President Patsy Sharaf’s Message

“For all the sad words of tongue and pen, the saddest are: “It might have been.” So wrote Hillary Rodham Clinton, quoting John Greenleaf Whittier, in her new book What Happened. And it is, I think, an accurate expression of how we all felt at the turn of the year. At what we thought was going to be the gala pizza dinner victory watch party we gave the night of the election, I remember turning around after the Florida vote came in (I was sitting in the front of the room) and seeing shockingly that more than three quarters of our attendees had gone home.

It took a month or two for us to lick our wounds and recover, but then we quickly became a huge group of ferocious activists. A few of us went to the inauguration in January and marched in the Women’s March in D.C. the day after the inauguration. Many of us here at home made signs and marched here in the Women’s March, some in Oakland and some in Walnut Creek. We marched again in the Science March on March 22nd.

And then we phoned. Katha Hartley began her calling group, DRAAT (Democrats of Rossmoor Action Alert Team) in February, and we began phoning legislators week in and week out. Phoning made a decisive difference in the Republicans’ plan to dismantle ObamaCare. Katha now has a group of 110 phoning. It’s not too late to join the ranks! We’ll be doing a lot of phoning as Congress starts work on the tax revision plan.

Susan Lewis has hosted weekly phoning for most of the year in the card room at Gateway and plans to continue throughout 2018. Every week a dozen or more stalwarts show up to make calls either on behalf of or against proposed legislation and candidates in close elections across the country. For those of you who would like to make these calls, they can also be made in the comfort of your home.

Continued on page 2
At the same time, Tricia Spiegel has hosted ongoing monthly sessions of handwriting postcards for or against issues and candidates. In our digital age, research shows that voters appreciate hand-written notes. Tricia gets about a dozen people at each session. Recently they wrote 190 postcards at one session.

Core to the club, we worked to get excellent speakers for our Thursday meetings. UC Berkeley sociologist Arlie Hochschild kicked off the year with a memorable talk (that members are still discussing) based on her book, *Strangers in their Own Land*. She was followed by popular politics journalist Carla Marinucci and then eight other speakers who covered a broad spectrum of topics: national labor trends, healthcare, and immigration, to name just a few. We also hosted noteworthy meetings with our congressman Mark DeSaulnier and billionaire environmentalist Tom Steyer, who may run for governor.

Throughout the year we also brought speakers to our fledgling TGWD (Thank God We’re Democrats) dinner meetings, where we had some good times dining with each other and talking about serious topics such as universal health care, sanctuary cities, and the Solidarity Sundays group.

For those who gravitate toward being armchair politicians, the Book Club provided many opportunities to read about and discuss the hot topics of the year. The film group provided monthly opportunities to watch excellent movies that supplement the current headlines.

We also collected over $2,000 for Walnut Creek’s Trinity Center for the homeless, most of it in little plastic boxes on the tables at our monthly general meetings. Kudos to Emily Ehm, Jeanne Thomas, and their committee for working on this all year, and for providing a convivial fundraising luncheon on a warm summer day last August.

We’re just getting started as we gear up for the critical 2018 Midterm Election. Swing Left has proven ideas for how to regain seven of the Republican House seats in California, and you will hear more about their work from Katie Merrill, one of our proposed speakers for 2018. You can also expect to hear about many new volunteer opportunities as the year unfolds. We welcomed an amazing 259 new members to our club in 2017, and our membership now stands at 758; it will take every one of us to make a difference!

Best Wishes for the Holidays,

Patsy
**Raise Your Voices on November 6!**

DoR will host a public forum for the two declared Democratic candidates for Assembly District 16 (AD16), which includes Rossmoor. The forum will be held on **Monday, November 6, at 5:30 p.m. in the Event Center** (one day after the time change). The victorious of the two will run against Republican Catherine Baker, who currently holds the seat, in the 2018 Midterm Election.

