

# Beach Cities Democratic Club



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

March, 2008

## Next Meeting Tuesday, March 25, 7:30 2000 Artesia Boulevard Redondo Beach

We will hear from Kathy Feng, Executive Director of Common Cause. Originally scheduled for the February meeting, Ms. Feng will discuss the California Voters FIRST initiative.

## 53rd ADDC Draws South Bay Crowd

There was a full house at the 53<sup>rd</sup> AD Democratic Congress meeting held February 23<sup>rd</sup> in San Pedro at the new D and D Gallery (*pictured at right*).

Headed up by Bobbi Buescher, the event drew club members and officers from around the South Bay to enjoy brunch and get up-to-date on the activities of the new AD Congress. The crowd was honored to be joined by Assemblyman Ted Lieu and Senator Jenny Oropeza.

Regional Director Sergio Carillo spoke about the upcoming pre-endorsement conferences and State Convention. He said the draft of the Platform is on the State Party website and all registered Democrats can petition for changes and amendments.

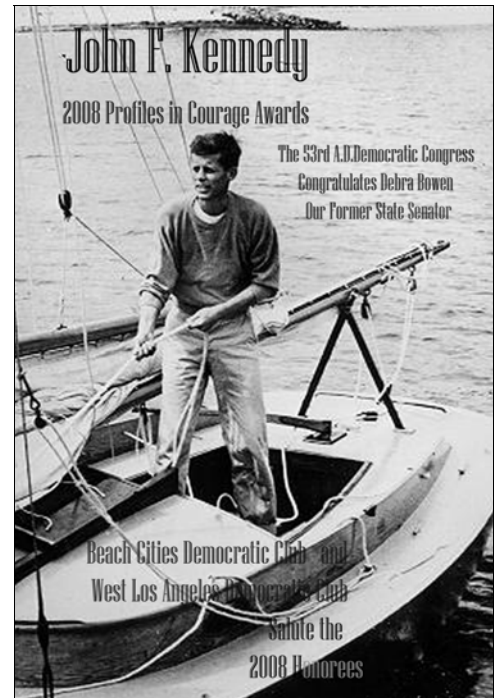
Ted Lieu reported that Democratic voter registrations are up in several districts. He said that 2007 was a bad budget year in Sacramento: a 60% vote is needed to change it and six Republicans would have to cross over.

The Precinct Coordinating Committee talked about their new manual and database. Mary Ann Tyler, Edna Murphy, and Tony Hale described how precinct work is so crucial to winning

elections. When neighbors talk to neighbors often, they learn what's important and they can feed this information back to the candidates.

Senator Jenny Oropeza offered her enthusiastic support for the precinct organization and said her office is available to provide printed information about community resources.

Please see the 53<sup>rd</sup> ADDC Events Calendar on page 4.



## JFK Ad Honors Democratic Leaders

With contributions from BCDC and the West LA Democratic Club, our 53<sup>rd</sup> ADD Congress ran this full-page ad in the booklet honoring the JFK "Profiles in Courage" Award winners. The event was held on February 28 at the Sheraton Universal Hotel in Universal City.

The ad honors Debra Bowen, our former State Senator and the other honorees, Yvonne B. Burke, James Duff, Senator Art Torres (Ret.), and Sal Rosselli.

This is the first time we have ever bought an ad and it was the talk of the event. By far the best one in the entire booklet, it was a fine tribute to our hero and former President, and a nod to our location here in Southern California, "53 by the Sea."

*Bobbi Buescher*

Visit our Website at [lafn.org/politics/bcdc](http://lafn.org/politics/bcdc)

## From the President

We've got much to do to cement a victory for progress next November.

Democrats have been coming out of the woodwork everywhere. The victory in Illinois of our candidate replacing Dennis Hastert is a great start. Perhaps we can duplicate that feat by de-



feating Dana Rohrabacher in our neighboring district to the south. We will be looking for volunteers to help with the campaign.

This month, Kathy Feng of Common cause will come to our meeting to explain the California Voters FIRST initiative. There was a bit of confusion last month.

There is a lot to do in preparation for elections that just keep coming.

See you at our meeting.

*Ray Waters*

## February Recap

Opening the meeting, President Ray Waters introduced Jane Harman's new field representative Jessica Duboff. She passed out Harman's petition to run for office, required with every election. She announced that the County Recorder has decided to count the 50,000 ballots put in jeopardy by the confusingly-designed "bubble ballot" in California's primary election.

In her legislative update, Duboff said that Jane is cosponsoring bills to strengthen the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (HR 1739), and to offer tax credits for renewable energy. Harman is a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee and serves on the powerful Energy and Commerce Committee.

