

The Republican Club of Sun City

NEWSLETTER

April 2018

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Sun City Texas

(Topics in this newsletter: Legal Challenge to ObamaCare, Omnibus Bill, Battle of San Jacinto, Statues of the past)

LONG-TIME REPUBLICAN OFFICER-ACTIVIST TO ADDRESS CLUB

Robin Armstrong, MD, long-time Republican officer-activist at the local and state levels who now represents, along with two other Texans, the state at the national level as a member of the Republican National Committee (RNC) will address the club during its dinner meeting scheduled for **Thursday, April 19 in the ballroom of the Social Center in Sun City.**

Armstrong has had considerable experience in dealing with Republican Party politics at various levels. At the grassroots level he served for over 20 years as a precinct chairman. At an upper level, he served for several years as vice-chairman of the Republican Party of Texas, and for the past 5 ½ years as a member of the Republican National Committee (RNC) representing Texas. Recently, the RNC, in recognition of his abilities, elected him vice-president of the Southern Region of the RNC.

It should be noted that, while his training and experience have provided him with considerable acumen in the fields of medicine and politics, he has also gained valuable experience in an area often lacking in elected officials and politicians: What it is like to operate a small business. Armstrong is a small-business owner, co-owning a medical practice with 4 doctors and 6 employees, and owner of a medical technology startup company. This means he knows what it is like to meet a payroll, and to deal with government regulations, personnel problems and the like.

He will discuss the present national political climate, the present climate of politics in Texas, and the upcoming elections. Given the contentious state of politics in the state and nation, the traditional division of electorate into Republicans and Democrats no longer prevails. Now there are apparently efforts from both sides of the aisle to destroy the presidency of President Trump, fake news seems to dictate today's political agenda, suspicion of corruption by government agencies and even courts are rampant, and on and on. Someone with the political acumen of our speaker is clearly needed.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE MEETING OF APRIL 19

BEGINNING TIMES: Doors Open – 5:45 pm; Social Period – 6:00 pm; Dinner – 6:30pm; Program – 7:00pm

MENU: Meatloaf w/red sauce, mashed potatoes with cream gravy, peas and carrots and spring salad with choice of cherry vinaigrette or ranch dressing. Optional is the grilled chicken salad.

COST: Dinner fee is \$18 per person. Checks made out to "The Republican Club of Sun City" should be mailed to: **The Republican Club of Sun City, 1530 Sun City Blvd., Suite 120, PMB 227, Georgetown, TX 78633**, or left in a special drop box located on the front porch of the home of club treasurer Gene Treasurer at 202 Duck Creek Lane. For information, contact Gene at 520-990-1159 or geneedwards@earthlink.net The deadline for payment or reservations is Friday, April 13.

Attendees are reminded of the request made by the Executive Committee that advanced payments for the dinner be submitted by the payment deadline so that the proper amount of food can be ordered, and that attendees who have made reservations in advance make payments *prior* to the meeting, when possible, so that a "bogging down" of the line at the ballroom entrance can be avoided.

VISITORS ARE WELCOME! Non-members may attend a maximum of two meetings per year – as attendees for the dinner or as observers for the program – without having to pay membership dues.

CLUB WILL NOT MEET IN MAY; WILL MEET TWICE IN JUNE

While the 5th club meeting of the year is normally scheduled for May, this year, because the ballroom was not available that month, will not be scheduled that month, but will, instead, be held on **Thursday, June 7.**

The usual June meeting remains scheduled for Thursday, June 28. While there will be two meetings in June, the space between those meetings is consistent with the space between meetings, generally.

TEXAS COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION TO ADDRESS CLUB JUNE 7

Mike Morath, State Commissioner of Education, the person responsible for overseeing the education of more than five million public and charter school students, will address the club during its dinner meeting scheduled for **Thursday, June 7 in the ballroom of the Social Center.** (This is the next meeting after the April meeting) Details of that meeting will be published in the next newsletter which will be distributed in late May.

