



YosemiteDems.net

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

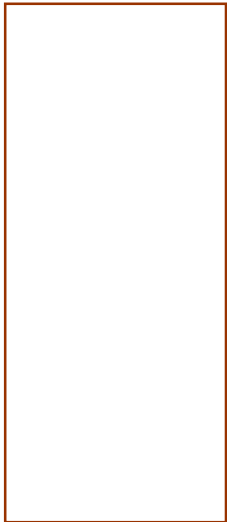


The Mountain Democrat

June – July 2007

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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

June 2007

Jun 2: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Jun 9: Mariposa Club Meeting

July 2007

Jul 7: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Jul 14 Mariposa Club Meeting

CONTACT US

CDC Central Area South VP
Jery Lacayo: 209-742-7891

CDC Yosemite Gateway
Ginny Terrell: 559-658-2648

Mariposa Democratic Club
209-966-3367

Oakhurst Democratic Club
559-658-2342

Newsletter/Web Page Editor
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:

YosemiteDems.net



SAVE THESE AUGUST DATES!



2007 CDC Statewide Convention

Friday, Aug 10 - Sunday, Aug 12, 2007

Description

The 2007 California Democratic Council statewide convention will include a weekend of training sessions, inspirational speeches, networking and campaign preparation. CDC and the host West Los Angeles Democratic Club invite you to spend a Democratic activist weekend at the Sheraton Gateway, near LAX, August 10-12, 2007. We hope all mountain Democrats save the dates and join us in Los Angeles! Info at: <http://www.cdc-ca.org/>

"Celebrate Summer" Picnic

Saturday, August 25, 3 PM – 6 PM

Description

The Oakhurst Democratic Club sponsors this annual event at the Oakhurst Community Park for fun, food, prizes, and an opportunity to hear Madera County Clerk-Recorder Rebecca Martinez talk about the upcoming February primary. Come and bring your friends, children, and grandchildren!

CDC Report

By Jerry Lacayo

YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS THE CDC CONVENTION!

The next convention is on the way and it promises to be important, informative, and inspirational! This will be the last convention before the 2008 primary and I expect it to be a great weekend. The Mariposa, Oakhurst and Coarsegold clubs will all be sending delegates and we are looking forward to a full attendance from our area. The convention will convene on Friday afternoon, August 10, with activities continuing through midday Sunday, August 12. Please contact me, or your club president, if you are interested in participating in a carpool or would like to share a room. This is the most affordable convention I have seen in some time and we will make every effort to help our delegates in any way possible.

Delegates will also be attending from Fresno, Modesto and other surrounding areas, and some of them may also be interested in participating in our good neighbor efforts. The registration fee is only \$35.00 and entitles you to participation in all workshops, trainings, meetings and elections. You can buy the full package, which will include registration, Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner, and Sunday breakfast for \$210.00. Individual meals can be purchased but the prices are not yet available. The convention will be held at the Sheraton Gateway on Century Blvd in Los Angeles. It is located very near LAX. Room rates are \$109.00 per night, double occupancy, but you must register early and be sure they know you are with the California Democratic Council (CDC).

I expect to run for reelection as Area Vice-President Central South and would appreciate your support. Hope to see you at the convention..

IT'S TIME FOR SOME GOOD NEWS!

By Jerry Lacayo

We have some very good candidates for president, and we have a very good chance to elect one of them. Everywhere I go I find people anxious to talk to me about our candidates. It is very early to have so many people paying attention. That's a good sign.

Smile: the Democrats are making changes. Change is often slow and cumbersome. It is often frustrating to watch the gears move at a snail's pace when we feel such urgency about many issues. The big picture is still much better than it was a year ago and we can look toward a brighter future.

Good news: politics is not a dirty word, and all politicians are not crooks. If I believed that I would have to believe that things will not get better, and I simply refuse to go there. Every profession has its bums and that's unfortunate, but let's not paint everyone with the same brush. They don't deserve it and neither do we. We need to defeat only the bad guys and it is our job to pay enough attention to know who to keep. You wouldn't fire your best employees along with the worst just because they worked for the same company, would you? See, it's not so bad after all.

In the next few months we have a lot of work to do. We will need to support our candidates, talk to our friends and neighbors, perhaps knock on some doors, make some phone calls, and raise some money.

Very good news: we can do all that and more—and have a lot of fun doing it. Most of us enjoy working together rather than alone. However, if you're someone who prefers to work alone, we can supply you with important tasks as well. For the rest of us, I ask all of you to volunteer for a committee, work on an event, help put on a luncheon or dinner or meet and greet or picnic. Ideas?

GREAT NEWS! WE CAN DO IT!

