

THE VOORHIS VOICE

Progressive Voice of the Pomona Valley

November 2021

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DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF CLAREMONT MEETINGS

Friday Issues Discussion 11:30 - 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.

November 12 (Friday) Luncheon 12 pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81881409396>

Speaker: **Ece Algan**, Professor, Center for the Study of Muslim and Arab Worlds, CSU San Bernardino, "Turkey, the U.S. and the Middle East"

November 20 (Saturday): Executive Board Meeting, 9 – 10:30:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88566006192>

November 29 (Monday): Members' Meeting, 7 – 9 pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89998723617>

Speaker: Assemblymember **Chris Holden**, California Assembly District 41

CALENDAR

November 6 Los Angeles County Democratic Party FDR/Eleanor Roosevelt Awards

December 4 Annual DCC Holiday Party with Helen Myers Awards: *Save the Date (See below for Preview)*

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DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF CLAREMONT NEWS

From the Editor:

While the political news in the outside world is pretty depressing, the Democratic Club of Claremont moves ahead in good style. This issue of the Voorhis Voice is a report on much of what we, both as a club and as individuals, have been up to.

Please check out our new fee set up at the end of this issue.

There will be a special holiday issue of the Voice (December 1) which will provide more information about the December 4 club Holiday Party.

Letter from DCC President Sam Pedroza

Dear Members of the Democratic Club of Claremont,

It has truly been my honor to serve as President of this Club. My recent job promotion has significantly increased my responsibilities and it has become apparent that I simply do not have the time to commit to my duties and responsibilities. The work of the Club is too important. I am proud to work with the dedicated men and women that work hard to promote the values of the Democratic Party. From all levels of Government to the politics from around the globe, I am overwhelmed and always impressed with the level of thought and intelligence exhibited by so many members of this Club. In addition, the commitment and energy to fight for the values we believe in and on behalf of those that hold those values as well is unparalleled. As much as I am committed to continue to represent our Democratic ideals, I am unable to represent our Club. I look forward to continue to contribute in any way I can as time permits, and I look forward to increasing my involvement as my commitments allow. In the meantime, it is with great sadness that I step down as President and as a member of the Executive Board, effective immediately.

I am honored for the opportunity to serve and grateful for the successes we can all celebrate. There is still so much more work, and I am confident in the people that work so hard for this Club to make it happen.

Thank you and forever in solidarity,

Sam Pedroza

New President: In accordance with the club by-laws, [Chris Naticchia](#), formerly First Vice President, will now be President of the Democratic Club of Claremont. There will be a replacement appointment for the vacated office. Anyone who is interested in filling that position, the chief duty of which is arranging speakers for the club meetings, please volunteer.

FDR/Eleanor Roosevelt Awards

The Los Angeles County Democratic Party (LACDP) annually recognizes two Democrats from each of the 24 Assembly Districts within the county. These grassroots activists are honored as Democrats of the Year at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt / Eleanor Roosevelt (FDR/ER) Awards event. This event

helps support LACDP programs including voter registration, neighborhood organizing, community outreach, candidate training, and policy advocacy for over 3 million registered Democratic voters in our communities within the county.

This year's event on Saturday, **November 6**, will begin at 6 PM with an in-person VIP Reception at the Hyatt Regency LAX, to be followed by a virtual program at 7:30 PM. General Admission tickets are \$35 each and our club usually purchases a table of 10. Please offset the total by making a contribution of any amount at the Club's website, claremontdems.org. Then, under "Get Involved", click on "Donate to the Club" where you can donate any amount.

Previous Claremont Dems honored at this annual event include Merrill Ring, Jed Leano, Carol Whitson, Joe Lyons, Sandy Hester and Ivan Light. We honor our own! Your contribution is appreciated!

