

# Palos Verdes Democrats

Founded 1952



logo by  
Paul Conrad

## August 2017 Newsletter

P.O. Box 2234, Rolling Hills Est. CA 90274  
Visit Us on the Web at [www.pvpdemocrats.org](http://www.pvpdemocrats.org)  
"One of the oldest Democratic Clubs in California"

### COMING EVENTS

**Social time: 2pm**

#### AUGUST MEETING

**DATE:** Sunday, August 20th

**MEETING TIME:** 2:30 - 4:30pm

**LOCATION:** Peninsula Center Library Community Room; 701 Silver Spur Rd, RHE

**TOPIC:** Explanation of Erwin Chemerinsky's 2016-2017 Supreme Court Review

**SPEAKERS:** Superior Court Judge Tom Long

#### SEPTEMBER MEETING

**DATE:** Sunday, September 17th

**MEETING TIME:** 2:30-4:30pm

**LOCATION:** Peninsula Center Library Community Room; 701 Silver Spur Rd, RHE

**TOPIC:** TBD

**SPEAKER:** TBD

#### Inside This Month's Issue:

**August General Meeting** Page 1

**July Meeting Report** Page 1-2

**CA Road Charge Pilot Program** Page 3

**Book Review** Page 3

### August General Meeting

**The Supreme Court: What have they done to us this Year?**

Our August meeting will examine the past year's Supreme Court decisions. PV Dems member and Jerry Brown judicial appointee **Tom Long** will elaborate on Erwin Chemerinsky's 2017 panel discussions of the decisions, and will provide incite as to how these rulings will affect us. In addition to Chemerinsky, panelists include Frederick Lawrence, one of the nation's leading experts on civil rights, free expression and bias crimes and Dahlia Lithwick, a senior editor at Slate Magazine and author of the "Supreme Court Dispatches" and "Jurisprudence" columns. Also included will be a discussion of Judge Gorsuch as well as the future of the Supreme Court after the use of the "nuclear option" by the Senate. The decisions to be discussed include:

- Church/state separation: *Trinity Lutheran v. Pauley* (7-2)
- Free speech: *Matal* (Lee) v. Tam (8-0)
- Bias and discrimination: *Peña-Rodriguez v. Colorado* (5-3) and *Buck v. Davis* (6-2)
- Transgender Rights: *Gavin Grimm* (remanded for further guidance)

Observations regarding Capital Punishment as well as the future of lower court challenges to Executive Orders will also be examined.

### July Meeting Report

by Carol Moeller

Over 130 members and guests attended our annual Installation picnic on the beautiful grounds at St. Luke's Presbyterian Church. The venue was provided to us through the generous church philosophy that the church is a public space for those whose values are in keeping with those of this progressive congregation. **Rev. Kang** encourages other groups, especially those involving the future, our youth, to take advantage of their goodwill.

**Lisa's Catering** was contracted for most of the food, with desserts and beverages provided by our wonderful members. We were reminded of our patriotic history through the donated talent of our local **Pennyroyal Players**.



*Pennyroyal Players*

Speakers included:

**Ben Kelly**, 18-yr-old candidate for RPV City Council. He focused on his fresh perspective as a youth and the environment in particular.



In the hopes of helping neighboring districts that currently are headed by

*Ben Kelly, RPV City Council Candidate*

#### Membership Reminder by Carol Moeller

Those who haven't already renewed your 2017-2018 dues, let me remind you that our fiscal year runs from July 1st through June 30th. We depend primarily on dues to pay for vital donations to Democratic candidates, room and equipment rentals as well as always-appreciated refreshments! We also pay fees to the FEC and the LA County Democratic Party.

You can use the renewal form in the newsletter or find it on our website or even complete the process entirely online at <http://pvpdemocrats.org/membership/>

This is a year we hope to help Democrats gear up to take back our Federal government, and we all know we certainly have our work cut out for us.

We look forward to seeing you at our August General Meeting.

*continued on page 2*

*continued from page 1*

Republican congressmen, we invited the following three Democrats running for those offices to join us:

**Harley Rouda**, candidate 48th CA District (CD) is an attorney running against Rohrabacher. He focused on putting country over party and service above self. He promotes human rights, believes in science and supports public education.



