

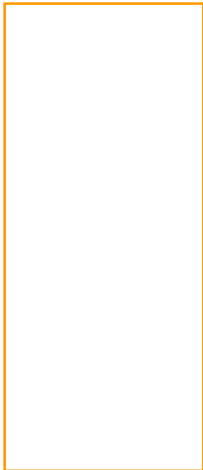


The Mountain Democrat
Newsletter Editor
PO Box 760
Oakhurst, CA 93644



The Mountain Democrat

Oct. - Nov.
2005



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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

October 2005

Oct 1: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Oct 8: Mariposa Club Meeting

Oct 8: Oakhurst Chocolate
Festival Booth

Oct 28: Cajun Ball
(see page 3)

November 2005

Nov 2: V O T E !!

Nov 5: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Nov 12: Mariposa Club Meeting

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COME TO A CAJUN FEAST & COSTUME BALL

LIVE MUSIC & JAMBALAYA
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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28TH
6:00 PM
ADULTS \$20, CHILDREN \$10
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YosemiteDems.net

California Democratic Council

By Jerry Lacayo

There was a lot of energy in the room as the CDC held its board meeting in Bakersfield on Sept. 24 and 25. I had personally hoped to see many more club presidents attending and participating in the discussions. It would be much easier to keep everyone on the same page if our discussions and decisions included more input. Nevertheless, we had a good meeting of over 40 board members and I consider it a worthwhile weekend. It has become a bit of a tradition to have a Saturday meeting, open to all Democrats, with a very fluid agenda allowing for a more thorough discussion of plans and concerns. Of necessity, the Sunday meeting follows a fairly tight agenda and the decisions of the Board direct the organization's activity between meetings. The next Board meeting will be held on Dec. 3 and 4 at the Picadilly (Airport) in Fresno. With this much advance notice, I am hopeful that many club presidents and members will invest the time and energy to participate in the Saturday discussion session. It would be very helpful to have greater input from more of our members where there is ample time for consideration of the issues we tackle. CDC is OUR statewide connection and as such is well worth our time and effort to make it strong and viable.

We were particularly fortunate to have Holly Hart and Helen Acosta present "True Blue" for our education, inspiration and entertainment. If you've ever wondered how we have, on many occasions, been outmaneuvered by the Republican propaganda machine this presentation will explain it. It will amaze, shock, and anger you, but it then goes on to offer a terrific plan to WIN IT BACK!

California Democratic Council (continued)

That part of the presentation will inspire you and give you a plan to constructively vent your anger. Last, but certainly not least, both Holly and Helen are absolutely delightful, entertaining, and smart. I am hoping to bring them to our area in the near future and I sincerely hope that many, or better yet ALL of you will make sure to attend their presentation. It is not often that we have the opportunity to be educated, be inspired, and be entertained all in the same hour.



Our President directing FEMA

From the Mariposa Trenches

By Les Marsden

It's been a busy summer and there's no let-up in sight for the Mariposa Democratic Club; our presence was not just announced but loudly and proudly brayed by our patriotically-decorated and intelligently-populated float in the annual Mariposa County Fair Parade on September 3. There was a distinct change in our reception this year: a very noticeable positive reaction, applause and cheering from the onlookers greeted us and the usual pro-Bush demonstrations were quite muted and few. And we dealt with those head-on and aggressively; after all: they may be the Right but we're the ones who ARE right! Our double booth at the Fair was visited by many sympathetic and proud Democrats AND Republicans alike who-in the latter case confessed their disappointment with Bush (what took so long?!) More than 15 new members were signed up at the Fair, boosting our membership to the 175+/- range.

In other news: after all the coordination to secure the Miners Inn as the new location for our less-labor intensive Monthly Breakfast Meetings, the restaurant changed owners and is currently closed. So (and this IS important!) the Mariposa Democratic Club will return to the Bootjack Stompers Hall to meet (still on the second Saturday of every month at 9:00/AM) for a delicious breakfast-cooked just for YOU by ME. Next Breakfast: October 8; please confirm your reservation in advance by calling (209) 966-3367 or 966-4894.

