

# True Blue

The Adams County Democrat

February 2012

## Why Am I a Democrat?

Is it only because I come from a family of Democrats? Without a doubt the influence of family examples and teachings cannot be discounted. My grandparents and parents did not hide their ideals or shun from speaking of their heroes. FDR had a direct impact on my grandparents and parents. Grandpa A. worked on the WPA and was proud of the public roads he helped build. He said providing men work allowed them to feed their families, restored their pride and self-esteem, and taught skills and work ethic. I knew that Woodrow Wilson was his favorite president not because Wilson was a Democrat, but because he worked to promote the ideal of world peace.

People in Adams County tend to know your lineage, so it isn't unusual for folks to share stories or events with me about my family. I have had people mention the WPA and the training that helped them build a life for themselves and their families. Perhaps the most touching story was when a man came to me one night and said, "Your Grandpa C. sold my Dad a pair of mules "on time" which allowed him to work his land and feed his family and trusted him to pay for them later. Our family would have lost everything and likely starved without this helping hand." Grandpa C., a quiet unassuming man, reached out because he felt he had "enough" to share during hard times.

My parents voted without fail and sometimes took me along to witness this privilege and responsibility. They spoke of the importance of voting and shared their passion about Democratic ideals and candidates. It was clear they were Democrats and they could point to specific events in their life that shaped their views. The most influential event of course was the Great Depression as they experienced the different approaches taken by the two political Parties. The Republican Party was willing to stand by and let corporate interests and market influences have their way while 25% of the population was unemployed with many hungry and destitute. The Democratic Party saw the human suffering and reached out to help people and to build an infrastructure that served the common good. Roads, bridges, school buildings and libraries all bear the stamp of the New Deal. In our county, the Rural Electrification Act provided life-changing electricity to many households.

At no time growing up do I recall hearing my grandparents or parents personally attack a Republican candidate. However, I do recall them clearly pointing out differences they had with specific policies and explaining why an alternate approach would work better for most people.

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## Thank You!

61% of Ohio voters rejected a referendum proposed by Republican Governor John Kasich that would have severely restricted the collective bargaining rights of 360,000 public employees. This is a significant victory for the middle class worker and restores fairness and a voice to our civil servants. Thanks to all who signed petitions to get the referendum on the ballot and special thanks to those who passed them door to door and on street corners. Most of all, thank you to all those voters who came out on Election Day and cast your ballot – your votes are what made this possible.

Politics isn't about big money or power games; it's about the improvement of people's lives. Paul Wellstone

## Primary Election Day March 6, 2012

Polls Open 6:30 am – 7:30 pm

Early voting started on Tuesday 1/31/2012 and ends on 3/2/2012. The Board of Elections will be open for early voting Monday through Friday, 8:30am – 4:00pm, except on 3/2/2012 when the office will be open until 6:00 pm. There is no Saturday voting. You may walk in to vote, or request an absentee ballot. Absentee ballots must be received in the mail by Saturday 3/3/2012 or can be delivered to the Board of Elections no later than Monday 3/5/2011.

You may request an absentee ballot in person at the Board of Elections, or call 937- 544-2633.

Adams County Board of Elections  
215 North Cross St  
West Union, Ohio 45693

## Why Am I A Democrat - continued

I have worked for Democratic candidates throughout the county and I have walked or rode in many parades and festivals. I frequently sit or stand by the Democratic booth and talk with those who stop or pass by. It is humorous to observe the “body language” of some folks as they avert their eyes or walk by giving a wide berth to avoid contact with Democrats as if we have some kind of disease! Then there are a few who stop to angrily confront by launching an attack on a national Democratic figure. In 2008 while riding on the Adams County Democratic Party trailer, I had racial epitaphs yelled at me, unprovoked, from a man along the parade route. Witnessing first hand this kind of prejudicial behavior and language, I felt ashamed for my county. Last fall while walking and distributing SB5 information and candy in a parade, I had a young girl refuse the materials. I was unsure if she was refusing just the literature or also the candy. At first I began to walk on, but since I thought she might actually want the candy, I stopped to inquire. She was in the company of an adult who I presumed to be her Mother. When I asked the girl if she would like the candy, the youngster gave me a look of sheer disdain and then without hesitation she defiantly announced, “I don’t take no candy from Democrats!” “Oh, alright,” I smiled and said and moved on in the parade, hearing not a word from the adult.

