



YosemiteDems.net

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



THE MOUNTAIN DEMOCRAT

**February -
March
2017**

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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

February 2017

Feb. 4: Oakhurst Club Meeting
8:30AM Denny's

Feb. 11: Mariposa Club Meeting
9:00AM Miner's Inn

March 2017

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8:30AM Denny's

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9:00AM Miner's Inn

CONTACT US

Mariposa Democratic Club
209-742-1010

Oakhurst Democratic Club
Peter Cavanaugh 559-641-6617

Newsletter Editor
Scott Hill: 559-658-2342

Cover
Yellow-bellied marmot
Marmota flaviventris
Yosemite National Park
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

CONGRATULATIONS YOSEMITE DEMOCRATS



Yosemite Democrats

Published by Scott Hill [?] · January 21 at 1:30pm · 🌐

Yaaaaayyyyyy! Thanks to outstanding work by Nancy Bednar and Peter Cavanaugh, the Yosemite Democrats Facebook Page now has over 200 Likes. That is absolutely outstanding, and far above average for pages like ours. Congratulations and thanks to everyone who has helped us along the way, including Mr. Honey.



Oakhurst Rising

By Peter Cavanaugh

The liar's liar—red faced with rage—faced down the press with marked petulance.

Sean “The Brat” Spicer thus began his first official White House Press Briefing January 21st, shouting at those in attendance for lying to the American people about the Liar-In-Chief's smaller size.

At issue was the crowd count at the preceding day's Presidential Inauguration, estimated by media consensus at around 250,000 folks, although the new President claimed he personally saw “*between a million and a million and a half.*”

The Brat went on and on with his contentious castigation, inadvertently providing excellent sound bites in later news reports contradicting everything he said. Pictures told an irrefutable story.

There was the Washington Mall in 2009 for Obama. There it was in 2017 for Trump. Ta-da! Comparative aerial shots dramatically demonstrated the extraordinary extent of Spicer's nonsensical claims, including the ridiculous allegation that Friday's Inauguration turnout was “*the biggest in history.*”

Even as Sean The Brat finished his diatribe and scurried

Oakhurst Rising (continued)

from the room like a frightened ferret without taking a single question from reporters, it had already become established that Trump had just been overwhelmingly outperformed by countless women around the world in pink pussy hats.

The Women's March on Washington dwarfed Trump's audience on The Mall, even as it generated similar response in hundreds of cities nationally and globally.

Special congratulations are due to “Oakhurst Area for Peace.” This group brought forth dozens of participants braving icy rain and freezing cold at the corner of Highways 41 and 49 on Inauguration Friday with a vigil “*in silent reflection and contemplation on the state of the union*” even as Donald John Trump simultaneously took his oath of office.

Their success increased by tenfold for Saturday's remarkable local gathering of several hundred in support of the Washington March proceeding from Oakhurst Community Park to the intersection of Highway 41 and Road 426—featuring live music, shared message signs and spirited commentary.

While the Oakhurst organization reflected admirable altruism in their planning and staging of both events, the underlying universal theme was decidedly and

Oakhurst Rising (continued)

passionately anti-Trump and all he stands for, whatever that might eventually be.

Along with the daunting challenge of attempting to decipher a specific vision from the twists and turns of Donald-speak, we are now faced with Trump's deeply concerning appointments for cabinet and other senior level positions. These primarily consist of aging white-guy generals, billionaires and multi-millionaires.

For all of Trump's promises to take care of the little guy, he's already stacked the deck with big-time players.

Despite his repeated denunciation of Wall Street power brokers, he's emphatically shown his cards by selecting six Goldman Sachs heavies to lead the supposedly "populist" charge. The Goldman Sachs stock price has surged almost 30% since the election and it recently reported a four times increase in quarterly profits.

For Trump's solemn declarations of "love" for anyone or anything temporarily in his favor, Ivana and Marla should come to mind.

By any standard, this will not end well.

Is anyone paying attention? We are at the Oakhurst Democratic Club.

