



Green Focus

The Newspaper of the Green Party of California - May 2006

Greens Run For All State Offices

■ Green Party candidates gear up for 2006 Primary and General Elections — With a complete slate for all State Constitutional Offices

By Crescenzo Vellucci

Hoping to join the 62 Greens already elected in California, at least 42 Green Party candidates are running for office in 2006 – from Governor and US Senate to school board and a local transportation seat, according to the most recent information provided by the Secretary of State, and county registrars of voters.

In fact, the June Primary is shaping up to be an unusual election cycle because Greens are involved in some competitive races, pitting one Green Party candidate against another for the right to win the Primary and move on to the November General Election. The two contested Green primaries are the U.S. Senate and the Assembly (44th Dist).

Additionally there are two Greens running for mayor in Sonoma and Richmond, and eight Greens running for city council or supervisorial seats across the state. And, then there is former Pasadena mayor, Bill Paparian, running for Congress.

Greens are also fielding candidates in all statewide constitutional offices. At the head of the ticket is Peter Camejo, who has run twice before for governor. Laura Wells is making her second run for Controller, as is Donna Warren for Lt. Governor.

These Green candidates need support. They do not accept corporate contributions, and are at a disadvantage in raising money for their campaigns – so they rely upon other Greens to support, either financially or with volunteer time, to further their worthwhile campaign efforts up and down the state.

To that end, Green Focus has attempted to contact those running for office. We've included below the best information available concerning Green candidates, and how to reach them to volunteer in or contribute to their campaigns. For more information, see (click 2006 elections at right for a full list of candidates):

Constitutional Offices

Peter Camejo, making what he terms his "final" run for Governor, has opened his campaign by attacking Republicans and Democrats for not solving the state's problems. Specifically, Camejo says that he could generate tens of billions of dollars if corporations and the wealthiest in the state – who are taxed at a lower rate compared to other taxpayers – would pay their fair share.

Donna Warren, running for the second time for Lt. Governor, wants to end the deathpenalty, amend the 3-strikes law and use tax dollars for "schools not prisons." Mike Wyman, the attorney general candidate and longtime GPCA treasurer, says he will defend the "rights of the people" in the state against misdeeds by governmental agencies.

And, Forrest Hill, the Sec. of State candidate, is a strong promoter of IRV and proportional voting. He has written several papers on voting and democracy and is opposed to the use of voting machines that can be hacked or do not provide a paper trail.

Controller candidate Laura Wells, who also ran for controller four years ago, says the state budget needs to be "true to the values of the people," and



From Left to Right: Matt Gonzalez, Forrest Hill, Gayle McGlaughlin, Todd Chretien, Nativio Lopez of MAPA and Aimee Allison on the steps of Diane Feinstein's office in San Francisco for the announcement of Todd Chretien's candidacy for US Senator from California.

"reflect the values of all Californians not pay back big campaign contributors through big contracts."

Larry Cafiero, a newspaper copy editor campaigning for Insurance Commissioner, has already produced materials attacking Democratic Party candidate Cruz Bustamante for receiving large hunks of cash from insurance companies.

Sara Knopp, running for the State Superintendent of Instruction office is a teacher and activist; is opposed to any military recruiting on campuses, and wants to "reduce class size immediately, stop the testing and accountability craze, desegregate our school, free pre-K for all, lower college tuition, make sure all children receive a quality education, giving teachers a raise and more college counseling."

State Assembly Offices:

Seven Greens are campaigning, including two Pasadena candidates – Philip Koebel and Ricardo Costa, who are going head-to-head for the Green nomination in District 44. It's believed to be the first-ever contested Green Party Primary for Assembly. Others running for Assembly include Gerald Fritts (4th Dist.), Cat Woods (6th Dist), Barry Hermanson (12th Dist), David Silva (34th Dist), and Peter Thottam (53rd Dist).

Fritts is working for campaign reform, universal healthcare and a mass transit system similar to those in Japan and Europe, Hermanson is one the architects of the San Francisco minimum wage and state minimum wage campaign, Costa said he wants "unions and



Tian Harter, seen above is one of three candidates running in a contested primary for the Green nomination for US Senate. The winner of this election will go on to face Diane Feinstein in the general election in November. At press time, no suitable photo was available for Kent Mesplay, also a candidate from San Diego.



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Place
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Here

working people to know they have real options," Silva is calling for a progressive energy plan, including fitting community buildings with solar panels, converting sewage into energy and a half to sprawl. Woods, a longtime social justice activist, supports ranked voting and publicly financed elections to reduce the influence of corporate money.

State Senate:

Two Greens have filed papers: Matthew Rick (18th Dist) and Bob Vizzard (4th Dist). Rick is calling for "unconventional reform in statewide issues ranging from emission standards to the prison. Vizzard, a doctor, is a leader healthcare reform, specifically universal, single payer healthcare work.

U.S. Senate:

Todd Chretien, Tian Harter and Kent Mesplay are squaring off for one nomination, and the right to meet incumbent Democrat Sen. Dianne Feinstein in November. Chretien, the co-author of the "College Not Combat"

initiative in San Francisco to keep recruiters out of schools, is a former Ralph Nader organizer who wants the U.S. out of Iraq now. His campaign slogan is "A Million Votes for Peace." Harter also is calling for the U.S. to leave Iraq. He's been a longtime promoter of environmental change, calling the current way of life "unsustainable," and challenging people to "change our habits." Kent Mesplay, who ran for the Green Party presidential top spot in 2004, failed to respond to Green Focus by deadline.

House of Representatives:

Seven California Greens are running in the Primary for a House seat, including Pam Elizondo (1st Dist), Jeff Kravitz (5th Dist), Krissy Keefer (8th Dist), Carol Brouillet (14th Dist), John Miller (21st Dist), Byron DeLear (28th Dist) and William Paparian (29th Dist).

