

Organized staff is essential

Plan your campaign soon

By SCOTT PENDLETON
Battalion Staff

"Government at all levels is suffering from a lack of trust," Penny Beaumont, president of the League of Women Voters of Brazos County, said at a forum on elections Saturday.

The only way to solve the trust problem, Beaumont said, is to get more people to support political candidates or to be candidates themselves.

But anyone planning to run for a council or school board position in Bryan or College Station this spring should organize his campaign well in advance, Beaumont advised.

A potential candidate should decide how campaigning will affect his family life. Perhaps it will be an overcommitment, Beaumont said.

But once he has decided to run, the candidate should "plan, plan, and plan some more," Beaumont said.

A candidate should realize that he can't run his campaign alone; he should find a campaign manager, she said.

"Your campaign manager must be able to put in long hours and put up with lots of telephone calls at all hours," Beaumont said.

A candidate also needs a finance chairman to raise funds, file contribution reports and handle expenditures.

A research assistant can help a candidate by discovering issues in the community.

A public relations director handles all the publicity for a candidate, Beaumont said. Since the campaign will use promotional materials such as bumper stickers and placards, it is helpful to find a public relations director who is familiar with the printing business, Beaumont said.

Once a candidate has a staff, he must decide what kind of volunteer activities to pursue, such as canvassing, campaigning door-to-door, or campaigning by telephone.

Beaumont recommends recruiting volunteers from groups in the community. Students, senior citizens, and members of civic groups are potential volunteers. Since a civic group is unlikely to furnish anyone with its membership list, a candidate or his staff member should attend one of the group's meetings to establish contact, Beaumont said.

After recruiting volunteers, a candidate must give them something to do immediately, Beaumont said.

"Nothing is worse than volunteering in a great burst of enthusiasm and then not hearing anything (from the campaign headquarters) for two or three weeks," Beaumont said.

Volunteers need something specific to do, as well as a place, a time, a reason, a way to have fun, a deadline, and — most important — recognition.

"You've got to tell them thank you a lot," Beaumont said. Showing appreciation is also important after the election.

"Win or lose, you've got to thank those people again," Beaumont said. "You may need these folks again."

Obey carefully campaign laws for contributions, expenditures

One of the most common mistakes political candidates make is to pay their filing fee before they file the name of their campaign treasurer.

This constitutes an illegal campaign expenditure under the Texas Election Codes, said Ramon Dasch of the Secretary of State's office in Austin.

Dasch spoke Saturday at a forum on running for office sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Brazos County.

A candidate may neither accept campaign contributions nor make expenditures until that name has been filed with the clerk of the proper authority, Dasch said. A candidate may be his own treasurer, but must still file as such.

Candidates, office holders, and political committees must also file a contribution and expenditure report, Dasch said.

The first report must be filed not later than 30 days prior to the election. The period covered begins on the day of the campaign treasurer's designation and ends on and includes the 40th day prior to the election.

The second report must be filed

not later than seven days before the election. It covers the 39th day up to and including the 10th day before the election.

The last report must be filed not later than 30 days after the election. It must include from the ninth day before to the 25th day following the election.

The reports must state the dates, amounts, full names, and complete addresses of each person from whom contributions in an aggregate amount of more than \$50 were received or borrowed during the appropriate reporting period, Dasch said.

The report must also state the dates, amounts, full names, and complete addresses of all persons to whom any expenditures aggregating more than \$50 were made during the appropriate reporting period, and the purpose of the expenditures, he said.

These reports are public record, and should be available to the public immediately upon receipt, Dasch said.

Dasch emphasized that the candidate must sign his own statement of contributions and expenditures.

The treasurer is not authorized to sign for him.

It is illegal for a corporation or labor organization to contribute to a candidate, Dasch said.

Nor may candidates accept anonymous contributions.

"Dirty tricks" are also outlawed, Dasch said. For instance, no contributions or expenditures may be made in the name of another person. And all advertisements must say "political" and disclose the name of the person who contracted for the advertisement.

No political communications may be made in the name of another, nor may such communications be misrepresentative. Dasch gave the example of "John Brown, Governor"

when the ad should read "John Brown for Governor." But Dasch admitted that this kind of misrepresentation is so widespread as to be unenforceable.

The penalties for violations of the election code can be high. Persons knowingly making or receiving an unlawful contribution or who fail to provide political disclosure on an advertisement are guilty of a class A misdemeanor, punishable by a \$1,000 fine and a year in jail, Dasch said.

To knowingly make or accept an illegal corporate contribution or to place a false advertisement is a 3rd degree felony, punishable by a \$5,000 fine and 2-10 years in jail, he said.

