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Snapshot of the item below:

Progressive Voice of the Pomona Valley		
SEPTEMBER 2021		
www.claremontdems.org		



DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF CLAREMONT MEETINGS

Friday Issues Discussion 11:30-1:00 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.

September 10 (Friday) 12pm Zoom Luncheon:

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

Speaker: Mohammad Tajsar, Senior Staff Attorney with the ACLU of Southern California, "The New Surveillance".

September 27 (Monday) Member's Meeting 7-9pm:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/189998723617>

Lauren Wolfer, lead organizer and advocate for the COOK Alliance, "A Strategy to Reduce Hunger".

CALENDAR

September 14: NO on Recall Election



DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF CLAREMONT NEWS

From the Editor

Welcome back to the new season of the Voorhis Voice and to the Democratic Club of Claremont's fall activities - and to the crisis facing California in the September 14 recall election.

The Club certainly hopes that in the next two weeks every one of us works to turn Democrats out to vote NO.

The Republicans cannot win a regular election for statewide office in California - this recall is the way that they can worm their way into the Governorship. So they are throwing everything into the effort. If we were a normal state and if a sitting Governor lost a recall or resigned, the LT Governor would move up in rank (as was just done in New York).

However, we have a mad system where the alternatives cannot include the Lt. Governor, opting rather for a list of non-entities and, worse, crazies. The election is a democratic farce: the Governor might get 49% of the vote and lose to a person who gets, say, only 20%.

Faced with the likelihood that the winning alternative would be a disaster for the state, someone who would be sneered at in a regular election, we Democrats are the protectors of California's welfare.

VOTE NO

Work

Note: there are about 40 NO on Recall yard signs still available. If you want one (or more) write Carolee at jackncarolee@verizon.net

Claremont Dems host NO ON RECALL phone banks

By Chris Naticchia

If you've been following the polls recently, you'll know that Governor Newsom's lead in the recall election is razor thin — within the margin of error — among likely voters. A [UC Berkeley poll](#) has him ahead 50-47. A more recent [FiveThirtyEight average](#) of recent polls shows Newsom ahead 50.6-46.3. Neither provides much comfort, even with state officials reporting Thursday that, of the mail-in ballots received so far, 55% were cast by Democrats and just 23% by Republicans (8/29/21 LAT). That's because that breakdown reflects just 12% of all ballots mailed out, and it's anybody's guess how the late deciders will break, or even how many late deciders there will be. If anything, the conventional wisdom suggests that it's Republicans rather than Democrats who will hold onto their ballots until election day,

September 14, preferring to cast their ballots in person rather than trust voting procedures that rely on the mail.

The biggest risk to the governor's chances of beating back the recall is voter apathy among Democrats. That's because, while the governor's lead is uncertain among likely voters, Democrats outnumber Republicans 2:1 in the state. That's where you can help. In an effort to find those fence-sitting Democrats, motivate them to vote NO on the recall, and build club capacity for the future, the DCC is hosting SIX confirmed phone banks to reach them. Your hosts have already held five of them, which involved not only club members but also volunteers from as far away as New York, Florida, Texas, Nevada and Minnesota. We have (at least) one more forthcoming, at a time and date to be announced. All calling is done virtually — you only need a laptop and internet connection, and in fact, you don't even need your own phone. For information on how you can sign up for our next phone bank, send an email to Chris Naticchia at cnaticch@icloud.com. Let him know too if you're interested in hosting a phone bank for the club. In that case, you'll need your own Zoom account and have some familiarity with calling. In both cases (as volunteer or as host), you'll receive training and support.

