



# COLLIN COUNTY DELEGATES OFFER *conventional* wisdom

BY CINDY BOYKIN & BRITNEY PORTER

*It has been a heated race for the highest office in the land, and quite a historical one. An African-American and a woman crossed the sidelines to become viable candidates, and it's the first time in history that two sitting senators are the principal opponents.*

*As both candidates look toward the finish line to become the next president, Plano Profile looks back at the **Democratic** and **Republican** conventions to reflect on their impact in this historical election.*

## CHAD CONNER

**O**N AUGUST 28, Sen. Barack Obama moved the Democratic National Convention outdoors to a football stadium, echoing John F. Kennedy's move to Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum in 1960. More than 80,000 people packed Denver's Invesco Field, including celebrities like Farrah Fawcett, Susan Sarandon, and Oprah Winfrey.

Representing the Democratic Party of Collin County was Murphy resident **Dr. Chad Conner**, Sen. District 8. Of the 4,119 delegates, Conner was part of the 80 percent who had already pledged a candidate in the primaries. But when Hillary Clinton stepped out of the race, Conner said, "at the end of the day it was her, more than anyone else, who convinced me to support Obama."

Obama's 43-minute speech inspired



not only a football stadium of supporters, but 38 million television viewers. "It was amazing to see how so many people have become so inspired by a politician,"

said Conner. "Shouldn't all of our leaders be so moving?"

Charisma and a polished persona aren't the only qualities that have garnered Obama attention. His cry for change appeals to voters most, particularly young voters who don't want "more of the same," one of a handful of chants the crowd hurrahed, including "yes we can."

When the 47-year-old mixed-race Obama said, "I realize I'm not the likeliest candidate for this office; I don't fit the typical pedigree," the crowd roared. Democrats want a fresh perspective in Washington; they look at the last eight years and see a war with no end, a volatile economy, high gas prices, and a costly healthcare system.

Conner is an anesthesiologist at Baylor University Medical Center in downtown Dallas, and said the best reason to vote for Obama is because

of his universal healthcare plan. “Over 25 percent of Texans are uninsured. With the economy slipping, any of us could be next. Obama wants to create a national health exchange that gives those without the benefits of a large employer the same bargaining position for affordable group rates. Without group rates and employer contributions, health insurance for a family is as much as \$12,000 per year—and that’s if everyone is perfectly healthy.”

Obama pledged in his speech to work toward a “95 percent tax cut on working families”; that is, a tax cut on families who earn less than \$250,000 a year. But what his (and McCain’s) speech lacked was a solution on immigration.

Said Conner, “First of all, 12 million immigrants are not a problem, but 12 million *illegal* immigrants are. I think they both avoided the issue because they essentially agree we need stronger border security and a path to legitimacy for illegals who are here now,” said Conner. “Our country faces a lot of challenges. Obama’s ability to inspire others means that more people

will be participating in solutions.”

Thirty-four electoral votes will ultimately decide Texas’ role in the election on November 4. Perhaps there is no perfect solution in a two-party system formed by an electoral college. “One person should equal one vote, period,” said Conner. “Unfortunately, because the electoral college is winner-take-all, most of the attention is focused on swing states. That is B.S., because politicians tend to ignore Democrats in Texas and Republicans in New York.”

At the end of Obama’s address, fireworks shot up, confetti rained down, and “Only in America” by Brooks & Dunn played in the background. Did he choose the song because “only in America” could Obama become president? Conner recited another lyric in the song, “*Where we dream as big as we want to...*” I think it has more to do with his vision for a better future, than it being simply about him. Obama’s campaign has been built on hope and inspiration. He understands the problems and is committed to guiding America towards a solution.”

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Profile photos/Mike Newman

## FRED MOSES

**E**ven before he was old enough to vote, **Fred Moses** was a proud Republican. “When I was a teenager, I got my mother to vote Republican. That was something!” he said.

In September 2008, it was his turn to cast a vote on behalf of family and friends at home. As an elected delegate to the Republican National Convention, he voiced their collective support of Sen. John McCain for President of the United States.

“What an exciting time to go to the convention! You always see it on television, but to be there on the floor, to be there with our state delegation, and especially to be at such a historic convention was really exciting,” said



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