

# Beach Cities Democratic Club



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

November, 2009

## Note New DATE!

### Next Meeting

Manhattan Bread and Bagel  
1808 North Sepulveda Boulevard  
Manhattan Beach  
Wednesday, November 18  
7:30 PM

The November program will feature Ron Wildermuth of West Basin Water District who will give an exciting presentation on the coming water shortage and what our water district is doing about it. He will talk about water recycling and how that can help. All the pundits are talking about the water shortage being the next problem after oil; much of the conflict in Israel is about water. With water being such an issue in California, we need to be knowledgeable.



### 350.org Climate Day of Action

October 24—The 350 Climate Day event was a huge success with over 1,300 people turning out at the Manhattan Beach pier to signal their support for reducing carbon dioxide levels.

Participants formed an “amazing human waving tide line,” holding up a 100-foot banner and spanning the beach for several blocks. Local radio stations KPFK and KPCC aired information about the event, and a photographer flew

overhead to film the action.

Local officials pitched in from all directions: Supervisor Don Knabe’s office waived permits, Manhattan Beach city crews donated labor to put up banners and mark off parking spaces for bicycle valets, and all five members of the Manhattan Beach City Council marched onstage to lend their support. Speakers took no more than the allotted 35 seconds. Representatives came from over 40 groups including Surfrider, Plug In America, and Greenpeace.

### Lessons From the 2009 Elections

Bad for Us: Worse for Them

LEE FINK

Election Night 2009 was a bad night for Democrats. After winning back Congress in 2006 and then winning an historic Presidential election with the widest mandate in nearly a generation, we lost two gubernatorial races in states with incumbent Democrats and that President Obama had carried. But if 2009 was bad for us, it is not clear what the guys across the aisle in red are celebrating. 2009 was worse for them.

The lesson of the 2009 elections for Democrats is a mixed bag. Incumbents took a beating—Michael Bloomberg, who spent another big chunk of his vast fortune, barely beat out an opponent who was expected to poll third behind “Undecided.” Jon Corzine was ousted

from office in New Jersey, despite being a strong Democratic state. With the economy in the dumps, voters are not happy, and they took it out on incumbents. Similarly, Democrats did not show up. In Virginia, where President Obama won by 7 points a year ago, the voters who turned out to vote for Governor had voted for McCain by 8%. People have not yet seen President Obama deliver on all his promises. As a result, Democrats stayed home, and the Democratic candidate lost.

The lesson for us then is easy—we have to improve the economy and deliver on the promises we have made. It was a bad night, yes, but we already knew this. The President has said it a number of times that if he does not turn the economy around and pass healthcare, there will be someone else in his shoes in 4 years. The good news is that good pro-

gress is being made. Job losses have slowed to their lowest levels since the Bush Recession began in December 2007 and the GDP grew in the last quarter. On the President’s signature issue, a universal health care bill has passed 5 Congressional committees and the bill, with a public option, has passed House of Representatives and will be taken up soon in the Senate. It may not often seem quick enough for us, but there is no question that we have moved further than at any time in history.

Republicans, however, are in real trouble. They lost two Congressional races where health care reform was front and center—so central, in fact, that by the end of the week, two new Democratic Congressmen had been sworn in and provided votes for health care reform in a

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

## BEACH CITIES GREEN

By Dency Nelson

It's late on a Friday night (actually very early on Saturday morning) and I've just returned from a reception at Studio 59 in Santa Monica that was the



culminating event for a day-long kickoff for the Nissan Leaf Tour here in Southern California. The Nissan Leaf is a fully electric plug-in, freeway capable, five passenger vehicle with a 100 mile range.

A beautiful car, in every way, brought to you by a major mainstream car manufacturer. As reported in this column a few months ago, these cars and the lithium magnesium batteries that power them, are being developed, in part, due to a \$1.6 billion loan from the U.S. Department of Energy for advanced vehicle technologies that was granted to Nissan in June of this year.

The car will be built for the U.S. market in Nissan's Tennessee manufacturing facilities, employing thousands of American workers and producing somewhere between 130,000 and

150,000 of these cars by 2012. A very exciting development from a company whose President & CEO, Carlos Ghosn, really understands the need to move beyond the fossil fuel burning, internal combustion vehicle. For more information and to see the Nissan Leaf, visit [www.nissanusa.com/leaf-electric-car](http://www.nissanusa.com/leaf-electric-car).

