

# THE VOORHIS VOICE

Liberal Voice of the Pomona Valley

September, 2011

[www.claremontdems.org](http://www.claremontdems.org)

## MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Friday, September 9, 2011, 12-2 PM

**Monthly Luncheon at the LYL Gardens Restaurant**

**Speaker: Susan McWilliams, Professor of Politics, Pomona College**

**Topic: "Challenges for the Democratic Party"**

921 W. Foothill Blvd., Claremont, 91711. Tel. 909-626-9151

Cost is ten dollars; meal is served family style. No pork on menu; many vegetarian dishes.

Saturday, September 17, 2011, 12-4 PM

**Bonita Democrats' 6th Annual Picnic & Barbecue in the Park**

San Dimas Canyon Park,

1628 N. Sycamore Canyon Rd., San Dimas 91772

Monday September 26, 2011, 7 – 9:30 PM

Monthly Membership Meeting at Porter Hall

601 Mayflower Rd., Pilgrim Place Campus, Claremont

Access Porter Hall from the west side of Berkeley St. at 6th Street

Friday, September 30, 2011

**The Role of Corporations in the American Electoral Process:**

**The Citizens United U.S. Supreme Court Decision**

Jointly co-sponsored by [The American Institute for Progressive Democracy](http://www.aipd.org), Common Cause, and the School of Politics and Economics at the Claremont Graduate School, this forum is scheduled for September 30, 2011 at the Albrecht Auditorium (<http://www.cgu.edu/pages/1418.asp>) on the CGU campus in Claremont (California) at 7:00 PM. Admission is free, but come early for a seat. A wine and cheese reception follows.

Speakers:

- Erwin Chemerinsky

Erwin Chemerinsky is dean and professor of law at the University of California, Irvine School of Law. His areas of expertise are constitutional law, federal practice, civil rights and civil liberties, and appellate litigation. He is the author of six books, most recently, *Enhancing Government: Federalism for the 21st Century* (2008).

- Bob Edgar

Bob Edgar has been President and CEO of Common Cause since 2007. He previously served 6 terms in Congress, has been General Secretary of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, President of the Claremont School of Theology, holds five honorary doctorates and is the author of the book *Middle Church*.

- Hans von Spakovsky

Hans von Spakovsky is an attorney who served in the Justice Department in the G.W. Bush administration. Bush gave him a recess appointment at the Federal Elections Commission but his nomination was withdrawn following Senate challenges. Since then he has been a fellow at the Heritage Foundation.

- Charles Doskow will be the discussant of the presentations

Charles Doskow is professor of law and dean emeritus at La Verne University School of Law. He is the 2011 recipient of the Federal Bar Association Inland Empire Chapter's Erwin Chemerinsky Defender of the Constitution Award.

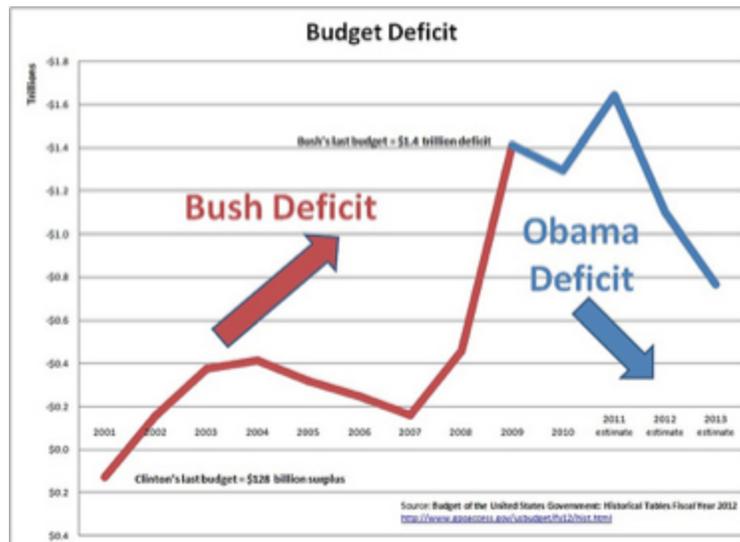
## **How Do You Define Fiscal Responsibility?**

