

TEXAS FEDERATION OF REPUBLICAN WOMEN
27TH BIENNIAL CONVENTION REPORT

It's hard to believe that just over one year ago we were informed that Galveston had been chosen to host the 2009 Texas Federation of Republican Women's Convention (TFRW). Some of us expressed doubt and wondered if it was even possible must less feasible. After all, Galveston and the entire Gulf Coast had just experienced a devastating hurricane. Questions abounded. Would we be ready in time, could we pull it together and we wondered whether Galveston would even be functional by then? There was so much damage to the infrastructure as well as to all the hotels and other businesses. But, Toni Anne Dashiell, TFRW President, encouraged us to go forward. Every meeting she would say, "We can do it and it'll be fun."

Well, she was right. With the leadership and guidance of Toni Anne and Convention Co-Chairman, Debbie Guitain-Roan, we did it and it was fun and the 27th TFRW Convention held in Galveston, Texas on November 12 – 15, 2009 is one for the history books.

Within days after the convention, emails began to fly between all the committee chairmen congratulating each other on a job well done. It began to sound as if we had become a mutual admiration society.

But then I stepped back and looked at each of the ladies and a bigger picture began to emerge. Each one of the ladies is a leader in her own right. Some are businesswomen, some own and run their own businesses, many serve as Republican Women Club presidents or former presidents, some hold leadership positions in their communities, yet, they put aside their title and position, came together and worked as a cohesive team.

One of the goals discussed in our planning meetings was what we, as Republican Women, could do to help the Galveston community. Sally Prill, Off-site Event /Tour Chairman, suggested we help the Galveston Independent School District Education Foundation replace books for their school libraries. She arranged for GISD to set up a booth at the convention and many opened up their hearts and pocketbooks. At the end of the three days, TFRW presented the GISD Education Foundation with a check for \$4,751.50. Thanks to all of you for reaching out to touch a community that is still recovering.

But, before closing the book completely, I would like for you to hear, in their own words, from those who helped with and attended the convention.

Sally Prill summed up the attitude of all the chairmen and their committees very well.

She said, "I (want to) express my respect for the manner in which you all handled your respective responsibilities during the build-up to the convention. It made the entire planning and execution a pleasure rather than a chore. Very few egos were evident and it all just worked and it was all done by volunteers!"

And these commitments from Kathy Rogers, Convention Secretary and Lillian Norman-Keeney, District Director, Senate District 11:

“The committees functioned extremely efficiently in an egoless manner where everyone was working toward a common goal without thoughts of personal glory! We also had something excellent in common, our conservative values!”(Kathy Rogers)

“What a wonderful group of women, all committed to the cause, we worked in concert just as we do for campaigns and as usual, great team work made it happen.”
(Lillian Norman-Keeney)

What they are saying across Texas

I've traveled this past week to Lake Conroe and Kerrville only to hear outstanding comments on the convention. It's all because each and every one of you put your heart and soul into the convention. I've bragged all year on this committee and I will continue to do so because you are the BEST.

Toni Anne Dashiell, TFRW President

“After the final lunch of the convention, I was saying good-bye to one of our delegates. This particular delegate had recently been honored by our club, Montgomery County Republican Women, as one of the founding members of our club 30 years ago. She told me this was, by far, the best convention she had ever attended, and she had been to quite a few! I thought it was the nicest compliment we could have received!”

Donna Barr, Decorations Co-Chairman

“From my position, I was able to hear a lot of comments from the attendees. The main things I heard was that it was the best convention that they had been to. They also commented on how nice this "Galveston Crew" was. It's funny, because as far as I know, we have never known anything but congeniality. It's just part of who we are. I think that compliment speaks volumes, and I wholeheartedly concur. I am quite honored to be associated with all of you. “

Shannon Trochesset, Sergeant at Arms/Pages

“I heard from one of the Pages that many people complimented them on how helpful and well-behaved they were (she thought maybe they weren't in other years)...They got a *lot* of nice comments! Kudos to Shannon Trochesset on that!

Kathy Rogers, Convention Secretary

“The camaraderie of ladies who had never met before from four different counties surrounding the Galveston area was unbelievable. New friendships were forged and the experiences never forgotten. “

Kathie Nenner, VIP Chairman

“The organizing of (registration) and the signing in routine was already decided by TFRW and because of their previous experience, everything went smoothly. All my volunteers were a joy to work with too! I loved telling them, "We don't handle any problems. All problems are sent to the office!"

Deborah Winters Chaney, Registration Chairman

On that note, I would like to commend the TFRW office personnel. Because of them, the convention operated much more smoothly. They were courteous and efficient. They were problem solvers, assuring everything was on track. They may be behind the scenes, but they are a great asset to the TFRW organization. If any of you have occasion to call the TFRW office, thank them for their service and dedication, not only for a great convention, but for their day to day commitment to help ensure TFRW is a viable, conservative voice in shaping governmental policies and laws.

On another note, David Townsend, Director of Convention Planning, San Luis Resort, Galveston, and our “go to” person for the convention, paid us a great compliment. He said he has heard a lot of speakers but we had the best speakers of any convention. My response was that we were Republicans. Enough said!

“I am..thrilled that the island did her part beautifully to welcome the conventioners, “ Casey Farris, Sergeant at Arms/Page Committee, who lives on the Island remarked. That they did.

It ‘s a great testimony to good leadership, good work ethics, and good teamwork when attendees and others come away praising the event as a success. Due to space constraints, I am unable to share every comment, but hope you can sense and feel the excitement from these few excerpts.

Gala Chairman, Carolyn Hodges put it very succinctly, "Great convention leadership and committee chairs plus our wonderful committee members made the perfect combination for a memorable event. It was great to be a part of it.”

Well put, Carolyn. I would like to add a thank you to all the delegates, alternates, guest, vendors and speakers who were the “icing “on the cake that made this a truly, extraordinary event.

There is an adage that says, “When you want something done right, let a woman do it.” Ok. That might be a little trite, but you get the picture. Also, there is another cliché used in showbiz, “Leave them wanting more.” We hope you are left wanting more and are even now making plans for the 2011 Convention in Ft. Worth.

Have a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!
Bonnie Wilson

Go to www.kemah.net or the TFRW website to see pictures from the convention.