

San Ramon Valley Democratic Club

(www.srvdems.org)

Newsletter: June 2012

June Meeting: Thursday, June 28, 2012, 6:15 pm at Crow Canyon Country Club

SPEAKER: Lisa Vorderbrueggen, Contra Costa Times Political Editor

TOPIC: The Real Scoop of the June 5th Primary Election



Lisa will talk about the consequences California's very first Open Primary. As the political editor of the Contra Costa Times, Lisa has access to many of the candidates, both Democrats and Republicans. She always has fascinating details about the campaigns and election results. Moreover, she is a lively and entertaining speaker. You won't want to miss this meeting!

Lisa Vorderbrueggen has been the political writer and columnist for Contra Costa Newspapers and Knight Ridder since late 2004. Prior to her political assignment, she covered regional growth and transportation at the Times.

She joined Knight Ridder in 1996 after working as the Carson City, Nevada, bureau chief for the Reno Gazette Journal and as a Washington, D.C., correspondent for the Las Vegas Review Journal. She also worked as reporter, editor and columnist for the Nevada Appeal, a Carson City, Nevada, daily. Vorderbrueggen's work has been recognized by the California Newspaper Publishers Association, Nevada Press Association and the East Bay Press Club. She earned her bachelors degree in journalism in 1989 at the University of Nevada, Reno.

A fifth-generation Oregonian, Vorderbrueggen lives in Martinez with her husband, Joe, in a lovely suburban house the couple will one day sell for an obscene sum of money in order to buy a sailboat and head for blue waters. After that, look for her byline in the travel section under "Tahiti."

LOCAL SPEAKER: Kish Rajan
City Council Member of Walnut Creek



Kish will give us a democratic perspective of California's first Open Primary. Kish Rajan was elected to his first four-year term on the City Council in November 2008. He has previously served as chair of the Walnut Creek Transportation Commission. A graduate from U.C. Berkeley with a B.A. in U.S. history, Rajan later earned a J.D. from Golden Gate University School of Law. He is currently director of North America mobile sales with SanDisk Corporation.

Rajan and his wife, Evie, have three children.

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, June 25, 2012.

Note: Remember if you RSVP and no-show, you may be billed for the meal.

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Presidents Corner

Once again I'm struggling to get this newsletter out in a timely manner. Right now I'm sitting in a hotel room in San Antonio, Texas trying to finish this up before I go to bed. I'm attending the Air & Waste Management Association's (AWMA) annual meeting. The AWMA is one of the oldest environmental organizations in the world, starting out as the Smoke Prevention Association in 1908. I have been a member for 38 years and always enjoy the annual meeting where I can find out the latest in air pollution control and waste management. I also teach some environmental review courses, judge student poster presentations and participate in an Environmental Challenge Initiative, wherein teams from universities in the US and Canada compete while presenting their solutions to an environmental problem. I find these activities very satisfying.

Why do I mention this; because we as a nation seem to be going in the wrong direction when it comes to acting responsibly toward our environment. Just today the Republican House passed a bill to overturn recent EPA decisions concerning control of mercury and other toxic emissions from coal-fired power plants. These plants account for almost one-half of the mercury released to the environment in the U.S. This is just another example of the Republican Party trying to undo the past 40 years of regulations trying to protect human health and the environment. I shudder to think what will happen if they win the senate and the presidency. How much more irresponsible can they be?

In North Carolina republican controlled state Senate proposed legislation limiting the state's ability to plan for rising sea levels. The proposal, which would prohibit state agencies from using projections of advancing sea levels in drafting coastal development rules, was hailed as a "common sense" approach that would shield against negative economic impacts on the state's coastal areas.

In Virginia State Del. Chris Stolle, a Republican from Virginia Beach, argued and succeeded in ensuring that a bill authorizing a \$50,000 study on the economic impacts of coastal flooding,

omitted mentions of "climate change" and "sea level rise," replacing them with terms like "recurrent flooding." That's because "sea level rise" is a "left-wing term," Stolle said during debate over the legislation, according to the [*Virginia-Pilot*](#).

It is frightening to me how many of these supposedly intelligent lawmakers ignore science and pursue policies that fly against well proven and documented scientific evidence of global climate change and rising sea levels. Their positions do not hold well for the future.

How can we counter act this insanity- by working to re-elect President Obama and working to keep a Democratic majority in the Senate and help win back the House.

There is a lot of work that needs to be done, not just to protect the environment, but to ensure policies that consider the middle class and the less well off in our country.

