

The Platform

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Contribute event and activity notices of interest to Democrats and articles to the Platform Newsletter, but please limit submissions to 500 words.



Metropolitan Greater Oakland Democratic Club

P.O. Box 11622, Oakland, CA 94611

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE April 2007

Dear MGO Members,

Thank you, Larry Sork

E-Board member Larry Sork, who served as the club's secretary last year and continued as a regularly participating member this year, left the Board last month. Larry, the Board and the members of MGO thank you for your conscientious contribution of time and effort to the club. We wish you well and look forward to seeing you at membership meetings.

Kudos to Another Budding MGO Luminary

Last month in this column, I expressed the club's congratulations to Executive Committee members Dan Kalb and Wayne Nishioka, and MGO member Joel Freid, all appointed or elected as delegates to the April Democratic State Party convention. I then learned that MGO member Steve Tidrick, who is also the current president of the Alameda County Democratic Lawyers Club, was also selected. Congratulations Steve!

After all of you have returned from the convention, we look forward to your thoughts and analysis.

Can You Believe It?

They say time flies, but this is fast. MGO will be fifty years old next year. Founded in 1958 as the Montclair Democratic Club, its first president, John King, was chair of the 1958 Alameda County Primary Endorsing Convention. Delegates to that convention met in the Oakland Auditorium Theatre, and their guest speaker was Adlai Stevenson.

At its last meeting, the E-Board noted the club is approaching its special birthday. Quite soon all of us, board and members alike, need to begin planning a very special event to honor the club's achievements over fifty years and the many members who have contributed

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April-May Important Dates

April 3rd, The First Tuesday Luncheon is an informal gathering from Oakland's Political Community. RSVP Judy Belcher 655.8658

April 4th, Wednesday, at 7:00 pm, Alameda County Central Committee, 300 Estudillo Ave., San Leandro. More info at <http://www.acdems.org/>

April 4th, Wednesday, at 6:30 PM Democracy for America (DFA) Meet up, Rockridge Library, 5366 College Avenue, Oakland, CA 94618, (510) 597-5017

April 11th, Wednesday, 7:00PM to 9:00PM City of Alameda Democratic Club (CADC) Monthly Meeting at Alameda Hospital 2070 Clinton Avenue, Conference Room "C" (1st Floor), Alameda.

April 15th, Sunday, Meeting for those interested in Resolution Peace. Contact Ondrietta Johnson or Pamela Drake for more information. <http://www.trivalleydems.com/ResolutionPeace.htm>

April 19th, Thursday at 7:30pm to 9:30pm, MGO General Meeting featuring panel on the history and operations of the Public Ethics Commission (PEC) held at Piedmont Gardens Retirement Community, (Sky Room) 110 41st Street, Oakland. More info at <http://www.mgoclub.org>

April 23rd, Monday at 7:00pm, MGO Executive Board meeting at Piedmont Gardens. More info at <http://www.mgoclub.org>

April 26th, Thursday, at 6:00pm, Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club (WDR) Membership Meeting, 390 27th Street, Oakland. More info at <http://www.wellstoneclub.org/>

May 7th, Monday, at Noon, Alameda County Democratic Lawyers Club, Luncheon featuring Senator Ellen Corbett, CA State Senate, Dist. 10, and Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee. RSVP by email to Steve Tidrick, President, club@demlawyers.org

Consider receiving the club's newsletter by e-mail only, which saves the club the cost of postage and printing. Contact Marcus Johnson at marcus_a_johnson@yahoo.com

President's Message (continues)

to its vitality.

Is A Bird the Centerpiece of Our April Membership Meeting?

Is it a bird? No.
Is it a plane? No.

Was it able even though a city agency itself, to leap over tall legal hurdles in a single bound and successfully sue the Oakland City Council? Yes. I am, of course, referring to the Oakland Public Ethics Commission, charged with overseeing compliance with the Oakland Campaign Reform Act, Oakland Sunshine Ordinance, Limited Public Financing Act, Code of Conduct for City Officials, Conflict of Interest regulations, Oakland's Lobbyist Registration Act, and Oakland False Endorsement in Campaign Literature Act.