For those of you who attended the South Bay 350 Climate Action Group's October 24 event on the sand in Manhattan Beach, you'll be happy to know that you were a part of the second largest of the hundreds of events all over the nation that day. The over 1300 participants in our "Amazing Waving Human Tide Line" numbered second only to San Francisco's event, which attracted around 2000 people. These events, and the thousands of others all over the globe on that day, will help send the message to the International leaders who will be meeting in Copenhagen the first week in December that the "whole world is watching" and that we are expecting a real commitment to action in solving the crisis of global climate change. There are forces of greed and denial with no regard for the planet who are prepared to defeat this message on the International stage and here at home in the U.S. as the Boxer-Kerry

Climate Bill is facing stiff opposition in the Senate. Please let Senators Boxer and Feinstein, and Congresswoman Harman, know how much you appreciate their support for climate change legislation, and follow the events leading up to the United Nations International Climate Conference by visiting [www.350.org](http://www.350.org).

And finally, as the holidays approach, be mindful of the many ways you can celebrate while still minimizing your impact on the environment. First, consider renting a living Christmas tree from a local company with a great idea. Visit [www.livingchristmas.com](http://www.livingchristmas.com) to reserve your tree before they run out. Trade in your incandescent holiday lights for low energy consuming LED light strings. For that program check in with the South Bay Environmental Services Center at [www.sbesc.com](http://www.sbesc.com). For gift giving, skip the hassle of the mall and save money on gas by ordering gifts online. Help further reduce pollution and energy consumption by choosing ground delivery. Gift packaging and wrapping contribute to a 25 percent jump in trash during the holidays. Choose gifts with minimal packaging, wrap in reusable gift bags or recycled wrapping paper, or even newspaper or brown bags that you decorate yourself. Better yet, consider

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## Monroe's Ruminations

Monroe Weinstock

To begin, I think it is time to "put my money where my mouth is" and touch on those



things that are most important to me (politically). We survived 8 years of Bush/Cheney...who led us into the bottomless pit of Iraq/Afghanistan and almost destroyed our economy...and it is now time for Barack Obama to show us the way back to a bright American future. In my considered opinion, we must get our troops out of Afghanistan & Iraq!!!!

First—JOBS, JOBS, JOBS. Some BANKS may have been too big to

fail, but most people are too important to be allowed to drown or have their homes foreclosed or educations curtailed. Next on my agenda is UNIVERSAL HEALTHCARE; there should not be 50 million Americans without coverage. Also, the ECONOMY needs another serious review; another injection of funds could expand JOBS and rebuild some industries. Then we have the problem of CLIMATE CHANGE, chemical emissions contaminating our atmosphere. CIVIL RIGHTS & SECURITY go hand in hand, and we must protect our personal dignity without trampling on our privacy & safety. Our COURTS are in dire straits; many judges do not relate to personal problems. We have a diminishing MEDIA that is changing daily from print news to

television to blogs to who-knows-what. CHURCH/STATE separation is another issue that must be guarded carefully to protect our religious freedoms. The MIDDLE-EASTERN QUAGMIRE has festered for centuries, with little future chance of compromise. I am strongly in favor of BUSH/CHENEY being convicted of crimes against humanity!!! CALIFORNIA thankfully will lose GOVERNATOR ARNOLD and hopefully be replaced by an honest politico.

Finally, PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA needs to get crackin' to fulfill the shining promises of the liberal future we came to expect from his election.... and I wish you all well for the upcoming holidays. I'll be back in 2010 for more commentary.

## October Recap

Tony Hale led the meeting this month, featuring local election candidates and environmental news.

First we heard an update from Hermosa Beach City Council candidate Howard Fishman on his campaign. He told us he has distributed 275 signs and hundreds of walk pieces with the help of local kids, and the Daily Breeze has written an article about his campaign.

(Election results note: Fishman won his seat in Hermosa beach, along with Jeff DuClos and incumbent Kit Bobko. Ray Waters won his seat on the school board. Congratulations!)

Rebecca Kim and Tony reported together on Jane Harman's recent activities. Jane spoke to a group of business leaders and politicians at the Torrance Marriott Hotel about a Hermosa Beach home that is being turned into a "net zero" energy dwelling, meaning that it produces as much energy as it consumes. Owners Robert and Monica Fortunato plan to use building materials with a low toxicity level and produced with a small carbon footprint.

Tony and Rebecca also said that various health care bills will soon go into conference, where a vigorous debate on the public option is expected. Once the bills are merged into a single one, it will go back to the House and Senate and then on to the President. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid has proposed an opt-out provision for those states that do not support a public option.

Harman is also credited with keeping the Hermosa Beach Post Office open. It was short-listed for closure along with six



*Tony Hale and Rebecca Kim, from Jane Harman's office, discuss the Congresswoman's actions on behalf of the environment and health care.*

other post offices in Harman's district, but Councilman Michael Keegan worked with her to keep it open because it's the only one in the city.

