

The Platform

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Metropolitan Greater Oakland Democratic Club
P.O. Box 11622, Oakland, CA 94611
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Save the Date-MGO'S OCTOBER EVENT:

Ron Dellums' First 200 Days: A Press Take on the Mayor

Our October general meeting program features a panel discussion of journalists following Oakland government.

Confirmed Panelist include:

Chip Johnson, San Francisco Chronicle
Jessie Allen-Taylor, Berkeley Daily Planet
Kelly Rayburn, Oakland Tribune
Robert Gammon, East Bay Express

OCTOBER 18th, 7:30 p.m.

Piedmont Gardens, 110-41st Street, Oakland
For more information, go to www.mgoclub.org

References (Panelist):

Chip Johnson, <http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2007/09/21/BAPJSAGJM.DTL>
Jessie Allen-Taylor, <http://www.berkeleydailyplanet.com/article1.cfm?archiveDate=04-27-07&storyID=26923>
Kelly Rayburn, http://www.insidebayarea.com/search/ci_6487855?IADID
Robert Gammon, <http://www.eastbayexpress.com/2007-01-24/news/behind-the-fracas-at-dellums-inaugural/full>

President's Message, Oct. 2007

Greetings!

So, why should you care? Your feet hurt, it's been a lousy day at work, and you need to crawl home to your cave and recuperate to fight another day. And so, why, WHY, would you drag yourself out of your nice warm chair and go to a MGO meeting?

I'd like to give you some answers to that question:

- **MGO Needs YOU:** We want MGO's name and endorsements to mean something in our community. To do that we need all our members informed about our endorsements;
- **YOU need MGO's programs:** We vote on ballot measures for affordable housing, support violence prevention or more police officers, etc.; we're asked to weigh in on questions like term limits and fees for community college classes. The outcomes on these measures impact our city, giving us new decision makers, new approaches to old problems, or problems that grow because they're unaddressed. Many of these ballot measures have clever (and sometimes devious) campaign promoters who try to shape your opinions by 90-second sound bites. You can spend a few minutes each month and beyond sound bites to become a more confident and knowledgeable voter, so your vote truly counts for the values we as Democrats hold dear.
- **Your friends need YOU:** Your friends probably know you are "political" and turn to you for your good analysis about issues and concerns facing Oakland, California and the nation. If you're going to be the expert, you've got to know enough to be a good one.

Besides, where can you find a livelier, more engaged and interesting group than at an MGO meeting?

I hope to see YOU on October 18th.

Sincerely, Judy Cox, President



MGO Goals: to spread knowledge of candidates, legislation, issues, and other matters of interest to the Democratic Party; to find, promote and support Democratic candidates; to provide a forum for Democratic candidates and officials; to stimulate public interest in governmental affairs; and to perpetuate the ideals and principles of the Democratic Party.

Meet our MGO Board Members

Gregory Chan, Secretary

I am currently the Senior Community Affairs Officer for the East Bay Municipal Utility District. I have more than 30+ years in the field of public affairs and has represented the Bay Area Rapid Transit District, the Oakland Chinese Community Council as well as several service agencies in San Francisco and the Greater Bay Area.

I hold a Bachelor's degree in Social Welfare and Community Organizing from the California State University at San Diego, a Master's in Divinity and Communications from Princeton and San Francisco Theological Seminaries and an MBA from Golden Gate University.

I am active in the Presbyterian Church, serves as the Chair of the Oakland Chinatown Chamber's Government Affairs Committee and serves on the Board of the Alameda County Asian Pacific-Island Democratic Caucus. I have also served as the Vice-Chair of MGO, on the Steering Committee of the Greater Mandana Action Coalition and the Board of the New Oakland Committee.

Wayne Nishioka, At-Large Board Member

I am a practicing lawyer in Piedmont. I am currently an elected delegate to the 16thAD and recently attended the E-Board meeting of the California Democratic Party.

I am involved with Obama Presidential campaign, which has recently put a formal campaign structure in place in California. As an ongoing member of the Board for MGO, I hope to contribute to the Club being a vibrant resource and meeting center to move forward current issues affecting our local communities.

SAVE THE DAY! MGO'S FALL FUN & FUN—RAISER

December 2nd 2007, 4:00pm to 7:00pm p.m.
At the lovely home of
Margaret & Winton McKibben

Lift a cup of holiday cheer, take a look at the Presidential candidates, and decide who YOU are supporting.

