

Beach Cities Democratic Club



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

April, 2008

Next Meeting

Tuesday, April 22, 7:30
2000 Artesia Boulevard
Redondo Beach

Dilip Adarkar will present a program about India and Pakistan, *Divergent Trajectories in South Asia*. He is a long-time member of the club and has recently returned from a visit to his home in India.

We also expect a report from Jenny Oropeza's office as well as visits from judicial candidates.

Workshops for Sustainable Living

Location: Whole Foods Market @ Plaza El Segundo; 760 S Sepulveda

Time: 6:00 – 7:30 pm

April 16 Tooling Around Town in (Green) Style

There's a reason cars and trucks are the poster children of environmental destruction: no other single consumer activity causes more environmental harm. Reducing the impact of getting yourself from here to there is an essential part of greening your life. And with gas approaching \$4.00 a gallon, now is a good time to start.

April 22 Helping the Earth with Every Bite

Producing our food takes a surprisingly significant toll on the environment, but it doesn't have to be that way. Thank Mother Earth for her delicious bounty by choosing foods that nourish the body without harming the Earth.

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Convention Recap

BOBBI BUESCHER

The delegates from our 53rd Assembly District Democratic Congress had a great State Convention the weekend of March 28-30 in San Jose. The city was lively and lush. Flying into the airport was a treat, seeing all that is beautiful about our wonderful state. The ocean, the mountains, the cloudless sky, then a slight turn eastward to the rolling green hills and the lovely city of San Jose. Many of us stayed at the Marriott and the Hilton, which are both attached to the Convention Center. It made for a super convenient location; even when it rained, we were sheltered and dry.

The many caucuses, meetings and events were interesting, informative and fun. Democrats Rock!!

There were 25 plus caucuses, something for everyone from children's issues to environment, veterans, grassroots, every ethnic group, labor, women, and seniors. So many good people doing really good work.

Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House, was the kickoff speaker on Friday night, followed by a myriad of hospitality suites with treats and drinks for hungry and parched Democrats.

Saturday's General Session featured many Democratic luminaries including Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi; State Controller John Chiang; Superintendent of Public Institutions Jack O'Connell; Board of Equalization Chair, Judy Chu; and Assembly Speaker-Elect Karen Bass, but it was the Dynamic Duo of Brown & Brown, Willie and Jerry, who brought the house down with their wit and wisdom.

On Saturday night we held our Annual 53rd Convention Dinner at Paolo's Restaurant, a beautiful room overlooking the Plaza and the Guadalupe Riverfront. We feasted on grilled salmon, 14 oz. aged Angus Rib Eye, chicken breast, and baked eggplant followed by flourless chocolate truffle torte.



We had a lovely dinner and an excellent evening topped off by our State Assemblyman Ted Lieu (*pictured at left*), who gave a short speech then answered questions into the night,

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Members of BCDC and the 53rd ADDC at the March 28-30 California Democratic Convention in San Jose. All convention photos courtesy of Lori Geitmann.

From the President

Ah, these are exciting times. We eagerly look forward to a Democratic victory in November.



California's delegates to the Convention will have been selected and are anxious to get to Denver for the Democratic National Party Convention. Our club has had quite a number looking to be representatives for either Clinton or Obama. We wish them success in their efforts to represent the 36th Congressional District.

With all of the political jockeying, it is important to look at the system that needs changes to increase the role of Democracy in our state and nation. Today I want to direct our attention to the needs of California. The deadlock existing in our legislature is heading to catastrophe in education, public health and public safety. In a time of increased needs our legislature is immobilized by the rule requiring 2/3 majority to pass any budget. This rule was passed in 1962 and strengthened by Proposition 13 in 1978. This allows a minority to veto any tax change. It also puts enormous power into the hands of those who have specific interests to leverage those interests into the budget debate. It also allows those responsible for budget failures to mask their accountability.

Currently, there is a Senate Constitutional Amendment (SCA 22) coauthored by Senators Torlakson, Alquist, and Kuehl along with Assemblymembers DeSaulnier and Hancock to allow the legislature to pass a state budget by a majority vote and thereby restore democracy to the process.