Two civil rights lawyers among the candidates - Paparian, a former Pasadena mayor, successfully represented an environmentalist and anti-war activist wrongly accused of domestic terrorism. Paparian wants the U.S. out of Iraq now and says members of Congress should "stand up to this rogue administration." Kravitz, a constitutional law professor in Sacramento, who, like Paparian is also a civil rights lawyer says his primary goal would be to "defend the constitution" by attacking the administration's war on terrorism as a fraud, and using the war as an "excuse"

to holding people indefinitely without trial and for wiretapping without warrant.

Carol Brouillet, running in the Palo Alto area, is running hard on an "impeachment, peace, truth, justice, ecological wisdom" platform, charging that it is time to "impeach" the terrorists, while Byron DeLear, a Los Angeles area journalist/independent producer, is running a strong anti-war campaign, and has called for the U.S. to take a "full-court press" approach on the scale of FDR's New Deal to tackle Global Warming.

And, Miller, representing the Tulare/Fresno area, says that the environment is his main concern, but he is also focusing on education, energy, agriculture, land use planning, foreign affairs and constitutional rights. Keefer, running in the San Francisco congressional district, is experienced in San Francisco on land use issues regarding artists and low income housing. Her issues including ending the war, impeaching Bush, fighting Global Warming, ending the death penalty and healthcare for everyone.

Local Races:

Although the number may grow, at least 14 Greens are running for local office so far in 2006, from mayor, county supervisor and city council to school board. Two registered Greens are running for office of Mayor - Chip McAuley (Sonoma), Gayle McLaugh-

lin (Richmond). Two Greens are poised as candidates for Supervisor - Pierre Fraysee (San Francisco) and Jo Chamberlain (San Mateo). Six Greens are on the ballot for City Council seats, including Aimee Allison (Oakland), Lara DeLaney (Martinez), Alan Drusys (San Bernardino), Dennis Kyne (San Jose), Dona Spring (Berkeley) and Gabrielle Weeks (Long Beach). McLaughlin is a Green "rising star," winning her first time out for the Richmond City Council two years ago. Allison, an anti-war conscientious objector in the first Gulf war, is considered a near-favorite in her second try in Oakland and Kyne is an anti-war, disabled Gulf War vet. Spring, DeLaney and Drusys are all city council incumbents. Willis and Spector are also incumbents, and Fraysee is hoping to join fellow Green Ross Mirkarimi on the SF Board of Supervisors. Other races include: Tim Willis (incumbent), School Board in Santa Cruz; Selma Spector, Rent Stabilization Board in Alameda County; Emily Drennen, BART in San Francisco and Ginny-Marie Case, Neighborhood Council, Los Angeles.

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Letters To The Editor

More on Cobb, the GDI and the Tulsa Convention

To the Editor,

In response to "Which Way Forward for the Green Party?" (Green Focus, December 2005), the authors give the impression that the three 'GDI proposals' introduced at the 2005 national Green meeting in Tulsa failed to pass because of an irrational fit of anti-democracy in the Green National Committee (GNC). In fact, a 2/3 majority of delegates defeated these proposals for a variety of reasons, including concern that they might disempower their own state Green Parties. Many Green delegates favored parts of the proposals but claimed that the wording was weak, and have expressed hope that the proposals be rewritten and reintroduced. Others were turned off by the anger, guilt-tripping, and aggressive tactics of the presenters.

Some delegates voted them down because they believed that the presenters were motivated by desire for retaliation for the 2004 nomination of David Cobb and Pat LaMarche as national candidates. Lots of Greens have disagreed with the party over the years, including many who preferred Ralph Nader to Mr. Cobb in 2004 but who reject these methods. Retaliation is not an effective strategy for building a party; it's more typical of the sectarian behavior of some members of left parties of the late 20th century, whose internal schisms and purges prevented them from ever achieving popular success.

For all the article's complaints about Greens selling out to Democrats, one of the authors of the proposals, Steve Greenfield, left the Green Party... to reregister Democrat in order to compete with Sen. Hillary Clinton in the New York primary in 2006. This is exactly what Dems have been trying to persuade Greens to do all along -- to keep electoral politics within the Democratic fold. We wish Steve success in his campaign, but as Greens we're skeptical that any meaningful challenge can take place within the two-party system.

The Steering Committee and GNC had good reason to rebuff a representative of the Utah faction who showed up and demanded that he be seated and given the right to vote at the Tulsa meeting, replacing the already recognized Utah delegates. He and his supporters have claimed that his faction has been given official ballot status by the state of Utah. In fact, there are already at least two state-recognized Green Parties (in Virginia and Missouri) that have no connection with the Green Party of the United States and do not meet the party's qualifications for affiliation. The Green Party doesn't base affiliation on recognition by a state government, nor does it automatically recognize persons who show up at national meeting claiming a right to be recognized as 'state parties' -- if it did, what's to prevent any outside group from calling itself Green and demanding recognition?

Many Green delegates in Tulsa took a dim view of the Utah faction because its members supported the ac-

tions of a party official who obstructed the Green Party's national nominees' names from appearing on the Utah ballot. The Green Party makes support for its national nominees a condition for state party affiliation. A political party has no obligation to reward members who sabotage its own presidential campaigns. The Nader/Camejo campaign itself affirmed this principle when it filed a lawsuit against the Michigan Reform Party for refusing to place their names on the state ballot. Furthermore, the Utah faction's representative agreed to participate in mediation, but no one from the faction showed up for the mediation session or bothered to explain why. The faction's bid for recognition is no longer an issue.

Other claims in the article are equally specious. The split between Cobb and Nader supporters in 2004 has nothing to do with one side being liberal and the other radical; numerous 'radicals' in the party favored the Cobb ticket, numerous 'liberals' favored Mr. Nader. David Cobb has indeed spoken at PDA events -- not to assist progressive Democrats' attempts to rehabilitate their party, but to offer the Green Party as the inevitable alternative for progressive Dems growing alienated from a party that more and more rejects them. Since a 2004 survey showed that a strong plurality (42%) of Greens once considered themselves progressive Dems, this is a vital strategy. Mr. Cobb's speeches at PDA events are no more traitorous to third party aspirations than Ralph Nader's meetings with and campaign advice for John Kerry in 2004. (Medea Benjamin has actively helped PDA raise money; however, Ms. Benjamin is neither a Green candidate or party official, so she is not accountable to the party.)

