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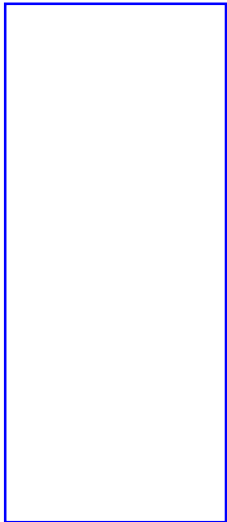
The Mountain Democrat
Newsletter Editor
PO Box 760
Oakhurst, CA 93644



The Mountain Democrat

Feb. – Mar.
2008

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The Mountain Democrat is published bimonthly by the Democratic Clubs of Eastern Madera and Mariposa Counties which are affiliated with the California Democratic Council, 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 2008

Feb 2: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Feb 5: Presidential Primary Election

Feb 9: Mariposa Club Meeting

March 2008

Mar 1: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Mar 8: Mariposa Club Meeting

April 2008

April 12: Jefferson Dinner
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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 page at:

YosemiteDems.net

MARIPOSA DEMOCRATS

Membership Renewal Time!

If there is a red line through the name on your mailing label, your membership has expired! We want each and every one of you back! Our low, low membership fee is only **\$5.00**. per person, but *please consider making an additional donation as well.* Your support is especially needed this year.

Name (s)

Address

Phone

E-Mail

Amount Enclosed: _____

Mail to Mariposa Democratic Club
5409 Tip Top Road, Mariposa, CA 95338

THANK YOU!

The California Democratic Council Convention

by Jery Lacayo

... is coming to Fresno on May 3 and 4. There will be speakers, workshops, training, a chance to vote for endorsement of Candidates on the June ballot, and much more. Every club and central committee needs to update its roster, list its officers, and designate its delegates. All affiliation paperwork and delegate designations must be completed by mid April. It is not often that we have a convention so close to home, and this will be our best opportunity to achieve full delegate representation from our area clubs.

Every effort is being made to make this a truly grassroots convention. Candidate and issue groups will have an opportunity to purchase table space to support their interests, and political merchandise will be available. The convention will begin on Saturday morning and close on Sunday afternoon and prices for meals will be very affordable. Also, room rates for those who might want to stay overnight will be \$110.00 (double occupancy, limited rooms available) if reserved two weeks prior to the convention.

I am hoping many of you will want to help with this event, and there will be many opportunities to participate for anyone interested. Please let me know if you are willing to help. Our area will be hosting this state convention and I hope we will put our best feet forward. This new, revitalized, CDC is making its mark in many areas throughout the state. Support of club development has just resulted in the formation of a very successful new club in Orange County which boasts a membership of 40 and a treasury of \$3000.00. Way to go CDC!

Those of us in the central part of the state look forward to ongoing assistance in our efforts to grow and win. If we all work together we will see great progress. Join the team!

Regional Meeting Notice

By Jery Lacayo

The California Democratic Council is hosting a regional meeting for the Area Central South on February 23. The purpose of this meeting is to develop a network designed to bring coordination, cooperation and consolidation to the many Democratic efforts in the central part of the state. I hope that each organization within the central area will designate one or more representatives to attend meetings, and share information throughout our area. As travel becomes more expensive and time is always a concern, it is clear that I, as Area Vice-president, will find it impossible to visit every organization on a regular basis, but the need for communication and cooperation among activists is paramount.

In a perfect world, everyone would participate in this effort, communication would be excellent, we would all support events, issues and candidates in an effective, cooperative and successful manner. We would all become good friends who could count on one another, and we would actually look forward to getting together. You may be aware that the real world is not yet perfect. It is clear that not everyone will participate, and not everyone will grow very fond of everyone else. However, for those who do choose to participate, I believe that a good portion of everything described above is possible—even likely. I love working with, and getting to know other Democrats, because they are some of the nicest people around. It is always satisfying to work toward making the world a better place, while sharing the effort and hopes with others of like mind. We live in a politically difficult place, and it is pretty lonely out there. It will take time to build this group into a cohesive unit, but it will be well worth the time and effort.

