

Siskiyou Democrats Grassroots News

Issue #2 – April-June 2021

Keeping Democracy Alive – Our Grassroots Democrats' Goals

Combating Conspiracy Theories and Misinformation

The Truth Matters. We need to be vigilant in our efforts to support the truth about election security, about candidates' records and bios, and about Democratic values and policy positions. This is critical to maintaining our democracy. The Siskiyou Democrats are calling on all of us to combat misinformation wherever we can: on social media platforms, by writing Letters to the Editor, and through conversations with neighbors, family, and youth.

To support this effort, we have set up a "Writer's Alliance," which can provide you with any support you need in writing Letters to the Editor or creating posts on social media. If you'd like to be involved, send an email to coordinator Tom Laurent at teleurent@snowcrest.net.

Helping Our Community

Almost 20% of the residents of Siskiyou County face food insecurity: not always having enough to feed the family. And so the Siskiyou Democrats have chosen this as our community service focus for 2021.

So far we have conducted two successful food drives in north and south county (see page 2). But we can always use more help! For information on our local food banks and their needs, & to get involved, send email to: siskiyoudems@gmail.com.

Electing Candidates Who Believe in Democracy

We are looking for Democrats to run for local offices! Please attend this workshop to find out more!

Who's Representing Us in Siskiyou County? Help Identify Democrats Who Will Work for YOU!

Thursday, July 8, 2021 - 6pm to 7pm
[On-line via Zoom](#)

[REGISTER For WORKSHOP](#)

Are you, or someone you know, interested in running for a local office? The Siskiyou Democrats are here to help!

Hear from **Elizabeth Betancourt** and **Max Steiner**, the **Democratic candidate** running against LaMalfa, on the importance of having Democrats in office!

Involving Young Democratic Voters

A key element in maintaining our democracy is reaching young people with the truth. We are working to create a Young Democrats group. If you know any young people (35 and under) who might want to be involved, send an email to the Siskiyou Democrats at siskiyoudems@gmail.com

IN THIS ISSUE

Siskiyou Democrats have been busy this quarter! On pages 2, 3, and 6, you'll find information about our many activities in securing both food and funds to address hunger in Siskiyou County, and reports by your delegates to the CADEM (state party) convention in late April. Above, you'll see information on an important candidate development workshop offering.

On page 4, we continue our Top Stories recap, where the right-wing Republican assault on our democracy again takes the lead. We also provide the latest information on the bad faith and costly attempt to recall Governor Gavin Newsom, and guidance on how you can get involved in ensuring its failure.

There has never been a more important time to take action, so please attend our workshops, make those calls and posts, and write those letters!

Hungry People in Siskiyou County Need Our Help!

In the state of California, **Siskiyou County ranks fifth highest** in the percentage of residents experiencing food insecurity – **almost 20%, or one in five** of our county’s population. (Source: [Feeding America](#) website) Siskiyou Grassroots Democrats will be helping the county’s food banks to feed our Siskiyou neighbors.

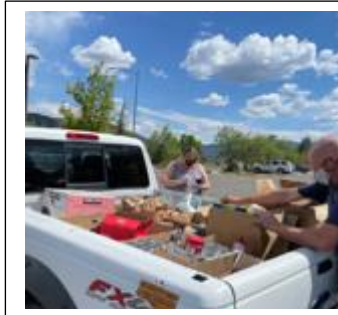
North Siskiyou Food Drive:

Thanks to the generosity of our Siskiyou County community, the Siskiyou Democrats held a very successful food donation event on Saturday, May 15. Dozens of donors stepped up and gave so much we filled a pickup and SUV! (see the two pictures on right) Additionally, over \$500 was given to support our two local food banks.

The Directors of the Siskiyou Community Food Bank and the Yreka Food Bank were very pleased with the number of donations. So thanks to all who participated!



Our fabulous north county food bank organizers (from left): Betsey Shuteroff, Neldena Anderson, Pat Hardig, Suzy Clark.



