



# Town & Country Democrat

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## Officers

**Margie Metzler**  
President

(916) 921-5008

[margiemetz@hotmail.com](mailto:margiemetz@hotmail.com)

**Arnie Godmintz**  
Vice President

916-332-5980

[arniegod@sbcglobal.net](mailto:arniegod@sbcglobal.net)

**Laure Olson**  
Secretary

(916) 470-1893

[laureo77@yahoo.com](mailto:laureo77@yahoo.com)

**James Nakata**  
Treasurer

(916) 768-9938

[james\\_nakata\\_52@hotmail.com](mailto:james_nakata_52@hotmail.com)

**Margie Metzler, Web-  
site: & Newsletter**

(916) 921-5008

[margiemetz@hotmail.com](mailto:margiemetz@hotmail.com)

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## Town & Country 2007 Awards Dinner Tuesday, October 16, 2007



All our hard work and your participation, sponsorship and encouragement have paid off! We had a great time and made some money for a new NE headquarters in the near future. Introductions by Margie Metzler, Lyn Stueve and Arnie Godmintz were touching and inspirational, and the Keynote speech by Controller John Chiang was terrific, heartfelt and educational. And the acceptance speeches by Dr. Bill Durston, winner of our Robert T. Matsui Award for Public Service, and Ralph Cy-

fers, recipient of our Great Grassroots Award for his unceasing efforts at building and maintaining our Sacramento county voter registration program, were touching and will encourage all of us to join their efforts. (Go to the Durston for Congress site at <http://www.durstonforcongress.org> or contact the campaign at 916-622-VOTE; call Ralph at 916-812-7225.)

Pictures on this page and on page 3 by Mary Ellen Asevedo.

Pat Pratt and her team created table decoration of ballot boxes centerpieces with ballots for everyone and then some, stuffing allowed and even encouraged, and quotes from the major Democratic candidates. The results of this less-than-scientific poll were as follows:

Gore: (all write-ins). 26  
Clinton: 29  
Biden: 6  
Dodd: 0  
Edwards: 45  
Gravel: 1  
Kucinich: 24  
Obama: 7  
Richardson: 6  
Other (write-ins): Bernie Sanders, 1  
Cici Goldwater/Stephanie Miller: 1  
Dames for W (!!) 1  
Can't decide: 5  
All: 1  
Don't like any: 0  
Wait and see: 1

Special thanks to Arnie, Kevin, Nancy Tronaas, Joan B. Lee, Pat Pratt, John Bernier, Jim Nakata, Lyn Stueve and the rest of our stalwart team, and to our sponsors:

United Association of Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 447  
Construction & General Laborers, Local 185  
Operating Engineers, Local 3  
Service Employees International Union, United Healthcare Workers West  
Pacific Gas & Electric Co., San Francisco  
Retired Public Employees Association (R.P.E.A.)  
SEIU, United Longterm Care Workers  
Cement Masons Local 400  
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 340 (I.B.E.W.)  
Sheet Metal Workers Local 162  
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Congresswoman Doris Matsui  
Assembly Member Dave Jones  
Consumer Attorneys of California  
Ben O'Brien  
Owen Jackman  
Barbara Krings  
Jane O'Donnell  
Roberta Ward  
Women Democrats of Sacramento County

## From the President...



As we near the end of the year, we still have two major things on our plate.

First, we have again decided to combine forces with the other local Democratic clubs to plan our holiday party. Arnie has reserved the Veterans Building at Carmichael Park for the evening of Wednesday, December 19 for the party. Nancy Tronaas has graciously agreed to organize this event along with Jo Souvignier of the Women Dems. We're not sure which of the other clubs will participate, but flyers will be out soon and we will give you more details then.

The second event is the 2008 elections. We have a nominating committee composed of Arnie, John Bernier, Leonard and Beverly Thomas, and Nancy Tronaas. I have agreed to run again, along with Warren Harding as Vice President and Jim Nakata as Treasurer. We will discuss the elections more at the November meeting Wednesday Nov. 14, and anyone interested can nominate themselves or any other member of the club. Ballots will go out with the Dec. newsletter and we'll install officers in January.

