

Palos Verdes Democrats

Founded 1952



logo by
Paul Conrad

May 2017 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

MAY MEETING

DATE: Sunday, May 21st
MEETING TIME: 2:30 - 4:30pm
LOCATION: Peninsula Center Library
Community Room; 701 Silver Spur Rd, RHE
TOPIC: The Bail Trap
SPEAKER: Representative from Ted Lieu's
Office

JUNE MEETING

DATE: Sunday, June 25th
**Note - the June meeting date was delayed
a week to avoid Father's Day**
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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Community Hike with CA Senator Ben Allen and Assemblyman Al Muratsuchi May 13 @ 2:30 pm [RSVP](#)

Meet at Forrestal Reserve
32201 Forrestal Drive, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275

All are welcome to join the hike and talk informally with the Legislators
about preserving parks and other environmental policy priorities.

In partnership with the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy



May General Meeting

On Sunday, May 21st, the Palos Verdes Democrats will meet at 2:30 pm in the Palos Verdes Peninsula Center Library to screen the film: *The Bail Trap: American Ransom*.



At our next meeting we will be screening the film: *The Bail Trap: American Ransom*. 70% of Americans are in jail because they are too poor to pay bail. Our mass incarceration system is fed by money bail. Poor Americans, mostly people of color, can spend days, months and even years for minor infractions because they cannot afford bail. Obviously this is wrong and, thus, a moral as well as a legal issue. This film explains how the money bail system works.

On March 8, 2017, our Congressman Ted Lieu introduced the: No Money Bail Act of 2017. This act, which is currently in committee, would seek to eliminate the use of money bail. We hope to have a representative from the Congressman's office attend our next meeting to illuminate this issue and to answer questions.

Resistance

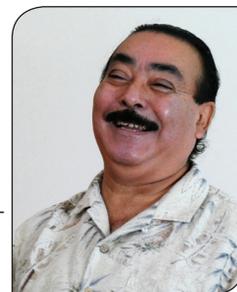
As we have been doing since the November election, we will encourage members to share

their activities and ideas for resisting the current administration. This ad hoc portion of the program has become very popular with our members.

Please join us for this exciting program or come to discuss issues with other like-minded Democrats or to enjoy our yummy homemade goodies.

April Meeting Report by Carol Moeller

In recognition of Earth Day, the PV Dems hosted speaker **Jesse Marquez**, founder of Coalition for a Safe Environment, a nonprofit community-based organization that seeks to improve environmental health and justice in our local communities.



Jesse Marquez,
Coalition for a Safe
Environment

Jesse recounted his childhood defining moment when the Fletcher Refinery across the street from his Carson home exploded, killing 2 and injuring 154. Largely self-educated, Jesse works to reduce public exposure to pollution primarily generated by the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach and by local petroleum refineries. In his activism, Jesse frequently relies upon the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a California statute passed in 1970 that requires state and local agencies to follow a protocol of analysis and public disclosure of environmental impacts and adopt measures to mitigate those impacts. CEQA makes environmental protection a mandatory part of every state and local (public)

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agency's decision making process.

A project at the Port of LA called China Shipping included a proposed container terminal that failed to disclose environmental impacts. Jesse was involved with a lawsuit that produced a \$50 million settlement agreement, and an Environmental Impact Report that became the beginning of a commitment to a greener Port of LA environment. The money has gone to pollution mitigation for the communities surrounding the Port

Venturing further afield, Jesse joined with other environmental groups to successfully add \$2.5 million in environmental projects accompanying the billion-dollar project to develop the Brown Field Municipal Airport in Otay Mesa. These settlement funds include efforts to help offset greenhouse-gas emissions, as well as protect San Diego's dwindling population of burrowing owls.

Julianne Tippett, a Junior at South High in Torrance, who is the President of the Torrance South Bay Youth and Government Delegation, a board member of her school's Model UN, and a volunteer for Al Muratsuchi's campaign this past summer also spoke. She has been accepted at the ACLU Summer Advocacy Institute, which is an 8-day program at Georgetown University. This program costs \$2500, and Julianne has raised \$1200 so far. After the meeting, our PV Dems board agreed to donate \$500 to help her learn more about social justice and the workings of our government. We are asking in return she give us a report about her experience.



