



The Official Publication of ACT
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the phoenix
On-Line

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Published by Chuck Hains & Sally Beer

Annual Holiday Potluck Dinner

and ACT and ADC Meetings



Thursday, December 4, 6:30 p.m.

at the home of
Bobbie and Henry Moon
1961 Mar Vista Avenue, Altadena



Special Guest Speaker Pasadena Police Chief Phillip Sanchez

Everyone is invited to our traditional Holiday Potluck Dinner and the December meeting of ACT and ADC. Come enjoy your own good cooking plus socializing with your ACT and Arroyo Democratic Club friends and guests. The potluck starts at 6:30 p.m. We will hear from Pasadena Police Chief Phillip-Sanchez at the start of the business meeting, beginning at about 8 p.m.

Potluck assignments: **A-G** – Fruit or dessert
 H-M – Main dish **N-Z** – Vegetable, salad, or side dish

Please provide enough for about six people and bring your own serving utensils. Beverages, plates, cups, napkins and eating utensils will be provided. Come. Bring a friend.

NOTICE: For discussion at this meeting: *Should the City of Pasadena reactivate an Affordable Housing Commission tasked to recommend housing policies to the Pasadena City Council?*



Issues Ballot Results - Re Pasadena Livable Wage Ordinance

Favor proposal	46	56.8%*
Oppose proposal	31	38.3%
No Position	4	4.9%

*The proposal we voted on in the October *Phoenix* failed to reach the 60% needed to pass. At the November 6 meeting members speculated that the opposition was likely due to the proposed wage levels (\$12.60 in 2015 to \$15 in 2017) rather than the issue itself.

Join the 2015 ACT Steering Committee

The Nominating Committee is looking for folks who want to serve ACT & ADC for 2015. Retiring Co-Chairs Anthony Portantino and Felicia Williams are heading the search. We must find two ACT Co-Chairs to replace them and join continuing Co-Chair Linda Centell. We also need Chairs for the new Issues committee and the Communications committee. Other committees need new people too. (ACT committees include Computer-Webpage, Election Procedures, Fundraising, Program, Membership, Mailing, Outreach-Coalition Building, *ThePhoenix*, Program and Research.)

To learn more please contact Executive Director Jon Fuhrman at jon_fuhrman@charter.net. He can answer your questions and take note of your interests. If you cannot continue your 2014 job, Jon wants to know that as well. NOTE: We elect new officers in January.



Progressive Discussion Group

The Friday Morning Progressive Discussion Group is still going strong on the first and third Fridays of the month at 9 a.m. at CoCo's Restaurant, 77 N. Lake Ave., Pasadena.

Join the discussion. Everyone is welcome. Order breakfast, coffee, etc., or not. Check with Inman Moore at 626-795-2201 or Email inmanmoore3@gmail.com for additional information.



Wanted! A Picture of you in a Special Place

Where have you been recently? Please send your high-resolution picture to Chuck Hains at Hains27@SBCGlobal.net.

Special Thanks to Our Sustaining Members

Peter and Roberta Braun, Pasadena
Joan and Jeff Palmer, Pasadena



Sara Hoge

We are saddened at the death of longtime ACT member **Sara Payne Hoge** on November 3 at age 88. Sara was a staunch Democrat and political activist who worked on many political campaigns in the 62 years she lived in Pasadena. Fortright and articulate, she shared her opinions and commitment to social justice in person and in thoughtful letters-to-the-editor.

We extend our sympathy to her daughters Virginia, Elizabeth and Catherine and their families - including five grandchildren and one great-grandchild - as well as her brother Bill Tinsley. A memorial service was held on November 8.



December *Phoenix* Deadline

The deadline for the December *Phoenix* will be Sunday, December 7. Please send your items to Chuck at hains27@sbcglobal.net. Mailing preparation will be Thursday, December 11 at 7 p.m. at a location to be determined.



ACTpasadena.org

Read *ThePhoenix* online at our revamped web page www.ACTpasadena.org. (It's usually available soon after the mailed version arrives.) The online *Phoenix* is in **color** and often has items that we didn't have room for in the print version.

Share ideas and suggestions with web site manager BruceWright@sbcglobal.net.

Wonderings and Wanderings

By Inman Moore



Politicians

The word “politician” is often said today with a sneer and a diatribe about how we should get politicians out of Washington and our state and local governments. Comments like, “Let’s get the politicians out of Washington and give the government back to the people” are heard on every street corner. Or, “The politicians are ruining Washington. Let’s throw the whole gang out.”

