

BENTON COUNTY DEMOCRATS' WORLD

VOLUME 12 NUMBER 2 FEBRUARY 2015 HAL SPANGENBERG EDITOR

Our February luncheon/meeting will be Monday Feb 23, 11:00 am, Golden Corral, 2605 Pleasant Crossing Rogers Don't forget to make your reservations with Connie Williamson by Friday, February 19th at (479)531-7985

Our speaker will be Paul Stratton, President Young Democrats at NWACC. He will speak of his journey from a Republican family to becoming a Democrat

PRESIDENTS LETTER

This year got off to a great start with Mayra McKenzie-Harris giving us an excellent overview of how the Democratic Party has pushed a progressive agenda over the years that has moved our country forward. Of course, Ms. McKenzie-Harris emphasized that she was speaking for the NAACP, which is non-partisan. And, in that regard, we should be ready to acknowledge when a Republican does something progressive.

Just this past month, a Republican legislator introduced a bill to withdraw Robert E. Lee's birthday as a state-recognized holiday. Also, one of our Republican Senators voiced his support for lifting the travel ban to Cuba. Our Republican Governor spoke forcefully in favor of renewing the "private option" - that is to use federal money to assist low-income adults to purchase private health insurance

coverage. He emphasized that more than 200,000 Arkansans had been able to purchase health insurance through the program and the hospitals in our State had benefitted from that coverage. We could also point out that the bill regarding Robert E. Lee was voted down by other Republicans in the Legislature, and that both the travel policy in Cuba and the Medicaid expansion were the result of President Obama and the Democratic Party taking courageous stands - first on the Affordable Care Act and then the President's decision to ease sanctions on Cuba. However, I prefer that the Republicans lead from behind than simply being the Party of "no".

Ms. McKenzie-Harris also reminded us of the challenges ahead. For example, a group of Republican Legislators have already broken with our Governor's position on the private option and introduced a bill to terminate the program. It is difficult to believe that a majority of Arkansans would support ending

the compromise of government and private health insurance that has profited both individuals and the hospitals in our State. This shows how extreme Republican Party has become, and how it may be more and more difficult for individual Republicans, as mentioned above, to try to find any compromise.

We must have confidence that the Democrats are correct on the issues and that a majority of Arkansans are with us. Ms. McKenzie-Harris ended her presentation by reminding us of the challenges ahead. We must be willing to discuss these issues with our friends and family and encourage them to register to vote and then to do so. The next election is already taking shape and the challenge is upon us!

Ken Swindle President



Mrs. McKenzie-Harris at our Jan Mtg.

BLUE BOWLS

Being a new comer to the organization, I wondered what the “Blue Bowl” meant to our members. It is meant as a means of “passing the hat” for any amount that you may have and be willing to part with for the good of the club. The money collected goes into the general fund to club activities and support of candidates..Still learning

Meet your Board members:

Born and raised in Rochester, NY, the Navy sent me to San Diego, CA in 1950. I never wanted to leave, so spent most of my adult life in S. California.

We recently came to N.W. AR for a visit and my wife had some serious problems. After that the dr. said she could not travel, so we are here forever. I was a member of the Benton County Democrats from 1995 to 1998, so in a way “glad to be back home” I am humbled to be asked to carry on with the newsletter, following Eileen Reese, but I will do my very best.

My wife Audrey was raised in Los Angeles We have 4 children between us. Her 2 live in Bella Vista, mine are in California and Idaho. Too many Grandchildren to count, and the number of great grandchildren is expanding.

Harold (Hal) Spangenberg, Publicity Chair

FLEA FOR ALL (Yard Sale)

May 1 & 2, (War Eagle weekend) On West Walnut, Rogers Exact location to be announced

As you do your spring cleaning, please set aside unwanted items to donate to the BC Democrats spring fund raiser.

Further details to be announced next month

Contact Info: Gaye Bland 479 631-9818
gkband@cox.net

Karen Smenner 479 866-9906
ksmenner0119@gmail.net

IT'S MOVIE TIME!!!!

SECOND BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL

Maggie Smith, Bill Nighy, Richard Gere, Judi Dench

Show Date: March 14th, Saturday 10:00 am at Malco Pinnacle Hills, Rogers

\$13.00 each to benefit Benton County Democrats

Reserve your tickets NOW

Bill Beck – 479 855-1872
thebillbecks@att.net or Karen Smenner –
[479 866-9906 mskas0119@gmail.com](mailto:479866-9906mskas0119@gmail.com)

Benton County Democrats Monthly Luncheon Meeting

Colden Corral, Rogers, January 26, 2015

Ken Swindle, President called the meeting to order at 12:00 noon.

In Ken's opening remarks he thanked the previous board for their hard work and the current board is easy to work with. He introduced Board Members present. Eunice Van Tuyl, (Recording Secretary) and Eileen Rees (Newsletter Producer) were absent. Eunice was enjoying "Sunny Florida" and Eileen had passed away in December.

He announced the board's policy on the pledge of allegiance. Individual's options are – not say the pledge say the pledge with out "under God" or say the pledge with "under God."

President recognized Hal Spangenberg, (Publicity Chair) who announced that the website had been updated and has a new look. He encouraged everyone to check it out.

President asked for January Birthday members to stand and introduce themselves and it is optional to tell your age. Two January Birthday Members Karen Smenner (Vice President), 72 years young Mary Lee Hay

Ken announced the Blue Bowls goal for this year was \$1,000. Blue Bowl revenue is deposited in the Campaign Contribution Fund. He reminded members it is membership renewal time.

Ken reminded the members to please leave a tip for the waitress on the table.

Ken recognized Karen (Vice President) additional business. She reviewed the past information about the former fundraiser called Spring Fling and announced the board voted to revive a spring fundraiser. The spring fundraiser will be a "Flea for All" garage sale on April 30th War Eagle weekend. Donations of "stuff" and members to work are needed. Contributions are not tax deductible. Please sign up on the volunteer sheet circulating. The Hispanic provide a food truck and maybe a Mariachi Band.

Another goal of the board is to get to know members. Karen passed out a form for members to share their skills and additional personal information. She encouraged members to please fill out and return the form.

She announced the speaker for February would be Paul Stratton, President of the Young Democrats.

Karen introduced the Speaker Myra McKenzie-Harris. She is Associate General Counsel in the Employment Division of the Walmart Stores, Inc. Legal Department in Bentonville and currently serving as 3rd Vice-President of the NWA Branch of the NAACP.

The speaker gave us a stroll down memory lane from party name change to eliminating discrimination by Democratic Presidents from Woodrow Wilson to FDR to Jimmy Carter, to John F

Kennedy to Lynden Johnson to Arkansas' own Bill Clinton to President Obama. It was a long road with each President playing a

significant role in expanding civil rights. (Excellent History Lesson)

Myra issued a warning about the strong headwinds the Democratic Party is facing. There is very little if anything in the Republican Party Platform that "we" would agree with. She stressed three headwinds and what Democrats can do – 1. Repeal of the Voting Rights Act Communicate with Congress to restore voting rights Communicate/educate the importance of voting rights

2. Repeal of the Affordable Care Act Communicate with your Congressman the impact upon Benton County. (16% of Benton County did not have health insurance before ACA) Educate the public on benefits to Benton County Start now to plan for CD 3 election in 2016.

3. Repeal Everything Democrats have passed Support candidates that run on a platform supporting Democratic issues Help shape Democratic issues by become a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 2016.

Questions and answer period followed.

Ken recognized Gaye Bland (Treasurer) to talk about the budget funds and how to make a Memorial Gift. She explained the funds are in three categories - The Operating Fund, Dedicated Democrats Fund and Campaign Contributions Fund. If you wish to make an Eileen Rees Memorial Gift the money would be deposited in the Dedicated Democrats Fund that is used for honorariums for speakers and voter education. Gaye will accept your Memorial Gift today or you may mail it to:

Benton County Democrats, P.O. Box 2258, Bentonville, AR 72712-2258.

Karen concluded the meeting with the following announcements:

As a fundraiser Democratic Central Committee is selling car wash cards.

Arkansas Democratic Party Fundraiser, Jimmie Lou Fisher-Lottie Shackelford Dinner is in North Little Rock on February 20th for tickets see Thurman Metcalf. Tickets are \$100.

Global Warming announcement

Upcoming movies

March Fundraising Movie is The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel at the Malco Pinnacle Hills, Rogers on Saturday, March 14, at 10:00 a.m. Tickets are \$13.

Bill Beck is considering 2 movies for April - "Salt of the Earth" and/or "Woman in Gold" and for May "Far From The Maddening Crowd." He is giving some thought to package all three for \$35 instead of \$39 if purchased separately.

Ken declared the meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted Leila Medley

