BC DEMS RESOLUTION 2026-05
A RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF HARRY DEMAREST

WHEREAS, Harold H. "Harry" Demarest Jr. spent more than 40 years volunteering for the Benton County Democrats, where he rose to Chair of the party in the 1980s and led the efforts to turn a reliably "red" county into the most reliably and deepest, darkest "blue" county in the state, routinely placing Benton County as the highest Democratic voter turnout in the state of Oregon; and

WHEREAS, Harry was acknowledged by the Democratic National Committee for his work, being the sole Oregonian ever honored with the Larry O'Brien Award for volunteer achievement in 1994, and was honored as Volunteer of the Year and received a Lifetime Achievement award from the Benton County Democrats; and

WHEREAS, Harry and Merry Demarest remained active in the Benton County Democrats after stepping down from leadership roles, sponsoring our annual Picnic and Pie Auction and organizing our Holiday Party; and

WHEREAS, Harry served as a mentor and wise counsel to countless Benton County Democratic party leaders for decades after stepping down as Chair; and

WHEREAS, His insistence on proper use of Robert's Rules of Order and knowledge of the party's Rules and Bylaws, and improving them when needed, saved the Benton County Democrats from devolving into chaos; and

WHEREAS, Harry was always helpful to new members, offering help in getting Legislative Action Items added to the state party platform, and encouraging newcomers to take more active roles in the party; and

WHEREAS, His lively personality and auctioneering skills proved to be a high point of many BC Dems gatherings, including the "Rumors and Jokes" segments that left many of us wondering which were which; and

WHEREAS, Harry's generosity of spirit and financial support to local, state and national political campaigns, from Basic Rights Oregon to NOW and the ACLU, and assistance to Democratic National Convention delegates needing financial help, will forever endow our party with a rich legacy; and

WHEREAS, Harry Demarest died on September 4, 2026, surrounded by his wife Merry, daughter Joan, grandchildren and close friends.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Benton County Democratic Central Committee expresses our deep sense of loss to the family and friends of Harry Demarest, our tremendous gratitude for his service, and we honor his life and contributions with this resolution. His work with our party will live on with the same sense of purpose, commitment and devotion he exemplified in all of his efforts.

A RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY: DAN De CARBONEL pct 8, ANN GAIDOS-MORGAN pct 9, JANET WOLF-ESHE pct 8, and the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE BENTON COUNTY DEMOCRATS

APPROVED BY THE BENTON COUNTY DEMOCRATIC CENTRAL COMMITTEE ON OCTOBER 15, 2026



Chair Gabe Shepherd

October 15, 2026

Date