We also have some issues we need to think about. While we raised money and had a terrific time at our Awards dinner, we had a lower turnout than we usually have. This may be partly due to changing the date, of course, or possibly to our shrinking membership. In any event, we will focus on increasing our membership in the near future and really want ideas from all of our members.

Proably related to shrinking membership, we have noticed that membership in our committees has likewise dripped off. We may want to thienk abou tshich committees we really need and encourage membership there as well.

Please let me know if you have any ideas on any of these topics. We value your participation and we love your ideas!

*Margie Metzler, President, Town & Country Democrats*  
[margiemetz@hotmail.com](mailto:margiemetz@hotmail.com); (916) 921-5008



## Capital Alerts

For some time, the Sacramento Bee has had a feature called Capital Alerts, which was a real blessing to teachers and advocates alike. The service sent you alerts about state legislative events as they occurred. The Bee had a one-month free trial, which I subscribed to and absolutely loved. However, it cost a lot, around \$500, which was prohibitive. I wrote to the Bee and suggested they reconsider, as this fee limited the users of the service to wealthy lobbyists and corporations, which in effect made it undemocratic. I also said I was a long-term subscriber and that at the very least there should be a special rate for us.

As luck would have it, the Bee just this month, possibly connected with their hiring of a new Editor, dropped the charge completely, in response to what they referred to as many requests.

To avail your self of this service, you must go to <http://data.sacbee.com/capalert/> and register. No charge and no obligation!

## Farewell to Long-time T&C Member Rita Hodgkins



**Rita Hodgkins, 1924-2007**

**Rita was a long time member of the Sacramento County Democratic Central Committee. She served as Vice-Chair and also served as Chair after Suzanne Freeman stepped down as Chair. Rita had also was a member of the Town and Country Democratic Club and also was the former Chair of the Coalition of Democratic Clubs of Sacramento County.**

**I think what Rita will be remembered for was her service as a teacher/educator and her service to the State Democratic Party. Her commitment to education was equal to that of Don Douglas. Most notably, Rita worked very hard on the booth for the State Fair. She did the shift sign ups, opened and closed the booth, purchased the buttons and materials. At the time Rita did the booth, there was no one else who had the commitment that Rita had to make sure that booth ran smoothly and successfully.**

Please to click on the link here on the Bee's web site.:<http://www.legacy.com/SacBee/DeathNotices.asp?Page=Lifestory&PersonId=95983638>

Thanks Rita, for all you did for us.

# 2007 Awards Dinner: More Pictures



**Thanks to all of you for making our Awards Dinner a success!**

## DON'T JUDGE A NEIGHBOR BY THE CALIBER OF HIS GUN

It was FDR who initiated the Good Neighbor Policy with Latin America in the 1930s. In regards to the United States and Mexico, that this policy of neighborliness appears today to be in full swing. To ensure that these two North American nations have an ongoing amicable relationship, the U.S., to offset Mexico's strict gun control law, is supplying its southern neighbor with almost all of the firearms used by criminals there. Now what could be more neighborly than that? (Quite possibly, this is not quite what FDR had in mind when he set up the Good Neighbor Policy!)

A Mexican government study revealed that 99 percent of the guns found in the hands of criminals in Mexico had been smuggled into the country from the U.S. Certainly, this is further confirmation of the determination of the U.S. to fully abide by the Good Neighbor Policy. What could be more neighborly than providing almost all of the guns used in homicides in Mexico?

To further confirm that it is truly eager to spread goodwill across its Southern Border, the U.S. could offer to help set up a chapter of the National Rifle Association in Mexico. This could be the first step in nullifying Mexico's strict gun control law, which has forced it to rely on its neighbor to the north for the necessary firepower for its criminal element. This would be the ideal time for the NRA to move across the Rio Grande, since President Bush is such a great supporter of the Right to Bear Arms under the Constitution's Second Amendment. (Once again, it does appear that this may not be exactly what FDR had in mind for his Good Neighbor Policy!)