Kathleen Paralusz read a California Democratic Party press release announcing that California Democrats shattered previous records for voter registration: over 150,000 new Democratic voters registered in the state prior to the primary election, for a total of more than 6.7 million registered Democrats. 61.7% of the total new voters registered were Democratic. By comparison, only 46.5% were added in the same period leading up to the 2004 election.

Next we heard from Melissa Ramoso, representing Ted Lieu's office. She talked about the two foreclosure bills described last month: AB 69, requiring lenders to report publicly on the number of loans in default or foreclosure; and 1830, prohibiting a high-cost loan from including prepayment penalties.

Since our speaker from Common Cause did not show up, Ray talked about the redistricting workshop he and Edna Murphy attended. Common Cause supports the California Voters FIRST Act, a proposal for reforming the state's redistricting process to put the power back in the hands of Cali-

## Book Review

*Dreams From My Father – A Story of Race and Inheritance*, by Barack Obama

LEE FINK

The modern marketing of a presidential candidate has inevitably come to include a signature book by the candidate, with a book tour the first wave of the national campaign that follows. Inevitably, it includes an element of personal memoir where the candidate's personal history will—through pure serendipity, the author will have you believe—coincide with the key themes of his or her budding presidential bid.

*Dreams From My Father* could seem like that type of book. In it, Obama chronicles the lessons of his childhood: his grandfather's hope that in America, there would always be opportunities; his mother's hope that looked beyond race and religion; and his father's hope that persistence and hard work would be rewarded. Obama chronicles the first time he learned that his words could enrapture an audience and inspire change as he spoke at an anti-apartheid rally in college, his frustration with failures, and how he came to believe that grass-roots change can happen as he united people as a community organizer on the South side of Chicago.

But *Dreams From My Father* is not a campaign book. Originally published in 1995, it pre-dates Obama's political career, written a year before he even

sought a seat in the Illinois State Legislature. Obama received the opportunity to write a book when he was elected the first African-American President of *The Harvard Law Review*—a distinction which members of the *Review* often consider an unparalleled achievement, but even other lawyers and law students barely note. But, being Harvard, the media took note of the development, and Obama was offered a book contract. Had he not fought through a crowded primary to become the surprise nominee for US Senate from Illinois in 2004, *Dreams* would have ended up on a stack of little read but well-meaning books churned out every year by the publishing world. And if current delegate counts and polls hold through November, it will be the most honest memoir ever written by an American President, unfiltered by political considerations.

I read *Dreams* knowing this, which made it all the more astounding to me. I already knew it contained Obama's confession of teenage drinking and college drug use—certainly something which would never get by the consultants today. And indeed, some of it was personal history, interesting only if you want to know the trivia of the next president. But throughout much of *Dreams*, you can see the threads that shape Obama's views on the world, his presidential campaign, and ultimately

*(Continued on page 4)*



*Harman Field Representative  
Jessica Duboff*

### Monroe Redux

As I write this, the primaries to decide the Democratic nominee for President of the USA has not yet been decided. My personal choice was John Edwards, but he is out of contention. John McCain is the Republican nominee and has been endorsed by his old buddy George Dubya (or is that the kiss of death?).



Many years ago, Huey Long in Louisiana proclaimed "every man a king." George Dubya on the other hand wants every man to be an investor & a homeowner. They shot Huey dead, while George Dubya slides off into the Texas sunset, to relax in Crawford. He leaves the USA with an unresolved war in Iraq; a major debt dilemma that will take two or three generations to possibly pay off; and an untold number of Mortgage foreclosures facing all of us. Perhaps the Chinese will lend us enough to cover the tax refund of \$600 per taxpayer. The \$600 has been called an Alka-Seltzer solution because you take one tablet, let it fizz, and we'll feel better in the morning...or will we choke on it?

George Dubya before being elected

was a disaster waiting to happen. Today he is a major catastrophic calamity that leaves the USA as a pariah nation. He also managed to contaminate our courts & judiciary, drained our morality, and added a large enough budget deficit to strangle our finances for the foreseeable future. It must also be said that his ignoring of environment pollution & Global Warming has stained our image & has made the world an extremely much dirtier place.

Our current list of economic burdens include a slowing economy; home building slowdown; plummeting retail sales; growth of joblessness; stock market tightening; bank reluctance to issue loans; and rampant fear mongering by the media. So, where do we go from here? There is not simply one answer to solve the dilemma. We need "real economic change" & financial justice. We need for white-collar predators to be put into the same prisons with drug dealers & killers. We need serious homeowner debt relief and adequate government assistance. Perhaps we might even look back historically & use pages from the book of FDR, who followed the devastation left by Republicans Harding, Coolidge & Herbert Hoover!!

