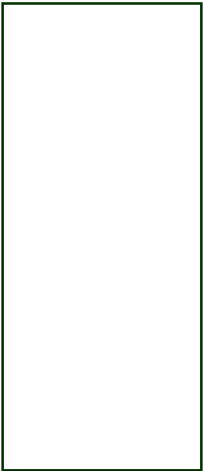




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The Mountain Democrat
Newsletter Editor
PO Box 760
Oakhurst, CA 93644



MOUNTAIN DEMOCRAT

Oct - Nov, 2006

VOTE

NOVEMBER 7, 2006

- T J COX US Congress District 19
- LEX BUFFORD CA Assembly District 25
- DIANNE FEINSTEIN..... US Senate
- PHIL ANGELIDES..... Governor
- JOHN GARAMENDI ... Lieutenant Governor
- DEBRA BOWEN..... Secretary Of State
- JOHN CHIANG Controller
- BILL LOCKYER Treasurer
- JERRY BROWN Attorney General
- CRUZ BUSTAMANTE Insurance Commissioner
- JACK O'CONNELL Superintendent of Public Instruction
- TIM RABOY..... Board of Equalization 2

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 2006

Oct 7: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Oct 14: Mariposa Club Meeting

**Oct 21: Wine & Chocolate
Festival, Oakhurst**

November 2006

Nov 4: Oakhurst Club meeting

Nov 7: Election Day

Nov 11: Mariposa Club Meeting

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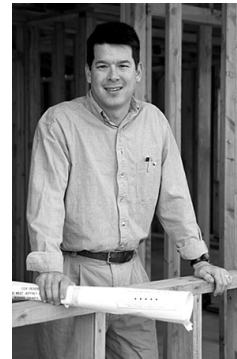
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Scott Hill: 559-658-2342

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:

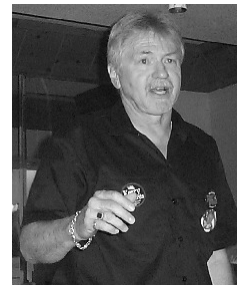
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Voting A Right and A Responsibility



TJ Cox for US Congress

**Engineer
Fiscally Conservative
Successful Business and
Family Man**



Lex Bufford California Assembly

**Successful Local Small
Business Entrepreneur**



Monika Moulin: Trustee Yosemite School District

**Currently Serving With
Distinction**

A Note From the Editor

We don't normally devote such a large part of the newsletter to a single topic as we have this month. The controversy surrounding Prop. 89, however, has split many Democratic organizations and left many individuals confused and unsure of which way to vote.

Three articles follow which address the different points of view on Prop. 89, written by three of our most respected contributors.

Page 5: Campaign Finance Proposition 89—What's a Democrat to Do? Ellie Schermerhorn provides some information about the current state of the controversy.

Page 6: From the Wilds of Mariposa: Clean Money Elections. Les Marsden, president of the Mariposa club, lays out the arguments against the proposition.

Page 9: Why Do I Support Proposition 89? Ginny Terrell, president of the Oakhurst club, lays out the arguments in favor of the proposition.

Campaign Finance Proposition 89—What's a Democrat to Do?

By Ellie Schermerhorn

US Senator Barbara Boxer *supports* it.

The California Teachers Association *opposes* it.

Gubernatorial candidate Phil Angelides *supports* it.

The Chamber of Commerce *opposes* it.

The League of Women Voters *supports* it.

The International Union of Operating Engineers *opposes* it.

The California Nurses Association *supports* it.

The California State Council of Laborers *opposes* it.

The President of the Oakhurst Democratic Club *supports* it.

The President of the Mariposa Democratic Club *opposes* it.

Have you got whiplash yet?

It's often the case that a *voter can look at who's supporting and who's opposing* a proposition and get a good indication of how to vote.

NO SUCH LUCK THIS TIME!

We may actually have to *think for ourselves*. Heck, we may actually have to **READ the proposition!**

http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/vig_06/general_06/pdf/proposition_89/entire_prop89.pdf

From the Wilds of Mariposa: Clean Money Elections

By Les Marsden

I'm 100% In Favor of Clean Money Elections—but...

