



LOCAL NEWS...

John Dean a Hit

Filled 250 seats and sold 80+ books... \$500+ going to fire relief.

by Raymond Lutz

Converted Republican John Dean presented his new book *Broken Government* on November 7th in a joint meeting of the La Mesa-Foothills, East County, and Santee Democratic Clubs to an audience of just over 250.

In his book, Dean explains how the Republican administrations have systematically gutted all three branches of government. They've loaded the Supreme Court with a majority of justices who abide by the "Strict Construc-

tionist" code word, which when translated really means that they will honor few if any improvements to civil liberties and will continue to move power from the populace to the hands of the corporate few. That doesn't even mention the firing of federal prosecutors, like Carol Lam, who were falling out of favor with the administration on political grounds—especially as Lam made progress fingering "Duke" Cunningham and tying him with Dusty Fogel.

The legislative branch, although slightly recovering under Democratic control, was meeting only two days per week, passing bills written by the corporations who have an interest in them, and operating under rules that deny Democrats from proposing any amendments and avoiding meaningful debate. Then they would hold votes open for hours to twist arms of any moderate

Republicans who did not want to go along with the neocon agenda.

Dean stresses that *process* is extremely important but is typically not stressed by Democrats. No Democratic platform planks dealt with process in the last election after a steady decline of emphasis in process over the years.

The entire video of Dean's presentation can be viewed on our web site.

Harris Fire Guts East County Blackwater Fires-Up PR.

by Raymond Lutz

Just as our prior issue of *East County Progressive* was going to press, the Harris Ranch and Witch Creek fires were just starting to have their way with the county. The Harris fire started in Potrero--within five miles of the proposed Blackwater West site. As of this writing, the investigation into the cause of that fire is still ongoing.

Strong Santa-Ana winds blew the fire mostly past the bulk of Potrero, including Twin Lakes resort, the home of about 150 families. Although the evacuation of neighborhoods was standard procedure in front of the progress of the

See Local News on page 2.

East County Democratic Club

*Serving El Cajon, Rancho San Diego,
Jamul, Lakeside, and outlying
San Diego County since 1965*

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MEETING LOCATION:

*Rancho San Diego Library
11555 Via Rancho San Diego
El Cajon, CA 92019
(Unless otherwise noted!)*

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL
IN PROGRESS!**

UPCOMING EVENTS

HOLIDAY PARTY

Marti Emerald, candidate for San Diego City Council and former TV personality will keynote at our Holiday Party on December 5th. We join with the other clubs in the area for a huge get-together! Turkey and Ham provided. Please bring a side-dish/dessert to share. Held at the La Mesa Community Center from 6:30 to 9pm. Festive, casual attire. Hope to see you there!



ECDC General Meeting, 13 Jan

ALL HANDS ON DECK! Let's kick off the new year with a strong turnout! We will have officer elections and conduct the Presidential primary straw poll, as well as discuss tactics for voter turnout.

"Beyond Treason", 27 Jan

This film documents the US Government's long history conducting deadly military experiments. Do you think they've stopped? Hardly.



SCHEDULE

**05 Dec 2007 (Wed) 6:30-9 pm
Combo Holiday Party!**

Keynote: Marti Emerald
La Mesa Community Center, 4975
Memorial Drive, La Mesa, CA 91941

11 Dec 2007 – Recall Election of
Blackwater-supporting Potrero
Planning Group members. We'll
be observing the vote count.

13 Jan 2008 (Sun) 2 p.m.
ECDC General Meeting. Officer
Elections, Presidential Primary
final straw poll

27 Jan 2008 (Sun) 2 p.m.
Current Events Theater presents
"Beyond Treason"

LOCAL NEWS (Cont.)

fire, the residents of Potrero were not asked to evacuate during those early stages of the fire, and they became stranded as the fire burned west, decimating the area around SR-94 and then circling around and up Hauser Canyon.

As late as Thursday and Friday the week of the fires, Gov. Schwarzenegger and Pres. Bush swaggered through Rancho Bernardo neighborhoods and the Qualcomm evacuation center. As the evac center at the Q was being closed on Friday, the residents of Potrero were in desperate need of supplies, such as fuel for their well pumps to get water.

