



**The Mountain Democrat  
Newsletter Editor  
PO Box 760  
Oakhurst, CA 93644**

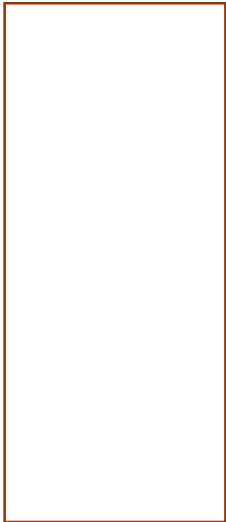


# **The Mountain Democrat**

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*The Mountain Democrat* is published bimonthly by the Democratic Clubs of Eastern Madera and Mariposa Counties which are affiliated with the California Democratic Council, and is distributed to all current members of those clubs. For a membership application see the inside back cover of this newsletter.

### COMING EVENTS

#### April 2005

Apr. 2: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Apr. 9: Mariposa Club Meeting

#### May 2005

May 7: Oakhurst Club Meeting

May 14: There will **NOT** be a Mariposa Club Meeting.

May 14: **Jefferson Dinner**  
(see p. 3 & 15 for details)

May 28-29: **Peddlers Fair**

Jun. 17-19 **CDC Convention**  
San Bernardino

### CONTACT US

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Jery Lacayo: 209-742-7891

Yosemite Gateway Region  
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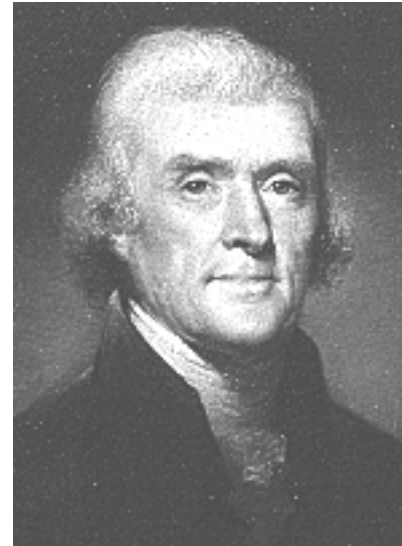
Mariposa Democratic Club  
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For more information about our Democratic Clubs and Democratic happenings around the state and nation open your trusty web browser and visit our web page at:

**YosemiteDems.net**



# Mariposa Jefferson Dinner

## *The Mariposa Democratic Club*

*invites you to the*

## *Annual Jefferson Dinner*

*May 14, 2005 at 6:30 PM  
Best Western Banquet Room  
\$25.00 per person*

## News From a Grassroots Activist

by Ginny Terrell

Hi! I've been asked to recount some of the things that are going on around our mountain area, but I thought I'd first introduce myself. I'm Ginny Terrell, and am helping the CDC and local Democratic groups in a variety of ways. To those of you who know me, I hope to see you soon in one endeavor or another. To those I have yet to meet, I hope I can encourage you to get involved in some way where we can get a chance to know one another.

Over the past few months other CDC representatives and I have traveled to Madera for their Democratic Club meetings. They were having some difficulty and asked for our help. We had a great goal-setting session, and they changed the location and time of their meetings. They are now on a more positive footing.

I've recently become a member of the Madera Central Committee, and am a delegate to the Democratic State Party Convention in April.

Do most of you know the differences between the CDC, CDP and Central Committee? Do you know your Congressional District, and who your congressman is? (Yeah, I'm sure we all know that one)! One of the things that I'm most interested in is how all these pieces work, who does what, and why. Since I'm relatively new to all this stuff, it was making me crazy. I needed to learn it to become a more effective activist. So, if you'll indulge me for a few moments, I'll try to briefly explain what each does:

**CDC** - California Democratic Council. This is a grassroots organization, which includes your club. It has been in existence for 52 years, and is the umbrella organization which links all Clubs, Central Committees and Assembly District Committees throughout the State. The CDC Chair is a member of the Executive Board of the State Party. CDC is primarily involved with increasing grassroots participation and developing issues related resolutions

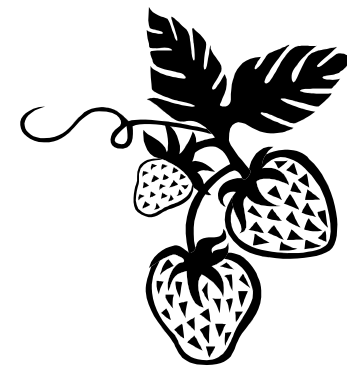
## News From a Grassroots Activist (continued)

to be forwarded to the State Party and Legislators for action in developing legislation.

