



THE DEMOCRATIC TIMES

A Publication of the Democratic Club of Southwest Riverside County

Volume 16 Number 2

February 3012

Awards Dinner and Black History Month Celebration on Sat., Feb. 4

The Democratic Club of Southwest Riverside County will hold its annual Awards Dinner at the Harveston Community Center, 40135 Village Road, Temecula, CA 92591, on Saturday, February 4. The event will also honor Black History Month; our speaker in Ms. Mary Venerable, President of the Lake Elsinore/SW Riverside Branch of the NAACP.

Doors will open at 6 pm, and dinner will be served at 6:30. The Center is accessible to persons with disabilities.

The menu includes TriTip and Chicken Marsala, vegetables, salad, and cake for dessert. Beverages include wine, water, soda, coffee, and tea.

Donation is \$25.00 per person payable at the door. Contributions in addition to your donation will be gladly accepted.

The Awards Dinner is one of our most significant fund raising events of the year. We have reduced the price of this event from previous years to help our members through this economic downturn.

If you contribute at one of the following levels, your name will be listed in the event program. Of course, any donation in any amount will help us keep our dues low and support the club's vital activities.

- \$25 – Supporter \$50 – Patron
- \$75 – Silver Patron \$100 – Gold Patron

For reservations or for more information call Kathy Katz at 951-693-2814 or 909-227-1553. Please call as soon as possible, but not later than February 2.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Happy New Year!

Here we are in 2012---a BIG election year. I know that we're all enjoying watching the Republicans trash each other and hoping that they can inflict serious damage on whomever their candidate is, but, we can't count on it! The saying is that Democrats fall in love (with

their candidate) and Republicans fall in line. So, no matter how battered their candidate is they'll show up in support of him. It's truly frightening to think of the consequences of not re-electing Barak Obama.

Those states which elected Republican governors and Tea Party representatives to state and federal offices are having serious buyer's remorse. The attacks on labor and women's health are unprecedented. Who do you think a President Romney or President Gingrich would appoint to the already compromised and unethical Supreme Court? One would think that just these issues alone would make this an easy election for President Obama. Unfortunately, the "just say no" Republicans in Congress have kept the economy in the doldrums. And, that affects all of us.

So many Americans are under-informed and just plain uninformed and blame the President. This year will require an even greater effort on our part than the 2008 election to spread the word and to get out the vote. The county is counting on us!

Just a reminder that Saturday, February 4th is our annual Awards Dinner. This year we decided to combine it with the Black History Month celebration. The committee has outdone themselves with the venue, the menu and the keynote speaker. I hope that all of you will be able to join us for a wonderful celebration. I look forward to seeing you there.

—Gail Ferrell

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NOW! RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ON-LINE!

Go to the club's website, www.democratswiverside.com, and then click on "To pay for club membership" on the left side of the page. We accept Visa, Mastercard, American Express, and Discover.

Don't forget our warm clothing drive! For pick-up all Gail Ferrell, 619-988-2893, or Kathy Katz, 951-693-2814.

Racism: A cancer eating at the soul of America

[Ed. Note: The following article is by Del Roper, a retired United Methodist pastor in Grand Island, NE, who has been active for many years with issues of peace, social justice, and earth preservation efforts. His seven grandchildren are strong motivators for his efforts. Central Nebraska Concerned Citizens take up topics that affect families in Central Nebraska and the world. This article originally appeared in the Grand Island Independent on Oct. 8, 2011. Del Roper is also Gail Ferrell's cousin.]

As an afterthought, Roper added this comment: "I confess I am not happy with it. Though I'm convinced racism needs to be addressed [for its manifestations seem to be on the rise] I fear that my choice of words may turn off too many readers rather than stimulate self-reflection. It's tricky addressing controversial issues, you know!"

I write to address a serious malady that seems largely unacknowledged within our population. That malady is a pervasive racism that, like a deadly cancer, is eating away at the very soul of America. Though this is not a new malady, it seems to have been intensified by the inauguration of a black president to the White House.

Unfortunately there are a number of maladies eating away at our collective soul. Along with racism are the maladies of consumerism, corporate crimes, unfettered greed, and the ongoing efforts to disenfranchise our everyday citizens. Today I choose to focus on a growing, seemingly overt racism.

