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



THE MOUNTAIN DEMOCRAT

**April – May
2015**

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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

April 2015

Apr 4: Oakhurst Club Meeting
 Apr 11: Mariposa Club Meeting

May 2015

May 2: Oakhurst Club Meeting
 May 9: Mariposa Club Meeting

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Cover
 Sky Pilot
 Polemonium eximium
 Will Beback, Wikipedia

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

SAVE THIS DATE



Madera County Democratic Central Committee

Annual Luncheon Fundraiser

Our Special Guest Speaker - TBA

Please join us for a mid-day luncheon

"Making California A Better Place!"

Sunday, April 26, 2015

12:30-3:30 PM

~Madera Clubhouse Restaurant~

Located on the beautiful
 Madera Municipal Golf Course
 23200 Avenue 17, Madera, CA 93638

No-Host Cocktails & Non-Alcoholic Beverages Available

-----Please Reserve your attendance today! (Please clip & return with your remittance)-----

Name(s) and/or Organization: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

Employer: _____ Occupation: _____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Group Tables of 8 and 10 (Please attach a list of attendees' names and their choice of entrée)

Choice of main entree(s) and quantity:

Beef Chicken Vegetarian

Per Person _____ X \$40.00 = \$ _____

Students _____ X \$25.00 = \$ _____

Donation \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

Make checks payable to: **MCDCC**
 EIN # 77-0549533 ID# 991608
 Mail to: c/o Kathy Eisele, MCDCC Treasurer
 414 Willis, Madera, CA 93637

For more information call or to RSVP: Susan Rowe, MCDCC Chair
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All Proceeds benefit Madera County Democratic Central Committee-
 -Printing labor is donated -

McClintock's Magical Mystery Meeting

By Peter Cavanaugh



“Peter, this is not a political meeting.”

When both The Central Valley Tea Party and I get politically blindsided, it's a rare day indeed.

Perhaps I went too far.

After Fourth District Congressman, Tom McClintock, made his usual local Spring appearance last year at Oakhurst Elementary on April 23rd, my subsequent Sierra Star column, “21st Century Tom”, bemoaned the fact that so few folks had shown up. I wrote, “*All that was missing was the chirping of crickets.*”

I was hoping next time would bring more people, looking forward to again providing the Congressman with a list of helpful questions to assist in his presentation, although he completely ignored all of them at Oakhurst Elementary, even publicly berating me with the words, “*Peter! This is NOT a political meeting.*”

What?

McClintock's Magical Mystery Meeting (continued)

You can only imagine my sudden shock and sad surprise to learn that Tom had come and gone again like a phantom ship slipping by through heavy fog in the dark of night. Even worse, I was discovering this a full ten days after the fact in a headline story published by my very own paper.

Then I found out that Central Valley Oakhurst/Coarsegold Tea Party Coordinator John Pero hadn't known about Tom's visitation either, making all the more mysterious McClintock's obvious decision to stage his recent Oakhurst stop as a drive-by.

In asking about, it would appear that Tom McClintock has become quite guarded in limiting his exposure to unscreened questioning and unforeseen challenge with careful and cautious venue selection.

Early this year, his office heavily promoted an evening “Town Hall Meeting” on Tuesday, March 10th to be held at the Mariposa Senior Center—hardly Candlestick Park or even a decent sized Dunkin' Donuts. As McClintock anchored his day around this strategic centerpiece, it was then the Oakhurst Chamber of Commerce became somehow connected—enticing Tom to travel 27 miles south on Highway 49 and participate in a comparatively exclusive private get together to which the general public and, in fact, much of the Chamber's own membership list was NOT invited nor informed of the event.

While I am heartened by McClintock's ringing endorsement of the critical need for more water as reported in The Star, I hope he reads some excellent notes Ben Leet from Mariposa brought to the Senior Center Meeting and hand delivered to Tom.

Ben listed quite a few startling realities such as the fact that 80% of the workforce has not received a pay raise in weekly or annual

McClintock's Magical Mystery Meeting (continued)

wages in real dollars over the last 51 years, while the economy has expanded by 155% per person. Every worker contributes \$73,000 a year to the national income in productivity and half earn less than \$28,300. And the period between 2000 to 2010 witnessed the worst economic performance since the 1930s thanks to Republican rule.

