

Beach Cities Democratic Club



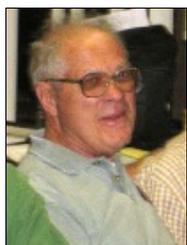
P.O. Box 2192, Redondo Beach, CA 90278

January, 2005

Next Meeting

Tuesday, January 25, 7:30PM
David K. Hayward Center
2000 Artesia Boulevard, R.B.

Democrats are off to a busy start this year. Our January speaker was not confirmed at press time, but we're hoping to hear from LA City Councilwoman Janice Hahn on the Port of LA—issues of security, traffic, and pollution. Other items on the agenda are local elections and the newly elected LA County Committee.



Bob Brigham Honored

Our longtime member Bob Brigham was the recipient of two highly coveted awards in 2004. He was named the Lions

Club Citizen of the Year and the Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce Rose and Scroll winner. In 2002, Bob was honored as Outstanding Teacher, Administrator, and Supporter at Mira Costa High School, where he taught for 36 years.

Public service runs in Bob's family: his father was in the Lions Club. Also, says Bob, "I am proud to say my father (a lifelong Democrat!) and I are the only father-son combination to get the Rose and Scroll."

He thinks this will be his last award "because after 65 years in this town, my wife (here since 1952) and I will be moving to Paso Robles."

"Will we miss Manhattan? Of course. But Democrats are few in number up there, and we are going in as reinforcements. Help is on the way!"

We will sure miss Bob.

This Is Democracy?

BY SENATOR DEBRA BOWEN (D-REDONDO BEACH), CHAIRWOMAN SENATE ELECTIONS, REAPPORTIONMENT & CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS COMMITTEE

The quickest way to undermine people's confidence in the electoral system is to fail to count their votes accurately – or not to count them at all.

We'll never know just how many thousands of people had their votes vanish into thin air in November thanks to the more than 900 documented electronic voting machine problems across the country. Down in San Diego, thousands of voters weren't disenfranchised by electronic voting machines. Instead, as ridiculous as it sounds, their ballots were simply ignored by the registrar of voters who decided that because they didn't fill in an oval next to a write-in candidate's name, there was no way to determine who those voters intended to vote for.

More than 5,500 write-in voters failed to fill in the oval and the decision to ignore the clear intent of those

voters by excluding their ballots changed the outcome of the mayor's race.

Beyond the intent of the voters there's also the intent of the law to consider. The requirement to fill in an oval next to the write-in candidate's name *wasn't* designed to make it harder for people to vote for a write-in candidate. Rather, it was designed for the convenience of the registrars so they could run ballots through a tabulator without having to look at each one to see if a candidate's name had been written in.

Democracy is about making sure elections reflect the will of the voters. As we continue to look at modernizing California's voting systems, what happened in San Diego is a reminder that any failure to accurately reflect the intent of the voters only serves to undermine our democracy. Like you, I don't have a particular stake in who is elected as San Diego's mayor, but I do have an investment in the integrity of our electoral system. Don't we all?

E-mail Delivery of Newsletters

BY STEVE ZUCKER

If you received this newsletter or the November one by US mail instead of e-mail, it is because (1) we do not have your e-mail address, (2) you have informed us that you prefer hard copy, or (3) because of an e-mail delivery problem.

In November, over 60 e-mails we sent were undeliverable, either because we had an incorrect or no-longer-in-service address or because some other problem prevented delivery. For example, your Internet Service Provider (ISP) might have blocked mail from our mailing service, ConstantContact.com, your mailbox might have been

full, or you might have unsubscribed using the Unsubscribe link on *any* ConstantContact mail that you received from us.

We urge all members with Internet access to take delivery of the newsletter via e-mail to save the club printing and mailing costs. If you have been receiving the newsletter in hard-copy form and are willing to receive it via e-mail, please notify Steve Zucker (szucker@dslextreme.com).

Please note that "e-mail delivery" consists of an e-mail containing a link to the club's website, <http://www.lafn.org/politics/bcdc/> which you may visit at any time. The newsletter is available there in both HTML form and PDF.

Visit our Website at lafn.org/politics/bcdc

From the President's Pen



Happy 2005 Dear Democrats.

Another day, another year, another election cycle.

Although, once again we did not accomplish our hearts' desire, we were big winners here at home. We returned our fabulous Senator Boxer to Washington, where her first act in the new Congress made us all so very proud. Thank you Barbara! Also back in DC is our great Congresswoman Jane Harman, and Mike Gordon is our new Assemblyman.

Another year. The reorganization of the 53rd Assembly District was held on January 9, with a kind of carnival atmosphere and much politicking and high decibel excitement. Despite the pounding rain, 150 people were on hand to elect six men and six women to be our representatives to the State Party for the next two years. Twenty-six people ran for the twelve positions and a chance to attend the State Convention coming to Los Angeles in April.

