

Sun City Democrats

www.suncitydems.org

February 2009



General Meeting

The General Meeting is the first Saturday of the month (usually, but be sure to check for change of time and/or place). Come at **9:30 a.m.** for coffee and conversation. The program starts at **10:00 a.m.** The meetings are free and open to the public. *For additional information on the Sun City Democrats, please contact President Jodi Salyers at 864-2812 or Communications Chair Carol Flynn at 864-3544.*

Saturday, February 7

Place: Activities Center Atrium

Program: Arvella Oliver, a recent graduate of the Climate Project in Nashville, Tenn., where she studied with former Vice President Al Gore, will speak to the group.

Ms. Oliver is a graduate of Southwestern University where she was a double major in history and literature. She received her master's degree in history from Rice University. She recently taught a class titled "The Science of Climate" for Senior University.



Saturday, March 7

Place: Activities Center Atrium

Program: Megan Morrow, the Outreach Director for Texas Watch, an activist organization, will speak. Ms. Morrow is the liaison between Texas Watch and consumers on media and policy matters. www.texaswatch.org

Ms. Morrow, a New Yorker until her teens when she moved to Texas, is a recent graduate of the University of Texas with a bachelor's degree in government. She is known for her passionate support of social change and empowerment of the average citizen.

SUN CITY DEMOCRATS CLUB OFFICERS

President: Jodi Salyers 864-2812 jodotcom@aol.com

Vice-Pres: Jim Stauber 515-0486 jcstauber@prismnet.com

Secretary: Joan Baker 869-5611 mizbaker@suddenlink.net

Treas: Margaret Donaldson 818-1594 marjohndonaldson@yahoo.com

Past Pres: Mary Kay Pierson 864-9909 mkatpie@aol.com

Communication: Carol Flynn 864-3544 flycar@verizon.net

Hospitality: Fred Becker 864-0704 fb.becker@suddenlink.net

IMPACT: Don Lelong 869-1714 donandjackie@verizon.net

Membership: Frank Wentworth 864-3385 f_wentworth@yahoo.com

Programs: Craig Whitney 869-2690 cbwhitney@verizon.net

Social: Nancy Danley 864-1544 nrdanley@suddenlink.net

Support the Sun City Democrats Political Action Committee!

Our Political Action Committee is known as **IMPACT**: "Informed Members PAC of Texas." Send donations to **IMPACT** treasurer Don Lelong, at 101 Crosby Street, or see him at the meeting.

The following people have agreed to serve as a "steering" committee for IMPACT: Former treasurer Clint McCutcheon, will serve as assistant treasurer, and be an alternate signatory on IMPACT bank accounts; Billie Reaney; Jodi Salyers; Craig Whitney; and Jane Yendell.



2009 DUES ARE DUE!!

Dues are **\$20** per member. You may pay at the sign-in table at the meetings, or mail a check made out to Sun City Democrats Club to:

Margaret Donaldson
107 Rosecliff Drive
Georgetown TX 78633

DEMOCRATS — YES, WE CAN!

Where were you on January 20th, Inauguration Day? Some of our members sent us these pictures and descriptions. The following pictures are from Margaret Donaldson:



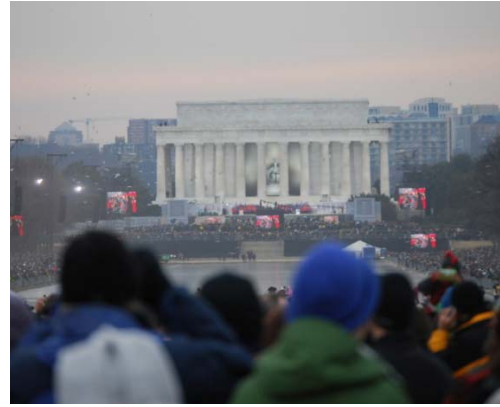
John & Margaret Donaldson pause (briefly, because it was **really** cold!) in front of the Washington Monument.

Margaret says: "What was so special about the five days in DC were the people...happy people everywhere. There were so many young families with very small children everywhere we went in the bitter cold, and I just felt so emotional watching them and knowing that these little children would grow up and tell their grandchildren "I was there." I'm attaching a picture of the first time I called Barack Obama "the President."



"I asked these kids who were still in their band uniforms the next day "did you see the President" and they were so excited telling me how they could see the whole family when they marched by the viewing stand. This was a big **big** thing in their lives and I got choked up again just listening to their excitement. We so enjoyed talking with these kids and feeling their complete joy."

For 48 professional photos of the inauguration available online:
http://www.boston.com:80/bigpicture/2009/01/the_inauguration_of_president.html?s_campaign=8315



Concert at the Lincoln Memorial



On Pennsylvania Avenue

Richard Torres' pictures:



DEMOCRATS — YES, WE CAN!