I absolutely support the idea of across-the-board, totally fair and financially untainted elections. Elections in which what the candidates say, what they offer—their ideas—should be the end-all of the Democratic process. I do not want to continue seeing elections in which the guy with the bigger wallet gets to say whatever he wishes; elections in which the candidate with the wealthiest friends can literally rule all communications including the airwaves and thus buy an election. The Mariposa Democratic Club recently hosted Tom Aja, District Representative of the Operating Engineers Local Union #3 out of Stockton. Tom spoke to us quietly, but effectively, AGAINST Proposition 89—the so-called California Clean Money and Fair Elections Initiative.

Please read through some of the key arguments against 89:

- a. Limits contributions to non-public financed Legislative candidates to \$500 per election.
- b. Limits contributions to non-public financed statewide candidates to \$1,000 per election.
- c. Public financed candidates may receive a total of \$10,000 in election contributions, with no more than \$100 from each donor.
- d. Limits contributions to independent expenditure committees to \$1,000 per year.
- e. Limits aggregate contributions to ALL candidates to \$7,500 per year.
- f. (One of the most important points to consider:) Places NO limits on self-financed campaigns by wealthy candidates.
- g. Limits contributions from small contributor committees to \$2,500.
- h. Limits contributions to political parties to \$7,500 per year and limits political party contributions to candidates.

Clean Money Elections (continued)

And please consider these arguments for the specific damage which 89 will do to our party:

- a. The Democratic Party will be marginalized, severely limiting its ability to elect Democrats.
- b. Prop 89 undercuts what the Democratic Party does best: member-to-member communications. Prop 89 critically limits member-to-member programs for candidates.
- c. Republicans in non-competitive seats may receive a financial edge: a Republican (under 89) running in what was formerly a safe Democratic Senate seat could receive \$1.3 million in taxpayer funds to run a campaign. Do we really need to give the already-flush GOP a whole new source of revenue?
- d. Again, a critical point: 89 does nothing whatsoever to stop wealthy individuals from contributing any amount whatsoever to their own campaigns or to ballot measures. Think about that. Who has more money, traditionally? Any rich Republican will be able to spend millions on campaign advertising on his/her own campaign while 89 restricts the contributions received by all other candidates. Wealthy conservative activists will be able to (personally) launch and run pro, or anti, issue campaigns with unlimited personal funds, and the great traditional friend(s) of the Democratic party—labor unions—would have to abide by campaign limits.
- e. 89 creates a very unequal playing field, as I've outlined above. Certain groups are severely restricted or completely shut out of the process: groups such as small businesses, non-profits and (of course) some unions. And the very (personally) wealthy?
- f. The ACLU has challenged a very similar law in Connecticut; The United States Supreme Court recently found the contribution and expenditure limits in a strikingly similar measure from Vermont unconstitutional because they limit free speech and violate the First Amendment.

(continued on the next page)

Clean Money Elections (continued)

Proposition 89 is 56 pages long and is filled with confusing and impossible-to-implement provisions; it is also rife with loopholes. Rather than making elections in California more fair, it will actually lay the groundwork for far more inequality in our state's elections. 89 is opposed by, among others, Tony Quinn, Former Commissioner of the California Fair Political Practices Commission. Also opposed: James Hall, past Chairman of the FPPC, who has stated "Proposition 89 is unconstitutional, unfair, and won't work."

Please keep in mind: the California Democratic Party recently voted to take NO position on 89. And subsequent to Tom Aja's compelling presentation and a lengthy question-and-answer period, the Mariposa Democratic Club voted to recommend a no vote on Proposition 89. The most important thought I can leave you is this: we don't vote for a mere titular concept; we vote for specific laws composed of specific words. In the case of Proposition 89, please take the time to examine what those words actually say and then consider what they ultimately mean.

<http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/vig_06/general_06/pdf/proposition_89/entire_prop89.pdf>

>From the wilds of Mariposa, where I'm still hoping for CLEAN elections and truly effective and egalitarian campaign reform.



Why Do I Support Proposition 89?

by Ginny Terrell

There are two main reasons: *money*, and *money*.

Now Only the Rich Can Run for Office

The first deals with the fact that at the present time *a candidate who may have an excellent message*, but little access to money, *can't afford to run*. This blocks the average guy on the street from an opportunity not only to run, but to vote for change. It *blocks the grassroots from having a say* in how they want things done.

As things stand *now no candidate, without access to large amounts of money, has a chance of getting elected* because the political machine in Sacramento won't give him/her access. This creates room for all sorts of devious dealings, not the least of which is the ability to draw their own districts to maintain "safe" seats.

