

THE VOORHIS VOICE

A Liberal Voice of the Inland Empire

November 2007

claremontdemocrats@yahoo.com

www.claremontdems.org

MEETINGS & EVENTS IN NOVEMBER AND BEYOND

The general membership meeting on November 26 will feature Claudia Strauss, Professor of Anthropology and Chair of Claremont's MoveOn.org unit. Her topic will be "Framing a Progressive Democratic Message: My Fieldwork in North Carolina." Associate Professor of Anthropology at Pitzer College. Dr Claudia Strauss is also the author of *A Cognitive Theory of Cultural Meaning* (Harvard University, 1997). The meeting will take place between 7:30 and 9:30 pm. in Porter Hall, which is within the Pilgrim Place campus near the intersection of Sixth Street and Berkeley Way in Claremont.

December's "first Friday" luncheon will feature Marjorie Cohn, current President of the National Lawyers Guild as well as author of a recent book, *Cowboy Republic*, which describes the crimes of the Bush administration. The luncheon will take place on Dec. 7, 2007 in the rear banquet room of the China Star Restaurant, 921 W. Foothill Blvd. in Claremont. The event begins at noon and ends at 2pm. Food is served family style. The menu is 50 percent vegetarian and contains no pork. Attendance is free, but the lunch costs \$10, which includes meal, tax, and tip. There is plenty of free parking, and no stairs to climb.

The holiday party will be Sunday, December 9, from 4 to 8 p.m. at the home of Eric and Beverly Andersson, 1066 Fuller Drive in Claremont. You may bring a food or drink item if you wish, but that is optional; the Club will provide calories and libations in delicious variety. Drive north from Baseline Road on Padua, then turn right (east) one block south of Mt. Baldy Road; 1066 will be the next to the last house on your right. Contact Sally Alexander (cell phone 714-654-8085) if you need a ride.

There will be no evening general meeting during the month of December.

Special note: Beginning January 2008, the noon luncheon series will be moved to the SECOND (instead of the first) Friday of each month. The location, China Star restaurant, remains the same.

Programs for 2008 are still being arranged. If you have any suggestions, please contact Ivan Light at 621-1159 or ihlight@yahoo.com.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

If you could do a two hour shift at the Democratic table at the Claremont Farmer's Market on Sunday mornings from time to time, please contact Gar Byrum at 621-9730 or garlandbyrum@aol.com. We need you – please help!!

NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Congratulations and condolences to new Development Chair Eric Andersson and Webmaster Ned Freed, who were approved for their new positions at the most recent general membership meeting and occupied hallowed seats at the Executive Committee meeting on November 3.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO VENTURE INTO THE VILLAGE

Special thanks to Carolee Monroe, Gar Byrum, and Ivan Light for organizing this year's Democratic Club booth for Claremont's Village Venture Days. Carolee in particular devoted an enormous amount of energy to this project!

Yes, people were shopping for early holiday presents. But they were also shopping for good government! More than 75 people collectively contributed \$250 to the fund to run a pro-impeachment ad in the Courier. More than \$300 worth of buttons and bumper stickers were distributed, and a few people even just threw money into the pot for memberships and/or general purposes.

Our unscientific straw poll produced the following results: Hillary, 47%,; Obama, 15%; Kucinich, 14%; Edwards, 13%; and a handful for Biden and Richardson. Sorry, Dodd and Gravel, you don't appear to be on the radar screen in Claremont. Gore received two write-in votes, and Wesley Clark received one. Please note that all visitors to the booth had the opportunity to vote; participation was not limited to registered Democrats or American citizens with a chip-implanted photo ID. (*Editor's note: some members of the Executive Committee wish our readers to know that a total of 72 votes were cast, slightly fewer than the number of intelligent viewers of Fox "News."*)

Carolee submitted the following note in appreciation of her volunteers:

Many thanks to our wonderful volunteers for the success of our Village Venture effort. Our booth attracted lots of attention, with our displays of a presidential mannequin, pointed bumper stickers, message buttons, and yard signs. Passersby were also provided with the opportunity to sign a request to investigate the actions of Bush and Cheney, possibly leading to impeachment. We collected signatures for an advertisement to be placed in the "Claremont Courier" and discussed our "Claremont Manifesto." We distributed pens with our Club's information to adults, along with tattoos and balloons to children. We registered voters and conducted a straw poll (see results above). Our booth had other information available regarding health care, the Claremont Post Office and the Milford Zornes mural preservation effort, and DCC membership. Altogether, it was a rewarding day.

