

Siskiyou Democrats Grassroots News

Issue #2 – February 2020



VOTE!

**And remind your friends & family to vote!
March 3, 2020 Primary Election**

Our DCCSC Endorsed Candidates:

Audrey Denney for US Congress

Elizabeth Betancourt for CA Assembly

Angelina Cook for Supervisor District 1

And, a Late Addition to the Ballot (not in time for State Endorsement)

Pamela Swartz for CA Senate

Get to know these candidates on pages 2, 3, 4 & 5

IN THIS ISSUE: GAMECHANGERS—A Closer Look at our Remarkable Candidates

March 3, 2020, is primary day in California. For SISQ voters that means critically important races for President, Congress, state Assembly, state Senate, and Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors. So it's a good time to take a deeper look at our candidates, providing our readers and grassroots canvassers, callers, and postcard writers with new insights into these brilliant, courageous women: Audrey Denney, Elizabeth Betancourt, and Angelina Cook.

These three have dedicated their lives to shaping public policy on behalf of the underserved in rural California, and of conserving the region's natural beauty and resources. They all ran for public office out of love—love for democracy, their fellow citizens, and the natural world. And the game they want to change is the Power Game—destructive partisanship and the unethical use of public office for dogmatic agendas and personal enrichment. They share a vision of a harmonious society, thriving through care for one another and commitment to creating a sustainable world. They know the way there is a rough road because they're walking it. Read on to get to know them better.

We also have a "late add" to the race. Although she was too late to be officially endorsed, Pamela Swartz is a strong candidate, and the only Democrat in the state Senate race. You'll find her information on page 5.

Your News Team: Abigail Van Alyn, Robin Richards, and Katherine Shelton

Recognizing our Volunteers:

Phone Calling...
SANDY SULLIVAN

Sandy Sullivan knows how to talk on the phone. She is our all-star "phone-banker," making **1,016** phone calls for the November 2019 special election. **Thanks, Sandy!**

Postcard Writing...
TOM & MARY LAURENT

Mary & Tom Laurent have "postcarding" down to a science! In the past three elections they wrote 466, 478, and 637 postcards, a total of **1,581!** **Go, guys!**

PASSION AND PURPOSE: Audrey Denney Candidate for US Congress, District 1

Not everyone would enjoy traveling to 31 states and 6 countries in a 12-month span. Audrey, however, loves adventure, travel, and isn't scared to try new things. She's hiked a Guatemalan volcano in flip flops (doesn't recommend), taken a nap in an Egyptian pyramid, and put her feet in the source of the Nile river. (From Audrey's Vivayic profile)

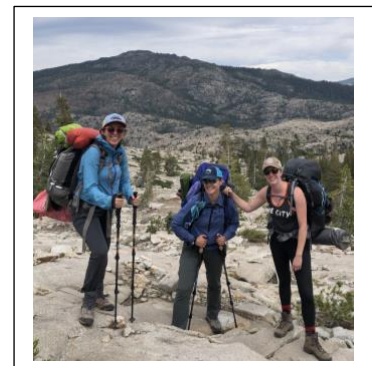
We met up with Audrey on Facetime, on the campaign trail. Literally. Tuesday afternoon at 5:00 pm, in the car, being driven to Placer County for a campaign event. She's so full of energy you'd never guess she's been up since 4:45 and gone about her usual day. Brush teeth, drink coffee, a bit of exercise, then to her computer. Not for the campaign, but for her job. Her *fulltime job* with Vivayic, a small private company where she's worked since 2012, creating learning protocols for agriculture-related businesses "doing good in the world." That morning, for example, she'd been pitching climate mitigation projects to the World Bank, and, for the Anglican Church, agriculture projects to benefit small holder farmers in Rwanda.

But around 2:00 pm, it's time to move on from international engagement and off to the campaign office to hit the phones. "In the system we have now, that's what I do. I raise money," she says, sipping from a giant cup of water and looking as fresh as if she'd just come from the spa. But then, this has been Audrey's way since she was a kid.

Growing up on a family farm on the central coast, she was always busy, even if she was just pretending. She had a playhouse where she played "Office," and her favorite Christmas gift from her mom was office supplies. "Forget the dolls! I'm going to my workroom." And she wasn't fooling around. In her teens she was a National Beef Ambassador, and later, Queen of the California Draft Horse and Mule Association. "Pretty high accolades," she jokes, then takes a couple of incoming calls.

