

The Rossmoor Democrat

Volume 2023, Issue 6

Marcia Karasoff, Editor

Nov-Dec, 2023

November



December



President Susan Hildreth's Message



Susan Hildreth

Greetings and I hope everyone is having a lovely fall despite the challenges we are facing both nationally and internationally. I wanted to let everyone know that this is my last President's Message as the Democrats of Rossmoor Board has decided to no longer publish *The Rossmoor Democrat* newsletter. I would like to thank Marcia Karasoff, current Editor, and all the other volunteers who have served as newsletter Editors for their great service since the newsletter's inception in January 2014.

The newsletter has been an engaging communications tool and we know readers enjoy the humorous cartoons. The Democrats of Rossmoor provide a weekly news update *News of the Week* that is sent via email to all members in good standing every Monday. If you are not receiving this email, please contact membership@democratsofrossmoor.org. Readers will see those cartoons pop up in the *News of the Week*!

The Democrats of Rossmoor will launch a new website, hopefully in December. (Website launches are always tricky.) The website will contain detailed information about all of the Democrats of Rossmoor events, programs and activities and will be easy to use. With the information on the website and the weekly updates, the Board thought that our members had several opportunities to keep up-to-date on our activities. If you have any questions about Democrats of Rossmoor programs or activities, check in at info@democratsofrossmoor.org or check our website at <https://democratsofrossmoor.org/>.

At the October meeting, Democrats of Rossmoor officers and Board members were approved for the 2024-2025 term. Rose Holmes, first Vice-President, Mary Taylor, second Vice-President, Mirna Wong, Treasurer, and I have signed on for another term. We will be joined by Alisa Kramer, Secretary. Continuing Board members are Joyce Brock, Gail Chesler, Diana Doughtie, Sue Hamill, Katha Hartley, Don Hoyt, Rose Jackson, Alice King, Steve Shields, Linda Walonen and Carol Weed. I want to thank this great team for stepping up to continue our critical work.

President's message continued on Page 2

President's message continued from page 1

Several members of the Democrats of Rossmoor Board are stepping down at the end of their 2023 term. Thanks to Marc Gould who has served as our Secretary and provided clear and detailed minutes of our Board meetings. Also thanks to Marcia Karasoff who has served as our Newsletter Editor. We are fortunate that Marcia will remain involved with the Democrats of Rossmoor as one of our primary content contributors to the new website. Jerry and Phyllis Jones have been "the host and hostess with the mostess" and provided wonderful refreshments and volun-

teer engagement that made our events very welcoming and fun. We continue to look for eager volunteers to lead the Democrats of Rossmoor hospitality efforts.

It has been my pleasure to lead the Democrats of Rossmoor Board during 2022-2023 and it is my honor to continue that role through 2024-2025. We have our work cut out for us in 2024 as we work with all our might to save democracy. We can do it and thank you all for your support and commitment to Blue Victory in 2024. I would also like to wish all our members a healthy and happy holiday season.



Democrats of Rossmoor elected the 2024-2025 officers at the General Meeting on October 26, 2023. Pictured left to right are Mirna Wong, Treasurer; Alisa Kramer, Secretary; Mary Taylor, Second Vice President; Rose Holmes, First Vice President; and Susan Hildreth, President.



Democrats of Rossmoor Board Members introduced at the General Meeting on October 26, 2023, are left to right: Rose Jackson, Alice King, Diana Doughtie, Linda Walonen, Don Hoyt, Katha Hartley, Carol Weed and Stephen Shields. Not pictured are Joyce Brock, Gail Chesler and Sue Hamill.

**THERE WILL BE NO GENERAL MEETING IN NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER, 2023,
DUE TO THANKSGIVING AND DECEMBER HOLIDAYS.
THE NEXT GENERAL MEETING WILL BE ON JANUARY 25, 2024.
LOOK FOR DETAILS IN THE WEEKLY UPDATE
AND ON DEMOCRATSOFFROSSMOOR.ORG.**

Thank Goodness We're Democrats

BY LINDA WALONEN

The Democrats of Rossmoor will hold the monthly TGWD in the Fireside Room on Thursday, November 9 at 4:00PM. Bring a snack to share.