Jim Landis has organized a terrific Club humanitarian effort to aid Hurricane Katrina victims; we're accepting

From the Mariposa Trenches (continued)

clothing, shoes and bedding which will be sent to refugee centers. If you have any such items, please call (209) 966-3367 or 966-4894 in Mariposa or (559) 658-2648 in the Oakhurst/Coarsegold area to arrange pickup or better yet: you may take them to Mariposa Self-Stor at 4953 Cole Road in Bootjack between the hours of 1-5/PM.

There's much more but mark your calendars right NOW for Friday, October 28th: the date of the Mariposa Club's brand-new Fall Event: the fantastic Cajun Feast and Costume Ball-guaranteed to be THE Party of the Year. In addition to an authentic mouth-watering jambalaya with red beans and rice, all accoutrements, dessert and Creole coffee, we're thrilled to announce live Dixieland music by the band Mo' Munny. This will be ONE hot damn evening and the fun starts at 6:00 - call (209) 966-3367 for your tickets today-a bargain at \$20 for adults with children \$10. So start planning: YOU'LL have a great time so get into your most creative COSTUME and festive, celebratin' party mood! - Who says nobody dresses for dinner any more?!

And remember-they may say they're on the Right, but we're the ones who ARE Right!





Oakhurst Democratic Club
P.O. Box 760
Oakhurst, Ca. 93644
559-658-2342

Visit www.yosemitedems.net for the latest Club info!

We're Organizing!

Within the last several months, the Oakhurst Democratic Club has created three new committees and reactivated the Get Out Vote Committee for the November election. Pretty good progress for our still relatively young club!

A *Calling Committee* comprised of **Mabel Cameron, Mary Herrmann and Bruce McNichols** is now contacting our members to remind them of upcoming events, increasing our meeting attendance.

Volunteers **Jamie Blair and Monika Moulin** staff our *Fundraising Committee* and have already proposed several creative and entertaining ways to improve our club's finances.

A *Scholarship Committee* with **Jackie Roberto, Ellie Schermerhorn and Joyce Stuhr** are working with Yosemite High School and club members to establish a scholarship fund for college-bound seniors.

And our crack *GOTV Committee* leader **Billie Cavin** is working with **Scott Hill** and other club members to get them the information they need to call most-likely voters.

Oakhurst Democratic Club (continued)

Don't just be an armchair Democratic. *There are many ways to help, and this club can provide you with something you'll not only enjoy doing, but take a great deal of pride in, too!*

"Restore Hetch Hetchy" Topic on November 5th

A surprising coalition of environmental and business groups, including the Oakhurst Chamber of Commerce, has proposed tearing down O'Shaughnessy Dam and restoring the valley to its natural state, and the Governor has actually created a commission to explore the costs and benefits.

Kay Pitts, representative from the **Restore Hetch Hetchy** organization, will address the worthiness of this project at our **Saturday, November 5th** meeting. Her presentation includes a 20-minute film, which describes the benefits of the restoration. Come see us at the Ol' Kettle Restaurant at 9:00AM for this very interesting discussion.

And Lastly, Our Chocolate Festival Booth October 8th

The booths prove to be excellent ways to raise our community visibility, register Democrats, and raise a little money to boot! Shifts are only 2 hours, and they are fun! *Please contact Ellie Schermerhorn at 559-658-2342 to sign up!*



Mountain Area Celebrate Summer Picnic

By Ginny Terrell

The Mountain Area Democrats held their first annual picnic in August, and it was a great success. Club members from all four local clubs were there with goodies for people to eat, and prizes to win. The main thrust of the picnic was for all the clubs to get together, get acquainted, and be more ready to help each other when the need arises. This was a great start!

Special thanks goes to Ed Koehler and Peg Sullivan of the Oakhurst club for their fantastic promotion of the raffle tickets! Because of their persistence the club was able to make a nice profit, although the whole affair was not billed as a fundraiser.

