

The Republican Club of Sun City NEWSLETTER

June 2018

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Sun City Texas

(Topics this newsletter: Krauthammer Illness, Homeschooling Surge, Parental Concerns, Internet Instructional Tool, TX schooling)

HEAD OF TEXAS REPUBLICAN PARTY TO ADDRESS CLUB JUNE 28

James Dickey, who was elected Chairman of the Texas Republican Party by the State Republican Executive (SREC) to fill the unexpired term of former chairman Tom Melcher who resigned from that post effective May 20, 2017, will address the club during its dinner meeting scheduled for **Thursday, June 28 in the ballroom of the Social Center in Sun City.**

Chairman Dickey grew up in Ft. Worth where he graduated valedictorian of his high school class. He earned Bachelor's degrees from Stanford University in Political Science and English. He holds a Master's in Business Administration from Baylor University. Professionally, he is the co-founder and Chief Operating Officer of IMGGA, a small insurance company that works with insurance agents and provides them with the tools they need to do their jobs easily and quickly.

He has long been a conservative GOP activist whose varied experiences in politics - including a stint as county GOP chairman in leftist Travis County - has contributed to the following accomplishments of the state party: (1) record-breaking fund raising in the amount of 1.2 million dollars; (2) record-breaking primary turnout involving 1.5 million voters, the highest number ever in a Texas Republican midterm primary; (3) a record number, 3,862, of Republicans on the primary ballot statewide, double the number of Democrat primary candidates; and (4) the Republican Party of Texas convention, with 9,000 delegates, is the largest political convention in the free world.

His address is expected to center on how the Texas Republican Party promotes the values of the Republican Party and promotes the election of Republicans to office.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE MEETING OF JUNE 28

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

MENU: Pulled pork sandwich with condiments, cole slaw, three bean salad with optional grilled chicken salad and choice of two dressings.

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 Edwards 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, June 22.

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.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF FAITH AND FREEDOM COALITION TO ADDRESS CLUB JULY 26

Timothy Head, Executive Director for the Faith and Freedom Coalition, an organization "committed to educating, equipping and mobilizing people of faith and like-minded individuals to be effective citizens," will address the club during its dinner meeting scheduled for **Thursday, July 26 in the ballroom of the Social Center in Sun City.**

This organization, originally identified as the Christian Coalition before it expanded its mission, has, according to Wikipedia, "hundreds of thousands of supporters and several hundred local chapters." President Trump, members of Congress, and other notables have spoken at conferences it has sponsored.

Details of the meeting will be provided in the July newsletter.

OTHER CLUB NEWS

VP (membership) Brian Olson reports 2018 membership is 351; club treasurer Gene Edwards reports there were 152 diners and 1 or 2 observers at the club's meeting of June 7.

KRAUTHAMMER EXPLAINS HE HAS ONLY WEEKS TO LIVE

Four Years Ago He Explained His Conversion From Liberalism to Conservatism

Charles Krauthammer, the Pulitzer-Prize winning journalist, Fox News Contributor and *Wall Street Journal* columnist, who has been absent from view for about ten months during which he has remained silent on his health status. Until June 8, that is, when he released a statement which many observers contend is nothing short of heartbreaking. Following are some excerpts from that statement:

I have been uncharacteristically silent these past ten months. I had thought that silence would soon be coming to an end, but I'm afraid I must tell you now that fate has decided on a different course for me.

In August of last year, I underwent surgery to remove a cancerous tumor in my abdomen. That operation was thought to have been a success, but it caused a cascade of secondary complications - which I have been fighting in a hospital ever since. It was a long and hard fight with many setbacks, but I was steadily, if slowly, overcoming each obstacle along the way and gradually making my way back to health. However, recent tests have revealed that the cancer has returned. There was no sign of it as recently as a month ago, which means it is aggressive and spreading rapidly. My doctors tell me their best estimate is that I have only a few weeks left to live. This is the final verdict. My fight is over.

Lastly, I thank my colleagues, my readers, and my viewers, who have made my career possible and given consequence to my life's work. I believe that the pursuit of truth and right ideas through honest debate and rigorous argument is a noble undertaking. I am grateful to have played a small role in the conversations that have helped guide this extraordinary nation's destiny.

I leave with no regrets. It was a wonderful life – full and complete with the great loves and great endeavors that make it worth living. I am sad to leave, but I leave with the knowledge that I lived the life that I intended.

