

Palos Verdes Democrats

Founded 1952



logo by
Paul Conrad

January 2019 Newsletter

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

COMING EVENTS

Social time: 2pm

JANUARY MEETING

DATE: Sunday, January 20th

MEETING TIME: 2:30 - 4:30pm

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

TOPIC: PVPUSD Board race and CCL

SPEAKER: Megan Crawford and Citizen's
Climate Lobby representative

FEBRUARY MEETING

DATE: Sunday, February 17th

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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**SAVE the DATE -- 3rd
Annual Women's March
Downtown Los Angeles --
January 19, 2019**

Visit www.womensmarchla.org to
learn more.



January General Meeting

Megan Crawford is a 26 year-old teacher and PV Democrats' member who just received the most number of votes in our recent election for PVPUSD board. She will describe her journey as a candidate, what her biggest challenges were and will let us know what worked and what didn't in her run for office. She will also tell us what responsibilities she expected and what came as a surprise as a school board member.

The latest information from **Citizen's Climate Lobby** (CCL) is also on tap for our January meeting. We'll learn how a Democratic majority in the House will impact them and what effects CA's Democratic supermajority will have in reining in human causes of climate change.

November Meeting Report

by **Tex Yamada and Asha Shahed**

Daniel Leserman, a Palos Verdes resident and Deputy Executive Director of the Los Angeles Democratic Party (LACDP), provided an upbeat and interactive report on the 2018 midterm election. Results show California to be "bluer" than the Pacific Ocean at the national, state and local levels. Hurray!

Mr. Leserman acknowledged the hard work of party members and grassroots efforts to increase voter participation as contributors to the Blue Wave success in the midterm election. He also cited the party's new proactive strategy in presenting goals and policies and robust response to the Republican attacks, which attracted historic voter turnout contributing to positive election results. Leserman noted that women were elected in top state positions: Eleni Kounalakis (Lieutenant Governor), Fiona Ma (Treasurer), and Betty Yee (Controller).

Other major Democratic wins included six U.S. Congressional districts in CA (now 7 as of this printing!) flipping from red to blue after 40 red years and LA county Sheriff race after 30 years.



Danny Leserman,
LACDP Deputy
Executive Director

LACDP conducts election campaigns in LA County under the direction of the Democratic State Central Committee. LACDP, which encompasses 88 cities and the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County, is the largest local Democratic Party affiliate in the country. LACDP's responsibilities include: 1) building Party organization at district, regional, and county levels; 2) assisting with voter registration; and 3) encouraging voter participation in elections. LACDP charters about 100 local Democratic clubs, which are a major source of grassroots organizing and disseminating the message, platform, and philosophy of the Democratic Party. In addition, LACDP develops official Party policies and positions and communicates this agenda to the public and to all office holders. As part of the organization's agenda, LACDP provides a grassroots forum for the study and discussion of public policy issues and their impact at the local level. As part of its program, LACDP also issues endorsements in local and municipal candidate races and takes positions on statewide ballot measures. These endorsements then become the official position taken by the California Democratic Party. Also, LACDP conducts candidate recruitment programs, in part, by soliciting help from local Democratic clubs.

Dan Weitzman, a product of Palos Verdes, returned home to speak at the Palos Verdes

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Democrats' November meeting. Growing up in Palos Verdes, he recalls the 1970's and 1980's when the local area was a conservative community, mostly Republican. Note, in this past primary, RPV flipped to blue! But change does occur, given the dynamics of California politics. And now, Weitzman said he "can't believe there are so many Democrats in attendance at this meeting today". Weitzman recounted how he embraced the Democratic Party ideology in his college days and early adulthood. Eventually, he relocated to Sacramento, while completing his education at California State University at Sacramento. In the state capitol, he has made his mark working in political fundraising for the past 27 years.



*Dan Weitzman,
Democratic Party
Controller*

As head of Daniel C. Weitzman Consulting, he performs political fundraising for Democrats at various levels of government. In May 2017 Weitzman was elected Controller of the Democratic Party. Now, he has become a central figure in California's Democratic Party, aiding the election and re-election campaigns of numerous political candidates through his fundraising, event planning, and community activism efforts.

While Weitzman is encouraged by the 2018 midterm election results, he warns Democrats must continue the momentum of the Blue Wave heading into 2020. He cites organization as one key component for winning local and statewide seats. "We need to organize across the state even at local levels, including school boards and city councils", he says. Of course, voter turnout is another key for Democratic

victory. "When Democrats vote, Democrats win. When Democrats don't vote, they (Republicans) win", Weitzman states.