The article's authors represent a group of Greens that continues to blame the party for having nominated David Cobb and Pat LaMarche instead of endorsing Ralph Nader and Peter Came-

jo. (Mr. Nader rejected the prospect of a Green nomination in 2004.) They claim that the Cobb/LaMarche nomination drove the party to the fringe, since Cobb/LaMarche drew only a fraction of 1% on Election Day. But Nader/Camejo, while gaining a lot more votes than Cobb/LaMarche, also received less than 1%. Arguments about how the Green Party could have pulled a higher fraction of a percent or might have even have surpassed one percent are a waste of time.

The reason that both the Green nominees and Nader/Camejo were nearly irrelevant has nothing to do with the anything the Green Party decided in 2004, or the candidates it nominated, or whether the candidates pursued a 'safe-states' vs. 'scorched-earth' strategy. (Contrary to the article's claim that Mr. Cobb ran a safe-state campaign and Mr. Nader an all-out campaign, the two ran mixed-message campaigns: Mr. Cobb campaigned in swing states as well as safe states, while Mr. Nader occasionally encouraged safe-state voting.)

It had everything to do with the fact that most voters who might have otherwise voted for antiwar, anticorporate third party candidates instead made it their first priority to evict George W. Bush from the White House, which meant holding one's nose and voting for John Kerry despite all the best arguments against ABB ('Anybody But Bush') from Greens and Naderites.

A more productive approach would have been to work around this reality, to admit that 2004 was simply not going to be a productive year for Greens at the national level, because of external forces, and instead to concentrate on campaigns at state and local levels -- i.e., not to tie the destiny of the Green Party to a single election in a single election year. The Green Party does not exist solely to run presidential candidates; rather, it runs presidential candidates for strategic purposes like advancing the party's agenda publicly, assisting state and local campaigns, and helping state parties achieve ballot status. That's the reality of national politics until the Green Party can run a

presidential candidate with at least a small chance of winning. The authors of "Which Way Forward for the Green Party?" are unable to admit this, and have therefore launched a hunt for scapegoats, chief among whom are party leaders who supported Cobb/LaMarche.

As for the accusation that the Green nomination was deliberately slanted to favor David Cobb, the convention rules were ratified by an overwhelming majority of Green delegates, including many in states like California who favored the Nader ticket, and the nomination process adhered strictly to the approved rules. The subheading of "Which Way Forward for the Green Party?" should perhaps be "We don't like the outcome -- the convention must have been rigged!"

Ironically, Greens came out of 2004 as heroes, not because of the election itself, but because David Cobb (working with Libertarian nominee Michael Badnarik) initiated the Ohio and New Mexico recount campaigns, after Kerry quickly conceded and Dems sat on their thumbs, in the wake of widespread complaints of vote obstruction and manipulation in these and other states. The recount paid off in terms of new respect for Greens and a surge of donations to the Green Party.

As page 7 of the December Green Focus said, "You must be the change you want to see in the world." (Mahatma Gandhi) We must be gentle and loving with each other, not angry and aggressive.

Readers can follow news about the Green Party of the US by visiting <http://www.gp.org>

Scott McLarty
(Media Coordinator of the Green Party of the United States, but the opinions expressed above are his own)

Budd Dickinson
(CA GPUS delegate)



Opinion

Green Governance, or Green Complaints In The Streets

By Roger Gray

A recent and heated discussion over a Green public event made me realize that many of my Green colleagues think of the party as a group of outsiders, whose best tactic is loud and raucous complaining. To be successful, we, as a party need to move beyond this outsider mindset.

Governing v. Complaining

Greens need to discover the difference between governing and merely criticizing or complaining.

As a party, we must learn to take up the reins of power, or we will all remain in a world controlled by the two big parties.

It is a choice of maturing as a political party that speaks to people beyond our registered core, or serving as the noisy rabble to make ineffectual Democrats seem like a reasonable choice for moderates.

Greens are used to being outsiders in America. We tend to feel excluded from the halls of power, and marginalized by the mainstream media. The idea of running the government may seem laughable to many Greens, but it can be done!

Here are three suggestions, to help us take the next step, to begin to reshape our government institutions to serve the common good, not merely the worst

impulses of personal greed and expediency.

1. Remember that Greens Are Governing

In my fairly progressive hometown, Pasadena, California, I tend not to mention my political registration. This works out okay because the local elections are non-partisan, and people tend to look at personality and issues over party labels.

In 1998 we had a Green City Councilman, but no one realized it. The greenest (small "g") Councilmember now sitting, campaigned on a bike. I think he might be a Republican, but I don't know. Likewise, our Mayor, who issued a Car Free Pasadena Day proclamation is a retired lawyer for a major bank; I think he might be registered Democrat. Again, I don't know.

Since I do not have to mention my party affiliation, local other Greens and I can gain creditability among based on our ideas, and not get labeled with the "fringe" and "outsider" and "nutcase" tags that traditionally attach to all third-parties. And that means, eventually, when one or more of us non-partisan Green office holders has developed a political base across party lines, that a Green can get elected to a partisan, state office.

Provided, that is, that we have taken care to associate the Green party with good ideas, inclusive and measured approaches to issues, the ability to affectively govern (not just com

plain) and real grassroots democracy, including people who disagree with us.

Political stunts – and particularly public demonstrations of anger and displeasure – are a tried and true tactic in American politics. And the less influence a party or candidate has, the more extreme the tactic needed to get the message across.

2. Behave Like Someone Already In Charge

Imagine if a Republican councilmember participated in a parade, dressed as a rude caricature of many of her constituents?

What if a Democrat called other elected officials rude names and made himself so isolated from most of the other electeds that he was ineffectual on council?

What if a Green candidate described decent, upright folks who happened to work for corporate employers as "dupes of the capitalists?"

If Greens want to get elected we need to avoid alienating voters and governing officials from other parties.

I have talked to many non-Greens in an effort to double registration in our local area; most express sympathy with Green ideas, but are loathe to be officially associated with a group known as outsiders, with no apparent clue about governing.

