



BASTROP COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY NEWSLETTER

A Monthly Publication Dedicated to Moving Bastrop County Forward

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec. 11

Deadline to file application for a place on the March 6, 2018, primary ballot.

Dec. 13

Volunteer Deputy Registrar training
Courthouse Annex
804 Pecan Street
10:00-11:00 a.m.

Dec. 13

Bastrop County Dem ladies luncheon
Cedar's Mediterranean Grill
904 College St., Bastrop
1:00 p.m.

Dec. 14

Bastrop County Democratic Party community meeting
Kerr Community Center
1308 Walnut Street
7:00 p.m.

Dec. 15

Affordable Care Act enrollment period ends

Dec. 23

Lost Pines Christmas Cookie Crawl
BCDP Headquarters
1009 Main Street
1:00-4:00 p.m.

Message from the Chair

Ending a Difficult Year with Determination and Optimism

By Cheryl Reese

Best wishes this holiday season, whatever your religious beliefs and traditions.

While 2017 has been a difficult and chaotic year with Republicans in control in Washington and in Texas state government, there is reason for optimism. Many people have argued for some time that electing Donald Trump as president would be a colossal mistake. They were certainly right. In response, Americans by the millions, especially women, have stood in protest around the country. We have seen massive resistance at the national and local levels to the Republican reverse Robin Hood agenda that would do even more damage to the middle class and poor, while further enriching the wealthy.

Locally, many Democrats have joined with Indivisible groups in protest. They have deluged congressional offices with calls and have marched across the old iron bridge over the Colorado River in Bastrop, proudly waving signs in protest of Republican efforts to destroy the Affordable Care Act and to enact tax giveaways to the rich. They have distributed information on open enrollment for the Affordable Care Act to help offset the Trump administration's efforts to sabotage enrollment.

I am growing increasingly confident that this human energy and determination will continue, and even build, as we look to the November 2018 election. We are seeing excellent Democratic candidates emerge for local and statewide offices in Texas. Now more than ever, Democratic candidates who win the March primary election will need your wholehearted support.

We have seen what electing good Democrats can do locally. The election of Mark Meuth in November 2016 as Bastrop County Precinct 3 commissioner is a good example. Mark has been doing a great job listening to and representing his constituents. He has consistently demonstrated his leadership by opposing a waste transfer station planned to be built at the worst location possible in the floodplain near SH 21 and FM 812.

Yes, many of us will be happy to see 2017 go away. But we must look ahead and not back. Thank you all for your continued hard work. We have much more work ahead of us.

Merry Christmas?

By Mary Liz Singleton

According to President Donald Trump, "We're saying 'Merry Christmas' again." I have to chuckle. What could be more hollow than Republicans wrapping themselves in the Merry Christmas flag while chanting their de rigueur "Merry Christmas" mantra? I find nothing merry or Christ-like about the brutal Republican agenda that is being foisted on us by our current Congress, cheered on by the Christian right. More specifically:

- * What is "merry" about their attempts to kill Obamacare and deny health care to millions of Americans? While doing so would provide a tax windfall for the wealthy, it would amount to a lump of coal for the poor.
- * Speaking of lumps of coal, Trump's tax plan would most certainly leave everyone but the top 1 percent with mostly empty stockings come Christmas morning.
- * Wasn't Christ a refugee? I'm sure Trump would find no room in his regal inns for this brown-skinned baby, much like Republicans are treating DREAMers and undocumented immigrants who are seeking better lives for themselves and their families. Do they think God will be assigning people to various rooms in His heavenly home based on their earthly skin tones?
- * The residents of Puerto Rico are going to have a difficult time generating the Christmas spirit when some areas are still without power, water service is not fully restored and communications are spotty. Yet Trump's response was to throw rolls of paper towels at them and later lob a threat to yank federal relief workers from the U.S. territory.
- * The parishioners of Sutherland Springs, TX, are certainly not going to have a Merry Christmas. Ditto for the victims of the other 306 mass shootings that have occurred in the U.S. since the Trump regime took office.



The Republican litmus test for who deserves a Merry Christmas seems to be the specific wording of holiday greetings exchanged. This begs the question: Why would Republicans expect support from anyone other than evangelical Christians if they do not embrace other forms of greeting?

If Republicans want to put Christ back into Christmas, I suggest they start acting more Christ-like and less holier than thou.

Greedy Profiteers and the Trump Administration Threaten America's National Treasures

By Robin Rieck

The recent outcry from citizens about proposed price increases for entrance permits to many of America's national parks and the rush of senior citizens last August to purchase lifetime passes to avoid an enormous fee increase emphasize that Americans love these unspoiled treasures. The thought of our families losing access to some of our nation's most beautiful open spaces due to rising costs has many among us crying foul. Once again, we spoke up about the Trump administration's disregard for seniors and for low to middle income families. When we feel we are being priced out of our own country, we light up our representatives' phones, slam them with emails, and send enough faxes to fill up their inboxes.