Our April membership meeting features a panel on the history and operations of the Public Ethics Commission (PEC). The panel will consist of PEC Chairperson Sukey Wilder, Executive Director Dan Purnell, and former chairperson Ralph Kanz. The seven-member commission maintains its independence by choosing four of its own members as vacancies occur. Chairperson Wilder says that the PEC is currently seeking applicants, and she looks forward to introducing the Commission to MGO.

Prop.13 Reform Countywide Demo Task Force

Last month I reported that four Democratic clubs and organizations had endorsed the MGO-initiated Proposition 13 reform resolution. Six more clubs have now endorsed. Here is the full list: Alameda County Democratic Central Committee, Alameda County Democratic Lawyers, Castro Valley, City of Alameda, Greater Hayward, Hayward Demos; John George, MGO, the 16th A.D. Committee, and the Tri-Cities Democratic Forum.

See you our next membership meeting, Thursday April 19th, 7:30 p.m.

Gary Sirbu, MGO President

Notice of Proposed Amendments of MGO Bylaw, Article VII, section 2

Dear MGO Member:

At its meeting of March 19th the Executive Board voted to recommend that club members approve amendments to Article VII, section 2 of the club's Bylaws. Currently, Article VII—Use of the MGO Membership List—reads:

1. The editor of the MGO newsletter shall maintain the current membership list.
2. Any current member of MGO may have the membership list but shall not disseminate it.
3. Access to address and phone lists of MGO members shall be provided only to any candidate or ballot measure endorsed by the MGO membership.

If the Executive Board's recommendation is adopted, section 2 would be amended as follows:

2. The membership list shall be provided to the club president, treasurer, and membership chairperson automatically and shall be provided to other club officers, executive board members and to other club members, such as committee chairs, on a need-to-know basis, subject to prior approval by the executive board. Further distribution of the members' names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses is prohibited.

The existing provision was drafted before the era of internet communication enabled widespread distribution of documents.

The purpose of this new language is to protect the privacy of the club's members. The proposed amendment:

- narrow the number of persons who are automatically entitled to a copy of the list to the club's president, treasurer, and membership committee chairperson.
- restrict distribution beyond that point to club members who demonstrate a compelling need for the information, and
- require that the executive board must pre-approve distribution to any members other than those specified for automatic distribution.

Article XIII of the Bylaws provides that the existing bylaw may be adopted, modified, or suspended at any membership meeting by a majority of those voting. **We will discuss and vote on this amendment during our April 19th general membership meeting.**

March 19th E-Board Meeting Highlights

- The Board discussed amendment to Article VII, section 2 of the club's Bylaws. is noticed to the membership for approval at the general meeting April 19, 2007. (see above)
- The Board discussed program planning for the months of April, May and June.
- The Board approved the drafting of a resolution for presentation to the membership in April or May regarding modification of federal statutes to permit possession and use of marijuana for medical purposes.

Robert Warwick, MGO Secretary

HIGHLIGHTS OF A MODEL STATE REDISTRICTING LAW

MGO voted against the Governor is redistricting initiative, so what do we propose instead?

A model law proposed by the League of Women Voters, Common Cause and several other public interest organizations could be downloaded from www.mgoclub.org.

The following is a summary of some of the key points in the model law.

Appointment and Accountability:

An Independent Redistricting Commission shall be given authority to specify boundaries of districts for State Senate, Assembly, Board of Equalization, and the U.S. Congress.

A pool of 36 nominees shall be established by the California Judicial Council. They will be evenly divided between judges and other citizens with 12 from each of the two largest political parties and 12 who are not so registered. They shall represent the geographic, gender, racial and ethnic diversity of California and shall be selected based on civic involvement and/or knowledge of redistricting policy, or civil rights, or political science, or demographics or statistics, or elections expertise, or voting rights or law.

Elected officials and those elected or appointed in any political party in the past ten years are not eligible, and lobbyists are not eligible if they have registered in the past five years. Commissioners are restricted from serving in these positions for five to ten years after their term of office.

