

San Ramon Valley Democratic Club

(www.srvdems.org)

Newsletter: September 2012

Next Dinner Meeting: Thursday, October 25, 2012, 6:15 pm at Crow Canyon Country Club

Come join us for our last regular dinner meeting of 2012. As we are getting close to the Holidays I'm asking that you bring either a coat, blanket or other clothing to donate to "Christmas for Everyone". I'll deliver all donations to this very worthy organization in Concord. Let's make this a very memorable meeting just before the election. - Jim Donnelly

SPEAKER: Assemblywoman Joan Buchanan

Assemblymember Joan Buchanan, elected to the State Assembly in November 2008, represents the 15th Assembly District and with her re-election will represent the new 16th Assembly District includes the Contra Costa County communities of Walnut Creek, Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda, Alamo, Danville and San Ramon. and Administrative Review committees. Joan was recently appointed as Chair of the Assembly Education Committee.

SECOND SPEAKER: State Senator Ellen Corbett

Senator Ellen M. Corbett is serving her second term in the state Senate and was elected Senate Majority Leader by her fellow Democrats on December 6, 2010. As Majority Leader, Senator Corbett is responsible for setting the Democratic agenda, managing the Senate's Floor operations and the chief advisor in political matters and strategy to the Senate President Pro Tempore. Throughout her career she has focused on strengthening California's economy, standing up for consumers and protecting our natural resources while encouraging the growth of our green economy.

**Dinner is \$25 per person for members and their invited guests, \$30 for others.
A limited number of seats are available for those just wishing to hear the presentations-
Suggested donation is \$5**

**RSVP: Mail checks, made out to Jim Donnelly, to 373 Century Circle, Danville, CA 94526
Or call him at (925) 570-9289**

Please RSVP no later than Monday, October 22, 2012.

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Presidents Corner

It is good to be back in the USA. I had an interesting time in Saudi Arabia and enjoyed teaching environmental review courses to professionals from Aramco. However, as fate would have it, it was not the best week to be there, what with the anti-Moslem video and cartoons coming out. Upon advice from my hosts I stayed pretty close to the hotel, so I didn't get to experience as much of the local culture as I would have liked. The following week I was in San Antonio where I made up for it by visiting the Alamo and enjoyed a number of meals on the Riverwalk. It is hard to beat San Antonio for rally good TexMex food.

It is getting down to crunch time. Only 20 more days until the election! If you mail in your ballot be sure to put \$0.65 postage on the envelope. I'm feeling a little better after Joe Biden's performance in his debate with Paul Ryan and President Obama's showing with Mitt Romney last night. The election remains tight and our candidates can use all of the help we can give them. See below for volunteer opportunities

I find the amount of money being spent this campaign season to be completely obscene. The Koch brothers alone have earmarked \$400,000,000 toward electing the most rightwing conservatives I have seen in my lifetime. A casino Las Vegas owner has earmarked \$100,000,000 to defeat President Obama. Is this democracy? How can the average person stand up to this on slot of power/ Only by working together with others to call voters, walk precincts, talk with friends, coworkers and acquaintances to counter the rightwing lies and propaganda.

The country they seem to want is one where the very rich get richer and the rest of us suffer over what is left over. The greed being exhibited by their like disgusts me and makes me worry about what the future holds for my children and grandchildren. As someone who is a scientist, who has studied environmental issues and global climate change for over 40 years I am sickened about how these right-wingers have been able to deny what scientific research has proven and convince the majority of the public to consume, consume, consume, and to hell with the future. Time is rapidly running out to make serious changes in our energy policy, to think about a future with 9 billion people

living on this planet and how to make the necessary changes toward a truly sustainable economy and society. The Republican and Tea Parties represent the complete opposite of what responsible human beings should be working for. These issues are what this election is all about for me.

I hope that next month I will be able to celebrate with you many victories in this election. Please do what you can to help President Obama get re-elected and to see that Proposition 30 get passed and that Proposition 32 gets defeated. .

