

Get to know Biden and Palin:

Vice Presidential candidates race for second in command

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Sarah Palin, Republican



and Communications from the University of Idaho, then worked as a sports reporter for Anchorage's KTUU-TV. According to Palin, she decided to enter politics when she was concerned that a new Wasilla sales tax would not be used well.

During her first term on the city council of Wasilla, Alaska, Palin was known for keeping a jar of the names of all the residents in Wasilla on her desk. Every week, she would draw a name from the jar and call, asking "How's the city doing?" She was re-elected for a second mayoral term in 1999.

As a chairperson for the oil and gas conservation commission, Palin is known for reforming and questioning the Republican leaders within the Alaskan oil business, creating grounds for her "maverick" title in her run as John McCain's running mate.

As governor of Alaska, Palin enjoyed high approval ratings. As of July, 2008 she had an 82 percent approval rating within the state of Alaska, according to CNN.

Palin is the mother of five. Her son Track is enlisted to serve in Iraq and her daughter Bristol is pregnant with a baby that she says she will keep with the baby's father. Her youngest son, not yet one year old, was born with Down syndrome.

This wins Palin points with pro-life advocates.

Still, this mother of five has not gone free of various controversies.

An article in the Seattle Times by Ken Armstrong and Hal Bernton said that when Palin won her first mayoral term, she controversially asked for resignation letters from all of her department

heads, telling them that she would later decide which ones to accept. She in the end fired the police chief and museum director with two other department heads quitting.

She also fired the town librarian although she later rehired her. While some say that it is normal conduct for a mayor to hire new staff if the old members hinder their mayoral duties, others claim that she fired them simply because she did not sense that they were completely loyal to her.

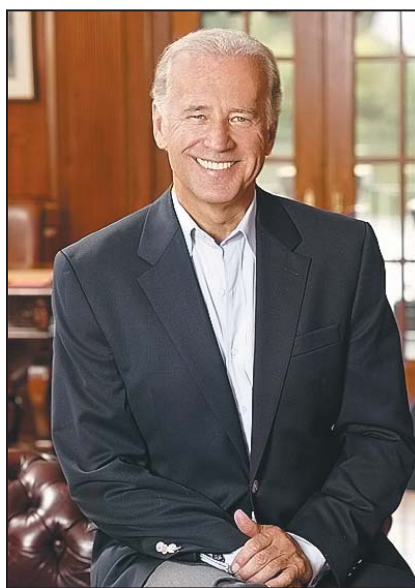
E-mails have also circulated that claim Palin had a list of books that she wanted banned from the Wasilla library. While this e-mail is false and Palin never had a list or specific books she wanted banned, she did allegedly ask the town librarian if she would ever consider censoring books. The librarian answered no, leading some to speculate that this is the reason that Palin originally fired her.

"The Bridge to Nowhere" is another controversy following Palin. The debate is over the proposed building of a bridge from the town of Ketchikan to Gravina Island, where the International airport is. Her claims that she put an end to the controversial, expensive project is questionable since she evidently openly supported it for a year before she was against it.

She is also under investigation for firing the Public Safety Commissioner, Walt Monegan. While some believe that she fired him for performance-related issues, others claim she fired him when he refused to fire Palin's ex-brother-in-law, trooper Mike Wooten.

In general, Palin is conservative when it comes to social issues. She is pro-life in all situations, anti-gun control and favors abstinence only sexual-education in schools.

Joe Biden, Democrat



Party: Democrat
Current Age: 65
Political Job History: Served on New Castle County's County Council for 2 years Served as Delaware Senator for 35 years (current job) Taught a class on constitutional law at the Widener University School of Law along with Senatorial duties for 17 years
According to Dr. Helen Fisher, again on CNN: Joe Biden exhibits character traits that match the director/high testosterone type. They tend to be tough minded, direct, decisive, tolerant of other people, quick to act, very blunt, focused, assertive and aggressive.

Chosen to run as Barack Obama's running mate, Joe Biden has been described by the Obama campaign as the person to help Obama shake up business as usual in Washington.

He is believed to relate well to blue-collar workers (those who tended to support Hillary Clinton) and to balance Obama's lack of extensive foreign experience with his years on the Foreign Relations Committee.