The speaker for the afternoon will be Rossmoor's General Manager, Jeff Matheson. He will address such topics as Rossmoor's response to climate change, insurance challenges and plans for dealing with aging infrastructure.

In January of 2023 Matheson took over the General Manager position. Prior to this, he was the Director of Resident

Services for Rossmoor where he oversaw construction and renovation projects totaling over \$25,000,000.00. Prior to joining Rossmoor, Jeff served more than 9 years as Director of Recreation and Public Works for the City of Dixon.



Jeff Matheson

Matheson grew up in Mendocino. He attended California State University, Chico, receiving his bachelor's degree in 1993 and a master's degree in 2000. He lives with his wife in Winters, CA, north of Vacaville.

Everyone is welcome to come to this event. Send any questions to info@democratsofrossmoor.org.



At TGWD on October 12, 2023, we got a bonus of two-for-one speakers. Mike Madrid (left) gave a presentation on *Authoritarianism: A Clear and Present Danger in the U.S. and the World*. His talk was preceded by an impromptu presentation by Walnut Creek City Councilman, Kevin Wilk (right) on his recent trip to Israel and the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023.

Defending

Democracy

Human Rights at Home and Abroad

A Rossmoor Human Rights Forum

Co-Sponsored by Rossmoor clubs including:

African Americans & Friends	LGBTQ Alliance
Cal Alumni	Mt Diablo Peace and Justice Organization
Current Events Discussion Club	National Council of Jewish Women
Democrats of Rossmoor	Rotary Club of Rossmoor
Emergency Preparedness Organization	Sustainable Rossmoor
Interfaith Council of Rossmoor	

**Rossmoor Event Center,
Walnut Creek**

Wednesday, Nov. 15, 9:00–4:00

Lunch at 12:30 (included in price)



Tickets available at
tinyurl.com/Rossmoor-11-15-23
\$40/seat, purchase by Nov. 8

**All proceeds benefit
the Human Rights Center**



Join us for a deep dive into today's most pressing human rights issues, featuring leading thinkers in law, climate, journalism, and public health.

Featuring

- **Jennifer Granholm**, U.S. Secretary of Energy
- **Beth Van Schaack**, US Ambassador for Global Criminal Justice

and speakers from

- The Human Rights Center at UC Berkeley
- The UC Center on Climate Change, Health and Equity
- The UC Global Health Institute
- Stanford University
- Physicians for Human Rights
- National Center for Youth Law

Please visit our event page for more details with a full list of speakers at events.berkeley.edu/hrc

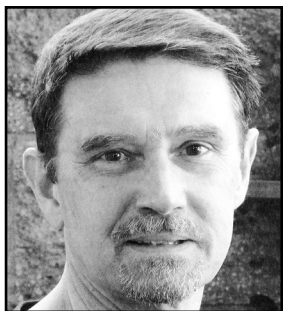
Special DoR Sponsored Event JFK Remembrance - November 28, 2023

By CINDA RAPP

The DOR is pleased to announce that it will be sponsoring an evening to honor the Presidency of John Fitzgerald Kennedy on Tuesday, November 28th at the Event Center. The evening begins with appetizers and wine by donation