Ben added in a note to me: *“ I question McClintock's morality and that of those who support him. Ignorance, silence and calculated avoidance are strategies of the people who cross the street when they see someone who needs help. I think that if more people would arrive and persistently present intelligent questions about his very radical and harmful proposals, McClintock's popularity would disappear.”*

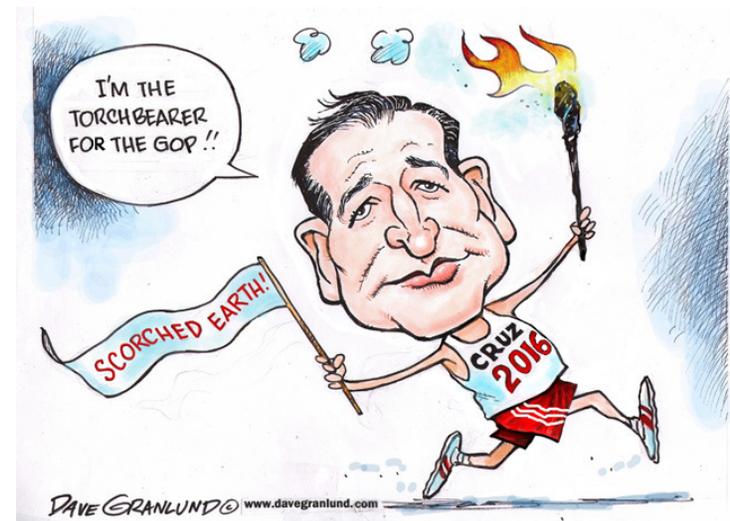
So, Tom, here's the deal.

I'm sorry if I have made you uncomfortable with any column I have ever written containing negative commentary about you, which would be all of them, and herein propose to make amends.

There's nothing to fear. No more crickets. Come back to Oakhurst and our Community Center and do a real “Town Hall.” John and Ben and I could ask the questions, all of which you'll see beforehand, and you could give the answers.

It'll be fun.

More on the Subject of Magical Republications



And Anne Brock Sends Us Her Thoughts About Ted Cruz

As I write this, I'm seeing headlines that Ted Cruz will announce he is running for president on Monday, 3/23. Of course, by the time you read this, he will have announced.

It's still early, and I personally doubt that he will make it through the primaries. But one of the “rumbles” about him I have heard has to do with whether he is a “natural born citizen” and thus eligible for president. Now I'm no lawyer, but as far as I'm concerned, his mom was a US Citizen so, even though he was born in Canada, he IS eligible.

But I really hope everyone focuses on where he stands on the issues, not what piece of dirt happened to be under him when he was born. I really don't want another year or two of birther yelling, do you? I hope his opponents stay classy on this one.

Whither Goest Thou, CDC?

By Les Marsden

"I have always regarded the California Democratic Council as one of the United States' most important centers of citizen participation in politics." President John Fitzgerald Kennedy

"I'm not a member of any organized political party.... I'm a Democrat. Democrats never agree on anything, that's why they're Democrats. If they agreed with each other, they'd be Republicans." Will Rogers

In 1953 the California Democratic Council (CDC) was a brilliant, brand-new idea: a means for the average-Joe/Jane Democrat to be involved with their political party and, hopefully, to influence it. And there was no organization quite like it—for either party. But what caused its birth?

By 1952, two decades of national dominance by FDR's New Deal Democrats had unraveled—unsustainable with that charismatic president seven years dead. President Harry S Truman's popularity was at an all-time low and his re-election campaign itself died following his defeat by Estes Kefauver in the New Hampshire primary. After HST stepped aside, Adlai Stevenson became our Presidential nominee—a new breed of younger Democrat. Prominent liberal that he was, Stevenson really energized the grassroots of the party and his campaign prompted the creation of countless “Stevenson Clubs” of activists. But national tastes had changed, the country had grown conservative and in that 1952 election the GOP pulled off a complete rout. With Eisenhower's victory in the White House and the Republicans gaining control of both houses of Congress, the Democrats were suddenly party non grata. And be stunned, in the event you didn't know this: California—our beloved, bright-blue liberal California—had not only a Republican governor but BOTH senators were ALSO Republicans. Fortunately, the excited, activated liberal and youngish California Democrats, which

Stevenson's candidacy had awakened, were dedicated. They had a place to go when—during brainstorming sessions in 1952 and '53 at Asilomar and Fresno by Alan Cranston and other similarly-inspired Stevenson supporters—the CDC was born. An over-arching organization to help create, encourage and unite Democratic clubs throughout the state. And in only a brief amount of time the CDC's success was remarkable, as attested to by JFK.

I first met the CDC in March of 1975 as an 18-year-old. Their annual convention was held in Fresno, and believe it or not (this was at the long-defunct Hacienda complex) there were 4,000 attendees. Wally Albertson (wife of “Chico and the Man's” Jack Albertson) was elected the CDC's first female president that year and it was a HAPPENING event! Absolutely remarkable—the amount of activity, enthusiasm (and yes, as ever, disagreement) was astonishing. These were dedicated, activated Democrats, and though the US had departed Vietnam and Nixon had resigned the previous year, they were Democrats fighting FOR something. They were Democrats who still possessed idealism and who still felt they could point our party into its former populist direction from which it had strayed since the stinging loss of the Southern power base following LBJ's remarkably courageous Civil Rights activism. They were Democrats who believed in the party; Democrats from the Democratic wing of the Democratic Party. I covered the convention for my school newspaper and interviewed Sumi Haru among many others. It was an exciting few days for me.

But these 40 years since we were introduced (and some 62 years after its birth) the CDC is sadly a shadow of itself, and there are more than a few reasons. Since its decision to no longer require a small annual fee for Club affiliations, I feel many groups have adhered to that old adage of “you get what you pay for” and feel that affiliation isn't worth the time. It is, of course. But membership has shrunk to an alarming level, with many activist Californians either unaware of the CDC or cognizant of its history and potential future. But in my estimation, the greatest threat to

the CDC has been the fact that the Internet has created innumerable organizations as outlets for isolated, individualist activism which allows us to feel as though we're doing SOMETHING good while we really don't have to make much of an effort. In our defense, we ARE far busier as a people than we were 50 years ago: life has grown complex while we've become more drawn to convenience. I've been an officer of the CDC for many years (one of three statewide Trustees) but even so, I wish I had more time to get back into the trenches where I once was. Sadly, the CDC no longer has regular dedicated stand-alone conventions, but now meets during state party conventions, or as in the case of the weekend of this last March 20-22, as a part of other organizational events. In Fresno last month, that was "The People's Empowerment Summit." And I'm pleased to say I was re-elected to yet another term as Trustee. I think. I'm not sure because a serious schism has developed in the organization, and the losing Presidential candidate (who had inherited the office) has declared the election illegitimate, proclaiming himself President still, despite having received only three votes. And while "my" side's victorious slate has an overwhelming predominance of numbers, one never knows, does one? And there's life imitating the art of Will Rogers' observation: no organized party.

In any event, I do hope that very soon Emilie Gatfield will be accepted by the losing side as our new CDC President. Smart, experienced and a wonderful leader, Emilie may just be the one who can turn the CDC around. What was a brilliant idea in 1953 still is: the CDC has not only a proud past but the promise of a remarkable future. As with our party itself, the best is yet to come. Because sometimes the most brilliant ideas are the ones which have been around the block.

And also because if we just agreed with each other, we'd be Republicans.

Mariposa Club and Central Committee Updates

By Anne Brock

We've had another couple of great meetings in Mariposa! We had Robin Hopper, Superintendent of Mariposa School District, in February. She did a great job of covering what Common Core does, along with some other topics of interest. Her presentation is on our website.

In March, we had Glenn Franklin of the Resource Conservation District. He discussed how they encourage cooperation to address local resource issues. They can connect landowners with resources that will help address issues they have. It's a great resource to have in our community!

We have gotten the essays for the annual Jefferson Award, our \$500 award for a high school senior with the best essay. Our judges are reviewing them now, and we'll let you know the eventual winner. If you want to contribute, contact Carmel Lozano, 742-5881, or mail the contribution to Mariposa Democratic Club, PO Box 5008-268, Mariposa Ca, 95338.

Keep an eye on our website for upcoming meeting speakers!
<http://www.mariposademocraticclub.org/>

The Central Committee is continuing to work on outreach. We'll be emailing Democrats whose email we have through the MOE system (voter database) to make sure they know both the Central Committee and the Club are working hard on Democratic issues. We also plan to write more letters to the editor and to do more posts on our Facebook page.

We want to be ready for the 2016 elections, so we are looking at possible fundraisers as well. We do have open slots on the Central Committee; if interested, contact us at mcdemcc@gmail.com or call Anne Brock, 209-742-6872.

HATE: The Poison Pill of Today's World

By Lucille Apcar

I don't think there is a creature in existence, whether human, animal, avian, creatures of land or sea, even the insects, worms, trees, shrubs and plants that does not have its likes and dislikes. A plant will demonstrate its dislike for a particular treatment by wilting or refusing to bloom. An insect will show its disapproval with a painful sting, and so on, up the ladder of all things living.

