Why We Should Help

“Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free” begins the inscription on the Statue of Liberty, America’s symbol of freedom and welcome. Yet the U.S. has responded in a meager and miserly fashion to what has been described as the greatest humanitarian crisis facing Europe since WW II.

The flow of refugees fleeing for their lives from conflicts in Syria, Iraq, North Africa, and other war-torn hot spots has reached record proportions. Conditions in Syria are appalling. Half of all Syrians have lost their homes, and of the 7.6 million still in Syria, one in three is facing food deprivation. Nearly 200,000 have lost their lives in the conflict including more than 70,000 civilians. More than 5,000 people died last month alone. Millions of Syrians have fled the chaos and violence inside their country. Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan have absorbed the major share of these refugees with roughly four million amassed in refugee camps and communities in those countries.

However, Syrian refugees are not allowed to work in these countries and are dependent upon aid, which is inadequate and shrinking. The World Food Program, which has been providing food aid to the refugees, recently warned that it must cut food distribution to the camps because of funding shortages. With despair and dire poverty in the camps, refugees are fleeing to Europe. A main flow of refugees has been from North Africa to Italy and Spain. However, the recent surge has occurred between the Turkish coast and Greek Islands and then via the mainland to Greece, Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary, and Austria.

In the days since the photograph of three-year-old Alan Kurdi’s tiny drowned body went viral, several countries opened their borders and increased immigration quotas. Germany has championed the refugee cause and announced that it will accept as many as 800,000 refugees over the next several years. Germany has also provided major aid to Italy and Greece to help them cope with the onslaught. Several other EU states have offered to help, but Hungary has refused to accept refugees and has closed its border with Serbia. The Balkan states are being overwhelmed by refugees seeking passage into Western Europe. So far Europe has been unable to agree on a quota system

Continued on Page 2

Table of Contents

President’s Message .........................................................1
October 22: Justice Ignazio (“Nace”) Ruvolo ........3
November 19: Steve Glazer .............................................3
September 24 Feedback Forum .................................4
Yea or Nay Report ..........................................................5
Recent Books by DoR Authors .................................7
The Recent Elections .....................................................8
Upcoming Events ..........................................................8
President’s Message, continued from Page 1

recommended by the United Nations, and a summit of EU members has been called to try to resolve the impasse. So the refugees suffer and keep waiting…

One would expect with its history of accepting refugees, the U.S. would take the lead in organizing an international response to the crisis, but its response has been underwhelming. Since the start of the crisis our country has admitted 1,500 Syrian refugees and now plans to admit only 10,000 more. This represents .0003% of the population compared to Germany’s total, which will be 1% of its population. The U.S. is pouring billions of dollars into humanitarian funds, but this simply is not enough. No amount of money can completely address the stark human cost of the refugee crisis. What is needed is a place for them to stay.

In examining U.S. policy, it is important to distinguish between a refugee and an immigrant. The U.N.’s 1951 Refugee Convention defines a refugee as someone who is fleeing armed conflict or persecution and would face potentially deadly consequences if denied asylum. It also guarantees certain rights to refugees, to be provided by his or her host country. A migrant is a person who leaves his country to seek a better life, but could be returned safely. The Syrians are applying for refugee status, for which they are well qualified.

Each year the President and Congress decide on the number of refugees they will accept. The U.S. has a proud history of admitting refugees for special humanitarian concerns. Over 600,000 displaced Europeans were admitted after WWII. Later laws provided for the admission of persons fleeing the Communist regimes of Eastern Europe, Korea, China, Cuba, and Vietnam. Nine U.S. Refugee Resettlement Agencies help newly arrived refugees settle into communities. Since 1975 the U.S. has resettled over 3 million refugees.

The U.S. has an obligation to admit vastly more Syrian refugees because the U.S. has fueled the refugee crisis in several ways. Many Syrians are fleeing the violence caused by the war between the Assad regime and the Syrian rebels—rebels the U.S. has funded and armed. Others are seeking to escape the brutality of the Islamic State and America cannot escape the reality that it unintentionally contributed to the rise of this organization.

So why the paltry response to what is one of the greatest humanitarian crisis since WW II? Some congressmen have argued that Syrian refugees could represent a security threat. This belies that fact that U.S. policy requires that refugees undergo a rigorous screening process by counterterrorism, the FBI and Homeland Security. Data has shown that for a refugee to engage in terrorist activities is an extremely rare phenomenon. Why should these families so desperate to escape violence consider engaging in it?