The loving family who supported Audrey's youthful efforts was staunchly Republican, and at 18, naturally, she voted with them. But in her early 20s she joined her sister for a year in El Salvador, working for Cristosal, a human rights organization focused on community development, forced displacement by violence, and the prosecution of past war crimes. That changed everything. The world, its suffering and poverty, its diversity and unmet need, opened up for her, and she began to vote with those who shared her evolving world view. Historic conservative principles of fiscal responsibility and conservation of resources are still personal core values. But what really matters isn't partisan. It's alleviating the planet's suffering, always working for the greater good.

And then came the moment of decision, to carry these passionately-held convictions into the public arena. She remembers it vividly. *(Continued on page 6)*



The many facets of Audrey—From left: Having a fun time with her niece and nephew; At 25, providing agriculture training in South Sudan; Hiking the Sierras with her sisters.

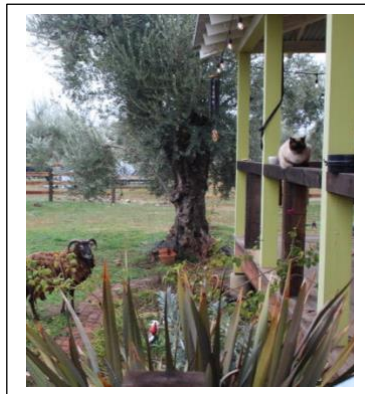
DEEPLY CARING: Elizabeth Betancourt Candidate for CA State Assembly

It's a rainy Saturday morning on Oliview Farm, and Elizabeth Betancourt and her shaggy white dog Bucky are waiting for our little News crew, on the porch of her charming orange farm house. The farm is five acres of highly productive olive trees, in Happy Valley outside Anderson. Husband Pedro manages the farm, but now he's off grocery shopping, since in winter the hens are hardly laying and the greens garden is lying fallow under a cover crop. Five cats make room for us as we sit down to tea. Over the months Elizabeth has been running for state Assembly, we've become familiar with her policy positions. But we wanted to know what the rest of her life is like, and who she is off the campaign trail. Here's what we learned.

Elizabeth grew up in Modesto, went to college in San Jose and Davis, and met her husband when both were working in Sacramento and singing in their church choir. Her church has always been central to her desire to belong to an ethical and caring community. It's what she's sought to create all her life, bringing diverse interest groups together around environmental policy goals. But big surprise—she didn't always want to work in conservation. She wanted a career in fashion, and has a trade school degree in textile design and pattern making. She jokes that what she's doing now is not really so far from that—there's plenty of juicy data and analytics, and the patterns are there, too. They just involve water flows, and fish and animal migration.

The turning point came when she was in college, and an influential professor at UC Davis encouraged her to take seriously her interest in science, government, and environmental issues. He arranged her first policy-making job with the Sacramento Water Forum, engaging her in multi-issue, large group negotiations around water flows, salmon health, and economic development on the American River. The job also involved salmon counts, up to her waist in the river's winter surge, covered in rotting fish guts. It was a moment of self-challenge that “really lit my fire,” and turns out to be typical of Elizabeth's life choices, always moving toward growth and exploration.

But environmental policy doesn't stand alone for her. Sustainable rural communities must be seen as an ecosystem, involving the health and wellbeing of humans as well as of waters and forests. Access to healthcare, education that serves local needs, high-quality jobs and gender equity are all tied together. This understanding, and the inaction and corporate servitude of our current representatives, are what led Elizabeth to the decision to run for public office. What sustains her is her connection to the many like-minded people she'd met along the way. Her family, her husband Pedro, their beloved animals, the sanctuary of Oliview Farm, all support her in her biggest personal challenge in this run: “letting go of what I can't control.” *(Continued on page 6)*



From left: Elizabeth and her husband Pedro, at home; Soay ram Hansel with cat buddy Pirate Jenny and ancient olive trees; Elizabeth in her lovely country kitchen.