After the forum all paid-up DoR attendees will submit a simple ballot stating their preference between the two. The results will guide the votes that the 26 Rossmoor Democratic delegates will cast at the district’s pre-endorsement conference in January. Whoever ultimately wins the seat will represent everyone in the district, so everyone is invited to the forum, regardless of political affiliation, though only DoR members will be able to vote.

The two candidates at the November 6 forum will be:

**Democrat Tom Tarantino** is a veteran of Bosnia, Iraq, and Afghanistan. He joined the staff of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, where he worked on various veterans' issues, including work on legislative actions that passed upgrades to the GI Bill and advocated for mental health services in veterans' benefits.

**Democrat Rebecca Bauer-Kahan** is an attorney who has worked as an environmental advocate, law professor, and community volunteer. She has also served on several boards and committees tasked with helping local attorneys provide services to those unable to pay for them.

Visit [www.democratsOFrossmoor.org](http://www.democratsOFrossmoor.org) for more information
**November 9 TGWD Meeting with the Mayor**

**Don’t Miss “Da Mayor”**

Walnut Creek Mayor Rich Carlston will speak next week on Thursday, November 9 in the Vista Room at Hillside. Doors will open at 4:30 p.m., and the Mayor will speak at 5 p.m. Mayor Carlston will focus on the city’s 2018 priorities in his opening remarks, with an eye to what’s in store for the City of Walnut Creek further into the future.

The Walnut Creek City Council has identified four priorities for 2017 and 2018. They are: identify and implement a strategy to meet the city’s infrastructure needs, improve the affordability and availability of housing in Walnut Creek, develop realistic responses to homelessness, and update the Economic Development Strategic Plan.

The city’s five council members are elected at large for four-year, staggered terms; elections are held in November of each even-numbered year and the role of mayor is filled on a rotating basis from among the council members.

Mayor Carlston was first appointed to the Walnut Creek City Council in November 2014. The third child in a family of six, he was born in Denver and grew up appreciating natural beauty and camping outdoors with his family, a childhood he says helped him to “deeply appreciate our unique and very special natural environments.” After finishing law school and military service, he and his wife Sue moved to Walnut Creek thirty-five years ago “because of the quality of life provided here.” Their children are grown.

Refreshments will not be served. The Democrats of Rossmoor are sponsoring the mayor’s visit, but everyone is welcome, free of charge, regardless of political affiliation.

**The December 14 TGWD meeting will be a holiday social in the Vista Room at 4:30 p.m.**

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**Supreme Court Quiz**

1. True or False: The number of Supreme Court justices is set in the Constitution.

2. Which one of the following people was NOT a Supreme Court justice?
   a. John Marshall
   b. Preston Howard
   c. John Marshall Harlan
   d. John Marshall Harlan II

3. True or False: Supreme Court justices must have law degrees.

4. How many cases do the justices decide each year?

5. What is the salary of a Supreme Court justice?

6. The motto etched above the entrance to the Supreme Court’s building in Washington, D.C. is:
   a. “All men are created equal”
   b. “Equal justice under law”
   c. “Favor our undertakings”

7. The following figures are all depicted in friezes inside the Supreme Court building EXCEPT:
   a. Moses
   b. Muhammad
   c. Hammurabi
   d. Jesus

8. The average age of the current justices is:
   a. 64
   b. 68
   c. 72
   d. 76

*Answers are on the bottom of page 5*
November 16 General Meeting

What’s Up With the Courts?

The Hon. Ignazio (Nace) Ruvolo, Presiding Justice of the California First District Court of Appeal, Division Four, will speak at the Democrats of Rossmoor’s General Meeting on Thursday, November 16, at 4 p.m. in the Event Center. The Town Hall will begin at 3 p.m. Please note the earlier time.

Justice Ruvolo’s presentation will focus on the most important cases under consideration for the United States Supreme Court’s current term (2017–2018), which began in September. The discussion will include the potential impact of new Justice Neal Gorsuch, who joined the court this past April, on these important pending decisions. He will also discuss the most significant United States Supreme Court decisions of the last term (2016–2017).