Biden says he overcame a childhood history of stuttering by reciting poetry in front of the mirror, and graduated from

the University of Delaware with a Bachelor of Arts with a double major in political science and history.

He graduated 506th of 688 in his class. He then went on to receive his Juris Doctor at the Syracuse University College of Law, graduating 76th of 85 students.

Biden admits that he was not the best student and that he was lazy and somewhat unmotivated in school.

It was during his time in law school that he married Neilia Hunter and had then had three children.

Practicing as a lawyer for one year, he then jumped into a career of politics when in 1970, he was elected to the New Castle County Council in Delaware.

In 1972, he won a Senate position for Delaware and was the fifth-youngest senator to ever be elected into office at the age of 29.

However, tragedy struck only a month after when on December 18, 1972, his wife and young daughter were killed in a car accident while Christmas shopping.

Biden considered resigning in order to care for his two critically injured sons from the same accident, but was persuaded not to by Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield.

"He is believed to relate well to blue-collar workers (those who tended to support Hillary Clinton.)"

From there, Biden began commuting an hour and a half by train from his home in Delaware to Washington D.C. every morning. NPR reported that while some staffers supposedly had bets on how long he would last, he kept up with the job despite being a single dad and had clear orders that he could be interrupted at any time to take a phone call from one of his sons.

Biden still does not work

on December 18 every year in memory of the accident.

In 1975, Biden met Jill Jacobs, a school teacher, and he says in his memoir that she renewed his interests in politics and life. They married in 1977 and together have one daughter.

According to Time magazine, in 1988, Biden was given life-saving emergency surgery for two brain aneurysms found in his brain.

While he is now a Senator and serves as the chairman of the National Foreign Relations Committee and the Committee of the Judiciary as well as a co-chair of the Caucus on International Narcotics Control, Biden has also run and lost in two presidential bids, one in 1988 and one in 2008 where he lost against Barack Obama in the Democratic primaries.

Biden is also not without controversy. While in college, he admits to having plagiarized 5 of 15 pages of a law review article. He told the New York Times that he had done nothing "malevolent" but rather did not know the proper ways to cite sources.

He is also known to say things that are not politically correct, accusing Governor Palin of not truly caring for mentally disabled people based on her anti-stem cell research stance.

He also recently riled many when he said that paying more in taxes is a patriotic act for wealthy Americans in an interview on Good Morning America.

When it comes to social issues, Biden is liberal. While he personally believes that life begins at conception, he does not believe that he should be able to enforce these beliefs on everyone through law.

He therefore believes in a woman's right to choose but does not want federal funding to be used to cover abortions.

He is in favor of closing gun-show loop-holes and favors certain gun control measures.

He also believes that sex-education in schools should include prevention methods.

Chris Gregoire campaigns for another term

RACHEL MILHEM
News Editor

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Christine Gregoire—the incumbent candidate for the governor of Washington State—seems to have a firm grip on the "values of the people of Washington State," or so she claims repeatedly during a gubernatorial debate on September 20.

Growing up in Auburn, Washington, Gregoire does know a thing or two about the state. She attended Gonzaga Law School and served three terms as the state attorney general.

These facts were not ignored in the debate on September 20. Using her four years as governor for a weapon against Dino Rossi, she constantly reminded her "opponent"—as she referred to him throughout the debate—he had no record or proof of his stance on all the issues presented.

Rossi, however, used her four-year term as a counter attack, claiming that the state needed change, especially in the spending area.

Against Rossi's claims that the state was in a huge budget deficit, Gregoire claimed that Washington is one of the few states with a surplus of money. She also went on to link any economical issues with the Bush administration.

Gregoire reminded the audience that at the beginning of her term, she "inherited" a \$2.2 billion deficit caused by Rossi and his involvement in the state Senate—a deficit that Rossi denied being involved in.

The state budget was a question though, and no matter the deficit, Gregoire claimed that, "This is not the time to be raising taxes."

Rossi came back with a completely viable response, questioning how long that statement will be true, but Gregoire seemed insistent that she was not going to raise taxes during any economical crisis. She admitted, however, that she cannot promise that because she does not want to have to break a promise—a promise that she claims Rossi broke.

