

Laguna Woods
Democratic Club
Post Office Box 2243
Laguna Hills, CA 92654-2243



STAMP
HERE

STAY SAFE. STAY WELL.

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Newsletter—June 2021

Village TV is every Wednesday in June from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

**MONTHLY MEETING
ORANGE COUNTY'S POLITICAL DIVIDE**

By: Sue Dearing

For our June meeting we are fortunate to have Dr. Fred Smoller and Dr. Michael A. (Mike) Moodian from Chapman University speaking about “Orange County's Political Divide: What Our Research Reveals.”

Together Smoller and Moodian publish an annual O.C. Survey, which asks O.C. residents about county, state, and national issues. This year’s focus is on the pandemic and climate change. [Click on survey link.](#)

Fred Smoller is an associate professor of political science at Chapman University, where he has been on the faculty since 1983. He received his Ph.D. from Indiana University. His major areas of interest are American politics, with an emphasis on media and politics, local government and public administration. Smoller directs Chapman’s annual local government conference and is the author of the 2018 book "From Kleptocracy to Democracy: How Citizens Can Take Back Local Government."

Michael A. (Mike) Moodian teaches for Chapman University’s leadership studies program and is an associate professor of social science at the Chapman-affiliated Brandman University. Moodian is one of Governor Jerry Brown’s appointees to the California Commission on Judicial Performance. He is the former chairman of the World Affairs Council of Orange County and serves as a U.C. Irvine Olive Tree Initiative Advisory Board member. He received his Ph.D. in Education from Pepperdine University.

The program will air on Village TV Wednesdays in June at 2 p.m.



Dr. Fred Smoller
Chapman University



Dr. Michael A. Moodian
Chapman University

LAGUNA WOODS Democratic Club

Welcome to the Laguna Woods Democratic Club.

We promote Democratic values through education and activism.

The Democratic Club serves as the meeting and gathering place for registered Democrats and friends of the Democratic Party in Laguna Woods.

**THANK YOU TO
ALL OF OUR
VOLUNTEERS!**

MEMBERSHIP

CURRENT MEMBERS - 346

**Our Membership
Goal is 400!**

HAVE YOU RENEWED?



**INVITE
A
FRIEND
TO
JOIN!**

**It is time to
Renew and/or
Invite a Friend to
Join the
Laguna Woods
Democratic Club!**

 **[Link to
Membership](#)**

2021 OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

DIRECTORS

- President Sue Dearing, Program
- 1st V.P. Rebeca Gilad, Outreach & Fundraising
- 2nd V.P. Nancy Hensel, Special Events
- Secretary Allan Feldman, Central Committee Associate Member
- Treasurer Pat Leftwich, Budget

AT-LARGE DIRECTORS

- Jonathan Adler, Legislative Action
- Dana Barraclough, Bylaws
- Janice Burstin, Activism
- Debra David, Membership
- Heide Krueger-Gerson, Historian
- Jeanne Lepowsky, Field Organizer
- Maureen Mehler, Nominating
- Jeanette Peck, Campaign
- Mary Ribando, Voter Registration

SPECIAL DIRECTOR

- Debo Orrill—Publicity, Website & Newsletter



VOTING MATTERS

By: Mary Ribando

Voting has consequences. Putting the right people in positions of power has consequences.

This is not only important in the House, Senate, and White House, it is important at EVERY level of government. Some voters are only interested in general elections. But primaries and local elections are even more important.

We are watching state governments suppressing voter rights, ignoring climate change, and turning a blind eye to social injustice. YOUR vote counts!

EVERY vote counts! EVERY ELECTION COUNTS! Do not sit them out. Make your voice heard. Talk to friends and family EVERYWHERE, here and across the country, to exercise their special power, to state their opinion, to make good changes, TO VOTE!

PS: Look for more information about the election to recall Governor Gavin Newsom!



THE V.P. CORNER

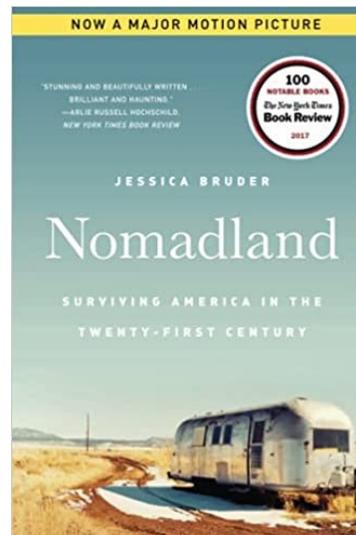
By: Rebeca Gilad

Do you prefer to read fiction or non-fiction? I definitely prefer non-fiction.

