Where the Republicans Got 2014 Totally Wrong

I think it would be appropriate in this January edition of our newsletter to look back at some of the predictions made by Republicans for 2014 and compare them with what really happened.

First of all there was the Great Ebola Scare, which was whipped up by the Republicans right before the midterm elections. Illegal immigrants were depicted as carrying Ebola across our borders. Obama and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) were depicted as weak and impotent to handle the threat. In reality, the “outbreak” of Ebola, although serious in Africa, was limited to fewer than half a dozen people in the U.S., only one of whom died. The CDC very quickly put in protocols to prevent the spread of the disease and it must be noted that the leadership situation could have been helped if Republicans had not blocked the President’s nominee for Surgeon General. Since the midterms we have not heard anything about Ebola from the Republicans because it never really presented a threat to ordinary Americans in the first place.

The second great Republican prediction was that the Affordable Care Act (ACA) would be impossible to implement and would never achieve its objective of reducing the number of uninsured Americans. In reality, although the national website got off to a rocky start, it proved to be accessible and popular, as were several successful state websites such as Covered California. Overall, the worst abuses of the health-insurance industry have been prevented, the number of Americans without insurance has fallen by around 10 million, and premiums rose far less than predicted; healthcare spending is moderating and specific cost-control measures are doing very well. Obamacare has been a resounding success. Still, Republicans deny those facts. They plan again to attempt to repeal the ACA in their 2015 session and seem to have no problem with depriving millions of Americans of affordable health care.

And what about our Socialist, business-hating, big-spending President, whose policies were predicted to bring disaster to the U.S. economy? Recently, the economy has improved dramatically and seems to be well on its way to recovery from the Great Recession beginning in 2008, which Obama inherited from Republican predecessor George Bush. Private-sector jobs are increasing and the stock market has reached new heights. Last quarter the economy showed the fastest growth in decades, adding 321,000 jobs in November, dropping the unemployment rate to 5.8 percent, with a growth rate Continued on page 4 (president)
How did we accomplish this? For the third election cycle the Democratic Central Committee participated in the State Party Grassroots Door Hanger program. Democrat volunteers, endorsed candidates, and their volunteers distributed more than 150,000 door hangers, which listed local endorsed candidates, to voters all over the county. Doors from San Ramon to Brentwood and Crockett to El Cerrito, all of the 19 cities in the county were visited. This is a very important printed recommendation when given to Democrats.

This year we took one more important step. I spent every day in October raising money from candidates, Assembly members, Congress members, union members and all of our friends to send out slate cards in the mail. This is not mail which voters glance at on its flight to the recycle bin. It is a folded postcard size piece marked Paid for by the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County. It was the same door hanger cut to a pocket size to take to the polls. We sent 80,000 slate cards to voters, who voted in 5 of 6 prior elections, vote by mail and to voters who voted in the June 2014 primary.

Although the turnout was low we were able to reach the Democrats in our county and our win rate was incredible. We need to learn how to get our voters out. We have a 2-to-1 margin over Republicans in the county. Vote by mail has helped, but a voter needs to mail in his or her vote. 2016 will be another high turnout election and we know that official Party slate cards are taken to the polls. Another 200,000 door hangers will make a total of 800,000 since 2010.

If I were a newly elected AD 16 member I would only sign a 2-year lease in Sacramento…

Rossmoor, Thank You for your walking and talking, phone calls and support for California Democrats!

Best Wishes,

Chuck Carpenter

The Rossmoor Democrat  2  January-February  2015
Local Party News

The Central Committee of the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County (DPCCC) elected new leaders at the organization’s January meeting. More than 50 people attended the jam-packed election session at JFK University Law School, which featured a warmly contested and spirited race for party chair between Carolyn Phinney, Ph.D., of Orinda, and DPCCC Controller Jeff Koertzen, of Concord. After the 34 voting members of the DPCCC cast ballots, Koertzen emerged victorious, succeeding longtime DPCCC chair and activist Chuck Carpenter of Concord.

“We must focus on electing more Democrats at every level of government in Contra Costa County,” Koertzen said. “Numerically, more Democrats now reside in Contra Costa County than San Francisco, yet — as demonstrated in November 2014 — we do not do enough to bring our supporters out to vote.”

We asked Mr. Koertzen at the Buchanan/Bonilla debate in Dublin about DPCCC’s relationship with the Rossmoor Club. Noting that DoR is the largest Democratic club in northern California, he said that DPCCC has not done enough outreach with Rossmoor. “I’d like to see Rossmoor more engaged in the larger Democratic community,” he said. “I want other groups to know how amazing it is.”

Prior to moving to Contra Costa County in 2010 from the Seattle area, Koertzen boasted a history of grassroots progressive activism everywhere he lived, from Oregon to Illinois. Befitting the fact that Koertzen is DPCCC’s first openly gay chair, Koertzen led the campaign while working at Microsoft in 2005 to cause the company to support LGBT rights legislation in the Washington state legislature.

