



# THE MOUNTAIN DEMOCRAT

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February –  
March  
2016

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The Mountain Democrat  
Newsletter Editor  
PO Box 760  
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YosemiteDems.net



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

#### February 2016

Feb. 6: Oakhurst Club Meeting  
8:30AM Denny's

Feb 13: Mariposa Club Meeting  
9:00AM Miner's Inn

#### March 2016

Mar. 5: Oakhurst Club Meeting  
8:30AM Denny's

Mar 12: Mariposa Club Meeting  
9:00AM Miner's Inn

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](http://YosemiteDems.net) or [MariposaDemocraticClub.org](http://MariposaDemocraticClub.org)

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**PLEASE RENEW  
FINAL ISSUE**

**If this label is on the cover of your newsletter  
it means that our records indicate your 2016 club  
dues have not been paid.**

It's the beginning of the year, and time for **Mariposa** Democratic Club members to renew! Please fill out the form below and send it with a check to:

**Mariposa Democratic Club**  
PO Box 5008-268  
Mariposa, CA 95338

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**MAILING** \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**PHYSICAL** \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Note: Dues for the Mariposa Club are \$10 per person and \$15 per family, but please consider donating extra to help us do more!

## Flint

By Peter Cavanaugh

It was home to the highest paid factory worker in the entire civilized world.

Then it became a city abandoned by many and cited by all in scholarly national narratives on the pitiful plight and awesome blight of post-industrial America.

Today headlines scream that its children are poisoned, many permanently so, as tempers flair, fingers point and the future darkens even more over a town turning to dust.

In all the decades I spent in Flint, no one drank the river water. Or swam in it. Or fished in it. You'd have to be crazy.

Fresh glacial water from Lake Huron flowed through city taps as the Great Sit-down Strike of 1937 brought about recognition of the United Auto Workers (UAW) and rising prosperity for all—workers and wealthy alike—in what is recognized by historians as the birth of the American Middle Class. I learned much from old men who had mattered.

Michael Moore's stunningly prescient "*Roger & Me*" was filmed on the streets of Flint in the late 1980s. Observing its 25<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2014, "*Roger & Me*" correctly predicted the demise of American industry, beginning with corporate abandonment of the epitomic factory town.

I had introduced Mike to an unsuspecting public over WWCK-FM in the late 1970s with a program called "*Radio Free Flint*." It ran Sunday mornings from 8 until 10—a live, unrehearsed talk show

## Flint (continued)

with minimal censorship and an accent on challenging involvement. Our radio station switchboard lit up like a Christmas tree.

On one program, Michael featured an extended segment interviewing the head of the Flint National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) appearing with the Grand Dragon of the Michigan Ku Klux Klan—they got along fine.

Mike was back in Flint last month seeking the resignation and arrest of Michigan Governor Rick Snyder for hapless leadership, criminal negligence and grand malfeasance in office. I know that's strong, but look what happened.

In the great Flint Diaspora following "*Roger and Me*" years, the city's population was cut in half, leaving barely 100,000 suffering souls—56% minority African-American. Of these, 41.5% are living well below Federal poverty levels, and a quarter of Flint families have an annual income of less than \$15,000 a year.

Flint's drinking water became contaminated in April of 2014 when a state-appointed emergency manager reporting directly to the Republican governor's office was running the city. To save money, city government was ordered by the state of Michigan to abandon its use of Lake Huron sources and draw water directly from the Flint River. Along with other consequences of pollution, the river water turned out to be markedly acidic and highly corrosive, leaching lead from pipes and fixtures—many over a century old.

Originally denying any problems existed, only after a year and a half, in October of last year, did the governor's office allow the city to switch back to input from Lake Huron, except irreparable

Flint (continued)

damage had already been done. The fresh water surged into ruined, deteriorated and lead-laced plumbing.

Estimated cost of repair? Three quarter of a billion dollars.

Time frame if such funds can be raised? Years.

Population affected? Anyone who drank the water.

Number of children already poisoned? Over 8,000.

