

Beach Cities Democratic Club



P.O. Box 2192, Redondo Beach, CA 90278

May, 2010

Next Meeting

Manhattan Bread and Bagel
1808 North Sepulveda Boulevard
Manhattan Beach
Wednesday, May 26, 7:30 PM

Water Conservation Forum

Saturday, June 5th
8:30 AM to noon
Pacific Unitarian Church
5621 Montemalaga Drive
Rancho Palos Verdes

Worried about running out of water? Is desalination the answer?

Come learn about the options at a public forum on "Desalinization or Conservation."

Coffee and refreshments will be served before the program. Environmental groups will have tables there to display their information. The sponsoring groups, our EPN and the South Bay Parkland Conservancy, have serious concerns about the problems that desalination can cause, and want the community to be aware of these impacts. Both pro and anti desal points of view will be presented.

For further information contact Lillian Light at llight@verizon.net (310-545-1384) or Jim Light at jim.light@verizon.net (310-989 3332).

Lillian Light

Fiesta Volunteers Needed

BCDC will have a booth at the Hermosa Beach Fiesta on Memorial Day weekend, May 29 – 31. The "free speech" zone will be located across the bike path this year because of construction near the Pier, but we expect to have lots of visitors and will share our booth with candidates. Ray Waters is asking for volunteers and is coordinating the schedule.

CANDIDATE FORUM

By Dency Nelson



In what was probably the last opportunity before the June 8 primary election to see the Democratic candidates for the 53rd A.D. gathered at the same time in the same place, 6 of the 8 remaining candidates appeared together Saturday afternoon, May 8, at the Knob Hill Community Center in Redondo Beach. (Candidate Diane Wallace was unable to attend due to an unexpected death in her family late Friday night; candidate Peter Thottam had a previously scheduled litigation-related commitment.) Organizer Lori Geittmann introduced the moderator, Mayor Michael DiVirgilio of Hermosa Beach; the question screener, Professor Lance Widman of El Camino Community College; and the time-keeper, Ray Waters of the Hermosa Beach School Board.

The format for this Candidate Forum, co-sponsored by the Beach Cities and Torrance Democratic clubs, mirrored the procedure used at the West L.A. Democratic Club's Candidate Forum earlier this year. The candidates were given 2 minutes each to introduce themselves and then a 1½-minute time limit for each question posed by Mayor DiVirgilio. At the end of the question session, the candidates were each given a minute in which to make a final statement. As each question was posed, all of the candidates responded to it in turn along the table where they were seated alphabetically, also taking turns at being the first to respond to a question. Candidates Kate Anderson and Edgar Saenz arrived a bit late due to prior commitments and traffic,

so Betsy Butler was the first to present her introductory statement.

Betsy Butler opened with, "Anyone get any interesting mail about me lately?" This in reference to the multiple negative mass mailings that have been targeting her as a lobbyist. Butler denied being a lobbyist, stating that one needs to be registered with the state as a lobbyist, and that she is not so registered. What she does call herself is a "very successful fundraiser" for many groups of people, including trial lawyers, and says that big insurance and pharmaceutical companies are afraid of her.

Nick Karno opened by saying that everyone has their own idea of who or what is to blame for California's troubles: the 2/3 rule, budget gridlock, Gov. Schwarzenegger, to name a few. Karno's view is that we don't have legislators in Sacramento who are willing to work toward eliminating the problems. He went on to say that he was the only one of the candidates sitting at the table who had been a teacher, had worked as an environmental activist for Al Gore, or had run a company dealing with energy efficiency, and that he was prepared to "transform the District."

James Lau described himself as a life-long Democrat and a life-long environmental advocate, saying that he had grown up with a love for the outdoors and that he learned in his classes that the outdoors he loved would all disappear. He went on to earn a degree in Environmental Engineering, became a Sierra Club canvasser, and worked in Sacramento as an environmental consultant to a State Senator. He has also worked as a children's advocate for healthcare and other issues.

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(Forum, continued from page 1)

Edgar Saenz, after wishing everyone a Happy Mother's Day, described himself as having come from a working class family, having married a Torrance and Redondo Beach native, and having served as Environmental Deputy for Congresswoman Diane Watson. He believes in the promise of hope and change offered by the Democratic Party and that "our party looks like America." He identifies himself as a Progressive, and on local issues he is "crazy passionate" for a Green Line extension to the airport, for a dog beach, and for the continued preservation of the Ballona Wetlands. He is for Universal Healthcare, is against Prop. 8, and is for the legalization and taxation of marijuana.

