



Kendall County Area Democratic Women

February 1, 2010 • Volume 11, Issue 6



From the President

Looking back

January was a tough month for Democrats: We lost Ted Kennedy's Massachusetts Senate seat and thus the 60-seat super majority in the U.S. Senate, just as the Health Care bill enters its final phase; and the Supreme Court decided that 63 years of laws governing election financing should be thrown out. Five of the nine justices ruled that corporations and labor unions are entitled to the same First Amendment protection of free speech as we biological persons, and so have the right to spend unlimited amounts of money on political advertising for a particular candidate. This from the very Supreme Court justices who preach judicial minimalism and claim to despise judicial activism!

On a brighter note, at our January meeting we had an inspiring presentation from Annie's List, the wonderful organization that endorses and supports progressive women in Texas races, and most recently helped to elect Annise Parker as the new Mayor of Houston (pictured above). We also elected Jean Robitaille as our program chairperson for 2010.

Looking Ahead to 2010

We have some super Democrats running in the March 2 primaries – let's all go to the polls and

choose the ones we think would best represent us in the General Election in November. Early voting will begin on February 16. Look for the list of candidates elsewhere in this issue.

KCADW member and progressive activist Alyssa Burgin is organizing a fantastic conference on water use and conservation that will culminate with a lecture by best-selling author and New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman. See details elsewhere in this edition of the *Voice*.

Jean Robitaille is heading a committee that is planning a fundraising event for the fall and I will be recruiting volunteers to help put on a wine-tasting in late spring or early summer. If you are interested, please let me know.

Also coming up on April 14 is the annual fundraising luncheon for the Planned Parenthood Trust of San Antonio and South Central Texas. Poet, playwright, civil rights activist and novelist Dr. Maya Angelou will be the speaker. Last year KCADW filled two tables for this event. Please let Cindy Offutt or me know if you are interested in attending this year. Tickets are expensive, over \$100 each, but the funds support clinics throughout that are often the sole healthcare provider for many women and girls.

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February Program

At our February 10 meeting we will hear from Bethany Heinesh, the editor of the local *Hill Country Weekly*. Bethany will discuss the local media market and ways we can get our message out effectively. As always, we will meet at the Holiday Inn Express in Boerne at 10:00 a.m. We hope to see all of you there. See more about Bethany and her program on Page 4.

KCADW Officers

President	Claire Oxley Gluck
First Vice President	Vacant
Second Vice President	Josephine Renfroe
Treasurer	Gwen King
Secretary	Bobbie Grover
Past President	Jean Robitaille
Board Members	Stu Adamslundy Judy McMillan Janice Shoemaker Susanne Rupp Vacant
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Membership Chair	Gwen King
Voice Managing Editor	Susanne Rupp
Voice Tech Editor	Janice Shoemaker
Proofreaders	Cindy Offutt, Claire Gluck
Distribution Team	Margaret Sanchez, Jean Robitaille, LaVerne Peterson, Stu Adamslundy

Phone numbers and email addresses available in club directory

Mark Your Calendar:

February 4, 7:00 p.m.: KCDC meeting at the BISD Administration Building on Johns Road. Brian Maldonado will present a special program on homelessness in Boerne.

February 11, 10:00 a.m.: KCADW meeting at the Holiday Inn Express.

February 15-16: Texas Water Symposium, Trinity University. See details on Page 4.

February 16-26: Early voting for March 2 primary elections.

February 18, 11:00 a.m.: The KCADW Board meeting at Stu Adamslundy's home.

March 2: Primary election.

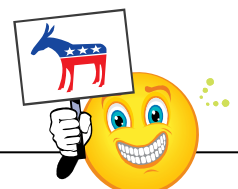
April 13: Run-off election, if necessary.

June 25-26: Texas Democratic State Convention, Corpus Christi.

Are you receiving the *Voice* in the mail? Since you signed up, have you gotten connected to the Internet so that you could receive it online? If so, consider switching over to the electronic version. You will save the club the cost of printing and mailing and save some trees, too. Call Susanne Rupp, 698-0559.



This newsletter is intended to reach people interested in the work of the Democratic Party in general and of Kendall County Area Democratic Women specifically. To be removed from this mailing list, please contact the editor at srupp@hughes.net or 210-698-0559.



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As I mentioned at the January meeting, Michael and I are moving into San Antonio this month. However, I will not follow Sarah Palin's example and quit my post mid-way through my term. I will continue as KCADW president through September 2010, and hope for your continued support.

Happy Groundhog Day and best wishes for St. Valentine's Day!