I finished the book *Nomadland* before leaving on a month-long camping trip across the nation. I wish I could tell you that what is written in it is fiction, an exaggeration from the author for the purpose of selling a story. But no, my friends. As you cross our beautiful country, you see hundreds of homes abandoned and businesses closed. And hundreds of RVs or campers that looked like they were abandoned a long time ago, but actually are homes to people that have nowhere else to live. People like you and me. Seniors and families of all ages, living there fulltime. No water. No electricity. No jobs. No health care. No school. No food. No hope.

So, what do we do? What can we do besides read a book or, because of this book, stop buying from Amazon? (You must read the book to understand why to stop buying from Amazon, even if it is “convenient.”) And you must read the book to understand that the people portrayed in the movie of the same name are NOT “camping” by choice.

Yes, we saw some incredibly beautiful towns and monuments and views on our trip, but this is not, it cannot be, our United States of America in the Twenty-first Century. It cannot. I repeat, it CANNOT.



ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH

By: Pat Leftwich

The month of May was designated Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month to recognize and celebrate Asian communities in the United States, which include people not only from the Asian continent but also people from the various Pacific islands. This last year has seen an increase in violent acts against members from all Asian communities.

The Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA) was established in 1997 and is located in Garden Grove. Their goal is to work to improve and expand the community’s opportunities through service, education, advocacy, organizing, and research.

The Laguna Woods Democratic Club recently donated to OCAPICA to support their numerous projects. These include homelessness prevention, health education, coordinating treatment for mental health issues, emergency rental assistance, and wellness programs.

To learn more about this organization or to donate, visit their website at OCAPICA.org.

[ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH SITE
FROM THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES](#)

The National Archives holds a wealth of material documenting the Asian and Pacific Islanders experience, and highlights these resources online, in programs, and through traditional and social media.

[Guide to Asian American and Pacific Islander Resources at the Library of Congress](#)

STOP HATE RALLY: DEMOCRATS & REPUBLICANS COME TOGETHER

May 14—The Democratic Club was joined by members of the Republican Club for the first time at the **Stop Hate Rally** on El Toro Road on Friday, May 14. A member of Concerned Citizens made a great video [link <https://youtu.be/eL6t-xZK6KU>]. The images of the faces and signs that he recorded that day give a good feel for the atmosphere of the rally. More photos by Joel Goldstein can be seen at the link below: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/QhNLoAQNE6gvrRLW6>



The Club's next **Stop Hate Rally** will take place on **Friday, June 11, from 4-5 p.m.** on El Toro Road (near City Hall and the Olive Garden). There is much to stand up for and celebrate this month: Flag Day, Gay Pride Month, and Juneteenth, which celebrates the end of slavery. And of course, to stand up against Hate in all forms! Contact Activism Chair, Janice Burstin: jburstin@comline.com or (949) 636-0501.

TODAY & ALWAYS

By: *Rebeca Gilad*

Dear Members: Do you want to congratulate someone, send a special message, honor a loved one, and at the same time help your Democratic Club so we can help others? Now you can do it! Please send an email to Rebeca: (rebecagilad@gmail.com) or call: 949-452-0464. Tell me whom you want to honor and what you want to say, and we will publish it! Please submit it before the 15th of the month. Just donate \$10 per line. Send donations to: Laguna Woods Democratic Club P.O. Box 2243 Laguna Hills, Ca. 92654-2243

TODAY:

To: Marcia Goldstein: Thank you for being our newsletter proofreader, and overall cheerleader for our newsletter. We will miss you terribly. --LWDC Board of Directors.

To: Barbara Siry: Welcome as you volunteer to serve as our new proofreader. Thank you. --LWDC Board of Directors.

To: Anita Gosch (Editor of the Globe Newspaper): Thank you for your professionalism, fair and continuous support. --LWDC Board of Directors.