Oakhurst Rising (continued)

*"Come on up for the rising
Come on up, lay your hands in mine
Come on up for the rising
Come on up for the rising tonight"*

Bruce Springsteen – *"The Rising"* (2002)



Winter's Rose

By Ben Leet

Winter's rose is found under the ground, beneath the snow, sleeping in the roots. It waits patiently for conditions to change before blossoming and fructifying. The devastation of winter endures one long season. We have a waiting period ahead, and then the rose will appear.

Politically we are looking at a Secretary of Labor who would destroy the minimum wage, a Secretary of Education who would do away with public education as we know it, a chief of the EPA who has opposed it most of his life, a Secretary of State who headed the world's largest oil company which has systematically discredited the reality of global warming, and a Secretary of Treasury who perhaps would be in prison for mortgage fraud under other circumstances. It's bleak and there comes a point when following the bleak news costs more than it's worth.

There are two things about the economy that grab my interest: inequality and the national debt.

A report from inequality.org dated January 9, 2017 displayed a graph comparing two 34-year periods—1946 to 1980 compared to 1980 to 2014. During the earlier period, the lower-earning 50% of households increased their incomes by 102% and the top 1% increased their incomes by 47%. In the latter period, the lower 50% increased their incomes by 1%, while the top 1% tripled their already high incomes. The EPI.org site “What should you be earning?” if your wage income had matched productivity gains as they did during the 1946 to 1980 period, shows these changes:

\$20,000 would be earning \$32,607
\$30,000 would be earning \$47,624
\$40,000 would earn \$61,360
\$50,000 would earn \$74,470
\$60,000 would earn \$84,668
\$70,000 would earn \$94,202

Winter's Rose (continued)

Now, about the national debt. I speak to my conservative neighbors and they are concerned. Didn't Obama double the national debt? Yes, he did, but he inherited the most devastating depression in 75 years. In 2000, federal revenue was 20% of the yearly GDP, and in 2008 (last year of GWB's term), it was 14%. That's a loss of close to \$900 billion in revenue. Obama was not in office in 2008. He inherited this mess.

Why didn't he fix it? During the 8-year Obama presidency, the Senate Republicans doubled the previous record for filibusters. They also threatened to default on the national debt interest payments. These payments today are 6% of the GDP but ran as high as 17% of GDP in 1994. Reagan increased interest payments about triple what Obama did.

Our Congressman, McClintock, recently delivered a speech to Congress urging the elimination of the filibuster in the Senate. He's about 8 years too late and deserves an award for hypocrisy.

The national debt is \$20 trillion. The total household net worth (private savings of private individuals and families) is \$90 trillion. It doesn't take a genius to understand that the debt is payable. The hysteria about not being able to pay it is a political choice not to tax the wealthy 1% who own 42% of this \$90 trillion. The value of all financial assets increased by \$33.4 trillion since 2009, a gain of 64% adjusting for inflation, during the worst economic maelstrom in 75 years, while the national debt increased by \$10 trillion, and the median household's net worth dropped by 40%. That's a complicated sentence saying that the wealthy did very well, while most people lost almost half their life savings and the government plunged into deeper debt. Most often politicians will say that financial assets cannot be taxed. They can be. Scholars are proposing such plans and we, of course, could legislate a tax if necessary. As I reported in another newsletter in 1999, Trump

Winter's Rose (continued)

proposed a 14% tax on wealth to pay down the debt. He now denies he made the proposal but CNN quotes him extensively explaining the deal.

We confront at least 4 years of radical right wing solutions. Cutting away health care insurance from 32 million Americans (by 2026) seems like a plan for igniting a political backlash. I find it exhausting to think about the proposals that are beyond the pale. But the Rose is not dead, it sleeps through winter. I spoke with a woman who voted for Trump. She is an amazing, likable and competent human. I told her the burden is on Trump and his supporters to improve conditions. Maybe they, and all others including sleepy Democrats and Independents, will start paying attention and applying their creative energies and their heart's empathy to our national problems.