I hope that many of you will join us along with other Democrats and our local Democratic Electeds in Marching the Danville 4th of July parade. It is always an enjoyable event. Come out and show your support to the Democratic Party and to our great electeds.

Have a good month!

Jim Donnelly- President SRVDC

SRVDC Website

Just a reminder that our website <http://srvdems.org/> is up and running. Visit it to see upcoming events and to learn more about the activities of the club. Your comments on our web site, both positive and constructive, are appreciated. Let us know what additional information you would like to see included on the site. Brodie Hilp does a wonderful job of updating it with information of interest to us.

Danville 4th of July Parade

Save the date and get out your walking shoes. Once again we will be marching in the Danville parade. This year we will be joined by Congressman George Miller, Congressman Pete Stark, State Senator Mark DeSaulnier, Assemblywoman Joan Buchanan and members of our Democratic clubs in the area. We will also be entering a number of cars in the parade some that some may ride the route. Come on out and show our local representatives how much we support them and show the people that there are Democrats in the San Ramon Valley. The parade starts at about 9:00 Am and we should be finished around 11:00 AM. More details will follow over the next two weeks.

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.

Tony Suh- posted on the Diablo Valley Democratic Club Web Site, May 30, 2012

GET OVER IT !!

At a recent George Miller fundraiser at the Shadelands in WC, CA, Barney Frank, in referring to all of the anguished commentary by Dems about the Obama Adm. on various issues-peeves of smart and committed Dems, the real dangers facing us/US via appointments to the SCOTUS yet upcoming by the next POTUS, the horrors we have been & will be facing via the Repugs/Tea Party'ers in Congress, and in our citizens' daily lives - - - we need to GET OVER IT !!.

Most of us are pretty smart and informed. What we need more of is not more specific faulting criticisms of Obama, Dems, our "fellow travelers", or other rightfully impassioned pleas for accuracy or "correctness". We need to be impassioned citizens who want to win for our over-arching causes - even with some warts ! What we have had with the Repugs/Tea Party'ers has been deadly cancers and strokes !!

Let's do whatever it takes to win the POTUS and then & thus the SCOTUS. Then let's fine-tune what we want. Don't argue over the icing when we don't have the cake ! Get the cake and then decide and argue over the icing!

Chuck Carpenter- SRVDC Member and Chair DPCC-printed in the Contra costa times, June 11, 2012

A vote for Pete Stark is a vote for future

"Who will protect Social Security and Medicare in Congress," I can only recommend the seated congressman, now running for the new District 15, Rep. Pete Stark.

Pete has been a champion for those of us who supplement our defined benefit pension with Social Security and need Medicare to package with health care programs like Kaiser Senior Advantage to guarantee a healthy and secure retired life.

Having worked over half of my life I cannot gamble with my future. The current attitude in Washington is to privatize or voucher all programs that promise any long-term security for taxpayers.

Just ask a retiree with a 401(k) how that has worked in the past few years. Stark has led the fight for affordable health care on the powerful Ways and Means Committee and the fight to maintain all senior benefits. The credibility that comes with the senior member designation is strong, even without a House majority, and provides protection for those at risk citizens. A vote for Stark protects our future.

Ro Khanna- former deputy assistant secretary of commerce and now is an attorney and a visiting lecturer in economics at Stanford University

San Francisco Chronicle, June 15, 2012

The 2012 presidential election is not simply a debate about ideology; it has become a debate about the best preparation for political leadership. Mitt Romney claims that his life in the "private sector" makes him uniquely qualified to lead the nation, that business experience is more important than any other skill to help grow our economy.

It is not enough that Harvard MBAs who have gone on to make millions in finance get to think of themselves as "Masters of the Universe," as Tom Wolfe famously described them in his novel "The Bonfire of the Vanities." The time, they believe, has now come to literally run the world. Now, I don't want to disparage private equity as a career choice or Mitt Romney's success. But, the claim that somehow that is the best preparation for statecraft should give pause even to traditional conservatives. Have they forgotten about the intellectual history of the West? Have they forgotten the lessons of Plato's "Republic" and Aristotle's "Nicomachean Ethics"? Plato and Aristotle both make the argument that statecraft is one of the highest callings and requires an [education](#), above all, in moral philosophy and history. To understand issues of the common good, of war and peace, of justice requires a lifetime of experience in the art of politics. And what about our founders, Jefferson, Hamilton and Madison? All nerds who had extensive political training. They were, first and foremost, deep thinkers, rooted in the ideas of the Enlightenment.

