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leftoverseastside.com



The LeftOvers

A leftist community zine for the Eastside of Lake Washington

A letter from the Editors



October 7, 2024 came and went. We are now a year into the genocide in Gaza, a startling fact that is hard to absorb. As we sat around the table to create our layout for issue two, we wanted to reflect on what has happened this year. A year ago, none of us knew each other, and we were more in the habit of prioritizing the “business” of our lives over finding and connecting with people. Watching the assault on Gaza through the eyes of Palestinians and learning more about their history shook up this complacency. We learned that news outlets that often sell themselves as “neutral” were telling a story that dehumanized innocent people and washed clean the war crimes committed by people in places of power. We realized that harm was being covered up by “neutrality.” Finding each other meant we didn’t need to be neutral anymore, we could have a perspective and work together to have a voice. That’s why this zine is never neutral. It has a specific point of view, because we have a specific point of view. We are for people over profits, and will always tell the story from the perspective of our community.

There is an election coming up, so this issue is focused on voting. We have a QR code on the front that will help you get registered to vote. We have an interview with someone running for office, a piece on the initiatives you should vote NO on this November, and some thoughts on helping the people of Congo by buying used electronics or repairing them. And as always, our community directory will be at the end to help us grow our connections and community.

Voting is often people’s entryway into civil engagement, so we want to encourage you to vote. And after you mail in that ballot, find a mutual aid or political organizing group to keep the momentum going. No matter what happens this election, your community will be here to get you through it.

And we are here to help you find those people.

Cheers!

-The Editors

(Chelsea, Reta, and Yaro)



An Interview with Melissa Demyan

By Chelsea Liekhus-Schmaltz

A couple weeks ago I had the opportunity to talk to Melissa Demyan, a candidate currently running for state legislative district 45. LD-45 includes Juanita, Totem Lake, North Redmond, Duvall, and parts of Sammamish. Demyan is running against current democrat John Goodman. She was only 499 votes behind Goodman in the primary, a stunning achievement against a 20 year incumbent who outspent Demyan 3 to 1.

Demyan and I started our conversation by talking about how she got involved in politics.



“I’ve worked in political spaces, community and advocacy work since before I turned 18.”

She was a fellow for Obama’s primary in 2008, a delegate for Bernie Sanders in 2016, and has participated in many campaigns throughout the years. These experiences brought her in contact with labor organizers where she began working for SCIU United Healthcare workers in California, the plumbers and pipefitters union, and then the machinist union in Washington state.



Demyan talked passionately about how important unions are for reclaiming the middle class.

“Our union density in our country was closer to 30 percent in the ... 50s, 60s, and 70s,” she explained. “We had a middle class and there was less income inequality, right? And so I knew that a Renaissance of Labor was going to be needed.”

This experience with labor organization in a multitude of trades has given Demyan a unique look into the important role unions play in protecting the working class in our state.



I became curious how this background influenced Demyan's decision to run for state representative. She explained that part of the reason she wanted to run was because of an interaction she had with current representative Springer. During a lobby day Demyan had the opportunity to talk to Springer about the need for safe staffing ratios in hospitals.

"It's actually just good patient care when you have safe staffing ratios," Demyan explained. But Springer was against a bill that would ensure this critical infrastructure for Washington state residents.

Around this time, Demyan and her husband were considering buying a house, and came face to face with the difficulty that many people in this area experience trying to do the same thing. She was also preparing to adopt their first child and started to learn more about the state's public education funding crisis. As it turns out, Springer voted against several bills that tried to solve these problems and even voted against reproductive and gender affirming care and many more that matter to Demyan. That's when she knew it was time to take action and run for office.

I asked Demyan to tell me more about the kinds of legislation she would support in office. We talked about several issues. These included health care, housing, child care, climate change, and labor organization. Demyan supports legislation that would regulate hospital mergers. On the topic of housing, she supports both immediate solutions for the unhoused and longer term solutions like relaxing building restrictions like parking minimums and encouraging housing density and rental stabilization. Demyan also sees the importance in child care and supports reducing the cost of child care, and has worked in the past to ensure her union members have sufficient child care even after normal business hours. We discussed the importance of transitioning to a clean energy future and how to do this in a just way that honors the reality of working class people. She also emphasized that she does not take oil and gas money, unlike her opponent. Once again we discussed the importance of labor unions in the overall picture and the critical role they would play in our future.

