

# Elephant Talk

Plano Republican Women

TFRW Region No: 3 Senate District No: 8

April 2026

## President's Byline



As we approach the 250th anniversary of our great nation, we are reminded of the extraordinary journey that began with courage, conviction, and an unyielding belief in freedom. Two and a half centuries ago, a small group of determined patriots dared to envision a country where liberty would reign, where individuals could pursue their dreams, and where the principles of self-governance would guide the future. Today, we stand on the shoulders of those who sacrificed, persevered, and built the foundation of the United States of America.

When we come together as a club built on shared purpose and mutual respect, we create a powerful environment for growth and empowerment. Each PRW member brings unique experiences and perspectives and as we encourage one another, exchange ideas and celebrate our achievements, our club becomes a place where confidence is strengthened and voices are amplified. This is how we support and strengthen the voice of We The People.

You are appreciated. Your leadership is celebrated. You make a difference.

*Blessings,*

*Kathy Ward*

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## Calendar of Events

**Next Board Meeting**  
April 7, 2026, 11:30  
Napoli's Restaurant  
West Plano

**Next General Meeting**  
April 21, 2026, 11:30  
Saltgrass - East Plano



# PRW April Meeting



## **NEXT GENERAL MEETING:**

**April 21, 2026**

Speaker - Christopher Holton  
Center for Security Policy

## **Security Update**

Christopher Holton is a Senior Analyst and Director for State Outreach at the Center.

During Mr. Holton's 20+ years with the Center, he has directed the Center's Divest Terror Initiative and Shariah Risk Due Diligence Program. He has been involved in education and outreach in more than two dozen states regarding divestment of taxpayer supported pension systems from foreign companies that do business with the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Republic of Sudan, and the Syrian Arab Republic. In addition, he has been involved in state level counterterrorism and countershariah initiatives in dozens of states.

He was a co-author of *War Footing*, published by the US Naval Institute Press and a co-author of *Shariah, Law and Financial Jihad: How Should America Respond?* In 2015, Holton co-authored *The Gulen Movement: Turkey's Islamic Supremacist Cult and Its Contribution to Civilization Jihad in America*.

Holton's work has also been published by *National Review*, *Human Events*, *The American Thinker*, *The Epoch Times*, *Family Security Matters*, *Big Peace*, *World Tribune*, *World Net Daily*, *NewsMax*, and *TheHayride.com*. He has appeared on television on the *O'Reilly Factor*, the *Glenn Beck Program*, *CNBC's Squawk Box* and *Fox and Friends*. On radio he has guested on the *Laura Ingraham program*, the *Michael Reagan show*, the *Brett Winterble show*, the *Roger Hedgecock program*, the *Michael Medved show*, the *Jim Bohannon show* and *Politics With A Punch with Jeff Crouere*.

Holton has been a frequent guest speaker at gatherings and events from Florida to California and has conducted law enforcement training in Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, Arizona, Minnesota, Louisiana, South Carolina, Alabama and Arkansas.

Before joining the Center, Christopher was President of Blanchard and Company, a two hundred million dollar per year investment firm, and editor-in-chief of the Blanchard Economic Research Unit.

# PRW April Meeting

## **NEXT GENERAL MEETING:**

April 21, 2026

Location: Saltgrass Steakhouse Plano East

3320 North Central Expressway, Plano, TX 75074

Time: 11:15 am: Arrive and check-in, 11:30 am: Meeting, Lunch & Program

Lunch is available for \$25.00 with RSVP, cash or check payable to PRW on arrival.

*Lunch will be salad, entree with vegetable, and dessert.*

[RSVP here to pay with credit card](#)

Please note: all Online Credit Card Payments include a processing fee.

To RSVP send an email to: <https://planorepublicanwomen.org/>.

Include your name in your email and specify whether you will/will not be having lunch.







## Legislative Report

### Legislative Update

#### Local Legislative Update

Plano City Council has decided to limit our first Amendment Right to petition our government for a redress of grievances. The council has done this by limiting non-agenda public comments to once a month and only at the end of the Council's regular meetings. Plano Independent School District did the same thing last August.

#### Federal Legislative Update

As I am writing this article, the government is in a partial shutdown. Congress has not agreed on funding for the Department of Homeland Security. This has left DHS workers without a paycheck for over a month. The Democrats finally agreed to a funding bill, however it would carve out funding for ICE officers, so all the other areas of DHS would get funding except ICE. So, the bill passed the Senate, but the House refused to pass the Senate's bill. That means DHS employees continue to go without pay.