What has happened in our world and right here in Adams County when candidates and those working on their behalf, or their Political Party, put out information that is inflammatory and disrespectful? What has happened when people feel free to openly scream racial slurs? What has happened when a child treats an adult with disrespect and the adult/parent doesn’t intervene to correct the child by saying, “Honey, please say no thank you.”? Traditionally, Adams County is known for its scenic beauty and its friendly people. Personal attacks and heated rhetoric don’t build a positive image for our county or promote the common good. I think back to Grandpa C. and his “loan” of a pair of mules and I know for certain, he didn’t ask if that man and his family were Democrats or Republicans before he acted. No, Grandpa took action to meet a human need, to reach out to a fellow human being and provided that family an opportunity to work to better themselves. Opportunity shouldn’t be rationed only to specific groups of people or to the privileged few.

Why am I a Democrat? I am a Democrat because I believe in the worth of every individual. I believe in the words of the Declaration of Independence that all men are created equal and are endowed with certain inalienable rights among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. I hope that during the 2012 campaign we take action locally to restore civility to our political discourse. Yes, point out different policy views and sometimes we may disagree, but let’s not be disagreeable. Let’s challenge one another to “call out” and eliminate negative campaign tactics and find common ground so we can provide more opportunities and have a government as good as our people.



### Paul Worley for Adams County Commissioner

**Name:** Paul Worley

**Office/Term:** Adams County Commissioner Term commencing on January 2, 2013.

#### Qualifications:

Paul Worley is a native of Adams County, son of Linda Lloyd Worley and the late David Worley. His parents were both teachers in the Adams County/Ohio Valley School District. As a student, he was a leader and an athlete. Paul earned the Eagle Scout Award, the highest honor in Boy Scouting. He was also captain of the Peebles Indians Basketball team and Senior Class President. Paul graduated Bowling Green State University and commissioned as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the United States Army as an Infantry Officer. He served three tours of duty in support of the Global War on Terrorism—two tours in Iraq and one in Afghanistan. As a platoon leader with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division in 2005-2006, Paul was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor for combat heroism in the Sunni Triangle in southwest Baghdad. After serving our great nation in a time of war, Paul has returned home to provide the common sense leadership and independent representation that the people of Adams County deserve. Paul is a Lifetime Member of the National Rifle Association, Adams County Farm Bureau, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, Saint Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic Church, and is a partner with the Truman National Security Project.

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**Paul Worley – continued**

**Why do you seek this office?**

After serving over seven years and three tours of duty overseas in the Army, I want to continue to serve here at home to help create jobs in Adams County, get our local economy going again and to improve the lives of my friends and neighbors.

Too often Adams County has been left behind. Left behind when it comes to jobs and our economic development efforts. I am prepared to lead and prepared to serve the people of Adams County full-time to make sure that we don't get left behind.

**Contact Information:**

- Campaign Headquarters: 26796 State Route 41, Peebles, OH 45660
- Phone: 937-798-4053
- Campaign Committee: Friends of Paul Worley
- Facebook: Paul Worley

**Mark Tolle for Adams County Recorder**

**Office/Term:** Adams County Recorder since 1/1/1993

**Personal:** Lifelong resident of Adams County. Married to Roxy Tolle; two children, Hannah and Levi and three grandchildren.

**Interests:** Sports, outdoor activities; began flying powered paragliders in 2000 – and still flying!

**Statement:** I have been privileged to serve the County for many years, and truly still LOVE my job. I get to help people with problems concerning their property and related issues and enjoy indexing and keeping the County's records in order. My goal: to make this Office the most effective and efficient it can be. My promise: I will never be perfect but I will never stop STRIVING to be. Please stop in and look up your records. After all, they ARE yours – you have just elected me to take care of them. Thank you!

If the people cannot trust their government to do the job for which it exists – to protect them and promote their common welfare – all else is lost.

Barack Obama

**Keith C Swearingen for Adams County Engineer**

**Office/Term:** Adams County Engineer term commencing on January 5, 2013.

**Personal:** I am a lifelong resident of Adams County and the son of the late Wendell and Virginia (Chandler) Swearingen. I am a Board Member of the Ohio State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Surveyors.

**Family:** I am married to Diana Swearingen who worked at the West Union Post Office. We have 3 children (Amy, K.C. and Mark) and 8 grandchildren.