Most white people I know would vehemently deny they are racist. Though that may represent a certain level of naïveté -- the heartening thing about it is that they find the thought of personal racism distasteful. Some responses that get labeled 'racism' may simply be fear of the unknown, fear of that which is different. I know very few overtly racist white people.

I was born and raised in a totally white, rural community in Fillmore County, Nebraska. I used to think that I didn't have an ounce of racism in my soul. I would learn later that this was a very naive assumption. I've come to believe it is impossible to grow up in our culture and not be racially prejudiced to some degree. Fortunate are those who have weeded out racist opinions from their hearts.

The virus of racism gets planted deep within our psyche by countless remarks we hear as we are growing up, e.g. "What can you expect of them 'coloreds'?" or "'Coloreds' are basically lazy and inferior to white people," or "All Gypsies are thieves," or "Never trust a 'Wet Back!'" or "All Indians are dirty

drunks." Of course, the labels we attach to different races also feed this virus, e.g. Japs, Chinks, Niggers, Gooks, Rag Heads, etc., etc. As the line in one of the lyrics from the musical "South Pacific" goes, "You've got to be carefully taught to hate."

The number of hate groups in our nation has grown exponentially since the election of Barack Obama according to The Southern Poverty Law Center. No other president has received so many threats upon his life.

Many talk radio hosts lash out daily with demeaning, slanderous remarks about Mr. Obama. They, along with widely circulated e-mail forwards, accuse him of being anti-American, and a 'closet Muslim.' Some claim he issued an order banning prayer in the military, and another to remove crosses from our military cemeteries. These are false, fabricated accusations growing out of fear and racial prejudice.

Of course, people of any color can be guilty of being racist. I have known a few black and oriental racists. Be that as it may, racism is unhealthy and detrimental not only to one's mental health, but the health of our nation wherever it rears its ugly head. It clouds the judgment of any who are infected by it. It seems very apparent that it is clouding the political judgments of our congressional representatives in ways detrimental to the well being of the Middle Class and jobless in our nation. Leaders of the Republican Party state openly that their goal is to make sure this president has only one term. They promise to block any legislation proposed by him regardless of its merit. Of course they deny racism has anything to do with their opposition.

Anyone who becomes president of our nation is bound to be subjected to a lot of criticism. That's in part because no president can be the "savior" we think he or she should be. Of course, not all criticism directed against Mr. Obama is grounded in racism. Level headed people in both political parties have raised questions and disagreed with some of his decisions out of honest conviction. Would that all disagreements stemmed from honest conviction rather than from racial bias.

Let's face it, racism builds walls and keeps us from seeing the worth and uniqueness God has invested in people of every color. Of the major religions, none condone racial bias or violence. The love of God and

Continued, RACISM, Page 3

JUST FOR FUN**Global death rate remains 100%**

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND—World Health Organization officials expressed disappointment Monday at the group's finding that, despite the enormous efforts of doctors, rescue workers and other medical professionals worldwide, the global death rate remains constant at 100 percent.

Death, a metabolic affliction causing total shutdown of all life functions, has long been considered humanity's number one health concern. Responsible for 100 percent of all recorded fatalities worldwide, the condition has no cure.

"I was really hoping, what with all those new radiology treatments, rescue helicopters, aerobics TV shows and what have you, that we might at least make a dent in it this year," WHO Director General Dr. Gernst Bladt said. "Unfortunately, it would appear that the death rate remains constant and total, as it has inviolably since the dawn of time."

Many are suggesting that the high mortality rate represents a massive failure on the part of the planet's health care workers.

"The inability of doctors and scientists to adequately address this issue of death is nothing less than a scandal," concerned parent Marcia Gretto said. "Do you have any idea what a full-blown case of death looks like? Well, I do, and believe me, it's not pretty. In prolonged cases, total decomposition of the corpse is the result."

"What about the children?" the visibly moved Gretto added.

"At this early date, I don't want to start making broad generalizations," Citizens for Safety's Robert Hemmlin said, "but it is beginning to seem possible that birth—as well as the subsequent life cycle that follows it—may be a serious safety risk for all those involved."

Death, experts say, affects not only the dead, but the non-dead as well.

"Those who suffer from death can be highly traumatized by it, often so severely that it kills them," noted therapist Eli Wasserbaum said. "But it can also be very traumatic for the still-living who are left behind. The sudden cessation of metabolic activity characteristic of terminal cases of death often leaves the dead person in a position where they are unable to adequately provide for the emotional needs of their loved ones."

