



The Official Publication of ACT
P. O. Box 40074, (626) 795-2798

the phoenix
On-Line

Volume 41
Number 2
February, 2013

Published by Chuck Hains & Sally Beer

Pasadena City Council & PUSD School Board Races

The ACT membership has completed voting and has endorsed the following candidates:



- **John Kennedy** for City Council District 3
- **Victor Gordo** for City Council District 5
- **Ruben Hueso** for PUSD District 3
- **Elizabeth Pomeroy** for PUSD District 5
- **Luis Ayala** for PUSD District 7



The endorsement ballot results are reported below. Endorsed candidates are allowed to list ACT and the Arroyo Democratic Club as official endorsers, and may receive financial support and access to ACT's mailing lists in support of their candidacies.

Congratulations to our endorsed candidates, and don't forget to vote on Tuesday, March 5th!

	ACT		ADC			ACT		ADC	
Pasa. City Council District 3:					PUSD District 3:				
Ishmael Trone	11	15%	5	11%	Guillermo Arce	2	3%	1	3%
John Kennedy	53	70%	33	72%	Tyron Hampton	9	12%	0	0%
Nicholas Benson	0	0%	0	0%	Ruben Hueso	61	82%	37	92%
No Endorsement	11	15%	8	17%	Deirdre Duncan	0	0%	0	0%
					No Endorsement	2	3%	2	5%
Pasa. City Council District 5:					PUSD District 5:				
Victor Gordo	60	81%	33	79%	Elizabeth Pomeroy	45	60%	30	70%
Israel Estrada	2	3%	0	0%	Stella Murga	26	35%	11	25%
No Endorsement	12	16%	9	21%	No Endorsement	4	5%	2	5%
PUSD District 1:					PUSD District 7:				
Kimberly Kenne	18	25%	10	25%	Scott Phelps	8	11%	0	0%
Hermond Dean Cooper	10	14%	3	7%	Luis Ayala	60	80%	39	93%
No Endorsement	43	61%	28	68%	No Endorsement	7	9%	3	7%

Welcome to Two New ACT Co-Chairs

Welcome to our two new Co-Chairs, **Felicia Williams** and **Anthony Portantino**, elected unanimously at our January 17 after-the-Candidate Forum meeting. They will serve for two years, 2013 and 2014. Felicia has already chaired her first Steering Committee meeting on February 5 at Fred and Jeanne Register's home. **Wendy Soltes**, now in her second year as a Co-Chair, continues to serve through 2013. Thanks and good luck to all three.

Here is a listing of the 2013 Steering Committee as well as the officers for the 2013 Arroyo Democratic Club. In all these years our list has grown very long. So please let us know if you see any mistakes (especially about your committee assignments). Also please tell us if you would like to join an ACT Committee. Contact Jon Fuhrman or Beth Gertmenian at jon_fuhrman@charter.net, bgertmenian@gmail.com.

2013 ACT Steering Committee

Co-Chairs Wendy Soltes,
Anthony Portantino, Felicia Williams

Recording Secretaries
Sally Beer, Taylor Dark

Corresponding Secretary:
Beth Gertmenian

Treasurer Jon Fuhrman

Communications Wendy Gordon

Computer/Web Page *Fred Register,
Bruce Wright, Jon Fuhrman, Elliot Cuite,
Ross Mitchell, Bobbie Moon, Henry Moon*

Demographics (The Demographics Committee was rolled into the Program Committee in 2012)

Election Procedures *Ann Hunnewell,
Jon Fuhrman*

Fundraising *Wendy Soltes, Anne Wolf,
Bill Hackett, Jim Heringer,
Teresa Lamb Simpson*

Membership *Neal Wrightson, Ralph
Hurtado, Connie O'Donnell,
Sally Beer, Jeanne Register, Anne Wolf,
Jeanette Mann, Greg Harrison,
Jon Fuhrman, Susan Kane, Elliot Cuite, Bill
Hackett, Chuck Hains*

Mailing *Ellen Coles, Sally Beer,
Tom Hubbard, Jon Fuhrman, Joe Pardee, Jim
Heringer, Teresa Lamb Simpson, Nellie Moore,
Inman Moore,
Linda Moore, Ann Hunnewell*

The Phoenix *Chuck Hains, Sally Beer*

Program *Inman Moore, Wendy Gordon, John
Buchanan, Dolores Hickambottom*

Research *Ralph Hurtado, John
McLean (City), Roberta Martinez (PCC), Susan
Kane (Federal),
George VanAlstine (Schools),
Brian Walsh (Propositions),
Greg Harrison, Neal Wrightson,
Jeanette Mann, Jon Fuhrman,
Jim Heringer, Dolores Hickambottom, Adam
Murray, Inman Moore, Bill Creim,
Tim Wendler, Joanne Wendler,
Geoffrey Baum, Garrett Schneider, Jacquelynne
Jones Corby, Peter Dreier,
Anthony Portantino, Monica Hubbard,
Mary Barrie, Emily Stork, Mike Cornwell,
Allan Eisenman, Berjouhi Koukeyan, Peter
Wong, Roberta Marti, Elliot Cuite,
Betty Krachman, Vickere Murphy*

NOTE: All former ACT Co-Chairs are members of the Steering Committee and some of them are not listed here.

