A new, growing breed of citizens

More groups watch Brazos politics

By SUZANNE BLACK Special to The Battalion A growing breed of sturdy rain or hine citizens is watching local politics nowadays. They're a minority in the multitude of fair-weather observers, but they're changing the com-plexion of the political scene.

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Usually, relatively few people or anizations seem to keep up with local government. Bryan Mayor Richard Smith said st citizens are pretty naive about

the local political situation. Organized interest groups, with regular membership and meetings, 'aren't that significant," said Colge Station Mayor Lorence enec. Brazos County Judge Bill nce commented, "every year re's a different issue and a differ-

And as far as political clout in azos County goes, Bryan layor Richard Smith said, there's no group that can deer votes.

to by Liz Buile And as far as political clout, Smith d, "there's no group that can de-

The show, Children's Some of that is changing, though. here are signs of growing commu-ity awareness and involvement in al government

For example, the past May priry drew more private campaign tributions from Brazos County idents thatn the two previous naries combined. According to campaign contribu-

onal Park a fons and expense reports at the Brazos Coutny clerk's office, the andidates in the last May primary percent, the that Presiden in the Sente 92 percent ed positionsu received money donations of at least \$78,569.

Only the primaries in 1974 and 1976 can be validly used for com-parison because the requirements between the second seco were all Den el Humphre John Culve Mont., an

Roomplete. However, in individual races, the Mass., 96 pc However, in individual races, the ra, and Pam ignes show contributions doubling the factor of the next. For loseph Bide in Prome oner candidates totaled \$1,830 and 8,586, respectively. That's almost a 7,000 difference.

bunty attorney candidates also es went to es went b tracted a lot of money. Records of iens. Dew he 1976 and 1978 primaries involv-John Tow ag that position show \$4,508 and Villiam Some \$9,360 were contributed. Curtis, Ne That's a 100 percent jump. ah, 7 perce Although some of the dollars iz., 8 perce ame from other areas, most of the per Thurnes and provided from pockets in acted a lot of money. Records of

om Thurner sney originated from pockets in g, N.D., Jazos County. What's inspiring wa, Calif, mese generous residents? Besides percent ersonal friendship with a particular middate or official, many people remaking political contact through membership in various organi-

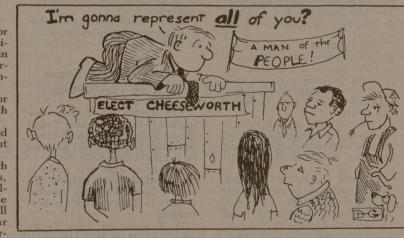
> The Bryan-College Station forum. wees often extend equal offers to posing political candidates to eak to the group. We like to keep well informed

although we stay as neutral as ssible as an organization," said enny Mallard, president of the

Roepke, president of the ing Lions Club, said that the b invites candidates to address members and that there is good nbership turnout for such

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Sip into something



t group. No one group domi-Newton Ellis, president of the Noon Lions Club, said, "in my ten years as a member, the club has never been addressed by a candidate strictly for campaign purposes. But we do normally invite the local state representative and senator to peak, usually to vive a wrap-up at the end of a legislative session.

11 representatives contacted, most agreed that their fellow members take the opportunity of meeting together to informally discuss their political opinions.

The president of the League of Women Voters, Penny Beaumont, said she more organizations will begin taking on political objectives, and getting involved in politics publicly

What's inspiring these generous residents in the county? Besides personal friendship with a particular candidate or official, many people are making political contact through their membership in various organizations.

The League of Women Voters never actually supports candidates, though it may support issues.

'We have a national reputation, so we're not as free to move," said Beaumont. "The league basically works for informed citizen participation. That's what the league is ab-

out," she said. To fulfill that job, the league provide a voter service, which is also coordinated with the league's various study and action groups.

Two young organizations with similar purposes are the Brazos Val-ley Black Caucus and the Brazos County Mexican American Democrats. Although they are more out-wardly active, their leaders say that communication of information is their primary function.

The caucus is almost two years old. Before the last primary, it hosted local, state and national office seekers in its first candidate's

'We don't endorse candidates. Whenever we extend an invitation, e extend it to everyone," said Rosetta Keaton, president of the Brazos Valley Black Caucus.

Support for candidates isn't talked about within the realm of the eees. "We do stay abreast of cur-events." caucus meetings, but politicking is conducted on an individual basis.

going process, rather than being reactionary, as in the past. There's more follow through. It's very important that there's a continuity throughout the year.

"Support for candidates isn't talked about within the realm of the caucus meetings, but poli-Typically, service organizations don't officially endorse or contribute to political candidates. However, of Keaton, president of the Brazos Valley Black Caucus. "United support would be difficult because the minority communities aren't homogenous."

