

Culver City Democratic Club

Active Democrat



www.CulverCityDemocraticClub.com

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General Meeting on Zoom — 7p.m. Wednesday, December 13, 2023

Program: candidates seeking the Club's endorsement

President's Message by Jeff Schwartz

No end to the fight for democracy

Shortly after the November 2022 election, in which unprecedented spending by billionaire developer and landlord Michael Hackman flipped a Culver City Council seat and created a conservative majority, I was listening to some friends. One was despairing about the outcome, and the other said: "It's OK, we will win in the end." I did not want to say anything at the time, but I was pretty sure I disagreed, because there is no end. Every gain, no matter how established, must be defended. Everything from protected bike lanes to Social Security to the Voting Rights Act to marriage equality to reproductive choice to public education is constantly threatened. The people who opposed these developments did not slink away into obscurity but immediately began organizing movements and institutions to undo them. I did not think fighting Nazis would be a thing again. It seemed that our grandparents had at least settled that, but no.

When I started thinking about this essay, I assumed I would need to reckon with Albert Camus' 1942 book *The Myth of Sisyphus*. According to Greek mythology Sisyphus offended the gods and was condemned to roll a boulder up a hill every day, only for it to roll down each night. Thanks largely to Camus, this story is a perennial metaphor for endless repetitious work, which seemed apopos.


I am not ashamed to admit I found it a bit of a slog (but [it's in stock at the Village Well](#), so buy it as part of our fundraiser and prove me wrong!). It's mostly detailed arguments with a series of B-list

mid-20th century philosophers and Dostoyevsky. Sisyphus only appears in the last few pages, where Camus offers the famous and shocking conclusion that we should "imagine Sisyphus happy" because he has a purpose and does not have hope. He has no illusion that the rock will ever stay in place. No expectation,

no disappointment, as the Buddhists say.

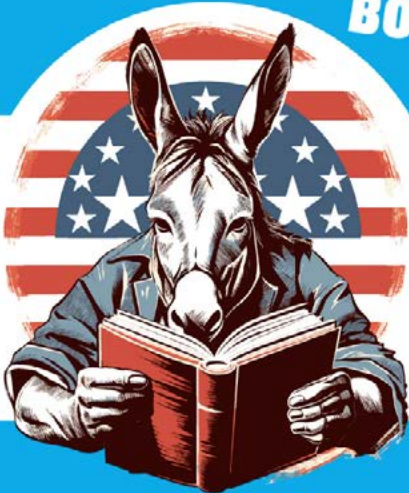
There is a new Rolling Stones record. Does Mick Jagger think he will ever write another song as good as "Satisfaction?" How many yachts does he need? I cite this album not for the pun, but as

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DEMOCRATIC CLUB**

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From MESSAGE on page 1

an example of a project which gives the band purpose without hope, since its artistic merit and commercial success are surely irrelevant to them. They made a record because they are a band and that's what bands do.

Camus' question is not how one should live but if. If life is absurd (and by "absurd" he means irrational, not funny), why not kill yourself? Sisyphus answers that question but raises a host of others, which are beyond the scope of the book. How do we reconcile Sisyphus' resignation with Camus' lifelong activism?

One option Camus considers and rejects is religion. More than one of the philosophers he engages landed on faith as the answer to the absurdity of existence, but he brushes this off because faith, by definition, is not rational. If you are asking for arguments and evidence, you do not have faith. There is, however, a significant tradition of existentialist Christian thought, led by Camus' contemporary Paul Tillich.

Martin Luther King wrote [his doctoral dissertation](#) on Tillich in 1955, shortly before leading the Montgomery Bus Boycott. King argued against Tillich's conception of God as Being rather than a being, but was clearly influenced by other aspects of his work. In his popular book *The Courage to Be* (1952) ([a special order at the Village Well](#), so not eligible for our fundraiser), Tillich discussed three fears that limit human freedom: the fear of death, fear of moral failure, and fear of meaninglessness. King spoke of his own death not only in his final "[I've Been to the Mountaintop](#)" speech, but throughout his career, inspired not simply by the idea of martyrdom but specifically by Tillich's writing on fear and freedom.

I was on a Progressive Delegates Network Zoom call during the last ADEMs election, and one speaker kept saying "embrace your death so you may truly live." She was paraphrasing a speech Southern Christian Leadership Conference co-founder Fred Shuttlesworth gave at the start of the 1963 campaign to desegregate Birmingham. A new book on this phase of the Civil Rights Movement is titled with his exact words: [You Have to be Prepared to Die Before You Can Begin to Live](#) (and [it's in stock at the Village Well!](#)). While Shuttlesworth was calling on people to literally

put their bodies on the line for freedom, the woman at PDN was talking about embracing our political deaths to vote our consciences, about committing to do the right thing regardless of its effects on our careers in the Party.

Votes in the State Party are not secret. Delegates are more like legislators in this respect: their votes are on the record so they can be held accountable. That's one level of political death: being voted out. That's democracy. However, all positions on Party committees are appointed by the Chair and, since delegates elect the Chair and their votes are public, anyone who does not vote for the winning Chair will have little-to-no chance of being on Resolutions, Platform, or any other committee. Choosing a Chair candidate based on your values rather than on who is most likely to win is an acceptance of death within the Party. There are people who believe they can compromise to get in the room, then do the right thing, but there always seems to be another room. Without embracing your political death, you cannot live authentically.

Vice Mayor Yasmine-Imani McMorrin often quotes Mariame Kaba's maxim that "[Hope is a discipline](#)." Kaba has several books, [available you know where](#). She also explained in an interview:

It's less about "how you feel," and more about the practice of making a decision every day, that you're still gonna put one foot in front of the other, that you're still going to get up in the morning. And you're still going to struggle, that was what I took away from it.

It's work to be hopeful. It's not like a fuzzy feeling. Like, you have to actually put in energy, time, and you have to be clear-eyed, and you have to hold fast to having a vision. It's a hard thing to maintain. But it matters to have it, to believe that it's possible, to change the world.

As a musician, I recognize this as practice. Dizzy Gillespie famously said: "Some days you get up and put the horn to your chops and it sounds pretty good and you win. Some days you try and nothing works and the horn wins. This goes on and on and then you die and the horn wins." Note that there have been few musicians [more joyous or virtuosic](#) than Gillespie (and his excellent memoir is a [special order from the Village Well](#)).