The Democratic Club of Claremont Holiday Party: Preview

By Carolee Monroe

The club will limit its annual year-end festivities to its Helen Myers Award ceremony and membership drive on **Saturday, December 4, 2021 to begin at 4 o'clock in the afternoon**. Three local Democratic activists, Devon Hartman, Carla Johnson and Larry Schroeder, will be the recipients of the award. The link to the event is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89998723617>.

Speaking at the event and recognizing the three recipients will be Congresswoman Judy Chu, Assemblymember Chris Holden and Claremont Mayor Jennifer Stark. Supervisor Hilda Solis and Senator Anthony Portantino have also been invited and may be in attendance.

Devon Hartman's interest in social activism began in his youth and led to an awareness of the politics of war, civil rights and gender equality. Since 2010 he has devoted his efforts to fighting global warming, focusing on community education and engagement, building retrofits and energy use reduction. He has founded CHERP and CHERP Solar Works to address global challenges.

Carla Johnson has hosted sign making and letter and post card writing parties while networking with other activists regarding progressive causes and

candidates. Simple actions, repeated steadily from the determined hands of activists like Carla are mustering votes for a strengthened democracy.

Larry Schroeder served on Claremont's Community Services Commission and on Claremont City Council for three terms during which he served as Mayor three times. Larry subscribes to the theory of social responsibility, in which individuals are accountable for fulfilling their civic duty, and the belief that actions of an individual must benefit the whole of society.

The Democratic Club of Claremont is honored to recognize local Democrats for their commitment to community activism and award them certificates in Helen Myers' name. Helen worked with Alan Cranston and other progressive Democrats to found the California Democratic Council and revitalize state-wide Democratic organizations. With the victory in 1958 of Pat Brown and other Democrats to state-wide and local offices, the Democratic program of broad-based economic development centered on education, water, and freeways was enacted.

Claremont Women's March and Rally

By Mike Boos

On Sunday, October 3, the Democratic Club of Claremont, along with Move Forward Claremont/Inland Valley, co-sponsored the Claremont Women's March Action. Organized by several DCC members, the march was Claremont's companion to the events held the day before in Los Angeles and throughout the nation, in support of women's access to safe abortion and other reproductive services. In 95-degree heat, approximately 200 local activists gathered and demonstrated with hand painted signs at the corner of Indian Hill and Foothill boulevards at 1:00 p.m.

Led by Karen May and Claudia Strauss to chants like "My Body! My Choice!!", they marched four blocks down to Memorial Park to the rally, joining several dozen others already situated under the shade of the oak trees. Musical entertainment was provided by Jen Rosen and Friends, and Ellen Harper with Jerry O'Sullivan. The rally featured a dozen dynamic female leaders in our community and region, including Claremont Mayor, Jennifer Stark, Representative Judy Chu, CA 27, and Norma Torres, CA 35.

Each speaker expressed profound and various perspectives on how women's reproductive rights were connected to voting rights, all levels of education, racial justice, the judiciary and Supreme Court of the United States, and political activism. Rose Ash delivered a powerful story of her mother's refusal of care after a miscarriage, Beverly Speak read the messages from her young Girl Scout troupe members to their political leaders; The Rev. Dr. Jen Strickland, Claremont UCC, presented the point of view of the progressive, faith-based community and Planned Parenthood patient advocate, Atalie Oliva, bravely told her own story of requiring the support of PP a decade earlier.

Amanda Hollis-Brusky, Chair of the Politics Department at Pomona College, delivered a spell binding assessment of the SCOTUS, what FDR did to move them toward upholding his New Deal, and what needs to be done now to alter the trajectory toward the repeal of Roe v. Wade. In a rousing speech, Judy Chu called attention to her bill approved a week earlier in Congress, The Women's Health Protection Act, the first pro-abortion act passed in over 25 years. Rep Torres told the story of being required to get her husband's signature approving her decision to have a tubal ligation.

The march was organized by DCC members, Mike Boos, Carolee Monroe, Claudia Strauss, Susan Castegnetto, with additional support from Laurie Pittman and Susan Brunasso. MC duties were shared by Mike Boos and City Council member Jed Leano.

