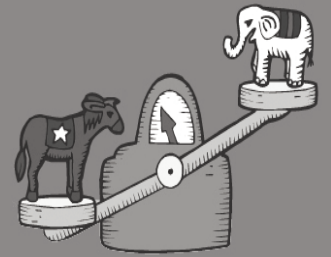


# 43RD DISTRICT DEMOCRATS ORGANIZATION

September 2007



## ‘43rd is proud of summer endeavors’—chair

**Hillary Madsen, chair**  
**Chair\_43@hotmail.com**

Summer has officially come and gone, but for the moment the sun is still here so we can all be content. The 43rd District can be proud of its summer endeavors. In May we had a widely attended Primary Candidate Forum followed by a huge Primary Endorsements meeting in June. We ran a field strategy in July with a celebratory pizza party at Piccora’s on First Hill and finished August with a General Candidate Forum.

It is a pleasure to report that all of our endorsed candidates won their primary races and in particular Gael Tarleton and Bill Sherman led their races with amazing majorities. I expect that our endorsements in the general election will similarly bring luck to our candidates. You are invited to participate in making our endorsements on September 18 at the University Heights Community Center. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

See you soon!

**Hillary**

## Reflections on the Primary Endorsement Meeting

At our primary endorsements meeting, we planned for an audience of roughly 70 people. We had an audience of more than 100 people. It was a great night. Long, hot, and in some tellings of the story, stinky. More than one candidate reminded us that our meeting with the neat little folding chairs and paper ballots was the very face of democracy.

While I do not disagree, I want to point out that there were a number of faces missing from our meeting. There were not a great deal of young people present, for example, nor were there many people of color, people with physical disabilities, or poor workers. And, even more basically, of the roughly 600 paid members of our district eligible to vote at our meeting, 94 ballots were issued.

Yes, it was a great meeting and, yes, it represented a unique picture of American democracy. And yes, WE CAN DO BETTER!

Our challenge is not just to increase our attendance at meetings, bringing in people from our disenfranchised communities or more of

our own membership. Our challenge, and our responsibility as Democrats, is to GO OUT and touch our fellow citizens.

This effort to create meaningful contact with our neighbors and to get out the vote must always be an ongoing effort, not just during elections. In less than eight months, we will host the 2008 Presidential Caucuses in the 43rd District. Every day until the caucuses and every day after the caucuses until we elect a Democrat to President of the United States should be treated as a get out the vote effort.

If you are interested in learning more about how you can help, please come to a general membership meeting, held on the third Tuesday of each month, or contact the executive board via email (email addresses are available on our website: [www.43rddems.org](http://www.43rddems.org)).

Our mailing address is P.O. Box 31527, Seattle, WA 98103 and we are in the process of purchasing a cell phone for the district in order to be available by phone as well.

# Fixing Our Health Care System

by Janice Van Cleve

Michael Moore does not live in a gray area. Critics and the film watching public either love him or hate him. And that's the way he likes it. His movies do not pretend to be balanced or fair. He's out to make a point and drive it home. So it is no surprise that his latest film, "Sicko," is already drawing the expected praise and anger. "Sicko" takes on the American health care system with all the delicacy of a lumber jack.



## Timing is perfect

His timing, as usual, is perfect. Few issues generate more questions than fixing our health care system in the United States. Washington State took the lead back in the glory days of Governor Mike Lowry and the first years of the Clinton Administration. Both of those efforts failed. Bush's prescription drug plan failed as well because it was just another corporate welfare scheme to enrich the pharmaceutical corporations.

Now the baby boomers are reaching their 60s and claiming their Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security benefits. This threatens to overwhelm a federal treasury already deeply in debt as a result of the current administration's wasteful spending on wars and tax cuts. At the same time, medical science is advancing cures far beyond what we imagined only a few years ago and we have many more seniors demanding those cures—and they vote. The pressure has never been greater for fixing the American health care system.