Watch for cheating at polls

By KAREN ROGERS
Battalion Staff

A candidate can do several things to insure voting procedures are carried out correctly both on and before election day, said Fumi Sugihara, state voting rights chairman for the League of Women Voters.

"Candidates should have one of their workers start checking now to be sure voters are registered in the correct precincts. Voters who are not registered correctly will not be able to vote," Sugihara said at a LWV forum in Bryan Saturday.

"Encourage your supporters to vote absentee, but assign a poll watcher or someone to go through the absentee applications to be sure it is being done properly and is not abused."

"The processing of absentee mail ballots has been abused before. The candidate should have someone there while they are being processed."

Practice computer runs can be done two days prior to the elections to insure that the computer is counting the ballots correctly, she said.

"Since the programs and ballots are handled by humans, they are subject to human error," Sugihara said. "We have found program errors in this county."

Candidates may protect themselves on election day by posting poll watchers to observe balloting procedures.

"The presence of poll watchers decreases the possibility of flagrant violations," Sugihara said.

Candidates should post poll watchers who know the election laws at each precinct voting box to protect their interests.

"There have been some cases of persons who handle the ballot box

having prearranged hand signals. If their candidate is losing, they will signal to go out and round up more voters. The ballots should never be handled unless two or more people are present."

If a poll watcher discovers a violation in a federal election, he should write a detailed description and report it to either the local FBI or the Justice Department. He should report violations of local elections to the sheriff's office or precinct judge, Sugihara said.

The worker at the counting station on election night should witness the acceptance of the ballots from each precinct and tally the votes on the printout to be sure all ballots were counted. If he finds an irregularity, he should report it to the election judge.

Since the ballots may not be examined until after the election is over, Sugihara warns poll watchers "to be sure you have enough evidence before you go public."

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DRAWING	7:30-9:30 P.M.	FEB. 19 - APR. 2
CAKE DECORATING	7:00-9:00 P.M.	FEB. 19 - APR. 16
SUNCATCHERS	7:00-9:00 P.M.	APRIL 2 - 16
TUESDAY		
GLASS ETCHING	7:00-9:00 P.M.	FEB. 13 - MAR. 20
SILKSCREENING	6:00-8:00 P.M.	FEB. 13 - MAR. 27
SAND TERRARIUMS	7:00-8:30 P.M.	FEB. 13 - MAR. 27
QUILTING	7:00-9:00 P.M.	FEB. 13 - MAR. 27
POTTERY A	1:00-3:00 P.M.	FEB. 13 - APR. 10
POTTERY B	7:30-9:30 P.M.	FEB. 13 - APR. 10
BASIC FURNITURE	7:00-9:30 P.M.	FEB. 20 - APR. 3
WATERCOLOR	7:00-9:30 P.M.	FEB. 27 - APR. 24
STAINED GLASS C	7:00-9:30 P.M.	MAR. 20 - APR. 24
EMBROIDERY	7:30-9:00 P.M.	MAR. 20 - APR. 24
FRAMING & MATTING	7:00-9:00 P.M.	APRIL 3 - 24
WEDNESDAY		
SHOP SAFETY A	7:00-9:30 P.M.	FEB. 14 - 21
NEEDLEPOINT	6:30-7:30 P.M.	FEB. 14 - MAR. 7
CROCHET	7:30-9:00 P.M.	FEB. 14 - MAR. 7
BATIK	7:00-9:00 P.M.	FEB. 14 - MAR. 28
BASKETS A	7:00-8:30 P.M.	FEB. 21 - MAR. 21
NOMAD FURNITURE	7:00-9:00 P.M.	FEB. 28 - APR. 18
ANTIQUE REFINISHING	7:30-9:30 P.M.	MAR. 21 - APR. 11
DECOUPAGE	7:00-9:00 P.M.	MAR. 21 - APR. 18
BASKETS B	7:00-9:00 P.M.	MAR. 28 - APR. 25
THURSDAY		
SHOP SAFETY B	7:00-9:30 P.M.	FEB. 15 - 22
MACRAME	7:00-9:00 P.M.	FEB. 15 - MAR. 29
CHINA PAINTING	7:00-9:30 P.M.	FEB. 15 - MAR. 29
STAIN GLASS B	7:00-9:30 P.M.	FEB. 15 - MAR. 29
SPINNING & NATURAL DYES	7:00-9:00 P.M.	FEB. 22 - MAR. 29
POTTERY C	5:00-7:00 P.M.	FEB. 22 - APR. 19
POTTERY D	7:30-9:30 P.M.	FEB. 22 - APR. 19
UKRAINIAN EGG PAINTING	7:00-9:00 P.M.	MAR. 8 - APR. 12
STAIN GLASS MIRRORS	7:00-9:30 P.M.	APR. 5 - MAY 3

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