

Palos Verdes Democrats

Founded 1952



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Paul Conrad

April 2019 Newsletter

P.O. Box 2234, Rolling Hills Est. CA 90274
Visit Us on the Web at www.pvpedemocrats.org
"One of the oldest Democratic Clubs in California"

COMING EVENTS

Social time: 2pm

APRIL MEETING

DATE: Saturday, April 27th (**NOTE the day is Saturday vs Sunday**)

MEETING TIME: 2:30 - 4:30pm

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

TOPIC: New Voting System for 2020 Election

SPEAKER: Phillip Verbera

MAY MEETING

DATE: Sunday, May 26th (**NOTE the day is the 4th Sunday vs our usual 3rd Sunday**)

MEETING TIME: 2:30-4:30pm

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

TOPIC: TBD

SPEAKER: TBD

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April General Meeting

Phillip Verbera, manager of the Community and Voter Outreach Operation of the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk office will speak about the new voting system being established for California's 2020 Primary Election. He was scheduled to speak at our March meeting, but couldn't attend.

Mr. Verbera joined the Registrar's Governmental and Legislative Affairs division in 2012 to manage the Community & Voter Outreach Operation where he received a crash course in outreach during the 2016 Presidential Primary Election. He is working diligently to expand community and voter outreach operations in Los Angeles County.

March Meeting Report by Tex Yamada and Asha Shahed

Candidate for California Democratic Party (CDP) Chair

Rusty Hicks, President of LA County Federation of Labor (LACFL), AFL-CIO since 2014, spoke about why he should be elected CDP Chair over other contenders. Hicks said that he is a candidate for CDP chair because he "believes that the party's top priority should be grassroots organizing to create people-powered election victories." Hicks, a labor union activist and grassroots organizer has contributed to many democratic election victories in California and other states. He noted that as President of the LACFL, he represented more than 300 local unions and 800,000 workers. These unions represent workers from key industries; health care, education, transportation and movement of goods, hospitality, construction, janitorial and government etc. He continued that because

of his association with workers he is in tune with the needs and problems of ordinary people and this experience will be invaluable for democrats to win 2020 election and beyond.



Rusty Hicks

Hicks said that his personal experiences propelled him to public service from an early age. He was raised by a single mother, a book keeper, in Fort Worth, Texas. He met his father who was incarcerated, for the first time at age 11. He graduated from Austin College and went to Loyola Law School at night while working full time in California. He joined the military and served one year in Afghanistan and now is a Lieutenant in the Naval Reserve. He took leave to work for the Obama campaign in 2008 and had also worked for assembly members Mike Gordon (who passed away in 2005; just months into his 1st term) and Ted Lieu (now our Congressman).

To win the CDP Chair, Hicks, launched "#58in58 Road Trip," to visit each of California's 58 counties in order to meet with delegates and grassroots activists. A rural County Committee Chair noted that Rusty Hicks' meet-and-greet stop was the first time that a candidate for CDP chair had visited with his committee.

As a delegate to the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC) for 12 years, Hicks observed the powerful impact of party voter registration, persuasion and voter turnout on favorable election results. He talked briefly about his various accomplishments as labor organizer, leader and activist. Following is a list of some of his LACFL accomplishments and CDP Chair goals he liked to accomplish as listed on his website <https://rustyhicks.org/>.

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• **Diverse leadership:** Under Rusty's leadership, there are twice as many women, five times more young leaders, and 60% of all leaders are people of color.

• **Opportunity for the formerly incarcerated:** Rusty built a jobs program to help formerly incarcerated women and men rejoin the workforce and secure good union jobs.

• **Fight for 15:** Rusty helped lead the successful campaign for the \$15 minimum wage, first in LA, then statewide, which helps lift people out of poverty, helps pay the rent and supports working families.

• **Health care for all:** Rusty fought to guarantee healthcare coverage for every immigrant child. He supports Medicare for All.

• **Sexual harassment and assault:** Rusty fought for and built a coalition to win greater worker protections against sexual harassment and assault for vulnerable workers in the hospitality industry.

• **Safe and healthy environment:** Rusty fought for environmental justice and helped lead the campaign for safe and clean water in Los Angeles. He supports a Green New Deal to prevent climate disaster and create jobs.

• **Policy at the ballot box:** Rusty was a driving force in ballot measures to build affordable housing, provide homeless housing and services, and expand the LA transit system.

