
JOHN GEORGE DEMOCRATIC CLUB NEWSLETTER

August, 2006

Candidate Forum

Saturday,
August 26
10 AM - 12 Noon

Prescott-Joseph Center
920 Peralta
West Oakland

Meet the candidates for
the November general
election. Vote for Club
endorsements in races
including Berkeley Mayor
and City Council, Peralta
College Trustees, AC
Transit, BART, and ballot
intialtives

Ron Dellums Elected Oakland Mayor



John George Democratic Club members
pose with Ron Dellums after mayoral
forum on April 15

Letter from the mayor-elect:

Dear Oaklander:

I thank the people of Oakland for their vote of confidence in electing me to be Oakland's next Mayor. I accept this responsibility with honor, humility, optimism, and idealism.

During the campaign I quoted a remarkable Japanese proverb: "Vision without action is a daydream; action without vision is a nightmare."

We share the vision that Oakland can be a great city—a place that is enriched by its multicultural diversity, where the environment is healthy and

safe, where people have educational and economic opportunities, and where their concerns are heard and their participation is welcomed.

Now it is time to take action, guided by that vision of greatness. With our talents, passions, and collective brilliance, we can make Oakland a 21st century model city. I invite you to come together with other Oakland residents to make plans for the city's future.

As I prepare to take office as Mayor, I am establishing advisory task forces that will look at every area of life in our city—economic development, education and community learning, city government, housing and transportation, violence and crime prevention, health, neighborhood issues, diversity issues, and political participation. These task forces will look at where we are succeeding, what we must do to improve, and how those improvements might be accomplished.

It is my desire and intention to be a mayor who represents all the people of Oakland. I hope that all interested residents, no matter their political inclinations, will be involved in this planning process.

My term as Mayor will be launched with a gala week of inauguration festivities, beginning on January 8, 2007, when I take the oath of office. If you are interested in working on any of these activities, you can volunteer by visiting the web site at www.rondellumsformayor.com or by telephoning 510-444-6016.

I look forward to working with you to create an exciting future for the city of Oakland.

Sincerely,

Ronald V. Dellums
Mayor-Elect

2006 John George Art and Essay Awards

Each year since 2004 the John George Democratic Club has sponsored an Art and Essay Awards contest. The contest offers an opportunity for elementary, middle and high school students to submit entries on a specific theme expressing some aspect of progressive politics. The winners each receive \$400 - a \$200 gift certificate and a \$200 savings bond, and their work is showcased at a community event that recognizes their achievement. The contest honors the memory of John George, Alameda County's first African American Supervisor and tireless fighter for health care, education, the rights of labor and poor people, a better environment, and peace and social justice. The awards honor John's memory and, particularly, his commitment to children and youth.

Past Awards themes have included environmental justice, the importance of diversity, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s writings on war. Elementary school children submit drawings illustrating the theme and middle and high school students submit essays on the theme. The contest focuses on students in West Oakland, with Award fliers distributed in local schools and at the West Oakland Library.

This year the Awards addressed two themes:

- Elementary school-aged children were asked to draw a picture showing a safe and comfortable school that enables them to learn well.
- Middle and high school students were invited to write an essay of up to 500 words on the topic, "Should the death penalty be abolished?" (The Awards flier provided web links discussing the death penalty, including the Death Penalty Information Center, the Justice Project, and Amnesty International to assist students' research.)

The Art and Essay Awards ceremony was held

Saturday, June 17th at the West Oakland Library. Club members and friends and families of the winners met to applaud the Elementary School art prize award to co-winners Catalina Jackson and Jordan Brooks, both second graders at Prescott School. The Middle School essay award was made to Pernell Rash, Jr., a 7th grader at KIPP Bridge College Preparatory, who read his essay to an appreciative audience. Club co-chair Walter Riley emceed the event and member Jean Damu gave an illuminating overview of the controversy surrounding the death penalty in California. The winning art work is displayed below; we plan to publish Pernell's thoughtful essay in our next newsletter.



Club Members and Award winners on June 17



Art by Catalina Jackson, 2nd Grade

Should Oakland consider buying the Oakland A's?

By Jean Damu

There's a new sheriff in town and he has called for new ideas to help make Oakland a better city.

One idea might be to apply a legislative form of the Denver Boot to an ankle of the Oakland A's. The Denver Boot is that odd-looking, 150 lb. piece of metal parking control officers apply to vehicles with excessive parking tickets to immobilize them.

