

Utah County Democrats

The monthly newsletter of the Utah County Democratic Party

January 2008

Upcoming Events

February 5 (Tuesday)

Utah Presidential Primary Election. For voter information and polling locations, see the Utah State Election website at <http://elections.utah.gov>.

February 7 (Thursday)

Research Committee Meeting at 7pm at the home of Paul Thomas: 484 East 2100 North, Provo. Phone: (801) 375-6359.

March 25 (Tuesday)

Precinct Caucus Meetings. Locations and times yet to be determined, but mark it on your calendar now!

Each Thursday

BYU Democrats meet every Thursday night at 7:30pm in 240 SWKT. The public is invited. For more information go to <http://byudemocrats.org>.

Please send information about upcoming events to newsletter@utahcountydems.com.

Message From the Chair

Richard Davis



The announcements are beginning. On January 8, Steve Baugh announced he was running for the state legislature in District 58—as a Democrat. One week later, Gwyn Franson did the same in District 27. And there are more to come.

We are delighted to see these candidates (and the ones who will be announcing shortly) step forward to serve—not just as candidates but as state legislators dedicated to making better public policy.

But it isn't enough for them to step forward. All of us need to do so as well. The party

needs volunteers. We need you to contact us and give us your time and talents and money. Even if you can't give much, even a little bit will help.

Please write to Hinckley Jones-Sanpei, our secretary, at hinckley@utahcountydems.com and offer to help. We will get back with you right away and hook you up with a committee or legislative district or a candidate where you can be of the most service.

I was hopeful that the county party would have a new constitution by this time. The Rules Committee spent quite a bit of time rewriting the constitution of the county party over the past few months. But the new constitution needed a 2/3 vote of the Central Committee. It received slightly less than 2/3 and therefore was rejected. I was disappointed. The county party desperately

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High-Profile Candidates Running as Democrats

This month, former superintendent of Alpine School District Steven Baugh and former Highland City Councilwoman Gwyn Franson announced their intentions to run as Democrats for State Legislature.



Steven Baugh

Baugh will be running for the District 58 seat. In his announcement speech on January 8, Baugh cited the recent voucher issue as one of the reasons motivating him to run. "It's time we had state legislators who were as good for public education as the teachers in the classroom," he said.



Gwyn Franson

Prior to serving for 12 years as school district superintendent, Baugh was principal of American Fork High School and Pleasant Grove High School. He also worked for 10 years as a math teacher at Orem High School. In 1998 He was

recognized as a David O. McKay School of Education Honored Alumnus and awarded Utah Superintendent of the Year. In 2000 he

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Message From the Chair (continued)

needs a new constitution and the draft prepared by the Rules Committee was a vast improvement over the existing constitution. Hopefully we can have a new constitution before too long.

Through the efforts of many people in the party, we're making progress in shaking up politics in Utah County. Now we need to work hard to elect our legislative candidates so they can shake up policy in behalf of all of Utah's citizens.

High-Profile Candidates (continued)



was inducted into the Utah Educators Hall of Fame.

He is currently an associate

professor at BYU, where he directs a school-university partnership. He and his wife Cathy have eight children and have lived in Orem for 35 years.

Gwyn Franson announced her candidacy for the District 27 seat at the American Fork library on January 15.

"I will run as a Democrat because I believe the Democrats are now the moderate, mainstream party in Utah County," she said.



Franson has lived in Highland for 27 years. She served on the Highland City Council for eight years and is married to Jay Franson, mayor of Highland. She is currently a fifth-grade teacher at Highland Elementary School.

Both candidates' announcements were greeted enthusiastically and have made waves in the press. Joe Pyrah, writing for the Daily Herald, noted that "Just three weeks into the new year, two relatively high-profile candidates have emerged as opposition to their GOP counterparts" and wondered if 2008 will be "Utah's year of the Democrat." In the Salt Lake Tribune, Paul Rolly wrote, "Believe it or not, there is evidence of a political sea change brewing in Utah County politics."

Press coverage of the candidates' campaigns can be found at <http://utahcountymocrats.com>.

