



YosemiteDems.net

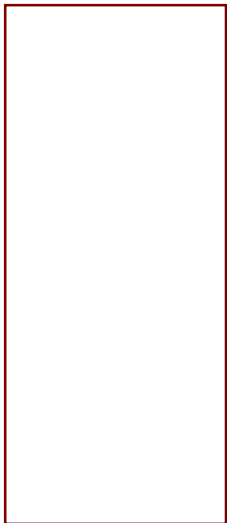
The Mountain Democrat
Newsletter Editor
PO Box 760
Oakhurst, CA 93644



The Mountain Democrat

April – May
2008

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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

April 2008

Apr 5: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Apr 12: Jefferson Dinner
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Apr 12: Coarsegold Meeting

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May 2008

May 1: Oakhurst Club Meeting

May 8: Mariposa Club Meeting

May 8: Coarsegold Meeting

May 16: Coarsegold Movie

CONTACT US

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

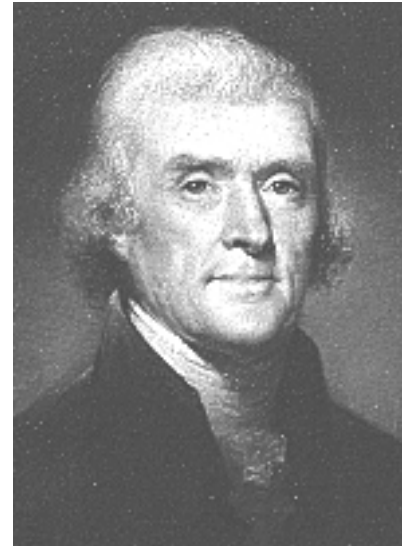
CDC Yosemite Gateway
(Vacant)

Democratic Club of Coarsegold
Sandy Stairs: 559-658-8220

Mariposa Democratic Club
Jery Lacayo: 209-966-3367

Oakhurst Democratic Club
Scott Hill: 559-658-2342

Newsletter/Web Page Editor
Scott Hill: 559-658-2342



Mariposa Jefferson Dinner

*The
Mariposa Democratic Club*

invites you to the

*Annual
Jefferson Dinner*

*April 12, 2008 at 6:00 PM
Bootjack Stompers Hall
\$25.00 per person*

Tickets: 209-742-7891 or 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

Can We Snatch Defeat From the Jaws of Victory?

By Jerry Lacayo

Will we never learn?

By all rights, this should be the year the Democrats sweep the election. It really is up to us. But I fear that we are preparing to, once again, throw out baby with the bath water.

There is much more at stake than whether or not Clinton or Obama gets the Democratic nomination. There is much more at stake than which candidate, Hillary or Barack, becomes our next President. The future of our entire judicial system is at stake. The next President of the United States may have the opportunity to change the face of the Supreme Court, or to continue the downhill decline left by our current "leader". A lot of damage can be done in a short period of time when choosing appointees for a lifetime position. The prospect of John McCain appointing our next justice, or next several, may be the most frightening part of this Presidential campaign. Some of the progress of the last fifty years has already been teetering on the balance, and we could lose it all in a very short time if left to Senator McCain. I am not willing to run that risk. Are you?

The Democratic Party, for all of its ups and downs, and despite all of the family infighting, has consistently delivered better social programs than the Republicans. Democrats show more concern for the downtrodden and work much harder to protect the little guy than our Republican neighbors. Social Security was a result of Democratic idealism. It did not come about as a result of Republican concern.

I am a partisan voter and I have chosen my candidate. I am as passionate about my choice as anyone else I know. But the November election results will depend upon all of us, whether or not our chosen candidate has become the Democratic Nominee. I have thought about this long and hard as I've heard reports of

Can We Snatch Defeat From the Jaws of Victory? (continued)

Democrats who denounce one Democratic candidate or another. I have already heard from voters on both sides of the Clinton vs. Obama contest, claiming that they WILL NOT vote Democrat if the nominee is not their chosen candidate. This shallow view is focused upon the bath water and does not consider the baby.

Our collective baby is our country. It is in our hands to care for it and to be sure we guide it properly. Why would we give it up to our Republican competitors? As a Democratic idealist who has seen positive change happen within my lifetime, I am hopeful that the water clears enough for everyone to see that the Democratic nominee, whomever it may be, needs our collective votes to win. We do know what could be worse, we are living it right now. McCain is Bushsame. A Democrat needs to take the lead.