GOING THE DISTANCE: ANGELINA COOK

Candidate for Non-partisan Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors

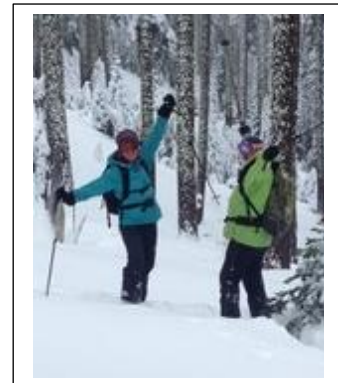
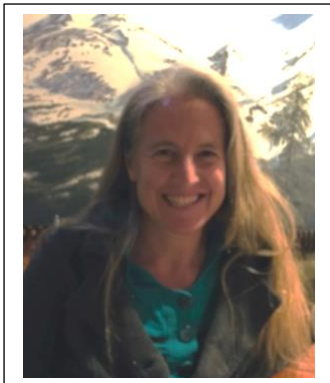
Endorsed by the Democratic Central Committee of Siskiyou County, Angelina Cook is running to represent the county's District 1. Her platform includes rigorous natural resource management, support for small, diversified businesses, and commitment to the creation of green jobs.

Angelina holds an MA in International Environmental Policy from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies, in Monterey, CA. A fifteen-year resident of South County, she has extensive non-profit experience, has taught COS courses in Sustainable Communities, and coordinates the Upper Sacramento Regional Water Action Group (RWAG). That project alone has attracted **eight million dollars** to the region, for water infrastructure repairs, data collection, stakeholder engagement, and climate planning for underserved source water communities.

As you can see, Angelina gets things done. But if this impressive resume suggests someone unapproachable and on the war path, she's far from it. We found her warm, full of athletic energy, and passionate about bridging the county's political differences to create communities working together from shared values and toward shared goals. Central to these is the need to move away from an economy based on the priorities of multinational corporations, who export the county's water, timber, and other resources in exchange for temporary jobs and little else.

What she advocates instead is strong, local civic engagement and small, responsive government dedicated to sustaining the county's unique small business opportunities, such as sustainable farming and ranching, outdoor recreation, and health and wellness products and services. And she doesn't just support these things. She's worked to implement many such programs and initiatives, like facilitating physical fitness and healthy food choices for elementary school children and diabetic adults, through the McCloud Healthcare Clinic. And in 2011 she helped found the Great Exchange Thrift Shop, 301 Main St. McCloud, encouraging reuse of clothing and housewares.

Personally, she's the mother of a teen-age son, and an avid skier, biker, and hiker. She practices yoga, and in winter carries her ice skates in the car in case she comes across a frozen pond. She's chosen a career path as a consultant so that her flexible schedule allows for parenting, many hours of volunteer work, and nurturing the strength and energy she gains from being in nature.



From left: Angelina with her beloved Mount Shasta; With her handsome son Rio; A typical day on the mountain, going cross country.

BETTER REPRESENTATION: PAMELA SWARTZ

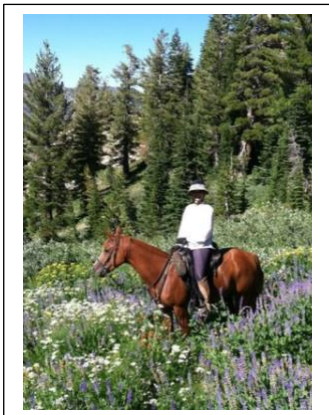
Candidate for CA State Senate

An outdoors enthusiast and competition equestrian, Pamela grew up in Shasta County where her parents, both educators, encouraged her to speak truth, question authority, and be an independent thinker. She graduated from UC Berkeley with a Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry and Wildlife Management. For 30 years she has owned a small personal health and beauty business in Nevada County.

Pamela is running for office because she believes government should serve the people, not private and corporate interests, and that rural Northern California deserves better than our current representation. Here are her priorities:

- Provide single payer healthcare to all Californians
- Increase the number of healthcare facilities in our District
- Support private-public coalitions in forest management to reduce fire danger and improve public safety and awareness
- Assist our farming and tourism economies to adapt to the evolving climate
- Provide affordable housing; no one should be homeless
- Fully fund education to include free college, trade schools and apprenticeship programs
- Build and improve crucial infrastructure projects including Internet access and improve rural roads and highways

Get to know her better by visiting her website here: <https://www.pamelaforsenate.com/>



*Pamela Swartz (above). Left and right:
Pamela on long distance trail riding events.*

What's Happening

SISKIYOU DEMOCRATIC GRASSROOTS COMMITTEE

**Tuesday, February 4, 2020: Siskiyou YMCA, Yreka or
Tuesday, February 11, 2020: CANCELLED**

Meetings begin at 6:00pm, and everyone is welcome!
The same agenda is used for both meetings, so attend either. It's fun!