Mitch Ward introduced himself as twice Mayor of Manhattan Beach, with 15 years on the Manhattan Beach City Council and 20 years a resident of Manhattan Beach. He stated that the new Manhattan Beach Police and Fire Headquarters, the Metlox Plaza and the up-scale Shade Hotel were all completed on

his watch, that he was "all about jobs, small business jobs," and that he himself was a small business owner who wants more incentives for small businesses. He emphasized that in Manhattan Beach they have achieved balanced budgets with a surplus and have given large amounts of money to their local schools, which he said is why over 50 local mayors and elected officials have endorsed him.

Kate Anderson thanked everyone for attending and for participating in democracy with their involvement. She went on to say that people have asked her why she would want to get involved with the "train wreck" in Sacramento by running for the California Assembly. She stated that she sees the problematic situation as an opportunity for positive change. She explained that she first became interested in politics when she was elected UCLA student body president. After graduating she became an intern for Congressman Henry Waxman, but after only 4 days into that internship she was hired to work for him fulltime. She says that many who

work in Washington, DC, become cynical about government, but her own experiences there made her less cynical about the power for good of government. She wants to take what she learned from Congressman Waxman to Sacramento. She also said that a high priority for her would be to get rid of the 2/3 rule.

For the remainder of the 2-hour forum, the 6 candidates addressed 8 questions that touched, respectively, on their top priority as a legislator should they be elected, the crisis in school funding, Prop 13, the state prison system, the film industry, the Arizona Immigration Bill, campaign finance reform and the public workers' pension crisis. What was apparent to this reporter and, I can't help but assume, to all in the room is that these candidates are all basically in agreement as to what needs to be done to make a better California. In terms of policy and method, the answers they gave were very much the same, with absolutely no controversy, and no discernible disagreement, emerging from any of the responses given. The differences between them, in this Democrat's point of view, are largely differences in style and areas of strength.

We have an "embarrassment of riches" in these candidates, any one of whom is more than capable of doing the job for us in Sacramento. What we really need is 7 more Assembly districts, so that all 8 candidates could go to Sacramento and do the work for which they are all ready, willing and able. It is now our job to vote for the Democratic candidate who resonates strongest with each of us, and then without fail to stand behind whoever wins on June 8 and make sure that he or she is elected in November to represent us here from the glorious 53rd.

Editor's Note: BCDC asked Dency Nelson to report on the Candidates' Forum this month in lieu of his regular environmental column. Beach Cities Green will be back next month.

Monroe's Ruminations

Monroe Weinstock



In our February bulletin I wrote about our Supreme Court and the abominable decision to equate corporations with people. It reminds me of the Chemist who approached the Lord & said, "We no longer need your intervention to create life. We can do it ourselves!" The Lord nodded & said, "DO IT!!!" The Chemist then said, "Okay, let me scoop up a handful of dirt and...." The Lord interrupts & says, "Hold it...create your own dirt!!!" Well, our Supreme Court has just created its own DIRT!!!!

I address the subject of the Supreme Court again so soon because President Obama is faced with a serious test of his ability to maintain equal justice & civility for all Americans. He must now select a

replacement for the retiring Justice John Paul Stevens.

Justice Stevens was not a liberal. If anything, he was a true judge...fair, honest, logical, thoughtful and objective. At 89 he needed to retire. Now we must have a replacement to counter-balance the four antediluvian, conservative thinkers who seem to have lost touch with reality as well as human & humane treatment of their fellow man/woman.

I know that there will be fierce opposition to any nominee for Judge. It is not just knee jerk reaction politics, but it is part of the party of "NO" to do what any self-respecting scorpion would do...sting & destroy!!!! Someone has suggested that it might help to choose a jurist who did not graduate from Yale or Harvard! If we're lucky, the president will pick a screaming, extreme, liberal, lefty.....from City College of New York (a hotbed of agitation).

April Recap

Filling the room at our well-attended May meeting, BCDC members were honored to be met by Assemblyman Ted Lieu, who came by to say hello and thank the club for our years of support. Currently serving in the 53rd Assembly District and seeking the office of Attorney General, Lieu is widely regarded as one of our valued, grass-roots leaders. He told us it feels like coming home to be at the meeting, and then he talked about why he is in this race.

Ted grew up with the support of his hard-working immigrant parents and a country that provided him with limitless opportunity. He went on to attend Stanford and then Georgetown University, where he received his law degree, while his brother attended UC Berkeley.