From the Wilds of Mariposa

By Les Marsden

How better to poke a finger into the eye of one of California's conservative hotbeds than to invite activist Democrats from all over the state to San Diego for the 2007 California Democratic Party Convention? Though not as notoriously conservative as nearby Orange County, San Diego County is certainly red, so it was a pleasure to join thousands of eager, dedicated Democrats at the San Diego Convention Center April 27—29. The delegation from the Mariposa County Democratic Central Committee consisted of Jery Lacayo, Heather Lacayo and myself: Les Marsden.

Friday evening saw the election of officers to the 58-county Federation of County Central Committee Members. This statewide caucus has the potential to be among the most influential and powerful within the State Party and I'm delighted that the new Chair of that Federation is our own Jery Lacayo. She ran unopposed and was elected by acclamation, adding yet one more distinction to our rural, yet ever-more-sophisticated, Yosemite area political import. In an unrelated election also conducted at the convention, our very good friend of the Democratic Club Garry Robbins of Modesto easily won a three-way race to become the new Director of Region 7 for the State Party. Region 7 covers a very large geographic area (Assembly Districts 10, 17, 25, 26) including all or parts of Mariposa, Merced, Madera, Tuolumne, Mono, Calaveras, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, Amador, El Dorado and Sacramento Counties! You may remember Garry's lovely wife Sharon really did an extraordinary job of personally ensuring the success of our Jefferson Dinner silent auction in March by happily buying nearly everything in sight. I was delighted to chat with the couple at our Mariposa Symphony Orchestra concert at UC Merced in April, part of Sharon's auction booty.

But certainly the most impressive part of the convention was the roster of speakers; State Party Chair Art Torres kept the ball rolling

From the Wilds of Mariposa (Continued)

admirably from the start with Nancy Pelosi's rousing and inspiring crowd pleaser welcome. We were then, over the period of Saturday and Sunday, addressed by all the Democratic Presidential candidates except Joe Biden. In a nutshell, though not a strong admirer of hers, I was extremely impressed by Hillary Clinton's very progressive, very 'real' and totally spontaneous-feeling speech. Barack Obama, whom I had been leaning towards, spoke mightily but said nothing. It's time for concrete plans and I feel he must offer something more than charm or he's done. Dennis Kucinich said all the right things and certainly had the crowd's passion, but didn't overwhelm the listener with any sort of true leadership or actual electability. Chris Dodd also played very well to the home crowd and told us (perhaps a little too much) in detail of his blueprints for the presidency. And then came John Edwards. I had pretty much written him off, but with that address he had me—and the great majority of those attending—in the palm of his hand. He spoke masterfully, inspiring confidence in his leadership ability—and at the same time gave us details of what he'd do and how. And it was all the best sort of progressive Democratic philosophy from ending the Iraq debacle to actually creating and funding national health care to protecting the environment to energy production—and much more. The crowd was rapt; I was privately invited via my cell to a small reception immediately following his speech. I dragged Jery and Heather along out of the hall to a smaller hospitality suite which was quickly clogged with about 300 other 'insider' supporters for a brief address by Edwards. Heather even managed to snap some great shots of Jery with John Edwards! I'm now lending my support to Edwards' candidacy and am very intrigued to see where it goes. See what YOU missed in San Diego. The link below will take you to the California Democratic Party's homepage where you can link to see and hear all the speeches from the convention; really great stuff!
<http://www.cadem.org/site/c.jrLZK2PyHmF/b.947937/k.CC3A/Home.htm>

Oakhurst Club Nominee for President

By Ginny Terrell

As the time comes for the leadership to change hands in the Oakhurst Democratic Club, I am somewhat saddened at the prospect of stepping down as president. The two years I've served seem to have gone so swiftly. As the saying goes, "Time flies when you're having fun!" But I believe two years is enough, and I plan on moving to Medford, Oregon later this year.

With elections scheduled for the June meeting we had found volunteers to accept all of our officer positions except that of President. However, after my plea during the May meeting for someone to take the job seemed to fall on deaf ears, a new member named Victoria Williams came to me and said she'd consider doing the job. We went to lunch a few days later to discuss the responsibilities involved in the position, and she agreed to take on the challenge. Here is some information about our new member and nominee for club president.

Victoria and her husband Dave are lifelong Democrats. Victoria has served with Democrats in L.A. by walking precincts, registering voters, and staffing the phones to get out the vote.

She says, "Although we have been in Oakhurst for several years it seems even more crucial now that Dave and I actively support the Democrats to take back control in Washington. We need an informed citizenry who will not allow America to be taken down the wrong road on a number of issues. I came to the group expecting to help in some way. I can coordinate meetings so, if that's what's needed, I can help."

A few years ago in her former neighborhood, Victoria worked with several others to create an organization called the Montecito Heights Association to Preserve Public Access. They gathered 250 members, raised over \$20,000, and negotiated an easement into the huge nearby park. In the future all who live in the hilltop

Oakhurst Club Nominee for President (Continued)

neighborhood of Montecito Heights will be able to hike directly from their homes into Deb's Park with its miles of hiking trails. Victoria served as the first president of this dynamic group.

