

Palos Verdes Democrats

Founded 1952



logo by
Paul Conrad

September 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

Join us at 2 pm to socialize!

SEPTEMBER MEETING

DATE: Sunday, Sept 15th

MEETING TIME: 2:30 - 4:30pm

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

TOPIC: Making a Difference

SPEAKERS: LAANE, Sister District South
Bay LA, and SBCCOG

OCTOBER MEETING

DATE: Sunday, Oct 20th

MEETING TIME: 2:30 - 4:30pm

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

TOPIC: Standing up to the Ffarmongers

SPEAKERS: Law Enforcement Action
Partnership (LEAP) and TBD

Inside This Month's Issue:

Aug General Mtg Report Pages 1-3

President's Report Page 3

**Why is August 26th Known as
Women's Equality Day** Page 3

**Come to a Meeting
and WIN A FREE
DOOR PRIZE!**



Socialize with your fellow Democrats. **Learn** what our speakers and activists have to say. And have the opportunity to **Win** a book or momento just by writing your name on a FREE raffle ticket.

September General Meeting

Making a Difference is the theme for our September 15th meeting, where we will hear from LAANE (Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy), Sister District South Bay LA, and SBCCOG (South Bay Cities Council of Governments).

LAANE representative, **Amardeep Gill**, will brief us on their Our People Our Port campaign to create good jobs, healthy communities, and a clean environment at the Ports of LA and Long Beach. Since the passage of the Clean Truck Program, the Our People Our Port coalition continues to ensure that truck drivers are provided good jobs and that the industry's effects on local communities are mitigated. Author and past labor reporter for the New York Times, Steven Greenhouse, says LAANE "brought unions, environmentalists and community groups together to develop a plan that has greatly reduced air pollution at the nation's largest seaport, the combined Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Not only did this effort bring in a new generation of trucks that polluted far less, but it raised port truck drivers' pay and helped unionize hundreds of port drivers."

Winning elections and turning states blue is the passion of **Gary Boston**, representative of Sister District South Bay-LA and former PV Dems 2nd VP. Learn how you can join other volunteers to flip states blue.

Jacki Bacharach, Executive Director of SBCCOG, is championing a fast broadband network (1Gbit/sec) to all the South Bay cities by July 2020 using Measure M funding, to pay for the one-time capital improvement. Find out about the South Bay Fiber Network consortium and the status of the Peninsula cities participation.

August General Meeting Report

by Tex Yamada and Ann Nye

UCI Law Ninth Annual Supreme Court Review

In what has become a tradition, Superior Court Judge Tom Long, a PV Dems member, walked us through the video of UCI (University of California Irvine) Law's 2018-19 Supreme Court panel discussion to provide his insight into how these decisions will affect us. Here's a link



to the video: *Carol Moeller and Judge Tom Long*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AIALTGqZepE&feature=youtu.be>

The UCI Supreme Court review panel was moderated by Richard Hasen, Chancellor's Professor of UCI Law and Political Science.



The panel includes: Jonathan Adler, Professor of Law, Case Western Reserve University School of Law; Erwin Chemerinsky, Dean and Distinguished Professor of Law, Berkeley Law; Chris Geidner, Senior Advisor for Law and Policy, The Justice Collaborative; Michele Goodwin, Chancellor's Professor, UCI Law; and Sarah Harrington, Partner, Goldstein & Russell.

The cases under review covered a wide range of topics, including partisan gerrymandering, reproductive rights, LGBTQ rights, the census citizenship question, due process, administrative law, the death penalty, and the ideological split among Supreme Court justices.

Each panelist spoke about at least one important subject involving recent Supreme Court

continued on page 2

continued from page 1

cases and were allowed approximately seven to eight minutes. To save time for comments, PV Dems member and Parliamentarian Carol Moeller collaborated with Judge Long to identify key segments in the video to focus our discussion on the gerrymandering, U.S. Census and Administrative Law decisions.