That is not to say that satire as a tactic is out, or that being Green shouldn't also be fun. But if Greens want to lead the way to a new and better

America, then we must speak in a tone that many people find reasonable, and save the shrill and angry voice for limited purposes.

3. You Be the Government

It's easy to complain that the government is doing things wrong. Dare to be the government. You don't have to run for office to be the government!

Every city and county has appointed committee and commission openings. Many go unfilled. To become a commissioner one must win only one "vote," that of one council member. As often as not, its just a matter of filing out a form – since no one else has applied for the post, and the elected has forgotten to fill it!

Big donors have access to politicians, but they are usually too busy to serve on city commissions. These jobs go to local activists and neighborhood folks. Might as well be Green activists. Appointed commissioners not only have access to the political process, they directly influence and sometimes make the basic governing decisions.

The Green Party has a future; we provide voters a choice, for a change. But not if we fail to make ourselves worthy of governing.

Roger Gray is an appointed Transportation Commissioner in Pasadena, California, and a member of the Arroyo Seco Greens local. He can be reached at gonegreen@snarfbargle.com

Political Corruption: A Message From The California Green Party

Editorial

Political corruption. It's something we hear about nearly every day now. Republicans are resigning - and some have been jailed - because they have been caught with their hands in the proverbial "cookie jar." The Democrats play in the same sandbox.

As a newspaper reporter at the State Capitol, the GPCA press secretary, Cres Vellucci, said he watched as wads of cash from special interests were hand-delivered to lawmakers on the floor of the Senate! He later quit his job as a Capitol Correspondent because, in large part, he said he didn't want to be associated, even as a reporter, with this obscene political greed. He then re-registered Green.

The Green Party of California is helping to end the corruption of politics at the State Capitol. By monitoring, and helping rewrite "clean money" legislation in California, the Green Party of California is playing a vital role in changing this system that will benefit our candidates, and the 63 Greens already holding office in the state.

Our work will increase the chances of victory for Green Party candidates competing against money-driven Republicans and Democrats, who spend millions of dollars each election by shamelessly allowing themselves to be bought and paid for by special interest monies.

The California Clean Money and Fair Elections Act would allow public funding of Green Party candidates. The

bill has passed the Assembly, and is moving forward in the state Senate.

A previous version of this bill, AB 583, was met with stiff opposition by Green Party of California legislative watchdogs, who noted it so strongly favored public funding for only the Democratic and Republican parties that it would create an even larger disparity between them and the smaller parties. The committee analysis of the bill agreed with us.

After the Green Party of California loudly complained, the bill was re-written, resulting in a full endorsement by the GPCA, as noted in this statement:

"AB 583 is a perfect opportunity for the CA legislature to demonstrate its dedication to removing special interest money as an influence in state elections. Funding candidates through a strict qualifying process guarantees public money will fund only serious and qualified candidates, including Greens."

Green Party candidates could receive tens of thousands, up to millions of dollars under this reform legislation.

With the promise of public funding, for Assembly and Senate races as well as statewide offices, including Governor, Green Party candidates will be more competitive than ever before - tens of thousands of dollars could be made available for Green Party legislative candidates, and millions of dollars for our gubernatorial candidate.

The legislation doesn't end political corruption, or the unfair competition

difference.

The Green Party of California will continue to pressure the Legislature, as we did with AB 583, to do the right thing to ensure your vote, and that of all of the 150,000 registered Greens in the state counts more than ever!

It's this kind of work that we do - sometimes behind the scenes, and usually without big fanfare - that your contributions help fund. Our resources also go to work on raising the minimum wage for California's lowest-paid work-

ers, environmental justice, health care and other areas where the major political parties have failed. Help us end political corruption and level the political playing field for Greens.

We can only do this if we have your financial support for the Green Party of California. Your generous contribution, as always, is not only needed, but appreciated. Please go to Greens website at www.cagreens.org to contribute.

Thank you.



Future Focus At Forefront of San Diego Green Party Gathering

By Lizlo Conner,
San Diego Green Party

LA JOLLA They began to arrive around 8:30 —the morning air was brisk, and the chill was not yet off the scenic bungalow overlooking the ocean in La Jolla. But come they did, and by 9:00 nearly two dozen of San Diego's key Green activists were assembled for an all-day "Future Focus" retreat designed to set the course for the Green Party of San Diego County for the immediate future.

The morning began over a breakfast of bagels, toast, spreads and fruit as these committed greens first introduced themselves, their primary areas of interest, and their expectations for the day.

When the introductions were over, a marathon brainstorming session — ably mediated by Grant Cameron — ensued, in which participants were asked to talk about what they felt the priorities of GPSD should be for the next two years, and how we could best deploy our limited resources to achieve these goals. Ideas ranged from the specific, such as collecting signatures to help the living wage initiative qualify for the ballot, presenting resolutions to every city council in the county asking them to adopt ranked choice voting methods, and building an active speakers' bureau, to the more general, such as "increase our visibility," and "focus on things that have tangible results for the community," to the visionary, such as "identify a strategy that pulls people together," and "Tell our story — leverage our influence."

Within a short time, a large white board was completely filled with very small printing; it was clear that a shortage of good ideas would not be a problem from which this group would not suffer. On the contrary, the rest of the day would be dedicated to paring down the ideas we had generated to a manageable number.

When it seemed that everyone had exhausted their supply of new ideas and were beginning to revisit ones that were already listed on the board, it became clear that it was time to move on.

After a lunch break we all reconvened for the first of two afternoon sessions. Session one was dedicated to sifting through the ideas we had generated in the morning and trying to structure the information in such a way that we could begin to grapple with it. Bob Nanninga noticed that all of our ideas could be broadly classified into four categories: administrative duties, media outreach, membership outreach, and activism. The recognition of this latent structure gave us all a much needed means to organize our thinking. After a time it became clear that some sort of consensus was beginning to emerge on some topics. We all agreed we needed at least one major fund raiser this year, that membership outreach was critical if our group was to grow and remain vital, that the election of Green candidates to local office was fundamental to our function as a political party, and that several people were passionate about media issues, electoral reform, and the peace movement.