The Coarsegold club supplied the hot dogs and fixin's, thanks to Sandy and Ruth Stairs, along with help from Ginger Julian. And the salads provided by Jeanette Bryon and her crew from North Fork, were a wonderful addition! Mariposa filled in with sliced watermelon, and gave people the opportunity to sign up for the Peace March in San Francisco.

It was great to have so many visitors from the surrounding area as well as from Fresno and Madera. We welcome all Democrat friends at all our functions! The more the merrier.

While the picnic was a huge success for its first time, there probably should be some fine-tuning to make it even bigger and better. Toward that end, we have submitted our event to the Oakhurst Chamber of Commerce for

Mountain Area Welcome Summer Picnic (continued)

inclusion in their 2006 Event Calendar. Our hope is to create an ad hoc committee to make this an even bigger and better event, raising money for all our clubs, as well as creating goodwill and fun within the community.

Thanks to all who participated! It couldn't have been done without you. And save the date for next year - Saturday, August 19th, from 3:00-6:00 p.m. (No more excuses about conflicting schedules. If you have things planned that far out, you're WAY too busy!)



Food and Fun at the Summer Picnic

Alliance for a Better California

Help Defeat Governor Schwarzenegger's Special Interest Agenda, on the November 8th Ballot...

The Alliance for a Better California has been steadfastly opposed to the Governor's wasteful Special Election for the special interests, and is now working to defeat the Governor's ballot initiatives (74-78) that will hurt our families and communities. The Alliance is also supporting two measures on the ballot (79 & 80) that will help everyday Californians, providing real prescription drug relief to consumers, and preventing energy blackouts in the future.

NO on Proposition 74: The "Punish New Teachers Act." This measure would do nothing to improve public education or deal with the real problems facing our schools. It unfairly attempts to blame teachers for the problems in our public schools, ignoring the realities of underfunding, overcrowding, and the lack of materials and resources needed for effective teaching and learning. If this measure passes, new teachers would serve a 5-year probationary period rather than the current two years, and would lose the right to even have a fair hearing on their dismissal for a full 5 years. Current law already allows for firing teachers who are not performing in the classroom, no matter how long they've been on the job.

NO on Proposition 75: "Paycheck Deception Act." Requires nurses, teachers, firefighters, police and other public employees to sign a written form every year, if they want their dues to be used for union political activities. This measure is sponsored by corporate and right-wing

Alliance for a Better California (continued)

activists, whose motive is to place bureaucratic burdens on public employees to deter their involvement in politics. It unfairly targets public employees with restrictions that don't apply to other groups or corporations, which regularly spend shareholder money on politics without permission. Prop. 75 does not protect the rights of teachers, nurses, police and firefighters. Instead it's designed to reduce their ability to respond when politicians would harm education, health care and public safety.

NO on Proposition 76: The "Cuts School Funding Act" would devastate our public schools and other vital services, cutting school funding by over \$4 billion every year - \$600 per student, leading to more overcrowded classrooms, teacher layoffs, and fewer textbooks and classroom materials. Our schools lost two billion dollars when Governor Schwarzenegger broke his promise to repay the money he took from education, and if this initiative passes, the Governor will never have to repay that money to our schools. It also overturns the voter-approved Proposition 98, eliminating the minimum funding guarantee for education. It also cuts funding for local government - cutting police and firefighters, as well as local health care services that protect children and the elderly. This initiative hurts our most vulnerable populations including the sick, the elderly and the young. This proposition would also give the Governor (any Governor) almost limitless power over the budget, instead of keeping it in the hands of our Legislation. With only 14 legislators refusing to pass the budget, the Governor could step in and declare a "state of emergency", allowing cuts at the Governor's discretion.

NO on Proposition 77: Reapportionment. Amends process for redistricting California's Senate, Assembly, Congressional and Board of Equalization districts, putting the process in the hands of a three-member panel of retired judges, selected by legislative leaders. This measure requires immediate redistricting which is unnecessary, costly, and will produce unfair results by using outdated census data. Even Republican Secretary of State Bruce McPherson believes this measure is fatally flawed because it cannot be implemented under the timeline contained in the measure.