The proposed proposition gives everyone a level playing field. If you feel your message is good enough, you can prove it by getting so many signatures (depending on the office you're seeking) along with matching \$5 donations. It gives the voters the right to be heard instead of the lobbyists. It gets rid of the impression, real or imagined, that we the people have no voice in our daily lives. *This should increase voter turnout and produce a more diverse field of candidates*. It makes the legislator accountable to us, instead of the lobbyists walking the halls of Sacramento.

Who Pays for Elections Now?

The second money issue I'm talking about is the *exorbitant costs of our current elections*. *The vast majority of the money comes from outsiders: big business, unions and special interest groups*.

If anyone wants proof of that, just check out who opposes Prop. 89. Politics does, indeed, make strange bedfellows. With Prop. 89

in effect, there *would be less special interest money* for the simple reason that if one candidate decides to run "clean" the other candidate(s) will be more inclined to do so, as well. After all, why waste all that money if the state is going to match what you are getting from those special interest "deep pockets"?

The opposition cites the onerous tax burden on California businesses. It's true. They'll be taxed 2/10ths of a percent! *Any idea how that stacks up against what these people are currently passing along to the average consumer?* Please don't be naive enough to believe that all the money they are currently spending to insure their agenda goes forward is not being passed along to you!

The **California Democratic Party decided to take a "neutral" stance** on this proposition. *I'm not sure whether it was because there were competing unions involved, they didn't want to get in the middle of a hornet's nest, they didn't have the intestinal fortitude to return power back to the people, or what.* On the contrary, the **California Democratic Council voted overwhelmingly to endorse Prop. 89.**

Please join me, along with Barbara Boxer, Nancy Pelosi, Phil Angelides, the Nurses Association, League of Women Voters of California, California Common Cause and others in ~

- getting rid of the corruption
- returning power to the people
- increasing public confidence in government

VOTE 'YES' ON 89!

(continued on the next page)

Some other opinions to consider:

From the Associated Press:

Robert Stern, president of the Center for Governmental Studies, (a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization), says Proposition 89 wouldn't cure all of the state's campaign finance problems but would 'change California pretty dramatically in terms of who runs and where they get their money.'"

'It will allow more people to run who aren't wealthy and aren't connected to wealthy special interests,' he said. 'I think it will reduce the impact of special interest money but not eliminate it. ... It would be a major improvement but not the Holy Grail.'"

Also from the Associated Press:

"Ironically, it was last November's special election that set the stage for the split between the nurses and other labor groups. While the nurses regularly turned out hundreds of members for high-profile demonstrations and protests against Schwarzenegger and his package of labor-opposed initiatives, the teachers union spent \$58 million to battle the governor's measures with mail pieces, television ads and other high-priced strategies.

While the teachers saw the defeat of Schwarzenegger's plan as an example of what can happen if labor pays to get its message out to voters, the nurses called it a warning of what the future could bring.

'We can't do this every time some harebrained politician wants to put something on the ballot,' DeMoro said. 'You can't do this year after year. We decided to go to the root, which is money.'"



A Visit to the Mono County Central Democratic Committee

By Ginny Terrell

As most of you know, I've been the Regional VP for CDC for almost a year now. It's a great job! No pay, but I get the opportunity to meet other grassroots Democrats throughout the seven counties that are my territory. I had never gotten the opportunity to visit the Mono Co. Democratic Central Committee, and decided that was a priority. (In my defense, I can really only go over there when the Tioga Pass is open.) So, in September Bart and I decided to make a little vacation out of the trip. The weather was perfect, and the drive as beautiful as ever. We found a cute little motel in Mammoth Lakes, where the meeting was being held. (Their meetings skip around—the previous month it was held in Lee Vining.)

Saturday morning I set out for the meeting, and was met by Jean Wuamett, the committee chair. But the real joy was in seeing how energized this group is! Just reading the minutes of their previous meeting told me I was in for a real treat. They seem to be everywhere, doing everything! They're heavily involved with the Rural Caucus and the Progressive Caucus. They had several fundraisers for their congressional candidate, Robert Rodriguez, including an afternoon event and a pancake breakfast, in one month. They were also involved with him at a voter registration drive, etc. They had so many innovative ideas! Just to name a few: holding voter registration at the soccer games, the Arts & Crafts Festival, etc. They were working on staging an event for their candidate to generate press coverage which might include any/all of the following areas: their "miserable Postal Service", Healthcare, Wilderness Bill, and on-and-on.

