

Grand Democrats
General Membership Meeting Minutes
February 22, 2023 - 6:00 P.M. Cimarron Center

- 1. Cookies, Coffee, & Conversation**

- 2. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance:** President Suzi Walling called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. Grand Dems member Bill Buckingham led the Pledge of Allegiance.

- 3. Minutes of January 25, 2023 General Meeting:** Nancy A. Martin, co-secretary, asked for comments or corrections of the minutes. No one had any corrections and minutes were approved.

- 4. President's Comments:**
 - a. Suzi made it clear that there is a great need for members to step up and fill the following positions:** Webmaster, Mailchimp Coordinator, Program Chair/ Committee, Publicity Chair/Committee and Fundraising Chair. Ken Kessler is doing a great job as interim Fundraising Chair. The 50/50, wine and art raffles continue to generate enthusiasm. The Grand Dems interim Program Chair Bob Walling has scheduled great speakers through the month of April. Suzi asked members to let Bob know of any suggested speakers they would like to hear at upcoming meetings. Suzi asked members to please consider signing up for chair committee assignments. Spreading the work will lighten the load for everyone who is already involved. Sign up sheets are in the back of the room at every General meeting. Suzi exclaimed " Get involved; it can be exciting!"

b. Committee Updates: Suzi said that Social Chair Judy Shields reported that thirty eight people attended the Blue Dinner at Angela's Kitchen Restaurant. The Social Committee is organizing the Spring Picnic to be held on March 1. In addition, Suzi asked members to see Membership Chair Carol Karsten to update their annual membership dues. The Grand Dems are a political action group whose membership fees support federal, state, and local candidates.

c. Brochure: Suzi reported that Serene Matthews, Nancy Martin and she have been working on updating the Grand Dems brochure. Suzi and Serene met with Nancy Schoon to design the brochure.

d. Save the Date: Attend the joint meeting with LD 28 and Northwest Valley Democrats on May 4th. Speakers will include the Arizona Secretary of State Adrian Fontes and Arizona Recorder Stephen Richer.

e . Results of the election for chair of the AZ Democratic Committee: Yolanda Bejarano won the election and will be the Chair of the Arizona Democratic Committee. Steve Gallardo will continue as the only Democrat on the District 5 Board of Directors.

5. Treasurer's Report: Jim reported that the January balance in the Grand Dems checking account was \$3,665.44 The combined January/February ending balance equaled \$3,777.25 In the month of January, our fundraising efforts yielded a profit of \$120.30. The combined expenses for January and February is \$428.76.

6. Committee Reports:

a. Membership: Carol Karsten reported that to date, the Grand Dems have had one hundred and forty four member renewals and currently, there are a total of one hundred and fifty five Grand Dem members.

b. Program/Publicity: interim Program/ Publicity Chair Bob Walling reminded attendees that the March General meeting will be held at

the Mesquite /Palms Ballroom in the Sonoran Plaza. Bob reported that Terry Goddard, CAWCD Board President, will be speaking at the Grand Dems March General meeting. Also, in March, Dr. Dwight Moore will be talking about end of life options. Clint Hickman, President of Maricopa County Board of Supervisors will be the speaker for the General meeting in April. Bob asked members to volunteer to be the Grand Dems Publicity Chair. The club needs someone to publicize our club's activities and events in local newspapers and magazines.

c. **Fundraising:** Ken Kessler said that our "Elite Wine Snob" Raffle will continue! He also told members that the painting that is being raffled off was donated by Grand Dems member John Geryak, John donated the painting with all proceeds going to the Grand Dems club. The painting has been assessed at \$450.00. Each raffle ticket is \$20 or \$50.00 for three tickets. The painting will be raffled off at the March General meeting.