**Qualifications:** Bachelor Degree in Civil Engineering from The Ohio State University  
Licensed Professional Engineer and Surveyors in Ohio  
Experienced in public highways and private engineering work

**Seek Office:** I have the experience, knowledge and desire to improve the highways and bridges for all Adams County residents. I have worked with state and federal agencies including FEMA and the Federal Highway Administration during flooding, wind damage and snow storms for Emergency Response and Recovery for the citizens of Ohio. These times require everyone to tighten our budgets and I have experience in acquiring state and federal funds for projects to keep Adams County moving forward. I will strive to inspect and maintain all roads and bridges to assure safety for our county residents and all the traveling public visiting our scenic area.

**Phone:** 937-544-8071

**Email:** ddsks@yahoo.com

**Support Our Public Libraries**

Our Adams County Public Library System is designed to provide services for people across the lifespan. Part of an inter-library system, it provides us with materials circulated from all over the state. This means citizens have access to new and old books, recorded books and DVDs – as well as internet access – all free of charge! Our public libraries are a valuable resource for all Adams County citizens. Please vote "YES" for the 1 mil public library tax levy on March 6<sup>th</sup>.

## Educational Reform: Can It Work?

A common theme running through the American political spectrum in this new century has been the constant criticism of the public school system. A number of reforms have attempted to “rescue” American education. No presidential campaign is without its candidate laying out reforms that will bring about the next golden age of education. George Bush gave us “No Child Left Behind” and Barack Obama has the country in a “Race to the Top”. Yet, for all the attention paid to this “crisis” in education, when the United States is compared to other countries, the nation is usually ranked somewhere in the middle of more than forty other nations. How can our rich and powerful nation produce such average students? It might be helpful to compare the U.S. educational system to a nation that surprised many: Would anyone guess Finland!

In 2000, tests revealed Finnish youth to be the best young readers in the world. Three years later they were the leaders in math and by 2006 Finland was ranked first in science out of fifty-seven countries. This remarkable performance came about due to a reform movement that is radically different from the American approach. What they did is worth serious consideration by our reformers.

Finland aimed to increase the ratio of their top teachers to average and poor teachers. The obvious thorny question was how. In the Finnish model, every teacher is required to obtain a master’s degree at a state university at state expense. Well-trained teachers are given the same status as doctors and lawyers in Finland and because teachers are important, the society acknowledges and rewards them as professionals

Finland also adopted a national curriculum that provides guidelines for teachers, and control over educational policies was shifted from the federal government to town councils. Educators using the Finnish model work with one another to help children learn. They spend fewer hours in the classroom than their American counterparts: this extra time is utilized for curriculum work and assessing their students’ progress. Unlike the American obsession with testing, there are no mandated standardized tests except for one exam at the end of the senior year. As Finland’s Ministry of Education and Culture declares: “We prepare children to learn how to learn, not how to take a test.”

American educational reforms must start with the teacher and recognize the critical role played by classroom teachers. Studies show that good teaching has a lasting impact on a student’s success in life. E.A. Hanushek, a long time educational researcher, recently wrote, “...the variations or differences between really good and really bad teachers have lifelong impacts on children.” (*New York Times* Jan. 6, 2012) These impacts show that if a student had a really excellent teacher for one year between fourth and eighth grade, the students would have a better chance of attending college, lifetime income would be greater, and students would be less likely to get pregnant while attending school.

In the last few years the United States has moved closer to the concept of a national curriculum whereby 46 states have adopted the Common Core State Standards. These standards are for the English arts and mathematics. The hope is that these curriculum standards will provide students with a consistent quality of education no matter where the student lives. Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana adopted these measures in 2010 and they must be in place by 2014-15. Unlike the Finnish model, these standards are for only two subjects, and the critical assessment method continues to be testing

Testing remains the real barrier to a successful implementation of the curriculum standards. The biggest drawback of the use of testing is that the teacher’s major concern is not to teach, but to improve the yearly test scores and to avoid being told that their school has not made adequate yearly progress. Teaching for the test dominates the educational environment and subjects that are not tested receive less attention. Gayle Hoffman, an elementary school teacher in Utah, had to cut her unit on Helen Keller because the school had not made adequate progress in its yearly evaluation. As Hoffman states, “We were told to cut out all the “fluff” and only teach to the test. How sad.”

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Cutting the deficit by gutting our investments in innovation and education is like lightening an overloaded airplane by removing its engine. It may make you feel like you’re flying high at first, but it won’t take long before you feel the impact.

Barack Obama

What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.

Emerson

Compared to what we ought to be we are half awake.

William James

The trick is to combine your waking rational abilities with the infinite possibilities of your dreams. Because, if you can do that, you can do anything.

Guy Forsyth

School never ends. The classroom is everywhere. The exam comes at the end.

Anna Quindlen

Next to freedom and justice is popular education, without which neither freedom nor justice can be permanently maintained.

James A Garfield

## Educational Reform: Can It Work? (continued)

No one is suggesting that we take the Finnish model and attempt to apply it wholly to the United States, but there are some important lessons to ponder. Teaching as a profession has never achieved the status that teachers experience in many European countries as Switzerland, Germany, and Finland. To achieve this goal we need to have superior programs and admission standards in our teaching colleges. The federal government could assist this process and help provide funding. Teachers must have advanced training in order to practice their craft. The management style of schools must change. State and local control should remain but teachers must be involved in solving the problems of their students. There should be an attitude of cooperation and not of competition between departments, schools, communities, etc. A national curriculum is needed where core curriculum standards are developed for all subjects and a variety of assessments are used to evaluate schools and teachers.

If we make education our number one priority, train our teachers to exacting standards, provide national curriculum guidelines in all subject areas, allow our communities to oversee these standards, and provide the necessary funding, then in twenty years we will see a new world ranking. Now is the time for bipartisan cooperation.

## Test To The Bottom

Our opponents have declared open season on teachers. Why? Teachers are being blamed for all of society's shortcomings. They are held responsible for the economic unraveling that keeps parents overwhelmed with their lives and poorly equipped to manage their families. They are blamed for students addicted to X-Boxes, i-phones, i-pads and text messaging that produce attention spans measured in seconds. They are blamed for a culture that forces children to mature too quickly and makes them good little consumers. They are repeatedly sniped at. Their bargaining rights are threatened. Their status and their dignity are taken. They are forced to test children into exhaustion.

Given these conditions, is it any wonder that teachers are treated as assembly line workers who should be paid only for the number of widgets they can manage to keep on line until graduation? Is it surprising American students, when compared to students in other developed nations, routinely rank only in the middle? This leads to a crucial question: how will our children, who are among the most tested students in the world, survive in a global economy and live meaningful, productive lives?

## WHAT ARE THE ODDS?

**“Income inequality is the defining issue of our time”**

Barack Obama, State of the Union 1/24/12

The 99% movement, also called Occupy Wall Street, has shed light on the fundamental issue of this election: democracy has been hijacked and the U.S. economy functions more like a casino than a capitalist free market. What are the odds this can be reversed?

The middle class is shrinking. The money earned, spent and invested by the 99% is channeled into pure financial speculation (gambling) by too-big-to-fail banks, Wall Street financial speculators and mega-corporations. Whether investments are successful or unsuccessful, only the speculators themselves benefit. The 99% see their earning and buying power steadily decline, risk losing their pensions and see money being withdrawn from education, public safety, infrastructure and social programs. The 1% are protected from any negative economic consequences of their actions. They buy deregulation and receive bailouts, tax incentives and subsidies. Corporate CEOs and Wall Street financiers are our Supremely Entitled Class and do whatever it takes to keep their game going. What are the odds they can be stopped?

Policy conflicts between political parties are often bogus issues – smoke screens preventing a clear view of the real problem. While Republican smokescreens focus on issues such as “creeping socialism”, waste, government handouts, food stamps, illegal aliens, and loss of family values, Democrats have their own smokescreens and have done little more than spin their wheels in restraining financial institutions. By identifying income inequality as “the defining issue of our time”, President Obama joins in the spirit of the 99% movement and points to the fire at the heart of the smoke. The question is, can he turn the tide, or will the 1% remain “too-big-to-fail” and the rest of us “too-small-to-matter”?

