

DCCV

SEPTEMBER
2009

NEWSLETTER

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September 1, 2009

The Passion of our Convictions and the "Moral Arc of the Universe."

(Yes, I know this title sounds pretentious!)

"Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable. . . Every step toward the goal of justice requires. . . the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

We Liberals, Progressives, Democrats are a hearty group of people. In the 60s, we were hosed, imprisoned and profiled. In the 70s, we endured Richard M. Nixon - enough said. In the 80s, we watched in horror as America ate up Reaganomics and spit out the homeless, the mentally ill and our kids' futures. In the decades since, we've experienced the conservatives on steroids acting so badly that we actually long for the good ol' days of Richard M. Nixon. We are barely out of the devastation of the past eight years of George W.

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Bush.

Each decade, we've rallied. We've been the progressive wave behind the civil rights movement, the women's movement and the anti-war movement. We've just had our greatest victory in a long time with the election of Barack Obama.

And yet, some of us are feeling somewhat disappointed. You know who you are!

We've got to remember we've seen our share of disappointments over the past 40 years. We can't afford to get bitter or give up. Not us. Oh sure, we might whine for a while. . . But eventually we just go for it again until the rest of the country evolves and catches up with us.

I purposely chose to start my message this month with the quote from Dr. King. He spoke so eloquently of the struggle for equality and justice. He knew the march toward justice was slow and often painful. He also knew that, while we might every once in a while take two steps back for each step ahead, eventually justice in all things would be achieved. There is an order to the universe whether you define it as God or Physics. The human mind demands it. When order doesn't exist, the human mind will fabricate it. But eventually, just order comes. Dr. King said it best: "The moral arc of the universe bends at the elbow of justice."

When people are denied their rights as citizens and when human suffering is allowed to exist for the profit of the few, there is no morality regardless how boisterously self-righteous the population is. Time and time again, hubris and selfishness bring their own rewards in the ultimate defeat of injustice.

Now is not the time to feel disappointed and disillusioned. "Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous

struggle." MLK, Jr.

The opposition has worked the initiative process long enough trying to legislate their brand of morality through referendum. They have spewed misinformation and hatred through corporate media long enough. They have fed us lies and fear to keep us imprisoned to the corporate bottom line long enough. Now is exactly the time to stand on the passion of our convictions and raise our faces to the just future. It's so close.

So, let's boycott the media and their sponsors that give sanctuary to tellers of lies and hatred. Let's co-opt the processes they've so diligently corrupted. Let's educate the willfully ignorant. There's so much to do. This is our movement, this is our decade, this is our chance to push the moral arc toward justice.

We can do it. Yes we can.

-- Debbie Birenbaum, President DCCV

Hospitality Alert

Judy Jordon, the DCCV's hospitality chair, was hospitalized recently at UCLA Medical Center.



What was supposed to be a routine - if serious - procedure unfortunately turned into a critical health crisis for Judy.

Let's all keep Judy in our thoughts during these difficult times.

Jody Avery Smith

UPCOMING EVENTS

DCCV Meeting, Wednesday, September 9

Please join us for our monthly meeting on Wednesday, September 9, at 6:30 p.m. at the Thousand Oaks Library. A portion of the meeting will be open mic, so come prepared to share your ideas, projects and concerns.

**September DemsCare Project:
Conejo Elementary School**

You don't have to be an A-student to figure out that California's public schools are really hurting from this year deep cuts in the educational budget. So this month's DCCV's DemsCare Project focuses on Conejo Elementary School. Supply donations, which be collected during the September 9th meeting, will enable the school will be to extend its budget for additional instructional materials.

The Conejo Elementary School Voluntary School Supply List ranges from classroom and study items to basic sanitation needs. Feel free to either fill a girl or boy's backpack with various items or simply choose one or more items.

The list that includes the following:

Sharpen Pencils	3-Ring Binders
Colored Pencils (Assorted)	Subject Dividers for Notebooks
Crayons Yellow	Pocket Folders
Pencil Sharpener	Rulers
Dry Erase Markers (Expo Broad Tip)	Glue Sticks
Pencil Box (small and/or 8x5 inch)	Paper Towels
Erasers	Facial Tissues (Kleenex)
Scissors (5-inch Fiskars)	Hand Sanitizers
Sanitizing Wipes (Wet Ones or Baby Wipes)	
Wide Ruled Notebook Paper (8 1/2 x 11 inches)	
3-Hole Notebook Paper (College Ruled)	
Bottled Hand Soap	
Spiral Notebooks (Wide Ruled) - 70 Pages	
Baggies (Snack, Sandwich, Quart or Gallon)	
Mead Composition Books (Black/White Cover)	
Clean Sock (Whiteboard Eraser)	

Colored Copy Paper - 20 lb (8 1/2 x 11 inches)
Empty Shoe Box

Carol Keavney

Annual Garden Party Fundraiser

DCCV Garden Party
Sunday, September 13

Please mark your calendars now for the DCCV Garden Party, which is scheduled for Sunday, September 13, from 11:30 AM to 3:00 PM at the Sunset Hills Country Club in Thousand Oaks.

