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



# The Mountain Democrat

Oct. - Nov.  
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

#### October 2007

Oct. 6: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Oct 13: Mariposa Club Meeting

#### November 2007

Nov 3: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Nov 10 **NO** Mariposa Club Meeting

**Nov 10: Cajun Feast and Costume Ball**

### 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**



## **THE Yosemite Jazz Band**

at the

# **Cajun Feast & Costume Ball**

**Live Music & Delicious Food  
Your Creative and  
Festive Costumes**

**Saturday, Nov 10th**

**6:00 PM**

**Bootjack Stompers Hall, Mariposa  
Adults \$20, Children \$10**

**For Tickets call (209) 966-3367**

**Sponsored by the Mariposa Democratic Club and  
Mariposa County Democratic Central Committee**

## Coming Soon To Your Neighborhood

By Jerry Lacayo

**BEWARE:** The latest Republican scheme to manipulate the election results involves assuring themselves MORE than a fair share of the California Electoral College votes. The Republican sponsored initiative, currently seeking enough signatures to place it on the ballot, is designed to change the way Electoral College votes are allocated, providing a chance to siphon off votes for Republicans even though the popular vote favors the Democrats.

**READ BETWEEN THE LINES:** Republicans will argue that their proposal provides better representation by allocating Electoral College votes based upon Congressional District votes. BUT, be forewarned that every gerrymandered, mickey-moused, creatively engineered, Republican safe Congressional District will pull Electoral College votes away from the winner of the popular vote in California. So much for the majority rule.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Republicans are making NO attempt to institute this fair and balanced system in Texas, or anywhere else in the country. This is a special attempt to target and sabotage the rights of Californians to be fairly represented.

**DON'T BE FOOLED:** This is a manipulative Republican move to outmaneuver us when they can't out vote us. **DON'T SIGN THEIR PETITIONS. DON'T HELP THEM PUT THEIR UNFAIR INITIATIVE ON THE BALLOT.**

**A FAIR SOLUTION:** The Democrats are seeking to have the Presidential election determined by **POPULAR VOTE. PAY CLOSE ATTENTION** when election time comes around. Be sure you know who is sponsoring the initiatives and be sure you know which way to vote. We **MUST** defeat those who seek to gain unfair advantage. We must work together, and vote together, so we can live together in a kinder, gentler, Democratic country.

News Flash    News Flash    News Flash

## We Can Do It!

It's time to get serious. 2008 is our opportunity to change the course of our government. We will reinstate respect for the Constitution and rule of law in our country. A Democratic President along with a wider majority in the House and Senate will insure an end to the absolute abuse of power which we have witnessed over the past 6 years.

It is likely that the next President will appoint at least one judge to the Supreme Court, perhaps more, and it is imperative that the next appointments be made by a Democratic majority. More appointments in an extremely conservative vein will assure the reversal of responsible social programs for decades.

If you are unwilling to suffer another four years of contempt for the laws and Constitution of the United States, with the prospect of continuing military conflicts and an unending parade of hypocritical proponents of family values, **SPEAK UP!**

**THE TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW!**

**YOU ARE THE KEY TO SUCCESS.**

Whether you have a little or a lot of time, a little or a lot of money, can make phone calls, write letters, register voters, support events, help with mailings, and/or attend meetings, your friends and neighbors will welcome and appreciate your support. You'll make new friends, renew acquaintances and find yourself involved with some of the most generous and caring people you could possibly hope to know.

**DEMOCRACY NEEDS YOU!**



## From the Wilds of Mariposa

By Les Marsden

Well, we've survived the Mariposa Fair, Mariposa Parade and....summer. And I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who stepped in to help when I had to suddenly withdraw from my Fair responsibilities due to Diane's health situation. Certainly many people did much to help, but no one had as large a burden suddenly thrust upon her shoulders as Jery. And as she does, she rose to the occasion and pulled everything off admirably. My thanks go out to Jery and to everyone else who stepped up to bat when I asked for help.

We have a VERY major event looming on the horizon, but one STRICTLY for fun and pleasure: the return of our celebrated Mariposa Democratic Club AND Mariposa Democratic Central Committee's fantastic **Cajun Feast and Costume Ball**, to be held this year on Saturday, November 10 at the Bootjack Stompers Hall. Those who attended our initial offering of this event had a great time and it became ONE still-talked-about legendary evening! Well, it's back, and better than ever: we're thrilled to offer great live music by the **Yosemite Dixieland Jazz Band** for listening AND dancing; there will, of course, be another authentic Cajun meal prepared from scratch by our dangerous Chef lePetomaine. Tickets are the insanely cheap \$20 for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under. Children five and under are free. Planning continues at this time, but we expect to have fun and games, drawings, raffles--everything you'd expect for a blow-it-out good ol' time--and politics left at the door! Again: this one is strictly about having fun. Call our office TODAY for tickets and more information: (209) 966-3367, and start flingin' some glad rags on; there will be prizes galore for costumes, and last time around we had some doozies! There will be NO November breakfast meeting of the Club as the Cajun Feast will occur on the second Saturday of the month.