Victoria holds a BA in Art from UCLA and a Master's in Education from USC, and taught elementary school for several years. Currently she is an active member of the Oakhurst Kiwanis Club and will be serving as a Board member of her neighborhood water association on Sky Ranch Road. Victoria is a fulltime Realtor working with her husband Dave as a team for Coldwell Banker Premier. Skiing, backpacking and oil painting are her favorite pastimes. She says can not be at the July meeting as she has a previous commitment to do some volunteer work at a summer camp, but hopes to be available for all the rest of the meetings for the coming year.

We will all have a chance to meet and get to know Victoria during our June meeting when she has agreed to act as facilitator for our annual goal setting activity.

WELCOME, Victoria!

Mortimer Mouse Sez...

**Boy!! That was close!
I thought we might have to find a
Republican to be club president.**



**California Democratic Party 2007 Convention
San Diego, California**



Jery, Heather, and Les, with California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell and California State Treasurer Bill Lockyer at the CDP convention.


**Madera County Democratic Central Committee
Annual Fundraising Luncheon
Held at the Madera Golf and Country Club**



Part of the crowd at the MCDCC luncheon

Mortimer Mouse Sez...

SEE!! If you had gone to the CDP Convention you would have gotten to meet lots of GREAT celebrities.



Susan Rowe, Chair of the Madera County Democratic Central Committee with John Chiang, California State Controller, who was the featured speaker at the Central Committee Annual Luncheon

Oakhurst Club Gives Two Service Awards

By Pati Stein, Scholarship Committee

The Oakhurst Democratic Club Scholarship Committee chose two very qualified candidates to receive the Eleanor Roosevelt Service Award from a field of twenty-six bright wonderful local high school students. Michelle Lalev and Adrian Hernandez will each receive an award amount of \$500 to provide financial assistance to further their education in fields that will benefit their communities and the world at large.

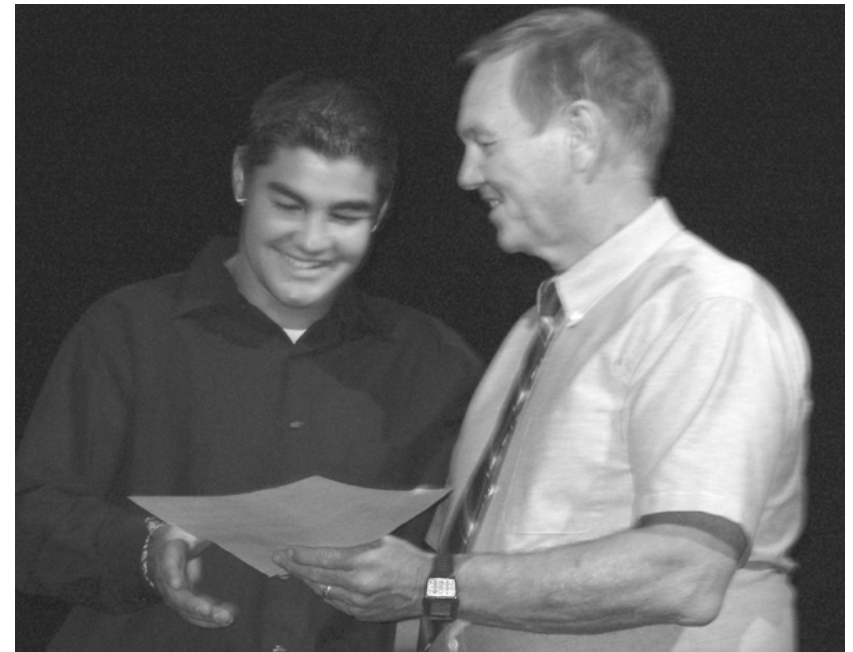
Michelle would like to pursue a career as an elementary school teacher in rural California. She has worked to pay her own expenses since she was 15 and still managed to obtain a grade point average of 3.63 and volunteer for numerous community projects. In her application, she wrote “People who lack knowledge do not have the ability to see when their liberties or rights are being violated. A free public school education is the birthright of all who are born here or who come to this country looking for a better life.”

Adrian arrived in this country from Cuba in 2003 and has attended Yosemite High School for four years. He has been accepted to San Diego State University as a business major. Adrian wrote, “My career goal will be working for a company that will allow me to combine my International business and science knowledge to interact with marine life and make a difference in the future, perhaps by saving creatures in danger of extinction. If I can’t find such a company, I will start my own.” He graduates with a grade point average of 3.79 and a record of service to many community organizations in the mountain area.

