



The Democratic Advocate

Newsletter of the Santa Clara County Democratic Central Committee

Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the first issue of our newsletter. There are several purposes for this newsletter:

- 1) to provide an avenue of communication for elected officials,
- 2) to help people become more aware of the Democratic Party,
- 3) to assist in distributing information on upcoming activities, and
- 4) to provide a venue for you to express your views through letters to the editor and other contributions to this newsletter.

Initially we will keep production simple. As each new quarterly issue is published we will continuously improve and grow. The plan is to distribute the newsletter in multiple formats: paper, web, and e-mail. I encourage and welcome any and all suggestions.

Sincerely,

Olivia Graeve

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General Submission
Guidelines:

This newsletter will be published quarterly on the first Thursday of February, May, August, and October.

Material to be submitted to the editor for publication is due on the 25th of the month, two months prior to the issue in which the item is to be printed. For example, a submission for the May issue should be submitted no later than March 25.

All material sent to this newsletter must conform to the goals and objectives of the SCCDCC, and portray the SCCDCC in a positive light.

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www.scc-democrats.org

Clubs and Assembly Districts

by Emy Thurber

There are a number of Democratic clubs and Assembly District committees which are actively involved in grass roots projects. Some of the clubs are geographically based and some are based on ethnicity. All the clubs are open to everyone who is interested in joining. The only criterion is that the member should be a registered Democrat. The clubs do voter registration, precinct organization, headquarters work and provide contact between activists and candidates. They give opportunities for members to meet elected officials and to socialize with other Democrats. If you want to keep up with Democratic activities and to get involved, joining a club is a good way to do it.

In addition to clubs, there are Assembly District Committees. These are geographically based and are official organs of the California State Democratic Party. Some of the committees are very active and some less so. All of them welcome members and also provide opportunities to be politically connected.

Following is a list of the Santa Clara County Clubs which are accredited by the Santa Clara County Democratic Party with e-mail addresses for their presidents, as well as a list of Assembly District Committees with e-mail addresses for their Chairs. Do not hesitate to get in touch with them, even if you are not sure about joining. All the clubs and Assembly District Committees welcome inquiries and will help you learn more about your local party activities.

Democratic Clubs

Silicon Valley African American Coalition, Tony Alexander, tonco@ix.netcom.com
Silicon Valley Clinton-Gore Democratic Action Network, Liz McDavid, cgactnet1@aol.com
DAWN (Democratic Activists for Women Now), Dawn Wright, dwrightway@aol.com
Peninsula Democratic Coalition, Fran Cochran, franlcochr@aol.com
Santa Clara County Democratic Club, Ann Shirkey, shioka1@home.com
West Valley Democratic Club, David Wilkes, dwilkes@svpal.org
Evergreen Democratic Club at the Villages, Jim Gleeson, JGlee75@aol.com
Silicon Valley Asian Pacific American Democratic Club, Gap Kim, batzmad@yahoo.com
South County Democratic Club, Alex Kennett, gavilanf@garlic.com
Peninsula Young Democrats, Andrew Byrnes, info@peninsulayd.org; www.peninsulayd.org

Assembly District Committees

21st AD, Ian Bain, ibain@arpartners.com
22nd AD, Chris Stampolis, calfdems@aol.com
23rd AD, Ben Tripousis, ben.tripousis@ci.sj.ca.us
24th AD, Dolly Sandoval, dolly@sandoval.com
28th AD, Sal Alvarez, aranch@infi.net

All of the clubs and assembly districts offer great opportunities for meeting fellow Democrats, getting involved and making a difference. Please contact us and see how you can become more active. If you do not have access to e-mail, you can leave a message with the Santa Clara Democratic Party telephone at (408) 445-9500. We hope to hear from you soon!

This event is crucial to our role in regaining control of the House and solidifying our position in the Senate.

