

Northwest Democrats News



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Northwest Democrats, P.O. Box 681911, San Antonio, TX 78268; nwdemocrats@gmail.com

August 18th Program: Restorative Justice

Don't forget to attend our August 18th meeting when John Byrd will be our guest speaker.

John Byrd, MPA, of the Department of Criminal Justice at UTSA, will discuss Restorative Justice. Restorative Justice is a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused or revealed by criminal behavior. It is best accomplished through cooperative processes that include all stakeholders.

Please join us for this important meeting at 8:30 a.m. at Luby's, 6200 Bandera Rd.

2006-2008

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Eckhert Road Clean Up After August Meeting!

Come one! Come all! July was a rain-out, but August 18 looks great. New volunteers are welcome to join in the fun. Your chairman will have cool drinks to keep you going!!

Stuff the Bus!!

Please bring school supplies for needy families. Pencils, crayons, paper (wide space not college-rule), folders, backpacks, glue, pens, scissors, etc. I met with the sponsoring organization, Communities in Schools. They really do have a yellow school bus that they are stuffing with school supplies. They told me that one group in great need is refugee families that have come to San Antonio from Somalia, Iraq, Sudan, and Afghanistan. These families have come to San Antonio with nothing but the clothes on their backs. The children are enrolled in our local school districts and are trying to succeed. Your help is needed so that the teachers can provide them with the school supplies we take for granted. If you have any questions, please call Gene Marck 614-7400 (office)...273-9201 (cell).

Thank you to everyone for making our dinner a success and thank you to Congressmen Charlie Gonzalez, Ciro Rodriguez, and Henry Cuellar for representing Bexar County and San Antonio. We will have more information about the dinner at our August meeting.

Authorized & Paid for by the Northwest Democrats

To submit an article or other info, email Jacob Middleton at:

TXDemocrat@satx.rr.com

A Few 'Joyce' Words

by Joyce Dorfyccott

If you only watch the media's reports on the Democratic Congress, you may believe that they are responsible for the lack of accomplishment so far this year. But, if you watch C-Span and listen to what really happens, you know that the Republicans continually play obstructionist to everything the Democrats try to do.

What we see happening is the result of having 49 Democrats, 49 Republicans and 2 Independents in the Senate (both of whom caucus with the Democrats) and 233 Democrats and 202 Republicans in the House. In the Senate they can never get past the 60 vote requirement to end the threat of a filibuster. Consequently, the Senate has accomplished very little since January.

One notable exception was the Senate passage of the Children's Health Insurance (CHIP) bill last week which passed with a veto-proof majority of 68 – 31. Cornyn, the junior senator from Texas, voted against it – a vote I am sure will be remembered in the 2008 Senate campaign. However, the vote in the House was 225-204 and 296 votes were needed to provide a veto-proof majority there. So – should Bush veto it, we might still lose the CHIP bill.

All this points out why it is so critical to elect a Democratic president in 2008. While most of the country's attention may be focused on Iraq, there are many domestic issues that have been so neglected the past 7 years and that require immediate action. We must also elect more Democrats to the House and Senate to give the support needed to get things done.

Next year there are more Republican senators up than Democrats, so we have the opportunity to supplement our current majorities with the numbers needed to pass legislation so desperately needed. One of those senators is from Texas, and we need to pick up that seat. In addition, we need to re-elect Ciro Rodriguez.

These are races in which Northwest Democrats can play a real part. Congressmen Gonzalez and Cuellar seem relatively safe, but we can take nothing for granted.

It is my hope that next fall when the call goes out to come work in the Northwest Democrats general election effort that more of you will answer the call. Plan your vacations early in the summer so that you will have plenty of time to help us. Take your responsibility to yourself, your party and your country seriously. Everyone can do something. Will you make the commitment now to do your part in restoring democratic (and Democratic) government to our nation?

Help Needed

For some weeks now a number of us have been meeting on alternate Thursdays at noon to lunch and visit together while also looking up phone numbers for those voters for whom we do not have numbers at present.

The task is so large that we simply must have more help. By working together now we will be better organized for the 2008 General Election.

What we are about is no small task. There are over 150,000 names to be checked. So, if you have the time to assist us, please join us. We meet at my home at 6454 Village Park at 12 noon, every other Thursday. Call me at 680-5701 if you need further information or directions.

www.WhyDon'tYouHaveAWebsite.com/LearnElectionLaw

by *Jacob Middleton*

In 2003, Joe Trippi, manager for Howard Dean's presidential campaign, shattered fundraising records by using the internet to actively connect with voters. In 2006, Gov. Ernie Fletcher (R-KY) selectively banned state employees from visiting certain political blogs and website (only those critical of him or his administration) on state computers. In late 2006, former Senator George Allen (R-VA) said, "So let's give a welcome to macaca here. Welcome to America and the real world of Virginia." With those words, George Allen helped usher in YouTube for politics and the idea of big brother campaigning. In a span of only three years, politics has already been changed completely; from raising money through the internet, to the influence of blogs, to online videos.

If you are either a candidate or an elected official and you do not have a website, let me ask you: Why not? In today's political environment a website is seen as making a campaign legitimate. It's simply expected that a campaign will have a website. A website allows a candidate to connect and deliver a message to voters in a simple and inexpensive way. Political campaigns nowadays need not only an effective ground operation, but also an effective online operation.

Can a candidate win without a website? Yes, at the more local level. The higher up the political ladder though, the more effective and interactive a website must be. The question again though is why you don't have a website. As a candidate, and even as an elected official, you are always trying to get your message out. What easier way to do that than with a website that anyone can access?

At our third workshop we are going to show you the candidate/elected official the components of an effective website. Maybe you don't know how to design a website or don't know anyone who does. That's okay; we're bringing in someone from a website design company who'll be able to tell you what to expect if you choose to hire a company to create your site.

Even when designing a website, you as a candidate must still know what rules and regulations you follow. For instance, if you're not the incumbent official, you cannot have yourself in a picture with the state seal. That's where our second workshop comes in. What are the rules and regulations you as a candidate have to follow? What are the forms I have to fill out? What happens if I miss a filing deadline? What do I have to disclose? I'm an elected official, why do I still need to file a treasurer's report?

If you are an elected official you might be saying to yourself, "If I'm an elected why do I need to come to this workshop." Answer: How often do we read about another politician who has been fined by the FEC or Ethics Commission because he or she does not know the rules? Does Tom DeLay ring a bell? One of the items his political action committee got in trouble for was spending corporate money on political activities, which is against the law, versus overhead costs, which is legal. Candidates and elected officials not only get in trouble with how they spend their money, but how they raise it. Please don't think that just because you're that you're an elected official or candidate someone else will tell you what is and isn't legal. It's your responsibility to know.

Sadly you won't get the knowledge passed on from Jeff Hewitt, Kelly Fero, Christian Archer, and others. That information was only available at the workshop. But you can still get the next best thing: Campaign Skills Workshop binder from the workshop for a \$50 contribution.

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Take Your Campaign to the Next Level! Calling all Candidates and Campaign Staff!

Northwest Democrats Political Workshops 2007. Coordinated by Joyce Dorrycott

Campaign Law and Finance \$125. Sat., Sept. 8th, 8:30 am - 1:30 pm

Role of the Internet and Media in Campaigns \$150. Sat., Sept. 29th, 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

Limited space is available so reserve your place early. Reservations must be made and paid for at least 3 days in advance of each workshop. To register for any of the workshops, please call 210-680-5701 or 210-387-3931.