Congratulations to: Ani Haigarian, Griffin Herrera, Carrie Lang, Gina Singletary, Stacey Toda, Andrea Wagner, Jim Aldinger, Lee Fink, Keith Martin, Marc Saltzberg, Mustapha Sesay, and Ray Waters. Mustapha was reelected Chairman and I was elected Vice Chair. Lori Geittmann was reelected Secretary, and Shirlee Browne will be Treasurer.

Another election, and a big chance to bring our Democratic ideals into South Bay City Halls. In six short weeks, on Tuesday, March 8, Manhattan Beach will elect three City Council Members and a Treasurer. Redondo Beach will elect a Mayor, City Council Members, a City Attorney and School Board Members. Many local Democ-

(Continued on page 4)

November Recap

Local Races Heating Up

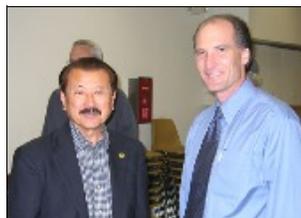
With President Bobbi on a well-deserved vacation, Lee Fink presided over the meeting.

George Nakano was the first speaker and reminded us this was his last meeting as our Assemblyman. He thanked us for our support and congratulated Mike Gordon on winning the seat.

He said there was concern over the election outcome, particularly the electronic voting system that leaves no paper trail. Nakano sees a problem with the Diebold machines, which were provided by Republicans.

Asked when he would run for Senate George said he's already started his campaign. In 2001, on the redistricting committee, he made sure his district stayed inside the senate district.

Asked if there was any chance



Above left, George Nakano and Manhattan Beach Councilman Jim Aldinger. Right, Dave Wiggins, running for RB City Attorney.

redistricting could be put in the hands of objective people, he said it was tried and voted down under Willie Brown. He believes it will come up again.

The mandated class size reduction is on hold due to a \$6.3 billion deficit. Nakano reminded Governor Schwarzenegger that Reagan campaigned on no tax increases yet California had one within the first year. With the state's crippling debt service payments, there's no other way out.

Possible names for governor are Phil Angelides, Bill Lockyer, and Steve Wesley.

Local candidates' forum

With elections coming up in Manhattan and Redondo Beach on March 8, we heard from a series of candidates.



Why Bush Won

Our featured speaker, Hans Noel, gave us some perspective on why George Bush won the election. Mr. Noel, a political scientist at UCLA, is the author of a paper called "The Road to Red and Blue America."

He said Bush's win was predictable because conditions favored an incumbent. (They win two-thirds of the



Political Scientist Hans Noel, our November speaker

time.) The economy was not considered that bad and the war in Iraq has not hurt him yet.

Bush's vote was stronger in 2004 in the areas in which he did poorly in 2000, in part by capturing the votes of Democrats and first-time voters.

Noel does not believe "moral issues," with only 22% of the vote, won the election. Bush's anti-gay marriage stance may have gained some voters but it also turned off others. 19.5% of voters are moderates, conservative Democrats, or liberal Republicans, and the Democrats should figure out how to reach them.

People "in the middle" get offended by political gaffes, so an effective cam-

The following people are in Redondo Beach races:

Pete Villasenor spoke on behalf of **Kurt Schmalz**, running for mayor. Kurt teaches communication law at Pepperdine. On the city council, he pushed for the long-neglected Artesia Boulevard improvements. He has been instrumental in keeping the North Redondo branch library open (where the club meets and which is used by more children than the other branch). He also fought for a bike path, improved storm drains, youth programs, and a Beach Cities shuttle.

Dave Wiggins is running for city attorney. His 4-year term on the Redondo Beach School Board saw a record increase in student scores and a decrease in the size of math and English classes. He criticized the record of incumbent city attorney Jerry Goddard who he said wages costly political battles instead of giving objective advice. As city attorney Dave would give objective legal advice and keep the public informed.

Tory Erickson, running for city council, criticized the council for eliminating crossing guards and after school programs while giving the city attorney a raise. Erickson practices civil law in

paigner avoids them. Thanks to Karl Rove, Bush was seldom caught in a misstep. The Dems need a candidate who can talk to a broad swath of people, not an East Coast liberal.

Noel talked about the mixed “red and blue” maps that have been making the rounds, showing actual proportions of voters within the states. They contain some surprises: places with high divorce rates tended to vote for Bush. (Texas has twice the divorce rate of Massachusetts.) People in the red states resent coastal states because they think “liberal” values are encroaching on their way of life.

As to the fact that red states are the recipients of federal largesse while the

Manhattan Beach. He also faults the city attorney for spending large amounts on outside legal counsel and not disclosing how much is spent.