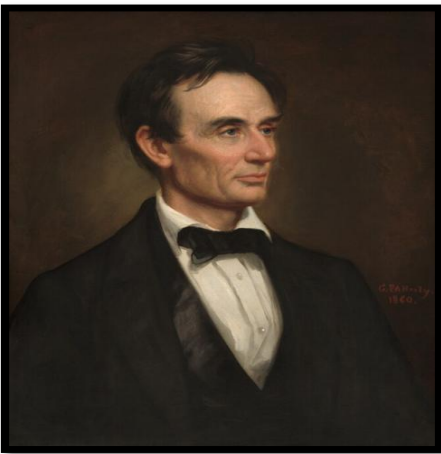
# AMERICANISM REPORT



## ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND FORD'S THEATER: 160 YEARS APRIL 1, 2026

The month of April is ripe with historical significance. The Titanic sank in April of 1912, both the Civil War (1861) and American Revolution (1775) began in April, and General George Washington was sworn in as the first President of the United States, also in April (1789). However, it is important to note that this month marks the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln at Ford's Theater, which occurred on a Good Friday, April 14, 1865.

### An overview of Abraham Lincoln's life



Tragedy after tragedy could be one way of summing up Abraham Lincoln's life. The son of poor farmers from Kentucky, Lincoln was born in 1809 and moved multiple times as his family sought to build a better life than what they left behind. In Indiana, his father, Tom Lincoln, built a three-sided shack while working on a small one-room cabin for the family as Abe cut the fields with an axe in his hand, clearing brush all day, not even 10 years old. About that same time, his mother fell sick and died, and when Tom remarried shortly after, Abe lost his newborn sister of the second marriage too. In adulthood, Lincoln traveled to New Salem, Illinois, where he studied law and became active in the Whig party, created to oppose the policies of Andrew Jackson.

Lincoln served in the Illinois legislature for four terms and met a beautiful lady, Ann Rutledge, who passed away from illness before he could even propose. In 1837, Lincoln moved to Springfield to work as an attorney where he continued to represent the Whig Party by running as a Presidential Elector for Whig Presidential candidates from 1840-1852. In 1847, he became a United States Congressman on the Whig ticket, serving one term. He retired from politics shortly after, but re-emerged in 1854, fueled by opposition to the newly passed Kansas-Nebraska Act, which permitted slavery in new territories by popular vote. It is through the debate over slavery which brought forth the new Republican party, which Lincoln was eager to join. Although he lost two bids for the Senate, during this time Lincoln participated in the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates with Democrat Stephen Douglas in 1858, preparing Abe to be catapulted into the spotlight for the upcoming Presidential Election.

The rest, of course, is well-known history. Abraham Lincoln became the 16<sup>th</sup> President of the United States in 1860, but bitter factions surrounding slavery forced our country into The Civil War, commencing in April of 1861. To shore up additional support near the end of the second full year of battle, Lincoln gave his famous Emancipation Proclamation, where he declared that enslaved people in Confederate states of rebellion "are, and henceforward shall be free." This directive served to free slaves in these rebel states, allowing them to flee to Union lines and enlist as African American soldiers, tipping the scale for the North. Democrats held rallies everywhere against Lincoln and the Emancipation, but the Union was victorious at key battles in Atlanta,



# AMERICANISM REPORT



Mobile Bay and the Shenandoah Valley, helping the war come to a close and ensuring Lincoln's re-election in November of 1864. Winning still came with a personal cost; Abe's young son, Willie, passed away and his wife, Mary Todd, began to decline in mental and emotional health.

Robert E. Lee surrendered his Confederate Army to General Ulysses S. Grant at the Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865, officially ending the bloodiest war ever held on U.S. soil, where over 1.5 million had died from death or disease. While the magnitude and weight of loss could be felt across America, there was also great celebration and joy for the war's conclusion, which found the President and his wife attending a theater play, *Our American Cousin*, at Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C. just five days later.

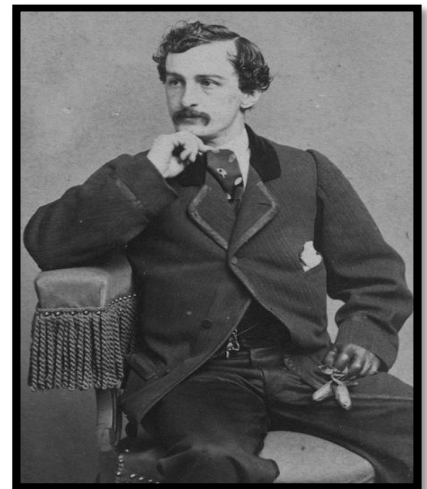
## Ford's Theater, a patriotic welcome fit for a president



Built in 1833 as the First Baptist Church of Washington, the space was sold to John T. Ford when the church congregation expanded and moved to another building. Ford converted it to a theater, but the building caught fire and was completely destroyed. Not wanting to be a man of defeat, Ford quickly rebuilt the structure, and Ford's Theater reopened to the public in 1863. The President had been a frequent attendee, and on the night of April 14, 1865, John Ford installed a

picture of George Washington and beautiful patriotic decorations encircling the President's box to mark the celebratory occasion of Lincoln's visit.