In the most serious cases of death, Wasserbaum explained, the trauma inflicted upon these still-living victims of death may continue throughout their entire lives, until their own deaths. "Thus," Wasserbaum said, "the 'vicious cycle' of death trauma continues indefinitely."

"Everybody talks about death," Sen. Pete Domenici (R-NM) said, "but nobody seems to actually be doing anything about it. I propose we stop molly-coddling death, not to mention the multi-billion-dollar hospital, mortuary, funeral and burial industries that reap huge profits from it."

Under Domenici's new bill, all federal funds will be withheld from the medical industry until it "gets serious and starts cracking down on death."

Consumer rights advocate and staunch anti-death activist Ralph Nader agreed with Domenici.

"Why should we continue to spend billions of dollars a year on a health care industry whose sole purpose is to prevent death, only to find, once again, that death awaits us all?" Nader said in an impassioned address to several suburban Californians. "That's called a zero percent return on our investment, and that's not fair. It's time the paying customer stood up to the HMOs and to the so-called 'medical health professionals' and said: 'Enough is enough. I'm paying through the nose here, and I don't want to die.'"

Have something to say?
Your views encouraged!
See it in print — for all to read.
Please limit to 2 columns, about 800 words.
Submit to: nshestople@earthlink.net

RACISM, From page 2

one's brothers and sisters of every race, color, and nationality is the common thread found in each major religion. Our essential America is a blend of all colors. People of each color have made, and continue to make, significant contributions to the building of our nation.

Though racism has always been a blight on the beauty of this nation, it's time for us to come to terms with it. It undermines the greatness of what we as a nation can become, it obstructs the rich contributions people of every race have to offer, and it cripples and wounds the very soul of our nation.

Have extra warm clothing? Give to the club's warm clothing drive. For pick-up all Gail Ferrell, 619-988-2893, or Kathy Katz, 951-693-2814.

A proposal by Caren Hansen

[As a citizen, what bothers me about our Country at this time is the corruption practiced by both parties, so that's what I mainly addressed. There are probably lots of other areas that need to be included – all up to others to address.]

“In the Course of our history, the United States has struggled to create a Country which values justice and laws based on reasonable and fair assumptions applicable to all peoples. As a direct result, in the last few centuries, our Society has flourished, and we have achieved a higher standard of living and expression of freedom never before seen in the history of mankind. Other countries across the world have sought to follow our example of an open and practicing democracy, free of fear and intimidation from the governing powers.

But recently, it has become clear that Congressional members themselves have gradually usurped these lofty and noble goals by setting up practices and institutional programs for their own enrichment and power, at the expense of the People themselves. In response, it has become evident that We, the People, must confront the governing forces within our Country and seek to readjust or completely eliminate these practices. We must address these inequalities individually and put into place new Safeguards for the future of our Country, and possibly for all of mankind.

Below is a list of proposals aimed at correcting these corruptive practices:

1. Outlaw any practices which allows congressional members to sidestep any regulations that ordinary citizens are required to abide by (ie, insider trading of stock).
2. Outlaw all campaign contributions, and require publicly funded campaigns.
3. Outlaw all forms of lobbying. Congressional members must adhere to the policy that they are in Washington solely to take care of the People's business, and that their decisions and votes cannot and must not be unduly influenced by outside sources of monies and any other forms of enrichment.
4. Guarantee all eligible citizens the right to vote without unnecessary roadblocks and regulations set up by special interest groups to influence or change the votes (ie, passing laws requiring ID, redefining boundaries which favor one group over another).
5. Require Congressional members to maintain

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Ending the unemployment crisis

Did you know we could end the unemployment crisis this very moment?

It's very simple – if last year's bank executive bonuses from the six biggest financial firms we bailed out went to creating jobs with middle-class jobs with benefits, the unemployment rate would plummet to 6.75% – the same as before the financial crisis.¹

The banker bonuses have gotten more and more obscene – and instead of spending the money we gave them in the bailout on hiring new workers or fail proofing their risky investments, the big banks are lavishing their executives with unearned bonuses. Even worse, that bonus money represents a small percentage of their total compensation – they could do the right thing and only take a small hit on their overall take-home pay.

