

True Blue

The Adams County Democrat
May 2013

UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES: WAR ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Before the beginning of the first Obama administration the Pentagon identified global climate change as the number one security threat to the U.S. History shows that large areas stressed by extreme weather, limited access to drinkable water and reduced ability to grow food can mobilize desperate people to cross borders. Economies can crash. Already, violent storms, drought and rising seawaters are threatening our land and coastlines. For example, on the east coast, in the 620-mile area north of Cape Hatteras, nine naval bases are located, and the ocean along that stretch is rising at three to four times the global average. Though Congress, with John McCain at the fore, has criticized the military for being involved in building new technologies and has tried to block them, the U.S. Armed Forces have been engaged in just such efforts for years. Economists claim that the costs of items such as steel, radar, GPS and microchips have been driven down because of military research and development and its purchasing power. Because of the U.S. Armed Forces' work, computers, microwave ovens and cellphones are widely used today. Now, they are leading the war on climate change.

What are the branches of the U.S. Armed Forces working on now? The Army's new Humvee burns 70% less fuel than the standard. Fort Drum will soon get all its electricity from animal and plant waste. The Marines, along with the Army, is developing self-sufficient, net-energy-zero bases that use solar generators, fridges and micro-power grids. Marines in Afghanistan are using solar "blankets" that power communications gear and eliminate the need for batteries. The Air Force has the largest photovoltaic solar array in North America at Nelis AFB in Nevada, saving \$1 million annually and comparable to taking 185,000 cars off the road. The Navy is working on producing fuel from seawater, the world's largest source of CO2 and hydrogen. Also, they operate the world's largest diesel/wind hybrid power plant.

Currently, the Navy, the United States Department of Agriculture and the Department of Energy are each investing \$170 million in private-sector biofuel refineries. In conjunction with existing private capital, a projected 26 new refineries will be operating by 2015. Biofuels now cost \$4.55/gallon to make. The DOE estimates the cost will fall to \$2.32 by 2017.

Thankfully, the Pentagon's leadership and investment in research and development is acting as a form of antidote to the failures of Congress.

(Sources: DOE; Pike Research; Whitty in Mother Jones April, 2013)

A POLITICAL FABLE

Most of you are likely familiar with Aesop's Fable of the grasshopper and the ant where the fun-loving and fancy free grasshopper fiddled and sang away the summer while the industrious ant worked and prepared for the winter ahead. Of course, when winter came, the ant had the resources needed while the grasshopper had none and had to beg the ant for food.

This fable brings to mind a story shared with me by my Grandpa who told me about some of his relatives where a previous generation had worked hard, built a good business and amassed money and land. Unfortunately, succeeding generations spent more time drinking than working. They squandered the money, cut the timber and mortgaged the land to live for today. Eventually, the family's resources were depleted and yes, they often had to depend on other more prudent and charitable relatives.

In Ohio, many previous generations have paid taxes and made an investment to build our State's resources and infrastructure. Some of the resources take the form of roads and bridges and others are buildings or departments, such as public schools or state prisons. Under the leadership of Governor Kasich, taxpayer-owned State resources are currently being sold off or privatized. Some recent examples include the Ohio Turnpike, privatizing several State prisons, and the expansion of Charter Schools and Vouchers while cutting and then not restoring funding for Ohio's public schools. I wonder what resources future generations of Ohioans will have when the one-time money is gone from these short-sighted acts? I hope people wake up to the lesson of Aesop and send a message to Governor Kasich and his political cronies that Ohioans believe that "it is wise to worry about tomorrow, today."

What Is Privatization, and Why Should We Ohioans Be Informed and Concerned about it?

Privatization refers to the process of transferring ownership of a business, enterprise, agency, public service or public property from the public sector (a government) to the private sector -- often to a business that operates for a profit. It may also mean government **outsourcing** of services or functions that are the responsibility of government to private firms – once again, to businesses that operate for a profit.