Let’s start by getting a true definition of the word “politician.” A politician is a person experienced in the art and science of government or party politics. Or a politician is someone actively engaged in conducting the business of a government. A person who is skilled in politics. The word “politics” means the art or science concerned with guiding or influencing governmental policy.

To be a politician is to be following in the footsteps of many honorable men and women throughout the ages. Socrates was a politician. Benjamin Disraeli, a former great Prime Minister of Great Britain, was a politician. Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin were politicians. George Washington learned to be a great politician. Abraham Lincoln was a very skilled politician. Franklin Roosevelt was a politician. Ronald Reagan learned to be a politician. Our colleges and universities have whole departments teaching the art and science of politics.

Let me ask a simple question. When you need medical treatment don’t you turn to a doctor skilled in medicine? When you want to be properly represented in a court of law, don’t you want a skilled lawyer? Certainly when we elect public officials don’t we want someone there who knows what they are doing and has

the ability to lead people and properly work for the betterment of government and society?

Now, I realize that there are dishonest politicians just as there are dishonest business people, teachers, preachers, doctors, lawyers, and people in all walks of life. Our business is to search for the best people in all professions. As voters we have a terrific responsibility of choosing the best people to represent us in government. But we don’t get the job done by offhandedly saying “All politicians are crooks.”

I frequently hear it said that all that politicians do is spend their time raising money. Seemingly some people think that this money goes into the pockets of politicians for their own private use. This is patently untrue. There are many laws forbidding that. Of course it is true that politicians spend a great deal of time raising money which is unfortunately necessary. Take for example running for a state office in California. California has over 18 million registered voters. To get elected you have to find a way to get your message out to all those voters. And it is very expensive. Pamphlets, newspapers, radio, and TV exposure all cost money. Lots of money!! And the only way a candidate gets campaign funds is to be rich or get it from the voters. As an aside, if you are a voter and you have never contributed to a political campaign, you are shirking your responsibility as a citizen in a democratic society. If you are serious about getting good candidates elected then you must pull out your purse or wallet and also contribute time and effort.

Progressives took a beating in the recent election. But we progressives don’t give up, and there is no real benefit in expressing ill will to our opponents. Tomorrow is another day and we should simply take a deep breath and work even harder for our causes. Who knows? If we work hard enough, and do it with a good spirit, we may find allies across

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Political Notes



Tuesday, November 11.

Well, there aren't many ways to sugarcoat the results. We lost Senate seats, House seats, Gubernatorial seats, legislative seats. The tide was pervasive and pretty deep. Even in California, although we swept all the statewide offices, several races were much closer than they should have been. Further, several Congressional and legislative seats were lost or, at best, are teetering on the brink. In San Diego, for instance, it looks like incumbent Democrat Scott Peters will win re-election to the House against Carl DeMaio, and in the north, Democrat Ami Bera has reduced his losing margin from 6,000 votes down to 2,000 votes and now down to 500 votes, so the remaining uncounted ballots (nearly 1.3 million statewide as of this morning) may rescue him.

Pundits are hard at work attributing the wide losses to the President's unpopular agenda, to his style that just didn't seem to connect with voters, to a failure of the Democratic ground game or success of the GOP ground game – or whatever their particular hypothesis had been before the election. Of course, those arguments don't really explain how the President was able to win such a decisive re-election in 2012, or how a remarkable number of Democrats this year did in fact get re-elected. For example, while we lost the Colorado Senate seat, we held onto the Governor's mansion. And of the seats we lost, many were by the narrowest of margins, often less than 1% of the vote.

Not many pundits, however, have focused on one of the most basic elements – turnout. We know the historic patterns, where Democrats turn out in Presidential years but not in off-years. But looking at the actual numbers is more than sobering – it's staggering. Below is a chart showing turnout in several key states from 2008 through 2014.

