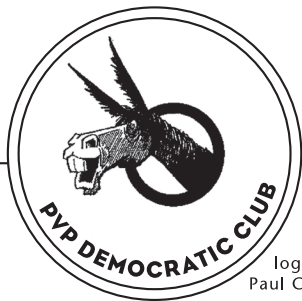


Palos Verdes Peninsula
Democratic Club
Founded 1952



February 2010 Newsletter

P.O. Box 2234, Rolling Hills Est. CA 90274
Visit Us on the Web at www.pvpdemocrats.org
"One of the oldest Democratic Clubs in California"

COMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY MEETING:

Sunday, February 21, 2010
2:30-4:30 p.m.

Community Room, Peninsula
Center Library, 701 Silver Spur
Road, RHE

MEETING TOPIC: The Rising Problem of
Mental Illness Among Veterans

MARCH MEETING:

Save the Date:

Sunday, March. 21, 2010
Community Room, Peninsula
Center Library, 701 Silver Spur
Road, RHE

Approval of revised club bylaws;
program TBA

Inside This Month's Issue:

**February Membership Meeting
Announcement** - Page 1

January Special Meeting Report
Page 1-2

PVPDC on Facebook
Page 3

Membership Report
Page 3

800 Volunteers Needed
Page 3

The Afghani War and Veterans' Mental Health Dilemma Top February Program

As politicians debate troop build-up in Afghanistan, the effects of war on our service men and women appear to be getting more and more distressing.

At this month's meeting on Sunday, Feb. 21, we'll explore the war in Afghanistan with the help of a young man who has seen it first-hand. And we'll learn about accelerating mental health issues facing U.S. veterans. The meeting is at 2:30 p.m. at Peninsula Center Library, 701 Silver Spur Road, RHE.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs reported in January the suicide rate among young male veterans has increased significantly – up 26 percent from 2005 to 2007 – due to the stress of multiple deployments and overall combat.

Meanwhile findings of a study reported last July in the American Journal of Public Health show more than a third of veterans receiving treatment at Veterans Administration hospitals suffer from one or more mental disorders, including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and alcohol and/or drug abuse.

Some predict a tsunami of mental health issues among our veterans as war continues and as they return home, unable to re-adjust to family life after the horrors they've witnessed.

At our February meeting, we'll hear from one war veteran who is fighting to stem the tide of wounded troops. Retired Marine Corps Corporal Rick Reyes, who served in both Iraq and Afghanistan, has been compared to a young John Kerry because of anti-war testimony he presented before Congress last year.

Reyes now serves as vice president of the Los Angeles chapter of Iraq Veterans Against the War. He recently made his first trip back to Afghanistan as a civilian and will tell us what he learned and why he believes U.S. foreign policy is headed down the wrong path.

We also hope to have a mental health professional who works with veterans in

distress. And we'll hear from the director of an organization working to help veterans suffering from mental illness.

Revised PVP Democratic Club Bylaws to go Before Membership in March

Please take a look at the proposed revised bylaws on our Web site at <http://www.pvpdemocrats.org>. You'll find a link to them in red on the right-hand side of the home page.

And we'll have printed copies of the bylaws available at the February meeting. We'll vote on them in March.

Hope to see you at the meeting!



Assembly member Bonnie Lowenthal, outgoing Newsletter Editor, Ruth McGrew, President Kay Cooperman Jue, and Michael Hiltzik, guest speaker.

January Special Meeting Report By Connie Sullivan

More than 60 members of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Democratic Club were greeted with an inviting potluck spread as they entered the Pacific Unitarian Church for the annual membership meeting on Jan. 10.

After members enjoyed the delicious food, the program, including the installation of the incoming board of directors and guest speaker Michael Hiltzik, business columnist with the Los Angeles Times, got under way.

continued on page 2

continued from page 1

Club President Kay Cooperman Jue took a few moments at the beginning of the program to recognize outgoing 2nd Vice President Barbara Dye and made special mention of the outstanding work performed by continuing Treasurer Jerry Parker.

At the conclusion of the program, outgoing Newsletter Editor Ruth McGrew was honored for her many years of service on the club's board. Ruth was a founding member in 1952 and over the years served in almost every capacity, including president. Kay presented Ruth with a \$100 check from the club to be donated to the charity of her choice. Fortunately for her many friends in the club, Ruth intends to continue as an active member.