Somehow, Blackwater V.P. Brian Bonfiglio was able to make it past road blocks, although only residents were being allowed into Potrero as late as Friday. He brought in supplies about an hour after UT reporter Anne Krueger was surveying the situation at the Potrero Volunteer Fire Department, and he provided those supplies to desperate residents, including Blackwater opponent Jan Hedlun.

The whole episode was detailed in Krueger's article on the matter, quoting Thell Fowler as saying he would have been willing to take supplies from Hilter.

This shortage of relief supplies in Potrero was quite remarkable since other areas had long completed distributing their supplies. One could only wonder if the shortage allowed to continue so Blackwater could become the valiant white knight saving the town from the ravages of the disaster, indeed just days prior to the mailing of the ballots in the



Potrero VFD volunteer wearing Blackwater hat carries boxed relief to sustain a family of four for four days as truck is unloaded in Potrero.

recall election concerning the Blackwater West project.

Early the next week, we contacted the Potrero Volunteer Fire Department and they confirmed that they were still short of food, diapers, and baby formula. After discussing this with StopBlackwater organizers Carol Jahnkow (of the Peace Resource Center of San Diego) and Susan Friedman (of Activist San Diego), we were tempted to purchase the supplies from Costco and drive it up to Potrero.

However, after a chat with Mark Hanson and a few more phone calls, we were able to locate surplus relief supplies in a warehouse in Escondido. At that point, our only problem was getting the supplies from Escondido to Potrero.

As the clock continued to tick, we rented the largest U-Haul moving van we could rent, drove it to Escondido, loaded it for two hours with five other volunteers from the Church of Christ, then drove it to Potrero, nursing the poor beast with about eight tons of supplies up I-8 at about 30 mph as other drivers probably cursed under their breath as they passed.

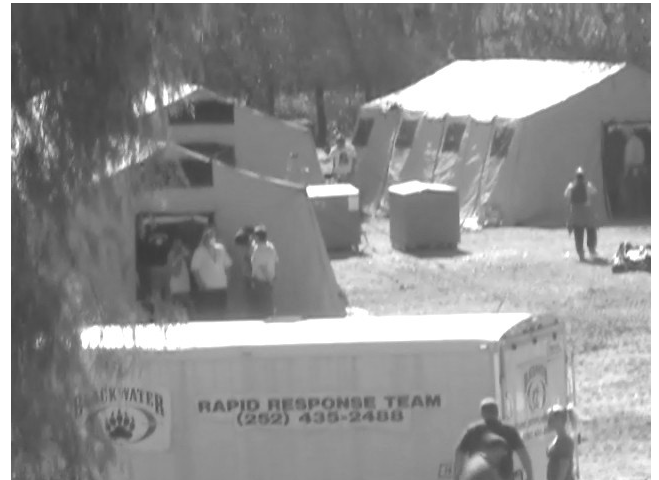
Carol and Susan drove ahead and prepared the volunteers at the volunteer fire department who would have otherwise gone home. The truck pulled in at about 9 p.m. and some ten volunteers in Potrero helped to unload it. Even pro-Blackwater Brenda Wise shook my hand and reluctantly thanked us for the effort, as pro-Blackwater resident Jack Reider (who hosted the counter protest during our rally) was trying to square this with his preconceived notions.

The gratitude didn't last too long, however. As Blackwater erected their "tent city" across the street from Barrett Cafe, we learned that our work to bring in supplies to Potrero was now cast as nothing more than a publicity stunt thwarted by locals who unloaded the truck prior to the arrival of cameras the next morning. The supplies we brought up were now distributed from Blackwater tents. Yet, Blackwater's meager relief effort was no publicity stunt even though it seemed the papers could not get enough of the progress of Bonfiglio's white Hummer.