While now generally regarded as a conservative, that was not always the case inasmuch as his political inclination during his younger years was to be a Great Society liberal. But something triggered a change, a conversion. It is instructive to consider that reasons for the conversion as was explained in a March 2014 newsletter report which follows:

Charles Krauthammer, a former psychiatrist, a current author of widely-read columns, and a frequent guest and panelist on a variety of TV shows, said, "My political inclination [during his early 20's] was to be a Great Society liberal on domestic issues." He explains his political views of that day: "It was sort of lazily socially Democratic, meaning, government wants to do good, government's got to engage itself to help the poor, etc. So there I was, by habit, a social Democrat."

Krauthammer comments on the change in the Democrats of today with, say, the Democrats of the John F. Kennedy era. It was Kennedy who had beliefs in tune with today's conservatives and out-of-tune with today's leftist/Democrats. Two examples: (1) Kennedy advocated reducing taxes as a means of making the economy grow, and (2) counter to the entitlement philosophy promoted today, admonished citizens, "ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country."

Krauthammer further explains his conversion:

So, I know it seems strange to young people today, but the Democratic Party had a very powerful wing that was quite anti-communist. So that's where I located myself, and then when I began to write in the early '80s, the empirical evidence on the Great Society started to come in. I'm a doctor by training, and I'm open to empirical evidence, and it was overwhelming. The Great Society was a failure. It made things worse.

So that was the beginning of my turn politically. It wasn't a philosophical turn, it was more empirical. You know, you have a good heart, you give money away, lo and behold, it creates dependency. Now, I will grant you that's not a great discovery, but for me it was. And that began my turn.

HOMESCHOOLING SURGES AS PARENTS SEEK SAFER OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN

Foreword. *The Washington Times*, in its May 30 issue, published reports from three homeschooling organizations in Texas, Louisiana and Oregon revealing a stunning increase in the number of inquiries about homeschooling which came about in the wake of recent killings of school children and teachers in Parkland, Florida and Santa Fe, Texas. These inquiries are probably typical of those from throughout the nation. While they all appear to be coming from parents of public school children, it should be recognized that private schools are also vulnerable to attack.

Following are some excerpts from the *Times* report.

The Texas Home School Coalition. Tim Lambert, president of the Texas Home School Coalition located in Lubbock, Texas, explains his organization “has been swamped with inquiries for months from parents seeking safer options for their kids in the aftermath of this year's deadly school massacres, first in Parkland, Fla., and then in Santa Fe, Texas.” When the Parkland shooting happened, our phone calls and emails exploded. “In the last couple of months, our numbers have doubled. We're dealing with probably between 1,200 and 1,400 calls and emails per month, and prior to that it was 600 to 700.”

There are other reasons for those calls. “[W]e get lots of calls from people saying 'Hey my kids being bullied, my kid's being attacked, and the school either can't or won't do anything about it, so we're going to take care of our child. We're withdrawing him.'”

“When a shooting happens, I call it the straw that basically breaks their idea of the public schools,” Mr. Lambert said. “They've already been thinking about it, and now somebody gets stabbed, or another teacher beats up another kid, or another kid beats up another teachers, and they say, 'You know what? We don't want to be there.’”

The *Times* draws this conclusion: “Demands to restrict firearms and beef up school security have dominated the debate following the shootings, but flying under the radar is the surge of interest in homeschooling as parents lose faith in the ability of public schools to protect students from harm.”

Homeschool Louisiana. Christopher Chin, president of Homeschool Louisiana, points out “[I]t's not just the threat of school shootings. Parents are also increasingly concerned about the the violence, the bullying, the unsafe environments.” He especially notes that, “One of the things we've seen definitely is an uptick in the last five years is the aspect of violence. It's the bullying. That is off the charts.”

“I think what happens with these school shootings is they're the straws that broke the camel's back,” Mr. Chin said. “I don't think it's the major decision-maker, but it's in the back of parent's minds.”

National Home Education Research Institution, Salem, Oregon. Brian D. Ray, president of the National Home Education Research Institute in Salem, Oregon, who has conducted homeschool research for 33 years said, “the top three reasons that parents choose homeschooling are a desire to provide religious instruction or different values than those offered in public schools, dissatisfaction with the academic curriculum, and worries about the school environment.”

“Most parents homeschool for more than one reason,” Mr. Ray said. “But when we ask families why do they homeschool, near the top nowadays is concern about the environment of schools, and that includes safety, pressure to get into drugs, pressure to get into sexual activity. It includes all of that.”