OTHER CLUB NEWS

As was previously announced, members of the year 2017 who did not renew for the year 2018 have had their names removed from the membership directory and e-mail lists. They can, of course, renew later.

Brian Olson, vice president for membership, reports that current club membership for 2018 stands at 282. Gene Edwards, treasurer, reports there were 174 attendees at the dinner plus and estimated 4 individuals attending as observers.

TWENTY STATES – LED BY TEXAS – LAUNCH LEGAL CHALLENGE TO AFFORDABLE CARE ACT (OBAMACARE)

Some History: Supreme Court Sustains ObamaCare. In 2012, in a 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court upheld the Constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act, better known as ObamaCare, on grounds the term “penalties” found in the Act and relating to the enforcement of the individual mandate requiring everyone to purchase insurance were legal to impose under Congress' authority to tax.

The author of that majority decision, Chief Justice Roberts, explained the rationale of that decision as follows: “The Affordable Care Act's requirement that certain individuals pay a financial penalty for not obtaining health insurance may reasonably be characterized as a tax. Because the Constitution permits such a tax, it is not our role to forbid it, or to pass upon its wisdom or fairness.”

The rationale of the decision has been roundly criticized with the most biting criticism being that Chief Justice Roberts engaged in “rewriting the law to in order to save it.”

Implications of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. But the status of ObamaCare may now be changed – again on the issue of taxation – because in 2017 Congress, in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, repealed the tax penalty tied by the Court to that mandate, effective January 1, 2019, while leaving the mandate in place. Consequently, Justice Roberts' contention that ObamaCare “may reasonably be characterized as a tax” is no longer applicable. Which prompts the question: Under what authority is ObamaCare still “constitutional”?

Enter the Attorneys General of 20 States in a Lawsuit. Subsequent to Congress enacting the law removing taxing authority from ObamaCare, a coalition of 20 states Attorneys General, led by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, filed a lawsuit in federal court challenging the constitutionality of ObamaCare in view of that removal. According to the lawsuit, “not only is the individual mandate now unlawful, but this core provision is not severable from the rest of [ObamaCare] – as four Justices of the Supreme Court already concluded.”

Paxton stated the following in regard to this matter: “Through our multi-state lawsuit, we hope to effectively repeal ObamaCare, which will then give President Trump and Congress an opportunity to replace that failed experiment with a plan that ensures Texans and all Americans have better choices for health coverage at more affordable prices.”

A successful lawsuit will still mean that legislation will be needed. Former Texas Senator Phil Gram, writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, notes: “But while Americans can escape ObamaCare, they still can't buy insurance in the individual market independent of ObamaCare because private insurers are prohibited from selling it. If this prohibition can be removed through the granting of state waivers by the Department of Health and Human Services, or by the passage of a new federal statute, ObamaCare will collapse into a high-risk insurance pool for the seriously ill rather than become a stepping stone to socialized medicine.”

A SURVEY OF THE WIDELY DIFFERING CONSERVATIVE VIEWS OF THE RECENTLY PASSED OMNIBUS BILL AND TRUMP'S DECLINING TO VETO IT

Foreword. President Trump refused to veto the controversial Omnibus spending bill primarily on grounds the huge increase in military spending, which it provides, cannot be delayed. Trump's refusal to veto has caused him to be roundly criticized .

But other players in that bill's passage are also criticized – particularly the Republican leadership which gave Democrats pretty much of everything they wanted with little, if any, concession made to Trump's agenda. Then there is the question of motive resulting in the GOP leadership arranging for the provisions of the bill to be covertly crafted by the four Republican and Democrat Senate and House leaders, and then allow members of Congress only 15 hours to read a 2,232 page document. The process smacks of the passage of ObamaCare.

But how shall the present situation be analyzed when fake news, a leftist media, and K-Street lobbyists can distort conclusions? A correct analysis can be helpful – particularly in regard to dealing with the coming mid-term and presidential elections and the possibility that large numbers of Republican voters will stay home, rather than vote, at election time.

