

Northwest Democrats News



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Northwest Democrats, P.O. Box 681911, San Antonio, TX 78268; TXDemocrat@satx.rr.com

June 19th Program: Jeff Weems, Railroad Commissioner Candidate

New Location: Luby's at Ingram Park Mall

Don't forget to attend our June 19th meeting when we will hear from former Railroad Commissioner candidate Jeff Weems

Please join us for this important meeting at 8:30 am at Luby's at Ingram Park Mall. We apologize for any inconvenience with moving to a new location again.

Special Projects: Warrior & Family Support Center

The WFSC provides coordinated services to patients, next-of-kin and extended Family members with a primary focus on Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom Warriors. It provides a friendly, comfortable environment in which to take a break, watch a movie on big-screen TV's, play video games, check email or use the Internet, select a book or magazine to read, make a phone call or just grab a cup of coffee.

Wounded Warriors and their Family members visit the WFSC to maintain contact with other military members or extended Family members, to receive emotional support and answers to their questions, and to extend their rehabilitation away from the hospital. The rehabilitation involves learning to cope with war related disabilities as individuals, as couples and as Families.

Items needed include: bottled water, snacks (cookies, popcorn, chips), diapers, toiletries, books, magazines, puzzles, games, CDs, DVDs, and monetary donations

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To submit an article or other info, email Jacob Middleton at:

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A Few 'Joyce' Words

by Joyce Dorrycott

On May 22nd, members of the Executive Committee met with a large number of our Democratic candidates to discuss our plans for the fall. Forty-six people attended our breakfast at Panchito's as we talked to these candidates about the fall campaign. Also invited to speak to the candidates was someone who will be vital to the entire Democratic campaign in Bexar County - Christian Archer.

Many of you are aware that at our May meeting Northwest Democrats voted to join the other Democratic groups in working under the umbrella of Bexar County United Democrats. This will be a countywide effort in support of the entire Democratic ticket. It is easier when you only have to focus on one race, but we have always focused on all of our Democratic candidates and tried to bring in as many independent votes in our precincts as possible while also trying to get all our Democratic voters to the polls.

I am excited about the cooperative effort we are putting together this year. We are all committed to working from the same lists, based on the professional targeting that is being done - while we are still working within our adopted precincts. Realistically, Northeast, Northwest and Mission City are the only geographically based of our Democratic organizations. Still we will all be supportive of the entire effort and find ways to work together to benefit all our candidates.

A major target this year will surely be to take back the governor's office. It is time to end Rick Perry's 25 years on the government payroll. There are plenty of motivations to do so - whether it is the turning back of federal funds for education, his refusal to accept increased funding for children's health care, etc., etc., etc. And, we will do all that we can to produce the margins of victory Bill White needs from Bexar County in order to win statewide. For, in doing so, we will provide the margins necessary to win our other contested races - many of them judicial.

Working in political campaigns can be both very exhilarating and very tiring. Either way it is very rewarding. Simply knowing that you have contributed to the election of good officeholders makes all the hours and days of hard work worthwhile. Make no mistake about it - we will need every Democrat if we are to be successful. Whether you can work an hour a day or for longer periods, we need YOU. Whether it is going door to door, calling voters, or putting together mailouts, we need YOU. This is YOUR fight as well as mine. Please come to the June meeting prepared to fill out a Volunteer Card.

Bexar County United Democrats already has a Facebook page. Soon it will have a website. It is our intention that we keep you aware of our activities and how you may participate in them. In addition, Northwest Democrats is seeking a campaign office and hopes to have one established in July. Please clear your fall calendar so that you may be an active participant in this crucial fall campaign.

As American as Apple Pie

by Jacob Middleton

First let me say I had originally planned on saying something about BP. That was until I happened across an article in Mother Jones magazine with this title: "Did the Bush Administration Experiment on Detainees?"

My opinion of the Bush administration was already lower than the rent on a burning building, yet somehow it has managed to fall even lower. I have come to the conclusion that almost everyone from that administration is so low to the ground they could teach snakes how to slither.

Back to article. Physicians for Human Rights (an international NGO that's been around since 1986), alleges in a new report that detainees were experimented on. Having said that, "*The PHR report doesn't produce a smoking gun—there's no memo saying 'we're going to experiment on detainees.'* The organization acknowledges as much, noting that none of the actual medical monitoring data from interrogations has ever been made public. PHR says that only a 'comprehensive federal investigation' can answer the questions raised by its report. But don't hold your breath for one. To date, the 'enhanced interrogation' program itself has yet to be fully probed."

So what does the report say? ...*The watchdog group claims that in an attempt to establish that brutal interrogation tactics did not constitute torture, the administration ended up effectively experimenting on terrorism detainees...*

According to the report, which draws on numerous declassified government documents, "medical professionals working for and on behalf of the CIA" frequently monitored detainee interrogations, gathering data on the effectiveness of various interrogation techniques and the pain thresholds of detainees. This information was then used to "enhance" future interrogations, PHR contends.

By monitoring post-9/11 interrogations and keeping records on the effectiveness of various techniques, medical professionals could also provide Bush administration lawyers with the information they needed to set guidelines for the use of so-called "enhanced" interrogation tactics.

...Ironically, one goal of the "experimentation" seems to have been to immunize Bush administration officials and CIA interrogators from potential prosecution for torture. In the series of legal papers that are now popularly known as the "torture memos," Justice Department lawyers argued that medical monitoring would demonstrate that interrogators didn't intend to harm detainees; that "lack of intent to cause harm" could then serve as the cornerstone of a legal defense should an interrogator be targeted for prosecution.

... It's possible, of course, that the data about detainees' "susceptibility to pain" was collected as part of standard medical monitoring of interrogations. But PHR says that doesn't matter: it's clear that "the collection of medical information was acquired and applied to inform subsequent [interrogation] practices," which amounts to illicit human subject research.

PHR claims that in addition to the data on simultaneous and sequential application of interrogation techniques, the experimentation program focused on two other areas of research: the safety and effectiveness of waterboarding and the effects of sleep deprivation. In each case, PHR points to declassified documents in which Bush administration officials acknowledge how medical information gathered during interrogations is being aggregated and used to inform future questioning.

Unfortunately this isn't the first time the United States has done medical experimentation that was probably illegal. Most people might immediately think of the Tuskegee syphilis experiment, but there have been many many others. Just under the aegis of the government we had Project Chatter, Project Bluebird/Artichoke, MKULTRA program, Project QKHILLTOP, MKULTRA Subproject 68, etc. Some of the results of these projects are now being used at Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib.

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Luby's at Ingram Park Mall

Reminder: Northwest Democrats will be meeting at a new Luby's. The reason for the change once again is because the Luby's at Bandera & 1604 was charging us \$6 per person as well as requiring us to pay minimum fee for a certain number of people even if we are below that number. Staying at the 1604 & Bandera location would have required us to raise our price for breakfast. We will be meeting at the Luby's at Ingram Park Mall (6301 NW Loop 410, #123).

Using the 410/I-10 intersection as your starting point, take 410 West. Take the Ingram Rd. Exit. Go to the light and make a right turn. At the next light make another right turn (this will take you into the parking lot). Turn right again, and then make a left. Luby's is right next to Sears. There is a sign for Luby's and an entrance right next to it.