**CDP** - California Democratic Party. This is the official arm of the National Democratic Party. Their primary function is to identify and support candidates for office, raise money to support campaigns, and through the Assembly District Committees and County Central Committees provide and support campaign headquarters. Resolutions on issues of importance are submitted for consideration to the State Party and are considered for action at the CDP convention and Board Meetings.

**County Central Committee** - This is the locally elected arm of the CDP, and is comprised of members who live in that county, with a given number of seats available in each supervisorial district.

The point I'm trying to make is, whatever it is that interests you, there is a way for you to become as active as you want. There are caucuses and committees to join, letters and emails to write, people to phone, doors to knock on. Just let us know, and we'll be happy to put you to work!



## Your Buck\$ at Work

By Les Marsden, Mariposa Democratic Club Treasurer

As Treasurer of the Mariposa Democratic Club, it's my responsibility to keep us solvent, to maintain a healthy financial reserve, to pay our bills, to be fully prepared for known and unexpected future expenses, to file our accountings with the Fair Political Practices Commission; I think it's also my obligation to keep you posted on the status of our Treasury.

While that's the opposite approach taken by the Bush Administration in operating our Federal Treasury (sorry — couldn't refuse the opportunity for that one) I'd like to offer reports from time to time to let you know how and what your money is doing for us Democrats.

As of the date of this report (March 20, 2005) our Treasury stands at \$3,575.84. When I took over as Treasurer back in May 2002, the balance stood at \$400.23. As I often tell people, our balance is in such great shape because I'm cheap. But our treasury is in place to do good things for Democrats and Jesse Unruh's oft-quoted line still holds true: "Money is the mother's milk of politics." Here are just a few of our upcoming expenses: Five of our members (including myself) will be attending the California Democratic Party Annual State Convention in Los Angeles on April 15—17. The club will ONLY be paying the base registration and two-nights lodging; no meals, special events, gas, transportation or even parking will come from your treasury but even so the cost will be just over \$1,000 total. Rather than staying onsite at the recommended hotels for roughly \$160, we've researched the least expensive off-location accommodations possible and will pay \$79 per night for our rooms, double occupancy. Why do we attend these annual conventions? To give Mariposa Democrats a voice. To vote on behalf of Club membership—you. To guide the course of our state Democratic Party. To attend and participate in workshops. To gather information and insight which we can pass

## Your Buck\$ at Work (continued)

on when we return. To network with other grassroots Democrats. And most important: to show (as we always do in a BIG way) Democrats from all over our state that we're HERE and growing; that Mariposa Democrats are just as involved and important as those from anywhere.

Where else will your money be going in the near future? I'll soon be paying our annual premium for liability insurance, an extremely reasonably-priced group plan made available through the state Party which covers all our events during the year; while we haven't yet received this year's bill, the cost last year was \$550. I'll soon be paying the Mariposa County Fair for this year's fair booth rental — last year was \$680. Annual affiliation fees of \$300 must be paid to the California Democratic Council. We'll be paying out at least \$1,000 for food for this year's Jefferson Dinner; ticket sales will reimburse that of course, but we've got to have the money up front to pay. I pay out \$50 every month for rental of the Stompers Hall for our luncheons. We usually buy about \$1,500 worth of merchandise to sell at the Fair; again, we'll make money on that process but must have cash up front to do so. There are many additional expenditures from our Newsletter expenses, copying and mailing costs (usually in excess of \$120 per issue— which annual dues of \$5 don't come close to covering) to approximately \$60 every month for our phone and fax lines (partially and very kindly covered by Margaret Hartley.)

So now you have an idea of where your money goes and what it does. And I won't feel quite so guilty about passing that hat at our next luncheon.





