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# DAVIS DEMOCRATIC CLUB

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## ***The Davis Democratic Club Successfully Adapted to the Challenges Facing Political Activism in the Era of COVID-19. We're ready for 2021.*** by Giles Giovinazzi, DDC Board Member



As Democrats, the aftermath of the 2020 Election presents a natural period of reflection on our activism over the last few years. For me, I joined the DDC just weeks after the 2016 election. After that election, like many others I was looking for any way I could get involved in supporting and rebuilding the Party after a devastating defeat. The Club provided a pathway to get involved, and I learned the ropes of grassroots fundraising, organizing, communicating the Democratic message, and liaising with the County and State Democratic Party.

So, after this most recent election, I felt a sense of accomplishment and a feeling that I had really invested in the outcome. The **election was hard fought and a lot closer** than many thought it would be. In the end, **it took a movement to defeat Trump**. Collectively, as activists, **every letter** we wrote, **every volunteer** we recruited, **every dollar** we raised, **every social media post** we shared . . . **made a difference in turning the tide**.

As we think about the future of the Club and political activism in the age of COVID-19, I'm not sure we need to do too much differently than what we're doing right now. The **Club** is still a pathway for getting people actively involved in the Party, and we **accomplished a tremendous amount** in this last election cycle. And while Board Members sometimes joke that we're not the most technologically savvy Club, in fact, we made a seamless transition to safe, virtual activism and through the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, we moved monthly Board meetings to the Zoom Internet video conference platform and held a virtual Election Night Party.

The Club published 20 Newsletters during the last two years. And in addition to mailing and emailing the Newsletter to members, we're also sharing it on social media and publishing it on the DDC website <[www.davisdemocraticclub.org](http://www.davisdemocraticclub.org)>.

And in the last two years, the Club raised over \$26,000 – most of it in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds were contributed to competitive national and statewide campaigns and supported activity within Yolo County (see p.2). Over 100 **members renewed their membership** with donations well above the minimum due – **thank you!** And in 2020, we started virtual fundraising through *Act Blue* on our website and on our *Facebook* page, and we've raised several hundred dollars online.

We now have over **1700 followers on Facebook** (<https://www.facebook.com/DavisDemocrats>) and **180 followers on Twitter** (@DavisDemocrats). In just the two weeks before the election, we shared 63 posts and received 1,670 reactions, comments and reshares of our Facebook posts. In addition to articles and humor, the Club shares **fundraising and other volunteer opportunities** with Democratic campaigns on social media.

Several Board Members took on special leadership projects. Jan Agee was elected to serve as a Biden Delegate to the virtual Democratic National Convention. DDC Past President Bob Bockwinkel initiated a get-out-the-vote **letter writing campaign** through *Vote Forward* to **contact Texas voters and for four CA Congressional candidates**. Over 50 Club members and friends hand **wrote 4,000 letters** (see p. 3). I recruited voter protection attorneys for **Lawyers for Biden** and travelled to **Nevada twice as an election observer**.

No doubt 2020 has been a tough year for a world struggling with COVID-19. But as activists, we should all be proud of our dedication and resilience in carrying out the urgent work of changing this Nation's leadership during these difficult times.

# Democratic News

## *Report (FINAL?!?!?) from Yolo County Democratic Chair, Bob Schelen*



Bob Schelen & Steve Souza (see p. 3)

First, thank you for a successful year in unprecedented times. I especially **thank the Davis Democratic Club for your financial and volunteer help** in the **Yolo County Democratic Party's** coordinated campaign and efforts throughout the **state and the nation**. The Club came through as you always do, especially important in these COVID-19 times.

We accomplished our main goal, electing **Joe Biden as President!** The efforts in the House and Senate were less successful.

However, we did keep our majority in the House, and if we win runoffs in Georgia (where we again need your help), we will have won the US. Senate. In our State Congressional delegation, we lost 4, possibly 5 seats where we will be 42 Democrats, 11 Republicans.