Meanwhile, a threat looms that is even more serious than fee hikes. In August, as seniors rushed to the parks to get their lifetime passes, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke recommended to President Trump that the size of several of our national monuments be greatly reduced. This is in line with the administration's assertion that restricting development and enforcing

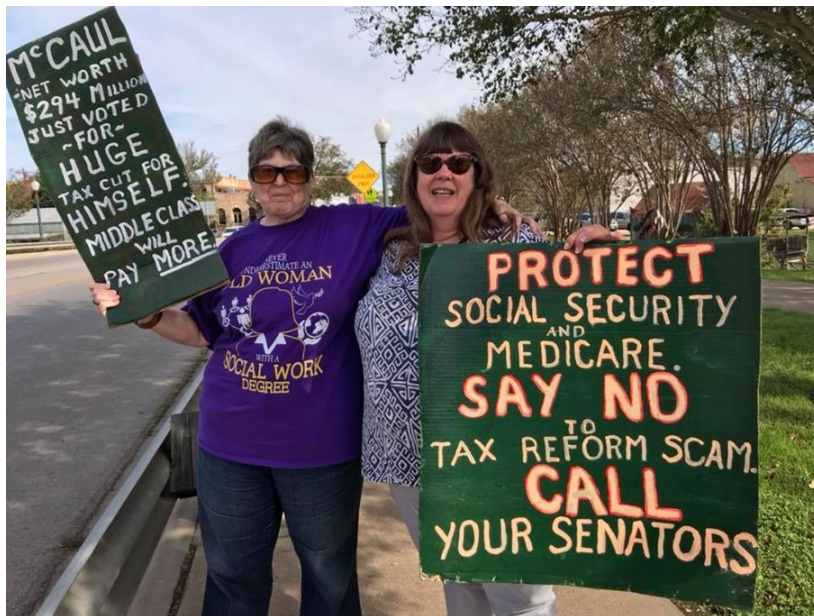


regulations in order to protect these lands is an abuse of federal power. It is also another example of Trump's efforts to reverse many of the responsible policies of the Obama administration. Utah Republican state Rep. Mike Noel was quoted as saying, "When you turn the management over to the tree-huggers, the bird and bunny lovers and the rock lickers, you turn your heritage over." He, along with other Republicans, wants to open up more areas for drilling, mining, and ranching without regard for preserving these lands for future generations.

Corporate profiteers are eager to drain our beloved national monuments of their lucrative assets, including uranium, coal, and natural gas. If the administration is willing to comply with these demands, how long it will be before they apply the same policies to our national parks? Uranium mining in the Grand Canyon and oil drilling in Yellowstone National Park would be highly profitable for those who pressure Trump to reverse decades of responsible environmental stewardship. With climate-change denier Zinke heading the Interior Department and energy lobbyists pumping large sums of cash into our elected representatives, it is important for Americans to speak up, not only about the price of admission but also about the threat posed by this administration to the very future of our parks and monuments.

Bastrop Democrats and Indivisibles Rally To Protest the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (aka Trump Tax Scam)

On Sunday, Nov. 19, at least 20 Democratic and Indivisible activists met on the Bastrop Pedestrian Bridge, armed with an array of signs, to share their concerns about Trump's Tax Scam that will raise taxes on 94 million American families, all to give its biggest tax cuts to the wealthy and corporations. The tax scam also adds \$1.5 trillion to the deficit.



Carole Marmell and Robin Rieck hope Bastrop residents will share their concerns and speak out.



Erin O'Brien urges all Texans to contact their Senators and tell them to vote "NO!"

Even the Monopoly Man (AKA Michele Rutherford) and Uncle Sam (AKA Louis) joined the protest.



Looking Ahead to the Midterms and Beyond

By Mark Timerman

I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving and took time to reflect on everything we have to be thankful for. Those of you who traveled may have witnessed the low-lying fruit that Congress is missing—infrastructure. One issue that everyone agrees is still not being addressed by the president or the Congress is a bill that would create thousands of good-paying jobs here in America.

The next newsletter will come to you in January, the true start of the midterm elections, which are a lot closer than many may realize. Hopefully we are all feeling rejuvenated by the election results from Virginia a few weeks ago, where Democrats gave the Republicans a shellacking. We must remind ourselves that the midterms will be the start of a marathon, and we must be prepared to fight all the way to November. There are lots of ways people can help, whether it be as simple as working in the office for a day, making phone calls, registering people to vote, or getting involved with the candidate of your choice.

I cannot overemphasize the importance of the midterms. If we take back the House and the Senate, we will send a powerful message to the president that he needs to be looking for a new job in 2020. If we win back either branch, we can start focusing on the issues the people want to see addressed, like infrastructure, health care, and real tax reform that helps the poor and middle class. We have a strong candidate in Beto O'Rourke for Senate, and everyone will be watching to see if he can unseat Ted Cruz in November. That would send a loud signal to Congress that we are done catering to the rich in this country and that we need to take care of Main Street, not Wall Street.

