

# Brazos County Democrat

Volume 4, Issue 2

June, 2008

## Donkey Dates 2008

June 14	Flag Day-wave yours proudly
June 23	Executive Committee Meeting Bryan Library 6:30 p.m.
July 4	Independence Day
July 17	Naturalization Ceremony
July 19	Hispanic Forum Banquet
August 28	Acceptance Speech Party Margarita Rocks, Texas at Dominik
September 1	Labor Day
September 5	First day to apply for Ballot by Mail
September 13	TDW Blue Denim Luncheon
October 6	Last to register to vote for Nov. Election
October 20	First Day to early vote
October 28	Last day to apply for Ballot by Mail
October 31	Last day to early vote
November 4	Presidential Election Day

## Texas Democratic Women of the Brazos Valley Blue Denim Luncheon

**When:** September 13, 2008

**Where:** Briarcrest Country Club, Bryan

**Time:** Noon to 2 p.m.

**Speaker:** To be announced-a good surprise!

**Cost:** \$40 Scholarships available

**Who:** You and 5 friends-everyone welcome

The money raised will go to support women candidates, TDW scholarship fund and TDW.

For more information or to help call Carol Biggs, at 979-690-6039.

**Glorious Items to bid on!!!**

## Voter's Bill of Rights

**As a registered voter, you have the right to....**

A ballot with written instructions on how to cast the vote. (Texas Election Code, Section 124.063)

Cast your vote in secret and free from intimidation. (Texas Election Code, Section 62, 0115) (b) (2)

Receive up to two additional ballots if a mistake is made while marking your original ballot. (Texas Election Code, Section 64.007)

Request instructions on how to cast the ballot. (Texas Election Code, Section 61.009)

An interpreter to assist you as you vote if you do not understand the English Language. You may bring your own interpreter. (Texas Election Code, Section 61.032)

Assistance while casting your ballot if you cannot understand the language in which the ballot is written, are not able to write or see the ballot. (Texas Election Code, Section 62.0115)

Bring written materials into the voting booth to assist you as you cast your ballot. (Texas Election Code, Section 61.011)

Report existing or potential voting rights abuse to the Secretary of State. (Texas Election Code, Section 31.0055)

Vote a straight ticket for one political party. (Texas Election Code, Section 124.001)

(Rights, Continued on page 2)

(Rights, Continued from page 1)

Vote at any early voting location in the county in which you reside. (Texas Election Code, Section 82.005)

Register to vote when you have been fully discharged from your sentence, term of incarceration or parole. (Texas Election Code, Section 13.001 (4) (A))

Vote in the precinct where you live even if your voter registration has your old address, and you are not on the list of registered voters in that precinct. You may execute an affidavit stating you are a resident of the precinct or have submitted a change of address to your new precinct. (Texas Election Code, Section 63.007)

Vote if you do not have your voter registration card by showing your driver's license, other photo ID, birth certificate, citizenship papers, passport, pre-printed checks, official government mail, or two other forms of identification including utility bills. (Texas Election Code, Section 63.0101)

Have an accessible polling place that is usable by the elderly and persons with physical disabilities. (Texas Election Code, Section 43.034)

To have an election official deliver a ballot to you at the entrance or curb of the polling place if you are physically unable to enter the polling place. (Texas Election Code, Section 64.009)

Request a Ballot by Mail if you are going to be absent from Brazos County, or have a condition that prevents you from going to vote on Election Day or during early voting. You are also eligible to a Ballot by Mail if you are over 65. (Texas Election Code, Section 82.001-004)

## **No Vote! No Voice!**

Thank you to everyone who donated money to help pay for our County Convention in March.

A special thank you to Dr. David Bailey who donated \$3,000 that had to be matched with other donations. This money has been put into a rainy day fund.

Thank you to Elizabeth Booker, Dr. Elizabeth Berigan and Patrick Gendron who matched Dr. Bailey's gift.

Patrick also sent pizza to the rescue when the convention got to the dinner hour and we were all starving.

**Special Thank You  
to  
Gene Joyce and Audio Video  
for  
Providing the microphones and speakers  
for the  
Brazos County Democratic Convention  
March 29, 2008**

**Thank you!!!!  
Your donations provided  
our election workers with lunch on  
March 4, 2008**

**All our sustaining members  
District Attorney Bill Turner  
County Attorney Jim Kuboviak  
Mike Beal, Century 21  
Jane Maxwell  
Denise Fries, Fries Financial Services  
Patrick Gendron, Attorney  
Margarita Rocks  
Carol Biggs, TDW President  
Mark Thomas  
Phil Banks, Attorney  
E. J. Norton**

### **TDW Awards Two Scholarships**

Sarah Hall from College Station A&M Consolidated High School and Dionysious Williams from Bryan High were each given a \$500 scholarship at the May meeting. Both young women will be attending TAMU in the fall. Sarah block walked in February and brought others with her. Good luck to both young women.

