



## Next Meeting

Manhattan Bread & Bagel  
1808 N. Sepulveda Boulevard  
Manhattan Beach  
Wednesday, May 22, 7:30 PM

### Program

Preparing for 2014 - Mobilize, Organize  
and Elect  
MOE - Program Information

## President's Message

It is May and in this month we honor our mothers and grandmothers - and our family and friends who are mothers of two-legged and four legged family members. And, in response to some news at the beginning of this month, it seems relevant to focus this edition of our newsletter on Mother Earth.

At Earth Day in Polliwog Park last month, two of our local elected officials were recognized as Environmental Heroes. The awards were presented by Assemblyman Al Muratsuchi and the Members of the Manhattan Beach City Council.

Congressman Henry Waxman was recognized for his legislation in Congress to ensure that we have clean air and water. He is currently focused on climate change and has established the Climate Change Tax Force in Congress. (<http://www.whitehouse.senate.gov/news/press/rep-waxman-and-sen-whitehouse-form-bicameral-climate-change-task-force>).

Hermosa Beach Councilman Jeff Duclos was recognized as an Environmental Hero for his lifelong passion for clean beaches and oceans through the Surfrider Foundation. Most recently Jeff has been appointed to the Coastal Commission.

In this month our focus is on the climate - climate change and climate crisis. The level of CO2 in our atmosphere is directly linked to climate change. We are Democrats and we learn from and believe in science.

In order to slow down the climate change, the goal is to reduce the level of CO2 in our atmosphere to below 350 - hence the name of the environmental group founded by Bill McKibben: 350.org - website: [www.350.org](http://www.350.org).

The news this month: The average level of CO2 around the world is now 392. And, according to the Scripps CO2 Program at the University of California at San Diego, the level of CO2 at Moana Loa, Hawaii is now poised to go above 400. In other words, rather than reversing the level of CO2, we are continuing to increase it.

In our daily lives, we can choose how we live. We can choose to do nothing and continue to contribute greenhouse gases and use fossil fuels. Or - we can change how we live and contribute to the reduction of CO2 in our atmosphere.

Here are some things that are highly recommended and easy to do:

- Change light bulbs from incandescent to LED
- Reduce your use of water every day. When you do this, you reduce your use of fossil fuels, which provide the power to transport the water to your home.
- Change to a low flow toilet.
- Turn the water off when you brush your teeth.
- Remove your grass lawn and plant drought-tolerant ground cover and native plants.
- Plant a vegetable garden - in your yard or in pots on your balcony.
- Participate in meatless Mondays.

Animals emit greenhouse gases. When we need fewer animals for our food, greenhouse gases are reduced.

- Turn off the lights when you leave a room. This reduces your use of electricity, reducing the use of coal in the generation of electricity.
- Think about how you get around. Instead of driving, walk or ride your bike. When thinking about a new car, buy electric.

Thankfully, among us we have some real environmental heroes - Tony, Jeff, Ray and Carol, Dency and Moira, Bill, Jane, Lillian, Ollie, and others. Let's all thank them for providing leadership in how to live responsibly on this Earth!

Honoring Mother Earth . . .

*Diane Wallace*

## From the Convention



*Many BCDC members attended the Party Convention in April. Photos courtesy of Lori Geitmann.*

## April Recap

*Editor's Note: Due to the many articles received this month, the minutes are abbreviated; full minutes will be available as usual at our May meeting.*

Federal Account: Starting Balance: \$1,183 as of 3/1/2013

Expenditures for the month of March were \$4 for postage stamps.

Ending Balance is \$1,179.

State Account: Starting Balance \$48

\$15 deducted from State account for Bank Charges. Current Balance: \$33.

### Program: State Convention Reports

Lori Geittmann, Ray Waters and Lynne Michaels reviewed the Resolutions that were passed at the State Convention.

Highlights and speakers at the convention: Nancy Pelosi, Kamala Harris, Gavin Newsome, Debra Bowen and a woman from Walmart who is organizing her fellow workers. She was a very passionate speaker with the message that Democrats stand up for workers; this is why we are Democrats. Teresa Bird: "She is our Norma Rae."