In the 20th century, the conservative icon Winston Churchill did not prescribe accounting or finance classes for statesmanship. Instead, he advised: "Study history, study history, for therein lies all the secrets of statecraft." Franklin Roosevelt, a career politician since the age of 28, never managed a business, but he had the temperament and resolve to get us out of the Great Depression. He was a beloved leader because he understood people's economic concerns and was effective in navigating the complex Washington bureaucracy to implement new solutions. Even Ronald Reagan, icon of the American conservative movement, emphasized ideas more than hands-on business experience.

As an experiment, think about the most well-regarded political leaders in American history. Then Google their backgrounds. My guess is that few of them will have excellence in finance as a pre-eminent qualification. Most devoted their lives to excellence on the battlefield, or as a writer, or as politician. That consumed so much of their passion that they lacked the time to also start a successful business.

Certainly, a business leader can be a good president, but without a wider range of reference, his career can be as much of a limitation as an asset. Such experience has to be supplemented with a deep knowledge of American life and history that can enable a leader to speak to who we are as a people and build consensus among both citizens and lawmakers.

Our politics, at its best, has to be about standing up for justice, for human rights and for a collective vision of the common good.

My guess is that Mitt Romney talks about being in the private sector because of the prevailing cynicism about politics. Americans are frustrated with Washington and want something different. The frustration is understandable given the partisan gridlock, the uncivil tone and the undue influence of special-interest groups. But electing business leaders, however appealing at first blush, is unlikely to provide a long-term solution to the deficit in our democratic system.

There is no quick fix. Perhaps our best hope is to take inspiration from great leaders of the past. We can't expect to match their genius. But we can expect our public servants to engage in real deliberation and attempt to restore a politics of ideas.

Reports from our Elected Officials

Congressman Jerry McNerney

**Congressman McNerney Blasts New Plan To Steal
Delta Water**

Says BDCP remains a "blatant attack" on the Delta communities

May 24, 2012

Stockton, Calif. – Today, Congressman Jerry McNerney (D-Stockton) condemned the latest developments related to the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP). Congressman McNerney's office received a briefing on the outcome of meetings held last week between federal and state government officials. The new plans still call for the construction of a massive conveyance system that would ship water to Southern California.

"This information confirms what we have known all along; the Governor and Secretary of the Interior intend to build a canal that would steal water from millions of people in our area and give it to wealthy special interests from Southern California. Their plan will destroy one of the most important water resources in the country and harm the livelihoods of the four million people who call the Delta region home.

"Now we know beyond a shadow of a doubt what the BDCP actually stands for. It's little more than a Build the Darn Canal Plan. The people who reside in the Delta region have been shut out of this process from the beginning. Any plan that includes a peripheral canal is unacceptable. It would devastate our local economy and cost countless jobs.

"From the beginning, I have said that any plan related to the Delta must include the input of the farmers, families and small business owners whose livelihoods stand to be devastated by a peripheral canal. The latest developments don't address the concerns of the Delta communities in any meaningful way.

"Agriculture is the economic backbone of the Delta. The special interests from south of the Delta are trying to steal our water, which would lay waste to our farmland and our economy. The latest development is a blatant attack on the Delta communities.

"The federal and state governments must come to the table and include meaningful input from the Delta region. This process has been crafted behind closed doors, and I call on Governor Brown and Secretary Salazar to finally make this plan fair and equitable for the Delta communities."

Congressman George Miller

Miller statement on May jobs numbers June 1, 2012 10:41 AM

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.), the senior Democratic member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, issued the following statement today regarding the May jobs report and needing to do more to help the American economy.

"There are a number of factors that are negatively affecting the American economy, the Euro-crisis being one of the most significant that is out of our control. But make no mistake about what we are seeing here in our own country that is crippling middle class families and hurting our overall economy.

"We are seeing in full swing a radical Republican plan to win political power by killing jobs and weakening the middle class. And this is not just politics as usual, this is the most cynical and destructive partisan strategy yet.

"The Republican plan to win political power by killing jobs started in 2009 by declaring that their number one priority was to see our President fail. The next step was to obstruct all legislation that could create jobs. They followed that up by sowing severe doubt and fear in the economy last August by fabricating a fake crisis over the debt ceiling. They caused rigid stalemate by

opposing any balanced plan to reduce the deficit. And now they are threatening to default on America's debt again.