The rollercoaster pattern is stunning, and particularly pronounced in California (where I've adjusted the numbers to include all the

State	TURNOUT			
	2008	2010	2012	2014
Alaska	326,000	251,000	300,000	212,000
California	13,583,000	9,435,000	13,055,000	7,763,000
Colorado	2,401,000	1,674,000	2,572,000	1,784,000
Florida	8,412,000	5,176,000	8,492,000	5,657,000
Georgia	3,932,000	2,554,000	3,908,000	2,560,000
Illinois	5,530,000	3,693,000	5,251,000	3,375,000
Iowa	1,537,000	1,089,000	1,582,000	1,078,000
Maryland	2,631,000	1,795,000	2,707,000	1,694,000
Massachusetts	3,081,000	2,260,000	3,168,000	2,043,000
North Carolina	4,311,000	2,604,000	4,505,000	2,778,000

uncounted ballots).

Democrats did work hard to turn out traditional voters, but it seems there is little that we (or Republicans) can do to boost off-year turnout.

Why is that? And more importantly, is there anything we can do about it? This pattern has been consistent since the 1970's, with 2006 being one exception (when the country was incensed over the war in Iraq). So it appears to take quite a lot to overcome the natural inertia of many voters. The Presidential campaigns, with the national focus and drama and sense of import, do break through that inertia, but recall that the President spent nearly one billion dollars on advertising, voter contact, organizing and GOTV to do that, concentrating on 10 battleground states (not to mention all the independent expenditures and money spent by Congressional campaigns themselves). Thus, absent an extraordinary effort like that, it would seem that we're doomed to suffer this lower turnout in most future mid-term elections.



But I'm not convinced that we are doomed to lose all future mid-term elections. As I noted, many of the seats we lost were by the slightest of margins. Further, we were facing significant headwinds – being in the second term of the incumbent President, a sense that the economy was still not really working for middle class families, and a vague sense that the world overseas – from the Ukraine through Syria and Iraq and Afghanistan and Ebola-stricken African countries – was collapsing around us. Democrats were facing an unusual confluence of troubles and fears, and the GOP displayed no hesitation to pounce on and exaggerate every possible problem.

So do not despair. In 2016, the natural Presidential electorate will reassert itself, and at least 7 Republican Senators in typically Democratic states will face the tide, in a mirror-image of what happened this year. Recapturing the House seems unlikely, but significant gains are not at all unlikely, since there too more Republicans are sitting in districts that Democrats are likely to carry in 2016. Our turn will come again, and instead of simply campaigning against President Obama, Republicans will have to field their own candidate who will have to both bridge the sharp divides within the GOP and appeal to be broader cross-section of voters with a specific

set of policies: what do they want instead of Obamacare; do they want to send more ground troops back into Iraq; what will they do about immigration reform; what is their stance on gay marriage and abortion rights (incidentally, despite the Republican tide, two states decisively defeated “personhood” amendments seeking radically to restrict abortion rights).

In California, at least, Democrats did sweep the statewide offices and hold substantial majorities

in the Legislature, although we lost the 2/3 super-majorities in each house. However, since the Governor is not supporting or seeking any new taxes, the Dem's don't really need a 2/3 majority. Further, the economic news continues to be quite positive. By the end of October, the state's revenues were \$1.2 billion above projections, suggesting a substantial surplus at the end of the year and increased spending, especially for education, next year. Further, with the passage of Prop. 47, Gov. Brown seems to have a solution to the overcrowding of state prisons, relieving one major potential budgetary hit. The only thing

the Gov. really needs now is a solid snowfall this winter to break the drought.

Locally, there seems no drought of candidates for local office. For a while, as Mayor Bogaard pondered on whether to run for re-election, people held off deciding, although Councilmember Terry Tornek committed early and has been out campaigning doggedly, perhaps racking up a significant "early mover" advantage. When the Mayor decided to retire, the dominoes started falling. Councilmember Steve Madison seriously considered running, but he seems to have decided to seek re-election to his District 6 seat. PCC Boardmember Bill Thomson, who served 16 years on the City Council, seems close to committing to the race. Don Morgan, a Democrat who lives in Councilmember Tornek's District 7, has formally entered the race. He has considerable experience working with non-profits, particularly raising money for Loyola High School and for education oriented efforts in Watts, and teaches at USC. However, he has not had much involvement in Pasadena, which may be a barrier he'll have to overcome. Allan Shay has also announced his candidacy, and Councilmember Jacque Robinson is actively considering running as well. Other candidates may also appear, suggesting that it will become extremely difficult for any candidate to win an outright majority vote in March and thereby avoid a run-off election in April. Pasadena has never had a Mayoral run-off, so it will be fascinating to see if the turnout, as is usually the case, falls sharply between the March primary and the April run-off.

