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*...economic survival was my priority..*

*..blessed that I could become involved..*

*..did my homework..*

*..curriculum was my passion..*

*..we all want what is best..*

*..no black and white..*

*..balancing pros and cons..*

*..close structural gap in three years...*

*..agree to disagree..*

*..love my time on City Council...*

*..work as a team..*

*..more affordable shopping options in Davis..*

*..very proud of Target, of Trader Joe, of West Lake Grocery..*

*..life is good..*

*I just love Davis.*



**Davis Mayor Ruth Asmundson: a life in community service by Tim Fenton**



Mayor Ruth at the Trader Joe construction site

The resume of retiring Davis Mayor Ruth Uy Asmundson's professional and public service life stretches on for pages and pages. Recently, we asked her to reflect on highlights from her long, fulfilling career. An early highlight came at age 19 when she was selected for a Fulbright Fellowship to study in the US after receiving her BS in Chemistry in her native Philippines. That led to an MS from Wilkes University in Pennsylvania (where it was too cold) and then a PhD from UC Davis (where the weather was just right). Davis has been her beloved home ever since.

In the early 70s, she met then Davis Mayor Vigfus Asmundson, who asked her out and proposed on their third date. The Asmundsons produced four daughters in quick succession, and raised two nephews whose mother had died. Her children have achieved degrees in fields as diverse as engineering, economics, law, music, math, education and business,

proud evidence of her passion for education.

That passion led to years of volunteering at her children's schools and eventually ten years on the Davis School Board, which she twice served as

president. During those years she also served as President of the Yolo County School Boards Association, Director of the California School Boards Association, and member of the National School Boards Association. During her school service, her focus was on curriculum, especially math. She was known for actually reading cover to cover every textbooks presented to the board for adoption (discovering typos and errors). Her passion also led her to set up a foundation that raised over \$250,000 at its directors' first meeting to support Adamson University, her alma mater in the Philippines.

In 2000, her husband was considering running again for the city council, but ill with Parkinsons, he opted not to. Ruth decided to run in his place. She went on to be elected five times and as high vote getter became mayor pro tem in 2006 and mayor in 2008. Thoroughness has been the hallmark of her board service; she seeks the complete background on all issues before the board and

reads every word of contracts the board considers. Praising Davisites' intense involvement in city affairs, Asmundson recalls former Mayor Dave Rosenberg's quip that ours "is a city of 65,000 mayors." She calls Davis "a city of experts" and says she listens to as many of them as possible to gain a diverse background on issues before the board. A devout Catholic, she says she also seeks enlightenment and guidance on major decisions through prayer.

Asmundson regrets that the council has not continued the annual retreats held in her early years of service. She says these helped council members work on long-term goals for the city versus the short-term goals encouraged by the council's two-year terms in office. Economic development has been a personal focus in her service. She cites a survey that showed Davisites wanted it to be easier to shop in town and hoped that a store like Target, a Trader Joe's and an electronics store would come here. She's proud that her efforts helped achieve the first and ground has been broken at University Mall to achieve the second.

With just nine council meetings to go, Ruth looks forward to devoting more time to Davis's sister cities program and would love to see a garden on city grounds with plantings from all eight sister cities. We wish Ruth Asmundson well in this ambition, and we thank her for all she has done for our town.

# Democratic News

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## Calendar of Events & Activities

**May 4: Tues. 6:30-7:30 pm Reception and Discussion with Calif. Sen. Mark Leno** Odd Fellows Hall, 415 2nd St. Davis.  
**May 4: Tues. 7:30-9:00 pm City Council Forum**, presentations and discussion of issues by candidates for City Council, Odd Fellows Hall  
**May 5: Weds. 7:00-9:00 pm DDC Board Meeting** regular business meeting of the Board, all members invited. Odd Fellows Hall  
**May 12: Wed. 7:00-9:00pm, PT 109 Rescue of JFK; Eyewitness Report of this historical event** By Lt. Cmdr (Retired) Ted Robinson Odd Fellows Hall  
**June: 13: Sunday 11:00am-2:00pm Annual Champagne Brunch** Buffet and social hour followed by presentations from candidates for **MAJOR** state-wide and local offices. (*Mark your calendar for a SPECIAL GUEST appearance TBA.*)  
**July 4: Sunday 12:00-8:00pm** Community Park, Davis. **Celebrate Independence Day** by distributing information, registering voters and enjoying the fireworks.  
**Sept. 19: (tentative date) Sunday Annual Yolo County Democratic Bean Feed**, BBQ dinner and fall campaign kickoff featuring candidates for federal and state offices.

## RESCUE of JFK: first hand historical account



DDC invite you to attend a unique historical account on May 12 (see Calendar above) detailing the heroic rescue of John F. Kennedy and his crew from PT 109. This lecture will be presented by Lt. Cmdr (retired) Ted Robinson, author, public speaker, decorated war veteran, member of the PT 109 rescue party and personal acquaintance of the future President John F. Kennedy.

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You are cordially invited to add your name to this list.

