



GERMANTOWN DEMOCRATIC CLUB

GERMANTOWN, BARTLETT, CORDOVA, COLLIERVILLE, EAST MEMPHIS
LAKELAND, BOLTON, ROSEMARK, MILLINGTON AND UNINCORPORATED AREAS

WWW.gdctn.org

August, 2015

President Dick Klenz
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Vice Presidents

Dave Cambron & Judy
Palmer

Treasurer-Susan Simmons

Website-Becki Barnhardt

E-Mail- Jeanette Warren
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Newsletter- Diane Cambron

2015 Voting Reminders:

September 17th Arlington & Lakeland Municipal

Sept. 18th – Oct. 3rd Memphis Municipal Early Voting

October 8th Memphis Municipal

October 14th-29th – Memphis Run-Off Early Voting

November 5th Memphis Municipal Run-Off

ANNUAL PICNIC

Saturday, Sept 12

4-7 pm

Cameron Brown Park

Farmington West of Wolf River Blvd, Germantown

All are welcome to join us for our annual All-American picnic. Please bring your lawn chairs, bug spray and your appetites. We will be serving the usual fare – hot dogs (yes, some will be veggie dogs), baked beans, cole slaw, soft drinks and desserts. Back by popular demand will be Bill Gillon, to provide guitar music for our listening pleasure. Candidates welcome. For more information, call Diane Cambron at 624-2504.

Wednesday, October 28

6:00 PM

Coletta's Restaurant 2850 Appling Road

TO BE ANNOUNCED

Wednesday, November 18

6:00 PM

Coletta's Restaurant 2850 Appling Road

TO BE ANNOUNCED

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Our biannual election of officers will occur this fall. All 2015 dues paying members are eligible to participate or serve. At this time we are requesting nominations for President, Vice President(s), Treasurer, and Secretary. You may nominate yourself. Please email nominations to Jeanette Warren at robnet@aol.com. The subject line should read "NOMINATION". The deadline for nominations is Thursday, October 1. The nominees will be at the October meeting. Ballots will be mailed out in early October, and will be due to be returned by November 15. The new officers will be announced at the November meeting. If you are not sure whether you are a current dues paying member, please call Dick Klenz at 756-4165.

The Thin Blue Line

Those who were lucky enough to attend our June and July meetings were treated to talks by two Democratic members of our state legislature, State Senator Lee Harris (Dist. 29) and Representative Raumesh Akbari (Dist. 91). These two are members of a very small but hard working group of Democrats in the legislature, five in the Senate and twenty-six in the House, who form what has been dubbed “the thin blue line”. Despite their minority status, both were able to report some successes during the 2015 legislative session, although some of those successes were merely keeping the Republicans from succumbing to their own excesses. Senator Harris, for example, talked about the many gun proposals, and told how Democrats fought to kill or delay bills permitting guns at school extracurricular events, or guns in cars parked on school campuses. Representative Akbari touted her success in passing a law allowing some struggling schools to avoid the ASD, provided they achieve a TVAAS score of 4+, and another law that gives companies incentives if they hire at least 10 living wage full time workers. One of these bills was passed on the last day the house was in session, at a time when most lawmakers’ attentions were focused on other more pressing matters (those who attended the meeting know that this statement is made with tongue planted firmly in cheek). Both Harris and Akbari made it clear that our Shelby County legislative members have worked hard to champion the rights of the elderly, the sick and disabled, those living in poverty, and the LGBT community. All Tennesseans should be grateful for the Thin Blue Line.

Recommended Reading: *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*, by Diane Ravitch

In 1988, when the Charter School concept first arose, Albert Shanker, President of the American Federation of Teachers, suggested that small groups of teachers could pursue innovative ways of educating disaffected students. He made it clear that these groups would be experimental, and that they would be tasked with developing innovative teaching methods and curricula, and expected to produce findings that would help other schools.

Recently, in a guest column in the Commercial Appeal, Nina Rees, President and CEO of the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, touted the gains made in Math and Science tests by

students at Charter Schools under the State of Tennessee’s Achievement School District. The reason for these gains, she claimed, is that Charters discard procedures that do not work and try new things until they find something that does work. The question that all of us must ask is why aren’t these ideas shared with other public schools? Why aren’t other public schools given the same freedom to experiment that Charter Schools seem to have?

Today no one seems concerned with sharing new methods. It seems it is more important to show how one type of school system works better than another, rather than to improve all schools. Diane Ravitch’s book, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*, is an excellent resource that explains how we got where we are today.

Call to Action

Just because the legislature is not in session does not mean that Republicans in Nashville are not seeking to further their agenda of privatization, and further enrichment of the 1%. Case in point: Governor Haslam’s recent proposal to eliminate the jobs of state workers and outsource them to out-of-state companies who would look to staff these jobs with low wage/no benefit employees. Please write your representatives, send letters to the editor, and alert your friends about this continual gutting of the middle class. By the way, how are those private prisons working out for us?

Insure Tennessee

Is Insure Tennessee dead? Not if the Tennessee Justice Center has anything to do about it. This summer the Nashville law firm specializing in public healthcare advocacy has gone on the road to talk to citizens and to get stories from some of the estimated 280,000 Tennesseans living “in the gap” – too poor to be eligible for health insurance subsidies under the Affordable Care Act, yet not eligible for TennCare. Our state’s failure to accept the Medicaid expansion is costing all of us in several ways: 1) we are losing out on federal tax dollars we pay into the Medicaid program; 2) we have already had 4 hospitals close in Tennessee, and many more are threatened, thereby limiting healthcare options for all, as well as jobs; 3) when hospitals cannot cover the costs of emergency care for the uninsured out of their budgets, they increase the costs to insurance companies, who in turn increase costs of premiums. CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS! Visit www.tnjustice.org.