

# BCDP NEWSLETTER

## BASTROP COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

- Sept. 10**  
**Stonewall Democrats meeting**  
*The 602 on Main*  
919 Main St., Bastrop, 7pm
- Sept. 11**  
**BCDP women's luncheon**  
*Cedar's Mediterranean*  
904 College St., Bastrop, 1pm
- Sept. 11**  
**BCDP monthly meeting**  
*First National Bank*  
1312 US 290, Elgin, 7pm
- Oct. 8**  
**Stonewall Democrats meeting**  
*The 602 on Main*  
919 Main St., Bastrop, 7pm
- Oct. 9**  
**BCDP women's luncheon**  
*Casa Chapala*  
800 Walnut St., Bastrop, 1pm
- Oct. 10**  
**BCDP monthly meeting**  
*First National Bank*  
312 Main St., Smithville, 7pm
- Nov. 12**  
**Stonewall Democrats meeting**  
*The 602 on Main*  
919 Main St., Bastrop, 7pm
- Nov. 13**  
**BCDP women's luncheon**  
*Cedar's Mediterranean*  
904 College St., Bastrop, 1pm
- Nov. 14**  
**BCDP County Executive Committee meeting (open to public)**  
*Kerr Community Center*  
1308 Walnut St., Bastrop, 7pm



## Guide to the September presidential debate

The Democratic Party's third presidential debate, hosted by ABC News and Univision, will be held Sept. 12 in Houston, Texas. The venue for the debate is Texas Southern University, a historically black university. Moderators for the third Democratic presidential primary debate will be George Stephanopoulos, David Muir, Linsey Davis and Jorge Ramos.

"As the nation's most diverse city, Houston is the perfect place for the Democratic Party's third debate. Leaders like Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee and Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner have been key to making Houston the world class city it is today," DNC Chair Tom Perez said.



Unlike June and July's debates, which had more lenient requirements that gave most candidates an opportunity to introduce themselves to America, the third debate has significantly stricter qualifications rules.

Candidates had to meet both a polling and donor threshold: at least 2 percent in four national DNC-approved polls, and at least 130,000 unique donors, coming from at

least 400 unique donors in 20 or more states. The deadline to reach the qualifications for the September debate was Aug. 28.

The following Democratic presidential candidates have met both requirements to be on the debate stage in September:

- Former Vice President Joe Biden
- New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker
- South Bend, Indiana Mayor Pete Buttigieg
- Former Secretary of HUD, Julian Castro
- California Sen. Kamala Harris
- Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar
- Former Texas Rep. Beto O'Rourke
- Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders
- Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren
- Businessman Andrew Yang

## **Bastrop County Stonewall Democrats participate in Austin Pride Parade**

*By Amy Fariss*

In Austin, Texas, August marks PRIDE, a time of positive affirmation of LGBTQ+ individuals and their causes. The evening of Saturday, Aug. 10, marked the final celebration with the 2019 annual Pride Parade. Hosted by the Austin Gay and Lesbian Pride Foundation, the parade welcomed 152 different groups and sponsors marching to show their support. This year's parade had a number of special guests, most notably, presidential hopeful, Mayor Pete Buttigieg and spouse Chasten of South Bend, Indiana. Mayor Buttigieg and Austin Mayor Steve Alder led the parade with an attendance of well over last year's 400,000.



Other notables present were State Sen. Kirk Watson; former Texas Sen. Wendy Davis; Julie Oliver, candidate for U.S. House of Representatives District 25; Sheri Soltes, candidate for Travis County Commissioner; and Austin City Manager Spencer Cronk. After the horrific events the prior weekend in El Paso and Dayton,

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Austin Pride issued words of support and change for those communities saying "...we will march on the front lines with you. That's what freedom and unity are, and we cannot let terror win."



Amy Fariss and Kirk Watson

Austin Police Department stepped up security and relayed safety precautions before the parade. Local non-profit Out Youth opted not to allow its under-17



Dayna Beck and Wendy Davis

members to march with its group. But a festive mood would not be tamped; the whole event was colorful, expressive, and creative. People from all walks of life came out to celebrate. Media sponsor KVUE of Austin provided a first- ever livestream of



the parade themed Boogie Wonderland. Bastrop County Stonewall Democrats joined forces to march with Travis County's Stonewall Democrats and [Register2Vote.org](http://Register2Vote.org).