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All of these efforts are dependent on a strong organizing base on the Eastside, and we discussed her plans for building the necessary infrastructure.

Demyan said she is putting a lot of emphasis on “helping to train people how to door knock, how to phone bank, how to have effective organizing conversations, [and] how to share their personal story.” She talked a lot about how important it is for people to work these organizing muscles.

I asked her for some examples of what people might think about doing. She told me there are two kinds of activism: mutual aid and political organizing and that we should be doing both.

She suggested that readers “find a community group that is directly helping in the immediate and devote some time.” This will help people connect on a regular basis year round. Then, during election season, “go help a candidate you believe in,” and “push for candidates who in the long run are going to help you.”

As we concluded our conversation, I thought about the major changes coming for our state and our communities. Wealth inequality is at a major high, along with homelessness, medical and student debt, all while climate change, threats to our LGBTQ community, and bodily autonomy are at our doorstep. Demyan sees these issues and wants to address them head on. She represents a new generation of politicians who are ready to adapt for our new future.



A Conversation with Melissa Chaudhry

By Chelsea Liekhus-Schmaltz

Melissa Chaudhry is running for Washington's 9th Congressional District.

We met at Redmond's Derby Days over the summer where she was advertising her campaign to potential voters. I was impressed to see someone running for Congress actively try to connect with the people in their district. I reached out to her to learn more about her campaign and policies. Below is a shortened version of our conversation. To read the full interview, view this article on our website!

We first asked Chaudhry why she is running for office

“Ever since the photos from Abu Ghraib came to light, I have struggled with my identity as an American. I was raised in a Navy family, and the US military provided my family's financial stability, my upbringing and education, and my opportunities - how was it possible, then, that the military was being used to demean and dehumanize innocent people, and destroy entire countries, in my name and (supposedly) for my benefit?

...

It took two decades, and a long series of explorations of other ways to make the world a better place - including work in climate resilience, affordable housing, economic empowerment, addiction treatment, immigrant support, and more - before I circled back around to the question of what to do. Was I going to let the future of America, the country I was born into and love dearly and always have, be determined by people who use their power to inflict harm? Was I going to accept that the racists were the only ones allowed to claim “patriotism” - or was there another way?

...

The method that opened up for me was politics. To enter politics with principle, purpose, and passion, coming from a place of love - maybe I was naive and idealistic, or maybe there really is some deeper purpose, some universal values, that have been missing from our political discourse for too long. Maybe people are hungry for something. Maybe I could help.



In short, I was tired of injustice. Tired of a sense of helplessness and aimlessness. Tired of work that was always about pulling people out of bad situations and never about working upstream to prevent them falling in. Tired of watching my friends struggle year after year - and struggling with them - with healthcare, housing, education, disabilities, discrimination, and inner dissonance. Tired of politicians who let themselves get bought by lobbies that work against the good of the people - who treated the job of Representative like a meal ticket, never seeming to really care about the people they represented. Tired of the fact that they had power, and good people didn't.

And eventually, I decided to be tired on purpose - because I'm running a grassroots campaign and writing this at 3:21 am! - rather than being tired by purposelessness. Running for Congress is my offer of meaningful service to our communities, and my path to inner redemption of what it means to me to be American."

One of the most striking differences between you and your opponent is your stance on Palestine and international policy. Can you talk about your point of view on this matter and how you came to this perspective?

"The gut reaction I've always had on the issue of Israel/Palestine is one of unfairness. Why do some people, who moved there a few generations ago, get absolutely everything - nice homes, successful startups, global aid (including, to this day, more US foreign aid than any other country, by a large margin) - but the people who lived there first are denied even the basics - oppressed, forced into poverty, segregated in daily life, evicted from their homeland, arrested and held without charges, and every so often, bombed and killed seemingly at random - for over seventy years before October 7, 2023?

...

Israel's goal is the erasure of Palestine as a place, Palestinian as an identity, and Palestinians as a people. This unconscionable strategy also ensures that Israel itself will never experience true security and stability, or true peace. Having suffered enormously does not give one the right to impose such suffering on others.



American support for Israel is fundamentally unsustainable. It has enabled Israel to blatantly commit genocide in front of our eyes, to start a war of aggression against Lebanon, and to do everything in its power to destabilize the Middle East and start WWII - all while pleading (and weaponizing) victimhood - so Netanyahu can escape criminal prosecution and a very small number of white Europeans, themselves a minority subset of the global population of a small Abrahamic faith, can continue to unilaterally dominate and exert total and brutal control over millions of people.

