



YosemiteDems.net

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

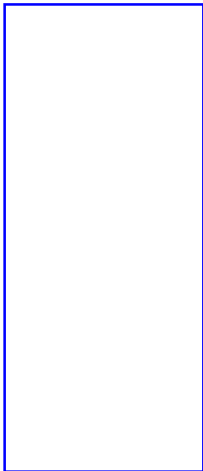


# The Mountain Democrat

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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

### February 2006

Feb 4: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Feb 11: Mariposa Club Meeting

### March 2006

Mar 4: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Mar 11: Mariposa Club Meeting

Mar 24-26: CDC Convention  
*see page 4*

## CONTACT US

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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**

## **Membership Drive**

A year ago the Mariposa Democratic Club changed the dues coverage to be consistent with the calendar year since it makes it much easier for folks to remember due dates! With the beginning of the New Year, we will use the months of January, February and March for our 2006 Membership Drive!

**Annual dues are \$5.00 per year.**

For those who wish to become LIFE MEMBERS the cost is \$100.00! The advantage to the Life Membership is never having 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  
5409 Tiptop Rd.  
Mariposa, CA 95338

**Any Questions????? Call Jim Archer at 209-742-7281**

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.

## California Democratic Council Report

By Jerry Lacayo

### DON'T MISS THE CDC CONVENTION!

Mark your calendar, arrange for the house sitter, and become a delegate to the California Democratic Council endorsing convention. Two talented members of the CDC are working overtime to plan a very special weekend for delegates and guests. The event is scheduled for March 24-26 in Santa Clara.

As always, we will make every effort to coordinate rides and rooms for those who wish to share.

Workshops, speakers, candidates for statewide and other offices, and lots of good food are all designed to provide a well-rounded program.

On Friday evening there will be a debate among the three candidates for Lieutenant Governor, Liz Figueroa, Jackie Spier, and John Garamendi.

Pricing information is not yet available, but package prices will include meals and registration. As of this writing, details are still being finalized, but having spoken to the planners, this should be the most ambitious and exciting convention in many years.

Now is the time for all of our area clubs to turn in their affiliation papers and list their delegates. Each club is entitled to one delegate for each 10 members plus the club president. If each of our area clubs sends a full delegation to the convention, we will have an impressive number of delegates and votes.

## California Democratic Council Report (continued)

Don't forget – this is an endorsing convention and the candidates will be looking for your support. It's a great chance for us to learn more about those who wish to represent us, and our opportunity to share our concerns and our ideas.

For all those considering becoming a delegate, please contact your club president or Jerry Lacayo 209-742-7891 and we will make sure to get all the information to you as soon as it is available.

Please join us at the convention.

*Mortimer Mouse Sez...*

**Ho-boy, Ho-boy, Ho-boy  
I LOVE conventions even better  
than costume parties!**



## From the Wilds of Mariposa

By Les Marsden

As we begin to shake off the quietude of the New Year, we in Mariposa are eagerly starting to gear up for what will certainly be a make-or-break midterm election. The November elections are only nine months away; we need to make sure this country offers a resounding 'NO' and an inarguable referendum to the inscrutable and desperately wrong agenda of Bush. After all: we in California sent a very clear message to Schwarzenegger last November and the people of America have an even more urgent message for Bush: No More War in Iraq, No More Illegal Wiretaps on American Citizens, No More Attacks on a Woman's Right To Choose, No More Devastation to our Environment, our Economy, our Pensions, our Seniors, our Healthcare, our Prescription Drugs....

....and it's about time to make America safe from terrorism. Bush certainly has not done so. The current Administration crows that we haven't had any attacks in America on the past four years. Of course they don't mention the fact that the worst attack on American soil in our country's history took place during the Bush watch.

Might the US House shift back to Democratic control? Or (deep breath) might we even regain the Senate? The latter is far less likely, but there is a real shot at returning to a Democratic Majority in the House - a first since the 1994 'Contract With America' engineered by Newt Gingrich ended 40 years of dominance by our party. We must certainly continue to remind people of all that has happened since the GOP took ownership of the White House, both Houses of Congress - and - in a very real sense - the Supreme Court.