This is our biggest annual fundraiser and we hope you all can attend. The event will include a sit down lunch, a silent auction and our guest speaker California Comptroller John Chiang.

Reservations are required prior to September 8. Prices are:

	Prior to September 8	After Sept. 8
Individuals	\$50.00	\$55.00
Seniors and military	\$30.00	\$35.00
Students	\$20.00	\$25.00

Credit card reservations can be made at our website
www.conejodemocrats.com or reservations by check can be sent to:
DCCV
P.O. Box 4421
Thousand Oaks, CA 91359

If you are interested in helping collect silent auction donations, creating the baskets or decorating, please contact Debbie Birenbaum (805)498-7151 or Carol Keavney at (805)498-7262.

Labor Day Picnic

Come join the fun at the Labor Day Picnic sponsored this year by Working Blue Democratic Club.

Our Club will have a table with a beautiful patriotic afghan for raffle handmade

by Miriam Albert, Club literature and either a sno-cone concession or a table bowling game.

Tickets are only \$20 a person and include food and drink and one raffle ticket. The DCCV has 20 tickets to sell. We get half the proceeds. If we can sell them all we will have made an easy \$200.

The picnic is being held on Monday, September 7th from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Freedom Park just west of the Camarillo Airport at 275 E. Pleasant Valley Road.

There will be a magician, face painter and jolly jump for the kids.

If any of you have access to a sno-cone machine or a shaved ice machine please contact Debbie immediately. We really need some help on this endeavor.

Legislative Watch Committee

The Democratic Club of the Conejo Valley is proud to announce the creation of the Legislative Watch Committee. The members of this group will track issues on the federal, state and local level. To achieve this broad objective, the committee members are pursuing a range of activities: from monitoring the votes of our state and federal representatives to following the decisions of local bodies such as the City Council and Board of Supervisors. As this database of knowledge is developed, it will benefit local activists who need facts about the record of their representatives on key issues.

The committee welcomes more energetic and passionate Democrats to join. This is the ideal body for anyone who believes that to be a good citizen one must be an informed citizen.

Please contact the committee chair, Alidad Damooei at damooei@gmail.com if you have any question or would like to become a member.

Alidad Damooei

ACTION ALERTS

1. Wednesday, September 2 - Candlelight vigil for Healthcare Insurance Reform organized by MoveOn at the corners of Lynn Rd. and Hillcrest in Thousand Oaks at 7 p.m.
2. 64 House Democrats have drawn a line in the sand. They will not vote for a healthcare bill that doesn't have a public option. Thank them and demand they don't back down from insurance industry pressure at democracyforamerica.com.
3. Global Exchange and ACLU present a video viewing of Building a World Beyond War on Saturday, Sept. 19 from 2 - 4 at the Thousand Oaks Library.

4. The Ventura County Democrats are hosting the Kennedy Legacy Dinner on Oct. 10 at the Sunset Hills Country Club. Tickets are \$75. Please go to the VCDC website for more information.

5. A committee is being assembled for the proposed re-districting of our state. If you are interested in sitting on this committee, please go to the California State Auditor's website and apply by Dec. 15.

6. If you are interested in getting rid of the 2/3 majority rule presently hampering any effective decision making in our state, please go to www.trivalleydems.com/DemocracyInCalifornia.htm to see details about the campaign to pass a ballot measure authored by Dr. George Lakoff. The measure reads "All legislative actions on revenue and budget must be determined by a majority vote." The CA Majority Rule campaign is dedicated to making this change happen. You can also sign up to help at www.camajorityrule.com.

7. CODEPINK is asking us to send a letter to Attorney General Eric Holder praising the announcement of his decision to ask a veteran prosecutor to review whether a full investigation should be conducted of CIA misconduct in the interrogation of detainees during the administration of George W. Bush. Tell AG Holder that he must hold those responsible for the illegal incarceration and torture. You can join CODEPINK's Citizen's Arrest Action Team by going to their website.

WRAP-UP

2009 Ventura County Fair Booth

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped staff the booth at the Ventura County Fair. The fair booth is sponsored by the Ventura County Democratic Party, with each club hosting a day or two during the 11 days of the fair.

During that time, we had 109 volunteers who signed in to staff the booth. Some took more than one shift. We registered voters - about 120. Of those, 94 registered Democrats, 9 Declined to state. There were 13 who re-registered from Republican.

Our political buttons were very popular: I estimate we distributed about 1400 buttons & wristbands. We also gave away brown bags stuffed with a county brochure.

This year we asked people to sign a blue postcard for the Fairground to ask the governor not to sell the fairgrounds. We turned in thousands of cards.

Thank you to everyone who helped. I hope that everyone who worked in the booth took some time to enjoy the fair - a frozen banana, funnel cake, BBQ corn or a corn dog - or a ride on the big Ferris Wheel for an incredible look at

the area from way up high.