Indeed, as I filmed the erection of the tent city from the public right-of-way (but out of the road) on Friday, Nov. 2, I had no problem at all. The next day, however, we were confronted by two argumentative females (indeed, I am tempted to use other descriptive words here but will resist the temptation) and told to get out of the road as we were suddenly causing a problem with traffic. Then Leon Herzog, the owner of the Barrett Cafe, informed us that we could no longer park in the area under the sign that said "Park Here."

As we attempted to back out, the local Sheriff pulled up, blocked us in and four MPs in fatigues surrounded the car. I told the Sheriff that we were given only one request to move and we were moving.

We reparked the car just west of Barrett Road. I walked back with my



camera running, staying on the public right-of-way. Herzog and the Sheriff stopped my progress and said I could not even stand on the side of the road. Also, Herzog also said he owned the new parking spot as well. Of course, I have a right to use the public right-of-way, but after some discussion, decided to call it a day.

You can view the "Tent City" video (on the CitizensOversight.org site) to see all the details, including the Blackwater "Rapid Response Team" trailers obviously relabeled just for this PR stunt. Of course, the fact that almost no one has stayed in the tent city proves the idea that benevolence is the last thing on the mind of Bonfiglio and the Blackwater PR team.

At the Potrero Community Planning Group meeting on November 8th, no one seemed to remember the fact that we delivered those eight tons of supplies, but instead complained loudly that I did not visit the Volunteer Fire Department on Saturday, Oct. 27th when I was able to get through the road blocks by riding with a reporter. Go figure.

(The expenses incurred for the truck and fuel were paid for by the money collected at the John Dean event on Nov. 7th. Thank you!)

Stop Blackwater Resolution supported by State E-Board

A resolution to withhold corporate charters from companies who raise private armies – like Blackwater – was unanimously supported by the Democratic State Party at the Executive Board (“e-Board”) meeting in Anaheim on November 18.

The resolution was drafted in cooperation with Stevan Thomas of the 15th Assembly District (Bay Area) and presented in Anaheim by Lutz.

The resolution is a good start to support legislators to introduce bills that will limit the power of private armies. Hopefully, this will limit the possibility that we will be surprised by an announcement of martial law due to some apparent disaster, with Bush pulling a “Musharra” followed by Blackwater soldiers patrolling the streets, picking off citizens who are

parked under a “Park Here” sign or display the wrong sort of bumper sticker.

Dems elbow Mother Goose

We march in the La Mesa Flag-Day parade and in the Independence Day Crest parade. Can the ECDC march in the Mother Goose Parade?

“Absolutely not!” said the organizer of the parade, the Mother Goose Parade Assn. “This is a family event.”

What? Of course I asked them why the Democratic Club is considered not family oriented, but seemed to be talking to a brick wall. Oh well, getting in the parade may be next to impossible, but can we have a presence and register voters?

Membership Chair Kristy Mundt called their office to find out where we could put our table and canopy, but they said it would not be possible for us to have a booth at the parade as they don’t have political parties there.

Luckily, the issue of having a presence at a public event and even at large public malls has been clearly supported in 1980 by the Supreme Court’s “Pruneyard” Decision.

In *Robins v. Pruneyard Shopping Center*, the California Supreme Court held that the California Constitution protects speech and petitioning, reasonably exercised, in privately owned shopping centers because the modern shopping center is a “public forum.” Large retail malls, it reasoned, are the modern-day equivalent of town squares, and owners of such facilities cannot both invite the public and exclude those who wish to communicate with them.

After sending the text of the decision to the association and to the City of El Cajon, we were offered a promenade booth location, but far away from the street by the alley. We noted that the Republicans had a booth conveniently located right on Main Street, which they closed quite early as the crowds overflowed their booth. Ours stayed open, at least. No political parties? Right.

We registered 7-Ds, 1-G, 1-DTS, and 2-Rs. At least we know how to get our foot in the door. I think we can target the Wednesday night car shows next!

Please send any comments to

newsletter@eccdweb.org

From the President...

Guess what? It’s time to send in your annual dues to help support the East County

Democratic Club and to continue to receive this newsletter—the best progressive publication in the East County!

