

THE VOORHIS VOICE

A Liberal Voice of the Inland Empire

March 2008

claremontdemocrats@yahoo.com

www.claremontdems.org

PEACE DEMONSTRATION

Peaceniks unite!! Join hundreds of your colleagues at a silent vigil on the fifth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, March 19, Wednesday, Arrow Highway and Indian Hill, 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Wearing black is recommended. For details, call Lois at 621-2061.

MEETINGS & EVENTS IN MARCH AND BEYOND

LUNCH MEETINGS: Luncheons take place on the second Friday of each month in the rear banquet room of the China Star Restaurant, 921 W. Foothill Blvd. in Claremont. The event begins at noon and ends at 2 pm. 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.

Russ Warner, Democratic Candidate for Congress in the 26th Congressional District, opposing David Dreier, will be the speaker at the Friday, March 14th, luncheon meeting of the Democratic Club of Claremont. A business owner who resides in Rancho Cucamonga, Mr. Warner has the endorsement and financial support of the Democratic Congressional Campaign committee, which has not previously supported candidates in this district. Mr. Warner's son served with the U.S. Army in Iraq, but Mr. Warner has been critical of the conduct of the war, the waste and mismanagement accompanying it, and the whole rationale for invading Iraq in the first place. For additional information, please call: 909 621 1159.

On April 11, the speaker will be Blasé Bonpane, director of the Office of the Americas. He has served on the faculties of UCLA and California State University Northridge. His articles have been published internationally as a contributor to the *Los Angeles Times* and *New York Times*. He is host of the weekly radio program World Focus on Pacifica Radio (KPFK, Los Angeles). Blasé also hosts the program World Focus on Time/Warner Educational and Cable TV Stations. His books include *Common Sense for the Twenty-first Century*, and *Guerrillas of Peace on the Air*. His upcoming book, *Civilization is Possible*, will be released in winter of 2008.

The Blasé Bonpane Collection has been established by the Department of Special Collections at the U.C.L.A. Research Library (Collection 1590). This is compilation of his published and unpublished writings together with recordings of his lectures, radio and television programs. The Regents of the University of California under the auspices of the Oral History Program of the University of California at Los Angeles published, *The Central American Solidarity Movement* by Blase Bonpane,, 2005. He was

named "the most underrated humanist of the decade" by the *Los Angeles Weekly*. In 2006, Blasé Bonpane was awarded the Distinguished Peace Leadership Award by the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS: Monday, March 31: Professor Ira Jackson, on "Closing the Responsibility Gap: Our Need for Effective Management and Ethical Leadership." Ira Jackson is dean of the Peter F. Drucker and Masatoshi Ito Graduate School of Management at Claremont Graduate University.

Professor Keith Shirey will address the Claremont Democratic Club at the membership meeting on Monday, April 28, on the topic of "THE STATE OF FREEDOM IN THE U.S. MILITARY EMPIRE 2008.." Keith Shirey was Professor Political Science at Citrus College between 1965 and 1999. He now runs a political consulting business, which includes the creation of political buttons.

General Membership Meetings take place in Porter Hall at 7:30 pm. In the Pilgrim Place campus, Porter Hall is easily accessed from 6th Street and Berkeley Way in Claremont. There is plenty of free parking, and there are no steps to climb. Refreshments are served. All voters are invited to attend this lecture. Admission is free.

A GREAT LOSS

Connie Stripling passed away on Tuesday, February 12. At her wish, no public funeral or memorial service is planned.

She assisted her husband of 48 years, Jim, while he edited our newsletter, decorated our booths for July 4 and Village Venture, and worked for our club in many other ways. She invented the slogan "We Love Our Troops, Bring Them Home" and suggested the yard signs containing this slogan, which Jim had made and which our club distributed to hundreds of people.

Connie was a good friend; she maintained a sunny disposition throughout her illness. We miss her very much and express our sympathy to Jim and their family.