What I especially enjoyed was their willingness to tackle these events with such a "can do" attitude. They considered the community college, Mammoth Hospital, the Ski Museum, various members' homes, Mammoth Lakes Community Center, restaurant's, etc.

A Visit to Mono County (continued)

But the idea I liked most was something they've had for a few years now. They bought an old home-made camper, and they take it all over the county for visibility. They use it for voter registration. They put signs on it for people they're backing. They put up "bumper sticker" slogans. They go to shopping center parking lots. (Did you know there's only one supermarket in the whole county??) They go into every nook and cranny of their county, using it to promote the Democratic message! And it seems to be working. **In the last election they turned their county from RED to BLUE - by an incredible four to seven votes** (depending on who you're talking to.) It was even written up in the L.A. Times.

I'm so glad I finally made the trip to Mono County!



Part of the crowd on the Democratic Float in the Labor Day Parade

.....and the people remain silent

by: Jim Landis

While Congressional Republicans (in full view) debate which parts of the Constitution they will destroy in order to appease their megalomaniac Commander in Chief, the people remain silent.

Debating which forms of torture are acceptable, along with secret evidence, indefinite detention, suspension of habeas corpus—all of these are violations of their oath to uphold and defend the Constitution—and the people remain silent.

The country is in the hands of tyrants—and the people remain silent.

That sound you hear in the background?—that's Josef Stalin and Adolf Hitler having a good laugh.



Looking at the parade from the front of the float

Propositions: California Democratic Party Recommendations

Prop	Title (Abbrv.)	Recommend.
1A	Transportation Funding Protection	Yes
1B	Highway Safety, Traffic Reduction, etc.	Yes
1C	Housing and Emergency Shelter	Yes
1D	Educational Facilities	Yes
1E	Disaster Preparedness and Flood Prevention	Yes
83	Sex Offenders Residence Restrictions	Yes
84	Water Quality, Safety, Flood Control	Yes
85	Waiting Period and Parental Notification	NO
86	Tax on Cigarettes	Yes
87	Alternative Energy, Research, Production	Yes
88	Education Funding, Real Property Parcel Tax	NO
89	Political Campaigns Public Financing	**
90	Government Acquisition of Private Property	NO

** CDP voted not to take a position, CDC recommends yes

Recent Local Events

Madera Central Committee Luncheon

State Senatorial candidate Wiley Nickel gave the address at the Madera County Democratic Central Committee fundraiser held at the Madera Municipal Golf Course on August 19th. Here shown with Fresno State Young Democrats member Will Oliver.



Mountain Democrats "Celebrate Summer" Picnic

Monika and Kirk Moulin entertained the audience at the picnic held August 26th in the Oakhurst Community Park. TJ Cox also spoke at the event.



Mariposa Democratic Club in County Fair Parade

The Mariposa Democratic Club turned out in force and filled the club's parade float. TJ Cox walked along the parade route and talked to voters. On the left you see Heather ..uhh..inflating Uncle Sam as Ellie admires her ..uhh..technique. On the right is Cian Polson in his best patriotic outfit waiting to ride in the parade.



Madera Central Committee Fair Booth

Democrats made a good showing at the fair during the second week of September. Shown are TJ with some of his family, and Susan Rowe.



ACTION ITEMS:

By Jim Landis

ELECTION 2006 COMING RIGHT UP:

Absentee ballots are being mailed out on October 9th. October 23rd is the final day to register to vote. There are thousands of eligible voters in our 19th Congressional District who are not registered. Contact your local Democratic Club and get involved in voter registration and get-out-the vote efforts.

Note: Permanent Absentee Voters (PAV) who failed to vote in a general election or primary election have lost their PAV status and must re-apply. Their voter registration is not affected.

Although Congress will be in recess (when you read this), various committees will be at work in Washington working on cuts in Social Security benefits for seniors, reductions in Medicare payments to doctors and hospitals, and drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Keep up the pressure on your representatives; their offices are open during the recess.

A substantial number of our troops wounded in Iraq are suffering traumatic brain injuries (TBI) caused by exposure to explosive blasts. While the numbers of these injuries continue to increase (far beyond that which was expected), the Bush administration is cutting the funds for treatment of TBIs by 50% from \$14 million to \$7 million. Typical behavior by these cold hearted bastards; once they have "used you" they toss you on the scrap heap. Demand that funding levels be increased, then get rid of these people on November 7th.

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