Please join us on Saturday, February 23, at 11am at Denny's, 1110 E. Shaw near First St. in Fresno. Please plan to eat lunch as our use of the room is based on orders. RSVP is not required, but would be appreciated at 209-7427891 or JeryTBEST1@aol.com

From Lee Stetson, President, Mariposa Democratic Club

Greetings, fellow Club members, and good Democrats everywhere,

At the December holiday party/meeting, Club attendees unanimously supported the nominated slate of candidates for your Executive Board Officers for 2008. And at the January meeting on the 12th, a slightly larger crowd watched as our previous President and tireless worker for the Club, *Les Marsden*, installed the nominated in their office, and swore them to their duties.

These eleven officers of your Club are: President, *Lee Stetson*; 1st Vice-President, *Laura Lee*; 2nd Vice-President *John Stewart*; Recording Secretary, *Sally Punte*; Correspondence Secretary, *Katie Heth*; Treasurer, *Jane Jones*; Assistant Treasurer, *Vicki Roland*; and Executive Board Members at Large; *Jery Lacayo*, *Les Marsden*, *Tom Martin* and *Shirley Schmelzer*.

I am of course delighted to serve as your President for the coming year, and feel blessed to have at my side these fellow board members, who have, for so long a time, committed their energy, resources, and expertise to Club affairs.

And your help, too, is needed, wanted and will be appreciated! We have before us an election year of both challenge and opportunity, and the energy of our Executive Board will be devoted to increased communication, full commitment to consensus goals and strategies as they are developed, and to expanding membership and interaction.

Our traditional events—the Jefferson Dinner, the Mariposa Fair, the Cajun Festival, and the monthly Saturday Breakfast—will be, as usual, front and center on the agenda. But the 2008 Campaign Year, as one of our splendid Democratic candidates emerges to claim the White House, is already invigorating Mariposa Democrats. And that process should provide ample opportunity to

Mariposa Democratic Club (continued)

grow our base, invite increased participation, and acquire some additional skills of communication and organizing. Your Board wants your help in becoming an ever more visible presence in the Mariposa community, a presence notable for its sensible *Democratic* viewpoints and worthwhile contributions. To get involved, do come to our meetings—the second Saturday of every month at the Bootjack Stompers Hall. Talk it up, bring friends, come early to share your feisty opinions and general outlook, and come hungry—a \$6 dollar delicious breakfast is served at 9:00 AM. The official agenda is launched about 9:30 or so, and all are very welcome.

AND SAVE THIS DATE, TOO – APRIL 12th !!

The Jefferson Dinner, always a highlight of our year, has been scheduled for April 12th at the Best Western Hotel in downtown Mariposa, a venue generously provided to us once again by *Jerry Fischer*. You can expect a delicious meal inspired by Jefferson himself and served at Monticello, the mountaintop home of the 3rd President of the United States. The dinner will be provided by *Naked Catering*, made possible by the generous contribution of members *Heather Bernikoff* and *David Raboy*, and sponsored in part through the *American Vegetable Oil Recyclers*. Details regarding *music* and *speakers* will soon be forthcoming, though there's a rumor floating about that *President Jefferson himself* may make his presence felt. Tickets for this always sold-out event are now available for only \$25 dollars per person. They can be purchased by contacting Jery at (209) 966-3367 or Ellie at (559) 658-2342.

As Les reminded us in the last newsletter, we can't afford to be lulled into thinking that the widespread disgust the nation feels about the current Administration will swing the election in our favor. There's significant work ahead of us, and the Club's Board looks forward to your participation.

From Victoria Willianms, President, Oakhurst Democratic Club

Primary elections have begun and Democrats have come out in record numbers to vote. Let's do our part to help California Democrats vote in record numbers as well. If you need a ride to the polls or can give a ride, please call the club phone number.

Historically, the California voter turnout is low, about 30 % for midterm elections and up to 40% for presidential elections. That's nearly 60% of Californians who do not vote!

