



GREATER HOUSTON PACHYDERM CLUB

NEWSLETTER

AFFILIATED WITH THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

PACHYDERM LUNCHEONS EVERY TUESDAY

Double Tree Guest Suites
5353 Westheimer (two blocks west of the Galleria)
Noon-1:15 p.m. \$14.00 per person
No Reservations Required Visitors Welcome
PARKING \$1.00

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PROGRAMS FOR MARCH 2005

Tuesday, March 1, 2005

**Speaker: J.P. Bryan, Texas Historian and CEO,
Torch Energy Advisors**



**TEXAS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION**
The State Agency for Historic Preservation

J.D. Bryan will speak in recognition of Texas Independence Day, March 2. Mr. Bryan will speak on the rich history and its preservation, and the Texas Historical Commission.

Tuesday, March 8, 2005

**Speaker: Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs, M.D.
At Large City Council Member, Position 3**



SAFEClear Towing and Smoking in Public Places are two issues which Houston City Council are discussing. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs will give us details which are to be considered.

Tuesday, March 15, 2005

**Speaker: Andy Hardwick, Public Affairs Specialist
Social Security Administration**



Social Security is a contemporary subject in the news. Mr. Hardwick will give us the message of Social Security as it pertains to our citizens in our communities in the greater Houston area.

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Tuesday, March 22, 2005

Speaker: Andrew Biar, President, Strategic Public Affairs, Inc.
(www.StrategicPublicAffairs.com)



Andrew Biar specializes in generating grassroots and public affairs action on legislative issues in every state with every member of our United States

Tuesday, March 29, 2005

Speaker: Mark Cole, Executive Director
CALA - Citizens Against Lawsuit Abuse



Lawsuit abuse affects every citizen and business in our country. Mark Cole will speak on the extent in which this abuse creates major problems, including the recent continuance of asbestos lawsuit abuse.

For more information regarding our programs or speakers, please email
Verdene Ryder at verdene@earthlink.net or call (713) 686-4336

Our Web Site: www.greaterhpc.org

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LEADERS of the PACH

This week's guest columnist is At Large City Council Member, Position 3

Shelley Sekula-Gibbs, M.D.

The new year has brought new challenges for our city, starting New Year's Day when our freeways underwent a dramatic transformation with the inception of the Safe Clear mandatory towing program. My office has been flooded with e-mails and calls from citizens speaking out against Safe Clear. I called for the repeal of the program at a recent Houston City Council meeting, but instead, the Safe Clear program will remain with the addition of "free tows" for short distances. I will continue to closely monitor this program that treats everyone fairly and does not put an undue burden on taxpayers.

Listed below are some exciting accomplishments reached during my time on city council:

- To keep more money in homeowners' pockets reached during my time on city council;
- To strengthen neighborhoods' efforts to prevent flooding, I authored and passed an amendment to the water/sewer bond refinancing that dedicated all water/sewer user fees to water, sewer and drainage projects.
- Early and preventive medical treatment reduces the need for expensive emergency room visits and prolonged hospitalizations—saving local taxpayer dollars. I have worked to bring more Federally Qualified Health Centers to the Houston area. The community clinics, supported by President Bush, provide health care to low-income and uninsured patients on a sliding scale basis.
- Homeland security is a priority in Houston, and that's why I have worked hand in hand with the Ellington Field Task Force to keep the 147th Fighter Wing of the Texas Air National Guard at Ellington field. The Fighter Wing plays an essential role in homeland

security for Houston and the Gulf Coast region. Plans are underway to transfer up to 2,300 Army, Navy and Marine reserve troops from Old Spanish Trail to Ellington Field, a move that will increase Ellington Field's chances of becoming a Joint Reserve Base.

- Bayport petrochemical shippers now have better transportation choices due to an agreement between Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Union Pacific to share track along Highway 146. This eliminated the San Jacinto Rail project that would have routed toxic chemicals through the East End, South Houston and Clear Lake. We are currently working on a long-term project to enhance freight rail transportation from Bayport through Houston via a Super Corridor.

It has been my honor to serve as your Council Member. Together we can make a difference in our great city. If you ever need assistance, feel free to contact my office at 713-247-2005 or e-mail me at atlarge3@cityofhouston.net

LITTLE KNOWN TEXAS FACTS

1. Beaumont to El Paso: 742 miles
Beaumont to Chicago: 770 miles
El Paso is closer to California than to Dallas
2. World's first rodeo was in Pecos... July 4, 1883.
3. The Flagship Hotel in Galveston is the only hotel in North America built over water.
4. The Heisman Trophy was named after John William Heisman who was the first full time coach for Rice University in Houston.