The Mayoral race has somewhat overshadowed the Councilmanic races that will be on the same ballot – Districts 1, 2, 4, and 6 are all up. Incumbents Margaret McAustin and Gene Masuda are running for re-election, and so far no challengers are materialized. District 1 will depend upon Councilmember Robinson's decision; she can run either for Mayor or for

re-election to District 1, but not both. Should she run for Mayor, the vacant seat would undoubtedly draw multiple competitors, most likely including Rafael Henderson, who ran for the seat in 2007. Interestingly, PUSD Boardmember Tyron Hampton is said to be looking at that seat as well, although he would have to give up the seat on the PUSD Board that he won just a year and a half ago. Assuming Councilmember Steve Madison seeks another term, he might draw an opponent. But his decisive victory in 2011 seems to have taken the breath out of those opposing him, so I wouldn't be surprised to see him unopposed, with many of his former opponents focusing their energies on electing Councilmember Tornek to the Mayor's office.

The School Board, by comparison, seems rather quiet. Districts 2, 4 and 6 will, for the first time, have sub-district elections. In District 2, Roy Boulghourjian has an active campaign, and no one has surfaced as an alternative. In District 6, Mikala Rahn, who is sort of the incumbent after being appointed to the seat just over a year ago, seems to have decided not to seek election. Sandra Siraganian, who lives in Sierra Madre and apparently draws support from the Tea Party wing of the GOP, may be running for that seat, but no other candidates have come forward yet.

District 4 is perhaps the most interesting. Incumbents Renatta Cooper and Tom Selinske both live in that District, but Selinske has indicated he will not seek re-election. Cooper has definitely decided to run, but so has Patrick Cahalan, who lives in the Bungalow Heights neighborhood and who, with his wife, has been quite active in the PUSD schools. So far, there seems little likelihood that the PUSD Board will end up with a Latino member, even though Latinos represent the strong majority of students served by the district, and could conceivably end up having no minority representation at all! This simply reminds us

of the vagaries of the “sub-district” election system, which voters chose 4 years ago to replace the prior “at-large” system. Perhaps it’s time to reassess that decision.

-- Jon Fuhrman



ACT Coalition-Building & Outreach Committee Report

Proposal to reactivate the Pasadena Affordable Housing Commission: The Committee endorsed a proposal by Michelle White to re-create a Pasadena Affordable Housing Commission tasked to recommend housing policies to the Pasadena City Council. The Committee requests that the Issues Committee notice a meeting to vet the proposal and submit it to the Steering Committee in December.

The Steering Committee designated Mark Maier and Ed Washatka as representatives to the **Living Wage Coalition** called by Rev. Francisco Garcia of All Saints; they have been actively working with the Coalition. The minimum wage proposal did not pass on the ACT ballot, but the Steering Committee agreed that Mark and Ed will continue to represent ACT at the Living Wage Coalition.

McDade OIR Report lawsuit. On Tuesday, November 4. Judge Chalfant overruled the great majority of the Pasadena Police Officers Association’s proposed additional redactions. He made 6 changes to the City’s proposed redactions – 2 of which required the City to eliminate redactions and 4 of which required the City to increase redactions (usually by only an additional sentence); in addition, he couldn’t decide on 3 redactions because the City hadn’t provided him with the unredacted portions; the City filed the unredacted portions on November 6, and Judge Chalfant is scheduled to issue his order November 7 which will prohibit the City from disclosing

the redacted portions but require the City to release the OIR Report with the Court’s authorized redactions. There is an expedited procedure for getting appellate review for any dissatisfied party. It remains to be seen whether any of the parties decide to appeal. We have a potential entitlement to attorney’s fees for our efforts and have reserved April 7 (the earliest available date) for hearing our motion. Gronemeier & Associates has pledged that, consistently with its handling the matter on a pro bono basis, any attorney’s fees award will be passed on to its clients.

Environmental outreach: Barbara Paul has been doing outreach to environmental advocates. She reports the following:

The Environmental Coalition met with Assemblymember Chris Holden on October 14 for the purpose of introducing ourselves as community members proactively involved in environmental issues both at the local and state levels. The CA League of Conservation Voters has given Chris a 100% on his environmental scorecard. Morey Wolfson, member of Pasadena’s Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC), updated Chris with status of: Zero Waste Strategic Plan, EACH newly formed Water Committee, Integrated Resource Plan as it relates to electrical power and Devil’s Gate Sediment Removal. Other issues to be discussed at a later date include water efficiency and conservation, source of water and how it affects ability to fight forest fires, amounts of spring water shipped out of state by bottled water distributors such as Nestle’s, Arrowhead, Crystal Geyser, and several other distributors-do we need to implement regulations re accountability relating to distributors.