Julianne Tippett, South High Torrance High School Junior

Activist Reports

Sura Halote spoke on behalf of the South Bay Progressives. This group meets on the 2nd and 4th Mondays at 7pm at the Torrance Sizzler on Sepulveda. They have a lively table at the Wilson Park Farmer's Market that enables them to share topics such as reaching out to mosques in the area.



Sura Halote, South Bay Progressives

Gary Boston of [Indivisible](http://www.sisterdistrict.com) provided notice of their May 13th meeting at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library in Torrance, where they will discuss sister districts (<https://www.sisterdistrict.com>), which channels activists in safely blue districts to help flip neighboring red districts.



Gary Boston, Indivisible

Our own **Christine Mei** spoke on behalf of Save our Nation, a local group that has organized committees to focus on specific social justice projects in our area. She asked attendees to join her in meeting with local law enforcement officials to discuss how they perceive the Trump agenda, particularly immigration issues, and to make sure the police hear that members of our community support the nine models for police enforcement as



Christine Mei, Save our Nation

set forth by the ACLU. Contact Christine at christinemei84@gmail.com

GMO Rebuttal

by Tony Hale

Ed note: In the interests of free speech, last month, we published a rebuttal to Tony Hale's January presentation in defense of GMOs. In fairness to Tony, below is his reply. The PV Dems takes no position on this subject. Any further opinions on this topic will be addressed on our website here: <http://pvpdemocrats.org/2017/03/30/the-gmo-debate/>.

Dear PV Democrats,

Here is my response to Mr. Bradford's letter.

Mr. Bradford's letter regarding my presentation on GMOs is highly accusatorial without any basis or evidence. He accuses me of being a corporate shill because he has no argument that can defend his feelings about GMOs. The bottom line is that he cannot argue against the fact that there is scientific consensus for the safety of GMOs, the same scientific consensus there is for our understanding of destructive climate change. So, he resorts to using logical fallacies to make his case. First he uses the Straw Man Argument by putting words in my mouth and then condemns me for saying things I did not say.

"Plants were modified thousands of years ago in the Dawn of Agriculture, so poisoning our food is OK. There are already poisons in nature (poison ivy, mushrooms, etc.), so poisoning our food is OK. The Agricultural Revolution is helping to feed the starving millions, so poisoning our food is OK."

I did not say the above nor imply the above. Mr. Bradford's pivot to pesticides is also a Moving the Goalpost logical fallacy. But, let's look at this issue brought up by Mr. Bradford. Pesticides and herbicides are difficult things for an environmentalist like myself to defend, but I feel I should explain how the real world to Mr. Bradford.

Pesticides are an unavoidable aspect of modern farming. Since many pesticides are toxic, their use should be minimized and strongly regulated. But, for the foreseeable future there is no replacement for them. Some make the argument that organic farming

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is the answer, but organic farming uses pesticides even more toxic than the ones used by commercial farmers. The difference is that organic farming uses natural toxins rather than synthesized toxins. Short of growing food in your own back yard, there is no way of avoiding exposure to pesticides.

But, there is good news. Here in the EPA's own words:

"EPA is confident that the fruits and vegetables our children are eating are safer than ever. Under FQPA, EPA evaluates new and existing pesticides to ensure that they can be used with a reasonable certainty of no harm to infants and children as well as adults. EPA works continually to review and improve safety standards that apply to pesticide residues on food."

It is important to note though, that just because a pesticide residue is detected on a fruit or vegetable, that does not mean it is unsafe. Very small amounts of pesticides that may remain in or on fruits, vegetables, grains, and other foods decrease considerably as crops are harvested, transported, exposed to light, washed, prepared and cooked. The presence of a detectible pesticide residue does not mean the residue is at an unsafe level. USDA's Pesticide Data Program (PDP) detects residues at levels far lower than those that are considered health risks."

Ironically, GMOs can also reduce the need for pesticides. GMO beets use fewer pesticides than non-GMO beets. GMO eggplants in India use far less pesticides than non-GMO eggplants.

Why is the anti-GMO movement so disconnected from the scientific community? In large part because the anti-GMO movement is funded by and motivated by the organic food growers. Organic crops are a 36 billion dollar industry and they are spending millions on anti-GMO efforts. This is why the main focus of the movement is GMO labeling, because when the public has questions about GMO foods, they are more likely to buy organic. [A heath tip, make sure you wash your organic vegetables. Organic consumers are less likely to wash their organic vegetables since they think they are clean. But, not only are they sprayed with toxins, they are also more likely to contain E.coli.]