Lori Geittmann spoke on Measure UU, the Redondo Beach ballot measure that would force the AES power plant to pay taxes on the gas it uses to generate electricity. AES makes electricity under a contract with J.P. Morgan, which sells it to Southern California Edison to distribute to its customers.

Opponents claim a tax on AES would ultimately force Edison to request a rate hike from the California Public Utilities

Commission that would be passed along to consumers. But city officials contend it's only fair that AES pay the 4.75 percent utility-users' tax on natural gas and not just on services such as electricity and water usage. (Measure UU was defeated in the election.)

Tony reported on the California Democracy Act, a ballot proposition authored by George Lakoff for the 2010 ballot. The content of the proposition is as follows:

*All legislative action on revenue and budget must be determined by a majority vote.*

It would change two words in the Constitution, turning "two-thirds" to "majority" in two places. Lakoff says: "Changing the vote requirement to a majority for budget and revenue would ensure that California's budget can meet the state's needs and be passed on time. ... One sentence can make California a well-run state again."

Information about the campaign can be found at [www.camajorityrule.com](http://www.camajorityrule.com).

Donations are needed to underwrite a poll and promote the legislation. The Club passed a motion to donate \$100 to the campaign.

Dency Nelson reported on 350 Climate Action Day held on October 24 (see page 1). Tony Hale reported from the Environmental Caucus of the California Democratic Party. At the November 13 E Board meeting he expects the Caucus to endorse a global climate change resolution calling for the reversal of Carbon Dioxide levels from the current 390 ppm back to 350. The resolution will be forwarded to California State senators, the Congressional delegation, the EPA, and

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New Meeting Date for November!  
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Manhattan Bread & Bagel  
1808 North Sepulveda Boulevard  
Manhattan Beach

President  
(open)  
Vice-President (interim)  
Tony Hale—310-465-6188  
Treasurer  
Edna Murphy—310-545-6292  
Secretary  
Sam Ingram—310-977-4430  
Membership  
(open)  
Newsletter  
Moira Zucker—310-546-7562  
MoiraZucker@alumni.reed.edu  
Database and mailing  
Steve Zucker—310-546-7562  
Web Manager  
James McGreevy—310-320-1638

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

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Beach Cities  
Democratic Club



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*(Lessons, continued from page 1)*

close House vote. John Garamendi's win in the California 10<sup>th</sup> was not heralded much by the national media. But Garamendi has become an unabashed liberal, a strong ally of the President and Nancy Pelosi, who had pledged to support the public option, and in the past had supported single-payer health care. He replaced Blue Dog Ellen Tauscher in a district that she had narrowly wrested away from Republican Bill Baker in 1996. In a low-turnout special election, it is precisely the type of district that a resurgent Republican Party would hope to pick up. But it was not only never in doubt, but it moved to the left.

Of course, the more heralded New York 23<sup>rd</sup> saw the Republican Party eating its own, destroying a moderate Republican. In a district that had not been represented by a Democrat since before the founding of the Republican Party, the Republican nominee was not only forced out, but endorsed the Democrat. Instead, the Republicans endorsed the tea-bag/birther-endorsed Doug Hoffman. That is

the way of the Republican Party, and if they keep going that way, there are a lot more Republican districts that will be lost.

Election Night 2009 was not good for us. But it taught us only that which we already knew—if we deliver on the change we promised, we can be successful. That does not mean we have to lurch to the center or solidify the base—the reality is that we have set down a path and just need the patience and determination to deliver on it. And we have a President blessed with those qualities. The Republicans have no answers, and they are lurching to the right, with even their elected leaders participating in tea-bag demonstrations, a path that will lead them to a permanent minority.

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### From the Editor

Again this year I thank my wonderful contributors: the monthly columnists who make people want to read the newsletter every month, Monroe Weinstock and Dency Nelson; and the other busy people who nevertheless take time to contribute: Tony Hale, Lori Geitmann, Lee Fink, and our former president Ray Waters. Thanks always to Jim McGreevy for being our Webmaster, and Steve Zucker for mailing, membership lists, and monthly announcements. There will be no newsletter in December, and no regular meeting.

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*(Green, continued from page 2)*

charitable gifts to your favorite earth-friendly or socially conscious organizations in the names of your loved ones and friends. A real recognition of the true spirit of the season. Happy holidays and peace to all of you!

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*(Recap, continued from page 3)*

President Obama. The club passed a motion to endorse the resolution.

In closing, Tony said the club is still seeking a permanent President. We have been rotating this office since July and need to name a person to fill the office ahead of re-chartering the club in January.