



## Next Meeting

Manhattan Bread & Bagel  
1812 N. Sepulveda Boulevard  
Manhattan Beach  
Wednesday, August 27  
7:30 PM

Thanks to our Vice-President Dency Nelson, we have a great guest speaker! Peter Mathews is a Political Analyst and Commentator who recently wrote the book, "**DOLLAR DEMOCRACY: WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR SOME; HOW TO RECLAIM THE AMERICAN DREAM FOR ALL.**"

We are also trying to connect with Dr. Michelle Bholat, the lone Democrat running for Beach Cities Health District, to see if she would like to meet us and seek our endorsement. If we hear from her in time, we will send out an endorsement meeting notice. If not, we can possibly add her in September.

## Overturn Citizens United

The Environmental Priorities Network would like to invite you to attend our public forum on "Overturning the disastrous Citizens United Decision" which will take place on September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The massive influx of money into our political system, made possible by the Citizens United and McCutcheon Supreme Court rulings, has created an unprecedented crisis. Millions of dollars are being spent on ads against environmentally friendly congressional candidates as well as ads opposing any kind of legislation that would tackle climate change or other environmental problems. Corporate

*( Continued on page 2)*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### FINDING DEMOCRATS WHEREVER THEIR HEARTS ARE

I find it fascinating the many different issues and paths that call us to the Democratic Party. Some are motivated by global issues, such as climate change, nuclear disarmament, or women's rights. For others, national issues are more immediate – things like mandating a living wage, offering equal opportunity through education and protection of equal rights, etc. Some are focused on regional Western and Californian issues, such as protecting our beautiful parks and coastlines.

Others may feel that these issues are



all "too big" for them – they care, but feel that they can't make a difference, that their vote doesn't really count. These disaffected, disengaged voters shake their heads as they read the news of corrupt politicians and political favors, and they gradually tune out all political news because they feel impotent to change a rigged game. They show up only for general elections, if at all. Sadly, this actually describes the majority today – that 75% of registered voters that did not vote in our June primary here in California, for example. What can we do to reach these neighbors, friends and family members? The current slate of significant local issues in our Beach Cities poses an exciting opportunity for local Democratic outreach.

In Redondo Beach, two big development proposals are coming to a

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*Overflowing crowd at our July meeting, as members came to vote for endorsing a candidate for the 26th SD*

*(President, Continued from Page 1)*  
 head: the CenterCal Waterfront Redevelopment Plan, and the new AES "Harbor Village" proposal. In July Redondo Beach Mayor Steve Aspel vetoed a vote by the City Council to put the CenterCal plan to a popular vote in November, leaving it up to the public to decide whether to bring additional pressure for more input into the final plan. Separately, AES hopes to gather enough signatures to put their Harbor Village plan, which would decommission the power plant but allow for them to reap the benefits of developing the land that it's on, on the March 2015 ballot. Stay tuned in coming months as Beach Cities Democrats invites speakers to present both sides of that issue, which will affect the entire South Bay in the years to come.

In Hermosa Beach, voters will decide March 3, 2015 whether E&B Natural Resources Management Corp. will be allowed to build its proposed oil and natural gas drilling operations. Perhaps somewhat less controversial, but still important, is the aggressive redevelopment plan of Hermosa Beach Mayor Michael DiVirgilio, who wants to "put the pedal to the metal" in speeding up Hermosa Beach's commercial makeover, including development of a new 120 room luxury hotel at Pier Plaza.

What do these issues have to do with motivating dispirited Democrats? Simply put, these "back yard" issues often move otherwise inactive voters to get involved and take action in their community. And once they see how the grassroots process works -- how concerted and consistent action can force the powers that be to listen and make changes -- they will often step up to a new level of political engagement in other areas as well. So **go ahead and forward this newsletter to a few friends who are not BCD members.** They might like hearing more about what's going on in their community, and what we're doing about it. They might appreciate knowing that there's a group that they can bring their concerns to, a vehicle

for making their voice heard. And **they just might start reengaging in the life-long process that all of us are committed to: making our world a better place, one neighborhood at a time.**

*(Overturn, continued from page 1)*

PAC's are investing millions in the campaigns of congressional hard-liners who deride the overwhelming scientific evidence that indicates that we are heading toward catastrophic climate change. The court decisions dismantle the few finance limits that we had left, and give wealthy individuals like the Koch brothers a much greater ability to sway elections and essentially buy politicians. The conflation of money with free speech has created an environment wherein money routinely drowns out other voices.

Three outstanding speakers will discuss how we can strengthen our democracy and reclaim it from corporate dominance. They are Michael Tucker, a coordinator for Move to Amend. John Smith, a Southern California Common Cause organizer, and Alison Hartson, a California State Director of Wolf PAC. We are holding our public forum at the Pacific Unitarian Church on 5621 Montemalaga Drive, in Rancho Palos Verdes.