*Clinton: Tax and Spend.*

*Bush: Borrow and Spend.*

*Obama: Tax and Save.*

**How do YOU define it?**



Source: <http://www.truth-out.org>

## The Jobs Are Coming! The Jobs are Coming! Or Are They?

by Charles Bayer

Now that things have calmed down a bit, following the debt-cap fiasco, it is time the political wizards turned to job creation. That, after all, is the blood spurting from America's economic arteries. The Republican solution has always been, "don't raise taxes—especially on the already wealthy." The uncertainty of tax increases, they opine, is the reason why the already affluent have been hesitant to invest in job creating businesses. Well, the threat is suspended for the foreseeable future. Taxes on the wealthy will not be increased soon. Now, if that is the Republican answer to job creation, one wonders where all these new jobs are? After all, the Bush tax cuts have been in effect for almost a decade, and their influence has provided only the loss of jobs. Economists tell us we are now on the brink of a double dip recession. At least we are witnessing a stagnant economic future.

The problem is not the lack of available money in the hands of potential job creators, the rich. The rich have the lion's share of America's wealth now. They don't need more. Their almost three trillions in the bank are going almost exclusively to overseas jobs, the repurchase of their own stocks, and dividends. America does not have a supply problem. It has a demand problem. The American consumer is where the financial lack lies. If people don't have money to buy, nobody is going to manufacture things that they cannot sell. The question is, therefore, how do we get purchasing power into the hands of potential consumers?

We have been through this before. After a false start with attempted budget cuts, President Franklin D. Roosevelt realized that the nation was being driven back into a continued depression, so he put America to work. When President Dwight Eisenhower hit the recession following the war, he devised the Interstate Highway System and gave Americans millions of good paying jobs. LBJ, in addition to jobs in the Great Society, generated a housing boom, realizing that the building, sale and occupation of homes is always necessary to break out of a recession.

Most economists realize that in a financial crisis government may be the only source of new jobs. While dealing with the long-term deficit is important, the immediate problem can only be solved by

government intervention. Obama's modest effort to ignite the economy faltered by being much too little, and was thus branded a failure by his opponents. The needs are there. What if we decided to rebuild America's rail system, our decaying sewer system, dilapidated bridges, and the rest of the infrastructure? There would be millions of new jobs. And that may be the only responsible answer to deficits.

The short-term solution is to awaken the American people to the pickle we are in by turning around the House while securing a filibuster proof majority in the US Senate. That seems to be the task for the next year and a half. While I share the Democratic party's left in its disappointment over what Obama hasn't produced, I lay the blame, not on him, but on they way those who elected him ran for cover and allowed the Tea Party et al to take over the House of Representatives in 2009, almost without resistance. While very conservative funding sources were putting big bucks into almost every campaign, we sat back and let it happen. And when the conservatives discovered the budget deficit and debt cap issues, which were hardly new, they got hold of a gold plated way to inspire terror in the hearts of the middle-class.

No one should expect the Republicans to come up with a solid job-creating strategy before the next election—even if they might have one. The fixation on cutting the government's ability to create jobs seems to be currently a winning issue, and I doubt if the three they appoint to the new commission will budge from that preoccupation. So if the problem is economic, perhaps the solution is political.