My wife has made similar points about yoga, and this is true for most physical and spiritual practices. Dizzy will never decisively defeat his horn or an athlete their sport. No matter how strong your yoga session was today, you'll need to do another one soon. The Pope still prays.

Kaba's view of hope as a discipline is not attached to an expectation of success. It is much more compatible with Camus' position. As Kaba put it in the same interview quoted above:

This is a long term arc of work and I'm not a progress-narrative person, so I think everything happens at the same time. So we're resisting and we're being crushed at the same time always, like they're parallel tracks happening. Let's just do what we can where we are within our capacity to the best of our abilities. Like, that's really the best we can be hoping for.

Improvising musicians often quote a phrase from Samuel Beckett: "Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better." In the course of verifying the Beckett quote, I was reminded that it is also a cliché in tech, reflecting the iterative process of product development. However, [several writers](#), who seem to have actually read the source text ([which you can special order from Village Well](#)) rather than dealing with a decontextualized fragment, note that Beckett is interested in the inevitability of failure, not its overcoming. A performance of a composition has some set goals, at a minimum one can judge if the score was accurately executed, but an improvisation can never not be a failure. The unrealized possibilities are always infinite and overwhelm the choices made, and the more one develops as an artist, the more one is aware of the limitations of any improvised performance. Whatever the inadequacies of a piece of tech are, and whatever angst its developers experienced, that is different from embracing failure as a discipline. The thresholds of both facility and expressiveness are infinite; a performance can never reach them. This is even more true for improvisations, which add the real-time creation and selection of material to the already unlimited challenges of execution and communication. Creativity is a discipline for artists as hope is for activists: the work will always fall short, but we cannot stop. The alternative is unthinkable.

Opinion: A Jewish case for an end to the war

by *Bubba Fish*

I recently came to realize just how many core memories from my upbringing center around my Judaism. I remember beaming on the bimah as I became a Bar Mitzvah, speaking at religious school graduation, being awarded a college scholarship from my temple, and traveling to Washington D.C. with hundreds of young congregants to advocate for climate action and LGBTQ+ rights. I remember my three weeks in Israel with my Jewish youth group and my first kiss being on a kibbutz. I remember meeting my now husband on the steps of our Jewish fraternity house and being married by our respective hometown rabbis.

If you can't tell by the readout of my Jewish résumé, my 'Jewishness' has always been integral to my identity, and our people's connection to "the promised land" was a part of my education from as early as I can remember. Israel was a place I recalled with affection where my faith and heritage was not unusual but the celebrated majority.

Following the horrifying October 7th attacks in which 1200 Israelis were murdered and 240 were kidnapped by Hamas, a conflict that I once saw as too intractable for my voice to matter was becoming more difficult to stay silent about with every passing day of escalating violence.

During the past two months, Israel's retaliatory siege on Gaza has claimed the lives of nearly [15,000 Palestinians](#), including [57 journalists](#) and [6,000 children](#), all with the backing of [\\$130 billion of military aid](#) from the U.S. since Israel's founding. Experts told the [New York Times](#) that the pace of death during Israel's campaign is unprecedented for this century, outpacing "even the deadliest moments of the U.S.-led attacks in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan." And that the number of women and children killed in Gaza is approaching the number of total civilians killed in Afghanistan during nearly 20 years of war.

The idea that such extreme violence is a viable route to peace for anyone, including the Jewish people, feels harder to believe as we witness the [magnitude of grief and suffering](#) caused by the ongoing Israeli retaliation. [Scholars](#) and [diplomats](#)



Bubba and two friends outside the Western Wall in Old City of Jerusalem

alike have sounded the alarm that the destruction of Gaza and decimation of its people by Israel's far-right government is antithetical to securing peace and far more likely to [fan the flames of extremism](#) and [antisemitism](#) for generations to come. After our own two-decade war in Afghanistan to root out the Taliban who played host to terror groups like Al-Qaeda, the Taliban are back in control and [stronger than ever](#). If history is any indication, Israel's violence [may win them the battle in Gaza, but lose them the war](#).

Even some loved ones of those Israelis killed on October 7th have renounced Israel's campaign. Days after Israeli Maoz Inon's parents were killed by Hamas on October 7th, he wrote a plea for peace titled "[Hamas killed my parents, but Israel's war is not the answer](#)." He explained, "Revenge is not going to bring my parents back to life. It is not going to bring back other Israelis and Palestinians killed either. It is going to do the opposite... It is going to bring more death."

At the recent California Democratic Convention, I sat next to Fatima Iqbal-Zubair, Chair of the Progressive Caucus of the state party, who tearfully shared that some of her friends had lost dozens of family members in Gaza. We joined Jews and allies in a peaceful protest, shouting "Ceasefire now!" while Senate candidates who had not called for a permanent ceasefire spoke. I left the con-

vention thankful to the Jews and allies who stood up in protest of business as usual, despite the risk of alienation and condemnation from family, friends and even fellow delegates and electeds.

Jewish people in the U.S. are no strangers to human rights advocacy and often risked their own freedom and safety to engage in protest and civil disobedience. In 1964, seventeen rabbis were [arrested with Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) in St. Augustine, Florida, and only a few days later, Jewish civil rights activists [Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner](#) along with James Chaney were murdered by the Mississippi KKK. Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel [marched arm-in-arm with Dr. King](#) and dozens more rabbis participated in the 1965 March on Selma, and both the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 [were drafted in the conference room of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism](#).

Many Jews understand deeply that our safety cannot and will never come from the oppression of others and that our struggle is tied to the collective struggle of all peoples. So it should come as no surprise that Jewish-led organizations including *If Not Now* and *Jewish Voice for Peace*, Jewish publications like *Jewish Currents*, [Israeli citizens](#), and [200 rabbis](#) have

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been on the frontlines condemning the indiscriminate violence committed by Israel against the Palestinian people and calling for both a permanent ceasefire and a commitment from the international community to broker peace.

Their activism appears to be making waves. As I write this, at least 49 members of Congress have called for a permanent ceasefire, a position supported by [68% of the American public and three quarters of Democrats](#). Los Angeles Councilmembers Eunisses Hernandez, Hugo Soto-Martinez, and Nithya Raman have joined them. Israel is [facing increasing pressure](#) to extend the temporary ceasefire that has resulted in the release of several dozen Israeli and Palestinian hostages and prisoners, and [Biden now faces pressure](#) from Democratic lawmakers to place [conditions on U.S. aid to Israel](#).