For those of us who served on the Scholarship Committee, it was exciting to see so many dedicated, serious young people who not only hoped for a better future, but had definite plans and a work ethic to achieve that goal. As adults, it is our obligation not only to kindle that hope, but to honor the spirit of Eleanor Roosevelt by

Oakhurst Club Gives Two Awards (Continued)

striving to provide a better community, nation and planet not only for these young people, but for their children as well. Let’s leave a beautiful world.



Adrian Hernandez receiving his Service Award from Dave Hamm, Scholarship Committee member

Managing the Media from the Grassroots

Communications expert talks to Oakhurst Democrats

By Ellie Schermerhorn

Media consultant Phoebe Wall Howard addressed the Oakhurst Democratic Club on May 5th, and her presentation focused on one simple question:

Do you want to win, or do you want to be right?

As ego-gratifying as it is to propound our beliefs in our terms, there's only one problem - it doesn't change minds, and changing minds is the key to changing outcomes.

Dress for success - Attending hearings is important, but so is how you are dressed, Phoebe advised. "The more professional, the better. People will decide to align with you simply by how you look." Your appearance also influences media producers and editors in terms of whether or not or how long to run a picture. "This may not be what people want to hear, but it is reality."

Be accessible on short notice - All media outlets should have your phone number. If a story breaks, they know how to get in touch with you, and can put you on TV and get a 2-second sound bite. "A sound bite is not superficial politics - it's the ability to say a lot in very few words." This is a learned skill and takes practice in crafting your sentences. While this may be insulting to the average educated person, it is what has to be done today.

Cultivate relationships with reporters - E-mail a reporter when you've connected with a story. "I liked the story" is not a good comment. Tell them it was fair and balanced if you honestly believe that, or say it made you think about an angle you hadn't thought about before.

Write to influence behavior - By focusing on issues, you can change behavior even if you can't change a person's bias. Letters

Managing the Media from the Grassroots (Continued)

to the editor that get the "most traction" are ones that don't mention political or group affiliation, but action or issues. People may balk at being called environmentalists even though they support energy conservation, so describing them as environmentalists just drives them in the other direction.

Don't just say "no" - If there's a local issue such as development that you care about, digging in your heels and refusing to negotiate just makes you look unreasonable. Simply saying "don't build it" won't win you support. You have to present alternatives or conditions that need to be complied with. An effective approach is to say, "We understand we need to grow, that that's the reality, but here's what's necessary for this project to proceed".



Phoebe Wall Howard

Political Education Program Available to Students

By Ellie Schermerhorn

Aurelia Figueroa, Executive Director of the American Youth Scholarship Committee, addressed the Oakhurst Democratic Club on April 7th. She shared information about an innovative program called the **United States Model House of Representatives** where students actually go to Washington, DC, and experience what it's like to be a Congressperson.

The program is open to all students 18 and above and there is no upper age limit. Students come from every major and with a variety of political views. When judging applicants for the program, an important criterion is community involvement. When they are accepted into the program, they are randomly assigned to either the majority or minority party, not Republican or Democratic Parties. What they've found is some of the best friendships ended up being between Republicans and Democrats, and that the program teaches students to listen to both sides of an argument and work together.

Each student is required to write a 3-page bill which will be assigned and potentially debated in the committee on which they serve. Professors from across the country act as chairs on the committees.

The students will spend two days in committee and then get orientation on the floor of the House of Representatives. Bills are debated, and chairs are former members of Congress who had been chairs of the respective committees.

Last year, the program sent 160 students from 44 states. A variety of activities are planned during the 6-day event. Both the Democratic National Committee and the Republican National Committee hosted events for interested students. This year, they'll attend events put on by the U.S. Department of State to learn how the House relates to the Department. They will also focus on how

Political Education Program Available to Students (Continued)

the House relates to the Executive Branch at presentations to be held at the National Archives.

The cost to attend the May 28th - June 2nd event this year is \$1,495 and includes housing and meals. None of the costs goes toward the cost of running the program. The students are tutored in how to raise the funds to pay their way. Last year, over \$20,000 in scholarships was given to those students who were selected to attend and made a good-faith effort to raise their expense money but fell short. Ninety-five percent of their students raised the entire amount in small donations.

For more information, contact <www.modelcongress.org>.



Aurelia Figueroa

Calling All Oakhurst Democrats

Membership Renewal and Fundraising Time!

July 1 begins our new membership year and *Eleanor Roosevelt Scholarship Award Fundraising Campaign*.

Membership fees are only \$5 annually. We keep our fees low so everyone can participate.

We hope you'll consider making an extra contribution toward the Club. We were able to give scholarships to two YHS students this year because of your efforts. This is both a great opportunity for the students and provides wonderful publicity for our club.

You can save the club 41¢ by completing and mailing this form along with your dues and donations today!

Names (s)

Mailing Address

Phone

E-Mail

Membership Dues (\$5 per person) \$ _____

Scholarship Fund Donation \$ _____

General Fund Donation \$ _____

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