How bad has it gotten? Even worse than we feared: **According to the latest data on year-end bank bonuses, 3.5 million jobs with benefits could've been created by spending last year's reported executive bonuses from only six firms: Wells Fargo, Chase, Bank of America, Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley and CitiBank.**²

Are they serious? At a time when record numbers of Americans are dealing with joblessness created by their financial crash, and homelessness created by their forged foreclosures? The big bank attitude seems to be “Big Bonus for me – the rest of you can go Scrooge Yourself.” Well, we're not going to take it this holiday season.

Join us in sending a message to the big banks TODAY: it's time to spend the bonus money on human needs, not executive greed. You can refuse the bonuses – or accept us Occupying your bonuses.

Some of the most brilliant economic minds to predict the financial crisis are now calling attention to the awful risk and moral hazard presented by out-of-control banker bonuses. Nassim Nicholas Taleb has taken to the New York Times editorial page with an inconvenient truth: it's time to eliminate banker bonuses.³

Bonuses are particularly dangerous because they invite bankers to game the system by hiding the risks of rare and hard-to-predict but consequential blow-ups, which I have called “black swan” events. The meltdown in the United States subprime mortgage

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Is This Land Made for You and Me-- or the Super-Rich?

By Bill Moyers and Michael Winship

The authors ponder the question at the heart of Woody Guthrie's "This Land is Your Land"--what kind of America do we want?

The traveling medicine show known as the race for the Republican presidential nomination has moved on from Iowa and New Hampshire, and all eyes are now on South Carolina. Well, not exactly all. At the moment, our eyes are fixed on some big news from the great state of Oklahoma, home of the legendary American folk singer Woody Guthrie, whose 100th birthday will be celebrated later this year.

Woody saw the ravages of the Dust Bowl and the Depression firsthand; his own family came unraveled in the worst hard times. And he wrote tough yet lyrical stories about the men and women who struggled to survive, enduring the indignity of living life at the bone, with nothing to eat and no place to sleep. He traveled from town to town, hitchhiking and stealing rides in railroad boxcars, singing his songs for spare change or a ham sandwich. What professional success he had during his own lifetime, singing in concerts and on the radio, was often undone by politics and the restless urge to keep moving on. "So long, it's been good to know you," he sang, and off he would go.

What he wrote and sang about caused the oil potentates and preachers who ran Oklahoma to consider him radical and disreputable. For many years he was the state's prodigal son, but times change, and that's the big news. Woody Guthrie has been rediscovered, even though Oklahoma's more conservative than ever -- one of the reddest of our red states with a governor who's a favorite of the Tea Party.

The George Kaiser Family Foundation has bought Guthrie's archives -- his manuscripts, letters and journals. A center is being built in Tulsa that will make them available to scholars and visitors from all over the world.

Among its treasures is the original, handwritten copy of the song -- Woody Guthrie's most famous -- This Land Is Your Land. The song extols the beauty of the country Guthrie traveled across again and again; its endless skyways and golden valleys, the sparkling sands of her diamond deserts. Yet his eye was clear, unclouded, and unobstructed by sentimentality, for he

also wrote in its lyrics:

*In the shadow of the steeple I saw my people,
By the relief office I seen my people;
As they stood there hungry, I stood there asking
Is this land made for you and me?*

"Is this land made for you and me?" A mighty good question. The biggest domestic story of our time is the collapse of the middle class, a sharp increase in the poor, and the huge transfer of wealth to the already rich.

In an era of gross inequality there's both irony and relevance in Woody Guthrie's song. That "ribbon of highway" he made famous? It's faded and fraying in disrepair, the nation's infrastructure of roads and bridges, once one of our glories, now a shambles because fixing them would require spending money, raising taxes, and pulling together.

This land is mostly owned not by you and me but by the winner-take-all super rich who have bought up open spaces, built mega-mansions, turned vast acres into private vistas, and distanced themselves as far as they can from the common lot of working people -- the people Woody wrote and sang about.

True, Barack Obama asked Bruce Springsteen and Woody Guthrie's longtime friend Pete Seeger to sing This Land is Your Land at that big, pre-inaugural concert the Sunday before he was sworn in. And sing they did, in the spirit of hope and change that President Obama had spun as the heart of his campaign rhetoric.