That kind of continuous involvement will definitely be promoted by the Brazos County Mexican Ameri-can Democrats (MAD). Right now the local chapter is planning a series of seminars called "Leadership Brazos County" to prepare its members for more active roles in the community. The seminars will cover areas of local concern as well as different facet of government operation. Daniel Hernandez, one of the MAD founders and its chairman,

said a local chapter was started "out of a desire to become more politi-cally aware and to give some politi-cal leverage to Mexican Americans here. We thought a state related or-

ganization would help us do this." Membership in MAD is not restricted to Mexican Americans, but the four-month-old group is designed toward addressing Mexican American concerns and relating those concerns to Democrats, Her-nandez said.

Such representation will be taken advantage of, said Pete Ramirez, president of the local council of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC). "We'll probably be going through MAD so we'll be able to get involved more directly We're (Mexican Americans) working as a unit now," he said.

Ramirez said the past political effects of LULAC were indirect since



the LULAC constitution doesn't elections, the voters have gone Re-allow official endorsements. Because of this record, There's no ax to grind, we're not forming to intimidate anyone,' Hernandez said. "We're just going to hold politicians accountable for what they say and do. That's what an

of several organizations to become familiar with issues and candidates are indications to Neeley Lewis that the community's political awareness is broadening.

Lewis is the chairman of the Brazos County Democratic Party. He said this political awareness results in part from the fact that local politic are becoming more interest-ing. It also stems from the growth of the community itself.

Party agrees.

furnished most of the candidates, McNiel said. "Yet, in presidential

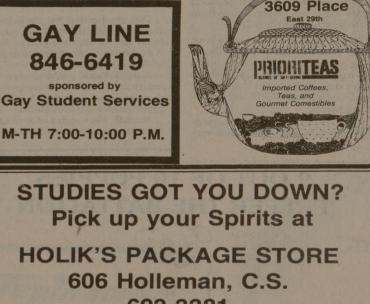
publican. Because of this record, Brazos County is receiving some at-tention as a place for viable Repub-lican efforts," he said.

"This year the local party is offer-ing Republican candidates equal in ideal citizen should be like." stature to the Democratic candi-The emergence of MAD and the Black Caucus, as well as the efforts Brazos County before," McNiel

> Just seeing candidates in pairs should make politics more interesting in a county where candidates have historically run unopposed. However, as Brazos Coutny Clerk Frank Boriskie said, the excitement of county politics this year is unique since several appointments and va-cated positions left an unusual number of positions open.

As far as politics becoming more interesting, N.A. McNiel, chairman of the Brazos County Republican ing politicians who rose to the occa-sion, though, Boriskie said, "you can't tell, they may come back again next time and fight like dogs.

the way.





Considering the number of aspir-ing politicians who rose to the occa-

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All Hamburgers should be consumed before attempting another.

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Winning Contestant must not get sick on premises

5) Accurate scales and weighing of remains to determine winners.6) Judges results will be final.

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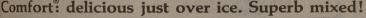
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United support would be difficult because the minority communities aren't homogenous," she said. Keaton thinks community involvement in government is increas-ing "because it's becoming an on-

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IDING A JOB:

PLAIN TALK 3

Environmentalism-will it muddy the job pool? Some people think America will have to spend a trillion dollars by the mid-1980s on more pollution control. Could this hurt your chance of getting a job you want? We hope not-but it's a possibility.

America simply doesn't have a trillion dollars to spare. Shifting so vast an amount from other uses will disrupt nearly every other national goal.

Adding costly environmental equipment doesn't increase industrial production. So once the equipment is in place, the handful of new jobs created for pollution control is more than offset by production jobs that don't appear. Spending large sums on unnecessary extra pollution control means companies can't spend that money on something else-like new jobs.

We're going to need another 17,000,000 jobs in this country by 1985. These days the average jobs costs \$45,300 to create. So a trillion dollars is more than the total current cost of creating 17,000,000 jobs. Even if we had a trillion dollars, America couldn't satisfy its most extreme environmental demands already on the books. Air quality rules now lock important areas of the country out of any new indus-

trial development. And water quality standards being applied to all bodies of water, no matter how they're used, will stymie even population growth in many parts of the U.S.

We all want clean air and water. We've been sensitized to pollution's dangers for years. But the fact is: America's air and water have been getting cleaner lately. We've obviously still got a lot to do. But as we do it, we need to study carefully the costs and benefits, to keep environmentalism from tying America up in knots.

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So far, Armco has spent \$260,000,000 for pollution control systems. Running that equipment costs us another \$50,000,000 or more a year. We've slashed our air emissions 95% and are a leader in water improvement. But now we've passed the point of diminishing returns. Cutting into that final 5% costs more - and wastes more electrical energythan it took to stop the entire 95%. What's worse, generating the electricity to operate equipment to reduce emissions further often creates more pollution at power plants than we remove. As a nation, we need to balance environmentalist demands against their consequences.

Next time somebody says American industry ought to

start cleaning up its act, you might like to point out that the clean-up is well on its way. The more extra environmental costs pile on, the fewer new jobs there may be.

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