

-THE VOORHIS VOICE

MARCH 2020

www.claremontdems.org



DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF CLAREMONT MEETINGS

Fridays, 11:30-1:00 pm

Issues Luncheon

Village Grill, Claremont

Get informed – and inform

The DCC's March luncheon will be **Friday, March 13**. The speaker will be **Peter Weinberger** the publisher of the *Claremont Courier*. His topic will be 'The Death of Local News'. The event will be (as usual) at Eddie's Italian Eatery in the Stater Bros. shopping center on Foothill. It begins at 11:45 AM (the meal is served promptly at noon.). The cost of the family style meal is \$17 and includes non-alcoholic beverage, tax and tip. The program begins at 12:45 PM and is free. Both luncheon and program are open to the public.

The February **DCC Executive Board** meeting will take place Saturday, March 14 at 9:30 am in the Napier Center at Pilgrim Place.

The **March monthly members' meeting** will be on **Monday March 30**. The speakers will be experts on Native American education, both professors at CSUSB and both tribal elders of their respective tribes: Professor Hannah Kivalahula-Uddin and Professor James Fenelon. The precise title of their presentation is unknown at press time but it will be in their area of expertise. The meeting will be in the Napier Center on the Pilgrim Place campus and will

begin at 7pm. There will be a members' business meeting following the talk.

OTHER MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Campaign Trail

March 3: **Super-Tuesday**: primaries in **California**, Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Democrats Abroad, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia and a caucus in American Samoa

March 10: primaries in Idaho, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Washington and a caucus in North Dakota

March 14: caucus in Northern Mariana Islands

March 17: primaries in Arizona, Florida, Illinois, Ohio

March 24: primary in Georgia

March 29: primary in Puerto Rico

Other Events

March 7th and 21st: Postcards from the Resistance will hold two meetings in March: Saturday March 7th and Saturday March 21st. We will meet from 2 to 5 pm. To participate, simply drop in. We will be writing our elected officials and also writing in Tony the Democrat's program, *Postcards to Voters*. Please bring postage or a donation for postage. Contact Carla Johnson 909 344-6777 or email at MmeBelvedere@Yahoo.com

March 27 Latino and Latina Roundtable of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley, the 16th Annual Cesar Chavez Breakfast will take place on March 27, 2020 at the Sheraton Fairplex in Pomona, CA. We hope to see you all there. For further information contact Lina Mira, Director, at Lmira@latinolatinaroundtable.org

March 31: Cesar Chavez Day

Calendar Note: Every Thursday, Claremont City government posts the agendas for every Council, commission or committee meeting scheduled the following week. Bob Gerecke reviews them and reports by email any items of significant importance to economic, environmental or social sustainability. If you'd like to receive these emails, please send a request to gerecke@surfside.net. He also posts the information on Facebook and on the NextDoor neighborhoods in south Claremont, and he sends a separate Tweet for each meeting with much less information. He usually emails, posts and Tweets no later than Saturday morning.



DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF CLAREMONT NEWS

From the Editor:

VOTE

Claremont and California have a big role to play in this election.

VOTE

Email Contact: on the subject line write EDITOR VV and address the message to m36ring@gmail.com

Editor's Note: OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME. The editor of the Voorhis Voice ("The progressive voice of the Pomona Valley") is seeking a replacement. The salary will not put you up there with CEO of any corporation. But you can visit Tahiti in June, July and November without guilt.

President's Message

Sam Pedroza

The last couple of Democratic Presidential debates gave us some sharp one liners, zingers, but mostly embarrassing, petty attacks. I am really not sure if the attacks offer anything productive during the debates, or are simply the result of built up tension of a long election. For me, I find them useless, both on the attacker and on the targeted person. If anything, it resounds negatively on the attacker.

As a voter who has not made up my mind on my primary presidential vote, I am now anxious that voting has begun and voting day is looming. On numerous occasions I have been asked, who did I vote for, and I respond that I am waiting. I really don't know what I'm waiting for, I do have my favorites. I feel that each day, each conversation brings some validation why to prefer one candidate over the other. In a way, I feel embarrassed that I don't have a solid person in mind, however when I have conversations with some of the most politically intellectual people I know, and they feel the same way, it gives me comfort.

However, the time is here now. The debates are helping, but for me they are helping to identify the candidate who feels the need to cut down others in order to look better. The Satan/Savior approach does not work for me. I believe that approach resulted in our current White House nightmare.

It reminds me of an award we gave during my Toastmaster days, the award for the best speech critique was a razor with the inscription - *For Being Sharp not Cutting*. I want my candidate to be sharp. I am looking to make America smart again. The primary election perhaps should be a rough and tumble, one that should build a stronger party, and I will have my primary candidate soon.

What I do know for sure and without an ounce of doubt, is who I am not voting for in November.