*Monroe Weinstock*

fornians.

Sponsors believe that redistricting decisions should not be made by partisan legislators. To achieve true representation, districting should result in more competitive congressional and legislative districts. Nonpartisan commissions should be structured so that no political party interests can prevail; and so that the two major political parties cannot collude to create a plan without support from other members not affiliated with either major political party.

Ray said that the redistricting proposal calls for a new census every ten years and in addition to Common Cause, has the support of the League of Women Voters, the Governor, and the chamber of commerce.

Bobbi requested that the club help sponsor the 53rd ADDC ad in the JFK Profiles in Courage Awards program. A motion was passed to donate \$152.50 as our share of the cost.

Lee talked about the March 28-30 Convention and said it's easy to attend as a volunteer or an observer, or to take someone's place as a proxy. It was noted that this year will be Lee's fifteenth Convention, and his tenth as a voting member!

Lori Geitmann and Lee are members of the Friends of the Library and the Library Foundation, respectively, and Lori reported that she is following up with the Parks and Recreation Department to find a room for the club to meet during renovation.

Bobbi reported that petitions are being circulated for County Committee membership. The Committee meets on second Tuesdays; thirteen people are running for seven open seats. At the last meeting, Mayor Villaraigosa spoke and complained about the Governor's budget shortfall.

Mary Anne Tyler and Edna Murphy

spoke about the 53<sup>rd</sup> AD Democratic Congress meeting (*see page 1*).

Jane Affonso reported on the LAX Hilton boycott. Members of Unite Here Local 11 claim that hotel workers in the Century Corridor earn 20 percent less than workers at downtown Los Angeles hotels and 30 percent less than hotels in Beverly Hills. Workers at the Hilton are fighting for their right to organize. There is to be a three-day, 23-mile March for Good Jobs April 15 through 17, from Hollywood to the docks in Long Beach. Watch the Internet for details.



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## Beach Cities Democratic Club



(Book review, continued from page 2)

his vision for America. His reflections and struggles with his own race and identity as the son of an African man from Kenya and a white woman from Kansas explain Obama's belief that America can move beyond color—black and white, red and blue. The idea that people, working hard but working together can effect change, even in the most depressed neighborhoods.

In the chapter detailing his Chicago experience, Obama relates the first time he attended Trinity United Church of Christ on 95th Street and Parnell, where he would eventually become a Christian, and is a member to this day. As I read his account, the passengers in my row (as I was stuck tarmac of JFK Airport in the season's first snowstorm) peered uneasily at me as I gasped when I saw the title of his pastor's sermon that first day he attended: "The Audacity of Hope."

A decade before that would become the theme in the most memorable Convention speech in a generation, before it would become the title

of his second book, and the basis of an historical campaign which may well lead to the White House, he was inspired to share the idea with whom-ever might read his tale. It turns out, of course, that Obama has always been open that he borrowed the theme from his pastor (who willingly shared it, because after all, no one holds a copyright on Hope). But what it demonstrated to me is that Obama's history is not a neat little narrative, tweaked and exaggerated, then squeezed into the poll-tested packaging of a campaign-theme. Rather, his campaign is his life—his experiences and upbringing, his personal struggles, his years of working for Change We Can Believe In, and his belief in the Audacity of Hope.

While the primary contest remains unsettled, Barack Obama is poised to become the most important political figure in the early years of the 21st Century. But if you want to gain at least some insight into the man and the leadership he offers America, *Dreams from My Father* is a must-read.

### 53<sup>rd</sup> AD Democratic Congress—Calendar of Upcoming Events

#### Thursday, March 20

6:30 Dinner, 7:30 Regular Meeting  
Special Guest Speaker on  
Afghanistan – Asad Farhad, former  
Deputy Minister of Finance  
Hennessey's Tavern  
313 Manhattan Beach Blvd, MB

#### Friday-Sunday, March 28-30

State Convention in San Jose  
**Saturday Night, March 29**  
53<sup>rd</sup> ADDC Convention Dinner  
Please call Bobbi at 310-545-7890 for  
reservations. Dinner is \$55.

#### Saturday, April 5, Noon

53<sup>rd</sup> Precinct Committee Presidents  
Forum on the new Precinct Manual  
Hennessey's Tavern

#### Sunday, April 13

Presidential Delegate Caucuses  
Time and place to be determined