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LAST MEETING

The last meeting was in January – see the prior issue of this Newsletter for details.

NEXT MEETING

Due to snow, the next meeting will be this Friday, March 9th, and will feature Julie Frost, an activist and trainer. Here's the brief bio she sent:

"I am currently working with the Human Rights Campaign to build coalitions that support taking direct action to stop the GOP agenda and elect candidates for office that support a progressive agenda. I was a high school English teacher for 20 years until I encountered intense hate and vitriol during my tenure at Sultana High School (Hesperia, CA). I am currently a LAMBDA Legal plaintiff involved in civil rights litigation with Hesperia Unified and supported students as they brought in the ACLU to protect their rights as LGBTQ students.

I have worked on several political campaigns, most notably Hillary Clinton's. I organized field staff, built coalitions, fundraised and traveled to help get out the vote in Nevada, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. I have participated in legislative lobbying efforts on Capitol Hill to help advance causes related to equality and civil rights as well as efforts to support treatment for addiction and mental illness. We all know that the upcoming election is the most critical in many generations. We all have to get involved on some level. We can't afford to watch as our democracy crumbles.

The information I will present to the group covers the types of political involvement we will be engaging in and ways to examine the "stories" we use when engaging with elected officials, families and others so we can be as effective as possible whether we are discussing issues with moderate Republicans, like minded individuals or those in office. We will get a chance to work on our "pitch" together and craft different ways of approaching issues so more productive conversations can be had. I look forward to seeing you!"

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DEMOCRATIC PARTY NEWS

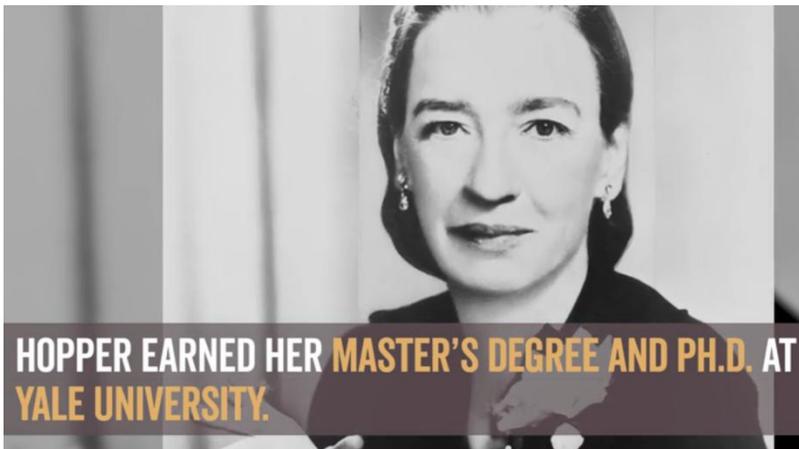
How up front are you with your political views? It really doesn't matter how much you discuss politics, but are you willing to define your positions on issues that matter to you? What it is like "[being blue in a Red County](#)" when faced with #45 and Fox "News" viewers.

Demonstrations have become common since the inauguration of #45 – not because they are 'fun' or even free from effort. They are a reflection of the lack of progress that is now possible in Congress. They should be seen as a warning by the Administration, but instead they're seen as an indicator of his ratings. [The anniversary of Bloody Sunday](#) is only the first of many large events this month. And in case anybody wants to know, yes – Democrats are involved; we're getting their votes in November!

[Resistance to oppressive immigration techniques in use by ICE](#) has caused #45 to Tweet that he might pull all agents out of California. [Our national 'vegetable bowl' may be saved](#) if that happens, actually.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS NEWS

The current member of the White House staff who is under investigation for misogyny is Rob Porter. [Here's what his ex-wife finally gets to say about that.](#)



[Grace Hopper](#). Computing. No comparisons need be made. None really can.

There are many womens' voices that deserve a wider audience. Stephanie E. Williams and Gail Fry are two of those . . . both in the local [Black Voice News](#).

