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COFER, Suzanne, papers, 3.5 linear ft.

Abstract:

Suzanne Cofer is a political activist interested and involved in Washington state politics and the Democratic Party (1982 – 1992), particularly the Gary Hart presidential campaigns (1984 – 1988), and in the People Speak program pilot project on AIDS testing.

Background:

Suzanne Cofer (b. 1948), a graduate of the University of Washington Master's degree program in Public Administration, has long been involved in local, regional and state politics, usually associated with the Democratic Party. She worked on the statewide Gary Hart presidential campaigns from 1984 through 1988, served as a delegate to the national Democratic Convention in 1984, was a board member of the League of Women Voters, acted as the Thurston County coordinator for Initiative 99 establishing a Presidential Primary, and was on the legislative staff of the state of Washington's House of Representatives. In 1989 she was elected to the Tumwater, WA city council.

Scope and content:

The Cofer papers consist of several series: participation and interest in regional and state politics (1982-1994); the Gary Hart presidential campaigns (1984-1988); the People Speak pilot project on AIDS testing (1987-1988); and a collection of local and statewide political campaign ephemera (circa 1980s – 1992).

Suzanne Cofer, and her husband, Don, were active workers within the Democratic Party in Thurston County and statewide. Several files relate to the Washington State Democratic Central Committee (1982-1990). Others contain material on the Third Congressional District Democratic League (1987) and the Washington State Women's Political Caucus (1990-1992).

One of the strengths of the collection is the material representing statewide efforts to inform and influence citizens in Washington about the viability of the candidacy of presidential hopeful Gary Hart. Particulars about the scheduling and itinerary for Senator Hart tours to Washington offer insight into the logistics of a state committee's effort to influence an election, as do some of the files of the 1988 Club, the Hart 1000 List, the clippings files, and information sent from Hart's national campaign office. Suzanne Cofer served as a state delegate to the national Democratic Convention in San Francisco in 1984 as a dedicated Hart advocate. Following Hart's failure to win the presidential nomination by his party, Cofer and her colleagues in Washington state turned their efforts to help eliminate Hart's campaign debt, an issue that would continue to plague him in his bid for the Democratic nomination in 1988. When Hart withdrew from the presidential race in May 1988, the campaign came to a halt. However, Cofer's clipping files shed some light on the regional sentiment about Hart's withdrawal, the Rice affair, and his eventual unsuccessful reentry into the race in December 1988.

While Cofer served on the legislative staff for the House of Representatives, she coordinated the People Speak pilot project on AIDS testing, a program that grew out of Project Democracy initiated in 1987. With the assistance and counsel of Richard J. Spady, president of the Forum Foundation in Seattle, three representatives (Rep. Dean Sutherland, 17th District; Rep. Georgette

Valle, 34th District; and Rep. Art Sprenkle, District 39-A) initiated a pilot project on an issue of concern as an example of how to better involve the general public in conversations about issues that they hoped would eventually lead to better policy and legislative decisions. The methodology used and the tabulated results of an “opinionnaire”, along with participant and facilitator feedback, provide a sample look at both the instrument and information gained on how Washingtonians felt about AIDS testing in 1987.

The general correspondence file consists mainly of personalized form letters sent to Cofer by politicians and political activists encouraging her support and involvement. Cofer saved much of the mail and door-to-door political campaign printed ephemera from various local and statewide candidates, which provides a representative sampling, particularly for Thurston County, 1989-1992.

Inclusive dates: 1981 - 1994

Restrictions: None

Volume: 3.5 linear feet

Accession number: 1997.54

FILE LISTING:

BOX 1: Correspondence (1985-1992); Washington State Democratic Central Committee (1982-1990); Campaign Literature (various); Newsletter: Thurston County Democratic Committee News (1990-1992); Clippings; Hart Presidential Campaign (1984); Democratic National Convention (SF, 1984); Hart Presidential Campaign (1988)

1. Washington State Politics: Correspondence – Cofer, Suzanne 1985 – 1992
2. Washington State Politics: Washington State Democratic Central Committee 1982 – 1990
3. Washington State Politics: Washington State Democratic Central Committee – Hart Rules Committee 1986 – 1988
4. Washington State Politics: Third Congressional District Democratic League 1987
5. Washington State Politics: Washington State Women’s Political Caucus 1990 – 1992
6. Washington State Politics: Issues 1985 – 1989
7. Washington State Politics: Campaign Literature – Thurston County – Commissioner 1992
8. Washington State Politics: Campaign Literature – Thurston County – Superior Court Judge 1992
9. Washington State Politics: Campaign Literature – Thurston County – Various 1989 – 1992
10. Washington State Politics: Campaign Literature – Governor
11. Washington State Politics: Campaign Literature – State Offices – Various 1991 – 1992
12. Washington State Politics: Campaign Literature – State Senator
13. Washington State Politics: Campaign Literature – State Representative
14. Washington State Politics: Campaign Literature – State Representative
15. Washington State Politics: Campaign Literature – U.S. Senate
16. Washington State Politics: Campaign Literature – U.S. House of