IMPORTANT!!! BY-LAW AMENDMENT TO BE VOTED ON IN APRIL

The Executive Committee is proposing to the general membership a set of procedures by which the Club may endorse candidates for non-partisan office and ballot propositions/issues. (The Club is already permitted to endorse candidates in partisan races.) These new procedures might result in the Club taking public positions that could be controversial. According to the proposed procedures, positions may be taken only if a "super-majority" of 60% of the membership present and voting agree.

The exact text of the by-law as it will read if the amendment passes follows. If you have strong feelings on this issue, be certain to attend the membership meeting in April. If you wish to see a version of the amendment showing additions and deletions from the current wording, please contact President Bob Gerecke.

Also in April, members of the Club will be asked to vote on whether or not to take a position on a redistricting initiative being supported by Governor Schwarzenegger, AARP, California Common Cause, and the League of Women Voters of California (among others). The initiative proposes a 14-person Citizens Redistricting Commission consisting of 5 Democrats, 5 Republicans, and 4 others. A list of prioritized mapping criteria would be established, including (but not limited to) equal population between districts and respect for the integrity of counties, cities, and communities. For additional information, go to www.CaVotersFIRST.org.

The following is the text of Article X of the club's by-laws as it would read if the proposed amendment is adopted.

ARTICLE X

PROCEDURES FOR ENDORSEMENT OF CANDIDATES AND POSITIONS

A. ENDORSEMENT OF CANDIDATES

This organization may endorse candidates for public elected office – federal, state and local, including nonpartisan -- as permitted by the rules of the California State Democratic Party. The following rules and procedures must be followed:

1. The candidate must be a registered Democrat.
2. Those voting must have been members of the Club for at least two months.
3. Notice of the meeting (and the endorsements) at which the voting will take place must be at least fourteen days for the candidates and the normal meeting notice time for the voters. Proxies will not be accepted.
4. The candidates must be given an opportunity to appear before the voting members and/or an interview committee, with fair rules set for their appearances.
5. A 60% majority vote of the eligible members present and voting at a meeting at which a quorum is present is required for endorsement. If 60% is not achieved in the first ballot, then all candidates receiving 15% or more of the vote shall appear on a second ballot. If no candidate then receives 60%, a run-off shall be held between the top two contenders. On each ballot there shall be included the option of "no endorsement." No more than three ballots (or votes) shall be held.
6. All votes shall be on written, secret ballots and shall be counted immediately in the room. The ballots shall then be put in a sealed envelope, with signatures across the seal, and kept by the Secretary for one year. A ballot not recording either an endorsement or a vote for "no endorsement" shall be counted as an abstention and will not be counted as part of the number from which the 60% must be won. In the counting of votes, there shall be a distinction between "no endorsement" (in which 60% voted for "no endorsement") and "failure to endorse" (in which no 60% was achieved).

B. ENDORSEMENT OF POSITIONS

This organization may take a position on issues – international, national, state or local in scope, including legislation and ballot propositions – as permitted by the rules of the California State Democratic Party. The following rules and procedures must be followed:

- 1. Those voting must have been members of the Club for at least two months.**
- 2. Notice of the meeting and topic(s) at which the voting will take place must be the normal meeting notice time for the voters. Proxies will not be accepted.**
- 3. Members on both sides of each issue shall be given an equal opportunity to speak to the voting members. Non-member advocates may be heard at the discretion of the presiding officer.**
- 4. The presiding officer shall take a voice vote; if anyone requests a recount, the presiding officer shall request a show of hands, which will be counted by two other officers.**
- 5. A 60% majority vote of the eligible members present and voting at a meeting at which a quorum is present is required for a club position. If 60% is not achieved, the club shall have “no position”.**

TIVO THIS!!

How good is your memory? How far back can you recall events? Our March DCC television productions take viewers back to W.W.I and W.W.II. These two half-hour programs air on TimeWarner Cable channel 29 in the cities of Claremont, Pomona, and Covina. If you do not have access to cable, DVD copies of the programs are available.