Realizing he wanted to give back to his country, Ted joined the US Air Force and is now a member of the reserves, where he serves as a Lieutenant Colonel. He is seeking the Attorney General post because he wants to help ensure that others have the same opportunity to achieve the American Dream. He said the incumbent, Jerry Brown, has done a great job for California in many crucial areas including the environment and home foreclosures.

Two counties have been forced to address global warming in their development plans: A recent settlement requires Riverside and San Bernardino Counties to limit greenhouse gas emissions and devise strategies to reduce carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases.

To address the mortgage crisis, Brown filed suit against Countrywide Financial Corporation, accusing the company of causing thousands of foreclosures by deceptively marketing risky loans.

Asked how the Attorney General's office can help improve prison overcrowding, Lieu said it is the Governor who holds the most control, but the AG can use his position as a bully pulpit. He supports an emphasis on rehabilitation, stating that our current recidivism rate is about 70%. Instead of increasing rehabilitation programs, the Department of Corrections

is cutting \$250 million from its rehabilitation program budget and laying off around 800 educational and vocational prison instructors. He said, "These reductions fail both inmates and the public."

The club moved to endorse Ted Lieu and donate \$300 to his campaign.

Other endorsements were made for the following:

- Governor, Jerry Brown
- Lieutenant Governor, Janice Hahn
- Secretary of State, Debra Bowen
- Controller, John Chiang
- Treasurer, Bill Lockyer
- Insurance Commissioner, Hector de la Torre
- State Senator, Jenny Oropeza
- US Congress, Jane Harman
- US Senator, Barbara Boxer

In the 53rd AD Assembly race, Edna Murphy proposed that the club make no endorsement until after our May 8 Candidates' Forum, since there are eight candidates in the contest.

James Lau also came to the meeting to say hello and thank the club for our support in his past campaigns and for the great support of the 53rd AD delegates at the Convention. He said the campaign has always enjoyed local support, and he is "sincerely honored by the friendship of these great community leaders and volunteers." Lau has been a BCDC member for six years.

Reporting from the 53rd AD Congress, he said that the next regular meeting will be on the third Thursday in May.

The Convention

Dency Nelson reported that local Democrats were well represented at the California Democratic Convention, helped by the Los Angeles location.

At the Environmental Caucus, Jerry Brown and several other candidates showed up. On Saturday, most of the AD candidates attended Jenny Oropeza's breakfast, later followed by the 53rd AD caucus. There, James Lau received a strong majority, but he did not reach the



Ted Lieu (l) and James Lau addressed the club and thanked us for our support.

60% required for endorsement, and Debra Bowen voted for no endorsement.

Lori reported that she was honored to deliver a one-minute address to the Convention at the request of Jane Harman.

Announcements

Jim McGreevy reported that the Gardena Club will be holding a Cinco de Mayo parade in downtown Gardena.

Dency Nelson announced a Solar Homes walking tour to be held on May 8. The tour will include Dency's home and St. Cross Episcopal Church, which has installed a solar roof. Our Lady of Guadalupe is installing 250 solar panels which will provide 70 to 80 percent of the power for the church and school.

Tammy Minion reported that MoveOn.org is having a forum on corporations and lobbyists at the Harry Bridges Labor Center in San Pedro.

The meeting ended with a discussion about political neutrality in the Democratic Action Center and the 53rd AD. Jim Kennedy had made a motion to call on the DAC to proscribe anyone actively associated with the DAC from working as a paid staff member of a campaign in a contested Democratic Primary.

It was revealed that Tony Hale, to avoid a conflict of interest, had already stepped down from his DAC role when he assumed management of James Lau's campaign. The DAC office is currently staffed by Edna Murphy and other volunteers for the duration of the campaign.

There was also discussion of the DAC bylaws and of the State Democratic Party guidelines with regard to endorsements.

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Beach Cities
Democratic Club



Beach Cities Democratic Club
Membership Form



Please Print

Name _____

I (we) understand that only registered Democrats, or those intending to register, may join the club.

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Phone _____ Email _____

Employer _____ Occupation _____

Distribution of the club newsletter via e-mail saves money. Check this box *only* if you would like to receive it by US mail.

I volunteer to:

Telephone Help with mailing Hospitality Write for newsletter

Register voters Programs Legislative Membership Other

Annual dues are \$25.00 per person or \$40.00 for two at the same address.

Please make checks payable to Beach Cities Democratic Club and mail to P.O. Box 2192, Redondo Beach, CA 90278
