



Democratic Super Delegates and DNC members -- Mary Ellen Early and Garry Shay -- Confirmed for March Meeting

The March DCCV General Meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 12 at 6:30 p.m. at the Thousand Oaks Library. Two California members of the Democratic National Committee will speak and answer questions about the Democratic Presidential nominating process and their role in it.

Starting in 1984 super delegates, or unpledged delegates, were designated by party rules to include all Democratic members of Congress, Democratic Governors, Democratic National Committee members elected by their state Democratic Parties, and former Democratic Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Speakers, Congressional Majority and Minority leaders and DNC Chairs.

Super delegates are elected outside of, and usually before, the election year primary and caucus process. For example, the California DNC members who will be voting at the Denver convention were elected in 2004. Of the estimated 4,049 total delegates who will vote at the national convention, 796 will be super delegates.

Pledged delegates have promised to vote for a specific candidate at the convention. By DNC rules, they must be elected in the same year that the presidential nominating convention is held and are awarded proportionally through primaries and caucuses. A candidate needs a total of 2,025 delegate votes to win the party's nomination.

Mary Ellen Early has served as a super delegate at each convention since 1992. She is a member of the

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Western States Caucus, and serves on the Executive Board of the DNC Women's Caucus. In 2000, Mary Ellen was appointed by the Gore Campaign to convene the Vice President's nominating caucus in the 24th Congressional District (Brad Sherman's district at the time). An active member of the California Democratic Party Executive Board, Mary Ellen was an Assembly District Chair from 1986 to 1988, a Regional Director from 1988 to 1991, and has served on the Party's Resolutions Committee since 1993. She is a co-editor of the California DNC Press Democrat, a quarterly newsletter published for the California Democratic Party. She is a member of the Women's Caucus, the Vice-Chair of the Irish American Caucus, and is Parliamentarian for the Native American Caucus.

Garry S. Shay is the Lead Chair of the CDP Rules Committee, a member of the DNC Rules Committee, and Parliamentarian for the LACDP and CDP-GLBT Caucus. Earlier this year when there was talk of moving California Democratic Primary from Feb. 5 to Jan. 8, Mr. Shay fought hard to keep his party from ignoring the national party schedule. "I even had one legislator tell me I should move to New Hampshire," he recounted. "But rules are rules, and California abided by them. And I believe that Florida should as well." Mr. Shay also manages a list serve which can be joined at DemocraticNewsGroup-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. (Portions of this article were originally published on the California Democratic Party Progressive Caucus list-serve.)



EYE ON THE ISSUES

The March program will feature former KNX reporter, Alex Sullivan, and director-producer-writer and member of the board of governors of the Academy of Arts & Sciences, Steve Binder. The lively discussion lead by host Constance Starkey centered on the media today, touching on the subjects of media consolidation and media bias. *Eye on the Issues* is now airing Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. on Time-Warner Channel 25.

We'll Have a Real Choice in This Election

By Richard Kolber

Anyone who thinks the choice of president in this November's election is between Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee could not be more mistaken. Whether the Democratic nominee is Senator Barack Obama or Senator Hillary Clinton, the differences with GOP nominee-to-be John McCain could not be starker. Whether we're talking about foreign policy, the economy, health care, or social issues, there is a sharp contrast between the Democratic candidates' positions and those of Senator McCain.

Consider the Iraq war. Both Obama and Clinton are determined to remove US forces from this quagmire. There are nuanced differences between them on when and how fast, but they agree that we must extricate ourselves from an unviable war as quickly as is practical. On the other hand, McCain talks about maintaining a US presence for one hundred years if necessary. He insists the surge is working, mistakenly assuming that is the case because casualties are lower (though not really low; we're back to the 2004-2005 levels). In fact, the reason given for the surge was to give the Iraqi government a chance to become stable and assert itself. That has not happened.