Claire

The Birth of Blue Tuesday (and how Kendall County, Texas became the "Mouse that Roared"!)

By Judy Kamen-McMillan

We were a merry band! Several of us were serving for the first time as representatives to a state nominating convention, others were old hands. Some were Democratic colleagues from prior to the convention, but others were new to the party and each other. None of that mattered once we got to Austin. We were Kendall County Obama delegates and alternates, and Steve Rogers, Claire Oxley Gluck, Sally Tarasoff, Michele Koch, and I felt like family right away.

There was one thing that took the smiles off our collective faces. It was the knowledge that admitting being a Democrat in Kendall County can mean putting yourself at risk. We'd all heard the stories of people threatened physically, socially, or with loss of livelihood for being too open about their politics. We vowed that a huge goal of becoming active Democrats in small Republican-dominated towns in the Texas Hill Country had to be helping people to feel free to "come out" without danger, or at least to find a friendly group of peers to hang with in safety.

We knew that the existing clubs served a valuable purpose in supporting and educating local Democrats. We also knew that like us, many people didn't even know about the clubs or if they did, weren't compelled or able to attend meetings, perhaps working during the day and/or more interested in a beer after work than a serious political gathering. So during "off" time from the convention, Steve Rogers, Claire Oxley Gluck, Sally Tarasoff, Michele Koch, and myself hung out, beers in our own hands, brainstorming solutions.



Shortly after returning to Boerne-- a few more beers and emails under our belts—Blue Tuesday and the Hill Country Democrats website were born. We hoped the latter would serve as ways of getting the word out to computer literate Democrats about groups, meetings, events, issues, and activist opportunities in small towns all over the Hill Country and announce to the region that there are indeed Democrats in them thar hills. I created an extension of the website with my email distribution list. We hoped that Blue Tuesday would provide an opportunity to simply meet and enjoy the company of like-minded people, savor election successes, commiserate together over disappointments, and provide some camaraderie in a pleasant social environment where one could eat and drink, unencumbered by minutes and speakers.

Times change, of course, and a lot has happened over the last year. The website still sits in cyberspace, though it hasn't been updated much these days. The distribution list has pretty much outlived its usefulness, as people have developed other connections and are now getting state and national info in their in-boxes without my assistance. Finally, we're putting Blue Tuesday on hiatus for 2010 as a regular event in favor of cultivating attendance at Kendall County Area Democratic Women (KCADW) and Kendall County Democratic Club (KCDC). It was fun, but time to move on!

**Program for February's Meeting:
"Communication and How Best to Use the Local Media."**

Our speaker, Bethany Heinesh, is the editor of the Hill Country Weekly, published by Marie Hicks in Boerne. Bethany strives to provide quality news and accurate reporting to the Hill Country community every week. The skill of communicating effectively is an endeavor everyone needs. Communication is the foundation upon which every area of life operates and is paramount to the success or failure of personal, professional, social and civic relationships.

Bethany has a strong background in communication. She is a qualified public speaker, as well as a freelance, professional and technical writer. Bethany is also a highly decorated former U.S. Marine Sergeant who served as a technical communications operator and Platoon Sergeant during her four-year active duty commitment. She spent three years in Japan as one of only five women in a 300-Marine communications company and trained hundreds of Marines to ensure technical competency. She also traveled the world performing complex communication configurations in unfamiliar terrain training ally forces.

Bethany received extensive communication training while in the Marines and has obtained an Associate of Arts degree from Montgomery College near Houston. She will have her Bachelor's in Public Relations with a minor in religious studies from the University of Houston in December and plans to further her education.

All the Water That Ever Was, Is Now

That's what our member Alyssa Burgin, who is the executive director of the Texas Drought Project, says. Put another way, she says, "There's no more water to be had, so we have to take care of what we have."

That is the theme of the upcoming Texas Water Symposium at Trinity University sponsored by the Texas Drought Project, Trinity University, and San Antonio Peace Center. It takes place over three days, February 14-16. Here are just some of the many sessions to be presented during this free symposium:

- Outer Space and Water
- Creativity and Water
- Law and Water I and II
- Political Science and Water
- Energy and Water, a panel discussion moderated by our own Alyssa Burgin
- Ecology and Water, presented by our members Carol Coston and Elise Garcia of Sisterfarm

Kicking off the symposium on Sunday, Feb. 14, will be the featured speaker, author Char Miller, whose topic will be "Urban Studies and Water: San Antonio Running Dry!"