I have always had a strong distaste for prepared, dried coconut, even to spitting out any confection that included coconut in its ingredients. So imagine my surprise one day, after ordering a favorite dish, tropical fruit compote for breakfast in Thailand, when I tasted a hitherto unknown and utterly delectable morsel among the fruits that I could not immediately identify. It turned out to be some young, fresh coconut slices, and I ate the entire compote with great relish.

My partner in business, Irene, refused flatly to eat or even take a taste of anything unfamiliar, even when her husband or her children tried to persuade her. She would shudder when I named such innocuous foods as rice, beans or corn, let alone my great fondness for the tropical fruits and unfamiliar nuts and legumes of the South Seas and the China Sea. Being English by birth, her tastes were strictly confined to roast beef, Yorkshire Pudding, Lemon Curd, "bubble & squeak" and other very British delights. On our infrequent attempts at socializing, I dared not serve such dishes as spicy Indian curry, or a New Orleans okra gumbo. But finally my persistence in persuading her to try something new, eventually prevailed. I can't remember what item of food it was, but I do remember she admitted the dish was delicious, and tucked away every bite.

I use the above as an illustration of mind set, of what I consider to be a herd mentality, a fear and even a hatred of the unfamiliar. And a recently publicized incident of college students on a bus in

HATE: The Poison Pill of Today's World (continued)

Oklahoma enforces that view making us wonder if the new crop of young, untried, recently elected representatives to our Congress are the product of the past 30 or so years of blatant discrimination against real or imagined forces at work to undermine a government considered from its inception to be a free, open and welcoming society.

In a recent op-ed article columnist Charles M. Blow presents a brief but succinct viewpoint: "We have to understand what hate is. Hate is never about the object of the hate but what is happening in the mind of the hater. It is in the darkness of that space that fear and ignorance merge and morph. It comes out in an impulse to mark and name, to deny and diminish, to exclude and threaten, to elevate the self by putting down the other."

So it is with considerable concern and dismay that I look upon the world of today. A world of turmoil, open antipathy, instant refusal to cooperate, and threats against life. What earthly reason could there be for such displays of dislike, distrust and hate? What reason for insulting behavior between former friends, colleagues as well as persons sharing the same workplace day after day? Should not familiarity bring about lasting friendships rather than hostility?

So I beg all those reading these words to stop, think and reconsider before expressing animosity towards others whose views do not match ours. Or expressing hatred towards those whom we have never incurred the opportunity to meet personally, never exchanged a single word. That we wish them ill is the poison that will eventually and with absolute certainty, engulf ourselves.

Why is the Republican Budget Plan Objectionable?

By Ben Leet

Because: 1) It cuts the tax burden for the richest 1% of households by about half. This is trickle down magic that has not worked in the past. The 2000 to 2010 period brought the slowest growth in 70 years.

2) It is Robin Hood in reverse. To adjust for the loss of revenue due to the large tax cut to the richest, they eliminate government programs that serve the poorest. Two-thirds of program cuts come from programs that serve the poor.

3) It doesn't balance. The revenue cuts are greater than the program cuts, so tax deductions called tax expenditures must be eliminated. But the Republicans refuse to specify which deductions will be abolished. "We'll show you how later," is their position. The CBO has stated that the national debt would rise to 150% of GDP by 2050 as no new revenues compensate the net loss derived from the tax cuts. While their main selling point is a balanced budget, their budget does not balance.

4) Obamacare is repealed. In the past year 24.4 million American adults between ages 18 and 65 obtained health insurance coverage—either through the expansion of Medicaid or through subsidies towards health insurance or through being connected to their parents' insurance plan until age 27. In 2012, 47 million such adults had no insurance, so Obamacare has reduced that number in half. The Republican plan would eliminate that improvement. The revenue funding that pays for the ACA coverage originates mostly from a surtax on high income households, those whose incomes have tripled in the past 30 years.

5) Social Security and Medicare will be substantially altered.

6) It doesn't address the economic needs of the nation. The chronic

Why is the Republican Budget Plan Objectionable? (continued)

decline in wage income affecting 80% of workers who are non-supervisory employees would worsen. Their average weekly and annual income has grown by 2% in the 50 years since 1964, while the nation's per person disposable income and worker productivity have increased by 155%. The wealthiest have more than tripled their incomes. Prosperity has left the majority of the nation behind. Rewarding the rich with tax cuts and ignoring the needs of the lower-income majority is bad policy in the era of record high corporate profits and increasing inequality.

