

# Siskiyou Democrats Grassroots News

Issue #3 –FALL 2021

## WAY TO GO, CALIFORNIA NO on the Recall Wins in a Landslide!

The costly, unnecessary recall election is over! Gavin Newsom won by an even larger margin that he won his election in 2018 (62% “No on Recall” Vote on 9/27/21 compared to a 61% vote for Newsom in the 11/6/18 election). Unfortunately, the cost to California taxpayers was over \$250,000,000 – money we could have used elsewhere.

In Siskiyou County, the vote was the opposite of the overall state vote as indicated in the table below (totals as of 9/27/21).

Question on Ballot	YES	NO
<b>Shall Gavin Newsom Be Recalled (Removed) From the Office of Governor?</b>		
Siskiyou County	62%	38%
California	38%	62%



## COVID CRISIS IN SISKIYOU COUNTY: WHAT WE CAN DO

On Friday, September 24, the Democratic Central Committee Siskiyou County sponsored a Town Hall on the Covid crisis in Siskiyou County. From August 1<sup>st</sup> to September 26<sup>th</sup>, the number of average daily Covid cases has increased over fourfold (from 6 to 26), hospitalizations have increased five-fold, and we have lost ten (10) of our neighbors to the disease (for a total of 51 deaths due to Covid).

To provide insight into what we can do to address Covid in our community, the Town Hall featured Aaron Stutz, MD, Siskiyou Public Health Officer; the CEOs of both Fairchild and Mercy hospitals; doctors from each hospital; Mercy’s VP of Patient Care, and Supervisor Ed Valenzuela. Eighty-two (82) people attended the meeting.

For a summary of the Covid Town Hall, and to learn what these healthcare professionals are planning, recommending, and asking of us in response to the crisis, see pages 2 and 7. You’ll also find a link to our YouTube recording.

## IN THIS ISSUE

We’re overjoyed at the election results, although yes voters won in Siskiyou County. Given that, it’s so important that all the county’s Democrats stay active, and ready for 2022. You can explore many ways to do that in this issue. And you’ll **meet Max Steiner**, who’s running to unseat Doug LaMalfa next year. You’ll find an interview with this strong and capable candidate on pages 3 and 8.

On page 4 and 5 we report on the work of our terrific grassroots group, and on **ways you can help** give Siskiyou Democrats a bigger voice in city and county decisions that affect all our lives. We dive into what your Democratic Central Committee is doing, and offer several **ways you can support**, or get involved with, its work.

Finally, the **quarter’s top stories** are updated on page 6. Of special importance are the rising number of Covid cases in Siskiyou County, and our responsibility to continually educate ourselves and accurately inform others about the real scientific basis for trusting and taking the vaccine. Again, to find what public health professionals are recommending, you’ll find a report on our recent **Covid Town Hall** on pages 2 and 7.