Perhaps one of the reasons that Californians don't vote is that California, like most states, gives its entire block of Electoral College votes to one candidate. All of California's votes are expected to go to the Democratic candidate, so why vote? A 2007 Harvard University study found almost three-quarters of Americans favor a direct national popular vote over the current system. As was mentioned at our last Oakhurst Democratic Club meeting, changing the Electoral College system via a Constitutional Amendment is a difficult process. But, as it turns out, there is another way. A number of states could change the process by passing a state law.

This law is an interstate compact called the "Agreement Among the States to Elect the President by National Popular Vote." Under this compact, all of the electoral votes of a member state would be awarded to the presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states (and DC). The compact would take effect only when enacted, in identical form, by states possessing a majority of the electoral votes. Thus, when the compact takes effect, it would guarantee the White House to the candidate with the most votes. In California this bill passed in 2007 in the Assembly and Senate but was not signed by our Governor. See www.nationalpopularvote.com for more details.

Oakhurst Democratic Club (Continued)

Every citizen's vote "counts" and is important. No more battleground states.

This would end the situation in which the winner of the Electoral College votes takes the office of President, regardless of who wins the popular vote.

In States where the polls show that the vote is close, possible tampering with the ballots would not have the huge effect on the election that it could under the current system.

Also, since this bill has bipartisan support it may be good for discussion with Republican friends!

So, let's first vote Feb 5th for our Democratic Party Candidate, and work to get him or her elected. Then let's fix the Electoral College System bringing America closer to the democracy we all want.



Dancing at the Bootjack Stompers Hall

By Kathryn Heth

Last night I danced at the annual Cajun Feast & Costume Ball at the Bootjack Stompers Hall. This lively event sponsored by the Mariposa Democratic Club welcomes people of all political persuasions. My husband of 57 years couldn't accompany me because he suffered a massive stroke 10 years ago and is physically disabled. Instead I went with my friend Donna.

Featured was the red hot music of the Yosemite Dixieland Band..live! The moment the music began, people were on their feet. I hadn't danced in many years, but surprisingly without hesitation, I jumped up, signaled to my guest for the evening and together we launched onto the dance floor. Donna wore a wicked authentic pirate's outfit complete with a Groucho Marx nose. I joked that I was costumed as a little old lady. "You think it was easy getting this hair gray? Putting these lines in my face? Or finding these orthopedic shoes?"

When we both began whirling and twirling, inventing our own moves, never touching, my "bad leg" was forgotten and I assumed that neither was the pirate's "restless leg syndrome" going to be an issue.

The band was playing a perennial favorite, "Bill Bailey Won't You Please Come Home" and I softly sang along while dancing because I knew all the words. "I'll do the cookin' honey. I'll pay the rent.."

Later, having abandoned the pirate and taken up with a glittery butterfly, I actually pulled off the long chiffon scarf from around my neck and twirled and dragged it Gypsy Rose Lee style across the floor behind me. Too bad the band wasn't playing "Let Me Entertain You". I know all the words to that song too.

We were a jolly lively bunch. Lots of actual "Bootjack Stompers" were in the crowd.

Dancing at the Bootjack Stompers Hall (Continued)

Last night I had a marvelous time. The Cajun feast was delicious featuring shrimp Jambalaya with black-eye peas, aromatic rice, okra a la Bayou and Mardi Gras salad. Dessert was southern chocolate pecan pie and praline pecan ice cream. With all that dancing, of course everyone was hungry.

I was home at 8PM. Yes, it was that late! I told my husband about the way I had danced and assured him that I'd had a good time. We talked long into the night about dancing, Cajun food, politics and how our lives used to be compared to what they are now.

When I finally went to bed, I lay awake thinking about my evening's adventure certain that I would always fondly recall the night when no one watched me as I danced at the Bootjack Stompers Hall to the music of the Yosemite Dixieland Band. I can't wait until next year.