## From the Wilds of Mariposa (continued)

At our last monthly breakfast meeting on January 14th, we were joined by very distinguished company - in addition to our exalted membership, of course! A larger-than-usual turnout included many members of the Mariposa Kiwanis Club, eager to join us in listening to Trent Lange, Vice-President of the California Clean Money Campaign. His intriguing presentation was succeeded by our Club's unanimous decision to offer a motion in support of AB 583, the Clean Money and Fair Elections Act. Less than a week later, we were all pleased to know that AB 583 was passed out of the California Assembly Appropriations Committee. Of the committee members, all Democrats voted in favor: all GOP members voted in opposition. Surprised? As the bill must now pass through the Assembly by the end of January, you may know more about its ultimate fate as you read this than I did when I wrote it. We were also joined by T. J. Cox, not-yet-formally-declared candidate for the 19th US Congressional District. T. J. will be our special guest speaker at the February 11th Meeting of the Mariposa Club; PLEASE call (209) 966-3367 as advance reservations are absolutely required.

Looking ahead, we're beginning the extensive planning for one of our biggest annual events, our Mariposa Democratic Club Jefferson Dinner. This year's event will be held on Saturday evening, April 8th and as always - we'll have a great evening planned for you with a gourmet feast of a meal, speakers and, of course, plenty of great politics!

Remember: America needs to be saved from the GOP - let's do all we can to make it possible.



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

Visit [www.yosemitedems.net](http://www.yosemitedems.net) for the latest Club info!

The December 2nd speaker was unable to attend, so President Ginny Terrell led the group in revising goals that were set at the April 2005 meeting.

**Grow the Club:** Members believe expanding membership should remain a top priority. Ideas were generated about who those new members might be, and how they might be recruited. Minority outreach toward Native Americans, Mexican Americans, East Indians, Gays and Lesbians, and Youth was seen as possible fertile ground for our efforts. A Community Outreach Committee composed of club members **Nancy McPherson, Laare Rowan, and Norman Secker** was formed to expand on these ideas. Current efforts to improve club visibility through the Mountain Heritage Days float, newspaper articles, bumper stickers, fair booths, scholarship, and union networking have proved effective and will continue.

**Get Out the Vote:** Through the able leadership of **Billie Cavin** and the help of many members, the club continues to set the standard for grassroots "GOTV" activity. This commitment was most recently demonstrated during the November proposition referendum. Another aspect of it, getting signatures to qualify candidates for ballots, is also

Oakhurst Democratic Club (continued)

underway. The past GOTV efforts have been very successful and members want it to continue.

**Improve Fundraising for Club Priorities:** Every organization wants to raise funds, but the logical question is: for what? Membership felt the first priority should be for those expenses that are necessary for ongoing operations, such as insurance, California Democratic Council membership, communications, and some level of assistance to members who attend CDC meetings. These expenses both are needed to make the club a "going concern" and keep members involved on a state level. After that, membership felt the priorities should be the new Scholarship Fund, and other as-yet-undefined outreach projects to establish our place as active contributors to the community.

**Scholarship Committee Update:** The "Eleanor Roosevelt Service Award" will be given for the first time in May to a graduating student of Yosemite High School or one of its affiliated alternative schools. Scholarship Committee members will screen the candidates and select a winner based on criteria established by the membership. It's anticipated that the winner will be announced at the April or May meeting.

**Upcoming Speaker:** **Cynthia Gonzalez**, acting General Sales Manager for the **Infinity Radio** station that runs **Air America**, will speak to the club on March 4th. If you haven't discovered this station yet, you can hear it at KPFT 790 AM. Cynthia is excited about their expanding listener base and will tell us what they're hearing from listeners and about future plans.

## Monika Moulin Earns Seat on New School Board

One evening in early fall, former VP of the Oakhurst Democratic Club Monika Moulin crowded onto the stage at the plush new performing arts center on the campus of Yosemite High School with no less than 10 other candidates for a not-yet-existing board of trustees for a not-yet-existing school board. The Candidates Forum, sponsored by the local teachers association, was designed to provide the public an opportunity to see and hear the 11 candidates make the case why they should be one of the members on the new board, should it come to pass.

When final votes were tallied on Election Night in November, candidate Moulin appeared to have snagged the fifth spot on the five member board, but the margin between the sixth-place vote-getter and Ms. Moulin was so narrow, only a couple of dozen votes or so, that neither the Madera County Elections Department nor the Madera County Office of Education were prepared to "call" it yet. Thus began a couple of weeks during which Moulin and supporters went into the proverbial nail-biting phase, as they waited for the final word on who were indeed the top 5 vote-getters in the 11-person race.

Getting to that period of "wait-and-see" was preceded by several weeks of grass-roots campaigning by candidate (now Board Member) Moulin. "I decided early on that the key was to do a few things well, instead of trying to employ lots and lots of tactics, some of which might be worth the effort, but others of which would most assuredly not deliver the necessary bang for the buck," said Moulin.