Democratic Booth at Village Venture, 2021

By Carolee Monroe

The Democratic Club of Claremont's booth at the 2021 Village Venture street faire attracted its fair share of attention. Some passersby showed support for the Democratic Party and the club with vocalizations and gestures. Many people stopped to talk, to make suggestions and to inquire. Even more, there were those who were not the usual visitors with the usual political concerns. The booth, it seems, has become an annual single-day community center.

The booth focused on Democratic values with a backdrop naming them, along with pictures of local Democrats displaying these values. Photos and brief biographies of this year's recipients of the club's Helen Myers Award were also displayed. The display attracted many people to stop, look and talk. Some joined into the activity of post card writing, especially motivated by "earning" one of the pins designed by Mike Boos. Many wanted to be added to our mailing

list and/or took handouts or photos of the club's programs, actions and contact information. The "thermometer," designed to show progress towards the goal of raising \$1500.00 towards next year's campaigns, also attracted attention and comments. Several people completed Register to Vote applications while others availed themselves of the link to the California Secretary of State website. Some expressed their unease regarding national politics while others had different concerns.

One visitor spoke of a local school that, they believed, was actively promoting an anti-vaccination agenda. Another proposed an interview to be available as a podcast. A former mayor/city council member and of another political party stopped by with his anti-Trump yard sign. Yet another used the booth to reconnect with a club member as it was the only way imaginable as their workplace had closed and no customer information was now available to them.

Booth volunteers were asked to share their impressions. Marguerite wrote, "During my shift, I was delighted to see Asian-American Claremont college students interested in getting involved in Dem politics and asked for resources on campus. (Carolee accommodated by giving resources...) One student whose family was from Macao asked probing questions about members of Claremont's City Council and seemed to think Kevin McCarthy was a moderate Republican. I corrected him. Hope he follows through and gets active on campus. The day was gloomy but spirits were light. The booth committee did a marvelous job, decorating with bright, clean graphics that held lots of information." Anne added, "The mood at our booth was calm & busy -- people approached with smiles and thumbs up and left the same way." Holly sent, "My impression is that our visitors really wanted contact after the long time away. Some stayed to talk for a while and to ask questions as well as to fill out voter registration and postcards. I think the booth itself looked very nice and colorful, especially listing Democratic values. For myself, it was good to talk in person!"

Another visitor, when asked what, if any, other actions local Democrats could engage in, suggested a monthly post card writing event. This prompted consideration of revitalizing the club's Rapid Response Team to reach out to elected representatives and other government officials. Another concern was reconnecting with students at Claremont High School and the Young Democrats Club.

“Measurable” success from the booth includes at least eight Register to Vote applications and more than 15 requests to be added to the club’s mailing list. Several spoke of joining the club. All 50 names provided by Grassroots Democrats HQ will receive a ‘VOTING MAKES US STRONG’ post card and message to vote out Mike Garcia in CD 25 in the next election. Cash donations totaled more than \$80. More so, satisfaction from those who volunteered was expressed. They include Gabe Monroe, Carol Whitson, Merrill Ring, Anne Koegel, John Forney, Mike Boos, Chris Naticchia, Nathan Bonar, Camille Nakama, Mel Boynton, Karen Chapman Lenz, Abe Esquibel, Marguerite Gee Royse, Holly Kurtz, and Murray and Marlena Monroe. Thank you to all!

Finally, photos of the booth are posted on the club’s Facebook photo page (thank you, Mel) and on Jennifer Stark’s Facebook page.