Another approach to changing the system and making the legislature more responsive is the redistricting initiative presented at our last meeting. This proposal would not allow the legisla-

tors to select the voters by drawing districts that serve their interests. This has led to a system that has routinely reelected legislators. With the current public anger at Republicans, we may be able to overthrow enough of them to get a 2/3 majority in each branch of the legislature, but this does not reduce the power of those that would leverage their interests into the budget.

We will be dealing with these and many other issues over the election period. In the meantime we have to prepare for the upcoming election. Bobbi Buescher, Edna Murphy and Marianne Tyler have put together a plan to help each of us get out and influence our neighbors and win votes for our causes. We will have an introductory presentation on their manual.

At our next meeting we will also hear Dilip Adarkar present a program about India and Pakistan, *Divergent trajectories in South Asia*. He is a longtime member of the club and has recently returned from a visit to India.

We also expect a report from Jenny Oropeza's office and visits from Judicial Candidates. There is an important election coming in June!

Ray Waters

(Convention, continued from page 1)
which was a big crowd pleaser.

Sunday was a very special day when San Francisco DA, Kamala Harris spoke on behalf of Barack Obama, and President Bill Clinton, speaking for Hillary Clinton, proved that he still has "it." In between the two presidential campaign speakers we were treated to our own Debra Bowen, Secretary of State. Debra just won the John F. Kennedy "Profiles in Courage Award" for her work making sure that all Californians have their votes protected. The LA County Democratic Party recently honored her with their JFK Award, but this one is the Real Thing.

Debra was informed of her selection

March Recap

Ray opened the meeting by reminding us that on this fifth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, 4,000 soldiers have lost their lives, a million or more Iraqis have been killed, and there are two to three million refugees.

Our speakers were John Smith and Tod Dipaola, who favor the California Voters First initiative on redistricting. Smith, who is director of Region 16, said the measure would provide a vast improvement over our current system by placing a citizens' redistricting commission in public view. The State Auditor's office would ensure the Commission is a politically balanced group of five Democrats, five Republicans, and four Other. The Act would set mapping criteria for the Commission to follow, including:

- ♦ Compliance with the US Constitution, including equal population requirements;
- ♦ Compliance with the Voting Rights Act;
- ♦ Contiguous shape;
- ♦ Compactness.

In a major conflict of interest, the

by a phone call from Caroline Kennedy. She will be honored at the JFK Presidential Library in Boston in May. Following the speakers was the pre-endorsement consent calendar, Democratic positions on the June



PVP Democratic Club President
Tony Hale at the Convention

ballot propositions and issues and adoption of the 2008 State Party Platform.
San Jose Olé!!



Ray Waters with speakers Tod Dipaola and John Smith

California State Legislature now draws the lines. Instead of drawing districts to reflect California's population changes, they draw to maximize their own ability to get elected.

Smith gave examples of the way our elected officials are thwarted from doing their jobs: Proposition 13 threw our tax base out of balance and mandated a 2/3 majority to override it. California governs by initiative, passing legislation to restrict use of our tax revenue. We can't pass a budget. Republicans are locked in their safe seats: in our last three elections, only four out of 495 seats changed parties, less than one percent.

Labor unions are studying the initiative now. The League of Women Voters and California Common Cause are in favor of it, and the ACLU may come on board.

A motion was proposed to endorse the California Voters First initiative, but the vote was tied. We will reconsider it at the next meeting.

Campaigns

Tim Goodrich, who spoke to the club last year about Iraq Veterans Against the War, gave an update on his campaign for Torrance City Council.

He said that he has been atoning since 2000 for having voted for George W. Bush. He found his true party while serving in the military. His fact-finding trip to Baghdad in 2004

Monroe Redux

Hillary and/or Barack are still dangling participants as I write this. But we do know the real opposition... John McCain.

We must admit that McCain has served this country admirably as a Navy Flier, prisoner-of-war for five & one half years in Viet Nam, and the son of a father & grandfather who were both Admirals. I should pause to think that such prolonged captivity must have done strange things to his mind as well as his body!

