



Congressman Henry Waxman to Speak on Congressional Oversight and Other Issues

The appearance of Congressman Henry Waxman may strike fear in the hearts of some Republican “evil-doers” these days, but the Democrats in the Conejo Valley welcome his visit on Sunday September 16 with great anticipation. This special event will start at 10:30 a.m. at the Conejo Recreation & Parks Community Room.

Time Magazine says, “In the altered landscape that is Washington, there’s a new contender for the title of Scariest Guy in Town. He stands 5 ft. 5, speaks softly and has all the panache of your parents’ dentist. But when it comes to putting powerful people on the hot seat, there’s no one tougher and more tenacious than veteran California Congressman Henry Waxman.” It has been suggested that Congressman Waxman was one reason behind Karl Rove’s hasty exit from the White House.

Congressman Waxman has been a leader on health and environmental issues, including universal health insurance, Medicare and Medicaid coverage, tobacco, AIDS, air and water quality standards, pesticides, nursing home quality standards, women’s health research and reproductive rights, the availability and cost of prescription drugs, and the right of communities to access information about pollution levels.

Date and time: Sunday, September 16 at 10:30 a.m.

Location: Conejo Recreation & Parks Community Room, 403 W. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks

A limited question and answer session will follow Congressman Waxman’s presentation. This event is free and open to the public. Refreshments and beverages will be served. Political swag and voter registration forms will be available. **Contact** Jay Kapitz at 818-889-1039 or j_kapitz@yahoo.com.

Nancy Gallagher to Speak Sep. 19 Beyond Iraq: Continuing Crisis in the Middle East

Because of the escalating crisis in Iraq and the administration’s intimations of an expanded conflict with Iran, the DCCV executive board deemed it appropriate to invite Nancy Gallagher, PhD. to speak to the Club again. Ms. Gallagher is a tenured professor of Modern Middle Eastern and North African Studies at the University of California Santa Barbara. She teaches in the Islamic and Near Eastern Studies Program.

Her expertise includes an in-depth understanding of the religious, cultural, historical, and political aspects of the international strife in the middle east. The Middle East is not only the birthplace of civilization, but it is the birthplace of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Our appreciation of the Middle East can not be complete without the understanding of how closely intertwined each religious tradition is.

Stability throughout the region is being disrupted by current events. There is a long history of foreign political pressures to extract and control oil in the region, which have affected the balance of power.

Ms. Gallagher will bring us up-to-date on the latest Washington rumblings against the Iranian state and its nuclear development program.

The general meeting of DCCV will be held September 19, at 6:30 p.m. at the Newbury Park Library, 2331 Borchard Road. For information: 805-675-8785 or www.conejodemocrats.com.



Our regularly scheduled meeting, September 12, is canceled due to Rosh Hashanah. We wish all our Jewish Members and Friends a Happy New Year.

5TH ANNUAL GARDEN PARTY

Join your fellow Democrats and Christine Pelosi, our featured speaker, at this year's fabulous Garden Party. Christine is the daughter of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, and has over 30 years of grassroots experience in voter education & mobilization. She is an attorney, an author, and also chairs the California Democratic Party Platform Committee.

Please plan to attend our largest fundraiser of the year. Everyone should have received an invitation by mail. Reservations are required, and seating is limited. Please mark your calendar and make your reservations early. Early reservations are available at discounted rates.

The Garden Party will be held on Sunday, Sept. 30 from noon to 3:00 p.m. at the Los Robles Greens Banquet Room

For information visit www.conejodemocrats.com or contact our fundraising chair, Sandy Emberland at 805-493-9122 or seemberland@verizon.net.

ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITY

This year's Garden Party program will include advertisements from local businesses. All ads will be black and white, except the back page, which will be full color.

A business card size ad is \$35, ½ page is \$100 and a whole page is \$175. The full color back page is \$300. The format will be 5 ½" X 8 ½" on ivory stock.

As you visit your vet, doctor, lawyer, real estate broker – anyone who provides a service, ask if they would like to advertise in our program.

The deadline for ads is Sept. 21. Kara Altshuler is coordinating the program, so all ad information should go to her at 480-4952 or kdba@roadrunner.com.

WANTED: Volunteers to make up silent auction baskets. We will meet Sunday, September 23 at 10:00 a.m. Contact Penne Letson, 805-375-4222 or penn2draw@earthlink.net.

WANTED: Volunteers to put together decorations and centerpieces for the tables at the Garden Party. Contact Deborah Birenbaum ginso350@adelphia.net.