This is not about religion. This is about humanity, and justice, and peace. American taxpayer money should not be laundered through genocide to line Raytheon's pockets (or the defense sector of Boeing, for that matter). We need to invest that money here at home, and we need to support humanitarian efforts abroad.

In short, we need to use our power for good."

...[read the rest of the interview online!]

People reading our zine are interested in building community where they live. What advice do you have for our readers as they do their own organizing?

"Start! The best time to plant a tree - or build community - is always twenty years ago, and the next best time is always now. Relationships of trust and mutual support are the backbone of a healthy future, and we really, really need to be building that network of supportive infrastructure right now. All of us need community for social and mental health, and I believe that we all need more community-based economic and political structures as well.

My first piece of advice is, invest the time to be with people, including strangers. Slow down your interactions - with neighbors, coworkers, family, friends - folks at your place of worship, or the bleachers at the soccer game, or the grocery store. Be willing to talk a little longer, go a little deeper, listen a little more fully, share more of your own story. The magic doesn't happen until we're past the superficial and transactional layers, and it always takes one person brave and authentic enough to go there first.



Two, invest in learning. There is so much that can be done to build a more regenerative, resilient, nurturing, and healthy world, starting at the micro-level – with a conversation, a bag full of groceries, a shovel. Areas of focus I suggest include: cooperative business, backyard permaculture, wildcrafting, sociocracy, green infrastructure and ecological design, the history of radical social movements, trauma and emotional intelligence, de-escalation and restorative justice, peaceful parenting, and grassroots political organizing (including becoming a PCO!). Pick what interests you – we can't all know everything, and diversity incentivizes collaboration.

Three, make it consistent. Whatever your level of availability is, commit to it and sustain it over time. Coffee once a week with like-minded friends to support each other and trade notes? A shared business endeavor 15 hours a week? Book club once a month? Gardening with a friend every other Friday – or political meetings, or both? Whatever you do in this work, take it seriously. Schedule it, block other commitments around it, and commit to sustaining it over the long haul. We are regrowing roots for ourselves and each other. It's long, slow, necessary work – the benefits are truly gained over time, and disruption is much harder to recover from than it is to prevent.

Four, don't be afraid to offer, or ask for, help. Giving and receiving – in an approximate balance, but spread over time, in what I call “delayed reciprocity” – is the lifeblood of relationships and community. Never needing anything, and never offering anything, leads to personal stagnation. We are social beings. We need each other, and we need to know that we're needed. So don't be afraid to offer, and don't be afraid to ask. In small ways, and big ones – when we get accustomed to being there for each other and can't imagine life any other way, then we can say we have truly built community.”

Chaudhry is running for Congress in District 9, covering CD9 covers the cities of Bellevue, Newcastle, Mercer Island, South Seattle, Rainier Beach, Columbia City, Beacon Hill, Skyway, Tukwila, Seatac, Renton, Kent, most of Auburn, and Federal Way. Read the full conversation and find more on Chaudhry's thoughts of the cost of living, discrimination, and her own personal story and values, on our website leftoverseastside.com

A Conversation with Melissa Chaudhry

By Chelsea Liekhus-Schmaltz

We had a last minute addition to our zine!

Melissa Chaudhry is running for Washington's 9th Congressional District.

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scan me!!

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Vote NO This November

By Yaro Escalona



There are 4 initiatives to vote NO on the ballot this fall: I-2109, I-2117, I-2066, and I-2124. They are all proposed by “Let’s Go Washington”, an organization founded by hedge fund millionaire and CEO, Brian Heywood.



Just this November Let’s Go Washington was fined \$20,000 for “failing to accurately report, document, and produce the receipts of contributions and expenditures,” as said in the final order for case #140213 by the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC)¹. We think this makes these initiatives particularly suspect, so let’s take a closer look at them.

Vote NO on I-2109!



I-2109 repeals the capital gains tax in Washington state. Currently, the capital gains tax applies to “stocks, bonds, business interest, or other investments and tangible assets”² where their profit is \$250,000 annually or more. This tax “funds K-12 education, early learning, and childcare,”³ and in the first year this tax generated \$889 million for education services.⁴ Eliminating the capital gains tax largely benefits the most wealthy in Washington state. Its repeal is particularly enticing to people like Heywood who move from California to Washington in 2010.