John Tranchitella



Ed Kimak



Joe Costella



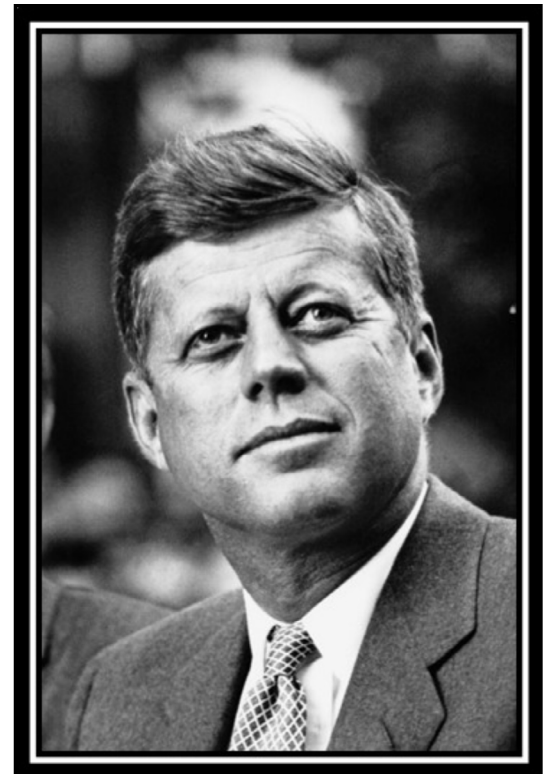
Sandra Lipsman

at 5:30PM, followed by the program at 7:00PM. Pearls, a-line dresses, pill-box hats, thin ties and old campaign buttons are welcome to help set the mood.

The evening will represent Kennedy from the inauguration to his death. Two of Kennedy's most inspiring speeches, the Inaugural and the Civil Rights Address, will be performed as well as two scenes with JFK (played by Bay Area professional actor John Tranchitella) and RFK (played by Ed Kimak) as they come to terms with Civil Rights and JFK's upcoming trip to Dallas. Kennedy's sense of humor and wit are portrayed during a Press Conference Scene.

Musical selections include a performance of Bob Dylan's *Murder Most Foul* as performed by Joe Costella and *Pie Jesu*, performed by Soprano Sandra Lipsman. Remembrances by those who met Kennedy and a sampling of where Rossmoor residents were during the assassination helps us remember how global the grief was 60 years ago this month. We hope you will join us for an evening and enjoy the political scene as it once was. Every vote counts.

Proceeds from ticket sales will benefit the Trinity Center in Walnut Creek, a non-residential program serving unstably housed people in Contra Costa County. Tickets are \$20 and can be obtained by contacting http://weblink.donorperfect.com/JFK_Remembrance or mailing a check payable to Trinity Center to Joyce Brock 2224 Pine Knoll #1 Walnut Creek 94595 by November 21.



John Fitzgerald Kennedy

Democrats of Rossmoor November Book Club

By STEVE SHIELDS

The book club of the Democrats of Rossmoor will discuss *Laboratories of Autocracy: A Wake Up Call from Behind the Lines*, by David Pepper, at their monthly meeting November 6 at 3:00PM in MPR 2. All are welcome.

The publisher writes: "It's the statehouses, stupid." *Laboratories of Autocracy* shows that far more than the high-profile antics of politicians like Marjorie Taylor Greene or Jim Jordan—and yes, even bigger than Donald Trump's "Big Lie"—it's anonymous, often corrupt politicians in statehouses across the country who pose the greatest dangers to American democracy. Because these statehouses no longer operate as functioning democracies, these unknown politicians have all the incentive to keep doing greater damage, and can not be held accountable however extreme they get. This has driven

steep declines in states like Ohio and others across the country. And collectively, it's placed American democracy in its greatest peril since the dawn of the Jim Crow era. But

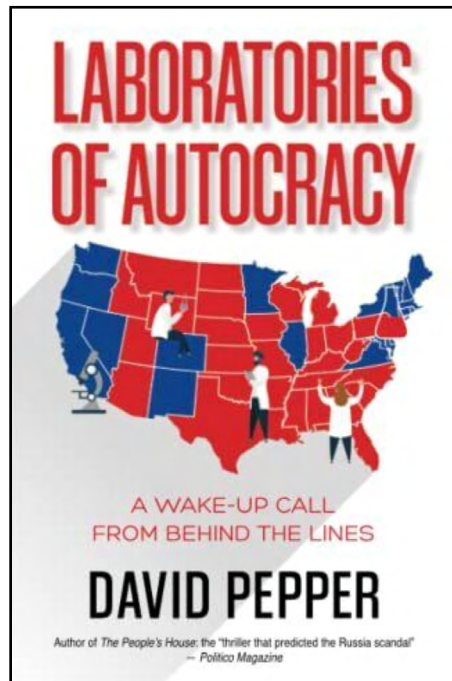
Pepper doesn't stop there. He lays out a robust pro-democracy agenda outlining how everyone from elected officials to business leaders to everyday citizens can fight back."