We took one more break, during which several of the participants took advantage of our spectacular location to walk down to Scripps Pier and back, taking in the magnificent view of the Pacific ocean and the day's glorious weather.

The third session was devoted to developing a concrete plan for our County for the next year. We went around the table, and each person had a chance to place proposals on the table.

Rather than treating each proposal as it came up, we went through only the clarifying questions phase of discourse, leaving concerns and affirmations for later. In several instances, the asking of clarifying questions resulted in a process of revision and collaboration that effectively dealt with many concerns before they ever arose.

Unfortunately, we ran out of time before we were able to consense on all of the proposals on the table, but we did affirm a great many that will be presented to our general membership in March. We created working groups for media outreach, finance, membership, electoral reform, peace and social justice, and candidate recruitment and sup-



San Diego Greens, seen above, attracted almost two dozen people to a meeting geared to brainstorming the best ways to promote the party in their county.

port. It was decided that most administrative function was already the purview of the County Council, so not any specifically 'administrative' body was recommended.

We decided that working to put the living wage initiative on the ballot would complement our efforts in recruiting new members and raising our profile in the community, so we agreed to support the signature gathering effort.

We also recommended that the finance committee create a subcommittee to plan a major fund raiser, and that the Lagoon Greens prepare a detailed proposal for hosting the Green Alliance conference in September. The remainder of our proposals ran short on time, but with luck we will pursue them and eventually bring them before the general membership for approval.

At the end of the day, all the participants went home with a feeling of accomplishment and a renewed sense of purpose. Although at 10:30 in the morning, our task seemed herculean, and it seemed that consensus might not be possible given such an open-ended task and such a diverse set of viewpoints, by 4:00 that afternoon we had

found several areas in which we could all agree to move forward and work together.

Many of us were heartened by the fact that consensus was achievable — in fact, every item that we had time to see through the complete process did reach consensus. In many ways the take-home message for us was that consensus takes a lot longer than the decision processes we have become used to in the wider world, but that in the end it is time well spent.

The difficulties commonly experienced with consensus are often brought on by trying to make the process conform to the clock. We met in the morning with no set agenda, and gave every item the time that it took to run its course naturally, and although we had items "left over" at the end, it seemed that if we were to meet again, we would be able to successfully conclude the process to everyone's satisfaction.

On balance, the day itself was an affirmation of green process as well as green values, and I wouldn't be surprised to see the Green Party of San Diego make this an annual event.

Opinion

By Wes Rolley

When Proposition 13 was implemented in 1977-78, it was heralded as the way to save the family home. No more would home owners, especially seniors on fixed incomes, be forced to move or to sell their homes just to avoid tax increases. Since that is approximately the time that I purchased my home in Morgan Hill, I have had the benefit of Proposition 13 for a long time.

Now, we are not only dealing with the benefits of Proposition 13, but also the problems of Proposition 8. Between the two, they have opened up enough loop holes for corporations and other businesses that our Governor could drive his Hummer through, as he famously chided Ariana Huffington in one debate.

The result of these loopholes and other measures is a change in who bears the burden of local, real estate based taxation. In 1977-78, the valuation in

Proposition 13 is Killing California

Santa Clara County, and with it the tax burden, was divided about 50/50 between single family residential "condominium owners and business or other collective ownership. In the Santa Clara County Assessors's latest Annual Report covering 2005-2006 fiscal year, that division has shifted to 67% of the tax burden falling on the home owner and only 33% falling on other holders.

In many cases, this might only be because businesses have been better positioned to take advantage of Proposition 8 rules to lower their evaluations. In other cases it has been possible for business interests to change ownership gradually so as to never trigger the sale of a property and its revised assessment.

The net result is the fact that we, the home owners are being asked to pay more and more or to give up services. While the City of Morgan Hill is running a deficit, the development community is walking around smiling. While Santa Clara County is talking about

layoffs for next year, we find that there is no way make things work except by raising sales tax revenue buying more things that we don't really need. . While business complain about the lack of well educated workers, the burden of supporting our schools falls increasingly on the home owner and California Schools rank near the bottom in terms of per capita student funding.

Something just does not make sense out of this. While the Howard Jarvis folks continue to agitate for less and less taxes for the home owner, they are letting the rest get off with not carrying their fair share. The Jarvis folks don't want to talk about real estate taxation on businesses. Now, they are at it again, proclaiming on their web site a "Huge threat to Prop. 13. Silicon Valley tax raisers would dismantle taxpayer protections".

It is truly time to revisit both Proposition 13 and Propo-



Howard Jarvis, seen above was founder of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, he spearheaded Proposition 13, the property tax-cutting initiative in California in 1978 which slashed property taxes by fifty-seven percent and initiated a national tax revolt. The Jarvis Taxpayers Association can be found at: <http://www.hjta.org/>

Continued on Page 6

Safeguarding the Ballot Box Should Be Our Number One Goal

Opinion

By Dave Berman

With the reprehensible behavior of both the Republican BushCo crowd, and the lethargic do nothing response of the Democrats to a wholesale assault on 'life as we have know it' in these great United States, it is time we took back our country at the ballot box. And to do so requires having confidence in a voting methodology that protects the people against corporate hackers who can guarantee elections to the highest bidder.

Last fall I wrote a white paper called *Blueprint For Peaceful Revolution* found on the website at: (<http://tinyurl.com/au2pj>). "*Blueprint*" describes context, talking points, memes and the broader view of how We The People can catalyze large scale change using the Voter Confidence Resolution, known as the acronymm (VCR): <http://tinyurl.com/amryg>.

So far only Arcata, CA has adopted the VCR. By the end of this article, I hope you'll be ready to help your community join the peaceful revolution.

The bedrock of the VCR is simple but massive: current election conditions ensure inconclusive outcomes and provide no basis for confidence in the results reported. Around the country, paperless electronic voting will continue, as will vote counting using secret proprietary software made by partisan corporations. These unverifiable votes cannot be recounted, guaranteeing we will never have unanimous acceptance of the results.

To create a basis for confidence and ensure conclusive outcomes will require more than one kind of election reform. The VCR contains an election reform platform created to meet these criteria.