Professor Chemerinsky provided both an overview of the Supreme Court October 2018 term year and important developments related to partisan gerrymandering. In his overview, Chemerinsky said the most significant takeaway was the Court's avoidance of taking on "blockbuster" and "divisive" cases following the "bruising" Kavanaugh hearing. In only a few exceptions where they were obligated to rule, the Supreme Court deferred handling cases involving immigration, gun control, abortion, and transgender-sexual orientation discrimination. Many of these cases have been put on the backburner until 2020 or later, according to Chemerinsky.

On the issue of partisan gerrymandering, Chemerinsky cites the *Rucho v. Common Cause* case, which the Supreme Court ruled in favor of leaving current gerrymandering practices intact, or as is, in the states of North Carolina and Maryland. Chief Justice John Roberts issued the majority 5-4 opinion, writing that "partisan gerrymandering claims present political questions beyond the reach of the federal courts". The Supreme Court decision also negated any lower court's decision that had ruled in favor of blocking selected gerrymandering tactics in districts of North Carolina and Maryland. In his opinion, Roberts did suggest a remedy to the partisan undemocratic fixing of legislative lines: States could adopt an independent commission model for redistricting. Interestingly, just four years ago, in *Arizona State Legislature v. Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission*, the chief justice voted in opposition to this practice.

Judge Long said this decision will be remembered like the *Dred Scott* decision (the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that no black, free or slave, could claim U.S. citizenship) or the *Plessey vs Ferguson* decision (court upheld the constitutionality of racial segregation under the "separate but equal" doctrine). And, he proclaimed, we all know how those decisions were overturned, the first by civil war and the latter almost 60 years later by the *Brown vs Board of Education* decision.

In his comments, Judge Long quoted from Justice Elena Kagan's dissenting opinion, "*Of all times to abandon the court's duty to declare the law, this was not the one. The practices challenged in these cases imperil our system of government. Part of the court's role is to defend its foundations. None is more important than free and fair elections. With respect and deep sadness, I dissent.*" Judge Long described the Supreme Court 5-4 ruling in favor of partisan gerrymandering as "perfidious," [treacherous, disloyal] noting the decision as "a betrayal of the will of the majority of our electorate." To lighten the mood, Judge Long joked how our districts were gerrymandered before we had an independent commission to redraw them 10 years ago. Our district wasn't called a "dumbbell" in honor of Dana Rohrabacher; rather it was because the district outline looked like a dumbbell.

The next topic about the U.S. Census was discussed by Sarah Harrington, a private practice law attorney and former Department of Justice Attorney. Harrington provided several key insights into the 2020 Census questionnaire issues, which surfaced as early as Spring 2018. At the heart of the matter is the inclusion of the question "Is this person a Citizen of the United States?" Department of Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross wanted the question included. Originally, Ross had stated that the citizenship question is needed to ensure that minorities are accurately counted, and their rights are protected through the Voting Rights Act. Additionally, in Congressional hearings, Ross had stated that at first the Department of Justice requested inclusion of the question. However, evidence revealed in lawsuits indicate that Ross had approached the DOJ earlier, asking that it initiate the question request.

On the other hand, major activist groups, such as the American Civil Liberties Union, wanted exclusion of the citizenship question. Critics of the question argued that members of a household filling out the questionnaire could be intimidated when responding. The results would lead to an inaccurate count. Census data is relied on by business for decision-making and by the government for funding purposes. Also, congressional districts and realignment are formed using the data.

Ultimately on June 27, in a 5-4 vote, Chief

Justice Roberts sided with Justices Stephen Breyer, Elena Kagan, Ruth Ginsburg, and Sonya Sotomayor, and the Supreme Court ruled against the Citizenship question. However, in the decision, Judge Long said Roberts didn't want to sign his name to an outright lie when it became obvious during the arguments that Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross was lying. Judge Long opined that "if he [Trump] had made a better pick at Commerce, we might have had a different outcome."