Lincoln, his wife and friends had settled into their stately box seats above the stage, eager for a night off from politics. But present in the audience was John Wilkes Booth, a Shakespearian actor and Confederate sympathizer, angry at the Union and full of hatred for what Lincoln stood for. Booth blamed the President for the deaths of so many Americans and felt he would do the South an incredible service by ridding the world of Abraham Lincoln. Perhaps this thespian blended too well his knowledge of plays with reality. As he made his way to the box, he assumed the character of Brutus attempting to rid Rome of the power-hungry Julius Caesar, a play he had performed in at the theater last year. Booth, well-known to the audience, obtained easy access to the President's box, and was right on cue, pulling the trigger as the audience roared with laughter at an actor's comedic line in the third act. But then again, Booth was all too familiar with the script. Then, as he struggled with Lincoln's guests,



Booth leapt over the front of the box railing, catching his spur on the draping and landing off-balance onto the stage. With a broken leg, he ran for the back theater exit door and a waiting horse. He would be on the run for the next 12 days as a fugitive of the law, and Abraham Lincoln



# AMERICANISM REPORT



would be carried next door to a civilian's home, where he would pass away in the early morning hours of April 15, 1865.

Abraham Lincoln's life may have seemed tragic, but his sufferings were entangled in a series of historical accomplishments and served as a testament of great perseverance; a principled man of character and faith who fought for Republican ideals and never surrendered, even in the face of national and personal loss.

## The last surviving witness

On a famous episode of *I've Got a Secret*, airing February 8, 1956, game show guest Mr. Samuel J. Seymour appeared with a unique secret for the panel: as a child, he attended Ford's Theater when Lincoln was shot. Mr. Seymour was five years old, and upon hearing the shots ring out, was only concerned with the poor individual he saw who fell from the balcony onto the stage below. He did not have the realization at the time that President



Lincoln up in his box had been injured. The panel, particularly Jayne Meadows, was rather clever and guessed his secret right away, but as a token of appreciation for appearing on the show, the 95-year-old was offered the full \$80 prize and even his own favorite brand of cigars, a rare deviation from the Winston cigarettes the TV show contractually promoted. The episode was a historic achievement of its own right, connecting someone from the distant past to the present day through the newly created medium of television. Mr. Seymour passed away a mere two months after the episode aired – in April, of course.

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## Sources

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<https://www.lincolnshrine.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/The-Life-of-Abraham-Lincoln.pdf>

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# AMERICANISM REPORT



**America 250 Celebrations** are happening all around town in the months leading up to our country's anniversary. We will feature several of these events in upcoming newsletters.

**Frisco Heritage Museum: Becoming the United States** (opens April 11)

A stirring new exhibit at the Frisco Heritage Center celebrating America's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday by tracing the nation's journey from revolutionary sparks to a unified republic. Historic documents, period clothing, and hands-on experiences bring this transformative era to life, offering a deeper understanding of the people, conflicts, and dreams that gave rise to the United States. It's a compelling tribute to resilience, innovation, and the enduring spirit of freedom. Admission to the museum is FREE! For more info, visit [www.friscotexas.gov](http://www.friscotexas.gov)

**The Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum: The Pursuit of Liberty** (May 12<sup>th</sup>)

The Rule of Law series, a conversation with Jeffrey Rosen, a best-selling author and CEO Emeritus of the National Constitution Center. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased on the website, [www.dhhrm.org](http://www.dhhrm.org)

**DHHRM: The Walt Disney Studios and World War II** (now through September 10<sup>th</sup>)

Discover how Disney transformed its studio into a wartime operation producing original artwork, as well as training and public-service films, and how artists, employees, and Walt Disney himself contributed to the war effort. More than 500 rare artifacts, film clips and stories of innovation and sacrifice in a family-friendly exhibit explores how one of America's most beloved entertainment companies helped achieve the Allied victory. Tickets are \$12-19 and free for Dallas Holocaust Museum members. [www.dhhrm.org](http://www.dhhrm.org)



**TELL THEIR STORY: A TRIBUTE TO OUR SERVICE MEMBERS**

Do you have a story to share with us about a family member who was enlisted in a branch of our Armed Forces? Perhaps a father or (great) grandfather from The Civil War, WWI and II, Korea, Vietnam, or a son or daughter who has recently served our country? We want to hear from YOU! Let's keep these service member's stories alive. To be featured in an upcoming newsletter, email Crystal Griffith, Americanism Chair, at [Precinct79chair@gmail.com](mailto:Precinct79chair@gmail.com).