- 1) voting processes owned and operated entirely in the public domain, and
- 2) clean money laws to keep all corporate funds out of campaign financing, and
- 3) a voter verified paper ballot for every vote cast and additional uniform standards determined by a non-partisan nationally recognized commission, and
- 4) declaring election day a national holiday, and
- 5) counting all votes publicly and locally in the presence of citizen witnesses and credentialed members of the media, and
- 6) equal time provisions to be restored by the media along with a measurable increase in local, public control of the airwaves, and
- 7) presidential debates containing a minimum of three candidates, run by a non-partisan commission comprised of representatives of publicly owned media outlets, and
- 8) preferential voting and proportional representation to replace the winner-take-all system for federal elections;

Local control is a strong theme in the peaceful revolution and so items within the VCR's reform platform are likely to vary as more communities adopt their own customized versions. Arcata's resolution is a template for other communities. The key ideas that should be left intact are: current conditions ensure inconclusive results and

inherent uncertainty; a reform platform is needed to create a basis for confidence; and We The People are challenging the assumption of our Consent.

The VCR says that when election conditions prevent conclusive outcomes, the Consent of the Governed is not being sought. According to the Declaration of Independence, the "just Power" of the government derives from the Consent of the Governed. This Consent should not be assumed or taken for granted. Yet as long as we stay plugged into the current power structure, our Consent is given, however begrudgingly. The VCR is a united, community-level way to begin municipal civil disobedience. This is about non-recognition as well as non-cooperation and non-compliance.

We have already begun to see some of this municipal civil disobedience. Monroe County, PA ignored the Help America Vote Act deadline, citing an unfunded mandate, and refusing to spend taxpayer money on election machines. Utah declared local education standards trump No Child Left Behind. Who will be the first to adopt the VCR and say plainly: we don't recognize the legitimacy of this government?

As more communities embrace the VCR we will move closer to shattering the assumption of Consent. We can do this by repeating this question: Has the Consent of the Governed been withdrawn, YET? The tone of inevitability presumes not if, but when. It may take 25, 50, 100 or more resolutions, but at some point, the consensus answer will switch from NO, to YES, the Consent of the Governed HAS been withdrawn.

This is a process by which we can manufacture a tipping point, one where

we shift the balance of power between the government and We The People. That shift is my working definition of non-violent revolution, with credit to Rebecca Solnit's *Hope In The Dark*.

As we shatter the assumption of Consent we take a position of non-recognition. We deny the government's claim to legitimacy. This must be supported by other acts of non-cooperation and non-compliance. We The People will have to enable our local leaders to choose to stand with their communities, in defiance of the federal government, rather than allowing continued harm to the community through loyalty to the empire.

Secret prisons. Torture. War crimes. It is no longer valid to assume *they would never do that*. All bets are off. Non-violent revolution is necessary, NOW! Those who are ready for a serious conversation about how we will do this are invited to a town hall forum in Eureka, CA on Saturday, Feb. 11, 2pm, at the Veterans Memorial Hall on 10th/H St. If you're not in Humboldt, consider ways to expand this conversation in your community. You can start by circulating the Voter Confidence Resolution: <http://tinyurl.com/amryg>. Ask the question.

Dave Berman is an author, speaker and workshop facilitator. He co-founded the Voter Confidence Committee of Humboldt County, CA and he writes the GuvWurld Blog found on the <http://guvwurld.blogspot.com>.

Dave Berman recently published his first book, "We Do Not Consent." Download it for free on the web at: <http://tinyurl.com/rlnr2>.

Continued From Pg. 5 Prop 13 Killing California

sition 8 and to close the loopholes. Maybe we can not roll things back to the way they were, but we surely should be able to find a way to fund City and County Government without putting such a heavy tax burden on young families who are buying their first new home.

Yes, we have to make hard decisions about what services we want to

have from government and then how we are going to fund them. But keeping the status as it is forces governments into making short range decisions for short range revenue gain when they should be making decisions with a view on the sustainability of specific economic development and the long term health of the community.

On November 1, 2005, I submitted

this to the Morgan Hill Times as an Op Ed Column. They seem to have chosed not to run it. So, it is now posted here on my bog site which can be seen at: <http://www.refpub.com/Reflections/>. The results that were documented for Santa Clara County have also been documented in San Francisco and Los Angeles Counties.

Wes Rolley is a resident of Morgan Hill, Santa Clara County where he has served on the Parks and Recreation

Commission.. He switched to the Green Party on returning from assignment in Japan in 1993 and finding that his Republican Party had left him. He supports the Green Party through his editorial writing and by maintaing three blogs: The Rural Green Caucus, California Greening and his personal pet project, PomboWatch. Visit this interesting site at www.refpub.com/pombowatch/ In his



Bush/Cheney Have Disgraced Their Office; They Should Resign

By Ralph Nader

Richard Cohen, the finely-calibrated syndicated columnist for the Washington Post, wrote a column on October 28, 2004 which commenced with this straight talk: "I do not write the headlines for my columns. Someone else does. But if I were to write the headline for one, it would be 'Impeach George Bush'."

Cohen stated the obvious then. Bush and Cheney had plunged the nation into war "under false pretenses." Exploiting the public trust in the Presidency, Bush had persuaded, over the uncritical mass media, day after day, before the war, a majority of the American people that Saddam Hussein possessed chemical, biological weapons and nuclear weapons programs, was connected to al-Qaeda and 9/11 and was a threat to the United States.

These falsehoods, Cohen wrote, "are a direct consequence of the administration's repeated lies - lies of commission, such as Cheney's statements, and lies of omission."

Fourteen months later, no widely syndicated columnist or major newspaper editorial has called for the impeachment of George W. Bush and Dick Cheney. Not even Cohen again. Yet the case for impeachment is so strong that, recently, hardly a day goes by without more disclosures which strengthen any number of impeachable offenses that could form a Congressional action under our Constitution. An illegal war, to begin with, against our Constitution which says only Congress can declare war. An illegal war under domestic laws, and international law, and conducted illegally under international conventions to which the US belongs, should cause an outcry against this small clique of outlaws committing war

crimes who have hijacked our national government.