## Moulin on New School Board (continued)

"Getting in the mailboxes of the registered voters was a primary goal of mine," she continued, "and with the support and assistance of friends and community members who backed my campaign, I was able to do two targeted pieces of mail in the weeks leading up to the election. Those mailers allowed me to say, clearly and in my own words, just why I thought I would be an asset to the new school board, and why I thought the board should come into being in the first place."

The new board, now known as the Yosemite Joint Unified School Board, serves the newly formed district which came into being at the pleasure of the voters. Just before the "who do you want on the school board" ballot question was a simple Yes/No question put before the electorate, asking if they thought the current Yosemite High School District and the Coarsegold District should unify and become one completely new school district being governed by a completely newly formed board of trustees. The question, which was Measure P on the ballot, passed decisively. So voters then moved down the ballot to mark preferences from the 11-candidate slate of hopeful prospective board members.

The new board has now begun meeting, and Board member Moulin is already en route to an intensive training session in Sacramento, put on by the California School Board Association, for new and first-time board members.

"It's going to be a lot of work, but I'm honored that the voters have given me this challenge," said Moulin.

## Health Care for All - A Goal for California

By Ellie Schermerhorn

Lynn Jacobsson, an Oakhurst Democratic Club member and Professor of Social Welfare Policy at Cal State - Fresno, recently shared her views on the state of the health care crisis here and in the nation. "Passing a single-payer health care bill in California is an issue waiting to happen. Health care in the U.S. is in a total 'meltdown' status with hospitals going out of business, patients going bankrupt, and large employers like General Motors and Delphi threatening bankruptcy because of health care obligations."

The good news for Californians is that **Senate Bill 840**, which would provide for universal health care has passed both the Senate and Assembly. However, the fiscal bill that needs to pass both houses is being introduced in January - February and everyone's support is needed to make sure that happens.

**Health Care for All** is the action group leading the charge for this bill. In 2005, it led the grassroots campaign that passed SB 840 in the Senate and Assembly Health committees, sponsored a study demonstrating the cost-effectiveness of a single-payer system, and garnered hundreds of co-authors and endorsements for the bill.

### Benefits of SB 840

**You will always be covered.** No matter your situation, your health care needs will always be met. You have freedom of choice of providers. You choose from any licensed health care provider as your primary provider.

## Health Care for All (continued)

You will not be limited to certain providers. All providers remain private and independent.

**You receive more comprehensive benefits.** The proposed health insurance plan delivers full inpatient and outpatient services by health facilities, medical, dental, mental health and emergency care, prescription drugs, acupuncture, chiropractic care, vision care, substance abuse treatment, and eyeglasses, among many other benefits. Preventative care is emphasized.

**You have affordable premiums.** The vast majority of consumers should pay less out of pocket for their health care.

**You participate in the decision-making.** Consumers and all stakeholders participate in the decision-making in regional boards. An elected health commissioner will represent all users and providers.

For more information on how you can support the passage of this bill, go to: [www.healthcareforall.org](http://www.healthcareforall.org).

### **FLOAT FOR RENT**

**Our giant, splashy and wonderful float is for rent!**

**Tell your friends and relations.**

For information call Jerry Lacayo

## Political Activism

By Ginny Terrell

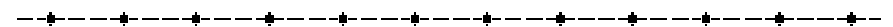
In looking at the Sierra Star newspaper here in the foothills, I notice several articles such as "I've Been Thinking", and the like. Lately I've been thinking about political activism and its many sizes and shapes. There are so many facets to being politically involved - everything from marches, letter-writing campaigns, phone banking to burning a candle, and much more. But when does it cross from "involvement" to "activism"?

Let me say up front, I find nothing wrong with being politically involved, and I wish many more people were. But to me, activism seems to mean more than just being "active", or for that matter, involved. To me it means bringing about change, however slowly. I came upon my activism late in life, although I had always participated in the democratic process. It took an overriding disgust with what was happening in politics, on the one hand - and an equally overriding desire to change the system, to get me off my rear end to do more.

I'm not sure what the defining moment was: Going back to Iowa for Howard Dean? My first "Take Back America" convention in D.C? Organizing the GOTV for the mountain clubs? Writing literally hundreds of letters for the 2004 campaign? I don't know. I know it was long before I became president of the Oakhurst club, or got so thoroughly involved with the CDC. What I do know is that my life has changed in the process. There is so much more that matters to me now. I know in my bones that my activism is here to stay; that I will do everything I can to make a positive change in this world, whether locally or internationally.

## Political Activism (continued)

And so I pose a question to each of you reading this. Are you willing to become an activist? To change the world around you? To do just one more thing than you are currently doing: Write a letter to the editor, respond to a call to phone your Senators, register voters, or whatever makes you feel good. Are you ready to stretch just a little to help in this great sea of need? Who knows... you may just cross the line one day, as I did, and say to yourself, "I'm an activist."