# COVID Crisis Devastates Siskiyou County

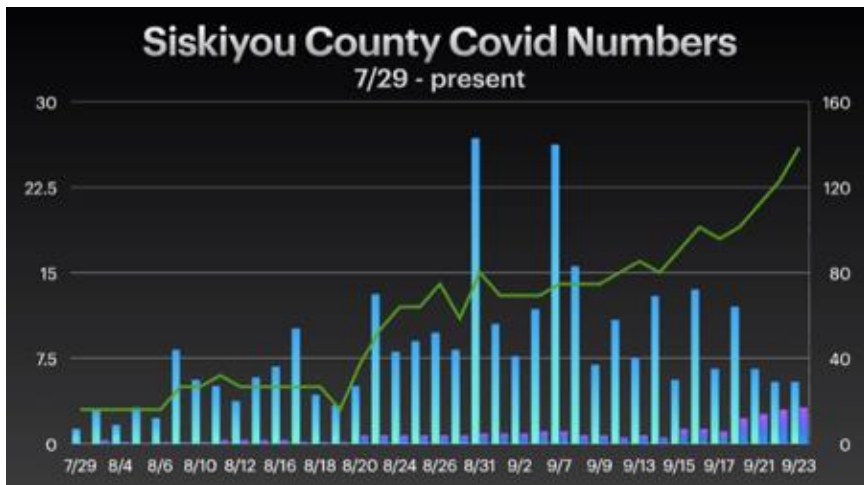
By Abigail Van Alyn

“On September 13, 2021, Fairchild went to a status of Crisis Care [due to Covid illness]. One nurse worked 100 hours last week, another worked twelve out of fourteen days. We’re experiencing the trauma of losing patients. We’re short-staffed, and we are exhausted.” *Jonathan Andrus, CEO, Fairchild Medical Center*

“In twenty-six years of working in Siskiyou county, I have never seen anything like this before. We can’t go on like this. With 26,000 people in this county still unvaccinated, it’s terrifying.” *Dr. Sean Malee, MD, cardio-pulmonary physician, Mercy Hospital*

“We’re on social media, I’m doing vaccination information talks wherever I can. Now it’s up to the community to stop spreading misinformation and persuade their neighbors to get vaccinated, wear masks, stay away from large gatherings. We’re doing all we can. It’s in your hands now.” *Aaron Stutz, MD, Public Health Officer, Siskiyou County*

The Democratic Central Committee’s Town Hall on Covid, September 24, drew 155 registrants, eighty-two of whom made it to the event. What we thought would be primarily an informational event turned out to be a cry for help, and a plea for recognition of the heroic efforts being made by our healthcare providers as Covid ravages our community. With extraordinary patience, restraint, and understanding the panel of doctors, nurses, and administrators told story after story of the generosity, commitment, love, and care our nurses, doctors, and hospital staff are giving 24/7 to manage an entirely preventable crisis in our community.



The Town Hall began with a presentation of data from Public Health Officer Dr. Aaron Stutz. Here’s one of several graphs he showed us, giving a stark picture of the crisis we’re in.

Our Covid cases (in blue) begin to rise dramatically around August 20, 2021 and increase throughout September. It was obvious to many of us that this shows the aftermath of the mask-optional, super-spreader County Fair.

Green line shows hospitalizations. Purple area at bottom shows ICU use.

Asked why the county health department hadn’t acted earlier to help prevent the spread last spring, Dr. Stutz said the department was blind-sided by people’s hesitation or refusal to get the vaccine. “We thought people would be eager to get the vaccine. We could not have imagined how much misinformation there would be.”

Hospital CEOs Jonathan Andrus (Fairchild) and Rodger Page (Mercy) followed with the dire situation they face in staffing and procurement of vital materials, including oxygen. There’s a national nursing shortage, which leads to small rural hospitals’ inability to staff properly or to transfer critically ill patients to larger urban hospitals. There are only 8 ICU beds in the county. At Fairchild, the number of ICU beds was increased from 4 to 12 based on this Covid emergency. Both hospitals have called on the state government for help. And each is losing substantial revenue. Joining the docs, the CEOs pled with the community to get vaccinated, or if you can’t, to wear masks, wash hands, avoid crowds, and protect the community from the delta spread.

They were followed by the doctors and Mercy’s Patient Care VP, nurse Elizabeth Pulatie, who gave grim accounts of what all of them, as well as staff, face daily and hourly, especially as the deadly delta variant transmits the disease at a far greater rate than before. They hold the hands of young people dying unnecessarily, watch ERs overflow with very sick patients, children lose their parents, and staff burn out. Dr. Moudy Youssef of Mercy Hospital said he’d been asked, “why get vaccinated if I can still get Covid?” He has a simple answer: “Because you won’t have severe infection or find yourself on life-support.” *(continued on page 6)*

# STANDING UP FOR US ALL: An Interview with Max Steiner, Candidate for Congressional District 1 By Abigail Van Alyn

On Labor Day, Max Steiner took an hour off from campaigning at Shasta County’s annual picnic, to sit under a tree and talk with the News about what matters most to him—a healthy, vibrant, economically successful CA-District 1, and a federal government whose mission is to “stand up for the powerless.” In the big picture, he’s running to help sustain a government that upholds the core principles of democracy, which he’s spent his adult life nurturing and defending.

