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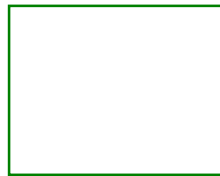
The Mountain Democrat
Newsletter Editor
PO Box 760
Oakhurst, CA 93644



The Mountain Democrat

Feb. – Mar. 2012

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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 2012

Feb 4: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Feb 11: Mariposa Club Meeting

March 2012

Mar 3: Oakhurst Club Meeting

Mar 10: Mariposa Club Meeting

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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 Democratic Club

**PLEASE RENEW
FINAL ISSUE**

**If this label is on the cover of your newsletter
it means that our records indicate your 2011 club
dues have not been paid.**

It's the beginning of the year, and time to renew your Mariposa Democratic Club membership! 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 are \$10 per person and \$15 per family, but please consider donating extra to help us do more!

Campaign Year: Full Throttle Ahead

Les Marsden

We're facing one of the most important election years of our lives. Yes, I know EVERY election year is so described, but the stakes for 2012 are particularly high.

Flatly: President Obama must be re-elected. Mull a couple of critical reasons: if a Republican takes the Oval Office, the already far-right Supreme Court will be packed with more conservative constructionists in the mold of Scalia (75), Alito (61), Thomas (63) and Roberts (57). (I've listed their current ages in parentheses.) With Kennedy (75) usually casting the deciding conservative-leaning vote, the current SCOTUS has been able to do an incredible amount of damage—merely note the dreadful 1/21/2010 "Citizens United" decision. Our only bulwarks against further damage are the generally left-leaning Ginsburg (78), Breyer (73), Sotomayor (57) and Kagan (51). But with Ginsburg's on-and-off health problems, she's the most likely member to leave the court during the next presidential term. And we cannot afford for her sage voice to be replaced by President Gingrich or President Romney's lunatic pick in the tradition of Scalia. Or worse.

Barack Obama must be re-elected because our economic recovery is at stake. And no matter what the GOP/Fox/Limbaugh propaganda lie-machines tell you, we ARE recovering. The right labels the president (and Democratic policies in general) as "job-killers" but despite the mess left behind by George W. Bush, in Barack Obama's first three years, America has gained 1,608,000 jobs (through the end of 2011). Compared to the 4,511,000 jobs LOST during Bush's second term alone. And those are the factual figures provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

I'll give you more ammunition in the year ahead, but let's also remember that the down-ticket races are equally important. Senator Dianne Feinstein is up for re-election. Jack Uppal of Lincoln is running for our new Congressional District 04 in an

Campaign Year: Full Throttle Ahead (continued)

uphill battle against the reprehensible far-right extremist Tom McClintock—and as I write, Jack just unanimously won the Region 7 pre-endorsement vote which will now be offered to the entire California Democratic Party for approval (and official CDP endorsement) at our party convention in San Diego Feb 10-12. Jack will need all the help we can give—please check him out at JackUppal.com and write him at jackuppal@gmail.com.

Also running in our region: Marc Boyd of Arnold, who seeks the State Assembly 05 seat. Among other Republicans, Marc may ultimately face Frank Bigelow, whose record is well known (particularly) to our Madera Democrats. Marc has spoken to both the Oakhurst and Mariposa Democratic Clubs and unfortunately due to the deadline for this piece, I haven't heard back from him re: his quest for the party endorsement but I do know he was very actively seeking it. Marc may be reached at md.boyd@yahoo.com and just like Jack: Marc needs our help. The only way for a Democrat to prevail in our GOP-favored districts is with a good ground game, and that's something we must provide. Unfortunately, no Democrat has stepped forward to run in our new State Senate (08) district.

Let's not forget that there will also be critically important ballot measures facing California come November and as usual, special interests (mostly GOP) are trying to seize power from the people. Perhaps the most important issue to watch will be the one that's come to be called the Paycheck Deception Act—in which laws would be imposed effectively banning Democratic-leaning labor money to be used for elections while not impacting the GOP-leaning corporate pelf's influence.

In the coming year, please keep your eyes and ears open—and your activism strong.

What Made Max Mad

By Peter Cavanaugh

Max Richie was a Powerhouse Man.

“We lived in an Edison Community. These were little communities around The Powerhouse. We were the people who ran The Powerhouse. We maintained it, worked together and lived together as next door neighbors. Our kids went to school together. I lived with them for 15—20—maybe 25 years.”

Max said these words last December 3rd at our year’s end meeting of the Oakhurst Democratic Club at the Ol’ Kettle as we introduced what was to become a regular closing highlight designated as, “A Moment with Max.”

I get to moderate these monthly sessions, having not been present a while back when a vote was taken by membership as to who should get stuck doing such a thing.

Here was my introduction to “A Moment with Max” as transcribed from a fortuitous recording of same:

“We have something special we’ve decided to close these meetings with from now on. We have a TREASURE in our organization. He’s 90 years old. He’s been on his best behavior today—just sitting here waiting for his turn—so I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the inaugural appearance of ‘A Moment with Max’—Max Richie!”

