



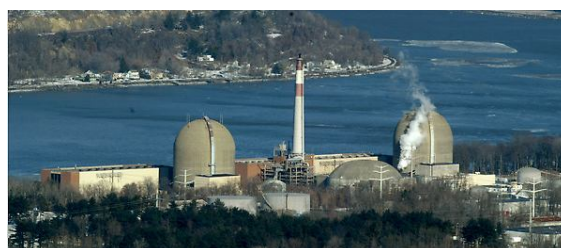
May 2016

Staten Island Democratic Association

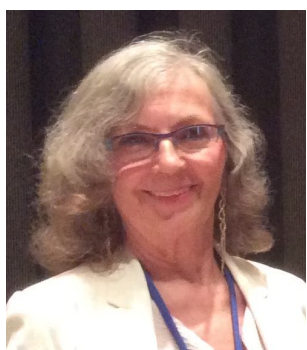
est. 1961 as Staten Island's reform Democratic Club

www.sidems.org

At our Next Meeting:



Indian Point - Nuclear Power



Catherine Skopic

Shut Down
Indian Point Now!



Alfred Meyer

Physicians for
Social Responsibility

Tuesday, May 17, 2016, 8:00 P.M.



Editorial Policy

Items for publication must be submitted to the newsletter no later than the last Friday of the month before the meeting. Please send items to: cmaxbauer@yahoo.com.

Unless explicitly stated, the views herein are those of the authors and not of S.I.D.A.

Chris Bauer, Editor
(917) 576-9248

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“I hold it, that a little rebellion, now and then, is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms are in the physical.”

- Thomas Jefferson
1787

S.I.D.A. Executive Committee

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S.I.D.A. President's Statement

May 2016

Let Us Count the Ways.... We Will Lose If We Don't Pull Together

Like many members of the Staten Island Democratic Association, I became concerned with a number of issues when I was young, a high school student in my teens. That was in the late 1960's – early 1970's, a time of turmoil in the United States, with protests against the war in Vietnam, civil rights marches and riots, the stirring of the women's rights movement. That was when I made a choice to support certain causes, to fight for equality and justice. I registered to vote as soon as I was eligible, and supported Democratic candidates like George McGovern.

In the almost half century since that time, there have been successes and setbacks in the struggle for civil rights, worker rights, women's rights, environmental protection. But now we are standing on the edge of a precipice. If a Republican gets elected president, together with a Republican majority in both the House of Representatives and Senate, all of the progress that we have made over the past century will be undone! Even if a president can be replaced after four years, any appointment to the Supreme Court by that president will be there for life. We already have seen the havoc inflicted on this country by the Rehnquist and Roberts courts.



And now we know that the Republican nominee is Donald Trump! A hate mongering, racist, bigoted, sexist, xenophobic, lying con artist, completely lacking the most rudimentary ability, temperament or experience necessary to hold any public office, much less the presidency! The fate of both the United States and the world depend on us

coming together to make sure that he does not get elected! We must pledge to get behind which ever candidate wins the Democratic nomination for the presidency, and to do everything possible to elect that person as president. Anything less, and all the work, suffering and sacrifices made over the last century to achieve the advances we have made will be undone.

- Joann Olbrich
President



Speakers on Indian Point and Nuclear Power

At our May 17 General Membership Meeting we will have two speakers on the Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant and nuclear power. They provided the following biographies for publication in the newsletter.

Catherine Skopic

“Closing Indian Point is more urgent than ever,” says Catherine Skopic, who has been working diligently on this issue for the past several years. Catherine has her Master's Degree from N.Y.U., is representative to the United Nations for the Anglican Communion Office at the U.N., has been a teacher for many years, an environmental activist and artist who has a water color painting in the International Archive of the National Museum of Women in the Arts.

