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The Mountain Democrat
Newsletter Editor
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The Mountain Democrat

December 2013

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January 2014

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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

December 2013

Dec 7: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Dec 14: Mariposa Holiday Luncheon
(see page 3)

January 2014

Oakhurst Club..**NO MEETING**

Jan 11: Mariposa Club Meeting

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Cover Photo
Red-shouldered Hawk
Wikipedia
"Mike" Michael L. Baird

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



MARIPOSA DEMOCRATIC CLUB

HOLIDAY LUNCHEON 2013

SATURDAY DECEMBER 14, 12:00 NOON

MACKAY HALL, CATHEYS VALLEY

Come join us for a festive occasion and bring your favorite side dish to go with Roast Turkey Breast and Honey Ham.

Some all-vegetarian dishes would be welcome.

And a special treat: Our year in review presented by our co-presidents Steve and Rosemarie Smallcombe

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL

Mission Imperative

By Les Marsden

The 2014 midterm elections are less than a year away. We face the great prospect of gaining control of the House (and thus, the entire Congress) or the tragedy for America of losing the Senate. Have we dodged the disastrous Obamacare website roll-out debacle? Though I disagree, Forbes predicts that things have already unraveled so irrevocably that the ACA will be repealed in 2014. Respected pundits believe the ACA's hugely bungled roll-out really can cause us to lose control of the Senate and if you think a mere Republican-controlled lower house has been bad, the thought of both chambers under their control is terrifying. The GOP gleefully cackles it'll tie all Democratic candidates to Obamacare's flawed roll-out even as many Democrats run from the president. But let's face it: even if that enactment of the ACA had proceeded perfectly, the GOP would STILL falsely equate it with the Titanic, the Hindenburg and 9/11 all in one neat, ugly package.

So what can we Democrats do?

Look—while I vastly prefer a single-payer “Medicare for All” approach, the ACA is a step in the right direction. And we've got to remind all Americans of its success as the bugs are worked out and people enroll in affordable health insurance plans. The truth is that most of those “cancellations” blamed on Obamacare were actually legitimate policies which would have been grandfathered under the ACA but were duplicitously canceled by health insurance corporations in order to compel their current enrollees to opt for more expensive plans. Many other plans were rightfully canceled because they were garbage policies with huge co-pays and little actual coverage and should have been eliminated, and not just because the ACA made it so. Did you know that insurance companies were already capriciously canceling as many as 40,000 health insurance policies each week BEFORE Obamacare—while

Mission Imperative (continued)

the ACA was just a gleam in the president's eye? Kentucky's Governor Steve Beshear has estimated the ACA is currently creating 17,000 new jobs in his state ALONE. Tell THAT to Kentucky's loopy two Senators: Mitch McConnell and Rand Paul.

It's our responsibility to keep the truth out there, despite closed minds and constant propaganda on the right. The time to begin is NOW, because the GOP is knee-deep in a relentless war of lies against the ACA. Let's remind voters which party has endlessly tried to keep affordable healthcare OUT of the hands of Americans. Let's remind voters which party childishly, recklessly shut down the government—and particularly of the pain it caused right here in our Yosemite region when the park was closed for no good reason whatsoever. If any area voters have businesses that depend upon tourism or Yosemite or the park service or Yosemite's concessionaire, let's remind them which party deliberately attacked their very livelihoods: polls released today (November 18) show more than 60% of the American public blame Republicans for that one and they must be reminded of what happens when control of government is put into the GOP's irresponsible hands. Let's remind voters to not slit their own throats by voting GOP and let's make it clear that Ronald Reagan—that endless font of stupidity—certainly was wrong. Government is NOT the problem—it's the SOLUTION...but only when Republicans are left outside where they belong.

The Fourth Estate Fades Away

By Peter Cavanaugh

Recent coverage in commemorating the Kennedy assassination a full half century ago sheds intriguing light on the astounding changes in American journalism we've seen evolving these last few decades. As technological revolutions in the delivery of news content have combined with a pronounced national shift to the political right, the traditional role of the American press to act as unofficial watchdog in the preservation of democratic rule has undergone a powerful and radical transition.