## Oakhurst Democratic Club

**Visit YosemiteDems.net for the latest Club info!**

### **An Opportunity to Serve**

The Oakhurst Democratic Club is preparing for “regime change” on July 1st although our methods will be a little more benign than our Republican counterparts. The formation of a nominating committee will be announced on April 2nd, and a proposed slate of new officers presented at the May 7th meeting. Our membership will vote at our June 4th meeting.

Two of our club leaders, Bob Odell (President) and Monika Moulin (Vice President) are stepping down. Members who have agreed to run again are Scott Hill (Secretary/Treasurer), Ed Bailey (Member at Large), and Clariss Cassin (Member at Large). **All Oakhurst club members are invited to run for any position.** If you are interested, contact Bob Odell at 658-8696 ext. 244.

We’d like to thank both Bob and Monika for their committed and caring service to our club and the Democratic cause in Eastern Madera County.

### **“Air Your Views” and Goal Setting**

We’ll depart from our usual speaker format at our April 2nd meeting to give our members an opportunity to brainstorm and

Oakhurst Democratic Club (continued)

reach a consensus on club goals for the coming year. The results of this discussion will be documented and revisited in 6 months to gauge progress.

One excellent idea from the March meeting called for bumper stickers to advertise our local clubs (thank you, Mary Hermann!). The current proposal is for a sticker reading “**Mountain Democrats YosemiteDems.net**”. The feasibility of creating these stickers is being evaluated. If you have any design or production suggestions, contact Ellie Schermerhorn at 658-2342.

### **May and June Meetings – Ol’ Kettle Restaurant at 9:00AM**

On May 7th, *Julie Bates, Associate State Director of AARP California*, will join us from Sacramento to talk about one of the hottest topics around: *Social Security reform and the creation of private accounts*. This should be a very informative session.

On June 4th, we’re diving into another hotly debated topic in the Democratic community: *religion and its role in public life*. *Kamal Abu-Shamsieh, a follower of Islam* and activist for greater understanding among different faiths, will address us on this subject. Some of us have heard him speak before on behalf of the Interfaith Alliance and were extremely impressed with his insights.

### **And Lastly, Our Peddlers Fair Booth May 28th – 29th**

We had booths at both the Peddlers Fairs last year, and one at the Chocolate Festival. These proved to be excellent ways to increase our visibility, register Democrats, and raise a little money to boot! Shifts are only 2 hours, and they are fun! *Please contact Clariss Cassin at 559-683-6328 to sign up!*

For more information, call Ellie or Scott at 559-658-2342, or visit [yosemitedems.net](http://yosemitedems.net).



**California Democratic Council  
Yosemite Gateway Regions 11 & 12**


By Jery Lacayo

CDC, the statewide umbrella organization for all clubs, central committees, AD committees and more, is growing daily and providing visibility, coordination, support and outreach for all our member organizations. This is truly an exciting time for Democrats in California and I want to invite all of you to think about how you are willing to help the effort. You will be contacted soon and invited to become a bit more involved in the process and I hope you will accept our invitation.

Our major effort this month is setting up and opening our official, year round, office. The networking, precinct contacts, newsletter mailing, letter writing, phone banking, and so much more will be coordinated out of the office, and we expect to be able to streamline our workload and improve our communications enormously. We hope you will accept our invitation to the grand opening. You will be notified of the time and place as soon as we are able to complete our work.

Reaffiliations and new affiliations are coming in now, and I am happy to report that we are growing within our foothill area. Welcome to the Coarsegold and Madera clubs, and we hope to include North Fork and Turlock very soon.

Please remember that CDC is our highway to more involvement and influence in Democratic politics in California and beyond, and your attention and support is vitally important.



**FLOAT FOR RENT**  
Our giant, bodacious, and otherwise totally big, splashy and wonderful float is for rent! Tell your friends and relations.  
For information call Jery Lacayo



**Mortimer Mouse says:**

You too can be an author.  
Write an article for the web page or newsletter (please?).



## Health Care at the Crossroads

Submitted by the Oakhurst Democratic Club

At our February meeting, Jessica Rothhaar, organizer for **Health Access California**, provided an insightful overview of the issues surrounding the uninsured in California, and the legislative efforts to expand insurance coverage. Her statewide coalition represents over 200 organizations working for the goal of quality, affordable health care.