Our very own Bastrop Stonewall Democrat, Madeline Eden, is its technical director. This entity is a nonpartisan, philanthropic, tax-exempt

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501(c)4 organization aimed at removing as many barriers as possible to registering to vote. Per the website, "In Texas, over 4.5 million voting-age citizens are not registered to vote. This is primarily due to laws that restrict voter registration efforts." Bastrop County Stonewall Democrats invite you to like their Facebook page and attend their monthly meetings. Let's mark today as the day to start getting people registered to vote. You can help anyone register by going to [Register2vote.org](https://www.register2vote.org).

## Bastrop County Democrats pitch in to Keep Bastrop County Beautiful

The Bastrop County Democratic Party and the Bastrop County Stonewall Democrats are participating in Keep Bastrop County Beautiful's Adopt-a-Street program. Each group has adopted a half-mile street, providing monthly cleanups.

BCDP has adopted both sides of Main Street, from Chestnut to Beech in Bastrop. Volunteers meet at the BCDP Headquarters, 1009 Main Street, at 9:00 a.m. on the second Saturday of the month.



The Bastrop County Stonewall Democrats have adopted both sides of Highway 95 from Chestnut (150) to Highway 71. They meet across the street from Buc-ee's at 4:00 p.m. on the fourth Sunday of the month.

Volunteers receive grabbers and trash bags provided by KBCB. This initiative is a great way to give back and build community ties while engaging with colleagues and friends. Please consider pitching in and joining us one or two Saturdays a month.



## The Case for Gun Control

*Commentary by Mark Timerman*

The recent mass shootings in El Paso and Dayton remind us that we need some common-sense gun laws, and ultimately we need to bring back the assault weapons ban.

Why can't we enjoy the safety and security of all the other industrialized countries in the world, where mass shootings have been virtually nonexistent for the last 25 years? In 1994 President Bill Clinton signed the assault weapons ban, and in 2004 President George Bush and the Republicans decided not to renew the bill. While the ban was in effect, there was one mass shooting of notoriety, the Columbine High School shooting. Since 2004 there have been about 18 mass shootings, each with at least 10 people killed, and 15 of those incidents have happened since the Sandy Hook shootings in 2012.

Why is this a USA problem and not other countries'? Because we have more guns per capita than any other country, and it isn't even close. All of the other industrialized countries have far greater gun control than we do, and most have assault weapons bans.

In New Zealand after the tragic shooting at a mosque earlier this year, it took their legislature only two weeks to enact an assault weapons ban, and the people were happy to do so. They knew the lesson learned by Australia, when after a shooting in 1996 in Tasmania that left 36 dead, they outlawed assault weapons and have been pretty safe since then.



All countries have mental illness problems. That is not a unique American problem, so that excuse doesn't fly with me. Every time we have a mass shooting, the anger rises, only to be forgotten in the following weeks. Nothing gets done, especially with the NRA-controlled Republican party in charge. Maybe when these kinds of shootings happen every week of every month of every year will they be willing to do something about it. Until then, we have only one option and that is to

vote all of the gun-loving Republicans out of office for the sake of our kids, our families, and our friends.

## **Bastrop County and local offices up for election in 2020**

It's hard to imagine, but it's already time to think about our next election for local offices. We'll be picking our candidates for the following offices in November 2020. Incumbent office holders are shown.

*Sheriff:* Maurice Cook (Republican)

*Tax-Assessor Collector:* Linda Harmon (Democrat)

### *County Commissioners*

- Precinct 1: Mel Hamner (Republican)
- Precinct 3: Mark Meuth (Democrat)
- Precinct 4: Donna Snowden (Republican)

### *County Constables*

- Precinct 1: Wayne Wood (Republican)
- Precinct 2: Gus Meduna (Democrat)
- Precinct 3: Tim Sparkman (Republican)
- Precinct 4: Paula Birran (Republican)

### *Bastrop City Council*

- Mayor: Connie Schroeder
- Mayor Pro-Tem: Lyle Nelson

### *Bastrop ISD*

- Molly McClure
- Billy Moore

### *Elgin City Council*

- Mayor-at-Large: Chris Cannon
- Mayor Pro-Tem: Jessica Bega
- Daniel Lopez
- Sue Brasher

### *Elgin ISD*

- President: Byron Mitchell
- Geno Chavarria

### *Smithville City Council*

- Mayor: Scott Saunders, Jr.
- Joanna Morgan
- Cassie Barrientos

### *Smithville ISD*

- Tay Campbell
- Grant Gutierrez

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How about you? Interested in throwing your hat in the ring? Let's get you started. First, you might be wondering what is involved in filling one of these spots. Go here to read about the official duties of each office:

<https://www.county.org/About-Texas-Counties/About-Texas-County-Officials>

Then go here to learn how to get going with your candidacy.