## US insurance in bad light

Michael Moore paints the system and the insurance companies that feed off of it in the worse possible light. Then he goes to Canada, France, England, and even Cuba to show how much better their universal health care systems are. He ends by asking, "If they can do it there, why can't we do it here?"

But does his question go far enough? The deeper we dig into the health care issue, the more questions there are to consider.

**Who should receive care?**

**What types of care should be offered?**

**Who should provide care?**

**How should it be funded?  
Who should decide?**

Take who should receive care. Universal health care advocates say everybody should be covered. Really? Throwing open the doors—and the treasury—to everyone for health care is burdening even the most experienced and sophisticated European health care systems right now. Sweden, Germany, and France have been at this for awhile and even with income taxes above 50%, they are barely paying for it.

As soon as one jurisdiction offers universal benefits, people flock there from less generous jurisdictions—like people fleeing the United States to get care in Canada. Granted, any country that can spend \$400 billion destroying Iraq while giving tax cuts to wealthy Americans should be able to afford universal health care, but how "universal" are Americans really willing to go?

## Who should receive care?

For example, should an undocumented alien who is here illegally be able to tap into a universal health care system just like a native born, tax paying, veteran with a spotless criminal record? And what about convicted criminals? Should they have access to every exotic medical procedure available at public expense? They lose their vote when they go behind bars. Should they lose any "universal" health benefits as well?

Moore claims that the prisoners held in Guantanamo Bay actually do get better health care services than most American taxpayers do—and it's free. Of course, maybe they have to be patched up more frequently because they keep getting tortured.

And what about the advancements of medical science? Modern medicine goes to extreme lengths to salvage barely viable premature births and it devotes even more effort and expense to extend the lives of barely viable elderly patients. In fact it is estimated that most medical expenses are incurred in the last two years of the average person's life.

## Futile attempts to preserve life

Fortunes are spent on costly and often futile efforts to keep sick, old bodies alive when their souls clearly want to leave. Many seniors have seen the wisdom of making out a living will to discourage any extraordinary efforts to preserve the life in their bodies when the quality of their life is

**Continued on p. 3**

no longer there.

Oregon passed a law permitting physician assisted suicide and efforts have been made to pass a similar law in Washington State. To what extremes of the human life span should “universal” benefits attempt to extend?

What about self abusers? Should the public health care system have to treat every drug addict, alcoholic, or smoker whose own habits made them sick? What about occupational hazards? Medical workers are exposed to diseases on their jobs and so are sex workers. Fire fighters are exposed to burns and so are NASCAR drivers. Should universal care be based on judgments about a person's work or lifestyle?

### **Health care for wealthy?**

What about very rich people? The Gates Foundation funds health care initiatives all over the world and Bill and Melinda can afford the most plush and exotic medical treatment imaginable. Should they also be eligible for “universal” health care or should it only be available to the poor? Should any health care system be based on the ability to pay?

Societies have historically ordered quarantines for the protection of the greater community in cases of rapidly contagious deadly diseases. What if there is a vaccine that absolutely works? Should people be forced against their will to get inoculated? Should universal health care ever be mandatory? These questions lead to very basic ethical dilemmas that if not considered will collapse any system that tries to be 100% universal.

### **What kinds of care?**

That leads to the second question which is: what types of care should be offered? It's easy to justify offering universal vaccinations free of charge against contagious diseases. An outbreak of malaria, West Nile virus, cholera, or influenza could be stopped if medicines were mandatory or even strongly encouraged. The Salk polio vaccine program of the late 1950s was very successful in eradicating this disease in the United States.

We've been successful defeating small pox and whooping cough with massive universal programs. We recognize that we are all at risk if even one of us is exposed and that diseases are more difficult and expensive to treat after the fact than if they are prevented in the first place.

