

-THE VOORHIS VOICE

Progressive Voice of the Pomona Valley

JUNE 2021

www.claremontdems.org



DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF CLAREMONT MEETINGS

Friday Issues Discussion 12-1 Fridays, at Village Grille. If you are fully vaccinated you are welcome to attend the luncheon discussion group. Restaurants still have public health rules they must meet so be prepared that not everything is back to normal.

June 11 (Friday) Luncheon 12 pm
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81881409396>

Speaker: **Asiya Junisbai**, CHS Young Democrats Club President and member of Claremont Student Equity Coalition: *The Claremont Student Equity Coalition Speaks*.

June 12 (Saturday): Special Executive Board Meeting, 9-1030

June 19 (Saturday): Executive Board Meeting, 9 – 10:30:

June 28 (Monday): Members' Meeting, 7 – 9 pm
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89998723617>

Speaker: **Jeanette Royston**, President of the Pomona Valley Branch NAACP: *White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide*

CALENDAR

June 1: 100th Anniversary of the Tulsa Massacre

June 19: Juneteenth: The Emancipation Proclamation finally fully enforced
(Slaves in Texas Freed)

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DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF CLAREMONT NEWS

From the Editor

The club has traditionally called a halt to its formal activities for the months of July and August: there are no scheduled meetings (the weekly issues discussion group continues to meet on Fridays) and the *Voorhis Voice* also goes on break to resume on September 1.

However, political life continues, locally, in California, in the nation and around the world. Here are reminders of some important issues that will be boiling over the summer months: Palestine and Netanyahu; Newsom and Gascon facing recalls; a huge set of necessary legislation (For the People Act, John Lewis Voting Rights Act, the American Jobs Plan, the American Families Plan, the 2022 Presidential budget) whose passage is being gummed up by McConnell and by the filibuster.

While enjoying your summer break, don't forget to follow the news, take any actions necessary to further Democratic aims and values, and be prepared to join the club in its fall activities.

Reports on May Speakers

By Carolee Monroe

Both of the May programs can be seen on the YouTube Democratic Club of Claremont channel.

The speaker at the Gar Byrum Distinguished Speaker Series Luncheon, May 14 was **Janice Elliott**, City of Upland Councilmember (the only Democrat on that Council). She discussed issues that Claremont and Upland have in common. Foremost is the undeveloped area along Foothill Boulevard, especially between Benson and Central Avenues. While both housing and warehouses are considerations for development, the lack of a sewer connection is a problem. The residents of Upland and Claremont use each other's parks. Also using the parks are persons with addiction problems and those experiencing homelessness and so funded services are needed. Other concerns Elliott listed included environmental policies, political realities, the animal shelter and Ophelia's Jump theater group.

State Senator **Connie Leyva**, CA SD 20 (our neighboring district), spoke at the May 31 General Membership meeting. She is Chair of the Senate Education Committee and the Senate Democratic Caucus and a member of many other committees. Leyva first discussed her part in bargaining for the safe reopening of schools and her support for SB 91 COVID-19 Tenant Relief Act. She then promoted the use of money in the state budget surplus to help child care centers and pre-schools. Her focus, she said, are bills that advance equity in the areas of education, the workplace, women's rights and environmental justice. Because of the pandemic, most of the proposed legislation was "shelved." The question/answer session that followed included topics: sunseting conviction records, a master plan for aging, the recall of the governor, the Pomona Library, funding for the Gold Line, the "30-30 Process", AB 1400 Guaranteed Health Care for All, trade unions, taxing Amazon and the bullet train.

Club Opportunity

Debi Evans, DCC Political Action Chair, is presenting DCC members with two opportunities to become more politically active.

Debi represents the DCC on the Central Committee of the Los Angeles County Democratic Party (LACDP) and is a member of its Legislative Action Committee (LAC). The purposes of the LAC are to work with legislators and legislative offices to conduct research, analyses, and deliberations on legislation in order to create a list of recommended priority legislation for LACDP consideration; and to advocate on behalf of LACDP priority legislation.

If you are interested in learning which legislation is considered “priority”, Debi will send the monthly packet upon request.