United we stand.



News from the California Democratic Council

By Jery Lacayo

The Regional Meeting which took place in February was informative and a good beginning. As we further develop our Regional Democratic Council, we expect to be able to better network among our Clubs and Central Committees. The group agreed to meet every three months on a rotating basis. We will meet alternately in Fresno, Merced and Visalia.

It is hoped that every Club and Central Committee will send a representative to each meeting. Please make every effort to be sure your group is included in the discussion. The next meeting is planned for Saturday, April 26, at Carrows Restaurant in Merced, located very near the Hwy 99 Yosemite/Mariposa offramp. The meeting will begin at 11 AM and end by 3 PM.

Anyone planning to attend who wishes more detailed information is encouraged to call Jery Lacayo, 209-742-7891, or e-mail JeryTBEST1@aol.com as the meeting date approaches.

The CDC Convention will take place in Fresno on May 3 and 4. Please be sure your club has affiliated and submitted your delegate list to secretary@cdc-ca.org right away.

This promises to be a very good convention, and has been designed to accommodate the financial concerns of our grassroots membership. The full convention package is available for only \$99.00 and includes both Lunch and Dinner on Saturday as well as all speakers, workshops, a silent auction and endorsements. Early registration is due April 5, and while I expect some possible extension, our guarantees to the hotel are due very early and we will be unable to extend the deadline very far out.

Please get you reservations in very soon.



2008 CDC Convention

Where: Four Points Sheraton, Fresno, CA

When: Saturday May 3 & Sunday, May 4, 2008

This convention will include:

- Endorsements of local, state and congressional candidates for the June 2008 Election.
- Presentation of the first annual Alan Cranston award.
- Speakers/Workshops.

Complete Package: \$99 (includes registration for all workshops/sessions, Saturday lunch/dinner)

Registration only: \$60

Exhibitor Tables: \$75 (limited space)

Hotel rooms: \$110 (limited)

News from the Oakhurst Democratic Club

By Victoria Williams

You are welcome to support any of the activities of the Oakhurst Club. Here are a few that we thought you'd want to know about.

We have been car pooling to Fresno once a month on Monday afternoons to assist in registering new voters who have just completed their citizenship ceremony. They are so enthusiastic and yet do need help in deciding how to register to vote. Thanks to all of our members who have assisted this year so far. If you are interested in helping please call Margaret Brandenburg at 559-760-1431.

Lynn and Alan have compiled a great library of progressive videos and would like to start an outreach program to the community by showing them at a local spot such as the Library. The video would be followed by a discussion. If interested in helping to organize these events please call Lynn and Alan at 658-5227.

Lastly, we are looking into supporting the formation of a Young Democrats club at Yosemite High School. Best that the club comes from students who want to start it. Do any of you, our members, know high school students who would like to start such a club?

I can see several ways this group could use the progressive videos that Alan has collected but first we need to see if there are interested students. Let me know (Victoria) or Sandy Stairs at 658-8220, if you know of any students who would be interested.



YOU ARE INVITED

To the

MARIPOSA

JEFFERSON

DINNER

“A warm mountain gathering of Democratic friends”

That's how one of our community described this event, but it can be described in many ways.

It is casually elegant in the Sierra tradition

It's a gourmet delight made with love and care

It's a chance to get somebody out of the kitchen

And enjoy a feast somebody else will prepare.

So join with us then for a night filled with magic

Inspiring speakers who won't talk too long

Share music and laughter with friends who are jolly

And all of this now can be yours for a song!

The Jefferson Dinner

Saturday, April 12, 6:00 PM

Bootjack Stompers Hall, Mariposa

\$25.00 per person 209-742-7891 or 559-658-2342

From the Democratic Club of Coarsegold

Sandy and Ruth Stairs

Club meeting: Saturday April 12th, 9:30 to 11:00 AM, YLP
Clubhouse Library
(Nominating steering committee members, discussion of new meeting day and time)

Movie night: Friday, April 18th, 6:00 PM, potluck @ Stairs, RSVP:
658-8220

Club meeting: Saturday, May 10th 9:30 to 11:00 AM, YLP
Clubhouse Library
(Vote for steering committee members)

Movie night: Friday, May 16th 6:00 PM, potluck @ Stairs, RSVP:
658-8220

Happenings in Coarsegold:

We are pleased to participate in and receive news from the Mountain Area Democratic clubs via this newsletter. We feel that this is a great tool for sharing ideas among the various clubs as well as our own members.