### **Sexually transmitted diseases?**

But what about sexually transmitted diseases? What about AIDS? When AIDS was rampant only in the homosexual community, some people sneered that it was retribution from somebody's angry god for activities that offended them. Now that AIDS is raging through the American black community, all over sub-Saharan Africa, and among many non-gay whites, the sneers are gone and it has become a public health crisis at which even Republicans are throwing money. Should it really matter how someone contracted a disease? Should any threat to public health or to any individual's personal health be treated by a universal health care system?

What about babies or not having babies? Should pregnancy and birthing be supported by public tax dollars? If so, birth control and abortion must be equally funded and available. A “universal” health care system cannot be limited by some people's moral judgments.

How about cloning? Stem cell research? Prescriptions for marijuana? Should Terry Schiavo and others in vegetative states be kept alive at public expense?

### **Plastic surgery?**

Plastic surgery is another area of controversy. Kids with cleft palates, fused fingers, and other birth defects are often treated at Children's Orthopedic Hospital in Seattle. When Siamese twins are separated the newspapers praise it. It is probably not too difficult to find general approval and support for these procedures. But what about sexual reassignment surgery? There is growing understanding around gender dysphoria and the treatment of transsexuals with hormones and surgery but would the public support these procedures with tax dollars? How about Brittany Spears's boob job or Michael Jackson's nose? Which plastic surgeries are medically necessary and which are cosmetic only? And should it matter?

**Next month, Van Cleve will address other issues around universal health care, including mental health, prescription drugs, funding, and who makes medical decisions.**

## Report on King County Democratic Central Committee Endorsement meeting (July 24, 2007)

Forty-third District Democrats Bill Sherman, Keith Scully, and Lisa Steubing were among the candidates endorsed at the King County Democratic Central Committee meeting in Renton July 24, 2007. The 43rd's Rob Dolin, First Vice Chair of KCDCC, presided over the meeting.

Highlighted endorsements included: Gael Tarleton for Port Commission, Pos. 2; Bill Sherman and Keith Scully a dual endorsement for King County Prosecuting Attorney (Bill with a vote of 50-0 and Keith with 36-11 with 5 abstentions); Jean Godden for Seattle City Council, Pos. 1; Venus Velazquez and Bruce Harrell a dual endorsement for Pos. 3 (Velazquez 28-9; Harrell 38-1); David Della for Pos. 7; Peter Maier for Seattle School Board, Pos. 1; Darlene Flynn and Lisa Steubing, a dual for Seattle School Board, Pos. 2 (Flynn 20-10; Steubing 34-2); Harium Martin-Morris for School Board, Pos. 3; Maria Ramirez, Seattle School Board, Pos. 6.

Endorsed issues include "No" on Initiative 960, (Eyman initiative on taxes and fees); "Yes" on EHJR 4204 ("Simply Better Schools"), Referendum 67 (sustain ESSB 5726 on insurance fair conduct), King County parks propositions 1 and 2, and "No" on King County I-25 (electing Elections Director).

The body also passed a resolution commending Congressman Jim McDermott for his support of HR 333 calling for the impeachment of Vice-President Cheney, and urging other Democratic members of the state's Congressional delegation to support HR 333.

Previously KCDCC granted early endorsements to County Assessor Scott Noble, County Council Members Larry Gossett, Larry Phillips, Dow Constantine, Port Commissioner Alec Fiskien, Seattle City Council Members Sally Clark and Tom Rasmussen, and County Council Candidate Brad Larssen.

**Respectfully submitted,**  
**Linda J. Clifton, KCDCC Committee-**  
**woman**

## Take responsibility for our energy

It's clear, I think, to all of us, that we need to take both political and personal action to avert the increasingly damaging effects of our own demands for energy. One thing each of us can do is to join in the **Live Earth** effort, by signing the pledge and continuing to take the positive steps the pledge calls for. I've signed, and am increasing my efforts. Will you?