Catherine has worked with several organizations throughout the years including 350.org, New York City Friends of Clearwater, United for Action and is presently focused on The People's Climate Movement - New York and Shut Down Indian Point Now (S.D.I.P.N.) [Shut Down Indian Point Now!](#)

“It is essential that we pass the New York City Resolution Int. 0694-2015 to close Indian Point. Contact your N.Y.C. Council Member and ask them to sign, if they have not; and thank them, if they have. Also, you can submit comments online regarding the Clean Energy Standard that includes nuclear energy – an oxymoron, if ever there were one. www.dps.ny.gov”

Alfred Meyer

Alfred Meyer is a social activist who serves on the board of directors of [Physicians for Social Responsibility](#), Chairs P.S.R.'s Radiation and Health Committee and is a leader of the New York chapter of PSR. Based in Washington DC, PSR is a U.S. non-profit organization which advocates for the public health by addressing policies regarding nuclear weapons, nuclear power, nuclear waste, climate change and toxic chemicals. A guiding principle for PSR has been to prevent what we cannot cure.

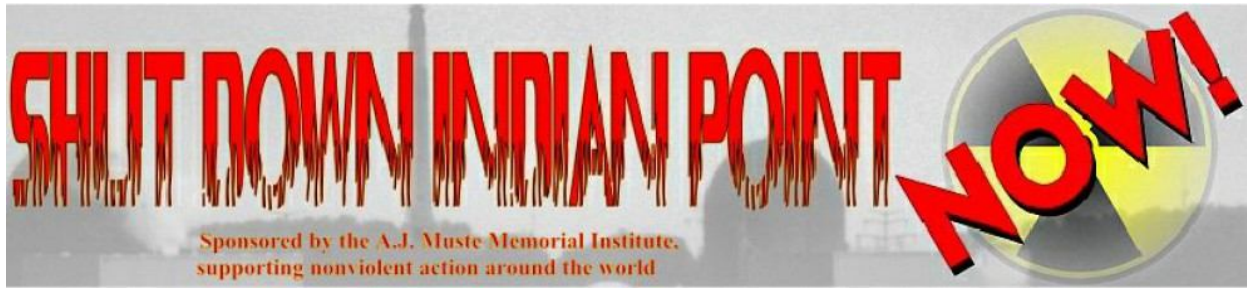
Mr. Meyer is active in New York, networking P.S.R. with other groups and efforts regarding the ongoing nuclear disaster at Fukushima Dai-ichi in Japan, the United Nations' response to Fukushima, and efforts to close the reactors at Indian Point in Buchanan, NY. As Indian Point ages and degrades, leaking spikes of radioactivity into the ground water and the Hudson River and suffering more and more mechanical failures and emergencies, the need to close the reactors, safely secure the large amounts of nuclear waste on site, and move New York to clean, safe and renewable forms of energy is of urgent concern.

Mr. Meyer is also Past-President and Secretary of the board of [Friends of Chernobyl Centers, U.S.](#), which works with Chernobyl Centers for Psycho Social Rehabilitation in five Ukrainian communities greatly affected by the Chernobyl nuclear catastrophe in 1986. He has visited the community centers and the reactor site in Ukraine.

He has also been the Program Director for the [Alliance for Nuclear Accountability](#) in Washington DC (a network of 35 non-profit organizations addressing an array of issues regarding the US nuclear weapons complex), Executive Director of PSR Wisconsin, and Chair of the Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice (a network of over 165 peace and justice organizations). Mr. Meyer resides in Manhattan.



Shut Down Indian Point Now!



Shut Down Indian Point Now NYC (www.SDIPN.info) is a grassroots organization, composed of individuals working in New York City to shut down Entergy's Indian Point Nuclear Plant and against the use of nuclear power in the US and around the world.

The earthquake and tsunami that caused the unprecedentedly severe nuclear power plant disaster, and melt-down, in Fukushima, Japan have served as a wake-up call for people in America, and around the world.

The lessons of Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, and Fukushima bring home the point that contrary to the bland assurances of industry and government officials, nuclear power can never be made safe. In particular, masses of people are becoming aware of the madness of maintaining a potential Fukushima-on-the Hudson located within 24 miles of NY City, where more than 20 million people live within 50 miles of the Indian Point nuclear plant, and where a melt-down would create an unimaginably horrific health, environmental, social, and economic catastrophe for the region, for the country, and for the planet.

There are insoluble problems not only with the safe operation of nuclear power plants, but with the entire nuclear fuel cycle from mining and milling to disposal of the radioactive nuclear waste that is the end-product of nuclear power operations, and which remains hazardous for hundreds of thousands of years.