Jim Donnelly- President SRVDC

Ballot Recommendations

The following Ballot recommendations come from the California Democratic Party:

President -Barack Obama
US Senate- Dianne Feinstein*

Statewide Ballot Propositions

<u>Yes on Proposition 30</u>	Protects funding for schools and local public safety
<u>No on Proposition 31</u>	Locks California into permanent underfunding of education, health, and other vital services
<u>No on Proposition 32</u>	Creates special exemptions for billionaires and Super PACs allowing them to buy elections
<u>No on Proposition 33</u>	Auto insurance rate hike
<u>Yes on Proposition 34</u>	Repeals death penalty and replaces with life without parole
<u>Yes on Proposition 35</u>	Increases penalties for human trafficking
<u>Yes on Proposition 36</u>	Reforms "Three Strikes" law
<u>Yes on Proposition 37</u>	Labeling of genetically engineered foods
<u>No on Proposition 38</u>	Munger Tax initiative
<u>Neutral on Proposition 39</u>	Adjusts taxes for multi-state corporations to fund clean energy programs
<u>Yes on Proposition 40</u>	Referendum on State Senate district boundaries

State Assembly

AD 14 Susan Bonilla
AD 15 Nancy Skinner
AD 16 Joan Buchanan

State Senate

SD 03 Lois Wolk
SD 07 Mark DeSaulnier
SD 09 Loni Hancock

Congressional

CD 03 John Garamendi
CD 09 Jerry McNerney
CD 11 George Miller
CD 15 Pete Stark

The San Ramon Valley Democratic Club also recommends the following local votes:

SRVUSD- Dwight Winn
SRVUDC Measure D- Yes

Holiday Party, December 14, 2012

Come join us to celebrate the holidays with your fellow democrats and our local elected officials. The San Ramon Valley Democratic Club, Tri-Valley Democratic Club and Diablo Valley Democratic Club are once again holding our annual Holiday party. Congressman Jerry McNerney, Congressman Pete Stark, Senator Mark DeSaulnier, Assemblywoman Joan Buchanan and other local elected officials have been invited.

Friday, December 14, 6:30 Pm – 9:00 PM
IBEW Hall
6250 Village Pkwy
Dublin, CA

Here is your chance to meet and talk with your elected representatives in a relaxed venue and enjoy the company of fellow democrats.

All we ask of you is to bring an appetizer, side dish or dessert. We will also have a bin for food donations to our local food banks.

More details to follow.

Member Editorials

Each month we invite you to present your views on about any subject you wish to discuss. This is an important way to understand what are major concerns for our members. Surely there are things going on that make your blood boil. Let it out, express your opinions here.

Another look at the real Romney

Dear Mr. Donnelly,

I was at the Danville farmer's market this morning and inquired at the Democrat table how to call attention to issues that may benefit our party. The representative at the desk suggested that I contact you.

I watched a PBS production Tuesday night, Oct 9, Frontline: The Choice 2012.

It was a fascinating, impartial look at the President and Romney. The stark contrast of their childhoods, their lives, their character, and what drives them. I think we all know quite a bit about the President but Romney has been a puzzle.

There is a segment in this Frontline production about Romney the businessman. Of interest is a photograph with Romney posing with his Bain Capitol team celebrating after a particularly lucrative coup. They (with Romney prominently in the middle of the group) have bills stuffed in every orifice of clothing and body, grinning broadly with bills clenched in their teeth and tucked behind their ears. THE FACES OF UNMITIGATED GREED with Romney prominently participating. It was disgusting.

I had not seen this photograph before, but think it is very reminiscent of the secret video and gives us another unintended look at who is the real Mitt Romney. Images captured when he

believes nobody of importance will see or hear him . I think it should be brought to the attention of Mother Jones or other prominent interested individuals. It appears to be part of public record, but not widely circulated.

I am bringing this to your attention because I do not really know what to do with it, if anything. This episode of Frontline will be aired again on KQED, KQED world, KQED Plus as soon as today at 4:00pm on KQED World (189) but several more times through Oct 28.

Thank you for taking the time to read this memo. This is a pivotal election that weighs heavily on our minds. Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Julie Lee

Support for Dwight Winn for San Ramon Valley School Board

Ditto from the Lawvers. We have known Dwight since the girls were at Charlotte Wood. He has always been involved in education issues in the Valley and will do a wonderful job, Marilyn & Bryan

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jane Fontius <jfontius@sbcglobal.net>

Date: September 28, 2012 9:56:08 PM PDT

To: Subject: School Board election

Dear Friends,

I am supporting Dwight Winn for the SRV School Board and urge you to vote for him. I worked with him on various committees and issues when my girls were in high school and recently talked with him about the School Board, the budget, and educational issues. I know from our talk and past experiences that he has an excellent grasp of budgets for both present and long-range needs and implications. We talked about education today, allocation of more limited budget resources, and what students' educational needs are for this changing, globalized, and technical world. He recently spent over a year taking courses at UC Berkeley to update his knowledge on project and business management and said "I now have a clear understanding of the knowledge and skills our students will need."