Some will say, even if GMOs are not a threat to our health, what is wrong with labeling them? If they make people feel better about their food, what is the harm? An example: the Hershey's

chocolate company has announced that they are switching to a non-GMO source for their sugar. Now, since sugar is a refined chemical, there is no difference between GMO sourced sugar and non-GMO sourced sugar. They are exactly the same. But, there is a problem switching from sugar beets to sugarcane, cane fields must be burned down in the harvesting process. The burning of canes fields produces large amounts of air and water pollution and contributes to global warming. This is not a good tradeoff for appealing to the unfounded fears of some consumers.

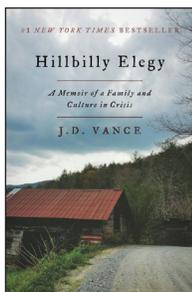
Modern science is complicated, and since none of us are experts in all fields of science, we must look to scientific consensus to judge which opinions have merit. I took on this controversial subject because I wanted the Democratic Party to be the party of science. I believe by consistently holding to solid scientific opinion, we will be better able make our case against destructive climate change. And, when we are out spent by large corporations, our integrity in our use of science is one of our few tools in the fight for stronger regulations and smarter public policy.

Tony Hale
Executive Board Member
California Democratic Party
Former Environmental Caucus Chair
Former President of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Democrats

And, because I'm not paid for any of this, the worst possible corporate skill ever.

Book Review

Hillbilly Elegy by J. D. Vance Reviewed by Carol Moeller



Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis is an autobiography that highlights some of the social problems inherent specifically to the culture of those living in Appalachia, but can be generalized to the white working poor.

This book took on a political flavor (most likely because it was published in the midst of the 2016 election) as many saw it as explaining why the less educated appear to vote against their best interests. Although his culture is identified

as strongly Christian, their behavior and habits are not what any religious organization would want to claim. Vance targets those who unfairly take advantage of the welfare system while exhibiting horrible work ethics and the resentment this poor use of taxpayer dollars causes, as a major reason for the shift from "solid South Democrats" to what he sees as a "tough love" Republican philosophy.

"People sometimes ask whether I think there's anything we can do to "solve" the problems of my community. I know what they're looking for: a magical public policy solution or an innovative government program. But these problems of family, faith, and culture aren't like a Rubik's Cube, and I don't think that solutions (as most understand the term) really exist.....Public policy can help, but there is no government that can fix these problems for us....I don't know what the answer is, precisely, but I know it starts when we stop blaming Obama or Bush or faceless companies and ask ourselves what we can do to make things better."

Despite a dysfunctional and poor family life Vance did well in school (due most likely to scary four-letter threats from his grandmother), found discipline in the military and took advantage of GI benefits to eventually graduate from Yale Law School. He shows us that control of our own lives is not possible, but the choices we do make can make all the difference.

Palos Verdes Democrats Officers for 2017-2018

Member vote on this slate will take place prior to the assumption of office in July

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President Emeritus: Carol Moeller

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2nd Vice President: TBD

Recording Secretary: Kathy Bradford

Corresponding Secretary: Arlene Korb

Treasurer: Al Shadbourne

Parliamentarian: Craig Williams

Membership: TBD

Publicity: Dunja Maglica

Newsletter Editor: Carol Moeller

Hospitality: Teresa Savo

Web Master: Reggie Jue

LACDP Member: TBD



Palos Verdes Democrats Officers for 2016-2017

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- President Emeritus: Carol Moeller 310-541-5526
- 1st Vice President: Kathy Bradford 310-265-9812
- 2nd Vice President: Connie Sullivan 310-378-1554
- Recording Secretary: Rascha Hall 310-377-7334
- Corresponding Secretary: Arlene Korb 310-544-7203
- Treasurer: Al Shadbourne 310-326-4953
- Parliamentarian: Craig Williams 301-265-9812
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- Newsletter Editor:
- Hospitality: Teresa Savo 310-541-1139
- Precinct Captains: Connie Sullivan 310-378-1554
Dee Dee Gonzalez 210-367-9727
- LACDP Associate Member: Megan Crawford 310-766-8222

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
 I am registered No Party Preference
 Name* _____ I am a registered Democrat
 I am registered No Party Preference
 * 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

Please contact me to help in the following areas:

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