South Siskiyou Food Drive:

The June 12 Food Drive at Market Place Insurance was a wonderful success! There was a steady stream of donors from the time we set up at 9:30 AM right through closing at 3PM, supported by a wonderful team of volunteers on-site having a great time throughout the day.

Food was collected for adults, children, and dogs and cats, for distribution at Siskiyou Food Assistance Food Bank in Weed, and to South County Family and Community Resource Centers for Mt. Shasta and Dunsmuir. All together we collected three pickups of food, and \$750 in cash and checks.



Thanks to our South County Grassroots Democrats Community Involvement Team – Carolyn Miller, Karen Zeigler, Marty Sochet, Karen Holmes, Al Lugo, Lexy Clancy, Pattie Crossen and Maggie Barto, as well as to the many other volunteers and those who donated! Everyone did a great job!

California Democratic Party CONVENTION

The California Democratic Party held their annual convention in late April, 2021. Close to 5,000 Democrats from all over California came together, virtually, to get our business done. We have seven delegates from Siskiyou County, to ensure that our voice is heard. As one of them, I've been lucky enough to attend these conventions since 2017, and I always enjoy and learn from them. The main event this year was electing CDP officers to four year terms.



We re-elected Rusty Hicks as Chair, and chose Betty Yee and David Campos as Vice-Chairs, Melahat Rafiei as Secretary, and April Verrett as Controller. (The five new officers are shown at left.) Otherwise, the focus of the convention was the recovery from the pandemic and the fight to stop the recall of Governor Gavin Newsom.

The Chair, Rusty Hicks (center in photo), is enthusiastic about the new leadership team for the state party. In his recent newsletter, he stated: "Over the last month, I've had the opportunity to begin collaborating with our new Statewide Officers – [from left:] Melahat, Betty, David, and April. Every single one of them is a phenomenal leader with a wealth of grassroots experience and a deep commitment to uplifting the voices of all Californians."

Saturday's many speakers included our own Audrey Denney, who did a wonderful job talking about our district. There was training on the first phase of the JEDI program, which will include future trainings in practicing Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. And we heard from elected officials, both State and Federal, all the way up to Vice-President Kamala Harris. There are many caucus meetings at convention, and I made it to as many as possible. The Rural Caucus always has a great meeting that focuses on the issues important to us here in Siskiyou County. **For details, see Katherine Shelton's piece on page 6 in this issue.** Finally, on Sunday we had a full day of voting on legislation and resolutions.

Meeting virtually means that we can attend safely, without hours of traveling. But I missed being together with other delegates. In person, there is a real feeling of power, and the connections we make seem more valuable. We learn from each other, and it makes our large state feel a little more like a community. So I'm really looking forward to being able to meet with fellow Democrats in person, as soon as it is safe to do so! And I hope you'll all stay engaged and active as we head toward fall and a likely recall election. Thanks for all you do! –Alice Rogers, Chair, DCCSC

For more Convention News, see page 6

No on the Recall: A \$215 Million Political Folly

The latest polling by respected source Public Policy Institute of California shows how likely voters feel about the recall: 57% oppose, 40% approve (SacBee, May 27, 2021). At the same time the Bee reports that the recall will cost the state over \$200 million, including more than \$330,000 in cash-strapped Siskiyou County.

Newsom's current approval rating is 54% overall, 64% for his handling of the pandemic. Although we still have to make it happen, the recall is almost certain to fail, while costing the state millions that could be used for critical needs like food security, affordable housing, education, homelessness, and many more. **Let the Dahle's know how you feel about this!** And Siskiyou Democrats will be mounting an all-out GOTV effort later in the year. Stay tuned! We'll need you for canvassing, postcards, and calling. More on page 4 below.

This Quarter's Top Stories

Voter Suppression Update—The Fight for Our Democracy

“The right to vote is the cornerstone of our democracy, the right from which all other rights ultimately flow.”

Merrick Garland, June 11, 2021

“What Republicans intend is to install an *unelected* Republican in the White House in 2024, and in as many other local and national offices as possible. They are counting on us to be complacent and exhausted by the pandemic.”