The paperback is \$16 and the Kindle edition is just \$4. In addition it might be available free from the Walnut Creek library in both paper or digital format

Membership in the Democrats of Rossmoor is not required to attend the book club or any other meetings but

you may join online at democratsofrossmoor.org at any time.

For more information please email Gary at gbhorp@gmail.com.



Democrats of Rossmoor December Book Club

BY GARY HORPDAHL

The book club of the Democrats of Rossmoor will discuss *Democracy Awakening: Notes on the State of America*, by Heather Cox Richardson, at the monthly meeting December 4 at 3:00PM in MPR 2. All are welcome.

In the midst of the impeachment crisis of 2019, Heather Cox Richardson launched a daily Facebook essay providing the historical background of the daily torrent of news. It soon turned into a newsletter and its readership ballooned to more than 2,000,000 dedicated readers who rely on her plainspoken and informed take on the present and past in America.

In *Democracy Awakening*, Richardson crafts a compelling and original narrative, explaining how, over the decades, a small group of wealthy people have made war on American ideals. By weaponizing language and promoting false history they have led us into authoritarianism - creating a disaffected population and then promising to recreate an imagined past where those people could feel important again. She argues that taking our country back starts by remembering the elements of the nation's true history that marginalized Americans have always upheld. Their dedication to the principles on which this nation was founded has enabled us to renew and expand our commitment to democracy in the past. Richardson sees this history as a road map for the nation's future.

Richardson's talent is to wrangle our giant, meandering, and confusing news feed into a coherent story that singles out what we

should pay attention to, what the precedents are, and what possible paths lie ahead. In her trademark calm prose, she is realistic and optimistic about the future of democracy. Her command of history allows her to pivot effortlessly from the Founders to the Abolitionists to Reconstruction to Goldwater

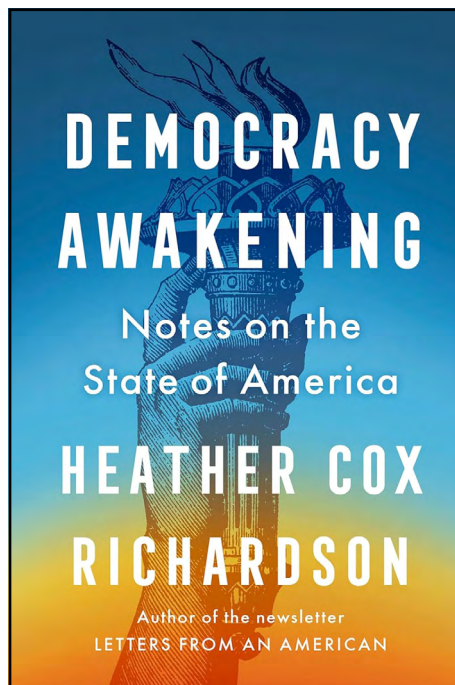
to Mitch McConnell, highlighting the political legacies of the New Deal, the lingering fears of socialism, the death of the liberal consensus and birth of "movement conservatism."

The Kindle edition is \$15, the hardcover is \$27, the paperback is \$29. It might be available free from the Walnut Creek library in both paper or digital format.

Membership in the Democrats of Rossmoor, the largest Democratic Club in America, is not required to attend the book club or any other meetings but

you may join online at democratsofrossmoor.org at any time.

For more information please email Gary at gborp@gmail.com.



DoR member, Barbara Abernathy, registers voters in downtown Walnut Creek during the Sunday Farmer's Market on October 15, 2023.

Democrats of Rossmoor November Film

BY LYNNE THORNER

Rossmoor residents and friends are cordially invited to Peacock Hall on Monday November 13th at 1:00PM to attend a film program featuring a timely comedy with a memorably long title: *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar* (1995).

