

Palos Verdes Democrats

Founded 1952



logo by
Paul Conrad

August 2015 Newsletter

P.O. Box 2234, Rolling Hills Est. CA 90274
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"One of the oldest Democratic Clubs in California"

COMING EVENTS

AUGUST MEETING

DATE: Sunday, August 16th

TIME: 2:30 - 4:30pm

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

TOPIC: 2015 Supreme Court Decisions

SPEAKERS: Attorney and former RPV Mayor Tom Long will explain this year's Supreme Court decisions using Erwin Chemerinsky's Annual SCOTUS review

SEPTEMBER MEETING

DATE: Sunday, September 20th

TIME: 2:30 - 4:30pm

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

TOPIC: TBA

SPEAKERS: TBA

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Membership Dues

It's now the time to renew your PV Democrats membership. You can renew online at www.pvpdemocrats.org, or complete the form on the back of this newsletter and send in your dues. Fabulous speakers, access to elected officials and informed camaraderie ... what a deal!

August Meeting The Supreme Court in Review

Last year, former RPV Mayor and Stanford Law School graduate Tom Long provided a synopsis of UCI Law School Dean Erwin Chemerinsky's 2014 Supreme Court review video that was so popular, we persuaded him to return to examine the recent 2015 decisions.

Tom will show us snippets of the 2015 video and will provide commentary on each. In addition to Chemerinsky, the panelists include:

- Linda Greenhouse, Yale Law School/The New York Times
- Song Richardson, UCI Law
- Kannon K. Shanmugam, Williams & Connolly LLP
- Hon. Jeffrey S. Sutton, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit
- Rick Hasen, UCI Law

Chemerinsky made waves recently in his July 20th LA Times opinion piece entitled "Why Scalia's a Bad Influence". Although he does not support them, it is not Scalia's controversial decisions that Chemerinsky cites in this article, but rather it is that Scalia has "long relied on ridicule" in his dissents, which are "especially nasty, sarcastic and personal". He finds Scalia's "browbeating" to be "childish, even vain; like a harshly negative book critic, he revels in his own turns of phrase. And his attitude, just like his legal theory, affects the profession as a whole." Noticing that some of his law students are beginning to mimic Scalia's tone, Chemerinsky reminds them this approach is unprofessional. Keeping these comments in mind, and considering all the controversial decisions made this year, the 2015 Supreme Court review is one meeting you won't want to miss!

July Meeting Report by Carol Moeller

Teresa makes Lemonade out of Lemons

When the weather report indicated our backyard annual party would be a wash (literally), a decision was made to cancel the party. However, when the fickle weather looked great on what was to be party day, Teresa decided to hold an "Unparty" for those who didn't get the cancellation message and also for others she was able to contact, and we are indebted to her for that. Thank you, Teresa! Below is a photo of Calif State Treasurer John Chiang and other "Unpartiers". Club members who were to be installed will hold their new positions unofficially until our next meeting when they will then be officially installed.



Please notice Teresa Savo's hand painted "Dump" Trump Piñata, even including a hair piece!

State of the Club by Carol Moeller

Connie started a practice during her presidency of giving us an overview of the previous year. I particularly like this tradition as I think our club officers should always remember that we report to you, our members. So below are what I see as some accomplishments and deficiencies.

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Aside from my actually surviving this year as president, I feel the biggest accomplishment over the past year is the completion of our Manual of Operations. Our bylaws reflect what we do and our Manual of Operations explains how. I served a couple of times on our Nominating Committee, and when recruiting for board positions, it always frustrated me that we didn't have anything explaining the nuts and bolts of each position. Our late Jerry Parker had worked with other board members on a Manual of Operations in the past, but this never got much past the framework stage. I met with Connie Sullivan, Al Shadbourne and Teresa Savo repeatedly over this past year to hammer this out, so we are all happy to finally have a Manual of Operations posted to our website.