**State Senator Mark Leno (D-San Francisco)** will be the **featured speaker** at a **May 4** (see **Calendar** above) fundraising reception for the Yolo County Democratic Central Committee, co-sponsored by DDC. Tickets are \$20 per person with sponsorships available. Immediately following this event, DDC and YCDCC invite you to a Davis City Council Candidates Forum.

Senator Leno chairs the Budget Sub-Committee on Health and Human and the Public Services Committee and serves on the Appropriations Committee. Previously, he served as an Assembly-member and as a SF County Supervisor. As a state legislator, he has worked for better schools, more access to higher education, a cleaner and sustainable environment, single payer universal health care and equal rights for all Californians.

His Assembly Bills 849 in 2005 and 43 in 2007 were the first marriage equality bills passed by both houses of any state legislature in the United States. Presently, he is the author of Senate Bill 810 to establish universal health care coverage for every Californian and coauthor of SB 10 enabling voters to approve local assessments on the vehicle license fee to fund local health and safety programs.

*Senator Leno will speak on moving from a two-thirds to a majority vote budget for the state, how the recently enacted federal health care measure signed by President Obama will affect California residents and efforts for SB 810 and the possibilities of repealing Prop 8, the anti-same sex marriage initiative.*  
For reservations or sponsorships, please contact the YCDCC Chair at <bob.schelen@yolodems.org>.

**Rep. Jackie Speier applauds Mike Thompson by Carl Schmid**

Over 300 local Democrats attended an April 11 fundraiser for Congressman Mike Thompson at the Heidrick Ag. History Museum in Woodland. Rep. Thompson stated that he was “proud to be there” when Congress passed Health Care Reform reminding us that we “have been working for this for 100 years”. He describes this advance as an important “step forward” toward the goal, “The number one thing is to provide quality affordable health care for everyone.”

Reps. Thompson and Speier each reaffirmed their intention to protect our local water resources to support farming, wild life conservation and the salmon fishery. Rep. Thompson worries that a possible canal through the delta would destroy farming in southern Yolo County.

Rep. Speier (a proud UCD alumna) was simply effusive in endorsing her long-term colleague describing him as being “tireless” on behalf of the district and the “very best.”

Rep. Speier identified passing Financial Services Reform as the “next hurdle.” She expressed concern that firms which had to be bailed out as being too big to fail have subsequently purchased other failed

*“Mike Thompson is the best member of Congress in this country.”*

firms becoming even bigger than too big to fail. In her words, “gamblers” from the “wild-wild East” have enjoyed “attractive bonuses and great salaries” at the taxpayers’ expense, and reform is necessary to bring the “sheriff ..back in town.” Her reform includes three parts: an industry funded insurance plan, like the FDIC, a “funeral plan to anticipate their demise” for firms that are now considered too big to fail, and rules for refinancing troubled assets.

Rep. Speier also identified the need for consumer protection, “a cop for the consumer.” Whereas a typical credit card contract once required only a single page, she noted that these contracts now cover 30 pages with 7,000 words and must be simplified for the consumer. Bad loans have been handled ‘like a hot potato which no one holds and are just passed up the line.’ While she stated her intention to “never let that happen again,” Rep. Speier noted that these reforms are opposed by a lobby spending \$1.4 million/day! (Ed. Note: Obviously, we can again expect Republican resistance to this reform much like Health Care.)



**Reps. Speier and Thompson enjoy serving Yolo constituents**

*The answers aren't easy  
..will not let go until he gets exactly what he needs for the district..  
..incredibly principled...tireless..  
..gamblers and traders on Wall St. took us to the cleaners..  
..the wild-wild East..the sheriff is back in town...  
Our water is going to be protected.*

**Mariko Yamada nominated for a second term**

In preparation for the upcoming June primary, California Democrats held Pre-endorsement Conferences throughout the state. The Davis Democratic Club was eligible to send twenty voting delegates to the regional conference, which was held on March 20. Unfortunately, relatively few Club members accepted the invitation to listen to political speeches in a dingy meeting room on a sunny Saturday in spring. (To fill our quota, the Editor volunteered his wife as a delegate.) Actually, for those of us who are new to the process, this event provided an fascinating opportu-

nity to witness democracy in action, candidates vying for the party’s official endorsement in the primary by giving rapid fire explanations of their plans and positions on the issues. Party nomination requires obtaining a super majority of the votes, 75%, such that few candidates in contested primaries were able to achieve this very high threshold. It is, therefore, noteworthy that building upon her impressive, first-term record of legislative accomplishments, Assembly member Mariko Yamada’s candidacy for reelection was unanimously approved and endorsed.



**Mariko addressing delegates at the Pre-endorsement Conference**

**Meeting and discussion with your Davis City Council Candidates: May 4**

Two vacancies on the Davis City Council will be filled in the upcoming June 8 election. The Club is sponsoring a City Council Candidate Forum on the evening of May 4 (see Calendar) featuring Joe Krovosa, Sydney Vergis and Daniel Watts to provide you with an opportunity to meet these candidates and learn their views. This forum (free admission) immediately follows the reception for Sen Leno’s (p. 2).

**Democratic Newsletter**

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