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5. Brazoria County has more species of birds than any other area in North America.
6. Aransas Wildlife Refuge is the winter home of North America's only remaining flock of whooping cranes.
7. The first word spoken from the moon, July 20, 1969, was "Houston."
8. King Ranch is larger than Rhode Island.
9. Texas is the only state to enter the U.S. by TREATY, instead of by annexation. (This allows the Texas flag to fly at the same height as the U.S. flag.)
10. Dr Pepper was invented in Waco in 1885. There is no period after Dr in Dr Pepper.
11. Texas has had six capital cities:
 1. Washington-on-the-Brazos
 2. Harrisburg
 3. Galveston
 4. Velasco
 5. West Columbia
 6. Austin
12. The name Texas comes from the Hasini Indian word "tejas" meaning friends. Tejas is not Spanish for Texas.
13. The State animal is the Armadillo. (An interesting bit of trivia about the armadillo is they always have four babies! They have one egg which splits into four and they either have four males or four females.

AMERICA'S ONE-PARTY STATE:

If you loathe political debate, join the faculty of an American university

(Reprinted with permission and editing from *The Economist* edition of December 2, 2004)

Tom Wolfe's new novel about a young student, "I am Charlotte Simmons," is a depressing read for any parent. Four years at an Ivy League university costs as much as a house in parts of the heartland — about \$120,000 for tuition alone. But what do you get for your money? A ticket to "Animal House."

In Mr. Wolfe's fictional university, the pleasures of the body take absolute precedence over the life of the mind. Students "hook up" (i.e., sleep around) with indiscriminate zeal. The university administration is utterly indifferent to anything except the dogmas of political correctness (men and women are forced to share the same bathrooms in the name of gender equality). The Bacchanalia takes place to the soundtrack of hate-fueled gangsta rap.

Mr. Wolfe clearly exaggerates for effect (that's kinda, like, what satirists do, as one of his students might have explained). But on one subject he is guilty of understatement: diversity. He fires off a few predictable arrows at "diversoids"— students who are chosen on the basis of their race or gender. But he fails to expose the full absurdity of the diversity industry.

Academia is simultaneously both the part of America that is most obsessed with diversity, and the least diverse part of the country. On the one hand, colleges bend over backwards to hire minority professors and recruit minority students, aided by an ever-burgeoning bureaucracy of "diversity officers." Yet, when it comes to politics, they are not just indifferent to diversity, but downright allergic to it.

Evidence of the atypical uniformity of American universities grows by the week. The Centre for Responsive Politics notes that this year two universities — the University of California and Harvard — occupied first and second place in the list of donations to the Kerry campaign by employee groups, ahead of Time Warner, Goldman Sachs, Microsoft *et al.* Employees at both universities gave 19 times as much to John Kerry as to George Bush. Meanwhile, a new national survey of more than 1,000 academics by Daniel Klein, of Santa Clara University, shows that Democrats outnumber Republicans by at least seven to one in the humanities and social sciences. And things are likely to get less balanced, because younger professors are more liberal. For instance, at Berkeley and Stanford, where Democrats overall outnumber Republicans by a mere nine to one, the ratio rises above 30 to 1

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among assistant and associate professors.

The current situation makes a mockery of the very legal opinion that underpins the university fad. In 1978, Justice Lewis Powell argued that diversity is vital to a university's educational mission, to promote the atmosphere of "speculation, experiment and creation" that is essential to their identities. The more diverse the body, the more robust the exchange of ideas. Why apply that argument so rigorously to, say, sexual orientation, where you have campus groups that proudly call themselves GLBTQ (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and questioning), but ignore it when it comes to political beliefs?

This is profoundly unhealthy. Debating chambers are becoming echo chambers. Students hear only one side of the story on everything from abortion (good) to the rise of the West (bad). It is notable that the surveys show far more conservatives in the more rigorous disciplines such as economics than in the vaguer 1960s "ologies." Yet, as George Will pointed out in the *Washington Post*, this monotheism is also limiting universities' ability to influence the wider intellectual culture.

Bias in universities is hard to correct because it is usually not overt: it has to do with prejudice about which topics are worth studying and what values are worth holding. Stephen Balch, the president of the conservative National Association of Scholars, argues that university faculties suffer from the same political problems as the "small republics" described in Federalist 10: a motivated majority within the faculty finds it easy to menopause decision-making and squeeze out minorities.

Ivy-clad propaganda

The question is what to do about it. The most radical solution comes from David Horowitz, a conservative *provocateur*: force universities to endorse an Academic Bill of Rights, guaranteeing conservatives a fairer deal. Bills modeled on this idea are working their way through Republican state legislatures, most notably Colorado's. But even some conservatives are nervous about politicians interfering in self-governing institutions.

Mr. Balch prefers an appropriately Madisonian solution to his Madisonian problem: a voluntary

system of checks and balances to preserve the influence of minorities and promote intellectual competition. This might include a system of proportional voting that would give dissenters on a faculty more power, or the establishment of special programs to promote views that are under represented by the faculties.

The likelihood of much changing in universities in the near future is slim. The Republican business elite doesn't care much about silly academic fads in the humanities so long as American universities remain on the cutting edge of science and technology. As for the university establishment, leftists are hardly likely to relinquish their grip on one of the few bits of America where they remain in the ascendant. And that is a tragedy not just for America's universities but also for liberal thought.

(Editors' note: Maybe we, as Republicans, should contact our state legislators about an "Academic Bill of Rights" for Texas schools.)

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