Reports on October Speakers

By Carolee Monroe

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

“The elephant in the room” cannot be overlooked as COVID-19 has supplanted any other topic in public education, according to **Tina Fredericks**, a member of the Pasadena Unified School District Board of Education and an Executive Board member of the California Democratic Party’s Assembly District Delegates, representing AD 41. In her presentation, “Next Generation Challenges for Public Education”, part of the DCC’s Gar Byrum Speaker series, Fredericks listed the consequences of COVID as it continues to adversely affect our schools. Enrollment is declining; a teacher shortage is occurring as teachers retire; facility updating, especially of HVAC, is required; contact tracing is placing extra demands on staff; quarantines are disrupting continuity; learning gaps are widening; mental health issues are rising; housing affordability is affecting stability; and vaccine requirements are stressing minority communities. Meeting these real demands while standing up to the misinformation from the anti-vax faction has added to the challenge. One action Fredericks and Pam Nagler have taken is to author a resolution, since passed by the Pasadena School Board, of the necessity of a 100% vaccination rate.

Sharing the program was **Brandon Lamar**, California Director Youth Advocate Programs, who presented facts about the rise of problems of mental health in

youth. The increase of severe depression, substance abuse, suicide, anxiety and other issues require treatment while adequate funding is not available for individual and family counseling. The goal is not just to help youth but to prevent them from entering the juvenile justice system.

The strength or muscle **Karen May** referred to in her presentation, “Speaking Softly While Carrying Big Sticks”, is that of resources, specifically money and volunteer power. During the DCC’s October Members’ program, May detailed how these resources can be used to increase influence and effectiveness in political campaigns. The endorsement process, matching clubs and candidates with similar values and political goals, is part of a field plan that leads to a successful election result. Karen gave a detailed description of the election cycle calendar while applying values to various tactics used to get out the vote. Political clubs, to impact candidates and voters, can make use of the components of the political process as described in the presentation.



Essays Etc. by Club Members

A Green New Deal Reduces Risk of War

by Ivan Light

Six decades ago, President Eisenhower warned Americans that a “military-industrial complex” threatened their prosperity as well as peace. By “military industrial complex” Eisenhower meant a coalition of weapons manufacturers, skilled labor, and the Pentagon whose interests are served by promoting

unnecessary wars and military spending. Unfortunately, his warning was ignored. Since Eisenhower retired, that same military-industrial complex (MIC) has persistently promoted war and threats of war as a means of self-enrichment. This permanent war lobby tilted American foreign policy toward war rather than toward patient diplomacy in defense of core national interests. The results, it is now ruefully admitted, were ill-advised and unsuccessful wars in Afghanistan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Vietnam. Wasteful of human lives, these failed wars were also hugely expensive. As President Biden explained, between 2001 and 2019, the United States expended 6.1 trillion dollars on Middle Eastern Wars. The war in Afghanistan alone cost the United States 2.6 trillion dollars. This massive waste weakened the United States and strengthened our detractors.

As the war in Afghanistan ends amid public rejoicing, Americans gloomily wonder how soon the next useless war will arrive. Unless something basic changes, the MIC will market the “axis of evil” in the future as it did in the past. To forestall the next Afghanistan or Vietnam, the United States needs to dismantle the military-industrial complex now. This is easier said than done because the MIC creates employment in every Congressional district. Abrupt and drastic reduction of Pentagon funding would create immediate depression. For that reason, reduction of military spending cannot be accomplished except as part of an integrated plan.

To close down or, at least, to weaken the MIC, the federal government needs to initiate long-term, massive spending on domestic priorities so that jobs lost in the warfare industries are compensated elsewhere. A Green New Deal (GND) does that. Backers of the Green New Deal have already identified many benefits that this policy direction would bring. The most prominent are rebuilding our industrial infrastructure, protecting the climate, and facilitating economic growth. But another huge benefit of a GND has thus far escaped public discussion: A more peaceful future. A GND would assist the transformation of the United States from self-appointed, unpaid world policeman into a prudent defender of core national interests.

