

Dallas County Young Democrats

Volume 3, Issue 2

March 2007



Upcoming Events:

March General Meeting

03/24/07 • 7:00 p.m.
Metro Grill
4425 North Central Expressway
Dallas, TX 75205

St Patrick's Day Parade Float Preparation

03/24/07 • 8:00 p.m.
Home of Brian Felicella, Events
Committee Chair
114 South Shore Drive
Dallas, TX 75216

St Patrick's Day Parade

03/17/07

Events and Community Service Committee Meetings

March 21, 2007 7:30 p.m.
Elbow Room
3010 Gaston Ave.
Dallas, TX 75226

Voter Registration Drive

March 24th, 2007 9:00 p.m.
Let the Voters Decide
Campaign Headquarters
2704 Valley View Lane
Farmers Branch, TX 75234

*Upcoming Events continued on
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Former Mayor Pro Tem to speak at March Meeting; DCYD looks at what's ahead for Dallas politics

by Trisha Raines

Former Mayor Pro Tem and Dallas City Councilman John Loza will speak at our March general membership meeting on March 13 at 7:00 pm. Serving on the city council for over seven years, Mr. Loza represented the city's second district.

Prior to his election to the city council, he worked in Dallas County as an assistant district attorney. With his experience in local government, Mr. Loza will give us a unique perspective on the upcoming city council and mayoral elections and what he sees on the horizon for politics in Dallas. Mr. Loza will highlight the issues Dallas voters should consider as they meet the candidates and head to the polls this May.

Mr. Loza's address to our members is in conjunction with DCYDs focus on educating our members about the issues important to younger votes. At the meeting, we will also provide updated information on our endorsement process and the upcoming Candidate Happy Hour scheduled later this month.

In addition, the Community Service Committee will also accept donations of DVDs, CDs, current magazines and paperback books as part of our effort to support the troops. We will send all donations to our military men and women.

The March meeting is at our usual location, the Metro Grill, located at 4425 North Central Expressway in Dallas.

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with DCYD: Help build our float then join us in the parade

by Trisha Raines

DCYD will once again march in the annual Greenville Avenue St. Patrick's Day Parade. The Greenville Avenue St. Patrick's Day Parade is a 25+-year tradition in Dallas and features celebrity judges, floats, music, food and after-parties. Help us spread the Irish cheer by marching with our entry, passing out candy, beads and information on our group – all while having a great time with friends and enjoying the enthusiastic crowds lining the street. Not only is this a great way to experience the parade first-hand, but this event allows us to showcase our activities to the Dallas community.

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DCYD members participate in the 2006 Greenville Ave. St. Patrick's Day Parade

DVD, CD and Book Drive set for March Meeting

The Community Service Committee will accept donations of DVDs, CDs, current magazines and paperback books at the general meeting on March 13. All donations will be sent overseas to our military men and women. We will also have cards to send to the troops. If you have questions or are unable to bring a donation on Tuesday, please contact Meredith McQuiston: m.m.mcquiston@gmail.com.

Dallas Mayoral Candidate Meet & Greet March 28th, Endorsement Process Update

by Sarah Duncan and Elaine Sanchez

Our endorsements process for in this year's Dallas municipal elections is well underway and questionnaires have been sent out to all the candidates who have currently filed.

When the Campaign and Party Relations Committee met to begin the endorsement process, the group focused on issues important to young voters and included those issues in the candidate questionnaire. At the top of the list were crime, police pay and police force strength. These issues have been in the news frequently, as Dallas' crime rate remains one of the highest nationally. Questions also cover the Trinity River Project, Fair Park and public city parks. All of the vibrant cities we can think of have grand parks and Dallas should be no exception. Homelessness is an issue near and dear to the DCYDs, so we wanted to hear how candidates are planning to address this issue. Transportation issues and public accountability round out the list. In addition, we have given each candidate room to tackle anything important to them not covered in the questions pro-

vided. There are 11 questions in total, but all responses are held to a seventy five-word limit, designed to give you important information in a concise format. You can view a candidate's responses on the DCYD website, which is being updated as questionnaires are returned.

If there is a topic you want more information about, you can ask the candidates at our Happy Hour on March 28 from 7-10pm at Zubar, 2012 Greenville Ave. Dallas 75206.

Please make sure to attend the Happy Hour, read through the questionnaires and talk to the candidates directly, so you are informed and ready to vote on our endorsements at the April meeting and in the May elections. This has always been a popular event and we expect this year's to be packed – arrive early to make sure you catch all the candidates!

If you have any questions or would like to be on the Campaign and Party Relations Committee, please contact Sarah Duncan, Political Affairs Director at politicalaffairs@dallasyoungdemocrats.org.

Upcoming Events - Continued

Municipal Candidate Happy Hour
March 28, 2007 7:00 PM - 10:00 p.m.
Zubar 2012 Greenville Ave
Dallas, TX 75206

Congressional Update featuring
Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson
March 30, 2007 5:00 PM - 7:00 p.m.
The Melrose Hotel - Oak Lawn Room
3015 Oak Lawn Ave.
Dallas, TX 75219
Donation levels: \$20, \$50, \$100.
Contact: 214-871-9291

2007-2008 Officers Elected at February Meeting

At the February meeting, our 2007-08 officers were elected by our membership. As we build on the success of last year, please join us in thanking our outgoing officers for their hard work and in welcoming our new leadership.

2007-08 Officers:

President: Jennifer Roberts
Executive Vice-President: Juan Ayala
Director - Political Affairs: Sarah Duncan
Director - Community Service:
Meredith McQuiston
Director of Finance: Cassandra Black
Treasurer: Andy Barron
Secretary: Marie Benton

President's Corner

Listening to the radio as I drove to work one recent morning, I heard a comment that epitomizes our central challenge. Discussing the war in Iraq, a man said, "I don't agree with it, but I guess that's not really my place." What? I nearly crashed the car.