Today, whatever was real about that spirit has been bludgeoned by severe economic hardship for everyday Americans and by the cynical expedience of politicians who wear the red-white-and-blue in their lapels and sing "America the Beautiful" while serving the interests of crony capitalists stuffing SuperPACs with millions of dollars harvested from the gross inequality destroying us from within.

But maybe -- just maybe -- the news that Woody Guthrie, once a pariah in his home state, has become a local hero is the harbinger of things to come, and that all the people who still believe this land is our land will begin to take it back.

[Veteran journalist Bill Moyers is the host of the upcoming show "Moyers & Company," premiering January 2012. More at www.billmoyers.com.]

[TruthOut.org, January 15, 2012]

Pay your 2012 dues TODAY!

www.democratswiverside.com

Calendar of Events

ON GOING: Voter Registration. Contact Pam Rocca, 951-514-7907, shirleypam3@gmail.com or Suji Fox, 951-471-4863, sujifox@msn.com. **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

ON GOING: Warm clothing Drive. We are looking for warm clothing during these cold winter months. Donations will be given to HOPE, "Help our people in Elsinore." Call either Cail Ferrell, 619-988-2893, or Kathy Katz, 951-693-2814, to arrange for pick-up. See story on Page 1.

Feb 4 (Sat) 6:30 PM: Annual awards banquet, featuring Black History Month. Harveston Community Center, 40135 Village Road, Temecula. Donation \$25 per person, payable at the door. See story on Page 1.

Feb 6 **NO MEETING.**

Feb 20 (Mon) 7:00 PM: The DCSRC Executive Board meets. 40535 California Oaks, Murrieta, opposite Ralphs. Open to all members.

Mar 5 (Mon) 7:00 PM: Regular Monthly General Meeting, Casa Jimenez, 40535 California Oaks, Murrieta, opposite Ralphs. Come early and enjoy good friends and good food. *Program: California Highway Patrol.*

For a complete list of Democratic Party events in Riverside County, visit the RCDCC web site at <http://www.riversidecountymocrats.org>.

6:30 PM, SATURDAY, FEB. 4, 2012

Annual Awards Banquet

Black History Month

**Temecula Community Recreation Center
40135 Village Drive, Temecula (Harveston)**

MONDAY, FEB. 6, 2012 NO MEETING

NO MEETING

MONDAY, MAR. 5, 2012

General Meeting: California Highway Patrol

Casa Jimenez Mexican Restaurant

40535 California Oaks Rd, Murrieta

The Democratic Times is published monthly by the Democratic Club of Southwest Riverside County
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Need more information?

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You may also visit our web site at

<http://www.democratswriterside.com>

UNEMPLOYMENT, From page 6

market, which set off the global financial crisis, is only the latest example of such disasters.

1. "Big Banks Bonus Bonanza Annual Report 2010", Appendix: Total Job Creation By Bank, SEIU; Extrapolation of job data taken from "Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey", Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor.

2. Ibid.

3. "Taleb: Banker bonuses should be banned", Boing Boing.

PROPOSAL, From page 4

the same standard of benefits, such as health care and retirement system, as is provided for similar positions in American culture.

6. Require all members of Congress to operate the People's business in an open manner.

7. Require all members of Congress to meet with their constituents on a regular basis, face to face.

Other issues

8. Require all citizens to pay their fair share of taxes.

9. Guarantee the right to a free education for all citizens.

10. Guarantee a Universal Health Care System for all Americans.

11. Maintain the Social Security system and Medicare system for current and future citizens, and prohibit Congress from taking monies from these programs to pay for other programs.

12. Enforce the policies of separation of state and religion in all forms.

Don't forget our warm clothing drive! For pick-up call Gail Ferrell, 619-988-2893, or Kathy Katz, 951-693-2814.

Pay your 2012 dues TODAY!

"What did liberals do that was so offensive to the Republican Party? I'll tell you what they did. Liberals got women the right to vote. Liberals got African-Americans the right to vote. Liberals created Social Security and lifted millions of elderly people out of poverty. Liberals ended segregation. Liberals passed the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act. Liberals created Medicare. Liberals passed the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act.

What did Conservatives do? They opposed them on every one of those things, every one. So when you try to hurl that label at my feet, "Liberal," as if it were something to be ashamed of, something dirty, something to run away from, it won't work, because I will pick up that label and I will wear it as a badge of honor."

Written by: Lawrence O'Donnell Jr.



Anti-Republican Crusaders