"It has become axiomatic that to be a Jew is to care about the world around us. To be a Reform Jew is to bear the voice of the prophets in our head; to be engaged in the ongoing work of tikkun olam; to strive to improve the world in which we live."
—Rabbi Marla J. Feldman, former Executive Director of Women of Reform Judaism.

I once believed that my Jewish identity complicated my feelings on this conflict, but I know now that it clarifies them. Judaism teaches that all people are created B'tselem Elohim, or in the image of God. I am thankful for the advocates brave enough to stand up and say not in our name-- no more atrocities in the name of the Jewish people who have suffered from atrocities ourselves. Our pain is not to be weaponized. We have seen firsthand the devastating effects that hatred can have on a people, and we will not allow the cycle of violence to continue.

As daunting as it may seem, we, as Jews, must speak up against extremism, violence, injustice, and oppression, wherever it occurs. We are the ones we have been waiting for to stand up for the peace and freedom we seek for all people. Let it be known that we raised our voices for our ancestors, our descendants, and all of humanity to say: never again.

Bubba Fish is a housing and transportation advocate living in Culver City. He organizes the City's annual Pride celebration and previously served on the City's Advisory Committee on Housing and Homelessness.



Vilma Dawson

Candidate Statement Assembly District 55 Delegate, March 5, 2024, Presidential Primary Election, Los Angeles County Democratic Party Central Committee

I am currently an appointed delegate representing Assembly District 55 of the Los Angeles County Democratic Party Central Committee selected by the Delegation to succeed the late Jacquelyn Hawthorne.

I am also a member of the California State Democratic Party Executive Committee (CADEM) appointed to the Credentials Committee and recently participated in the 2023 Organizing convention, Executive Board meeting and the November Endorsing convention in Sacramento.

I've been active in local Democratic politics as an Alternate for the Assembly District including the 2016 presidential

election cycle, the 2021 campaign to defeat the Newsom recall, the 2020 presidential campaign supporting the Biden-Harris ticket, and most recently the election of Karen Bass as the present Mayor of Los Angeles in 2022.

As an elected Delegate for Assembly District 55, the top policy areas where I would like to make a particular contribution in the political process at local and national levels are:

1. Reduction of gun violence – although California is a state that has stringent gun laws, we are experiencing a higher levels of mass shootings in public places across the country including Los Angeles County; ban assault weapons and limit the sale of high capacity ammunition;
2. Identification of local opportunities to leverage the \$45B infrastructure investment in the state of California from the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Assembly mem-

ber Bryan's California Justice 40 Act;

3. Redevelopment of South Los Angeles/plan – As a previous asset manager of real estate portfolios in both for profit and non-profit environments, with experience managing affordable housing portfolios, I have an interest in the City's plans for not only development of housing but commercial and industrial businesses development as it can favorably impact the black wealth gap in our communities;

4. Increasing the representation of people of color and progressive jurists in judicial nominations and judicial appointments in the U.S. District court circuit.

I respectfully ask for Culver City Democratic Club's endorsement as a candidate for the AD 55 Delegation in the upcoming March 5, 2024 primary election.

Thank you,
Vilma Dawson

Jeff Schwartz: LACDP candidate statement

While I was thinking about what to write for this statement, I got an email inviting me to the LACDP Holiday Fundraiser. Sponsors include DoorDash, the Cruise driverless car company, and Rick Caruso. That's why I'm running. Democrats must not become the party of union-busting

corporations, killer robots, and anti-choice billionaires. I have had the honor of being this Club's President for the last three years. If elected to LACDP Central Committee, I hope to bring the same combination of progressive values, serious and thoughtful discourse, and practical organizing to that role.

Editor's Note: Other Club Members who are running are:
Ilissa Gold
Pam Sparrow
Jimmie Woods-Gray
Jeanna Harris
Darrel Menthe
Freddie Puza

Solidarity from under the bus

by Danny Young

“Laid off due to company-wide reduction in workforce” was the euphemism I received when I finally got canned from my VFX job in October. I had already survived a springtime massacre that happened as a result of cuts in spending from the big distributors. Then, at least in my imagination, [like the iconic imagery of Neo from The Matrix \(expertly designed by a previous generation of digital artists\)](#), I had continued to dodge a hail of industry attacks and layoffs until finally someone on the other side pulled my plug. I don’t mean to be coy about it but the truth is I lost my job due to the sustained strikes by the writers and actors guilds.

The impacts of the strikes have been so devastating to people in the creative fields orbiting Hollywood that a palpable sense of resentment has crept in. Many industry veterans have been out of work for well over six months already. Students graduating into this environment will be permanently set back. The few jobs that are available today are receiving 100s of applications apiece. As of writing this I’m under the impression that all the strikes are formally wrapped up and that production is resuming immediately, however common estimates say it will take until early to mid 2024 before content makes its way into VFX houses.

As always, I struggle to focus my friends’ and colleagues’ frustration on their genuine enemies. And I want to make my position very clear. Those responsible for this sustained disaster are the heads of studios, state and provincial govern-

ments, and the surreal technification of the entertainment industry. These dominating forces and transformations in the entertainment world have fundamentally altered the landscape in a way that justly demanded a response.

The prominent creative guilds have set a remarkable example of what can be achieved by collective organizing. Consider for a moment the leverage required to force concessions from these economically and politically powerful institutions. Individually those workers’ needs, like whispers in a crowd, would never have been recognized, and although I wonder why they didn’t coordinate better between the separate guilds, and although there are still some valid concerns about the respective deals, they demanded change and they got it the only way possible. By forcing it through disruptive collective action. To reiterate, by causing a scene, shutting down the machine and focusing attention on their legitimate issues.

