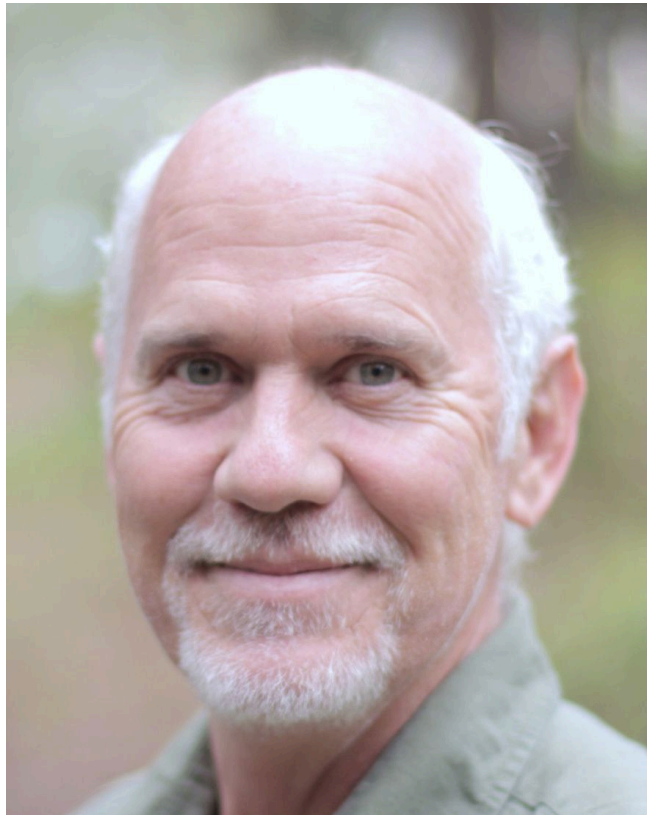


In My View: The election is coming soon!

December 18, 2023



The Primary Election is March 5, 2024, and it will be here before you know it.

It is not too early to start paying attention to what is happening with campaigns if you want to be an informed voter.

Ballots will be mailed to everyone in the first week of February. California voting will start in two months!

Senate Campaign

There has been a change in the race to replace the late Senator Dianne Feinstein. According to a story in the San Francisco Chronicle (11/29/23), “Silicon Valley business executive Lexi Reese has ended her Senate campaign over financial woes.” Lexi Reese said, “We’ve raised approximately \$2 million, which sounds like a lot of money until you compare it to the top competitors in the Senate race.”

Despite donating \$534,216 to her campaign, Reese was trailing Adam Schiff who has \$32 million on hand. Katie Porter has nearly \$12 million, and Barbara Lee has \$1.3 million. This is further evidence that a

candidate with no political experience cannot simply buy their way into winning an election. Experience matters.

Reese said she was concerned with how difficult it is for an outsider to run for office. Before beginning her campaign in June, Reese had shown little interest in political activism.

Reese has never run for elected office, yet she wanted to start at the top and run for Senate without any prior experience.

Jungle Primary

California has a jungle primary for most elected offices including U.S. Senate. This means that the top two vote getters regardless of party affiliation will advance to the general election in November. The way the election for Senate is shaping up, there may be two Democrats or a Republican and a Democrat.

In the November general election, it is likely that a Democrat will win this Senate race. In California, the Republican party voter registration is shrinking, and the Democrat registration is growing.

Democratic registration has increased from 45.1 to 46.3 percent. Republican Party registration has decreased from 27.1 to 24.0 percent.

Despite this disparity in party registration, if the three top Democrats split the Democratic vote, then a Republican could make it into the top two in the primary. The leading Republican contender is a former baseball player from southern California with no government experience.

Ballots May Vary

On the March Primary ballot, everyone can vote for our next Assemblymember and U.S. Senator. In Del Norte County, only voters in District 1, District 2 and District 5 will get to vote for County Supervisor.

The Presidential Primary race will be different. Only Republicans will get to vote for Republican Presidential candidates. Only Democrats will get to vote for Democratic Presidential candidates. However, if you are registered as a No Party Preference (NPP) voter, you can request a Democratic ballot.

The registrar of voters recently mailed a notice to all NPP voters advising that they should return a postcard by December 29 to request a cross-over ballot. The Democratic, Libertarian and American Independent Parties will allow cross-over voting. The Republican, Green Party, and Peace and Freedom Parties do not.

If you have questions about voting, call the Del Norte County Registrar of Voters (707) 465-0321.

Rural Assembly

Since most state elected officials are from urban areas, persistent advocacy has been needed to raise awareness of rural issues. We have come a long way. The new Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas comes from a rural agricultural county, and I have high hopes for his speakership.

With Robert Rivas as Speaker, rural California will be well represented. The most recent indication of this change is the shake-up of the Assembly leadership.

Speaker Rivas has elevated our Assemblymember Jim Wood to Speaker Pro Tempore, the second highest post in the Assembly.

Speaker Rivas said, “Californians want their Assembly to run with efficiency and transparency and Assemblymember Wood has the experience, temperament and ability to exceed their expectation.”

The third ranking position in the California Assembly is Majority Leader. Speaker Rivas has appointed Cecilia Aguiar-Curry to this position. For as long as I have known Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry she has been a staunch advocate for rural California. On every bill she asks, “Is it fair and feasible in rural areas?”

Rural Progress

Another rural ally, Mike McGuire is now the Senate President Pro Tempore. Senator McGuire has a storied history of delivering results for our community. With this new leadership in place in the Assembly and Senate, the next legislative year should be ripe for adopting policies and programs that will benefit rural California.

If we communicate with our elected officials and present solutions rather than simply complaining about problems, we can make progress.

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