"They refuse to let a highway bill out of Congress, directly taking hundreds of thousands of jobs out of the economy. They insist on cutting taxes again for millionaires, oil companies and corporations that ship jobs overseas, while making middle class families pay for every spending cut. Their approach is fiscally irresponsible, economically unsound, and morally indefensible.

"What we are seeing is not simply the usual partisan disagreements in Washington. The independent scholars Thomas Mann and Norman Ornstein said we are witnessing the most partisan environment in their 40 years of analyzing Congress and that the Republicans are at fault for blocking anything that President Obama might want.

"Republican leaders in Congress are knowingly consigning a generation of American families, students and seniors to a lower standard of living and are threatening America's standing in the world economy, all for one crass, partisan purpose – to win political power on behalf of their special interest supporters.

"The Republican plan to win political power by killing American jobs is not just politics as usual, it is the most cynical and destructive partisan strategy yet."

Congressman John Garamendi

Congressman Garamendi's Statement on Senate Passage of Farm Bill June 21, 2012 4:07 PM

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Congressman John Garamendi (D-Fairfield, CA), who runs a pear orchard in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and is a life-long rancher, issued a statement on the Senate's passage of the 2012 Farm Bill. Congressman Garamendi led a [California Delegation letter to the House Agriculture Committee](#) outlining a number of priorities for California. He was pleased to see that many of these priorities were included in the Senate legislation. Text of this letter and a statement from the Congressman are included below.

Congressman Garamendi's statement:

"I applaud the bipartisan leadership in the Senate for ensuring passage of the 2012 Farm Bill. Passage of a responsible Farm Bill is vital to American agriculture and our entire economy.

"As the largest producer of agricultural products in the country, California's economy is especially dependant on passage of a Farm Bill. The Senate Farm Bill strengthens California's ability to grow and sell its many '[specialty crops](#),' such as walnuts, almonds, and grapes.

Programs such as the Market Access Program and Specialty Crop Block Grants will allow California's farmers to remain competitive in the global market.

"The bill also empowers farmers to implement important conservation measures to protect the sustainability of land, water, and wildlife. California's rice farmers, for instance, have utilized Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) programs to help reach their environmental goals of creating prime bird habitat that provides refuge and food supply for over 7 million waterfowl, several hundred thousand shorebirds, and the endangered giant garter snake. The Senate bill will ensure that all farmers can continue this type of valuable conservation work.

"This legislation makes investments in agricultural research, conducted at UC Davis and universities across the country, that are essential to providing our agricultural businesses with the most advanced technology and pest and disease prevention strategies.

"The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), helps struggling families to get by and to prevent children from going hungry. This Farm Bill implements reforms to the program while maintaining our commitment to families in need.

"I will continue to work with the House Agriculture Committee and Republican leadership to develop a Farm Bill that helps secure our food supply and grow our economy."

Congressman Pete Stark

Stark: 1.1 Billion Reasons Why ObamaCare Works June 21, 2012

More than 1.8 Million Californians will receive \$74 Million in Rebates from their Insurance Companies

WASHINGTON – Today, Pete Stark (D-CA), Ways and Means Health Subcommittee Ranking Member, and Sander Levin (D-MI), Ways and Means Ranking Member, issued the following statements in response to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announcement that more than 12 million Americans will receive \$1.1 billion – an average of \$151 per household – in rebates from health insurance plans this summer that failed to meet a requirement to spend at least 80 cents of every dollar on health care claims and quality improvement initiatives as part of the new health care law:

Rep. Pete Stark (D-CA): “Today’s announcement on rebates highlights another 1.1 billion reasons why ObamaCare benefits working Americans. Thanks to health reform, American families will receive \$1.1 billion from insurance companies this summer. This is one more example of the many ways the law increases the value of people’s health care dollars. While I remain optimistic that the Court will rule in favor of reform, these rebates highlight -- in hard dollars -- all that is at risk with their decision.”

Rep. Sander Levin (D-MI): “Today’s announcement is another example that vital health insurance reforms in ObamaCare are working to make health care more affordable. Tens of millions of Americans are already benefiting from the law. The news underscores what is at stake in the upcoming Supreme Court decision on the Affordable Care Act.”

State Senator Mark DeSaulnier

Assembly Panel Approves DeSaulnier Bill to Require Reporting Lost or Stolen Fire Arms June 15, 2012

This week with a 4-2 vote the Assembly Public Safety Committee approved Senate Bill 1366 (DeSaulnier) to require every person whose firearm is lost or stolen to notify local law enforcement, in order to improve public safety in California.