For more information, please go to his web site www.thinkwinn.net. I hope that you will pass this information on to your neighbors and friends.

Jane

The following editorial appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle, September 13, 2012

Innovation is key to economic success
Ro Khanna

The recent passing of Neil Armstrong reminded us about the power of a common goal to rally our country. Fittingly, even longingly, many Americans ask: What might that common goal be today?

If the Soviet Union challenged American values in the 1960s, then China - which is presiding over censorship of the Internet, human rights abuses and currency manipulation - now presents the greatest challenge to the American model of an open, free society. How can we win the battle of ideas?

President John F. Kennedy challenged our technological elite - engineers, scientists and astronauts - to win the space race. Today, our challenge is more difficult. It is no longer enough for our military, government institutions and universities to use taxpayer funds to outcompete their foreign counterparts. Economic and technological growth have been decentralized. To win in a global economy with billions of potential new entrants, nearly every American citizen has to be more technologically creative.

We must become a nation of innovators.

We already are locked in a race to develop the fastest broadband, the newest alternative energy sources, the latest cars and planes, the next generation of computers and media, sophisticated machinery and improved medicine. It's no longer just about being the first to orbit the Earth or land on the moon. Government institutions alone cannot win this race. To succeed, we need an innovative, dynamic workforce that, of course, is supported by smart federal and state governmental policies.

For my book, I surveyed more than a dozen successful U.S. manufacturers to try to understand what makes them tick - and how they are thriving when many consider American manufacturing dead in the water.

What I learned is that to compete in a global economy, the best American manufacturers expect innovation at every level - on the assembly line, in middle management, by the executive team. This echoes the conclusions of Thomas L. Friedman and Michael Mandelbaum, who looked into what's going on in the U.S. service sector as well as in manufacturing.

By becoming a nation of innovators, we can add value to our products at each level of manufacturing and distribution. This gives us a productivity advantage over lower-wage countries such as China.

So how do we get there?

As a first step, our leaders should call for every citizen to embrace innovation. Some ideas put forward by Ben Casnocha and Reid Hoffman, the founder of LinkedIn, are instructive. They say: All of us have to become lifelong learners and entrepreneurial in our approach to our careers. We must constantly think about how to add unique value to whatever tasks we undertake.

This is a lot to expect. To make it happen, our government has to do its part. We must find

common ground concerning government's role in helping encourage nationwide innovation.

Practically, this means:

- Ensuring every citizen has access to quality education after high school, whether it's college or vocational training, and that this education is tailored to jobs that exist in the marketplace.
- Empowering teachers to use technology in every classroom.
- Funding government institutions that do basic research, such as DARPA (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency), ARPA-E (Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy), NIH (National Institutes of Health), NSF (National Science Foundation), and in our own backyard, the Lawrence Berkeley and Livermore national laboratories. These institutions develop groundbreaking technology that can help spawn startups and provide existing American companies with a competitive edge.
- Providing immigrants who are contributing to our country's innovation with green cards and a path to citizenship. Consider the contributions of Andy Grove, Sergey Brin and Elon Musk. Enough said.
- Streamlining bureaucracy and providing tax incentives to start new companies.

These policies are not comprehensive, but they are critical to ensuring our economic competitiveness for this century. They require the same resolve that our nation had for the space program in Kennedy's time.

We need once again to show that institutions of self-governance work, and are capable of achieving great objectives. Using government policy to empower messy, bottom-up technological progress will require more finesse than directing the nation to achieve a single, big goal.

We should take inspiration from our founders. If ever there were a group of innovators - not just politically but also in the arts and the sciences - it was Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and Ben Franklin. They viewed their intellectual pursuits as part of living a good life and envisioned a nation where one day every citizen - not just a handful of elites - could aspire to be entrepreneurs.

If we succeed in democratizing innovation, this century could be our greatest - both economically and technologically. From the perspective of contributing to human knowledge, 21st century America would be akin to Renaissance Florence. My generation would, then, have earned its chapter in the great American story.

Some major contributors

Immigrants have played a key role in pushing American technology forward. Here a few outstanding examples:

Andy Grove -- Hungarian-born co-founder of Intel

Sergey Brin -- Soviet-born co-founder of Google

Elon Musk -- South African-born creator of SpaceX and co-founder of Tesla Motors and PayPal

To learn more

Interested in these ideas? Read these authors:

"That Used to be US: How America Fell Behind in the World It Invented and How We Can Come Back," Thomas L. Friedman and Michael Mandelbaum (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011).