Thank you to these people who so generously gave their time and effort: Jim Stripling, Bob Gerecke, Merrill Ring, Ivan Light, Jack, Gabe, Murray and Marlina Monroe, Betty McClellan, Bill Hunt, Betty Cramer, Lois Thompson, Elayne Logan, Myron Chapman, Roger Gallegos, Elliott Barkan, Suzanna Stafford, Laura Fukada, David Levering, Nancy Waldman, Amelia Andrade, Anne Kirk, Mary Anne

Schultz, Charles Bayer, Ron Wolff, Don Stumpf, Kathy Kelley, Sally Alexander, Sandy Hester, Laura Ditte, Jocelyn Lo, Rudy Mann, Beverly Sloane, and Yumi, Yuko, Mayu, Suki, and Nao.

I appreciate any comments so as to make next year better.

Carolee Monroe, Chairperson of DCC Special Events

NEWS & COMMENTARY (IN THAT ORDER)

General Musharraf recently announced a state of emergency (basically, martial law) in Pakistan. All private news channels have been shut down, and military personnel are patrolling the streets of Islamabad. The Supreme Court is now under occupation of military personnel, and Supreme Justice Chaudhry, re-instated following his suspension by Musharraf this year -- has been told that his services are "no longer required." The 1973 constitution has been suspended, and Musharraf has issued a "provisional constitutional order," passing all power into his hands.

Can this happen here? We can't rule out another major "terror" attack, especially on the eve of the 11/08 election if it looks like the Republicans will get creamed. Bush won't have to shut down the Supreme Court, however; they won't stand in his way. Nor will the corporate-owned news media, which will fall into line. It's even doubtful that the incumbent Congress will object; Republicans threatened with the loss of their seats will back Bush, and in the Senate they'll be able to filibuster to prevent passage of any resolution. Much of the coup has already taken place.

I recall Werner saying that the Nazi dictatorship didn't come into being overnight; it was a step-by-step process. Octavius took some time to consolidate his power and be declared Emperor. Napoleon likewise.

In our case, since (unlike Musharraf, Octavius and Napoleon) Bush has no military credentials and has largely ruined the military, the most powerful organization that may object to his dictatorship may be the military. It would be truly ironic if a military coup prevented Bush from consolidating and extending his power.

Of course, in most countries a military dictatorship comes to power in order to protect the country from allegedly corrupt or unlawful civilian rulers. Once in power, it's reluctant to let go, since it seized power in the first place because it despises the politicians who have failed to do their duty to the country and who would then be returned to power.

Bob Gerecke

IT COSTS LESS TO BE HEALTHY

By Eric Andersson

The winds of healthcare change are now upon us. Unions, corporations, individuals, healthcare workers, the aged, all understand that we are spending outlandish sums of money without a net national gain in health. Most of us realize that, as individuals, we can influence our personal health through our behaviors, often at little cost. Yet controversy still surrounds the idea that we owe it to each other to

become healthy as a community, and as a nation. Our culture is finding it hard to let go of unfettered libertarian thinking. Let us look at some of these issues as they relate to health and personal behavior.

Sometimes it is necessary to spend money to save it. If we choose to sell a gas-guzzling car and replace it with a hybrid, we might do so at two points of opportunity. The first is if we recognize our contribution to the environment by polluting less and consuming less fuel, so we undertake a net increase in cost by electing a car payment. The rest of us wait until the old gas-guzzler is too costly to keep on the road, and the total cost of ownership of the new hybrid represents a net savings in our monthly expenses. We can look at healthcare in the same light. On October 3, 2007, the LA Times ran an article entitled “Healthy Living Could Save US \$1 Trillion.” We might stop to consider what such a huge number would buy us. If we bought a \$1500 annual *basic* healthcare insurance policy for each of the 50 million uninsured Americans, that would cost \$75 billion annually. One trillion would support such a plan for over 13 years. If one trillion were invested at 4% and the interest used to pay uninsured healthcare premiums, the plan could be kept alive over two decades, all other factors assumed to be stable. But wait. What if overall healthcare costs began to go down during those years, because of the investment, and because the entire population began to be healthier? Maybe cost savings would accrue to all of us as a nation, enabling greater expenditures on solving things like poverty and poor education. We have not experienced that in our lifetimes, so it seems a little incredulous, doesn’t it?

The Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University just released the results of an epidemiological study of incidence of disease in the US, compared to 10 European nations in aggregate. The results are astounding. Compared to these EU countries, older adults in the US were:

- Twice as likely to have heart disease;
- More than twice as likely to have arthritis;
- More than twice as likely to have cancer;
- Nearly twice as likely to be obese;
- But, only one and a quarter times more likely to be or have been a regular smoker.

Two thoughts come to mind. Maybe if Europeans were in as poor health as Americans, the costs of caring for them would be much closer to our own costs. The second observation is that maybe smoking is not all that important, but obesity is. Let us examine this further.

Recent studies show that residents of Vermont are the healthiest in the US, and their health is steadily improving. Substantial improvements have been made in maternal and child health and cardiovascular disease over the last decade, due in part to better access to care, but also due to lower rates of poverty. Yet, improvement on cancer in Vermont is barely statistically significant, even though smoking has dropped by over 65% in two decades.

What is going on in these two studies? Didn’t we all think that smoking causes cancer???

The science of health is often 20 years ahead of healthcare practice. Our knowledge of epigenetics (the study of how cells stably maintain *different* characteristics despite containing the *same* genomic material) is expanding at a breathtaking rate. We are learning that environmental and chemical factors can influence cells to change their behavior according to the influence of extenuating circumstances. This is amazing! Could it be that the mere presence of a carcinogen in your body may not cause a cancer, but *if* it is present together with other things, that even small amounts of that carcinogen become *exceedingly likely* to cause a cancer? Recent evidence is beginning to show that this phenomenon is not only real, but that obesity among smokers is highly correlated with cancer. It is the two risk factors together, not alone,

that may put a person at risk for disease. The application of this science to medical practice is just beginning to evolve. Some who are actively pursuing it have given it a name: Functional Medicine (the clinical practice of discovering the *underlying* cause of disease and attempting to correct for it through a combination of genetics, molecular biology, behavior, nutrition, and drugs). The difference between Functional Medicine and traditional medicine is turning away from treating disease palliatively and through gross forms of intervention like chemotherapy, and instead treating disease at the molecular level of cell biology through a *complete* overview of the patient's behavior and relationship to the environment. Performed early enough, maybe we could beat the Europeans at lowering the incidence of disease.

The China-Cornell-Oxford Project (<http://www.nutrition.cornell.edu/ChinaProject/>) is one of the largest studies ever conducted in which incidence of disease was assessed in a context where gene type was the control, and the variables to be studied were behavior and environment. Over many years and with respect to a large cross section of the Chinese people, incidence of disease was highly correlated to nutrition and behavior. You can read about this in a book titled The China Study by Campbell and Campbell, available through most bookstores. A word of caution: some people think this study proves the benefits of a vegan diet. The study does not *prove* anything; it merely shows what the correlated risk factors are. But like our smoking/obesity example, it directs our attention to where ongoing research should be applied, and helps focus the expansion of Functional Medicine.

Let us close this discussion on a political note. Tobacco companies want to stop cigarette taxes for healthcare insurance. They claim that freedom to smoke is only a personal risk. This is not true. Even without universal healthcare, the high incidence of disease costs us all by raising the costs of healthcare. Furthermore, the health of our children today will determine the likelihood of those children requiring costly care in old age. We have to start now to prevent the costs of tomorrow, which are already increasing at a rate we cannot afford. Let us not avoid this issue, so that we are forced into rationing health tomorrow. Let us plan for long, productive, healthy lives, at a cost that we can lower as a nation. We need to begin a discussion about how copayments in insurance cause us to avoid care (both needed care *and* unnecessary care) but copayments based on behavioral choices indemnify the rest of us against our bearing the cost of one person's poor choices.

YES, THERE IS SOME GOOD STUFF ON TV

We currently have in production four more programs which will begin airing during the month of November. Merrill Ring, DCC Treasurer, hosts two of the programs. He interviews our Club's Past-President Chuck Farritor as part of our series on local Democrats. Chuck talks about the "dirty tricks" era during which he was president. As an active member of the American Legion, Chuck also talks about the military and war, and also about the Boys State Program for which he is area coordinator.