In closing, Weitzman commented on President Trump and the next Presidential election. He more than hinted that the Trump White House operates differently from past recent Administrations. "These Trump people are not friendly" and "Trump will do just about anything to hold on to his Presidency", he believes. Weitzman named Kamala Harris and Joe Biden as two Democrats having the best chance to unseat Donald Trump if he runs for re-election.

Meeting Announcements

Every 2 years, registered Democrats vote for 7 women and 7 men who will represent their Assembly District at the annual Calif. Democratic Conventions. **Connie Sullivan** announced that she is in charge of these ADEM elections for our 66th AD, which will take place on Sunday January 27th, at Hesse Park (29301 Hawthorne Blvd, RPV); doors open at noon, candidate speeches begin at 12:30, ADEM voter registration begins at 1 and voter registration closes at 2pm. Connie needs our help with this task, so please contact her at pvedems@gmail.com to volunteer. Representing our AD is a real honor, so the PV Democrats encourage anyone who has been a registered Democrat, and has lived in the 66th Assembly District on or before October 22, 2018 and is interested, to seriously consider running. For more information, see California Democratic Party website here: <https://www.cadem.org/our-party/adem>

Connie also informed us that ALL ballots in California will be [mailed to registered voters](#) starting with the 2020 election! That is really good news, as those who have received mail-in

ballots in the past have been more inclined to actually cast their votes.

Donna Tarr announced that author and spiritualist [Marianne Williamson](#) is exploring a run for the 2020 presidency as a Democrat. Previously she was a congressional candidate in the 2014 election as an Independent, and much of her platform mirrored that of Bernie Sanders. Marianne will be at the Saban Theatre at 8440 Wilshire Blvd. in Beverly Hills on Monday, Dec 10th at 7:30 pm. A \$15 donation is requested but no tickets are needed.

In her role as a public school teacher, **Stacey Michaels** expressed relief that Tony Thurmond had secured the California Superintendent of Public Instruction slot. Stacey announced a December 15th [March for Public Education](#), which is being held primarily to point out that LAUSD is sitting on surplus funds which should be released for use in classrooms where they are desperately needed.

President's Report by Rascha Hall

Our November meeting was very exciting. The meeting began with a wrap-up of the fantastic Democrat gains in the election held earlier in the month. The gains have continued to grow as more results become certified. Then followed two inspiring speakers from the Los Angeles County Democratic Party (LACDP) and the California Democratic Party (CADEM).

Here are some of the highlights: 40 House seats flipped, 7 in California alone. All of Orange County, Ronald Reagan country, the place where Republicans are said to go to die, flipped to BLUE. For those of us in Palos Verdes, the most impressive flip was that of Dana Rohrbacher, after 15 terms, 30 years in the House, lost by a substantial margin (53% to 47%) to Democrat Harley Rouda. Kudos and many thank you's to our former president, Lynn Bommer, and her dedicated group of phone bankers in Palos Verdes, Hermosa Beach, and Manhattan Beach and to those who participated in precinct walking.

Every week from before the June primary until the election Lynn's groups phoned Democrats and some Independents to get out the vote to flip the 5 House seats in Southern California that were considered vulnerable.

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Lynn Bommer's Hermosa Beach phone bank

And it worked! All of the House seats were flipped from Republican to Democrat!

In New England (Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, and Rhode Island) the last remaining Republican representative in the House also was defeated. New England is now almost all BLUE. Except for Independent Senators in Vermont and Maine, and one lone Republican in Maine, the New England Senate delegation is also BLUE. Furthermore, 7 Governor flips is taking us from 33 Republican Governors and 17 Democrats to 26 Republicans and 24 Democrats. Among the defeated Republicans was Scott Walker in Wisconsin who did so much to cripple the unions in his state.

Jon Testor, Senator from Montana, managed to hold on to his seat despite fierce opposition and campaign rallies for his opponent from Mr. Trump. There were some sad loses: While we lost Senate seats in North Dakota, Missouri, Indiana, and Florida, we managed to gain seats in Nevada and Arizona. Unfortunately, the Republicans will hold a slightly stronger majority in the Senate than now. That's most important because the Senators must confirm some Presidential appointees, which is especially important in the case of judges. The gains in the House comprise a diverse group. There were LGBT winners, minority men and women, lots of women, including 2 Muslim women, and 2 Native American women.