Max grew up in Sacramento, in a family with deep roots in California’s Central Valley. After attending public schools there, he went on to study economics at Cal Berkeley, at the same time committing to active duty in the military. He served two tours in Iraq, then graduated from Cal *magna cum laude*, then joined the State Department. There he completed several overseas assignments, including implementing agriculture trade policy in Honduras and Guatemala. After that he worked with the United Nations on international food security. These experiences inspired him to join the Rand Corporation as a PhD candidate in economic Policy Analysis. Because Rand is strictly non-partisan, Max will be leaving the program on October 1<sup>st</sup>, with a Master’s degree and a plan to complete his PhD “somewhere down the road.”

But Congress comes first, and he has a clear plan to get there. In the policy arena, he places himself squarely in the middle, a dedicated moderate whose positions are rooted in economics. He applies these principles to CA-D1’s major concerns—forests, water, and agriculture. In all these areas, he works hard to balance environmental interests with economic viability and sustainability. For instance, in agriculture he feels the federal government should support efforts in sustainable farming and ranching, while not “trying to change the way of life” for traditional farmers and ranchers. “I want to be a responsible representative for everybody, and if you’re a farmer, you will be represented by me in D.C.” Overall, he meets the people of CA-D1 where they are, and wants above all to represent everyone regardless of party. He is fully committed to making the district successful and its resources sustainable. *(continued on page 8)*



*At left, Max in Iraq during one of his two tours there.*

*At right, with his wife, Nika Ip, on a trip to Shasta Caverns.*



*At left, Max, his dad, and his younger sister visit Yosemite.*

*At right, Nika and Max in a romantic moment on their wedding day in 2016.*



## Siskiyou Writers Alliance

By Tom Laurent

Siskiyou County Democrats are part of the Writers Alliance that Barbara Smith started in Placer County. I'm the Siskiyou Democrats' representative with this group. Its purpose is to help Democrats across CA-District 1 organize Letter to the Editor writing by offering editing services if needed, and helping to spread the word out of each county using their Facebook site. Our current Letter to the Editor campaign is part of this effort.

We approached then-Editor Skye Kinkade at the Siskiyou Daily News, suggesting that in addition we should have a weekly column in the paper to counter the conservative political commentary by weekly columnist Liz Bowen. She readily agreed. Our first column was published on August 4, 2021. This column utilizes four writers: Madeleine Ayres, Lisa Frost, Gail Domanski and Tom Laurent. Our goal is to be informative rather than write attack pieces. We welcome your support and suggestions for future columns. Thanks!

## We Need Siskiyou Democrats to Run for Office!

One of the goals of our Siskiyou Grassroots Democrats is to develop candidates to run at all levels of government. We're looking for individuals who might be interested. And we'll provide them information on how to run.

Key local offices up for election in 2022 include City Councils, School Boards, Community Services Councils, Board of Supervisors (Weed and Scott Valley Areas), and countywide offices (e.g. Sheriff, District Attorney, County Clerk).

Although the local offices are non-partisan, we did an analysis of party affiliation for the key elected positions (see table below). We found that 52% of the positions are held by Republicans, while only 40% of registered voters in Siskiyou County are Republican. By contrast, 22.5% of the elected officials are Democrats, while we represent 30% of the registered voters. We are working to change this inequity.