Oakland has numerous problems. Keeping in mind that we do not want to "obscure the priorities," as mayor-elect Dellums has emphasized, the concept of Oakland taking control of the A's baseball team, and possibly the football and basketball franchises as well, should



Art by Jordan Brooks, 2nd Grade

be considered.

Oakland A's owner du jour, Lew Wolff is threatening to move the team unless Oakland comes up with a plan to build him and his team a new ballpark at public expense. Wolff never bothered with the sheep's clothing. The estimated cost of a new park is in the \$300-400 million range. Wolff paid \$180 million for the A's just over a year ago and now he wants a new \$400 million ballpark at little or no cost to himself. Wouldn't it be cheaper for Oakland just to buy the team?

Conventional wisdom tells us that the Green Bay Packers is the only publicly owned professional sports franchise in the U.S. Conventional wisdom is somewhat off the mark. The Boston Celtics and the Florida Panthers franchises are owned by the fans to the tune of 51 percent. Several minor league baseball teams are non-profit corporations owned by their municipalities or counties of residence.

Also in 1998, and again in 2003, the New York State Assembly considered an act that would have created a State Sports Authority to administer professional franchises. The act would have allowed the Sports Authority to obtain the franchises through eminent domain.

Oakland tried something similar when it attempted to acquire the Raiders through eminent domain in 1982, before the team finally moved to Los Angeles. Eventually Oakland's right to eminent domain was overruled by California Court of Appeals. Most recently however, the U.S. Supreme Court has boiler plated eminent domain rules, in the favor of cities, governing almost all forms of private property.

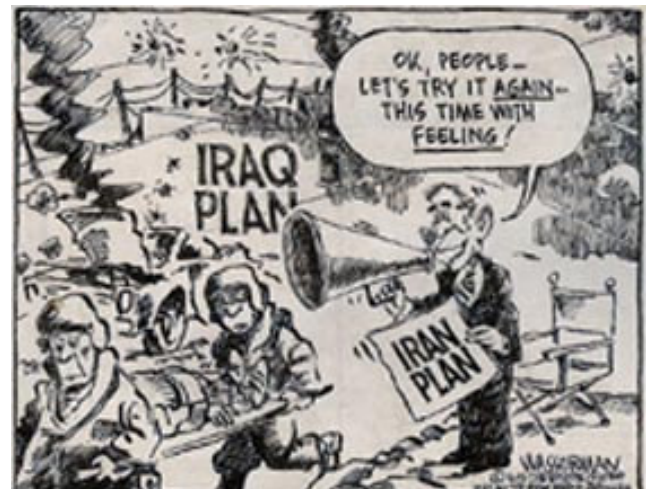
It seems to me if creative thinking is brought into play on this issue Oakland, possibly in combination with Alameda County or even the State of California, could take over ownership of the Athletics or create a governing board,

perhaps similar to the Port of Oakland, to run all its' professional sport franchises.

However, the biggest stumbling block to any notion of publicly owned professional sport teams are the owners. In 1992 when Joan Kroc, widow of Ray Kroc, founder of McDonald's Hamburgers, attempted to donate the San Diego Padres to the city of San Diego, major league owners fatuously adopted a resolution forbidding the sale of any franchise to a non-profit corporation.

There is another at issue at play here as well. Public sector industries and agencies have long been sources major sources of employment for African Americans. Bringing professional sports franchises into the public sector should be seen as a strategy to employ Blacks in industries that have historically exploited them as entertainers but shut them out of the offices of administration.

Citizens who are concerned about the perpetual state of conflict between the city of Oakland and her professional sports teams and visualize public sector franchises as sources of jobs for Blacks beyond the playing fields should urge Mayor-elect Dellums to convene a body of concerned and knowledgeable citizens to investigate this issue further.



: Half Nelson (film)

Reviewed by Jack Lucero Fleck

This is your unbiased newsletter editor's plug for the film *Half Nelson* opening at the Berkeley Shattuck Landmark theater on August 25. The film deals with many themes—racial dynamics, drug addiction, radical history of the U.S., education, and human relations. The film has won film festival awards including:

- Best Actor – Seattle Film Festival
- Best Director—Philadelphia Film Festival
- Screenwriting Award—Nantucket Film