Last, but definitely not least, our own Al Muratsuchi was re-elected to the State Assembly by a substantial margin - 59.8% of the vote! And our young superstar, Megan Crawford, is going to be a member of the Palos Verdes School Board. She managed to be the top vote getter in a field of 4. Congratulations, Megan.

Now we have our work cut out for us. We can't let our guard down. We need to continue to work hard to further our gains in 2020. We

need to hold on to our House gains, try to retake over the Senate, and above all, defeat the current occupant of the White House and elect a Democrat to be President.

Book Review *Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right's Stealth*

Plan for America

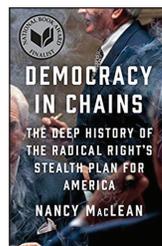
By Nancy MacLean

Reviewed by Lynn

McLeod

I read Nancy MacLean's book recently and it has made me into something of a missionary. Like all good books, whether history or science or fiction, it tells a compelling story, in this case about the vulnerability of democracy as a result of its strengths. Also the corruptibility of great intelligence by fear and greed. Partly the depth of this history comes from its origins in the propertied, slave-holding class in the South, specifically Virginia, before this country was a country. And partly it comes from the depth of MacLean's research into archives hidden in plain sight for years.

The idea at the root of this radical right movement was and is that economic freedom trumps (sorry – that's just the right word) all other political freedoms and the idea of majority rule, which it calls "the tyranny of the masses." John C. Calhoun was its passionate legislative exponent after the Civil War, as was his 20th Century avatar, Senator Harry Byrd (R – VA). Perhaps most important to this story was the emergence of James Buchanan, a brilliant, resentful, uncompromising intellectual who earned a doctorate in economics, coined the misleading phrase "public choice," (which means anything less than unanimity is not acceptable to the public), established pseudo-academic programs in Virginia dedicated to unswerving allegiance to his ideas, and ultimately won a Nobel prize in 1986. The core idea of economic liberty gives rise to a set of related stances that includes opposition to regulation and taxation and programs funded by taxation such as public education, public health, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, and of course, any form of welfare. And voting rights. Buchanan's approach was unprecedented: He wanted to make these



concepts academically respectable and then move them into our governing structures. To accomplish this, he worked with like-minded white men to establish autonomous academic centers at Virginia universities to indoctrinate economic students in these libertarian principles and move them into government positions; he also moved to train government officials, create foundations and institutes for research and advocacy, and move trainees into judgeships, with the caution that "conspiratorial secrecy is at all times essential" (p. 117). "By 1990...40% of the U.S. federal judiciary had been treated to a Koch-backed curriculum" (p. 195). Yes – Koch. Buchanan was delighted when in the late 1970s, Pinochet in Chile consulted with him and enacted his ideas, even to the extent of rewriting the constitution. (The fact that decades later, Chile is mired in corruption and inequality due to this enactment is overlooked or denied by "public choice" institutions here is America.) In fact, in their drive for freedom, Buchanan acknowledged that "Despotism may be the only alternative to the political structure we see" (p. 151).

In this country, the success of Buchanan's ideas accelerated when David Koch became an enthusiastic supporter, funding all sorts of related endeavors, including the Cato Institute as the propaganda arm. In addition, over time, Buchanan advocated more subtle efforts to win public support for the ultimate goal of changing the existing rules of our society: Move in small steps and use distorted language to misrepresent their real purpose. The results of those efforts and their growing strength should feel quite familiar to us: privatizing education, prisons and Social Security on the way to moving them off public funding entirely; restricting voting rights to exclude poor and minorities; disparaging feminism as a form of socialism; eliminating government regulations and graduated tax rates. According to Tyler Cohen, this new social contract will result in the wealthiest holding the power with clear consciences since they are clearly "worthy," the unworthy poor can be left to suffer due to their own irresponsibility, move to cheaper areas and have a poorer quality of life without government assistance or public health programs (p. 212).

The ideas around undoing the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution is scary enough, but the visible implementation of them is scarier still. There is truly a "deep state," and it will require the "tyranny of the masses" to undo the chains.



Palos Verdes Democrats Officers for 2018-2019

- President: Rascha Hall 310-377-7334
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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
- 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
 Young Adult \$10.00/Year

Amount enclosed _____ Renewal New Member

Please contact me to help in the following areas:

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 Voter Registration Campaign Work Website/Facebook Phone Tree