Finalizing the Symposium will be a talk by the noted journalist and author Thomas Friedman, who will be at Laurie Auditorium at 7 p.m. Tuesday. Doors open at 6:30 and KCADW members are forming carpools to attend. Call Jean Robitaille, 830-981-4971.

For the full schedule go to <http://1.salsa.net/peace/water/schedule.html>



On the Democratic Party Ballot in the Primary Election March 2, 2010

Local election: JP, District 2
Josue Martinez

Commissioner of Agriculture
Kinky Friedman
Hank Gilbert

Statewide and District Elections

U. S. Representative District 21
Lainey Melnick

Railroad Commissioner
Jeff Weems

Governor
Alma Ludivina Aguado
Felix (Rodriguez) Alvarado
Bill Dear
Clement E. Glenn
Star Locke
Farouk Shami
Bill White

Justice, Supreme Court, Place 3
Jim Sharp

Justice, Supreme Court, Place 5
Bill Moody

Justice, Supreme Court, Place 9
Blake Bailey

Lieutenant Governor
Linda Chavez-Thompson
Ronnie Earle
Marc Katz

Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals Place 6
Keith Hampton

Attorney General
Barbara Ann Radnofsky

Member, State Board of Education, District 5
Rebecca Bell-Metereau
Robert M. Bohmfalk
Daniel Boone
Josiah James Ingalls

Commissioner of the General Land Office
Bill Burton
Hector Uribe

Justice, 4th Court of Appeals District,
Place 2 - Unexpired Term
Rebeca C. Martinez



We here in Kendall County and the surrounding areas know all too well the feeling of being left out in our Democratic primary elections. There is often no one at all on the local sections of our ballots, and certainly not any actual competition, while the Republican primary is awash in candidates for county commissioners and the like. While it’s true that those positions can have some impact on our daily lives, we should overcome the temptation to cross over and vote in the Republican primary. We should remember that our votes are needed in those statewide elections, where we can influence who our party chooses to go up against the Republican nominees. This is especially critical this year, when we may be able to field a strong gubernatorial candidate who can stand strong against either Perry or Hutchison. In addition, the number of voters in the primary may affect our representation at the state convention.

So please, let’s all turn out at our polling places—or at the courthouse for early voting—for the **Democratic** primary next month.

Hold Them Accountable: How Our Representatives Voted in Washington

Thanks to Gwen King for keeping us up to date on how our legislators voted.

In the U.S. Senate

Amendment to clarify coverage for preventive services for women

Vote **Agreed to** (61-39). The Senate adopted this amendment to the health care reform bill, which aims to guarantee that women of all ages receive an annual women's health exam at no cost. The Senate is still debating this bill.

Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison voted **NO**

Sen. John Cornyn voted **NO**

Debt Limit Extension; Thune Amendment to terminate TARP

Vote **Rejected** (53-45, 2 not voting). The Senate rejected this amendment to end the Troubled Asset Relief Program. The bill itself would raise the federal debt limit to \$13.029 trillion.

Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison voted **YES**

Sen. John Cornyn voted **YES**

Joint Resolution increasing the statutory limit on the public debt

Vote **Agreed to** (60-39, 1 not voting). The Senate voted to raise the federal debt limit to \$14.4 trillion, essentially avoiding a scenario where the government defaults on its debt.

Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison voted **NO**

Sen. John Cornyn voted **NO**

Confirmation of Ben Bernanke To Be Chairman of the Federal Reserve System

Vote **Confirmed** (70-30). The Senate confirmed the nomination of Ben S. Bernanke, of New Jersey, to be Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for a term of four years.

Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison voted **NO**

Sen. John Cornyn voted **NO**

Dr. Maya Angelou to Headline Planned Parenthood Fundraiser

The Planned Parenthood Trust of San Antonio and South Texas is holding its annual fundraising luncheon on April 14, 2010. World-renowned author, educator, civil-rights activist and poet Dr. Maya Angelou will be the guest speaker. One of Dr. Angelou's best-loved books, *I know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, was nominated for a National Book Award, and her volume of poetry, *Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'Fore I Die*, was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

KCADW is sponsoring at least one table for this fundraiser—and possibly two if there is sufficient interest among our members. If we can fill two tables, tickets will be \$125 each. If we fill only one table, tickets are \$150 each. Each attendee will be paying for her own ticket, so no club moneys will be used, and approximately \$40 per person will be tax deductible.

All proceeds benefit the Planned Parenthood Trust and will be used to fund family planning, annual exams, and cancer screening and treatment for low-income, uninsured women throughout our community. San Antonio ranks among the top 20 urban areas in the country for uninsured adults. Thus Planned Parenthood is often a woman's only healthcare provider. By sponsoring at least one table at this event, KCADW will help ensure that vulnerable women can continue to rely on Planned Parenthood for the life-changing, life-saving services upon which their futures often depend.