Reports on DCC June Programs

By Carolee Monroe

Friday, June 11, Gar Byrum Distinguished Speaker Series

Asiya Junisbai, President of the Claremont High School Young Democrats Club, organizing member of the Claremont Student Equity Coalition and Co-Opinions Editor of the CHS *Wolfpacket*, shared the history of the coalition and her insights into the process of student appeals to city government and school district officials. Several student organizations came together to form the coalition. It then represented students of color in an effort to remove the School Resource Officer (SRO) from the campus. As initial student appeals were labeled “emotional” by authorities, the group researched the issue. It provided national data showing the SRO to not necessarily be effective in reducing crime or

providing a more safe campus. Asiya said that these results, when presented, were met with dismissiveness. She further asserted that the school needs to set up a proactive rather than reactive system to intervene with the behavioral and mental health issues of students.

Monday, June 28, Members Meeting

Ted Burnett, 2nd Vice-President of the Pomona Valley NAACP, Deputy director of SEIU Local 1000 and Coordinator of Pomona Valley Poor People’s Campaign, discussed “White Rage: The unspoken truth of our racial divide”. Burnett provided a differing view of accepted history, one based on white efforts to subvert the economic, social and political power of Black Americans. Using 1860 census data Burnett proposed that the United States implemented an immigration policy favoring Europeans so as to maintain a white majority. He gave further evidence of government actions and policies that have attempted to maintain the status quo. Burnett closed his talk with a quote promoting unity: “ We may have come on different ships but we are all in the same boat.”

*** I checked the 1860 US Population data: (-I did some rounding-) ***

State	total pop	Blacks	%Black
SoCaro	703,000	402,000	57.2
Miss	791,000	436,000	55.2
LA	708,000	331,000	46.9
Ala	964,000	435,000	45.1
Georg	1,060,000	462,000	43.7

(Florida: 44%; NorCar: 33.4%; VA: 30.7%; TX 30%; Ark: 25.5%)

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

YOU are Necessary!

By Democratic Club of Claremont (brought up to date by Carolee Monroe)

Our Democratic Club of Claremont is the face of the Democratic Party in Claremont. Because our club represents the party and its principles, we strive to reach out to the community in every way that we can. We are a real “presence”.

Our current officers are President Sam Pedroza, VP-Programs Chris Naticchia, VP-Membership Andy Winnick, Treasurer Carol Whitson, Corresponding Secretary Mike Boos, Recording Secretary Carolee Monroe, Past-President John Forney, Political Strategy Chair Debi Evans and Issues Chair/*Voorhis Voice* Editor Merrill Ring. Mel Boynton maintains our Facebook page and Ned Freed is our webmaster. The second Friday of most months (not July or August or December) are reserved for our monthly noon luncheons. The luncheons, named to honor Gar Byrum, a DCC leader/activist, are planned by Chris. Chris wants to attract as wide an audience as possible through the timely topics and knowledgeable speakers. Currently these luncheons are virtual, with the ZOOM information sent to members. If and when conditions permit, we hope to resume in-person meetings at Eddie’s Italian Eatery on Foothill Blvd. These luncheons are open to the public and are free. However, there is a cost for the luncheon..

The last Monday of most months (again, not July, August or December) are reserved for our members’ meetings. Again, Chris arranges for yet more information on current topics presented by knowledgeable speakers, but the Issues Committee often presents us with resolutions that may work their way up to the State Party platform. Our general membership meetings are on ZOOM and begin at 7:00 PM. Hopefully, we will soon resume in-person meetings in the Napier Center, Pilgrim Place. Again, the public is invited to the programs which are open and free.

Generally, the other Fridays (not scheduled Gar Byrum Luncheons) are used by the Club’s Issues Committee to meet over lunch and discuss the politics of the day. Talk often leads to action, in the form of resolutions and candidates for our speakers program. The committee, a loosely formed group and chaired by Merrill, meets at the Village Grille or on ZOOM.

We participate in community events each year during which volunteers are needed. As a club, we reach out to the community through booths at Claremont's observance of Earth Day in April, Independence Day in July, and Village Venture in late October. We also participate in the 4th of July parade with a noticeable entry.

Our club mentors the Claremont High School Young Democrats Club. We help arrange for speakers to come to the meetings and talk on the issues the students have selected. Because these meetings occur during the school's lunch, pizza is provided.