In California, we gained two seats in the Senate to increase the super majority. 31 Democrats, 9 Republicans and maintained the super majority in the State Assembly at 60 Democrats, 19 Republicans, and one independent. Yolo County was particularly helpful in the re-election of Assemblymember Reggie Jones Sawyer. Locally, we were about 60 percent successful in our endorsements throughout the county.

With the **Club's help**, we opened a county **headquarters in Davis** (masks and social distancing required) with **three hired interns** to organize our efforts. Those efforts included distribution of **Biden-Harris signs**, not only throughout Yolo County, but also **Northern California. Letter and postcard writing campaigns** (the letter writing campaign coordinated by **Bob Bockwinkel** (p. 3) working through the Club). We placed thousands of phone calls for both local candidates and different campaigns including the Biden campaign, Congressional campaigns for Christy Smith, Josh Harder and TJ Cox, and the Arizona Senate campaign of Mark Kelly, among others.

We also did a video for a virtual Bean Feed that you can still watch on Facebook or You Tube. While it was less successful then we had hoped, please watch it and consider contributing to our efforts by providing a start fresh financial start for the 2021-2022 cycle.

<https://yolodemocrats.org/virtualbeanfeed> <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/yolo2020>

Finally after **five terms and 12 years as Chair of the Yolo County Democratic Party** aka Yolo County Democratic Central Committee, I have decided to step down. I will continue to serve as a member of the Committee and an Executive Board member of the Club to lend help wherever I can. We improved the reach of the Committee and did make a difference in ways that I will report in a future DDC Newsletter.

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*Continued on right*

**How Does the DDC Go Forward?**

*By Stephen Souza, DDC President*

Over many years, the DDC has made significant differences in local, State Congressional races and even national Democratic politics (canvassing and phoning into Nevada and Colorado, contributing money to Arizona and elsewhere). Yet, the Club's usual model of conducting political action and outreach has been constrained by COVID and challenged by the Trump Presidency causing the need to redirect resources and efforts.

While we have adapted and accomplished much (p. 1), this Club needs new leadership from younger members stepping forward with new ideas to continue the DDC's successful legacy. We particularly note Bob Schelen's long distinguished tenure as Party Chair now ending (p. 2). We need **your input**, ideas and your volunteering to **guide** our **Club** during the fragile period where President Biden reestablishes the most basic norms in our Democratic institutions.

The question now becomes **"How does the DDC continue using those traditional means, which have served this Club and this community so well, while recognizing that so much has changed during the disruption of 2020 and into 2021.** We still cannot hold our usual end of the year *Holiday Party* or beginning of the year *Love Your Electeds* events to raise money for political action. Some other Democratic Clubs in the State are doing virtual fundraising events asking members to contribute to get Zoom login information. Some are doing online auctions, selling merchandise online and other virtual means to raise money. **We need your ideas.** Email <[sasouza@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sasouza@sbcglobal.net)> or call me at 530-400-2222. Looking forward to hearing from you and *Happy Holidays!*

**Letter Writing Report by Marie Bockwinkel**

During 2020, the Davis Democratic Club initiated a get-out-the-vote letter writing campaign through Vote Forward to contact Texas voters, and for four CA CD candidates, Phil Arballo (22nd CD), Brynne Kennedy (4th CD), Josh Harder (10th CD) and Christy Smith (25th CD). Over 50 members and friends hand wrote **4000 letters**. Josh Harder was re-elected. As of November 17th, Republican candidate Mike Garcia was leading Christy Smith by 422 votes. Phil Arballo, running against Devin Nunes and Brynne Kennedy running against Tom McClintock both lost their races. Our most **prolific letter writers were Dick and Kyoto Luna, Sherrill Futrell, Tom Dowling, Pam Nieberg, and Sandy and Jeffrey Granett.** The letter writers spent the equivalent of 8 weekends of 40 people walking precincts. Currently, members are writing get-out-the-vote letters through Vote Forward ([hello@votefwd.org](mailto:hello@votefwd.org)) for the two Georgia US Senate seats. To write postcards for the Georgia contest, contact Sister District at [www.sisterdistrictca3.org/postcarding](http://www.sisterdistrictca3.org/postcarding).

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