## **An All-Cuts Budget?**

By Bob Gerecke

The recent agreement between President Obama and the Republicans created a deficit reduction committee (DRC) consisting of Democrats and Republicans from Congress. If the DRC fails to agree on a package, or if the Congress fails to adopt the package, further spending cuts will take place automatically, and taxes will increase for low and middle-income earners (primarily consumers) as well as for the wealthy (the investor class). Decreasing Federal spending while simultaneously increasing taxes on consumers will remove stimulus, weaken the economy and increase rather than decrease unemployment. As Nobel Laureate Paul Krugman wrote recently in the New York Times, "instead of helping to create jobs, the federal government is pulling back, acting as a drag on output and employment." The Republicans hope that economic stagnation will cause Obama to lose the 2012 election. Therefore, the Republicans will probably reject any DRC package and instead force the automatic drag on output and employment.

Hopefully, voters will understand the culpability of the Republicans in the coming recession. Gallup Poll results (below) suggest that voters are increasingly disenchanted with the GOP. The public's unfavorable rating of the Democratic Party increased four percent between February and August, 2011, but the public's unfavorable rating of the Republic Party increased 11 percent in that period. More change in this direction would mightily help Obama's reelection campaign. On the other hand, Obama may still expect the Republicans reluctantly to agree to a policy that includes fewer spending cuts and more revenue increases from wealthy individuals and corporations. If so, he's likely to be disappointed. In any case, Obama and the Republicans are both playing a risky game that endangers the American economy.

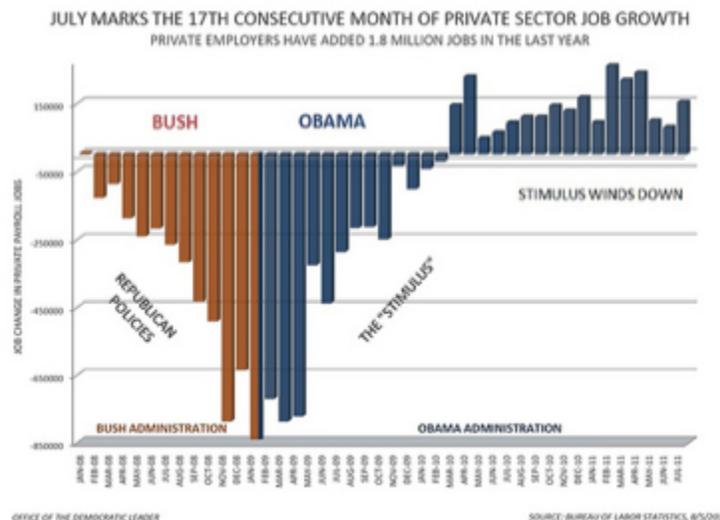
The economy is still weak. Federal budget cutting will prolong the Great Recession, and perhaps even tilt us into another Great Depression. In either, federal revenues plummet, increasing the budget deficit and leading, if the GOP rules, to further budget cuts in the interest of balancing the budget. The vicious circle of economic stagnation, fiscal deficit, budget cuts, and stagnation will damage our society, not just our economy. Al Gore recently observed that the end of democracy in the USA is not out of the question if the adverse trends continue. That's regrettably true; just remember Germany in the 1930s.

As long as the U.S. trade deficit sucks around \$500 billion annually out of our economy, we need a stimulus that big just to break even. The previous stimuli of around \$800 billion in Federal government deficit spending and around \$600 billion in Federal Reserve money creation merely prevented economic collapse; they weren't enough to produce a strong recovery. (And the huge bailout of Wall Street and the big banks didn't trickle down to the rest of the economy, so it was no stimulus at all.) Reducing the stimulus of the Federal deficit at this time will add to the depressing effect of our trade deficit.

Over a complete economic cycle – the boom and then the bust – our government should approximately break even, running surpluses in boom times and deficits in the bust. We're in a bust now. Since the government already has a large debt from Bush's reckless deficits, it should gradually reduce that debt during the next boom. However, this is the worst time to reduce debt. "To everything there is a season." There is a time to spend and a time to save. This is the time to spend.

The Republicans may not understand elementary economics, or they may think another recession will enable them to win the 2012 presidential election. It boggles my mind, however, that a Democratic President has agreed to a budget-slashing agenda that almost assures that both disasters will happen: The economy will collapse, and the voters will punish us in 2012 for the disaster the Republicans caused. Every one of us should contact President Obama and/or the Democratic leaders in the Senate and House about this disastrous course.