In contrast with some of the gloom and doom which can come from an analysis is a part of this report (at the end) where two ideas of two writers about how Republicans can strike back are presented.

The Views of Rush Limbaugh. The views of Limbaugh should be given some credence because for many years he has maintained a listening audience in the millions and has been the number one talk show host in America. Limbaugh has made some especially biting comments about the various actors connected with the Omnibus bill, but they may be “truth” which Republicans, especially, should face. Following are some of them:

And it's time to stop thinking of the Congress as made up of Republican and Democrats. This remains what it always has been, establishment versus outsider, ruling class versus Trump and his voters.

Folks, this budget is a slap in the face. This budget is the Washington establishment, both parties, telling Donald Trump to go to hell . . .

Whatever happens, this is the last piece of significant legislation that's gonna happen before the midterms. So this is gonna be the thing that is the last big congressional action that will serve as informing American voters of what's been going on. This is designed to make Donald Trump look ineffective . . . like his presidency doesn't count for anything.

Today's legislation – including budgets like this – is written by the so-called special interests: Lobbyists, donors. . . I know it may be a big shock . . . but the vast majority of legislation originates outside of Capitol Hill.

Provisions in the Bill Affecting Trump's Main Agenda: Border Security.

The administration wanted an increase in the number of ICE agents. This budget rejects that request. Those agents are not going to be hired. They're not paid for. The Democrats have made sure that American employees who profit off illegal immigration are gonna have less to worry about because there aren't going to be hardly any agents at all running around trying to find people, illegal aliens who've been hired.

So essentially, the House “has voted to continue a policy of catch-and-release, where illegal aliens, as under Obama, are apprehended and then let go into the U. S.”

Sanctuary cities will continue to thrive. Measures that would have taken money away from sanctuary cities were rejected . . .

The bill provides funding . . . to the secretary of defense 'to enhance the border security of nations adjacent to conflict areas including Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, and Tunisia . . .’ In other words, the U. S. Budget is going to provide money to build walls and to enhance border security in Jordan, in Lebanon, in Egypt, in Tunisia, but not here.

Reaction of Columnists and TV Newscasters. Reacting to the news that the Omnibus bill provided funding for border walls in other countries, Planned Parenthood and Schumer's tunnel project – but not for Trump's request for added or reduced expenditures, author Patricia McCarthy asks, “Why would conservatives bother to vote? What did it get them?”

TV newscaster Laura Ingraham stated, “the president did have a choice. He could have called Congress back to town and made them pass a continuing resolution until his priorities were funded . . .”

Congressional Opinion. While some Republicans may be satisfied with the Omnibus bill, Sen. Rand Paul made the following observations about the bill and the vote:

As far as the content of the bill, this could have been written by President Obama and liberal Democrats. When I ran in 2010, when we had that Tea Party tidal wave, we were opposed to President Obama spending, we were opposed to President Obama's trillion-dollar deficits. This is why people are so upset with politics, because when the Republicans are out of power, when they're in the minority, they are the conservative party. But when they get in the majority, there is no conservative party.

Congressman Jim Jordan (Ohio) stated: “The fact is we only had 15 hours to read it – 2,232 pages – before we voted on it. And the president is exactly right. It doesn't fund the things we told the American people we were gonna fund – like the wall – and it does fund things we told them we weren't going to fund – like Planned Parenthood, like sanctuary cities and those kind of things.”

View of a Caller to Limbaugh's Show. A caller to the Limbaugh show expressed a view which may be typical of voters who had previously supported Trump: “Yesterday you asked the question of why we hadn't heard from the Never Trumpers, why they were silent. And its because they knew that if this bill went through and he didn't veto it, that he would lose his people faster than anything they could do or say to separate us from Trump. And it worked. He will lose me. He will lose just about everybody I know that's a Trumper, and we can't figure out why he suddenly changed so quickly.”

