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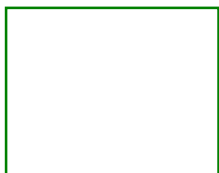
The Mountain Democrat
Newsletter Editor
PO Box 760
Oakhurst, CA 93644



The Mountain Democrat

June - July 2012

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The Mountain Democrat is published bimonthly by the Oakhurst Democratic Club and the Mariposa Democratic Club, 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 2012

Jun 2: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Jun 9: Mariposa Club Meeting

July 2012

Jul 7: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Jul 14: Mariposa Club Meeting

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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 pages at:

YosemiteDems.net or **MariposaDemocraticClub.org**

IT'S YOUR VOTE—USE IT OR LOSE IT!

By Rosemarie Smallcombe

It's more important than ever that you vote in the June primary.

California now has a Top Two Candidates Open Primary

You may have been thinking that voting in the primary wasn't necessary as you could simply vote for the Democrat, or whomever you considered to be the best candidate in November. But, what if no Democrats or even an independent candidate are included in the November ballot for our new districts? That is now a real possibility.

With the new Top Two Primary system, the top two vote getters in the primary election will be the only two candidates on the ballot in November regardless of party affiliation, if any. This is a major change in the way we choose elected officials. If Democrats and independents don't get out and vote in the June Primary, the two candidates on the ballot in November for our new Mountain-centric districts could easily be two Republicans or from the Tea Party. Selection of candidates on the November ballot is no longer in the hands of the major parties, but in the hands of the people—in this case, the people who vote in the primary elections.

All districts for elective state and federal offices have been redrawn. The mountain and foothill communities now have voting districts that represent us, and do not, in general, contain urban population centers in the Central Valley. While our new rural mountain/foothill districts favor Republicans, elected officials will have to represent our needs, and not those of the Central Valley.

Fortunately we have two very good Democratic Candidates: Marc Boyd for the 5th Assembly district (State) and Jack Uppal for the 4th Congressional district (U.S. Congress). Please vote in the June primary and support these candidates or we may not have a choice we like in November.

A Momentary Diversion from Politics

By Les Marsden

On May 11, 2012 Mariposa was the victim of fire—as this historic gold rush town so often has been over the decades. But this one was personal: fire broke out that evening in the Pizza Factory, and immediately, the entire historic 5th Street block was doomed. Within a few hours, all the conjoined structures (some dating to 1858) were black rubble. Less than 24 hours after it began, the smoldering debris was trucked away. While the cause hasn't been officially declared, longtime property concerns were the reason the Board of Directors of the Mariposa County Arts Council, Inc. was relocating our business at the end of our current lease. Unfortunately, that move was to have occurred late in 2012. Fortunately, the move will now be far easier due to the fact that all our fixed assets (as well as a treasured collection of consigned one-of-a-kind art) no longer exist. Our databases, equipment, furniture, institutional records, our 31 years of documented history, computers, fixtures, all the long-accumulated tools necessary to run our 501(c)3 business: all burned to a crisp. Gone forever.

Sure, I could damn the conservative mindset that rails against governmental safety building standards. This entire block-long building lacked retrofitted sprinklers. Ancient wooden sub-flooring was oil-soaked from time spent as an auto garage and its common block-long attic space without firewalls was a mocking finger-poke in the eye of the fire-fates. Concerns had been repeatedly raised about the neighboring employee smokers who defiantly tossed their butts willy-nilly, and only occasionally into an old coffee can provided for the assumed purpose against old exterior wooden siding. Ancient electrical wiring frequently called attention to itself in disconcerting ways. I love history; I love old architecture. And unfortunately, old buildings do need laws and regulation to protect them from careless or nonchalant owners: the types of owners who demand that gub'mint stay outta their lives and bidness. What those buildings silently witnessed for a century-and-a-half boggles the mind, from the presence of John C. Fremont and Presidents Grant

A Momentary Diversion from Politics (continued)

and Garfield to John Muir. Generations of Mariposans who were born and died. Literally innumerable tens of millions of visitors passed by on their way through town. And in a gasp of brief time, 154 years of observation ended and history itself died.

But the sudden, shocking loss of our Mariposa County Arts Council also gave jaded me unexpected gratitude as I saw the power of art to unite people in the absolutely beautiful aftermath of that fire. Innumerable calls of concern came from all over. Immediate responses from those offering help. Immeasurable depth of care. I had no idea so many people knew we existed, much less CARED about that fact.

Materials were immediately donated from individual artists, supplies were donated by the Merced Arts Council—a donation that was the impetus for me to make my first visit (after 11 years back home in California, in Mariposa) to the Merced Arts Council's office, to finally meet staff there. More information including a video news report and the opportunity to donate is found here: <http://arts-mariposa.org/fire.html>

I'm not going to descend to cliché by leaping upon the old silver-lining saw, but this experience has been a remarkable demonstration of the power of art. The power of art to heal, the power of art to bring people together, the power of art to share our common humanity, the power of art to communicate, the power of art to express the inexpressible. And by the time you read this, the Mariposa County Arts Council will have begun its long bounce back by opening the initial portion of our new office at 5009 Highway 140—atop Chocolate Soup. Fires may come and go, buildings might lose their battle against neglect and the elements, but the arts live on forever. And there's something tremendously inspiring about that.

Remembering Remembering

By Peter Cavanaugh

"I'm not familiar, precisely, with exactly what I said, but I stand by what I said, whatever it was."—Willard "Mitt" Romney—May 17, 2012.

What Republican Presidential Candidate Romney couldn't remember were words spoken only weeks earlier when Mitt proclaimed that President Obama wants to make America "a less Christian nation."

But total recall is not one of Governor Romney's strongest suits. When recently confronted with uncontested allegations by five former school mates from Cranbrook, an elite Michigan prep school, that he had personally led a vicious bullying attack on another classmate found guilty of "being different", Romney blurted, "I don't remember". And as far as that "being different" deal is concerned? Mitt just had to chuckle. "I certainly don't believe that I thought the fellow was homosexual. That was the furthest thing from our minds back in the 1960s."

WHAT?

As a High School Senior in 1959, I must emphatically observe this is outrageous nonsense. Although boastful of Irish heritage, I went out of my way to avoid "wearing green on Thursdays" (other than March 17th) since that might signal I was "queer." Back then, "queer" meant a bit as "gay" does now, but in a much meaner, more slashing fashion.

But Mitt's not alone with his memory challenges. In 2004, American Author/Historian Gore Vidal (quintessentially "queer" and mighty proud of it) wrote his brilliant "Imperial America: The United States of Amnesia", the primary point being that, as a people, we tend to forget what we should most remember. Oops. Not good.

We recently observed Memorial Day 2012, a "remembering" day set aside to honor our fallen heroes, tribute perhaps best extended by seriously reflecting upon our own responsibilities in the waging of American wars.

Public opinion against continuing military efforts in Afghanistan now equals opposition to the Vietnam conflict at its highest point in the early '70's. But the same mind set which brought us Vietnam, Iraq, and a full decade in Afghanistan now regards Iran as another golden opportunity—a mind set which blames our entire current Federal deficit on a President who inherited an unmitigated disaster in progress when he assumed office in January of '09—a mind set now stunningly unmindful of "George the Conqueror."

George W. Bush will be, according to all Republican sources, not remotely involved in this year's campaign, nor will he be asked to contribute anything more meaningful at this year's Republican Convention in Tampa Bay than his complete absence.

Try to find Tea Party friends who remain staunch supporters of "W's" policies or openly remember if they ever were. Ask how they currently feel about heading into Iraq in the first place—guided by what is now universally recognized as demonstrably altered information as we witness 4,408 American dead, 33,184 American injured, two trillion American dollars squandered and 100,000 Iraqis killed since the initiation of "Shock and Awe" in March of 2003. Do they recognize that along with Afghanistan adventures through 2008 and billions upon billions in tax cuts primarily for those already rich, none of it was concurrently paid for?

Inquire as to the whereabouts of "George the Invisible" as we relentlessly ponder the undeniable and intentional suppression of traditional American conscience in much of our current culture.

In these United States of Amnesia.

Marc Boyd House Parties, May 12, 2012

By Steve Smallcombe

The Mariposa Democratic Club sponsored two house parties on May 12th for CA 5th Assembly District Candidate Marc Boyd. The first party was held in the morning at the Jerseydale home of the Club's co-presidents, Rosemarie and Steve Smallcombe.

At the morning party, Steve gave a tour of the house focused on the construction and energy efficient features of the home. Marc followed with an extensive presentation about his positions on a number of issues, including education, the Sierra Foothills economy and the need to revive it, the environment and renewable energy and high-speed rail.

The afternoon party was at the spectacular home of Harvey Holland and Jo Ann Belforte that overlooks the South Fork of the Merced River. At the afternoon party there was plenty of time for individual discussions and a good group discussion lead by Marc about issues of importance to our community.

More pictures of the events can be found at <http://www.mariposademocraticclub.org/MarcHouseParties.html>



CD 04 Caucus to Select Delegates for the National Democratic Convention

By Steve Smallcombe

Obama for America asked Mariposa Democratic Club Co-President Rosemarie Smallcombe to convene a Caucus for the southern part of Congressional District 4 that would select local delegates for the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina, which will be held the week of September 3, 2012.

Rosemarie asked Susan Rowe to be a co-convenor. Volunteers from the Mariposa Democratic Club pitched in to help run the event, provide food and count the votes. The Caucus was held on April 29th at the Bootjack Stompers' Hall.

Our endorsed CA District 5 Candidate, Marc Boyd, was there to support the election of local delegate candidate, Bill Fjellbo, and Bill got the lion's share of our votes, but unfortunately the Caucus for the northern part of CD4 had a somewhat better turnout and managed to get their local favorites selected for all of the delegate slots. Our caucus was a fun event nevertheless. We even had a photo op with a tall dark handsome unexpected visitor!

More pictures of the caucus can be found at: <http://www.mariposademocraticclub.org/CD04Caucus.html>



PHOTOS



Candace Flammang, Friends of the Oakhurst Branch Library
Oakhurst Democratic Club, April 7, 2012

PHOTOS



Oakhurst Meet and Greet with Marc Boyd
May 6, 2012



Oakhurst Meet and Greet with Marc Boyd
May 6, 2012



Les Marsden, The impact of Top Two Primary voting
Oakhurst Democratic Club, May 5, 2012

Fear and Loathing in Oakhurst

By Betty Persson

In our mountain community we have people of many varied political “persuasions”. I am a progressive, a liberal, a pacifist, a socialist; I believe passionately in my right (and yours) to express these views, in a respectful, but succinct manner. There are times when I might feel like personal ‘name-calling’, but that serves no useful purpose in political discourse. In our base, emotional tendencies, we all think of ourselves as the truth-tellers, and people of other political views as “misguided, blind to the truth, fearful idealogues. After all, we are human, and our emotional truths guide us.

In a recent Opinion Column in Oakhurst’s Sierra Star, J. R. Froelich opined his take on ‘truth-telling’. His opinions are thinly veiled as facts. His words speak volumes: “alleged”, “cronies”, “czars”, “communist”, “illegalities”, “glib”, “martial law” “lackeys”, “spew”, “vile”, “avenger”, “pandering”, “sleazy”, etc., etc. And all of Mr. Froelich’s vitriol is directed at President Obama, his advisors, and his cabinet. Oh, and I almost forgot, the Right’s favored derisive use, of the President’s middle name, “Hussein”.

Can you feel the fear, the anger, the hatred for the “other”—this country’s first black President? Somehow, all the bile comes back to the central issue—the President’s race. After all, he’s “black”, and we all know where “they” came from.....AFRICA! The “Birthers”, Tea Party members and advocates, ultra-conservative, corporatists, warmongering militarists (who, in their ‘innate’ wisdom, decide who will shed their lives for the profiteering of a few).

I have watched many political campaigns wax and wane, but never in the history of this country have the “haters” driven a political

Fear and Loathing in Oakhurst (continued)

machine the likes of this one. Their main goals are to completely revise American history, and re-create their best world, a Jacksonian utopia, which places individual powers over the good of the citizenry. This brand of rabid revisionism is what we all of any party politics need to fear, not the President’s “blackness”. Drowning the government “in a bathtub” is their goal, while setting the 99% citizenry adrift in poverty.

Fellow Democrats, this could be the most vital and important election year ever. The people still have the power of the vote (except in the states where Republican governors and their legislators have started to revise voting laws in order to diminish the clout of students, blue-collar, and minorities, who all have a tendency to vote “Democrat”). This is the year to make your vote count, including the vital Primaries: in California we now have “top two” vote-getters being on the ticket in November—could be any two, regardless of political party affiliation. Think what that means! YOUR vote could decide the next election! It is our right and privilege to vote—don’t neglect or throw it away. All of our futures depend on it!



2012 Eleanor Roosevelt Service Award Winners

By Cheryce Chartier

Wow! Is the first word that comes to mind when I sit to write this message to you all. Our wonderful Democratic committee read through 41...YES 41 applications this year. In the 4 years since I've been on the committee I don't think we've had nearly that number of students apply. Our Winners this year are:

Kristen Emerick has served her community with such activities as sorting glass bottles at the rodeo to serving eggs at "breakfast with Santa" She has served dinner at a number of community events and even planted daffodils at our local Fresno Flats historical site, all this while working and maintaining her grades.

Kristen plans on attending Humboldt State University and is drawn there by the fact that it's a smaller school in Northern California and their dedication in helping the environment. Once Kristen graduates she would like to work with a nonprofit organization and teach children who wouldn't normally have the chance to go to school. Her overall goal along the way is to help others, and inspire people to make a positive difference in our world.

Amanda Bausch has logged over 298 community service hours, at the same time keeping her grades well above average and participating in sports, school clubs and working as well. Amanda has served many community dinners, helped with the shoe drive, Toys for Tots, Relay for Life, riverbank clean up and volunteered her time to work with children at some of the local elementary schools.

Amanda has chosen to head over to San Luis Obispo where she will attend Cuesta College, later transferring to a larger university where she would like to major in marketing, minor in public relations and eventually become a certified event planner. The young Ms. Bausch has been inspired by this mountain community to continue giving and helping other communities with the intent to better peoples' lives.

2012 Jefferson Award Winner Announced!

By Anne Brock

The Mariposa Democratic Club is pleased to announce the winner of this year's Jefferson Award. The award (\$500) is given to a high school senior whose essay highlights both their contributions to the community in the past and how they plan to continue to contribute in the future.

This year's winner, Grace Joseph, wrote a thoughtful essay about how she started as a participant in the Mariposa Story Time hour at the library; she later became an assistant, and said she saw how "opening the heart and the imagination through books will lead to a kinder and more accepting world." Ms. Joseph is heading to college to study screenwriting, so that she can write stories to open up other people's hearts.

We presented the award at the Mariposa High School's annual awards ceremony. We hope to have Ms. Joseph read her essay to us at an upcoming club meeting.

Many thanks to the donors who make this award possible—Anita Starchman, of Starchman and Bryant Law Firm; Jim Archer; Heather Bernikoff; Anne Brock; Caroline Korn; Kathy Lander; Laura Lee; and Len McKenzie.



Grace Joseph and Steve Smallcombe

Mariposa Democratic Club June Meeting:

By Steve Smallcombe

The Mariposa Democratic Club has a very exciting meeting on June 9th with our featured speaker, Daniel Flaming, talking about how being a small, rural county shapes Mariposa's economy. His recent study brings together information that has not been available before to look at where tourists spend money, the role of agriculture and its strengths, where job growth is happening, wage trends, how Mariposa compares to neighboring counties, and possibilities for sustaining growth.

Dan and his wife Susan have had a home in Ponderosa Basin since 1991. Both still have jobs in Los Angeles, where Dan is president of the Economic Roundtable. Dan has a Ph.D. in urban planning and has spent much of his professional life collecting and analyzing data and making recommendations to policy makers and other stakeholders in the LA area. The primary focus of the Economic Roundtable is developing strategies that contribute to a robust economy and desirable quality of life. Dan's study of Mariposa County offers new and practical information about choices for developing Mariposa's economy.

We also will have our 2012 Jefferson Award winner, Grace Joseph, read her winning essay as well as a slide show featuring pictures from all the events that the club hosted in the late April/May timeframe, the Marc Boyd House Parties, the CD04 Caucus, the Spring Fling and the Jefferson Award. For details visit <http://www.mariposademocraticclub.org>



By Rosemarie Smallcombe: Get out, get together, recall American history and have a great time with all your neighbors—regardless of political affiliation! The goal of this production is to help us set aside political divisions and remember our shared history.

Mortimer Mouse Sez...

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Mariposa Democratic Club

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Wall **Mariposa Democratic Club** · Events (Top Posts)

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Write something...

Mariposa Democratic Club
Got this heads-up from Yosemite Democrats! This looks like a GREAT event to help a great cause: Saturday, March 17, 7 p.m. (Doors open at 6:30 p.m.) Saint Patrick's Day Concert - Veterans Memorial Auditorium (Fresno and O street in downtown Fresno. Que Viva Los San Patricios!

Click on the link below for much more information.
<http://fresnoalliance.com/wordpress/?p=4550>

Que Viva Los San Patricios! « Community Alliance
fresnoalliance.com

Saturday, March 17 · 7 p.m. (Doors open at 6:30 p.m.) Saint Patrick's Day Concert - Veterans Memorial Auditorium (Fresno and O street in downtown Fresno. Que Viva Los

Recommended Pages See All

Sierra Foothill Conservancy
16 of your fans like this.

Yosemite
8 of your fans like this.

Valley Public Radio
6 of your fans like this.

Oakhurst Area
6 of your fans like this.

Democracy for America
12 of your fans like this.

YOSEMITE DEMOCRATS

Yosemite Democrats
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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Today's Date: _____

___ Mariposa: Annual Dues are \$10.00 per person
\$15.00 family
Lifetime membership \$150.00

or

___ Oakhurst: Annual Dues are \$5.00 per person

___ New Member or ___ Renewal:

How did you find out about us? _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

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Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

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