2013 Arroyo Democratic Club Officers

President Bill Hackett

Vice-President Tim Wendler

Secretaries & Treasurer Same as ACT

Wonderings and Wanderings

By Inman Moore

The Marvelous Murderous 1960s



The 1960s will go down in history as one of the most remarkable decades in the history of the United States, or, indeed, the history of any nation in the world. The decade saw gays come out of the closet. It heralded women taking their rightful position in the workplace. They came marching out of the kitchen in large numbers, no longer satisfied with just the lower level jobs. Youth began to find a voice in our society. There was Martin Luther King, Jr. speaking to one of the largest crowds ever assembled in the nation's capitol reminding us that we should not be judged by the color of our skin but rather by the content of our character. The decade saw segregation officially discarded by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. These were two of the most monumental laws ever passed in our country. The sixties were truly a decade of liberation.

Some of the most melodious songs ever written appeared in the 60s. Bob Dylan's: "A Hard Rain's A Gonna Fall." Joan Baez: "Blowin' In the Wind." Peter, Paul, and Mary: "If I Had a Hammer." There were many others, such as: "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" and "Turn, Turn, Turn." Pete Seeger readjusted an old song to make it the anthem of the Civil Rights Movement: "We Shall Overcome." The 60s music came to a climax in 1969 at the Woodstock Festival in New York State when more than half a million people came together united in a message of peace, openness, and cultural expression.

Like many great liberation movements it also brought some sad and murderous events. As I start to write this sentence, tears again come

into my eyes. It seems to happen every time I remember the senseless assassinations of Medgar Evers in June of 1963, President Jack Kennedy in November of 1963; his brother, Robert in June of 1968; and Martin Luther King, Jr. in April of 1968. I keep thinking what might have been.

The 60s were also tragically filled with the stench of that senseless war in Vietnam which accomplished nothing but bloodshed, dying, mangled bodies, and a massive debt. How could we have been so stupid? Lyndon Johnson led us to victory in the civil rights legislation and then made the tragic mistake of leading us to war.

The sixties brought also a proliferation of drugs led by Guru Professor Timothy Leary and his LSD experiments. In addition to LSD, hard drugs came on the scene big-time, such as: heroin, cocaine, amphetamines, etc. This was one of the sad chapters in a great decade. However, we must remember that an open society always carries risks. It is the price a society pays when all men and women are granted equal rights and privileges.

There are those among us who react negatively to the changes wrought by the turbulent sixties. For them the sixties were nothing but trouble. Count me as one who sees great possibilities because of the doors that were opened by the sixties. Gays are now becoming accepted with same sex marriages gaining acceptance all over America. Women have rapidly found positions open to them at all levels of the business and professional community. Segregation at any and all levels is rapidly being eliminated. We just need to muster the courage to continue to walk through those open doors. It is a fascinating story how the sixties, at their best, affected the future of our great country. We owe a great deal to that marvelous murderous decade of the 1960s.

Inman Moore, continued on page fourteen

Political Notes

by Jon Fuhrman



Monday, February 11.

While licking their wounds and considering how to re-brand their party, GOP leaders were, nonetheless, also looking ahead to the 2014 mid-term elections. Turnout is always lower in off-years, and, historically, second mid-term elections for incumbent Presidents are pretty grim. Bill Clinton defied the odds, gaining four House seats, but usually the President's party loses heavily in both the House and Senate.

That trend could be reinforced in 2014 given the number of Democrats from red states up for re-election; many had been elected with the help of President Obama's 2008 surge. Alaska, Arkansas, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Dakota, West Virginia -- red states everywhere one looked. Worse yet, senior Democrats were already announcing their retirements (Jay Rockefeller from West Virginia, Tom Harkin from Iowa, with Carl

Levin of Michigan and Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey likely to follow). To cap it off, Republicans were almost too eager to confirm John Kerry as Secretary of State, thinking that Scott Brown could steal Kerry's Massachusetts seat.

But already these plans are going awry. Scott Brown chose not to run in Massachusetts, recognizing that even if he won a tough special election this year, he'd just have to run again in 2014 (after winning the 2011 special but losing the 2012 general). Even in an off-year election in Massachusetts, the odds would have been with the Democrats. So it's hardly surprising that Brown wasn't entranced with the prospect of having to run in four tough elections in four consecutive years. With Brown out of the picture, Republicans have no candidate of stature and the seat is practically guaranteed to stay in Democratic hands.

Now, the GOP is struggling with its own radical elements as Tea Party extremists position themselves for seats that might otherwise be lucrative targets, or, even worse, for seats the party should easily hold. In Georgia, for example, incumbent GOP Senator Saxby Chambliss has announced his retirement. This should be a totally safe GOP seat. Yet, Cong. Paul Broun has announced his candidacy. Broun is a physician and a member of the House Science, Space and Technology Committee. He's also a Tea Party favorite, with quotes like "evolution, embryology and the Big Bang Theory -- all of that is lies straight from the pit of hell." There are not many ways the GOP could lose a Georgia Senate seat, but they may have found one in Paul Broun.