NO on Proposition 78: The Drug Companies "Bad Prescription" Initiative. The big drug companies are going to spend millions trying to fool voters to keep them from passing the real prescription drug relief contained in the Alliance-backed Prop. 79. This phony measure says only that drug companies can enter a "voluntary" program to reduce prices...but why will they? They have no real incentive to lower the sky-high cost of prescription drugs. A "No" vote on the measure is necessary to provide consumers with real relief from soaring drug prices, because whichever measure gets the highest number of votes becomes law.

Yes for Consumer Rights and Corporate Responsibility...

YES on Proposition 79: The "Cheaper Prescription Drugs for Californians Act." This measure creates a drug discount program that requires participation by drug manufacturers, or companies will lose the right to sell drugs through the state's Medi-Cal program. It will mean steep discounts for seniors, families, small business, and

the State. The initiative allows the State to negotiate directly with the pharmaceutical companies for lower drug prices for millions of Californians. The State will save hundreds of millions of dollars, and California consumers will get cheaper prescription drugs.

YES on Proposition 80: The "Affordable Electricity and Preventing Blackouts Act." This is a common-sense consumer initiative that will help prevent energy blackouts and massive fraud by unregulated private energy producers like Enron. It will override the failed energy deregulation policies, put utilities back in the business of serving the public, and encourage development of more renewable energy sources. The ultimate result will be more affordable energy for ALL Californians.



Mortimer Mouse Sez...

GET OUT THE VOTE

(excuse me for yelling)



Tribal Chair Addresses Oakhurst Democrats

By Ellie Schermerhorn

Elaine Bethel Fink, Tribal Chairperson for the Mono North Fork Rancheria, addressed the Oakhurst Democratic Club on July 2nd about the Tribe's plans for a casino on Hwy 99. Since then, the Madera County Board of Supervisors has voted in support of the project. While this helps the Tribe to demonstrate local support, the federal government has final determination on tribal land.

Fink began by describing the connection that exists between the Mono Indians and areas of land in Madera County, and the Tribe is utilizing the skills of an ethnographer to scientifically study and describe their cultural roots there. "These are our historical lands. Our people used these lands, and we're in the process of documenting that."

Whether or not a nexus to the land can be proven, the hurdles to placing a casino on the site are formidable. For starters, extensive environmental reviews and discussions with local and state governments have to occur. Following that, the land must be acquired and placed into federal trust for the Tribe. In addition, an agreement known as a "compact" must be negotiated and signed with the State, and approval also must be obtained from the US Department of Interior. Fink understands these obstacles, but believes it's worth the effort for both her Tribe and Madera County.

She described the economic benefits to the County as

Tribal Chair Addresses Oakhurst (continued)

significant, providing between 1,500 – 1,700 permanent jobs, plus additional construction jobs. The current estimate for annual payroll is \$50 - \$60 million and over \$45 - \$50 million for goods and services.

Fink emphasized that the Tribe wants the casino to be a "model project", and that the decisions made about the project be would be "transparent". "We've had strong local support", per Fink. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) has been signed with Madera County that would provide \$87 million over 20 years. The funds would be dedicated to public safety, charitable, educational, and economic development. The MOU requires that the Tribe come to agreement with the County on any casino development decisions.

Station Casinos, a developer and casino management firm, has been hired by the Tribe to oversee the project. "We went looking for them. They are listed in Fortune Magazine as one of the top 100 companies, and have a lot of experience, but all decisions must be approved by our Tribal Council", she stated. Station Casinos would manage the project for 7 years, and then the Tribe would decide whether or not to manage it itself.

A member asked if the jobs at the casino would be unionized. Fink stated that would have to be negotiated. She had experience working in a unionized casino environment, and felt there were pros and cons.



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
(209) 966-3367		(559) 658-2342



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For information call Jerry Lacayo

Mortimer Mouse Sez...

I'm going to come to the
Cajun Feast & Costume Ball
in my Les Marsden Costume!
I bet you'll never recognize me.