With ownership reduced to three or four major players, radio and television broadcast and cable news operations, both locally and nationally, have been reduced to churning out limited coverage on almost everything with minimal investment chasing maximum profit.

Ratings rule the day—prioritizing potential popularity over mundane matters of genuine importance. Similarly, newspapers and magazines have slashed staffing across the board, their old business models shredded by Internet competition. What the public needs to know has been replaced by what it needs to know—interesting and entertaining material presented in as titillating and emotionally evocative a manner as possible. Negativity dominates discussion.

The New York Times' classic promise to deliver, "All the news that's fit to print" has been replaced by virtually all commercial media entities with, "If it bleeds, it leads!"

Consequently, the American public has generally become as intellectually fat and lazy as physically displayed on full public view by your average Walmart shopper on any given day.

The Fourth Estate Fades Away (continued)

With shallow thought, "The American people" are easily bought. No wonder John Boehner constantly invokes this phrase with such confident conviction, especially with "Citizens United" having unleashed even more hundreds of millions of dollars dedicated to enhancing brilliantly targeted thought control.

"One man—one vote?" Hah. What a sad thought.

Thanks to redistricting maneuvers performed with perfection in the aftermath of our 2010 census, the Republican Party now controls the U.S. House of Representatives by a commanding majority even though Democratic candidates for the House received a million and a half more votes than their GOP counterparts.

While Fox News fans remain thrilled with their tailor-made, customized vision of the world soothingly being reinforced hour after hour by polished performers, even our somewhat more objective networks are now answering Wall Street's siren call for revenue through revisionism.

In the last few months, we've seen ABC's White House Correspondent, Jonathan Karl, breaking an "ABC News Exclusive" unfavorable to the Obama Administration that was quickly revealed to be fundamentally unsubstantiated. "Sixty Minutes" from time honored CBS News suffered professional humiliation in November when correspondent Lara Logan carried a Benghazi report filled with lies from start to finish and even MSNBC's Political Director, Chuck Todd, caused many an eye to roll when he proclaimed it wasn't his job to inform viewers when politicians spread misinformation, having also expressed his opinion that a proposed NBC special on Hillary Clinton was nothing but a "total nightmare" for him.

The Fourth Estate Fades Away (continued)

Locally, although KMJ's Ray Appleton has been known in the past to interject his own deplorable negative commentaries and/or grunts of disapproval during live Presidential broadcasts, a new low was reached on Thursday, November 14th, when "John and Jen" interrupted President Obama in mid-sentence while he was holding a White House Press Conference on "The Affordable Care Act."

John Broeske suddenly jumped into the broadcast without a semblance of traditional professionalism as he solemnly and arbitrarily declared, "That's about enough from this guy"—thus ending KMJ AM/FM coverage of the event, even as the Presidential Press Conference continued for another half-hour on live TV.

Aldous Huxley envisioned a "Brave New World" would commence in 2540 AD.

Look what's getting here early.

Speakers Inform and Inspire the Oakhurst Democratic Club

The Oakhurst Club has heard many excellent speakers this year who have covered a wide variety of topics.



In October David Martin from the US Forest Service talked to us about "Toads and Frogs"



In November Tim and Susan Madden gave a presentation on "Education in Developing Countries"

YES

By Michelle Stone (Submitted by Lucille Apar, with permission of the author)

I can't hold it in any longer. I try so hard to keep my mouth shut. But it had to come out.

They quote long-treasured documents yet negate historical context.

They demand life for all yet deny it to the living.

They fill the air with platitudes of love but spout hatred with every bated breath.

Equality for all they say but many still stand in longing desperation.

Charity for all, some claim, but only for those who believe.

"A land where all voices count", you'll hear, except for those too weak to defend themselves.

Some hunger for an interview, some hunger for power, and children attend school with empty bellies.

They debase respect, civility and honor to insolence, insults and debauchery.

They claim sacred trust for fiscal responsibility yet flush billions away for naught.

They fling their neighbors' children to kill and be murdered in conflicts of whim.

YES (continued)

Recidivism sours our shining city on a hill into a moldy rat-infested brothel as they terrorize the world with looming worldwide financial collapse.