Tabling at the Oaks Mall to Resume

Sean Richards is looking for volunteers to talk to people and register voters at the Oaks Mall through out the fall. If you are interested in political outreach, please contact Sean Richards, maysman24@yahoo.com or Jay Kapitz, j_kapitz@yahoo.com.

Fundraising: Opportunities for Participation Abound

Along with hearing the Democratic message from our speaker, Christine Pelosi, a big part of the annual Garden Party is the Silent Auction.

Please look in your closets, pantries and garage for anything that can be re-gifted. You know that ornament that you don't really care for, wall hangings, picnic baskets, cappuccino machines, that cute little desk lamp, chopsticks. Even if it seems a little silly, we can put it together in terrific baskets.

Also, take along a Garden Party flyer when you are out shopping, running errands, getting a massage, taking a lesson, eating out. Ask for a silent auction donation or for an ad for the program. You are really in the best position to ask for a donation. You will be surprised at how easy this is to do.

For our records, please note the name and address of the donor and approximate value. This will help us to price the opening bids on the baskets.

We will be combining donations to create terrific baskets. We need a bottle or two of champagne to go with some crystal flutes, baskets, and your generous donations.

Last year the Silent Auction raised more money than ticket sales, so contact Penne Letson who is coordinating the silent auction, 805-375-4222 or penn2draw@earthlink.net.



WANTED: Cookbook Coordinator.

The Club is planning to put together a cookbook of recipes from members and Democratic leaders as a fundraising project.

The thought was to include recipes for dishes brought to fundraisers and pot lucks along with photos from those events. How about Penne's sourdough pancakes & Ferial's baklava and Sandy's biscotti? We could also include recipes from famous Democratic leaders, i.e., President Clinton's favorite enchiladas & Roslyn Carter's chili.

Members have already signed up to contribute recipes, but we need someone to pull it all together and get it published. If it is ready by December, it would be a great gift for the holidays & help us continue our campaign work for a blue 2008.

If you would like to be the cookbook coordinator, please contact Sandy Emberland at 805-493-9122 or

DCCV Youth Volunteers Register Voters!

This summer our youth volunteers made their presence known in the Conejo Valley. Many of you know Sean Richards, our youth and tabling coordinator. Sean has been building awareness at our local high schools. Through Sean's efforts 40 high school students attended our Congresswomen Lois Capps speaking event.

Team Registers Voters at Nursing Homes

Sean created a new strategy to register residents at nursing homes. With the help of Sarah Kapitz, they have visited one nursing home and plan to visit an additional home before summer's end. Sean also registered many voters at Oak Park High School. Quite impressive for a high school senior working multiple jobs, including interning for Assemblymember Julia Brownley.

Another High School Senior Walks to 200 Democratic Households

Ayla Nejad of Westlake volunteered to walk to Democratic households in her surrounding neighborhoods. She carried club, party and registration materials. I asked Ayla to describe her experience:

My name is Ayla Nejad. I'm 17 years old and a senior at Agoura High School. I love Keith Olbermann and support Hillary Clinton for President. So far I've visited 200 homes, with a few more to go. I walked all different neighborhoods in Westlake and Thousand Oaks, and spoke to various people about getting more involved in the Democratic Party. An interesting fact that I had never noticed prior to this volunteering experience is that the majority of Democrats either enjoy living on steep hills or love having very long driveways.

Spread the Word

Please spread the word to any students who might like to volunteer and earn internship credit for their college applications. Precinct walking and phone banking are available and encouraged for Democrats of all ages as well.

Join me in congratulating and thanking our youth volunteers for their hard work and contributions this summer! Jay Kapitz,
Election Strategy Chair

EYE ON THE ISSUES

Our September show will be about Teen Activists and will feature guests, Sean Richards of Oak Park High School, Pepperdine student Katherine Sexton and Clay Carter from Newbury Park. The show may be seen every Tuesday night at 8:00 P.M. on Cable Channel 25 and

semlerland@verizon.net.

some past shows can be seen on YouTube/Eye on the Issues. Our host is Constance Starkey, the director is Jody Avery-Smith and the co-producer is Teri Smolarski. By Sue Gunther, Producer

Members Visit Family Housing Program in LA

Recently, Susie Canfield and Arlene & Jerry Clein visited L.A. Family Housing's Cesar Chavez Program in Boyle Heights. They were so impressed with what they saw and the help being provided to people in need that they went back a second time.

At Cesar Chavez, each family (which must have at least one child) is linked up to intensive case management services. These are aimed at developing an individual plan to assist the family in obtaining permanent, affordable, housing within 120 days. In order to achieve this goal, Cesar Chavez addresses barriers and obstacles to housing and successfully transitions clients into their homes with the skills and tools to not only obtain but sustain permanent housing.