If you would like to contribute to future TDW scholarships send your check to TDW at P.O. Box 4568, Bryan, Texas 77805. Write "scholarship" in the memo line.

One thing is clear to me: We, as human beings, must be willing to accept people who are different from ourselves.

**Barbara Jordan**

## Medical Glossary for 2008

Our health care system is more than twice as expensive as the next most expensive system which provides universal care and better outcomes than we do. The United States ranks somewhere between 30<sup>th</sup> and 45<sup>th</sup> in health systems. (The World Health Organization) That, along with so many uninsured people in the U.S. is why health care is a major topic in the Presidential election in 2008. Here are a few terms to help you better understand this issue.

**Association Health Plans**-Association Health Plans (AHPs) allow small businesses to band together for the purpose of buying health coverage. The potential advantage is giving those businesses more clout to buy cheaper coverage for employees.

**Block Grant**-Block grants are a way for the federal government to help cities or states pay for health services. Instead of setting rules in Washington, policy makers send money in the form of a block grant to state or local governments to help pay for medical services, mental health care, infrastructure and research.

**Copay**-What a patient pays out of his/her pocket for prescriptions or medical services. This usually does not count toward the deductible on a policy.

**Deductible**-The amount that someone who is insured must pay themselves before their insurance will begin to pay.

**Drug Importation**-Americans pay the highest prices in the world for prescription medicines. Imported drugs from other industrialized countries typically cost less than U.S. prices. Though it is technically illegal, individuals can buy small amounts of prescription drugs from other countries. Legislation allowing big distributors and pharmacies to buy imports has passed Congress with bipartisan support. But the Bush administration has resisted implementing the plan, saying it could open up U.S. markets to unsafe drugs from overseas. Pharmaceutical manufacturers oppose importation and have successfully lobbied to weaken or stop proposals in Congress. (Continued on page 4)

The work goes on, the cause endures, the hope still lives and the dreams shall never die.

Edward Kennedy, U.S. Senator



Remember, while your kids are home from school this summer, to get them an Application for a Ballot by Mail. We also have voter registration cards in the office.

### Other Notes

**Naturalization ceremonies**-Texas Democratic Women and the County Party give a gift bag to each newly naturalized citizen at the Courthouse. There are three more ceremonies this year. If you are interested in helping, please call Carol Biggs at 690-6039 or the main office at 779-5600.

**Things we need for the fall**-we need a location in College Station to serve as a sign headquarters for the fall election. With the price of gas at almost \$4 a gallon this would be a huge help.

**New precinct chairs**-Experienced precinct chairs. We have many new precinct chairs. When your precinct chair calls you this fall and asks you to help work to turn out the vote please say yes. Help us take back our country by taking back Brazos County.

**Yard signs**-We will have yard signs for President as soon as we have a candidate and a running mate. This may be August. We will ask a small donation for each sign.

(Medical Glossary continued from page 3)

**Electronic Medical Records**-One of the best ways to help avoid costly and dangerous medical mistakes is to use computer records. Computerized records can make sharing between offices faster, more efficient, take away the pitfalls of misread handwriting, and help scientists access health data quickly and easily. Incentives are popping up to encourage health providers to move to electronic formats. There's been some trouble getting everyone to agree on a common format for the records, and also convincing doctors and hospitals to spend big money for new systems. The Veteran's Administration already has a fully functional electronic medical records system.

**FEHBP**-This stands for the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, which handles health coverage for about 5 million civilian federal employees, including Congress. Many private insurance plans compete to offer coverage paid for the government through FEHBP. Some want to allow persons outside the government to buy into FEHBP to give more people access to affordable medical coverage.

**Health Saving Accounts**-Health savings accounts and "bank accounts" where you can save money tax-free to spend on health care costs. HSAs are allowed in conjunction with a qualified health plan, typically high-deductible insurance plans that have lower monthly premiums but require patients to spend more of their own cash on health services than they would under other types of insurance. The law limits the amount you can put into an HSA. President Bush promotes HSAs as a good way to give Americans more responsibility and control over their own health choices. Critics say the accounts primarily benefit wealthier people who can afford to save more money and risk paying higher deductibles.

**Health Tax Credit**-The health tax credit plan would let middle class individuals and families pay less income taxes and use the extra money to buy health coverage. Candidates in both parties have proposed using credits to make it easier for Americans to buy health coverage.