Installation of New Board of Directors

Our Assembly member, the Honorable Bonnie Lowenthal, graciously served as installing officer for the club's Board of Directors for 2010. She introduced the new board as follows:

- President: Kay Cooperman Jue
- 1st Vice President: Hans Grellmann
- 2nd Vice President: Ron Smith
- Recording Secretary: Mary Meade
- Corresponding Secretary: Sheila Papayans
- Treasurer: Jerry Parker

The standing committee chairs were also recognized. They are:

- Membership: Lynn McLeod
- Hospitality: Teresa Savo
- Publicity: Hilary Bloom
- Website: Carol Moeller
- Phone Tree: Judy Pang
- Mailing: Dick and Barbara Trakas
- Newsletter editor: Connie Sullivan
- Newsletter designer: Jocelyn Wilson

Guest Speaker: Michael Hiltzik

The title of Mr. Hiltzik's address was "If people get the government they deserve, what have Californians done to deserve this?"

After first noting some surprise to see so many Democrats gathered in the Republican stronghold of Palos Verdes, Mr. Hiltzik launched into his talk by describing a recent column he wrote about California's loss of sales tax revenue due to the volume of Internet sales in which sellers do not collect state sales taxes ("Tax



Newly installed Board officers: Kay Cooperman Jue, President, Mary Meade, Recording Secretary, Assembly Member Bonnie Lowenthal, installing officer, Hans Grellmann, First Vice President, Ron Smith, Second Vice President, Jerry Parker, Treasurer, Sheila Papayans, Corresponding Secretary

dodge under the Christmas Tree", December 23, 2009). If the seller doesn't collect the tax it becomes the purchaser's responsibility to send the taxes to the Franchise Tax Board, but this is rarely done. Consequently, California loses \$1.2 billion annually.

Hiltzik said he received a raft of negative responses to his article because he argued for strong state enforcement to ensure all Internet sellers collect the taxes. In Hiltzik's opinion, people don't recognize the connection between tax revenues and quality of government services.

Hiltzik went on to talk about the prevalent theory that California is ungovernable, noting it is next to impossible for the Legislature to reach consensus, which has led to elected officials employing shams and borrowing to raise revenue.

Hiltzik also noted that the Reagan revolution began in California first. It fed into voter cynicism, poisoned the political well and allowed people to ignore all the good that government does. Proposition 13 followed and created lasting damage by forcing budgeting power out of local governments and placing the power with the state; local governments now must stand in line after competing interests.

Voter cynicism led to another debilitating change – political term limits imposed upon legislators. We now have less experienced legislators who are less capable of solving problems compared with their predecessors. Further complicating matters, California is the only state that requires both a super majority of the Legislature to pass a budget and a super



Michael Hiltzik, Los Angeles Times business columnist was guest speaker at the January 10, 2010 membership meeting.

majority of voters to pass a tax measure.

Hiltzik mentioned the constitutional convention movement that has been proposed to correct these structural problems, but he is concerned that a convention would be hijacked by political extremists. Hiltzik went on to talk about the ballot initiative system in California. Originally designed to circumvent the undue influence of powerful special interests, the process became "the handmaiden of special interests," he said.

As an example, he cited a proposed proposition (The Taxpayers Right to Vote Act), currently awaiting certification. Pacific Gas and Electric, which has spent \$3 million of ratepayer money, is the sole sponsor promoting the proposition to hamper competition from municipal utilities.

Another example, in Hiltzik's view, is the initiative that led to the \$3 billion conflict-of-interest-riddled stem cell research project, pushed through by a billionaire father of a diabetic son.

Hiltzik believes that solutions to California's dysfunctional government are not hard to devise – stop the practice of passing unfunded projects, liberalize term limits, and remove the super majority necessary to pass the state budget.

However, according to Hiltzik, the Governor does not have the political will to lead California to solutions. In his State of the State speech, the Governor merely proposed a referendum to correct funding imbalances. Hiltzik doesn't believe the candidates running for Governor possess the leadership necessary to solve these

continued on page 3

continued from page 2
problems either.

The situation is dire, with California State University turning away students, the state's infrastructure crumbling, more children losing healthcare, and teachers being laid off.

According to Hiltzik, the most important missing element is the voter. He said too few people are making crucial decisions for all Californians.

For example, Hiltzik mentioned that only 29% of registered voters passed Prop 13 in 1978. Hiltzik said it's rare for even 40% of registered voters to turn out to vote. Last May's special election on budget issues drew only 19% of the state's registered voters.

He closed his talk by calling on groups like ours to register voters and get them to the polls. Hiltzik has been with the Los Angeles Times for nearly 30 years. In 1999, he and a colleague won the Pulitzer Prize for a series of articles exposing corruption in the entertainment industry. His columns appear twice a week in the paper's business section.

PVP Democratic Club is on Facebook

By Kay Cooperman Jue

Something new for 2010: Our club has a page on Facebook.

For those of you who aren't familiar with Facebook, it is an extremely popular social-networking site on the Internet. It makes it very easy to stay in touch with people you know or organizations you care about. And there's no cost involved.