On Oct. 21, the Pasadena City Council voted to adopt the **Zero Waste Strategic Plan** for implementation in 2040. To view the entire Plan, see CityofPasadena.net/publicworks/zero_waste_pasadena_2040. The EACH is a

strong proponent of immediate implementation of disposal bans as it relates to polystyrene food packaging, which is the #2 item of the initiatives in a list of 19 items.

The Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy has taken the task to preserve 11 open space acres known as **Cottonwood Canyon**, located in the Linda Vista area. Their main goal is to raise money to purchase the acreage and not allow development of this pristine corridor for wildlife. We have expressed our desire to assist them in any way as needed.

The San Gabriel Mountains have now become the **San Gabriel Mountains National Monument**, thanks to Congresswoman Judy Chu and President Obama who used an Executive Order to preserve this mountain range whose majestic beauty is such a part of our daily lives.



**From
41st District
Assemblymember
Chris Holden**



Dear ACT Friends,

I want to thank all my friends in the ACT community for their support during the recent midterm election; you are the ones responsible for the whole thing. Without your walking and phoning and coffees, we wouldn't have been able to maintain our democratic majority in the Assembly and across the state. I also want to take a moment to thank our incredible team led by Darla Dyson and the folks at United Democratic Headquarters.

I am looking forward to building on the success of my first term – expanding the Metro Gold Line, making college affordable for middle class families, and strengthening the eco-

nomie vitality of the San Gabriel Valley. Hope to see you in the weeks and months ahead.

Honoring our Veterans

21 names will soon be added to California's Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Sacramento – a long overdue tribute. I wholeheartedly support the addition of the California sailors from the U.S.S. Frank Evans to be inscribed on the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The outstanding services of these American sailors during the Vietnam War are without dispute; they died in service to their country. I authored Assembly Joint Resolution 33 at the request of Pasadena resident Tim Wendler whose father is among the 21 Californians who died on the USS Frank E. Evans when it sank during the Vietnam conflict. My resolution urges the Department of Defense to add their names to the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C. It is never too late to honor our heroes.

Holiday Open House

In celebration of the holidays, I'd like to invite you to "jingle and mingle" at our Holiday Open House. We'll be serving up tasty goodies and holiday cheer. We are partnering with the children's charity "Shoes That Fit", to provide shoes and socks for children sizes 10 youth through 12 adult. If you'd like to help, please bring new socks or shoes and we'll make sure the shoes fit.

Join us at the District Office on Thursday, December 11 from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. RSVP at 626.351.1917 or www.asmdc.org/holden.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

-- Chris R. Holden

Assemblyman Holden represents some 420,000 people in the foothills communities of Altadena, Pasadena, South Pasadena, Sierra Madre, Monrovia, San Dimas, La Verne, Claremont, and Upland. He can be reached via his website at: www.asm.ca.gov/holden and fill out the contact form.

Huntington Hospital is Ill

Pasadena leaders come to the aid of nurses trying to organize a union



By John Grula, reprinted from the *Pasadena Weekly* with permission

Question: What's wrong with Pasadena's Huntington Hospital? Long thought to be in the same league as the Huntington Library, Caltech and some of Pasadena's other great institutions, the hospital has not been looking so good lately.

An article in the September 2013 issue of Consumer Reports ("Your Safer-Surgery Survival Guide") ranks Huntington fifth from the bottom as one of the worst among nearly 200 California hospitals. Consumer Reports is the largest, most-trusted independent product testing organization in the world, accepting no advertising and without, as a not-for-profit organization, shareholders.

Huntington's senior management is richly compensated. For example, according to IRS 990 forms for 2012 and 2013, President and CEO Steve Ralph receives on an annual basis well over \$1 million in total compensation.

What does Ralph do to earn his lucrative pay? Well, lately he has engaged in significant efforts to aggressively suppress attempts by the hospital's registered nurses (RNs) to form a union under the auspices of the California Nurses Association (CNA). This is in complete violation of federal law, according to the National Labor Relations Act of 1935. A statement recently issued by Huntington's PR department is clearly anti-union and reads, in part, "We believe that we are stronger when we work together directly, rather than through a third-party like a labor union."

