Benton County Dems' World

Volume 16 Issue 3 March 2017 Richard Bland, President Hal Spangenberg , Editor

Benton County Dem's March Meeting
Monday, March 27 Lunch 11:00 am Meeting 12:00 noon

Golden Corral, 2605 W. Pleasant Crossing, Rogers

Our speaker this month will be Kimberly Benyr, Co-founder of Ozark Indivisible.
She also helps manage the group's Facebook page and helps organize calls to action and events for the group.
Kimberly is married with two children, ages 12 and 5, and they live in Bella Vista. Her husband is a commercial truck driver and Kimberly works part time, at home, for a property and casualty insurance carrier. Their family moved from southern California to Arkansas in 2005.
Kimberly will be talking about Ozark Indivisible, what they stand for and hope to accomplish.
>>

President's Address

Democracy is never easy nor simple. As many of us watch the news with growing apprehension about the future in the United States, perspective can be gained by observing what is going on about the world, especially here in the Americas. Even before he secured the Republican nomination, I noted the similarities between Donald Trump, and Hugo Chavez, the late Venezuelan "populist" president. Many observers consider Chavez and his legacy responsible for the current sorry state of affairs in Venezuela.

Similar struggles to maintain or reestablish responsible democracies are unfolding elsewhere in Latin America.

We happened to be in Quito, Ecuador's capital, on February 19, the date of the first round in this year's Ecuadoran presidential election. Current President Rafael Correa was not eligible to run again because he has served the two terms allowed by the nation's constitution. His handpicked successor, Lenin Moreno, was the favorite in a field of eight candidates. We were able to talk to a handful of voters—voting is mandatory in Ecuador, with limited exceptions—ranging from the owner of one of the resorts we stayed at on the Galapagos Islands to a cab owner/driver that we spent two days with on the mainland. A consensus emerged from our limited sample that the Correa administration was very corrupt and wasteful and would try to manipulate the vote. Another objection was the extreme commercial nationalism of the regime, with high tariffs on many items causing the cost of living to skyrocket. A base pickup truck that could be purchased in the United States for $25,000 costs $45,000 in Ecuador. A bottle of Casillero del Diablo wine, produced in nearby Chile, and available in Northwest Arkansas for $10 to $12, less if on sale, costs $25 to $30 in Ecuador. Similar prices apply to many other items.

On the day of the election, the streets were nearly deserted and many stores were closed. We witnessed intense campaigning in the days leading up to the election. That was especially true in the large plaza that the Presidential Residence faces in downtown Ecuador. One of our acquaintances said that government workers—which constitute about 10% of the population—were required to abandon their desks for the streets during the

campaign. We noticed several vehicles marked Organization of American States and learned later that that international group was monitoring the election.

The government candidate, Moreno, received about 11% more of the vote than his closest rival, Guillermo Lasso, but failed to receive the 40% total that is necessary to avoid a run-off. Those to whom we talked, some of whom had voted for Lasso and some for others of the eight candidates, expressed hope that the opposition to Correa and Moreno would rally behind Lasso and end the current policies. One described Lasso as the "less bad" of the choices. Others see Lasso, a businessman and banker, as being too far to the right and a threat to social programs. Some of his economic policy proposals sound somewhat like the "trickle-down" theory. Polls taken since the primary election indicate a narrow lead for Lasso. A decision will come in the final election on April 2. Will Ecuador continue its current "populist" policies, called socialist in some quarters, or join neighbors Argentina, Chile, and Peru in moving toward the political center or even farther to the right?

Richard

>>

BENTON COUNTY DEMOCRATS

February 27 General Meeting

Golden Corral, Rogers, AR

President Richard Bland called the meeting to order at 12:00. He welcomed several new attendees, guests and visitors.

Rusty Mastricola led us in the pledge of allegiance.

Special Guest Denise Garner who is running for Chair of the Democratic Party of Arkansas spoke briefly about the restructuring of the party.

Vice President David Cauldwell introduced former Judge Jon Comstock who spoke on "Our Justice System-Status Quo or Change".

The minutes and treasurer's reports were approved unanimously.

Reports were heard from several people who attended town hall meetings for Senator Cotton and Representative Womack. Large crowds attended both meetings and questioning was sometimes loud and emotional.

Suzanne Jessup reported that the last meeting of the Democratic Party of Benton County (DPBC), which meets at The Benton County Cooperative Extension Building at 1204 S.W. 14th St. in Bentonville, had over 100 attendees. Normal attendance is around 20.

A form letter stating that we do not want our tax dollars to pay for a wall between the US and Mexico, written by Hal Spangenberg to Arkansas Senators and Representatives, was made available for anyone who would like to send them out.

Bill Beck reported on the fund raiser movie "The Zookeeper's Wife". The movie is on hold for possibly April 8 at 10:00. More information will be given as the date gets closer.

Respectfully Submitted by Secretary Betty Cauldwell

|>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Treasurer's Summary Report Feb-2017

Beginning Balance	$1,772.89
Income	
Blue Bowls	$ 75.39
Donations	$ 15.00
Dues	$ 260.00
Total	$ 350.39
Expenses	
meetup.com (6mo)	$ 89.94
Total	$ 89.94
Ending Balance	$ 2,033.34

Submitted by: Joel Ewing, Treasurer

>>

Be careful what you say or do in your kitchen. Your Microwave may be recording you…

Don't let all of the trump Administrations distractions catch us off guard.

The real work in D.C. by the Republicans, is the following:

HR 861 Terminate the Environmental Protection Agency
HR 60 Vouchers for Public Education
HR 899 Terminate the Department of Education
HR 69 Repeal rule protecting Wildlife
HR370 Repeal Affordable Care Act
HR 354 Defund Planned Parenthood
HR 785 National Right to Work Act (this one ends unions)
HR 83 Mobilizing Against Sanctuary Cities Bill
HR 147 Criminalizing Abortion (Prenatal Nondiscrimination Act)
HR 808 Sanctions against Iran
HR 249 Defunding the U.N.
HR726 Prohibit Federal Funding of N. Public Radio
If your Senators and Reps are not in your phone yet, Text your zip code to 520-200-2223. You'll get a text back with everyone's contact info. It gives you federal and State.

If you are against these bills, call your representatives and ask them to not only vote "NO" but to speak up for our rights, health & safety, and our beautiful country
>>>

Membership renewal time

Your membership dues are an important means of financial support to our organization. While there are no State or National elections occurring this year we need to rebuild our treasury for the 2018 campaigns. Especially now with the Republicans dominating both Federal and State offices, Democrats need to fight harder and enter more candidates in all elected offices ranging from local, City to State and Federal. We must use the Republicans' method of controlling all local elected offices and run them out of office. This all takes money, and our annual dues are one major source of income.

Remember, the dues are only $20.00 for individual members and $30 for a couple. If you wish to receive the newsletter by U..S. mail instead of via e-mail please include an additional $10.00 to handle copying and mailing.

Make your check out to: Benton County Democrats and mail to P.O. Box 2258, Bentonville, AR 72712…..Or deliver it in person to our March meeting…Waiting to see you

Making America polluted again

The recent slew of administration attacks on protections for clean water, clean air, and food and worker safety could send America back to a time of unchecked pollution.

READ MORE

>>>

Contact information for your officers:

President: Richard Bland 631-9818
e-mail :rabland@cox.net

Vice President: David Cauldwell
721-2747 e-mail: dcaudwl@gmail.com

Treasurer: Joel Ewing 268-4231
e-mail: jcewing@acm.org

Secretary: Betty Cauldwell 721-2724
e-mail: bcauldwl@gmail.com