"The Start-Up of You: Adapt to the Future, Invest in Yourself, and Transform Your Career," Reid Hoffman and Ben Casnocha (Crown Business, 2012).

"Entrepreneurial Nation: Why Manufacturing Is Still Key to America's Future," Ro Khanna

(McGraw-Hill, 2012).

Ro Khanna, 36, was appointed by Gov. Jerry Brown to the California Workforce Investment Board. He is a technology attorney at Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, and a visiting lecturer at Stanford University's economics department. He previously served as the deputy assistant secretary of commerce in the Obama administration.

Reports about/from our Elected Officials

Congressman George Miller

Miller, Dems hold hearing on protecting Medicare

by Miller Staff Oct 3, 2012 Issues

George, as the Co-Chair for the Steering and Policy Committee, held a hearing in Washington on Tuesday, Oct 2nd on the Democratic commitment to protecting Medicare and the devastating effects the Ryan-Republican budget would have on middle class families. George also joined fellow Democrats after the hearing. George talked about the testimony he heard from 54-year old Cheryl, who's family would be impacted by the Ryan-Republican Medicare plan that would end the guarantee of Medicare as we know it.

Congressman Jerry McNerney

The Record

October 12, 2012

No doubt about McNerney... Seasoned congressman has immersed himself in S.J. County issues

We would contrast his 25-year-old opponent, Ricky Gill, a bright, well-spoken man seeking his first elected post. Gill lacks even a scintilla of public experience, save his service as an appointed student representative on the state school board when he was in high school. Further, since he graduated from law school earlier this year, he lacks any demonstrated work experience, aside from his campaign claims to have "worked on his family farm" growing up.

Gill says, "We need more statesmen in Congress," but even before being elected he has signed the infamous Grover Norquist anti-tax pledge that essentially removes negotiation from the bargaining table. He told The Record's editorial board he would stand by that pledge even if the nation went to war.

This is not to suggest Gill isn't bright. He most assuredly is. Nor is he a flamethrower. But his level of naïveté and being born privileged at times makes him seem dismissive of just how tough some Valley residents have it.

McNerney has had tough times. He has been laid off from a job. For that matter, he had actual jobs before launching his public service career.

He's earned a doctorate, raised children (including a daughter who this year earned a doctorate). And since becoming a congressman for this area, he has immersed himself in the issues facing this area, especially water, agriculture and services to veterans.

One area where we split with McNerney is in his support of the high-speed rail system. But even on this issue he makes reasoned argument that by being first in the nation to build a high-speed rail system this state can create the engineering and manufacturing expertise that the rest of the nation could adopt.

McNerney should be sent back to Congress.

Congressman John Garamendi

Garamendi Highlights New Kaiser Study: Californians Would Pay \$100 per Month More in Medicare Premiums Under Ryan-Republican Plan

Oct 16, 2012 Issues: [Economy](#), [Health Care](#), [Seniors](#), [Social Justice](#)

FAIRFIELD, CA – Congressman John Garamendi (D-Fairfield, CA), California's Insurance Commissioner for eight years, today highlighted a new [report by the Kaiser Family Foundation](#) that shows California seniors would, on average, face an increase of over \$100 per month in traditional Medicare premium costs under the Ryan-Republican plan to replace Medicare with an underfunded voucher system. The study also found that removing the Medicare guarantee and replacing it with a voucher or "premium support" system would produce higher premiums for six in ten American seniors.

The Kaiser study only evaluates increased premiums and does not take into account the additional out-of-pocket costs that seniors would incur from higher co-pays and deductibles and from [losing the free preventative care and prescription drug discounts included in the Affordable Care Act](#).

"California's seniors, and every Californian who will become a senior, have good reason to be concerned about the changes to Medicare that almost every Republican in Congress voted to implement," said Congressman Garamendi, who has made protecting the Medicare guarantee a top priority. "The Ryan-Republican plan to end the Medicare guarantee would raise premiums paid by California seniors in the traditional Medicare program, on average, by at least \$1,200 a year. This is effectively a regressive tax increase targeting middle class and lower income seniors, and so long as I'm in Congress, I'll do all I can stop their plan from becoming law."