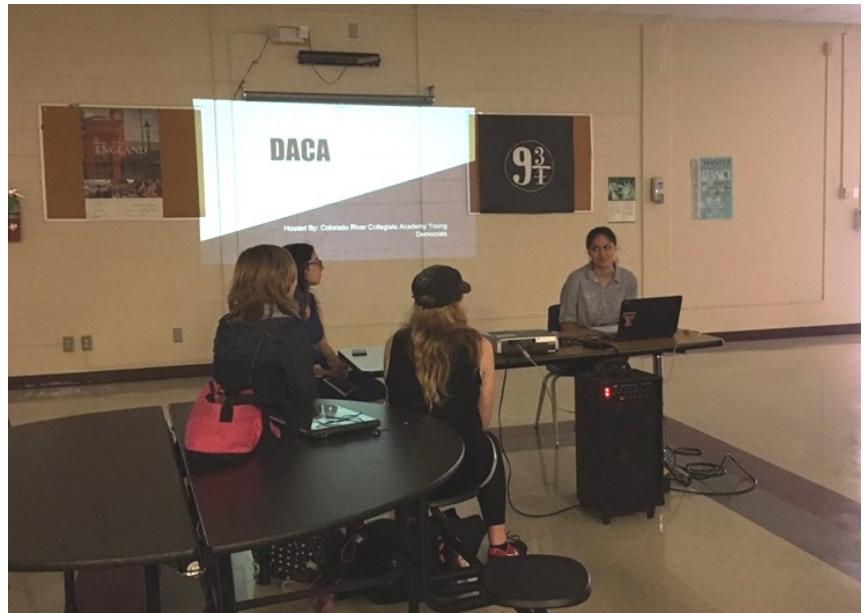
We need to look at the calendar now and start planning out the year. Decide what you are going to be able to do and when, keeping in mind that we need all hands on deck the last two months before the election.

CRCA Young Democrats Hold DACA Assembly

On Nov. 17, the Colorado River Collegiate Academy chapter of the Young Democrats hosted a Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) assembly for approximately 40 interested attendees. In addition to explaining what DACA is, they also provided information on the protections it affords for hundreds of thousands who are allowed to step out of the shadows and obtain a driver's license, apply for college, and legally secure jobs.

Qualifications to be eligible for DACA protections were also explained as well as information on how the students can help those protected by DACA, including how to contact their senator or representative.

Natalia DePaz, president of the CRCA chapter of the Young Democrats, conducts DACA assembly.



Office Volunteers Needed

Midterm elections will be upon us before we know it, so we need to step up our game to turn Texas BLUE. We are currently looking for volunteers to staff the BCDP Headquarters from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays. Please volunteer for a three-hour shift monthly if you can. Consider teaming up with a friend, because there's a lot we'll need to get done to get the word out about Democratic candidates by March, and it's just more fun working with a buddy. We need YOU!



Office Manager Diana Kern (center) and regular volunteers Melanie Hunt and Emma Mackey

To schedule shifts for the month, email Diana Kern at expectrecovery@gmail.com

or call/text her at 512-554-3622. Be sure to leave your name and hours that work best for you.

Check out our new bumper sticker collection. \$3 each, or two for \$5. Get yours at the Bastrop County Democratic Party HQ office at 1009 Main Street in Bastrop.



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:

RESISTANCE ACTIVITIES

- **Bastrop County Indivisible for District 10**
Contact Ginger Redden bcitx10@gmail.com
- **Indivisible TX-27 Bastrop**
Contact Robin Rieck rriek@austin.rr.com
- **Hogeye Huddle**
Contact Michelle Ryan hogeyehuddle@gmail.com

LIVELY DISCUSSION GROUPS

- **Bastrop County Democratic Ladies Monthly Luncheon**
Contact Mary Liz Singleton marylizsingleton@gmail.com
- **Drinking Liberally**
Contact Marsha Correia marshac1017@sbcglobal.net
- **Uppity Women Monthly Caucus**
Contact Carole Marmell cmarmell@gmail.com

VOTER REGISTRATION

- **Become a Volunteer Deputy Registrar**
Contact Mary Liz Singleton marylizsingleton@gmail.com

BCDP LEADERSHIP ROLE

- **Precinct Chair • Volunteer Coordinator**
Contact Cheryl Reese cheryl.reese@yahoo.com

CANDIDATE FOR OFFICE AT THE LOCAL OR COUNTY LEVEL

Contact Cheryl Reese cheryl.reese@yahoo.com

COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE

- **Photographers for meetings and events**
- **Webmaster**
- **Writers to contribute articles/ letters-to-the editor to local newspapers**
Contact Bill McCann bmccann42@gmail.com

SUPPORT STAFF ROLE

- **Volunteer in the BCDP Office**
Contact Diana Kern expectrecovery@gmail.com

VOTER OUTREACH

- **Block Walking • Phone Banking**
Contact your local Precinct Chair
www.bastropdemocrats.org/contact-us/

CONTRIBUTE TO THE BASTROP COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/bastrop-county-democratic-party-1>

KEEP IN TOUCH VIA THE BCDP NEWSLETTER
Visit 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)
- Blake Farenthold, District 27: 202-225-7742 (DC); 361-884-2222 (Corpus Christi)

Texas State Senator

- Kirk Watson: 512-463-0114

Texas State Representative

- John Cyrier: 512-463-0682

Visit www.bastropvotes.org to find out your district and precinct. Additional contact information can also be found at this link.