<https://www.bastropvotes.org/elected-officials/information-for-candidates/>



You must file for your place on the primary ballot between Nov. 9, 2019 and Dec. 9, 2019.

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## But first, there's this

Nov. 5 of this year is also an election day. Voters will decide on 10 constitutional amendments in a statewide election. Usually these elections attract a very low voter turnout, largely because voters are frustrated by the language on the ballot and confused about what the proposition actually says.

Here's what's on the ballot:

- Proposition 1: Allows persons to serve as more than one appointed or elected municipal judge
- Proposition 2: Allows the Texas Water Development Board to issue up to \$200 million in bonds
- Proposition 3: Authorizes temporary property tax exemption for disaster areas
- Proposition 4: Prohibits the state from levying an income tax on individuals
- Proposition 5: Dedicates revenue from the sales tax on sporting goods to parks, wildlife, and historical agencies
- Proposition 6: Authorizes the legislature to increase bonds for the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute
- Proposition 7: Increases distributions to the state school fund
- Proposition 8: Creates a Flood Infrastructure Fund
- Proposition 9: Authorizes property tax exemption for precious metals held in depositories
- Proposition 10: Allows for transfer of law enforcement animals to handlers or others if in animal's best interest

For a broader understanding, explanatory statements for these propositions are available from the Texas Secretary of State at <https://www.sos.texas.gov/elections/forms/2019-explanatory-statements.pdf>.

And for even more information, including videos on each proposition, visit the League of Women Voters here:

<https://my.lwv.org/texas/election-information>



## Every vote counts

Commentary by Steve Chamberlain

I am a Democrat. Period. We don't need Trump to divide us. We are dividing ourselves. Look around. There are progressive Democrats, independent Democrats, Stonewall Democrats, socialist Democrats, young Democrats—any number of different types Democrats. Most of us watched the recent debates, held over two nights because there were over 20 candidates, but did you happen to see DNC chair Tom Perez? He made some interesting statements that I researched further.

In December of 2016 the Washington Post reported that in the 2016 election 1.7 million people in 33 states and DC cast a ballot without voting in the presidential race. (Note: they didn't have the data on the other states at that time.) In several states the number of

State	Margin: Trump won by	Undervote: Ballots cast without vote for president	Undervote percent of margin
Arizona	91,234 votes	88,332	96.8%
Maine	22,142 votes	23,965	108.2%
Florida	112,911 votes	160,450	142.1%
Michigan	10,704 votes	75,335	703.8%

people who didn't vote for president was near to or greater than the eventual margin of victory:

Those are all swing states. Look at Michigan. If one-seventh of those Michigan voters had voted for Hillary, she would have won the state.

Clearly, people deciding on one candidate or another instead of skipping the presidential race could have made the difference in the election. Flip Michigan and flip Florida—both states where the undervote was larger than the margin—and Donald Trump drops to 261 electoral votes.



Yes, a homophobic, Latino-hating, Muslim-hating, racist, sexist pig won the US presidency, but for a beautiful moment in time I got to stamp my feet and refuse to vote for Hillary. You'd understand if you saw how many people on Facebook were impressed with me at the time.

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But between those two states, more than a quarter of a million people preferred to pick no one over anyone on the ballot.

We have 20 plus presidential candidates with 20 plus ideas of what America needs. We need a candidate who embraces the ideas of all Democrats. Make your pick, support the candidate of your choice but at the end of the day...VOTE DEMOCRAT. We need to get everyone registered to vote. Once registered, those people must actually cast a complete ballot.

Remember, "You miss 100 percent of the shots that you don't take." I am looking for the button or sticker that simply states DEMOCRAT FOR PRESIDENT 2020.



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## **VOTE BLUE NO MATTER WHO** **(Well, maybe...)**

*Commentary by Annie Marrs*

I was invited to consider writing an article for this issue of the BCDP Newsletter. When given the theme "Vote Blue No Matter Who," my immediate thought was, "Of course." For anyone who pays attention to the daily news, it is a no-brainer. Right?

After giving it some thought, however, I have to add what for me, a moderate Democrat, is a major caveat. When it comes to the office of the President of the United States of America, it is an unquestionable and resounding YES! For local and state offices, though, for me it is an unquestionable and resounding WELL, MAYBE....

I cannot tell you how deeply I value my freedom to vote, and how important that is to me. Voting is to my political life what prayer is to my spiritual life. It is not to be taken lightly. If I find myself intrigued by any Republican, Independent, or Libertarian who is running for office, I check them out. Unlike the "dark ages" (before the internet) these days it means relying primarily on their websites. If they do not have a link for "Issues" I immediately pass by. If they have policy statements, well, typically they are eliminated pretty quickly. But there have been occasions that have caused me to stop and seriously consider, and even to reconsider, my vote. For someone who historically did not vote a straight ticket, I will admit that for several voting cycles I have indeed voted a straight ticket.