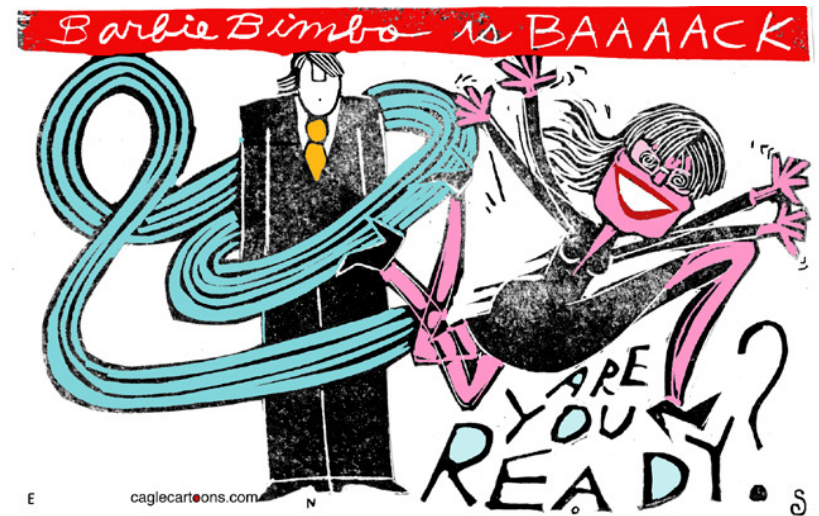
Yet, Michigan Republican Governor Rick Snyder stays in office like a James Bond Martini.

Shaken, but not truly stirred.



Michael Moore and Peter Cavanaugh in the studio

## SOME THINGS



NEVER  
CHANGE!

## A Dysfunctional Economy and a Blizzard of Reforms

By Ben Leet

Voters have difficulty keeping track of the snow-flurry of reform proposals in this election year. There are countless issues and they are complicated, and all the proposals to heal the economy are complicated. Arguably, about half of the U.S. public faces economic insecurity, and some face real hardship. In fact, over 1.4% of U.S. households and 4% of U.S. children live on an income that is less than \$2 a day per family member, according to the authors of “\$2 a Day—Living on Almost Nothing in the U.S.A.” Future prospects are very slowly improving, but the Consumer Confidence Index has returned to an average reading in relation to its 65-year history.

“Dysfunctional” is perhaps the clearest description of the U.S. and world economy. A recent report states that 62 wealthy individuals own more property than 3,600,000,000 individuals—half the world’s population, and in the U.S. 400 individuals own more than 160,000,000—half the U.S. population. Half of the world accounts for 7.2% of all consumption, while 20% consume 76.6%. While in the U.S. the lower-earning 60% of the population receives 22.5% of all income, and the highest-earning 20% receive 58.1% (and 1% also receives 16.7%, more than the income of 50%). These are figures from a CBO report on year 2011. Dysfunctional is an apt description.

As voters, we are faced with several competing plans to improve things. On the Republican side, there seems unanimity to just cut taxes and eliminate all regulations. But just which regulations and why they should be eliminated are never articulated, and taxes seem to be a vestige from some ancient epoch of economic history. On the Democratic side, there is much more going on. Last year 51% of the House Democrats voted for the Congressional

## A Dysfunctional Economy (continued)

Progressive Caucus budget, which proposes a large increase in spending. The budget finances roughly \$528 billion in job creation and public investment measures in calendar year 2015 alone, and roughly \$1.34 trillion over calendar years 2015–2017. That would equal \$446 billion per year in various new spending projects. Yes, over half of the House Democrats voted for this proposal. The House Democrats, perhaps, are more progressive than the electorate who support them. But of course, 49% of House Democrats voted against that budget proposal.