Similarly, in Alaska, Tea Party candidate Joe Miller is lining up to challenge Democratic incumbent Nick Begich. Miller won the Republican primary in 2010, beating incumbent Republican Lisa Murkowski, but then lost to Murkowski when she ran as an independent.

Early polls suggest he'd lose handily again. In Iowa, where Democrat Tom Harkin is retiring, Republican Cong. Steve King has made it clear he's interested; King, a hero to the Tea Party, leads the polls among all Republican contenders, but loses to virtually every potential Democratic contender.

Karl Rove announced he is organizing a super-PAC to support Republican candidates they deem electable, yet within days he was back on Fox News kowtowing, itemizing how many Tea Party candidates his groups had supported and how much money they had spent on their behalf. The grass-roots remain at best skeptical, and mostly just outright angry and defiant. They want true believers, electoral prospects be damned. This simply makes it harder to recruit top-flight candidates for these crucial Senate races, substantially reducing Republican hopes of recapturing the Senate.

To make things worse, President Obama has apparently made specific commitments to House Democrats, both to raise money and to help recruit candidates for swing seats now held by Republicans. This is far more than Obama did in 2008, 2010, or 2012. It represents a pretty significant shift in White House thinking, both recognition of Republican weakness and a determination to try to buck traditional patterns and win back the House in 2014.

Speaking of the House, a recent blog noted that our own Cong. Adam Schiff leads all California Democrats in cash on hand in his campaign account, with over \$2 million banked. While he might not need that money for his own campaigns, he uses it effectively in helping recruit and support Democratic contenders in the Southwest, and those funds give him



considerable political leverage within the House caucus. Schiff, sitting on the Appropriations, Intelligence and Judiciary panels, is becoming an influential leader in the House. Further, he had a recent op-ed piece that ran across the country addressing the exemption granted gun dealers from negligence and product liability lawsuits. According to Schiff, 1% of all gun dealers account for the sale of 57% of all weapons used in crimes, yet those gun dealers are, by federal statute, protected from civil lawsuits despite their clear defiance of existing statutes. Given the Republicans' oft-repeated argument that we should just enforce the laws we have on the books, rather than

pass new ones, an effort to repeal this unique exemption not only puts Republicans in a terrific political bind, but it has an overwhelming common-sense logic behind it. Look for Schiff, from his position on the Judiciary Committee, to lead the effort to eliminate this ridiculous exemption. And, should Minority Leader Pelosi retire in the near future, don't be surprised to see Schiff as a dark-horse candidate for party leadership. He'd do a hell of a job.

Here in California, the budget news is stunningly bright. January total tax receipts were \$4.3 billion over budget; personal income tax receipts were actually \$4.8 billion over budget, but sales tax revenue came in about \$500 million under budget. To make the news even better, spending for the first seven months of this fiscal year is \$1 billion under budget. So while the state had been looking at a \$13 billion cash shortfall, that has been cut in half. All the economic indicators the Controller tracks are looking remarkably positive: vehicle registrations, median home prices, single home sales, aggregate non-farm employment, construction permits are all up significantly year-

over-year; foreclosure filings have fallen to just over half what they were in Dec. 2011.

Will the trend continue? A significant amount of the personal income tax revenue comes from the effect of Prop. 30, and some may also come from sales of stock or other assets in December 2012 aimed at avoiding increased federal taxes in 2013. But the Prop. 30 boost was included in budget forecasts, and the gain for the whole year was estimated at only \$5 - 6 billion. So there seem to be other factors at work here. Will they continue over the next five months, perhaps creating a modest surplus in this year's budget and a substantial surplus for next year? Predicting state revenues has been fraught with difficulty, and most estimates have been erred on the high side. Will we finally end up with more money than predicted, rather than less?

Politically, it may turn out to be as hard to deal with a surplus as with the deficits. We've cut the budget in hundreds of places, some of which had thought to be sacrosanct. There'll be no shortage of special interest groups ready to plead their case; the only problem is, many can make a compelling and well-justified case for at least partial restoration of past cuts. How do we balance one need against another - caring for the aged against maintaining parks, supporting community colleges vs. adult day care? Legislators will have to make some tough calls, or leave it to Governor Brown to exercise his line-item veto with exceptional relish.

Here in Pasadena, with the new "sub-district" election system, school board candidates are joining city council candidates in walking their districts; votes from just a few hundred households could be enough to win a seat. Absentee ballots have already gone out. They are likely to predominate, perhaps counting for upwards of 2/3 of the votes cast. So the population registered for permanent absentee

ballots will have a disproportionate influence in this year's election, and probably future elections as well. Most voters will be voting for only office; some will cast votes for both a school board and a city council candidate, but in many of those cases, the city council candidate will be unopposed (Terry Tornek, in District 7) or facing an opponent who has officially withdrawn (Victor Gordo, in District 5). Only a small number of voters in Pasadena's Northwest will vote for truly contested races on both the City Council and the School Board.

