

Sun City Democrats

www.suncitydems.org

December 2009



General Meeting:

The General Meeting is typically on the first Saturday of each month. 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, December 5, 2009

9:30 AM Holiday Party

Place: Sun City Activities Center Atrium

Program: **Let's kick off the season with good cheer and a holiday breakfast!** Our Special Events Committee will provide a delicious array of easy-to-eat dishes. A short annual business meeting will follow, celebrating the past year and looking forward to the future.



Saturday, January 9, 2010 **NOTE: We are meeting 1 week later due to New Year's Holiday.**

9:30 AM Coffee, 10:00 Speaker

Place: Sun City Social Center Ballroom

NOTE: We are meeting in a different location.

Program: Carmen Cortes-Harms

Carmen Cortes-Harms has been the **Director of Immigration Legal Services** at Catholic Charities of Central Texas since June 2008. Prior to her current position she was a Mexican Foreign Service Officer for fifteen years. She took an early retirement from the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs in December 2007.

Mrs. Cortes-Harms served at the **Consulate General of Mexico in Austin, Texas** from July of 1998 to December 2007. She began her work at the Austin Mexican Consulate as the Director of Documentation for Mexican and Foreign Citizens, Powers of Attorney and Civil Registry. After one year in this position she was promoted to the Consulate's Chief of Protection and Legal Affairs Department. The Protection and Legal Affairs Department provided Mexican nationals in South Central Texas with criminal, civil, and labor legal services as well as with human rights assistance. Prior to being posted in Austin, Texas Mrs. Cortes-Harms served at the Consulate General of Mexico in Chicago, Illinois where she also worked on criminal, civil, labor and human rights cases.

SUN CITY DEMOCRATS OFFICERS

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

Vice-Pres: Jim Stauber 515-0486 jcstauber@ecpi.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

Website Editor: Meredith Mitchell

Newsletter Editor:

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

Meeting Setup Mgr:

Coffee Mgr: George Wagner

Food Mgr: Betty Bendewald

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

Membership:

Meeting Sign-In Mgr:

New Homeowner Orientation Mgr:

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

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

Special Events: Nancy Danley 864-1544 nrdanley@suddenlink.net

Decorations Mgr:

Please SUPPORT the Sun City Democrats

The **Sun City Democrats** provide many activities and services for members. We have educational meetings, provide speakers, social events, maintain a website, and a monthly newsletter. We exist only because of loyal volunteers. Please call any of the above officers to volunteer your time or to ask questions.

Please join us by supporting our activities and by paying your annual dues. As a Sun City "Interest Group", we pay for using all Sun City facilities. We exist only because of paid annual dues.

Sun City Democrats Stimulus Package: The Board voted to reduce our annual dues to **\$12** per member. You may pay at the sign-in table at the meetings or mail a check made out to **Sun City Democrats** to our Treasurer: **Margaret Donaldson**, 107 Rosecliff Drive, Georgetown TX 78633.

Please SUPPORT the Sun City Democrats
~ Political Action Committee

Our PAC is known as **IMPACT: Informed Members Political Action Committee of Texas**. **IMPACT** is the only way that the Sun City Democrats organization can legally contribute to candidates. **IMPACT's** goal is to raise **10 Grand By 2010**, just after the primaries. Send donations to **IMPACT** Treasurer, **Don Lelong**, 101 Crosby Street, Georgetown TX 78633.



DEMOCRATIC PARTY INFORMATION

Texas Democratic Party

Boyd Richie, Chairman. www.txdemocrats.org
Address: 707 Rio Grande Street, Austin, TX 78701
Phone: (512) 478-9800

Williamson County Democratic Party

Richard Torres, Chairman. Phone: 512-964-5054

Williamson County Democratic Headquarters

<http://www.wilcodemocrats.org>
Address: 110 North Interstate 35 (at Highway 620)
Phone: 512-388-1993
Office Hours: Mon-Fri: 11AM to 6PM, Sat: 10AM to 2PM

Precinct 381

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

Precinct 394

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

Precinct 396

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

Precinct 399

~**Bill Blair**, Precinct Chair
868-9180 billblair3@verizon.net



WCDP prepares for 2010

Precinct 396

~**Billie Reaney**, Precinct Chair

\$100,000+ WCDP Budget for election year 2010

is being developed now. It is a significant sum to raise, but an absolute necessity if we are to become a winner in the fight to make Williamson County Democratic once again. None of this

money goes to the candidates. It is needed to maintain the efforts to get out the vote with mailings, phone banking, voter registration drives, party publicity and outreach, maintenance of the party headquarters, polling and election training and support. Fundraising efforts are underway now. Let me know if you want to donate. We grow stronger with each name we can add to our roster.