To sign the Live Earth Pledge (copied below) go to <http://liveearthpledge.org/>

- 1. To demand** that my country join an international treaty within the next two years that cuts global warming pollution by 90% in developed countries and by more than half worldwide in time for the next generation to inherit a healthy earth;
- 2. To take** personal action to help solve the climate crisis by reducing my own CO<sub>2</sub> pollution as much as I can and offsetting the rest to become "carbon neutral";
- 3. To fight** for a moratorium on the construction of any new generating facility that burns coal without the capacity to safely trap and store the CO<sub>2</sub>;
- 4. To work** for a dramatic increase in the energy efficiency of my home, workplace, school, place of worship, and means of transportation;
- 5. To fight** for laws and policies that expand the use of renewable energy sources and reduce dependence on oil and coal;
- 6. To plant** new trees and to join with others in preserving and protecting forests; and,
- 7. To buy** from businesses and support leaders who share my commitment to solving the climate crisis and building a sustainable, just, and prosperous world for the 21st century.

— Linda Clifton

# A Carbon Two-Step

What if they gave a freeway shutdown and nobody came? That's the real story coming out of the I-5 lane closures for engineering repairs. The media, as usual, hyped up the "inconvenience," the "clogged artery," the "traffic jam" that they drumbeat every night in order to play up the sensation.

## The real sensation

But they were looking in the wrong place. The sensation is that in one day, 50% of the usual automobile traffic disappeared off the concrete of I-5. The other arteries like highway 99 and Airport Way were not unusually clogged, either. People still got to work. The city did not shut down.

The dirty habit of burning up fossil fuels to drive hunks of metal bearing only one passenger was shucked overnight. The carbon footprint of Seattle and King County was dramatically reduced without any new roads, new taxes, or new construction. How did that happen?

## Government prepared us

The biggest reason is that local government offices warned us and prepared us. Simple education and communication went a very long way. They also prepared for it by timing lights, getting more busses in service, streamlining corridors, increasing capacity on the Sounder train, and putting an extra passenger boat from West Seattle out on Elliott Bay.

People were forced to make another transportation choice and they did it. Mass transit in the Seattle/King County area actually does work!

## Takes more than a carrot

People will not change their lazy, carbon consuming habits just because they are offered a carrot. Link light rail is a nice carrot. More passenger ferries on Elliott Bay (and even Kirkland to Seattle!) is a nice carrot. More Metro busses more frequently is a nice carrot. These are all valid options. But people

will not easily try them until they are given a stick as well. Higher gas prices alone will not do it as we have seen in the last two years. Actual shutting down of road surfaces will do it. We just saw it happen.

## Implications for Alaskan Way

So when city and county council members consider what to do about the Alaskan Way Viaduct, let's hope they think about what just happened in August 2007. Road surfaces decreased and people still got where they wanted to go. It underlies the basic truth that the objective of a good transportation strategy is not to move vehicles—it is to move people and cargo.

If that can be accomplished without paving over the rest of King County, what a success we will make for our businesses, our people, our environment, and our future.

Thank you,

Janice Van Cleve PCO 43/1858

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## Support Referendum 67

The big insurance companies have already raised more than \$6.8 million to try to defeat Referendum 67 here in Washington this November. What are they so afraid of?

Perhaps the insurance industry doesn't want to be held accountable by Washington consumers. After all, Referendum 67 simply requires that all insurance companies pay legitimate claims in a reasonable and timely manner. Is that really too much to ask?

Instead of raising \$6.8 million to campaign against Referendum 67, the insurance industry should be using that money to pay the legitimate claims due to Washington consumers.

After all, thousands of consumers in Washington file complaints with the Office of the Insurance Commissioner every year because their legitimate claims have been unfairly denied or delayed.

Under our current law, there is no penalty for insurance companies that do not play by the rules. Fortunately, Referendum 67 will create an incentive to pay legitimate claims promptly by allowing the court to assess penalties if an insurance company illegally denies or delays payment of a legitimate claim.