In serving families, Cesar Chavez has developed an extensive Children's Programming component to address the special needs of the youth that they serve. Children are provided with on-site tutoring and mentoring, field trips, after-school activities, and festivities including the Birthday of the Month Club and holiday gatherings. These activities allow the children to escape their day-to-day struggles and just have some fun.

The volunteers follow up with the people who leave and they have about an 85% success rate – people being off the streets and working. Many 'graduates' come back and give time and efforts for the current residents.

What can you do to help? Cesar Chavez has a constant need for items – especially things for the children. From diapers, to clothing, to food for after school snacks, and many other items that would help make life a little easier.

If you want to contribute, you can give the items to Susie or Arlene and Jerry and they will deliver them to the Cesar Chavez house. If you would like to see pictures of the home, please let Jerry know. All contributions are tax deductible. By Jerry Clein



Why Michael Moore is Right

By Richard Kolber

I've seen Michael Moore's latest movie "Sicko" twice and think it is his best and most important work yet. The health care problems in this country have spun out of control, especially in the last few years, and, unless something is done, it is only going to get worse. Quite simply, as Moore says, the profit motive is incompatible with quality health care. The Republicans can scream "socialized medicine" all they want, but it really is a disgrace that the World Health Organization rates the US 37th in overall quality of health care, the worst among major industrial powers and only a scant two positions above "evil Cuba." Canada, Britain, and France, to name but a few countries, all have longer longevity and lower infant mortality rates than the US. We are also the only major industrial power that has not endorsed the concept of universal coverage.

Conservatives love to talk about how "big government" is the problem (and I suppose it is when they are in charge). Yet, administrative costs in Medicare are but a fraction of what they are in the private sector. And before Medicare, approximately half of our senior citizens lacked coverage. If Medicare is such a failure, why aren't the Republican candidates for president calling for its abolition? For that matter, how many veterans are complaining about their health care? In fact, most are really pleased with care received in VA hospitals.

Let's examine the problems with the profit motive more closely by considering the largest US health insurance company WellPoint and its biggest subsidiary Blue Cross of California. I read the Business section of the LA Times daily. I am not exaggerating when I say that, over the past six to nine months, I've read some eight to ten stories charging Blue Cross with denying claims unfairly, not paying providers, retroactively cancelling coverage, and most recently dramatically reducing payouts to providers. In addition, the company has been letting employees go at a rapid pace. All of this suggests a firm in desperate straits, right? But in fact Blue Cross is enjoying record profits. WellPoint stock has steadily increased over the past decade, and there have been two stock splits. Rather than reward their employees and customers for their success, WellPoint instead chooses to give them the back of its hand.

Honesty compels me to disclose that I worked for WellPoint for almost five years before retiring two years ago. I was actually originally planning to retire this year, but I found the work environment so depressing and the company's treatment of its customers and employees so poor that I decided to leave early even though it meant some personal financial sacrifice. But WellPoint does not treat all of its people shabbily. When it merged with

Anthem a couple of years ago, WellPoint's then chairman of the board Leonard Schaeffer elected to retire. The company felt he was owed a going away present for his performance, and he received one. Would you believe a total compensation package that could be worth as much as \$337.5 million, depending on the price of his stock, according to The Foundation for Taxpayer and Consumer Rights? Note that this was in addition to total annual compensation as high as \$32 million in one year. At the same time, the company was stiffening qualifications for its retirement benefits, and this cost my then boss, who'd been with the firm over thirty years, dearly. How a corporation can justify reaping such a huge reward on one individual while disregarding the needs of its long-time loyal worker bees is beyond me.

When the Anthem-WellPoint merger was permitted by then Insurance Commissioner John Garamendi, WellPoint agreed to spend a certain amount of money to help the poor and the uninsured. The Department of Managed Health Care is seriously questioning whether WellPoint is living up to its commitment, and a hearing has been set for this month. Thankfully, the stories of retroactively denying coverage and claims based on innocent errors in applications, not to mention a class action suit involving six hospitals including Long Beach Memorial Hospital, has caused Sacramento to sit up and take notice. Even the Republican state insurance commissioner has called for an investigation by his department.

I do not wish to leave anyone with the impression that WellPoint is unique and that most insurance carriers are wonderful people putting the interests of their customers ahead of the almighty buck, so consider the following anecdotal evidence. I recently had dinner with a friend and his wife. He is 62, and she is 60. A couple of years ago he had a health setback and now has a stent in his chest. The subject of health insurance came up, and he told me that he is paying Blue Shield \$1500/month for coverage for the two of them. Personally, I find \$18K annually for coverage obscene, and let's not forget that he still has to cope with deductibles and co-payments.

