



HOUSTON BOARD ADOPTS NEW STRATEGIC PLAN; SEEKING VOLUNTEERS FROM LOCAL MEMBERSHIP

This past year has been a busy, yet productive one for Houston Chapter of the ACLU. Our board of directors has been hard at work over these last several months putting together a Strategic Plan outlining chapter goals over the next five years. Our first and most pressing need — our No. 1 goal — is more membership participation. Put simply, we need YOU.

We are looking to cultivate active members interested in helping organize activities designed to safeguard civil liberties in the greater Houston area. Perhaps you are interested teaching a seminar on the Bill of Rights, or filming a demonstration or even networking with like-minded legal professionals. There are a number of ways you can contribute; the variety of opportunities to get involved is almost endless.

Learn more at our annual meeting and Banned Books Week event featuring author Lou Dubose on Thursday, Oct. 1, 6:30 p.m., at Dharma Café, 1718 Houston Ave. Event is free for ACLU members; non-members \$25 at the door. (More on page 2.)

There are five secondary goals for our chapter under the Strategic Plan, and we are looking to implement some of these activities. They include: (1) Community Outreach — increasing visibility of the ACLU at local events; (2)

Civil Rights Watch — monitoring civil rights issues at local events, such as demonstrations, council meetings, judicial proceedings, etc.; (3) Networking — cultivating relationships with other civil rights organizations, media outlets or attorneys groups; (4) Research — compiling data and evidence about possible civil rights issues in our community; (5) School Chapter Organization — establishing contact with and support for local ACLU student groups.

Along with planning activities in support of our long-term Strategic Plan, we continue to sponsor a variety of local initiatives. Some of this past year’s activities include: “Give Me Liberty” radio show on KPFT 91.1 FM, First Amendment celebration concert starring Roy Zimmerman, marching in Houston Pride Parade and Independence Day information table at Hermann Park.

We look forward to having you join us in the protection of our civil liberties. Please take a few moments to fill out a survey of your interests and provide us with your contact information. We need your support and we welcome your input. We hope you will join us at our Oct. 1 meeting (see page 2). Together we can help make freedom and democracy flourish in our city, state and country. We stand united in liberty.

CURIOUS ABOUT VOLUNTEERING? IT’S EASY TO GET ACTIVE!

We could use your help! Here is a taste of the projects the Houston Chapter has had in the past, is currently working on, or would like to implement. If you see something you would like to help with, let us know!

- ◆ Maintaining a civil rights speaker’s bureau (Free Speech, Freedom of Religion, Reproductive Rights, Student Rights, Privacy, Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement).
- ◆ Coordination with the state affiliate in legal action on local civil rights issues through our local Legal Panel.
- ◆ Coordination of efforts to identify and remedy racial profiling by police and government officials.
- ◆ Participating in events such as the Houston Pride Parade, International Festival and Art Car Festival.
- ◆ Organizing an annual gala to bring together ACLU supporters, leaders and newcomers.
- ◆ Sending legal observers to protests, courtroom proceedings and government meetings.
- ◆ Development of an editorial committee to submit opinion columns and letters to the editor to local media.

Please take a moment to let us know how you would like to contribute. Please fill out the form below, cut it out and mail to: Houston Chapter—ACLU of Texas, P.O. Box 132047, Houston, Texas 77219.

I can offer: ___ time, about ___ hours per month
 ___ organizational skills
 ___ food/services/items for auctions/events
 ___ computer skills (internet, software, etc.)
 ___ radio production or broadcast experience
 ___ legal expertise
 ___ journalism, media, advertizing, marketing skills
 ___ ANYTHING ELSE NOT LISTED ___

Please provide us with your:
 Name: _____
 Email: _____
 Phone: _____
 Address: _____

CELEBRATED AUTHOR SPECIAL GUEST AT HOUSTON EVENT

If words are weapons, nationally known political author Lou Dubose is packing. As special guest of the ACLU Houston Chapter, Dubose will be coming to our city Oct. 1 ready to take aim at those who seek to stifle the academic freedom of Texas students and the freedoms of the public at large.

Armed with his particular brand of political insight and his disdain for abuse of power, he will speak in recognition of Banned Books Week (Sept. 27 — Oct. 3), a statewide event promoting awareness of banned books in school districts throughout Texas.

The work of the ACLU closely mirrors the values of freedom and democracy Dubose holds dear.

“I’m an ACLU member,” he says proudly. “They really are the bulwark in defense of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.” A one-time high school teacher, Dubose was never one to go with the flow of politics as usual. He built a journalism career chronicling the dubious dealings of Texas politicians, and in the process, became a shining star among Lone Star State progressives. Now he focuses much of his attention on national figures.

“I’ve always been an adversarial Texas liberal,” he says. “I found writing to be a gratifying way to address what Jim Hightower calls the ‘bullies, bankers and bastards’ who are running this country.”

Dubose, who says he “cut his teeth on Nixon,” has written several books and articles outlining social injustice, abuse of authority and threats to freedom.

“I believe the old maxim of speaking truth to power.”