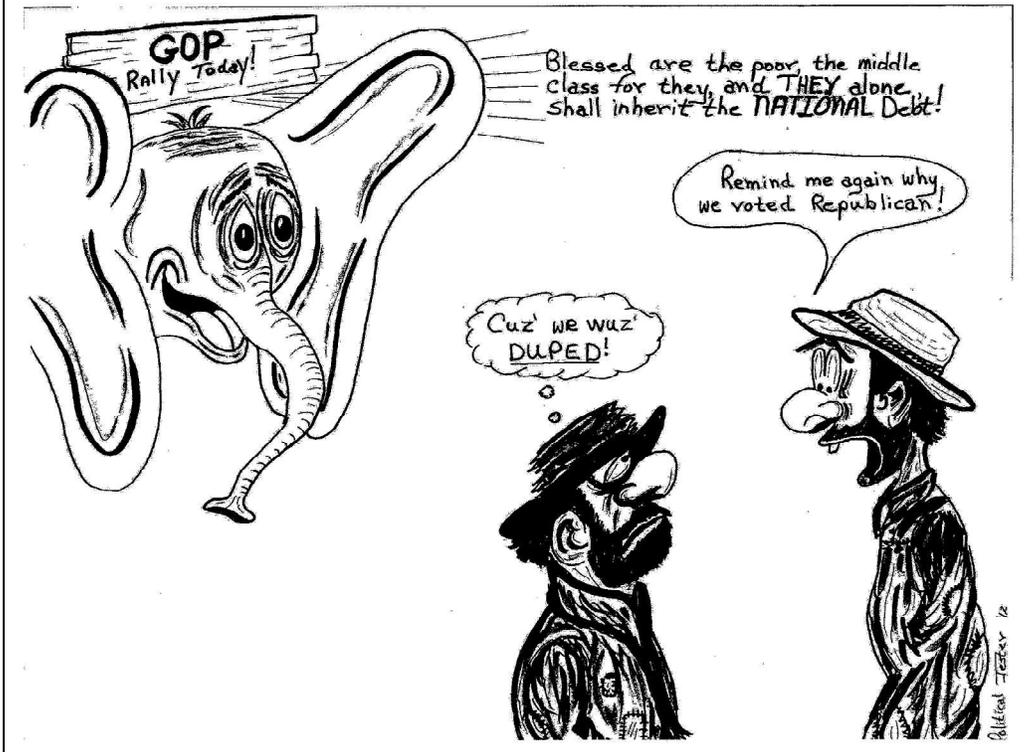
**What are the odds?**

Conservatives say if you don't give the rich more money, they will lose their incentive to invest. As for the poor, they tell us they've lost all incentive because we've given them too much money.

George Carlin

Few men have virtue to withstand the highest bidder.

George Washington



## COULD OCCUPY WALL STREET BE A TRANSFORMATIONAL MOVEMENT?

A core group of Occupy Wall Street activists have described their movement as more cultural than political. They say they want to influence the way people think about their lives. In this process the activists hope the individual experiences a personal crisis of meaning that is both political and spiritual.

A minister and Occupy member likened the movement to his years at a monastery, saying that when people first come to the movement, just as people come to the monastery, they are not sure why they've felt compelled to be there, yet have been drawn to it.

An Episcopal priest and Occupier compared the group to early Christianity which was "born as a public movement, in public space, a series of spontaneous gatherings".

In both types of groups leaders hope that something new is being created through the movement, something enduring in the hearts and minds of the people

The Occupy movement, like the civil rights movement of the '60s, uses nonviolent techniques to communicate and motivate. It asks for a government that is accountable to its people and free of corporate influence. Its power lies in making people feel heard when they have ceased believing their elected officials listen to them.

...no drug, not even alcohol, causes the fundamental ills of society. If you're looking for the source of our trouble, we shouldn't test people for drugs, we should test them for stupidity, ignorance, greed and love of power.  
P.J. O'Rourke

The people in the parks, the alcoholics, the homeless, they are looking at you. Do not be those who look and do not see.

Mother Teresa

### Join Us! Adams County Democrat Club Schedule 2012

<u>MONTH/DATE</u>	<u>HOSTS</u>	<u>PLACE</u>
March 3, 2012	Manchester	Venture Productions-WU
April 7, 2012	Liberty/Sprigg	Venture Productions-WU
May 7, 2012 (TBA)	**Fundraiser**	Career and Technical Center
June 2, 2012	West Union	Venture Productions-WU
July 28, 2012	**Picnic**	Glen-Dale Park
August	No Meeting	
September 1, 2012	Seaman/Winchester	Venture Productions-WU
October 2012	Party Fundraiser	To be announced
November 3, 2012	Green	Venture Productions-WU
December 1, 2012	Everyone	Venture Productions-WU

For Your Consideration - A Few Web Sites

- [www.standupforohio.org](http://www.standupforohio.org)
- [www.weareohio.com](http://www.weareohio.com)
- [www.innovationohio.org](http://www.innovationohio.org)
- [www.pbs.org](http://www.pbs.org)
- [www.progressiveohio.org](http://www.progressiveohio.org)
- [www.jimhightower.com](http://www.jimhightower.com)
- [www.huffingtonpost.com](http://www.huffingtonpost.com)

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