- Representatives 1990 – 1992
17. Washington State Politics: Newsletter. Thurston County Democratic Central Committee News 1990 – 1992
 18. Washington State Politics: Publications – Various 1983 – 1993
 19. Washington State Politics: Clippings 1986
 20. Hart Presidential Campaign 1984: State of Washington
 21. Hart Presidential Campaign 1984: National
 22. Hart Presidential Campaign 1984: Clippings 1984
 23. Hart Presidential Campaign 1984: Democratic National Convention (SF, 1984) – Delegates Packet
 24. Hart Presidential Campaign 1984: Democratic National Convention (SF, 1984) – General Information
 25. Hart Presidential Campaign 1984: Democratic National Convention (SF, 1984) – Clippings – Regional Interest
 26. Hart Presidential Campaign 1984: Debt Retirement Efforts – National
 27. Hart Presidential Campaign 1984: Debt Retirement Efforts – 3rd Congressional District
 28. Mondale / Ferraro Presidential Campaign 1984: State of Washington 1984
 29. Democratic Presidential Campaign 1984
 30. Hart Presidential Campaign 1988: Visits to State of Washington Oct 1986
 31. Hart Presidential Campaign 1983: Correspondence 1984 – 1987
 32. Hart Presidential Campaign 1988: Correspondence – Regional 1984 – 1986

BOX 2: Hart Presidential Campaign (1988); Center for a New Democracy (Newsletter, Publications, General Information); Democracy Project (1987); Democratic National Committee Publications; People Speak; Proposed Legislation (1987-1988); Governor's Task Force on AIDS; Report: Grassroots: A Study of Neighborhood Political Organization in Tacoma – Pierce County.

1. Hart Presidential Campaign 1988: Friends of Gary Hart in Washington State 1987
2. Hart Presidential Campaign 1988: 3rd Congressional District 1987
3. Hart Presidential Campaign 1988: 1988 Club 1984 – 1987
4. Hart Presidential Campaign 1988: Hart 1000 List 1987
5. Hart Presidential Campaign 1988: Target List 1987
6. Hart Presidential Campaign 1988: National 1986 – 1987
7. Hart Presidential Campaign 1988: Campaign Literature
8. Hart Presidential Campaign 1988: Clippings – Regional 1985-1986
9. Hart Presidential Campaign 1988: Clippings 1985 – April 1987
10. Hart Presidential Campaign 1988: Clippings – Withdrawal from Race May 1987
11. Hart Presidential Campaign 1988: Clippings – Re-Entry into Race Dec 1987
12. Hart Presidential Campaign 1988: Clippings – Re-Entry into Race – Regional Dec 1987
13. Hart, Gary. U.S. Senator, Colorado: Newsletter 1984 – 1986
14. Center for a New Democracy: Newsletter, New Realities 1986

15. Center for a New Democracy: Publications
16. Center for a New Democracy: Information – General 1986
17. Democracy Project 1987
18. Democratic National Committee: Publications (4) 1984
19. Project Democracy: AIDS, Public Knowledge and Opinion, State of Washington March – August 1987
20. People Speak: Pilot Project Sept 1987 – Jan 1988
21. People Speak: Correspondence and Information – Spady, Richard J., President, Forum Foundation (Seattle) 1983 – 1988
22. People Speak: AIDS Testing Discussion Meetings – Form letters to participants and convenors 1987
23. People Speak: AIDS Testing Discussion Meetings – Convenor training 1987
24. People Speak: AIDS Testing Discussion Meetings – Convenor Notes 1987
25. People Speak: AIDS Testing Discussion Meetings – Participant and Convenor Lists Nov 1987
26. People Speak: AIDS Testing Discussion Meetings – Participant Sign-up Sheets 1987
27. People Speak: AIDS Testing Discussion Meetings – Information Packet Nov 1987
28. People Speak: AIDS Testing Discussion Meetings – Information Sheets Nov 1987
29. People Speak: AIDS Testings Discussion Meetings – Evaluations by Convenors 1987
30. People Speak: AIDS Testing Discussion Meetings – Evaluations by Participants 1987
31. People Speak: AIDS Testing Opinionnaire 1987
32. People Speak: AIDS Testing Opinionnaire - Completed Samples Nov 1987
33. People Speak: AIDS Testing Opinionnaire – Nov 1987 Attitudinal Profile Report (17th District) Dec 18, 1987
34. People Speak: AIDS Testing Opinionnaire – Nov 1987 Attitudinal Profile Report (34th District) Dec 18, 1987
35. People Speak: AIDS Testing Opinionnaire – Nov 1987 Attitudinal Profile Report (39 A District) Dec 18, 1987
36. People Speak: AIDS Testing Opinionnaire – Nov 1987 Attitudinal Profile Report (Combined Districts) Dec 18, 1987
37. People Speak: AIDS Testing Opinionnaire – Nov 1987 Summary Highlights
38. People Speak: Legislation, Proposed 1983 – 1989
39. Legislation – Proposed: Participation and Communication on Public Issues as Part of the Centennial Observance by Organizations and Citizens 1987 – 1988
40. Governor’s Task Force on AIDS: Reports, Clippings, and General Information on AIDS 1987
41. Manual: Spady, Richard J., and Cecil H. Bell, Jr. Administrative Theory: The Ten Dynamics of Governance and Civilization Building – A Manual for Leaders and Followers 1989
42. Study Report: Grassroots: A Study of Neighborhood Political Organization in Tacoma – Pierce County. League of Women Voters, 1981

BOX 3: Books

1. Book: Hart, Gary. A New Democracy: A Democratic Vision for the 1980s and Beyond (NY: Quill, 1983)
2. Book: Hart, Gary. Reform, Hope, and the Human Factor: Ideas for National Restructuring Kittredge, CO: 1987
3. Book: Hart, Gary, with William S. Lind. America Can Win: The Case for Military Reform 1986 Autographed
4. Book: Cohen, Williams S., and Gary Hart. The Doubleman (NY: Morrow, 1985) Autographed.
5. Book: Heck, Dennis L. Challenges & Opportunities: The Transformation of Washington's Schools (Advance Washington, 1987) Presentation Copy, Signed.