Examples of privatized businesses and public properties include ownership and management of city parking facilities, ownership and maintenance of vehicles used to transport first responders, ownership and maintenance of voting machines, and ownership management, and maintenance of prison facilities and programs.

Examples of outsourced services or functions to private firms include revenue collection, law enforcement, prison management, educational programs for school-aged children, mental health treatment programs for children and adults, and conducting background investigations for security clearances of military and government workers.

Those who advance the practice of privatizing and outsourcing public sector properties and services almost always profess that competition forces improved quality. But, this is rarely the case. Privatized schools such as charter schools and voucher-paid programs have the luxury to exclude the most challenging students – students that public schools are required to embrace and educate. Yet, the overall, aggregate test scores and graduation rates for students in privatized educational programs consistently fall behind those of similar demographic groups served in public schools.

A similar pattern is noted with privatized prison programs; more challenging inmates tend to be incarcerated in our remaining public prisons, while privatized prisons, serving less dangerous inmates, have less effective safety records and higher recidivism rates than their traditional, public counterparts.

All too often, the practice of privatization fosters cronyism and corruption. Bidding on government contracts has often been rigged, rather than vendors being selected on their expertise, merits, and fiscal responsibility. Also, fairness in firing and retention of workers in privatized programs is often compromised when hiring and retention preferences are given to friends and family members. All too often in privatized settings, workers' rights go unchecked as bargaining units are shut out of operation.

continued on next page

Privatization and Its Impact Hit Real Close to Home!

Under the Kasich administration and current state legislature, a systematic push has emerged to privatize many state-funded and state-operated services. This includes the work of the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). This program operates under the catchy name, “Triple P” or “PPP,” and it stands for “Public to Private Partnership”. On the surface, the name sounds harmless. But the reality behind the name foreshadows a potentially destructive economic restructuring of our state and of our region.

In Scioto County, construction of a highway by-pass around downtown Portsmouth has been discussed for years. Under the Kasich administration, and with the shepherding of Portsmouth’s Interim Economic Development Director, Todd Book, this has been moved forward at a rapid rate. Why? The purpose is to privatize not only the design, construction, and maintenance of the by-pass, but to also turn over all of ODOT’s Scioto County operations to a yet-to-be-named private company! If approved, this could and will likely lead to the following:

- Millions upon millions of dollars being channeled directly from Ohio’s taxpayers to a private, for-profit firm. (This firm will not necessarily even be Ohio-owned or Ohio-managed!)
- At least a 35 year-long commitment of this channeling of Ohio’s taxpayers toward this yet-to-be-named firm.
- ODOT’s Scioto County Garage, and all of its operations, would “go away.”
- 28 employees working from this facility—and their jobs—would also “go away.” (It has been said that these workers will be reassigned to other ODOT garages. But, “PPP” is a state-wide program, so the arithmetic here just does not make sense!)

For more information, please go on-line and read:

http://www.portsmouth-dailytimes.com/view/full_story/22161216/article-Commissioners-considering-P3-bypass-endorsement?instance=commented
<http://www.aashtojournal.org/Pages/083112Ohio.aspx>

QUESTION: If Scioto County ODOT “reassigns” workers, does this mean ODOT jobs in surrounding counties will be lost?

**IF YOU ARE NOT OUTRAGED,
YOU’RE NOT PAYING ATTENTION**

**THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE
BUT FIRST IT WILL MAKE YOU ANGRY**

What Is Privatization - continued

There are some enterprises which cannot be operated morally and properly if earning profits for the company supercedes the importance of providing safe and high quality service. Capitalism has its merits and is integral to our economy, but its application is inappropriate to the operation of essential services in which the safety and well-being of our citizenry is at stake!