Jery Lacayo and Kathryn Heth at the 2006 Costume Ball

Republicans and Electoral College Vote “Reform”

by Ellie Schermerhorn

After listening to Matthew Jude Egan, Ph.D, J.D. describe “The Republican Attempt to Divide California’s Electoral Votes” at the December Oakhurst Democratic Club meeting, I was impressed. You’ve gotta hand it to those wily Republicans. They’re skillful at creating ways to tilt elections in their favor, and have the money to implement their craftiest ideas.

Witness the “Presidential Election Reform Act” filed by Arnold Schwarzenegger’s personal attorney for election issues, Sacramento lawyer **Thomas Hiltachk** of *Bell, McAndrews & Hiltachk, LLP* which bills itself as “specializing in campaign, election and administrative law and litigation”. Hiltachk also represented John Kerry’s nemesis, the “Swift Boaters”, on legal issues the group had in California.

Super-rich Congressional Representative Daryl Issa, a lead financier in Gray Davis’ recall, stepped in with his checkbook to fund the initiative and top-notch signature gathering experts were hired to get the required number (Note: Each signature is worth \$3.75 to the worker who convinces a voter to sign).

Brilliant execution and an ingenious plan: Pass an initiative that would change California from an electoral vote “winner take all” state to one which allocates electoral votes based on the popular vote in each Congressional district. Looking back at the 2004 election, this would have given 22 more votes to President Bush, or about the number of electoral votes allocated to the state of Ohio.

So pass initiative and - BINGO- Republican Presidential candidate wins!

We’re likely to see this initiative on either the June or November ballot. If it’s on the June ballot, *turnout will likely be low, and that*

Republicans and Electoral College Vote “Reform” (continued)

favors Republicans. If it’s on the November ballot and passes, it could be implemented when the Electoral College votes are tallied in December.

Arguments Against the Initiative

Keep these arguments in mind when talking to your friends and neighbors:

1. If Republicans are so interested in equal representation, why aren’t they pursuing this in other states? Why just in California?
2. Article 2 of the Constitution says *state legislators have the right to decide how electoral votes are allocated.* This was part of the Supreme Court’s argument in Bush v Gore, so the initiative may be unconstitutional.
3. Allocating electoral votes by congressional district doesn’t achieve greater fairness in results since *Congress draws the districts and they are gerrymandered* across the country to assure each Congressperson’s reelection.



Matthew Jude Egan Speaking to the Oakhurst Club

Second Annual Thomas Jefferson Community Service Essay Award

By Jim Archer

The Mariposa Democratic Club will be sponsoring the Second Annual Thomas Jefferson Community Service Essay Award. This essay contest will be open to all Mariposa County Unified School District seniors. Qualifications for the award will include currently enrolled high school seniors in good standing having a GPA of 2.0 or better. The intent of the essay contest is to provide financial assistance to those students who have contributed to their community in the past and intend to do so in the future.

A letter of recommendation from a community member who can validate a student's community service will be required to accompany the essay and the application form. All completed applications must be returned to the student's school no later than noon on Monday, March 3, 2008.

Following the judging of all entries, the finalist will be awarded a \$500.00 cash prize provided by the Mariposa Democratic Club. Service to family, community and country reflects the highest of values our young students can embrace. The Mariposa Democratic Club wishes to reward past services and encourage future endeavors through this essay contest and would like to recognize those students who engage in community services.

At this time, the Mariposa Democratic Club intends to have the essay contest winner attend the Jefferson Dinner on April 12, 2008. A reading of the winning essay and presentation of the \$500.00 will be included in the festivities of the evening.



YOU ARE INVITED

To the

MARIPOSA

JEFFERSON

DINNER

“A warm mountain gathering of Democratic friends ”

That’s how one of our community described this event, but it can be described in many ways.

It is casually elegant in the Sierra tradition

It’s a gourmet delight made with love and care

It’s a chance to get somebody out of the kitchen

And enjoy a feast somebody else will prepare.

So join with us then for a night filled with magic

Inspiring speakers who won’t talk too long

Share music and laughter with friends who are jolly

And all of this now can be yours for a song!