OTHER PARENTAL CONCERNS

Each of the statements made by the homeschool presidents reveal parental concern about a variety of matters in addition to school violence. Following are some of the concerns which have been recently reported:

Test Results. The recently reported results of the 2017 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), known as the “Nation's Report Card,” a test which, it should be noted, is not based on a comparison with other students, but in comparison with what students should know and be able to do. Columnist and university professor Walter Williams comments on the test results:

It's not a pretty story. Only 37 percent of 12th graders tested proficient or better in reading, and only 25 percent did so in math. Among black students, only 17 percent tested proficient or better in reading, and just 7 percent reached at least a proficient level in math.

The atrocious NAEP performance is only a fraction of the bad news. Nationally, our high school graduation rate is over 80 percent. That means high school diplomas, which attest that these students can read and compute at a 12th-grade level, are conferred when 63 percent are not proficient in reading and 75 percent are not proficient in math.

Government Policies. As was pointed out in the May newsletter, when the Florida shootings were discussed, the application of the federal government's “disparate impact” doctrine meant schools were not disciplining minority students – including the killer – out of fear of having to face charges of racism. Other concerns are the handling of LGBT students, the Common Core , and non-English speaking students.

The *Wall Street Journal* recently reported on an unwise government decision, this time at the city level, in New York City which administers the schools there. Mayor di Blasio became alarmed because Asian students do far better than black or Latino students. To him this was a problem, the solution of which was to take seats at the elite schools from Asian and white students and give them to less qualified black and Latino students who may not even be prepared for the needed academic demands. Achievement is thus penalized and underachievement rewarded.

Indoctrination of Leftist/Anti-Biblical Values. Various court rulings, the curricula of universities, the culture of the entertainment industry, and other influences do promote an ideology incompatible with the traditional Judeo-Christian values which have served the nation so well.

Other Concerns. There are other parental concerns too numerous to mention here.

THE INTERNET AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL TOOL FOR THE HOMESCHOOLING PARENT

The reader should be aware of two significant developments in the home school movement: First, the concept of a parent or a grandparent being the sole teacher of a homeschooled student is no longer valid, this being said in view of the present multitude of instructional materials being available on the Internet, including some that provide for interaction between a teacher on the Internet and a student in a home, plus videos.

Second, while some parents may not wish their children inculcated with Judeo-Christian values, other parents will want those values taught. It should be noted, however, because of the 1947 Everson case (with its "separation of church and state" doctrine), and subsequent court rulings, those values may no longer be inculcated as they once were in public education.

Private schools and home school programs, however, are not bound by this prohibition. In addition, the Supreme Court, thanks to its 2002 ruling in *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, said there is no problem with private schools or home schools providing religious instruction, even using public monies if, firstly, that money goes directly to parents rather than to a private school. There continues to be considerable political resistance, however, to this arrangement in Texas and elsewhere.

In the April 2018 issue of *The New American*, a report based on an interview with Dr. Duke Pesta, Academic Director of the Freedom Project Academy (fpeusa.org), one of a growing number of organizations providing instructional materials available on the Internet and by video, appears. The availability of instructional materials being thus available means the adults providing instruction to children are thus relieved of much of the burden of preparing for and delivering lectures.

What follows are excerpts from that article which addresses pedagogical, philosophical and theological issues related to the education of the young particularly at Pesta's school but also generally. The following uses a question-answer format in which a "Q" indicates a question, and an "A" indicates the response of Dr. Pesta.

Q: Those in the public-school realm often have the opinion of home schoolers as being "indoctrinated," with severe religious ideals. They're being brainwashed by their parents; they're a cult; home schooling is for overprotective parents. What is your rebuttal?

A: Some of the words you just used – cult, overprotective parents, indoctrination – are ironic coming from the public-school people because that's exactly what's happening in the public schools. You could make an argument that the collectivism of public schools – now especially because we've centralized them, federalized them under things like Common Core – what you've got now is one great big government-sponsored cult that is teaching kids the same thing, imposing all sorts of ideologies on kids like transgenderism, global warming, homosexuality; getting these kids sexualized way younger developmentally than they should be – forcing that on your kids!

The second thing I would point out – the only remaining argument from the public schools is that homeschoolers are not socialized. When you look at what's going on in high school, middle school, and elementary school campuses, you've got sex between younger kids at younger ages, you've got an epidemic of bullying, you've got an inability of schools to protect your kids.