DoR Book Report: The Teacher Wars
Sue De Carlo

In January DoR’s book club discussed The Teacher Wars, by Dana Goldstein.


In this book Ms. Goldstein provides a comprehensive history of the teaching profession in the United States, from the earliest beginnings of public education in the 1800s to 2012. She highlights many of the changes that resulted in a lowered economic position and social standing for teachers as compared with other professionals who have the same amount of education. This book also details the changes and innovations in education philosophy and curricula that have so far failed to improve either teaching conditions or educational results in public schools. Citing many studies, Ms. Goldstein explains why and how these programs have failed. In the last chapter she lists 14 changes that she believes are based on solid data. If implemented, they would result in improved outcomes for student success. Teacher Wars is a well-written page turner that should be of interest to anyone who cares about the state of education in the United States today.

The DoR Book Club meets at 3:00 PM on the first Monday of every month in Multi-Purpose Room 2. We read and discuss non-fiction books that are of interest to those with a progressive political outlook. Everyone is welcome to attend a meeting and join our group. If you have questions call Sue De Carlo at 210-1039.

In Memoriam: Jeanne Gelwicks

The Democrats of Rossmoor extend their condolences to the family and many friends of long-time DoR board member and activist Jeanne Gelwicks. Jeanne devoted many years of distinguished service on the DoR board and provided outstanding leadership in mobilizing the Club membership for voter registration drives in Rossmoor, Walnut Creek, and Concord. Jeanne was passionate in her belief that every citizen should have the right to vote. We will miss her dedication, her enthusiasm, and her unfailing good cheer.
Continued from page 1 (president) of 4.6% in the second quarter. Forbes magazine recently published article that noted that Obama’s economy actually outperformed that of the Great Republican Savior Ronald Reagan. Inequality and wage stagnation remain issues, but so far the Republican party has shown no interest in addressing them. Along with all this, President Obama has reduced the deficit and taxes on most Americans are lower than they have been in 20 years. Historically, in spite of Republican predictions, the U.S. economy has performed better under Democratic presidents than Republican - and Obama is no exception.

Let’s look at some other issues which the Republicans got wrong. Marriage equality has swept most of the country and American families are no worse off where it exists. States that have raised the minimum wage have suffered no subsequent job losses. And Obama’s Executive Orders on immigration have not resulted in a great rush of illegal immigrants to our borders. In fact, recent border apprehensions of Mexicans trying to enter this country illegally have fallen to historic lows, although undocumented immigrants fleeing conditions in Central America remain a problem.

My question is why did the Democratic Party overlook all this good news and manage to lose so badly in the midterm elections? Why did so few Democrats come out to vote for the party that has rallied the economy and provided them with affordable health care? A booming economy should crush the GOP in 2016, but only if Democrats stop running away from their President and his accomplishments. It is time for Democrats to stand up for their principles, their President, and their Party.

Best Wishes,

Jane

---

Take Me Out to the Movies!
Emily Ehm

There’s good news here: Golden Rain has assigned permanent dates for our movies: they will always be shown on the second Monday of the month at 1 pm and 7 pm. The 1 pm time makes the show available to those who take the bus and the evening movie will work for those who work regular hours. And, of course, these movies will always be advertised in the Rossmoor News for two weeks.

The next movies will be:

**Monday, February 9** (1 and 7 pm) at Peacock: *United States of Secrets Part One*. This is a Frontline production which goes behind the headlines to reveal the dramatic inside story of how the U. S. government came to monitor and collect the communications of millions of people around the world – including ordinary Americans – and the lengths they went to as they tried to hide this massive surveillance program from the public. It will be shown with subtitles and last approximately 120 minutes.

**Monday, March 9** (1 and 7 pm) at Peacock: *United States of Secrets Part Two*. This is another Frontline production which explores the secret relationship between Silicon Valley and the NSA and investigates how the government and tech companies have worked together to gather and warehouse your data. It will be shown with subtitles and last approximately 120 minutes.

**Monday, April 13** (1 and 7 pm) at Peacock: *Wadjda* is an award winning picture from Saudi Arabia about a 10 year old girl who longs to ride a bike. It lasts 97 minutes and will be shown with subtitles. It is the first time a movie has been produced by a woman in Saudi Arabia and is rated PG.

Questions? Call Emily at 943-7610, DoR’s own Siskel and Ebert combined, and from Illinois, too…

---

The Rossmoor Democrat                                         4                                     January-February 2015
The February 26 Dinner Meeting Speaker Can Help Save You Energy Dollars

(Dinner sign-up info on page (8): Deadline is Monday, February 23)

The New Economics of Energy Efficiency and Alternate Resources

Cindy Ware

We read that wind power provides 126% of the electricity needs of every home in Scotland and that solar power supplies an increasing percentage of domestic energy needs in Germany. What are the latest energy savings and innovations here in the United States, California and Rossmoor?

Drawing on recent research in energy efficiency and resources, Kim Ryle, a 25-year PG&E energy efficiency veteran and sustainability professional, will offer an overview of developing trends in energy — from the global perspective to our own backyards.