Judy Cox, MGO President

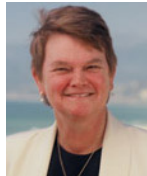
Living whole, well, and wise

AN EVENT CELEBRATING EVERYDAY HEALTH FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

Saturday, Oct. 13, 8:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
Oakland Marriott City Center,
1001 Broadway, Oakland, CA

MGO Club membership benefits include this newsletter, invitations to special events while supporting progressive Democratic politics.

MGO General Meeting Notes: (9/21)



Senator Kuehls

Our club has just endorsed (by 94%) Senator Sheila Kuehl's California Universal Healthcare Act, SB 840 in the ongoing battle over how to fix health care in California because Kuehl's bill:

- Covers 6.5 million residents now not covered by health insurance;
- Unties health care coverage from employment, so people who don't have jobs don't give up health care too;
- Asks employers, individuals and government to pay in;
- Makes care costs affordable;
- Requires no new spending because costs are paid by federal, state and county funds already being spent on health care and by affordable insurance premiums that would replace all current consumer and employer costs;
- Helps counterbalance the rapidly rising costs of health care, which have outpaced wage increases by a ratio of 4 to 1 since 2000;
- Takes the whopping \$186 billion California spent on health care last year and uses it in a more fiscally sound way to provide excellent health care for all and fair reimbursement for care providers;
- Insures that money goes to care, not administration like our current system which wastes 30% of every health care dollar on administration;
- Provides an estimated saving over a 10-year period of \$343.6 billion.

Kuehl's bill is opposed by health care bills put forward by the governor and by House Speaker Fabian Nunez's AB 8. These bills are less comprehensive, leaving many lower income or unemployed without coverage, provide little to control rising costs of health care, and may require \$5000 deductibles before any coverage is provided. As you hear discussion of Speaker Nunez's bill and the governor's proposals, remember—and tell your friends: a better option is available: Sheila Kuehl's SB 840. **Note:** MGO endorsement letter available for download at www.mgoclub.org

The general meeting program consisted of a informational panel discussion "Inclusionary Zoning, Condo Conversion and Affordable Housing Strategies" followed by a Q & A, featuring panelist:

- Greg McConnell: CEO and President of the Coalition for Jobs and Housing, an Oakland California trade group that represents premier home builders and major employers. He currently serves on the City of Oakland Blue Ribbon Commission for the study of Inclusionary Zoning, Condo Conversion and Affordable Housing Strategies.
- Earl Hamlin: long time MGO member, former investment banker, former Alameda County Planning Commissioner and the vice chair member of the City of Oakland Blue Ribbon Commission for the study of Inclusionary Zoning, Condo Conversion and Affordable Housing Strategies.
- Jeff Levin: City of Oakland/CEDA Agency Staff/Housing Development Coordinator, presenter and City of Oakland resource for the Blue Ribbon Commission for the study of Inclusionary Zoning, Condo Conversion and Affordable Housing Strategies.

MGO members who attended this panel discussion found it informative, enlightening or as one long time member stated "one of the best programs MGO has presented", providing a better understanding of the ordinances before Oakland City Council.

Topics were not limited to Inclusionary Zoning,, Condominiums Conversions, Linkage fees, and Community Land Trust,

Program handouts are available for download at www.mgoclub.org included a introductory document, a matrix depicting a comparison of Oct. 2006 IZ proposal and the Blue Ribbon Commission recommendations and a table comparing existing Condo Conversions ordinances and two minority reports for the blue Ribbon Commission.

MGO Executive Board Meeting (9/24)

MSP: dues that are paid in October 2007 by new members will be applied to their 2008 membership.

Item: No Child Left Behind presentation; Eric Heins (California Teachers Association/Pittsburg School Teacher) and Jim Mordecai (MGO member).

Action: President Cox referred the issue to the Education Committee. Membership to hear the issue preliminaries, an update, from the Education Committee or the Chair at the Oct. Membership meeting.

Item: Oct. & Nov. Program

Action: Oct. panel discussion of the progress of the Dellums Administration. The Nov. discussed possibly as 3 ballot measures and endorsements .

Item: MGO Meeting Location Change

Action: Discuss meeting location move to Dimond Library at Oct. general meeting, place on MGO Talk.

Item: Peace Resolution presentation to the Executive Board.

Action: draft to return to the Nov. Executive Board meeting for further discussion.

Greg Chan, MGO Secretary



OAKLAND'S MISDEMEANOR JURY TRIAL COURT PROBLEM

Tom C. Rogers,

*Assistant District Attorney II,
North County Wiley Manuel Courthouse*

I was here from 1976 to 1978. I was a Deputy District Attorney here at the Oakland/Piedmont/Emeryville Municipal Court. The court is now known as Wiley Manuel Superior Court. All the misdemeanor jury trials and felony preliminary hearings for Oakland were heard here 30 years ago and all are heard here today.

In 1976 through around 2003, Berkeley/Albany cases were heard in three courts in Berkeley. In 2003 the Berkeley courts were shut down. All of the Berkeley/Albany cases were absorbed by Oakland's Wiley Manuel Courthouse. Last year all of Berkeley's traffic cases were absorbed by the Wiley Manuel Courthouse.

COURT NUMBERS AND STRUCTURE IN 1976-1978

There were 11 courtrooms with 11 appointed/elected municipal court judges in the Oakland Municipal Court from 1976-1978. There was one felony arraignment court and two courts that heard felony preliminary hearings.

There were three misdemeanor calendar courts. There was misdemeanor traffic, a D.U.I. arraignment and a pre-trial court. There was a misdemeanor arraignment, pre-trial and motion court (all 1 court). There was a misdemeanor readiness, pre-trial and calendar court that sent the misdemeanor cases out to trial courts.

There were five (5) misdemeanor jury trial courts. In other words, in 1976-1978, there were 7 courts available for preliminary hearings and misdemeanor jury trials and there were 4 "calendar courts."

A calendar court must always be opened on a daily basis so that if a calendar court judge is sick or on vacation, then a preliminary hearing or a misdemeanor jury trial judge must leave his or her court and take over. Still, in 1976-1978, judges on vacation would most often be replaced by a "visiting judge" so that no loss of courts would occur.

COURT NUMBERS AND STRUCTURE TODAY (2007)

The Oakland Wiley Manuel Courthouse has seen a progressive decline in courtrooms over the past ten years. This has occurred despite the fact that Oakland's Wiley Manuel Courthouse has absorbed all of the criminal cases (arraignments, motions, misdemeanor jury trials and felony preliminary hearings) formerly heard in Berkeley by their three courtrooms. Today there are 6 calendar courts in the Wiley Manuel Courthouse and 4 courtrooms available for misdemeanor jury trials and/or preliminary hearings.

The 10 courtrooms are staffed by only 7 elected/appointed judges. The other 3 judges are comprised by a court commissioner, a permanent "retired judge" (Carol Brosnahan) and one "visiting judge" when one is available.

There is a misdemeanor arraignment court and two misdemeanor pre-trial courts. There is one misdemeanor motion court that also handles felony pleas of guilty. There is a felony arraignment court. There is one drug calendar court that handles Prop. 36 drug cases. Their drug court is often open in the afternoon, but is most often unavailable for preliminary hearings as defendants have the right to have their hearings heard continuously without interruption from other matters and the next day's calendar deprives them of that right.

The end result of the structure is that there is normally only one misdemeanor jury trial court available for trial and that court may have continued preliminary hearings that disrupt the jury trial.

SUMMARY

30 years ago, Oakland had 5 misdemeanor jury trial courts.

Today Oakland has 1 misdemeanor jury trial court to cover both Oakland and Berkeley.

PRACTICAL PROBLEM OF ONE TRIAL COURT

In 2006, our Office charged 6,505 misdemeanor cases in the Oakland/Berkeley Wiley Manuel Courthouse. Each of those defendants in each of the 6,505 misdemeanor cases charged are entitled to a jury trial if they choose to assert that right with a not guilty plea.

It becomes very difficult to effectuate a guilty plea where a defendant believes that there is very little prospect that his case will ever go to trial.

Pre-trial judges daily tell deputy district attorneys in plea bargaining sessions that this case "has to be pled out for credit for time served" because we have "no courts."

OPINION & CONCLUSION

The proper administration of justice demands that a city with Oakland and Berkeley's size and pervasive crime problems have at least six or seven misdemeanor jury trial courts in order to function at all effectively.