**I DON'T MIND YOU BEING RICH,
I DO MIND YOU BUYING THE
GOVERNMENT**

**THE BUSINESS OF AMERICA IS NOT BUSINESS,
NEITHER IS IT WAR. THE BUSINESS OF AMERICA IS
JUSTICE, AND SECURING THE BLESSINGS OF
LIBERTY.** George F. Will

Courage and Commitment

We tend to feel helpless and demoralized by some of the realities of our daily lives. What lies beneath our social, health, political and economic failures? The evidence is growing. Problems as varied and wide-ranging as war, cancer, extreme weather, autism, earthquakes, crime, and poverty are all being linked to a few common causes. Eradicating human suffering is the most rational, moral and economical commitment that "We, The People", can make. Future generations depend on our willingness to face the facts. We cannot fail to act when so much is at stake.

**THE MOST POWERFUL MIND-ALTERING
SUBSTANCE IS THE TRUTH**

**IF YOU SEE SOMETHING WRONG
SAY SOMETHING STRONG**

On a Lighter Note

MATCH UP : President to Ailment
(from Mother Jones: March and April 2013)
(Answers on last page)

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1) Sleep Apnea | a) Ronald Reagan |
| 2) Buttock Boils | b) Calvin Coolidge |
| 3) Myopia | c) Thomas Jefferson |
| 4) Syncope | d) George Washington |
| 5) Sterility | e) William Taft |
| 6) Back Problems | f) Abraham Lincoln |
| 7) Excessive Sleep | g) George Bush |
| 8) M.E.N., type 2B | h) John F. Kennedy |

Doing More With Less

Conservatives are famous for wagging their fingers in the face of the public while warning us that "We, the People", must learn to "do more with less". Behind this popular piece of rhetoric is a very twisted logic: large corporations, such as Exxon Mobil, should continue to make record profits as they receive taxpayer subsidies while the majority of us should stop being so greedy and wasteful and just learn to "tighten our belts".

Where might we "tighten our belts" in Adams County? According to the Ohio Department of Health records (to 2011) we have the highest rate in the state for death by cancer, just beating Scioto County by seven persons in one of those years. This rate is more than twice the national average. We have the highest accident rate in the state. We rank third, behind Highland and Monroe Counties, in death by suicide: twice both state and national averages. (U.S. Census Bureau) We rank second highest among Ohio counties in lung disease. (CDC)

A recent Xavier University study shows Adams County ranks highest in the state in poverty (49%), highest in cancer mortality, second highest in teen births, twice the national average in suicide rate and second highest in average annual age-adjusted homicide rate (9.2%: significantly higher than state and national averages at 5.6% each.)

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation reports Adams County children's poverty rates are almost three times the national average, and premature death, across the lifespan, is twice the national average.

If the question of waste is central to our national well-being and economic security, how can Adams County eliminate the waste of suffering and premature death? Where will we find the resources to invest in finding and eliminating their causes? The question is not, "how can we do more with less?", but "how much more 'less' can we survive?"

WHO SAID IT?

(Alice Walker, Anne Frank, Mark Twain, Desmond Tutu)
(Answers on last page)

- 1) If you're neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.
- 2) How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.
- 3) It is easier to fool people than to convince them that they have been fooled.
- 4) The most common way people give up their power is thinking they don't have any.

From Our Commissioner

A crow, half-dead with thirst, came upon a pitcher which had once been full of water; but when the crow put its beak into the mouth of the pitcher he found that very little water was left in it, and that he could not reach far enough down to get at it. He tried, and he tried, but at last had to give up in despair. Then a thought came to him, and he took a pebble and dropped it into the pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped it into the pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the pitcher. At last, he saw the water rise up near him, and after dropping in a few more pebbles he was able to quench his thirst and save his life.

The moral of the story: **LITTLE BY LITTLE DOES THE TRICK.** Whether it's one pebble, one dollar or one day at a time, we will accomplish our goal eventually.

As our nation and state forge ahead out of the economic downturn, our local government continues to operate under tight budget constraints. The demand to think creatively and adapt to the growing needs of our people is vital. Officials must be open to new ideas and be willing to try new things.