Furthermore, empirical evidence now demonstrates, or strongly suggests, the feasibility of providing for our region's and the country's energy needs entirely with renewables (solar, wind, wave, and geothermal), and with conservation; and without raising the costs of electricity. This is now within reach, inasmuch as renewable technologies are COMPETITIVE with nuclear power (given a level economic playing field), since NUCLEAR IS INHERENTLY UNCOMPETITIVE, and would cease to exist as a power source without heavy government subsidies.

Other countries have taken the lead in migrating off nuclear and towards renewable energy economies. Switzerland, which has 40% nuclear power, and Germany which has 23% nuclear, are demonstrating that it is not only possible, but an actuality to migrate off nuclear power and to renewable energy NOW, and to do so at a modest cost.



April 2016 Minutes

General Meeting April 26, 2016

President Joann Olbrich opened the meeting at 8:00p.m.

Congressional Endorsement Vote

Susan Chew made a motion that the by-laws be suspended for the endorsement vote for Richard Reichard for Congress in order that the vote be made by acclimation instead of paper ballot, and Dennis Brown seconded the motion, which passed. Phil Jonas made a motion to endorse Richard Reichard for Congress; the motion carried.

Vice President's & Treasurer's Reports

Vice President Bobby Digi gave the Executive Committee report of March 24th. A Civil Rights Committee was formed with Dennis Brown as chair and Clara Ogburn as co-chair. Bobby Digi also gave the Treasurer's Report: as of March 15 there was a balance of \$8,002.94.

Social Secretary's Report

Social Secretary Bryan Ellicott told us that Mail Chimp has been set up for S.I.D.A. group communications. We also now have Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts. The annual picnic will be on July 17. Members can make suggestions for honorees for our annual dinner on Facebook or can e-mail him. He also said that 151 people are on the e-mail list. He has discovered that S.I.D.A. can get a liquor license for wine and beer for \$30, but we will not be getting one due to the location of the picnic.

Prisco Essay Competition

Susan Chew gave the Loretta & Gene Prisco Memorial Essay Competition report: Dennis Brown will create the award certificates and Marie Dwyer will create the brochure. There is approximately \$900 being held in the S.I.D.A. account with Susan Chew and Bonnie Rothman, Treasurer, keeping track of these funds. Mention was made of the Mark Herman memorial.

Guest Speakers on Labor

Bobby Holst introduced Alex Gleason, Policy Associate of the Central Labor Council (C.L.C.), to speak about the Council, an umbrella organization for unions which organizes by building coalitions and serves to build consensus. It works with 35 different union leaders and is seeking to involve the public to create a better world. The main problems facing unions is that work is being outsourced, while there is an insourcing of unskilled workers to replace skilled union workers.

The C.L.C. is organizing New York University faculty. It is monitoring the worker-related bills in the City Council: on laundries, which does not protect the immigrant and underpaid laundry workers; licensing structure which recognizes the need to protect workers who are not trained; a crane bill: at present anyone can work on a crane without training and the C.L.C. position is that crane workers should be union workers and trained, and that rigging workers need proper training; for journeyman plumbers working on fuel gas lines there is not now a

licensing requirement; forty-two percent of emissions are from buildings owned by trans-national organizations.

Additional goals are to provide legal help for people facing foreclosure: at present only union workers with access to legal help get help with this; licensing for mold abatement workers; and to further develop a community-bound initiative so that any union worker can support and protect someone from any other union. It is also working with other organizations to obtain well-paying climate jobs and climate issues. There is a particular problem with putting solar panels on schools as the city is leasing the panels rather than buying them, which means that union workers do not get the jobs.

The CLC is working on a bill for people making \$50,000 or less to receive legal representation in tenant-landlord court. Also, they want to see at least one union member on each community board.

Question: How can we help? Answer: Call your city councilperson.

James Franz and Marilyn Brook, licensed representatives with the Workmen's Compensation Board since 1980, spoke about the evolution of the Board and its problems. The Board is a "no-fault" system. In 1910, the Board was declared unconstitutional and the very next day the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire occurred. Labor did not trust the lawyers who wrote the laws for it as they were viewed as lackeys of management. Now the licensed representatives function as speakers, but there is continuing litigation because the law is unclear on the ratings of disabilities.

