

From the President...



As many of you know, over the weekend of April 27-29 California held its Democratic Convention in San Diego. Several Town & Country members, including me, attended the event, called "California Democrats Leading the Way." The Convention is always terrific fun and great education, but this convention was absolutely riveting because of the star power of the speakers. Because our Primary has moved up to February of next year, everyone who is anyone spoke to us! Delegates also got a phone call before the convention from a Hillary staffer asking for our support for Hillary.

On Friday we registered, greeted old friends, chatted with new ones, and I attended the Senior's Caucus, which was largely the voicing of senior issues by attendees: SB 840, Sheila Kuehl's Single Payer Healthcare bill, and Medicare Part D. There is also ongoing concern about the Administration's ongoing attempts to privatize everything, especially Social Security.

I also attended the Progressive Caucus, which was one of the largest and liveliest. They held elections, and our own Karen Bernal is won a position on the Board. Karen did Yeoman's work on preparing the resolutions, which should have been voted on by the group on Sunday but were not, due to a very questionable Quorum call. All of us were upset about this, and Karen has promised us a more complete report.

The real action started Saturday, with speakers including John Garamendi, our speaker for our June 27th Awards Dinner, which is also our most important fundraiser. (See page 1 for more.) Others speaking included Congressmembers Susan Davis and Bob Filner, Debra Bowen, John Chiang, our last year's event speaker Bill Lockyer, Jerry Brown and Jack O'Connell. But the most riveting speaker was undoubtedly Hillary Clinton, who spoke very well and probably won over some doubters. Not all, however, as there were many who sported "anyone but Hillary" signs in the demonstration for her.

I attended the Saturday luncheon, which featured pretty good food and terrific speakers: Zoë Lofgren, Don Perata and Speaker Fabian Nunez.

The afternoon speakers were the high point for me: Nancy Pelosi, Chris Dodd, Barack Obama, Dennis Kucinich, Barbara Lee, Barbara Kerr, Phil Angelides, Mike Jimenez, President of CCPOA, and San Diego City Attorney Michael Aguirre. Obama's supporters were loud and passionate, and there were demonstra-

tions before, during and after his speech. Dennis Kucinich spoke passionately as well, and raised a lot of progressive issues others hadn't.

That evening we had discussions about resolutions, and the Regional elections. Owen Jackman and Harold Fong both made excellent speeches, and Owen won the Region 3 contest. (Rob Haswell also won in another region.)

Dinner was either the official dinner, at \$250 a head, or the "Take Back Red California" dinner, which was more affordable and which most of our members attended. We were packed like sardines at the San Diego Buca Di Beppo restaurant, but it was well worth it, because the most terrific speakers were our own Bill Durston and Charlie Brown. Charlie won the Democracy for America Grassroots All-Stars election, thanks to votes online by many of us. The award included money for his campaign, presented by Jim Dean (read all about it at www.democracyforamerica.com/). Dr. Durston spoke about the need for gun control and made a very compelling case. Candidate Bill Richardson also made an appearance and was terrific as well.

Sunday was the final round of speeches and featured John Edwards, Bill Richardson, and Maxine Waters, all bringing down the house. Our own Dave Jones was in attendance with Sen. Edwards at a volunteer's meeting after his speech, as we saw in the picture in the Bee. We also saw Congressmembers Hilda Solis, Gavin Newsome, Betty Yee, Judy Chu, Don Perata, Fabian Nunez, and Art Pulaski.

The other big news in all these meetings is that all our candidates were absolutely terrific. I have never seen a better group. There was also impeachment talk everywhere, including buttons and demonstrations, and a sizable group of "Draft Gore" people.

Below are websites for our Democratic candidates:

- **Joe Biden:** (not present at the convention): <http://www.joebiden.com/>
- **Hillary Clinton:** www.hillaryclinton.com/splash/
- **Chris Dodd:** <http://www.chrisdodd.com/>
- **John Edwards:** <http://johnedwards.com/>
- **Mike Gravel** (not present at the convention): <http://www.gravel2008.us/>
- **Dennis Kucinich:** <http://www.denniskucinich.us/>
- **Barack Obama:** www.sacramentoforobama.com
- **Bill Richardson:** www.richardsonforpresident.com/

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