PRECINCT 381 NEWS

~Kay Walker, Precinct Chair
864-2874 klwalker@suddenlink.net

County/State news: At the Williamson County Democratic Party meeting on January 8th at the WCDP Headquarters, Diana Maldonado spoke at this meeting and unveiled her five-point plan:

1. Grow a Stable Funding Base for the Party
2. Hire a Full-Time Staff for the Party
3. Develop a Research & Communications Operation.
4. Substantially Grow the Grassroots Support for WilCo Democrats.
5. Institute a Targeted & Coordinated Campaign Program.

These are the broad strokes of the plan but working together we need to fill in the details of how we are to accomplish these goals. It is a new day in Williamson County and if we seize the opportunity in front of us today, we can keep WilCo moving forward."

Texas State Board of Education election watch. I have been told that when Cynthia Dunbar runs for re-election to this board (2010), the Democratic Party will have a candidate--unlike in 2006. One person in Williamson County and two in Travis County, so far, have expressed an interest in being this candidate. At least one of the Travis County prospects is a professor at UT Austin.

Editor's Note: An interesting bit on Cynthia Dunbar is posted at the web site www.kissmybigbluebutt.com. Scroll down to the February 5 posting. The web site's owner lives in Tom DeLay's old district, and usually has some informative and sometimes amusing tidbits to offer.



It shall be the policy of the Sun City Democrats Club that its membership roster and database shall be considered an asset which is to be used only by the club for the purpose of promoting the activities of the club. The information in these documents should not be sold or divulged to others. The custodian of the database shall be the membership chair and those persons whom he/she designates to help with the communication needs of the club.

PRECINCT 394 NEWS

~Don Mohr, Precinct Chair
868-2850 donmohr@netzero.net

The neighborhood has been growing at a rapid rate. All the new homes in N46 have been completed or almost finished. Most of N62 is also complete with the new N47 just starting home construction. The new road, Pedernales Falls Drive, is under construction to all the new Precinct neighborhoods to the west of the Cowan Creek Golf Course.

The Precinct Resident total is now over 92 people with new homes closing weekly. I have been getting email contacts for all new residents as they pass through the CA enrollment process. This will be used for future contact efforts.

Plans for 2009

I plan to prepare an information package to take around to all the new homes in the Precinct and try to encourage Democrats to come out and make this Precinct Democratic majority precinct. The package will contain info on new voter registration, elected incumbents, bipartisan info links, and the new Democratic momentum.



Sun City Democrats



PRECINCT 399 NEWS

Precinct 399 is currently without a chairperson. If you go home by crossing the White Wing Bridge, you live in Precinct 399. If, however, you continue so far as to cross the Cowen Creek bridge, you would be in Precinct 394.

If you live in precinct 399 and are interested in being active in the party, please talk to either Billie Reaney, chair of precinct 396 or Kay Walker, chair of precinct 381. We need you and we are eager to hear from you.

DEMOCRATS — YES, WE CAN!

PRECINCT 396 NEWS

~Billie Reaney, Precinct Chair
868-0098 billie_reaney@msn.com

Gallup findings that show Democrats with slight edge among Texans.

The Gallup polling organization says that, based on its daily tracking polls during the 2008 election, 43 percent of Texans say they're Democrats or lean Democratic, compared with 41 percent who say they're Republicans or lean Republican. "I don't believe it for a minute," said Cal Jillson, a political science professor at Southern Methodist University. Texas is generally considered a Republican state. "In the body politic, the Republicans have lost some ground," said James Henson, director of the Texas Politics Project at the University of Texas. "Where Democrats have gained ground is among people who don't vote as much."

The news item above was excerpted from last Sunday's *Austin American Statesman*. Living in Sun City, it is easy to join Cal Jillson in disbelief. But if you spend some time engaged with the Democrats and the Democratic Party in the rest of Williamson County, it is a lot easier to become a believer. Having been ignored by both parties for years, these non-voting Democrats have become a discouraged bunch, not easily energized.

Williamson County Democratic Party recognizes our challenge and we are embracing it. WCDP has opened a year round headquarters in Round Rock. The party is in the process of hiring a full time Executive Director to help us develop a larger public presence in the county. The headquarters is open from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. week days with shorter hours on Saturday. The headquarters is located in the 'Market at Round Rock' Shopping center on the southwest corner of the intersection of RM 620 (Round Rock Ave.) and IH-35. Being visible and easy to reach, the headquarters helps keep the Democratic image in front of the public. You can find more information at <http://www.williamsoncountymocrats.org/>.