Grassroots Views. The Republican Conventions of Senatorial District 3 & 4 of Montgomery County made their displeasure about the passage of the Omnibus bill via the following resolution which may be reflective of resolutions passed by other such conventions: “The Republican Party of Texas holds Republican members of the Texas delegation to Congress in contempt for their affirmative votes on any omnibus spending bills that violate the Republican Party platform.”

Some Suggested Courses of Action. There have been at least two proposed courses of action by two writers which conservative Republicans could take to “push back” and minimize the number of Republicans who might simply stay home during the coming elections.

Thomas Lifson in American Thinker states, "I would like to see him [Trump] publicly campaign against omnibus spending bill as a concept and demand that the House leadership start crafting the sort of focused spending bills that used to be voted on to fund specific departments and even projects . . . The filibuster is a concept that has outlived its usefulness."

Wall Street Journal columnist Kimberley Strassel contends that the fight over the 1.3 trillion omnibus bill doesn't have to be over. There is now a thought that a certain idea – if done right – could be a political winner. She is talking about the 1974 Impoundment Act

which allows the president to order the rescission of specific funds, so long as Congress approves those cuts within 45 days.

Ronald Reagan used rescission where he could and holds the title for most proposals.

Under the Impoundment Act, a simple majority is enough to approve presidential rescissions – no filibuster.

The political danger here rests in Mr. Trump moving unilaterally, with a rescission package that shames his fellow Republicans in Congress and puts them at greater risk in the mid-terms. The trick is instead for House Speaker Ryan and Senate Leader McConnell to request Mr. Trump to the impoundment route, or for the White House and congressional leaders to make a joint announcement.

Most important, this is a vivid way for the GOP to explain to voters the importance of allowing it to continue to hold both chambers of Congress.

APRIL 21, 2018: 182ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF SAN JACINTO, "ONE OF THE DECISIVE BATTLES OF THE WORLD"

On April 21, 1836 – some 182 years ago – one of the world's decisive battles, the Battle of San Jacinto, was fought in the fields near what is now referred to as the Houston Ship Channel between Texas and Mexican forces. A plaque on the San Jacinto Monument located on that battlefield states, "when measured by its results, San Jacinto was one of the decisive battles of the world." (The complete statement is reported below.)

Because the club has a number of residents from other states who may not be familiar with this historical event, and because even native Texans could, perhaps, use some refreshment of their recollections, the following account of some of the events leading up to that battle and the battle itself is presented.

Texas Declares Its Independence. On March 2, 1836, Texas declared its independence from Mexico and became the Republic of Texas. The Declaration was made by 54 delegates meeting at the village of Washington-on-the-Brazos.

The Battle of the Alamo. The Battle of the Alamo inspired the Texians (as they were called then) to victory in the coming battle of San Jacinto. The Alamo battle began on February 23, 1836 with a 13-day siege during which around 200 Texans were pitted against a force of Mexicans estimated to number between 1,800 and 6,000 men.

During that siege, William Travis, commander of the Texas garrison, sent a message of defiance and a plea for help:

I am besieged by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna – I have sustained a continual bombardment and cannonade for 24 hours and have not lost a man – The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion, otherwise the garrison are to be put to the sword, if the fort is taken – I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, and our flag still waves proudly from the walls – I shall never surrender or retreat. Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, or patriotism and everything dear to the American character to come to our aid with all dispatch.

The Goliad Massacre. Less than month after the Battle of the Alamo, a Mexican colonel ordered 342 prisoners out of the pueblo of Goliad to three roads where Mexican soldiers shot them point blank. Those who survived being shot were clubbed and knifed to death.

Simultaneously, at the Goliad Presido, approximately 80 wounded prisoners were executed by a variety of means. Colonel James Fannin, who was there, requested that his body receive a Christian burial, that his personal belongings be sent to his wife, and that he be shot in the heart, rather than the face. Instead, the firing squad shot him in the face and spat on his body, and the soldiers rummaged through his possessions, taking some and dumping the rest. His body was burned on stacks of timber along with the men who had been under his command.