**Please let us know of anyone who might be interested in running for office by sending an email to: [siskiyoudems@gmail.com](mailto:siskiyoudems@gmail.com). We will contact them!**

<b>Party Affiliation: Siskiyou Elected Officials</b>	<b>Number of Elected Officials</b>	<b>% of Elected Officials</b>	<b>% of Siskiyou Voters by Party</b>
<b>Republicans</b>	90	52.0%	40%
<b>NPP</b>	41	23.7%	26%
<b>Democrats</b>	39	22.5%	30%
<b>Libertarian</b>	3	1.8%	1%
<b>Other</b>	0	0%	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

## BUILDING DEMOCRATS' PRESENCE IN SISKIYOU COUNTY

By Katherine Shelton

### Interested in becoming more involved with Siskiyou Democrats?

Here are several ways you can make that happen.

- ⇒ **Become a monthly donor** through [ActBlue](#). No amount is too small to help. Many of our members, volunteers, and supporters donate only \$5/month. We use that money to help support local Democratic candidates, buy outreach supplies (like postcards, signs, and postage), pay state and federal filing fees, rent venues for events, and much more.
- ⇒ **Join our Grassroots Committee** and help us plan and organize outreach activities, write letters to the editor, sign postcards, phone bank for candidates, and network with other dedicated, like-minded people who want to improve Siskiyou County. The Grassroots Committee holds a meeting for North County volunteers on the first Tuesday of every month at 6pm, and a meeting for South County volunteers on the second Tuesday of every month at 6pm. Both meetings are currently being held via Zoom.
- ⇒ **Join our Democratic Central Committee**. Our monthly meetings, held on the second Wednesday of every month, are open to public. There we discuss budgets, fundraising activities, form committees to work on specific issues/projects, meet with prospective candidates and sometimes even elected and state officials. You can seek nomination to become a voting member, pay annual dues (\$24), run as an officer, and even run as a delegate to the California Democratic Party. Some of the projects our Central Committee is currently working on:
  - Creating a scholarship program for high school seniors
  - Combating disinformation around coronavirus, vaccines, and election security
  - Engaging with the community through volunteerism
  - Strategizing on how to get young people involved in politics
  - Becoming more visible at city council and board of supervisors meetings
  - Finding Democrats who are interested in running for local office
  - Researching, writing, and publishing our quarterly Newsletter
  - Planning a fundraiser

Bring us your ideas, your expertise, your social networks, and be a catalyst for change. Reach out to us on [Facebook](#), or email us at [siskiyoudems@gmail.com](mailto:siskiyoudems@gmail.com), and let us know how you'd like to get more involved.

## DCCSC Scholarship Plans

By Karen Zeigler

The Democratic Central Committee has formed an action group to develop the guidelines and application process for a \$1000 scholarship to be offered starting in 2022. This scholarship supports our belief that an educated society is the best way to develop a strong democracy, and that education is the one of the best means for individuals to improve not only their own lives, but to contribute to a healthy society in many productive ways.

We are planning to launch this scholarship in the Spring of 2022 to an eligible graduating senior from any/all Siskiyou County High Schools. The committee is working to develop guidelines and to create an inviting but thorough application process for applicants. So far we've agreed that recipients can attend any college, and that they must demonstrate an active commitment to positive community action.

The scholarship will be offered annually, funded by the community. We'll let you know soon how you can contribute to this effort, which could mean a big difference in the life of a deserving young Democrat. We look forward to your generous support.

## This Quarter's Top Stories: Denial of Science Comes Back to Bite

**COVID UPDATE:** Because so many across the country refused vaccination, variants of the original (2019) Covid virus have continued to mutate in unprotected bodies. The latest, the delta variant, has proved to be the most deadly so far, affecting previously invulnerable children and breaking through protections offered by the current vaccine. In Siskiyou County, hospitals are strained and deaths are rising. In neighboring counties, especially Shasta and Del Norte, hospitals are reaching capacity, and those with serious illness unrelated to Covid are being triaged. All this because of the **deadly spread of anti-science disinformation**, much of it by people who know better and have been vaccinated themselves. (For instance, Fox Corporation has mandated vaccination for all employees since June.)