President Obama: (202) 456-1111 or <http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/>  
 Senator Harry Reid: (202) 224-3542 or <http://reid.senate.gov/contact/index.cfm>  
 Representative Nancy Pelosi: (202) 225-0100 or <http://www.democraticleader.gov/contact>



Source: <http://www.truth-out.org>

## CHS Young Dems Plan Activities

By Carolee Monroe

The Student Democrats, a club at Claremont High School, have elected new officers and are planning for the coming school year. Co-Presidents for the 2011-2012 school year Sara Battersby (374-7095) and Paul Hurley (451-1238) met recently with Jacquelyn Monroe, past Co-President, and Jack and Carolee Monroe, Democratic Club of Claremont members who mentor the club. They reviewed past topics and activities and then initiated a plan for the coming year. Not only do the students want to become involved in more activities outside of school, they also want to focus on topics of current interest. Specifically, they see a need for voter registration drives on campus as citizens of California can register to vote when they are within six months of their eighteenth birthday. The club leaders also want to address the issue of jobs and the American economy.

Plans for the year include finalizing a list of topics from which the club members can choose. Past speakers have included Darcel Woods and Russ Warner, candidates for public office; Bill Fox, supporting the district's school bond; Charles Bayer, sharing his views on gay marriage; Gar Byrum, discussing the election results of 2010; Luis Duran, speaking of U.S. involvement in Central America; Jose Calderon, discussing his enrollment in both public and private colleges; Adnan Aswad, whose presentation was the multi-faceted "Geopolitics of Oil and Gas"; Sandy Hester, presenting information about health care legislation; Andy Winnick, with data on the federal budget; and Joe Lyons, discussing global warming research. Two of our DCC members have spoken on two occasions with the students; Ivan Light, on Democratic principles and immigration and Merrill Ring, who discussed "Faux Fox" and the California economy. These speakers have given the students a greater understanding of American and world politics.

The mentoring of the Student Democrats began from the concerns and actions of Chuck Farritor, Zephyr Tate-Mann and Laura Ditte Lo, along with those of Jack and Carolee Monroe. The club advisor, CHS teacher Mike Callahan, observed that the club has really jelled since the DCC mentoring began in 2009 CHS Student Democrats have joined the DCC in many activities. For two years, Co-Presidents Jackie Monroe and Perry Osgood (2010) and Paul Hurley (2011) have ridden in our July 4 parade entry. Student members have volunteered at our candidate forum and for several Democratic candidates. They also have staffed our booths during the Earth Day and Village Venture festivals and the Independence Day celebration while students Matt Monroe and Max Real carried our club's banner in the parade. Some students staffed the Los Angeles County Democratic Party's booth at the Los Angeles County Fair. Their continued involvement is much appreciated! Other officers of the Student Democrats for the 2011-2012 year are: Vice-President Aneesa Andrabi; Secretary Claudia Liss-Schultz; Treasurer Matt Monroe and Public Relations Coordinators Nell Menefee-Libey, Sam Schiffris and Julia Tanenbaum.

## Claremont is Redistricted

By Gar Byrum

August 15, 2011 marked the day when the citizens-redistricting commission issued its final maps for California. After many years of imprisonment in the gerrymandered 26th Congressional district, captives of Congressman David Dreier, times have changed to our advantage. Claremont is now part of the 27th Congressional District. We now live in a district with a Democratic registration advantage of around 11% over the GOP, and another 24% registered as Decline to State. Democrats can elect state and federal officials now. Uncork the champagne, Mom.

The 27th CD now extends from the Upland Heights on the eastern border to Pasadena on the west. In the western part of the district, Altadena forms the northwesterly boundary, with communities such as Alhambra and Rosemead making up the southernmost point.

