

Tea Party members support speaker

* February 20th, 2010

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By **Brandon Macz** of the Tribune

Organizers say Capps was a fill-in at event but her comments won't derail political movement
Trib Biz Directory

One local Tea Party organizer is calling the media attention brought on Dianne Capps after she stated she would like to hang U.S. Sen. Patty Murray a way of discrediting the movement, while another organizer believes Capps' statement will not harm the movement.

Clarkston's Doug Schurman, who organized last Saturday's Tea Party rally at the Asotin County Fairgrounds with Capps, was not present when she made the comment about Murray, but said, "I cannot even imagine this thing being in a vicious context."

Capps had been stalling for time during Saturday's rally, Schurman said, and was uneasy about speaking in front of a crowd of about 500 people. It was at that time she compared Jake Spoon from "Lonesome Dove" to Murray, D-Wash.

"What happened to Jake when he ran with the wrong crowd?" Capps asked. "What happened to Jake when he ran with the wrong crowd? He got hung. And that's what I want to do with Patty Murray."

Attempts to reach Capps were unsuccessful Friday.

"We were filling up space because we lost a speaker," Schurman said. "She was trying to stall for time."

Schurman said he wasn't sure whether Capps' remark would affect the Tea Party movement, but believes the issue will eventually "blow over."

"This is not unexpected," he said of the national media coverage. "We know the agenda and direction of the general media. We're not radical, bomb-throwing crazies, unlike some people in our government."

There has been some speculation the Tea Party might become its own political party in the United States some day.

"I personally hope not," Schurman said. "I hope it never turns into a political party."

Schurman added the Tea Party movement does not side with any political party. Clint Didier, a former NFL player and Republican candidate running against Murray did speak at last Saturday's rally, Schurman said, but was outside the fairgrounds building when Capps was speaking.

"He was signing autographs and showing off his Super Bowl ring," he said. "I didn't see him come in and hear anyone speak."

Jeff Williams, who has organized and spoken at past Tea Party rallies in the Lewiston-Clarkston Valley and on the Palouse, wrote in an e-mail he doesn't believe Capps' comment will "hurt the liberty movement."

Williams is the chairman for the Palouse Liberty Project - formerly the Palouse 9.12 Project - a grassroots organization seeking effective change in government and more control relinquished back to the American citizenry.

"While it is unfortunate that the metaphor Dianne Capps used to express herself could be interpreted in a way that includes a threat of violence against Patty Murray, I completely reject the notion that it will hurt the liberty movement in any way," Williams' e-mail states. "Could Ms. Capps have chosen her words better? Possibly. But in an extemporaneous situation, especially for someone with limited public speaking experience, these things do happen."

Williams' e-mail adds many Americans are angry with the government, speaking their minds and their anger will continue to grow "unless those in power choose to restrain themselves and begin to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution as they took an oath to do."

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