A more extensive version of this article can be found on my blog, Economics Without Greed, at <http://benL8.blogspot.com>



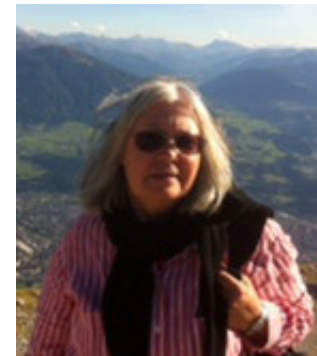
Mariposa County Democratic Central Committee (MCDCC) Elects New Officers

By Christina Oborn

The MCDCC held its annual organizational meeting on January 14, 2017 in Mariposa.

Christina Oborn, a member and Democratic State Central Committee (DSCC) delegate since 2013, was elected Chair. A Bay Area transplant since 2012, she has been the MCDCC Secretary since 2015. She worked with Lowell Young and Anne Brock last year to successfully apply for a NextGen grant to expand voter outreach and registration. During a career in community college workforce and economic development, she was successful in writing grants to fund, implement and manage innovative vocational programs.

Rosemarie Smallcombe was elected to serve as Vice Chair as well as represent the MCDCC on the California Democratic Party Executive Board. Steve Smallcombe was elected as Treasurer, and Aaron Marcus as Secretary. Five DSCC delegates were chosen with one slot to be filled. Another member and delegate, Lowell Young, was elected at the Assembly District Election Meeting to be a delegate and represent Assembly District 5 at the 2017-2019 State Conventions.



Christina Oborn

Sticks and Stones and Trump

By Charlie Bednar

We all remember being told, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” That time-worn phrase popped into my head recently when I was sternly taken to task by a Mariposa club member for some language I used when sending out information regarding Senate confirmation hearings.

For those who may not have seen my e-mail, I used the term “Cabinet of Deplorables,” called Ben Carson “a really scary whack-a-doodle,” and suggested Trump’s cabinet is a “mob of neo-Nazis.” The member responded with this:

“You used the terms ‘deplorables’, ‘wack-a-doodle’ and the worst: ‘neo-nazi’s.’ All these terms are used to DIVIDE our country and that is what has happened. America see’s this, and is sick of it. You have become what you say you hate. If you are not willing to work with other’s ‘deplorables’ then America will simply leave you behind. I see America moving to a better place when we work together and stop name calling. Please stand in front of a mirror and say these names to yourself. Is that OK with you? I think not! Please keep me on the email list. Keeping you accountable.”

Wow. Realizing I had struck a nerve, my first impulse was to apologize. After all, just because Carson believes the pyramids were built to store grain, does that really make him a whack-a-doodle?

But my second impulse was to seek guidance from history. Some pertinent quotations came to mind. The first, from President John F. Kennedy quoting Edmund Burke:

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”

Sticks and Stones and Trump (continued)

It is patently obvious that Trump and his band of millionaires are determined to propel the country in a radically different and dangerous direction. Trump’s emotional and intellectual deficiencies are well documented. Some of his cabinet picks have shown utter contempt for the rule of law by refusing to submit financial disclosures. Trump’s closest advisors are arrogant and mendacious. I submit that, as a group, they are evil. They cannot be allowed to triumph.

My critic thinks I have “become what I hate,” and that if I choose not to work with the Trump forces, I’ll be left behind as the country starts “moving to a better place.” Does anyone really believe Trump’s America will be a better place for the middle class? I offer another quote, this one from President Dwight D. Eisenhower:

“May we never confuse honest dissent with disloyal subversion.”

Donald Trump has the lowest pre-inauguration rating of any president in modern history, with good reason. Political pundits, the press and informed Americans all over the country are alarmed by his obstinate refusal to accept facts, his pre-adolescent obsession with Twitter and his snarling contempt for the press. I choose to stand my ground, rather than turning the other cheek while he destroys our democracy. One final quote, this one from Adolph Hitler:

“How fortunate for governments that the people they administer don’t think.”

We all watched in horror as Trump supporters physically attacked dissenters, while Trump cheered them on. We all were stunned when Trump attacked a disabled reporter, an ex-POW turned US

Sticks and Stones and Trump (continued)

Senator, and a civil rights icon. We all are dismayed by the endless succession of outright lies spouted by the President-elect and defended by his minions. We have to prove Hitler wrong. We have to think, we have to speak out and we have to dissent.

So, I'm not going to apologize for a few strong words. They can't hurt anyone.



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: _____

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) 641-6617