



Don Kirkpatrick, like many El Paso residents, first came to Fort Bliss in 1961, at the end of his tour of duty in the U. S. Army. Upon his release from active duty, Don entered the U. S. Army Reserve as a second lieutenant and served as Information Officer for the El Paso Subsector Command for five years. He returned to active duty in 1962 to attend the U. S. Army Information Officers' School. He graduated third in a class of sixty. With good fortune, the company for which he had worked in his hometown of Odessa before enlisting in the Army had purchased KROD Radio and TV in El Paso while he was serving with the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service in Ethiopia. Don went to work as the evening disc jockey at KROD Radio the day after his arrival in El Paso. Later, in 1964, he was the host of a television program on KROD-TV called "The Group and D.K." Twenty talented young El Pasoans performed each Saturday on the half-hour variety program.

Don moved on to other local radio stations and in 1973 joined deBruyn-Retting Advertising as Account Executive and Broadcast Producer. While there, he worked on Congressman Richard C. White's 1976 re-election campaign. That same year, he wrote and produced "El Paso: City by the Rio Grande" featuring Marty Robbins. The promotional film for the City of El Paso earned the Golden Eagle Award from the Council on International Non-Theatrical Events. Don opened his own ad agency four years later and then, in 1981, he moved to Pagosa Springs, Colorado, where he owned half interest in the local radio station.

Returning to El Paso in 1983, Don spent nearly five years as Marketing Director for Cowtown Boot Company, then several years as an Account Executive at KTSM Radio and KOFX-FM Radio. He retired in 1999 after nearly fifty years in radio, television and advertising. Along the way, he was awarded the George Washington Honor Medal from the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge for a radio program highlighting the Bill of Rights. He also earned the Douglas MacArthur Award for Americanism in Broadcasting in 1973.

Volunteer Work:

A lifelong Democrat, Don Kirkpatrick was named Volunteer of the Year by the El Paso County Democratic Party in 2000. He worked to elect his friend, Queta Fierro, as Chair of the Party and served her as office administrator for a year. Don received special recognition for producing, directing and editing a video tribute to legendary El Paso Democrat Woodrow Bean in 2000. For the past ten years, Don has sent daily updates about Democratic politics to an extensive email list. In 2000, he took on the responsibility of Executive Editor of the Texas Democratic Times, a weekly newspaper "dedicated to the ideals of American Democratic and to the confoundment of the opposition." Don contributed to the publication of 165 issues of the newspaper.

During the past 40-plus years, Don has worked tirelessly to elect an extensive list of Democratic candidates on the local, state and federal levels. He has offered advice and expertise to first-time candidates and to experienced officeholders alike, all without compensation.

Beliefs:

Don likes to quote Rep. Sylvester Turner who told the Democratic state convention in Fort Worth in 2000: "On any given day, the worst Democrat is far, far better than the best Republican!" Don believes that was true then and it is true today.