The Environmental and Progressive caucuses were taken over by non-delegates, and they were "mob scenes." There is a concern that people were registering at the last minute, and some may not have been Democrats.

Lori is on the Convention Credentials committee. Apparently a lot of people from the Sacramento area came and took over the caucuses. There is an eBoard meeting in Costa Mesa in mid-July. This issue may be brought up at the Rules committee. Lori encouraged people to attend. Out of 300 people who attended, they checked party affiliation of 70, and 50% were not registered Dems. Lori would like the Club to send a Resolution to the Rules committee to request a change to the rules.

Kamala Harris and Gavin Newsome seem to be the future of the party. Diane encouraged everybody to go as a Volunteer or Observer at next year's Convention to be held at LA Live; the latter only costs \$30.

### For endorsement consideration

AB 1077 Proposed support for a tax incentive for the purchase of alternative fuel cars. Support for AB1077: passed by majority; 1 abstention.

Opposition to the Annenberg Proposal for the Wetlands – Proposed support. Passed by majority; 1 abstention.

SB 52 – Requires transparency in campaign funding - Proposed support. Passed unanimously.

MOE (Mobilize, Organize and Elect – an online voter database provided by the California Democratic Party – free to clubs through LACDP. Motion to table and have a detailed presentation on MOE to inform us of the rules that we need to follow as an organization to use, info on initial usage and who has access to it. Passed. Diane will provide details to the Club in order for members to make a decision about supporting our access to and use of MOE.

### Reports from the offices of our Elected Officials

Veronica Zendejas from Ted Lieu's office reported that Ted is working on 30 Bills plus a Resolution. Highlights:

- SB 2 - Sunshine in Campaigns act: moving along, to be heard on 4/30.
- SB 49 - require schools in CA to have safety plans (and to enforce them). Passed Education committee today; problem is that schools are self-reporting.
- SB 333: Swatting: Ted was Swatted last Friday. To be heard on the 29<sup>th</sup> in Appropriations. Wasted resources. Already passed public safety.
- SB 57 GPS Bracelet enforcement. High risk gang member / sex offenders who break their bracelets would be charged with a felony, and the person

will go to jail.

- Public forum on LAX airport: Ted will be speaking in Venice Beach along with Henry Waxman.

• SB52 Full Disclose - support  
If a list of Ted's bills isn't on his web site, Lori asked that they be included. Veronica will confirm that they are on the website.

### 66<sup>th</sup> AD – Al Muratsuchi

Timothy Lippman reported:

- AB8810 - Public safety data sharing to correct realignment. Passed 7-0, expected to pass Appropriations.
- Save SCROC just heard on 4/24. This was presented but not voted on.
- Timothy encouraged us all to "Like" the State Gov't Official FB page (from Al's campaign page). There is also a link to the SCROC landing page.
- Press conference last week in Torrance about electric cars. That bill will be heard on May 6<sup>th</sup>.
- AB 777: Job preservation bill. SpaceX ongoing issue with assessor. Their rockets are taxed as real property instead of inventory.
- AB 927: Aerospace select committee member. Tax credit to encourage Aerospace to stay in CA: tax credit when they hire from local area.
- Field Representative Melissa Uribe is working with the South Bay. You can contact her at 310-316-2164 or email her at Melissa.Uribe@asm.ca.gov.

## The Fallacy of Non-Partisanship in Local Elections

"I only vote for the best person." "I knew she's a Republican but this is a nonpartisan office." "He promised me he'd fix my street."

These are some of the comments you hear from those who support the idea of non-partisanship in local elections. Usually they don't know what they are talking about.

Would you rather have school board members who are Republicans or Democrats? What if the Republicans school board members want to prevent Planned Parenthood from giving lectures on family planning and safe sex to those students who attend with consent of their parents? What if the school board members want creation-

ism taught and not evolution? How about a school board member who denies global warming?