What I really want to say is that I’m more disappointed in my own industry than I am upset at the others. The last decade in VFX, animation and even video games has been a completely disorganized free for all. An ideologically libertarian industry founded by old hippie rebels who made a lot of money and in the process neglected to create a viable business model for the rest of us. [In some cases that was their explicit intention.](#) In 15 years I’ve never once been approached by a formal union representative. Even when I wasn’t being paid overtime, or being illegally misclassified as an indepen-

dent contractor, there was no organized body to take advantage of the opportunity. [Even when Rhythm & Hues famously went bankrupt in 2013 and won an Oscar two weeks later](#) there was only fleeting, disorganized solidarity. The companies I’ve worked for have never bothered to try and coordinate a trade union to protect themselves, let alone me. They desperately underbid each other into the ground, spending huge amounts of some fool’s capital to set up shop in whatever local government pays this year’s highest labor subsidy, they compete with foreign markets doing our work at a third of the cost, and the PR-arm of the industry is so bad that most of the film-going public fundamentally misunderstands what they do and hates them for doing it.

Had we built the infrastructure ten years ago, VFX artists and the industry itself would have been in a position to make our own demands, instead of sitting meekly on the sidelines, whining that it isn’t fair that those braver than us have the power, the discipline and the self-respect to improve their own circumstances, while we have nothing.

There is some light. The newer generation of artists tend to think more systemically. In fact the title of this letter is paraphrased from a colleague’s initial reaction to her unemployment. But as it stands now, we’re floating in this ether with nothing to cling to. For supposed creatives we seriously lack imagination. We have no power. No demands. No self-respect. For now at least, we are nothing.

Workers need the PRO Act

The PRO Act (S.567), that passed the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee last summer, protects the right to organize and collectively bargain in the workplace.

It revises the definitions of employee, supervisor, and employer to broaden the scope of individuals covered by the fair labor standards; permits labor organizations to encourage participation of union members in strikes initiated by employees represented by a different labor organization (i.e., secondary strikes); and prohibits employers from

bringing claims against unions that conduct such secondary strikes.

The bill also allows collective bargaining agreements to require all employees represented by the bargaining unit to contribute fees to the labor organization for the cost of such representation, notwithstanding a state law to the contrary, and it expands unfair labor practices to include prohibitions against replacement of, or discrimination against, workers who participate in strikes.

The bill makes it an unfair labor practice to require or coerce employees to attend employer meetings designed

to discourage union membership and prohibits employers from entering into agreements with employees under which employees waive the right to pursue or join a collective or class-action litigation.

Finally, the bill addresses the procedures for union representation elections, modifies the protections against unfair labor practices that result in serious economic harm, and establishes penalties and permits injunctive relief against entities that fail to comply with National Labor Relations Board orders.

—by Cynthia Hart

Paula Amezola de Herrera on the CADEM Convention

This past weekend of November 17, I attended the State Democratic Party Endorsing Convention in Sacramento as elected delegate Shannon Theus's proxy. I had planned to go without my husband or son, but a week before the convention, the call went out for two other last-minute proxies and my husband and son agreed to step up as proxies and accompany me.

We arrived in Sacramento to find rallies on Friday and Saturday calling for a ceasefire in Gaza and rallies on Saturday where participants chanted "Jesus is King." The active democratic process was pretty lively in the daily protests outside the convention center in the streets of Sacramento.

Within the convention center, there was

a shared commitment among attendees to address the challenges of free political expression and asserting our democratic values. There were so many dedicated activists in a small space, even if they didn't all agree on their purpose—everyone was purposeful. We attended events where human rights issues, worker's rights, environmental activism, reparations, tenants and housing issues, reproductive rights, LGBTQ+ rights, and minority representation were discussed.

Growing up, I had parents who were unable to vote, who weren't familiar with the specifics of democratic process in the U.S. Yet, they communicated to me that voting as a U.S. citizen was my birthright—an important privilege earned by my parents' sacrifices, a result of their

hard work to ensure a better life for their four daughters in the U.S. Now, witnessing my own children transition into voting adulthood, I impress upon them to never take this right for granted and to stay actively engaged in the political process.

Given this background, I was delighted to share this experience with my 24-year-old son and see his reactions and hear his questions as he got a closer look at the intricacies of the democratic process within the State Democratic Party. My son has one parent who is on the local school board and the other who is an officer of a Democratic Club. We don't force political engagement so it was a proud

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Dante Herrera, Greg Bartlett, Bubba Fish, Leah Pressman, Jeanna Harris, Will Herrera, Paula Amezola de Herrera, and Herman Jones II at the California Democratic Party Convention in Sacramento

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moment for us to witness his genuine curiosity and engagement this weekend. Like many people his age, he did not expect to find a diverse array of perspectives within the Democratic Party or even to find people who reflected his own views and his concerns. He was surprised to find that this was not entirely the case. Moreover, after being exposed to the campaigns for four U.S. Senate candidates and engaging in thoughtful deliberation with Forward55 delegates, he became an enthusiastic Barbara Lee supporter. For my son, support for Barbara Lee quickly emerged as the most fitting response to the pressing issues of our time.

As a mother, a first-generation immigrant, and as a school board president, the question of how to engage the next generation in the political process is so

important. It's disheartening to observe the impediments to involvement of young individuals—the tendency of party elders to dismiss the very issues that will impact the youth the most. These concerns, including global warming, the setback of the Vote16 initiative in Culver City, the financial challenges associated with attending conventions, the outdated processes, and the insufficient information and education about avenues for youth engagement, compound the frustration. It feels like every election in the past few years has become the most important election of our lives. Why aren't our students taught civics in a more engaging manner, enabling them to actively participate and feel empowered to change the world?

Speaker after speaker at the convention paid lip service to the perils of autocracy,

fascism, and the potential demise of the democratic process in America. However, rather than initiating a constructive dialogue with the predominantly youthful peaceful protesters, party leadership canceled Saturday's evening events.

Now, more than ever, it is imperative to guide the next generation towards understanding the significance of democratic values. By actively participating in the democratic process, we empower not only the youth but every individual. Although our government is not perfect, our collective participation becomes the catalyst for change towards a more perfect union. Through our engagement, we can elect representatives who truly mirror our values, fostering a sense of empowerment and a government that aligns with the ideals we hold dear.

Exploring Democracy Vouchers Reform in Los Angeles
Friday, December 1 @ 1PM PT | RSVP: tinyurl.com/exploringreform



Trent Lange
California Clean Money Campaign



Hon. Nithya Raman
Los Angeles City Council



Tom Latkowski
Los Angeles for Democracy Vouchers

Co-hosts:      

The idea of democracy vouchers is of interest to many residents in Culver City. On Dec. 1, Los Angeles for Democracy Vouchers will be co-hosting a virtual community briefing on the topic of Exploring Democracy Vouchers Reform in Los Angeles.