Our Thursday evening program, “Claremont Democratic Forum,” which begins at 8:30 PM, is airing a discussion with Werner Warmbrunn. Host and Club Treasurer Merrill Ring talks with Werner about his life and what led him to become the force behind the writing of “The Claremont Manifesto.” Werner, Professor Emeritus of History at Pitzer College, reflects upon his life, beginning with his youth in Germany and his leaving there to escape Naziism. Werner also talks about his education and his knowledge of several languages including Dutch which led to his career in history. His teaching career, based on helping people make decisions on how to live their lives, factors into his championing of the writing of “The Claremont Manifesto,” which is, he says, a guide for the commonwealth, giving an example of the lifestyle most Americans want.

Our Friday program, “Democrats: People and Ideas,” begins at 8:00 PM. This month we feature a lively discussion with DCC member Rosalind Kling. With host Merrill Ring, Rosalind talks about her earliest memory, that of the ending of World War I. Having lived nine decades in the Pomona area, Rosalind recalls the origins of the Los Angeles County Fair and the beginning of World War II. Her father, James Ferrell, was a good friend and fellow Democrat of Jerry Voorhis who would visit with Mr. Ferrell at his insurance office whenever in Pomona. She has kept many of Jerry’s books and letters, and talks about

his commitment to community. She also recalls his bitter loss to Richard Nixon. Rosalind is a former president of the Eleanor Roosevelt Democratic Club.

If you do not have access to cable television in Claremont, Pomona, or Covina, we now have DVD copies of our programs available for check-out or small donation. Get a group of friends and neighbors together and watch these great interviews! Contact Carolee at 909 626 8122 or email at jackncarolee@verizon.net.

RECALL!

Have you been a host or guest for one or more of our DCC cable televisions programs? We have taped at least 50 programs during the past three years and have endeavored to give participants a copy of each program on which they have appeared. The copies, until very recently, have been on VHS tape. And usually all copies were distributed. Now not only do we have a source for making multiple copies in DVD format but we also have a secure storage place. So we would like to recall a copy of each program, especially those on VHS, and transfer the program to DVD. If you have any programs, we ask that you lend them back to us for transfer. Once the transfer is made, your original VHS copy will be returned to you, along with a DVD copy. We also want to catalog all programs and establish a library/archive from which they can be checked out. The Executive Committee has agreed to fund this project. Ned Freed, our webmaster, and his son Tom, will make the transfers, and the library will be set up at Don Stumpf's. Please contact Carolee Monroe at 909 626 8122 or [<jackncarolee@verizon.net>](mailto:jackncarolee@verizon.net) to lend us back your tape.

SAVE THE CLUB MONEY & GET THIS NEWSLETTER FASTER!!

Subscribe to the e-mail version of this newsletter! The Club saves money on printing and postage, and you get "All the Claremont News that's Fit to Print" more promptly. E-mail Bob Gerecke (see e-mail address at the end of this newsletter) to make this "turn of the century" transition.

"SUPERDELEGATES"

MoveOn.org recently distributed an email and petition, which contained some factual errors regarding "superdelegates." Below is a response from John A. Smith, one of the California Democratic Party's regional directors:

Excerpts:

Dear MoveOn member, You've probably heard about the "superdelegates" who could end up deciding the Democratic nominee.

There is no such thing as a "superdelegate". That is just a nickname. They are actually called unpledged delegates, and there are several varieties. They do not "decide" anything. They each get one vote, just the same as everyone else.

Who are the superdelegates? Most of them aren't elected—they're state party chairs, retired politicians, and Democratic insiders.

False – Almost all of them are elected in one way or another. State party chairs are elected. Congressional representatives are elected. US senators are elected. State governors are elected. Members of the DNC are elected.

They control 40% of the votes needed to win the nomination.

False – there are 4,049 convention delegates, of which 796 are unpledged. That equals 19.65% of the total number of delegates.

The reason they exist: to make sure the party establishment approves of the nominee.

False – The reason they exist is because the Party operates 24 hours a day. Not just once every four years. District level delegates are elected on one day in a four year period. But almost all of the unpledged delegates are there for the entire four year period.

Congressional representatives, US Senators, and state governors are the legislative and executive parts of the party and deserve a vote. That includes past presidents, past vice presidents, past speakers of the House and majority leaders, and past senate majority leaders.