There is an old Italian parable that says....you cannot talk with one long arm & one short arm. But to the long and short of it...we can look at his quotations & his record. (a) He was against Bush's tax cuts for the wealthy BUT he supports extending the cuts indefinitely. (b) He once sneered at the likes of Jerry Falwell & Pat Robertson BUT he now embraces the Pastor John Hagee. (c) He was in favor of starting the war on Iraq BUT he was against the methods used to fight it. (d) He is for the way we are fighting in Iraq BUT against whether or not it should have ever been started. (e) He voted against same sex marriage BUT he favors banning it state by state. (f) He condemns negative campaigns BUT he is now campaigning with the



most public members of the Swift Boat liars (remember the Kerry campaign?). (g) He was in favor of fund raising transparency BUT voted against this legislation (to pander to the conservative base). (h) He said in 2002 that "we can win (in Iraq) in a very short time" BUT in 2007 he said, "those who thought it an easy task (in Iraq) were mistaken and did not know what they voted for (& neither did he!).

And now for a few additional facts... He wants a Christian to be President because the Christian faith is a better guide than other faiths (I hope my Rabbi doesn't find out about this!). His campaign is dominated & riddled with lobbyists. At least 24 staffers or advisors are either registered lobbyists or were previous lobbyists. He has missed voting on every single crucial environmental issue in 2007, and was the only Senator to skip voting on the future of clean energy in the USA. And the famous Bush's Brain Karl Rove has donated \$2,300 to his campaign.

He is known as a man with a hair-trigger temper, explosive & violent, then apolgetic the next moment. He is quoted as saying that "we should be in Mesopotamia (Iraq) for the next century (so long as Americans are not injured or harmed or killed).

Do we or the world need a guy like this with his finger on the trigger of atomic weapons???? NEVER!!!!

Monroe Weinstock

inspired him to found the antiwar organization, and later, Iraq Veterans for Progress.

The issues he cares about as a City Council candidate are overdevelopment, traffic, and the environment, which draws a lot of interest in Torrance because the Exxon Mobil refinery is located there. Contaminated groundwater has been discovered near the plant, and Goodrich thinks we should hold the corporation responsible. They earn \$40 billion per year and

can afford to clean up their toxic waste. Local issues translate into national ones: Honda and Toyota are located in Torrance and he wants to work with them to develop cleaner vehicles.

There are four open seats on the Council and fourteen candidates. A motion was passed to endorse Goodrich and contribute \$200 to his campaign.

We heard from Ben Arnon, a

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*Beach Cities
Democratic Club*



(Workshops, continued from page 1)

**April 30 Your Green Sanctuary:
Making your Home a Friend
to Mother Nature**

Your home represents an amazing opportunity to green your life because most everything involved with running a household affects the environment in one way or another. Make your home a model of sustainability, inside and out, and give the Joneses something meaningful to keep up with.

Kathleen Jacecko
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(Recap, continued from page 3)

regional field organizer who is running for Obama delegate. It was also announced that Bobbi Buescher and Tod Dipaola are running for Clinton delegate positions.

Club Business

Lee Fink gave an interim report from the bylaws committee. He said we may elect to make three policy changes: First, we may want to make committee chairs part of the executive board. Second, we may want to formalize our endorsement process. Third, we could require new people to be paid-up members for thirty days before they can vote. We can consider these questions in upcoming meetings.

It was reported that the County Committee discussed the “bubble ballot” at their recent meeting. 60,000 votes were in jeopardy of being thrown out, but all except 12,000 ended up being counted. Jenny Oropeza and Debra Bowen heard input on this issue and on the qualifications of the county

registrar of voters.

Bobbi reported on the 53rd ADCC meeting and the JFK Awards dinner, where our sponsored ad was a great success. She also announced the upcoming meeting in which the precinct committee would present the new manual and software to club presidents.

It was announced that Vietnam Veterans of America had spoken at the Palos Verdes Club, as had Tim Goodrich. The first Gulf war costs \$3 billion a year in veterans’ benefits; the bill for the Iraq war could be \$600 billion. Veterans have a long struggle to get medical care when they return with injuries, sometimes having to apply to 58 different agencies.