We recently contributed \$250 to the Eleanor Roosevelt Community Service Award Fund co-sponsored by the Oakhurst and Coarsegold Clubs, and we hope to double this investment next year through our fundraising efforts. We have just received from Oakhurst Club Member Sally Jeans a stack of award applications to review and to help make the final decisions on the two awards which will be given this year. It is exciting to see the degree of participation from the Yosemite High School students in this program this year.

We have seven volunteers to help the Oakhurst club at the Peddlers

Happenings in Coarsegold: (Continued)

Market in Coarsegold to assist with voter registration. We will participate in this event on May 24th and 25th and we hope to continue the Democratic tide that is sweeping the Nation to our little patch of RED.

It's tough to explain our positions to folks that have a closed mind or are a "one issue" voter, but if we keep trying and talking to people, showing them that we are real people with many of the concerns that they have, we will surely have an impact in our area.

A quick reminder concerning our movie nights: if you have not attended one of these events, you're missing out. We feature a potluck plus a movie of interest ranging from the political to green energy! We also have an extensive library for those of you who wish to borrow either a movie or a book with which to fan the fires of discontent!

And finally to our local Coarsegold members: we will be sending you a complimentary copy of the Mountain Democrat newsletter. This is costing our club six dollars per copy, each year, to mail, so we will be mailing them only to members whose dues are paid for the current year. If you are not sure of your membership status, or if you get two copies of the newsletter, please call Sandy or Ruth Stairs at 559-658-8220.

See you all at our next meeting or at the movies.



The Only Numbers That Count

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Current polls show McCain would defeat Clinton in the general election? And Obama loses to him too? Polls, polls....for every poll showing McCain beating Clinton or Obama, I'll bet I can find one showing my grandmother beating McCain. And there's probably one favoring Granny over Obama or Clinton, too. Candidate polls are just snapshots in time, and with eight months to go, nearly anything can – and probably will – happen. The election won't really begin until both sides have officially anointed their candidates.

Here's the real, sobering news for Republicans, however: partisan affiliation trend data released March 2, 2008 (by Rasmussen) shows the number of Democrats has ballooned. The percentage of Americans declaring themselves Democrats is now 41.5 while the percentage of Republicans has shrunk to 31.8. The Democrats' 41.5% is the highest-ever recorded number, and no mere snapshot in time but a steady trend over the past few years. February 2008 alone showed surprising growth: the Democrats' advantage grew by (ready?) 4.6%. For the past few decades registration has been (roughly) one-third Republican, one-third Democratic and one-third miscellaneous, but today's Democratic 10-point edge is (according to Rasmussen) "the highest (advantage) level ever measured." The remaining 26.7% of the voting population is divided between several smaller parties and those who decline to state any affiliation. Even worse news for McCain? Those independents are voting Democratic.

We've seen astonishing primary figures over the past months in those states which allow open voting by independents; the independent vote has been going overwhelmingly to Democratic candidates. In some cases, and even in very red states, the figures have shown as much as 75% of independents voting for Democrats. And probably the most serious news of all: the youth vote is now solidly Democratic – with a 13-point advantage to the

The Only Numbers That Count (Continued)

Democrats in the under 30-year-old demographic. And even greater 17-point Democratic advantages among women voters and 18 points for retirees. That's big news.

So the question of America being ready to elect a woman or an African-American president is moot: the greatest affiliation gains have been made by the Democratic Party after it became clear the party will be offering either a woman or an African-American candidate, both supremely qualified. Is America ready? Absolutely. Is all America ready? Absolutely not. Some still reject human differences outright and refuse to vote for anyone not of their own comfortable skin hue, gender, or religion. Who refuse to consider ability and skill over human physiology.

But fortunately, far more Americans are objective enough to put America first, to support and elect the most capable leader regardless of skin color or gender. To put a positive, populist agenda and true American morality – the sort our Founders had in mind – above any sort of myopic exclusionary tradition. And that's corroborated by the record numbers of primary voters – whether self-identified as Democrats or Independents – who've opted for a leader first, a progressive platform first, real change first – and have little cared whether that leader is a woman or an African-American. After 220 years of white male presidents, it's about time color and gender became totally irrelevant.