Directed by Beeban Kidron with screenplay by Douglas Carter Beane, the cast includes: Wesley Snipes, Patrick Swayze, John Leguizamo, Stockard Channing, Blythe Danner, and Chris Penn. Each of the 3 lead performers (Snipes, Swayze, and Leguizamo) earned Oscar nominations for their amazing performances in the Best Supporting Actor category!

After jointly winning a local Drag Queen Pageant in New York City, Noxzema Jackson (Wesley Snipes) and Vida Boheme (Patrick Swayze), along with inexperienced Chi Chi Rodriguez (John Leguizamo), travel across country until their car breaks down in Snydersville, a small mid-western town. With just their wits and an endless supply of costumes,

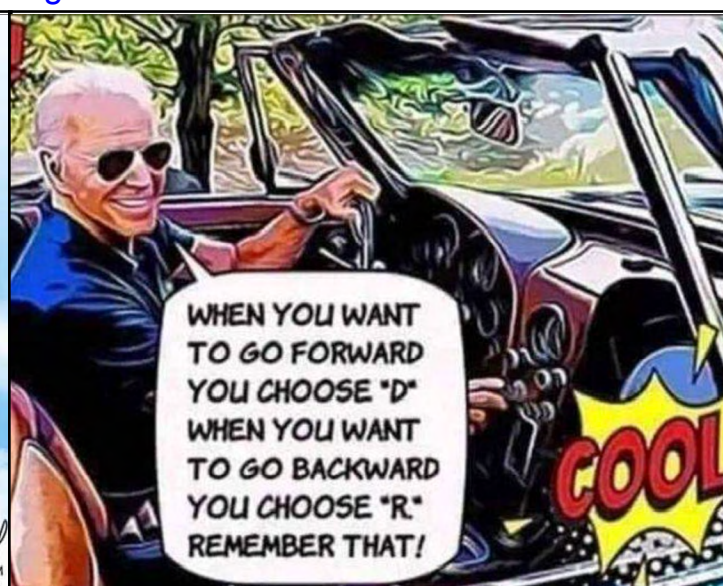
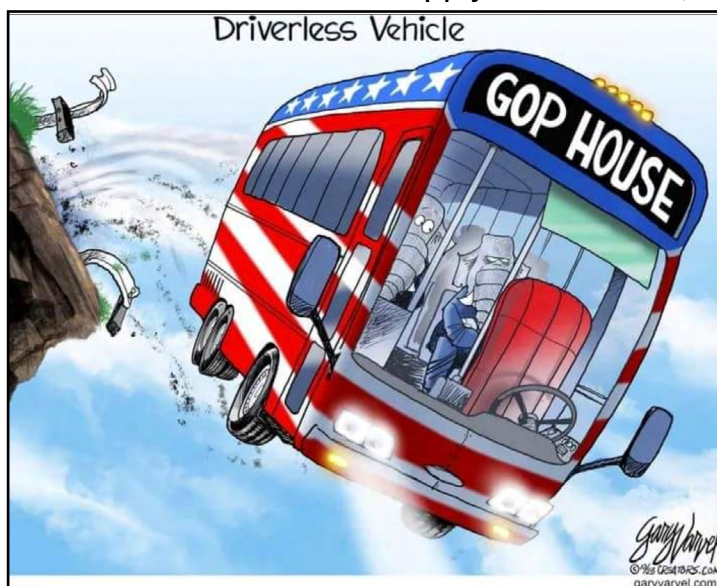
they transform the town, everyone who lives there, and themselves!

Roger Ebert wrote that "*To Wong Foo* is the first movie about drag queens to be rated PG-13, which it earns by being so relentlessly upbeat and wholesome that you walk out of the theater thinking of the queens as role models; every small town should be as lucky as Snydersville, and have its values transformed by them."

Chris Penn stands out in his delivery of homophobic, sexist and racist monologues that seem terribly timely! Ultimately, the comedy comes across as a celebration of openness, alter-

native lifestyles and bonding, all life-affirming values that in the 1990's are beyond reproach – or real controversy!