Some sources I draw upon are the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, the Center for American Progress, the Campaign for America's Future, and the Economic Policy Institute that has just released the 2016 budget proposal of the Congressional Progressive Caucus. The last source describes a different vision from the voodoo economics of the Republican plan.

Ben Leet's Blog: "Economics Without Greed" is found at:
<http://benL8.blogspot.com/>

Desalination: A Rational Approach (Part 2)

By Lowell Young

Currently, there are desalination plants being built in California and elsewhere. And they will continue to be built because California's traditional sources of water, snow melt, rain and the Colorado River, even if they return to normal levels, along with stringent water conservation, will not be able to meet the water needs of our ever growing population. To me, it just makes sense to do everything we can to have desalination plants powered by non-nuclear renewable energy, rather than carbon-based fuels, which are highly polluting. And that is what the resolution is all about—using environmentally safe technologies and renewable non-nuclear energy sources.

A statement in the article says, “Since desalination has serious environmental consequences including exacerbating climate change, it deserves serious discussion before the Party takes a stand in favor of a concept that is opposed by the Sierra Club and other environmental organizations.” In fact, the Sierra Club is not opposed to desalination. Rather, it just wants it to be done in an environmentally sound way and only if conservation can't meet our ever growing demand for water. The following material is the first five items under the definitions section of the Sierra Club's Guidelines on Desalination:

“1. Desalination should not be used for water supply needs that can be met by water conservation, water recycling, and other water use efficiency practices.

2. The Sierra Club believes that state and federal agencies should encourage water use efficiency projects in preference to all types of water supply projects, including desalination.

3. Oppose state and federal policies that would give desalination projects the same priority as water use efficiency for assistance and

Desalination: A Rational Approach (Part 2-continued)

funding.

4. Desalinated water quality shall meet all applicable local, state, and federal water quality standards for potable and non-potable use.

5. Evaluate desalination projects using an ecosystems approach by integrating these applicable sections of the following Sierra Club conservation policies: Water Resources, Marine Conservation, Water Wetlands, Commodification, Energy Conservation and Renewables, Environmental Justice, Ocean Pollution and Waste Management, Precautionary Principle and Urban and Land Use Policies”.

The URL to the Sierra Club's Desalination Guidelines is: <https://www.sierraclub.org/sites/www.sierraclub.org/files/uploads-wysiwig/desalination-guidelines.pdf>

This doesn't sound like opposition to me. Rather, it sounds like the Club realizes that desalination is going to happen and as it does, it must be done in the most environmentally friendly way possible. I happen to agree with the Club 100%. But remember, desal plants are being built today, and will continue to be built. So why not have them powered by non-polluting energy?

As for the serious environmental consequences including exacerbating climate change, I suggest that recent technological advances in these areas of concern now allow us to deal with them safely. If you read my reference materials, I have no doubt that you will agree with me. It seems to me, that using non-nuclear renewable energy in any way will alleviate climate change, not exacerbate it, because they reduce the use of carbon-based fuels which do exacerbate climate change.

Desalination: A Rational Approach (Part 2-continued)

The comment, "Climate change implication of desalination, one of which is that it uses 10 times more energy than traditional sources of water." is no longer the case. In the past, much of the initial energy input for desalination, recycling and reclamation of water was wasted. Today, this lost energy is recaptured and recycled in much the same way that hybrid vehicles do. As a result, desalination will produce new freshwater using only slightly more energy than it takes to pump water through the California's State Water Project aqueduct from northern California to San Diego. In fact, today desalination can provide an individual's daily water needs for about a dollar a day.

It is true that desalinization is an issue that many intelligent and capable engineers and scientists have worked on for many years. The results of their work has made water recycling, reclamation and desalination of sea water more energy-efficient, and environmentally safer than ever before. And I suspect that as more and more plants come online we will see even more improvements in their energy efficiency and environmental safety. When you think about it, why would anyone oppose doing things in an environmentally sound and energy-efficient way? As I said before, this is what our resolution is all about and I quote it: "Therefore be it further resolved that the California Democratic Party shall provide copies of this resolution to the California Democratic Congressional delegation and encourage them to introduce legislation to expand the further research and development, and appropriate use of water recycling and desalination technologies using renewable non-nuclear energy sources to meet our ever-growing water needs and using the Best Available Control Technologies."

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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