From 9 to 10 AM, you are invited to visit the tables with information about local environmental groups. From 10 to 12 noon, our speakers will talk about how best to get congressional action on the climate crisis and other necessary environmental legislation. They will welcome questions from the audience.

Cosponsors are the South Coast Interfaith Council and the PUC Green Sanctuary Committee. Admission is free, but contributions are welcome. For more information about this event, contact Lillian Light at [llight@verizon.net](mailto:llight@verizon.net) or at 310-545-1384.

*Notice our beautiful new logo, reflecting the fact that we are now called "Beach Cities Democrats." It was designed by Jim McGreevy.*

## July Recap

*Minutes courtesy of Teresa Bird*  
 President Kathryn Campbell greeted BCD members and guests to our 26th SD Pre-endorsement meeting. The two candidates for the 26th SD are Ben Allen and Sandra Fluke. Members in good standing were able to vote by secret ballot for Fluke, Allen, No Endorsement, or Abstain. Only members of at least 30 days duration were eligible to vote; current status was verified at check-in. The winning candidate needed to receive 60% of the vote to win endorsement.

Each candidate was allowed to speak for three minutes and allow ten minutes of Q&A from the floor.

Diane Wallace and Dency Nelson counted the votes. The results were Ben Allen, 10 votes, Sandra Fluke, 34 votes, No Endorsement, one vote. Receiving over 60% of the required votes, Sandra Fluke was declared the winner.

Treasurer's report: Edna Murphy stated beginning balance: Federal, \$2,855.00; State, \$97.00, money out, \$15.00, ending balance \$82.00

Lauren Pizer Mains from Senator Ted Lieu's office, was introduced and gave a report on his current legislation. *(Continued on Page 3)*



*Above: Sandra Fluke; below, Ben Allen*

## Beach Cities Green

Dency Nelson

I'm going to veer slightly "off topic" this month, but in the larger scheme of things really not so much. (Coincidentally, it follows along similar



lines as Kathryn's President's Message in this edition.) I'm inspired once again by Joni Mitchell's "Big Yellow Taxi," a song written and recorded by Joni right about the time of my and a lot of the planet's first pop culture awareness of "ecology" and how we were treating our home, this spaceship called Earth. If I may:

*"Don't it always seem to go, you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone.*

*They paved Paradise; put up a parking lot."*

We've got a lot of issues right here in the Beach Cities that come to mind when I hear that song. Hermosa Beach Oil, Redondo Beach King Harbor development, Manhattan Beach retail, Hermosa Beach Strand & Pier Hotel, and even the Hermosa Beach Farmers' Market. What do all of these issues have in common? It's all about a rush to develop, to get bigger and supposedly better, and to bring in assumed new wealth and income to the businesses and the community. Sounds good, right? But are we truly realizing a better quality of life for the people who live in these communities with all of this? And conversely, are we ignoring what is unique and special about our Beach communities with these developments?

This trend may just be a sign of a community's evolving tastes and expectations, but I think there is also a certain classist mentality entwined in it. It ignores a segment of society that desires to "live simply so that others may simply live." It also ignores the value of "small town character" and historical reference in our communities. This "bigger, brighter, better" is pursued, for the most part, by those whose only focus is on the almighty dollar, and often these are more recent, up-

wardly mobile newcomers, who are among the few that can afford the inflated property prices, both for business and residential, and who expect and demand a more expensive standard of living than has been the norm here. I was struck this past week by two very different reactions from some out-of-towners visiting Hermosa Beach, and they both involve the little \$119/night "Seasprites Motel" on the Strand.

While I was serving as a Volunteer Docent at the Hermosa Beach Historical Museum, a visitor from Lansing, Michigan, came in to look around. It was his first time in the museum but not his first time in Hermosa Beach. He often comes to Los Angeles for business and usually stays in one of the vertical slab hotels near LAX. When he has free time on these trips, as he did on this day, he gets on the north/south Sepulveda/PCH bus and he comes to Hermosa. He comes to Hermosa for "its small town, seaside quaintness," and he swore to me that the next time he comes he is going to bring his wife along and stay at "Seasprites" rather than in the vertical slab chain hotel on Century Blvd.

And then, there is the other opinion I overheard on the Strand this past weekend, from tourists with dollars, who as they passed by the same "Seasprites," exclaimed, "Wow, this place is like a ghetto!" I guess one man's paradise is another man's ghetto, but I do believe there is a happy medium, and that we will be very sorry if we throw out the baby with the bathwater by replacing all of the old and/or small with newer, bigger, brighter.

