

True Blue

The Adams County Democrat
July 2014

Challenges We Must Consider

I'm a retired social studies teacher from Adams County, most recently instructing high school juniors and seniors in a course entitled "U.S. Government." Over the years I also worked on a few candidates' campaigns. One summer I tried to call every registered voter in Adams County – in an attempt to help someone I admired become an elected official.

What I thought I learned that summer surprised me. It appeared that well over half of the residents of Adams County weren't registered to vote! No wonder my students thought that learning about "government" was irrelevant.

Recently I did some research and learned that according to census estimates for 2013, there were 21,219 individuals over the age of 18 living in Adams County. That same year 17,444 were actually registered to vote, BUT only 5,239 went to the polls. It appears that roughly 2/3rds of those who are registered and 2/3rds of those who actually vote "declare" themselves to be Republican. There do not appear to be many "true" Independents. So what does that mean for those of us who are Democrats?

Obviously we have a lot of work to do . . . and perhaps there is a fairly "fertile field" in which to plant our seeds. Some of the individuals who told me that they weren't registered may not have realized that their names would not be dropped from the "active" roles until they "missed" two federal elections and were notified by mail that they were no longer registered. Basically, this would occur if they had not voted in 4 years &/or failed to update their registration before the end of 6 years. Also, it is possible that some of those who are "registered" have, in fact, passed on but have not yet been purged from the election data base. However, it would appear that there may be approximately 5,000 "voters" out there who have registered as Democrats and who may not actually plan to vote in the upcoming election.

What can we do about this? I don't have any answers, but I feel strongly that it is important that we try to do *something*. This year we are faced with what could be a "close" Congressional race. In two more years we will be electing a "new" President. If we truly feel that our party has better answers than those offered by the "loyal opposition," we need to not only "get out the vote" (GOTV), but also to educate ALL of our friends and neighbors concerning the issues and individuals that will impact our lives for years to come. Are you ready to put your shoulder to the wheel?

"MILITANT WOMEN OF THE PARTY STAGED ENTHUSIASTIC MEET AT SCHOOL AUDITORIUM"

...is the title of an article in the Peoples' Defender on November 3, 1932. Regarding women who believed in their right to vote as "militant", the item went on to describe the meeting: The invocation was given by the Adams County Superintendent of Schools, Edna M. Howland; Miss Mary White, the Governor's daughter, attended; Miss Nelly Dunlap, Democratic Committee Woman for the 6th District (which used to encompass Adams County) spoke. More than 1000 people attended!

Let's hear it for Militant Adams County Women!!!!

Voter Rights: Why They Matter

The right of citizens to vote—and to have their votes counted—is the cornerstone of a democracy. The issue of voter rights has always been a contentious one in this country, and current times are no exception.

The U.S. Constitution does not specifically address voter rights in the original Articles, leaving the matter to the discretion of state governments. This has contributed to wide variances in how individual states manage elections, with consequent claims of unfairness (i.e., voter suppression). During the past 150 years, six amendments to the U.S. Constitution have been passed to try to ensure equal protection for citizens' voting rights. Many lawsuits have been filed challenging local and state policies which excluded segments of the population from the basic right to cast their votes, resulting in case law from which interpretations are made about what is and is not to be allowed by state and local boards of election. Ultimately, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was passed. Yet, disputes around elections have persisted.

History clearly reveals that many segments of our citizenry have had to vehemently fight for the right to vote. Our nation's founding fathers initially permitted only Caucasian males who owned large parcels of land and/or who had sizeable wealth to cast their ballots. Over time, and with much controversy, tension, and effort, this right was eventually extended to include poor people of various racial backgrounds, African-Americans, women, Native Americans, immigrants who had become citizens, non-Protestants, non-Christians, and young people 18 years of age and older. This last group fought for and gained the right to vote during the Viet Nam War; protestations and arguments that it was unjust to draft 18 year olds to fight and die in the name of our country but not allow them to vote ultimately prevailed.