Let’s face it, we’ve made a lot of progress since January, 2006, when I took the position of President and rechartered the club out of likely oblivion. Since then, we’ve sent chills down the spines of local unethical right wingers as we exposed their cronyism and constitutional violations.

We put a stop to the David Barton videos being played by Councilmember Bob McClellan. We’ve helped raise awareness about the invasion of our backcountry by Blackwater, and have even been mentioned as far away as North Carolina as the primary force blocking Blackwater’s progress.

Just think. The upcoming recall election of the members of the Potrero Planning Group who voted to approve the Blackwater project by only some 500 voters in that precinct will be the first time anyone in the country has had the balls to say “no” to Blackwater Worldwide.

The little town of Potrero is akin to the sole Chinese man blocking the line of tanks moving into Tiananmen square.



When you see that picture, you just want to support that man, to help him stop the tanks. We can help the town of Potrero, but we need your support. Please renew your membership today.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS! Please enjoy your celebration of winter solstice!

-- Raymond Lutz, President. ☺

Membership Campaign

Our club makes it easy to know when your membership expires: everyone expires at the end of the year unless you joined after October.

Now is the time to send in your dues for the next year! You will get a subscription to this newsletter, the right to vote at club meetings, and discounts on events, plus, the knowledge that you are supporting the most important resistance to our Republican neocon administration and local cronyism.

Also, our nominating committee will be looking for people who want to take leading roles in the club. Remember, candidates cannot have club roles. PLEASE VOLUNTEER!



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ECDC MEMBERSHIP FORM

(Don't miss any future issues!)

- | | Single | Dual/Couple |
|----------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Student/Senior | <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 |
| General | <input type="checkbox"/> \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 |
| Sustaining | <input type="checkbox"/> \$60 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 |
| Sponsoring | <input type="checkbox"/> \$125 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$200 |
| Patron | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$750 |
- Newsletter Only \$12 (free otherwise).
 I am a Democrat
 I am not a Democrat but wish to join as a non-voting Associate
 Please send newsletter as email (PDF).
 My name and address as shown on the label is incorrect, see corrections --->
Occupation:

(Req'd for FPPC Reports)

COPs NEWS

Dec 11th Recall Election

by Raymond Lutz

One of the most important elections in the nation will occur on December 11th. Residents of Potrero will have the gift of being able to vote on the Blackwater West project.

Indeed, the ballot will not have the word Blackwater written anywhere, but you'd have to live under a rock not to realize that the outcome of this election will directly affect the disposition of that project.

Our county is huge – larger than 21 other states in terms of population – but it has almost no representation. If you live in unincorporated areas of the county, you have only a single supervisor that represents you on a panel of five, a panel without a single Democrat, of course. Other states have a number of smaller counties, and many more representatives.

Normally, the only way you can have

any input into the process is to go to hearings—hearings where you can talk until you are blue in the face and then watch the elected officials ignore everything that was said.

But the voters in Potrero get to vote to recall their planning group. They get to have their voice clearly heard about the project.

If they say no to the project, Blackwater should respect the democratic process and withdraw their project from the county Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU). There is no reason to complete the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), as it is superfluous.

If the voters do not recall those members of the planning group and the group still approves the project, it still may be stopped by the EIR or by the vote of the Board of Supervisors.

Under that scenario, it is likely that the County will drag its collective feet so that hearings on the EIR will be held after the elections in November, 2008. That will conveniently remove the controversial issue from discussion as the

Board of Supervisors can claim that they can't discuss the project since they may have to vote on it later. Dianne Jacob has already said that she won't comment and won't even allow constituents to mention the project in her presence. This was after she met privately with Rep. Duncan Hunter and Blackwater in May of 2006 just before the project was opened in the DPLU.

This will be the first election held after Debra Bowen decertified the voting machines, and in this election, ballots will be counted by hand. You can bet that this election will be followed by national and international media, but they may still try to cheat.

Blackwater is facing the voters. It is unprecedented in more ways than one. This is where we put our collective foot down and say no to the illegal activities of Bush and his administration, where we say no to privatization of our military and decimation of Round Potrero Valley. Stop Blackwater!