She plans to keep a balanced budget with a method called "priorities of government budget setting," drawing the line at what is necessary and what is excessive.

As weak as the taxes argument was, Gregoire was absolutely sure about progressing education in the state. She boldly reprimanded Rossi for allegedly removing \$1 billion from the education budget, and urged that cutting back on education is not acceptable.

"My mom taught me three priorities in life: education, education, education," she said.

She claimed she has a plan for increasing education in math and science and "opening up the doors to higher education."

She aspires to create a "world-class" education system and has made some changes to improve the state's schools.

In an address to public school workers on August 8, she said that she had increased teachers' pay by eight percent and that an expected 3.9 percent increase was on its way. Paying teachers more assures the attraction and retaining of better teachers.

She has also worked towards smaller class sizes, which would improve the teachers' abilities to give more attention to the students, theoretically creating a better learning environment.

Environment is also an important issue for Gregoire. She bragged about the state's ranking as the third greenest state, and in response to Rossi's excitement at the growing use of hybrids, she brushed it off citing that the tax write-offs for hybrid drivers has already been passed, and the state needs to move beyond to other forms of transportation.

Gregoire also showed a passion for law enforcement. Previously, she worked in criminal investigation, and she was part of "Operation Crack Down" for stricter punishments for sex offenders. She also pointed out that the state of Washington's crime rate is the lowest it has been in fourteen years.

Overall, nothing too significant was said as to what Gregoire would do in the future, mostly because she seems to find the state in good shape and just wants to progress with the programs she has already started.

The debate was full of classical political rhetoric, and, by the end, the truth is hard to determine.

However, one thing was unmistakable. Gregoire showed a confidence in the work she has done in the past four years, despite Rossi trying to convince her otherwise, and seemed to have plans—although the details were not discussed—for the next four years, if reelected.



Caroline O'Grady/Director of Art

Dino Rossi tries to dethrone Gregoire

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Dino Rossi was born and raised in Washington, attending Seattle University for a degree in business.

He was elected to State Senator in 1996 and served there until 2003 when he became the Chairman of the Senate Ways and Means Committee.

After a narrow loss in the 2004 election, Dino Rossi has returned as this year's Republican candidate running for Governor of Washington state.

When considering teen-relevant issues, Rossi's plans for the education system could change the lives of thousands of Washington students. His education reform plan pledges to bring "Higher Standards, Accountability and Opportunity to our Education System."

One highlight of this plan is the potential replacement of the WASL. If elected, Rossi plans to swap the WASL with a new standardized test modeled after other state tests including the "Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System, the Indiana Graduation Qualifying Exam and the California High School Exit Exam."

Like the WASL, this substitute will be a graduation requirement for all students. However, it will have "standards that are recognized as clear, understandable and rigorous" as opposed to "confusing" and "vague" standards of the WASL.

In addition, Rossi's education plan emphasizes holding school systems accountable for student progress by raising salaries for effective teachers and eliminating "underperforming" ones.

Rossi wants to stress the importance of math and science in K-12 education. He will do this specifically by "focusing on math and science by paying math and science teachers more; allowing professionals to teach in our classrooms, and adopting clear math curriculum."

In accordance with improving math and science education, Rossi also plans to raise the general standards of public K-12 education in order to decrease the number of students needing to take remediation courses in college.

According to his campaign website, "approximately 50 percent of students coming out

of high school have to take remedial courses in college. This not only costs more money for students and parents who are paying tuition, but clogs our state universities as students take longer to graduate."

Along with education, Dino Rossi has big plans for preserving and protecting the environment as Washington's Governor. One of his goals is to protect Washington's state parks, "even through difficult economic times."

Rossi is also promoting hybrid, electric and alternative-fuel vehicles by promising to eliminate sales tax on them for the next 10 years.

His transportation plan also intends to convert "state government vehicle(s) to hybrid and plug-in electric cars by 2015" and "create public electric charge stations at park and rides and rest areas."

"We all share the common goals of wanting a clean environment and it's time for us to take reasonable steps to reduce carbon emissions," Rossi says on his web site.

The candidate is in favor of renewable energy resources as well, including hydropower and nuclear energy.



Caroline O'Grady/Director of Art