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CIVIL RIGHTS and DIVERSITY

Utah, yet. Maybe there IS hope if [Andrew Jackson has been ditched for MARY Jackson!](#)

A British judge has ruled that a person (who is a risk for suicide) should not be sent to a U.S. prison. Why? [Because to do so would be inhuman.](#) Not 'inhumane' – INHUMAN.

One of the most damning accusations that the U.S. faces is the very true one of mistreatment of the mentally ill. [It has been going on for decades, and the future is not bright for these mistreated neighbors.](#)

[This Supreme Court ruling means that people in the U.S. can be held indefinitely.](#) Internment camps already exist. Now they are "legal."

The ability to say what you wish comes to a line that is a bit blurry. A man who was told he was being "disorderly" when he stated in a City Council meeting that some politicians are corrupt [claimed otherwise and was arrested for it.](#)

In the corner of my memory not well used is a name – [the Kerner Commission](#). It was an embarrassing telling of the rates of childhood poverty in this Land of Plenty. Yesterday, the National Association of Black Journalists ([NABJ](#)) began to examine our status fifty years later.

[Fred Harris](#), the last surviving member of the Kerner Commission, told Tuesday's conference at George Washington University: "We made progress on virtually every aspect of race and poverty for nearly a decade after the Kerner report and then that progress slowed, then stopped and in many ways was reversed, so that today racial and ethnic discrimination is again worsening. We are resegregating our cities and our schools, condemning millions of kids to inferior education and taking away their real possibility of getting out of poverty."

Read the book that stimulated this scathing accusation - [Healing Our Divided Society](#): Investing in America Fifty Years After the Kerner Report.

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LOCAL POLITICS

[Good advice from the Los Angeles Times](#) . . . but I'm not holding my breath the GOP will take it.

We're not the only [pocket of Democrats feeling surrounded](#) by very angry conservatives . . .

RADC ([Redlands Area Democratic Club](#)) is busy making sure 2018 moves Democratic Candidates forward.

The [FAA lost a lawsuit filed against them by the city of Newport Beach](#). While this is a bit of good news, we must remember that we aren't a city, the amount of money available for such things is far greater in Newport Beach, and most residents there actually call it 'home' – not their 'cabin.'

As you decide what you MUST do in Election Year 2018, keep in mind that "Independent Voters" are buzz words, mostly having [no real meaning in the world](#).

BUSINESS AND NATIONAL POLITICS

Now, far too late to have any beneficial effect, the media is wising up to the fact that [Hillary Clinton literally created most of the talking points](#) that some in Congress use to get paid today.

As easily in the section on Women's Rights as an example of sheer misogyny, this [article on Minority Speaker Nancy Pelosi](#) should be read with an eye to spotting pure envy on the part of her male co-workers; you know – the ones with half her ability and twice her pay.

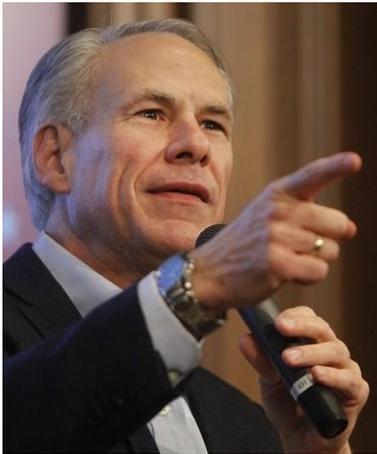
Investment in corporate innovation yields results, but not immediately. Even if U.S. firms were to shift payouts from stockholders to research today, the effects wouldn't be felt for years. So [the drop from the top innovators list](#) is significant, and the stock market's realization of that can't be far behind.

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Business and National Politics (cont.)

[A major list of indictments on February 16th](#) from the investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 Presidential election. It is all we hoped it would be.