While we are faced with current energy practices that are unsustainable, new opportunities offer not only potential savings but also increased reliability and — just as importantly — increased national and international security.

American homes use almost 25% of the energy consumed in the United States. Mr. Ryle will provide practical, economic, and smart actions that every resident can take to optimize his or her home efficiency and renewable energy options. His presentation will include some hands-on examples of some energy efficiency technologies such as LED lighting, controls, and sensors.

Thursday, February 26:

5 pm: Town Square and social hour

6 pm Dinner

7 pm: The New Economics of Energy Efficiency and Alternate Resources

Kim Ryle is a Walnut Creek resident and 25-year veteran of Pacific Gas and Electric Company’s Energy Efficiency Program. He started with PG&E performing residential energy audits and progressed to become a Senior Account Manager working with some of the largest businesses in the PG&E system. With extensive training and support from PG&E, Mr. Ryle managed a portfolio of assigned business accounts with energy usage over $40 million. His experience spans a wide range of businesses including school districts, retail, warehouse, manufacturing, cities (including Walnut Creek), Contra Costa County, Safeway and Lucky supermarkets, and power-intensive high-tech companies such as Sun Microsystems, Sybase, and others. Over his career he helped customers identify, develop and achieve many energy efficiency projects resulting in the reduction of approximately 300 megawatts of ‘on-peak’ electric demand and many millions of dollars’ worth of energy savings. He currently works as a certified energy auditor, sustainability educator and consultant.

When not engaged in energy or sustainability, Mr. Ryle enjoys time with his wife outdoors including hiking, photography, tennis, canoeing, and playing golf with his son. He has a double major in Environmental Science and Biology from Mankato State University, Minnesota, and was born and raised in the small town of Worthington, Minnesota in the house that his grandfather built.

A good time was had by all at the live showing of the President’s State of the Union address at Creekside
THE DEMOCRATS OF ROSSMOOR ANNOUNCE THEIR

ANCHAL DINNER

Thursday Feb 26, 2015
Tahoe Room ~ Event Center
Social Hour~5pm; Buffet Dinner~6pm; Program~7pm

Catered by Hamilton Catering
Passed Hot Appetizers
Meat Balls~Seafood Puffs~Artichoke Hearts
Cost $30.00 per person

BUFFET DINNER MENU

Pork Tenderloin~~~~Chicken Marsala
Vegetarian Lasagna
Scalloped Potatoes~~Mixed Winter Vegetables
Spinach Salad~~Cold Vegetable Platter
Rolls and Butter
Dessert: Lemon Meringue Pie
Decaf Coffee and Hot Tea service

* PAYMENT DEADLINE: Feb. 20, 2015 *

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

DEMOCRATS OF ROSSMOOR BUFFET DINNER  Feb. 26, 2015

Name_______________________  Guest_______________________
Phone______________$30 per person ~ Total Amt. Enclosed_____

Please make check out to: Democrats of Rossmoor~~send to Jane
Williams~ 2200 Golden Rain Road #6 Walnut Creek, CA 94595. Or
place in the Democrats of Rossmoor mail box at Gateway.
Two Popular Democrats Square Off for 7th State Senate District Seat

Former Assemblywoman Joan Buchanan (left) and current Assemblywoman Susan Bonilla, both Democrats, are running for the 7th State Senate District seat vacated by Mark DeSaulnier, who was recently elected to George Miller’s seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. The race has set the stage for a Democrat-on-Democrat Bay Area battle. The Republican candidate for the seat is Mark Meuser. Buchanan termed out of her Assembly seat and Bonilla will term out of her Assembly seat next year. Their January debate in Dublin, hosted by the Tri Valley Democratic Club (which endorsed Buchanan on a 29-2 vote) revealed little if any difference in the political philosophies of the two Democrats, both former educators. When asked by a member of the audience if one would bow out in favor of the other in order to avoid splitting the Democratic vote, each pledged to “stay in the race to the end.” The special election for the seat will be held on May 19.

Things Don’t Go Better With Koch!

The products shown above are just a few of the most common consumer products sold by companies owned by the infamous Koch Brothers, Charles and David H., who together own 84% of Koch Industries, which reported revenues of $115 billion in 2012. In addition to those consumer products Koch Industries owns, according to Wikipedia, Invista, Georgia-Pacific, Molex, Flint Hills Resources, Koch Pipeline, Koch Fertilizer, Koch Minerals and Matador Cattle Company. Koch companies are involved in core industries such as the manufacturing, refining and distribution of petroleum, chemicals, energy, fiber, intermediates and polymers, minerals, fertilizers, pulp and paper, chemical technology equipment, ranching, finance, commodities trading, as well as other ventures and investments.

In 2013 Forbes called Koch Industries the second-largest privately held company in the United States, after Cargill. Charles has stated that the company would go public “over my dead body.”

The ultraconservative brothers have pumped millions into conservative Republican political races and have heavily influenced their outcomes through attack ads.
State Senate Democratic candidate and education activist Joan Buchanan spoke at January’s membership meeting.