**The Good News:** On September 9, Biden announced action by the Labor Department to mandate vaccination in all businesses with more than 100 employees. He also addressed those refusing vaccination, telling them directly that they are holding back economic recovery, and that the rest of us are running out of patience.

**WOMEN'S HEALTH UPDATE:** No one can have missed the shocking failure of the Supreme Court to block the passage of a Texas anti-abortion law turning the United States citizenry into bounty hunters. The law, if allowed to stand, will particularly impact low income women and communities of color, since they will be least able to afford travel to find healthcare out-of-state. **The social science denied here** is the substantial body of data showing the suffering, economic decline, and mental health impacts among individuals, families, and communities where women are forced to give birth to unwanted children, or to children they can't afford to raise. See <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK232137/>

**The Good News:** On September 9, Merrick Garland announced that the Justice Department has sued the state of Texas, and a San Antonio OB/GYN has since come forward to test the law. This means that the law can now be properly vetted in federal court, and possibly enjoined before going fully into effect. This could put a chill on the efforts of other red states to follow Texas down this dark alley.

**CLIMATE UPDATE:** Wildfire as far as Minnesota, monster hurricanes, floods in Manhattan, tornadoes in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, devastating draught across the west, states running out of water—these are only the most obvious events that climate change has produced. **The denial of climate science**, especially by big coal, big oil, and agribusiness, has brought us here—decades lost in what should have been a world-wide response to lowering emissions of carbon and other greenhouse gases. And the Trump years were not only lost ones, but did active harm throughout federal agencies charged with environmental protection.

**The Good News:** Gavin Newsom's victory over the right-wing recall attempt means that California can continue to lead the nation in climate action. At the same time, Congress is moving closer to passing the massive, life-changing reconciliation bill, which, along with the Infrastructure, Investment and Jobs Act, contains dozens of projects to both harden existing infrastructure against climate disasters, and seriously shift the nation into green energy production. (For summaries, see <https://www.whitehouse.gov>).



*Continued from Page 2:*  
**COVID Devastates Siskiyou County**

All agreed that 91% of those hospitalized or dying of Covid are unvaccinated. And sadly, since death rates always lag infection rates, we can expect more deaths in the coming days. But Mr. Andrus stressed that a protocol of monoclonal antibody treatments is being stood up, while other untested treatments such as Ivermectin are strongly discouraged.

But the most important goal of the Town Hall was to find out what we, both Democrats and the community as a whole, can do to help our remarkable healthcare providers. The first thing all asked for was recognition and appreciation. They are going far beyond the call of duty to serve our community. We are working on a plan to promote ways our Siskiyou County neighbors can protect themselves from Covid and stay out of the hospital.

We can also urge our public officials to do a better job. Shocking to many was the failure of the Board of Supervisors to allow the County Fair to go forward, and once authorized, failure to mandate masks for the Fair. We are calling on all of our readers to attend Supervisor meetings via Zoom, and ask Board members to step up and protect the community. We can also be effective in urging local City Councils to do a better job of countering misinformation.

Equally important is doing the obvious—protecting ourselves and others from the Covid virus, and continuing to have conversations with friends, family, and business owners about the urgent need to stop the spread. As Dr. Stutz has said, it's now in our hands.

The Town Hall far exceeded our expectations, and we can only capture a little of its rich content here. We urge everyone to find the whole event on YouTube. Here is the YouTube link: [VIDEO OF 9/24/21 COVID TOWN HALL](#)



*Speakers at the Town Hall meeting. Who they are (from left to right):*

***First Row:** Dr. Aaron Stutz, Siskiyou County Public Health Officer, Elizabeth Pulatie, VP Patient Care Services - Mercy Medical Center, Jonathan Andrus, CEO – Fairchild Medical Center*

***Second Row:** Rodger Page, CEO – Mercy Medical Center, Dr. Sean Malee – Mercy Medical Center, Ed Valenzuela, Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors*

***Third Row:** Dr. Moudy Youssef – Medical Director, Fairchild Medical Center, Robin Richards, DCCSC Member and Moderator*