Almost surely, this will lead to record low turnouts, a disproportionate influence for permanent absentee voters, and perhaps a reconsideration of our new system for electing school board members. The system is saving money, both for the election administrators (the city and school district), and for the candidates who are running in much smaller districts. School candidates now can walk their entire districts, and several are attempting to do so. One would hope this would better connect citizens to the school district and give them a stronger sense of involvement with the schools. It will take some years to see if that actually happens, or if the new system actually lessens voter awareness of and commitment to the PUSD (since in about half the district, voters have no election, no ballot, and no impact on school governance).

The other election that has started percolating is the proposed recall of Councilman Steve Madison. Some residents of District 6 remain dissatisfied with Madison's support for the EIR that opens the door for the city to discuss hosting an NFL team on a temporary basis. They have filed recall papers, and they now must gather over 2800 signatures from District 6 registered voters within 120 days after the city approves the format of their recall petitions. There are only about 14,000 registered voters total, so that 20% requirement is pretty daunting. My guess is that the recall

advocates might get 1,000 - 1,500 signatures, but they'll stall out after that. Even when Californians strongly disagree on policy, they generally see recalls as appropriate only for cases of ethical misconduct. In this case, it appears that proponents simply want to redo the 2011 election that they lost fairly decisively.

Further, on the merits, they seem to have a weak case. We don't even have any clear prospects of negotiations with the NFL yet, and seven other Council members also approved the measure (so even if Madison opposed the EIR, it would have easily passed). Their fight is not only premature, it also appears to elevate local neighborhood concerns well above concerns for the city as a whole. It's hard to argue that neighbors bought their houses not realizing there was a rather large football stadium close by, and it's hard to argue that football games are an inappropriate use for the Rose Bowl. So my guess is that recall proponents will be intensely frustrated, and the parallel lawsuit challenging the city's EIR will likely go nowhere as well. All this may, however, make for a more interesting Mayoral race in 2015.

-- Jon Fuhrman



Steering Committee Calendar

The ACT Steering Committee and the Arroyo Democratic Club meet on the first Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday of the month in rotation. Socializing begins at 7 p.m. with the meeting following at 7:30 p.m.

All members are welcome and urged to attend Steering Committee meetings. Check the Calendar and our website for meeting locations, <http://www.ACTPasadena.org>.



The San Gabriel Valley Democratic Women's Club

The San Gabriel Valley Democratic Women's Club meets at 10 a.m. on the second Friday of every month, September through June, usually at the Altadena Public Library. A program or speaker follows the brief business meeting. Everyone is welcome. Please see the Calendar on the back page for information about the next meeting.



Welcome New and Returning ACT Members:

- Peter Braun, Pasadena
- Elizabeth Ellis, South Pasadena
- Redell Ellis, South Pasadena
- Geraldine Kennedy, Pasadena
- Lena Kennedy, Pasadena
- Ellen Ligons, Pasadena
- Beverley Morgan-Sandoz, Pasadena
- Sadara Shakoor, Altadena
- Tarek Shawky, Pasadena

Special Thanks to Our Sustaining Members

- Bobbie & Henry Moon, Altadena
- Elizabeth & Tom Polenzani, Pasa.

And Special Thanks to Patrons

- Jon Fuhrman & Susan Kane, Pasa.

And Thanks to Members for Additional Contributions to ACT's Political Account

- Janice Nelson and Douglas Hayes, Sierra Madre



From State Senator Carol Liu...



Sacramento Update

California is off to a good start in 2013! With voter approval of Proposition 30 and the earlier rounds of cuts in state spending, the Governor has announced a 2013/14 budget without a projected deficit, with projected balanced budgets in years ahead, and a focus on paying down the "wall of debt." The state built up debt over several years of borrowing money to balance the budget. We also deferred payments owed to school districts, local governments, special districts and special funds. According to the Governor's projections the "wall of debt" will be at less than \$5 billion by 2016-17, down from \$35 billion in 2010-11 and \$28 billion in 2012-13.

The Governor's 2013-2014 budget emphasizes public education spending. He proposes a \$2.7 billion increase in spending for K-12 schools and \$1.3 billion for higher education - UC, CSU and the community colleges combined. He also called on the universities to hold the line on tuition increases. His "Local Control Funding Formula" (formerly know as "Weighted Pupil Formula") and proposal to shift all responsibility for adult education to the community colleges will be the topics of much discussion in the coming months in both the budget and policy committees.

Another area of the budget that will evolve as the year moves forward is the state's implementation of changes prescribed by the Affordable Care Act (ACA), including the expansion of health care to the uninsured. The Governor

called for, and the Legislature has convened, a special session to address eligibility and enrollment changes to Medi-Cal, the state's Medicaid program that serves low-income children and families, seniors, and persons with disabilities.