Perhaps there is a fear that the U.S. cannot assimilate a large Middle Eastern Muslim population. This is unfounded. America has done an excellent job of assimilating many immigrants from that part of the world. Studies have shown that as an immigrant group they are better educated, have higher work force rates and greater numbers of entrepreneurs than the average American.

The U.S. has the history and the resources to help resettle many more refugees than the President has proposed. It has the moral responsibility to take the lead in this crisis. It is simply the right thing to do.

Best Wishes,

Jane

“What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans, and the homeless, whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or the holy name of liberty and democracy?” — Gandhi
The 2014-2015 Roberts Court Term—Was it Really “The Most Liberal Since the 1969 Warren Court”?

Presiding Justice Ignazio (“Nace”) Ruvolo will speak on Thursday, October 22, at 7 p.m. in the Event Center. There will be a social hour with refreshments at 6. His presentation will focus on the most significant United States Supreme Court decisions of the last term, and he will discuss the current debate by scholars and journalists as to whether this past term of the Roberts Court produced the most liberal decisions since the 1969 Warren Court. Justice Ruvolo will also discuss a few of the most important cases pending for the term beginning this month in the U.S. Supreme Court.

After more than 20 years of civil litigation practice, Ruvolo was appointed to the Contra Costa Superior Court by Governor Pete Wilson in 1994. He was then appointed in 1996 to the California District Court of Appeal, Division Two, as an associate justice, where he served until his current appointment by Governor Schwarzenegger in 2006 to presiding justice of Division Four, where he still serves today.

In addition to his many duties as an officer of the court, Justice Ruvolo has taught students, lawyers, and other judges about legal and judicial ethics, the judicial process, professional liability, construction, and franchise law. He was on the faculty of the Hastings Center for Trial and Appellate Advocacy for a number of years, and also served as adjunct professor of law at Hastings College of Law, Golden Gate University School of Law, and John F. Kennedy University College of Law. He received his J.D., magna cum laude, from the University of San Diego School of Law, where he was also editor-in-chief of the law review, and has received an L.L.M. degree from the University of Virginia School of Law.

He is currently in the third year of his appointment as the only appellate court justice on the California Commission for Judicial Performance, the constitutionally constituted public body of eleven commissioners charged with the investigation of complaints of ethical violations lodged against judges statewide, and with imposing discipline where appropriate.

Justice Ruvolo was voted 1996 Trial Judge of the Year by the Alameda Contra Costa Trial Lawyers Association, and 2002 Appellate Justice of the Year by the San Francisco Trial Lawyers Association. While his judicial appointments have been made by Republican governors, Ruvolo is a registered Decline to State voter. He lives in Rossmoor.

Don't forget to mark your calendars for our General Meeting on November 19—6 p.m. social/7 p.m. speaker—in the Event Center.

Recently elected State Senator Steve Glazer will speak to our club for the first time. It will be your opportunity to ask questions about both local and state issues. Don't miss it!
DoR held its first-ever Feedback Forum last month. A total of 52 participants gathered in the Event Center along with 11 facilitators and 10 scribes. All registered Democrats, their task was to identify and prioritize their top issues going into the 2016 election year. The issues will be ranked in order of importance by early November in a final report. The report will then be available to local and state Democratic candidates so they can effectively focus on issues most important to their constituents and craft their communications around them.

“We’re going to share this information,” said Feedback Forum Manager and Rossmoorian Katha Hartley, adding, “We’ll then have compelling evidence on what candidates should address in their campaigns.”

Though information from participants is still being tallied, Hartley said that three issues quickly rose to the top, listed here in order from first to third: the economy, including job creation, infrastructure projects, and worker training; education, focusing on public school support, free education from kindergarten on, and student loan caps; and the environment and climate change.

Hartley said one surprise was that 100 percent of participants said they would support a candidate who worked to end the influence of money in politics. “This is a powerful way for our voices to be heard,” said Hartley.

Hartley added that, being a retirement community; it was especially impressive that participants ranked future-oriented issues so high. As a relative newcomer to Rossmoor, she said it is inspiring to find so many well-informed Democrats here.

“It’s phenomenal to find so many interesting, educated people,” she said. “It’s an enormous gift.”

Stay tuned for the full report in early November.
So far this year over 2,700 bills have been introduced into the California Legislature. Of these, 210 were passed in regular session.