Save the Date

JJ Dinner

The **JJ Dinner**—a tradition for local Democrats, supplies the funds necessary to conduct local activities such as headquarters, voter registration drives, and get-out-the-vote campaigns. At \$100 a person, not one individual's pocket book suffers very much, yet the results make the difference between no activity and a roaring, successful campaign.

Save the date now, **May 3**, for this gala event honoring the contributions of the African American Community to the Democratic Party. Invitations will be in the mail in early April. Return your reply card as quickly as possible, as space is limited. For further information call (408) 445-9500.



Smart

Voter

Smart Voter provides online election information (candidates and measures), is a polling place locator, provides your personal ballot, provides information about Santa Clara County (www.smartvoter.org/ca/scl), is non-partisan, is free (funding is provided by contributions from the public and from local Leagues), is owned by the League of Women Voters of California.

Smart Voter has been providing citizens with information necessary to cast informed votes since 1996 and is an outgrowth of the League's candidate questionnaires published on paper.

Candidates may enter information online and add to or edit their information up to the day before the election. When submitting, the candidate must provide a minimum amount of information (two lines of biography and three top priorities). In addition, the candidate may provide a photo, additional biographical information, political philosophy, endorsements, and up to three position papers.

Voters can read information about candidates and measures, get their personal ballot, locate their polling place, obtain information about candidate forums, and obtain links to political newspaper articles.

Smart Voter needs your help encouraging candidates to participate in Smart Voter, publicizing Smart Voter, linking to Smart Voter from city webpages, political webpages, community group webpages, and business webpages. To link to Smart Voter see details at:

<http://www.smartvoter.org/voter/linktosv.html>.

You may also contact Barbara Wardenburg at barbward@pacbell.net for additional information.

Remember - March 5 is Election Day

23rd Assembly District

Manny Diaz



California is not alone in these times of economic adversity. Like 46 other states, California is experiencing falling state revenues, increased unemployment, and a huge budget deficit. Thousands of Californians have lost their jobs in the tourism and airline industries. These losses, coupled with the collapse of many high-tech firms, have led California into the sharpest economic downturn since World War II.

With budget cuts looming, it is critical for programs that offer services to seniors, immigrants, minorities, the poor, and the unemployed remain protected. The administration's proposed budget cuts will be discussed in a special session, and I will do my best to ensure that we do not retreat from the progress accomplished in areas of public education, the protection of our environment, the availability of affordable health care and child care. Investing in safety net services at a time when layoffs are occurring is crucial to the stability of California's working families and their children.

The current legislative year will bring about challenges that California has not experienced in decades. Currently, the federal government has provided little aid to California. But I can assure you that the Democrats in Sacramento will not wait for Washington to act. The leadership in our Assembly has already formed a special working group to examine the Governor's proposed spending cuts, and our leadership is meeting with the administration in an effort to explore other options.

State economists have indicated to the legislature that this economic downturn is temporary. As the nation is caught in the midst of war and fiscal uncertainty, it is imperative that we weather this year's economic storm together. A united front is the surest way to lead California back on its path to economic prosperity.

This year's legislative session will provide the California legislature an opportunity to revitalize our sagging economy and also to continue to support quality of life issues important to our constituents in the 23rd Assembly District and in the Silicon Valley region. As Chairman of the State Select Committee on Housing in the Silicon Valley, I am also aware of the pressures and difficulties imposed on working families because of the lack of affordable housing in the Bay Area. (continued on page 5.)

Voter Registration Program

The Santa Clara County Democratic Party has a year round voter registration program. You may have seen us in the shopping malls, stores, festivals and fairs. If you would like to join our voter registration team or would like some more information about the program, please contact Liz McDavit, our voter registration/community services director at (408) 445-9500 or by e-mail at Cgactnet1@aol.com.



Liz McDavit and Tom Cochran*

(continued from page 4.)

This committee is consulting local elected officials, labor leaders, housing advocates, building industry representatives, and real estate interests in its attempts to craft sound housing policies. Long-term solutions to this growing problem could include legislation or regulatory recommendations in the areas of tax credits, housing bonds, and incentives for the creation of more affordable housing.