Good news! This transition has begun. The infrastructure bill that the House of Representatives recently passed projects a 3.5 trillion-dollar expense over ten years. This sum is exactly what Uncle Sam paid for the final 10 years of warfare in the Middle East and for which the United States obtained nothing of value in exchange. If Bernie Sanders’ bigger GND plan were fully funded, within ten years the United States would enjoy a vastly improved social, economic, climate-protecting infrastructure that would attract foreign investment. That is something of value. Additionally, to the extent that a GND is funded in whole or in part by reduction of

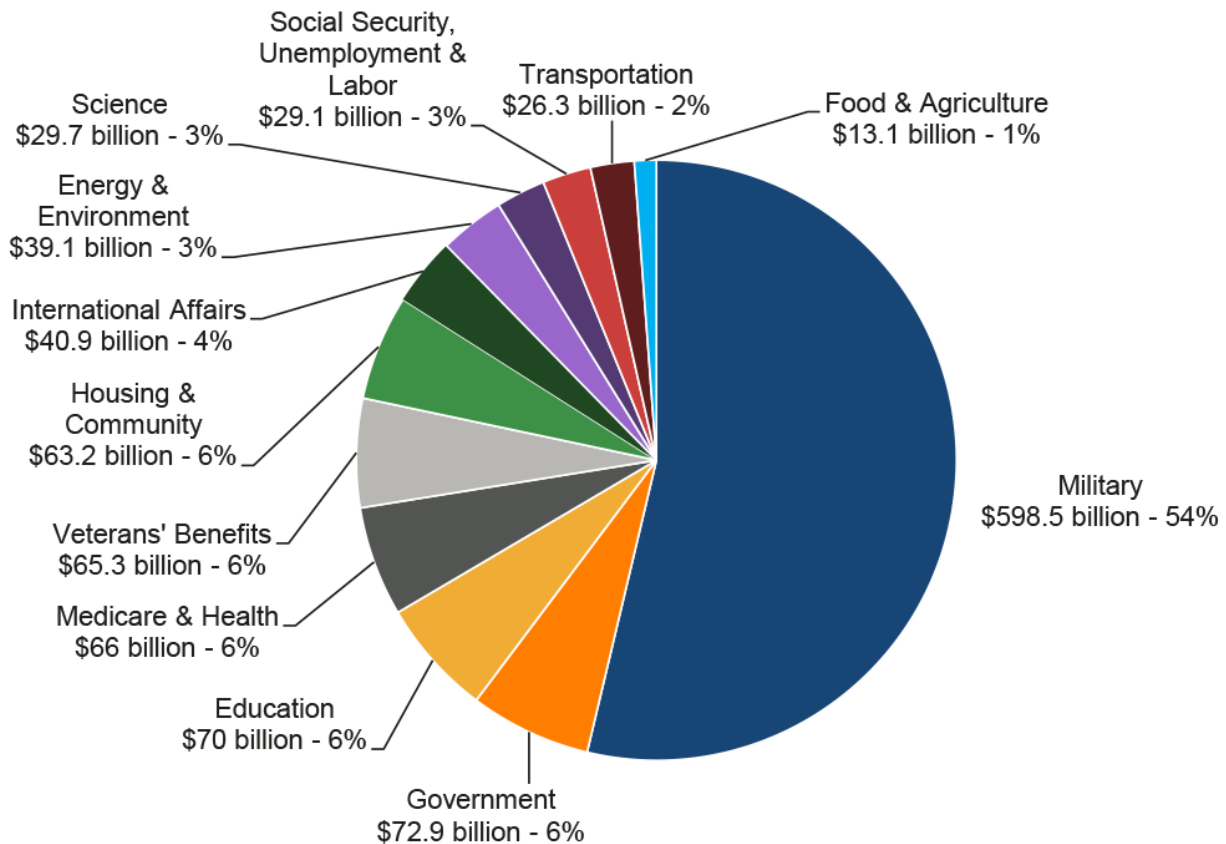
military spending, the United States government would rebuild its tattered infrastructure without increased spending.

To dismantle the MIC does not mean to defund the Pentagon. All that is required is to reduce the U.S. military budget to the proportionate average of our NATO allies. As is, the United States spends more on defense than do all 29 NATO allies together. Trump wanted NATO allies to increase their military spending to our level. They did not. There is nothing to stop the United States from reducing our military spending *to their level*. Because the process would be gradual and would create compensatory employment, a GND could overcome the political resistance that diminished military spending is certain to provoke.

