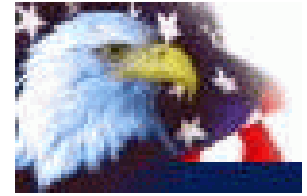




GREATER HOUSTON
**PACHYDERM
CLUB**



NEWSLETTER

AFFILIATED WITH THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

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**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

PROGRAMS FOR APRIL 2005

Tuesday, April 5, 2005

Speaker: **Susan Foutch, Executive Director and Sarita A. Hixson,**
Chairman, of the San Jacinto Museum of History
www.sanjacinto-museum.org



In recognition of the anniversary of the Battle of San Jacinto on April 21, 1836, Ms. Foutch and Ms. Hixson will discuss some of the events of the Battle and will relate much of the significance of this important event in the history of our great State of Texas. The museum is operated by the San Jacinto Museum of History Association - a nonprofit organization associated with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission.

Tuesday, April 12, 2005

Speaker: **Ron Stone, President of Stonefilms of Texas, Inc.**
www.stonefilms.com

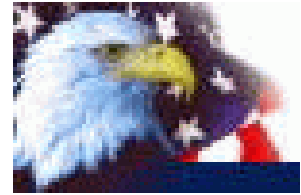


Having spent over 30 years broadcasting the news on TV stations KHOU and KPRC, Ron Stone is a household name in Houston. The Houston Chronicle once called him the most popular and revered news anchor the city has ever known. After an award-winning career, Stone founded the company that bears his name and has since earned new awards and accolades as Stonefilms has become a preferred choice for quality commercial production - from business profiles to documentaries to instructional videos.

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Tuesday, April 19, 2005

Speaker: Dr. Bobby Eberle, President and CEO of GOPUSA
www.gopusa.com



The mission of GOPUSA is to spread the conservative message throughout America through the distribution of conservative news, information and commentary via the internet. Since 2000, Eberle has built GOPUSA from an unknown political start-up to one of the top conservative destinations on the Web - now reaching over 500,000 subscribers every weekday. In addition to his duties at GOPUSA, Eberle also works as an aerospace engineer in Houston.

Tuesday, April 26, 2005

Program: Panel Discussion on Social Security



On a national level, Social Security reform is a hot topic of discussion among most citizens of our country www.ssa.gov/ga.htm. Our panel will include Robert Lampkin, AARP Associate State Director, HYR President Jessica Colon and U.S. Congressman Kevin Brady, who sits on the House Ways and Means subcommittee on Social Security. They will discuss the current state of these reform efforts and how they could ultimately affect us and future generations.



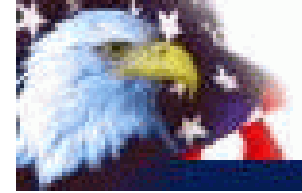
For more information regarding our programs or speakers, please email
Verdene Ryder at verdene@earthlink.net or call (713) 686-4336

Our Web Site: www.greaterhpc.org

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LEADERS of the PACH



(Since the “leader” who was to write this month did not meet deadline, your editor draws the black bean.)

– Bob Shults
McFall, Sherwood & Breitbeil, P.C.

When I was a prosecutor, I would sometimes argue to the jury that the explosion in crime we see today is the result of the loss of “Faith and the family farm...” While this was almost humorous, I believe it still to be true. I came from one of those vanishing farm families – specifically from its first branch to move to the city. But I always envied my uncles and cousins and such who stayed on those West Texas and Southern Oklahoma farms.

With this in mind, I want to recommend a book to you and give you a taste of that book that I think applies to this column and to our purpose as a Republican organization. The following is an excerpt from Fields Without Dreams by Victor Davis Hanson. Mr. Hanson farms the land his family settled in the 1870’s near Alma, California. Previously, he was the head of the classics department at Cal. State – Fresno, a professor of Greek and Latin, a writer and expert on ancient Greek and Roman agrarian life and a teacher at both Stanford and the United States Naval Academy. In this book, he tells of the impact of farmers on American life through the lens of his family’s history.

People to the farmer’s eye...are good or no good, lazy or industrious, kind or cruel. Period. Their tasks are either incomplete or accomplished. Men – all men, regardless of race, age, or environment – either kill or do not slay, steal or do not loot. To the farmer – who either produces or fails to produce food, who either masters nature or is mastered by it – much of what passes in political America – Democratic and Republican alike – as legitimate, as just and moral, is found wanting. I offer this alternative view of our culture because I worry that when the agrarian

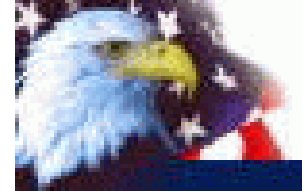
yardstick has vanished completely, there will be no bridge on the present absurdity of random violence, growing illiteracy, and spiritual desolation, no one left to tell us how silly it is all becoming... The agrarian.... becomes most acutely mystified over human behavior that now seems to have no purpose...His political views – nearly exclusively Republican – are incidental to his conservatism. He expresses more a knee-jerk and blanket distaste for fashion, affluence and leisure – the current cradle of criminality for the urban rich and poor alike. In other words, his own world is an island of absolutes in a sea of relativism.

If you have a chance to read this book, you should. As they used to say in the Texas Legislature when I worked there and a bill was passed that had popular support, “Bubba likes it!” As good a yardstick as any. Even for those of us who do not desire to share Bubba’s lifestyle, there is much to learn from those who still live close to the land. Faith and industry are not remote or academic to them. There is too much in their lives that is immediate and beyond their control. There is less time for contracts or legal niceties. Their word is their bond and to break it is a moral, not just a legal matter. All farmers are not moral any more than all doctors, lawyers or politicians. But there is a dignity that comes from a belief in something that is unconnected to money, status or power. Maybe it’s the dependence on nature and the faith that dependence seems to bring – and the pride. My grandmother called it “nobility” - the quiet nobility of the humble perhaps. As Hanson puts it, “As the notion passes that such people were the foundry of the country – its values, its militia, it’s very resilience – it is not altogether clear where, or if, they are to be replaced and what is to be left in their wake.”