There is a complicated system for evaluating disabilities, which is supposed to take the nature of the work into account, which also involves the age, education, job description, and treatments that are established for each body part injured. It is very difficult for doctors outside the Compensation Board system to deal with the system as it becomes a roadblock for them and the person injured. Narcotic medication is often the answer to the difficulties doctors find in trying to arrange treatment.

Carriers are pushed to settle but there is money to be made in holding onto it and not settling. The State Insurance Fund is the aggregate trust fund and cases are not being settled to the benefit of workers. New legislation is being proposed by Governor Cuomo, which calls for the Aggregate Trust Fund to save money and eliminate six judges, which would mean that the judge hearing a case would not be the person making a decision on the case. The Board is taking on regulation of doctors, which means that bureaucrats are making all the decisions. A scaffold law decided that both the building owner and contractor are responsible.

We should be very wary and make sure our elected officials understand all the problems which come with the changes. All the changes make getting ongoing treatment, as is required in some cases, an impossibility, and medication is offered instead. Another problem is that "voluntary binding review" is being offered to speed up decisions on the long-drawn out process, and people who are anxious to have help soon are likely to accept this, which means there is no recourse when there is an adverse decision. Cuomo wants this to become mandatory and not voluntary. A review takes about a year; only unions can help an individual case. Others just wait. S.I.D.A. is urged to contact State Assembly representatives and senators to make them aware of the seriousness of this situation.

Michael Murphy, who has been 20 years with the Communication Workers of America (C.W.A.), spoke about the strike 39,000 Verizon workers are having. There have been no new hires in 16 years. Verizon wants to take away benefits and outsource overseas, as well as seeking a mobile work force up to 250 miles away. There is already a 25 mile mobile force, which means

that Verizon workers may have to go to any borough, depending on need. Two hundred and fifty miles would take them as far as Delaware and would have to be for several days at a time; Verizon wants to move its current staff around rather than hiring more staff in order to increase its profit, and the pay of the top executives, while cutting benefits (especially retirement benefits) to the detriment of the workers. Verizon is cozy with media so the public does not have the information on these conditions. The C.E.O. makes in one day what long-time workers like Michael Murphy make in a year, including his overtime pay.

Other unions are joining C.W.A and the strikers would appreciate support from the general public, such as coming to the public meetings or offering support to the picket lines. He pointed out that Verizon Wireless has nothing to do with the Verizon workers, and is not unionized. Susan Chew suggested we call 800-VERIZON and tell the representative that we support the strikers and Michel Murphy said if the representative is management, they are scabs.

Issues Committee

Bobby Holst has taken over the Issues Committee, which will discuss Phil Jonas' paper on climate change. Bobby would also like to make another type of Issues Committee which has a few members from each of the Democratic clubs on the Island and works to interest and maintain younger members in political involvement and action. Joy Robins mentioned that the Lathrope Voorspuy memorial Scholarship Fund is a way S.I.D.A. has helped address that need.

Elections Committee

Dennis has restarted the Elections Committee of S.I.D.A. and asked that people contact him if they want to be a part of it.

New Business

Richard Reichard thanked the club for the endorsement, financial support, petitioning and all other support, and asked for help with leafleting at the ferry in the evenings, and any other help members feel they can give. Richard said that Gary Carsel had had surgery for the removal of a growth but is getting better. Joann Olbrich suggested that a gift should be sent to him, and a motion was proposed, seconded and passed for this.

Cindy Voorspuy told us about this year's winners of the Lathrope Voorspuy Memorial Scholarship Brunch: Barbara Sanchez and Maria Vella, and that the brunch will be held at LiGreci's Staaten on Forest Avenue on May 15th; \$65. before May 1st and \$70. at the door. Please see the April Newsletter for further methods of payment.

Tom Shcherbenko spoke about the delegates for the presidential race, of which is now one, as well as Ann Taylor.

