



Republican Record

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From the Editor

As the end of 2021 fast approaches, we welcome you to the fourth issue of the Lewis & Clark County Republican Central Committee (LCCRCC) newsletter, *Republican Record*! The LCCRCC has had amazing attendance at the last few monthly meetings, and we are working diligently to integrate our sign-in process at monthly meetings with the Montana Secretary of State's My Voter Page to allow for easy reference to precincts for prospective members. As a reminder, the LCCRCC meets the second Monday of each month in Helena, MT at the DoubleTree by Hilton, at 7:00 p.m.

As always, we hope you enjoy the newsletter and share it with others. If you have specific content to add to the newsletter, please contact the LCCRCC Executive Board members at mt.lccrcc@gmail.com. We wish you all the very best holiday season, and we look forward to continuing our work in 2022. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Hailey Oestreicher, Editor

A Tribute to...

The LCCRCC extends our deepest sympathy to friends and family of Shirley Herrin, who passed away on October 26, 2021.

Shirley was born in Helena, MT to Gus and Bernice (Warren) Beaver as the 4th child of 14 children. Her first job was car hopping at RB Drive In. She later returned to RB Drive In for her 80th birthday, where she delivered meals car-side to friends, family, and the Helena community.

Shirley worked for various Montana State departments, including the Montana Highway Patrol, Montana Historical Society, and Department of Justice. Her true passion was working for the Montana Legislature, where she began working in 1963.

In the legislature, Shirley served as the supervisor of the Senate Committee Secretaries for many years. She carried out this passion of assisting the legislative



Shirley Herrin

1939-2021

process and all members/staff with great enthusiasm and care, serving her last legislative session in 2021. She truly was just as much at home in the halls of the Montana capitol building as on the back of a horse or camping with grandchildren.

Shirley also served on many boards and was an active member of several Republican Women's groups. She also volunteered for both the National and Montana Saddle Club Associations, Pioneer Cabin (Reeder's Alley), Lewis & Clark County Fairgrounds Users and the Helena Trail Riders, serving as the club's president at the time of her death.

Shirley was a well-known and deeply loved member of the Montana Republican party and her colorful presence at events, complete with none other than a matching hat, will be greatly missed and always remembered.

There will be a celebration of Shirley's life in Helena in early 2022.

LCCRCC Update

At the November monthly meeting, LCCRCC members elected DeAnna Anderson as the new Vice-Chair! The Executive Board is excited to have DeAnna as an integral part of its team as we head into the new year!

BLAST from the Past

Zack Wirth, Columnist

Sidney Edgerton, a Representative from the 18th district in Ohio, was serving his term as an outspoken abolitionist when President Lincoln appointed him as the first “Territorial Governor” of Montana. Assuming his duties, Edgerton organized a census, an election, and the first Territorial Legislature, which was held in December of 1864. Nine original counties were formed, which included Edgerton County. Silver City (northwest of Last Chance Gulch) was designated as the county seat.

Edgerton’s personal conflicts with the sitting County Clerk, Eastman, prompted him to replace Eastman with H.H. Harding. County Commissioners refused to accept the replacement.

Governor Edgerton, Wilbur F. Sanders, Sheriff Wood, and Harding rode to Silver City with a writ for the county books. The men wrestled the books from Eastman and returned to Helena. Jilted commissioners claimed Edgerton and associates committed theft of public property, prompting a Montana myth that the county records were “stolen.” The controversy ended

when a county-wide election confirmed Helena as the county seat and H. H. Harding as the Clerk.

The following legislative session, Commissioner J.W. Rode introduced a bill to change the county name from Edgerton County to Lewis & Clark County. Democratic newspapers, willing to wipe Edgerton’s name off the map, supported the measure and the bill passed. Edgerton was never reimbursed for personal funds and debts he incurred funding the early expenses associated with the startup of the Montana territorial government.

take 5 Redistricting Commissioner Dan Stusek

The LCCRCC recently sat down with Districting and Apportionment Commissioner Dan Stusek, a native of Billings and graduate of University of Montana School of Law, to discuss the reapportionment and redistricting processes.

LCCRCC: What are your thoughts on the Congressional maps, as presented?

Stusek: We set guidelines and priorities in 2019, unsure of whether we would have two districts. Various mapping proposals, twelve in total, were all flawed. However, we reached a consensus. We were very reluctant to split cities and, by extension, counties. Our chair was not a Democrat or a Republican, but a champion of social justice who favored some maps that split counties. In the end, we kept county-splitting to a minimum.

LCCRCC: Moving to Redistricting, what is the committee’s timeline?

Stusek: We will start studying census data in January, making sure we are complying with the Voting Rights Act. It is tricky to set a timeline because data analysts are working in other states and have not yet provided data for Montana. We hope to begin serious work on the Senate and Legislative Districts in March. Historically, the Commission has traveled around the state gathering public comment, but budget constraints will likely limit such travel.

LCCRCC: What issues do you see in the future?

Stusek: Eastern Montana is losing population, resulting in large districts. Democrats continue to propose maps that divide cities and cover large rural areas, giving themselves a clear advantage. One example of Democrats gerrymandering using rural areas in the past is Glasgow, MT, which has been split into three districts. I want to propose that State Senators with a carry-over term still live in their new district. The State Senators have a 4-year term and half carry over to the new redistricting. In the last redistricting, carry-over Senators were put in nearby district, but I want to make sure they still live in the district they are representing.



Comm. Dan Stusek

Nuts & Bolts: Gerrymandering

Gerrymandering is the manipulation of electoral maps for the political adversary. In 1812, Massachusetts Governor Elbridge Gerry (pictured at right) backed a redistricting plan favoring his own party, the Democrats. One district was shaped like a strange salamander. The media combined Governor Gerry’s name with “salamander.” Ever since 1812, the practice of drawing distorted districts favoring one party has been referred to as “Gerrymandering.”