Members of the DNC are elected in each of the 50 states. They run the bulk of the party operations, including traveling to four DNC meetings per year. They also deserve a vote.

Superdelegates aren't used to hearing from concerned voters.

False – these delegates are in the business of listening to concerned voters nearly each and every day.

This is about democracy, pure and simple. Whoever you support, we can all agree the Democratic nominee should be decided by Democratic voters.

We can all agree that the rules have been in place for a long time. And we can agree that everyone knew what the rules were before they decided to run for president. And we can agree that everyone should abide by the rules.

In the long run, the Democratic Party needs to reconsider this undemocratic system, but for this election, we need the superdelegates to do the right thing.

If the Party needs to reconsider the convention makeup, there are procedures to do that. Trying to change the rules in the middle of an election is not the way.

MoveOn's petition says:

"The Democratic Party must be democratic. The superdelegates should let the voters decide between Clinton and Obama, then support the people's choice."

All delegates should abide by the rules. District level delegates were able to decide for themselves which candidate they supported prior to running for a seat at the convention. Unpledged delegates are just as entitled to their private decision as any other delegate. They should vote for the person they believe will make the best nominee for the Party, and the best President of the United States.

I hope that cooler heads will prevail. Without a united party, the policies of the last seven years will continue.

**Best Regards,
John Smith
CDP Region 16 Director**

P.S. – An argument can also be made that each “superdelegate” should vote the way that his or her state or district voted, rather than for the candidate with the highest popular vote or pledged delegate count overall. But the bottom line is that all of us (members of the public, pledged delegates and unpledged delegates) are attempting to select the candidate who is either the most likely to be elected, or the most likely to be the best President, or the most likely to be both. The unpledged delegates who have been elected to party or government office have knowledge and educated judgment to contribute to this process, because of their political experience and personal acquaintance with the candidates. – Bob G.

INJUSTICE AT GUANTANAMO: TORTURE EVIDENCE AND THE MILITARY COMMISSIONS ACT

By Marjorie Cohn, Jurist, February 15, 2008 (<http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/forumy/2008/02/injustice-at-guantanamo-torture.php>) Reprinted by permission.

The Bush administration has announced its intention to try six alleged al Qaeda members at Guantánamo under the Military Commissions Act. That Act forbids the admission of evidence extracted by torture, although it permits evidence obtained by cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment if it was secured before December 30, 2005. Thus, the administration would be forbidden from relying on evidence obtained by waterboarding, if waterboarding constitutes torture.

That's one reason Attorney General Michael Mukasey refuses to admit waterboarding is torture. The other is that torture is considered a war crime under the U.S. War Crimes Act. Mukasey would be calling Dick Cheney a war criminal if the former admitted waterboarding is torture. Lawrence Wilkerson, Colin Powell's former chief of staff, has said on National Public Radio that the policies that led to the torture and abuse of prisoners emanated from the Vice President's office.

The federal government is working overtime to try and clean up the legal mess made by the use of illegal interrogation methods. In a thinly-veiled attempt to sanitize the Guantánamo trials, the Department of

Justice and the Pentagon instituted an extensive program to re-interview the prisoners who have undergone abusive interrogations, this time with "clean teams." For example, if a prisoner implicated one of the defendants during an interrogation using waterboarding, the government will now re-interrogate that prisoner without waterboarding and get the same information. Then they will say the information was secured humanely. This attempt to wipe the slate clean is a farce and a sham.

In *Brady v. Maryland*, the US Supreme Court held that a prosecutor has a duty to give criminal defendants all evidence that might tend to exonerate them. Yet the CIA admitted destroying several hundred hours of videotapes depicting interrogations of Abu Zubaydah and Abd al-Ramin al-Nashiri, which likely included waterboarding. The administration claims Abu Zubaydah led them to Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, one of the defendants facing trial in the military commissions. So the government has destroyed potentially exonerating evidence. Moreover, the CIA's "enhanced interrogation techniques" are classified so they can be kept secret from the defendants, and CIA agents cannot be compelled to testify or produce evidence of torture.