WCDP **Candidate Recruitment** Committee has worked diligently for months to fill all the slots on the 2010 ballot with good candidates. Last week, Jeff Maurice announced he will run for Commissioner for Precinct 4. Jeff has been an attorney for Dell and has been very influential in the recent political victories in the eastern part of Williamson County. He is a leader of the Hutto Citizen's Group, working to address critical issues surrounding the Williamson County landfill near Hutto.

In other races, **Diane Maldonado (D)**, who gained a seat in the Texas Legislature in 2008, will endeavor to keep her position. As a newcomer to the Legislature, her lack of experience makes her vulnerable and the GOP has set their sites on reclaiming that seat. Maldonado does not represent Sun City, but will need our help again to win. Dan Gaddis (R), who represents Sun City in the State Legislature will run next year for the Texas Senate. That leaves an open seat in Legislative District 20. We are certainly eager to fill that seat with a Democrat, but so far no strong Democrats have voiced interest.

Justice of the Peace (JP). Is there a Sun City Democrat among us who is willing to consider becoming a candidate for Justice of the Peace (JP) for this Commissioner Precinct? The incumbent JP is retiring, leaving an open field for this position, which pays about \$73,000/yr. The court is located in the Williamson County Inner Loop Annex. A candidate need not be a lawyer. (None of the 4 JP s in Williamson county are.) You get the title of Judge, a courtroom and a clerk. Mostly the JP handles arguments between neighbors, traffic tickets, marries people and settles small claims disputes. (Like Judge Judy.)

SBOE Candidates. Drs. Judy Jennings and Lorenzo Sadun, candidates for the State Board of Education, impressed a crowd of about 50 as they spoke at an event on Nov. 11 here in Sun City. The event was sponsored by the 4 Sun City precinct chairs. These two Democrats will face off in the primary in March. But the critical race will come in November when the primary winner will run against Cynthia Dunbar, a far right-wing nut case who represents us on the SBOE.

Conservative Bible Project Cuts Out Liberal Passages ...

~Rachel Weiner, The Huffington Post



Lo and behold, the Bible has gotten too liberal, according to a group of conservatives. And it needs a little editing.

That's the inspiration behind the **Conservative Bible Project**, which seeks to take the text back to its supposed right-wing roots.

Yes, even scripture is not orthodox enough for the modern conservative. Not that it's the fault of the author(s), exactly. The group cites a few reasons why the Bible is too progressive: "Lack of precision in the original language ... lack of precision in modern language" and "translation bias in converting the original language to the modern one."

So how can the Bible be "conservatized"? The group has proposed a Wikipedia-like group editing project. Some of the ideas would only bring the translation closer to the original. But others would fundamentally change the text.

1. Framework against Liberal Bias: providing a strong framework that enables a thought-for-thought translation without corruption by liberal bias
2. Not Emasculated: avoiding unisex, "gender inclusive" language, and other modern emasculation of Christianity
3. Not Dumbed Down: not dumbing down the reading level, or diluting the intellectual force and logic of Christianity; the NIV is written at only the 7th grade level [3]
4. Utilize Powerful Conservative Terms: using powerful new conservative terms as they develop; [4] defective

translations use the word "comrade" three times as often as "volunteer"; similarly, updating words which have a change in meaning, such as "word", "peace", and "miracle".

5. Combat Harmful Addiction: combating addiction by using modern terms for it, such as "gamble" rather than "cast lots"; [5] using modern political terms, such as "register" rather than "enroll" for the census

6. Accept the Logic of Hell: applying logic with its full force and effect, as in not denying or downplaying the very real existence of Hell or the Devil.