Todd Lowenstein, RB city council running for school board, is an Internet executive who recently worked for John Kerry in interstate vote getting. With an entertainment background that includes a stint at the Weather Channel, he offers good fund raising skills and budget expertise. He would like to establish partners in education that include alumni and large and small businesses, including his largest client, Microsoft.

Lee Fink, running for city council in the 4th district, said his top priorities would be to support our school programs, expand our parks, and complete a new North Branch library. He wants to continue reinvigorating business on the waterfront and Artesia while fighting to minimize traffic and environmental impacts, and ensure the best fire and police resources. He would work with neighboring cities on issues

(Continued on page 4)



RB city council candidate Tory Erickson



Monroe's Corner

The Old Testament starts by saying: In the beginning God created Heaven & Earth. And the Earth

was vast & empty. In this year 2005 we have a president whose opportunities are vast, but whose mentality & capabilities are empty. We face leadership by Dubya, who is a Texas gun-slinger, with the morals of a know-nothing, the curiosity of a snail, does not acknowledge opposing opinions, & is guided by his private talks with the Almighty.

Republicans have become a far more theological faith-directed party, not troubled with evidence. Dubya cut funds for ‘no child left behind’ & Rod Paige said, “Hey kids, you’re on your own.” And the fervent Fundamentalist ex-Att’y. General Ashcroft is being replaced by a warm cuddly Mexican. Gonzalez is fortunate that he can read Dubya’s mind & justify the use of torture & mistreatment of prisoners, especially if they are Muslims.

But enough of the truth, we should address larger dangers...the direction of the Democratic Party. The old quotation by Will Rogers still holds true... “I am not a member of an organized party. I am a Democrat.” We appear to be torn between bleeding heart liberals who defend lost causes and the centrists who oppose free trade.

We are now in a cat-bird seat & can frame our language positively & precisely. The Republicans are part of the corrupt status quo & we Democrats are the agents of progress & improvement. We can even justify same-sex marriage on the grounds that we do not want the government to tell us whom to marry! In truth, we do have grievances & good ones, but we actually offer opportunity & responsibility. Major issues at the top of the list are the export of jobs; curbing stem

(Continued on page 4)



Beach Cities Democratic Club

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

President

Bobbi Buescher—310-545-7890

Vice-President

Lee Fink—310-370-3020

Treasurer

Shirlee Browne—310-798-0908

Secretary/Publicity

Kathleen Paralusz—310-621-3734

Newsletter

Moira Zucker—310-546-7562

Database

Steve Zucker—310-546-7562

Web Manager

James McGreevy—310-320-1638

Membership

Barbara Blum—310-540-6346

(President, continued from page 2)

rats have come forward seeking these offices, and we must work hard to help them succeed. Among them are long-standing BCDC members. In Manhattan, Councilman Jim Aldinger is running for reelection. Councilman Kurt Schmalz is running for Mayor in Redondo, with Lee Fink hoping to succeed Kurt in District 4, and Dave Wiggins seeking the City Attorney seat. LA Democratic Party endorsements were not available at this writing, but we will let you know who they are.

It's a New Year, with new opportunities and challenges. Come to the meeting on January 25, and let's get started.

Bobbi Buescher

(Races, continued from page 3)

like keeping the LA Air Force Base and our 310 area code.

Our Manhattan Beach candidates followed:

Jim Aldinger, running for a second city council term, wants to safeguard the city's small town atmosphere. He was instrumental in saving some large downtown lots from a developer who wanted to split them into 20 half-acre lots. He reported that the new police and fire facilities are underway and the two-story underground parking structure is complete. Upcoming projects include upgrading the strand and a library project near Mira Costa.

Eric Mah, also running for city council, is active in the national and state Democratic Party. He went to Nevada and Arizona with the Alameda County Democrats and worked on Mike Gordon's campaign. He holds a Bachelors in philosophy from UCLA and a public health degree from Johns Hopkins.

(Monroe, continued from page 3)

cell research; unfair foreign competition; social security changes; racial & religious discrimination; & a fairer tax structure. The Patriot Act eviscerates many freedoms. Global warming is not a myth; the environment needs nurturing & care; homeland security needs more than silly color-coding; our young guys need removal from the Iraqi quagmire; we need to legally import safe prescription drugs and pay attention to a national debt that is comfortably beyond two or three generations! We also must confront a medieval administration that does not tell us the truth.

Why can't we find Osama bin Laden? Why is Saddam not yet on trial? When do we get to try Ken Lay & Enron? How can we punish the offshore corporations who operate tax-free? And since we cannot find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, perhaps we could find the long lost records of Dubya in the Alabama National Guard, where no one saw him!

Monroe Weinstock