Brian Austin in Race for Madera Superior Court Seat

By Ellie Schermerhorn

Attorney and former law enforcement officer **Brian Austin** is challenging **Madera County District Attorney Ernest LiCalsi** in the June 3rd election, competing for a six-year term as a judge on the Madera County Superior Court. Brian contacted the Oakhurst Democratic Club and asked to attend our April meeting and introduce himself to our members. While the club is not currently endorsing anyone in the race, I offered Brian the opportunity to tell us about his experience both at the meeting and in this newsletter.

A Madera County native, Brian has practiced law for over 12 years in the county area. He spent 6 years in the Marine Corps, and served more than 6 years as a Police Officer and Deputy Sheriff. This experience inspired him to go to law school and he was graduated from the San Joaquin College of Law in Fresno. Brian's spent time in the mountains, teaching political science at the college here in Oakhurst for 6 years.

Brian's trial experience includes civil and criminal, family, probate, and contract law, and he served as a Judge Pro Tem for over 2 years, which he considers excellent experience for the Superior Court position. He also has legal experience with the Unemployment Appeals Board, Workers Compensation Board, and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Brian believes Madera County is at "the crossroads of growth and the politics here is changing." He feels LiCalsi "is a longtime politician, and Madera County needs fresh ideas and someone without preconceived loyalties. Being a Judge, requires honesty, integrity and complete fairness. I am that candidate."



MOC Monitors County Development

By Ellie Schermerhorn

Ahwahnee resident and **Madera Oversight Coalition member Tony Ward** described MOC's mission to Oakhurst Democrats on March 1st. Tony, a former member of the county planning commission for 8 years, is also active in many other historical and regional conservation organizations.

Tony was clear that **MOC is an apolitical organization** and there is no political litmus test for joining. It is organized as a non-profit, and will not participate in political campaigns or ballot measures. Everyone who is a resident of Madera County is eligible to join, and MOC is actively seeking members.

MOC grew out of concerns that land use decisions in Madera County were being made without adherence to the county general plan and state law which define how the county is to manage property within its boundaries. MOC's primary objectives are to "encourage responsible growth through adherence to California land use law" and to "promote the health, safety and welfare of the public within Madera County". Its main focus is development along the Hwy 41 corridor and related impact on Ahwahnee, Bass Lake, Coarsegold, North Fork, and Oakhurst.

One unfortunate but true fact is that the county pays attention to complaints if there's a realistic possibility that they can lead to lawsuits, so **MOC has retained a highly respected lawyer, Patience Milrod**, to represent it. One specific action she is addressing now is the "Gateway Village" development which was approved by the county based on an environmental impact report that does not address the "cumulative impact" when added to other massive developments the county has approved in the area.

MOC also provides education, information and support to citizens concerned about development taking place in their neighborhoods. A recent example is the 64 condominiums planned for Bass Lake.

MOC Monitors County Development (Continued)

Area residents believed an environmental impact report was required to determine how the development would affect problems which currently exist with inadequate sewage facilities, water availability and access/egress in case of fire. *With MOC's help and expertise, the residents were able to prevail and convince the planning commission that an EIR needed to be done.*

MOC is also challenging how money is used. Funds approved through Proposition A for Rd 415 were taken away for a bridge for Ave 17 down in valley. MOC has taken it to the Madera County grand jury.

Tony closed by saying *MOC needs our support financially and morally, and our presence at meetings when MOC brings issues to the Madera County Board of Supervisors.* It "makes a difference when you have a body of people present".

To join MOC, go to their website at **www.tranquilwaters.us/mocindex.html**.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Annual Dues are \$5.00 per person
(Mariposa lifetime membership is \$100)

Today's Date: _____

Club: Coarsegold___ Mariposa___ or Oakhurst___

New Member: _____ or Renewal: _____

How did you find out about us? _____

Name: _____

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

-or-

Democratic Club of Coarsegold
28845 Crystal Springs Road
Coarsegold, CA 93614
559-658-8220



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...
**OK DEMOCRATS!
WE ARE GOING TO WIN
THIS YEAR.
Got it?**