(Continued on page 5)

### Unity!!!!

November 4 is not about you or me!  
November 4 is not about Hillary Clinton!  
November 4 is not about Barack Obama!  
It is about our country!  
It is about our Supreme Court!  
It is about our families!

## The Food Bank:

### Everything You Needed to Know

Rising food and gas prices are putting a toll on already stretched individuals and families across the country.

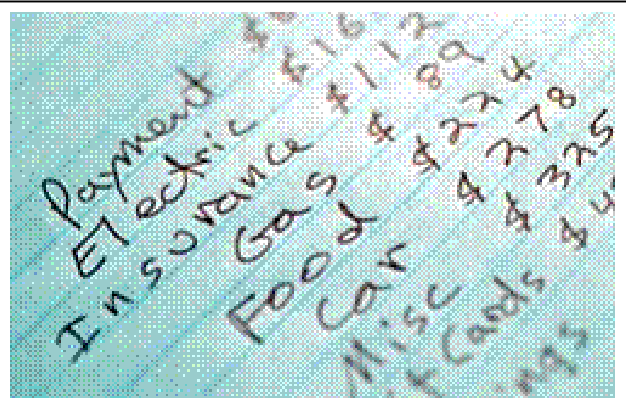
- Texas has the highest percentage of families without health care coverage in the nation.
- Texas families are also the second most likely in the nation to be at risk of going hungry.

The Brazos Valley Food Bank is the "hub" of an anti-hunger relief network of more than 40 different agencies throughout Brazos, Burleson, Grimes, Madison, Robertson and Washington Counties that feed the hungry. The food bank provides close to 82 percent of the food these partners distribute or cook for those in need. We are grateful to these partners who work diligently to ensure that the food they receive from us feeds our neighbors in need.

The food bank and our pantry partners are seeing more demand. Individuals and families who may have never needed assistance getting by before are struggling. We want you and those you love to know that a safety net does exist in this community. Several wonderful organizations and churches make it their mission to provide food to those who may be falling through the cracks.

In Brazos County, only 21 percent of the population eligible for food stamps participates. Thousands of people in the Brazos Valley could benefit from state programs helping them to access food and medical services. However, many are unaware that they might qualify, or are unable or unsure how to access these services.

(Continued on page 5)



(Health Glossary continued from page 4)

**Health Tax Credit**-Both parties have proposed using credits. Critics say that tax credits alone won't help most people who lack insurance because credits would be about \$3,000 for a family of four. Private coverage for the average family can cost as much as \$12,000.

**Hospital Report Card**-These provide consumers more information about the quality of health services. The government now requires hospitals to report how effectively they treat common diseases like diabetes and heart failure.

**Medicaid**-About 45 million Americans receive medical coverage through Medicaid's "safety net." The states run their own programs with financial help from the federal government so guidelines may vary from state to state. Medicaid covers persons living at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

**Medicare**-More than 43 million Americans over 65 get their health care paid for through Medicare, which is funded by a combination of your tax dollars and premiums paid for by the beneficiaries. Coverage varies according to patients' income. In general it pays about 80 percent of the cost of hospital stays, doctor's visits and prescription drugs.

**Part D**-Part D is the name for Medicare's prescription drug insurance program. Most states offer Part D through private insurance companies. One controversy is over who should be able to bargain for the best drug prices.

**Portable Insurance**-If you have health insurance through your job but change jobs, lose your job, or become self-employed, federal law says that insurers must continue to sell you the same coverage you had in your previous job, at roughly the same price. This concept is known as insurance portability.

**Private Insurance**-This is a business that makes money by providing health insurance coverage. It does not spread risk very well but makes a profit for the company. That is why we have 45 million uninsured and why these private companies pay \$50 billion per year not to cover the 10 percent of the population that has 90 percent of the medical costs.

**SCHIP**-SCHIP stands for State Children's Health Insurance Program. About 6 million children get coverage through SCHIP. States run their own programs, like Medicaid, but with financial assistance from the federal government. An estimated 9 million U.S. children still lack health coverage. President Bush opposes expanding this program.

**Single-Payer Insurance**-Single payer means that hospitals and doctors are paid by one organization: a single payer or single source. By having only one payer instead of many companies you can simplify the health care system. The single payer would be the federal government.

**Socialized Medicine**-Socialized medicine is a program that pays health care professionals to provide basic medical care to all citizens. Canada and England have this kind of system. We have socialized medicine in this country: it's military medicine. The military pays for medical care and pays providers directly. It is now highest rated of our care systems.

**Universal Coverage**-This is a general term for any plan that would provide medical insurance to everyone. It does not tell who pays for it. An example of universal care is Medicare which covers everyone over 65 or anyone who is disabled.