*Continued from page 3:*

### **Standing Up For Us All: An Interview with Max Steiner**

In social issues, Max is clearly an egalitarian, passionate about voting rights, civil (including women's) rights, and federal protections for all the nation's most vulnerable citizens. He welcomes all views, loves a good debate, but has no patience at all for those who are spreading disinformation around both Covid and "election fraud." And that includes Doug LaMalfa. But he's also clear that he can't unseat LaMalfa without support from NPP voters and moderate Republicans. So his campaign will be "a big ground game, boots on the ground." He'll travel widely, attending inclusive community gatherings, focusing on civic organizations like VFW, LWV, Rotary and Elks, and cultivating relationships with active moderate Republicans. And with boundless energy, he seems more than up to the challenges he's set for himself.

But the interview wouldn't be complete without discovering a little about Max's life outside politics. He's been married for five years, and lately he and his wife, Nika Ip, love to play online board games with friends all over the country. They also love to travel abroad, but like all of us their trips were cut off by Covid, and their hikes have been shortened by smoke. But they still manage 40-minute walks several times a week, and visits to Chico's coffee houses for social time, coffee, and crosswords.

Max is eager to get to know us here in Siskiyou County, and we hope to welcome him to a smoke-free outdoor venue later in the fall. Stay tuned! You can visit Max's website at: [maxsteinerforcongress.com](http://maxsteinerforcongress.com)

## **How YOU Can Help with our 2021 Goals**

For 2021, the Siskiyou Grassroots Democrats are focusing on four key goals, and we need YOU!  
**Here's how you can help:**

**Candidate Development** – We will be identifying Democratic candidates for the upcoming local office elections – for example, Board of Supervisors in June 2022 and City Councils in November 2022.

**Young Democrats and Voter Registration** – We're encouraging involvement in our efforts by young Democrats in Siskiyou County, including help in registering new voters. Know young Democrats who would like to be involved? Refer them to us by sending their names to: [siskiyoudems@gmail.com](mailto:siskiyoudems@gmail.com)

**Community Involvement** – We will continue to work to support our community by assisting food banks in the county through volunteer support. Want to find out what's next? Send us an email at [siskiyoudems@gmail.com](mailto:siskiyoudems@gmail.com), and we'll keep you informed!

**Democratic Messaging** – We need your help to counter misinformation and conspiracy theories! Use your Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or Letter to the Editor talents to combat it. If you'd like to be involved in our Writer's Alliance, contact Tom Laurent at [telarent@snowcrest.net](mailto:telarent@snowcrest.net)

## **What's Happening**

In light of the stay-at-home requirement in California, we will not be conducting the SISKIYOU DEMOCRATIC GRASSROOTS COMMITTEE or the SISKIYOU DEMOCRATIC CENTRAL COMMITTEE meetings in person. Instead, we will be using remote access (Zoom). If you are interested in attending, please send an email to: [siskiyoudems@gmail.com](mailto:siskiyoudems@gmail.com) to request a digital meeting invitation.

The Grassroots Committee meets the first Tuesday of the month (North County) and the second Tuesday of the month (South County). The Central Committee meets the second Wednesday of the month.

### **Your Democratic Central Committee of Siskiyou County (DCCSC):**

Officers: Alice Rogers – Chair, Abigail Van Alyn- Vice Chair, Katherine Shelton – Secretary, Robin Richards – Treasurer; Members: Neldena Anderson, Rick Green, Ann Herfindahl, Al Lugo, Carolyn Miller, Larry Marks, Christine Balletta, Dolly Verrue, and Karen Zeigler. For more information, visit our website: [siskiyoudemocrats.org](http://siskiyoudemocrats.org) or Facebook page: [SiskiyouCountyDemocrats](http://SiskiyouCountyDemocrats). Send mail and donations to: DCCSC, Post Office Box 4, Mt. Shasta, CA 96067.