We maintain a Facebook page (DemocraticClubofClaremont), a YouTube channel (DemocraticClubClaremont), and a website, www.claremontdems.org. We send messages, announcements and notices to members. Several members are published in the "Letters to the Editor" sections of both the *Claremont Courier* and the *Inland Valley Daily Bulletin* as they initiate progressive thought and respond to less than progressive thinking.

The club is a part of all local, state-wide and national campaigns, both of candidates and issues, beginning with our vetting process and going through endorsement and financial and volunteer support.

The DCC is currently going through a self-examination as it evaluates how to expand, especially to include younger members. We share information with Indivisible Claremont, Move Forward, Claremont Change, Swing Left, Inclusive Claremont, Latino/a Roundtable, NAACP and Newcomers Access Center.

Throughout the year our club needs people to help with various tasks. These include establishing a phone tree, bringing snacks to meetings, submitting articles to our own "Voorhis Voice" newsletter (edited by Merrill Ring), or to the other local newspapers, arranging for speakers and helping with our website. Your participation is always desired.

Finally, we celebrate our year with an annual holiday dinner, although COVID has prevented our event this past year. All members and prospective new members are welcome. Again, any help with this will be appreciated.

So, if you have time and desire, your service is wanted. Look through the above activities for one or more that interest you. Call or email us. Help keep our Democratic Club a real presence in our community.

AB 1177: Creating BankCal

By Merrill Ring

AB 1177, which the DCC supports, has passed the final hurdle - the Senate Appropriations Committee - on its way to Governor Newsom's desk. He is expected to sign it. Since our Senator, Anthony Portantino, is head of that committee and supported the bill, the Club has sent a letter of thanks to him. In the June Voice we printed a column by Andy Winnick arguing the need for passing the bill. Below are some excerpts from that article.

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.

We need AB 1177 which will establish a public program called BankCal that partners with existing banks and credit unions to specifically address the needs of this underserved population.

In our modern world having access to adequate banking services is a social and public necessity, not a luxury or a mere convenience. So we must guarantee that everyone, especially the very poor and underserved or those so often discriminated against, have access to basic and necessary services.

Remembrances

Over the summer the club lost two significant members. What follows are not obituaries but political remembrances. For David Levering there are two: one relating to his Congressional candidacy and (some

of) his DCC activities and the other to his place as a history faculty member at Cal Poly (written by a colleague). For Charles Bayer there are also two: one dealing with his political ministry, the other a typical column that he wrote.

Democratic Club of Claremont: Memorial for David Levering

By Merrill Ring

Imagine a Congressional candidate whose platform includes “strengthening Social Security and Medicare, protecting environmental programs that ensure clean air and clean water, providing a living wage for full-time employment, providing a cushion for displaced workers who must retrain, a new emphasis on corporate responsibility, preserving the ban on assault weapons, tax credits for college tuition, direct student loans, full funding for the educational programs that set world class standards for American schools, opposing tax cuts for the rich, opposing cutting education budgets, providing health insurance for all citizens”.

Was that this past election? No, it was 1996.

David Levering was the Democratic candidate in the Congressional district which included Claremont. He was running against David Dreier, the long-time Republican congressman who was our representative thanks to Claremont being the outlier in an engineered safely Republican district and who rose to power in Congress without having done anything except winning elections and thus acquiring longevity in the House.

He of course lost – we did not get rid of Dreier until a newly created re-districting commission redrew boundaries that caused Dreier to retire.

But David inspired Democrats in Claremont and our district by standing for policies that were not then in the mainstream. Remember that 1996 was the height of the power of the Democratic Leadership Council with its stick to the middle advice to Democratic candidates. David himself was an outlier in the party.

A decade later, Werner Warmbrunn who was then chair of the club's Issues Committee, formed the idea of Claremont and the club producing a political document that showed where we should be going. He signed up David and myself to help write it. In May of 2007 we finished *The Claremont Manifesto*. Werner paid for its publication by the Democratic Club of Claremont. We sent it to political publications all over the country; I carried it to Washington the next year to hand deliver it to Barack Obama and Howard Dean. Of course, it was not a smashing success. What we urged was, for the time, too advanced to be taken seriously.