The film runs for an hour and 49 minutes and provides subtitles. Film enthusiast Lynne Thorner will facilitate a post-viewing discussion based on the timeliness of ideas expressed in the film. Please direct any questions or concerns to Lynne at lbthorner4657@gmail.com.



Democrats of Rossmoor December Film

By LYNNE THORNER

Rossmoor residents and friends are warmly invited to Peacock Hall on December 11th at 1:00PM to view a romantic comedy wrapped inside a political story. December's featured film will be the audience pleasing *The American President* (1995).

Directed by Rob Reiner with screenplay by Aaron Sorkin, the film stars Michael Douglas, Annette Benning, Richard Dreyfuss, Martin Sheen, and Michael J. Fox. The film's narrative focuses on Andrew Shepherd, a widowed U.S. President running for re-election, and Sydney Wade, an environmental lobbyist, who fall in love. Although their behavior is all above-board, his political opponent launches an attack on the President's character – and sparks fly!

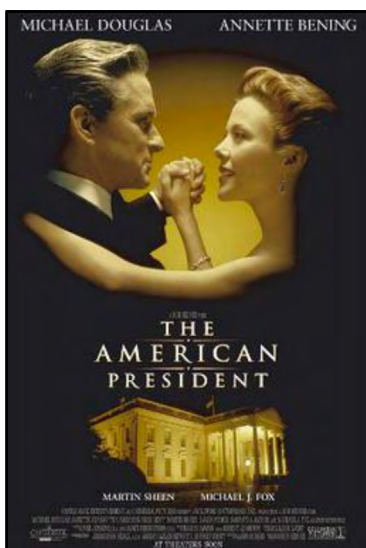
The film earned an Oscar nomination for Marc Shaiman's Musical Score and received 5 Golden Globe-nominations for Best Pic-

ture, Best Director (Reiner), Best Screenplay (Sorkin) and Best Actress (Benning). Roger Ebert gave the movie a 4-star review and described *The American President* as “an in-

telligent film about politics that is also a witty and warm romance. But what's most admirable is that real issues – gun control, the environment – are handled realistically.” Additionally, the film provides a flawless re-creation of the White House, smart and amusing dialogue, and a charming love story that enhance the cinematic craftsmanship.

The film runs 2 hours 9 minutes and offers subtitles. Film enthusiast Lynne Thorner will fa-

cilitate a post-viewing analysis and lively exchange of ideas. Please direct any questions or concerns to Lynne at lbthorner4657@gmail.com.



Supported small businesses

Spurred investments in manufacturing and clean energy

Unemployment under 4% for 16 months

Invested in clean energy to lower energy bills

Lowered prescription drug costs for seniors

13 million new jobs created

Capped insulin at \$35 a month for seniors

Democrat Laphonza Butler Becomes the First Black Lesbian to Openly Serve in the U.S. Senate



DONATE HERE



BY MARY KAY McCLURE

Rossmoor's Democratic Club has helped to support Trinity Center in downtown Walnut Creek for many years. It has been a phenomenal help to unhoused individuals within our community. Trinity Center provides a wide array of offerings to its members.

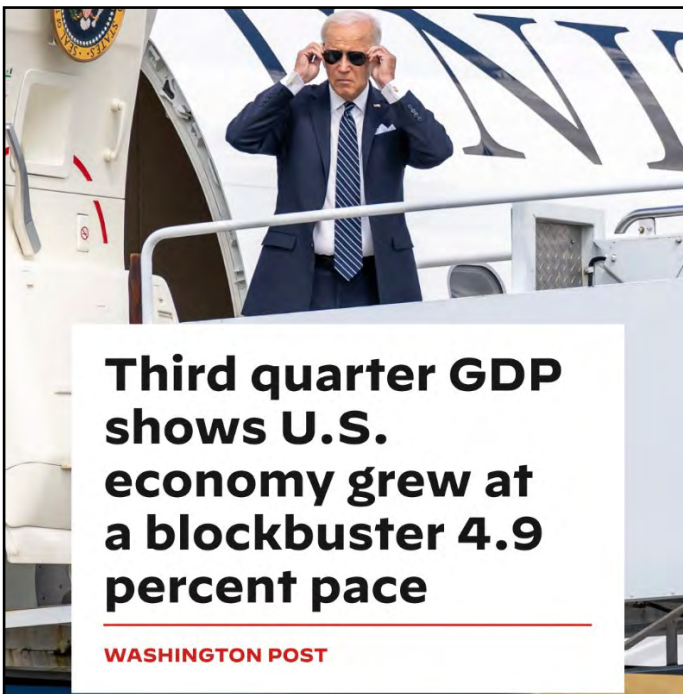
Among these services are clothing, job-finding mentorships, job interview transportation, employment counseling, medical appointments, US Mail services and hundreds of Transition Age Youth intakes annually. These are often Foster Care youth who have aged out of the system.