McCain has also vowed not to raise taxes. Not knowing what the economic conditions will be over the course of the next five years, this is grossly irresponsible. Bush has piled record red ink upon the American people. It is unfair to expect future generations to pay for the current administration's foolhardiness, yet McCain is allying himself with Bush on that score. This war is going to run into the trillions. McCain can talk all he wants about how he opposes earmarks and is thus a fiscal conservative. But even if one assumes earmarks are always bad, this is a pittance compared to the cost of the war. McCain reveals himself to be penny wise and pound foolish. Both Clinton and Obama have come out in support of repealing Bush's tax cut for the rich. That will not eliminate Bush's deficit, but it is a start. Yet McCain will not even go for that. Of course, this is a candidate who freely admits he knows very little about the economy, and it is clear that, on this point, he is being entirely truthful.

Both Senators Clinton and Obama have advanced health care plans designed to put us on track toward universal coverage. Personally, I would prefer single payer, but either option would be a step in the right direction. If McCain has a plan, so far he has done an excellent job of keeping it a secret.

Social issues? McCain is staunchly pro-life, silent on gay rights, and a recent friend of the Religious Right, whom

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he had castigated back in the 2000 campaign. Of course, that was before he realized he needed their support to win the nomination. So much for "Straight Talk."

It is a mark of just how far right the Republican Party has strayed that many in their ranks are unhappy with their nominee-to-be. Yes, McCain has taken a few progressive positions (campaign finance reform, stem cell research, immigration), but on balance this is an extremely right-of-center candidate. This country can do a lot better, and hopefully we will do just that come November.



Daytime Dems to Honor Cesar Chavez March 31 at Noon

Cesar Hernandez, Community Organizing Director, Central Coast United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE), will speak to the Daytime Dems at the 3rd Annual Cesar Chavez Day Luncheon, Monday, March 31 at 12:00 p.m. CAUSE is a community planning and public policy research center serving the California Central Coast region. Their mission is to promote economic and social justice for working people in the region through policy advocacy, research, organizing, leadership development and community building. CAUSE's key program areas are: (1) Living Wage and Accountable Development, (2) Health Coverage, (3) Women's Economic Justice, (4) Fair Representation, and (5) Community Building.

The luncheon will be held at the Alamo Bar and Grill, 2311 Borchard Rd. Newbury Park. The cost is \$13.00 per person payable at the door. Lunch includes buffet, beverage (ice tea or soda), tax and gratuity. RSVP by Friday, March 28th: 805-675-8785. Please provide name, phone number and number of people.



Women's Council to host "BUY BLUE" Brunch

Are you a consumer? Of course, we all are! When you are about to spend your hard-earned money on something, wouldn't it be great to have a directory of local businesses and service providers that support our progressive ideals? Of course, it would! Please join us for a great brunch and discussion on how we can make that happen!

The brunch is March 15, from 10:00 a.m. to noon at Mandevilla Restaurant, 951 S. Westlake Blvd #102, Westlake Village. The cost is \$20.00 per person which includes a delicious brunch buffet and gratuity. RSVP: AdminVP@DWCCV.org

Single-Payer Healthcare for All!

The statewide grassroots organization Healthcare for All, which supports single-payer healthcare, Senator Sheila Kuehl's SB 840, has been busy since the ground-breaking "365" campaign.

Since then the focus has been on defeating the various state healthcare proposals and bills which would have benefited insurance companies and not the people of California. Recently the ill-conceived AB11 failed in the Senate health committee. Even Don Perata withdrew his support from this bill when its many weaknesses were uncovered in committee hearings chaired by Senator Kuehl.

Over the weekend of February 23 -24 single-payer activists gathered in Los Angeles for State Strategy Summit. This conference featured workshops on 1) Endorsement and Outreach, 2) Veto-Proofing SB 840 – 2/3 majority, 3) Multi-Media Truth Squad, and 4) HCA fundraising and online communications. A dinner featuring Sheila Kuehl's update on SB 840, plus entertainment by Lily Tomlin, Paula Poundstone, Kathryn Joosten and Sally Kellerman capped off the event. Among the participants in the weekend Summit were the League of Women Voters, California Nurses Assn., California School Employees Assn., California Teachers Assn., Dolores Huerta Foundation, Consumer Federation of Calif., American Medical Students Assn., California Gray Panthers, Church IMPACT, California Physicians Alliance, many Democratic clubs and others.