It’s complicated, too complicated for this newsletter. I suggest readers cut to the chase. If you want to get lost in the blizzard, you may visit these sites:

Hillary Clinton’s Economic Proposals,  
<https://www.hillaryclinton.com/issues/plan-raise-american-incomes/>

Campaign for America’s Future, CAF, <https://ourfuture.org>

Center for American Progress, CAP,  
<https://www.americanprogress.org>

Center for Economic Policy and Research, CEPR, <https://cepr.net>

Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, CBPP,  
<http://www.cbpp.org>

Economic Policy Institute, <http://www.epi.org>

...and don’t forget to see “What Would Sanders Do?” at  
<http://www.dollarsandsense.org/archives/2015/1115friedman.html>



**SAMPLES FROM OUR PHOTO ALBUM**

A Dysfunctional Economy (continued)

Sanders proposes (see the Dollars and Sense article) an increase in spending by \$380 billion a year for ten years, or 2.1% of GDP. Clinton is more difficult to pin down.

In short, new federal spending each year for ten years for the two candidates is:

	<u>Sanders</u>	<u>Clinton</u>
Infrastructure	\$100 Billion	\$ 55 Billion
College Tuition	\$ 75 Billion	\$ 35 Billion
Pre-K Education	\$ 75 Billion	\$ 80 Billion
Social Security	\$100 Billion	not specified

I relied on the article from “Dollars and Sense” (cited above) for the Sanders’ figures. For the Clinton figures, I searched her web page and some other sources.

A reader should take away from this report that both Democratic Party contenders’ new spending and other policies are designed to level out the extreme condition of income and wealth inequality in the nation’s economy.

Ben’s Blog is at: <http://benL8.blogspot.com>

<http://yosemitedems.net/PhotoPage.html>



David Zaniba  
Mountain Heritage Days Parade  
Oakhurst, Sept. 2003



Les Marsden tries to take advantage of poor, innocent Miss Mariposa at the 2007 Mariposa Costume Ball



California Secretary of State Debra Bowen at the breakfast reception hosted by the Oakhurst Democratic Club in the Oakhurst Community Center, August 7, 2010



"Ragtime Nan" Bostick



John Stewart and Peter Cavanaugh



Les Marsden



With Devin Norman

## **CDP Environmental Caucus**

From Rosemarie Smallcombe

Rosemarie has sent us the information that the CDP Environmental Caucus has developed the following water plank for the state platform.

### **Water**

- Implement a comprehensive science-based water plan that includes managing each watershed (including groundwater) as a unified whole and upgrading the Delta levee system;
- Fully protect all water sources from contamination and guarantee sufficient water for the basic human needs of drinking and sanitation;
- Motivate efficient, sustainable, safe use of water and hold all users accountable for their consumption; implement and enforce regulations regarding groundwater use including full usage documentation; and,
- Ensure allocation and management of water to sustain ecosystems, fisheries, recreation, and endangered species.

## **Oakhurst Democratic Club Activities**

By Scott Hill

Busy, busy, busy. The Oakhurst Club has been continuing our traditions of enjoyable breakfast meetings at Denny's, and outreach into the community.

At our October meeting, following up on a recommendation from the Mariposa Democratic Club, our speaker was Glenn Franklin from the Mariposa Resource Conservation District discussing "The History and Future of Resource Conservation Districts."

Later that month, on October 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, we sponsored an information and voter registration booth at the Oakhurst Fall Festival in the Community Park. We met lots of people there and let them know that there are Democrats in the mountains.

At our November meeting, Kevin Bowman led a lively discussion about "Local Community Radio 98.5 FM from Mariposa."

Those attending our December meeting were energized by an in-depth presentation about the homeless in our area by Michael Baird, who has an extensive background in outreach to less fortunate people.

During our December meeting, the club also unanimously passed a "Resolution Supporting Planned Parenthood."

Going forward into the New Year, during our meeting on February 6<sup>th</sup> we will hear from Madera County Auditor Todd Miller about "County Money: Where It Comes From and Where It Goes."

Then on March 5<sup>th</sup> our featured speaker will be Officer Kaci Lutz, letting us know about "Cool New Things with the CHP."

**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:

Mariposa Democratic Club	-or-	Oakhurst Democratic Club
PO Box 5008-268		PO Box 760
Mariposa, CA 95338		Oakhurst, CA 93644
(209) 742-1010		(559) 658-2342

*Mortimer Mouse Sez...*

**Be sure to  
 BECOME A FAN  
 Of our Facebook Pages**

(click the little "Like" button)