The table below provides the voting records of our two most recently elected legislators on important issues. If you would like to learn more, relevant information can be found at [leginfo.ca.gov](http://leginfo.ca.gov). I can be reached at [decarlo901@comcast.net](mailto:decarlo901@comcast.net).

*Sue De Carlo*

### Yea or Nay Report by Sue De Carlo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative Reform</th>
<th>Baker</th>
<th>Glazer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AB 401</strong>—Provides for the development of a plan for funding and implementing a Low Income Water Rate Assistance Program.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AB 1030</strong>—Requires state agencies that allocate moneys from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund to prioritize projects that involve training and hiring from disadvantaged communities for career-track jobs.</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Waiting for Vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AB 1335</strong>—Would create a permanent source of funding for affordable housing by placing a $75 fee on real estate transactions, excluding home sales. Money would go into an already existing housing trust fund.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Waiting for Vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AB 1461</strong>—Provides that everyone who applies for a driver’s license or state I.D. Card who is eligible to vote would be registered to vote unless they opt out.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SB 673</strong>—Creates a Community Oversight Committee that will recommend to the Department of Toxic Substances Control ways to improve enforcement of existing rules and the permitting of hazardous waste facilities, particularly in the most vulnerable communities.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Budget

| **AB 93**—The 2015–2016 Budget of $119.9 billion including a reserve fund of $2.4 billion and a Fund for Economic Uncertainties of $5.7 billion. | N     | Y      |
| **AB 95**—Abolishes several obsolete funds and designates $5 Million for abatement of waterway barriers caused by highway construction so fish can reach their spawning grounds. | N     | Y      |

### Education

| **AB 329**—Requires school districts to ensure all pupils in grades 7–12 receive comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education. | N     | Y      |
| **AB 1354**—Requires that companies that do work for California provide an annual report on compensation comparing sex and race data for all positions. | N     | Y      |
| **AB 1452**—Provides that records of a school employee's egregious conduct not be expunged and be shared between districts and departments. | Y     | Y      |

### Energy

| **SB 765**—Creates an independent entity to coordinate the state's energy efficiency market-transformation activities. Died in the Senate. | Waiting for Vote | N      |
### CA LEGISLATION OF PARTICULAR INTEREST, continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Baker</th>
<th>Glazer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AB 590</strong>—Would use funds allocated for Greenhouse Gas Reduction to run incinerators that cause air pollution.</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Waiting for Vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SB 248</strong>—Requires the Division of Oil &amp; Gas Geothermal Resources to establish an inspection and reporting system to verify compliance of all fracking facilities operating in California with all regulation and publish the findings.</td>
<td>Waiting for Vote</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Judicial Procedures</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AB 87</strong>—Adds race, national origin, ethnic group, religion, age, sex, color, sexual orientation, genetic information, or disability as grounds for peremptory challenge in jury selection.</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AB 830</strong>—Allows individuals who have been subjected to violence because of gender orientation to bring civil action for damages against the responsible party.</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SB 14</strong>—Provides that consent is not a defense in a sexual battery civil action involving a minor if the person being sued is an adult in a position of authority over the minor at the time.</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SB 226</strong>—Provides that state agencies can intervene in groundwater adjudication to insure environmental concerns are addressed.</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SB 411</strong>— Specifies that taking photos, videotaping, or recording a law officer in a public place where the photographer has the right to be is not grounds for a charge of obstruction or detention or arrest.</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medicine and Health</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AB 258</strong>—Prohibits consideration of patient’s use of marijuana as criteria for determination of eligibility for the organ transplant list.</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SB 75</strong>—Extends Medi-Cal coverage to undocumented children</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Privacy</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AB 1541</strong>—Extends privacy rights to medical information, user names, computer passwords, and security questions and answers used for online account access.</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wildlife Protection</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AB 96</strong>—Strengthens the ban on sale of ivory and adds a ban on the sale of rhinoceros horn.</td>
<td>Did Not Vote</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### Did You Know…about the Supreme Court?

- The 2014–2015 term is the tenth term of Chief Justice Roberts's tenure and the fifth term with the current membership.
- This term Justice Stephen Breyer agreed with the Court’s judgment almost 92% of the time. He filed a dissent 3 times in the 74 cases heard in 2014–2015.
- Justice Clarence Thomas agreed with the Court’s judgment only 59% of the time in 2014–2015. He filed a dissent 17 times.
- Chief Justice John Roberts agreed 78%, filing a dissent 5 times.
The Light in Her Window by Mary Lou Peters Schram

“The gold was there all the time,” Jeb said, “It was waiting there for the right man to find it.” He was talking about the California Gold Rush, but to Marion that statement described him.