The Speaker and Minority Leader of the Assembly and the Senate are each entitled to strike two names from the pool. From the remaining nominees the Clerk of the Assembly draws by lot from the pool, using a procedure (see website) that insures that there are four retired judges and five other citizens on the Commission, and, overall, three members from each of the two major parties, and three who are not so registered.

Transparency and Accountability:

The law provides for public meetings in no less than six geographical regions before and after the initial plan is submitted. Commission meetings shall be open to the public and all plans posted on the website.

(continues, next column)

Members of the Commission shall be prohibited from all ex parte communications with elected officials, candidates, representatives of political parties and lobbyists regarding the subject of redistricting.

Criteria: The redistricting plans shall provide fair and effective representation for all citizens of the state, including racial, ethnic, and language minorities. Districts shall be composed of contiguous territory, with reasonable access between population centers in the district.

"C.2. (1) the plan shall neither disperse nor concentrate minority populations in a manner that has an adverse effect on their political influence. (2) The plan shall respect identifiable communities of interest. (3) The plan shall have the greatest number of competitive districts possible... (4) The plan shall respect the boundaries of a county or city...and shall not divide census tracts." **Jean Brown**

2008 Election Watch

- Apr. 27-29, 2007: California Democratic Party State Convention in San Diego, CA
- Jan. 31, 2008: CNN and the Los Angeles Times host a debate of the Democratic presidential candidates in California.
- Jun. 3, 2008: California presidential primary
- Aug. 25-28, 2008: Democratic National Convention in Denver, CO
- Nov. 4, 2008: Election Day
- Nov. 4, 2008: Electoral College member Elections
- Dec. 15, 2008: U.S. Electoral College President and Vice President vote
- January 6, 2009: Electoral votes officially tallied (Houses of Congress)
- January 20, 2009: President Inauguration



Obama in California--It's Real!

March 18th, 2007

California Progress Report by Frank D. Russo

Some excerpts from the article: He then delivered his speech, not once looking at notes, and not once standing behind the lectern. He was at times folksy, spontaneous, and very human. As the youngest candidate, there was something very appealing, almost Kennedyesque, But when he got into his groove, he was mostly serious, focused, and impassioned.....*"In the history of this nation, change has never come from the top down. It's always come from the bottom up. "*

For the full article go to:

http://www.californiaprogresreport.com/2007/03/obama_in_califo.html

Over 15,000 turn out to see Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama at Oakland City Hall, on March 17, 2007.

Proud Democrat



Renew your 2007 Membership Today!
Please disregard, if dues has been paid)

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www.mgoclub.org

P.O. Box 11622,
Oakland, CA 94611



Democratic Club

MGO

MGO Membership Information

JOIN NOW

Remit dues annually in January

Membership options:

Senior/Student \$20 Individual \$30 Family \$45

Mail dues to:

P.O. Box 11622, Oakland, CA 94611

**For membership information, please contact
Jean Brown at 510.653.3204
or email: jbr936@aol.com**

**Download Membership form from
<http://www.mgoclub.org/member.htm>**

FPPC# 790500 (California) FEC# C00402651 (U.S.)

**Don't forget to join our MGO Talk yahoo group:
http://mgoclub.org/join_mgotalk.htm**



You have the
POWER to
save democracy
Join or Renew Today!

Resources and Links

- Alameda County Democratic Lawyers Club:
<http://www.demlawyers.org>
- Alameda (City) Democratic Club:
<http://www.alameda-demo.org>
- Cal Berkeley Democratic Club:
<http://www.caldems.com>
- Castro Valley Democratic Club:
<http://www.ebdir.net/cvemos>
- El Cerrito Democratic Club:
<http://www.ECDClub.org>
- East Bay Young Democrats:
<http://www.eastbayyoungdems.com>
- Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club:
<http://www.wellstoneclub.org>
- California Progress Report:
<http://www.californiaprogressreport.com>
- Smart Voter <http://www.smartvoter.org/ca/alm>
- California Democratic Party <http://www.cadem.org>
- Democrats of Rossmoor
<http://www.ebaydemo.org/DOR.html>
- League of Women Voters Oakland
<http://www.lwvoakland.org>