At our September breakfast meeting, the Club members heard from

## From the Wilds of Mariposa (continued)

**Mariposa County Elections Officer Keith Williams** on the decertification of electronic voting machines by California's Secretary of State Debra Bowen. Members were told of the impact of this statewide action on Mariposa County and had the opportunity to ask numerous questions of Keith. A very informative session and we're also grateful to Mariposa Democratic Club member Koki Moretti, second-in-command under Keith Williams, for providing additional information to Club members. It's always great to see Koki and her daughter Maureen, who is certainly our club's youngest active participating member.

Diane, Max and I continue our treks to San Francisco for her consultations with her surgeon and with the UC San Francisco Mt. Zion facility. As I write, her October 1 surgery is in the future. By the time you read this, it will hopefully have gone well and we'll be in the post-op recovery and follow-up phase. Thanks to all of you who have expressed concern and well-wishes during this time of stress for our family.

If you're not a member of the Mariposa Democratic Club but belong to one of our neighboring organizations, you can still be kept current on our activities. Just e-mail me at **actlocally@sti.net** and asked to be added to my distribution list for the Mariposa Democrats. And make sure to mark your calendar for our **November 10th Cajun Feast and Costume Ball, y'all!**



## What's Happening with Our Healthcare?

A National and State Update by Lynn Jacobsson

If 18,000 Americans were dying at the hands of terrorists in this country, wouldn't most of us expect the government to do something about it? According to the Institute of Medicine 18,314 adults in the United States die annually due to a lack of health care insurance, and yet the Bush Administration has done nothing to address this on-going crisis. In fact, the Republicans are moving in the other direction. In the recent battle over children's health care coverage, Bush is trying to cut back on coverage for children by threatening to veto the recent bi-partisan congressional health care deal on the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). The SCHIP compromise forged by Congress would continue to provide health insurance to 6.6 million children (800,000 in Calif.) and expand coverage to an additional 3.2 million of the 8 million children without insurance nationwide. Unfortunately, the measure did not pass with a veto-proof majority in both the House and Senate. Bush denounced the legislation as a step "down the path to government-run health care for every American."

At the state level as well, the Republican leadership in the Assembly and the state Senate continues to fight any real reform that would provide affordable health care to the 6.5 million uninsured Californians. They have made it clear that not only will they refuse to vote for any Democratic-sponsored bills on health care such as Assembly Bill 8 (a "pay or play," employer-mandate to provide health coverage), or Senate Bill 840, the single-payer health plan, but they also will not support even the *very* problematic legislative proposal from the governor for a private universal health insurance program which includes an "individual mandate" for each Californian to purchase care on the health insurance market. Individual mandates, whether proposed by Schwarzenegger (or Hillary Clinton, for that matter), amount to vastly increased profits for the private health care insurance industry at the expense of the public, and do not begin to address the lack of affordability of health insurance in the private market.

## What's Happening with our Healthcare? (Continued)

*The Public is Ahead of the Legislators*

In the meantime, as public support for a "single payer" system continues to grow—from only 24% last year to 36% in August, 2007—support for the governor's so-called "shared responsibility" approach which relies on the private health insurance system has fallen from 52% last December, 2007, to just 33% this August. In the 2006 legislative session, both the California Assembly and the Senate passed SB840, a comprehensive single-payer plan, only to have it vetoed by Schwarzenegger. **This year, state Senator Sheila Kuehl (D.) withdrew SB840 (in the face of another veto by the governor) after it had passed the Assembly, in order to keep the bill alive and ready to reintroduce in 2008.** In spite of the "behind-closed-door" wrangling by Democrats Nunez and Perata to try to come up with a compromise with the Republican governor, the bottom line is that the Republicans are going to continue to block any meaningful health care reform in the State of California.

At both the national and state level, if we really want universal health care, we must continue to pressure the Democratic candidates for President and state offices to go beyond the insufficient incremental reforms that they have proposed thus far, and provide us with the kind of health care system that is enjoyed by every industrialized country but our own. At this point, Dennis Kucinich is the only Democratic Presidential candidate to have endorsed single-payer health care for all Americans. At the same time, we must challenge the myths that the insurance industry is promoting—that single-payer means a government-run system, that our taxes will rise, that the quality of care will suffer, etc. We need to continue to educate and build support among the public for the only real reform that will save us tax dollars and provide comprehensive, affordable health care for all.

