



# Democratic Directions

## This Month's Meeting

Wed. Nov. 14

7 PM

Alameda Hospital.

Councilwomen Lena Tam and Marie Gilmore will talk about the city charter review process and the state of the city.

## Upcoming Events

Nov. 10 — So I Might Want to Run for Office, a free workshop presented by the Alameda County Democratic Central Committee, 10am-1pm, 333 E. 8th Street, Oakland

Dec. 2 — Democratic Club holiday luncheon, noon, Pasta Pelican restaurant, 2455 Mariner Square Dr., Alameda

## How to defeat a GOP dirty trick

Brent Blackaby, whose online political consulting firm, Blackrock Associates, has been involved in many successful campaigns, gave club members a behind-the-scenes look at how Democratic groups pulled together to publicize the hidden agenda in the GOP's Presidential Election Reform Act.

Blackaby characterized the initiative drive as "a Republican dirty trick" that was funded by Rudy Giuliani supporters



Brent Blackaby chats with Richard Hofmann after his talk.

and played on voters' frustration with how the Electoral College works. He said the opposition campaign was a good example of traditional and online politics working well together.

## Our 2008 nominees

The following members have stepped forward to run for club offices for 2008:

President: Rob Bonta and Jim Oddie

Vice President, Activities: NakMin Oddie and Johanne Duffy

Vice President, Programs: Rae Lisker and Karen Green

Treasurer: Mike McMahon

Secretary: Joan Robinson

Voting will be at the November meeting.

## Can we believe Arnold?

At a meeting of Silicon Valley executives on Nov. 2, Governor Schwarzenegger said he had no interest in challenging Barbara Boxer for her Senate seat in 2010. He also said he wasn't interested in becoming mayor of Los Angeles. One possible explanation: Arnold is used to being chief executive in California and would be frustrated being just one of 100 Senators.

Sounds right for a former actor and body builder, doesn't it?

## Minutes of Oct. 10 meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:25 pm by co-president Rob Bonta.

The minutes of the Sept. 19 meeting were approved with one addition, that Barbara Kahn was appointed Nominations chairperson.

The nominations are as follows: President: Rob Bonta and Jim Oddie; Vice President, Activities: NakMin Oddie and Johanne Duffy; Vice President, Programs: Rae Lisker and Karen Green; Treasurer: Mike McMahon; Secretary: Joan Robinson.

The Oct. 13 Alameda County Democratic Unity Dinner was discussed and the need for the club to be represented at a table. Someone was also needed to put together a gift basket to be auctioned.

The speaker was Brent Blackaby, an online fund-raising expert who helped to defeat an initiative before it was put on the ballot about changing the way electoral votes are apportioned in California.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Robinson

Secretary

## Are we sure this guy is a Republican?

From an Oct. 17 letter to President Bush by maverick Sen. Chuck Hagel of Nebraska:

"Now is the time for the United States to actively consider when and how to offer direct, unconditional and comprehensive talks with Iran. The offer should be made even as we continue to work with our allies on financial pressure, in the U.N. Security Council on a third sanctions resolution and in the region to support those Middle East countries who share our concerns with Iran."

Any material to be considered for inclusion in the newsletter

MUST be submitted to [lcdennis50@earthlink.net](mailto:lcdennis50@earthlink.net)

or mailed to 3104 El Paseo, Alameda 94502

14 days before the next monthly meeting

## Donald Rumsfeld, memo writer

It turns out that former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was quite a prolific scribe during his years serving George W. He wrote notes about meetings he attended and jotted down order for his staff. Some highlights:

In April 2006, when retired generals called for his resignation he wrote: "Talk about Somalia, the Philippines, etc. Make the American people realize they are surrounded in the world by violent extremists."

His take on the Muslim world? "Too often Muslims are against physical labor, so they bring in Koreans and Pakistanis while their young people remain unemployed."

In March 2006 he ordered a public affairs employee to prepare "a better presentation to respond to this business that the Department of Defense has no plan (for the Iraq war). This is just utter nonsense. We need to knock it down hard."

After his resignation in November 2006 a New York Times editorial said he had damaged the Army during his tenure. Here's what he said to his staff: "I read the letter we sent in rebuttal. I thought it was rather weak and not signed at the level it should have been." Would that level be George W?