SISKIYOU DEMOCRATIC CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Wednesday, February 12, 2020 – Best Western, Mt. Shasta

Meetings begin at 6pm, and all are welcome to attend.
(Note: The meetings rotate between Yreka and Mt. Shasta.)

Passion and Purpose – Audrey Denney - continued from Page 2

It was Thanksgiving Day, 2017. She was driving to Chico from Napa with her sister Robin. (Both her sisters are Episcopal priests, in Napa and St. Helena). They were discussing the inspiring Congressional run of three women from Roseville. Her sister said, “Then why not you?” She describes having a chill, then a total mind/body response. This was real, the need was immediate, and it was possible for her. She had the energy, the drive, and the vision. She could do it, and she *would* do it.

And she is doing it, in spite of giving up financial security, precious time with friends and family, and having no time for herself or even thinking about marriage and kids. What does she gain from this? Growth and learning, especially that “it’s not about *me*.” Not the money-raising, not the mean things you hear about yourself, not even the compliments. It’s about the woman in Susanville who mails her \$3 a month in cash because that’s all she can afford. It’s about the kids in tiny Greenville whose parents can’t give them shoes without holes, even in winter. It’s about saving our democracy. It’s all about what she’s always strived for—the greater good.

So is there anything she wants, right now, just for herself? Yes, there is. Sleep!

Deeply Caring – Elizabeth Betancourt – Continued from Page 3

Here’s a message Elizabeth asked us to send to her Siskiyou County supporters:

“Many of the issues we face here in the North State are issues of access and opportunity. These things have been neglected for decades: getting our biomass energy facilities going, increasing employment in forest management activities, providing better access to education and technical/career training. And we need greater investment in our healthcare system and providers, so that we don't have to drive hours for good care. These aren't partisan issues, but still our current elected officials haven't moved them forward. Something isn't working! Even if people don't like Democrats, they are the supermajority in Sacramento right now, and voting in a representative with credentials in these critical areas will equip our region with an advocate to address our rural concerns and actually do something about them. Together we can make this happen. Thanks so much for your hard work, your support, and your votes!”

Resources of the Month

Inequality Media <https://www.inequalitymedia.org/>

Former Labor Secretary, economist, and amateur cartoonist Robert Reich has created a site where we can view short, fun, pithy videos, illuminating and simplifying complex economic issues. Very helpful in responding to the current popular myth, “the economy is great!” You’ll find guides to other social media sites you can like and follow. Also great for civics lessons for kids.

Ian Bremmer, Eurasia Group, political risk advisors to multi-nationals and others

“We've never listed US domestic politics as our Top Risk, but in 2020, US institutions will be tested in unprecedented ways.” <https://www.eurasiagroup.net/issues/top-risks-2020>

William Barr, Trump’s Sword and Shield, the New Yorker, Jan. 20, 2020

Go to the link below, search William Barr. All sorts of juicy stuff, but especially the piece above.

[https://www.newyorker.com/search/q/William barr](https://www.newyorker.com/search/q/William%20barr)

Your Democratic Central Committee of Siskiyou County (DCCSC):

Officers: Carolyn Miller - Chair, Alice Rogers – Vice Chair, Katherine Shelton – Secretary, Robin Richards – Treasurer; Members: Neldena Anderson, Kate Coggin, Rick Green, Ann Herfindahl, Al Lugo, Larry Marks, Bill McKillop, Karina Pollard, Daniel Soltis, Abigail Van Alyn Booraem, Dolly Verrue, and Karen Zeigler. For more information, visit our website: siskiyoudemocrats.org or Facebook page: [SiskiyouCountyDemocrats](https://www.facebook.com/SiskiyouCountyDemocrats). Send mail and donations to: DCCSC, Post Office Box 4, Mt. Shasta, CA 96067.