Photos from the 2007 Mariposa Labor Day Parade



Photos from the 2007 Oakhurst Chili Festival  
And Goodbye to Ginny and Bart Terrell



## Changing Politics As Usual in Community Development

By Ellie Schermerhorn

On August 4th, the Oakhurst Democratic Club heard from **Derek Winning, Deputy Director of the Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC)**, the County's independent regional planning agency. Derek talked about the work the MCTC is doing to get public input on how Madera County should develop given projections of massive population growth from approximately 150,000 residents today to 410,000 by the year 2050.

MCTC is working with other counties to define what's called the **San Joaquin Valley Blueprint**. A series of public meetings is held and surveys taken to determine the "vision and values" of county residents, and to use these as a basis for constructing a plan for county growth. *When local governments propose new development, they'll need to show how it fits into the "blueprint" that's been defined by the community.*

Members at the meeting were skeptical that local residents could have any influence given the County's history of approving developments without adequate consideration of transportation, water, environmental, and other factors. Local area plans that took years of public input, like the **Coarsegold Area Plan**, are ignored or dismantled, and the *Madera County Board of Supervisors is seen as bending to the influence of developers, regardless of the impact their plans may have on current residents.*

Derek acknowledged there are strong pressures at work when it comes to land use decisions, but said the thrust of his agency's work is to **"potentially change the ways things work"** by getting community involvement and mapping out a plan for the future that "will be different than the way we've been doing things." His agency will be asking the politicians to adopt plans based on what the community supports and the agency discerns through workshops and surveys, some of which have already taken place in

## Changing Politics in Community Development (continued)

Oakhurst and other areas of Madera County.

Derek pointed out that **the MCTC holds "the funding strings on transportation. We administer all of the transportation funds in the County"**, and this funding is tied to how well projects address the community's expressed desires on development. So if Madera County wants the MCTC to fund building a new intersection, or bike lanes, or expanded roadways, **"don't come to me unless you can show me that your community has signed off on (these plans) and (the local governments) have become compliant by introducing ordinances that produce those growth results."**

So think of the MCTC as an agency helping to carry our voice with the County Board of Supervisors, and participate in the workshops the MCTC will hold this fall.



Derek Winning, Madera County Transportation Commission

## **What Are Democrats & What Are We Up To?!**

By Laura Lee

We are of every sort: rich and poor, employed and unemployed, and educated in a variety of ways. The aspect that most defines us is that Democrats have true compassion for all people; no matter their race, religion, gender, or bank account balance. This is what drives us. We believe in protecting Social Security. We believe in fairness in the workplace. We believe in healthcare for all. We believe in a responsible economy.

We believe we can protect our Constitution while protecting our safety and security. We support those in need throughout the world; the ill, disadvantaged, victims of disaster. Why? Because it is the right thing to do. We support legislation such as; California State Senate Bill 840, (SB840), which will create universal health care for all Californians.

We support a system that centers on children's educational needs, not the test centered system that is failing us today. We are concerned about the condition of our schools. We want our children to live well educated lives so that they can be productive members of society. We are concerned about our environment. We want our children's children to live long and healthy lives.

Within our party there are differences of opinion. But what we value most—people—holds us together so that those differences help to make us stronger. We understand that it takes time and effort to change the direction of any society. But anything that is worth having is worth the effort, and we are up to the task. There is room for everyone in the Democratic Party that is up for it.

## **Some Thoughts While Sitting in the Parking Lot**

By Lynn Jacobsson

In the process of doing voter registration with Ruth Stairs (a member of the Democratic Club of Coarsegold) at the Coarsegold Market on September 23, I realized how important the issue of health care policy is to most of the people who stopped to chat.

Although most of them were registered to vote, the majority of them spoke about problems with their health insurance, the high cost of prescription drugs, or their lack of health care coverage due to a pre-existing condition.

As we sat at our registration table with the information on universal single-payer health care petitions all around us, a car wash was taking place in the parking lot—the family of a local boy, who is a cancer patient at Valley Children's Hospital, was trying to raise funds to help pay for the medical tests that the boy needs that are not covered by their health insurance.

As I sat there in the parking lot of the Coarsegold Market I pondered the irony and anguish of living in a country in which the current Administration claims we can afford to spend \$720 million per day on the occupation of Iraq, but at the same time we are unable to afford to provide health care for the 420,000 children that that amount of money would buy here in America.



**Memories from the Cajun Feast and Costume Ball  
In Years Past**



**Memories from the Cajun Feast and Costume Ball  
In Years Past**



## 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



### FLOAT FOR RENT

**Our giant, splashy and wonderful float is for rent!**  
**Tell your friends and relations.**  
For information call Jerry Lacayo

### *Mortimer Mouse Sez...*

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

