

GLBT community has a promising candidate in Grant Cogswell

by Robert Raketty
Staff Writer

City Council candidate Grant Cogswell, is articulate, outspoken and intelligent. He scored all "A's" in his Seattle Municipal Elections Committee interview last September and enjoys the endorsements of a number Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender activists.

However, largely unknown is the topic of his sexuality, likely overshadowed by the other sexual minority candidates who ran against incumbent McGiver.

"It is interesting in that particular race, McGiver faced three Gay and Bisexual candidates of the four that ran against him. Jerome Wilson, Heath Merriwether and Grant Cogswell all identified as members of the community," said SEAMEC Co-Chair, Herb Krohn. "It shows we are making progress as a community, which is a very good thing."

Although he discussed his sexuality at a meeting of the Stonewall Democrats, his Bisexuality only became more widely known following his SEAMEC interview. "His coming out was a source of great interest. As I recall, I received a phone call the next day, from one of the interviewers,"



GRANT COGSWELL

said Krohn. "The question on the written questionnaire was 'Whom would you consult to help you decide an issue that involves are community?' to which he replied, 'My many Gay friends and neigh-

See **COGSWELL** on page 26

Visit www.sgn.org for Seattle's most complete Gay news coverage

McDERMOTT continued from page 25

for Sound Transit. Greg has been a leader on transportation in our region way before it was popular and before we had the gridlock we have today. You don't hear about his success in the media because they don't create a headline," he said.

He says that Nickels has worked hard to create a viable transportation plan. "I want to emphasize that Greg has been a leader, he wasn't afraid to sit down at the table and work with communities to come up with a transportation plan. Sidran hasn't come up with a plan," he said.

McDermott says Nickels is an effective consensus builder. "In the extensive time I have known Greg, he has not shied away from working with diverse communities, bringing people together to find a solution and finding what is needed to implement it," he said. "I find him engaging of both people and solutions."▼

COGSWELL continued from page 5

bors and my Bisexual self'."

Cogswell has enjoyed several same-sex relationships, the longest being two years. He has also been a long time member of the Capital Hill community. He hasn't spent much time campaigning in our community but says that is because of the limited space

he was to deliver his message. "I only have so much time, opportunity and bandwidth to talk about what we need to talk about. I don't get much of an opportunity to talk about housing and the environment or our need for better police relations. So, my sexuality, except in a forum like the Stonewall Democrats or SEAMEC, is fairly far down the list of things I need to talk about," Cogswell told the *SGN*.

He says, however, that the issues of his campaign do relate to the LGBT community. "How I represent issue of importance to that community, it's all the same. Good transit the quality of life in this region and the environment all relate. I think housing issues have a particularly strong relevance to the Gay community because the Gay community is an institution that relies on a centrally located place. It's not just a neighborhood but an ongoing organism. When you get to the point where we are now, when a kid out of high school or out of a small town comes to this city and they can't afford to live in the Gay neighborhood then I think that is a problem. It's a problem for the continued survival of that culture," he said. "So that is a way in which I can speak to our community."

At a time of great racial tensions in Seattle, Cogswell acknowledges that McGiver is tough act to beat come Tuesday, Nov. 6. "I think his representation is symbolic and that is important to some people. It's important for kids to see some-

one who looks like them up there in a position of leadership," he said. "Really, when you talk about race relations in this country now, you are talking about economic relations. We have made racial prejudice and discrimination illegal but it still happens because we have economic injustice. The people who are struggling to get by are disproportionately people of color. So, to fight for the Black community you have to fight for working class people and I don't believe Richard McGiver is doing that."

Cogswell continued, "If you take a look at his record on transportation, he supported the light rail in the Rainier Valley. That is going to destroy a mostly minority, poor neighborhood. Fundamentally, [transportation] is a social justice issue. How are people without cars, without much money going to get around and go about their lives? We have this issue of the impound ordinance, people are getting their cars impounded because they didn't pay their tickets. These are people who are too poor to be able to pay their tickets or get insurance for their car. They have to drive a car because of their work situation demands it and because they have kids."

On transportation, he believes that Sound Transit isn't a fair solution to Seattle complex traffic problems. "They're building this truncated rail line that is not really going to give us anything. It's way too expensive to extend to the region, it's going to have 42,000 riders by the year

2020 most of which are going to be getting off the buses. It is going to displace the buses that go into the bust tunnel right now. Suburban commuters are not going to find taking the bus into downtown a viable solution because they are going to be taking the surface streets," he said. "It's not a viable transportation plan."

Cogswell says when it comes down to it, who do you trust. "I am running a grassroots campaign. You take a look at my contributor's list, it's my neighbors and it's small, grassroots groups that are trying to preserve the quality of life in our city. If you take a look at McGivers' list, it's the companies building Sound Transit and their 52 law firms they have got on retainer. It's companies like Uwajimaya, REI, the Pine Street Development Group," he said. "All companies that have gotten something and will continue to get something."▼

SASG continued from page 16

303 17th Ave. East. Lunch, prizes, and fun included!

If you are able to attend the training, volunteer as a lot supervisor, or simply volunteer to work a shift on the tree lot this year, please contact me as soon as possible: airen lydick (206) 322-2437 or email airen13@hotmail.com. Thanks again for your support. SASG would not exist without volunteers!▼