(continued from page 4 Food Bank)

This is where the Brazos Valley Food Bank's Social Services Outreach Program can help. Our Outreach Coordinator, Shannon Avila, travels to Brazos, Burleson, Grimes, Madison, Robertson and Washington counties to make applying for these programs more accessible – providing information on qualifying, helping to fill out applications, making copies of documentation and submitting the application to the appropriate office.

Applications can even be completed over the phone and mailed to the individual for a signature. The Social Services Outreach Program can make the process less intimidating. Our Outreach Coordinator is available to speak with individuals or groups, by phone, referral, at events and by appointment – just give her a call at 979-779-3663, ext. 105 or drop her an email at [shannona@bvfb.org](mailto:shannona@bvfb.org)

Brazos County Democratic Party  
P.O. Box 4568  
Bryan, Texas 77805

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Bryan, Texas 77805

**Gathering to Celebrate  
November 4, 2008  
Margarita Rocks 7:00 p.m.  
Mark Your Calendar NOW!!!!**

**Brazos County Democratic Party**

**“Turning Brazos County Blue”**

Officers and Staff:

Chair – Charles “Chuck” Wiggins

Vice-Chair – Corbet Perkins

Treasurer – Maggie Charleton

Recording Secretary–Mary King

Social Secretary-Linda Coats

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**THE HISPANIC FORUM**  
*Of Bryan College Station*

**Save the Date**  
**July 19th, 2008**

**2008 Awards & Scholarship Gala**

2008 Grammy Award Winner  
*Little Joe y La Familia*  
Also featuring Grupo Viento

Date: 07/19/2008  
Time: 6:00pm  
The Brazos Center  
Bryan, Texas

A Formal Affair

For information call: 979.777.6866  
E-mail: [Hispanic\\_forum\\_bcs@yahoo.com](mailto:Hispanic_forum_bcs@yahoo.com)  
Website: [www.hispanicforumbc.com](http://www.hispanicforumbc.com)

(Brazos Valley Food bank continued from page 6)  
 The Brazos Valley Food Bank can use donations of:

- Food
- Money
- Volunteer time

Food donations can be dropped off Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at its warehouse. The warehouse is located at 1514 Shiloh Avenue in the Brazos County Industrial Park. This is located off 2818 in Bryan.

- Monetary donations can be mailed to P.O. Box 74, Bryan, Texas 77806.
- For information about volunteering, please contact Louis Martinez at 979-779-3663, ext. 102.
- For general information about the Brazos County Food Bank visit its website at [www.bvfb.org](http://www.bvfb.org)

**BRAZOS COUNTY: Food Pantries**

	<b>Address</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Hours of Operation</b>	<b>Special Instructions</b>
<b>Brazos Church Pantry</b>	304 A West 26 <sup>th</sup> Street	Bryan	(979) 822-2660	Monday 1:00-2:45 p.m. Tues 9:30-11:15 a.m. Wed 1:00-2:45 p.m. Thurs 9:30-11:15 a.m. Friday 9:30-11:15 a.m. Sat 10:00-11:45 a.m.	Bring Social Security cards and Driver's Licenses for each individual in the household. Only serves resident of Brazos County. Can get food every 3 months.
<b>St. Vincent de Paul Society</b>	304 N. Main	Bryan	(979) 823-4369 (979) 775-2273		Call and leave your name, phone number and a message stating that you are in need of food. You will receive a call back within two days.
<b>Salvation Army</b>	2506 Cavitt	Bryan	(979) 361-0618 (979) 779-3470	Monday – Friday 9:00a.m.– 11:30 a.m.	Bring photo I.D. and proof of residence.
<b>First Baptist Church of CS</b>	2300 Welsh	College Station	(979) 696-7000	Every Tuesday 10:00-11:30 a.m.	Bring photo I.D.
<b>Project Unity</b>	1400 Beck Street	Bryan	(979) 775-6788	Open the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday of every month 9:00 a.m. -12:00 noon	
<b>Lee Chapel United Methodist Church</b>	903 N Washington	Bryan	(979) 822-0437	Open the 4 <sup>th</sup> Saturday of every month 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon  Call for additional hours	Pantry closes when all food has been distributed
<b>Bryan Church of Christ</b>	1701 West Hwy 21	Bryan	(979) 822-7790	Open the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Pantry closes when all food has been distributed
<b>Twin City Mission Community Café</b>	500 N Main	Bryan	(979) 822-1492	Monday – Friday Lunch: 12:15-12:45 p.m. Dinner: 5:15 – 5:45 p.m.	Individuals will be served one meal per day