I'd much rather have my moms and dads make their own choice about when to teach sex, or values, or virtues to the kid. Non-religious homeschooling is at its highest level ever because a lot of moms and dads who aren't religious are balking at the bullying, the intimidation, the indoctrination, the weak standards, the standardized testing.

Q: Let's say you have some parents who are interested in the classical education, but they aren't religious. What do you tell them?

A: We make it very clear that we're two things: We're a classical school, which means we teach logic, we teach economics, we teach real history, we teach kids *how* to think, not *what* to think. We're a classical school. But we're also a classical school that's rooted firmly in Judeo-Christian values, which means we believe that the Greco-Roman world – with its focus on reason, rationalism, and logic – is perfectly compatible with the Bible and biblical revelation.

So, we let them know, and most moms and dads who are from a secular perspective love it because we don't talk about theology and we don't talk about dogma in our classrooms. We're non-denominational.

So when we talk about biblical values, we talk about shared understandings of Judeo-Christian values as they have obviously manifested themselves in the history, art, politics, and culture of the last 2,000 years. Most secular moms and dads who have taken us aren't the least bit bothered by the fact that their kids have to take the Latin language. They're not bothered that we have them read the great Christian writer of Western culture such as Dante, or Milton, or Shakespeare, because they understand that that's part of our history and culture.

Q: How about deeply religious families? Do the parents mind their children being exposed to texts by authors whose religious traditions may be different from their own?

A: I'm proud to say that not a single one of our parents has ever complained that their kid is a Baptist but is getting too much Catholic, or their kid is Catholic but is getting too much Lutheran.

In our literature classes, they're reading traditional, classical texts. They'll read Plato and Aristotle and Homer and Virgil – the great Greek and Roman writers. But they're also going to read Dante and Milton and Shakespeare and Chaucer – the great Christian writers. They'll read the Roman-Catholic Dante in the 14th century. Then they'll read the radical Protestant Milton in the 17th century. Then they'll read the Anglican C. S. Lewis in the 20th century. Then they'll read the Book of Job in ancient Jewish text from 3,000 years ago. And so, consequently they're getting exposed to all sorts of different writers.

Q: Some of the “classical” classes that you offer are Latin, phonics, logic, philosophy, and rhetoric. Why are these classes important?

A: They are the courses that built liberty, freedom, and personal responsibility in Western culture. It's undeniably true that as you go back to the Old Testament, through the New Testament, through the last 2,000 years, that the Judeo-Christian ethic and value system is what gave rise to the Magna Carta. It's what gave rise to the Declaration of Independence.

If the Western world is as bad as all these liberal professors say it is, how come human rights, civil rights, women's rights, minority rights, gay rights – how come those things grew up exclusively in Western culture?

The Founding Fathers, as we know, were deeply studied in a scriptural worldview. We know that liberty and the rights of the *individual* are most championed in Christianity.

Classical education is predicated on the notion of critical thinking. We want kids to be able to think critically. One of the major problems in American public education right now with all the federal control is that it's short on critical thinking – letting kids think for themselves – and its long on telling kids how to think and feel.

If logic is thinking logically and correctly, you could make the argument that rhetoric is how you express that in ways that will move other people. Rhetoric is really the science of being able to speak logically and move people with your words to virtue.

Q: How do you think [your organization] develops a student as a person?

A: The primary objective of a classical education is to create and mold a human being in virtuous action. It's not about getting a job.

The first purpose of education is to morally improve students, make them more civilized, and make them more understanding and thoughtful and reflective. Make them better people! And only secondarily do you make them more proficient in the subject area. Ironically, in the American government schools today, character education and actual education for knowledge and mastery – those things have been eradicated. What we're doing is very different: Read the great books of Western culture, learn how to think logically, study languages such as Latin that force you to become more methodical, so that your character develops, your worldview develops. And then because of those emphases, your mastery of subject matter will rise, and you'll be able to integrate your personal and professional life into one wholistic unit, which is the objective here – to be a full person.

Q: What obvious differences do you see in a student who has gone through [your school], versus one who hasn't?

A: In the public schools, they're taking away the morality. In the public schools, the Judeo-Christian morality and ethical and virtuous behavior in a religious context is being replaced with radical, political activism.

REPUBLICAN POSITION, TEXAS LAW REGARDING HOMESCHOOLING

Republicans have made it known via Propositions on ballots of at least two Republican primaries and planks in the party platform that they approve of parental choice in regard to the education of their children. For example, Republicans overwhelmingly approved Ballot Proposition #5 on the recent primary ballot: **“Texas families should be empowered to choose from public, private, charter, or homeschool options for their children's education, using tax credits or exemptions without government constraints or intrusion.”**

Texas already is a significant participant in homeschooling. Tim Lambert of the Texas Home School Coalition estimates that Texas has about 15,000 families and more than 300,000 children being taught at home. Texas has “has more students being homeschooled than being schooled in traditional private schools.”

Providing verification that interest in providing alternatives to public schools extends to the professional and political ranks are the following national statistics reported by columnist Walter Williams:

- **Nationally, 11% of all parents enroll their children in private schools, and 89% of students attend public schools.**
- **Nationally, more than 20% of public school teachers with school-age children enroll them in private schools.**
- **Members of Congress enroll 33% to 44% of their children in private schools, three to four times the national average.**

NOTES ON THE PASSING SCENE

(Some random observations on this crazy world in which we live)

Demographics. According to the Baltimore Sun:

“Whites are now the numerical minority in a half dozen states, and they will be the nation's numerical minority in a little more than 25 years. And now, for the first time ever, there are fewer white than nonwhite children under 10 years of age.

This is a significant. The U.S. Population has been predominantly white since the founding of Jamestown in 1607. As late as 1950, whites accounted for about 90 percent of the nation's population, according to U. S. Census figures. But in the past six decades, whites' share of the overall population has dropped to 61 percent. Demographic projections suggest that whites will become the numerical minority in 2044, when the nation will become a majority-minority country.

In certain places this is already underway. Hawaii and the District of Columbia became majority-minority in 1980, California and New Mexico in 2000, Texas in 2004, and Nevada last year.,

Nonwhites are drivers of the demography of the national and state populations. For example, nonwhites accounted for nearly 96 percent of the 14.4 million people added to the U. S. population between 2010 and 2016.”

Who Pays What in Taxes? Columnist Walter Williams provides the following updated information:

“The top 1 percent of income earners, those having an adjusted annual gross income of \$480,930 or higher, pay about 39 percent of federal income taxes. That means about 892,000 Americans are stuck with paying 39 percent of all federal taxes. The top 10 percent of income earners, those having an adjusted gross income over \$138,031, pay about 70.6 percent of federal income taxes. About 1.7 million Americans, less than 1 percent of our population, pay 70.6 percent of federal income taxes.

The bottom 50 percent of income earners, those having an adjusted income of \$39,275 or less, pay 2.83 percent of federal income taxes. Thirty-seven million tax filers have no tax obligation at all. The Tax Policy Center estimates that 45.5 percent of households will not pay federal income tax this year.”

Quotas for Male Democrats. The *Wall Street Journal* reports the following:

“Pennsylvania Democrats have long complained that women are under-represented in state politics. But last month they turned away two women who won election to the Democrat State Committee, giving the positions to men who garnered fewer votes. Believe it or not, Democrats are justifying this decision in the name of gender equity.

Presumably to boost the number of women in party leadership, Pennsylvania Democrats have a longstanding rule that “there shall be an equal number of females and males elected” to the state committee.

But there was a surge of female candidates for state office. So the Democratic State Committee's gender-equity rule functioned as an affirmative-action program, thus placing two male candidates with fewer votes than their female competitors in office.

TPPF Launches Initiative on Poverty. Kevin Roberts, Executive Director of the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF), recently sent a letter to supporters announcing a groundbreaking project to be known as the Booker T. Washington Initiative to be headed by retired Lt. Colonel West who was recently appointed Senior Fellow at the TPPF. With this initiative, TPPF is proposing to redefine the debate on poverty, welfare, opportunity.

But, contends Roberts, “we must first debunk the idea that taxation and massive welfare help our nation's poor escape their burden.”

West, in a statement accompanying this letter, makes this powerful contention:

“...welfare-entitlement bureaucracy will continue to make poverty worse by addicting countless millions of Americans to handouts. It will imprison tens of millions of human beings, our fellow Americans, in poverty. It will **kill** the only thing that will save them: *the transforming pride of an individual work ethic.*

Without change, the poverty rate will never be effectively cut down.

And if it *isn't* cut down, all horrors spilling out from the big-government-driven poverty cycle will get worse: **Family breakdown. Crime. Drugs. Racial hatred. An ever-rising prison population. Money poured into law enforcement and criminal justice with no end in sight.”**