If you are interested in learning how to track a bill, training is available from the LACDP. Since Marguerite Gee Royse has “retired” from her role as Rapid Response chairperson our club has not been formally following the progress of legislation we are for or against. The DCC Board would welcome a volunteer or a committee willing to take on this task to keep us all more informed.

To sign up for either or both of these opportunities, contact Debi Evans at debi4change@aol.com or Carolee Monroe at jackncarolee@verizon.net.

Request for Assistance

The SHOES FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN program is sponsored by *Newcomers Access Center (NAC)* a local (headquartered in Pomona) non-profit organization which provides various forms of assistance to refugees/immigrants. Its present goal is to raise \$15,000 to get new athletic shoes for 500 kids housed at the Fairplex (more are expected to arrive later). Shoes will be provided by Shoes That Fit.

Donations can be made at charity.gofundme.com/o/en/campaign/shoes-for-migrant-children. All donations are tax deductible. Alternatively, checks can be mailed to NAC at 401 N. Gibbs Street, Pomona CA 91767. To ask questions please call 301-346-4221.

Report on CHS Young Democrats Club 2020-2021

By Carolee Monroe

The club, led by Asiya Junisbai and Kalilah Hamid, established a program of monthly topics. Those topics included: elections; trans/queer issues; inequality/class issues; Black activism; war and peace; indigenous peoples; and

climate.

The twice monthly meetings featured a speaker at one and, at the other, a discussion (led by Kalilah Hamid) of the book chosen on the month's topic. (Books were selected so as to be available at no cost to the students.)

The Democratic Club of Claremont, which mentors the Young Dems, supplied speakers for some of the topics: Sam Pedroza, Ivan Light and Pam Nagler.

The Young Dems will have a meeting in June to determine leadership for next school year. This year, of course, has been difficult for all: may it be better next year and may the Young Dems prosper.



Essays Etc. by Club Members

Students Say "No" to the SRO

Asiya Jusisbai, Co-Opinions Editor, Published in the CHS Wolfpacket, January 25

An armed School Resource Officer (SRO) has been regularly present on the campus of CHS since the position was first instituted in 2009. Today, this practice is being challenged. Students developed the campaign to "Say No To The SRO" in the early summer of 2020 during a nation-wide reckoning with police brutality and racially biased policing. The Claremont Student Equity Coalition, a conglomerate of student organizations dedicated to the promotion of racial equity and student wellbeing at CHS, leads this movement. Its nine

clubs — the Black Student Union, the Young Democrats, the Asian Student Alliance, the Future Minority Leaders, Best Buds, Environmental Justice Club, Women of Color Empowerment Club, Feminist Club, and Disarm Hate — are united by one unwavering demand. They want the CUSD Board of Education to completely remove the SRO.

Roughly seven months have passed since students first voiced their concerns about a regular armed campus police presence to the CHS administration. The administration has not taken concrete steps towards removing the SRO position in that time. However, student efforts have not let up. Members of the Equity Coalition and members of the general student body have attended every single public Board of Education meeting since June, making public comments in support of the Say No To The SRO campaign. They have organized a protest against the SRO, gathered anonymous student testimony regarding the SRO, compiled national data proving that SRO programs are racially biased and universally unsuccessful in deterring on-campus crime, gathered larger community support, and prompted the Claremont Police Oversight Commission to create a separate ad-hoc committee to research just how effective or ineffective the CUSD SRO really is. For months, they asked the Board of Education to make the SRO a meeting agenda item so that thorough discussion could be had and real action could be taken on the matter.

On December 17th, 2020, the SRO was added to the agenda of a CUSD Board of Education meeting per repeated student requests. During the meeting, there was limited time for public comment. Instead, a presentation by CHS administration and Claremont's Chief of Police was delivered to the Board and the public. It explained the role of the SRO.

Kahilah Hamid has been deeply involved in the SRO removal campaign since its inception. She is concerned that the presentation, which did not mention race as a factor, did not paint a holistic picture of the reality of CHS policing with respect to differences between student demographics. "Members of the Board of Education are the only people with the power to vote to remove the SRO," Hamid said. "They should know the whole story. This presentation does not account for racial disparities in policing, it lacks statistics, and it does not prove

that the SRO deters crime. It only says that the SRO is supposed to do so. But what is really happening?”

