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# PARTY!



PHOTO BY JOHN MORENO

Former Republican Party Chair Michael Steele, at left, chats with Republican delegates at the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Fla. this week. Be sure to check www.TheSkanner.com for daily updates on the Republican event and the Democratic convention, which kicks off immediately afterwards.

## Politics Heats Up in Tampa, Fla.

Catch *The Skanner News'* live coverage of conventions

This year *The Skanner News Group* is partnering with the Los Angeles Wave and several other papers to bring readers all the latest news on the Republican and Democratic National Conventions.

The publications will be sending John Moreno, managing editor of the Los Angeles Wave, to both conventions.

"Usually when we cover something like this I'm the front reporter and I've got a photographer," says Moreno. "Unfortunately that's not going to be the case so I have to become the photographer, the videographer, the print reporter and the social media editor, etc. You just have to

own up." Moreno, a self-described political junkie, has been doing journalism for nine years. He worked as a copy editor when he first began at the Wave and soon moved on to entertainment coverage. Eventually he migrated to the local political beat and reported on City Hall.

Since being elevated to managing editor, he hasn't gotten as many opportunities to be out in the field.

"When I get the chance to go out and cover something like these elections I jump at it," says Moreno. This year will mark his second time

covering national political conventions. In 2008, he reported from the Democratic National Convention in Denver.

Moreno says the thing that stood out to him the most from 2008 was all the excitement surrounding President Barack Obama's candidacy. Specifically, he says there were a number of celebrities, professional athletes, actor, singers and other people that you wouldn't necessarily expect at a political convention.

"That was great for a reporter because you could just walk around the arena and you would run See PARTY on page 2

## Yakima Council Lawsuit

Latino Voters, ACLU sue city over elections system

By Shannon Dininny The Associated Press

YAKIMA, Wash. (AP) — Mateo Arteaga has closely watched the demographics change in Yakima since he moved here in 1988. A longtime educator, Arteaga visits kindergarten classes where smiling Hispanic faces dominate the room.

Hispanics now make up more than a third of Yakima's population, as farm workers travel to central Washington's fruit bowl to work in agriculture and those who have come before them settle here to raise families.

But Arteaga says those same faces grow up to find they have no voice in the community and a lack of representation: Parks and libraries aren't built on the city's east side, which is predominantly Hispanic, and educational opportunities are fewer.

Arteaga joined Rogelio Montes, a student at Yakima Valley Community College, and the American Civil Liberties Union in filing suit Wednesday in U.S. District Court to change the city's system for City Council elections in hopes of improving the odds for minority-supported candidates.

"Our kids need a place to be playing and to be a part of the community," said Arteaga, a Central Washington University administrator who oversees an outreach program for disadvantaged students. "It's about giving everybody an opportunity to have their voices be heard and their votes count."

A city representative did not immediately return a telephone call seeking comment Wednesday.

The federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 invites court challenges to an election system that prevents protected minorities from meaningfully influencing election outcomes.

The case marks the first of its kind in Washington state, but the ACLU has successfully challenged at-large voting systems in other communities.

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## Politicians Draw from Campaign Cash

By Mike Baker The Associated Press

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) — With their excess campaign cash, politicians in Washington state often return money to donors, forward it to their political party, or donate it to charity.

Some, however, decide to use the funds for other things: alcohol, iPads or auto repairs.

Records show that since the beginning of

2007, Republican Rep. Mike Armstrong of Wenatchee has pulled \$7,000 in campaign cash to buy clothing. Democratic State Auditor Brian Sonntag used the money to buy more than \$1,000 in Mariners tickets, and Joe McDermott, a Democratic member of the King County Council, used \$5,600 to pay for his tuition at Harvard.

The spending, which possibly tests the boundaries of state law, is conducted with little scrutiny through so-called surplus accounts that rarely get public examination.

The Associated Press identified hundreds of questionable expenses — from Democrats and Republicans — during a computer analysis of more than 500,000 spending reports obtained under public disclosure laws.

Surplus accounts are intended to allow candidates a way to hold onto cash between elections, and provide politicians options for how to properly disperse money that's not needed.

Candidates See MONEY on page 3