They were only twenty, sophomores in junior college, when they married and took a Greyhound bus to begin life in New York City where almost nothing turned out to be right for them. Eventually they landed in Oakland and took part in the civil rights movement, and their lives began to make sense to them.

“Spanning a half century of American cultural history…Schram’s breathtaking new novel, The Light In Her Window, explores the transitions in our attitudes toward the grand themes of our lives.” (Doug Hergert, Rossmoor News) There are four five-star reader reviews on Amazon.

The Mind of an American Revolutionary by Jon Foyt

Real Men may eat quiche, but do real men do Talk Therapy? That is the question Jon Foyt’s historical novel asks—and answers—in The Mind of an American Revolutionary, the life and motivations of one of the lesser known but equally significant Founding Fathers.

Extensively researched, Jon’s 12th novel tells the story of Robert Morris, an illegitimate immigrant lad from off the docks of Liverpool, who went on to finance the American Revolution—at times with money out of his own pocket—and then ended up in debtor’s prison.

The novel explores Morris’ mind and his emotions, which are relentlessly probed by a persistent mercenary Hessian Major in what today we would call psychological counseling or talk therapy.

Standing on My Head with My Fly Open by Duke Robinson

Duke Robinson, DoR member, award-winning author, and President of the nearly 100-member, Published Writers of Rossmoor, will have available in November, his fifth book, a memoir, Standing on My Head with My Fly Open. Along with one venture into fiction, Savior (2012), Duke has had published three other non-fiction works, all about being fully human: A Middle Way (2014), Create Your Own Best Life (2011), and his first book, Too Nice for Your Own Good (2000).

Duke often is asked how he published four books in the last five years. He says you do a lot of reading, thinking, note taking, and writing over the previous five decades. Learn more about Robinson’s books at http://www.amazon.com/author/duke_robinson.
The Recent Elections by Jon Foyt

You may ask: What really happened in the recent elections, in which we all took part? Even party leaders in Contra Costa County may be in the dark.

We had a State Assembly election and a State Senate election with a run-off. A lot of campaign money was spent on the ubiquitous cardboard flyers delivered through every Rossmoor mail slot seemingly every day.

Allysia Finley—writing in the Wall Street Journal under the headline “The Coalition to Arm California’s Democratic Moderates”—explains these elections as she reports on an organization called “Govern for California.”

Launched by Professor David Crane at Stanford, this organization acts like a venture-capital firm. They select candidates based upon their centrist positions, and then back them with lots of money. So far their investments have paid off with two vital seats in Sacramento. Guess which candidates they backed. You got it: Katherine Baker (a Republican) and Steve Glazer (a Democrat).

As members of Democrats of Rossmoor, we need to be alert to these developments and tune ourselves in to learning more about the candidates. Perhaps we can even invite them to speak to us in Rossmoor.

INFORMATION STATEMENT: The Rossmoor Democrat, newsletter of the Democrats of Rossmoor, is distributed six times annually to members and others expressing interest in The Rossmoor Democrat.

Paid for by the Democrats of Rossmoor, P.O. Box 2070, Walnut Creek, CA 94595
FEC ID# C00360644—FPPC ID #960136. Not authorized by any candidate or candidate committee.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT www.democratsOfRossmoor.org

“Democracy is not something you believe in or a place to hang your hat, but it’s something you do. You participate. If you stop doing it, democracy crumbles.” — Abbie Hoffman

Upcoming Events

October 5 Book Club: Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End
Gateway Multipurpose Room 2, 3 p.m.

October 6 New Members’ Party:
Vista Room at the Hillside Complex, 4 p.m.
RSVP to Patsy Sharaf,
patsysharaf@gmail.com

October 12 Film: Social Network
Peacock Hall, 1 and 7 p.m.

October 22 General Meeting:
Honorable Nace Ruvolo—Significant Effects of the 2014–2015 Supreme Court Decisions
Event Center, 6 p.m. social, 7 p.m. speaker

November 2 Book Club: to be determined
Gateway Multipurpose Room 2, 3 p.m.

November 9 Film: Merchants of Doubt
Peacock Hall, 1 and 7 p.m.

November 19 General Meeting:
Steve Glazer
Event Center, 6 p.m. social, 7 p.m. speaker