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INTERVIEW with STATE SENATOR LOIS WOLK by Tim Fenton



Tim Fenton and Lois Wolk

Thank your luck that you live in California's 5th Senatorial District. You've got Lois Wolk, one of the state's hardest working and most effective legislators, working for you. We asked the Senator recently what she's got at the top of her agenda. It's a very packed agenda, so we'll labor to give you some highlights.

Resurrecting and preserving the waters, environment, wildlife, economic health and spirit of the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta is high on Wolk's agenda. She's Chair of the Senate Delta Stewardship and Sustainability Committee and says her role is to "persuade legislator colleagues that the Delta is more than just plumbing." She notes the Delta comprehends 5 counties, 27 cities and a vital and unique lifestyle, and she's adamant that Delta

citizens have a voice at the table on legislation that will affect it.

Government reform ranks high too. "We've lost 40 percent of the wealth in the world. Government can't do things as we have in the past," she says. As Chair of the Revenue and Tax Committee, she'll have a lot to say about how we govern and provide services more efficiently and more effectively. She's sponsor of a bill requiring "Performance Based Budgeting" of all state agencies whereby they must define goals for programs and services, budget appropriately to fulfill them and then report progress toward achieving them.

Wolk would like the state go to two-year budgeting with every other session devoted to the budget. "No other bills, none!" she proclaims. She'd like the two-thirds votes required to pass budgets and raise taxes to be reduced to a simple majority but holds slim hope. Why is it so tough to pass a budget? One reason Wolk says is that "voting to increase revenues is a career killing move for Republicans."

Issues affecting the elderly are high priority with the Senator. She sponsored a bill requiring healthcare providers treating individuals who have signed a Physician Order for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) to follow its orders. Now a statewide standard POLST form specifies an individual's preferences regarding life-sustaining treatment. To protect elderly homeowners, she's sponsoring a bill that imposes a duty of honesty, good faith, and fair dealing on any entity recommending purchase of a reverse mortgage to a borrower in anticipation of financial gain. And she's cosponsoring an Elder Financial Abuse Act mandating banks, credit unions, and savings and loans to report financial abuses perpetrated against elder and dependent adults.

Check the Senator's website www.sen.ca.gov/wolk to see the amazing number of her legislative accomplishments. Then, when you see her on the streets of Davis, give her a thumbs up and a big "Thanks Lois!"

Our job, in the legislature is to exercise better oversight.

Reform happens when things are bad.

...can't do things the way we did before...Are there ways of providing the services in a different way?

...the Delta is more than a plumbing system...people live there...culture and economy need to be taken into account...

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www.davisdemocraticclub.org

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Photography: Luba Schmid

Calendar of Events & Activities

NOVEMBER 8: Sunday 5:00-8:00 pm Yolo County Democratic Bean Feed, Veterans Memorial Hall, 203 E. 14th St., Davis. Join the yearly gathering featuring good BBQ and humble democratic beans. **SPECIAL NOTE:** SENATOR BARBARA BOXER is the KEYNOTE SPEAKER. Contact Donna Provenza 759-8460.

DECEMBER 4: Friday 6:30-8:30 pm HOLIDAY PARTY Odd Fellows Hall, 415 2nd St., Davis. This annual event features a social hour, great buffet dinner and desserts and holiday cheer reported by elected officials. Contact Mike 756-5831



(photo l.) Mr. & Mrs. Truman, Mrs. Johnson and V.P. Humphrey witness Pres. Johnson signing Medicare into law

DISCUSSION WITH LBJ by special correspondent H. S. Truman,

Dateline: July 30, 1965 Truman Library, Independence, MO
HST These people are our proudest responsibility and they are entitled, among other benefits, to the best medical protection available. Not one of these, our citizens, should ever be abandoned to the indignity of charity. Charity is indignity when you have to have it. But we don't want these people to have anything to do with charity and we don't want them to have any idea of hopeless despair.
LBJ *It was a generation ago that Harry Truman said, and I quote him: "Millions of our citizens do not now have a full measure of opportunity to achieve and to enjoy good health. Millions do not now have protection or security against the economic effects of sickness. And the time has now arrived for action to help them attain that opportunity and to help them get that protection."*

Ed. Note Special Correspondent Truman also intends be present, at least in spirit, when Pres. Obama signs the forthcoming Health Care Bill into law.

