus has some of its highest leaders involved and are doing a lot of phone banking for candidates. LyndaS also reported that the run-off candidates for Josephine County Commission will be at our monthly social starting at 6:30 p.m. on ZOOM. Go to

<https://josephinedemocrats.org/event/candidate-night-commissioner-deyoung-and-smith/> to sign up.

Speakers were District 4 Oregon State Representative candidate Mary Middleton and Sam Chapman from the campaign to legalize therapeutic use of psilocybin, a psychedelic drug derived from mushrooms.

Mary spoke about her belief in service to the community, giving back, and why she's running for the state legislature. She had a setback with the pandemic and a fall that resulted in a broken wrist, but she's been calling and talking to people and recently won the endorsement of the Oregon Independent Party. She said that is a huge win, since District 4 has about 20 percent Democrats, 30 percent Republicans, and 30 percent non-affiliated and Independent voters. Mary said she is very concerned about small farmers in the Rogue Valley and will work to help them survive the pandemic and economic turndown as well as protect their crops from genetically altered contamination. She's also concerned about the wide income gaps and vulnerability of our essential workers. The pandemic has revealed so many who make more on unemployment than what they make working, which means wages should be increased. Mary, who is president of the instructors' union at Rogue Community College where she teaches, says she's a strong supporter of unions and believes they would benefit our essential workers. Her greatest needs right now are volunteers and donations, she said, to help with phone banking and postcards.

Sam Chapman gave an informative presentation of what the Psilocybin measure, which just turned in enough signatures to qualify for the ballot, would mean to the people of Oregon. He explained Psilocybin is a psychedelic that studies show has benefit for people suffering depression, anxiety, PTSD and addiction. He said the measure they are supporting does not make psychedelic mushrooms available like marijuana. It will be available only as a prescription and administered by trained facilitators in a clinical setting. Psilocybin has shown much promise and is now endorsed by many medical professionals who would like to have it available as a treatment since it is not toxic and not addictive. The way it works, Chapman said, is to help people get out of their own destructive consciousness and see themselves in a different way. Oregon Congressman Earl Blumenauer has endorsed this, he said, and if legalized for therapeutic use in the state, Chapman says will allow much more study and a wider application for people in dire need of a new way to treat their illnesses.

Submitted August 12, 2020

By JCDemocrats Secretary Lynda Demsher