Many students of history have plainly stated that a common fascist tactic is to sow discord and doubt that the government can actually act to benefit the public. But Katherine Rampell in a Washington Post opinion piece points out that [it is not "Washington" at all – it is the members of the Republican Party in Congress and the Administration.](#)



The Texas [Governor's race may end up being a referendum on better gun control.](#) Too bad, as the criminal behavior of Greg Abbott should be the focus; . . . ah, well – at least [the proposals the Governor floats LOOK good,](#) even if they are usually [talking points with no real value.](#)

Tillerson was crooked. Imagine that. Exxon got wise and is still profiting from it. Again – imagine that. Now it turns out the sanctions voted favorably on by Congress might end up [revealing the divide between #45 and Congress](#) – and ending some of the powers formerly part of each Administration.

[A fairly weak Democratic candidate has dropped out of a race](#) against a strong Republican whose political stance and political warchest combined are formidable.

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FAKE NEWS AND RELIABLE SOURCES

[Seems that right wingers are the worst of the fake news slingers.](#) Imagine that.

Sinclair Broadcasting is a propaganda arm of (at least) conservative viewpoints (and perhaps a hostile foreign nation). The FCC Chairman was able to allow this single corporation to own many more stations than was previously allowed, when he actively campaigned to permit it. Now Chairman [Ajit Pai is under investigation by the FCC's own inspector general.](#)

I'll bet you've been wondering where the people are who can fix this. [He's here – Ethan Zuckerman of M.I.T. is on it, too.](#)

The next 'big thing' may be Artificial Intelligence. That is readily shown by seeing how many things it is supposed to 'cure.' [Like Fake News, for instance.](#)

This is quite a partisan piece, but the facts are pretty solid – [the GOP is not a friend of the military or those who serve in it.](#)

Many of us are being asked to contribute to help various agencies push back against the seeming tide of awful disregard and hate toward others. Be careful as you go forward – and [use Charity Navigator for guidance.](#)

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Environment and Climate Change

“Because I said” is simply not going to cut it as the ‘reason’ for re-opening the discussion on California’s protected deserts. But [that’s all the excuse #45 is offering](#).

[Gov. Brown makes environmental activists very happy](#) by scaling back the North/South water redistribution to one tunnel instead of two.

Voters want water storage to ease the impact of So. Cal’s drought cycles. But approving the projects has not been easy – seems [nobody knows how to get the water stored without making SOMEbody angry](#).

It’s been said before, but the louder it is broadcast, the better the reception, apparently – [SYNTHETIC FIBERS ARE KILLING OUR OCEANS](#). If you don’t believe the all caps, check out the links.

[CalEarth – local building innovation](#). and [Website](#).

Water Districts hold great responsibility – and when it is discovered [the people running them are stealing](#), it causes strong community reactions.

The Palo Verde Reserve near Blythe [looks to be expanded due to a large purchase by the Wildlife Conservation Board](#). Perhaps an alliance with hunters is a viable way to save our natural resources?

Our infrastructure for delivery of energy is simply [not keeping up with either population growth or technology](#). The [Facebook Page Americans for a Clean Energy Grid](#) is now on LinkedIn to try and help fix that. They are worthy of note.

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SUPREME COURT and LAW

Where does the line exist between [enforcing the law and harassing a defendant](#) . . . and his team . . . and the crew making a documentary of the trial . . .

DA Mike Ramos has had his share of the headlines recently, with accusations of connections to the Mexican Mafia. [Now he's "firm" on his policy](#) against wiping out marijuana use records on a wholesale basis.



Los Angeles attorneys who are tasked with defending clients without charge believe their newly appointed boss is ridiculously underqualified. Last month, the L.A. County [Board of Supervisors appointed](#) Nicole Davis Tinkham as interim public defender — the latest in a yearlong string of temporary

appointments. The decision disturbed many within the office, who say Tinkham, who has never tried a criminal case, is woefully unqualified.

For those who claim that “less government is better,” take a look at the [private company trying to squeeze residents in Apple Valley for more cash](#) – and the town government that is defending them from exactly that.