An Invitation

It's a different day in March, not the 15th (the Ides) but the 27th.

It's a different Latin group, not the Romans but the Latino and Latina Round Table.

It's a different Caesar, not the emperor but Cesar the farmworker/union founder.

It's a different event, not a coronation (or worse) but a breakfast.

This is your invitation to join with other members of our Democratic Club in attending the 16th Annual Cesar Chavez Breakfast at the Sheraton Fairplex. The event will begin at 8:00 AM on Friday, March 27, 2020.

The annual celebration honors the legacy of Cesar Chavez as it recognizes community leaders and presents four students with significant scholarships.

Since its inception, the breakfast has grown from less than 50 attendees to more than 500. The Latino and Latina Roundtable is an organization dedicated to promoting educational programs to advance leadership, communication and effective civic participation to provide a proactive voice. The annual breakfast raises money for the goals of the organization.

The cost of a table seating ten persons is \$625.00, with each attending person paying \$62.50. Please be one of those attending. Contact Carolee Monroe at 909-626-8122 or jackncarolee@verizon.net.

Summaries of February Presentations at Club Meetings

By Carolee Monroe

January Luncheon

Joe Cicero's talk on "Preventing Nuclear War" began with a walk down memory lane for most of the 20 people attending the luncheon. As he reminisced about growing up during the turbulent 60's with an education that didn't teach him to question his beliefs (or people in authority), Cicero broke with his family and worked his way through college. As he became politically educated, he challenged the mores with his realization that "Christ was a pacifist". After working with political campaigns, he decided to labor for his values. However, he said, "There are not many paying jobs in the peace industry".

Cicero is now Deputy Director, Peace Action West, formerly SANE/Freeze. The organization is the largest peace advocacy group in America. Its mission is to promote diplomacy and reduce the number of nuclear weapons. While telling of the numbers of weapons held by the United States and Russia, Cicero explained that so many exist that just a fraction of them being detonated would cause a "Nuclear Winter". He spoke of the fluctuating numbers as, after President Obama worked to reduce them, the current president wants more.

He also spoke of countries with nuclear weapons and their unfriendly neighbors, along with those countries or groups (such as ISIS) who have or don't have the capabilities to destroy us. To obstruct actions by the current president who doesn't understand or listen, some Members of Congress have introduced the "No First Use" (of nuclear weapons) bill.

Since the founding of our country, we have realized the power of the executive and we acknowledge that the most serious decision a country makes is to declare war, Cicero said. He stressed that the current administration has no checks on the president. Furthermore, as we understand this dangerous time, he asked that each of us get involved, encourage others to join with us and help shape the new generation. Peace Action West advocates for the United States to get back into treaties, negotiate with China and work to halt the new arms race. We again are in a time of turbulence and we need to act on our beliefs,

January Members' Meeting

The importance of participating in the "2020 Census" was emphasized by Andrea Moreno, Deputy Director of the East San Gabriel Valley/Pomona Regional Office, of Los Angeles County Supervisorial District 1. The census, mandated by the U.S. Constitution to be taken every ten years, provides data that determines the number of seats each state will be allotted in the U.S. House of Representatives and the funding each state will be allocated. The federal money, a total of eight hundred billion dollars, is used for health and human services, housing, nutrition, workforce development, transportation and other services. Population totals and breakdowns by sex, age, race and other factors determine allocations.

Particular effort is being given to encouraging community members and groups to liaison with those individuals and groups that are known as "hard to count" or "traditionally undercounted", such as those experiencing homelessness, non-English speakers, LGBTQIA+, racial minorities and more.

Another issue is that, while most of the census will be online, many people do not have computers or online access. Furthermore, there are those who are concerned about their personal data being online with a subsequent loss of privacy. For all these reasons, "Community Ambassadors" are being sought to liaison. Moreno also gave assurances that census data use is now prohibited, as when it was used to locate Japanese-Americans during WWII. An appeal to community leaders and activists to join in a Kick Off event on March 12th was made.

Moreno distributed a color-coded map of the First Supervisorial District. The map designated various areas according to their ability to be surveyed, with most areas shown as difficult to count. Moreno said that an undercount is predicted. Note: Another source stated that for each person not counted, California "is expected to lose federal funding to the tune of approximately \$1,950 per person, per year, for ten years, for every person who is missed in the 2020 census." Although the motto is "Everyone Counts", it appears that many will not.



Essays Etc. by Club Members

Great California Progressives #11

The Democratic Club of Claremont is in the progressive wing of the Democratic Party. We California Progressives have a long tradition of producing some of the great figures in American political thought and action. These essays are dedicated to ensuring that we current members of the club and the party know our ancestors.

These pieces are of course very brief. I encourage readers to seek out and read more about the people whose life and work is summarized here.