The filing of a criminal complaint is only a symbolic act if there is no department that is able to hear a jury trial.

Some would say that even with only 6-7 jury trial courts the problem would not be eliminated. The problem would not be eliminated, but I know from personal experience (1976-1978) that the ability to achieve proper plea bargaining would be improved exponentially.

Contact Information:

Wiley W. Manuel Courthouse
661 Washington Street, Room 225
Oakland, CA 94607



Mayor Dellums

Paul Rose, Mayor Dellums' Media Spokesman explains the Mayor statement on community policing at a Neighbor 2 Neighbor Town Hall Sept. 17th, at DeFremery Park .

" I'm the Mayor's communications director and I just wanted to take a minute to respond to your concerns. In regards to community policing, the Mayor believes we must improve our recruitment efforts to bring the number of officers to the levels they should be.

What the Mayor was saying is that we don't need to build beyond the officer academy, rather build the team to full capacity - in essence that is providing more cops. With that team, implement community policing to where every single one of those officers are working and responding to crime in their beats, regardless of their assignments."

(extracted from a response to community questions regarding community policing on a yahoo community group site)

Next community meeting

North Oakland Town Hall
Speaker: Oakland Mayor Ron Dellums
Date: Saturday, October 13th,
Time: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 Noon
Location: Peralta Elementary School, 460-63rd St.

Special Events

Oct. 11th, Thursday, 5:30 pm, 1st Annual JG Social Justice Award Reception, John George Democratic Club ; at Zazoo's, 15 Embarcadero W, Oakland, <http://www.jgcd.org/>

Oct. 13th, Saturday, 6:00 pm, 37th Annual Alameda County Democratic Unity Dinner, at Oakland Airport Hilton. For info or to reserve, email: airtydinner@gmail.com or call 510/263-5222.



"Understanding Gentrification In West Oakland

Presented by the **WOPAC**
Saturday, Oct. 20th, 2007
Noon to 3:00pm
West Oakland Senior Center
1724 Adeline Street
Free event-Light Refreshments



Next General Meeting Oct. 18th

RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED

www.mgoclub.org

P.O. Box 11622,
Oakland, CA 94611



Tell a friend about a MGO Membership!



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

Membership is open to registered Democrats. Benefits include monthly newsletter, invitation to special events, political programs and working with other active Democrats.

We are actively seeking new members and renewing current with the following membership options:

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

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

Download our Membership form here:
<http://www.mgoclub.org/member.htm>

Mail dues to:
P.O. Box 11622, Oakland, CA 94611

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

Calendar of Events

Oct. 9th, Tuesday, at 7:00 pm, City of Alameda Democratic Club (CADC) at Alameda Hospital 2070 Clinton Avenue, Conference Room "C" (1st Floor), Alameda. www.alameda-demo.org

Oct. 12th, Friday at Noon, Alameda County Democratic Lawyers Club, next meeting, Luncheon featuring Assembly Member Mary Hayashi (Dist. 18); RSVP by email to Steve Tidrick, Pres., club@demlawyers.org; Zazoo's, 15 Embarcadero W, Oakland; <http://www.demlawyers.org/>

Oct. 15th, Monday, at 7:00 pm, TriValley Democratic Club IBEW Hall, 6250 Village Pkwy, Dublin; <http://www.trivalleydems.com/>

Oct. 18th, Thursday, MGO General meeting at Piedmont Gardens, 110-41st Street, Oakland www.mgoclub.org

Oct. 20th, Monday, MGO Executive Board meeting at Piedmont Gardens.

Oct. 23rd, Tuesday, Castro Valley Democratic Club, 7:00PM at the Faith Lutheran Church 20080 Redwood Rd. Graydon Room; <http://www.ebdir.net/cvdemos/>

Oct 25th, Thursday, at 6:00pm, Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club (WDRC) Membership Meeting, 390 27th Street, Oakland. <http://www.wellstoneclub.org/>

Oct. 25th, Thursday, at 7:00pm, DEMOS Democratic Club, Westminster Hills Church, 27287 Patrick Avenue, Hayward; <http://www.haywarddemos.org/>

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

Every Thursday, 7:00PM, Cal Berkeley Democrats, Berkeley Campus, 170 Barrows Hall Berkeley; <http://www.caldems.com/>