The Assembly and State Senate districts mostly conform to the general framework of the Congressional District, with one being smaller and the state senate district being larger than the assembly district. Gone are the days when these electoral districts were misshapen and distorted.

The Republicans are not happy. The Republican Party intends to hire lawyers to overturn the statewide initiative that created the citizen commission. Go online to <http://wedrawthelines.ca.gov> for additional information.

## GOP Voters' Presidential Preferences

By Ivan Light

Chess players know that it's fatal to concentrate on your own strategy, losing track of what your opponent is planning. Since Obama is virtually certain to receive the Democratic nomination in 2012, the GOP nomination is the big question mark. Recent Gallup Poll data help us to identify the unhappiest travelers in the GOP caravan. Assuming Rick Perry is nominated, and he's now the front runner, those GOP voters happiest about it will be elderly, Southern, conservative men. Forget those guys. Those Republicans least happy about their party's candidate will be: young voters, especially in the East, who are liberal or moderate in outlook, and who seldom attend church. How do we take this unhappy constituency away from the GOP and hand it to Obama? My answers: Stay with Biden as VP because he's an Easterner; but also campaign on a "free tuition for all" plank that will interest youth; also stress the independence of the Democratic Party from religious sectarianism, but stress equally our party's humane values, ultimately rooted in religious traditions. These are the values of international peace, environmental stewardship, compassion for the poor, the unemployed, and oppressed, and human rights. We are a party for values voters. This emphasis paints the GOP as the party of narrow and exclusive religious sectarianism in contrast to the humane, cosmopolitan, and welcoming values of the Democratic Party.

Of these electoral positions, none have short-term economic consequences, save one, proposing free tuition to all qualified students in their first two-years of higher education. From the youth point of view, this plank translates into "vote yourself free tuition." Here's an incentive for youth to vote! Obama will need the youth voters in 2012 as he had them in 2008, and did not have them in 2010. But this plank makes substantive sense too. From the nation's point of view, such a plank promises

belatedly to realize President Clinton's proposal to raise the average educational level of the American labor force from 12 to 14 years. Such an improvement would yield the skilled labor force the USA will need to build a world-beating economy in the rest of this century. President Clinton put this idea forward in tandem with his sponsorship of NAFTA back in 1994. Clinton thought we should let the low-wage jobs go to cheap-labor countries while preparing ourselves to nab the lion's share of high-wage jobs. NAFTA passed, and we have watched the jobs go offshore as Clinton expected, but, as George W. Bush did nothing to strengthen the quality of the American labor force, high-wage jobs did not fill the offshore gap as Clinton had planned. Net result of it all: export of low- and medium-wage American jobs without compensation at the top. It's up to the youth voters to save our country from the Tea Party, and, doing so, to craft an economic future for themselves. It helps Democrats too that Rick Perry specifically rejects any federal support for college students.

<b>Discontent with Political Leaders, More Anger at Government</b>		
	<b>Feb 2011</b>	<b>Aug 2011</b>
<i>Job rating ...</i>	%	%
<b>Obama</b>		
Approve	49	43
Disapprove	42	49
<i>Favorable opinion of ...</i>		
<b>Republican Party</b>		
Favorable	43	34
Unfavorable	48	59
<b>Democratic Party</b>		
Favorable	47	43
Unfavorable	46	50
<b>Congress</b>		
Favorable	34	25
Unfavorable	57	70
<i>Feeling about federal government ...</i>		
Angry	14	26
Frustrated	59	60
Basically content	22	11

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Aug. 17-21, 2011. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding. Congress favorability, feeling about federal government from early March.

## **Democratic Values: The Sequel**

By Bob Gerecke

The previous VV contained a fine article by former club president and vice-president Ivan Light, in which he wisely advocated that we explain our "Democratic values" to "values" voters. He focused on three values that distinguish us from the Republicans: Friendly foreign relations that encourage international peace, preservation of the environment for future generations, and compassionate assistance to our fellow humans who are poor, sick, unemployed or otherwise in need. It was a timely reminder that Democrats promote "Peace on Earth, Goodwill towards All" all year long, not just on Christmas Day.