—John Bernier

## NOW HOLD ON THERE, MR. PRESIDENT

The United Nations' nuclear watchdog agency appears to be saying to President Bush, "Hey cool it man." in regards to his hostile attitude toward

Iran. Mohamed ElBarader, who heads the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency, said he is worried about the increasing rhetoric from the U.S. regarding the question as to Iran's nuclear potential. ElBarader added that he has no evidence that Iran is working to build nuclear weapons.

The U.N. official is not alone in his concern as to just what the president, Dick Cheney, and a few others in the Bush administration have in mind for Iran. Granted, it could be said that all right-minded persons in the world should be opposed to Iran acquiring nuclear weapons. (In fact, the goal should be that no nation in the world, including the U.S., would possess nuclear weapons.)

Regarding the question of Iran obtaining nuclear arms, ElBaradel declared, "I'm very much concerned about confrontation because that would lead absolutely to a disaster. I see no military solution. The only durable solution is through negotiation and inspection." Too bad Bush didn't follow such a policy before going to war in Iraq.

—John Bernier



## HEAT OR NOT TO HEAT: EAT OR NOT TO EAT

Once again the Town & Country Democratic Club searched far and wide for the person most deserving of its Compassionate Conservative of the Month Award. And once again, George W. Bush was selected for this highly coveted prize, because of the compassion he put forth to reduce funding for the program which assists some 38 million low income American families to pay for heating their homes.

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), the federal agency responsible for distributing these funds, reports that at least two-thirds of the families receiving such assistance have annual incomes of less than \$20,000. However, LIHEAP reports that its current budget only has enough funds to cover 16 percent of the households eligible under this program. In such a case, one would think this would call for an increase in the agency's budget. Think again. Our president, has shown his normal compassionate self by proposing a cut in these funds. It does seem like a rather odd application of compassion by Bush to force a family to choose between going hungry or freezing.

Of course it may be that Bush was misunderstood when during the 2000 election campaign he described himself as a "Compassionate Conservative."

Maybe what he actually meant was that he was dedicated to "conserving compassion." Certainly, no one can say the president has been overly extravagant in his distribution of compassion. In fact, it could be said he has been down right stingy with his compassion.

—John Bernier

**Sac Dems have a Home!**

- **Phone numbers:** 916-739-6001 or 916-739-6002.
- **Address:** 2729 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95816-6403.
- **Email address:** [SacDemsOffice@aol.com](mailto:SacDemsOffice@aol.com).

## Join the Town & Country Democratic Club!!!

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Strengths/Experience \_\_\_\_\_

**The Town & Country  
Democratic Club  
encourages the  
participation of  
young members.**

Please check one box and circle the correct membership below:      NEW                       RENEWAL

Annual Dues:     \$25.00 Individual                       \$30.00 Family  
                           \$20.00 Senior Individual             \$25.00 Senior Family

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to: Town & Country Democratic Club  
 P.O. Box 1286  
 Citrus Heights, CA 95611-1286

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### November Meeting: Update on Healthcare

This month's meeting will be an update on the status of healthcare at both the state and local level. As you may know, it's not great news!

We'll talk about the Governor's plan, SCHIP, SB 840 and the future of Single-Payer in General, and general strategies for talking about healthcare.

We'll have a showing of the Shelia Kuehl video and talk about "Sicko". (I have the DVD and would love to share in any way I can!

The meeting is in the usual place: the Clubhouse at Deterding Park, map below.



—Margie Metzler



## Health Care Excuses: Paul Krugman

The United States spends far more on health care per person than any other nation. Yet we have lower life expectancy than most other rich countries. Furthermore, every other advanced country provides all its citizens with health insurance; only in America is a large fraction of the population uninsured or underinsured.

You might think that these facts would make the case for major reform of America's health care system — reform that would involve, among other things, learning from other countries' experience — irrefutable. Instead, however, apologists for the status quo offer a barrage of excuses for our system's miserable performance.

So I thought it would be useful to offer a catalog of the most commonly heard apologies for American health care, and the reasons they won't wash.