How would you feel if Republican city council members decided not to give health care benefits to the spouse of an employee in a gay marriage? How would you feel if a city council instructed the police to hold in custody for ICE any undocumented person found sleeping in a city park?

These are just some of the issues that may spawn differences between Republicans and Democrats in local elections.

"But there are no Democrats running for local office," says one of our club

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## Beach Cities Green

By Dency Nelson

Anyone reading this column is already prepared to acknowledge how important it was that we elected Al Muratsuchi to represent us from the 66<sup>th</sup> AD. It



became personally very clear to me how fortunate we are to have this man representing us when a coalition of his constituents, including myself, met with him formally, for the first time in his official capacity, to ask for his vote on an issue we feel is critical to the health and safety of California and Californians. That issue is hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking."

Assemblyman Muratsuchi sits on the Assembly's Natural Resources Committee, and that committee was the first stop for two important bills calling for a moratorium on the dangerous and unnecessary practice of fracking—AB 1301 (Bloom) and AB 1323 (Mitchell). Without going into detail about the bills' differences and similarities, I will just say that these and several other bills basically have been presented to "define hydraulic fracturing and [would] prohibit hydraulic fracturing in oil and gas operations until the Legislature enacts subsequent legislation that determines whether and under what conditions hydraulic fracturing may be conducted while protecting the public health and safety and the natural resources of the state."

Obviously, the oil and gas industry would like to "keep on fracking" in just the same way they have been doing to date, without any real regulation or transparency concerning exactly what chemicals and procedures they are subjecting our fragile water supplies, air quality, and earthquake-prone geology to, putting the health and safety of Californians at the mercy of these practices. The oil and gas industry has lots of money to spend, along with the money of job-starved labor movements, on campaigns of disinformation that minimize the effects of these practices while warning that a moratorium would be economically disastrous for the State and its workers and would deprive the State and the Nation of a vital source of

cheap fuel. In their spin, calling for a moratorium makes you a "job killer" at best and, even worse, a traitor to National Security. A heavy burden for any lawmaker to carry.

Assemblyman Muratsuchi intuitively appreciated the anti-fracking arguments coming from us, for whom he has great respect, when we cited the various reports we provided from the NRDC, the Sierra Club, Food & Water Watch, and other environmental watchdog organizations. But he held our feet to the fire, saying he needed science and statistics from sources more disinterested than the zealous environmental organizations that our coalition represented. And thanks to the diligence of Food & Water Watch's Brenna Norton, Assemblyman Muratsuchi was provided with the research and sources that he needed to confront the industry hacks during the committee hearings on these bills on Monday, April 29, and to vote with the 5-to-4 majority to move these bills on to the next Assembly committees.

As Tony Hale, our good friend and fellow environmental activist said in a note to Assemblyman Muratsuchi following his vote, "This is the good feeling of representative government. Of course, that requires a representative who listens to our concerns, who carefully considers the issues and who truly makes his own decisions based on the facts and interests of his constituents." That is Assemblyman Muratsuchi, and we are very fortunate to have him!

## 5 Big Ideas for 55 Democrats

By Lee Fink

California Democrats gathered last month in Sacramento for our annual convention. Most of the convention was a celebration about winning a two-thirds supermajority in both houses of the state legislature.

But missing from most of the discussion was what we are going to do with this new mandate. California Democrats could hardly be blamed for impersonating an Aaron Sorkin character and suggesting that we "take this 2/3rds majority out for a spin and see what she can do." Because Proposition 30 enacted mostly temporary tax measures that have balanced the budget, Governor Brown and legislative leaders have already signaled that they are not keen to move new tax measures, which require a 2/3

(*Fallacy, continued from page 2*) members.

And why not, I ask? Has our club been out there looking for potential candidates? Maybe it is time we make that Project Number One, especially candidates who are in their 30s and 40s who will make future candidates for state and national offices. Assemblyman Al Muratsuchi was just such a candidate, a successful, young Torrance School Trustee.