I believe our State legislature is more than capable of managing the many challenges that await this legislative session. Last year, we inherited a flawed energy deregulation system seeking to disrupt the flow of power to our homes, businesses, and farms. As a member of the Utilities and Commerce Committee, I worked on policies that protected us as consumers by stabilizing the fluctuating energy market and preventing blackouts from disturbing our summer. I am confident that this legislature will once again rise to the occasion and prevail above any challenge that confront us.

Please feel free to visit my district office located at 100 Paseo De San Antonio Road, Suite 300 in downtown San Jose. You can also call me at (408) 269-6500 or email me at:
Assemblymember.Diaz@assembly.ca.gov.



Why am I a Democrat? by **Charlie Ahern**

I am a Democrat because Democrats believe that Americans can work together, through their government, to progressively improve the lives of their families, friends, and other Americans. And Democrats win elections.

Democrats understand that in order to resolve the problems facing the American people, we cannot simply entrust a free-market economy to produce effective and equitable solutions. While we support and enjoy the benefits of capitalism, Democrats favor the interests of the larger population in the working- and middle classes. Corporate executives and wealthy individuals can afford to hire PR firms and well-paid lobbyists to promote their interests. The Democratic Party provides a voice for those people who cannot afford PR firms and lobbyists. That is why I am a Democrat.

The close relationship between the labor and civil rights movements and the Democratic Party demonstrates that Democrats understand how ordinary people can organize to accomplish significant changes in American life. Often the key to success for Democratic candidates is the support of grassroots activists. These activists may not be able to write big campaign contribution checks, but they can contribute their time to walk precincts. Even in an era of big-money political campaigns, Democrats know that word-of-mouth campaigning can still beat 30-second ads in prime time. That is why I am a Democrat.

In a time when many people ridicule the Federal government, Democrats recognize that the American people use the Federal government to basically define what it means to be an American. Because we are such a mobile society, Americans expect some consistency in the legal and political ground rules as we move from place to place. Those who want to devolve political power from the Federal level to states and cities may prefer to ignore what it really means to be an American. I hope we will never again need Freedom Riders to demonstrate how local control and states rights can be un-American. That is why I am a Democrat.

When Democrats look to the future, they see opportunities for social and economic progress. Rather than enshrining the traditions of the past or defending the inequities of the status quo, Democrats identify problems and propose policies to improve the lives of the majority of Americans. FDR summarized this Democratic spirit when he said, "The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today." That is why I am a Democrat.

Many people hold opinions and positions similar to Democrats, but cannot or will not attempt the transition from social critic to elected official. They prefer to observe those struggling to govern, rather than joining the struggle. Others make the attempt through third parties. However, Pat Buchanan's plundering of the Reform Party demonstrated the frailty of third parties without their charismatic leaders. The Democratic Party wins elections. That is why I am a Democrat.

That is why I will always be a Democrat.

The Campaign Kick-Off Event

by Charlie Ahern

Despite a sunny Sunday afternoon and a Niners-Packers playoff game on TV, more than a hundred people attended the Campaign 2002 Kick-off at the San Jose Labor Temple. Madge Overhouse, Region 5 Director of the California Democratic Party, organized the event to bring together candidates and activists in preparation for the upcoming primaries in March and the general election in November.

Volunteers staffed several tables to distribute literature, discuss issues, and recruit other volunteers, for the campaigns of Steve Westly, Rebecca Cohn, Kevin Shelly, Terry Gregory, Rebecca Cohn, and Dennis Kennedy, among others.



Steve Preminger and Manny Diaz

Steve Preminger, chairman of the Santa Clara County Central Committee, helped Madge Overhouse pull the event together and also served as master of ceremonies by introducing the speakers and welcoming them to the podium.