Back in 2016, Trump appealed to voters tired of forever wars. Right now, exhausted by 20 years of warfare, Americans ardently desire a more peaceful future. As a result, an ambitious GND policy has more to offer American voters than its backers realize. Peace is back by popular demand. Backers of the Green New Deal need promptly to add peace to the menu already on offer.

(See chart below)

Discretionary Spending 2015: \$1.11 Trillion



nationalpriorities.org



Source: OMB, National Priorities Project

Ivan Light is professor emeritus of sociology at UCLA. A prior essay ("Why the Constitution did not prevent the military industrial complex") was published in Progressive Democracy (2012) no. 12. <http://www.taipd.org/node/109>. His historical novel dealt with the origins of World War 1: Deadly Secret of the Lusitania (Ft Bragg: Lost Coast Press, 2015). light@soc.ucla.edu 415-663-9530. A version of this article appeared in the Pt. Reyes Light for 7 October.

Book Review

By Holly Kurtz

Evil Geniuses: The Unmaking of America: A Recent History, by Kurt Andersen. Random House, 2020.

The changes in law and economics were well-designed. They were orchestrated. And after 40 years, the country is no longer the same.

Kurt Andersen tells the history of how America's leaders decided that big business should get whatever it wants. Behind these moves were CEOs, the super-rich, extreme right wingers, Wall Street and think tanks. The New Deal gave way to the Raw Deal. Along the way, the large and fairly secure middle class was undermined while the Establishment and many liberals were complicit.

The end result: greed is good, workers are powerless, and the market is the most powerful force with few checks and balances. Consider this as a long but quiet war with little fanfare. While other news made headlines, these forces met, took action for the oligarchy and rewrote our social contract -- power to the rich at the expense of everyone else.

Compare this to the 25 years following the end of World War II when much of the economy was vibrant, society was somewhat cohesive (other books explore caste and racism), and many jobs were well-paid leading to a strong middle class.

Anderson, who has written several books and magazine articles, also shows how America's ability to move forward culturally and be excited about the future has stagnated. If you looked at folks in the 1950s versus 1970s, you saw a big difference. But if you look at the 1990s to 2010, people looked very similar. He also does a good job showing how nostalgia played a part in convincing people that big business is right. While simplifying the past, nostalgia softened the ground for Ronald Reagan and radical individualism.

Look in many directions and you'll see the change in our political economy: the trickle-down theory, tax cuts, deregulation, lack of anti-trust enforcement, various anti-labor and anti-consumer measures. All of this occurs while the nation faces catastrophic inequality.

Andersen also points out that a lot of pro-business rules and regulations were barely noticed because the changes were tedious, wonky and appeared inconsequential. Or the GOP simply let things expire.

As one reviewer said, the changes were both explicit and subtle. Now the minimum wage is basically slashed. Companies spend more money buying back their own stock than on research and job expansion. Wall Street took over the management of companies. The human element is gone; you can consider yourself a “cost center.”

Andersen names people, gives dates and describes how strategies evolved. Of course, political donations and PACs played a big part. The leaders of the movement formed nonprofits like the Federalist Society, bought up media, and endowed positions at universities.

How do we get out of this situation? Andersen talks about basics like unionization and universal basic income. But he emphasizes broader themes like being persistent. If the right could set a path that took hold in a single decade, maybe the left can do that too. Can the left stand their ground and let stale ideas drop? Can they do a better job of marketing ideas?

Some drawbacks to this book... It is depressing to read this history and the stagnation of the lower and middle classes. The book’s length and level of detail are hard to read even though Andersen writes in an engaging style.