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Army Contracts (from *The Hill*)

The U.S. Army defended the unorthodox contractual arrangement it has with Boeing on the \$120 billion Future Combat Systems (FCS) program. The “other transaction agreement” was put into place to give the service and industry greater flexibility to manage the program, Army officials said during a Senate Armed Services Airland Subcommittee hearing this week. It also allows the Army to “attract the best and the brightest of our nation's industry and their subcontractors,” Army Procurement Chief Claude Bolton said during the hearing.

But Arizona Republican Sen. John McCain, the chairman of the Airland panel, gave no indication that he plans to stop his investigation into FCS and the other transaction agreement. However, he requested that the independent Institute for Defense Analyses review the country's procurement laws to determine whether current statutes are effective at handling large defense programs.

In Line with Our Concern for Lawsuit Abuse...

Insurance

A lawyer and an engineer were fishing in the Caribbean. The lawyer said, “I'm here because my house burned down, and all I owned was destroyed by the fire. The insurance company paid for everything and I'm using some of the insurance money for this trip.”

“That's quite a coincidence,” said the engineer. “I'm here because my house and all my belongings were destroyed by a flood, and my insurance company also paid for everything.”

The lawyer looked somewhat confused. “How do you start a flood?” he asked.

Bribing the Judge

Taking his seat in his chambers, the Judge faced the opposing lawyers. “So,” he said, “I have been presented, by both of you, with a bribe.”

Both lawyers squirmed uncomfortably.

“You, attorney Leon, gave me \$15,000. And you, attorney Campos, gave me \$10,000.” The judge reached into his pocket and pulled out a check. He handed it to Leon.

“Now then, I'm returning \$5,000, and we're going to decide this case solely on its merits.”

Why Chávez seeks a clash with the U.S.

It's obvious that Hugo Chávez, the leader of Venezuela, is looking for a confrontation with the United States. He constantly insults President Bush, makes vulgar sexual allusions about Condoleezza Rice, threatens to suspend the supply of crude oil to the United States and wastes not a single chance to associate with the enemies of Washington, be they Iran or Moammar Gadhafi.

At the same time, Chávez funds and helps all subversive movements in Latin America, from Evo Morales' MAS, which is sniping at Bolivia's precarious democracy, to Colombia's communist narco-guerillas.

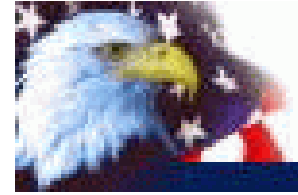
Why the irresponsible behavior? It's obvious: Chávez needs a powerful enemy abroad to galvanize his own forces. The *chavista* leadership—a gaggle of geese—is an ill-conceived mishmash of communists, military men lacking in prestige, hot-headed radicals, Cold War zombies like Vice President José Vicente Rangel, and flunkies from the new and official economic class that feeds from the million-dollar oil revenues.

These folks have no ideological spine, no discipline. Neither do their supporters, who are attracted to the polls only through the coarsest populism, for the price of a few alms. They are not militants but clients. They are grateful stomachs.

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MEETING LOCATION

Besides, Chávez needs to project his image abroad, and he believes that he must prepare himself to take up the role of David vs. Goliath—splendidly performed by Fidel Castro during half a century of Caribbean tragedy—as soon as *el comandante* chooses to die and pass him the torch of anti-imperialism in the midst of a lively wake.

The problem is that this type of societal organization has failed always, everywhere and under every circumstance. It failed in Russia and Germany, North Korea and Nicaragua, Mongolia, Yugoslavia and in every historic, geographic, cultural, ethnic or political micro environment where it was planted. It flopped among Slavic, Germanic, Scandinavian, Latin, Turkmenian and Asian people.

Most Venezuelans, with the exception of the top leadership, share this analysis. According to the most reliable surveys, only six percent of them admire Cuba as a valid reference model and 85 percent oppose a reproduction of the Cuban model in Venezuela.

However, the path that Chávez has found to skirt that little obstacle is the path of confrontation with the United States. He assumes that a crisis against Washington, implying the risk (real or invented) of a U.S. Marine landing, will serve as an excuse to brand as traitors to the homeland all those who refuse to defend the revolution.

It is true that Chávez struts through the world carrying a bulging checkbook that he manages mindlessly, but is it worth the trouble, or is it morally justifiable, to access that dangerous dynamic by selling him weapons and warships, or to join him in his chimerical plans to create great, multinational, public enterprises into which he'll sink billions of much-needed dollars?

These are questions that require swift answers. The crisis worsens.



The Greater Houston Pachyderm Club meets every Tuesday from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. at the DoubleTree Guest Suites - 5353 Westheimer near Yorktown (two blocks west of the Galleria next door to The Capital Grill) in the Milano Suite on the 2nd floor.

Please park in the garage directly behind the hotel. **Parking is only \$1.00 with lunch!**

And...visitors are definitely welcome! The optional Double Tree Guest Suites buffet lunch costs only \$14 per person...no reservations are required. Once you have arrived on the 2nd floor, please sign in and you will be directed to the restaurant which is adjacent to our meeting room. Then, simply bring your meal back to the room so we can all dine together during our program.

Greater Houston Pachyderm Club

P. O. Box 22531

Houston, Texas 77227

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

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