Sue Evans, Spokesperson

Approve 67 Campaign

# Beyond Disaster

By Chris Hedges

**Monday 06 August 2007**

The war in Iraq is about to get worse—much worse. The Democrats' decision to let the war run its course, while they frantically wash their hands of responsibility, means that it will sputter and stagger forward until the mission collapses. This will be sudden.

The security of the Green Zone, our imperial city, will be increasingly breached. Command and control will disintegrate. And we will back out of Iraq humiliated and defeated. But this will not be the end of the conflict. It will, in fact, signal a phase of the war far deadlier and more dangerous to American interests.

## **Iraq no longer unified**

Iraq no longer exists as a unified country. The experiment that was Iraq, the cobbling together of disparate and antagonistic patches of the Ottoman Empire by the victorious powers in the wake of World War I, belongs to the history books. It will never come back. The Kurds have set up a de facto state in the north, the Shiites control most of the south, and the center of the country is a battleground.

There are two million Iraqis who have fled their homes and are internally displaced. Another two million have left the country, most to Syria and Jordan, which now has the largest number of refugees per capita of any country on Earth. An Oxfam report estimates that one in three Iraqis are in need of emergency aid, but the chaos and violence is so widespread that assistance is impossible. Iraq is in a state of anarchy.

The American occupation forces are one more source of terror tossed into the cal-

dron of suicide bombings, mercenary armies, militias, massive explosions, ambushes, kidnappings, and mass executions. But wait until we leave.

It was not supposed to turn out like this. Remember all those visions of a democratic Iraq, visions peddled by the White House and fatuous pundits like Thomas Friedman and the gravel-voiced morons who pollute our airwaves on CNN and Fox News? They assured us that the war would be a cakewalk. We would be greeted as liberators. Democracy would seep out over the borders of Iraq to usher in a new Middle East. Now, struggling to salvage their own credibility, they blame the debacle on poor planning and mismanagement.

## **Arabists opposed war**

There are probably about 10,000 Arabists in the United States—people who have lived for prolonged periods in the Middle East and speak Arabic. At the inception of the war you could not have rounded up more than about a dozen who thought this was a good idea. And I include all the Arabists in the State Department, the Pentagon, and the intelligence community. Anyone who had spent significant time in Iraq knew this would not work.

The war was not doomed because Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz did not do sufficient planning for the occupation. The war was doomed, period. It never had a chance. And even a cursory knowledge of Iraqi history and politics made this apparent.

This is not to deny the stupidity of the occupation. The disbanding of the Iraqi army; the ham-fisted attempt to install the crook and, it now turns out, Iranian spy Ahmed Chalabi in power; the firing of all Baathist public officials, including university professors, primary school teachers, nurses and doctors; the failure to secure Baghdad and

**Continued on p. 7**

the vast weapons depots from looters; allowing heavily armed American units to blast their way through densely populated neighborhoods, giving the insurgency its most potent recruiting tool—all ensured a swift descent into chaos. But Iraq would not have held together even if we had been spared the gross incompetence of the Bush administration. Saddam Hussein, like the more benign dictator Josip Broz Tito in the former Yugoslavia, understood that the glue that held the country together was the secret police.

### **Iraq has resources**

Iraq, however, is different from Yugoslavia. Iraq has oil—lots of it. It also has water in a part of the world that is running out of water. And the dismemberment of Iraq will unleash a mad scramble for dwindling resources that will include the involvement of neighboring states. The Kurds, like the Shiites and the Sunnis, know that if they do not get their hands on water resources and oil they cannot survive.

But Turkey, Syria, and Iran have no intention of allowing the Kurds to create a viable enclave. A functioning Kurdistan in northern Iraq means rebellion by the repressed Kurdish minorities in these countries. The Kurds, orphans of the 20th century who have been repeatedly sold out by every ally they ever had, including the United States, will be crushed. The possibility that Iraq will become a Shiite state, run by clerics allied with Iran, terrifies the Arab world.