Why do RNs at Huntington feel compelled to form a union? Their concerns are many, but, according to several with whom I have spoken, their primary concern is that management is

not complying with all of the Title 22 California Code of Regulations, which include such things as nurse-to-patient ratios and other important laws that are critical to ensuring patient care standards. The RNs are keen to restore and maintain the highest quality of patient care.

According to several RNs, many units are understaffed and they have to do more work with less help, often without sufficient supplies and equipment. Stagnant compensation and frozen pensions are other concerns, as well as more restrictive and punitive work policies, which have eroded morale. Is it possible that these problems have something to do with why Huntington recently received such a lousy grade from Consumer Reports?

It's not as if RNs forming unions is something rare or unusual. According to the CNA, 60 percent of California hospitals are unionized, and of the approximately 200,000 RNs who work in California hospitals, 120,000 are represented by a union. Some well-known examples of unionized hospitals in Southern California include City of Hope National Cancer Center, Glendale Memorial Medical Center and USC-Norris Cancer Center. In California, unionized hospitals are the norm. In this case, Huntington is an outlier, and looking pretty bad.

[Last week] Congresswoman Judy Chu and Pasadena City Council member Victor Gordo [spoke] at a rally supporting the nurses at Huntington. Representatives from ACT, All Saints Church, Healthcare for All, the NAACP Pasadena Branch, a teachers' union, and other groups [joined] Chu on the east sidewalk of Pasadena Avenue.

It should also be noted that other public service and health care professionals in California, such as firefighters, police officers and emergency medical technicians, have, in nearly all cases, strong unions. Why does the management of Huntington Hospital have such a big problem with their RNs forming a union? More

than 70 percent of those nurses are women. The two head honchos at Huntington, Ralph and Chairman of the Board James Rothenberg, are (surprise, surprise) men. Is it possible that there is some kind of gender discrimination going on?

Does Huntington have the resources to adequately staff and compensate its RNs and other frontline health care workers? Apparently the answer is a resounding "yes." According to the CNA, the hospital accrued \$235 million in net revenue during the last five years and in 2013 made a \$54.4 million profit. According to the Oct. 9 Pasadena Weekly, it even "provides millions of dollars annually in charity care."

By the way, the current union-busting in which the hospital is engaging is not the first time this has happened. In 2003 the National Labor Relations Board found the hospital in violation of federal labor law and required it to post a notice that stated, among other things, "Federal law gives you the right to form, join, or assist a union."

People don't become RNs to get rich or powerful. RNs are special human beings who have a passion for ministering to sick and injured people. Someday we're all going to need one. Thank goodness such individuals exist, and they richly deserve to be treated with the utmost dignity and respect.

So, Mr. Ralph, do the right thing. Obey the law and let your RNs form a union.

John Gula, PhD, is affiliated with the Southern California Federation of Scientists.



Inman Moore, *Continued from page three*

political lines. I-am sick and tired of us calling people traitors, ignorant, or hateful who don't see things as we do. A political enemy of today might be an ally tomorrow. People do change. A vivid example of that is ourselves. Every single one of us changes. I have a different outlook on various issues today than I did 50 years ago. So let's look beyond gridlock and find every way possible to work together. We may be a Democrat or we may be a Republican. But we are all Americans and, down deep, we all want a better country, a better society, and a better world. Viva la democracy and may America, because of you and me, be a better country tomorrow than it is today! Let us never tire of giving our best while we live on this beautiful Planet Earth!

-- Inman



Did Americans get what they want?

Excerpted from Paul Waldman (CNN) 11/6/14

We've established that the public is fed up with a Congress seemingly incapable of getting anything done. The trouble is that the voters -- unanimous in their abhorrence of gridlock -- just delivered a result almost guaranteed to produce more gridlock...

To be fair, there was one party assuring them that their votes would do just the opposite. Republican candidates promised voters that they'd stand in Obama's way, and also promised that they'd "get things done," sometimes in the same sentence. As The Atlantic's Molly Ball reported last week, "these two seemingly contradictory messages are at the heart of Republican Senate campaigns across the country. I've heard them from candidate after candidate."

It's one thing to vote Republican because it's the party that reflects your beliefs. But if you're voting Republican because you want to

see Congress become more conciliatory and productive, you really should have been paying closer attention the last six years.