To: Marina Brik: Good-bye and Good-luck. We thank you for your support and contributions to the Club over the years! We wish you the best in Anaheim! --LWDC Board of Directors

To: P.J. Higgins: Thank you for your help, guidance, patience and good work as the editor of our LWDC Channel 6 programs. --LWDC Board of Directors.

To: Annie Wright: Thank you for your review of the Club Bylaws. It was greatly appreciated. --LWDC Board of Directors.

ALWAYS:

To: Gloria Moldow: Our deep sympathy on the passing of your beloved husband Bert. A good friend of the Club and dedicated volunteer for Laguna Woods Village. May he rest in peace.

--LWDC Board of Directors.

CASTE - THE ORIGINS OF OUR DISCONTENTS

By: Kathleen Rubin



Isabel Wilkerson

Many of our club members are involved in work to support individuals who make up our increasingly diverse society. I thank Dottie Hawkins for encouraging me to read *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson even though it is gut wrenchingly difficult at times.

The author’s arguments and examples are well documented. It is a useful, personal accounting of what she subtitled “The Origins of Our Discontents.” I urge you to read and discuss it with people you care about. She provides many answers for how we might become effective allies to those who suffer under our home grown U.S. caste system. The two paragraphs below showcase Wilkerson’s concept of radical empathy. They describe challenging and effective ways to increase the trustworthiness required to become an ally.

They fit well with the Reverend Dr. Charles Dorsey’s quotes from W. E. B. Du Bois and his own sensitive, passionate explanation of the SCARS that grow over injuries experienced at the Soul level, the Conversation level, the Awareness level, and the Response level that allies must take into consideration.

“Radical empathy, on the other hand, means putting in the work to educate oneself and to listen with a humble heart to understand another’s experience from their perspective, not as we imagine we would feel. Radical empathy is not about you and what you think you would do in a situation you have never been in and perhaps never will. It is the kindred connection from a place of deep knowing that opens your spirit to the pain of another as they perceive it.

Empathy is no substitute for the experience itself. We don’t get to tell a person with a broken leg or a bullet wound that they are not in pain. And people who have hit the caste lottery are not in a position to tell a person who has suffered under the tyranny of caste what is offensive or hurtful or demeaning to those at the bottom. The price of privilege is the moral duty to act when one sees another person treated unfairly. And the least that a person in the dominant caste can do is not make the pain any worse.”

OUR MEMBERS—HASKEL SIMONOWITZ

By: Rebeca Gilad

R: Haskel, please share with us a little about your life.

H: I was born and raised in Manhattan, New York, a city I have loved from early on. The city has many interesting things everyone can see, but what goes on underground is fascinating too. I got a degree in psychology and moved to California, where I got a job as a probation officer. I got married here and was drafted to the army the same year and sent to Pittsburgh. Then, to Vietnam and finally to Berlin. By that point, I was an Army Officer.



Haskel Simonowitz

I started my military career filled with a sense of national duty and, as a son of immigrants, with a heart filled with gratitude. But being in Vietnam was a big disillusionment. I had the sense we were oppressing other countries, and it became a great emotional dilemma for me. I left the army after six years and joined the organization Veterans against the Vietnam War.

I returned home and went back to school. I got a Master’s and a Ph.D. in Political Science and spent the next 28 years teaching politics at Cal State. In my last years of teaching, I loved the fact that my classes were filled more and more by minority students whose parents never had the opportunity to attend college. Today, at age 82, I study languages, I read, and I enjoy good conversations with old friends and new acquaintances.

WHAT'S UP WITH DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF O.C.

By: Allan Feldman



The California Democratic Party (CADEM) Convention took place from April 29th to May 2nd. It was a virtual convention. At the convention, the CADEM approved a resolution to end the filibuster in the U.S. Senate and conducted the usual business of an off-year convention. The LWDC's legislative action this month also involves ending the filibuster.

The big news at the convention was the election of CADEM officers. Melahat Rafiei, member of the DPOC Central Committee and a current member of the Democratic National Committee, was elected Secretary of CADEM. This is good news for LWDC and our entire area. Melahat is the first CADEM officer from Orange County since the 1970s. California has lost one Congressional seat in the new nationwide redistricting. Nobody is certain what district will be eliminated, but word at the Central Committee meeting is that it will be a district in Los Angeles.