Elected leaders have a duty to provide a vision for the future and ensure we prepare Adams County for the challenges of tomorrow. Modernizing our technology and internal infrastructure is critical to providing the people of our county with affordable services. Looking for ways to share services between departments and adapting to a 21st century government is of great importance.

Modernization and increased efficiency are not the only solutions to our problems. We must also look for opportunities to invest in programs and improvements that will allow our government to adapt to a rapidly changing world. With the right leadership we can invest wisely in the future and little by little accomplish our greater goals.

Paul Worley

*If your heart is in the right place,
it's on the left.*

*Democracy
is not a spectator sport.*

Election News 2013 and 2014

In 2013, there is no Primary in Adams County and the November 5th General Election will have no countywide offices up for election. There will be 2 trustees to be elected in each township and the villages have council members to be elected. Some villages also have members of Board of Affairs and a treasurer to be elected.

The main feature of the 2014 election cycle will be statewide offices, including Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Treasurer and Auditor. Several Democratic individuals are exploring running for a state office in 2014 including State Representative Connie Pillich, State Senator Nina Turner and State Representative John Patrick Carney. There may be additional individuals entering the races prior to the 2014 Primary. Right now, both Ed FitzGerald and David Pepper have already declared their candidacy so we will provide you with some information on both of them.

Ed FitzGerald, Democratic Candidate for Governor

Ed, Cuyahoga County Executive, is a husband, father and lifelong public servant. He and his wife Shannon have been married 21 years and are proud parents of four teenagers. After working his way through The Ohio State University and later night law school, he began his public service by becoming a Special Agent with the FBI assigned to the Organized Crime Task Force in Chicago. He returned to Ohio and served as an assistant county prosecutor and eventually Mayor of Lakewood before being elected as Cuyahoga County Executive.

David Pepper, Democratic Candidate for Attorney General

David is a former Cincinnati City Councilman and former County Commissioner of Hamilton County. He is a graduate of Yale University and its law school. He currently practices law for the Blank Rome law firm in Cincinnati, specializing in commercial litigation. His combination of legal experience and dealing with public safety issues as an elected officeholder has prepared him for the job as Ohio's Attorney General. David is engaged to be married in June to a proud native of Adams County and North Adams High School graduate, Alana Swartz. Adams County will then officially be a part of David's family!

Gavi Begtrup – Second District U.S. Congress

Dear Adams County Democrats,

I am a lifelong Democrat and an entrepreneur in Cincinnati. I was born on a farm outside Fort Campbell, KY, where my parents settled after careers in the Army. As my wife, Amber, and I raise our two daughters, we want the same opportunities for them to excel and succeed that my brother, sisters, and I had growing up. I believe we all share that same vision for our children and for our future, and that together we can overcome the many challenges our community and our nation are facing today.

I have spent my career focused on solving hard problems. Before I started my own company developing products that filter sunlight to boost crop yields, I worked as a research scientist and invented a new nanotech digital memory device. But my life has not just been about science and technology innovation. For three years I had the pleasure to serve as a senior advisor to Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, an experience that shaped my life and pushed me to pursue a path of public service like my parents before me.

I worked alongside Gabby developing common-sense solutions to problems facing millions of average Americans. Unlike most politicians in Washington, Gabby looked beyond problems to seek solutions. As a scientist, I took the same approach, focusing on building consensus around solutions instead of scoring political points. Similarly, when our nation’s space program was on the precipice, Gabby asked me to lead efforts to craft a bipartisan plan to sustain investments in NASA and continue our country’s groundbreaking research in aeronautics and space. We introduced competition into future technology development, reducing costs to taxpayers and delivering better, safer and more reliable systems. Gabby taught me that **government can do good**, which is why we worked hard to break through partisan divides in Congress.