When you exit the Target parking lot onto

Lacassie Ave., look right in front of you for a mural the Trinity youth painted on the wall across the street. It's beautiful to behold.

Please watch for a letter you will receive very soon detailing the Rossmoor Trinity Center Committee's Holiday Appeal Goal. The letter provides further details about the amazing array of services that Trinity Center provides. The goal is to reach a three year total of \$100,000.

The Committee is so very grateful for the ongoing financial support Rossmoor Democrats have shown throughout this year and sends its wishes for a very Happy Holiday Season.



Membership Form

DEMOCRATS OF ROSSMOOR (DOR) – ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Annual dues for membership are \$25/person

See Instructions below for paying your dues

This form may be used for two people by using spaces numbered (1) and (2) in the sections below

Are you a NEW member ☐ or a continuing/returning member? ☐

Please write your name(s) in Sections A and B if appropriate (see RATIONALE & HELP below):

A. In this space, please write your name(s) the way you would like to be known to members of the Club:

(1) _____ (2) _____

B. If you are a registered Democrat in Contra Costa County, provide the version of your name(s) on voter rolls IF different from A above:

(1) _____ (2) _____

☐ My/our information is the same as last year (if changed or you are a new member, please enter below)

Address: _____

(cell 1) _____ (cell 2) _____ (landline) _____

All club communications are by email, so please take special care to print your email address clearly

email (1) _____ email (2) _____

RATIONALE: PLEASE provide your registered name(s) above and answer the following questions because our club's representation in the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County is determined by the number of primary club members who are registered as Democrats in Contra Costa County.

1. Is the DoR the only (or primary) Democratic Party club to which you belong?....Yes ☐ or No ☐
2. Are you registered as a Democrat in Contra Costa County?Yes ☐ or No ☐
3. Are you interested in hearing about opportunities for volunteering?Yes ☐ or No ☐

COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES: All club communications are by email. Our weekly updates and bimonthly newsletter are the primary way we can let you know what events, activities, and volunteer opportunities are available. You may opt out any of these at any time. **PLEASE INDICATE WHETHER OR NOT YOU WISH TO RECEIVE EACH OF THESE:**

Weekly Updates: Yes ☐ or No ☐

Bimonthly Newsletter Yes ☐ or No ☐

Announcements & Special Events: Yes ☐ or No ☐

Event Recordings: Yes ☐ or No ☐

Payment of Annual Dues: Memberships will start upon receipt of payment and last for one year.

Please indicate which of the following three ways you will pay your dues:

- ☐ Mail this form with your check payable to "Democrats of Rossmoor" for \$25 per person to:
Attn: Democrats, 1001 Golden Rain Rd., Walnut Creek, CA 94595
- ☐ Complete a form and leave it with a check in the "Democrats" mailbox in Gateway Admin. Bldg.
- ☐ Complete a form and hand it with a check to folks at the Membership Table at any DoR meeting

HELP confirming your voter registration name is available at: www.cocovote.us

Information about club activities is available at our website: www.democratsofrossmoor.org

If you do not have internet access, please check the Rossmoor News for our major events.

Thank you for joining the Democrats of Rossmoor