The briefing will give an update on the City's exploration into the feasibility of establishing a Democracy Voucher pro-

gram, including options for full public financing, as well as share the results of Los Angeles for Democracy Vouchers' latest [research](#), derived from conversations with members of the community, that outline possible options that the City could take to make Los Angeles city elections open to all—not just the wealthy and well-connected.

[RSVP here.](#)

Comments expressed in the newsletter are the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the Culver City Democratic Club



Don't Forget to Renew Your Club Membership for 2024!

[To Join the Culver City Democratic Club CLICK HERE for the Club's ActBlue page.](#)

Join the Culver City Democratic Club for next year and the rest of 2023 for a \$30 donation!

For more information on becoming a member of the Culver City Democratic Club, call Diane Rosenberg at (310) 398-5328.

Club members cheer Supervisor Holly Mitchell's re-election bid

by Cynthia Hart

On November 1 Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell announced her run for re-election to represent the roughly 2 million voters of the 2nd District surrounded by cheering supporters.

Officials of the Sierra Club were among those on hand who cited her work in phasing out oil and gas drilling in the Inglewood oil field and promoting a just transition for jobs that are safe for workers and for the surrounding community. Susanna Reyes, a Sierra Club national political co-lead, called Holly "One of the Sierra Club's strongest allies". Allison Chin, president of the national Sierra Club, praised Holly's environmental leadership that has made Los Angeles County a model county for the nation.

Culver City Council Member Freddy Puza called her Culver City's "fierce ally" for phasing out the Inglewood oil field, as well as a "staunch ally of the LGBTQ+ and other marginalized communities."



Nancy Barba, Alex Fisch, Pete Rockwell, Disa Lindgren, Jeanna Harris, Holly J. Mitchell, Cynthia Hart, Andrew Lachman (Not pictured: Karim Sahli, Freddy Puza, David Haake, and Bubba Fish)

He said "Her values are equity and justice. No one should be discarded."

Mike Bonin, former LA City Council member and serving "Forward 55" ADEMS delegate, called Holly "the most awesome bad-ass legislator."

In seeking a second term, Supervisor Mitchell spoke of her vision for a Los Angeles County where Angelenos can "grow up and thrive and grow old with dignity." To that end, the County must

address multigenerational poverty. We must decide that 80,000 people living on the streets (the fastest growing number of them being senior-age women) is unacceptable. (Hint: "No Parking" signs are not a solution.)

We need to build out a world-class system of public transportation. Her vision cannot be achieved in one four-year term. "If it were easy, we would have figured it out a long time ago."



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December 21

**National Homeless Persons Memorial Day
The Winter Solstice—The Longest Night of the Year**



**Homeless Persons'
MEMORIAL DAY**

New CCDC t-shirts are here!



We are now accepting orders for Club t-shirts in a new design, refreshed for our 70th anniversary.

Shirts are 100% cotton, union made in Boyle Heights.

They come in small, medium, large, and extra-large and, for the first time, we have Men's (boxy) and Women's (fitted) cuts.

Place your order by donating \$20 (or more!) via [Act Blue](#) and emailing us at CulverCityDemClub@gmail.com your desired size and cut. We will deliver in Culver City and nearby; other orders will be mailed.

We also have a few shirts remaining with the previous design (now known as "heritage" or "throwback") shown below.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our Club website: www.culvercitydemocraticclub.com

Club email address: CulverCityDemClub@gmail.com

Follow us on Twitter: @CulvCityDemClub

Instagram: CulverCityDemClub

and Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CulverCityDems>

December 2 • 9 AM - 3 PM

[Free Household Hazardous Waste & E-Waste Recycling Collection Event](#)

Wende Museum, Front Parking Lot, 10808 Culver Boulevard, Culver City
(enter from Culver Boulevard at Elenda Street)

December 2nd and 3rd

Culver City Democratic Club

Pop-Up Fundraiser

Village Well Books & Coffee

<https://www.c-c-d-c.com/holiday-fundraiser-save-the-date/>

December 6 • 6:30 - 9:30 PM

LACDP Chair Mark Gonzales's Holiday Party

Purchase tickets here:

<https://www.lacdp.org/chairsholidayparty23>

December 11 • 7 PM

[Culver City Council Meeting](#)

The City Council will discuss and elect the new Mayor and Vice Mayor

December 11

[CCUSD School Board Meeting](#)

December 13 • 7 PM

[CCDC General Meeting via Zoom](#)

Endorsement Votes for March Primary Ballot

December 21

National Homeless Persons Memorial Day
The Winter Solstice—The Longest Night of the Year

Ongoing

Grassroots Democratic Headquarters

Offers volunteer opportunities to flip the House!

Choose from in-person or virtual phonebanking,
textbanking, postcarding and canvassing

<https://linktr.ee/grassrootsdemhq>

**Comments expressed
in the newsletter are the
opinions of the authors
and do not necessarily
represent the position of
the Culver City
Democratic Club**

Di's Corner:

by Diane Rosenberg

Update on club member Charlotte Gunter. Charlotte's attitude is remarkable. Whenever I talk to her, which is several times a week, she's always positive and misses everybody. She looks forward to when the club meets in person.



When looking into candidates, it is often so telling to learn who is backing them and what kind of corporate money they are taking. Alfred Twu, architect and DNC candidate, has prepared this very useful guide to make this process easier. Here is the link: [Who Takes Corporate Money?](#)



Elected Eboard member AD 55, Leah Pressman, pictured here at the California Democratic Convention booth for the Campaign for a Safe and Healthy California. In October, our club voted to support their campaign to preserve the oil and gas drilling setback law which keeps oil drilling away from our houses and schools. Along with our club, Leah is fired up and ready to fight against a November Ballot proposition to repeal oil and gas drilling setbacks.