An illegal, criminal war means that every related U.S. death and injury, every related Iraqi civilian death and injury, every person tortured, every home and building destroyed become war crimes as a result - under established international law.

There are those on talk radio or cable shows who scoff at international law. They rarely tell their audiences that the United States has played a key role in establishing these treaties, like the Geneva Conventions, and the United Nations Charter. When these treaties are agreed to by the U.S. government, they become as binding as our federal laws.

By these legal standards and by the requirements of the U.S. Constitution (Article I, Section 8, the war-declaring authority), George W. Bush and Dick Cheney are probably the most impeachable President and Vice President in American history. An illegal war based on lies, deceptions, cover-ups and their repetition even after being told by officials in their own administration - not to mention critical retired generals, diplomats and security specialists - of their falsity should have prodded the House of Representatives into initiating impeachment proceedings. But then, Bush did not lie under oath about sex.

A majority of the American people have turned against this war-quagmire, against its intolerable human and economic costs, against the increased danger this war is bringing to our nation's interests. They want the soldiers to return safely home. In increasing numbers they sense what Bush's own CIA Director, Porter Goss, told the U.S. Senate last February. He noted, along with other officials since then, that U.S.

tracting and training more terrorists from more countries who will return to their nations and cause trouble. Many national security experts have said, in effect, you do not fight terrorists with policies that produce more terrorists.

Now comes the most recent, blatant impeachable offense - Bush ordering the spying on Americans in our country by the National Security Agency. This disclosure stunned many N.S.A. staff who themselves view domestic surveillance as anathema, according to Matthew M. Aid, a current historian of the agency.

Domestic eavesdropping on Americans by order of the President to the National Security Agency violates the 27-year-old Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act unless they obtain a warrant from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) Court. This court meets in secret and has rejected only four out of 19,000 applications.

So why did Bush violate this law and why does he defiantly say he will continue to order domestic spying as he has since 2002? Not because the FISA Court is slow. It acts in a matter of hours in the middle of the night if need be. The law actually permits surveillance in emergencies as long as warrants are requested within 72 hours or 15 days in times of war.

Bush violated the law because of the arrogance of power. Ostensibly, he believes that a vague Congressional resolution after 9/11 to fight al-Qaeda overrides this explicit federal law and the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution. Bush even claims he can unilaterally decide to domestically spy from the inherent powers of the Presidency to fight wars. (To him Congressionally-undeclared wars are still wars).

Other than his legal flaks in the White House and Justice Department

making such transparently specious arguments as "good soldiers", the overwhelming position of legal scholars is that Bush and Cheney have violated grave laws protecting the liberties of the American people.

The crime, says Professor David Cole of Georgetown Law School, is "punishable by five years in prison." Professor Jonathan Turley of George Washington University Law School said that the President ordered such a crime and ordered US officials to commit it..this is a serious felony..what happened here is not just a violation of Federal law, it's a violation of the U.S. Constitution.an impeachable offense."

It matters not that a Republican-dominated Congress has no present interest in moving to impeach Bush-Cheney. What matters is that impeachment in this case - based on the authority of Congress to charge the President and Vice President with "high crimes and misdemeanors" - is a patriotic cause rooted in the wisdom of our founding fathers who did not want another King George III in the guise of a President.

As Senator Russell Feingold said a few days ago: The President is not a King, he is a President subject to the laws and Constitution of the land. Apparently, George W. Bush seems to believe and behave as if his unlimited inherited powers flow from King George III, given the way he has shoved aside both federal law and the nation's Constitution.

Both George W. Bush and Dick Cheney should resign. They have disgraced their office and bled the nation. They have shattered the public trust in so many serious ways that will only become worse in the coming months.

Commentary

By Wes Rolley

Californians should not have needed the catastrophe of Hurricane Katrina and the flooding of New Orleans to force us to pay attention to things in our own state. We had the flooding of the Jones Tract in 2004 that cost California nearly \$100 Million in property damage, repair costs and lost income. In 1997, we had flooding in the San Joaquin Valley that damaged or destroyed 30,000 homes and 2,000 businesses.

Why, then do I still read, as I did in a Visalia Times-Delta editorial this week, that "Tulare County's levee system is a disaster waiting to happen, and no one is taking the lead in addressing it." The facts that the Times-Delta brings to light would be frightening at any time, but given the examples that we have, border on the criminally irresponsible.

Most of California's vast levee systems are maintained by local, underfunded Levee Protections Districts. As the Times-Delta noted, the last steward of one district retired this month at the age of 80 and there is no one taking his place.

Do not think that these are minor issues confronting a small city in a rural county. The health of the water in the Sacramento - San Joaquin River system is arguably the single most important issue that we have. This water supply supports not only the largest food grow-

ing region in the United States, it supplies the drinking water for 20 million people. The loss of reliable, drinkable water from the Delta would have a devastating effect on California's economy and the quality of life of its citizens. In testimony before the House Committee on Resources, California Secretary for Resources, Mike Chrisman referred to a "ticking time bomb for flood management in California"

The response of our governments, Federal, State and local have been predictable. No politician ever found a reason to do sound planning when you have the opportunity to demonstrate that you are doing something about the problem by calling for a major project. That is exactly what Governor Schwarzenegger is doing with his planned infrastructure bond issue. This calls for \$68 Billion to be spent on roads, new school construction, water development and levee repair.

There are other solutions to the Delta's problems that do not require big projects. It does not make sense to put new housing in flood plains, yet that is exactly what is happening in the Central Valley. Since the floods on 1997, 30,800 new homes have been built in flood prone areas of San Joaquin County. When the State Reclamation Board decided that they would examine all new proposals for building in the flood plain, Schwarzeneg-

ger fired the entire board and replaced it with political appointees. It seems better to spend a lot of money on levees than to refrain from building in a flood plain.

You can not expect much from the Democrats. The current favorite to face Schwarzenegger in the general election this year, Phil Angelides is a developer himself whose company participated in the development of suburbs along Laguna Creek in Sacramento County flood plain areas. This from a company that some have the audacity to call environmentally responsible.

