

NORTHWEST VALLEY DEMOCRATS
MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
JANUARY 11, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Maria Bears, President, at 6:30 PM in the Quail Room of the Foundation Building in Sun City West. Present were Lonna Fischer, Vice-President; Jan Martinez, Treasurer; Margaret Cordovano, Secretary; Ken Kovach, Member-At-Large; Ginger Pottenger, Member-At-Large; Kathy Scherich, Membership Chair; and Frank Copple, Political Action Chair.

After the Pledge of Allegiance, Maria introduced the above members of the board and committee chairpersons.

Treasurer's Report

Jan gave the Treasurer's Report. We have a balance of \$2,461.89 in our account. 69 members have paid their dues for this year. We paid \$200.00 for the meeting room rental.

Joan Campbell

Lonna introduced Joan Campbell of the Maricopa Attorney's Office. Ms. Campbell spoke about scams which are prevalent through phone calls, the Internet and the mail. One frequent scam is an inheritance letter, stating that the recipient is entitled to inherit money from an unknown relative, but have to pay a fee to collect the money. Another is threats that you will be arrested or your service will be turned off if you do not send payment immediately, usually via gift cards. There have been incidents of "mail fishing" where a hook has been inserted into a mailbox to remove mailed items to obtain checks. It is safer to deposit mail at a post office rather than in a mailbox. If one gets a "fraud alert" online, one should not click on the link, but call the financial institution which purportedly has sent the alert.

There are several sources which list scams such as AARP, the Better Business Bureau, and the Arizona Attorney General's Office. Joan will email a list of websites to Maria and she will send it to members.

There also are rental scams where the pictures of the premises online are not accurate depictions of the actual premises. Some scammers tell people to meet them in person to give them gift cards.

There are dangers in using checks as payment to those who do work in your home. They can use the check to create a blank check and put in a different amount. It is safer to use money orders.

Scams should be reported to the FTC. There have been many successes in prosecuting the scammers.

Lt. Scott Keller

Lonna introduced Lt. Scott Keller of the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office. There have been several recent burglaries in Sun City West from homes on Vacation Watch. The criminals were apprehended through fingerprints and DNA analysis. Signs that a home is vacant include newspapers in driveways, no lights at night, and air conditioning not running in the summer. It is advisable to get a camera to record what is happening outside.

There are over 16,900 homes in Sun City West. Some of the responsibilities of the Sheriff's Office are to conduct welfare checks and deal with neighborhood disputes. There is a need for more officers.

The use of cameras to detect speeders on the highway has been declared unconstitutional but they are still used to detect red light violations. The Sheriff's Office is planning on putting an officer on a motorcycle to detect speeders in Sun City West.

President's Report

Maria stated that her goal for the year is education of members on important political issues so we can evaluate candidates for office. We will be training volunteers to be ready to work on elections. Through Civic Engagement Beyond Voting (CEBV) we can sign up to get an account so we can make comments on pending legislation. Next month we will practice making a comment on a bill.

Lonna stated that we have received a thank you note from Saguaro Jane Food Bank for food we donated to them in December. There have been postcards sent out from a PC in Sun City West that incorrectly lists our meeting times. Our meeting times continue to be the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 6:00 PM for check in, meet and greet with the meeting starting at 6:30 PM. A seminar will be given tomorrow at 10:00 AM at Johnson Rec Center. Dr. David Hondula of the Office of Heat Response and Mitigation of Phoenix will speak about using lighter color pavement as a way to lessen heat. We should contact our legislators about House Bill 2003 which would cut taxes for large corporations.

Frank spoke about the need to take action to counter climate change. We are the only pale blue dot in space as we are the only one with water. Solar panels on homes are needed regardless of whether they provide a good return on the investment. The "Climate Action Now" app is available through your app store. You can use it to provide your comments to those making climate decisions, learn lifestyle changes that can make a difference and earn points to have trees planted.

Ken Kovach suggested that we invite Sandy Behr from the Sierra Club to speak on water issues and Maria stated that we are working on that.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM. The next meeting will be held on February 8th at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret D. Cordovano
Secretary