There is real value in preserving small-town characteristics, certainly for the quality of life for the people who live here in Hermosa Beach, but also for smart, visionary business. The same goes for Redondo Beach's King Harbor. We have something that many of the cookie-cutter developers from inland and elsewhere aren't appreciating. They should be exploiting what is different about us -- what that visitor from Lansing, Michigan, sees and comes here to Hermosa Beach to en-

joy. The small-town feel and the people-friendly restaurants and shops. Yes, exploit the recreational possibilities of the harbor and boating, and the seaside experience of King Harbor, but keep it accessible and viewable, and unique as it is now. We need the boaters to come with their small boats, to park & launch by the Seaside Lagoon. We need the folks who want to hang out in affordable, family-friendly restaurants along the Strand like the soon-to-be-gone Good Stuff and the already gone Cantina Real. It would be a mistake to make us look like Huntington Beach, or even Santa Monica. Those places are already there for the people who want crowds and commercialism. Let us instead be Seal Beach, or even Carmel if you have to be exclusive! Better yet, let's just "Keep Hermosa Hermosa." Let the people come, do business, shop and enjoy, but in numbers and on a scale that complements and embraces what we are, with a recognition of our history and why families have stayed here and called this "home" for generations.

*"Don't it always seem to go, you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone.*

*They paved Paradise; put up a parking lot."*

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*(Recap, Continued from Page 2)*

We also met Marc Sussman from Ted's campaign office.

Nanette Barragan, Hermosa Beach City Councilwoman, announced that the Hermosa Beach oil drilling measure will be on the March, 2015, ballot.

Manhattan Beach Mayor Amy Howorth announced that Manhattan Beach is now a smoke-free city, with enforcement to begin on August 18.

Don Dear, President of the West Basin Municipal Water District, announced that the Water Resources Control Board will begin levying fines on August 1 for drought-related issues; visit [www.westbasin.org](http://www.westbasin.org) to learn more.

Rochelle Schneider announced that Governor Brown allowed SB 1272 to go to a floor vote without his signature.

There will be a fund raiser for Al Muratsuchi at 1PM Sunday August 24. Email [genelle.buchert@gmail.com](mailto:genelle.buchert@gmail.com) for details.

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**Democrats**  
**Beach Cities**

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## Corporations Are Not People

*Compiled by Rochelle Schneider*

The U.S. Supreme Court (SCOTUS) Citizen's United, McCutcheon and the most recent Hobby Lobby decisions state that corporations have 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment free speech rights, individuals can spend unlimited amounts of money to influence campaigns, and private employers can withhold payment for women's reproductive health.

Given this upside down and erroneous interpretation of the U.S. Constitution and the rise of the corporation over people, action is being taken on several fronts. Unfortunately, the only way to overturn the SCOTUS' opinions is by an amendment to the federal Constitution stating that only natural organic humans are people. Our own State Senator, Ted Lieu, has been at the forefront. He co-sponsored a bill which put on the California ballot for a Constitutional amendment to overturn Citizen's United essentially, calling for a federal constitutional conven-

tion for the purpose of proposing an amendment to the U.S. Constitution. This bill passed both state houses. The governor did not sign nor did he veto, which allowed it to go to the ballot this November as Proposition 49. The Howard Jarvis Association immediately filed a case with our State Supreme Court to block the measure arguing that in 1984, the Court ruled against placing *initiated*, but not *legislatively referred*, advisory questions on the ballot. This is a technicality that rests on the concept that the state legislature does not have authority to initiate action that is not related to state legislation. The measure is now off the November 2014 ballot pending a full hearing on the merits in this case.

In the meantime there are actions that can be taken to at least require disclosure of where the money is coming from in campaign advertisements. SB52 called the **California Disclose Act** would require: 1) the three largest funders of ballot measure ads to be clearly identified (two largest for radio ads and robocalls), so voters know who is actually paying for

them (Applies to all television ads, radio ads, print ads, mass mailers, online ads, and billboards for or against state and local ballot measures and applies whether ads are paid for by corporations, unions, or millionaires); 2) paid for by committees that spend \$1 million or more to link to the FPPC page listing their top ten funders; and 3) the names shown on ads are the "original source of contributions."

Some excellent and informative documentary films to see: "Inequality for All" featuring Robert Reich, former Clinton Secretary of Labor, and "Pay 2 Play" and "Citizen Koch." To get more involved check out Money Out Voters In (MoVI) and California Clean Money Campaign locally, and Move to Amend, Occupy Movement, especially the 28<sup>th</sup> Amendment Roadshow, Rootstrikers and the work U.S. Senator Tom Udall is doing on campaign finance reform.

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