Vote NO on I-2117!

The second initiative, 2117, aims to repeal the climate commitment act, a cap and trade program that limits pollution from big polluters. It also provides funding for things like converting trucks and buses from diesel to electric and improving air quality in marginalized communities. I-2117 is written in a confusing and convoluted way, designed for us to get lost.



The main claim of this initiative is that I-2117 will lower gas prices. However, it is not clear that this would take effect. A more effective method for reducing gas prices would be to directly reduce gas taxes, not eliminate the necessary action outlined in the climate commitment act. Heywood has spent around \$6 million, out of pocket, into this initiative. It seems he is ready to spend whatever is necessary to accomplish his goals, never mind what harm comes to the rest of us.

Voting NO on 2117 means:

- Youth under 18 will continue to ride free on transit and ferries
- Supporting cleaner air and water and healthier ecosystems
- Continued funding for programs and rebates for retrofitting to homes to be more energy efficient and lowering energy costs
- Funding for eastrail, habitat restoration
- \$70 million for Tribal support against environmental impacts, i.e. sea level rise
-and SO much more

If I-2117 passes, it would take funding away from all the programs listed above and allow people like Haywood to go back to practices that create pollution - pollution that harms our planet and our future.

For the environment, for our futures, jobs, food systems, transit, and trails, Vote No on 2117!

Two other initiatives you should vote no on
are I-2066 and I-2124.

Vote NO on I-2066!

I-2066 “would repeal...planning requirements for cost-effective electrification and prohibitions on gas rebates and incentives”- Let’s Go Washington. This threatens clean air, our health, and can make our energy bills more expensive.



Vote NO on I-2124!

I-2124 would “allow all employees and self-employed individuals to opt out of paying the tax and receiving benefits under WA Cares, the state's long-term services and supports trust health care program.” But in fact, “I-2124 will cause more people, mostly women, to leave their jobs to provide unpaid care for loved ones with disabilities, or who are sick or aging, by shutting down Washington’s long-term care benefit fund for 3.9 million working Washingtonians.” Groups such as Eastside for All, Solid Ground, Real Change, the Transit Riders Union, and many more all agree:

For our health, the environment, jobs, education, childcare and so much more, vote NO to all initiatives on the ballot this November, and refuse to let an out of touch rich guy dictate our futures! Vote No on I-2066, I-2109, I-2117, I-2124!

To see the works cited, view this article on our website
(the link is on the cover!)



FROM LOCAL TO WORLDWIDE



The People of the Congo are Suffering for our Phones

by Reta Nemesszeghy

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), **over 7 million people have been displaced from their homes and over 6 million have died** since this current conflict started. The reason: a metal present in our phones, computers, cars, and most technological devices we use - coltan.

The DRC is rich in coltan and other vital metals. This means villages are destroyed to create mines and the people who lived there often have no choice but to work in these mines. The conditions of the mining are horrible - toxic metals are mined with no protective equipment, often with their bare hands. Even children are working in these conditions. To add insult to injury, each miner only makes about \$2 a day and is forced to live in makeshift tents. **All this is for our electronic devices that we rely on so heavily.**

So, what can people like us do? Let's band together as a community and say no to violence for our tech! Sources and Resources are linked below

1. **Stop buying new technology** - the companies funding these human rights violations should not receive our money. **Here are some alternatives:**
 - Repairing your broken tech - go to repaircafe.org or visit the WSU extension (see qr code) to find experts who can repair tech near you! The next repair café on the Eastside is in Monroe on November 16th.
 - Buying used technology from Facebook Marketplace, Mercari, or Offer Up
 - Buying refurbished technology from websites like Reebelo or Plug.tech
2. **Get involved** with organizations working in the congo:
 - Focus Congo - ensuring the next generation in Congo have a bright future
 - Friends of the Congo - raising awareness about the congo.
3. **Raise Awareness** about this situation in our communities. Many people in our lives didn't know this was happening until we talked to them about it. If you don't know how to start the conversation, check out these people (see qr code) on tiktok or instagram.

This qr code has links to our sources and the resources mentioned above!