### Background

Jessica's presentation began with some statistics: Six million Californians are completely uninsured, but eighteen million are at risk of losing their employer-provided health insurance. Of the uninsured, 80% *have jobs*, but because their employers either don't offer health insurance, or the premiums are unaffordable, they go without even the most basic coverage.

The "Wal-Martification" of the retail environment plays a large role in this benefit erosion. As we know, Governor Davis and the legislature tried to ameliorate this situation with legislation to protect currently insured employees, and provide access to those who aren't. The California Chamber of Commerce fought bitterly against the legislation and spent \$18 million to kill it. Their efforts succeeded in November and the bill was repealed by a heartbreakingly narrow 2% margin.

### The Republican Non-Solution

Health Savings Accounts (HSA's), the Republican solution for expanding health care, actually leaves many people functionally uninsured. For example, with an HSA, people are required to have a high deductible plan. The annual required out-of-pocket amounts can be up to \$5,100 for individuals or \$10,200 for families, not insignificant sums. *Many people burn through the money they've set aside in their HSA, but still have not met their out-of-pocket*

Health Care at the Crossroads (continued)

*requirements*. If they can't make up the difference they are effectively uninsured. One of the outcomes is that medical bills are the single biggest reason for bankruptcy. So the system creates bankrupt people who still don't have health care.

### How to Achieve Affordable Premiums

There was one concept Jessica drove home the most as key to affordable premiums: the need for very large risk pools. The concept is both simple and relatively intuitive. The larger the risk pool, composed of both the young and the old, the more reasonable the premiums.

Another way to keep premiums affordable is to have a single payer system with its lower administrative costs. Jessica pointed to Medicare as an example, which has a very low 3% overhead rate compared to a 20% rate for private insurance. However, as she said, "The Republicans would rather die than see an expansion of a public program for health care."

**Health Access California** is extremely active in following and promoting health care legislative actions. For more information and to sign up for their e-mail list, go to: [www.health-access.org](http://www.health-access.org).

### Getting Involved Locally

There are several opportunities within our local Democratic community to become more informed and/or help in the development of resolutions and actions around this subject. Contact Jim Landis, Vice-President of CDC Region 11 (that's our area) at 209-966-4894 and he will point you in the right direction. Most of these committee meetings are held online, so you don't need to travel, or even get out of your pajamas unless you want to. Every voice is important!



## Mariposa Club Membership Drive

by Jim Archer

Beginning in 2005, we will use the months of January, February and March for our annual Membership Drive! Last summer we decided to run Membership with the calendar year, so if you think we just collected recently, you are right. However, if you paid your dues after July 1, 2004, we will accept it for the year 2005!!!

For those of us who paid before July 1 dues are due! Cost for each member is \$5.00 per year.

Have you thought of sponsoring someone and paying their first year dues for them? It's a great way to increase our membership and get our friends involved.

For those folks who wish to become LIFE MEMBERS, the cost is \$100.00! The advantage to the Life Membership is never having to worry about whether or not you've paid your dues and you will be providing fees for the Club's use NOW...when they are needed.

Dues may be paid at meetings or sent to:

Jery Lacayo  
Democratic Club Office  
5409 Tiptop Rd.  
Mariposa, CA 95338

Any Questions????? Call Jim Archer at 209-742-7281, because he may be calling you very soon.



You're Invited  
to the  
Mariposa

*"A warm mountain gathering of Democratic friends ..."*

That's how one of our community described this event, but it can be described in many ways.

It is casually elegant in the Sierra tradition . . . .

It's a gourmet delight made with much love and care . . . .

It's a chance to get somebody out of the kitchen . . . .

And enjoy a feast someone else will prepare.

So join with us then for a night filled with magic . . . .

Inspiring speakers who won't talk too long . . . .

Share music and laughter with friends who are jolly . . . .

And all of this can now be yours for a song!

### *The Jefferson Dinner*

Saturday, May 14th 6:30 PM

Best Western Banquet Room, Mariposa

\$25.00 per person 209-742-7891



## Building Bridges for Peace

Submitted by the Oakhurst Democratic Club

“Whether we’re talking about Northern Ireland or the Middle East, the one thing to remember is they are all human beings. What’s true for one is true for the other.”