The club was fortunate in having as members two such creators of political ideas as David Levering and Werner Warmbrunn.

Of course, more could be said of David's political life in Claremont. I remember being with him at a union organized demonstration at Dreier's office in San Dimas. The idea at some point was to start singing union songs. The one person who knew them best was David, belting them out in his fine voice.

These notes certainly do not exhaust the political impact of David Levering on Claremont and local and regional Democrats.

David Levering: A Political Remembrance

By Ricki Maslowski

Early on, as a new faculty member at Cal Poly Pomona, I was welcomed by David Levering, who also invited me to join the recently formed faculty union. It was expected that a state law would soon be passed that would permit public employees to bargain collectively. Thus the union was growing. In a few years, Jerry Brown, in his first round as governor signed such a bill. After such a beginning, my whole career at Cal Poly was never far from David Levering.

Of course, the right to bargain is just a beginning. David's activism never let up. He marched with the union, demonstrated with the union, sang the union songs. He was in the thick of battles over which union would represent the faculty. He did hard work assisting other faculty members, especially with

grievances. He was my advocate in a grievance I filed for non-promotion. Now someone whose value is not recognized will almost always question her (especially her) own worth. The final statement that David wrote for my grievance was so strong and persuasive that I became convinced that I did in fact deserve the promotion. Don't laugh. The psychology is important. Though we lost the grievance, I was promoted the following year. The assurance provided by that final statement has remained.

Largely thanks to David, I believe, the History department was one of the most collegial departments on campus. But his real importance in the atmosphere of Cal Poly involved his interdisciplinary reach. In the good old days there was a faculty cafeteria where the majority of faculty would actually take time to go for lunch. In the large group that coalesced around David, almost all disciplines were represented, even those as far from the Arts and Sciences as Business and Agriculture. The conversation was always stimulating. Some of us would joke that what we liked best about the job was lunch.

A more formal campus activity in which David was a central player was The Campus Forum, which had evolved from a weekly brown bag discussion group of faculty members to a series of lunch meetings anchored by a guest speaker (from on or off campus). After the first hour of presentation plus Q & A, most of the audience would stay a second hour for informal conversation. I always thought of this as the one activity, apart from the Rose Float, that was open to the entire university community. Among the subjects we discussed were prison reform, democracy, civil rights, feminism, science, religion. After David retired, the Campus Forum was taken over by someone with a national reputation and quickly became a lecture series with prominent speakers but with none of the camaraderie that we had in David's time.

Of course, David did not do all this alone. Yet no person contributed more to creating what was vibrant, collegial, and stimulating in the culture of Cal Poly. We worked hard for education, justice, rights. We had fun and found community doing it.

I've always felt that where David Levering is, is where it's at.

Charles H Bayer: Democratic Club of Claremont Memorial

By Merrill Ring

By the time Charles reached Claremont and became a member of the Democratic Club of Claremont, he had retired from a very active life as a minister and professor. He left a record of political activism scattered across the country and probably even in Australia while he was teaching there.

Probably the most memorable period was when he was the radical youngish senior minister at the University Church (Disciples of Christ) in Chicago. A year after his appointment there, Chicago hosted (famously) the Democratic National Convention with all its historic events. In Charles' own words: "It was the high point of the anti-Vietnam war movements and [the church] quickly became a center for the radical students – thousands of them. We probably had 500 of them in the building every day. I became their pastor, was gassed at Michigan and Balboa during the 1968 Democratic Convention, and was called a suspected conspirator by the grand jury that led to the trial of the Chicago 8." That is, he became an unindicted co-conspirator.

While at the Chicago church, he taught a class that had Jesse Jackson as a student.