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At the California Democratic Convention: Culver City Vice-Mayor Yasmine-Imani McMorris, United States Senate Candidate Barbara Lee, and Herman Jones II, who is an elected delegate from AD 55, member of the Forward 55 slate, 2nd VP of the New Frontier Democratic Club (Herman is also senior field rep for California Assemblyman Isaac Bryan)

Proposition One: Related Links

Proposition 1 will be the only **statewide** proposition on the March ballot. It's controversial. The full name of the proposition is "California Proposition 1, Behavioral Health Services Program and Bond Measure." It relies on a new state law which created "care courts," which opponents say will lock up homeless individuals without due process and allow for them to be medicated without their consent. Proponents of the bond measure and the new law which created care courts argue that it will help people who are mentally unable to take care of themselves. Opponents of Prop. 1 say it will take money from existing, community-based funds for addressing homelessness, and that care courts (which are already in effect) don't give homeless people due process. Here are some links which try to explain care courts and proposition 1 in a fair and unbiased way, or argue against the proposition, or argue for it:

[Ballotpedia](#)

[City Council votes unanimously to support California Proposition One](#)

[Mental Health Advocates and Supporters Declare Opposition to Proposition One](#)

[Newsom's mental health plan is going to voters](#)

[Families have high hopes for Gavin Newsom's CARE Courts.](#)
[Providers want to lower expectations](#)

[ACLU: Disability, Civil Rights Groups say Fundamental Questions Must Be Answered Regarding 'CARE Court' Proposal](#)

[Why we oppose the Governor's "Care Court" proposal--and so should you](#)

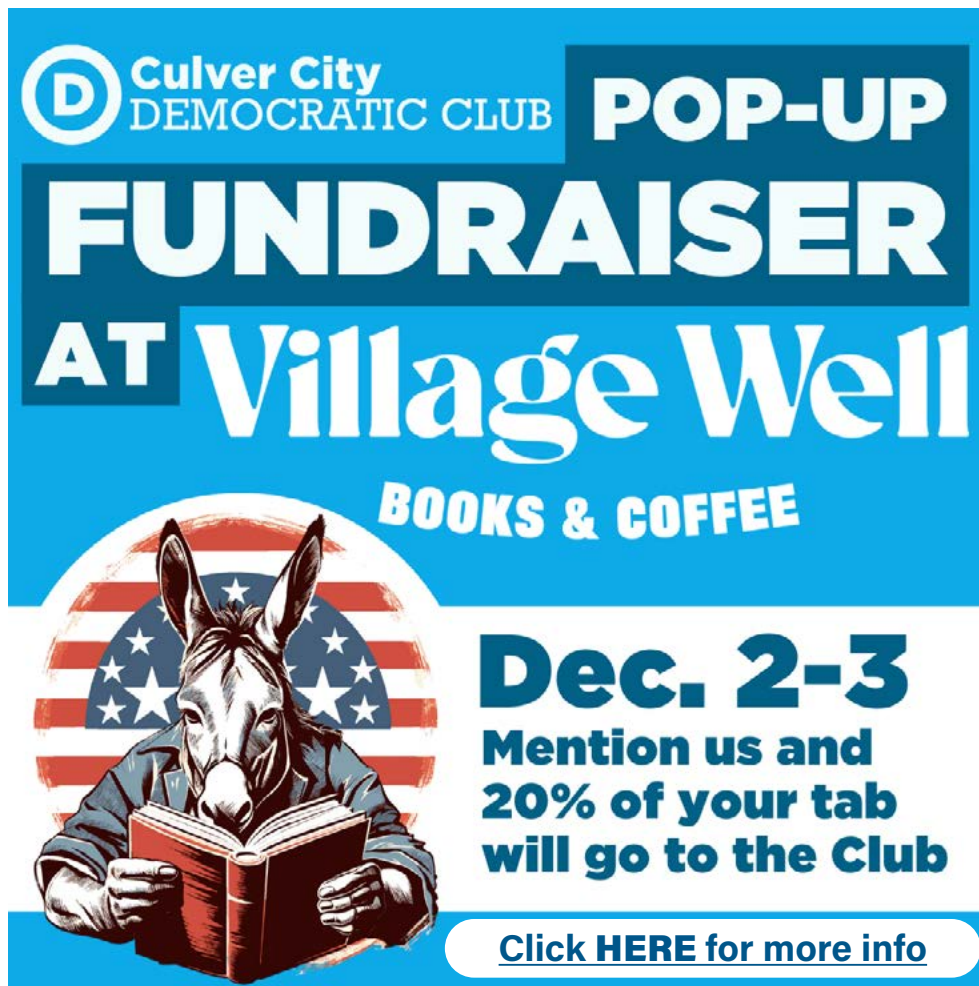
[Legislative analyst's office: Proposition 1](#)

[Governor Newsom's transformation of mental health services](#)

[Office of Governor Gavin Newsom: Press Release](#)

Book recommendations from CCDC members

Since the Club is having a fundraiser at the Village Well bookstore in Culver City this weekend (see the ad on this page) we asked our members to recommend political books they think their friends and/or fellow members would like. Here they are. We hope to get a good turnout at Village Well this weekend. It's a great bookstore and they have amazing coffee.



Culver City DEMOCRATIC CLUB POP-UP FUNDRAISER AT Village Well BOOKS & COFFEE

Dec. 2-3
Mention us and
20% of your tab
will go to the Club

[Click HERE for more info](#)

Julie Bernard

"When Things Fall Apart" by Pema Chodron (or anything else by Pema Chodron)

She's an American Buddhist nun (who occasionally swears). With a 21st century application of Buddhist principles, she inspires you to confront your deeper self in order to navigate the chaos of the world and make peace with the groundlessness of life.

Alex Fisch

"Man of Tomorrow: The Relentless Life of Jerry Brown" by Jim Newton

Informed by many interviews, a deep archival dive, and a solid grasp of California history, Newton is an incisive biographer. And, beyond being one of California's most consequential governors, Jerry Brown is a fascinating subject. The result is an engaging read that reveals as much about California as it does the former seminarian, college trustee, Secretary of State, Governor, California Democratic Party Chair, Mayor, Attorney General, and Governor (again).

Jeff Schwartz

"The Genius of the System" by Thomas Schatz

In the 1960s, French critics promoted the auteur theory: that the director was

the author of a movie, and celebrated individual geniuses who developed strong personal voices within the studio system, like John Ford and Alfred Hitchcock. Schatz's history of the studio system makes a case against auteur theory, restoring the essential roles of everyone from writers to studio heads in shaping classic films. Much of this story unfolds in Culver City so, without intending to, Schatz has written one of the essential books on our city's development.