★ COMMUNITY RECIPE: LUMPIA! ★

BY YARO ESCALONA

Lumpia is a staple in many Filipino households and restaurants and having grown up with it, lumpia is one of my comfort foods! It's crispy and crunchy on the outside, with a warm and flavorful inside. Lumpia was introduced to the Philippines from Fujian immigrants and today has many variations! For example, turon has a sweet filling, typically made of bananas. This recipe was transcribed by my sister, from my grandmother. She typically estimated things when cooking, so feel free to adjust to your taste too!



INGREDIENTS: ★

- 2 cloves of garlic
- 1/2 cup of chopped onions
- 1lb of meat (pork, chicken, meat alternative)
- 1 Tbsp vegetable oil to cook filling + around 1 1/2 - 2 cups for frying
- 2-4 Tbsp (depending on taste) oyster sauce
- 1 egg beaten
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced green cabbage
- 1/2 cup minced carrots
- 1/2 cup of any other veggie of your choice
- 12 oz or 1 can of minced water chestnuts
- Lumpia wrappers (can be found at many Asian grocery stores)
- Dipping sauce of your choice



MAKING THE FILLING ★

- Heat 1 Tbsp of oil in a medium pan
- Add onion and garlic, cook for around 4 minutes or until onions are slightly translucent
- Add ground meat and veggies and cook for around 6 minutes, or until the meat is cooked through
- Add water chestnuts, oyster sauce (to taste), & salt. Stir for around 2 minutes
- Remove pan from heat and strain the filling. Squeeze out liquid and let cool

FOLDING THE LUMPIA ★

- Lay one lumpia wrapper in a diamond shape and spoon in a good amount of filling in the lower middle half of the diamond
- Spread out the filling to form a line, leaving room on the edges
- Line edges with beaten egg - this will create a seal (can also use water to seal, but eggs are recommended)
- Take the bottom corner and wrap up the filling, tightly stopping halfway.
- Fold in the two sides and continue rolling until you reach the end. Think of this like rolling up a burrito!

FRYING ★

- Heat around a 1/2 inch to 1 inch of oil in a medium deep frying pan or wok
- Heat up the oil to around 300° F (150° C)
- Carefully place around 4-5 lumpia at a time in the hot oil
- Fry on each side for around 1-2 minutes or until golden brown (if the lumpia are cooking too fast or burning, reduce the heat)
- Remove lumpia from oil and drain on a wire rack or a plate lined with a paper towel
- Enjoy with a sauce of your choice! Popular ones are sweet and sour, chili, or vinegar based

Community Directory:



If you know of more organizations that should be on this list, email us at leftoverseastside@gmail.com or fill out the survey on the back!

- **Bellevue Student Union**

- Mission: create a positive change in our community by working for social justice issues through discussion, study, and direct action
- Info: Find them on Instagram @bellevuestudentunion

- **Democratic Socialists of America Book Club**

- Mission: to build community with other socially-minded people and learn about the history of capitalism and socialism.
- Info: join their discord <https://discord.gg/6Bsuz8yS>

- **Eastside Urbanism**

- Mission: A community group excited about creating vibrant neighborhoods on the Eastside. Their goal is to bring together people who want to improve the communities we live in, collaborate on projects, and make their voices heard! And have some fun too.
- Info: They meet every Thursday at 7pm at Jack Sprat in Redmond



- **Issaquah Students League**

- Mission: educate fellow students on socialism, promote solidarity among workers and students, and work for social justice through discussion, study, and direct action
- Info: Find them on Instagram @issaquahstudentsleague

- **Livable Kirkland**

- Mission: create a shared vision for the future of our neighborhoods. The objective of this vision is to create homes for everyone while improving sustainability and quality of life. The key to achieving this vision is to focus this growth into complete communities where people can meet their routine needs without needing to drive, all connected with efficient transportation.
- Info: They meet on Wednesdays at 7am at the Kirkland rotary Central Station

- **Move Redmond**

- Mission: Decrease the reliance and need for cars to better the community
- Info: moveredmond.org

About the Artist:



Neil Kapit



Neil Kapit is a cartoonist and para-educator based in Bellevue. His move towards the left was started from a year teaching in an inner city LA school, and cemented by the 2016 election and the obvious systemic failure on all levels.



One of the goals of this zine is to connect people and organizations so as to expand and help our overall community. If you live on the Eastside, please consider filling out this survey!



You can also contact us at leftoverseastside@gmail.com if you have any questions or comments.