In Claremont, in retirement, not only was he member of the Democratic club, but served on the city's Human Relations Committee and on the board of Uncommon Good, helped found both the Claremont Homeless Advocacy Project (David Levering was also a co-founder) and The American Institute for Progressive Democracy. He also wrote a (as he said) less academic version of the *Claremont Manifesto*. While in Claremont, Charles continued to write weekly columns of opinion, distributed widely. (Bill Moyers was impressed by those, referred to them and became friends with Charles.)

Note: I will reprint below the last column of Charles' that I published in *Progressive Democracy*. It was an Easter column last year. It shows the mixture of politics and religion in his life. You've probably never heard the story told as Charles did.

An Easter Message on religion and politics

By Charles Bayer

Our media assume that there is no such thing as liberal religion, liberal Christianity – and they borrow that assumption from non-liberal denominations. Charles Bayer has always begged to differ and has written columns as a very clear reminder that that assumption is quite mistaken. Easter Week will be upon us before long. So I am printing here an Easter message from a very liberal Christian. Note: this may be Charles' last column printed here in Progressive Democracy: he is slowing down.

One of the complaints I often hear is that religion and politics should not be mixed. Religion has to do with spiritual matters and politics with worldly matters, and the two must be kept apart. Well, this is what Christians call “holy week,” the most sacred time in our calendar, so let me put on my preacher’s identity and tell you a story right out of the Bible.

Jesus, a Jewish wandering teacher, had just spent several months traveling around Galilee, where his main work was with the ill, the oppressed, the dispossessed and the subjugated. As he traveled from town to town it became increasingly clear that the main problem was the political and economic occupation inflicted by Rome’s army and the henchmen Rome had appointed to guarantee domination over the lives of these subjugated masses—taxed without political representation.

He had been clear about his mission, and identified it in his home synagogue when he said *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are oppressed, and to proclaim that now is the year.*”

He had subsequently told his disciples that they must go south to Jerusalem and confront the oppressors on behalf of the captives and the oppressed. First, he had to determine whether his disciples were able to affirm his authority. Peter speaking for the others called him the one whom God had anointed. But when Jesus said that the authorities in Jerusalem, the Roman rulers and their puppets, would resist to

the point of having him killed, Peter then said that perhaps they should not make that dangerous trip. Jesus call him a devil and determined to go, and on the way south three times had to remind his disciples about what was bound to happen.

Along the way they gathered followers wherever they went, and finally arrived at Jerusalem. He did not enter the city quietly, but led a parade that included crowds of his cheering followers. It was that event on what we eventually called “Palm Sunday,” that made clear he was there to confront the Roman occupiers and their collaborators.

In the week that followed he engaged in a series of confrontations with the Romans and their temple quislings. On what we now call Maundy Thursday evening, he and his inner circle celebrated a meal marking a political uprising that had taken place centuries before when Moses had gone to the Egyptian capital demanding that Pharaoh “let my people go”. That earlier meal was marked by blood painted on the doors of all the Hebrew homes so that the angel of death would “pass over” those dwellings—and the Hebrews would be on their way to political liberation.

Having realized the extent of the threat, Roman soldiers were dispatched later that night to find and arrest Jesus. This they did, and after a series of mock trials before the Roman governor and his temple accomplices, Jesus was unmercifully beaten and then executed as a criminal who had defied Rome’s authority. The identification nailed to his cross said “King of the Jews”. The message was clear: do not defy the authority of Rome’s occupation.

The end of the story had a very different sign. It was an empty tomb whose message was “God, not Caesar, has the last word,” and an **empty** cross that for all the centuries since has affirmed this message.

I suppose we will continue to hear from those telling us that religion and politics are not to be mixed. What they will be saying is, "Do not confront Pharaoh, Caesar or any other political ruler or any so-called secular authority that holds people in political or economic captivity".

Must religion and politics be held in totally separate worlds? I doubt if that can be said by anyone seriously confronting the events of what we now call "Holy Week."



ESSAYS ETC BY CLUB ME