*Harley Rouda, 48th CA District Candidate*

**Katie Hill**, candidate in the 25th CD (running against Republican Steve Knight) is the Deputy CEO of PATH, a nonprofit dedicated to ending homelessness in California. In the last four years, PATH has helped more than 1800 chronically homeless individuals, 2100 veterans and 2600 families into permanent housing



*Katie Hill, 25th CA District Candidate*



*Jess Phoenix, 25th CA District Candidate*

**Jess Phoenix**, also a candidate in the 25th CD is a geologist who sees the importance of science, infrastructure, conservation and education as a path to a better future.

**Al Muratsuchi**, State Assembly District 66 informed us that he



*The beautiful grounds at St. Luke's Presbyterian Church for the PV Democrats Picnic and Installation Party*



*Al Muratsuchi  
CA State Assembly District 66*



*Janice Hahn  
LA County Supervisor District 4*

has introduced 5 bills designed to improve the safety of the Torrance refinery and was one of the authors of the recently passed Cap and Trade bill.

**Janice Hahn**, LA County Supervisor District 4 and former Congresswoman was particularly proud that 4 of our 5 LA County Supervisors now are women.

**Ted Lieu**, US Congress District 33 wearing a "Trump/Putin 2016" T-shirt was passionate about the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen that experts show is primarily due to the Saudis. From his standpoint as a former prosecutor, he explained in detail how cases against Trump, Jr and Kushner could be built using information we now have. Congressman Lieu also was gracious enough to swear in our PV Dem 2017-2018 club officers.



*Ted Lieu  
US Congress District 33*

We raffled a Summertime Pink Pussy Hat donated by Lynne Michaels from the website <https://hearusroar.co/>. I miraculously won it (most likely because I bought a whole passel of tickets)!



We hope you all enjoyed the comradery and festive atmosphere of our annual picnic.

*continued on page 3*

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continued from page 2



On left, Lynn Bommer introducing Ted Lieu - On right, Ted Lieu swearing in the new PV Dems board



## CA Road Charge Pilot Program

by Carol Moeller

A couple of years ago, the PV Dems had a UCLA professor speak about a possible program to fund road repairs based on miles driven. As more and more electric and alternative fuel cars come into use on our roads, our current system that relies primarily on gas taxes to fund road repairs would not capture the wear and tear that cars that use no gas create on our roadways.

So, a pilot program was created that consisted of a device that wirelessly reported the miles driven as well as the type of driving (i.e. there was a greater charge for jackrabbit starts, speeding, etc.). I volunteered to be in this pilot program and was given one of those devices to install in my Prius and found the monthly reports quite helpful. I installed an app on my phone, so I could monitor my driving immediately, and I noticed a difference in my driving during the rainy months and as well when vacationing in the mountains. I was put into a lower tax bracket because I had a fuel efficient car in their simulated billing, so I would have paid about a penny a mile driven had this been an actually enacted program.

There are issues this program would not address, such as out-of-state drivers who use our roads, but since taxes on gasoline would likely not be eliminated entirely, at least some of their road usage would be covered. Since part of the initial paperwork involved the make, model and year of the car, fuel economy was a part of the equation. Large trucks which create more

wear and tear were in a higher payment bracket. The devices inserted into cars did not provide the location of the vehicle being driven, so that participant privacy was upheld.

The pilot phase ended and I now have a Volt for which I use gas only for trips over 60 miles, so I rarely buy gas. But I do use the roads and feel I should contribute to their maintenance. Although there has been talk of charging station taxes, most people charge at home, so I feel this sort of "pay as you drive" system is a fair and painless and easy solution to our road maintenance issues.

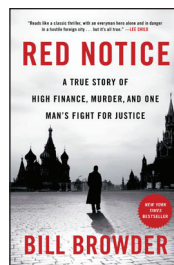
## Book Review

### *Red Notice - A True story of High Finance, Murder, and One Man's Fight for Justice*

by Bill Browder

Reviewed by Ann Nye

Most people, when they heard the news about Trump, Jr.'s meeting with a Russian lawyer, were mystified why the Russian lawyer wanted to talk adoptions versus incriminating info on Hillary. However, those of us reading Bill Browder's *Red Notice* book knew there was a much bigger story about adoptions than was being reported. It was in Browder's book I learned Putin had stopped all Russian baby adoptions in 2012 in response to The Sergei Magnitsky Rule Accountability Act, which sanctioned Russian citizens involved in Sergei Magnitsky's murder. Putin has been fighting to rescind these sanctions ever since.