Even with constitutional amendments, federal case law, and eventually, enacted federal law, local boards of elections or Secretaries of State have come up with creative strategies to suppress the vote to manipulate electoral outcomes. These strategies have included poll taxes, religious tests, literacy tests, and durational residency requirements (which create obstacles for individuals in transition, experiencing homelessness, etc.).

More recently, in states such as ours which are so crucial in national elections, efforts have been made to manipulate voter outcomes by curtailing voter registration opportunities, limiting hours and days when votes can be cast, etc. Within the past three years during the Kasich administration, federal district courts have had to intervene and make four separate rulings reversing changes to Ohio election laws and policies made by the state legislature and/or administration.

As stated earlier, the right of citizens to vote—and to have their votes counted—is the cornerstone of a democracy. It is the fundamental right upon which our civil liberties are predicated. Ordinary men and women have fought—and some have died—to gain voting rights and to make the collective will of the citizenry known. Voting is how we shape our local, state and national destinies in a meaningful fashion.

Please be sure to vote on November 4. Please also encourage and help at least one family member, friend, neighbor, or acquaintance in getting registered to vote and in actually getting their vote cast.

Unless someone like you care a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not.

Dr. Seuss

Memories

An Adams County Democrat remembers how important voting was to her mother. Mom was married in 1918 and voted from the very first year American women were given the vote. She remembers how unhappy Mom was the one and only time she failed to exercise her right – because there was confusion over who would pick her up to take her to the polls.

She also remembers, during her youth in Kentucky, how the right to vote was treated with such respect and honor. People celebrated the anniversary of the women's right to vote. They took great effort to drive folks to the polls. Voting was a priority, she reports, "We never went to school on election day"!

She is happy to share her Mom's favorite joke with us: Once upon a time a man was bear-hunting in the woods when a big storm came up. He took refuge in an old hollow tree trunk. When the storm was over he could see out of the trunk through one of the knotholes, but try as he may, he couldn't climb out. Night came. He started to review his life and thinking about all the bad things he had done. He thought he was a goner. But when he got to remembering how he had voted against women's suffrage, he felt so small, he crawled right out of that hole.

One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors.

Plato



Marek Tyszkiewicz
Democratic Candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives

Marek Tyszkiewicz (pronounced tiz-kev-ich) is a 48 year old actuary and the Democratic candidate running to represent Ohio's 2nd Congressional District.

Marek's parents are Polish immigrants, survivors of Siberian prison camps during World War II. They, like so many others, came to this country pursuing the American Dream.

Born and raised in the mid-West, Marek grew up on a small farm with his three brothers. His father worked on the highways as a state employee. His mother worked the second shift in a factory until they saved enough to buy their 80 acre farm. The Tyszkiewicz farmhouse only had two bedrooms, but by living modestly and saving, Marek's parents gave all four of their sons the gift of college educations.

Marek earned his bachelor's degree in mathematics and started his career as a math and physics teacher at a public high school. He is currently an actuary and small business owner. For the last 24 years, Marek has helped municipalities across the nation fund billions of dollars of pension and health obligations, providing secure retirement for millions of people.

Senator Sherrod Brown recently endorsed Marek and stated: "I'm proud to support Marek Tyszkiewicz for Congress in the 2nd District. Marek's experience, values and integrity make him the right choice to protect Social Security, keep our commitment to our veterans and create jobs here in Ohio."

"I am honored to be the democratic candidate for the 2nd district," says Tyszkiewicz. "No one will work harder than me to represent you and break the gridlock in Congress that's stopping this country from moving forward."

To learn more about Marek, please visit his website at www.ElectIntegrity.com

General Election Candidates - November 2014
State Office Candidates – endorsed by the Ohio Democratic Party

Governor & Lieutenant Governor: Ed Fitzgerald & Sharon Neuhardt

www.edfitzgeraldforohio.com

Secretary of State: Nina Turner

www.ninaturner.org

Auditor of State: John Patrick Carney

www.votecarney.com

Treasurer of State: Connie Pillich

www.conniepillich.com

Attorney General: David Pepper

www.davidpepper.com

Justice Ohio Supreme Court: John P. O'Donnell

Justice Ohio Supreme Court: Thomas Letson

Ohio House of Representatives 90th District: Thomas Jefferson Davis

Representative to Congress 2nd District: Marek Tyszkiewicz

www.ElectIntegrity.com



Friends,

I am blessed by the opportunity to run for not only state representative but for the 90th district. The 90th district is diversified in many ways from not only community to community but house to house.