Ben Rhodes, National Security advisor to Barack Obama

There's a lot going on across the country. On Friday, June 11, Attorney General Merrick Garland finally responded to the national outcry over false claims of fraud in the last election, resulting “audits,” and voter suppression laws proposed or passed all across the country. He promised to double the cadre of lawyers in the Civil Rights Division, and to “use all existing provisions of [existing laws] to ensure that we protect every qualified American seeking to participate in our democracy.” He assured us that DOJ lawyers are “scrutinizing new laws that seek to curb voter access, and where we see violations we will not hesitate to act.” And on June 25 he followed through, announcing that **the DOJ will sue Georgia over its recently-passed discriminatory laws.**

While this is great news, some of the most egregious laws recently passed will take the whole *post-election* process out of the hands of non-partisan election officials and give it to partisan legislatures, who can overturn unwanted election results without oversight. And in some states, proposed laws would allow judges to consider allegations of fraud without evidence, triggering election chaos. There are no current federal laws to challenge this, so, as Garland also said, Congress **must pass** the For The People Act (SB1) and the John Lewis Voting Rights Act (SB4), to give teeth to the DOJ's interventions.

But it's all coming down to reforming the filibuster. On June 22, Mitch McConnell followed through on his promise to obstruct everything proposed by Democrats. His flaming hypocrisy was on full display as he declared Senate bills 1 & 4 to be “Democrats' attempts to rig elections permanently in their favor.” By making voting easy for **everyone?** Bringing sure-to-fail SB1 to the floor was clearly intended to bring Joe Manchin around on reforming the filibuster. More pressure was brought by Reverend William Barber and the Poor People's Campaign, and many civil rights groups are planning for a Voting Rights March on Washington in late August. But as *Mother Jones* reporter Ari Berman put it, “How do we really feel about 41 Senators representing 21% of the country blocking everyone's right to vote?!”

Actions: Stacey Abrams' Fair Fight Action has launched a Hot Call Summer, to flood lawmakers with calls and emails calling for action. And Indivisible is swinging into action as well. **See page 6 for their contact information.** Join the fight as much as possible. Donate. Call or email Senators Feinstein and Padilla, urging them to keep the pressure on Senators Manchin (WVa) and Sinema (AZ) to reform or end the filibuster.

Far-right Attempt to Recall Governor Newsom

The state party, CADEM, kicked off its recall opposition movement with a Zoom conference on June 15. The strategy they are recommending is a robust broadcasting of Newsom's many accomplishments using every available outlet. They will be providing county “hubs”—here, our Siskiyou Democrats grassroots committee—with materials for canvassing and timelines for action.

Top CADEM organizer Lizzie Heyboer reported that the recall election is now expected to take place earlier in the fall than previously anticipated, maybe as early as September. So the Siskiyou Democrats will be in touch very soon with information on canvassing, calling, and other GOTV (Get Out the Vote) activities.

STAY TUNED AND READY TO VOLUNTEER FOR THIS MUST-WIN SPECIAL ELECTION!

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:

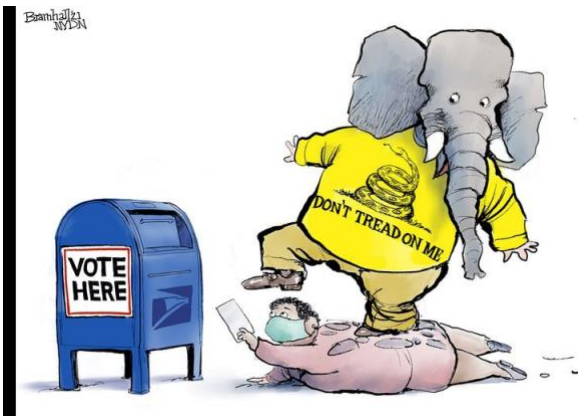
Candidate Development – We will be identifying Democratic candidates for the upcoming local office elections – for example, Board of Supervisors in June, 2022 and City Councils in November, 2022.

How you can help: ATTEND the July 8 workshop, *Who Represents You in Siskiyou County? Help Us Identify Democrats Who Will Work for YOU*. Here's the registration link: [REGISTER FOR WORKSHOP](#)

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

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 is next? Send us an email at 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



How is California doing in the fight for our democracy?