Legislature must address real school issues

*Steven Baugh
Local Opinion
Daily Herald, January 24, 2008*

Our state legislature is back in session, and, once again, legislators have the opportunity to address important educational issues facing the state. Unfortunately for us, they've too often failed to resolve key problems in the past. They spend too much time on resolutions and not near enough on substantive policy decisions, which is why the real issues keep coming up.

And what should their education priorities be this year? Spending for public education is at the top of the list. Last year's voucher vote showed that Utahns are deeply committed to excellent public education for all. We want the state to fully fund public education without diverting that support to private schools that serve only a small number of our children.

But some of our legislators still don't get it. Now they want to push tuition tax credits, another form of vouchers, for those who leave public schools. They're still more interested in the state's few private schools than they are in our public school system.

While our legislators concentrate on helping the very few, Utah class sizes remain among the highest in the country. The educational benefits of smaller class sizes are well established, so even though our teachers perform admirably with the limited resources our legislators provide, we must do better. Our schools need money to reduce class sizes, and they need a long-term plan to gradually catch up to the national average.

Another major education priority should be the recruitment and retention of public school teachers. A shortfall of 44,000 teachers is projected for the next six years. Meeting this shortfall is near impossible with the state's low teacher salaries relative to surrounding states. Many of those who graduate from Utah universities with teaching certificates take teaching jobs outside of Utah because of this salary discrepancy. It is time for the legislature to make teacher salaries a high priority and

close the competitive gap with our neighboring states.

The problem of recruiting enough teachers is especially difficult in fields such as mathematics, science, and special education, where college graduates can find private-sector jobs at much higher salaries than our schools pay. But all teachers need to be rewarded with salaries that will attract them to teach in Utah's schools.

Still another problem is funding for higher education. Year after year, higher education faces a shortfall between what the state provides and the actual costs of educating students. Many legislators accuse the higher-education community of whining. These same legislators point to a few higher-education salaries and accuse all higher-education faculty of being overpaid, even though the reality is that Utah's college professors are paid below the national average.

But the real issue is whether our state can afford not to invest in the future. Increased costs for education leave behind many young people (our children!) who want to attend college but can't afford to. These potential students would have been our future doctors, engineers, teachers and accountants, but they won't be able to because higher education is too pricey. The social costs of not educating our young people are far greater than the funding needed for higher education.

These are the highest-priority education issues this year. It is time to put aside the message resolutions and get to work on the issues that affect us. It's what we elected our legislators to do in the first place. Utahns are watching.

Steven Baugh, a former superintendent of the Alpine School District, is a candidate for the Utah State House of Representatives in District 58.

Steven has been serving as chair of the Utah County Democrats' Education Outreach Committee. As chair, he formed a bipartisan group to oppose vouchers and succeeded in defeating the voucher referendum in Utah County.

COUNTY-PLATFORM CORNER

SENIORS AND SOCIAL SECURITY

As Utah County Democrats we honor our seniors for their contributions to our community and our quality of life. We believe in assisting them to live with dignity and self-reliance.

We support the Social Security system and call for its protection and preservation. We oppose privatization that would convert this essential benefit for millions of Americans into a program of investment schemes for the profit of a small segment of the private sector. We are open to any and all ideas that ensure

that the current and future generations of retirees receive the benefits they were promised without adding trillions to our national debt.

We also recognize that Americans rely on more than just Social Security for their retirement. We therefore call for genuine reform that protects working families from future Enron-style abuse, and for the development of new ways to help hard-working Americans save for retirement.

To read the entire platform of the Utah County Democratic Party, please visit our website at <http://utahcountydems.com>.

New Committee Chairs

The following individuals were recently appointed to serve as committee chairs:

Kevin Sutterfield
Fundraising Committee

Sara Jensen
Events Committee

Paul Thomas
Research Committee

We thank them sincerely for contributing their time and talents.



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**Richard Davis — Chair
Larry Brown — Vice Chair
Hinckley Jones-Sanpei — Secretary
Kristin Gerdy — Treasurer**

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