Please contact Cindy Offutt by phone or email if you would like to join us!

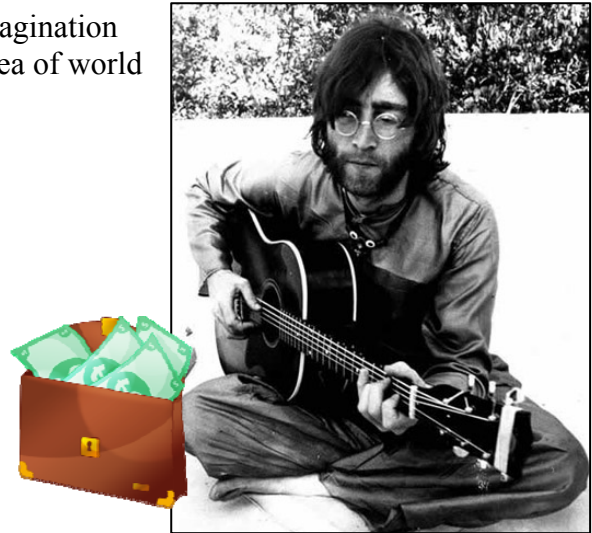
Imagine . . .

by Janice Shoemaker

If John Lennon were here today, directing his utopian imagination toward the American political scene rather than toward the idea of world peace, perhaps his lyrics would look something like this:

Imagine there are no lobbyists,
It isn't hard to do.
No payoffs for Congress,
Government for me and you.
Imagine all the voters
Deciding based on fa-a-a-cts . . .

You may say I'm a dreamer,
But we can do this if we try.
Publicly finance our elections
And democracy will not die.



Okay, so he would have been cleverer and more lyrical than this, but you get the idea.

As we have watched the money spent on our national—and even many state—elections spiraling more and more out of control, it has become clear that we cannot continue on this path and expect to have a truly legitimate democratic government. What with the recent abominable decision by the right-leaning Supreme Court, granting corporations the ability to pour unlimited funds into election campaigns, the problem has surely reached the crisis stage. We must find a way to finance major elections with our tax money rather than allowing the special interests with very deep pockets to buy the elections and therefore to own our elected representatives.

Many taxpayers would scream “No! I won’t let my tax money be spent that way!” But they are not seeing the reality of the game of politics. We would all like to think that our elected officials, from local and state representatives to governors and senators and even presidents, are committed to acting in our best interests, to leading our states and our nation ethically and responsibly.

The reality is that most of them are committed to one thing: getting re-elected. From the moment they are sworn into office, their sights must be on the next election—how they will raise the money to run the kind of obscenely expensive campaign that has become the norm. No politician wants to be a one-term officeholder, so a large percentage of their time, while we taxpayers are paying their salaries, is spent on fund-raising. And while some of those contributions will come in small doses from people like you and me, who just want to support a candidate we believe in, the overwhelming bulk of a politician’s re-election coffers is filled by corporations and well-heeled donors who expect to receive something for their investments.

I would rather pay a little more in taxes in order to have elected officials who would be free to do the work we pay them to do, without obligation to wealthy benefactors. I would also rather see election campaigns substantially reduced, with far less television saturation and more substantive debate.

Imagine if your representative—let’s say your senator, as an example—didn’t fill his or her day with meetings with lobbyists. Imagine if campaign fundraisers were non-existent. Imagine if that senator were free to vote on an issue based on her conscience or on input from his constituents instead of loyalty to big contributors.

Maybe someday you’ll join us, and the country can have our democracy back.

Donations for Haitian Earthquake Relief

Here are just a few of the many organizations taking online donations:

Clinton Bush Haiti Fund

<https://re.clintonbushhaitifund.org/SSLPage.aspx?pid=3935&gclid=CLKrsoCKyJ8CFQgQswodGGrEzw>

CARE

https://my.care.org/site/Donation2?df_id=5340&5340.donation=landing&s_src=171040330000&s_usbsrc=redghaitisplash&utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_term=haiti%20donations&utm_content=donatetocare&utm_campaign=redhaiti5340

UNICEF

<http://www.unicefusa.org/?gclid=CPiuo-mKyJ8CFQLHsgodG2Womw>

American Red Cross

<http://www.redcross.org/>

Doctors Without Borders

<http://doctorswithoutborders.org/donate/>

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