Melahat Rafiei
Secretary of CADEM

The Republican recall of Governor Newsom has collected enough signatures, and there will be a special election this autumn. This is an obvious Republican attempt to accomplish in a low turnout special election what they could not do in a general election. The original rationale behind the recall was Governor Newsom's instructions for people to wear masks, social distance, and close "non-essential" businesses. After many of the restrictions were lifted (prematurely), the reasons for the recall seemed to morph into the Governor going out to dinner.

The Republican Party is trying to relive those thrilling days of 2003. They hope to repeat that success this year, although there is no rational reason to recall Governor Newsom. As in all special and off-year elections, the recall will be decided by voter turnout, and it is going to be up to all of us in the LWDC to make sure we get our voters to vote. The LWDC will be asking our members to: make telephone calls, deliver literature door to door (if possible), send texts, and engage voters. Doing the things we do helps win elections.

REFUGEE FILM "THE GOOD LIE"

By: Annie Wright & Marcia Goldstein

June is Refugee Awareness Month, and the Orange County Jewish Coalition for Refugees is sponsoring an event to raise awareness of the global refugee crisis. On Sunday June 20 at 5:30 p.m., a drive-in screening of the film "The Good Lie," starring Reese Witherspoon and produced by Ron Howard, will take place at Mess Hall Market, 1705 Flight Way in Tustin (at Barranca and Red Hill). Donations will support local organizations who find and furnish homes for refugee families, help them find jobs, and enroll children in school.

We are all aware that refugees often make arduous journeys under horrific conditions. But once in the U.S., they may find themselves still struggling, trying to fit into a society that cannot see their strength, their humanity, and their contributions to the fabric of our society. "The Good Lie" with humor and sensitivity reveals the challenges of resettlement in the U.S. of a group of Sudanese siblings who fled the war there. It highlights the resilience and tenacity of this orphaned family.

The location of the June 20 event is a trendy food court of innovative mom-and-pop shops that is remarkably the mall landscape in Southern California. You may like reliving the old days of watching movies at the drive-in with a date. Snacks and dinner are available for purchase. Register at tinyurl.com/GoodLieOCJCR (If you cannot make it to the drive-in, you can always watch this film at home on Amazon for \$2.99.)



SOUTH COUNTY OUTREACH - UPDATE

By: Sue & Richard Snyder



SCO Food Drive with Sue and Richard “The King” Snyder.

Remember when we used to have South County Outreach Food Drives at Stater Brothers Market on the third Saturday of each month? So many of our LWDC members have participated in that effort over the last dozen years . We are grateful for all you have done to help NEEDY FAMILIES. Well, because of Covid we cannot hold food drives at the market yet. So, after a brief “think tank session” with our President Sue Dearing, we all decided to hold the food drives at 907 Ronda Sevilla, Unit O. It seems to be working quite well.

We asked SCO to drop off nine big barrels for our April 29 to May 2 collection because the last food

drive filled nine barrels. However, by early Saturday morning all the barrels were full, our dining room table was full, and more donations were on the way. Early Monday morning Manny Cervantes of SCO arrived with seven more barrels. We filled them up too. That is an astonishing 16 barrels of food for NEEDY FAMILIES, which totaled 1,338 pounds. And we received \$590 in checks and cash.

A HUGE THANK YOU to everyone who helped with this effort—and get ready for yet another event at 907 Ronda Sevilla, Unit O. We will be hosting a **food drive from Thursday July 8 through Sunday July 11**. We will let you know which items are most needed. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

FOLLOWING OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

By: Maureen Mehler

Katie Porter Reports:

On the 100th day of her second term in Congress Katie shared some highlights of what she and her team have accomplished for Orange County families so far. She introduced 10 bills, including legislation to hold polluters accountable and to make health care cheaper. She has also sent 13 letters demanding answers on behalf of the American people—writing to big insurance companies, the Biden Administration, and Congressional leadership.

Getting Orange County families the help they need to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be a top priority, and she is thrilled to share that in just the past three months, her team has helped nearly 400 families get answers from federal agencies and recover nearly \$300,000 in money they were owed by the government. She reiterates that anyone in our community needing help with a federal agency should never hesitate to contact her office for assistance.

The Orange County Register recognized her as the **“most legislatively productive representative”** when it comes to coronavirus relief.



Katie Porter Campaign Meeting. Members include Bethany Gilboard & Mary Ribando; with Supervisor Katrina Foley.