Consider becoming a volunteer at our headquarters, serving as receptionist for visitors dropping in and answering the phone. One need only volunteer for a few hours a month. Any of the Sun City precinct chairs can give you more information and help to get you involved.

WCDP meets on the second Tuesday of the month. The meeting is at 7:00 p.m., but often volunteers helping to raise money for the support of the party begin serving an evening meal around 6:00 pm. Every Democrat is welcome at these meetings.

OF INTEREST TO MEMBERS

Texas Democratic Party

Boyd Richie, Chairman. www.txdemocrats.org
707 Rio Grande Street, Austin, TX 78701
Telephone: (512) 478-9800
Fax: (512) 480-2500

Williamson County Democratic Party

Richard Torres, Chairman. Phone 512-671-8683 or www.williamsoncountymocrats.org.

Monthly meetings: 2nd Thursday of each month from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Party headquarters, 110 South I-35 (corner of I-35 and Hwy. 620 behind McDonald's in Round Rock).

Williamson County Democratic Headquarters

needs volunteer workers. Address: 110 North Interstate 35 (at Hwy 620). 512-388-1993.

Office Hours: Mon-Wed-Fri: 11 p.m.-7 p.m.
Tues-Thurs: 1 p.m.-6 p.m.
Saturday 10am-2pm
Phone: 512-388-1993

Williamson County Obama Store

At the Williamson County Democratic Office, featuring T-shirts, hats, posters, calendars, etc.



Williamson County Government www.wilco.org.

Road bond information, maps, vital records information, elections, Commissioner Court Minutes, and quick links to all cities and school districts in the county.

Keep an eye on Williamson County at

www.eyeonwilliamson.org.

Rumor checking headquarters

Check it out and get the facts at www.snopes.com, www.factcheck.org, and www.mediamatters.org.



DEMOCRATS — YES, WE CAN!

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BUS?

by **Billie Reaney**

Last week a majority of the City Council, including our councilman, Bill Sattler, nixed the plan to keep the Sun City Bus running. It is important to keep in mind that our bus was a trial only, instigated to gauge ridership. Bus drivers kept detailed records of the number of riders and their destinations. They reported that the bus was averaging 3.7 riders per hour, which was considered a good result. Only Council members Eason and Oliver voted “yes” to continue the Sun City route, citing these good results. Councilman Sattler said he saw buses go by in the afternoon without riders, “which is not good.” He voted “No,” he stated, on the Sun City route because of these empty buses, disregarding the data provided by the study.

I am a member of the Transit Working Group that advises the council on a bus plan. This Transit Group recommended completing the bus trial period (3 more months) with the Sun City route running concurrently with a new route in Southeast Georgetown. The discussion began at the Monday workshop and continued at the Council meeting the following evening. Council member Eason pushed for approval of the plan to continue the bus trial as recommended. The continued plan would have required the approval of additional money. One option would have required an additional \$64,000. A second option would have needed only \$34,000.

Additional funds was a stumbling block for several. Council member Berryman stated that the city “did not have the money” because the city was looking at an operating deficit for the next budget year. However, the funding source for the project, a city fund with a balance of over \$500,000, which could only be used for one time projects such as this bus trial, had been specified in the motion to proceed. But Berryman made the “no money” argument several times. Her misinterpretation of the money situation was addressed more than four times by either the City Manager, the Finance Director or Council members Sansing and Eason. Ms. Berryman rejected their arguments.

Noting the presence of a number of her constituents from the Wesleyan at Estrella, Ms Berryman indicated reluctance to vote “No.” She chose to abstain. Councilman Sansing lodged a protest, saying that members may not abstain unless they have a conflict of interest. The city



attorney confirmed his protest. Ms Berryman then voted “No.” Later it became clear that Council member Berryman’s “no money” mantra was due to the mistaken impression that the bus trial was intended to morph into a full-fledged bus system.

Council member Brainard was absent from the informational workshop on Monday. He along with Council members Ross and Berryman had also been absent at the Council meeting and workshop when the Bus Trial project had been approved. Brainard and Ross did not contribute to the discussion at the Council meeting. Both Ross and Brainard joined Berryman in voting “No.” Council member Sansing’s vote was also “No.” He helped craft a compromise that was approved. It cut out the Sun City bus and shortened the life of the other route.



YOUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

See our web site, www.suncitydems.org, and select the **GOV'T & PARTY** menu item, then click #2 **REPRESENTATIVES**.

Volunteer!! Please Help Make a Difference!!

To volunteer for a committee, please contact the chair of that committee, or email President Jodi Salyers at jodotcom@aol.com, and she will pass the message on to the chair.

For additions and corrections to information in the newsletter, contact Betty Dougherty at 864-1582 or bettydou@suddenlink.net.