Moderator Hasen was asked a three-fold question, received from the audience: a.) Will an Executive Order get the Trump Administration around this (Supreme Court ruling against Census Question)? b.) What's likely to happen? c.) When are we likely to know what's going to happen? Harrington responded, that first, an Executive Order is not likely to save the Administration from the litigation. She cites the change of legal team for the Administration as an example of internal personnel problems. Also, she emphasized that using the Voting Rights Act justification for including the citizenship question failed. Harrington concluded her analysis with this comment. "My bet would be you will not see this question on the questionnaire in the end."

Next, we heard from Professor Adler on Administrative Law and its impact on immigration, the Census Bureau, the Southern Border Wall, and Environmental programs. Professor Adler noted both Trump appointed Justices Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh have a court background associated with Administrative Law, yet there were multiple occurrences of them breaking ranks to join liberal Justices and not always agreeing with each other. The Roberts' court has managed to avoid overturning precedent not by ruling according to precedent, but by narrowing the opinions or by rewriting statute.

During the Q&A session, it was noted this is the first time in history where all the conservatives have been appointed by one party and the liberals by one party. Professor Chemerinsky ended the Q & A session by answering a question with an "I don't know" answer: "What will the legitimacy of the Court mean at a time when the legitimacy of other institutions of government, the Presidency and Congress, are at all-time lows? I think this is such an enormously important question, one that none of us can answer at this point in time."

continued from page 2

Judge Long provided a brief discussion about the controversial Trump v. Sierra Club case, which wound up 5-4 in favor by the conservative Justice majority. The case was decided on July 26 with the Court allowing the White House to use \$2.5 billion of Department of Defense budget funds for the Southern Border Wall. Approximately \$600 million of the funds had been earmarked to use in the war in Afghanistan. In actuality, the Supreme Court ruling overturns an appellate court ruling blocking border wall construction. The Trump Administration had appealed the lower court decision, but the decision was upheld in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Only when the government asked the Supreme Court to step in was the block lifted for continued border wall construction.

Last Chance Alliance

In the absence of the Last Chance Alliance representative, Ann Nye presented their *Dear Governor Newsom letter* to seize our last chance to build a healthy, resilient future, calling on him to:



1. STOP new fossil fuel projects. Lead by issuing no new permits for oil and gas extraction, fossil fuel infrastructure, or petrochemical projects in California.

2. DROP existing fossil fuel production. Set a national and global precedent by becoming the first oil-producing state to announce a phase-out of existing production in line with the Paris climate goals, with a just and equitable transition that protects workers, communities, and economies.

3. ROLL out science-based setback limits. Begin by phasing out oil production in places that are suffering most from the impacts of fossil fuel extraction—by creating a 2500-foot health and safety buffer zone between fossil-fuel infrastructure and homes, schools, and other sensitive sites.

Afterwards our club voted unanimously to add our name to their Governor Newsom letter.

Announcements

Lynn Bommer provided info on Field Team 6 organizing efforts to register voters in Orange County. You can drive on your own or carpool with her to register voters in Katie Porter's and Harley Rouda's districts. Contact Lynn, 310-503-

3030, if you want to join the carpool on Tuesdays.

Gary Boston representing Sister District South Bay - LA will be speaking at our meeting in September, and wanted us to know that they meet monthly in the Peninsula Library Community Room on the 4th Sunday of the month at 1:30 pm.

Donna Tarr reminded us the Butcher Hill Solana Complex construction is scheduled to start January 2020. After the meeting, we learned that the city of PVE and Ted Lieu both submitted letters before the deadline to question the findings in the environmental report.