SB 840 will continue its progress through the California Legislature, once it is felt that it can go all the way. The last time that it was passed by both the Senate and the Assembly; Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed it without reading the bill or allowing Senator Kuehl to discuss it with him. Although Kuehl is termed-out this year, she is supporting Fran Paley to run for her seat. Lloyd Levine has also declared his candidacy.

Penny Strowger is the Director of Healthcare for All – Ventura County. She can be reached at pen1@verizon.net or 805-495-3297 for more information. Volunteers are needed and welcomed!



Club Cookbook Fundraiser

We haven't heard from all you good democratic cooks. We postponed publishing DCCV cookbook and are continuing to take recipes. Current plans are to put it together in the spring. Thanks to you who have submitted recipes for inclusion in the club cookbook. Please call Sharon Thomas at 805 499-2423, sharonannethomas@roadrunner.com

Inaugural Jack and Bobby Kennedy Democratic Dinner

About 300 Democrats from all corners of Ventura County gathered on Friday night, Feb. 15th at the Marriott Courtyard in Oxnard for the Inaugural Jack and Bobby Kennedy Democratic Dinner. Vote-Blue -- Central Coast organized the event as a fundraiser for future registration efforts and to celebrate the successful registration of Democrats in Ventura County. A few years ago registered Republicans outnumbered registered Democrats by 16,000 voters. The latest figures in early February showed a difference of only 473. Ventura County is about to be a BLUE county.

Stephanie Miller, nationally syndicated radio talk show host, who is heard locally on KTLK, AM1150 from LA and KIST, AM1340 from Santa Barbara, provided the crowd with her commentary on politics.

Eric Bauman, chair of the LA Democratic Party, MC'd the event and provided support for rallying the troops for this election year. In addition, we heard from Controller John Chiang, State Senator Gloria Romero, Majority Leader; Assembly member Julia Brownley; former Assembly member Hannah Beth Jackson; and Henry Vandermeir, President of the CA Democratic Council. Following the speakers Maripat Davis & Richard Osborn presented a musical cabaret.

Event organizers Sue Broidy and Helen Conly were assisted by Kate McDermott, Sandy Emberland, Ron Suckle, Diana Hopkins, Karen Peters, and ML Peterson. Other club members who helped were Debbie Birenbaum, Bruce Gardner, Penny Strowger & Shoshana Brower.

Vote Blue thanks the DCCV for their contribution to the dinner.



Volunteer Opportunities Abound

This is the year to be involved. DCCV offers many opportunities for all skills -- Newsletter editor, copy writing and editing, membership, fundraising, customer service and public relations. Need a little exercise – try precinct walking. Like to talk to people we set up booths at fairs. Contact Jim McIntyre, 805-498-6219 Gikumac@gmail.com

ADVENTURES AS A POLL WORKER

by Debbie Birenbaum, Exec. V.P.

Poll working, along with voting and jury duty, is one of the most important, vital and accessible aspects of our participatory democracy. There are valid reasons for spending a grueling day sitting in one place in a very cold church listening to inane comments. It is important to have alert, well informed, and dedicated workers at the polls. I really feel it should be a mandatory duty.

Our election process needs well-trained poll workers. Yes, a basic degree of training should be mandatory. Hard as it is to believe, there are poll workers who don't participate in the training when it is offered. They pass their ignorance on by misinforming those who are trying to vote. Problems due to poorly trained poll workers became glaringly apparent this year when inconsistent directions were given to non-partisan voters. The lack of training also was clear at closing, when the ballots had to be counted, designated and sealed.

Lack of training isn't the only problem. As it works now, the polls are mostly run by seniors. Generally, I am the youngest member of the precinct team . . . and I'm fifty.