(Enthusiastic applause)

Max lived in North Fork, having been a Merchant Seaman in the South Pacific during World War Two—later joining Southern California Edison in 1947 and operating in the Powerhouse for 33 years until his retirement in 1980. It was while working for Edison that Max joined the International Brotherhood of Electrical

What Made Max Mad (continued)

Workers (IBEW) and became a union steward, at one time leading a strike against Edison which brought about milestone changes in wages, benefits and working conditions across the board. He continued his role as a primary union negotiator with Edison for the remainder of his years with SCE.

Max was heading north on Highway 49 Saturday morning, January 14th, to participate in a Mariposa County Democratic Central Committee symposium when he died.

His son, Charles, shares these thoughts:

“The family has talked it over, and decided that we could not have picked a better way for Dad to spend his last day than to wake up excited, discussing what he might say, printing off copies of a ‘Thank You’ letter from Bernie Sanders and be on his way to his next Democratic activity.”

Max K. Richie was spending his 91st year still on the ball—on the road, on the move, because Max K. Richie was mad—and getting madder all the time.

Max was always writing “Letters to the Editor”—the Sierra Star and Fresno Bee his primary recipients. On October 3, 2010, The Bee honored Max with featured recognition in their highly circulated Sunday “Meet Our Letter Writers” segment.

Pam Rowse of the Bee remembers Max well. “I was so sad to hear of Mr. Richie's passing. He has been writing letters, probably before I started working here in 1977. I remember he used to hand write all of his letters. He had very distinctive penmanship. Even though I don't have any of those hand-written letters, I can still see his very unique writing in my mind to this day.”

The reason Max wrote all those letters all those years was for the

What Made Max Mad (continued)

same single word Gore Vidal once used in explaining why he has remained so politically energized and active even after becoming severely debilitated and confined to a wheel chair.

“Rage!”

Rather than delineate specifics with any attempt at inclusive summary to create a litany of all the things that made Max mad, might I suggest the following publications Max devoured with passionate commitment and always consistently and insistentlly recommended to others?

Liberal Opinion

The Nation

Mother Jones

The Progressive

Dissent

Monthly Review

Industrial Worker

and Fresno’s Community Alliance.

I bring these to your attention with endorsement in the name of Max K. Richie: Socialist.

One of the finest men I’ve ever known.



Max Richie

In Praise of Corporations (Reply To Anne Brock)

By Lucille Aparcar

Anne—I read your defense of corporations, and I agree with you, not all corporations or independent businesses are the bad guys. There seems to be a tendency to lump all business, large and small, under a single banner and that is a mistake.

What we have been seeing over the past 30 or so years, has been the buying and selling of businesses, mostly by large investors or groups of investors. Another is the growth of franchises, and a third has been the development of so-called “Holding Companies”. In my estimation each in their own way have been both good and bad for the economy; I tend to lean toward the latter. Another disturbing trend has been the Universities emulating these practices to the detriment of basic education.

All of the above have relentlessly pursued deregulation, destroying the checks and balances that have served us well for many years. We are seeing the effects of that now.

Most have become extraordinarily powerful both in Washington and abroad, I fear, to the downgrading of the working person and to the general public. The growth of so-called “Global” companies have altogether too frequently influenced Washington. And I am not talking about American Global companies; I am concerned about outside interests as well. America has always tried to encourage foreign investment on our soil, but my gut feeling is that perhaps we may have gone too far.

I do not advocate protectionism. For one thing, that would be ridiculous in today’s age of communication, but I do feel the same rules that apply when we do business abroad should also be observed here. That would be common courtesy, NOT a detriment to trade.

I would be glad to debate this with you or anyone else interested.

January 21st Oakhurst Democratic Forum
Photographs by Ken West



January 21st Oakhurst Democratic Forum
Photographs by Ken West



Dr. Gary Latshaw's Climate Reality Change Project

By Les Marsden

The Mariposa County Democratic Central Committee presented Dr. Gary Latshaw's multi-media Climate Reality Change Project program to a packed house at Miners Inn in Mariposa on January 14th. Offering an illuminative and all-encompassing overview in conjunction with the training received in Al Gore's CRCP, Dr. Latshaw of Cupertino served as an authoritative voice and answered many well-informed questions from the eager crowd.

Dr. Latshaw later wrote glowingly to organizer/MCDCC Chair Les Marsden that "of all the presentations, yours was the most rewarding one that I have given. The audience was very attentive and the questions were well thought out. I appreciate the opportunity to know some Californians who live such a different, but rewarding, lifestyle."

The retired physicist has been actively involved with climate change issues for three decades and began offering his own presentations predating those of Al Gore's organization, with which he now works conjunctively. Further information on the international presentations of the Climate Reality Change Project may be found at <http://climaterealityproject.org/> and information about requesting a presentation to your organization is available at that website.



Dr. Gary Latshaw

Photos From Mariposa The Club and MCDCC Meetings



A Message from Marc Boyd

California Democratic Party's Candidate for the Foothill Assembly District, AD-5

I am honored to be the Democratic Party's candidate for the Foothill Assembly District (AD-5).

