

-THE VOORHIS VOICE

Progressive Voice of the Pomona Valley

JANUARY, 2019

www.claremontdems.org

MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS



DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF CLAREMONT MEETINGS

Fridays, 11:30-1:00 pm

Issues Luncheon

Village Grill, Claremont

Get informed – and inform

Friday, January 11, 12-1:30

Luncheon

Eddies' Italian Eatery

Stater Bros Shopping Center (Foothill Blvd)

Speaker: Laura Shultz, PAC Chair Teamsters Local 1932: "Labor Partnering with the Community"

Cost: \$17 includes non-alcoholic beverage, tax and tip - Italian dishes, some vegetarian. (Note: the meal is served promptly at noon so try to be there a little earlier.) The talk, beginning at about 12:45, is free and open to the public

Saturday, January 19, 9:30am

Executive Board Meeting

Monday, January 28, 7-9 pm

Member's Meeting

Napier Center Pilgrim Place

Speaker: Karen May, Membership Director DISE Stronger

Napier Center Pilgrim Place

Speaker: Karen May: Membership Director RISE Stronger:
"Southland Resistance"

The meeting is free and open to the public. A club members' business meeting (beginning about 8:15) will follow the speaker

OTHER MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Claremont is being forced to move from a system where Council members are elected at large to a district system. (See City Council <http://www3.ci.claremont.ca.us/WebLink/DocView.aspx?id=254518&dbid=0&repo=CLAREMONT>). Before maps for districts can be professionally drawn, the City must hold two public hearings to gather citizens' input. Those hearings will be **January 8 and 17**.

Draft maps will be available for public review by at least **January 28**.

January 8: Public Hearing #1: *Overview of the process and city demographics. Gather input from public to be used in establishing options for district boundaries. Adopt resolution setting forth the mandatory and permissive districting criteria.*

January 17: Public Hearing #2: *Gather input from public to be used in establishing options for district boundaries.*

Vote Center Community Meeting. In 2020, LA County will transition from traditional polling places to new vote centers. This new model will provide voters with greater convenience and accessibility by allowing ballots to be cast at any vote center location in the County over an 11-day period. The County is seeking input from the community on where vote centers should be placed for the 2020 election cycle. **Claremont residents are invited to provide their input at a community meeting on Wednesday, January 9 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Alexander Hughes Community Center.**

Sunday, January 27: Assembly District Election Meeting (ADEM) will take place from 10-12 at the UCFW 1428 hall at 705 W Arrow Highway Claremont. Further information about this meeting will be distributed to the DCC mailing list. Must be a registered Democrat residing in the 41st Assembly District. Rides available if needed. Contact Debi Evans 909-268-1201 or Debi4Change@aol.com

Sunday, January 27: UNA-USA Pomona Valley Chapter Annual Gala Celebration: 5pm Napier Center, Pilgrim Place. The speaker will be: Bob Smith who will give an update on Africa

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Tuesday, January 29: Claremont/Inland Valley Move Forward will hold its monthly meeting at 7:30pm at 1015 N Indian Hill Blvd. The aim will be to organize for 2019.



Democratic Club of Claremont News

Professor Will Barndt (Politics, Pitzer College) was the speaker at the November luncheon. His title was 'After the Election: What Do Democrats Do Now?' No summary is available.

Professor Eric Nilsson (Economics, CSU San Bernardino) gave the talk at the November Members' meeting. The title was 'Manufacturing an Entitlement 'Crisis': The Case of Social Security'. Following is a summary of what he said (and subject to errors by the reporter.)

The standard narrative about Social Security, found on both Fox News and in the NYT, is that it is on the brink of disaster. That story has been very effective: over ½ of the American population believe that Social Security will go bankrupt. 75% of students believe that they shall never receive Social Security.

Social Security was created in 1935 – its first payout was in 1940. It was created as a pay-as-you go system (unlike pension funds which are promises.) In order to protect it from legislative grabs, money is paid as a separate tax into a separate account – the funds do not come from the general fund. All and only social security tax money goes into the system.

That system worked just fine – until the baby boomers began to retire. The size of that generation meant that there were more people eligible for payments than there were people putting money into the system. Consequently, more money was needed. The pay as you go system was then dropped and higher Social Security taxes were added.

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As a result of the greater income, today there is \$5 trillion in the Social Security account (held in the form of government bonds.)

In 2018 for the first time there was less money coming in than was paid out – and so the accumulated money has to be drawn upon. In 2034 all the trust fund money will be used up.

Will that be the death of Social Security? Will there be bankruptcy? Is this the end that the standard narrative predicts?

No: that won't happen.

In the *worst case scenario* what will then happen is that payments would have to be reduced to 77% of what they would otherwise be. That is not bankruptcy.

Why the shortfall in 2034? There is a good argument that ¼ of that predicted shortfall will be due to *increasing income inequality*.

There is a cap on how much of one's income is subject to the Social Security tax: at present the cap is \$128,000: money earned above that is not subject to the tax. However, as more and more people make (much) more than the cap, that income is not taxed and that means less money going into the system.