CUSD-specific data on SRO crime prevention is not yet available to the public (it is currently being gathered by the Claremont Police Commission SRO ad-hoc committee). Nationally, SROs do not lower student crime rates. They increase them. According to the Justice Policy Institute, schools with a designated school law enforcement officer on duty had disorderly conduct arrest rates close to five times those of comparable schools without such an officer. But who bears the brunt of this rise in student criminalization? According to the U.S. Department of Education Civil Rights Data Collection for the 2013-2014 school year, Black students are three times as likely as white students to be subjected to school related arrest and seventy percent of students referred to law enforcement are Black or Latinx. The rise in arrests caused by an SRO affects students of color more than white students.

The Claremont Student Equity Coalition has assembled its own presentation on the SRO that will be presented to the Board of Education during a public meeting on February 18th. It is heavy in statistics and contains a mixture of qualitative and quantitative data regarding national and local SRO efficacy with especial respect to racialized policing and ableist policing. It also contains refutations to popular arguments made in favor of the SRO position, such as the belief that the SRO can prevent a school shooting. The presentation claims that this is a myth, citing a 2018 Washington Post analysis which found that 198 of 200 gun violence incidents on school campuses occurred, uninterrupted, despite the fact that SROs were present. The presentation also provides examples of alternatives that can accomplish what the SRO intended to. Some include peer mediators (which would be completely free), unarmed student safety coaches, and restorative justice coordinators.

In the end, the outcome of this historic CUSD campaign to remove the SRO is completely in the hands of its Board of Education. The Coalition’s main goal is to convince the majority of the Board to vote no to the SRO. If you are interested in hearing CHS students make their case, tune in to next month’s virtual meeting. The meeting information will be available on the CUSD website the day of the meeting.

AB 1177: Creating BankCal

The following op-ed by [Andy Winnick](#) was published in the Claremont Courier in May

Despite the existence of a broad array of banks and credit unions, we have a serious problem in California – one in four households in the Golden State are either unbanked or underbanked. This means approximately eight million Californians either don't have a bank account or they may have an account but are unable to maintain sufficient funds in the account to avoid a broad range of fees for virtually any service they need, and may not qualify for even a debit card that does not carry fees for its use. For the unbanked or underbanked, many cannot even cash their hard-earned paychecks without paying a substantial fee.

Our system of banks and credit unions, for many years, has failed—and failed badly—to deal with this major problem of addressing the needs of our fellow Californians. That's why we need AB 1177, a bill being considered by the state legislature, to establish a public program called BankCal that partners with existing banks and credit unions to specifically address the needs of this underserved population.

Critics of AB 1177, also known as BankCal, argue that program duplicates what is already being offered by credit unions, but the staggering number of Californians who are paying up to 10% of their paychecks in banking fees and interest simply to access their own money, says otherwise.

In our modern world having access to adequate banking services is a social and public necessity, not a luxury or a mere convenience. A people's government, with leaders who are responsive to the needs of their constituents--must guarantee that everyone, especially the very poor and underserved or those so often discriminated against, have access to basic and necessary services.

It's time we stop blaming the unbanked and underbanked, and implying that the reason why they pay high costs for banking services is due to either their own ignorance or of their failure of initiative to avail themselves of those services. The main problem is neither a lack of information nor a lack of initiative, but rather a lack of money and the predatory practices of the financial industry. Too many Californians simply cannot afford to pay the service fees that the credit unions and the banks charge. After all, the banks expect to make

a significant profit, and even the credit unions need to generate income from their fees to help support their other activities -- whereas a public program can provide the needed services as a free public service.

I am reminded of our postal system. There are some who view the postal system not as a necessary social service to which every American should have affordable and convenient access, but rather as something that should be privatized, if not even make a profit. These are typically the same people who opposed "free" public K-12 education. They fail to recognize how our entire society benefits or could benefit from our people having these public services. We are seeing the same attitudes now with regard to our health care system as we try to fight the pandemic and witness the totally inappropriate and unfair burden being borne by the poor, women, and people of color as they get sick, die, and suffer disproportionately to their numbers in the population. Providing adequate banking services is a social responsibility of any decent, humane and economically efficient society -- and AB 1177 is a partial recognition of that fact.

Dr. Andrew Winnick is a California State University – Los Angeles Professor Emeritus of Economics and Statistics, with a specialty in Monetary Theory and in Money and Banking. He is also a 20-year member of a credit union's board of directors and a member of the Pomona Valley Public Bank Study group.

Book Review

By Merrill Ring

How the South Won the Civil War

Heather Cox Richardson

Oxford University Press, April 2020

On June 1, 1921 a mob of 10,000 white American citizens massacred over 300 black American citizens.

After an incident the day before, a signal at dawn sent the mob into the prosperous black enclave of Greenwood in Tulsa. The mob was well armed, there were even machine guns, while a bi-plane overhead fired guns and dropped fire bombs. The residents fought back the best they could, but the area, known as the Negro Wall Street of the country, was devastated. About

1200 homes were destroyed, as well as churches, stores, offices, a school and the library. 35 square blocks were laid waste – 10,000 left homeless.

The Black dead simply disappeared, trucked off – to where is still largely unknown.

That massacre (or riot as it is sometimes called) happened in the recently completed twentieth century, nearly within the memory of many of us (I was born only 15 years later).

Now the point of talking about that event is that it did not take place in the American South, in the old Confederate states, with their post-civil war Jim Crow laws and lynchings and the Klu Klux Klan. No, the massacre took place in the American West, in the recently formed state of Oklahoma in fact.

And that brings up the book being reviewed: *How the South Won the Civil War*. Professor Richardson (an expert on the reconstruction period and the American West) knows, of course, that militarily the south lost the war. And she knows that the system of slavery on which the South was built was abolished during the war (the Emancipation Proclamation freed the slaves as of January 1, 1963). However, she observes that slavery itself rested on the assumption that human beings form a hierarchy with whites at the top and blacks at the bottom and on the consequent oligarchical structure of the southern economy in which a few white families were at the top.

Her thesis is that those two features of southern life ended up not being lost with military defeat and abolishment of the slave system, but were transferred to the developing American West. That is the sense in which the South won the war: the basic values and social structures survived and were extended into the frontier of the post war era.

While the book covers the story of how that happened (if you want the it in detail, read the book), she also paints a bigger picture. She calls attention to the defeat of Abraham Lincoln's support of human equality (Gettysburg Address: "a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal") by reminding us of how inequality with white superiority, popped up across the West. In Oregon there was an attempt to exterminate Native Americans – in California it was Chinese laborers who were the object of punitive laws – across the Southwest it was those lazy Mexicans

who had to be kept in their place. And then there was Tulsa where the very prosperous black community could not be tolerated.

The West was economically developed after the war. It turned out to be a rip-roaring capitalist system in which there were bosses and workers, though not now masters and slaves. The idea of economic equality did not surface there. Richardson is very good at setting out how that development of a hierarchical economy across the American West came to be.

One last note about the Tulsa massacre. The city of Tulsa was located on land granted by treaty to the Creek Nation (now the Muscogee Nation) but which was subsumed into the State of Oklahoma in 1907 much against the desires of the Creeks (and of all the Native American nations that formed most of Oklahoma).



Now YOU write!

Do so! Of course, newspapers have so many restrictions (especially space) that very worthwhile letters do not get published. But try! And if

it doesn't get published there, sent it to the VV and it most likely will be published here. (Or if it does get published, send it here also and have it published again.)



Or call & Complain (or Praise)

MEMBERSHIP: JOIN THE DCC or RENEW

We have no corporate sponsors. Your membership dues pay all DCC's expenses which include our meeting expenses, P.O box, club charter, storage space for our booths, publicity, political donations, support for the CHS Young Democrats, and events such as Claremont's July 4th celebration and Village Venture,. Take this opportunity to renew if you haven't already done so. *Just complete and mail this form.*

**Mail this form with your check to: Democratic Club of Claremont, P.O.
Box 1201, Claremont, CA 91711**

Individual \$30 Family \$40 Contributing \$50-99 Patron \$100-249
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The *Voorhis Voice* is published by the Democratic Club of Claremont, PO Box 1201, Claremont CA 91711. The newsletter's name commemorates the late Jerry Voorhis, a talented and courageous Congress member from Claremont.

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