Good intentions aside, a certain degree of physical good health should be required. Some of the poll workers I've seen are very nice, but too infirm for the trials of the day. Some cannot hear well enough to take the names of voters. Others can't hold a ruler straight enough to mark off names. Still others are too feeble to tear the stubs off the ballots. Imagine these poll workers at 9:30 p.m. after 15 hours of sitting in one spot.

There are some "hardships" involved in being a clerk; not everyone loves learning how to properly bag provisional ballots. I trained on line at my own convenience and also went to an all-day class. Also, Election Day is long. Clerks arrive at 6:15 a.m. and work well past 8:00 p.m.

The Poll Inspector has additional duties starting the day before. Inspectors have to pick up the equipment and set it up. While clerks can leave after the ballots are tallied and the equipment is packed up, the Inspector has to take it all back. Poll Inspectors are truly dedicated citizens.

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I find sitting at my local polling places very interesting. This year I watched my son's friend register and vote for the first time. I saw working class men with paint spattered hands receive their Republican ballots and wondered silently "why?" I overheard disgruntled voters anguish over the "Mexican" translation on their ballots. They demanded that we check their driver's licenses so that no "Pedro's" could vote in their stead. I got to smile time after time at jokes based on the idea that the OPTEC ballot-reading-machine was actually a shredder . . . and only Democratic Party ballots should be fed into it. All in all, it is a very interesting experience.

So, all you hearty, healthy souls who would like to take an active roll in your democracy, take a turn at poll working. Helping fellow citizens vote is a wonderful activity for people well enough and inspired enough to train and work. Information about working at a poll can be obtained by calling the County Registrar or by filling out the postcard application on the back of your voter's pamphlet. I greatly encourage everyone to work a poll at least once. You get amazing insights into the electorate as well as the election process. And you get paid!



Newbury Park Wetlands

"At the last TO City Council meeting, I proposed that the city enter into negotiations with the developer and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy in hopes of protecting the Alice Drive Wetlands. A closed session regarding this issue has been set for March the 18. This session is open for public comment beginning at 6 p.m. We need to fill council chambers, let everyone know that we want parkland and not more pavement at the end of Alice Drive..." Clint Matkovich 805-497-9343, chauncey155@aol.com



Classified Ads

Wanted: Person or Persons to edit and produce a monthly democratic newsletter. Needs computer skills, knowledge of Word and Email. Contact Jim McIntyre, 805-498-6219 Gikumac@gmail.com

Calendar of Events

March 7
8:00 a.m. to
5:00 p.m.
Last day to file nomination papers for VC Democratic Central Com. Papers are available at the County Government Center in Ventura.

DCCV General Meeting.

March 12
6:30 p.m.
Program: Super Delegates to Speak. Main Library, 1401 Janss Road, TO. Contact: 805-675-8785 or www.conejodemocrats.com

March 15

T A B L I N G

Contact Sean Richards
maysman24@yahoo.com 818-309-9408.

Wednesday
at
7:30 p.m.

New Day & Time

Eye on the Issues,
Time/Warner Cable, Channel 25.

RESOLVE TO VOLUNTEER. Contact: Jim McIntyre, 805-498-6219 Gikumac@gmail.com

March 15
10:00 a.m.

BUY BLUE Brunch

Hosted by DWCCV. \$20/Person. Mandevilla Restaurant, 951 S. Westlake Blvd #102. RSVP AdminVP@DWCCV.org

March 18
6:00 p.m.

TO City Council hearings on Alice Drive Wetlands.

Contact: Clint Matkovich, 805-497-9343, chauncey155@aol.com

March 31
12:00
Noon

DAYTIME DEMS Cesar Chavez Luncheon.

Alamo Bar and Grill, 2311 Borchard Rd, \$13.00/person **RSVP: 805-675-8785**

April 9
6:30 p.m.

DCCV General Meeting.

Program Contact: 805-675-8785 or www.conejodemocrats.com

April 13
2:00 p.m.

Caucus to select delegates to the Democratic National Convention for 24th CD. Location TBD. Contact: Sandy, semlerland@verizon.net



Democratic Club of Conejo Valley

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www.conejodemocrats.com
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