Following this year's off-site Senate Democrats retreat, the Democratic Caucus announced its gun control agenda. Ten bills to curb gun violence in California will ban rifles with detachable magazines, make all high-capacity magazines illegal in California, keep firearms and ammunition out of the hands of dangerous persons, regulate the purchase of ammunition, and require gun owners to be educated, trained and tested in the safe use of firearms. The measures will be introduced before the legislative deadline, February 22.

Finally, I am pleased and honored to have been named Chair of the Senate Education Committee. I will continue to serve on the Senate Human Services Committee, which I chaired for the last four years. In addition I will sit on the Senate Transportation; Governance and Finance; and Public Safety Committees. Please also know that I have moved to a new office, Room 5097, in the Capitol. The phone number is 916-651-4025. My District Office remains in Glendale and the number is unchanged. Best wishes to everyone and thank you again for your hard work in the 2012 election year. You have helped set the stage for a promising 2013.

Sen. Liu represents about 930,000 people in the 25th Senate District, which includes Burbank, Glendale, Pasadena, La Cañada Flintridge, La Crescenta-Montrose, Altadena, San Marino, South Pasadena, Sierra Madre, Monrovia, Duarte, San Dimas, La Verne, Claremont, Glendora, and Upland. Visit www.senate.ca.gov/LIU.



Dear ACT Member:

It's Time to Renew Your Membership!

As much as we accomplished last year, re-electing President Obama, keeping the Senate, gaining House seats, we know our job is not done. The fight continues! We can't walk away! It's more important than ever to stay involved, nationally and locally, to keep fighting for the reforms and the change that we sought.

That's why ACT needs you, and why you need to renew your membership in ACT!

You know ACT is the oldest progressive grass-roots political action group in the Foothills, and one of the most effective. Collectively we've been fighting for progressive ideals at the city, state and national levels for 40 years. Our special focus and competence is on elections and campaigning; individually and as a group, our members have helped elect numerous candidates to local and state office.

In 2012, we played critical roles in the United Democratic Headquarters. In 2011, we endorsed City Council, School Board and PCC Board candidates, six of whom won election.

Being an ACT member is also a great way to meet other politically engaged people -- activists, officeholders, future candidates -- and to get better informed about key issues. In addition, our "sister" organization, the Arroyo Democratic Club, provides a way to get involved in the Democratic Party.

As an ACT / ADC member, you'll continue to receive our monthly newsletter, *The Phoenix*, with some of the liveliest and most fearless political commentary and analysis you'll find anywhere. At Steering Committee meetings (to which all members are invited), special programs have ranged from candidate forums -- like the one we just had at PCC, which is being rebroadcast on a daily basis -- to campaign and election analyses, talks by local leaders like PUSD Supt. John Gundry, a report on the conditions women face in California prisons, or an overview of how new campaign techniques are taking advantage of social networking tools. And, of course, you get to vote on which candidates the organization will endorse.

So please, renew your membership today. Send your check with the membership form in the *Phoenix*. Your continuing membership enables us to carry the flag for progressive politics in the Pasadena - Foothill area.

Jon Fuhrman, Exec. Director, on behalf of the Steering Committee

P.S. If you can, please consider being a Sustaining Member or Patron; your special generosity is critical to our ability to be an effective voice in the political arena.

From Anthony Portantino

Dear ACT Friends,



I've was in New Jersey this past week visiting with my extended family and saying our final goodbye to my mother, Barbara. We had her service on Thursday and Friday. I appreciate everyone who sent their positive regards to me and my family. We received hundreds of e-mails, Facebook posts, cards, notes, Mass cards, donations in her name, personal well wishes and prayers. So many positive thoughts were sent our way that it was amazing and comforting. My entire family appreciates the love you shared with us and our mom. It was very fitting that it stormed on Friday during the service and Bella and Sofia got to play in the snow on Saturday. They went sleigh riding on the very same hill I sped down when I was Bella's age -- Grandma would have really like that "her girls" were having fun when visiting her. Several ACT members wanted me to share my mother's obituary, it's below.

Thank You and God Bless,
Anthony, Ellen, Sofia & Bella

Barbara Garrone Portantino passed at 81 years-old. She had a very full life as she maintained her positive spirit to the end. Many of you met her during her visits to California, were extremely kind to her while she was here, continued to inquire about her and sent your prayers often this past year. My entire family thanks you for your warmth toward our Mom. I was very glad that Ellen, Sofia, Bella and I surprised her on Christmas morning. The girls, wearing bows in their hair, were her presents. Christmas and the two days after it were about the last three days she was up and active. Unfortunately, in the past three weeks, she experienced a quick and deep decline. My brother Phil and my sister-in-law Nancy were by her side when she left us.

As many of you know, my dad died when I was eleven, leaving Barbara and four children with limited means. She did a remarkable job as the

foundation of our family and as our nurturing parent. Three of her four children graduated from college and the fourth went on to be a very successful entrepreneur. My oldest brother Phil, who was a high school senior when my dad died, became only the second person in our extended family to graduate from college. She wouldn't have it any other way.