A report just released by Seton Hall Law Center for Policy and Research reveals more than 24,000 interrogations have been conducted at Guantánamo since 2002 and every interrogation was videotaped. Many of these interrogations were abusive. "One Government document, for instance, reports detainee treatment so violent as to "shake the camera in the interrogation room" and "cause severe internal injury," the report says.

The Military Commissions Act contains other provisions that deny the defendants basic due process. It allows a trial to continue in the absence of the accused, places the power to appoint judges in the hands of the Secretary of Defense, permits the introduction of hearsay and evidence obtained without a warrant, and denies the accused the right to see all of the evidence against him. Defense attorneys are not allowed to meet their clients without governmental monitoring, and all of their notes and mail must be handed over to the military.

Will the U.S. Supreme Court be able to rectify the situation of abusive interrogations if and when a case comes before it? Not if Justice Antonin Scalia has his way. Once again, Scalia is acting as a loyal foot soldier in the President's "war on terror." In a BBC interview that aired this week, Scalia defended the use of torture to extract information from prisoners in some cases.

Scalia's remarks mean he has prejudged the issues in future cases in which the Constitution might dictate the suppression of evidence because of illegal police interrogation techniques, or the right to compensation of a person whose civil rights have been violated. Justice Scalia should recuse himself from any case that presents these issues.

Bush is meanwhile threatening to veto a bill Congress passed that would forbid the CIA from subjecting prisoners to interrogation techniques banned by the U.S. Army Field Manual. John McCain, the tortured POW who led the charge in 2005 against cruel treatment, has now hitched his wagon to Bush's star. Presidential candidate McCain voted to allow the CIA to continue to ply its cruelty.

When Bush vetoes the bill, Congress should stand firm for the rule of law and basic standards of human decency and override his veto. Dick Cheney and other officials who participated in formulating the abusive interrogation policies should be investigated under the U.S. War Crimes Act. And the

Democratic-controlled Congress should repeal the Military Commissions Act that Bush rammed through the Republican-controlled Congress.

Marjorie Cohn is a professor at Thomas Jefferson School of Law and president of the National Lawyers Guild. She is the author of Cowboy Republic: Six Ways the Bush Gang Has Defied the Law. Her articles are archived at <http://www.marjoriecohn.com/>. She was our luncheon speaker in December.

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WHAT ARE YOU WILLING TO DO THIS YEAR?

*(IF YOU HAVE PREFERENCES, NUMBER THEM: 1=HIGHEST, AND
DUPLICATES ARE OK.)*

- Staff our Sunday morning table by the farmers' market
- Set up equipment and supplies in our campaign headquarters
- Staff our campaign headquarters
- Belong to an outreach team in your own neighborhood
- Visit or phone neighborhoods which don't have their own outreach team
- Pick up candidate and issue literature from their headquarters
- Deliver candidate and issue literature to our table/booth/headquarters/teams
- Look up a voter's polling place
- Give a voter a ride to the polling place
- Operate equipment to tape our live TV program
- Decorate our booth or parade truck on July 4
- Staff our booth or ride in the parade on July 4
- Decorate our booth at the Village Venture in October
- Staff our booth at the Village Venture in October
- Maintain our member database
- Print mailing labels from our database
- Help to fold and label our monthly newsletter
- Write letters to newspapers about issues and candidates
- Catalog our TV program DVD's and other items
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

AND PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR CLUB IN 2008:

Circle your choice: **Lifetime \$250.** **Patron \$100 or more.** **Contributing \$50.**
 Family \$35. **Individual \$25.** **Student/Limited Income \$5.**

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In this crucial election year, please add at least \$25 (or as much as you can afford) to help your local Democratic Club elect responsible office holders! Yes (\$_____) Sorry, not today

(Part of your dues and contributions may be contributed to Federal and State candidates.)

Please mail this form with your check to:

Democratic Club, PO Box 1201, Claremont CA 91711

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**Comprised of five elected Officers, appointed Chairpersons of Standing Committees
and The Past President**

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