The projected shortfall is a very easy problem to fix. First the Social Security program is very popular: 80% of Americans approve of it (that is, they approve of paying to support others.) Given the popularity, it is politically easy to solve the so called 'crisis'. The cap could be raised so that more money is going into the system. The tax level could be raised to supply more money. We could even use money from the general fund to balance the system.

Remember: the 'crisis' is the worst case scenario. It may never occur and if it does it is an easy problem to solve.

Report: 2018 Holiday Party

What goes into planning a successful event? As coordinator of our Democratic Club's Annual Party, I share with you that each part is deliberated. Many people have joined in the effort to, hopefully, assure a good time. Our Executive Board has observed that Sundays are better than Saturdays and so John Forney reserves Napier Center a year in advance!

We send out "save-the-date" invitations to our elected representatives in September. Congresswoman Judy Chu has attended so many annual parties and prepares remarks that are both upbeat and forewarning. This year she talked about the Democratic take-over of the House of Representatives and suggested its agenda. Our other elected representatives, when unable to attend, send staff members. This year Matt Lyons, Assemblymember Chris Holden's Deputy District Director, spoke briefly.

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The DCC has been honoring Club members who are local activists. Past honorees have been Lois Thompson (2013), Jim Stripling (2014), Marilee Scaff and David Levering (2015), Mel Boynton, Claudia Strauss and Karen Chapman Lenz (2016), and Andy Winnick, Ellen Taylor and Marguerite Gee Royse (2017). This year the Executive Board decided to name our annual award in honor of Helen Myers, a founder of both our club and the California Democratic Council. Sally Seven and Sam Pedroza were recognized and their biographies told by Betsey Coffman and Larry Schroeder, respectively. Sally and Sam, after reminiscing, talked about their current concerns. Sally gave a brief presentation on income inequality while Sam spoke to his continuing efforts to extend light rail to Claremont. Both Sally and Sam were given certificates of appreciation by Congresswoman Judy Chu and the offices of Supervisor Hilda Solis and Assemblymember Chris Holden, along with a club certificate

We want to include in our annual program, besides the honorees and elected representatives, any special acknowledgments. This year Merrill Ring talked about the "retirement" of Ivan Light, after more than 30 years of active club leadership! Also recognized were newly elected city council members Jennifer Stark, Jed Leano and Ed Reece.

After the failure of serving well-preserved left-over spaghetti, the menu has been re-set to Carol Whitson's family recipe of brisket, with chicken available to those who do not eat red-meat. The "sides" of refried rice with vegetables, prepared and provided by Marguerite Gee Royse, and assorted vegetables, chosen and prepared by Don Martens, Holly Kurtz and Karen Chapman Lenz, were so popular that we actually ran out! Salads were provided by Karen Rosenthal, Barbara Hughes and Carolyn Spaulding. One of our deliberations always is to consider for how many we should plan. Of course, we do not want people to RSVP as **that** commitment seems to **really** cut down on attendance, so we never know for how many to prepare. We aim for 100 and, this year, we came close. One menu item that is not a worry is the desserts brought by the attendees. Again, there were so many delicious choices. Thank you to all!

Finally, no event could be carried out and memorialized without the photography and set-up and clean-up crews. These least recognized but most needed people included Gabe Monroe, Mel Boynton, Don Martens, Barbara Hughes, Pat Lunde, Dick and Gayla Sanders, Marlena and Murray Monroe, and Carol Whitson.

Martens, Barbara Hughes, Pat Lunde, Dick and Gayla Sanders, Marlena and Murray Monroe, and Carol Whitson.

Thank you and to all a better new year.

Carolee Monroe

President's Letter

'Twas the Night Before Christmas

John C. Forney

President, Democratic Club of Claremont

Maybe not even a mouse was stirring, but the Donald was furiously pacing the halls. Poor me. Poor me. Boohoo. Here I am all alone in this place and they've all deserted me. Of course, they didn't desert.

They were fired. Or they're under indictment. Or in jail. If your instincts are as mine and you have the sensibilities of an adult, you are shocked and appalled. Here we have one of the richest persons in the world holding the position of the most incredible power and prestige, and he's having a pity party. No wonder, Thomas Friedman in Wednesday's column doubts that we can survive two more years of his tenure in office. I doubt the world can handle another two years. I used to believe we could. We could just hunker down, tend to the local stuff we can control, and the country'd somehow survive.

I'm not going to repeat the entire litany of misdeeds, stupidity and abject foolishness. You know that. You've felt the dread it engenders.

So, now what? I believe that we need to trust the results of our efforts this past fall. In just days, Democrats will take control of the House. Nancy Pelosi will be Speaker. Progressive, intelligent and dedicated members will be sworn in – not a few of them glorious, “nasty women” who will neither tolerate the current state of national affairs nor the treason of this president. There will be investigations, hearings and legislating. The government will re-open. And should the shut-down last weeks, I'm predicting that for every week it remains closed, we will pick up a bunch more Representatives and Senators in 2020. You heard it here first!