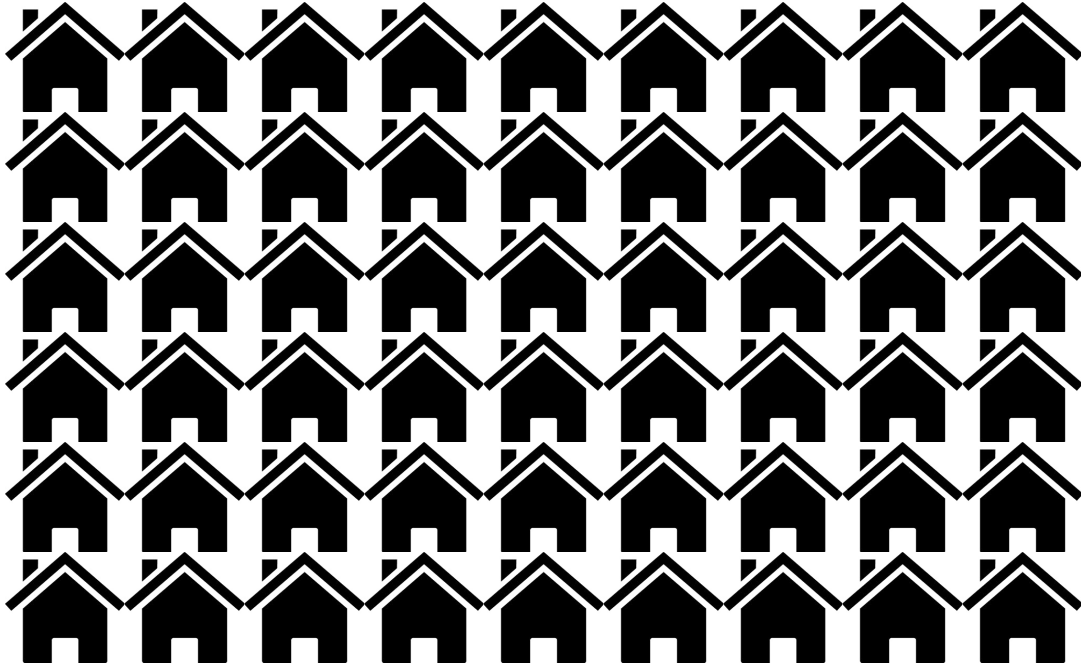
Helen Settles announced that this Saturday at Petrides is a Families Against Violence basketball game.

Respectfully submitted
Susan Chew and Richenda Kramer
(In Marie Dwyer's absence)



Letters

We in S.I.D.A. like to make our views known. The following are some of the letters written by S.I.D.A. members that have appeared in print. Unless otherwise indicated, all letters were in the Staten Island Advance and/or posted on the Advance's website www.silive.com. Unless explicitly stated, the views herein are those of the authors and are not the views of S.I.D.A.



On-line April 12, 2016

Printed April 24, 2016

It's not too Late to Change Fate of Mount Manresa

The Savo Brothers massacred over 100 beautiful old growth trees at Mount Manresa (on Fingerboard Road), endangering wildlife, and subjected surrounding homes to flooding. Then the Savos exposed thousands of Staten Islanders to deadly asbestos dust when they demolished Mount Manresa's historic buildings.

The street names Borough President Oddo assigned the Savo Brothers, Cupidity Drive (An Inordinate Desire for Wealth), Fourberie Lane (Trickery, Deception), Avidita Place (Consuming Greed), are fitting for greedy builders who plan to cram 250 townhouses into a once bucolic Mount Manresa site. It would be better if they are never built! Imagine the traffic! Where are the kids going to go to school?

It's NOT too late for our elected officials, Councilwoman Rose and Borough President Oddo, to put an end to this drama using the power of eminent domain (the city buying the site at fair market price of \$15 million) as was done with Chapin Woods and Fort Hill Park. They must put discretionary funds aside to begin the ULURP process. The site would be put to better use for much needed North Shore schools and open space.

- Barbara Sanchez



On-line April 12, 2016

All Great Progress Came About Bernie's Way

We hear a constant refrain from opponents of Bernie Sanders: that his plans are too "idealistic," "naïve" even; that young people are flocking to Bernie in record numbers because of his idealistic promises of radical change that he would never be able to keep.

After long identifying as a "moderate, centrist," facing an unexpectedly strong primary challenge from the left, Hillary Clinton has adopted the Madison Ave-coined "progressive *who gets things done*" mantra, promising "incremental change." She says she won't make promises she can't keep (implying Bernie is). Her "incremental" change agenda will actually pass.

Newsflash: Hillary's agenda has the same 0 percent chance of passing Paul Ryan's Congress as Bernie's does. Only one candidate is talking about a "political revolution" movement bigger than himself to actually elect Democrats to Congress, and his name is not Hillary.

