

Palos Verdes Peninsula Democratic Club

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Paul Conrad

July 2013 Newsletter

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"One of the oldest Democratic Clubs in California"

COMING EVENTS

JULY MEETING

DATE: Sunday, July 21, 2013

TIME: 2:30-4:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Home of Teresa Savo
30226 Avenida de Calma, Rancho Palos Verdes

TOPICS: Installation of Officers and Reception

SPEAKER: Assembly member Al Muratsuchi

AUGUST MEETING

DATE: Sunday, August 18, 2013

TIME: 2:30-4:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Peninsula Center Library

TOPICS: Educational Reforms with a focus on the Parent Trigger and the Common Core.

SPEAKERS: Lori Yuan, parent leader and Diane Wallace, professor of education.

July Meeting: Installation of Officers and Reception

July marks the beginning of our new operational year – 2013-2014. Please join us as we install our new officers who were elected at our June meeting. We're very honored to have as our installing officer our new Democratic Assembly member, Al Muratsuchi.

The first order of the day will be to enjoy a light catered meal and homemade desserts. We are requesting a \$10/person donation towards offsetting the costs of the catered items. Our outgoing hospitality chair, Teresa Savo is in charge, so you know the food will be delicious.

After we eat, our Assembly member will give us a brief report of his legislative activities and insights for the first eight months of his tenure in Sacramento. Then he'll install our new board officers for the coming year.

The location of the event is Teresa Savo's home. Her address is 30226 Avenida de Calma, Rancho Palos Verdes (nearest cross street is Crest Road).

As there will be another event hosted by Teresa's neighbor across the street, Teresa is asking that club members park on her side of the street only. If possible, carpooling is encouraged, as well.

We look forward to seeing you at Teresa's in July!

June Meeting Report

By Christine Mei

Club Business

Club President Connie Sullivan made the following announcements:

a) Next month's meeting will be held on July 21 at Teresa Savo's home. It will be the installation meeting of the new officers. All paid members are welcome to attend. Next year's membership is due now.

b) The next board meeting will be held on June 18 at Connie's house.

Carol Moeller reported that the next meeting for the 66th Assembly District Democratic Council would be held at the Zamperini Building at the Torrance Airport on June 27.

Fourteen people signed the petition requesting the RPV city council to pass a resolution urging Congress to propose a constitutional amendment overturning the Citizens United decision.

A representative from the League of Women Voters (LWV) invited the audience to join the organization. LWV is a non-partisan political organization aiming at informing and educating voters on select political issues.

The slate of candidates for the next board was read by Connie and approved by club members.

Skid Row Housing Trust

Our first speaker was Mike Alvidrez, executive director of Skid Row Housing Trust. He has been working for the Trust since the early 90s and became the executive director in 2004.

Skid Row Housing Trust was incorporated in 1989. It has preserved and restored some of downtown Los Angeles' most historical and architecturally valuable residential hotels to house those who are in desperate need. It now owns buildings that provide homes to 1,600 residents, and more are in construction. Mike showed many pictures of the buildings that the

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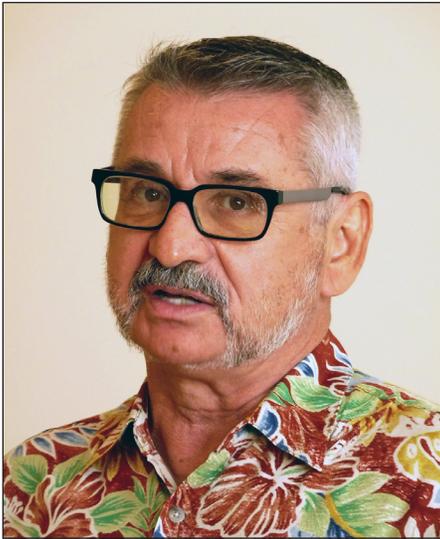
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Mike Alvidrez, executive director of Skid Row Housing Trust

Trust has restored or built. The buildings are meticulously styled to look nothing like typical low-income housing.

The core concept of the Trust is to build permanent supportive housing. They believe that it is the key to prevent homelessness. The full implementation of the concept, however, took many years.

When the program first started, Mike and his colleagues put emphasis on preservation and affordability. By the mid-1990s, they began to have case manager offices in the building to help the residents secure outside services. Because it required a lot of coordination between agencies, it did not work out well.

The best way to provide services to the residents, as Mike and his colleagues found out, is to provide integrated supportive services in the building where the residents reside. The St. George Hotel was the first building that was equipped with such services through a federal grant. A psychiatrist, nurses, case managers, and a benefits advocate were stationed on-site during the week. These on-site services enabled the building to become fully functional permanent supportive housing.

Through the years, they have incorporated several innovative concepts to improve their program:

a) Housing First. They take people directly off the street or in shelters and put them in supportive housing right away. They believe that this is a better approach to help people deal with their health issues when they are in permanent housing first.

b) Community Building. They build a community within each building to provide positive interactions among the residents. There are concerts and various recreational and educational classes for the residents.

Permanent supportive housing is cost effective. It has been shown that the cost of caring for people in permanent housing is



Mark Silverbush, chair of the South Bay Coalition for the Homeless

far less than the cost of caring for homeless people in the street. In 2009, LA County spent \$100,000 per person caring for the chronically homeless population.

To this day, the Trust continues to construct buildings that are esthetically beautiful and conducive to participatory activities. In the future, they will have prefabricated buildings to reduce construction costs and time.