When asked during travels with my job what's my area like I tell them, "I live in an area that neighbors are often as much family as friends". I look forward to meeting you soon.

Your Friend
Thomas Jefferson Davis
Candidate State Representative
90th house district

WHO WILL CARE FOR VETERANS?

Recent events involving the Veterans' Administration provide evidence that hundreds of thousands of U.S. Veterans returning home after multiple tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan are being profoundly underserved. Returning from multiple deployments, many American combat veterans are unable to reenter civilian life. They are suffering from complex medical and psychological problems. Many cannot manage to reengage with their families, find work, or tolerate working once employed. They are vulnerable to becoming homeless and helpless. Some veterans are demonstrating violent outbursts and some are developing addictions. They are committing suicide in epidemic numbers.

Because of modern combat methods and improved medical interventions in-the-field, more people are surviving combat, leaving increased numbers of men and women needing treatment for brain injury, lost limbs and the psychological consequences of stress and trauma. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has always been a product of war and today it is at epidemic levels. PTSD is a condition in which a malfunctioning nervous system fails to normalize after trauma and causes a range of debilitating symptoms. The diagnosis was originally based on an ancient Greek concept meaning "out of heart". In the Civil War this was called "Nostalgia", then "Irritable Heart". In WWI it was called "Shell Shock" and in WWII, "Battle Fatigue".

Veterans' Hospitals are underfunded, understaffed and unequipped to meet the needs of the population they were created to serve – and have been ever since the US began a war in Iraq that was supposed to last months and became, along with the war in Afghanistan, the longest war in American history. The tragedy of combat veterans lacking necessary services is not the result of big government and bureaucratic redundancies and snafus. Its cause lies in a Congress quick to fund wars but refusing to deal with the consequences of war. It lies in the inaction that results from the customary Republican demand for "PRIVATIZATION". It lies with those who insist the government is neither able to nor responsible for providing critical and necessary services for veterans. What are they holding out for? Halliburton to manage the VA system?

Older men declare war. But it is the youth that must fight and die.

Herbert Hoover

Annual Fundraiser

The Adams County Democrat Club had a very successful dinner and fundraising event in May with a large crowd of loyal Democrats and a few Republicans to meet and greet Judge John O'Donnell, candidate for Ohio Supreme Court and Marek Tyszkiewicz, candidate for 2nd district Congressional seat. The group was energized when Commissioner Paul Worley introduced State Senator Nina Turner who is running for Ohio Secretary of State. All the things she said made us proud to be Democrats. She is not running for an office, but running for a cause: equal access to the ballot box!! What a dynamic speaker she is! Run, NINA, Run!!!

We also heard from Thomas Jefferson Davis, candidate for 90th district State Rep and Ronny Richards thanked those who voted in the Primary and pledged to work to help elect Marek Tyszkiewicz to Congress.

Janet Campbell, Club President and all the Club Officers and planning committee are to be commended for their efforts in making the event a success! Russ Arey and Dale & Jerry Grooms conducted a lively and entertaining auction. We thank all those who bid and all those who donated. Special thanks to all our canners, bakers and walking stick makers!

A great night and the beginning of the Blue Wave to take back OHIO!

The Adams County Democrat Club Annual Picnic will be held on August 9th, 6:00 at Glendale Park.
Join Us!

We realize that most of you are registered voters, but we have enclosed a Voter Registration form with the mailed Newsletter for anyone you know who would like to vote. The form can be hand delivered to the Board of Elections in West Union or mailed (properly folded, taped and stamped!) Registration forms are also available on-line

True Blue
C/o Adams County Democrat Executive Committee
PO Box 143
Seaman, OH 45679 – 0143

Paid for by the Adams County Democrat Executive Committee
Dennis J Grooms – Treasurer
2525 Wintersteen Road Blue Creek, Ohio 45616