Leah Pressman and Jeff Schwartz

"Counter Intelligence" by Jonathon Gold

Gold is the only food writer to win a Pulitzer Prize and this is his only book. While restaurant reviews may seem as ephemeral as the meals they describe, gathered together these tell a new story of Los Angeles through food and the people who brought it here. They are also sometimes very funny.

Tad Daley

"Welcome to Washington Fina Mendoza" and its sequel

"State of the Union" by Kitty Felde

My favorite political books are a pair of mystery novels for middle-school readers. *Welcome to Washington Fina Mendoza* and its sequel *State of the Union*. Only in small part because they were written by my favorite wife, Kitty Felde! Kitty was a long-time public radio journalist for KPCC, KCRW, and NPR, and was named three times by her peers as "Los Angeles Radio Journalist of the Year." Now her great passion is kid literacy and civics education. Fina is the ten-year-old daughter of Arturo Mendoza, a Democratic congressman from Southern California. She roams around the

See BOOKS on page 12

From BOOKS on page 11

secret passageways of the U.S. Capitol, solves riddles various, and teaches middle-school readers all about government and politics and the U.S. Constitution along the way. The books (and accompanying podcast) have received high praise and blurbs from Republican members of Congress David Dreier and Buck McKeon, Democratic members of Congress Linda Sanchez and Adam Schiff, and many others. You can read all about it at www.kittyfelde.com, and our own Village Well bookstore should have copies. If they're out please ask them to order them for you!

Jeanne Black

"We Are Not One: A History of America's Fight Over Israel,"

by Eric Alterman

I bought this book in January 2023, after reading a brief review in the December 26, 2022 New Yorker. The author is a journalist and CUNY Distinguished Professor of English at Brooklyn College; he earned a PhD in American history with a minor in Jewish studies from Stanford. His book is a deeply researched history of the debate about Israel within the United States; it is not about Israel or the Palestinians, per se. How did the U.S., whose Jews comprised less than 4% of the population in the 1940s, and which was increasingly dependent on Middle Eastern oil, become the first country to recognize Israel as an independent state? How did AIPAC (the American Israel Public Affairs Committee) come to support the election of dozens of Republican Congressional candidates in 2022 who denied President Biden's election victory? Why do older American Jews, including Democrats, equate anti-Zionism with antisemitism, while younger Jews recognize that Amnesty International has documented Israel as an apartheid state in its treatment of Palestinians? Is Israel an actual place to American Jews and Christians, or is it a myth and their support an expression of identity politics? Alterman ends his book by reflecting on Joan Didion's 2002 comment that Americans seem incapable of discussing

the U.S. relationship with Israel with any intellectual subtlety. He writes "I have tried to tell the story of why that is, and why it matters, not just for Israel and for American Jews, but for the sake of civil discourse upon which all hopes for democracy must finally rest." After October 7, 2023, we need this understanding more than ever.

Haifaa Al-Moammar

"The Crusades Through Arab Eyes"

by Amin Maalouf

This book explains the nontrust issue between the current Arab Muslim world and the West. Given the current war in Gaza and the occupation of Palestine by what is considered a West proxy, aka, Israel this book hopefully will bring some understanding to current issues in the Western Mediterranean Arab world. Maalouf emphasizes the periods of relative tolerance and coexistence between different religious and cultural groups in the Middle Ages. I especially enjoy the author's writing style: simple, rich in narrative, a man

"Circe" by Madeline Miller

This novel is a page-turner- and a well-crafted novel that breathes new life into Greek mythology. Circe is depicted as a feminist and independent figure. It explains her myth from her point of view. I highly recommend getting the audible copy, the narration was sublime.

"America's Kingdom: Mythmaking on the Saudi Oil Frontier"

by Robert Vitalis

Explores the historical relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia, with a particular focus on the American oil industry's presence in the Arabian Peninsula.

This book challenges simplistic views and offers a more intricate understanding of the dynamics at play in the Middle East. It explains the socio-political dynamics within Saudi Arabia, clarifying the internal power struggles and the impact of American involvement on the local population. It analyzes the role of American oil companies in shaping the economic and political landscape of

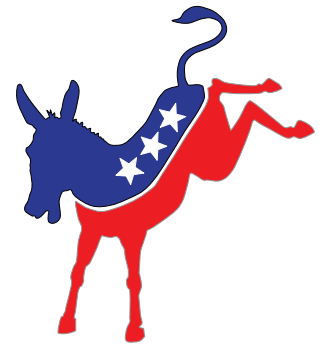
Saudi Arabia. He discusses how corporate interests influenced policy decisions on both sides.

There is much more to this important book and my summary is not doing it much justice.

"Love in the Time of Cholera"

by Gabriel García Márquez.

The novel is set in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a time when cholera outbreaks were a real threat. The cholera outbreak in the novel disrupts social norms and structures, creating a backdrop for the characters' personal struggles. The Covid pandemic has similarly disrupted social structures, challenging traditional ways of life and prompting a reevaluation of society's priorities. The cholera threat reflects the constant presence of mortality, influencing the characters' decisions and perspectives on life. The Covid pandemic has prompted a global reflection on mortality, with individuals and societies confronting the fragility of life and the importance of meaningful connections.



Don't Forget to Renew Your Club Membership for 2024!

[To Join the Culver City Democratic Club CLICK HERE for the Club's ActBlue page.](#)

Join the Culver City Democratic Club for next year and the rest of 2023 for a \$30 donation!

For more information call Diane Rosenberg at (310) 398-5328.

Why Culver City needs a bond on the March ballot to fix our schools' infrastructure

by Mila Moraga

CCUSD had a third-party Facility Condition Assessment done in 2019, which found major problems, including ongoing flood damage in Linwood Howe and la Ballona, exterior and interior architectural and finish work in most facilities requiring immediate attention, HVAC, plumbing, and electrical systems reaching end of life, and much more: The district averages for all facilities weighted, five years ago, below a "C" average, and have deteriorated since that time.

Our schools need work, and this has become urgent, and a matter of safety for our children.

