

Grassroots Activities

"Top Ten" Simple Things You Can Do

10. **CHANGE YOUR VOICE-MAIL GREETING.** Several people hear your voice on your answering machine at home or your cell phone voice-mail each day. When the election nears, update your voice-mail greeting with a reminder to vote for your local and statewide candidates and include early vote and election-day dates.
9. **TAKE YOUR CANDIDATES WITH YOU WHEREVER YOU GO.** We meet people every day who need to hear about the Democratic Party and our agenda. We have materials to help. Pass out flyers in your neighborhood. Use talking points and issue papers to persuade friends and family. Give signs and placards to fellow supporters.
8. **RECRUIT MORE VOLUNTEERS.** Always keep your eyes open for individuals or groups willing to work for the Democratic cause. Keep lists current and be sure to contact volunteers often and keep them involved. Focus on young people; they are the future of our party.
7. **MONITOR THE MEDIA.** If you hear negative or inaccurate information on radio programs, do not hesitate to call in and provide an alternative viewpoint.
6. **MAKE A DONATION.** Any donation, large or small, to our Club and the County Party will help. Become a NEBCD PAC Member or a Bexar County Democratic Partner for as little as \$10 a month. Pass on the message to friends and family. (www.NEBCD.org or www.BexarDemocrats.org.)
5. **MAKE THE WINNING CONTACT LISTS.** Candidates will always need help with local phone banks and canvass programs. Be sure area phone banks start early and that you have enough volunteers to knock on all the doors, so we have time to identify ALL supporters before the election.
4. **HELP DURING EARLY VOTE.** In Texas, we have a unique opportunity to get people out to vote for almost two full weeks. Focus on Early Vote. Early voting wins Democratic campaigns. Let's bank those votes early.
3. **REACH BEYOND.** We need to create relationships outside of our normal circles.
2. **TAKE ELECTION DAY OFF.** Actually, we want you to work on Election Day, but instead of going to your job, help lead the Democrats to victory. The pay is low and the day will be long, but it will all be worth it when we celebrate on election night.
1. **VOTE EARLY AND NEVER VOTE ALONE.** We all know several people who have to be reminded repeatedly to go vote. Make it a social occasion. Gather your friends and go vote early as a group, and then go out and have some fun. Early Vote is a perfect time for this, since everyone in your county can vote at any early voting location.

Getting Involved

There is nothing more important at the grassroots level than participation. No party or candidate has ever been successful without an army of grassroots volunteers. Whether a novice or veteran volunteer, there are a variety of ways to participate at all levels in a campaign as well as directly in the Democratic Party.

Campaigns may be long and difficult, and as a volunteer you will be giving of your time and money. Be mindful not to overextend yourself time-wise or financially.

If you have more time than money, recruit new Democrats, volunteer your time, write letters to the editor, call in to a talk show, serve as a surrogate speaker, or organize a Democratic block meeting. If time is a problem, maybe you could help with fundraising. Remember: The world is run by those who show up! Participate.

How to Participate

The activities listed represent some of the many ways one can participate.

Become a Precinct Chair: The precinct chair is the heart and soul of the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party and our candidates do not succeed without active precinct chairs. For instruction on how to become a precinct chair, please see ***below**

Assist Your Precinct Chair: If the precinct chair is the heart and soul of the Democratic Party, then the grassroots volunteer is the heart and soul of a campaign. The duties and responsibilities of the precinct chair are listed in ***below** but you can assist the precinct chair in writing letters, making phone calls, and canvassing your precinct. This helps volunteers learn about the local workings of the Democratic Party.

Show Your Colors: One of the easiest ways to participate is to have a Texas Democrat bumper sticker on your car. Let others know that you are proud to be a Democrat. Place Democratic candidate yard signs in your yard during elections. Let your neighbors know who's worth supporting.

Join Your County Party: There are many activities that occur on the county level, as the county chair is responsible for a multitude of duties. Assistance is always greatly appreciated. This is especially true during the primary and fall election cycles.

Join Local Democratic Clubs: In many places local Democratic clubs are very active and bring in speakers, hold events, participate in campaigns, open and operate campaign headquarters. This is an excellent method of meeting fellow Democrats and learning about the local workings of the Democratic Party. To expand your participation you may also wish to join nearby local clubs or statewide clubs, such as the Young Democrats or Texas Democratic Women.

Donate Your Time and Money: The political process requires both, and there is nothing more important than volunteering your time. Okay, money is important, too. If you can't give time, give money. If you can't give money, give of your time.

Work on a Campaign: There are many activities that fall into this category. To name a few, you can write letters for the candidate, make phone calls, block walk, deliver yard signs, or work in the campaign headquarters. As you become more comfortable with the process, you may even wish to organize phone banks, block walks, and events. Detailed lists of campaign activities are listed later in other chapters.

Work on Local Elections: Local elections are an excellent way to learn about your community. These elections include, but are not limited to, city, school board, MUD districts, and water boards. Under Texas law these are nonpartisan elections, but you do meet other activists and meet the local "players." One reason many city elections are not held in November of an election year is to keep the partisan and nonpartisan elections separate.

Write Letters to the Editor and Call in to Radio Shows: Let your voice be heard. If you are passionate about a specific subject, write letters to the editor of your local newspapers and call in to radio shows that solicit input.

Get on Democratic E-mail Distribution Lists: Many county Democratic Parties and Democratic clubs distribute useful information by e-mail. This is rapidly replacing regular mail notification because of its speed and low cost. This is an excellent means of keeping informed of the many activities occurring in your area. Caution: While chat rooms are popular, they may or may not be useful to a volunteer.

Join Non-Political Activist Groups: Membership in groups such as the League of Women Voters, Save Our Springs, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, and others allow you to meet other active people in your community. In many cases these people will agree with your slant on politics and give you the opportunity to bring them into the fold.

*** www.bexardemocrats.org/BCDPPctChairRecruitment.html**

Please copy and past into your browser