Letters

*The following letter by **Bob Gerecke** was published in the Courier on October 9*

Explanatory Note: “On September 29, our City staff and consultant held a public meeting to discuss the scope of the Environmental Impact Report on

the draft Housing Element update of our General Plan. Limiting myself to the relevant categories covered in an EIR, I sent the following comments to the Courier. The EIR categories are capitalized”

“The concentration of large buildings around our traditional small-town Village shopping district will degrade its **AESTHETICS** by changing its character from suburban to a motley mix of urban with suburban and by partially blocking the views in several directions, thereby creating a sense of being closed in rather than open.

“The concentration of hundreds of housing units within a small area of our town will impact the **AIR QUALITY** of that area because of the increased vehicular traffic from owned and ride-hailed vehicles, especially the latter, which make more trips (i.e., before and after the actual transport) than owned vehicles do. Parking insufficiency planned because of nearby public transit will cause a shift from owned to ride-hailed vehicles which make more trips, thereby increasing **GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**.

“Construction of multiple buildings on contaminated land south of the RR tracks will release **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**.

“The cluster of large buildings around the Village will directly induce substantial **POPULATION** growth in this limited area.

“The population cluster around the Village will overload its tiny nearby **RECREATION** areas and create a demand for additional recreation spaces.

“It will also increase **TRAFFIC**, causing congestion and parking overload in and around the Village. Enforced use of ride-hailing services will double the amount of traffic that would have been experienced from owned vehicles. Emergency vehicles will be impeded.

“The proposed concentration of population will overload the **UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS** in the immediate area.

“All of these impacts can be mitigated by spreading our housing more widely around our city. Similar adverse impacts can be avoided throughout our city by building small developments rather than large ones.”

Bob Gerecke's comments on his letter:

While those comments adhered to the EIR outline, they reflect my broad concern that the draft Housing Element prepared by our consultant is on the wrong track in two respects.

First, it emphasizes the construction of large developments, each with hundreds of units, which will change the character and ambience of our city and will separate the developments' occupants into their own cocoons. Neighbors in nearby single-family homes will resent these hulks and, by association, possibly the people who live there. If so, the feeling will be mutual. This will be a socially unhealthy environment.

Second, it concentrates most of these large buildings around our Village. This will make the Village less charming and attractive to out-of-town shoppers and diners, on whom we depend for business and tax revenues. Customers choose Claremont because it's different. If it feels less different, it will be less desirable to them. Some will go elsewhere to spend their money, and our loss of them probably won't be offset by repetitive spending from residents in the developments. We already expect competition from more than a million square feet of commercial development planned in North Montclair, and the competing old-fashioned downtowns of La Verne and Upland aren't far away, either. We can't afford to risk degrading the image of our Village.

I grew up in a small New Jersey suburb. Duplexes, triplexes and quadplexes were scattered among the single-family homes. With

affordably small units, these 'plexes didn't loom over their neighborhoods. The largest were no larger than many of our City's homes. Their residents were part of their neighborhoods, as sociable as it was in their personality to be. This remains my image of how a small town can supply affordable housing without losing its soul.



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.)

JOIN THE DCC OR RENEW

We have no corporate sponsors.

Your membership dues pay all the DCC's expenses which include our meeting expenses, P.O. Box, club charter, publicity, political donations, insurance, support for the CHS Young Democrats, and events such as the Claremont's July 4th celebration and Village Venture.

This year, in an effort to become more valued as an endorser of local races we are adding a Political Action Fund (PAF) to our Treasury and encourage your donations to support those worthy candidates.

We have also expanded the options for making payments by adding a QR code link for a PAF donation. (see below)

Folks without smart phones can use our direct link to ActBlue by clicking below and choosing the correct radio button on the next screen:

[Democratic Club of Claremont — Donate via ActBlue](#)

As always, you can fill out the form below and mail with your check to:

Democratic Club of Claremont, P.O. Box 1201, Claremont, CA 91711

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Help the Democratic Club of
Claremont Reach the
Fundraising GOAL to develop
our Political Action Fund.
Go to ActBlue here:



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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