

# The Connection

SUMMER 2009

The newsletter of the Texas Democratic Women

Issue 17, Volume 2

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## 2009 TDW Summer Retreat: The Lodge of Granbury Granbury, Texas July 17-18, 2009



*"Our Future Starts Today: Building a Future with Democratic Values"* theme continues for the 2009 Summer Retreat. The Retreat began as members from across Texas arrived Friday, July 17. **Hood County President Glenda Vernon** welcomed the TDW members, after which attendees had a chance to relax and chat during dinner.

The program began at 7pm with **Dave Lieber** columnist from the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, author, and founder of Watchdog Nation. Dave's presentation covered a variety of topics from his experiences as a native New Yorker moving and living in Texas, his family, and his work with Watchdog Nation (a consumer advocacy group). Dave's animated presentation and stories provided a great start to the Retreat!

Saturday's session began with an opening statement's by TDW **State President Susie Blackmon**. Susie's statements centered around membership and the challenges we face maintaining the level of enthusiasm seen during the 2008 elections.



After several door prizes were distributed, next on the agenda **President-Elect Joanna Reagan**. Joanna's presentation topic was "Know the Constitution: Countering T.E.A. Precinct Organizing". The presentation provided members with in-

formation with the organized campaign of disinformation generated by the T.E.A. as well as by other groups throughout Texas. In addition, Joanna discussed "Constitution Week" which is September 17-23 and provided various stories about different elements of the Constitution.

Attendees then participated in an open forum moderated by **President, Susie Blackmon** on "Energizing TDW Chapters and Board". For over an hour the 21 chapters represented shared experiences, challenges, and solutions to the issues.

At 11ish am our keynote speaker **State Senator Wendy Davis**, District 10, Tarrant County. **Senator Davis** described her experiences in the Texas State Senate. She also thanked TDW for their help with her campaign as well as for all Democratic candidates.



The Retreat concluded after a delicious lunch, more door prizes, and a thank you from **Susie Blackmon**.



## President's Message

**Dear TDW Members,**

### **Message from our Retreat: promote yourself, your chapter and Democrats!**

While Texans are enjoying their summer, the Texas Democratic Women met at their 2009 Summer Retreat. We talked about strengthening our chapters and heard from **Senator Wendy Davis** of Ft. Worth. We had some fun too in Granbury and the Hood County Chapter were wonderful hosts. A warm welcome was extended by **Democratic County Chair, Joyce Carver** and TDW Hood Co. **Chapter President Glenda Vernon**. Members sported Health Care buttons and talked about the upcoming elections.

**DNC Secretary, Alice Germond's** remarks were distributed and spoke of the opportunities for TDW. In the 2008 Election, Texas women voted for Obama by 47%, 3% more and we've made it! The Hispanic vote has doubled since 1992, voting 63 percent for Obama. Women, the young and Hispanics are all growing populations in Texas, and all are trending D. It happened everywhere – 11 counties switched red to blue: the 3 biggest: Harris, Dallas, and Bexar. Alice liked what she saw, and this Sept. 10-12, the Democratic National Committee will be meeting in Austin (*Note: The Women's Caucus will be held from 9-10 AM on Sat., Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> at the Renaissance Arboretum. Guests are welcome.*).

At our Retreat, **Sen. Wendy Davis's** remarks were the highlight of the meeting. With her election, statehouse democrats gained the one vote they needed to make the republicans re-think some of their harshest legislation. She was voted the outstanding Rookie of the Year by Texas Monthly. By campaigning for democratic women candidates like **Sen. Davis** and choosing offices for which to run yourself, we can turn Texas blue. In the 2008 Election cycle, with your help and support TDW was able to donate \$50,000 to candidates just as inspirational as **Wendy Davis**. Following the 2010 Census, Texas is expected to pick up as many as 4 more Congressional seats. We can do it!

Both women urged us to be active and be vocal. Write those letters supporting health care to your local papers, encourage and work for democratic women candidates. My experience in politics tells me that at those times when I had the most republican pushback, I was doing something right and they were loosing ground. Keep doing the right thing!

Join us in Austin on **Feb. 26-27** for the 2010 TDW Convention, Silent Auction and for the Candidate's Forum and Campaign Workshops. Our 2010 theme is **"Be The Change You Want In Texas"**.