This brutality and the defeat at the Alamo constituted the basis of battle crys for the coming Battle of San Jacinto.

The Battle of San Jacinto. General Houston, commander, ordered his troops to advance toward the Mexican camp at about 4:00 PM. They were hidden by the crest of a hill between the two camps. It took the Texians about thirty minutes to cover the distance to within 100 yards of the Mexican breastworks when the

shooting began. The actual battle at San Jacinto lasted less than 18 minutes although the slaughter continued until dark.

The Texians lost nine men and the Mexican Army about 600, most after the Mexican position was overrun and the Mexicans were in retreat. Cries of "Remember the Alamo" and "Remember Goliad" indicated the revenge the unbridled Texians felt against the Mexicans.

The Significance of the Battle of San Jacinto. The commander of the Texas army, General Sam Houston, brought hostilities to an end when he had the commander of the Mexican forces, Santa Anna, sign a document recognizing the independence of Texas with its border at the Rio Grande River. The importance of the Battle of San Jacinto is recorded on the San Jacinto Monument as follows:

MEASURED BY ITS RESULTS, SAN JACINTO WAS ONE OF THE DECISIVE BATTLES OF THE WORLD. THE FREEDOM OF TEXAS FROM MEXICO WON HERE LED TO ANNEXATION AND TO THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN WAR, RESULTING IN THE ACQUISITION BY THE UNITED STATES OF THE STATES OF TEXAS, NEW MEXICO, ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA, UTAH AND PARTS OF COLORADO, WYOMING, KANSAS AND OKLAHOMA. ALMOST ONE-THIRD OF THE PRESENT AREA OF THE AMERICAN NATION, NEARLY A MILLION SQUARE MILES OF TERRITORY, CHANGED SOVEREIGNTY.

NOW GERMANY STRUGGLES WITH STATUES HONORING HEROES – OR VILLANS – OF THE PAST

Recently, a towering bronze 14 foot tall statue of Karl Marx arrived at the town of Trier, Germany, the birthplace of Marx. The statue was a gift from China's Communist government presented on the the occasion of the 200th birthday of Karl Marx, generally acknowledged as the founder of communism.

The gift, however, is getting sharply mixed reaction – not unlike some of the reaction heard in this country about statues honoring certain individuals from the Civil War era. European politicians and opponents of communism have denounced the statue's installation, saying the celebration is a slap in the face to millions who suffered under governments acting in the philosopher's name.

Marion Smith, executive director of the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, a Washington-based nonprofit, questioned the wisdom of celebrating a thinker whose ideas have led to "some of the greatest episodes of human suffering in all of history."

"Every time Marxism has been tried, it resulted in abject economic collapse or a repressive police state – or, as we are seeing right now in Venezuela, both," stated Smith. Providing contrast to that evaluation, is the fact the president of the European Union's executive arm and one of the Continent's most well-known leaders, is expected to speak at the opening of an exhibition on the works of Marx.

Then there was reaction to that news. A British member of Parliament who fled the Soviet-dominated communist regime in Poland stated the appearance of the Union official would be in "very poor taste," stating, "Marxism led to the killing of millions around the world . . ."

The Trier City Council approved the statue's installation last year on a 42-11 vote, despite objections from some residents who are ashamed of the town's association with the revolutionary thinker and suspicious of China's motive behind the gift.

But Trier Mayor Wolfram Leibe told a newspaper that the vote "has nothing to do with glorification" of Marx or his ideas. "Those times are over."

But is the mayor correct in his contention that "those times are over?" That contention could be said about the institution of slavery and the institution of segregation and discrimination which did exist in America in the past, although isolated instances – not institutions - of those problems can still be cited.

Communism, on the other hand, appears to be doing well today as evidenced by the long-standing present governments of North Korea, China, and Cuba today, plus the ongoing struggle in Venezuela and elsewhere.