I would like to add a fourth value: Protection of ourselves and our fellow humans from external harm, regardless of its source.

While the Republican Party wants to protect us only from poor crooks who use a knife or gun, Democrats want to protect us as well from rich crooks who use economic power, and deception.

While the Republican Party protects property, Democrats protect property and people – their health and their livelihood.

While the Republican Party claims to protect our capitalist economic system, by protecting speculators, monopolists, and exploiters, Republican policies actually endanger that system. Democrats authored the laws which kept the economy functioning for 70 years. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal policies during the Great Depression of the 1930's saved the American people from destitution and saved the capitalist economic system.

While both parties want to protect us from attack by foreign terrorists and invaders, only the Democrats protect us from toxic emissions, financial crises, export of our jobs, unsafe consumer products, and hazardous working conditions. Conservative Republicans claim that the government's only job is protection, but Republicans leave us altogether unprotected in the face of all these inescapable hazards.

## **Anthony Portantino**

By Ivan Light

Anthony Portantino is a termed-out State Assembly member from La Canada. He has decided to seek the Democratic nomination for Congress in the 27th CD next year, and has held meetings in support of his candidacy in Claremont and elsewhere. Portantino captured headlines recently because of his controversy with the Democratic Party leadership in Sacramento after Portantino refused to support Gov. Brown's stop-gap budget.

Now, apparently responding to pressure from Portantino, who initiated the idea, the Democratic State leadership has released members' spending records, information that Assembly leaders had previously said was protected from public disclosure. According to the Los Angeles Times (Aug. 27) the spending records were released after a few lawmakers broke ranks to release their office budgets to several media outlets. Assembly officials previously denied requests for members' current spending reports, citing state law that exempts legislative memoranda and correspondence from disclosure requirements. The records fight stems from that feud between Assembly Speaker John A. Pérez (D-Los Angeles) and Assemblyman Anthony Portantino (D-La Cañada Flintridge), who sought the documents partly to clear his name after Pérez labeled him a profligate spender and slashed his office budget. The published documents support Perez. In point of fact, Portantino was the Assembly's biggest spender. In the first eight months of this year, he spent almost \$300,000 of taxpayer money running his office. On the other hand, members' spending information would probably not be available at all to the public now were it not for Portantino. From Anthony Portantino's newsletter:

Last week I introduced HR 20, an Assembly House Resolution to open the financial records of the Assembly and to make budgeting transparent and fair. . . Sadly, the Rules Committee has not yet taken action on HR 20 and I fear that leadership wants to just let the issue fade away. Instead of complete transparency, leaders have proposed creating a "task force" . . .to come back "next year" with a "recommendation." We don't need a task force or a recommendation; we just need to give the public access to how its money is being spent.

## In Memoriam

We recently lost three of our oldest, most dedicated, and most effective members. Sally Alexander passed away on May 18; Ware Meyers and Helen Grove Meyer both passed away on July 22.

A lifelong and passionate Democrat, Sally Alexander ran for Congress in Orange County in her eighties, then retired to Claremont to be near her daughter Sandra Hester and her family. Sally was a regular participant at DCC luncheons and membership meetings where she contributed actively in discussions and debates. During political campaigns she volunteered in the headquarters even though over ninety years of age at the time. She had an optimistic and positive approach to life that affected all who knew her. Sally is survived by her daughter, Sandra Hester, a DCC member and former DCC President, and by her grandchildren.

At the time of his death Ware, 96, was still a contributing member of our Issues Committee. Ware had been a member of our Executive Board for many years before and after the death of his able wife, Helen, a founder of the California Democratic Council in the 1960s. A naval veteran of World War II, and author of software engineering books, Ware read and thought about political events, spoke his mind, and fearlessly called the events as he saw them. He gave the Republicans hell all the time, but was unafraid to criticize Democrats too when they fell for easy slogans or mistook wishes for reality. He is survived by his son, Paul.