This past year was an election year, and I am so proud that our members responded to pleas to help out in campaign headquarters in greater numbers than any of the other area clubs. I am proud that despite a last-minute cancellation, we were able to rearrange the date and meeting venue in order to host Governor Michael Dukakis, and even managed to pack the house! I am proud of the quality of speakers we were able to host over the year, with topics as diverse as the Supreme Court decisions, Marine Mammal protection policies, Fair Trade, reform of unfair Corporate tax laws under Prop 13, a look at policies involving Armenian Genocide, current Planned Parenthood blockades and League of Women Voters' ballot summaries, as well as environmental remedies to obtain clean water, clean energy and possible solutions to reduce our carbon footprint. I am proud that we had a speaker advising us that transparency in funding was about to become a bill (the AB 700, the Disclose Act), before the bill was even given a number! I am also proud that our club was the only club in the district that didn't end up dividing our membership by endorsing

one or the other of the Democratic candidates running in the 26th Senate District.

Challenges, big challenges remain. Although our club remains in a good fiscal position thanks in large part to Connie's implementation of monthly fundraisers, I feel our biggest problem involves our membership numbers. We had 193 members in 2009-10, 181 members in 2010-11, 173 in 2011-12, 182 in 2012-13, 152 in 2013-14, and sadly only 139 in 2014-15. Aside from a rise during the 2012-13 Presidential election, there has been a steady decline in our membership, with similar declines seen in other area clubs as well. Although our club is by far the largest club in the area and has higher membership and attendance numbers than other clubs, our meeting attendance has recently dipped from our norm. All of this despite our almost constant tabling presence at the weekly Farmer's Market (that is, until our recent bootings first by the Pen Center management and now by our own PV school board). We need all of you to aid in helping us find solutions that will enable us to reverse these trends and help engage our local Democrats in education and activism through club membership.

May 2015 California Democratic Convention Resolutions
by Carol Moeller

I believe those of us lucky enough to represent you at conventions have an obligation to convey to you what we learned. Although it is difficult to separate the "pinch me" sense of awe at seeing notable elected officials walking the halls and the traditional "rah rah" associated with these gatherings from the really important content, much of what results has a big impact on our party. Below are some resolutions that were voted on and adopted. There's too many to show at once, so

we'll include more in subsequent newsletters.

Trans-Pacific Partnership: The California Democratic Party reaffirms its longstanding opposition to "fast tracking" of the TransPacific Partnership, denounces any elements which result in the massive expansion of corporate power and the weakening of democratic rule and workers' rights, and calls for the disclosure of all the details of the agreement.

Resolution to Make California Work Better for Working Women by Advancing Workplace Equality and Modernizing Worker's Compensation Laws: Governor Schwarzenegger pushed through changes in Workers' Compensation insurance that reduced permanent disability compensation for women, based on the assumption that lower bone density caused by osteoporosis, pregnancy and menopause are the true causes for many workplace injuries for women, creating this gender discrimination which runs contrary to the Patient Protections and Affordable Care Act, a central tenant of which is that being a woman is not a pre-existing medical condition. The California Democratic Party urges policy makers to make California a better place for working women by promoting workplace equality and modernizing worker's compensation laws to correct gender-based discriminatory policies.

Resolution in Support of Repealing California's Personal Beliefs Exemption to Mandatory Vaccinations: The California Democratic Party supports the removal of the personal belief exemption to legally required vaccinations for school attendance.

Fireworks in San Pedro Restore Patriotic Pride
by Laura Hines Jurgens
Originally printed in The Daily Breeze, 7-11-15



I was giddy as a kid waiting to see fireworks. *Can you see, by the dawns early light.* As afternoon shadows moved into nightfall, we rang the doorbell and entered his apartment, a perch high above San Pedro. Anticipating a fun and exciting evening, I was drawn out onto my host's balcony by the distant sounding of a single trumpet. It was an indiscriminate sound until someone else joined in with the opening bars of the Star Spangled Banner.

O'er the ramparts we watched

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Children were blowing whistles and singing. I leaned over the railing in search of the source, just as a neighbor released the first of many remarkable streamers; rockets propelled upward, on a mission to burst into a noisy explosion of exquisite confetti-like, colored petals that slowly drop filled the area with the first visual excitement of what would be a night of nights.

And the rockets red glare

Our friend had invited us knowing the view would show off the fireworks from five different venues. It was a 'wow' invitation. Hot dogs with mustard and relish and apple pie with ice cream, truly a Fourth of July feast, complete with cherry bombs, knives and forks mixed with songs and flags, sounds, colors and squealing kids, running about with whistles and sparklers.