Your board of directors is hoping our Facebook page will be the place members will go to get the latest information about anything related to the Democratic Party, such as upcoming events, ways to get involved with political campaigns, or interesting books to read or television shows to watch – really just about anything any of us wants to share with fellow club members.

It could also be a place to discuss issues, write opinions, or share interesting articles. You will be able to check it at your convenience and add to it if and when you want. In this way, we will be able to keep club-related e-mails to a minimum.

We'll still publish our monthly newsletter.

But hopefully, Facebook will supplement the newsletter with up-to-the-minute information that can't wait for a monthly publication. Facebook also will supplement the club's Web site, www.pvpdemocrats.org, by allowing everyone to post items of interest.

Give it a try! If you're already signed up with Facebook, do a search for "Palos Verdes Peninsula Democratic Club" and join the group. If you haven't signed up with Facebook, go to www.facebook.com and follow the directions. Then do a search for the club's page and join.

Please note: if you are new to Facebook, you might want to pay close attention to privacy issues. Once you're signed up, click on "settings" and then "privacy settings" and consider limiting access to most of your information to "only friends."

800 Volunteers Needed

Ever wish you could attend a state Democratic convention? Here's your chance.

This year's convention is being held in Los Angeles, and the state Democratic Party needs 800 volunteers to "facilitate a productive and enjoyable convention for the approximately 3,500 delegates, guests and press in attendance," according to party officers.

The convention should be especially interesting because we're in an election year. Virtually all candidates for state and federal office traditionally make an appearance sometime during the three-day meeting.

The convention will be held Friday, April 16, through Sunday, April 18, at the convention center in downtown L.A. Help is needed with registration, ushers, the general session and administrative tasks, among other things. Some assignments will require sitting while

others may involve standing or acting as a runner. You'll be able to state your preference.

If you are interested in volunteering, you're asked to complete the volunteer form online at www.cadem.org/volunteer2010 by March 1st.

You are required to sign up in advance to become a volunteer. You also must plan to attend a pre-convention meeting at the L.A. Convention Center scheduled for Thursday, April 15, at 7 p.m.

Questions should be directed to Christopher Guerrero, the party's deputy political director, at (916) 442-5705 or volunteer2010@cadem.org.

Membership Renewal Time **By Lynn McLeod, Membership Chair**

We're starting a new year, hard as that is to believe. 2009 brought wonderful news with President Obama's inauguration, passage of his economic stimulus package and progress towards health care reform. Let's work towards making 2010 even better with improvement on employment, completion of health care reform and climate reform.

We want to make this a good membership year, too. Membership dues for 2010 are now due. Please return the membership form at the back of this newsletter with your check to the address indicated on the form. While it may seem like the same old, tired request we'd really like to find out how each of you would be interested in helping the club.

We could use some people to help with Board committee work, so if any of you have writing or computer skills, or simply a willingness to pitch in where needed, we would like to know about you. And if you have Democratic friends you could bring to the Club, we'd love to have them as members too.

PRIORITYONE

PRINTING ★ COPYING ★ GRAPHICS

Phone (310) 831-8804 • FAX (310) 833-9598

E-mail - priority1@earthlink.net

Website: www.priorityoneprinting.com

Newsletter Printing Donated by PRIORITYONE



Palos Verdes Peninsula Democratic Club

Founded in 1952 - One of the oldest and largest Democratic Clubs in California

**PVPDC Officers for 2010
Contact Info**

President: Kay Cooperman Jue,
pvedem@yahoo.com

1st V: Hans Grellmann
310 373-3066

2nd VP: Ron Smith

Recording Secretary:
Mary Meade - 310 377-6108

Corresponding Secretary:
Sheila Papayans
310 373-7978

Treasurer: Jerry Parker
310 377-7833

Membership Chair: Lynn McLeod
310 375-2103

Phone Tree Chair: Judy Pang
310 375-5783

Newsletter Editor: Connie Sullivan
310-378-1554

Please Send your membership form to P.O. Box 2234, Rolling Hills Est. Ca 90274

Name _____ I am a registered Democrat
 Name* _____ I am a registered Democrat

** Fill in if Applying as a Family - 2 memberships*

Residence Address _____ Phone _____

City _____ Zip _____ Cell _____

Mailing Address _____

(If different from residence)

City _____ Zip _____

Email Address _____

***Select One: Individual: \$ 20.00/Year * Family Membership \$30.00/Year
 Young Adult \$10.00/Year**

Amount enclosed _____ Renewal New Member

Please contact me to help in the following areas:

- Hospitality Newsletter Membership Publicity Correspondence
- Voter Registration Campaign Work Website/Facebook Phone Tree
- I might offer my home for a meeting or social event