Again, thank you for all of your hard work - I hope it was fun, too.

Sandy Emberland, Fair booth coordinator

Tabling at The Oaks and Membership

Saturday, September 19

Tabling times run from 12 to 4 p.m. Shifts generally are 12-2 and 2-4. Tabling can be an extremely energizing and fun experience. Sylvia and her tablers registered five new Democrats on Saturday, July 25! You can sign up to table by contacting Mary Freed at 495-3887 or Debbie Birenbaum at 498-7151 or at the next meeting.

Membership for the club runs from January to January. Our membership drive will begin in earnest with the Garden Party in September. If you join or renew your membership at that time, it will cover the last months of 2009 as well as 2010. Your membership dues go a long way to keep the club running throughout the year and allow us to get great speakers, fine refreshments, election and registration materials as well as to keep up on our website and phone line. We depend on you. In fact, you are us. So renew. . .soon!

Mary Freed

Democratic Women's Council

Wells Bring Hope Presents to DWCCV
Saturday, September 12, at Boccaccio's

Wells Bring Hope, a volunteer group committed to drilling wells to bring safe water to rural villages in Niger, West Africa, will present information on their mission to save lives with safe water at the next brunch meeting of the Democratic Women's Council of the Conejo Valley (DWCCV), on Saturday, September 12.

The DWCCV brunch meeting is scheduled for 9:30 to 11:30 AM at Boccaccio's Restaurant, 32123 Lindero Canyon Rd # 104, Westlake Village. Brunch cost is \$20. To reserve your space, call 805-495-1515.

Since its inception early last year, Wells Bring Hope has raised funds and awareness that led to drilling more than a dozen wells in Niger, one of the poorest countries in the world. Niger also is one of many places where contaminated water kills innocent victims, most often infants and young children. Partnering with World Vision and with dollar-for-dollar matching

funds from the Conrad Hilton Foundation, Wells Bring Hope has helped transform lives.

In mid-January this year, six of the Wells Bring Hope women and one documentary filmmaker journeyed to Niger and spent five days visiting remote villages in the bush. The documentary of that journey will be presented, along with remembrances of personal experiences, during the DWCCV brunch meeting.

Directions to Boccaccio's: From the 101 Freeway: Exit at Lindero Canyon Road and head south; drive 1.3 miles and turn right. Boccaccio's will be on the left.

Carol Keavney

Eye on the Issues Programming to Air

EYE ON THE ISSUES - SEPTEMBER UPDATE

Our September show will feature host Cynthia Martin interviewing guests Richard Gunther, professor in the Business School at CSUN, KRLA radio personality and mortgage representative Chuck Gebert, and our favorite Banker, letter writer and financial commentator Ray Freeman, who will be enlightening us on the continuing economic crisis. This is the second part of a program we aired back in June. In this program, the focus is on the road ahead: where the new jobs can be found, how to solve the foreclosure crisis, and what healthcare reform will mean for our economy are just a few of the topics discussed by Ray, Rick and Chuck.

The show will air every Thursday night in September at 6:00 p.m. on Time Warner cable channel 25 and is produced by the Democratic Media Committee.

Sue Gunther

VIEWPOINT

DCCV MEMBERSHIP SOARS!

Our Health Care Forum on August 12 resulted in 35 new members to the Democratic Club of the Conejo Valley! This is a very big deal. I hate to admit it but lately there is more energy coming from the far right than we have seen in years. Sure it's crazy, angry, misguided and corporate funded but energy just the same. Obama has got them excited in the way Bush got us excited. They are scared and dangerous.

On the other hand, the Dems have been pretty quiet since our victories in November 2008 and the inauguration in January 2009. Of course, this all makes some sense and can be explained by human nature: success breeds

complacency. Failure can lead to many directions but for Dems during the Bush years. It served as motivation. Our highest levels of membership and meeting attendance occurred during the aftermath of the Kerry loss in 2004.

All this background leads me to just how extraordinary it was for us to have had our best meeting attendance in years as well as the amazing number of new members. There is very good news here: We are responding well to the anger and energy coming from the right. Also I think we are starting to wake up. Our 2008 victories were wonderful and the efforts extended to earn them were significant; so time to recharge is understood... but it is time to get back in the game!

Congrats to Debbie Birenbaum and the DCCV leadership for pulling off such a successful event. We should continue to be thoughtful about our meeting speakers and agendas. A well planned meeting can increase our membership, create press coverage leading to further outreach and even more membership. Each member is a potential volunteer to walk, call and support our voter registration and get out the vote efforts for the big elections in 2010. This will lead to the end of the 2/3 rule and help us elect a Dem Governor who will sign Single Payer Health Care into law. Our events are informative and fun, but ultimately the building blocks of a strategy to win elections and finish the business we started last November. The donkey is waking up... and not a moment too soon.

Jay Kapitz

Democratic Club of the Conejo Valley

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