I believe that this is an historic election for the state of California. We cannot allow any more cuts to education, public safety, and economic development. Now is the time to move California forward by restoring funding levels necessary to restore economic prosperity.

I live in Arnold and I'm currently working as a substitute teacher in Calaveras County. I'm also a retired high school sports official (of 35 years). I have a BA degree from San Jose State's Political Science Department. I also have an AA degree from Columbia College.

In my final semester at San Jose State in 2005 I completed a successful internship with the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. Recently, I completed an Assembly Internship determining whether a 1949 Replica of California's First Statehouse can be saved from demolition.

In addition, I've been politically active for the past decade working on political campaigns and advocating for improved access to health care, greater environmental protection, and transitioning to clean energy. In 2008, I presented a Climate Action Plan to the Calaveras Planning Coalition.

If I'm elected, the first thing I will do is to ask every school and public facility in the district to prepare a feasibility study for an on-site solar power system. Solar partnership agreements are providing electrical power to publicly owned facilities at a reduced rate and without any start-up costs.

A Message from Marc Boyd (Continued)

This will help us reduce government spending, create good paying jobs, and lower our greenhouse gases.

I also support a single-payer health care system that will reduce overall health care costs and prevent the financial hardship associated with the rising cost of medical care. In addition, I support the California Disclose Act which would require large contributors of political ads to be clearly disclosed.

Finally, I'd like to share a story of a brief conversation I had with Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom when he recently visited Opera Hall in Sonoma. I mentioned to him that I'm exploring the possibility of running for the Assembly seat in the newly-established Foothill District. He looked at me directly in the eyes and said, "Make it happen."

Throughout my campaign, I will work very hard every day to show my dedication, my work ethic, and my commitment to the people of this district. My campaign will be a positive one focused on solutions to our many challenges. If you live in the Foothill Assembly District (AD-5), I hope to earn your vote. I also hope to see you out on the campaign trail.



Marc Boyd

Deregulation

By Jack Uppal

Candidate for the U.S. Congress in California's 4th district

As my wife and I have been traveling around our huge district, which, I must add, is the most beautiful congressional district in the nation, we have had the pleasure of meeting some of the nicest, well informed, and passionate people anywhere. I get this passion. It is the same passion that led me to run for Congress. All of us are the disinherited. We see a government that is less and less responsive to our needs, and more responsive to corporate needs. Congress is there to represent us, but through money, it is owned by special interests.

A key distinction between my opponent, Mr. McClintock, and me is that Mr. McClintock believes that government needs to “get out of the way.” He says government must shrink and we must remove regulations that are choking our small businesses. To this end, he would remove regulations intended to protect us from corporate and institutional greed. I just don't see it that way at all.

There are ideals common to us all—Democrats and Republicans, right and left, conservatives and liberals, that we all share. We all believe in fairness. We all value individual liberties. We all believe in laws that protect people from thievery, from swindlers, and from crooks. We tried deregulation in banking and we got the housing disaster in 2008. We tried deregulating power companies and we got the Enron scandal in 2001. Fundamentally, the chief goal of corporations is to be profitable for their shareholders. But deregulation legalizes greed, and it hasn't worked—ever. I agree that we have some regulations that are onerous and do not serve us well. But, the solution is not to blindly remove all regulations on business. We must tidy up the regulations we have. But, we must absolutely keep regulations in place that protect our money from being stolen by banks, keep our food supply safe, keep our drugs

Deregulation (continued)

safe, keep our airplanes and automobiles safe, and keep our environment safe. While the goal of corporations is to be profitable, the goal of government is fundamentally to protect our people. And one thing our government must do is to protect people from institutions that, once unshackled by deregulation, would prey upon our people.

This battle cry to cut regulations is one to watch out for this election year. Just keep in mind that cutting regulation is the definition of deregulation, and try to think back to when we last benefited from some kind of deregulation. Deregulation is nothing more than government abdicating its responsibility to protect us. And deregulation at a time when business already has too much undue influence over government is not in our best interest. But, wait, of course, that influence of business over government is exactly where the cries for deregulation are coming from.



Jack Uppal



PLEASE "LIKE"
YOSEMITE DEMOCRATS
NOW ON



The Oakhurst and Mariposa Democratic Clubs now have a Facebook page. Keep up with all the latest club and Democratic happenings by following us there!

*If you need assistance, contact Scott Hill at
 scott@k6ix.net or 559-658-2342.*

See the newsletter in **COLOR** at: YosemiteDems.net

Mortimer Mouse Sez...

OK DEMOCRATS!!

IT IS ELECTION YEAR

Time to "Get Our Act Together"
 (But then would we be Democrats?)



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Today's Date: _____

___ Mariposa: Annual Dues are \$10.00 per person
 \$15.00 family
 Lifetime membership \$150.00

or

___ Oakhurst: Annual Dues are \$5.00 per person

___ 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
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Mariposa, CA 95338		Oakhurst, CA 93644
(209) 742-1010		(559) 658-2342