

## Grassroots Focus on Lynn & Sandi Breaux

October, 2006



Lynn is the oldest of 9 children. Born in New Orleans, he joined the Air Force at 17, learned to work on the B52 positioning systems, earned a Certificate in National Security Management and after serving a tour in Vietnam, he came back through Carswell and decided to make Fort Worth his new home by settling into a job at General Dynamics (now Lockheed) while taking classes at UTA. He was also the oldest football player to be on the team and was called “The Old Man” by his team mates. Being an engineer, he tries to look at every angle and gets teased about “over analyzing” things. Conservative when it comes to politics, insert your political views, logic and voting info? He tends to be one of the people who do things in a different way. Like rejoining the Air Force Reserves 1 day before he would have been too old to be accepted. That service put him the 301<sup>st</sup> Civil Engineering Squadron where he earned a degree in construction technology and spent annual tours outside of the USA including England, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama and within the US at Florida, Idaho and ? In civilian life, he worked at jobs that continued to use his knowledge of electronics for everything from quality control to crop dusting applications to oil logging tools. But after the children left home, he mentioned to Sandi that he had always wanted to do something field of medicine. Shortly afterward, he left the electronics industry and went to nursing school where he obtained an RN followed by a BSN and he became a Director of a Home Health Agency. That job made him realize there was much more in the big picture of healthcare so he enrolled in a Masters of Public Health Program at UNT Health Science Center. After that, he enrolled in the school’s first class for the Doctorate of Public Health and was elected Class President. He graduated in 2005. Our family joke is that Lynn has more degrees than a thermometer. He is retired from the Air Force and works as a Public Health consultant. Lynn has been an active participant in campaigns at all levels of government and served as an election worker.

Born in December 1953, Sandi is a 4<sup>th</sup> generation Fort Worthian and says her early roots concerning voting and politics were uncomplicated. I was an only child of an only child, where much of my free time was spent reading Life Magazines or talking to adults. During elementary school, I remember chanting “Nixon, Nixon, he’s our man, Kennedy belongs in a garbage can”. My father worked for 37 years at Bell Helicopter and their local union always handed out a list of candidates they expected the members to support. Daddy came in and handed my mother his copy of the list of candidates and then as we drove to the nearest polling place, he would remind her to make sure to vote for these people. In looking back, it is true that it was an uncomplicated way to handle voting because no thinking on the part of the voter was required. Fair, no it wasn’t, for that very same reason. In high school, government classes were required and politics highlighted – as in there are 2 parties, Democrats and Republicans, and the teacher you had for the class tried hard not to say which party they supported. My first campaign experience was when Dolph Briscoe ran for Texas Governor. It seemed easy enough, there was some excitement as I went around telling my friends about the candidate and explaining why he was the best one for the job. Although most of them gave me a blank stare and few of them even registered to vote. Of course, as I was doing all of this, the Vietnam War was still going on and several older high school friends had graduated, went off to that war and came home with injuries. Songs about the evils of war, voting let “Big Brother” know where you were and allegations that our politicians were controlling all of it made me question the whole concept and wonder how all these puzzle pieces fit. Shortly afterward, my group of college friends spent many of our late night pizza & beer parties centered around the best candidate in any upcoming election instead of studying for exams. Much to my Father’s dismay, I came home one weekend and proudly announced that I had joined the Young Republicans Club. On the other hand, my Mother pulled me off to one side to say she had never really paid much attention to the list he had brought home because in the voting booth she made her own selections. It took a while for it to dawn on me that what it came down to was they canceled out each other’s vote! I went to Austin to a convention of Young Republicans and couldn’t believe how many people were there. **That convention made me realize that citizens have to make the effort to use their voice through elections and the voting process.** In fact, it took work all the way around – the system could only work if the two major players did what they were supposed to do. Candidates had to study issues, prepare their platform and look at the greater good while the voters had to ask questions and seek answers before they voted for the candidate. Parts of my puzzle were coming together, but many questions still remained unanswered the first of which is why don’t citizens vote – seems an easy enough question but answers run from it’s no use to it’s too much trouble. I have worked as an election judge in Tarrant County and on many other campaigns at all levels of government over the last 35 years. To date, my most disappointing experience in working elections was the time we had 3 precincts at the polling location I worked during a runoff election and only 32 people came in to vote that day.

We are members of the Southwest Republican Club and after serving as delegates for SD 10 in San Antonio this year, we proudly remain committed to the Republican Party and look forward to ways that we can generate more interest in the process in upcoming elections.