## Mariposans Open their Hearts and Wallets to Health Care for All!

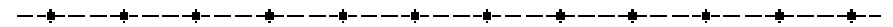
By Jim Archer

Thanks to the generosity of various members and guests at the January meeting of the Mariposa Democratic Club, we are able to forward a sum of \$150.00 to the **HEALTH CARE FOR ALL-CALIFORNIA EDUCATION FUND.**

This state-wide organization will use these funds to aid in raising the level of awareness for the **SB 840 -Health Care for All Bill** that will be before our Legislature this year.

Our area was asked to donate \$100.00 and upon hearing the critical need, those present on January 12, 2006, exceeded that mark by 50%!!! This is a very important task and California could lead the Nation if it passes.

Thanks, again for being so generous!





## **Mariposa Democratic Club Sends 400 Boxes of Supplies to Mississippi Hurricane Survivors**

By Jim Landis

In response to the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina, the Mariposa Democratic Club coordinated the donation of clothing and supplies to homeless families in Mississippi. "The people of Mariposa, as always, were beyond generous," said Jim Landis, club member and coordinator of the drive. "We were able to send 400 boxes of clothing, shoes, and bedding to Jackson Mississippi."

The Club worked with the Mississippi Association of Cooperatives, based in Jackson. The Association provides various services to rural farmers throughout the state. "Hundreds of families remain homeless and in Jackson area shelters," said Myra Bryant, Katrina Relief Coordinator for the Association. "There was no assistance in their home communities or Red Cross relief, so most of the families, who lost everything in the storm, came to Jackson." Indeed, the people of greater Mississippi have been forgotten in the media, which has focused mostly on New Orleans, and somewhat on just the gambling industry in Biloxi. "It was a perfect match," said Heather Bernikoff, club member and volunteer. "We knew Mississippi needed tremendous assistance. This was a case of rural people helping rural people - farmers helping farmers."

"When we started this project," Jim Landis explained, "we were led to believe that free shipping to the disaster area was available for the donated items. That turned out not

## Supplies for Hurricane Survivors (continued)

to be the case, and was a major set-back. We wanted to be responsive to the needs of the people in Mississippi, and ended up being delayed by several weeks. We pursued many avenues in a search for free shipping including shipping companies, airlines, private non-profit organizations, members of Congress, the California Air National Guard and the Office of Emergency Services--all to no avail. Once again, we turned to the people of Mariposa and Madera Counties, and they came through with the necessary funds."

There are so many people to thank: Thank you to Mike and Marianna Burrett, owners of Mariposa Self-Stor on Cole Road, who generously donated the space to store the collected items; the project would have been unmanageable without their assistance. Our thanks to Jaye Brown and Jim Horner, also of Mariposa Self-Stor for their help in so many ways. Thank you to Heather Bernikoff and David Raboy for arranging a destination for the clothing and for negotiating the "best price" with the trucking company. Our thanks to all those who contributed so generously toward the shipping expense. Our thanks also to the dozens of Democratic Club members who spent several days sorting, packing, labeling the boxes, and loading the truck. And, of course, our sincere thanks to the scores of citizens and businesses of Mariposa and Madera Counties who gave and gave and gave so generously; we knew that they would, they always do.

## ACTION ITEMS

By Jim Landis

**SUPPORT SB 840:** Health Care For All Californians. Call your State Representatives and the Governor and urge their support for this legislation. Help California lead the nation to universal health care for all Americans-it's long overdue. For detailed information: [www.healthcareforall.org](http://www.healthcareforall.org) or 888-442-4255

**TAKE THE MONEY OUT OF POLITICS:** Support AB 583: "The California Clean Money and Fair Election Act" CLEAN MONEY provides public financing to candidates who show broad public support and reject private funding. In Arizona and Maine it has increased voter turnout by up to 20%, allowed good people with new ideas to run, and has made officials accountable to voters, not big money donors.

Details: [www.CAclean.org](http://www.CAclean.org). For petitions (in support): [landis@yosemite.net](mailto:landis@yosemite.net) or 209-966-4894

**IMPEACH BUSH:** That Bush has violated his oath of office to "protect and defend the Constitution" should come as no surprise. Bush has been on "the other side of the law" since his youth: drug abuse, alcohol abuse, insider stock deals (re: Harken Energy), desertion from the military during the Viet Nam war, abrogating treaties, authorizing torture, and violating U.S. citizen's rights under the 4th Amendment to the Constitution. Isn't that enough? Contact your Congress members and tell them to uphold their constitutional duty to impeach Bush.

## 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