Corporations are taking on the next phase of cases trying to get even more [“rights” to discriminate](#), to shield themselves against the public interest, and . . . to influence our government.

A bi-partisan agreement in Congress created a bill to reduce the difference between how whites and POCs are sentenced – and incarcerated. [The problem is that Jeff Sessions doesn't want it.](#)

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THE WHITE HOUSE RESIDENT

This is not a fake. [The European Union will no longer make trade deals with countries that are not part of the Paris Climate Agreement.](#)

This Forbes article explains how [hundreds of MILLIONS of dollars come to #45 in rent](#). From tenants in his towers like . . . the Chinese government (via the Industrial & Commercial Bank of China), Saudi Arabia, and over 160 tenant JUST IN THE NEW YORK TOWER. These aren't "emoluments", unless you consider them payment for favors to the President of the United States.

The Tweeter in Chief (or, if you prefer, the Self-Claimed Ruler of the United States – SCROTUS) has again embarrassed himself and the nation in response to expert statements at the [Munich Security Conference](#). #45's own national security adviser, H.R. McMaster found himself the subject of almost incoherent claims on Twitter because he didn't claim Russian interference in the 2016 Presidential Election was 'fake news.'

[Joy Reid said it best](#) on the occasion of "President's Day." A President's Day without a real President.

Squirm as he may, he's [still under the spotlight with the Democratic Memo](#). Devin Nunes must be pretty tired of being the author of HIS literary masterpiece.

There's another colorful character in the White House. [Virginia Heffernan rips into the First Daughter](#) – and sounds like she wants a check from Robert Mueller while she does.

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The White House Resident (cont.)



[David Neiwert has written a book](#) that lays the advancement of the white supremacists directly at the door of the White House – and its current Occupant. Rachel Janik of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) spells out the timeline and Mr. Neiwert points out some uncomfortable facts: “One of the reasons Trump is so dangerous is that this country would never have elected an overt fascist. If Richard Spencer had been the nominee, Americans would have revolted — because he is revolting. But ultimately his ideology did win the presidency because it came under the guise of this right wing populist.”

WORLD EVENTS

[Angela Merkel has secured the support](#) needed to have a fourth term. Germans in the know are delighted.

After #45 tried [his negotiating skills on the European Union](#), it seems he’s going to make America pay . . . and pay . . . and pay. He can’t make money owning a casino either, so it’s really no surprise.

Some think it will be hundreds of years before the planet becomes toxic, but it might be in our lifetime that [Global Warming \(or Climate Change\) wipes us off the planet](#) – if the rate of polar ice melt is a good gauge.

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EDITOR'S PAGE

This month there will be another demonstration against inaction in Congress. I'll be there – wearing a vest, carrying peaceful instructions (intended for both sides) and sporting a new, pink “pussy hat.”

It seems that I've been doing this forever, but it is only since the mid 1970s. What? You say that seems like it IS forever?

Some mornings I would have to agree. Getting up and getting going used to be a fifteen minute event – shaved, showered, dressed and ignition key turned. Now it takes quite a bit longer, and reviewing Facebook and Twitter posts isn't the only reason.

Equal rights for women should have been easy. Equal rights for people of color equally so. When Dreamer were promised a path to citizenship despite their parents' illegal entry to this country, it should have remained solid. When Congress banned the sale of weapons designed for military use to kill large numbers of people, they should have STAYED banned.

But it seems nothing stays more than a short time in the collective conscious; everything dangerous becomes common. Many things obviously deadly becomes just 'dangerous.' Those of us with clear memories are both sustained and tortured by them.



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Mountain Bears Democratic Club was founded in 2004. We are located in the San Bernardino Mountains of Southern California. We hope to do our part to inform and educate the public and bring newcomers to the party by registering new Democrats. The Democratic Party believes that the American Dream should be within the reach of all people. We welcome and encourage people from all walks of life to join us in discussion and debates regardless of your political affiliations.

Mountain Bears Democrats website:

<http://www.mountainbearsdemocrats.org>

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