Turkey, as well as Saudi Arabia, the United States, and Israel, would most likely keep the conflict going by arming Sunni militias. This anarchy could end with foreign forces, including Iran and Turkey, carving up the battered carcass of Iraq. No matter what happens, many, many Iraqis are going to die. And it is our fault.

### **Interventionists learn nothing**

The neoconservatives—and the liberal interventionists, who still serve as the neo-

cons' useful idiots when it comes to Iran—have learned nothing. They talk about hitting Iran and maybe even Pakistan with airstrikes. Strikes on Iran would ensure a regional conflict. Such an action has the potential of drawing Israel into war—especially if Iran retaliates for any airstrikes by hitting Israel, as I would expect Tehran to do. There are still many in the U.S. who cling to the doctrine of pre-emptive war, a doctrine that the post-World War II Nuremberg laws define as a criminal “war of aggression.”

### **Occupation spreads instability**

The occupation of Iraq, along with the Afghanistan occupation, has only furthered the spread of failed states and increased authoritarianism, savage violence, instability and anarchy. It has swelled the ranks of our real enemies—the Islamic terrorists—and opened up voids of lawlessness where they can operate and plot against us. It has scuttled the art of diplomacy. It has left us an outlaw state intent on creating more outlaw states. It has empowered Iran, as well as Russia and China, which sit on the sidelines gleefully watching our self-immolation. This is what George W. Bush and all those “reluctant hawks” who supported him have bequeathed us.

What is terrifying is not that the architects and numerous apologists of the Iraq war have learned nothing, but that they may not yet be finished.

Chris Hedges, the former Middle East bureau chief for *The New York Times*, spent seven years in the Middle East. He was part of the paper's team of reporters who won the 2002 Pulitzer Prize for coverage of global terrorism. He is the author of *War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning*. His latest book is *American Fascists: The Christian Right and the War on America*.

<b>VOLUNTEER WITH THE 43RD DISTRICT! JOIN A COMMITTEE!</b>	
	<p><b>ELECTIONS COMMITTEE</b>  <i>Chair: Paulo Pontemayor (pontemayor@gmail.com)</i>  <i>Current committee members: Charlie Bendock, Arvia Morris</i></p> <p>The Elections Committee is responsible for helping to recruit Area Coordinators and develop our canvass infrastructure. In addition, this committee works with Paulo in planning the 2008 Presidential Caucuses.</p>
	<p><b>RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE</b>  <i>Chair: Stephanie Pure (stephanie@stephaniepure.com)</i>  <i>Current committee members: David Kunselman, Jean Carlson</i></p> <p>The Recruitment Committee is responsible for helping to recruit and support existing Precinct Committee Officers (PCOs).</p>
	<p><b>EVENTS COMMITTEE</b>  <i>Chair: Kirk Shirley (kirkshirley@gmail.com)</i>  <i>Current committee members: Linda Clifton, Will Affleck-Asch</i></p> <p>The Events Committee is responsible for helping to plan and coordinate district fundraisers and auctions.</p>
	<p><b>PROGRAMS COMMITTEE</b>  <i>Chair: Julian Wheeler (julianfwheeler@aol.com)</i>  <i>Current committee members: Neal Traven, Karelina Resnick</i></p> <p>The Programs Committee is responsible for helping to brainstorm and execute programming ideas as well as improving upon check-in processes.</p>
	<p><b>COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE</b>  <i>Chair: Rob Dolin (robdolin@wuxx.com)</i>  <i>Current members: Craig Sanders, Chris Butler</i></p> <p>The Comm. and Tech. Committee has several elements. One is the newsletter, for which Craig Sanders is editor-in-chief and oversees an Editorial Committee currently comprising of Arvia Morris and Janice Van Cleve. Another is our email communications system, and membership database, which are both being managed by Chris Butler. A final element is creating and improving upon our online tools and presence, for which Rob is exploring creating a taskforce and several members have expressed interested in participating.</p>