Next, Merrill interviews Louie Duran, Past-President of SEIU Local 660, which has a membership of 50,000. Louie's has been a life of activism, not only in the area of labor but also poverty, immigration, and senior and civil rights. Ivan also hosts two upcoming programs. He continues his discussions with Eric Andersson, our own in-house health care expert, who has already apprised us of some of the newest medical technologies, along with ways of financing them. Finally, the last of programs now in production

features one of the two Democratic primary candidates for Congress Hoyt Hilsman. Ivan and Hoyt talk about the issues facing not only our area but our nation.

Exact dates for specific programs are not available.

DEMOCRATIC CLUBS THROUGHOUT HISTORY

By Ware Myers

There were Democratic clubs in California before the California Democratic Council was formed, but not many. I think I remember my wife Helen saying there were 20 or so in Los Angeles County. The County Committee here had always believed in them. There may have been more during the FDR period; he aroused great enthusiasm.

There was one in San Francisco in the early 1950s. The County Committee there believed in a tight hold. Helen once said she knew of seven in all of northern California before CDC.

Clubs come and go. The idea goes all the way back to Thomas Jefferson's time. Charismatic leaders tend to generate them. The ordinary run of Presidents seem not to spark them. Tammany Hall was a club. The Chicago machine had them, or an equivalent. Candidates have organized followers. The forces of campaigning creates groupings, etc.

Still, the California pattern is probably the best organized in the country. Helen had already expanded the pattern under the L.A. County Democratic Central Committee. Then, after CDC was formed, she extended it statewide. It was primarily Helen's doing. Alan Cranston was focused more on issues and doing what he had to do to become a Senator; he wanted to participate in foreign affairs. Not that he was opposed to clubs; he supported the idea. So did Richard Richards, Don Rose, and other chairmen of the LACDCC. Helen was Organization Chairman of the county committee from 1950 until they kicked her upstairs, to Vice Chairman, at the end of the decade.

The pattern has been there since at least 1950, but filling it out depends on leadership in the sense of the emotions generated by national leaders. There have been two great outpourings in my lifetime. The first was generated by Adlai Stevenson. No other president or candidate has since generated comparable steam—until George W. Bush and his misadventures. He has inspired the emotions that lead to Democratic clubs. None of our own candidates has had an effect of much magnitude in terms of getting people steamed up to the point of joining in clubs. For instance, in the current campaign Hillary is way ahead according to the polls, but she seems not to be having much effect on the people who come together in clubs.

My own explanation, to put it briefly, is that club people are idealists; they see what should be, not what is. Candidates veer toward the other pole: they have to reach the mass of people where they are—in the pits.

ADVERTISING POLICY MAY HELP PAY FOR “THE VOICE”

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P.S. – Matt Lyons is president of the Democratic club in LaVerne and San Dimas. He donates part of his sales commission to our club if you become his client and tell him you saw his ad here.

IT'S TIME TO ENERGIZE YOUR COMMITMENT TO OUR DEMOCRATIC EFFORTS! PLEASE PAY YOUR DUES!

Working together, we can transform society and politics in America:

- by building a community that knows what it values and can't be manipulated;
- by communicating our views to the public and to our Party and government officials; and
- by bringing out our voters to support our candidates and our positions on ballot issues.

Circle choices: Patron \$100 or more. Contributing Member \$50
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(Part of your dues may be contributed to Federal and State candidates.)

*Please fill out the forms above and below. Mail the information with your check to:
Democratic Club, PO Box 1201, Claremont CA 91711*

PLEASE CIRCLE THOSE CLUB ACTIVITIES THAT INTEREST YOU:

- Develop our neighborhood teams
- Staff a meeting or conference
- Help with fund-raising
- Edit or publish our newsletter
- Develop resolutions on public policies
- Publicize our activities and policies
- Assist with producing our cable TV programs
- Staff our voter registration and literature tables
- Help our campaign headquarters (scout location, volunteer, etc.)
- Research vulnerabilities of opposition candidates
- Improve our technology (Website, Database, E-mail distribution, etc.)
- Other: _____

Note: Not all of the above will be needed at all times, but it will be good to know who can do something when we'll need it.

Executive Committee of the Club
Comprised of five elected Officers, appointed Chairpersons of Standing Committees
and The Past President

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