Born in Long Branch, New Jersey, Mom helped her own mother run a small rooming house. Her father died when she was seven. She graduated from high school in 1950 and became a secretary in New York City. She met my dad, Tony at a Fort Monmouth mixer. The rest, as they say, is history. She quit her job and became a traditional Italian American mom raising Philip, MaryAnn, Michael and me through the 1960's and 1970's. I think she did a remarkable job. She loved making Halloween costumes. Almost every year, one of the four of us would win a trophy because of her work. Thanksgiving was a day robustly celebrated at our house with pasta and turkey on the menu. Every Sunday, I came home from church to a frying pan full of meatballs, quickly eaten while I watched the weekly Abbott and Costello movie shown Sunday afternoons at that time.

She never missed a Little League game, Pop Warner football game, or high school event that featured one of her children. She instilled in all of us a positive spirit and warmth that we carry as her legacy each and every day. A truly amazing woman, my mother survived an extremely difficult adolescence and the death of her husband with an uncanny ability to see the best in all people and an amazing belief in her children. She was not a complex person, but inspired big dreams for everyone she touched. In our large Italian family, there is always someone mad at someone else, but no one throughout the last 80 years ever got upset at my mother. She was the one person to whom everyone stopped by to visit with or pay their respects. I am very grateful to all of her childhood friends, my cousins, aunts and uncles who continually visited her in the nursing home this past year. She was truly a "good soul," as the old Italians would say.

Her obligations didn't stop as her children grew up, they intensified. She embraced my brother Michael when at age 16 he came out to her. I didn't even know that she knew he was gay until I was in my twenties. She knew it all along and supported Michael with devotion and unconditional love until

the day he died two years ago. She inspired him to become an activist and she spoke out to a generation and to a culture that didn't always understand LGBT issues. She couldn't be kept away from Washington, accompanying my brother to the Capitol Mall where she climbed on stage to support his life long quest to achieve equal rights for all Americans during the LGBT Millennial March in 2000.

Although she loved having her children and grandchildren around her, she selflessly encouraged all of us to pursue our dreams and passions even when those dreams took us far away. Her only daughter moved south to pursue a business career and Michael and I moved west, and she supported our decisions without reservation, guilt or hesitation. She treated her son and daughters-in-law as if they were her own. No person could make others feel more loved and appreciated better than her.

A child of the Depression, she would use every inch of paper before she would get a new sheet. Nothing bothered her more than someone wasting a precious resource. Every time she went out to dinner, she appreciated the opportunity to do so. She would always offer the table the chance to taste her food before she touched it. When we packed up her house, we found every household gadget known to exist except the pocket fisherman. She was way beyond cute. All of her grandchildren were the smartest, prettiest and most handsome. She was all grandma all the time and they all loved her with an eagerness and earnestness that makes me smile.

Barbara Garrone Portantino leaves behind two sons, one daughter, two daughters-in-law, two sons-in-law, seven grandchildren and one great granddaughter. She called her grandchildren "her bonuses" because after my father died she hoped to live long enough to see her children grown. God granted her the "bonus" by allowing her the extra time to see and love her grandchildren. She was preceded in death by Anthony Portantino in 1972 and her three older sisters.

She will be missed but not forgotten. In lieu of flowers, donations in Barbara's name may be made to Elizabeth House <http://elizabethhouse.net/> or Friends of Project Ten <http://project10.org/>. Elizabeth House helps young girls, many of who have been victims of abuse and Project Ten is nationally recognized program for LGBT youth.

**From
41th District
Assemblymember
Chris Holden**



Dear ACT Friends,

I am off to a busy start to my first year as your Assembly representative. As the newly appointed Majority Whip, my days are packed with meeting various constituencies. I am so honored to be working in one of the most beautiful buildings in California. I actually have a view of the Capitol dome from my office desk. If you are ever in Sacramento be sure to visit.

I recently had the privilege to meet and introduce an inspirational woman on the Assembly Floor - the incredible Myrlie Evers. She is widely admired for her great works and life-long service. Most recently she delivered a stirring invocation at President Obama's Inauguration. Myrlie Evers is a civil rights pioneer, a ceaseless advocate for the poor, and a true American hero. It truly was an honor meeting her.

My district office is on the move! We are now located in the Hastings Ranch area of Pasadena at **600 N. Rosemead Blvd, Suite 117, Pasadena 91104. Our new phone number is: 626.351.1917.** I hope you will all drop by to see the new office at our Open House on Saturday, March 16 from 2pm to 5pm. We will be sending details later, but in the meantime, please go to my Assembly website: www.asm.ca.gov/holden to sign up for our newsletter with details and photos of what's going on in the 41st Assembly District.

On the legislative front, I have introduced AB 132, which would waive the state penalties on

early withdrawals from retirement accounts when the funds are used to help stabilize mortgage payments. Eligible homeowners could avoid state tax penalties on up to \$6,000 taken from their retirement accounts when they use them to pay their mortgage. The penalty is also waived as part of a home loan modification. Individuals must agree to receive financial counseling from a HUD-approved counseling agency prior to taking the distribution.