Seven Republican state senators have introduced two anti-voter bills, SB 597 and SB 511. The latter is a head-spinner, requiring county jury commissioners to give election officials juror questionnaires, and election officials to cancel the voter registrations of anyone who is not eligible to vote based on their questionnaire responses.

SB 597 would require voters to provide driver's license or Social Security information on their ballots, adding another layer of complexity and obviously targeting immigrants. This one has no sponsors. Our opinion? Both are obvious non-starters.

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 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, Carolyn Miller, Al Lugo, Larry Marks, Christine Balletta, Dolly Verrue, and Karen Zeigler. For more information, visit our website: siskiyoudemocrats.org or Facebook page: [SiskiyouCountyDemocrats](https://www.facebook.com/SiskiyouCountyDemocrats). Send mail and donations to: DCCSC, Post Office Box 4, Mt. Shasta, CA 96067.

More Convention News

This is my second term as a DCC delegate, and so I had the opportunity to attend both the lively organizing convention in San Francisco in 2019 and this year's Virtual Convention. As a Siskiyou County delegate I thought it was important to attend the Rural Caucus. Democrats in rural California have to contend with unique challenges, not the least of which is often being the minority party struggling to make our red districts bluer. The Rural Caucus seems to be where some of the hardest work is, and that's why I got up at 7:30 in the morning on a Saturday to attend their virtual meeting, coffee and bagel in hand.

After formally acknowledging the re-election of their officers and regional chairs, including Elizabeth Betancourt as Region 2 Chair, Caucus Chair Joy Sterling shared some of the big priorities for the coming year. Aside from updating the Caucus By-Laws to adapt to the need for more virtual/remote work, she talked about pushing for broadband access, and getting Democrats elected to local water boards. Secretary Karen Ross, and Chair of the Ad Hoc Water Discussion Group, Michael Saunders, followed with really great discussions on California's drought and the dangerous potential impacts of water privatization. And Sonya Logman-Harris gave an excellent presentation on California's covid-19 vaccine outreach strategy.

We also heard from Senator Alex Padilla, State Senator Mike McGuire, State Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara, and others. The Rural Caucus members also voted by acclamation to support State Senator Anna Caballero's "Dreamers to Delegates" bill, SB-714, which would allow Dreamers and other aspiring citizens to run for delegate positions on county Central Committees. The Rural Caucus meeting was packed with important information on issues and upcoming bills, and a video of the meeting is still available through their [website](#). Overall the Rural Caucus under Joyce Sterling's leadership is finding its power and becoming a real force in the state party.

Katherine Shelton, DCC Delegate and DCCSC Secretary

Convention Themes

This year, the direction of the California Democratic Party was evident from the comments made by the speakers throughout the four days. The focus was on:

1) Defeating the far-right Newsom recall, 2) Supporting our local grassroots efforts (great to hear), and **3) Challenging voter suppression and misinformation.**

Resources

Stay informed and take action here!

- *Fair Fight Action*—Sign up, and donate, here: <https://fairfight.com>
- *Indivisible*: <https://indivisible.org>
- *Poor People's Campaign*: <https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/manchin/>
- *A deep dive into the Newsom recall*
Link: [What To Know About the Newsom Recall](#)
- *In case you missed it, the Merrick Garland speech*
Link: [Garland Voting Rights Speech](#)

Books of the Quarter

After the Fall, Being American in the World We've Made—Ben Rhodes, National Security Advisor to Barack Obama; Random House, 2021. With unique insight and widespread international contacts, Rhodes investigates the world's dangerous slide from democracy into autocracy—in America, under the relentless onslaught of the current Republican party—and what we must do to prevent it here.

Our Time is Now—Stacey Abrams, Founder, Fair Fight Action; Macmillan, 2020. Here's how Abrams describes her book, just released in paperback. "This is a narrative that describes the urgency that compels me and millions more to push for a different American story than the one being told today. It's a story that is one part danger, one part action, and all true. It's a story about how and why we fight for our democracy and win."