They deny science to stir the mob mentality yet reap its rewards every second of every minute of every day.

They demand quality education but wrap themselves in a flag of pious ignorance and intolerance.

Sanctimoniously they deconstruct two centuries of bravery, blood and treasure for self-proclaimed glory.

The response to every suggestion, proposal or idea, even if their own, is "no".

And for all this they are worshipped in droves.

Welcome to our new civil war.

Report from Lowell Young, AD Rep.

I think that it would be good if all Democrats were more aware of what is in the State Party's Platform. So, I am going to highlight various Platform positions in this and subsequent issues of the newsletter. By reading the platform, you may find things that you feel need to be improved or even changed. If you do, there is a mechanism through which you can do so. I'll begin with the Preamble for the 2012 Platform:

OUR BLUEPRINT FOR THE GOLDEN STATE

America's strength derives from people coming together and working for the common good. We believe in a strong economy that increases political, social, and cultural opportunity. We believe in inclusion and equality so that all can reach their fullest human potential. We are committed to upholding our Federal and State Constitutions, protecting and defending ourselves and our human rights and civil liberties, and ensuring peace and justice, freedom, and equal opportunity. We believe that by standing firm and acting positively on these values, America can reclaim her vision and lead by example as a responsible and judicious member of the global community.

The people of California deserve a government that supports their hard work and shares their hopes for the future. Our Platform represents the Democratic vision for our State, embracing and realizing the dreams of Californians. We firmly defend these American beliefs, values, and traditions and will work with elected officials and activists to achieve our vision in government and in our communities.

The California Democratic Party will:

Report from Lowell Young, AD Rep. (continued)

Promote peace, rule of law, and human rights by instituting and funding time-tested and cost-effective tools and strategies for peace, which address the hate, vitriol and violence that are rampant in today's society, which interfere with our security and prosperity, both at home and abroad.

Seek the safe withdrawal of U.S. troops from all foreign engagements and the full reintegration of veterans and our tax dollars into civilian life;

Create a 21st century economy built on a diverse workforce educated in quality public schools by teachers enjoying the right to organize;

Respect the civil rights and liberties of all American citizens, including rights to freedom of expression and assembly, as well as the inherent dignity of the person and the equal and inalienable human rights of all peoples;

Ensure universal, comprehensive, and affordable health care for all Californians, preferably through a single-payer plan;

Protect a woman's right to choose how to use her mind, her body and her time;

Secure a dignified retirement for our seniors, protecting Social Security and Medicare now and for future generations;

Promote energy self-sufficiency, building renewable energy industries to counter global warming and pollution, and protect our natural resources;

Report from Lowell Young, AD Rep. (continued)

Build smart, sustainable, safe, equitable, environmentally sound, aesthetically pleasing, and caring communities;

Insist upon fiscal common sense, responsibility, and accountability in California and Washington, through restoration of appropriate regulation and elimination of corporate personhood;

Seek abolition of the death penalty through conversion of all death sentences to terms of permanent incarceration and reform aspects of the penal system that have contributed to prison overcrowding and abuse of prisoners;

Promote a reasonable path to citizenship for immigrants and demand respect for the human rights of all residents;

Withdraw the profit motive from healthcare delivery, imprisonment, and war;

Restore our fundamental civil liberties by reversing the evisceration of the Magna Carta, which created the right of habeas corpus in 1215 AD; oppose the assassination of U.S. citizens and any policies that grant to a government the unrestrained power to arrest, detain, transfer, or interrogate U.S. citizens without charge or trial; and,

Promote the restoration of a fair and equitable system of taxation.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Today's Date: _____

___ Mariposa: Annual Dues are \$10.00 per person
(Jan. 1 – Dec. 31) \$15.00 family
Lifetime membership \$150.00

or

___ Oakhurst: Annual Dues are \$5.00 per person
(Jul. 1 - Jun 30)

___ New Member or ___ Renewal:

How did you find out about us? _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: ___ ZIP: _____

Physical Address: _____

City: _____ State: ___ ZIP: _____

Telephone: (_____) _____

E-Mail: _____ Fax: _____

Supervisorial District (if known): _____

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Please mail form and check payable to:

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