You've had your yuletide schnapps, you've made your resolutions.

The stockings are back in the chest of drawers. In January it will be time to re-engage. Remember, this is like house cleaning or organizing my office. The job is never done. We made the mistake of thinking that our work of the '60s was inalterable and inviolate, but it was not. Republicans have rolled much of it back these past thirty years. They are relentless in their hubris and greed. It's always the

it was not. Republicans have rolled much of it back these past thirty years. They are relentless in their hubris and greed. It's always the season for voter suppression and gerrymandering.

Remember the question posed to Benjamin Franklin as he was leaving the final meeting of the Continental Congress, "Sir, what sort of government have you given us?" "A republic, madam, if you can keep it." Therein lies our summons. If we can keep it.



Letters from Club Members

From Bob Gerecke: submitted

George Skelton correctly points out that homeless housing and other affordable housing are a high priority for our Democrats in Sacramento.

The state already tells each city how many units of affordable housing targeted at each income level it's responsible to have. That includes the lowest income level, which would help the homeless. Cities then identify the parcels that they will allow affordable housing to be built on. Yet no affordable housing gets built on most of them.

The state should exercise eminent domain on them and re-sell them to developers who will build affordable housing. This will stretch the \$5 billion from the bond issue. If the state begins this, cities themselves will begin to act, in order to retain some control. The state can keep acting in those cities which don't do enough.

The increased supply of this affordable housing will help to retard rent increases in other housing.

From Merrill Ring: Courier (11/25/18)

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Let me connect the dots between two Courier stories (11/18/18).

The Gold Line Authority has had to delay the construction of the highly desired Gold Line through Claremont “due to higher than expected costs”. The four bids to do the work each came back “hundreds of millions of dollars over the estimates”, estimates made only 2 years ago. What is now making the project suddenly so “costly”? The CEO of the Construction Authority said that it was “the culmination of unfavorable market conditions” – conditions which included “higher steel tariffs, material costs, labor shortage” as well as some litigation costs.

And what produced the rise in those costs? Especially notice the word “tariffs”.

Two pages later is a story about local Measure G projects. CUSD had the foresight and the luck to receive bids on some projects barely before “domestic construction cost increases due to tariffs imposed by the Trump administration, which are just beginning to trickle down to contractors.” However, not all Measure G projects have been put out to bid with the consequence that the tariffs will push costs for those way above what was originally anticipated.

That is, the Trump administration tariffs have sent local construction costs up by hundreds of millions of dollars and the end is not in sight, (By the way, does the labor shortage affecting the Gold Line have anything to do with Trump’s variety of pressures to keep immigrants out?)

For those who don’t vote saying that who is running the country has nothing to do with their lives, think about what is happening here in Claremont.

From Marilee Scaff, Sally Seven and Freeman Allen: Courier (12/14/18)

Editor’s Note: Since conservative Claremonters continue to rant against the city’s voter approved attempt to acquire our water supply, it is time to remind them of what actually happened. This letter is an important attempt to set the record straight.

As we welcome a new city council, it seems time to put to rest the failed attempt to place our city water in public hands (Statement of

As we welcome a new city council, it seems time to put to rest the failed attempt to place our city water in public hands (Statement of Final Decision, Case No. BC 566125, December 9, 2016).

With respect to the continuing expenditure on the water issue, it was public knowledge from the beginning that, if our attempt failed, the city would be charged both our own legal costs and those of our opponents. Although the election itself had an additional cost, nearly 72 percent of Claremont voters endorsed the effort to make our water a publicly-held resource.

Why did we lose our case? For one thing, the assigned judge, Judge Richard L. Fruin, Jr., stated in court that he knew little of water law. Also, he admittedly believed that water companies were better run by large corporations and that local communities did not run them efficiently. Repeated attacks on La Verne and its ability to run a water system efficiently were not effectively rebutted.

A major issue was the administrative record, which “forms the foundation for the findings in the city’s ‘Resolution of Necessity’”; it was offered and indexed by our law firm, Best, Best and Krieger LLP, several times, but it was not accepted by the judge.

According to the city manager at that time, Tony Ramos, in his official report on the case, “Judge Fruin refused to review it and required it to be removed from the courtroom right after closing arguments. The judge’s statement that the administrative record, when submitted with our objections, had no index is simply wrong.”

The judge limited the time for a League of Women Voters witness to testify, spending more time objecting to her testifying than he allowed for her testimony. He also limited the content of the testimony so that a member of the water task force was not allowed to address significant water issues.

We now wonder if the Claremont public should have been more of a presence in the court room, but we were not.

We hope we can now move forward in a cooperative and civil manner to achieve the best outcome for Claremont with respect to our water issues.



Now YOU write!



Or call & Complain (or Praise)

Join/Renew Your DCC Membership

We have no corporate sponsors. Your membership dues pay all DCC's expenses that include our meeting expenses, p.o. box, club charter, storage space for our booths, publicity, political donations 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

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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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