If right-wingers want to call me a socialist for preferring a system that eliminates the greedy middle man, I plead guilty because I much prefer having doctors work for the government as they do in Britain or at least are paid by the government as independent agents as is the case in Canada under single payer. Michael Moore has it right. The profit motive is incompatible with quality health care for all.



Calendar of Events

September 3
11:00 a.m. to
3:00 p.m.

VCDCC Annual Labor Day
County Dem. fundraiser and picnic.
www.venturacountydemocrats.com

September
19
6:30 p.m.

DCCV General Meeting, T.O.
Speaker: Nancy Gallagher:
Beyond Iraq: The Continuing
Middle East Crisis.
Newbury Park Library, 2331 Borchard Road.
805-675-8785 or www.conejodemocrats.com

September
15
4:00 p.m.

Baseball for SIDS: YPD vs. Ventura Cty.
Dems. Fundraiser for YPD and SIDS.
For more info contact Heather Schmidt
(hchristenas@gmail.com)

Congressman

Waxman Appearance:

September
16
10:30 a.m.

Conejo Recreation & Parks
Community Room, 403 W. Hillcrest
Drive, Thousand Oaks. Contact:
Jay Kapitz at 818-889-1039 or
j_kapitz@yahoo.com.

September
30
Noon to
3:00 p.m.

5TH ANNUAL GARDEN PARTY
SPEAKER: CHRISTINE PELOSI,
LOS ROBLES Banquet Center
805-675-8785 or www.conejodemocrats.com

Tuesday
Evenings

Eye On The Issues
Cable 25, 8:00 p.m.

October 10
6:30 p.m.

DCCV General Meeting, T.O.
Thousand Oaks Main Library, 1401 Janss Road.
805-675-8785 or www.conejodemocrats.com

December
12
6:30 p.m.

Volunteer Appreciation & DCCV Meeting Benefiting Hospice of the Conejo.

Contact Sandy Emberland at
seemberland@verizon.net



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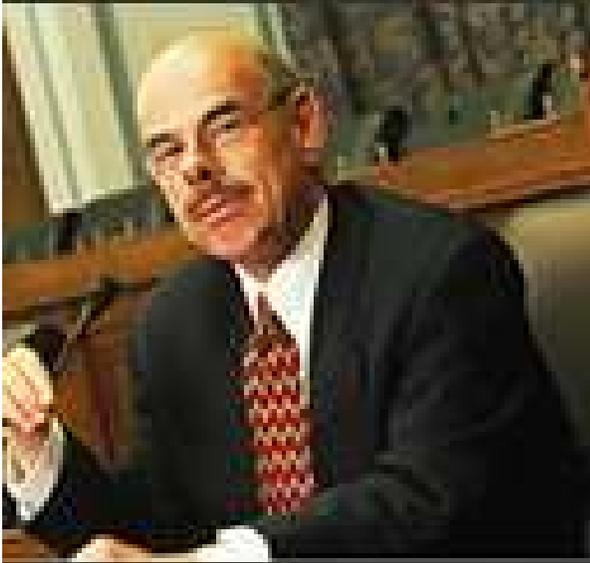
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Sean Richards, **Youth Coordinator**
Heather Schmidt, **Young Progressive Democrats**



The Democratic Club of the Conejo Valley Speaker's Series:

"Congressional Oversight – Essential to the Health of the Nation" - Sunday, September 16, 2007



Guest Speaker

**Congressman
Henry A. Waxman**

30th Congressional District

**Sept 16th, 10:30 AM
Conejo Recreation & Parks,
Community Room
403 W. Hillcrest Drive
Thousand Oaks**

Congressman Waxman has stated that unless congressional oversight is reinvigorated and the checks and balances on which our government is restored, we won't succeed in meeting the enormous challenges our nation faces at home and abroad.

Congressman Waxman will discuss this and other issues essential to the health of the nation. A question and answer session will follow.

Rep. Waxman has been a leader on health and environmental issues including universal health insurance, Medicare and Medicaid coverage, tobacco, AIDS, air and water quality standards, pesticides, nursing home quality standards, women's health research and reproductive rights, the availability and cost of prescription drugs and the right of communities to know about pollution levels.

**This event is free and open to the public;
No tickets or reservations are required.**

For event information visit our website at www.conejodemocrats.com or contact Jay Kapitz at j_kapitz@yahoo.com or call 818-889-1039.