Proud to be a Democrat, Prouder to be a Democratic Woman

*Susie Blackmon*

President, Texas Democratic Women



## DNC Message

**We are so excited to have the Fall DNC meeting in Austin, Texas!** The meeting will be **September 10th -12th** at the Renaissance Hotel in the Arboretum. Caucuses meet during the day on Friday and Saturday and the general meeting will be **Friday, September 11th** from **11:30 to 1:00**.

Of course, official meetings are open to the public as are all official Democratic meetings.

Texas has not been a host for several decades, so needless to say, the Texas Democratic Party is planning a huge Texas welcome.

**Betty Richie-DNC Committeewoman-Texas**



### **TDW CHAPTERS & MEMBERS!**

Start thinking about Silent Auction items for the 2010 TDW State Convention. Wouldn't it be GREAT to have one at least 1 item per chapter. The proceeds help support TDW events. Let's try to surpass 2009!

### **CORRECTION:**

Spring 2009 edition of "The Connection":  
Young County received 1st place for  
scrapbook at the 2009 TDW State  
Convention.

## Why are you a Democrat?

By Carolyn Harvey

How would you answer that question?

We should all have an answer without thinking. Democrats have been responsible for things we have today. Social Security, minimum wage, G I Bill of Rights, and Medicare to mention a few. We believe equal opportunity for all citizens. We believe in quality education for all. Democrats stand for Hope, Equal Opportunity, and Fair Play. The Republicans have defined us too long. It is time for us to speak up.

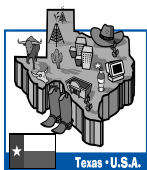
The stakes are too high to let them to get away with it. There is hope that we can turn Texas Blue again. There are too many counties that are still red. The 2010 election preparation starts **NOW**. This country is finally moving forward. We can not afford to turn back now.

Remember to always be **PROUD TO BE A DEMOCRAT**.



## The Texas Governor's Mansion by Donna Beth McCormick

The Governor's Mansion belongs to the people of Texas, it does not matter who the occupant is, or what party, it is ours!



At the present, the Mansion is in peril, an arsonist set fire by throwing a Molotov cocktail on the porch in the early morning hours of Sunday, June 8, 2008. The one good thing about the fire is that everything was out of the house and in storage. The Mansion will be restored, it will take two or more years since things have to be handmade in the interior - moldings, baseboards, door frames, etc. The Legislature appropriated about \$22 million for the house and the Restoration Committee will raise the rest, about another \$3-4 million. While this is going on, the house will be made more accessible: restrooms that wheelchairs will fit into, an elevator large enough for a wheelchair, back stairs that are wider than 3 feet, etc.

One question everyone asks: where was the insurance? The State of Texas is self-insured.

A few facts about the mansion:

- \* Construction on the Mansion began in 1854 and finished in 1856.
- \* Austin, the capital of Texas, had about 3,000 residents in 1856 when the Governor's Mansion was completed.
- \* The builder of the Governor's Mansion was Abner Cook.
- \* The original cost of the Mansion was \$17,000--\$14,500 for the building and \$2,500 for the furnishings.

Here are some websites with more information and some you can download for club presentations  
**[www.TexasGovernorsMansion.org](http://www.TexasGovernorsMansion.org)** and **[www.TexasOnline.com](http://www.TexasOnline.com)**.

## CHAPTER NEWS

### Hidalgo County—Rosalie Weisfeld, President

Hidalgo County chapter of TDW elected its 2009-2010 officers on March 2, 2009. HCTDW's newly elected officers, appointed board, and committee chairs were sworn in by the **Honorable Judge Linda Yanez** at a dinner ceremony held at Chucho's Restaurant, McAllen Texas that same evening.



A BIG Thank you to....

Sharon Davis & Carolyn Harvey—Assistant Editors—“The Connection”.



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### TDW MEMBERS

#### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

#### 2009

Sept 10 DNC Fall Meeting—Austin  
-  
12

12 Women's Caucus-Renaissance  
Arboretum-Austin (9-10am)

17 Constitution Week  
-  
23

#### 2010

Feb 27 TDW State Convention--  
- Wyndam Garden Hotel-Austin  
28

*Dates subject to change—check with Chapter Leaders or see the website for updates.*

*Thank you.....*

To the members of Hood County TDW for their hard work and hospitality to provide a great Summer Retreat!



Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.

Helen Keller(1880-1968) Author and Lecturer

#### Change of Contact Information

Send any changes of your contact information to

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**The Connection** is published quarterly. Send Chapter “happenings” or ideas for stories, columns, or news to...

***newsletter@tdw.org***

***2009 deadlines for submission of articles***

⇒ Fall : September 7th

⇒ Winter : December 7th