

Nonpartisan efforts paid off

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Over the next couple of months the Clark County Democratic Central Committee will be reflecting on the organization's first venture into the nonpartisan arena.

An initial look in the rearview mirror shows that we made a real difference in an exercise that could very well have been dominated by some people who were determined to use big money to steer this community toward a conservative if not regressive future.

That determination was revealed in the incessant schedule of cable television ads touting the re-election of Vancouver City Councilor Jeanne Stewart and the election of like-minded challengers Bill Turlay, Micheline Doan and Frank Decker as a bulwark against tolls and light rail.

In terms of money, our efforts were paltry. The Democratic Party spent less than \$3,000 where the other side was spending nearly 10 times as much. Our efforts were, however, effective. Our doorbelling and phone-banking in behalf of the candidates we endorsed helped Alishia Topper unseat Stewart and helped Anne McEnerny-Ogle withstand the charge of Decker.

Vancouver Mayor Tim Leavitt said he'd just as soon not have our endorsement, but he said he wouldn't mind if we deemed him our preferred candidate. We did that and helped him survive Turlay's challenge by a seven-point margin.

Jack Burkman urged us to stay out of nonpartisan races even though the Republicans were seen to be working against his re-election. But we worked for him quietly, carrying his literature along with that of Topper and McEnerny-Ogle. He won, but by a smaller margin than that of Topper, who was taking her first shot at elective office.

We endorsed Mike Ciraulo in Battle Ground. He lost, but Democrats helped elect progressives Mike Dalesandro and Chris Regan.

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