Congressman Pete Stark

Rep. Stark Announces EPA Grants to Bay Area Water Quality Projects

WASHINGTON – Today, Rep. Pete Stark (D-CA) released the following statement in support of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) awarding \$6.5 million in federal grants to ten projects in Northern California. These grants, provided to state and local agencies as well as non-profit organizations, will be used to improve water quality and restore habitat throughout the San Francisco Bay watershed. They are funded through the San Francisco Bay Water Quality

Improvement Fund, which has invested \$28 million in various clean water projects since 2008 and leveraged more than \$103 million in additional funds.

"I am very pleased with the Environmental Protection Agency's decision to award these funds to water quality projects in the Bay Area. I have spent my entire career fighting to clean up the Bay and protect our environment and I have worked to bring federal funds back to our area to do so. The Bay is a national treasure. These grants will help make sure it is healthy enough for our children to fish and swim in."

Two of the grants awarded today are for projects located in Rep. Stark's 13th Congressional District. The EPA allocated \$500,000 to continue the restoration of the South Bay Salt Ponds in partnership with the California Coastal Conservancy. Additionally, \$181,000 was awarded to improve the health of Alameda Creek in partnership with the Alameda County Resource Conservation District.

In 2010, Rep. Stark worked to obtain \$1 million in federal funding to support Salt Pond restoration. In 2009, Rep. Stark secured \$1,337,000 in funding to improve wildlife habitat in the Alameda Creek watershed

State Senator Mark DeSaulnier

DeSaulnier Responds to Veto of Transportation Inspector General Bill

SB 878 Vetoed by the Governor

Today Senator Mark DeSaulnier (D-Concord) announced his disappointment in the Governor's veto of Senate Bill 878. SB 878 would have created the State Office of Inspector General (OIG) to oversee transportation agencies with projects funded with state dollars. SB 878 received wide bipartisan support in the Senate with a vote of 35-0.

"I am very disappointed in the Governor's veto. The limited oversight that SB 878 would have provided over billions of taxpayers' dollars, would have helped to regain the public's trust in how the State spends their money," said DeSaulnier. "This bill is a modest first step to assure that we are getting the most out of our transportation dollars."

The California Transportation Commission is responsible for adopting the five-year State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which is the funding plan for future expansion projects on the state highway system. The most recent STIP consists of more than \$3 billion to be allocated and spent over the next five years. These funds, once allocated, are spent by various state and regional entities with relatively little oversight.

"Billions of dollars are spent each year on California's transportation infrastructure," said DeSaulnier. "We are operating in a challenging world of shrinking transportation revenues and increasing demands. It is imperative that we make every transportation dollar go as far as possible."

SB 878 establishes the Office of the Inspector General to ensure the California Department of Transportation, the High Speed Rail Authority, and all other state, regional, and local agencies that use state transportation funds are operating efficiently, effectively, and in compliance with federal and state laws. The Inspector General would be appointed by the Governor and serve a six year term. In addition, SB 878 directs the Inspector General to report annually to the

Governor and Legislature with a summary of his/her findings, investigations, and audits and requires that this summary be posted on the Inspector General's Internet website.

Many states have successfully adopted the OIG model, including New York and Pennsylvania, and many major cities employ an Inspector General to oversee transportation projects. The federal government employs OIGs in most of its departments and agencies, charging them with identifying fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement within its parent agency. The US Department of Transportation relies heavily on its OIG to ferret out fraud as well as recommend areas of improvement and efficiencies.

Assembly Woman Joan Buchanan

The Independent

Friday, 12 October 2012

Joan Buchanan is the best choice to represent the 16th Assembly District.

Dublin, Livermore and Pleasanton are included in the 16th District, which stretches as far north as Lafayette.

Buchanan was elected to the assembly four years ago. Since then, she has proven to be responsive to the needs of both people and businesses in the district. She has helped save homes and process business licenses.

At a time when education is reaching a critical juncture, Buchanan brings an 18 year background of school board service to the job. During her time on the San Ramon School Board, the District expanded and renovated facilities and improved core academic programs. She understands that for California's economy to thrive in the future, there is a need to invest in a strong public education system. During the last session of the Assembly, she was appointed chairman of the education committee, positioning her to implement reforms. She plans a review of the state's education code, which will look at such areas as teacher work reviews, including the criteria for dismissal.

She has said that she will continue to work to bring jobs to California and to support the local economy by helping small businesses thrive. One of her goals would be to streamline the process for those businesses who want to locate here.

Buchanan holds regular sessions to update constituents regarding state actions and proposals. She maintains a local office.

Buchanan has proven to be hard working effective, responsive, and accessible. For those reasons, as well as her knowledge regarding financial and educational issues, if reelected, Buchanan will continue to serve the 16th Assembly District well.