But every day, it becomes more and more clear that our representatives in Washington don’t share our views. They continue to put partisan politics above community needs. With each vote to serve their own interests, they distance themselves further from ours. That’s exactly the kind of stubborn obstinacy that stops progress, kills jobs, and weakens our economy.

I think it’s time we looked at where we are and where we want to go as a community and a country. I think it’s time we sent a problem solver to Congress.

In the next few weeks, I look forward to meeting you and talking more about how we can make our community and our government better. I will see you at the Adams County Club Fundraising Dinner on May 11th.

Respectfully yours, Gavi Begtrup

Ronnie Richards – Second District U.S Congress

Dear Adams County friends and fellow Democrats,

I have had the good fortune to meet many of you at your monthly Saturday pot-lucks. The food is great but the people are better! They are what I expect from Southern Ohio Dems, level headed common sense folks, committed to moving our country forward.

My name is Ronny Richards and I live on Upper Twin Creek about a half mile off US Route 52, three miles from the Adams County line. I have lived on Twin Creek since 1972 and moved there not long after serving in the US Army as a Combat Medic in Viet-Nam. In 1979, I was fortunate to get a job with the Ohio Division of Forestry and worked there as a Conservation Aide, then was promoted to work in the carpenter shop. Of course all Division personnel also serve as wild land firefighters, so I did a lot of that and also served on the Inter Agency Fire Crew and fought fire in Western States and in the Mid-South. I also served for about 8 years with the Buena Vista Volunteer Fire Department. I served as my Union Chapter Secretary for about 9 years, and have always been a strong voice for labor and workers rights, while realizing that labor and management must work together for the betterment of both parties.

Since retiring I have supplemented my income by raising truck produce which I sell at two farmers markets in Portsmouth. I attend Friendship United Methodist Church where I am on the Board of Trustees and am also our Lay Leader. My wife Cyndie and I raised 4 children who still reside in the area with our 7 grandchildren.

I have been active in Democratic politics since I handed out Stevenson Leaflets when I was eight years old with my mother. Many of us worked our tails off in this last campaign and were sorely disappointed that we did not field a viable candidate in the Second District US House. I vowed that would never happen again and with much encouragement from fellow Scioto County Dems have decided to run for that office. We are off to a great start and we will keep moving ahead. The right candidate can win this seat for the people of the Second District, and for a variety of reasons I believe I am that candidate. The reasons are too lengthy to go into in this format, but know I am a core principled Democrat. The one point I've stressed during this run is that the race has very little to do with me. This race is about us, and what we expect from our government.

I am looking forward to meeting each and every one of you at some point along this trail. I pledge to answer all questions forthrightly.

All the best, Ronny Richards

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Thank You

Thank you to all Adams County Dems, who have supported and worked on True Blue since its inception in 2011 – The Adams County Executive Committee, the Adams County Democrat Club and its members - and special thanks to Ina Hendrix for those True Blue cakes and Sue Naylor and family for folding and stuffing envelopes.

**CRITICAL THINKING,
THE OTHER NATIONAL DEFICIT.**

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Answers Match Up

1) e: (Taft, the heaviest President, rarely slept through the night and often dozed off in public). 2) c: (Jefferson's boils were treated with sulfur and mercury which may have shortened his life). 3) a: (Reagan gave speeches with one contact lens so he could focus on the audience with one eye). 4) g: (Both Bushes fainted while in office). 5) d: (Washington never had children; Martha had four from a previous marriage). 6) h: (one theory holds that Kennedy's back brace prevented him from slumping after being hit by the first bullet in Dallas, making him an easier target for the second). 7) b: (Coolidge was known to sleep 11 hours a day). 8) f: (Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia, a rare genetic disorder, may have caused Lincoln to die from thyroid or adrenal cancer if he had not been assassinated).

Answers Who Said It?

(1: Tutu, 2: Frank, 3: Twain, 4: Walker)

**OBAMA IS MY HERO
- AND HER HUSBAND IS OKAY TOO**