### **Excuse No. 1: No insurance, no problem.**

"I mean, people have access to health care in America," said President Bush a few months ago. "After all, you just go to an emergency room." He was widely mocked for his cluelessness, yet many apologists for the health care system in the United States seem almost equally clueless.

We're told, for example, that there really aren't that many uninsured American citizens, because some of the uninsured are illegal immigrants, while some of the rest are actually entitled to Medicaid. This misses the point that the 47 million people in this country without insurance are an ever-changing group, so that the experience of being without insurance extends to a much broader group — in fact, more than one in every three people in America under the age of 65 was uninsured at some point in 2006 or 2007.

Oh, and finding out that you're covered by Medicaid when you show up at an emergency room isn't at all the same thing as receiving regular medical care.

Beyond that, a large fraction of the population — about one in four nonelderly Americans, according to a Consumer Reports survey — is underinsured, with "coverage so meager they often postponed medical care because of costs."

So, yes, lack of insurance is a very big problem, a problem that reaches deep into the middle class.

### **Excuse No. 2: It's the cheeseburgers.**

Americans don't have a bad health system, say the apologists, they just have bad habits. Overeating and teenage sex, not the huge overhead of America's private health insurance companies — the United States spends almost six times as much on health care administration as other advanced countries — are the source of our problems.

There's a grain of truth to this claim: Bad habits may partially explain America's low life expectancy. But the big question isn't why we have lower life expectancy than Britain, Canada or France, it's why we spend far more on health care without

getting better results. And lifestyle isn't the explanation: the most definitive estimates, such as those of the McKinsey Global Institute, say that diseases that are associated with obesity and other lifestyle-related problems play, at most, a minor role in high U.S. health care costs.

### **Excuse No. 3: 2007 is better than 1950.**

This is an argument that baffles me, but you hear it all the time. When you point out that America spends far more on health care than other countries, but gets worse results, the apologists reply: "Sure, we spend a lot of money on health care, but medical care is a lot better than it was in 1950, so it's money well spent." Huh? It's as if you went to a store to buy a DVD player, and the salesman told you not to worry about the fact that his prices are twice those of his competitors — after all, the machines on offer at his store are a lot better than they were five years ago. It is, in other words, an argument that makes no sense at all, yet respectable economists make it with a straight face.

### **Excuse No. 4: Socialized medicine! Socialized medicine!**

Rudy Giuliani's fake numbers on prostate cancer — which, by the way, he still refuses to admit were wrong — were the latest entry in a long, dishonorable tradition of peddling scare stories about the evils of "government run" health care.

The reality is that the best foreign health care systems, especially those of France and Germany, do as well or better than the U.S. system on every dimension, while costing far less money.

But the best way to counter scare talk about socialized medicine, aside from swatting down falsehoods — would journalists please stop saying that Rudy's claims, which are just wrong, are "in dispute"? — may be to point out that every American 65 and older is covered by a government health insurance program called Medicare. And Americans like that program very much, thank you.

### Town and Country Committees

<b>Membership:</b> Nancy Tronaas: 916-386-1170 <a href="mailto:n.tronaas@att.net">n.tronaas@att.net</a>	<b>Legislative:</b> Joan B. Lee: 916-332-5980 <a href="mailto:joanblee@sbcglobal.net">joanblee@sbcglobal.net</a>
<b>Communications:</b> Lyn Stueve: 916 974-1960 <a href="mailto:lynette.stueve@earthlink.net">lynette.stueve@earthlink.net</a>	<b>Fundraiser:</b> Arnie Godmintz: 916-332-5980 <a href="mailto:arniegod@sbcglobal.net">arniegod@sbcglobal.net</a>
<b>Newsletter Contributors:</b> Margie, Lyn, Joan, John, Jim Nakata	<b>Website:</b> Margie Metzler: 916-921-5008 <a href="mailto:margiemetz@hotmail.com">margiemetz@hotmail.com</a>

# The Calendar

## **Sacramento County Democratic**

### **Central Committee**

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, State Capitol, Room 127, 6 PM. Contact: (916) 442-0264 or [www.sacdems.org](http://www.sacdems.org).