Tony Hale, CDP Executive Board Member, reported on the LAC Democrat Delegate meeting where they passed a highly unusual resolution calling on Villanueva to restore trust in his department and adhere to recommendations on hiring practices by the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission, to end inmate transfers to federal immigration agents and their contractors, and to reverse all decisions by a panel that reinstated a deputy fired for violating department policies regarding domestic abuse and lying. The resolution also expressed concern that Villanueva's son was admitted into the Sheriff's Department academy despite a history of driving under the influence. Next, the resolution will go to the State party's Executive Board.



President's Report by Rascha Hall

I'm sure you all enjoyed Judge Tom Long's presentation of this year's Supreme Court decisions at the August meeting. We are so lucky to have him as a member of our club.

Reggie Jue (our wonderful webmaster) and I attended the Clean Money Campaign Rally on August 11th. At the time, the Rally was in support of four bills--two that are currently before the State Assembly and two that are before the State Senate. Three of the bills are Discloser bills: **SB 47 Petition Disclose Act** (the author of which is our own State Senator, Ben Allen), **SB 636 Ballot Disclose Act**, and **AB 1217 Issue Ads Disclose Act**. They are slated to do exactly what they say they will do--disclose the sponsors and candidates who support the positions stated on petitions, the ballot, and

in issue ads. Since the Rally, the Clean Money Campaign has taken on a new bill to support: **AB 201 Text Message Disclose Act** to force all those text messages paid for by candidate committees to "stand by their ad" and list the name of the candidate and the office for which the candidate is running.

The **Secure the Vote Act, AB 1784** is to do just that. We want paper ballots, or at the very least, paper back-up. Some of you may remember how in recent history, the maker of Diebold voting machines promised that he would secure the Ohio vote for the Republicans. Voting machines can be programmed to do whatever the programmer wants them to do and, as we all know, are easily hacked. Our vote is too precious; we must make sure every vote is counted, and counted as intended by the voter!

Why is August 26th known as Women's Equality Day?

From GFWC-NC Federation Friday Newsletter

The 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote nationally on August 18, 1920, so why is Women's Equality Day on August 26th each year? The simple answer is that just because a constitutional amendment is ratified, it's not official until it is certified by the correct government official. In 1920, that official was Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby. On August 26, 1920, Colby signed a proclamation behind closed doors at 8 a.m. at his own house in Washington, D.C, ending a struggle for the vote that started a century earlier. **What is the 19th Amendment and what does it mean?** The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation. **How did this come to be?** The 15th amendment made it illegal for the federal or state government to deny any US citizen the right to vote. This did not apply to women. Thus, began the Suffrage Movement led by key figures such as Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. These women were among the original authors of the 19th amendment although it took forty-one years before the government would even consider ratifying the 19th amendment. Many lawmakers feared that women would vote in large groups, which would affect the outcome of elections. **August is the 99th anniversary of the Women's Right to VOTE.**



Palos Verdes Democrats Officers for 2019-2020

- President: Rascha Hall 310-377-7334
- President Emeritus: Lynn Bommer 310-374-1188
- 1st Vice President: Kathy Bradford 310-265-9812
- 2nd Vice President: Ann Nye 310-373-6805
- Recording Secretary: Asha Shahed 310-709-0264
- Corresponding Secretary: Arline Korb 310-544-7203
- Treasurer: Al Shadbourne 310-326-4953
- Membership: Irene Silver 310-541-2650
- Publicity: Nancie Silver 310-941-4501
- Parliamentarian: Carol Moeller 310-541-5526
- Newsletter Editor: Tex Yamada 310-329-3694
- Newsletter Designer: Ann Nye 310-373-6805
- Newsletter Mailings: Ron Moeller 310-541-5526
- Hospitality: Nancie Silver 310-941-4501
- 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), and have the opportunity to be elected to the board

**Please send your membership form and check 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 both names 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 **Check payable to: Palos Verdes Democrats**
Amount enclosed _____ Renewal New Member

Please contact us to help in the following areas:

- Hospitality Newsletter Membership Publicity Correspondence
- Voter Registration Campaign Work Website/Facebook Annual Picnic Committee