The Jefferson Dinner

Saturday, April 12, 6:30 PM

Best Western Banquet Room, Mariposa

\$25.00 per person 209-742-7891

Endorsement Vote Shows Surprising Results

(from www.cdc-ca.org)



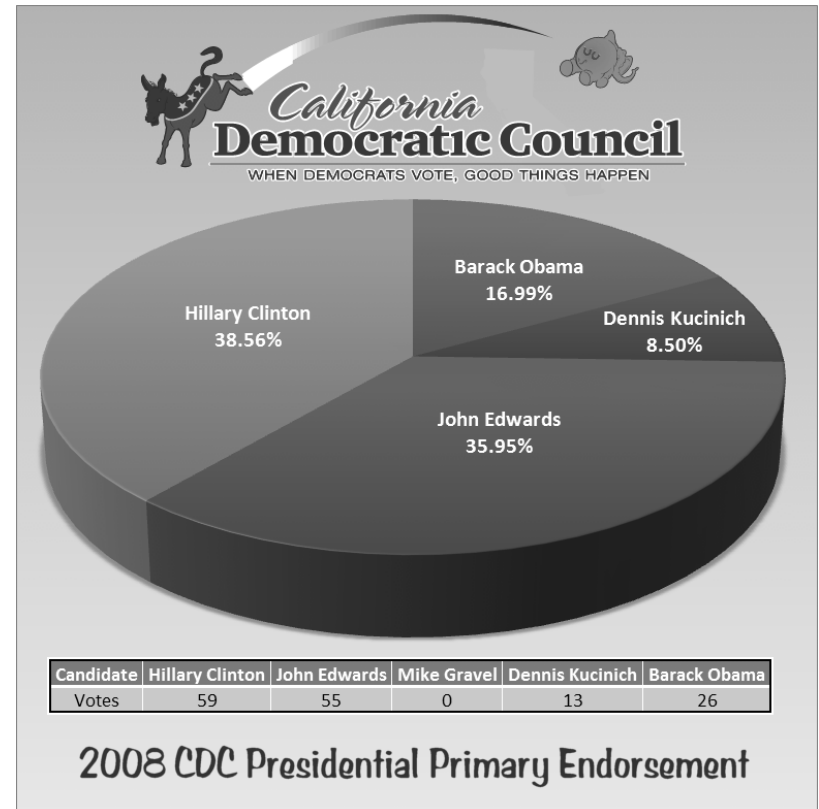
Despite the short notice and heavy workload during this election cycle, over 150 delegates from across California participated in the California Democratic Council's first ever online endorsement vote. Delegates from both the Oakhurst and Mariposa Democratic Clubs participated.

Although no candidate received the official 60% needed for an endorsement, the mix of grassroots participants shows a different story than most polls have typically indicated.

With 59 votes, Hillary Clinton barely squeaked past John Edwards' 55 votes. Surprisingly, Barack Obama came in at a distant third with only 26 votes followed by Dennis Kucinich with 13.

While we obviously cannot draw any definite conclusions from this small sample of voters, it does seem to indicate that among California party regulars, there is a different type of battle going on when independents and not so 'active' voters aren't added to the mix.

Endorsement Vote (continued)



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Annual Dues are \$5.00 per person
(Mariposa lifetime membership is \$100)

Today's Date: _____

Mariposa Club: _____ or Oakhurst Club: _____

New Member: _____ or Renewal: _____

How did you find out about us? _____

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Telephone: (_____) _____

E-Mail: _____ Fax: _____

Supervisorial District (if known): _____

Name: _____

Mailing 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
5409 Tip Top Road		PO Box 760
Mariposa, CA 95338		Oakhurst, CA 93644
(209) 966-3367		(559) 658-2342



FLOAT FOR RENT

Our giant, splashy and wonderful float is for rent!
Tell your friends and relations.
For information call Jerry Lacayo

Mortimer Mouse Sez...
OK DEMOCRATS!
WE ARE GOING TO WIN
THIS YEAR.
Got it?