After more than 20 years of civil litigation practice, Ruvolo was appointed in 1996 to the California District Court of Appeal, Division Two, as an associate justice, where he served until his current appointment in 2006 as presiding justice of Division Four, where he serves today. Ruvolo is also Chairperson of the California Commission on Judicial Performance, the statewide commission that investigates complaints of judicial misconduct and imposes discipline on judges where appropriate.

For more than 30 years Ruvolo has taught public groups, students, lawyers, and other judges about legal and judicial ethics and the judicial process. 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 San Diego School of Law, where he was also editor-in-chief of the law review, and received a L.L.M. degree from the University of Virginia School of Law.

Judge Ruvolo is a Rossmoorian and one of the Democrats of Rossmoor’s most popular speakers. There will be time for questions. However, he cannot comment on any pending cases and cannot comment on any case with issues that are now or likely to be before the Court of Appeals for the State of California. Everyone is welcome, regardless of political affiliation. There is no charge.

There will be no General Meeting in December.

Answers to “Supreme Court Quiz” from page 4

2. b. Preston Howard
3. False. The Constitution does not specify qualifications for Justices such as age, education, profession, or native-born citizenship.
4. In recent terms, between 70 and 80 cases.
5. $251,800, though the chief justice makes $263,300.
6. b. “Equal justice under law”
7. d. Jesus. The figures represented were all lawgivers, and Jesus doesn’t fit the bill.
8. b. 68
DoR Board Members’ Holiday Wishes

I wish for an end to untruthfulness in politics in 2018 and beyond. — Patsy Sharaf

I hope that Congress will finally join hands to pass legislation critical to both parties: That henceforth all American presidential candidates pass eighth grade level history, civics, and English exams. — Marilyn Davin

My first wish is for Trump to have a brain and heart transplant from an intelligent, compassionate liberal. My second is for every child in the world to have the opportunity any means to reach their full potential. — Judy Canepa

My wish is that all those who didn’t bother to vote last time wake up and elect democrats to the House and Senate in 2018. — Sue DeCarlo

I wish that Congress would pass health care and tax reform legislation that will not bankrupt the 99% of us who don’t belong to the 1% that own 38% of the wealth in the U.S. — Jeanne Melaugh

That the people of the nation, after the fires have been extinguished, the flood waters have receded, and light and power are restored, will realize the beauty of community and continue the heroic acts of sacrifice and kindness that make us a great nation. — Katha Hartley

I wish for peace, prosperity, and common sense. — Jane Williams

My greatest political wish for 2018 is a combination of good health for current Supreme Court justices and a Democratic majority in the Senate. — Marc Gould

I hope that President Trump resigns after being indicted, that President Pence is caught in a honey trap, and that President Ryan can be beaten. — Steve Shields

I hope that Trump would be a one term President or be impeached prior to the end of his first term, and then I wish that Congress would come up with Democratic majorities. — Jane Walter

My most fervent wish is to not have a nuclear war. — Nancy Meredith

I wish the Democrats win both houses in November. — Carol Weed
Vetoed

**AB 569**: bans employers from taking adverse action against workers or their dependents for their reproductive health decisions. Brown wrote in his veto message that existing state law has long banned such action, except for religious institutions.

**AB 1209**: requires large employers to publicly report any disparities in pay between their male and female employees. Brown wrote that it could "encourage more litigation than pay equity."

**SB 149**: the Presidential Tax Transparency and Accountability Act requires a candidate for President, in order to have his or her name placed upon the CA primary election ballot, to file his or her income tax returns for the 5 most recent taxable years with the Secretary of State. Seen by some as a trolling Trump bill, Brown questioned its constitutionality.