7. Express Free Market Parables: explaining the numerous economic parables with their full free-market meaning

8. Exclude Later-Inserted Liberal Passages: excluding the later-inserted liberal passages that are not authentic, such as the adulteress story

9. Credit Open-Mindedness of Disciples: crediting open-mindedness, often found in youngsters like the eyewitnesses Mark and John, the authors of two of the Gospels

10. Prefer Conciseness over Liberal Wordiness: preferring conciseness to the liberal style of high word-to-substance ratio; avoid compound negatives and unnecessary ambiguities; prefer concise, consistent use of the word "Lord" rather than "Jehovah" or "Yahweh" or "Lord God."

Among the words to be eliminated: "government." A conservative columnist at Beliefnet described the effort as "just crazy ... like what you'd get if you crossed the Jesus Seminar with the College Republican chapter at a rural institution of Bible learnin'."



"The modern conservative is engaged in one of man's oldest exercises in moral philosophy; that is, the search for a superior moral justification for selfishness."

~ John Kenneth Galbraith

REHABILITATING HEALTH CARE

One Nation, Insured

Some states, such as Arizona, are considering ways to opt out of a national plan. That's foolish.

As healthcare reform legislation advances in Congress, more state lawmakers are looking for ways to limit its effects on their constituents. At the front of the pack is the Arizona Legislature, which agreed to put a constitutional amendment on next year's ballot that would provide three new rights to its citizenry: to obtain coverage from a private insurer, to buy healthcare services with their own funds directly from doctors and hospitals, and to be free *not* to buy insurance or participate in a particular healthcare plan. That last right would run counter to the comprehensive reform bills moving through Congress, which would require everyone to obtain at least a minimum level of coverage -- with subsidies, if necessary. Spurred by a conservative advocacy group called the **American Legislative Exchange Council**, lawmakers in nearly 20 other states have either introduced or announced plans to introduce proposals similar to Arizona's "healthcare freedom act."

Although proponents of these measures say states can go further than the federal government to protect their residents, it's not clear whether a state constitution can trump a federal healthcare mandate. Nevertheless, the resistance in Arizona epitomizes a central problem for proponents of reform: Many Americans look at a federal overhaul of healthcare as a threat, and don't see how they will benefit from covering millions of uninsured people at taxpayer expense.

Arizona went through this exercise last year too, when voters narrowly defeated a ballot measure with most of the same features as the current edition. **Dr. Eric Novack**, the Phoenix orthopedic surgeon leading the effort to adopt the amendment, said one of the problems for consumers today is that there's nothing in the Bill of Rights to protect an individual's control over his or her healthcare. It's an issue on both

sides of the debate -- there's no right to obtain health insurance or to see a doctor when you're sick either. And without such basic assurances, the public is left to trust policymakers to do the right thing as they address one of the most pressing problems with the current system, which is an unsustainable increase in costs.

That's asking a lot, to put it mildly. Yet Arizona's initiative, despite some sensible elements, goes too far. It's reasonable to demand that Congress allow people to buy whatever healthcare services they can afford out of their own pockets. That's how the law stands today, with some limits in the Medicare program to guard against fraud, and the comprehensive reform bill passed by the House wouldn't change it. Allowing people to ignore a national mandate to buy insurance, however, would encourage them to carry policies only when they need treatment. Instead of having a broad customer base to spread costs across, insurers would mainly serve those who rack up high medical bills, sending premiums even higher than they're going today. Theoretically, Congress could avoid this problem by allowing insurers in states that opt out of the mandate to deny coverage for preexisting conditions and charge people higher rates after they fall ill. But that would just preserve within those states the worst features of the current system.

Implicit in proposals such as Arizona's is an every-man-for-himself vision of society. Why shouldn't the healthy be able to refuse to pay for insurance they're confident they won't use? Because they have a stake in making healthcare affordable for those who need it. The healthier the public is as a whole, the more productive it is and the faster the economy can grow. And most important, bringing everyone under the insurance umbrella will make it easier to achieve the changes in how healthcare is demanded, delivered and paid for that are essential to curbing costs over the long term. When it comes to the public health, there should be no opting out.

Editorial, November 16, 2009

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