# PRW In Action



## Political Action Hours

by Political Action Chair Jennifer Groysman



It has been a very busy month. We had the primaries, the Precinct and Senate District Conventions. That means our members should have racked up lots of political action hours in March. Remember your travel time counts too. You can turn in your hours online at [www.planorepublicanwomen.org](http://www.planorepublicanwomen.org)

**Keep the challenge going! 10 hours per month!**



**What counts as**

## **Political Activity Hours**

- **Attending Political Meetings**
  - Political Events & Fundraisers
  - County or State GOP meetings
  - School Board or City Council meetings
- **Travel**
  - Any time you spend traveling to and from political events and meetings.
- **Legislative Advocacy**
  - Time spent calling, writing, about legislative issues
- **Campaign Activities**
  - Block walking, sign waving, phone banking, digital work
  - Running for office
- **Election Support**
  - Election Judge, Election Clerk, Deputy Voter Registrar
- **Appointed or Elected Service**
  - Prep time, travel time, and attendance at meetings you were appointed or elected to serve at any level

*Any political activity you do that is not for your primary job counts!*

## CARING FOR AMERICA



# AGAPE

Resource & Assistance Center, Inc.

### Your Gift Changes Lives – Donate Today

The Agape Resource & Assistance Center in East Plano, TX, helps women, moms and their children facing situational homelessness. With the help of case workers and counselors, women and children typically stay with Agape from 6 months to a year, during which time they gain the skills, strength and stability for self-sufficiency. **Bring donations to the meeting.**

#### Move in Items:

- Laundry Baskets tall baskets or collapsible
- Coloring Books
- Planners (no dates)
- Trash Cans (small for bedroom)
- Tumblers/Water Bottles for kids and women
- Welcome Mats for our homes
- Treats/Snacks for welcome bags, like chocolate and candy
- Heating pads
- Cozy socks

#### Move Out Items:

- Trash Bags
- Deodorant
- Shampoo and conditioner  
for curly hair
- Swiffer Mop Replacement Pads
- Kids toothpaste
- Diaper Cream
- Kids Tylenol
- Kids ibuprofen
- Paper Towels
- Toilet Paper



# Membership Report

by Membership Chair Joan Hart

## Many Thanks To Our Club Patrons

These members have donated \$100.00 in cash, given items to the club, or paid budgeted expenses valued at \$100.00 or more.

**Debby Arrant**

**Deb Blencowe**

**Ushma Ferguson**

**Catherine Gibb**

**Jennifer Groysman**

**Joan Hart**

**Madelon Issaeff**

**Donna Krauss**

**Cleo Marchese**

**Lynn McCoy**

**Dana Sickler**

**Merrie Spaeth**

**Kathy Ward**

**Di Wike**

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**We are currently accepting Membership Renewals for 2026! And we always welcome new members!**

**Membership dues can be paid at the meeting, online through our website <https://planorepublicanwomen.org/become-a-member>**

**Or checks can be mailed to Plano Republican Women, P O Box 940461, Plano, TX 75094-0461.**

### **Memberships:**

**\$40 Full Active Single Membership (PRW receives \$15, TFRW and NFRW receive \$25)**

**\$45 Full Active Membership with Spouse**

**\$25 Associate Membership – for Men or Active Members of other Republican Women Clubs**

**\$20 Young Affiliate (young woman, age 10-17)**

**\$140 Patron Member (includes Full Active Single Membership)**

**\$145 Patron Member with Spouse**

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# PRW Officers and Birthdays

Kathy Ward, President  
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Catherine Gibb, 1st VP Programs - 214-929-0857

Joan Hart, 2nd VP Membership  
[RSVP@PlanoRepublicanWomen.org](mailto:RSVP@PlanoRepublicanWomen.org)

Lynn McCoy, 3rd VP Awards

Ashley Bergerson, 4th VP, Ways and Means

Janet Troutman, Recording Secretary

Trina Westberg, Corresponding Secretary

Dana Sickler, PAC Treasurer

## April Birthdays

Shelby Johnson	4/8
Kathaleen Sharpe	4/18
Sherran Gammon	4/20
Chris Beninger	4/23
Arya Knapp	4/25
Anne Logan	4/25
Sharon Bradford	4/27



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### Vision and Mission Statement:

Plano Republican Women is an American political club, bringing together women to positively impact the direction of our nation. We come together as a collective force advancing the power of women through political access and participation.

Our mission is to see women from all age groups and walks of life as key players at the political table of national, state, and local issues.