### 2007 E-Board Contact Information

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## Opinions and editorials

# Why I support John Edwards

By Barbara Kahn

I sat on the fence for a long time. I saw Barack Obama and came away a supporter. A woman as president of the United States is compelling. Governor Richardson has had more significant experience than most presidents before they take office. So why John Edwards — other than that he can win?

Whoever is our next president will take office facing incredible problems: the legacy of a dishonest, corrupt, incompetent and uncaring administration; a war to be ended; health care in disarray; a huge and growing deficit; a loss of the American edge in manufacturing and innovation and the resultant trade imbalance; wages not keeping up with inflation; an immigration system that is broken; the fact that there are two Americas — one affluent and one where families are struggling for bare subsis-

tence; global warming; an assault on the environment through bad policy and lack of enforcement; fuel prices out of control; a Congress where lobbyists reign; and our country's standing throughout the world in disrepair.

John Edwards is concerned not just about winning, but winning with a platform of thought-out and articulated progressive policies on every issue that we face. His is the thoughtful campaign of a man who has compassion and who will fight, not just to win but for what is right.

On a personal level, I supported Wesley Clark last time around. My good friend and very thoughtful Democrat, Ann Muir, believed Edwards was the embodiment of the Democratic Party she remembered.

I agree.

## Rudy Giuliani's fuzzy math

Presidential candidate and former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani is a prostate cancer survivor, and he's entitled to use his health history in the current campaign, but he's not entitled to twist facts to make his points about the supposed evils of socialized medicine, as he did recently in speeches and advertisements.

He has been quoted as saying that while prostate cancer patients in the United States have an 82 percent survival rate, in England, under the National Health Service system the prostate cancer survival rate is only 44 percent.

Wrong!

Britain's Office of National Statistics says the five-year survival rate for prostate cancer is 74 percent, not 44 percent.

So how did Rudy get it so wrong? A spokeswoman for his campaign says Giuliani got the 44 percent figure from City Journal, a publication of the Manhattan Institute, a conservative think tank.

A Manhattan Institute researcher says he got the figure from the Commonwealth Fund, a health-care policy group.

The Commonwealth Fund says the Manhattan Institute misinterpreted its research, using a wrong approach to calculate five-year survival rates for prostate cancer.

The Manhattan Institute researcher, David Gratzner, says

the Commonwealth Fund "has an ideological bias."

If they do, they're certainly not the only ones in this messy situation who do.

We also should mention that Giuliani apparently fails to make a distinction between the government health system in Britain and the sort of single-payer system (in which only health insurance is government-run) that some Democrats support.

## Pete Stark's apology

Our Congressman recently leveled some harsh words at President Bush. He said young people were being sent to Iraq "to get their heads blown off for the president's amusement."

Then he felt compelled to apologize: "On a very serious note, I want to apologize to my colleagues, many of whom I have offended, to the President, his family, to the troops. I apologize for this reason: I think we have serious issues before us, the issue of providing medical care to children, the issue about what we're going to do about a war that we're divided about how to end. I hope that with this apology I will become as insignificant as a should be and that we can return to the issues that do divide us but that we can resolve in a better fashion."

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## Forum on paratransit

Assemblywoman Loni Hancock is sponsoring a community forum Nov. 30 at 1pm about paratransit services in the East Bay. Bring your questions or suggestions to the North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 Martin Luther King Way, Oakland. Paratransit riders, their family members, service providers and transportation advocates are encouraged to attend.

To RSVP, call Melissa Male at (510) 559-1406.

**“There are only three things in a Giuliani sentence — a noun, a verb and 9/11.”**

*- Delaware Sen. Joe Biden, describing one of the Republican presidential candidates, during a Democratic debate on Oct. 30 .*

## Dear Diary

Guess who wrote this?

“A moment I’ve been dreading. George (Bush) brought his ne’er-do-well son around this morning and asked me to find the kid a job.

Not the political one who lives in Florida. The one who hangs around here all the time looking shiftless. This so-called kid is already almost 40 and has never had a real job.

Maybe I’ll call Kinsley over at The New Republic and see if they’ll hire him as a contributing editor or something. That looks like easy work.”

Yes, we might like to believe this came from President Reagan’s recently published diaries. Actually, it came from a humorous essay by Michael Kinsley, editor of the New Republic, who was speculating on why his name was in the index of the Reagan diaries.