It is as if we learned nothing from the Obama years. Obama promised to bring about bipartisan consensus in Washington. Since the Republicans took control of Congress in 2010, President Obama's approach has repeatedly been to propose modest compromise proposals, hoping to achieve incremental change by making massive concessions to Republicans - at times even willing to cut Social Security and Medicare. We are fortunate that the Republicans proved themselves so obstructionist that such a "Grand Bargain" never passed. But Obama's approach of coming to the negotiating table with a compromise deal designed to be acceptable for any reasonable Republican to jump on quickly crashed into the reality that the Republican Congress was never going to accept anything proposed by President Obama.

When it comes to negotiations, you start high. You come to the table demanding 110 percent, as Bernie Sanders would do, and then negotiate down from there to achieve any "incremental" change at all. You don't give up the fight for bold progress before it's even begun by conceding it will never happen. You don't start at the negotiating table proposing 40 percent that you assume the Republicans as rational actors would accept and then be forced to negotiate down from there.

Less than a decade ago, same-sex marriage was considered an outlandish unthinkable goal for progressives. We'll have to settle for "incremental" civil unions. But by setting our sights high, now marriage equality is the law of the land.

Putting an end to centuries of institutionalized racism codified in the law did not come about as a result of "incremental change". It took thousands of people marching in the streets to achieve the radical civil rights legislation of the 1960s.

Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal transforming America from an unfettered capitalist society where the elderly literally were left to die into a regulated social welfare state was considered so "socialist" and radical that it nearly led to a fascist coup to overthrow FDR engineered by corporate industrialists.

All great social progress in American history began as "idealistic, naïve" dreams. But it took bold leaders to promise and deliver radical change. Bernie Sanders carries on the bold FDR tradition. Hillary Clinton represents surrender to the status quo.

- Erik Pennacchio



Call for Nominees



Looking for Nominations for Annual S.I.D.A Gala

Do you have a suggestion for who should receive recognition from the Staten Island Democratic Association for their work at this Fall Gala? We have **5** possible awards to give out:

- Hon. Paul O'Dwyer **Humanitarian Award**
- John W. Lavelle **Labor Award**
- Tyrone Butler **Political Action Award**
- Terence Benbow **Environmental Award**
- Peggy Johnson **Club Service Award**

Please consider filling out [this form](#) [this is a hyperlink in the electronic form of this newsletter, or contact Social Secretary Bryan Ellicott] for the Executive Committee. That way we can discuss the individuals or groups of people we want to honor.

Bryan J. Ellicott
Social Secretary
(718) 710-1061
ellicottbryan@gmail.com



Inaugural Mark Herman Memorial Picnic



Sunday, July 17, 2015
2:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Celebrate Summer & the Memory of Mark Herman
at Our Picnic!

Willowbrook Park Barbecue Area

Driving Directions:

Richmond Avenue, turn east on Eton Place
Barbecue area is behind the carousel.



For information contact Social Secretary Bryan Ellicott
ellicottbryan@gmail.com, (718) 710-1061



S.I.D.A.'s Twitter account:



S.I.D.A.'s website:



www.sidems.org

May 17, 2016	June 21, 2016
General Meeting 8:00p.m. Charlie Brown's Steakhouse 1001 Goethals Road North	General Meeting 8:00p.m. Charlie Brown's Steakhouse 1001 Goethals Road North
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catherine Skopic and Alfred Meyer on Indian Point and Nuclear Power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaker TBD

It's Time to Join or Renew Your S.I.D.A. Membership!

To become a member, renew membership, or make a donation, call Bonita Rothman at (917) 596-3724, or complete and return the coupon. Voting privileges begin 45 days after joining.

✂

2016 DUES	DONATION
_____ \$15 - Family	_____ \$5
_____ \$10 - Individual	_____ \$50
_____ \$5 - Senior, Student, or Unemployed	_____ \$100
	_____ Other _____

_____ Check (payable to: S.I.D.A.) _____ Cash

I understand SIDA is a Democratic Party club. I (or we, if this is a Family Membership) am (are) at least 17 years of age and an enrolled Democrat, or intend to enroll as a Democrat upon becoming eligible.

Signature _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____ Apt # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

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