Bill Browder, whose grandfather was the leader of the American Communist Party, decided to "become a capitalist knowing that it would surely upset his parents." The first part of the book details how Browder after earning a graduate degree in business from Stanford, decided what better place to be a capitalist than in Russia after the breakup of the Soviet Union. He opportunistically invested in the Russia market; buying shares of undervalued newly privatized companies, and making them available to foreign investors. Browder made a lot of money for himself and his investors and naively thought Putin was his ally as he confronted the corruption of the oligarchies. However, once Putin figured out a way to blackmail the oligarchies and make lots of money for himself, he expelled Browder from Russia in 2005.

The 2nd half of the book details Putin's failed scheme to get Browder's investments; including charging Browder with tax invasion. Browder hired Sergei Magnitsky, a tax lawyer and auditor who worked for a legal and audit firm in Moscow to defend his company, the Hermitage Fund. Sergei discovered corrupt senior Russian Interior Ministry officers had stolen the identity of the Hermitage Fund and used it to rob the Russian treasury (in the guise of a tax return) of 5.4 billion rubles (\$230 million). Just over a month after Sergei Magnitsky's testimony against these corrupt officials he was imprisoned and tortured to withdraw his testimony. After a year of inhuman treatment, Sergei became severely ill and died at the age of 37 in November 2009 after being denied life-saving medical treatment.

Overcome with grief, Bill Browder led the fight to expose and accuse those who murdered his lawyer (all of whom were documented by Sergei in a diary before he died). His fight brought him to the US Senate where with the help of John McCann and others, The Sergei Magnitsky Rule Accountability Act was passed in 2012 overwhelmingly by a bi-partisan vote.

*Red Notice* is a timely read and its title reflects Russia's failed request to Interpol to issue a "red notice" for the provisional arrest and extradition of Browder to Russia.

For a recent update of *Red Notice*, NPR's Planet Money interviewed Bill Browder. Listen or download the show (#784, titled Meeting the Russians) at this link. <http://www.npr.org/podcasts/510289/planet-money>





### Palos Verdes Democrats Officers for 2017-2018

President: Lynn Bommer 310-374-1188  
President Emeritus: Carol Moeller 310-541-5526  
1st Vice President: Rascha Hall 310-377-7334  
2nd Vice President: TBD  
Recording Secretary: Kathy Bradford 310-265-9812  
Corresponding Secretary: Arlene Korb 310-544-7203  
Treasurer: Al Shadbourn 310-326-4953  
Parliamentarian: Craig Williams 301-265-9812  
Membership: Irene Silver 310-541-2650  
Publicity: Dunja Maglica 310-375-4912  
Newsletter Editor: Carol Moeller 310-541-5526  
Newsletter Designer: Ann Nye 310-373-6805  
Newsletter Mailings: Ron Moeller 310-541-5526  
Hospitality: Teresa Savo 310-541-1139  
Web Master: Reggie Jue 310-433-8189

## Palos Verdes Democrats

Founded in 1952 - One of the oldest and largest Democratic Clubs in California

[www.pvpdemocrats.org](http://www.pvpdemocrats.org)

As a member of the Palos Verdes Democrats, you can:

- Meet other Democrats
- Meet and get to know your elected officials, raise funds and work for candidates
- Attend special events and monthly meetings
- Hear speakers and discuss issues of local, state and national import
- Receive a monthly newsletter
- Vote on club issues, unless registered as NPP (No Party Preference)

**Please send your membership form to P.O. Box 2234, Rolling Hills Est. Ca 90274**  
**Please fill in all items to ensure that we have your full and correct current information.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name\* \_\_\_\_\_

\* Fill in if Applying as a Family - two memberships

- ☐ I am a registered Democrat  
☐ I am registered No Party Preference  
☐ I am a registered Democrat  
☐ I am registered No Party Preference

Residence Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

\*Select One: ☐ Individual: \$ 25.00/Year ☐ Family Membership \$40.00/Year  
☐ Young Adult \$10.00/Year

Amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Renewal ☐ New Member

Please contact me to help in the following areas:

- ☐ Hospitality ☐ Newsletter ☐ Membership ☐ Publicity ☐ Correspondence  
☐ Voter Registration ☐ Campaign Work ☐ Website/Facebook ☐ Phone Tree