



# DEMOCRATIC DIRECTIONS

CITY OF ALAMEDA DEMOCRATIC CLUB

FEBRUARY 2009

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Now that the euphoria of the election and President Obama's historic inauguration has begun to subside, we are seeing the magnitude of the mess he inherited from his predecessor. No doubt President Obama and his staff will put in countless long nights as he brings our country back to period of peace, prosperity, and respect. Some of you may wonder what our club is going to do, now that Democrats control the White House, Senate, House, and most levers of power here at home. Our club has worked hard on offense to get this far, now we will have to shift and work on defense to maintain our hard-fought gains. Let me share some of the ideas the E-Board has been discussing on how to do this.

First, we want to answer President Obama's call to stay engaged. Our club's new Secretary, Alice Fried, has already organized an Economic Recovery House Meeting. As the President works to enact more of his agenda, such as health care reform, we will see more of these grass roots efforts to educate and organize. We can counter the other side's cable chatter by using these types of small events to get out our message to voters. We are also planning ways to transform our issue outreach and programs into action.

Second, we want to answer President Obama's call to service by giving back to our community. This year, we are helping landscape Chipman Middle School. Some may wonder how community service fits into our mission, and we will be having this discussion with our members as we work to stay relevant and involved during the breaks from the seemingly never ending campaign cycle. Giving back to our community is a way to build goodwill for our club throughout Alameda, bring in new members, and most importantly, do something good for others.

Third, we want to grow our membership so we are ready for the next two challenging election cycles. Alice and Stephanie are working on ideas and specific plans to bring in new members, especially among Alameda's youth. Today's Encinal H.S. seniors will be starting their careers, getting their education, and starting their families over the next eight years (hopefully!) of the Obama Administration. They have a vested interest in becoming and remaining politically active.

Lastly, we have not forgotten our primary mission of electing Democrats. We will continue to fund raise for our 2010 headquarters – the election is a short 600+ days away! The governor's race tops our priority list, but Alameda will elect a new mayor, and this election is one we will be extremely interested in.

So, 2009 will not be an idle year for the Alameda Democratic Club, and we look forward to working together as a club to strengthen our club and our Democratic majorities.

February 2009  
Jim Oddie, Co-President

**FEBRUARY 11TH GUEST SPEAKER JOHN DIAZ**

**EDITORIAL PAGE EDITOR, SF CHRONICLE**

**DISCUSSION WILL COVER A RANGE OF TOPICS, FROM WHAT HE  
VIEWS AS THE NEW ADMINISTRATION'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE  
MEDIA TO THE BUDGET CRISIS IN SACRAMENTO**

**HAVE YOU PAID YOUR '09 DUES?**

The amount for the various categories of dues remains the same as last year:

Seniors/Youth	\$15.00
Senior Couple	\$25.00
Individual	\$20.00
Couple/Family	\$30.00

If you have not already paid your dues, please complete the attached renewal application with the requested information. For those who receive the printed newsletter, please return it with your check in the reply envelope (also attached). For those who receive the newsletter electronically, please mail the form and your check to: CADC, PO Box 2723, Alameda, CA 94501. Thanks for your continued support of the City of Alameda Democratic Club.

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**NEW MEMBERS**

**Welcome to our New Members**

The new administration brings new hope and the endless possibilities of putting our great nation back on the right track. We extend a warm welcome to all of our new members and we encourage all of you to support our club and the Democratic Party in its renewed vision. Members who have joined the club since July 1, 2008 are:

- Don Arnold, Dan Ballinger, Jeff Cambra
- Joyce Charles, Nancy Crosby, Billy Davidson
- Susan Dunn, Casey Fenton, Joel Freid
- Ruth Israely, Stephanie Jacobs,
- Tracy Jensen, Carla Lopez, Cecilia Martinez
- Tim & Vanessa McCutcheon, Ron Mooney
- Kathy Moore, Linda Mutch, Donna O'Dowd
- Elsa Ortiz, Chris Peeples, Kate Rome
- Kristin Sagen, Sally Simpson, Austin Tam
- Nielsen Tam, Debra Turnage,
- John Knox White, Johanna Winzenread

**GARDEN PROJECT**

In response to President Obama's call for a national day of service on Martin Luther King's birthday, our club organized a project at Chipman Middle School to create a green space at the school. The project was posted on the Obama website and 30 people arrived—some with shovels in hand. Several club members attended as well as a number of people who learned of the meeting on the web site.

Brainstorming yielded many ideas and plans for moving forward. A tiled wall will be added to the front of the school after removing some of the tall Junipers that block windows; pruning and improving the planting in the interior of the school brought forth a volunteer who lives in our city but works as a gardener for the city of San Francisco; several options for creating a garden area in the playground of the school are under exploration, including the planting of an edible garden.

All this costs money and a committee was formed and has met and planned a fundraising evening on the first day of Spring, with some members of the committee working with local restaurants to help with the food. The goal is raise 10,000 dollars for the project.

As we have moved forward new people are joining, offering services and materials

One of the people who attended this meeting remarked "Isn't it wonderful that all across America meetings like this are taking place.

If you are interested in joining this project you can contact Alice Fried ([Alicefreid@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Alicefreid@sbcglobal.net)) or Barbara Kahn@barbarakahn8@gmail.com

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**DAY OF SERVICE**

**RUTH BADER GINSBURG**

*Extracted from an article in Salon By Rebecca Traister*

*This piece was originally published in July 2007 in [Elle](#) magazine..*

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, so slight, so frail, so like your *bubbe* in her tight bun and Boca-size glasses, was pissed. When she read aloud from the bench a summary of her dissent in *Gonzales v. Carhart*, her words were incandescent, shimmering with rage and steely reason. The protection of reproductive rights, she said, is not a matter of "some vague or generalized notion of privacy" but of "a woman's autonomy to decide for herself her life's course, and thus to enjoy equal citizenship stature."

The 74-year-old justice had every reason to be livid. "Her life has been about achieving equal rights and opportunities for women under the law," says the pro-choice activist Kate Michelman. "This ruling must have been extremely painful for her."

No doubt it was. Since the 2005 retirement of Sandra Day O'Connor, Ginsburg has been the only woman on a bench lousy with alpha males."

Born and raised in Brooklyn, Ginsburg got her law degree from Columbia University in an era when it was not easy for a woman, a Jewish woman, to pursue a legal career. She cowrote a landmark casebook on sex discrimination, was the first woman tenured at Columbia Law School, and cofounded the American Civil Liberties Union's Women's Rights Project. Appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals in 1980, Ginsburg was nominated by Bill Clinton in 1993 to fill the seat of retiring Justice Byron White, the man who wrote a dissenting opinion in *Roe*. "She's paved the way for women to be treated as full equals in society, not to be defined by the maternal roles they choose," Michelman says.

Ginsburg understands the balancing act intimately: Her first child was one year old when she entered law school, and she hid her second pregnancy under loose clothes while an untenured professor. It helped that her husband of 53 years, the tax lawyer Martin Ginsburg, took domestic partnership literally; the two divided child-care duties, and he does most of the cooking, even baking birthday cakes for her Supreme Court clerks and fellow justices. His wife, reserved and soft-spoken, has been taken for a frosty intellectual. Yet how could a woman whose passions have included opera and horseback riding and waterskiing be such a thing? Now, try this one on: She is a close friend of her fiercest ideological opponent, Justice Antonin Scalia. In her Supreme Court chambers there is a photo of them riding an elephant together.

But all that last-bastion business is a little sad. How exhausting to be fighting this battle all over again. How draining for a woman in her mid-seventies, who powered through colorectal cancer in 1999 without missing a Court session. Ginsburg has said that she will continue to do her job for as long as she is able. It's unfair, really. After all, maybe she'd like to retire too -- ride a few more elephants, see a few more operas.

But for now, we have to rely on her to keep her word. This small woman of steel is all we have

**ALL POLITICS IS LOCAL**

That's a quote often attributed to the late Thomas P. (Tip) O'Neill, Jr., former Speaker of the House. But Tip didn't coin the phrase ... it was passed down to him. Tip revealed the true attribution of the quote in his 1987 autobiography, *Man of the House*. Tip's father, Thomas O'Neill, Sr, shared this wisdom on one occasion of the one election loss in his son's lifetime--a run for the Cambridge City Council.

"This was the only race I ever lost in my life, but in the process, I learned two extremely valuable lessons. During the campaign, my father had left me to my own devices, but when it was over, he pointed out that I had taken my own neighborhood for granted. He was right: I had received a tremendous vote in the other sections of the city, but I hadn't worked hard enough in my own backyard. 'Let me tell you something I learned years ago,' he said. 'All politics is local.'

That goes double for Alameda. Not only is all politics local, but everything is political from movie theaters to parking garages from parking meters to parcel taxes, but because we are geographically delimited, it is easy to connect to the process. Looming on our horizon is the development (or non-development) of the former Naval Air Station—Alameda Point. Sides are being chosen—information and misinformation abound. To get some first hand information check out the following <http://theislandofalameda.blogspot.com/2009/02/island-interviews-suncals-pat-keliher.html>

**COMING IN APRIL****KRISTEN VITAL-SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS****DEBBIE STEBBINS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ALAMEDA HOSPITAL****OFFICERS**Rob Bonta [robbonta@comcast.net](mailto:robbonta@comcast.net)Jim Oddie [jhoddie@pacbell.net](mailto:jhoddie@pacbell.net)**VICE-PRESIDENTS**Stephanie Jacobs [bettertomorrow4u@yahoo.com](mailto:bettertomorrow4u@yahoo.com)Johanne Duffy [johannebduffy@sbcglobal.net](mailto:johannebduffy@sbcglobal.net)**VICE PRESIDENTS FOR PROGRAM**Karen Green [kjgp25171@yahoo.com](mailto:kjgp25171@yahoo.com)John Knox White [jknoxwhite@gmail.com](mailto:jknoxwhite@gmail.com)**SECRETARY**Alice Fried [alicefreid@sbcglobal.net](mailto:alicefreid@sbcglobal.net)**TREASURER**

Mike McMahan

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# CITY OF ALAMEDA DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 2723, Alameda, CA 94501  
Hotline: 510-522-3361

## NEW MEMBER OR RENEWAL APPLICATION

Membership Dues:

Seniors/Youth	\$15.00
Senior Couple	\$25.00
Individual	\$20.00
Couple/Family	\$30.00

*Please make checks payable to:* City of Alameda Democratic Club or CADC

*Please print all information.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I want to receive the monthly newsletter via \_\_\_\_\_ email or \_\_\_\_\_ snail mail.

As a member, I am willing to help with the following:

- |                                                           |                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Registering Voters               | <input type="checkbox"/> Making Phone Calls         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assisting in Fund-Raising Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Fund-Raising Needs   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attending Support Rallies        | <input type="checkbox"/> Hosting Demo Get Togethers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Activity: _____            |                                                     |

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

The City of Alameda Democratic Club meets the second Wednesday of each month (except in December) at 7:00 p.m. at the Alameda Hospital, Clinton & Willow Streets, Alameda.