There is another factor. We need to hold our Democratic officeholders' feet to the fire on issues.

With the new elections standards, where the top two candidates are in the runoff, we may find ourselves facing some appealing Republican office holders. Republicans are not totally dumb. They want to keep filling local offices, many times with our help.

Some of our Democrats are too timid to stand up for our issues. When they do, we need to let them know we appreciate it.

Finally, if you are a Democrat, stop apologizing for it. It is okay to put out a sign for a Democrat. So, maybe your neighbors won't love you. They probably don't anyhow. If you are involved in politics stop trying to win "Mr. Popularity" or "Ms. Congeniality" contests. You have already lost. Just be honest and real. And don't try tricks. This isn't machine politics. Smoke filled rooms went out with second hand smoke.

Lori Geitmann

vote. Although the Democratic supermajority will eventually have to deal with state revenue, this is generally the right posture for the moment. But California has the opportunity to pave the way for the rest of the country on five important issues that the Legislature can tackle this year:

### 1. Health Care Reform - A California Public Option

California became the first state to enact the Health Insurance Exchanges that form the heart of reform under ObamaCare. But we know that adding a public option would force private insurers to compete and drive down insurance premiums—using the market forces in which Republicans so often claim to believe. California could provide its own public insurance programs. Indeed,

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**Beach Cities  
Democratic Club**



*(Ideas, continued from page 3)*

public options are already in the offing in some places.

Alameda Alliance, which is run by the County of Alameda, provides healthcare in Alameda County under the Medi-Cal program. A number of other public entities also administer Medi-Cal services throughout the state, and could also compete on the exchanges. The Legislature should act this year to make sure that there is a public option—either through local Medi-Cal providers or a new statewide system—available in all 19 regions under California's new health insurance exchange, California Covered, which becomes active in less than eight months.

## **2. Increase the Minimum Wage**

President Obama called on Congress to increase the minimum wage from the current \$7.25 level to \$9 per hour by 2015. California, with some of the highest cost-of-living in the country, has a minimum wage of only \$8 per hour. A bill by Assemblyman Luis Alejoto to increase the minimum wage to \$9.25 in 2016, and indexed to inflation thereafter, has already moved through an Assembly committee. The Legislature should ratchet up that bill to match the

President's call for a \$9 minimum wage in 2015, and pass it this year. Raising the minimum wage would benefit thousands of low income Californians, as well as driving up wages for middle class workers. In an era where CEO pay is rising, the stock market is at record heights, and Nobel Prize winning economists agree that it will not harm the economy, it is time for California to support middle class wage earners.

## **3. Pass Gun Safety Measures NOW.**

While the NRA may have enough US Senators in its pocket (for now) to block even the most common sense of measures like universal background checks, despite 90% support of the public, other states have begun moving. New York, Colorado, and Connecticut have all adopted stringent gun safety measures in wake of the Newtown massacre. Just after the convention, the State Senate began working on legislation that would require background checks for all gun owners and ban assault weapons. There is no excuse for California to have waited so long when New York, with a Republican-controlled state senate, has already acted. California should adopt these effective measures before school is out for summer.

## **4. Double-Down on Climate Change**

California has one of the most progressive climate change laws in place in AB 32, as well as one of the most aggressive Renewal Energy Portfolio standards, requiring 33% of the state's electricity to come from renewable sources by 2020. But we can help increase the supply of renewable energy by creating a fund to retrofit government buildings to install solar panels.

Local governments and state colleges could be allowed to tap into the fund as well. While such a fund could be financed by adopting an oil extraction tax (California is one of the few states without such a tax), if the Legislature wanted to avoid a new tax, it could place a bond measure on the ballot. The cost savings from the state generating its own electricity would be an ideal revenue source for paying off a bond. Moreover, this would generate a slew of high-tech manufacturing and construction jobs that would bolster the economy.

A higher volume of such work would bring down costs for businesses and individuals, creating a virtuous circle allowing even more people to retrofit their homes and buildings.

*Part 2 of this article will appear in June.*