Not his place? Since when are the citizens of the United States not entitled to have an opinion about an issue as significant as WAR? Clearly, those who quell dissent by painting people who disagree with them as unpatriotic and overreaching have been largely successful.

This is an even bigger problem when you look at the youth vote in America. Young voters have historically failed to do two things: (1) self-identify as members of a political party and (2) vote. Surely, the roots of this phenomenon are both practical and ideological. You may be old enough to vote, but not have transportation or the freedom to leave your workplace or school to vote. Maybe the pressure you feel from parents, educators, or employers causes you to keep your political leanings to yourself.

Or, maybe, when posed with a question about Democrats and Republicans, you respond with a question I have heard all too often in the past couple of years: "Aren't they really the same thing – is there any real difference between the two?" As frustrating as this perception is, however, things are trending in the right direction. The youth vote was up sharply in the last

election, and young people are self-identifying as Democrats more than in past years and in greater percentages than the general electorate.

Even when they don't call themselves Democrats, they often agree with us. The DCYDs have learned that by engaging young people in conversations about common values and shared beliefs – and not necessarily party politics – we can overcome many of the stereotypes about Democrats being part of the establishment that turn off young voters. In politics, we often get carried away with focusing on people, when our real focus should be the reasons we were drawn to the party in the first place – the issues that affect our everyday lives.

That brings me back to the war and the comment about one's "place" in the debate. As Young Democrats, it is our responsibility to talk to our peers about their opinions and to reassure them that having opinions is not only valid, but an imperative. The government derives its power from the people, not the other way around, and "people" includes all of us. Last year, we mounted a letter-writing campaign in response to a *Dallas Morning News* story in which a professor said that he preferred that young people not vote. Keep fighting against this kind of narrow-minded elitism. Have an opinion and share it with others.

- Jennifer Roberts

DCYD Committee Updates

Campaign & Party Relations Committee

The Campaign and Party Relations committee has been busy preparing for the DCYD municipal elections endorsement process to take place in March and April. By now, you should see the candidate's responses to our questionnaire online on the DCYD webpage. In addition, they are busy preparing for the Candidate Meet-and-Greet on March 28th. All candidates who have filed for office have been invited to attend. We always have a great turnout for this event; so don't forget to place it on your calendar. If you are interested in becoming active in this committee, please email Sarah Duncan at politicalaffairs@dallasyoungdemocrats.org.

Community Service Committee

In addition to the DVD/CD/book drive at the March 13th meeting, the Community Service Committee has been actively organizing several activities aimed at showing our support for the troops and focusing attention on issues related to the War in Iraq and the unique challenges faced by veterans. In the

works for April is a Meet-and-Greet with the USO to welcome the troops home as they arrive at the airport. Other plans include sponsoring a Mothers Day luncheon for the troops and a blood drive at a local VA hospital. Please check the DCYD website for details in the coming weeks. If you are interested in joining the committee, please contact Meredith McQuiston at m.m.mcquiston@gmail.com.

Communications Committee

DCYD is launching a "Points of View" blog for our members on our website. If you like to write, have an opinion on a pressing social issue, or would like to comment on something that moves you politically, we need you! If interested, please contact Trisha Raines at trisha_raines@yahoo.com.

National Convention Host Committee

The National Convention Committee is in charge of organizing and preparing for the 2007 Young Democrats of America National Convention in Dallas. Currently, they have

collected \$25,000 of the \$65,000 pledged to DCYD to date, which will now be matched by the YDA national office. In the upcoming months, a convention director will be hired and the convention website will be launched. The various subcommittees will be meeting in March as they work on completing convention plans. As the July date draws near, we are looking for talented, hard-working individuals to assist us. If interested in this committee, please contact Juan Ayala at jja613@sbcglobal.net.

Special Events Committee

The Special Events Committee is busy preparing our entry for the 2007 Greenville Avenue St. Patrick's Day Parade as well as details for the Candidate happy hour. From our regular meetings to our monthly happy hours, the events committee keeps our organization active, moving forward and fun. For more information on getting involved with this committee, contact Brian Felicella at bfe-felicella@aol.com.

St. Patrick's Day Parade

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We hope to have an even larger group that last year, so put on your best green attire or DCYD shirt, grab a friend and meet us at the parade line-up!

The Events Committee will be meeting to build the float and make final plans for the DCYD entry on **March 14th at 8:00 PM** at the home of committee chair Brian Felicella (114 South Shore Drive, Dallas, TX 75216). There's plenty of work and we promise a good time- so, please join us! If you need assistance with directions to his home, Brian can be reached at 210-379-5113. The parade is **March 17th**; the meeting location and time for the parade will be available on our website as details are finalized.



New Member Spotlight

Each month, we spotlight one of our newest members. We hope it reminds you why you joined, what keeps you active and encourages you to invite someone new to our next event.

Name: Michelle Eyrich

How did you hear about DCYD?

I have a friend who is the president of a chapter in Pennsylvania.

What did you think of your first meeting?

I thought it was great - the number of people who were at the meeting along with the diversity of the group. I was also pleased with the number of events that the group has planned for this upcoming year

Had you ever been active in the Young Democrats before this meeting?

I was active in college.

What would you say to some one considering joining the group or coming to a meeting?

Well, I brought two people with me so they could see what it was about also. But, I must say it was a shock to move from Pennsylvania to Dallas, it was such a change from Red to Blue. Attending the meeting made me feel comfortable and more at home.

<http://www.dallasyoungdemocrats.org>