Last year, upon assuming the post of VV editor I began the series. The people covered so far have been Carey McWilliams, Jerry Voorhis, Hiram Johnson, Dr. Seuss, Harvey Milk, Upton Sinclair, Earl Warren, Harry Bridges, Jackie Robinson and Tom Hayden.

Cesar Chavez (1927-1993)

By Merrill Ring

It is not necessary to talk much about Cesar Chavez. We know what is important: that he created a farmworkers union when no one said it could be done and succeeded in bringing the big California growers to heel, improving the lives of the most down-trodden groups in this country.

Let me flesh out that barebones sketch with a few additional items.

He, like Martin Luther King, became a follower of Gandhi's non-violent approach, a vision of how to protest enabling its followers to win support in the wider community.

He learned how to be a community organizer from a disciple of the master, Saul Alinsky. The union trained organizers who have been crucial in many organizations fighting injustice.

The success of the United Farm Workers led to the entire Latino community in the U.S. becoming more and more politically active.

After his death, Chavez was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

March 31 – the final day of this month – is an official California holiday, Cesar Chavez Day. Celebrate it and Chavez!

Review of Edward Snowden's "Permanent Record"

By Robert Nelson

Published in the Pasadena Weekly

Sept. 11, 2001 is a reference point for Americans.

Terrorists, mostly Saudis, hijacked four American airliners, inflicting 2,977 fatalities.

As we mourned, national security bureaucrats contrived presidential directives permitting unrestricted access to intimate details of our private lives. The national security state expanded, shredding our Bill of Rights.

Throughout, leaders assured us that privacy intrusions were subject to rigorous oversight. They were lying.

The 9/11 events inspired many Americans to support the war on terror. One was Edward Snowden, a student at Maryland's Anne Arundel Community College. His parents were federal employees with top security clearances. Snowden had just been certified as a Microsoft certified systems engineer. It was the path to service at the highest levels of our national security apparatus. "This was the brass ring, the guaranteed meal ticket."

But Snowden wanted to serve at the front. He joined the military, was injured during basic training and discharged. Undeterred, he continued to search for national security work. He became an information technology (IT) engineer for one of many contractors that service the national security apparatus. A top security clearance? No problem.

Snowden sincerely believed his work was consistent with America's constitutional principles. Domestic spying on innocent civilians? We would never do such a thing!

There was one drawback. Snowden's security clearance prevented him from discussing his work with the people closest to him, including Lindsay Mills, who later became his wife. She never had a clue about his work. Everything was classified.

Snowden and Mills were young, in love, and had a steady paycheck. Snowden traveled the world, servicing the IT needs of America's spy network at military installations, consulates and embassies. Life was good.

The nature of Snowden's work required he access the highest levels of the security machine. Documents needed to be opened, checked and closed again. Snowden soon discovered inconsistencies with what he was uncovering and what the surveillance agencies were saying. Programs named STELLERWIND and PRISM were monitoring our phone calls. Big Brother was everywhere.

Snowden's final IT stationing was in Hawaii at a refurbished bomb proof facility called "The Tunnel." There he devised several software tools to crawl through data files and catalog programs surveilling communications. He copied them to thumb drives.

He had to go public. He contacted journalist Glenn Greenwald through Greenwald's colleague, filmmaker Laura Poitras. (This story is described in reviews of Greenwald's Pulitzer Prize journalism, "No Place to Hide," and Poitras' Academy Award winning film, "Citizen Four")

Snowden flew to Hong Kong where he gave the thumb drives to Greenwald and Poitras. He then sought asylum in Ecuador attempting to fly there via

Moscow and Havana. Obama's Secretary of State John Kerry canceled his passport. He was trapped in Moscow.

Obama's Attorney General Eric Holder then charged him with espionage. This prevents him from defending himself at trial. Snowden deserves a fair trial before a jury of peers, but the espionage charge assures that he will never get one.

In essence, this book is Snowden's defense brief to the American people.

Concurrent with the release of Snowden's book, the House of Representatives renewed domestic spying authority, sneaking it at the last minute into an omnibus federal spending bill intended to prevent a government shutdown. The entire Southern California congressional delegation supported this legislation.

The *Pasadena Star-News* exposed the sneak attack, editorializing on Nov. 20, "We urge Congress to put the civil liberties of Americans ahead of political expediency moving forward."

Congressman Adam Schiff led the initial phase of impeachment proceedings against President Trump. Ironically, Trump's defenders now charge that some of the evidence gathered against Trump was acquired by illegal surveillance.

Edward Snowden presents an eloquent defense. All Americans should read his book, his defense brief. Snowden deserves a Congressional Medal of Honor, not an espionage trial.

The most recent insult to our freedoms emanating from the Snowden case happened in Virginia last week. Federal Judge Liam O'Grady ruled that Snowden should be deprived of all royalties acquired from this book, according to a Dec. 19 *New York Times* story. Those who buy this book might consider making a supplemental donation to the American Civil Liberties Union, which serves as Snowden's lawyer.