That's because obstructionism hasn't been an accident, or a reaction to moves on Obama's part that Republicans found objectionable. It was a strategy they employed from the outset. Literally on the day Obama was inaugurated, Republican leaders gathered over dinner and made a decision to oppose everything he proposed, to deny him both substantive progress and whatever political benefits might accrue to a president who looks like he's accomplishing things....

As political strategy, it was extremely astute and executed to near perfection. McConnell understood well that the President gets credit when Washington works and blame when it doesn't -- whether he deserves it in either case. So Republicans could pour sand in the gears of government and watch Obama suffer for it.

And it worked. What was the result of six years of unprecedented filibusters, debt ceiling crises, a government shutdown, 50 futile Affordable Care Act repeal votes, endless conspiracy theorizing and a dramatic increase in general buffoonery? Republicans took back the House in 2010, and have now taken the Senate.

Voters rewarded their misdeeds by returning them to power.

And now politicians in both parties are saying they want to come together to accomplish things for the public. The problem is that they don't agree on the things they'd like to accomplish. The argument isn't over means; it's over ends. That'll be even truer when the new Congress is inaugurated in January than it is now.

The new class of freshman Republicans in both the House and Senate is even more

conservative than the existing GOP caucus... and to them, "getting things done" means slashing environmental protections, taking away health coverage from the millions who have obtained it through the Affordable Care Act and cutting taxes on the wealthy.

If those new representatives actually managed to turn those beliefs into law, the public would say, "Hey, we didn't vote for that!" And they didn't, even in this Republican-leaning year...



Calendar

- November 21 Friday Morning Progressive
Friday Discussion Group at CoCo's
9 a.m. Restaurant, 77 N. Lake Ave.,
Pasa. Call Inman Moore for
info at 626-795-2201.
- November 25 Coalition Building/Outreach
Tuesday Committee meeting at Grone-
7:30 p.m. meier offices, 1490 Colorado
Blvd., Eagle Rock.
- December 4 ACT/ADC Holiday Potluck
Thursday Dinner and Meeting at the
6:30 p.m. home of Bobbie & Henry Moon,
1961 Mar Vista Ave., Altadena.
PPD Chief Phillip Sanchez to
speak. Potluck at 6:30 p.m.;
meeting at 8 p.m. See Potluck
assignments on front page.
Everyone welcome.
- Dec 5 & 19 Friday Morning Discussion
Friday Group. (Details same as 11/21.)
- December 7 ThePhoenix deadline. Send
Sunday eve items to hains27@sbglobal.net.

December 12 Friday 10 a.m. Final Meeting of the San Gabriel Valley Democratic Women's Club at the home of Jeanne and Fred Register, 2345 Midlothian Dr., Altadena. Discussion of Marylyn Sobieski's 1959 founding of the Club by daughter Lada Marx. Holiday luncheon. Everyone welcome.

Jan. 3 & 4 Research Committee interviews March local election candidates.

January 13 ACT Candidate Forum. (Date tentative.)



Membership Renewal 2015

You are always welcome to renew early for 2015! Just use the form below and mail your check c/o ACT/ADC, P. O. Box 40074, Pasadena, CA 91114-7074. If you have any questions about your membership contact Jon Fuhrman at jon_fuhrman@charter.net or 626-795-5255.



I'd like to join both groups for one low price! (Checks payable to ACT/ADC)

\$40	Single	\$70	Single Sustaining
\$25	Each additional member per household	\$90	Double Sustaining
\$15	Student or limited income	\$150	Patron
		\$275	Benefactor

I'd like to join ACT (Checks payable to ACT)

\$35	Single	\$60	Single Sustaining
\$20	Each additional member per household	\$85	Double Sustaining
\$15	Student or limited income	\$125	Patron
\$20	Gift Membership (NEW!)	\$275	Benefactor

I'd like to join the Arroyo Democratic Club (Checks payable to ADC)

\$35	Single	\$60	Single Sustaining
\$20	Each additional member per household	\$85	Double Sustaining
\$15	Student or limited income	\$125	Patron
		\$275	Benefactor

Extra Contribution

\$ _____ Political Account (for endorsed candidates and issues)
 \$ _____ Operating Account (for organizational costs) \$ _____ **Total enclosed**

Name Home Phone

Address Office Phone

City ZIP Email address

Mail to ACT, P. O. Box 40074, Pasadena, CA 91114-7074