Finally, I am extremely proud to be recognized by my neighbors, friends and constituents at this year's City of Pasadena, Black History Gala and Parade. It has been an honor to serve Pasadena for the past 23 years and to continue to serve our community in the State Assembly.

-- Chris 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.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



Dolores Hickambottom at the 57th Presidential Inauguration. She is on the parade route with Christine Donnelly, Communications Officer of Punahou High School (from which President Obama graduated in 1979.) Photo by Ann Marie Hickambottom. See more photos of the Hickambottoms at the inauguration on our web page.

From 43th District Assemblymember Mike Gatto

**Worth Repeating:
Honored to Serve You,
Always Glad to Hear
from You**



As a result of a government-reform effort, an independent commission re-drew California's Legislative boundaries that were used in last year's elections. The new lines are much more logical. Gone are the squiggly lines at which we all used to chuckle. The new, more regular-looking lines mean that my district, besides including Burbank and Glendale and parts of Los Angeles, will now also include all of Montrose, La Crescenta, and La Canada.

I was happy to welcome these communities into the district, because they bring back such fond memories of my childhood. My friends and I used to chase down golf balls at Oakmont golf course in Glendale, then bike all the way to Honolulu Avenue in Montrose for an ice cream. In summers, we would do odd jobs for friends' families, and I have some great memories of doing things like painting a friend's barn in La Canada. I've stayed in touch with many of my childhood friends, of course, and I have also enjoyed meeting many new people in the new communities.

Although my district has almost 500,000 people in it, I believe we can speak as one on many issues. For example, last year, Carol Liu and I authored a bill to force CalTrans to manage better or dispose of certain assets and use the money to fund sound wall construction along the 210 Freeway. Although the Governor vetoed our bill, residents of the San Gabriel Valley and Foothill communities should rest assured that I will continue to work re-

lently on these issues

My staff and I are currently in the process of developing ideas for the next legislative session and I would love to hear from you. You can call me any time at 818-558-3043 or write me at: Assemblymember.Gatto@asm.ca.gov. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve you.

Mike Gatto is the Chairman of the Appropriations Committee of the California State Assembly. He represents Burbank, Glendale, La Canada-Flint-ridge, La Crescenta, Montrose, and the Los Angeles neighborhoods of Los Feliz, Silver Lake, Atwater Village, and portions of the Hollywood Hills and East Hollywood.



Pivot to the Middle East

Chuck Hagel possesses the cool-headed skills to help return stability to the war-torn region

By John Grula

Reprinted from the Pasadena Weekly
with permission

President Obama's Jan. 7 nomination of Chuck Hagel to be his new Secretary of Defense is a bold and gutsy move that presages major changes in America's foreign and military policies.

Hagel is a former Republican senator from Nebraska who served two six-year terms from 1997 to 2009.

He is also a Vietnam War veteran who enlisted and eventually became an infantry squad leader. Badly wounded twice in combat, he was later awarded two Purple Hearts. If his nomination is confirmed, he would be the first veteran of that war and the first enlisted man to become Defense Secretary. He knows the horrors of combat in war firsthand, unlike Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld, two warmongers who never saw combat but started and prosecuted unnecessary and brutal wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Hagel has been critical of both of these wars, and he alienated many Republican colleagues in the US Senate with his denunciations of President George W. Bush's post-9/11 PATRIOT Act, warrantless

wiretaps and the Iraq War. Like Obama, Hagel wants to bring the troops home from Afghanistan sooner rather than later, and keep them home as the military is reformed and downsized.

Ever the independent and maverick, Hagel has also expressed skepticism about taking military action against Iran over its nuclear program, and instead favors continued diplomacy, using force only as a last resort. The fact that Hagel's nomination is being vehemently opposed by the likes of the Bill Kristol-led GOP outfit, the Emergency Committee for Israel, indicates Hagel not only greatly prefers a peaceful resolution to the standoff with Iran, but would also do much more to promote Palestinian statehood.

Sen. Hagel has other progressive positions that have put him in the line of fire of his conservative opponents. He has been highly critical of the bloated Pentagon budget, and conservative commentator David Brooks of The New York Times has argued that the main reason Obama nominated Hagel is "to supervise the beginning of [a] generation-long process of defense cutbacks. If a Democratic president is going to slash defense, he probably wants a Republican at the Pentagon to give him political cover, and he probably wants a decorated war hero to boot." Amen to that.

Even more remarkably, Hagel has endorsed Obama's vision of a world free of nuclear weapons, and he is a major supporter of efforts to reduce the numbers and role of nuclear weapons.

In fall 2011, the Obama administration issued a series of announcements that the US would be expanding and intensifying its already substantial military and diplomatic presence in the Asia-Pacific arena, especially the southern part of that region. This US-Asia "pivot" is seen primarily as a response to the growing economic and military power of China.

