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NOVEMBER-
DECEMBER 2020

NEWS

A monthly publication of THE METROPOLITAN DEMOCRATIC CLUB of SEATTLE

Spitzer offers ideas for changes to Supreme Court



Hugh Spitzer

Hugh Spitzer, a constitutional law expert, described options for change to the United States Supreme Court appointment process in his November 18 presentation to the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle. He has spoken to the MDC many times over the nearly 50 years since he joined the organization.

The size of the Supreme Court has changed many times since it was established in 1789. At that time there were six justices, Mr Spitzer explained. The number varied from five to 10 up until 1869 when the number of justices finally settled down to nine.

He outlined some of the problems with the current system: there is a national crisis every time a vacancy occurs; lifetime appointments skews membership; the court is ideologically unbalanced - in the last 44 years Republicans held the presidency for 24 years and appointed 11 justices whereas Democrats held the presidency for 20 years and appointed four justices.

We may find solutions in the systems used elsewhere in the world Mr Spitzer explained; most involve limited terms and mandatory retirement. In Germany, for example, there are 16 members in two "senates" divided into three panels; six are professional judges, others are academics, civil servants or lawyers; they are selected by a two-thirds vote of both houses of

mark your Zoom calendar

December 13, 6 pm

Winter holiday party

Special guests: Attorney General Bob Ferguson, Treasurer-elect Mike Pellicciotti

Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 871 2590 4523

Passcode: 630983

<https://tinyurl.com/Dec13meet>

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December 16, noon

Representative Gael Tarleton

Topic: Reflections on Campaigning through a Pandemic

Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 867 4265 5358

Passcode: 404007

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January 13, noon

Speaker: Heather Marx, director, West Seattle Bridge and Downtown Mobility.

Topic: West Seattle Bridge

Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 875 7249 2672

Passcode: 780861

<https://tinyurl.com/Jan13meet>

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parliament; they serve 12-year terms and then retire (retirement at 75 is mandatory); some decisions require two-thirds vote, others unanimity.

Options for reforming the court that require a constitutional amendment include the Buttigieg proposal (five Democrats, five Republicans and five chosen by those ten and the Ornstein proposal

(18-year term limits, two appointments per presidential term). Options not requiring a constitutional amendment include: add two seats to the court; serve 18 years then rotate to a lower court and each president gets two appointments; return to use of the filibuster.

Mr Spitzer is a professor of law at the

- continued on p4 -



Winter Holiday Party 2020

Please join members and friends of

THE METROPOLITAN DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF SEATTLE

on Zoom for a bounty of joy and good cheer
at our annual winter holiday party

December 13, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Our special guests will be
Attorney General Bob Ferguson
and
Treasurer-elect Mike Pellicciotti.

We welcome your sponsorship of \$125. You can donate at
www.metrodems.org or send your check to Eleanor Munro, 1925
41st Ave SW, Seattle WA 98116.

As always at this celebration we honor our elected officials and
thank them for their service to the public. We invite them to
comment briefly on the upcoming legislative session.

Join Zoom meeting:

<https://tinyurl.com/winterholidaymeet> Meeting ID: 871 2590 4523

One tap mobile: Passcode: 630983

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CASC facility transferred to community ownership

The Central Area Senior Center (CASC), situated on a bluff overlooking Lake Washington and valued at \$4.9 million, has been providing services to seniors for over 50 years, Dian Ferguson, executive director of the center, told members and friends of the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle at its October 28 Zoom meeting.

After a long and complicated effort, Ms Ferguson explained, the Seattle City Council will vote on legislation that will transfer the property to the ownership of CASC with the provision that the property, even if sold, must continue to operate as a nonprofit providing health services and wellness programs, assistance to low-income seniors, low-cost meals and nutritional support, fitness and recreational programs, social and educational gatherings and affordable housing. (The Council voted November 2 on the legislation and Mayor Jenny Durkan signed it into law November 10.)

The CASC will now be able to more accurately reflect the rich historical and culturally significant heritages associated with the CASC's founding, mission and vision by modernizing the building, updating systems and redesigning the interior, Ms Ferguson said.



Dian Ferguson

METROPOLITAN DEMOCRATIC CLUB of SEATTLE –Board of Directors

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From the editor

Please send notices of upcoming events, letters, articles, and book reviews to Editor Eleanor Munro at walkere1@msn.com or 1925 41st Ave SW, Seattle WA 98116 no later than the fourth Wednesday of the month. All contributions are subject to editing. For more information call 206-370-1374.

These office holders have been or are members of the MDC

Following are listed public officeholders who are or have been members of the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle.