South Bay Coalition for the Homeless

The second speaker was Mark Silverbush, chair of the South Bay Coalition for the Homeless. In the last five years, he conducted biannual homeless counts in Los Angeles County for the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA).

The South Bay Coalition for the Homeless was formed in March 2012. It is the only coalition in the South Bay that deals with homelessness exclusively. The goals of the coalition are to coordinate efforts among the various homeless service groups, to become advocates for the homeless, to educate the community and to bring in new partners.

Mark shared with the audience some disturbing statistics about the homeless population in LA County and the South Bay. Out of the 10 million people who live in LA County, more than 50,000 are homeless on a single night. This is equivalent to the combined population of RPV, Rolling Hills Estates and Rolling Hills. In the South Bay, the homeless population is around 7,000 on one single night. They tend to be older (55 and above) and are prone to die on the streets. Thirty-three percent are veterans, 41 percent have substance abuse issues, 24 percent are chronically homeless with various disabilities and 9 percent are homeless families.

The available resources for helping the homeless are very limited in the South Bay. Mark also believes that permanent supportive housing is the key to solving the problems of homelessness. But there is not enough housing stock to meet the demand in the South Bay.

Mark stressed that a strong coalition will be able to better address the imbalance between resources and demand. He hopes that his coalition can partner with our club to work toward ending the homelessness in the South Bay. He can be reached at contactsbch@gmail.com.



Rascha Hall, president of Helping the Homeless Help Themselves

Helping the Homeless Help Themselves (HHHT)

Our third speaker was Rascha Hall, president of Helping the Homeless Help Themselves

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(HHHT). HHHT was founded in 1987 by the late Bill Finkel and his wife Bunny. It is an all-volunteer non-profit organization with the main purpose of raising funds for qualified service providers to assist the homeless and those on the verge of homelessness.

HHHT's funding sources come from many: humanitas supporters (those who donate \$1,000 or more each per year), foundation grants, fundraising events, and donations. For the past 25 years, HHHT has distributed \$2.25 million through various service providers.

There are nine service providers in the South Bay area that HHHT supports. Rascha mentioned a few:

House of Yahweh has 11 trailers to house families and single persons. In 2004, HHHT purchased a trailer and paid for the rental of the land.

Rainbow Services provides shelters for victims of domestic violence. HHHT paid for the rent and household goods not covered by government funds.

The Salvation Army/Stillman Sawyer Family Services Center issues hotel vouchers, makes emergency shelter referrals and helps with transitional housing or rental subsidies.

The 1736 Family Crisis Center issues taxi vouchers to homeless teens to enable them to go to shelters.

Rascha asked the audience to help HHHT in terms of financial support, volunteering, and attending the fundraising events. She can be reached at rascha_hall@yahoo.com.

Activists are Successful By Hans Grellmann

Many of us wonder if one or a few people can accomplish anything these days. Here is a success story which proves that it is possible. The Peninsula News had an article on June 6 about the city of Rancho Palos Verdes changing banks. Here is the story behind that change.

Early in 2012 the local offshoot of Occupy Wall Street, Occupy PV, started to speak at the RPV city council meetings to request that the city move its money from Bank of America to a smaller bank. OPV

explained that B of A is one of the too-big-to-fail banks which are a threat to our financial system. Occupy PV also started to gather signatures for a petition to the city council. Several hundred RPV residents signed the petition and the signatures were submitted to the council.

As a direct result of this petition, the city started to do what it should have done many years ago. The council instructed staff to review the banking relationship with B of A. It turned out that there was no contract between the city and the bank, the city had no documentation about whatever services the bank provided for the city. RPV had just muddled along like this for more than a decade. The city then went through the usual process of sending out a request for proposals and evaluating the responses from the seven banks that responded. B of A was not among the three finalists. The city selected Bank of the West as its new major bank. Some of the city's banking business will also go to smaller local banks.

Five members of OPV, some of whom are also members of this club, contributed to get this process started. Keep that in mind the next time you would like to see something changed and you feel it's just impossible.

John F. Kennedy once said: "One person can make a difference, and everyone should try."

2nd Notice: Don't Let Your Membership Expire!

This is to remind you that it's time to renew your membership and stay involved in this year's important Democratic campaigns and issues. Student memberships are \$10, individual memberships are \$25 and family memberships are \$40. An important tenet of the Democratic Party is to be inclusive to all. In that spirit, our club will never turn anyone away who cannot afford the annual dues. If you fall into that category, please contact Al Shadbourne at al.shadbourne@socal.rr.com or mail in your membership form noting your situation.

We are very happy to announce that it is now possible to join or renew online via the Membership page on our website, Palos Verdes Peninsula Democratic Club – instructions will walk you through the process. If you prefer, you are also welcome to complete the membership information form on the last page of this newsletter and send it with your check to the address on the form. You may also bring your check to the next meeting.

Thank you for helping us build a meaningful voice for good government at all levels – we look forward to hearing from you!

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PVPDC Officers for 2012 Contact Info



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 Democratic Club
 Founded 1952

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 Rolling Hills Est. Ca 90274

Palos Verdes Peninsula Democratic Club

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

www.pvpdemocrats.org

As a member of the PVP Democratic Club, 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
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 * Fill in if Applying as a Family - two memberships
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*Select One: Individual: \$ 25.00/Year Family Membership \$40.00/Year
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