Hicks' vision for CDP chair is to prepare for the 2020 election by building upon the success of the Democratic party. He wants to ensure all candidates are treated equally; to strengthen the statewide party infrastructure, clubs and activists at all levels to collectively resist and defeat Trump; and, to preserve/add congressional seats in 2020 and beyond.

Hicks has been endorsed by elected officials and labor organizations (see rustyhicks.org).

Hicks' talk was followed by an interactive Q&A session. Among many questions, his opposition to Rule 1410 banning the use of Modified Hydrofluoric Acid (MHF) was very contentious. MHF is an additive used by Torrance and Valero refineries in the South Bay area. MHF can be harmful to people living in the area if accidentally released. However, Hicks wrote a letter in 2018 to the South Coast Air Quality District Governing Board against the passage of Rule 1410 because of its impact on the labor union people working in these refineries. Hicks said at the meeting that after talking to the Torrance Refinery Action Alliance (TRAA) folks before the meeting, he will look into modifying his position to mitigate the MHF controversy justly for all those impacted.

CA State Legislative Update

Andrew DeBlock, Senior Field Representative for Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi, discussed several state legislative measures, including

Assembly Bill (AB) 39, which increases K-12 public school funding by \$35 billion for the next seven years. AB 39 was introduced by Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi with the overall intent to *Andrew DeBlock* improve education for all state public school students. Currently, California is ranked in the bottom ten states for per pupil funding, a condition deemed unacceptable by the Assemblymember of the 66th District.



DeBlock also spoke about **Assembly Bill 895**, which will allow for school districts to apply for state grants to support mental health

programs for K-12 schools. AB 895 is supported by Assemblymember Muratsuchi, as he feels the mental health and wellness programs available to students in public schools is a high priority.

DeBlock wrapped up his discussion as he talked about two local events supported by Assemblymember Muratsuchi. On March 23, Charles Wilson Park in Torrance is the site of the South Bay Pet Adoption Fair, planned by the Carson Animal Shelter & the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA).

Also, on April 6, Assemblymember Muratsuchi will be present at a natural disaster town hall meeting at the Los Verdes Country Club and Golf Course. The town hall will be attended by representatives of the California Office of Emergency Services, Los Angeles County Fire Department, Southern California Earthquake Center, as well as Southern California Edison. The discussion will focus on natural disaster preparedness, communication, and evacuation proactive measures. Go to <https://a66.asmdc.org/> for more information.

Activist Announcements

Lynn Bommer, Board of Director and President Emeritus of Palos Verdes Democrats, made several announcements at the monthly meeting March 17. Bommer reported that [Sister District South Bay LA](#) is writing postcards, raising funds, and making phone calls in the Pennsylvania State Senate District 37, April 2nd race for Democrat Pam Iovino.

Bommer explained that Sister District is a grassroots organization that helps Democratic candidates in state races across the country. The Palos Verdes chapter has been enlisted to help in states where gerrymandered districts need to be redrawn to enable Democrats at having a fair chance of winning. As states draw their own districts, it is imperative that legislatures have more Democratic members. Volunteers from PV Democrats are encouraged to help.

Also, Sister District South Bay L.A. will host a Pub Trivia Night as a social event April 14. PV Dems are invited.

Bommer also announced that [Field Team](#)

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[Six](#) is registering Democratic voters. In 2018, the voter registration effort brought in over 6,000 new Democrats and helped flip five swing districts in Southern California. Field Team Six is expanding new Democratic voter registration and is looking for volunteers. For more information, go to fieldteam6.org.

Tony Hale, Chair Resolutions Committee Los Angeles County Democratic Party (LACDP) and 66th AD Executive Board Member, announced that Rusty Hicks won the endorsement of LACDP for the position of California Democratic Party Chair. Election will be held at the California Democratic Party Convention in San Francisco May 2019.

Other LACDP Resolutions Committee updates included LACDP support of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union efforts to safeguard jobs at the Port of Los Angeles and Port of Long Beach. Also, LACDP calls on Democratic leaders to seek diplomatic, peaceful measures to resolve the political and military conflict in Venezuela.

Additionally, the LACDP supports the use of carbon fee and dividend in the United States in the fight to reduce carbon emissions and to mitigate global warming.

Doug Bender, 66th AD ADEM Delegate and Member Indivisible South Bay L.A., announced next month's meeting will be held April 13 at Zampirini Field at Torrance Airport. Scheduled speaker is California State Senator Steve Bradford.