**SB 2**: the Building Homes and Jobs Act authorizes billions in new funding for low-income housing.

Signed

**AB 249**: the Democracy is Strengthened by Casting Light on Spending in Elections Act (the "Disclose Act"), would require corporations to disclose the top five donors in their political ads (for issues, not candidates), and the head of the company would be required to appear at the end of the ad. But the bill exempts the NRA, AARP, the Humane Society, and large 401C4 organizations from the requirements.

**AB 567**: allows the new process of "liquid cremation" to dispose of bodies.

**SB 1**: the “Gas Tax” bill approves $5.2 billion-a-year road funding to improve roads and bridges; it raises the gas tax by 12 cents/gal on November 1, increases registration fees, and add other charges.

**SB 5**: a $4 billion parks and water bond, sending it to the June 2018 ballot.

**SB 54**: The Family Values Act, for a “Sanctuary State”, would limit state and local law enforcement agencies from communication with federal immigration authorities, and prevent all state and local police forces from questioning and holding people on immigration violations unless they had been convicted of a crime.

**SB 179**: allows a third gender marker on birth certificates and on drivers’ licenses.

**SB 258**: requires companies that make cleaning products to list hazardous ingredients on labels.

**SB 398**: a controversial bill written by Big Oil to extend of the Cap and Trade program for carbon dioxide emissions.

Bills that did not pass this legislative session, but can become 2-year bills

**SB 100**: A Renewable Portfolio Standard with the goal of reaching 100% renewable energy by 2045.

**SB 562**: A Single Payer Healthcare system, expanding the Affordable Care Act, proposing care better than “Medicare for All.”
November 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29, Flip Red Votes Phone/Text Banks: Gateway Oak Room, 4–6 p.m.

November 5 Daylight Savings Time ends 2 a.m.

November 6 Book Club: What Happened by Hillary Clinton. Gateway MPR 2, 3 p.m.

November 6: Candidates’ Forum. Event Center 5:30–7 p.m. See page 3 for details.

November 7, Write2Blue: Creekside Mulligan Room, 2–4 p.m.

November 13 Film: The Manchurian Candidate. Peacock Hall, 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.

November 9, TGWD: Walnut Creek Mayor. Hillside Complex Vista Room 4:30–6:30 p.m. See page 4 for details.

November 16, General Meeting: Hon. Nace Ruvolo. Event Center, 3 p.m. social/town square; 4 p.m. speaker. See page 5.

November 23 Thanksgiving

December 4 Book Club: Beyond the Messy Truths by Van Jones. Gateway MPR 2, 3 p.m.

December 5, Write2Blue: Creekside Mulligan Room, 2–4 p.m.

December 6, 13, 20, and 27, Flip Red Votes Phone Banks: Gateway Oak Room, 4–6 p.m.

December 11 Film: Hugo. Peacock Hall, 1 & 7

December 14 TGWD: Holiday Social. Hillside Complex Vista Room 4:30–6:30 p.m.

December 25 Christmas

It’s the time of year to renew your DoR membership for just $20 for all of 2018. The club has been growing by leaps and bounds, and our membership and many activities have grown right along with it. Membership now stands at 758, 259 more than at this time last year. So don’t delay!

**Membership runs January through December and costs $20 per person.**

Check One: [ ] New member [ ] Returning member

Name(s) __________________________________________________________ Date __________

*Please print.*

Address __________________________________________________________

Phone ____________ Email __________________________

Are you a registered voter at this address? ______ As a Democrat? ________

*(We need this information for the Democratic Party, Region Two)*

Volunteer for any of the following? ___________ Voter registration ___________ Event set-up

On behalf of Democratic Party candidates & issues: ___________ Write cards/letters ___________ Phone ___________ Table

Place your check (made out to Democrats of Rossmoor) and this form in an envelope and:

- Leave it in the Democrats' mailbox at Gateway during office hours,
- Mail it to Sue De Carlo, 901 Terra California Dr. #6, Walnut Creek, CA 94595,
- Or bring the form/check to the Membership Table at any meeting.

Visit [www.democratsOFrossmoor.org](http://www.democratsOFrossmoor.org) for more information