



BENTON COUNTY



DEMOCRATS' WORLD

VOLUME 9 NUMBER 3 MARCH 2011 EILEEN REES, EDITOR



PROUD TO BE DEMOCRATS



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



There is no time to lose!

We don't always agree with our own Democratic Sen. Mark Pryor's votes on legislation but sometimes he gets it right. Once again, I'm calling for Democrats in the third district to step up and be heard. We owe a huge word of thanks to Sen. Pryor for joining 55 other Democrats voting to block HR1, the Republicans bill to cut \$61 billion in discretionary spending during just the next 6 months. HR1 would have drastically cut health care for the poor, including free clinics set up through last year's stimulus program; eliminated funding for Planned Parenthood which, among other services, provides STD testing, contraceptives and education for teens; nutrition programs for infants and pregnant women; and public education. All this after protecting tax cuts for the wealthiest 2% of Americans.

Unfortunately, the Republicans were able to block the Democratic alternative proposed in the Senate, which Sen. Pryor helped to prepare, proposing moderate budget cuts and eliminating spending on duplicate programs. So now, back to the drawing board. It appears likely that there will be another stop-gap bill passed to buy some time for discussions past the April 1 deadline.

Here is where we come in. Sen Pryor is asking for input from his constituents at home. He is asking for ideas on ways to cut spending appropriately and for your response to proposals he shares on his web site www.pryor.senate.gov/public/. For those who have email, the best way is to email the Senator at a special address he has set up for this specific purpose: cutspending@pryor.senate.gov. For those without Internet service, some information is published in local newspapers and you can still phone the Senator's office at 202-224-2353. He represents all of us. However you can, contact him. **Do it now.**

Republicans have already managed to eliminate all the programs set up through the stimulus to assist homeowners in foreclosure. According to

Rep. Steve Womack in his most recent local meeting, they also expect to win these cuts from HR1 passed in the House and will tackle entitlement programs in the next session. Now is the time to stop them and the Senate is our only recourse. We know that Sen. Boozman is going to vote in lockstep with his party without listening to us but tell him what you think anyway. Let him know we are watching. Call him at 202-224-4843. As always, there are contact links for all officials at bcdems.org.

Don't forget, the state legislature is still in session and we also need to stay updated on bills as they move quickly through the process. Last week was the deadline for filing bills and they came in fast and furious. A very important one is a shell bill regarding redistricting that we really need to keep a close eye on. There are also --count them-- 26 bills that relate to state taxes, many changing sales and use tax that we will want to watch. A very, very, busy time and an especially critical time for all of us to be alert to what our elected officials are doing.

Sharon Carter



OUR NEXT MEETING

MARCH 28, 2011 CLARION 11:15

DAWNE VANDIVER



PLANNING RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP FOR ARKANSAS, 2012

See Pg. 3 for details & to learn more about our speaker.

For reservations for the \$12 lunch buffet, contact Carole Westby at 876-2178 or westby@cox.net by March 24th.

WE ARE INVOLVED!

Last meeting we surveyed your political interests and you had a wealth of ideas for **ACTION!** We will send you some refining questions to better focus on the topics you think are important. **MEANWHILE** you should write letters to the editor, or make calls and emails to your representatives telling them what you think. Bills are passing at both the state and national levels in rapid-fire speed. Let them hear from you as individuals **NOW**.

Here are the top vote-getters:

- National: Social Security and Medicare
- Affordable Health Care law
- War Concerns
- Federal Budget Cuts
- State: Shale Operations
- Redistricting
- Guns(on campus ?)
- Budget Cuts
- Local: Environmental Protection
- Transportation

We are emailing our questions to you —one level at a time and hope you will respond to us and React directly to your Senator, or Representative.

You have about a week to respond. **WATCH YOUR EMAILS DAILY.**

If Democrats speak up, they will be heard. Please participate!
Your Advocacy Committee



INTRODUCING DAWNE VANDIVER OUR MARCH SPEAKER

Currently the 1st Vice-Chair of the Democratic Party of Arkansas, she has also been Justice of the Peace for District 2, Pulaski County since 2006 & chairman of the Quorum Court Administration Committee. During the administration of Gov. Jim Guy Tucker, she worked with the Democratic Party, & also worked with President Bill Clinton. A mother of three, she is an active volunteer, including serving on the Little Rock Zoo Foundation Board. At present, she is opening a new business, *Engagements*. Don't miss her presentation on ways of planning for "Responsible Leadership for Arkansas, 2012"



SUCCESSFUL MOVIE FUNDRAISER

Our recent movie preview of the new version of Jane Eyre not only provided a most enjoyable experience, but also added over \$1000 to our treasury! Thank you, ticket sellers!



SPRING FLING



Now that spring is *finally* here it's time to think about **Spring Fling!** Watch for news about it in our next issue. Meanwhile, if you would like to volunteer to help make it a success, contact Carole Westby.



A gentle reminder from our membership chair - **DUES ARE NOW DUE!**