Responses from the Federal Government have also been lacking. In September, 2005, Governor Schwarzenegger sent a letter to Senator Feinstein and Representative Pombo that identifies 12 priority projects where federal funding was required to avoid a New Orleans style disaster. Feinstein and Pombo took a lot of credit for doing very little. When this year's Energy and Water bills passed through Congress and were signed into law, the Delta agencies, especially Feinstein's favorite CalFed Project received \$750,000 to study the problem.

The land is the delta is sinking. Increased development and over pumping of underground water increases the rate of subsidence. The rate of subsidence on some Delta tracts is as high as 18 inches in ten years. We also know that the ocean

level is rising, slightly, due to the melting of the polar ice caps, but still it is enough to increase the erosion effects of waves on the levees.

The are solutions available that do not require building Netherlands style dikes around then entire area. It does not take a genius to understand that it is not a good idea to build more housing on flood prone land. It does take political will to go against the rich developers who contribute so much to our politicians: Angelo Tsakopoulos made Phil Angelides. Tsakopoulos and Angelides are major contributors to Democratic officials, including Feinstein. Alexander Spanos and Fritz Grupe, both major Stockton area developers with plans for delta tracts, are major supporters of Pombo.

As long as our politicians are funded by developers with a vested interest in developing the cheapest flood prone lands and then having the tax payers pick up the tab to protect them, we are not going to have sensible solutions to the problems of safe and sustainable water supplies. As long as we are willing to settle for studies when low cost planning solutions are easily implemented, we will end up paying, again and again

Joaquin Delta Levee Breaks Blamed on Greed, Poor Planning and Cronyism With Big Money

The Ten Key Values of The Green Party

1. Grassroots Democracy

Every human being deserves a say in the decisions that affect their lives and not be subject to the will of another. Therefore, we will work to increase public participation at every level of government and to ensure that our public representatives are fully accountable to the people who elect them. We will also work to create new types of political organizations which expand the process of participatory democracy by directly including citizens in the decision-making process.

3. Social Justice and Equality

All persons should have the rights and opportunity to benefit equally from the resources afforded us by society and the environment. We must consciously confront in ourselves, our organizations, and society at large, barriers such as racism and class oppression, sexism and homophobia, ageism and disability, which act to deny fair treatment and equal justice under the law.

3. Ecological Wisdom

Human societies must operate with the understanding that we are part of nature, not separate from nature. We must maintain an ecological balance and live within the ecological and resource limits of our communities and our planet. We support a sustainable society which utilizes resources in such a way that future generations will benefit and not suffer from the practices of our generation. To this end we must practice agriculture which replenishes the soil; move to an energy efficient economy; and live in ways that respect the integrity of natural systems.

4. Non-Violence

It is essential that we develop effective alternatives to society's current patterns of violence. We will work to demilitarize, and eliminate weapons of mass destruction, without being naive about the intentions of other governments. We recognize the need for self-defense and the defense of others who are in helpless situations. We promote non-violent methods to oppose practices and policies with which we disagree, and will guide our actions toward lasting personal, community and global peace.

5. Decentralization

Centralization of wealth and power contributes to social and economic injustice, environmental destruction, and militarization. Therefore, we support a restructuring of social, political and economic institutions away from a system which is controlled by and mostly benefits the powerful few, to a democratic, less bureaucratic system. Decision-making should, as much as possible, remain at the individual and local level, while assuring that civil rights are protected for all citizens.

6. Community Based Economics and Economic Justice

We recognize it is essential to create a vibrant and sustainable economic

system, one that can create jobs and provide a decent standard of living for all people while maintaining a healthy ecological balance. A successful economic system will offer meaningful work with dignity, while paying a "living wage" which reflects the real value of a person's work.

Local communities must look to economic development that assures protection of the environment and workers' rights; broad citizen participation in planning; and enhancement of our "quality of life."

We support independently owned and operated companies which are socially responsible, as well as co-operatives and public enterprises that distribute resources and control to more people through democratic participation.

7. Feminism

We have inherited a social system based on male domination of politics and economics. We call for the replacement of the cultural ethics of domina-

tion and control with more cooperative ways of interacting that respect differences of opinion and gender. Human values such as equity between the sexes, interpersonal responsibility, and honesty must be developed with moral conscience. We should remember that the process that determines our decisions and actions is just as important as achieving the outcome we want.

8. Respect for Diversity

We believe it is important to value cultural, ethnic, racial, sexual, religious and spiritual diversity, and to promote the development of respectful relationships across these lines.

We believe that the many diverse elements of society should be reflected in our organizations and decision-making bodies, and we support the leadership of people who have been traditionally closed out of leadership roles. We acknowledge and encourage respect for other life forms than our own and the preservation of biodiversity.

9. Personal and Global Responsibility

We encourage individuals to act to improve their personal well-being and, at the same time, to enhance ecological balance and social harmony. We seek to join with people and organizations around the world to foster peace, economic justice, and the health of the planet.

10. Future Focus and Sustainability

Our actions and policies should be motivated by long-term goals. We seek to protect valuable natural resources, safely disposing of or "unmaking" all waste we create, while developing a sustainable economics that does not depend on continual expansion for survival. We must counterbalance the drive for short-term profits by assuring that economic development, new technologies, and fiscal policies are responsible to future generations who will inherit the results of our actions.



What Is Your Hope For This World?



The Green Party Is Planning On A Sustainable Future for All



But We Need Your Help to Make It Happen

The Green Party of the State of California is working hard to promote candidates and provide financial support to campaigns on the local and regional level that we feel we have a chance of winning, or in which we feel we can make a spectacular showing in the media. Further, we are improving our ability to speak truth to power, provide training programs for candidates and managers across the state and gaining media access through a viable network of spokespersons and a press agent for the party. To do this, and to fulfill our dreams of a permanent office in our state capital, **we are looking for people who can step up and become Monthly Sustainers to the Green Party of CA.** And as your added benefit, you will receive a free subscription to the GREEN FOCUS newspaper. We invite you to fill out the form below and help grow the party in a meaningful way. Today!

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