While Asia-Pacific nations and China are certainly important concerns, the potential threat from China is overblown, and it is diplomatically unproductive to make China feel that we are trying to "contain" it. Plus, there are Asian-Pacific counterweights to China, such as Australia, Japan, India and South Korea. If federal government deficits mean that our huge military budget is due for some significant reductions, we should let these allies shoulder more of the responsibility for Asian-Pacific security. Moreover, events in the Middle East over the last

two years amply demonstrate that this region has become a much bigger threat to world peace and economic prosperity than the Asia-Pacific. The "Arab Spring" revolutions have created ongoing instability in Egypt and other Arab nations, with the Muslim Brotherhood coming into power in Egypt and realigning its foreign policy in ways that could increase the chance of war with Israel.

Meanwhile, a bloody civil war rages in Syria, with tens of thousands already killed and a swelling refugee problem that could ignite military conflicts with Syria's neighbors, such as Turkey and Lebanon. In addition, Iraq remains very unstable and Iran is growing increasingly nervous as its ally in Syria, the Assad regime, appears close to falling.

Finally, Israel's already belligerent stance toward Iran may become even more hostile after Israeli elections later this month, and the possibility that it could launch a preemptive military strike against Iran may only become greater. A regional conflagration in the Middle East would not only mean a huge loss of life, but the resulting disruption of oil supplies from the area, which could plunge the world back into recession, or worse.

Thus, the Obama administration should now be pivoting to the Middle East while putting the Asia-Pacific theater on the back burner. It will require all of our diplomatic skills to return the Middle East to stability, as well as cool heads at the departments of Defense and State.

Who better to guide us through these shoals than Chuck Hagel at the Pentagon and Sen. John Kerry (also a Vietnam vet) at the State Department?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Inman Moore, from page three

When Robert Kennedy was making a run for the presidency he used this quote, "Some people see things as they are and say *Why*. I dream of things that never were and say, *Why not?*" We stand in the shadow of greatness here in America. Here we are in the early stages of a new decade. It's time for dreaming again! Why not?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The NRA "Enemies List"

Excerpted from John P. Avlon, CNN

Question: What do George Clooney, Chaka Khan, the American Medical Association, Bon Jovi and C. Everett Koop have in common?

Answer: They are among the 500 names on the National Rifle Association's absurd new "enemies list."

Richard Nixon would be embarrassed to find that his once sinister form of score-keeping has been revived so promiscuously by the NRA. But there is some redeeming social value here: The list illustrates an organization that has become hermetically sealed from society at large, so caught up in conservative debates that it has forgotten how to connect with Main Street America...

This idea gets thrown into even sharper relief when you look at a partial list of civic, charitable and religious organizations that the NRA has determined are "anti-gun." Warning: Take a deep breath before reading aloud:

AARP • AFL-CIO • American Medical Association • American Bar Association • American Jewish Committee • Anti-Defamation • B'nai B'rith • Children's Defense Fund • Environmental Action Foundation • Episcopal Church • Lauder Foundation; • League of Women Voters of the United States • National Association of Police Organizations • National Coalition Against Domestic Violence • National Association for the Advancement of Colored People • National Council of La Raza • National Urban League • National Spinal Cord Injury Association • Southern Christian Leadership Conference • U.S. Catholic Conference • United Methodist Church • United Church of Christ • U.S. Conference of Mayors • and the YWCA of the USA...

The NRA enemies list will backfire badly...

To Renew or to join...

To renew your ACT and/or ADC membership you may use this coupon and mail your check c/o ACT/ADC, P. O. Box 40074, Pasadena, CA 91114-7074. Or renew online at <http://www.actpasadena.org/>. 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

Feb Mar

Calendar

- March 1
Friday
9:00 a.m. Friday Morning Progressive Discussion Group at CoCo's Restaurant, 77 N. Lake Ave., Pasa. Call Inman Moore for info at 626-795-2201.
- Mar 5 Local Elections - Tuesday
- Mar 6
Tuesday
7 p.m. ACT Steering Committee and ADC Meeting at the home of Bobbie and Henry Moon, 1961 Mar Vista Ave., Alta. Program: Capt. John Benedict of the Altadena Sheriff's Station. Coffee at 7 p.m.; meeting follows at 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome.
- Mar 8
Friday
10 a.m. San Gabriel Valley Democratic Women's Club Meeting at the Altadena Library, 600 E. Mariposa St., Altadena. Program: Healthcare Update by Dr. Irma Strantz.
- Mar 10
Sunday eve. ThePhoenix deadline. Send items to Hains27@SBCGlobal.net.
- Mar 15
Friday Friday Morning Discussion Group. (Details same as 3/1.)



The Phoenix Deadline

The March *Phoenix* deadline will be **Sunday, March 10**. Send items to Chuck Hains at Hains27@SBCGlobal.net. *ThePhoenix* will be prepared for mailing on Thursday, March 14. (Volunteer mailers please check with Ellen Coles at 626-798-2402 for the location.)



**P. O. Box 40074
Pasadena, California
91114-7074**