“When guns are lost or are stolen from law abiding citizens, the guns often turn up in the hands of people who mean harm,” said Senator Mark DeSaulnier (D-Concord). “SB 1366 will help law enforcement recover lost or stolen guns and will help reduce gun violence.”

California has among the highest rate of gun crimes in the nation. In 2009, 2,972 residents died from firearm related injuries, and 3,545 others were treated for non-fatal gunshot wounds. Of the 1,811 Californians murdered in 2010, 1,257, or 69%, were killed with firearms.

SB 1366 is co-sponsored by the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence and Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca and is supported by numerous law enforcement organizations. This bill will help reduce these egregious gun crimes in several important ways:

- SB 1366 will notify law enforcement about missing firearms in their communities, enhancing their ability to recover the weapons and reduce violence.
- SB 1366 will also help protect lawful gun owners from being unjustly implicated in crimes in which their lost or stolen gun was used.

- SB 1366 will discourage gun trafficking and straw-purchasing – in other words, buying a firearm for someone who is prohibited from owning one.

Reporting laws are widely recognized to reduce violence. Seven states, the District of Columbia, and nine California cities already require firearm owners to report to law enforcement when their firearms are lost or stolen. The public overwhelmingly supports laws requiring the reporting of lost or stolen firearms. A nationwide poll in 2011 found that 94% of Americans surveyed, including 94% of gun owners, favor laws to require the reporting of lost or stolen firearms.

Assembly Woman Joan Buchanan

Assemblymember Buchanan Announces \$600,000 Research Grant May 23, 2012

(Sacramento, CA)— Assemblymember Joan Buchanan (D-Alamo) announced today that Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory was awarded \$600,000 from the California Energy Commission to develop a low-cost nitrogen oxide (NOx) sensor for small distributed generators. Funding for the project, which was recently approved, comes from the Energy Commission's Public Interest Energy Research (PIER) program. The low-cost, highly-sensitive sensor will be able to measure very low emission levels of NOx and can seamlessly integrate with NOx pollution control systems.

"The project will help develop technology that can be used to more cost effectively reduce emissions in California," Buchanan said.

Researchers with Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in Livermore will develop a NOx sensor for small distributed generators that are having difficulty achieving required control levels. Existing NOx sensors lack the accuracy and precision needed to help control or monitor emissions from small natural gas-fueled engines.

The researchers plan to build upon their success in developing automotive NOx sensors to customize them for stationary distributed generators. Prototype sensors will be built and tested in simulated environments in the laboratory before final testing in operating generators.

The California Energy Commission's PIER program supports public interest research and development that helps improve the quality of life in California by bringing environmentally safe, reliable, and affordable energy services and products to the marketplace.

Membership Drive

Wow! It is already the end of June. Have you renewed your San Ramon Valley Democratic Club membership?? Almost 20 % of last year's member have yet to renew, are you one of them?

We need and want your support, especially in this difficult election year. Dues are only \$25/person or \$40/family. These dues support us in presenting our programs throughout the year. Also, as this year is an election year we need your dues to help our local candidates in their efforts to get re-elected. The primary goal of the SRVDC is to aid in informing voters and concerned citizens about issues of the day and how they may impact our lives. The SRVDC serves the communities of Alamo, Blackhawk, Danville and San Ramon. We provide a vehicle for persons interested in your communities to come together for interesting and informative meetings about issues facing all of us. We provide a voter registration and information table at

the Danville Farmer's Market and other venues. We also send out a monthly newsletter presenting updates from our elected officials and provide a forum for our members to express their views.

If you are one of those members who have yet to renew their membership for this year, please do it now. It is easy, just print and complete the form below and mail it with your check to P.O. Box 1218, Danville, CA 94526

If you are not certain if you have renewed please email or call Jim Donnelly to find out your status.

Renewal or New Membership

Singly or Family Membership

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Email _____

Home Phone _____ Cell phone

Please indicate the activities that interest you

____ Voter Registration

____ Get-out-the-vote activities

____ Fundraising

____ Publicity

____ Local Government

____ Newsletter

____ Hospitality

____ Programs & Functions

Make checks payable to: San Ramon Valley Democratic Club

P.O. Box 1218

Danville, CA 94526

Thanks.

Jim Donnelly