Festival

- Best Film—San Francisco International Film Festival foreign critics award

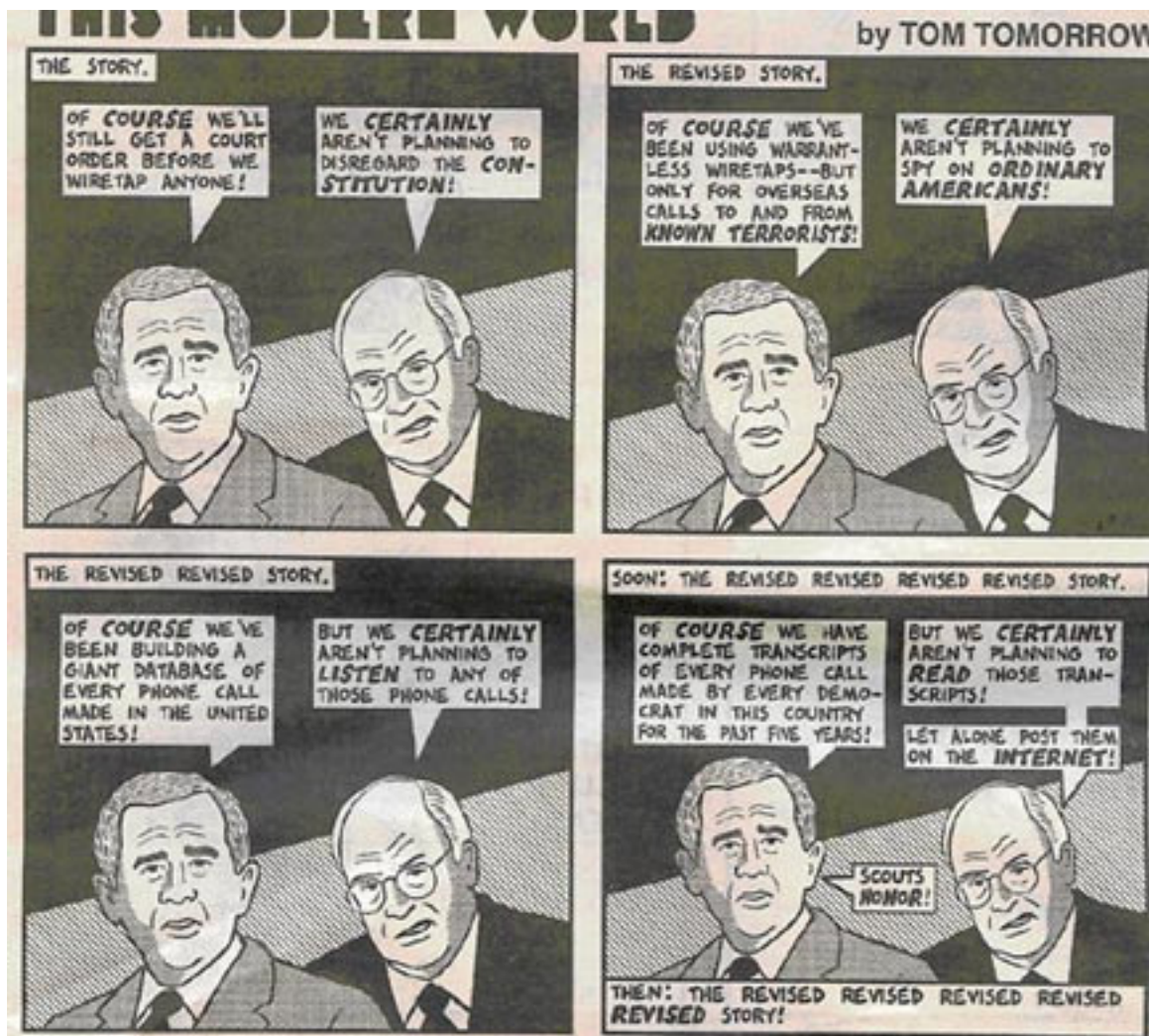
Two BIG thumbs up—Ebert and Roeper!

And most importantly, the film was co-written and directed by Ryan Fleck, son of the JGDC's Lucero Flecks. For more information go to www.halfnelsonthefilm.com/

For a review from the NY Times, go to www.nytimes.com/2006/07/30/movies/30lim.html

Hope to see you at the movies!

--Jack



John George Democratic Club
P.O. Box 18802
Oakland, CA 94619

**MEMBERSHIP
APPLICATION/RENEWAL**

Name _____

Address _____

Tel (plus area code if not 510):

(D) _____ **(E)** _____

Email: _____

Enclosed are my dues for:

_____ **\$30 (Reg).**

_____ **\$10 (Low Income)**

_____ **\$50 (Sustaining)**

**Please make checks payable to John
George Democratic Club and mail to
P.O. 18802 Oakland, 94619
For Information call 846-2837.**

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