I was part of the CCUSD Bond Feasibility Committee that met twice in the last month to talk about the possibility of putting this bond on the ballot next year. After extensive discussion, the committee agreed that a Bond must be put on the ballot next year. The only question remaining was: should it be on the ballot in the March, or November elections?

In a final vote by the committee, the majority of members agreed to recommend putting the bond on the ballot in March.

This is also the sentiment of most residents I have talked to since the meetings started. This will save us millions of dollars that would otherwise be wasted by delaying the approval of a bond due to inflation and other financial concerns. Also, in November, there are many other

bonds in ballots around California that will increase competition for architects, constructors, and other needed services.

Measure K, for example, is up for renewal in November, which is important to our teacher's union, and this measure will be more difficult to pass with a bond in the same ballot.

One of the comments that made an impression on me during the meetings was from Dr. Kenya Williams, the principal of our Middle School. She was worried that this necessary bond could be sidetracked—not because the infrastructure improvements are not needed, but just due to political disagreements related to the school board and bond planning details.

I encourage Culver City residents to prioritize getting this measure passed first and let the political problems and implementation details work themselves out during the eight years of work that will be required to fix our schools in a way that makes our community proud.

There is a master plan for these improvements that the CCUSD is working from. The plan may not be perfect, but there will be plenty of opportunities for community input throughout the process. Passing the bond is just the beginning, but it is vital that we do get started.

Many of Culver City's neighboring communities have passed bonds like this

without even a plan in place. At this point, our district is way ahead, so let's not lose our head start.

I am a mother of three boys in the Culver City school district, so of course their education and safety motivates me—but the quality and reputation of a school system affects all residents of a community. Part of the reason people move to Culver City is because of the quality of our schools, which helps all residents through real estate valuations, the attraction of large business, increased revenue in restaurants and small businesses, increased tax revenue, and increased federal funds.

We proudly live in a great city, nestled in one of the most beautiful areas of the world, and our school system is one of the true foundations of our city's health.

Let's give Culver City the opportunity to make its school system the best it can be.



Culver City Democratic Club member and Culver City Vice Mayor Yasmine Imani-McMorrin with Dolores Huerta at the California Democratic Party Convention in Sacramento

Join or Renew Your Culver City Democratic Club Membership!

[To Join the Culver City Democratic Club](#)
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Join the Culver City Democratic Club for a \$30 donation!

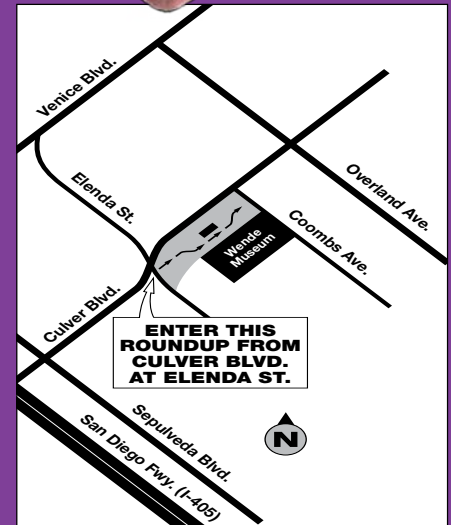
For more information on becoming a member of the Culver City Democratic Club, call Diane Rosenberg at (310) 398-5328.

TOO TOXIC TO TRASH



FREE Household Hazardous and Electronic Waste Drive-Thru Collection Event

Saturday, December 2 • 9 A.M. - 3 P.M.
Wende Museum, Front Parking Lot
10808 Culver Boulevard
Culver City, CA 90230



CHEMICALS



- ◆ Carefully secure items in your trunk/pick-up bed. Hazardous waste must be in your trunk/pick-up bed with no other items.

PAINTS & SOLVENTS



- ◆ Waste should be in a sturdy box, preferably in their original containers. Be prepared to leave containers.

E-WASTE



- ◆ No explosives, ammunition, radioactive materials controlled substances, trash, tires, or large appliances (like refrigerators, stoves and washing machines).

SHARPS



- ◆ Sharps disposal will require exiting your vehicle in a designated location to deposit them in a bin.

- ◆ Open to Los Angeles County residents. No business waste accepted.

- ◆ Limit of 15 gallons or 125 pounds of hazardous waste per trip.



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SANITATION DISTRICTS**
Converting Waste Into Resources

Brought to you by Los Angeles County and presented by Los Angeles County Public Works and Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, in cooperation with the cities of Beverly Hills, Culver City, El Segundo, Hawthorne, Inglewood, Los Angeles, and West Hollywood.

800-238-0173 • LACSD.org/HHW • CleanLA.com



ÓXICO LA RA

A collection of hazardous waste items including a car battery, a broken plastic jug, a red gas can, a bucket of electronic waste, and various batteries and light bulbs.

Map showing the location of the Wendt Museum at the intersection of Culver Blvd. and Elenda St. The museum is marked with a black square and labeled "Wendt Museum". Surrounding streets include Venice Blvd., Overland Ave., Sepulveda Blvd., and San Diego Fwy. (I-405). A north arrow points towards the top right.

Sábado 2 de diciembre • 9 A.M. - 3 P.M.
Wende Museum, Estacionamiento delantero
10808 Culver Boulevard
Culver City, CA 90230



◆ Asegure los artículos en su cajuela cuidadosamente. Los desechos peligrosos deben estar en su cajuela sin otros artículos.



- ◆ Traiga los artículos en una caja resistente, preferiblemente en sus envases etiquetados originales. Prepárese para dejar los envases y las cajas.



◆ No se permiten explosivos, municiones, materiales radioactivos, sustancias controladas, basura, llantas o grandes aparatos (como refrigeradores, estufas y lavadoras).



- ◆ El desecho de objetos punzantes requerirá salir de su vehículo en un lugar designado para depositarlos en un contenedor.

◆ Disponible para los residentes del Condado de Los Ángeles. Desechos de negocios no serán aceptados.

◆ Límite de 15 galones o 125 libras de desechos tóxicos por viaje.



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SANITATION DISTRICTS**
Converting Waste Into Resources

Patrocinado por el Condado de Los Angeles, y presentado por Obras Públicas del Condado de Los Angeles y los Distritos Sanitarios del Condado de Los Angeles en cooperación con las ciudades de **Beverly Hills, Culver City, El Segundo, Hawthorne, Inglewood, Los Angeles, y West Hollywood.**