A long-term resident of Claremont, Helen Grove Meyer is best known as a founder of the Claremont League of Women Voters, a non-partisan organization. She was also a pioneer of the environmental movement in our region. But, among her many civic involvements, Helen Grove Meyer was also a member of the Democratic Club of Claremont as well as its much earlier and now defunct predecessor, the Eleanor Roosevelt Democratic Club. She is survived by two children.

## Editorial: Democrats on the Defensive

By Ivan Light

For at least two years, progressive Democrats have been complaining about President Obama's performance in office. He has slighted the environment, left Guantanamo open, strengthened troop commitments in Afghanistan, opened a third military front in Libya, and bought hopelessly into the erroneous Republican view that deficit reduction is the economic nostrum we need now. Recent news stories even report that President Obama is attracting serious funding on Wall Street whose "malefactors of great wealth" he chose not to prosecute, much to the dismay of many in his electoral base. It looks like a sell-out, and possibly it is, but I wish to propose an alternative scenario.

On this view, in the aftermath of the elections of 2010, Obama decided that the Democratic Party is on the political defensive, and must move to the right to capture independent voters. He's a calculating politician, not a bold leader. I regret it, but that's who he is. However, there is more. The GOP's Tea Party wing is now so scary, I suspect, that elements of the dominant capitalist class are becoming afraid of it. In a recent column, Paul Krugman accused the GOP of opposition to science. Al Gore said something quite similar regarding the GOP's intransigent indifference to climate change.

The capitalist class cannot tolerate a political leadership that opposes science. Business needs science for competitive advantage. If the USA becomes indifferent or hostile to science, some elements of the dominant capitalist class (bio-pharma for example) will lose economic advantage. That is why, I suspect, some Wall Street elements are now reconsidering their long-standing commitment to the GOP. They are backing Democrats instead. The Democrats have become the party of at least one segment of business. It's not just Obama courting Wall Street, it's Wall Street needing Obama, the only sane person on the political horizon.

Where does this leave the progressive wing of the Democratic Party? Out in the cold for the next few years. The progressive agenda is dead in the water now, and cannot move forward until and unless the electorate shows it's ready to drop its infatuation with the GOP and the Tea Party. In the meantime, the best that will happen is that Obama and his new Wall Street allies will succeed in turning back the Tea Party in 2012. If that victory is decisive, and the Tea Party appears defunct, then progressives can hope for a renewed surge of progressive legislation in the next Obama administration. The worst case, of course, is that Obama's new allies on Wall Street will not suffice to reelect him, Obama will lose in November, 2012, the rightward political slide will continue, and Rick Perry or Michelle Bachmann will become President of the United States with the GOP in control of both houses of Congress as well as the Supreme Court. We will drift into an American fascism consisting of fundamentalist Bible-pounding, suppression of dissent, and aggressive warfare in the name of freedom.

**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.**

## **Newsletter Editor**

Ivan Light: Email him at [claremontdemocrats@yahoo.com](mailto:claremontdemocrats@yahoo.com)

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on our web site!**

Access our website: <http://www.claremontdems.org>

Select: Get Involved > Join Us (Complete the form. Then...)

Select: Get Involved > Donate to the Club This will take you to the Act Blue website where you can pay your annual dues online.

P.S. – Part of your dues and contributions may be contributed to Federal and State candidates. Individual contributions will be deposited into the club's Federal account, subject to the Federal Elections Campaign Act. Non-individual contributions and contributions of individuals who so request will be deposited into the club's State account. Contributions are limited under State law. No anonymous contributions of more than \$50 will be accepted. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, address, occupation and employer of each individual contributor. Political contributions are not tax-deductible. FPPC #841491. FEC #C00404319

