

NEXT KCDW MEETING APR 25TH (WEDNESDAY): Yacht Club Broiler – No host lunch – 11:30 am; Meeting – 12:30 pm. Speaker: Joy Stanford, Candidate for 26th LD Representative against Michelle Caldier; NO RSVP required.

WHAT MAKES THE #METOO MOVEMENT NECESSARY – *by Jo Fox Burr*

An article entitled 'Us Too' by Tyrone Beason in the Pacific NW magazine (*A Seattle Times Sunday insert; 4/8/20*) focuses on local women empowered by the #MeToo movement. The woman that most caught my attention was Bree Black Horse, a Seminole Native American attorney. She advocates for indigenous women who face a true crisis of domestic violence and sexual assault. In a survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention between 2010 and 2012, 45.6% of indigenous women experienced some form of physical sexual violence. While over two-thirds of this violence was committed by nonnative men, indigenous men were responsible for a significant portion of it. In the past, Seminole women were held in high esteem within their society, but European influence has eroded this power. Black Horse believes that returning Seminole and other indigenous women to a position of high esteem will do much to quell the sexual violence at least among the indigenous men. The photograph of her in this article in a traditional cloth dress made by her mother exuded dignity and power. It did much to make me believe she is right.

While ethnic minorities have far more to complain about, they have one advantage over women. They know the full extent to which they are discriminated against. White people, even those meaning well, may not understand all the ways minorities are discriminated against, but minorities know. Women are aware of overt sexual harassment and employment discrimination, but many are not tuned into the subtler denigration we live with every day. It is so much a part of how our society is structured we accept it as normal. When women speak up too much, at least according to society norms, they are often labelled as uppity, frequently by other women. I have been in meetings where my opinion was ignored, while the same opinion voiced by a man was lauded. To win arguments, men often utilize a tone of voice to assert power and we women often either submit or respond hysterically, which wins nothing. Women politicians are frequently appraised by how they appear as much if not more than by what they say. This rarely happens to men, except maybe Trump.

All of this and more is why I believe we are more susceptible to sexual harassment. Society views us as the weaker sex and those men who need to prove their manhood see us as easy prey and have felt their chances of being outed were slim to non-existent. In fact, some of them (like Trump) see nothing wrong with what they have done – which speaks volumes about what such men are taught by society. It is also why it has taken so long for women to come forward to make accusations about such acts and be believed. Well, I do believe the times are changing and perhaps we have Trump to thank.

Isn't it interesting we elected a black man president but have yet to elect a woman president? I understand there were other circumstances affecting the last election. Certainly, Trump's win is partially the result of a racist backlash to an effective black president and Russian election interference. Clinton won the overall vote count by a large majority, but she lost the electoral college vote because many Americans knowingly supported an admitted misogynist. Further, a believably accused pedophile came close to winning a Senate seat in Alabama. While this is a disturbing comment on our society, I think both these things have served as a wakeup call for women. More than twice as many women are running for Congress in 2018 than ran in 2016, and most are running as Democrats. And in doing so, they are wearing their gender as a badge of honor.

Jennifer Palmieri, Clinton's 2016 Communications director, wrote a book, "Dear Madam President," as a letter to the first woman president. In it she advises that it is time we women stop running for office the way men would run. She admonishes us to embrace the power of being women. In an interview she praised Emma Gonzalez, the outspoken student survivor of the Parkland shooting, for speaking so effectively at the March for Our Lives event in Washington, D.C. while crying as she recited the names of the people killed in Parkland. Her tears empowered her and what she had to say.

I believe our true salvation from sexual harassment is to embrace our strength as women. As Bree Black Horse says "Men have gotten to run the show for the last 10,000 years. It's our turn." #MeToo is not a movement of victimization. It is a movement of empowerment.

OTHER UPCOMING DEMOCRATIC MEETINGS AND EVENTS: (**GM designates a general membership meeting*)

Kitsap Co. Dem. Central Com: GM* Apr 16th (Monday); 6:30 pm Social; 7 pm meeting; Eagles Nest

23rd Leg. District Democrats: GM* Apr 26th (Thursday); 6:30pm Social; 7 pm mtg; Olympic Coll – Poulsbo, Rm 120

Rise and Organize Lunch Apr 28th (Saturday); 11:45 am – 1 pm; Puerto Vallarta Kingston

26th Leg. District Democrats: GM* May 3rd (Thursday); 6:30pm Social; 7pm; Kitsap Rm, Givens Ctr. Pt Orchard

35th Leg. District Democrats: Pig Roast-Pot Luck June 30th (Saturday); 3-6 pm; The Salmon Center in Belfair

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ADDRESS CORRECTION

“Men spent centuries building the professional world, devising rules to make sure it was a comfortable place for them and that it was geared toward their particular qualities and skills. Like any good guest, women have looked for clues on how to behave in this foreign land. We have tried to understand and follow the local customs. We have intuited that in this world we are to be obligating, calm under pressure, and diligent, and to always keep our emotions in check. Our adaptive skills have served many of us well. But we aren’t in a man’s world anymore. Now it’s our world. And shame on us women if we don’t do something to change the way this game is played so that everybody is able to bring their best to the effort. Let’s embrace a new way of working that is equally geared toward our own qualities and skills.” – Jennifer Palmieri, “Dear Madam President

Newsletter:

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Links

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