As a moderate Democrat my current choice (it's still early!) for president is Pete Buttigieg. But to my wonderful progressive Democratic friends, please hear me when I say that I will **VOTE BLUE NO MATTER WHO**, meaning I will vote for whomever is the choice of the Democratic Party for President of the United States.

## HOW DO YOU WANT TO BE INVOLVED?

There is much to do at all levels as we strive to thwart the Republican agenda and turn Bastrop County, the State of Texas, and America BLUE. Here are some possibilities for your consideration:

### ACTIVIST GROUPS

- **Bastrop County Indivisible**  
Contact Ginger Redden [bcitx10@gmail.com](mailto:bcitx10@gmail.com) or Robin Rieck [rrieck@austin.rr.com](mailto:rrieck@austin.rr.com)
- **Bastrop County for Beto**  
Contact Mary Liz Singleton [marylizsingleton@gmail.com](mailto:marylizsingleton@gmail.com) or Robin Rieck [rrieck@austin.rr.com](mailto:rrieck@austin.rr.com)
- **Hogeye Huddle**  
Contact Michelle Ryan [hogeyehuddle@gmail.com](mailto:hogeyehuddle@gmail.com)
- **Stonewall Democrats of Bastrop County**  
Contact Madi Eden [mk@aifx.net](mailto:mk@aifx.net) or Dayna Beck [aspenrox@gmail.com](mailto:aspenrox@gmail.com)

### LIVELY DISCUSSION GROUPS

- **Bastrop County Democratic Women's Monthly Luncheon**  
Contact Mary Liz Singleton [marylizsingleton@gmail.com](mailto:marylizsingleton@gmail.com)
- **Liberals Dining & Drinking (LDD)**  
Contact Marsha Correia [marshac1017@sbcglobal.net](mailto:marshac1017@sbcglobal.net)
- **Uppity Women Monthly Caucus**  
Contact Carole Marmell [cmarmell@hotmail.com](mailto:cmarmell@hotmail.com)

### VOTER REGISTRATION

- **Become a Volunteer Deputy Registrar**  
Contact Dayna Beck, [aspenrox@gmail.com](mailto:aspenrox@gmail.com)

### BCDP LEADERSHIP ROLE

- **Precinct Chair • Volunteer Coordinator**  
Contact Cheryl Reese [cheryl.reese@yahoo.com](mailto:cheryl.reese@yahoo.com)

### CANDIDATE FOR OFFICE AT THE LOCAL OR COUNTY LEVEL

- Contact Cheryl Reese [cheryl.reese@yahoo.com](mailto:cheryl.reese@yahoo.com)

### COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE

- **Writers to contribute articles/letters to the editor to local newspapers and for this newsletter**

Contact Bill McCann [bmccann42@gmail.com](mailto:bmccann42@gmail.com)

### SUPPORT STAFF ROLE

- **Volunteer in the BCDP Office**  
Contact Carole Marmelle [cmarmell@gmail.com](mailto:cmarmell@gmail.com)

### VOTER OUTREACH

- ♦ **Block Walking • Canvassing**  
Contact James Denny [jedenny@comcast.net](mailto:jedenny@comcast.net)

### CONTRIBUTE TO THE BASTROP COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY

[secure.actblue.com/donate/bastrop-county-democratic-party-1](http://secure.actblue.com/donate/bastrop-county-democratic-party-1)

### KEEP IN TOUCH VIA THE BCDP NEWSLETTER

Visit [www.bastropdemocrats.org](http://www.bastropdemocrats.org)

## Who Represents Me?

### U.S. Senate

- John Cornyn: 202-224-2934 (DC); 512-469-6034 (ATX)
- Ted Cruz: 202-224-5922 (DC); 512-916-5834 (ATX)

### U.S. House of Representatives

- Michael McCaul, District 10: 202-225-2401 (DC); 512-473-2357 (Austin)
- Bill Flores, District 17: 202-225-6105 (DC); 512-373-3378 (Austin)
- Michael Cloud, District 27: 202-255-7742 (DC); 361-884-2222 (Corpus Christi); 361-894-6446 (Victoria)

### Texas State Senator

- Kirk Watson: 512-463-0114

### Texas State Representative

- John Cyrier: 512-463-0682

Visit [www.bastropvotes.org](http://www.bastropvotes.org) to find out your district and precinct. Additional contact information can also be found at this link.

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