A sense history and spirit permeated the lighthearted group. When one of the guests began singing, first on a note too impossibly high to continue, then a restart in a reasonable lower octave that allowed everyone in. We helped each other sing the words to this amazingly patriotic song through to the end.

So proudly we hailed

Silent tears rolled down happy cheeks.

"The boat, it's coming into the harbor," said our host. "Where," heads turned to watch the blue tugboat lights pulling the fireworks barge.

At its appearance, streamers shot up from the neighborhoods to burst in sparkly lines of red, white and blue.

Oh say does that star spangled banner still fly

In the dark, the displays became more prominent. We howled in delight, excitedly waving flags.

Distant towns began their programs. Eyes turned toward the horizon and the oohh's & aahh's began. Sounds that would continue throughout the evening and get louder and longer or hushed and reverent depending on the size and degree of the streamers, where they came from and the various colors of bursting distant shapes.

Throughout, the horn played. Its repertoire expanded into Americana we all related to, the Navy and Marine Corp favorites, Yankee Doodle, America the beautiful and even hail to the chief, obviously a good Obama Fan.

Whose broad stripes and bright stars

The local display began. It was so close and had such variety we were all stunned. "Who thinks up these things?"

Some never seen before, the hat, the smily face, the burst that spread and changed to grow into a half a mile wide, before falling into the next more amazing artpiece shooting up

through the fading of the last one for its own moment of glory. There were many displays but this was the best, this one on was ours.

I stayed out on the balcony for a long time, listening to the fireworks boom, setting off car alarms mingling with the trumpets in the starry night.

Glory, that's what I was witnessing, glory and pride in my country and how it has survived the many attempts to defeat it.

It was a super-star spangled night lasting long and providing all who watched the display, an evening of patriotic togetherness.

O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Book Review

by Carol Moeller

This Changes Everything: Occupy Wall Street and the 99% Movement

by Sarah van Gelder

I have long been curious as to the actual roots of the Occupy Movement, and this book provided some answers. Initially under the impression that Occupy Wall Street (OWS) was a fairly spontaneous result of the greed of Wall Street, the vignettes in this book actually point to a planned movement that had been considered for at least 6 months. It was finally triggered by a group called New Yorkers Against Budget Cuts (NYAB) that promoted a "sleep in" in lower Manhattan in July 2011. This gathering provided the platform for a congregation of activists to plan the actual Sept 17, 2011 takeover of Zuccotti Park. Written just a month after that takeover, and partly authored by Ralph Nadar and Naomi Klein, this book conveys the initial idealism and hopes that the movement would become larger than it has so far. Many questioned whether this movement could really make a difference, but the truth is that it already has, and in the words of the Occupiers, here's how:

1. It names the source of the crisis. The problems of the 99% are caused by Wall Street greed, perverse financial incentives, and a corporate take-over of the

political system.

2. It provides a vision of the world we want. We can create a world that works for everyone, not just the wealthiest 1%.

3. It sets a new standard for public debate. Those advocating policies and proposals must now demonstrate that their ideas will benefit the 99%. Serving only the 1% is no longer sufficient.

4. It presents a new narrative. The solution is no longer to starve government, but to free society and government from corporate dominance.

5. It creates a big tent. We, the 99%, are made up of people of all ages, races, occupations, and political beliefs, and we are learning to work together with respect.

6. It offers everyone a chance to create change. No one is in charge. Anyone can get involved and make things happen.

7. It is a movement, not a list of demands. The call for transformative structural change, not temporary fixes and single-issue reforms, is the movement's sustaining power.

8. It combines the local and the global. People are setting their own local agendas, tactics, and aims. But we also share solidarity, communication, and vision at the global level.

9. It offers an ethic and practice of deep democracy and community. Patient decision-making translates into wisdom and common commitment when every voice is heard. Occupy sites are communities where anyone can discuss grievances, hopes, and dreams in an atmosphere of mutual support.

10. We have reclaimed our power. Instead of looking to politicians and leaders to bring about change, we can see now that the power rests with us. Instead of being victims of the forces upending our lives, we are claiming our sovereign right to remake the world.





Palos Verdes Democrats Officers for 2015-2016

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Palos Verdes Democrats

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

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

**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 _____ I am a registered Democrat
Name* _____ I am a registered Democrat

* Fill in if Applying as a Family - two memberships

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

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