### **Auburn Area Democratic Club**

1<sup>st</sup> Thursday, Auburn Public Library, 250 Nevada St., Auburn, 7 PM; Contact: Trish Grenfell, (530) 887-8873, [pgrenfell@yahoo.com](mailto:pgrenfell@yahoo.com)

### **Davis Democratic Club**

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, Yolo County Library-Davis, 14<sup>th</sup> St & B, 7 PM  
Contact: John Chendo, (530) 758-3331 or [jac07@dcn.org](mailto:jac07@dcn.org)

### **Folsom Democratic Club**

Last Monday, 7 PM; Contact Tessa Janian, [tessa.janian@comcast.net](mailto:tessa.janian@comcast.net) for location

### **JFK Democratic Club**

1<sup>st</sup> Saturday, 10 AM at the Raley's at Hazel and Madison; Contact: Mike Dillon, (916) 967-3157, [mikedillon2@comcast.net](mailto:mikedillon2@comcast.net)

### **Lincoln Democratic Club**

1<sup>st</sup> Thursday, Orchard Creek Lodge, Lincoln Hills, 7 PM; Contact: Della Sharief, (916) 408-5028

### **Rocklin/Roseville Area Democrats**

3<sup>rd</sup> Monday, Rocklin Library, 5460 Fifth St., Rocklin, 7 PM; Contact: Glenda Wertemberger, (916) 723-9930, [paulindaw@yahoo.com](mailto:paulindaw@yahoo.com).

### **Sacramento County Young Democrats**

(35 and younger) 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday, State Capitol, Room 317, Sacramento, 6:30 PM; Contact [scyd@yahoogroups.com](mailto:scyd@yahoogroups.com)

### **Stonewall Democratic Club of Greater Sacramento**

2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, Lambda Players Theater, 2427 17<sup>th</sup> Street, Sacramento, 6 PM; Contact: (916) 441-1787, [info@sacstonewall.org](mailto:info@sacstonewall.org) or [www.sacstonewall.org](http://www.sacstonewall.org)

### **Sun City Democratic Club**

4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday, Sierra Pines Recreation Center, Whistlestop Way, Sun City, Roseville, 9 AM; Contact: Myra Schimke, (916) 772-4371, [mschimke@surewest.net](mailto:mschimke@surewest.net)

### **Town & Country Democratic Club**

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday, Deterding Park Clubhouse, 1415 Rushden Drive, 7 PM; Contact: Margie Metzler, (916) 921-5008, [margiemetz@hotmail.com](mailto:margiemetz@hotmail.com), website [www.tcdems.org](http://www.tcdems.org)

### **Women Democrats of Sacramento**

**County**, 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday, SCTA Office, 5300 Elvas Ave., Sacramento, 6:30 PM; Contact: JoAnn Souvignier, (916) 971-9601, [josouvign@comcast.net](mailto:josouvign@comcast.net), website [www.wdsc.net](http://www.wdsc.net)

### **Other Progressive Clubs**

#### **Sacramento For Democracy**

1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday, 7:00pm; Various locations. Contact: (916) 974-1960; [lynette.stueve@earthlink.net](mailto:lynette.stueve@earthlink.net) [www.SacramentoForDemocracy.org](http://www.SacramentoForDemocracy.org)

#### **Gray Panthers of Sacramento**

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 1:00pm, Hart Senior Center, 27th & I Streets, Sacramento; Contact: Joan Lee, (916) 332-5980, [www.gpcal.org](http://www.gpcal.org)

#### **Capital Area Progressives (CAP)**

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, various locations; Cathlyn Daly, 479-5961; [dalywood@comcast.net](mailto:dalywood@comcast.net)



## **Town & Country Democratic Club**

**P.O. Box 1286**

**Citrus Heights, CA 95611-1286**

[www.tcdems.org](http://www.tcdems.org)

**November 14: Update on Healthcare issues**

**December 19: Democratic Clubs Holiday Party**