This statement formed the basis for a talk by Vince Lavery, peace and political activist, in his March 5th presentation to the Oakhurst Democratic Club entitled “Terrorism: What We Can Learn from Northern Ireland”.

“Northern Ireland is small, so it’s a good laboratory for studying terrorism”, per Mr. Lavery. The terrorist seed always gets planted the same way. “Terrorism occurs when people give up any hope of redress to their legitimate grievances”, he stated. “The person who turns to terrorism has been denied any hope and humiliated.”

“But how do you determine if a grievance is legitimate?”, one member asked. Mr. Lavery defined this as the denial of rights which are self-evident (words used in our own constitution), such as the denial of the basic human right to self-governance.

The terrorists of the Irish Republican Army and the Middle East all use the same organizing principle which, ironically, is to forego the standard hierarchical structure seen in an organized military force. “Terrorists don’t need leaders. They work in small cells, one not knowing what the other is doing”, but having the same goals. “They can’t fight the British face-to-face, so they hit and run”, he said. “No uniforms, no leaders, no organization.”

Once the terrorist mindset is ingrained in a culture, there is only one way to stop the cycle of violence. “Hope comes from the leaders of the groups sitting down at the table and talking. When that’s happening, you can turn to (particularly the young) terrorists and say, ‘There IS hope for change. Look, the leaders are talking

## Building Bridges for Peace (continued)

together on your behalf”’. This approach can take time to sink in, to take hold, but it is required and ultimately will work. Mr. Lavery pointed to the “Good Friday” agreements of 1998, spearheaded by President Bill Clinton, Senator George Mitchell, Prime Minister Tony Blair, and Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern. The agreement gave more rights to the Catholic minority in the north while reassuring Protestants they would not be taken over by the Catholic south. “This determination to build bridges for peace bore fruit”.



Vince Lavery speaking  
at the Oakhurst  
Democratic Club

## ACTION ITEMS

by Jim Landis

1. The toll free telephone number for contacting your Senators and Congresspersons at the Capitol has been disconnected. No Surprise there.
2. Once again the Bush administration is pushing to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to oil drilling. This time they surreptitiously slipped the measure into the budget bill. Despite Democratic opposition, the measure was approved in the Senate by two votes. Additional action is needed before the measure becomes law. Senator Boxer has been leading the opposition. She has introduced a bill to put ANWR into the Wilderness Act in order to protect it forever. She also plans to organize a consumer boycott of any oil companies that plan to drill in the ANWR. Please contact Senator Boxer; thank her, sign her petitions, and join her in the fight to save ANWR. Time is critical. Your action is needed NOW.
3. The Bush administration also plans to open thousands of acres of Alaska's North Slope to exploratory oil drilling. This area has been protected for decades because it is the home of migratory birds and caribou. Both the North Slope and ANWR will suffer the same environmental destruction as visited upon Prudhoe Bay.
4. The Republicans have been opposed to Social Security since the day President Roosevelt signed it in 1935. They see their control of the House, Senate, and Oval office as their chance to "get rid of it" once and for all. They don't want to fix it—they want to destroy it. Taking trillions of dollars out of the system for private accounts is just the first step—but a deadly one. Try solving *your* household or business budget problems by reducing *your* income and see what happens.
5. George Bush has "borrowed" \$754 billion from the Social Security Trust Fund during the last four years. Another trillion has been "borrowed" since 1968. A proposed law: SB 689, the "Lockbox Law" would prevent borrowing from the trust fund and require all monies to be used exclusively for benefits for future generations. Ask your Senators and Representatives to support SB 689. Ask that the bill be amended to require repayment of all funds previously borrowed.



## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Annual Dues are \$5.00 per person  
(Mariposa lifetime membership is \$100)

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mariposa Club: \_\_\_\_\_ or Oakhurst Club: \_\_\_\_\_

New Member: \_\_\_\_\_ or Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you find out about us? \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisorial District (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisorial District (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount Enclosed: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Please mail form and check payable to:

Mariposa Democratic Club	or	Oakhurst Democratic Club
5409 Tip Top Road		PO Box 760
Mariposa, CA 95338		Oakhurst, CA 93644
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