President's Report

by Rascha Hall

Two days before the last meeting, we were shocked, saddened, and horrified by the massacre in otherwise peaceful New Zealand. The white supremacist who murdered 50 Muslims as they gathered for Friday worship told how he was inspired by the man who occupies our White House (I refuse to call him president). I don't know about you, but I was inspired by the Prime Minister of New Zealand's reponse. She wore a hijab (head covering) as she went to comfort the wounded and the mourners, and she vowed, within days, that New Zealand would strengthen its gun laws specifically to outlaw assault weapons.

Jason Berlin and Michael Tonetti organized the volunteers for Southern California for the precinct walking to flip the House in the 2018 elections. We all know how successful they were. Past President Lynn Bommer organized the phone banking for the South Bay. Now Jason Berlin and Michael Tonetti are leading Field Team 6, the Official Voter Registration Team of Netroots Nation 2019. They are offering instruction by phone on how to register voters. Also, they are planning trips to Arizona to work on securing the Senate seat formerly held by Senator McCain. Again, our local representative working with Field Team 6 is Lynn Bommer (see pg 2). Please contact her if you would like to be part of this effort --(310) 374-1188.

Congratulations to former PV Democrats President Kay Cooperman Jue, who was recently appointed to the Commission on Judicial Review. From their website: "Commission on Judicial Performance, established in 1960, is the independent state agency responsible for investigating complaints of judicial misconduct and judicial incapacity and for disciplining judges, pursuant to article VI, section 18 of the California Constitution.188."

Book Review

The Fifth Risk by Michael Lewis

Reviewed by Carol Moeller

This book details what happened during the transition from the Obama to the Trump administration. It is written in US law that the outgoing administration must help the incoming administration prepare to take over the functions of our government, a monumental task engaging 2 million federal employees.

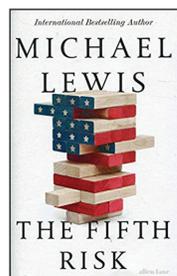
As previous administrations had done, Obama officials spent much effort in preparing detailed briefing books and presentations for the teams expected as their successors, starting way before the election. So what transpired during the transition? Not much, because as a former top official in the Energy Department told Lewis, "that required them to show up. And bring qualified people. But they didn't." Even when they did show up, Trump representatives exuded the bored arrogance of those who already knew it all and didn't need to waste time probing experienced people. Chris

Christie, for all his faults, tried to wake up the incoming appointees to enable an exchange of knowledge, but he was ignored. Christie's discarded transition plan would not have even considered Michael Flynn, who stepped down as Trump's national security adviser after less than four weeks and has since pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI.

Neither Trump nor his appointees appeared to have any respect for the functions of government. Some of the Trump officials who arrived at the State Department did not bother to obtain the security clearances necessary to even hear the briefings. In another department, no Trump transition member arrived until a whole month after the election. Trump's pick for Chief Scientist at the Dept. of Agriculture, talk show host Sam Clovis, had no background in science (which was legally required), nor any policy experience with food or agriculture. After much public outcry, Clovis withdrew his name from consideration. Department appointees who did show up were totally unprepared and many discarded the painstakingly-prepared briefing books. New Energy Department officials were more interested in ideology, and asked for lists of staffers who had worked on projects they disagreed with, or required them to stop using terms like "climate change".

This book derives its name from the Energy Department's first-ever chief risk officer, appointed in the Obama administration, who shared his top five worries. First, was a nuclear-weapons accident. Second, a potential conflict with North Korea, and third was the situation in Iran. Fourth was an attack on our electrical grid. The fifth risk, which sounds out of place at first, he called "Project Management", which in a nutshell is readiness for the unexpected. Previous administrations collected as much knowledge as possible about an array of issues that included small problems that could become big problems, thus increasing the chances of solving them.

The Trump administration displays what Lewis calls "willful ignorance"; if you don't recognize a problem or acknowledge it, then you can claim there is no problem, especially if your goal is to maximize short-term gains without regard to the long-term cost. This philosophy serves to diminish our government, and if you espouse Grover Norquist's view that government should be diminished to a size where it "could drown in a bathtub", then the Trump administration is on track to succeed.





Palos Verdes Democrats Officers for 2018-2019

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- Web Master: Reggie Jue 310-433-8189
- 66th ADDC Rep: Connie Sullivan 310-567-2210

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
- 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 _____ I am a registered Democrat
Name* _____ I am registered No Party Preference
* Fill in if Applying as a Family - two memberships 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
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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