d. **Social Chair:** Judy Shields indicated that the Blue Dinner at Angela's Kitchen Restaurant was a success. In the future. If our Grand Dems group exceeds 25 people, we will be given a set menu. Judy said that she will email an RSVP for the next Blue Dinner so she can determine the number of people who will be attending. The Spring Picnic will be held on Wednesday, March 1. Please sign up as soon as possible so the social committee knows how much food to order. Each ticket cost \$10.00 for members and \$15.00 for nonmembers. Please bring a side dish and your own drinking vessel as our social committee wants to promote using recyclable products. **The Blue Breakfast has a new location. The Blue Breakfast will be held at Biscuits Cafe, 13752 W. Bell, Surprise, AZ.**

e. **Adopt -A - Street:** Kevin indicated that the next clean up effort will be held on Saturday, February 25th. We will meet at the intersection of Mountain View and Reems. We will walk up to Goldwater. Our group takes safety seriously. A vest and clean up tools will be provided.

7. Old Business: Suzi Walling asked those who attended if they had any Old Business. It was determined that we had no old business to cover.

8. New Business:

- a. Amendment to By-laws:** Bob Walling reported that at the January 10th Board meeting, a motion to amend Article III, Section G and Miscellaneous /Section D was made and approved. Bob moved to amend the by-laws in order to move from the Secretary performing the treasurer's function in the treasurer's absence to the President performing the duties of the treasurer. Bob Walling told those attending the Grand Dems meeting that he felt that the change was good as the President and Treasurer are the most responsible for the club's finances. Bob said that the amended by-laws was sent to members as an attachment. Patti Doss said that she would like to discuss the amendment further. Bob indicated that we will discuss the amended by-law at the March General meeting.
- b. Report from LD 29:** The next Arizona LD 29 Democrats monthly meeting will be held on **Wednesday, March 15 from 6:00 - 7:30 at the Hampton Inn & Suites, 2000 N. Litchfield Road, Goodyear, AZ 85395.**

9. Program Guest Speakers: Suzi Walling introduced tonight's speakers: Alicia Lucas and Ne'Lexia Galloway.

- **Alicia Lucas** is a representative from Save Our Schools (SOS) which is a community based organization whose goal is to make Arizona public schools stronger. She stated that the SOS organization is composed of parents, teachers and others who are concerned with increasing the funding for public education. Alicia strongly believes that public funds need to stay in public schools. The most recent Empowerment Scholarship Accounts

(ESA) passed by the legislature in the dead of night provides parents with a debit card that can be used for both private school education and homeschooling. Nearly half of the vouchers have gone to wealthy communities and 80% of the students awarded the scholarships were already in the private schools. Alicia asked attendees to sign up for the SOS emails so they can be informed of what school related bills are going through the legislature.

- **Bob Walling:** LD 29 - Bob reported that 95% of Democratic voters in Sun City Grand voted in the 2022 election. This compares to 88% of Republican voters in Sun City Grand who cast their ballots. Bob encouraged Grand Dem members to sign up for the election committee.
- **Ne'Lexia Galloway** is the Executive Director of the Maricopa County Democratic Party (MCDP) She reviewed voting results from the 2022 election in Maricopa County. The data shows that 64.4% of registered Arizona Democrats voted in Maricopa County in the 2022 election. Ne'Lexia indicated that eighty nine thousand Democratic voters did not complete their ballots and this fact accounted for Democratic losses. Independents outnumber Republicans and Democrats in Arizona and the data shows that 72% of Independents voted with Democrats in 2022. Since MCDP has a small staff, they need volunteers and precinct captains to register Democrats and Independents and also to text, phone, distribute literature and send postcards to registered Democrats and Independents.

10. 50/50, Wine and Painting Raffle: The Grand Dems club received \$61.00 from the 50/50 raffle.

11. The next Grand Dems General meeting will be held on March 22, 2023 at 6:00 P.M. There will be a change of venue in the month of March. The meeting will be held at the Mesquite/ Palms Rooms at the Sonoran Plaza.

Respectfully Submitted by

**Nancy A. Martin
Grand Dems Co- Secretary**