FALL BBQing with GOOD FRIENDS by Carl Schmid

Robin and Stephen Souza again graciously hosted the Annual Fall BBQ at their home providing a relaxed, enjoyable setting for meeting friends. Cold Sudwerks beverage on a sunny Davis day added Gemutlichkeit. Keeping with established tradition, our Principal DDC BBQ Chef, Richard Yamagata, took great pride in cooking sausage to perfection (the main culinary challenge being to separately identify five different types of sausage being served).



Nonetheless, Richard obviously relishes this tasty assignment.



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Local Outreach for Health Care Reform by Carl Schmid

Many find it difficult, even frustrating, to remain idle during the raging, national debate on health care reform, particularly in the face of an opposition that makes entirely reckless charges such as “death panels” and includes individuals who go to the extreme of carrying loaded guns to political meetings that are intended for thoughtful consideration of complex issues. The question becomes what can we, in Davis, do to help influence the outcome of this process? Thankfully, Democratic values are already well represented in Washington by Senators Boxer and Feinstein and by Congressman Thompson. The question then becomes how might we reach out to influence the views of others. As one approach, the companion article by Betty Woo (see below) describes an artistic, giant quilting project to advertise health care reform.

As another approach, a group of local health care reform advocates, consisting largely of volunteers from the highly successful 2008 Yolo United election campaign, has decided upon a strategy of encouraging and supporting Senator Harry Reid to include a public option within the final bill that emerges from the Senate. Senator Reid’s reelection next year will be contested, and he is a good person deserving support. This group’s letter to Senator Reid is enclosed within this Newsletter, and for those interested in participating, this same flyer also includes a form to pledge your support in Senator Reid’s forthcoming reelection campaign.



Senator Barbara Boxer will attend the Nov. 8 Bean Feed in DAVIS

Sen. Boxer will be the principal speaker at the Yolo County Democratic Bean Feed. **Do not miss this memorable return engagement of a truly exciting, unabashed Democratic speaker, who delivers a barn burner address.** Other featured speakers include our outstanding local representatives, State Sen. Lois Wolk (p.1) and Assembly Rep. Mariko Yamada (see April Newsletter).



HEALTH CARE REFORM QUILT

by Betty Woo



Under a steering committee chaired by Kevin Wolf, the same Yolo County ground troops who put in countless hours to elect the President, have organized again to help pass health care legislation. One Organizing for America (OFA) activity is the creation of a Health Care Reform Quilt following the example of the Aids Quilt which traveled the country before being displayed at the National Mall. The Health Care Reform Quilt would give tangible evidence of public support for reform and provide voice to those supporters who cannot attend rallies and meetings.



The Yolo County Fair Democratic booth presented a perfect place to collect quilt squares resulting in more than 65 squares decorated with poignant stories, clever sayings and fun graphics. The assembled quilt (22’ long and 6’ high with 120 squares) has now been displayed at a Sacramento rally for Doris Matsui and Barbara Boxer and at a large rally for Feinstein and Boxer supporters in San Francisco, which I attended with Tom Cronin, Hillary Ross and Kathy Henry.

Kathy gave a stirring speech as the quilt was held aloft behind her by doctors, nurses and medical educators. This impressive quilt displays photos on fabric, cloth collages, paintings on fabric superimposed on heartbreaking stories of loss.

You may contact me or Hillary Ross (ponygirlhill@aol.com) to learn the details of designing and contributing a square, as the expanding quilt weaves its way to Washington. To obtain copies of the Yolo United Health Insurance Reform Newsletter, contact Daniel Sharpe. Daniel.C.Sharpe@gmail.com. The committee provides news updates and volunteer opportunities for letter writing, phone banking, and staffing a Davis Farmer’s Market information booth.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

Davis has neat people whom we often do not meet because of busy schedules. One city program, Davis Neighbors’ Night Out (www.cityofdavis.org/neighbors) addresses that problem by helping to organize block parties, which might be a pot –luck dinner or dessert with coffee. This is a great way to say hello to neighbors.

(below) Mayor pro tem Don Saylor greets a recent block party in North Davis



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SENATOR BARBARA BOXER in DAVIS NOV. 8 at the BEAN FEED!!

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