The surprise, featured speaker was California Attorney General, Bill Lockyer. He discussed some of the actions he has taken to protect the people of California, most recently the suit filed against the PG&E holding company for its financial transactions that helped push the PG&E utility into bankruptcy. He was also the first speaker to sound a cautionary note that Democrats should not become complacent about the upcoming general elections.

A crowd favorite was Steve Westly, candidate for California State Controller. Many of the attendees have known Steve for several years through his party activism here in Santa Clara County. His energetic speaking style held the crowd's attention and his focus on the little known responsibilities of the Controller highlighted the importance of his campaign.

The phalanx of Democratic members of the California Assembly impressed the crowd. Seeing Rebecca Cohn, Manny Diaz, John Dutra, and Joe Simitian stand shoulder-to-shoulder waiting to speak, reassured the attendees that our region has excellent representation in Sacramento. Assemblywoman Cohn noted that although she has no opponents in either the primary or the general election, she will be campaigning hard this Fall for other Democratic candidates. Three candidates for the 22nd Assembly District; Rod Diridon Jr., Sally Lieber, and Rosemary Stasek briefly spoke about the progress of their campaigns and asked for volunteers. (continued on page 7.)



Steve Westly, Liz Figueroa and Anne Mack



Thelma Spaziani

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Carl Henley, a candidate for Secretary of State from Long Beach, gave a well-received speech that focused on the important role the Secretary of State has in making sure that voters have the opportunity to cast a ballot and that their ballots will be accurately counted. Steve Smith, California director of industrial relations, represented Gray Davis. He guaranteed that the governor's race in the Fall "is going to be a nail-biter."

Come and join us as a volunteer to make sure that our Democratic candidates get elected! To find out how to get involved see page 2 of this newsletter.

Participate with a Purpose

by Steve Preminger

Your political participation in 2002 is needed now more than ever. America just ended a year filled with bitterness, disappointment and uncertainty. The reasons are in our face every day. The constant memory of September 11, the quest to eliminate terrorism, our shaken economy; all these issues are paraded relentlessly in the news.

Add to that a President who, while widely considered a successful responder to terrorism, has continued to pursue an agenda that caters to his wealthy political contributors at the expense of most average working Americans. While a natural response might be to turn off the outside world, to eliminate the constant message of pain and angst, as Democrats, we cannot.

The Santa Clara County Democratic Party is gearing up to do all sorts of meaningful activities in the coming months leading to the elections in November, and we could really use your help. We will be involved in voter registration efforts, including New Citizen Swearing-In ceremonies, which many find quite moving. New citizens are choosing to register as Democrats by an overwhelming margin, both over Republicans and Independents. We staff lots of Democratic tables at outdoor festivals and other activities that the Santa Clara Valley is so conducive to.

This March we will be supporting our candidates for local, state, and national offices. Some of the races are non-partisan, like city council, board of supervisors, judicial, and school boards. Just because they are non-partisan does not mean they do not interest the Democratic Party. We have made endorsements of candidates in these non-partisan races. Additionally, there are ballot measures crucial to the future of California. Our web site (www.scc-democrats.org) lists our position on these issues.

The general election in November will be crucial to California, as we will be electing or in this case, re-electing Governor Gray Davis. The Governor has had his mettle tested with the various economic challenges that have befallen the state as well as the national challenges poised by the possibility of terrorism in California.

The Santa Clara County Democratic Party is a great place for you to get active. Without an invigorated people who realize that they can and should make a contribution to our community, a sense of defeatism and cynicism will prevail. Do not let that happen. Get in touch with us and see how you can use your talent and initiative to make this a better place for all. Please feel free to contact me at steve@atwork.org or (408) 445-9500. I look forward to meeting you.

Notes from the Chairman

If you would like to receive a free subscription to this newsletter, please send your name, address, and phone number, indicating that you would like a subscription to The Democratic Advocate, to Olivia Graeve at oagraeve@lanset.com, or mail this form to 485 Northern Road, San Jose, CA 95125.

This form may be photocopied.

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