US senators

Brock Adams
Henry M Jackson
Warren G Magnuson
Hugh Mitchell

US representatives

Jim McDermott
Lloyd Meeds
Jolene Unsoeld

WA governors

Booth Gardner
Mike Lowry
Jay Inslee

WA It governor

Denny Heck

WA attorney general

Bob Ferguson

WA treasurer

Dan Grimm

WA ins comm

Deborah Senn

WA senators

Cal Anderson
Steve Berquist
Donn Charnley
Maralyn Chase
Martin Durkan
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Arnie Berg
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Geoff Douthwaite
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Roger Goodman
Phyllis Kenney
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Dick Nelson
Ray Olsen
Gerry Pollet
Nita Rinehart
Cindy Ryu
Helen Sommers
David Sprague
Gael Tarleton
Georgette Valle
Max Vekich
Jesse Wineberry

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Dow Constantine
Randy Revelle
Ron Sims

King Co comms

Ed Munro
Howard Odell
Scott Wallace

King Co Council

Rod Dembowski
Carolyn Edmonds
Maggie Fimia
Larry Gossett
Audrey Grueger
Joe McDermott
Dwight Pelz
Larry Phillips
Cynthia Sullivan

King Co assessors

Lloyd Hara
Ruthe Ridder

John Wilson

Seattle mayors

Mike McGinn
Ed Murray
Greg Nickels
Norm Rice
Charles Royer
Paul Schell
Wes Uhlman

Seattle City Council

Sally Bagshaw
Tim Burgess
Martha Choe
Cheryl Chow
Sally Clark
Richard Conlin
George Cooley
David Della
Susan Donaldson
Jan Drago
Jean Godden
Bruce Harrell
Phyllis Lamphere
Andrew Lewis
Nick Licata
Wing Luke
Floyd Miller
Tammy Morales
Mike O'Brien
Margaret Pageler
Tom Rasmussen
Dolores Sibonga
Peter Steinbrueck
Jim Street
Tom Weeks
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Seattle city attorneys

Pete Holmes
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Mary Bass
Cheryl Bleakney
Jill Geary
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Jan Kumasaka
Eden Mack
Harium Martin-Morris

Marty McLaren
Ed Palmason
Sharon Peaslee
Kay Smith-Blum
Sally Soriano

Port of Seattle

Sam Cho
Pat Davis
Fred Felleman

Justices and judges

Norman Ackley
John Darrah
Fred Dore
William Dwyer
Ed Heavey
Janice Niemi
John Riley
Solie Ringold
Phil Talmadge
Don Voorhees
Bob Winsor
Shoreline mayor
Chris Roberts
Edmonds School Board
Carin Chase

Over the past 64 years MDC membership has included many others prominent in academia, business, law, labor, civic affairs, community service and Democratic Party leadership.



Some members have served in several capacities; they are listed only once, however, under the office for which they are best known.



The MDC promotes good government through educational programming, social discourse and support for progressive public policy, candidates and campaigns.

www.metrodems.org

book review

The War on Normal People: The Truth About America's Disappearing Jobs and Why Universal Basic Income is Our Future

by Andrew Yang
Hatchette Books, New York, 2018

Reviewed by Pete Francis

Millions of jobs have been lost in the past twenty or thirty years, mostly from automation. Andrew Yang shows how robotics and artificial intelligence (AI) are already accelerating this process. Between now and 2030 tens of millions more jobs will disappear. For example, in that time frame much of long haul trucking will be performed by driverless trucks. Result: millions more out of work.

And this book was published before the pandemic even started. So we can foresee the thousands of businesses that will never reopen, former owners and employees unable to pay the rent or mortgage, or even feed their families, becoming homeless for the first time, joining the many who are homeless already.

Yes, we can hope that infrastructure work and efforts to stop climate change will provide some good-paying jobs, but Mr Yang contends that will not be nearly enough. He proposes a universal basic income (UBI) as absolutely necessary to our country. He says that \$1,000 per month for every adult through age

64 can replace many of our current programs, help those with no job, and supplement parents and others with low-paying jobs. His arguments are thought provoking, and worth considering. His responses to the usual arguments against his proposal are well thought out.

We already can see tremendous inequality and homelessness. We cannot ignore the huge changes that are coming at us. Mr Yang's ideas deserve serious consideration. His book is extremely readable--a page-turner really--and everyone should read it. If you do not agree with his ideas, at the least you will better understand the problem.

Howell gets award

Lem Howell, a member of the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle since 1967, will be presented with the APEX Sally Savage Leadership in Philanthropy Award at the Washington State Bar Association's annual celebration of the luminaries of the legal profession. Watch the event at 7 pm December 4 at <https://www.wsba.org/apex>.



Ferguson and Pellicciotti to speak at holiday party

Special guests who will speak briefly at the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle's winter holiday party this year are Attorney General Bob Ferguson and Treasurer-elect Mike Pellicciotti. The Zoom event takes place December 13 starting at 6 pm.

As always at this celebration we honor our elected officials and thank them for their service to the public. We invite them to participate in the event by commenting briefly on the upcoming legislative session.

MDC members and friends are invited to sponsor the event at \$125. You can donate at www.metrodems.org or send your check to Eleanor Munro, 1925 41st Ave SW, Seattle WA 98116.

See Zoom access information on front page. The information will also appear on the printed invitations.

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University of Washington School of Law, where he teaches state constitutional law, US constitutional law, local government law, transnational law, and professional responsibility. He has published widely on local government law and state constitutional law topics including a book on the Washington State Constitution.

He earned a BA from Yale University, a JD from the University of Washington Law School and an LL M from the University of California Law School at Berkeley.

Membership renewal date appears on above label

November-December 2020

MDC meetings have
been cancelled until
further notice

Eleanor Munro
1925 41st Ave SW
Seattle WA 98116

Return Service Requested

METROPOLITAN
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