"Permanent Record," by Edward Snowden, Metropolitan Books, 352 pages; hardcover \$17.99, paperback \$18, Kindle \$14.99, audio CD \$33.08.

Merrill Ring has written an analysis of the issues involved in the Democratic debates about health care. It can be read online at <http://taipd.org/node/469>

Andy Winnick has written (and delivered at various places in southern California) an examination of Medicare for All. It can be read online at <http://taipd.org/node/468>

Merrill Ring in December published a book entitled **Has The Democratic Party Become Socialist?: A Primer on Socialism for the 2020 Election.**

It runs just over 100 pages, costs only \$7 for the paperback, \$3.99 for the e-book version and is available at Amazon Books. Royalties from the book will be given to the DCC and TAIPD.





Letters from Club Members

By Bob Gerecke, submitted to the LA Times

In addition to geothermal energy, the Los Angeles Times article "Clean Energy After Sunset? It's Right Here Underfoot" mentions solar farms with lithium-ion batteries, offshore wind turbines, renewable hydrogen and compressed air energy storage. All can play a part in providing clean energy around the clock. However, there was no mention of harnessing power from the ocean's waves and coastal swells. These never stop. The swells especially are promising, because devices mounted on the sea floor are protected from violent weather and boat traffic.

California has a long coastline. An enormous amount of sea power is waiting to be harnessed. It would be good to know what's being researched and developed to take advantage of it.

By Bob Gerecke, submitted to the Claremont Courier

Last week's *Courier* contained a letter opposing the March 3 ballot measure to increase funding for L.A. County fire fighting in this era of wildfires. The letter-writers inadvertently made an argument supportive of a ballot measure called "Schools & Communities First" which will probably be on the November ballot.

They argued that entities such as "large corporations ... shouldn't get a free pass on paying their fair share". Well, that happens all the time under our State's current property tax laws. Although personal homes are re-assessed at current value when they're sold, thereby increasing their tax, commercial properties get a free pass on re-assessment when shares of the corporation that owns them change ownership, even if they change 100%. As long as the corporate name on the property title remains the same, the assessor can't re-assess the property at current market value. Owners create a corporation for every property they own, so they can sell them at a better price because the buyer will continue to pay tax based on below market value. That's not "paying their fair share".

The assessor doesn't know when the corporation's ownership significantly changes. Closely-held corporations' shares aren't traded publicly, and publicly-held corporations change a little of their ownership every day as their shares are traded. Therefore, the only way to collect corporations' fair share is to re-assess large commercial properties regularly. "Schools & Communities First" will do that. It's supported by the California League of Women Voters, ACLU, California State PTA, California Alliance for Retired Americans, 24 religious organizations, 48 labor organizations, 64 small business entrepreneurs and many dozens of others -- so far. Its sponsors are still collecting voters' signatures to put it on the ballot. Please do what you can.

see <https://www.schoolsandcommunitiesfirst.org/>.

By Ricky Maslowski, submitted to the Claremont Courier

In the January 10 issue of The Courier there were two articles concerning the reluctance of the good citizens of Claremont to pay for public services, whether through taxes or through user fees. First was Joe Lyons's sorrowful essay about the defeat of measure CR. Then there was the report of the talk by Jason Neidleman about the possibility of charging for parking in the village. Mr. Neidleman raised important points about urban sprawl and traffic congestion. (A study has shown that a significant percentage of drivers in areas like the village are "cruising," driving around until they find a parking place.) One proposal is to have parking fees adjusted so that at any given time, fifteen percent of places will be available for people on short errands, such as picking up a prescription. The revenues so collected would be used to maintain and upgrade the area. Pasadena has had success with this approach.

I am always amused when people who oppose, say, free tuition at public universities, argue that you don't appreciate something unless you pay for it. You have to have "skin in the game," a "dog in the fight." (Why use metaphors of competition?) Yet parking is a clear counterexample to such arguments. Who do you know who appreciates parking only when they pay for it?

I am not saying that all public services should be financed by user fees. Do we want to reduce dependence on automobiles? How can we discourage driving? Do we want to support higher education? How can we make education more readily accessible in such a way that students can start their adult lives without debt? We need to have honest discussions about the balance between user fees, public subsidies, and yes, ensuring sufficient revenues. Indignation at the very idea of paid parking is just foolish.



Now YOU write!

Do so! Of course, newspapers have so many restrictions (especially space) that very worthwhile letters do not get published. But try! And if it doesn't get published there, sent it to the VV and it most likely will be published here. (Or if it does get published, send it here also and have it published again.)



Or call & Complain (or Praise)

MEMBERSHIP: JOIN THE DCC or RENEW

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

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

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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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