He began freelancing for *The Texas Observer* in 1984, eventually becoming editor. He is currently editor of the biweekly newsletter *The Washington Spectator* in Washington D.C., affording him up-close access to the national political scene, which he calls an “enormous privilege.” He has spent the last decade concentrating on former President George W. Bush and former Vice President Dick Cheney.

“It was an age of enormous intellectual dishonesty, incredible ideology and dangerous policy. I found them fascinating to write about,” Dubose explains. “Their abuse of power and their idea of the unitary executive were perversely fascinating and truly dangerous. They were such a menace.”

The Bush-Cheney philosophy of sweeping presidential power was the inspiration for *Bill of Wrongs: The Executive Branch’s Assault on America’s Fundamental Rights*, a book he co-wrote with Molly Ivins, a close friend and progressive compatriot whom he admired.

“Molly was my hero,” he says. “She was the woman I wanted to be when I grew up.” He also collaborated with Ivins on *Shrub: The Short But Happy Political Life of George W. Bush* and *Bushwhacked: Life in George W. Bush’s America*.

Other books by Dubose include *Vice: Dick Cheney and the Hijacking of the American Presidency* and *The Hammer: Tom Delay: God, Money and the Rise of the Republican Congress*.

For more information on banned books, go to: <http://www.aclutx.org/projects/bannedbooks.php>.

Dubose Special Guest at Chapter Meeting and Banned Books Event

We hope you will join us for this year’s Banned Books event and annual meeting of the Houston Chapter of the ACLU, featuring noted author and commentator Lou Dubose.

Date: Thursday, October 1, 2009

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Dharma Café
1718 Houston Ave., Houston, TX 77007
(Houston Ave. at Crockett St.)

**Event is free for ACLU members,
for non-members \$25 at the door.**

Cash bar.

LETTER FROM CHAPTER PRESIDENT CURT GIBBY

JOIN US IN PROTECTING LIBERTY; HOW TO GET INVOLVED

I am pleased to invite you to the 2009 the annual meeting of the Houston Chapter of the ACLU of Texas.

This year we are combining our annual meeting with our Banned Book event, and we are privileged to have author and editor Lou Dubose to talk to us about the importance of intellectual and educational freedom. Mr. Dubose is the editor of the biweekly newsletter *The Washington Spectator* and former editor of *The Texas Observer*. He has written several books, including three co-authored with Molly Ivins: *Shrub: The Short But Happy Political Life of George W. Bush*, *Bushwhacked: Life in George W. Bush's America*, and most recently, *Bill of Wrongs: The Executive Branch's Assault on America's Fundamental Rights*.

The usual purpose of the annual meeting is to confirm new members to the board of the Houston Chapter. We have room for up to fifteen members on the board; we are currently at eight members. We hope that many of you will consider either serving on the board or volunteering to become more active in ACLU events in the greater Houston area.

To join the board, you must first attend four board meetings in a six-month period and indicate your willingness to join and work with us. Typically we meet the third Wednesday of the month at the ACLU regional office, 1214 West Gray, at 7 p.m. In the coming year, we plan to provide our members with new opportunities to participate in activities that will help grow the

cause of liberty ("Because Freedom Can't Protect Itself") here in Houston and surrounding communities.

This last year the Houston Chapter, in cooperation with the state affiliate, inaugurated the "Give Me Liberty" radio show, which aired on KPFT 91.1 FM monthly. We are now planning to produce the program more frequently. We also put on a "Celebration of the First Amendment" concert starring Roy Zimmerman, a singer-songwriter known for his cutting, insightful and uproarious political humor. There have been several continuing legal education courses (CLEs) produced by the affiliate here in Houston, and more are planned for the future.

We want to expand these and similar activities. We need your support and participation. Whether you can attend the board meetings or not, we hope you will fill out our survey indicating your interests and willingness to participate and support this work.

We'd love to have you attend the meeting to help us take care of the small amount of chapter business, enjoy a delicious meal at the Dharma Café, and then learn from and be entertained by Lou Dubose, who will share some of his stories about politics and freedom. We hope you will have fun with others who share your love of liberty, and then join us in the work of the ACLU in the coming year.

Curt Gibby
ACLU Houston Chapter President

ACLU Houston Chapter Board of Directors

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PLEASE TELL US WHAT CIVIL RIGHTS ISSUES ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU

The ACLU is your organization. Houston Board wants its work and representation to the State Affiliate to reflect the civil liberties concerns of its members. The Board is in the process of planning its public education and outreach strategies for the upcoming year. Please number the issues below in order of importance to you, with one being most important and 10 being least.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Police Brutality | <input type="checkbox"/> Prison and Jail Conditions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Sentencing | <input type="checkbox"/> Racial Profiling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immigration and Border | <input type="checkbox"/> Drug Policy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reproductive Freedom | <input type="checkbox"/> Cyber-Liberties |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Racial justice | <input type="checkbox"/> LGBT Rights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth/Student Rights | <input type="checkbox"/> Open government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free Speech | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious Freedom |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Privacy/Gov't. Surveillance | <input type="checkbox"/> Patriot Act/Homeland Security |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Voting Rights | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |