



The Anderson County Democrat

The Official Voice of the Anderson County Tennessee Democratic Party Feb 2016 Issue 12

Vote in the March 1st primary for a Democratic candidate!

A word from the Anderson County Trustee, Mr. Rodney Archer

Dear Anderson County Democrat:

As most of you know, this is the busiest time of year in the Trustee's Office. We collect nearly half of the property tax roll in the month of February (around \$20 million in 20 days). Not a day goes by that I am not grateful for the opportunity to serve in this capacity. The citizens of Anderson County have been very good to me.

I wanted to let you know of several activities that my wife Callie and I have been involved in recently. I am serving out my last few months as secretary of the National Association of County Collectors, Treasurers, and Finance Officers (NACCTFO). In July, I will be installed as the Vice President of the organization which represents all 50 states. I was also appointed as the Legislative Chairman for the County Officials Association of Tennessee (COAT) which represents County Clerks, Trustees, Registers, and Court Clerks for all 95 counties. This has been an exciting role to take on and has proved to be very rewarding. I even had the opportunity to testify on a couple of occasions as an advocate for the Tax Relief and Freeze programs in front of both House and Senate committees. Both of these programs are very dear to me as they assist local senior citizens, disabled homeowners, and disabled veterans with their property taxes. Finally, I have been co-facilitating a new program called Co-Starters, partnering with the Anderson County Chamber, to assist new entrepreneurs in Anderson County in order to help their businesses succeed.

Many of you know my wife, Callie. She was recently promoted to Vice-President of Junior Achievement of East Tennessee. If you're not familiar, they teach financial literacy to K-12 children in their 18 county service region and they are headquartered right here in Clinton! In addition to her role at JA, Callie serves on the Tennessee Achieves Advisory Council and the Chamber's Education and Workforce Development Committee. She also has been serving on the Anderson County Career and Technical Center's Advisory Council. Both of us greatly enjoy the opportunity of public service.

As election day approaches, don't forget to exercise your right and tell your friends and acquaintances about all of the good things that democrats are doing here locally to support a healthy, educated, and employed community. We have a lot to offer that goes to help enrich the lives of all Tennesseans (our friends and neighbors).

Rodney Archer

Anderson County Trustee

The Anderson County Democrat thanks Mr. and Mrs. Archer for their time, contribution, and service!

Come to the Chili Supper on February 25th!

It's Chili Supper time in **Tennessee**! Ok, football season is way off, but this will have to do! Come join us at on Thursday February 25th at 6 PM at Claxton Elementary School for our annual chili supper and auction. There is a \$5 donation requested at the door and you may bring a desert for consumption or auction. In addition to the chili and auction, we will be hearing a speech from District Attorney General for the 7th Judicial District Dave Clark.

We are still seeking items to auction at the supper. Dessert foods such as cookies, cakes, and pastries are in high demand. It is also possible to have for action services.

If you have anything you wish to auction, please contact Beth Hickman at (865) 964-0611 or email her at: bethhickman301@gmail.com.



Past issues can be found at:
www.andersoncountymdemocrat.com

Editor: Pat Fain

Asst. Editor: Scott Julius

Consulting: Catherine Denenberg

Contact us: patfain.acdp@gmail.com

Anderson County Democratic Party: Respect...Inclusion...Equality

You Cannot Fool All of the People All of the Time by Pat Fain

The rage of the American people was felt in the Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire and the pundits had very similar stories to tell the following day. One over-arching theme came from both conservative and liberal commentators. A disappearing, overburdened, overwhelmed, stagnant, underpaid, screwed, abused and aging middle class has realized that they are as much the victim as the poor and they want changes in the way our system, of both money and politics operates.

So let's name some of the culprits..... where do we start? One percent of the people own 90% of the wealth. Wages are not just stagnant, they have not kept up with inflation in years. The economy of the country no longer depends on production of goods and exports; we have become an economy where money changes hands based on services. It is impossible for the middle class to accumulate sufficient savings for a comfortable retirement; pensions have been raided and then abolished; job security disappeared with the off-shore use of poverty-wage foreign workers; laws protecting unionization have been abolished; cost of medical care has soared as family doctors disappeared and corporations came to own every aspect of health care. Anger? You bet! Despair? Just look at the climbing suicide rate of white middle aged men who used to be considered middle class. People of color have never had a fair share.

As human beings our memories are very short. We think these things have just happened recently. No change this large, this radical, this unprecedented in our history *just happened*. This change has been going on for my entire lifetime (I was born the year WWII began), slowly, incrementally, insidiously, overwhelming every part of American life. The workers of this country have been squeezed unrelentingly since the end of that war, as orchestrated by a coalition of the moneyed classes, politicians and yes, the courts. It took the "entitled class" a while to change enough laws to allow them to own the wealth of the country. They even rewrote the legitimacy of our moral values and religious creeds, to celebrate greed and avarice. A college education and hard work are no longer sufficient for our children seeking a comfortable, productive middle class life. Angry? Oh yeah! The fix will take a while on this one.

So, oligarchs beware, we out-vote you; there are more of us. Really? Or have most of us drunk their Kool aid? Or have a plurality of us become so disaffected and overwhelmed by anger that we will not look critically at the possible, but seek destructive counterproductive methods of revenge. This election is a reflection of the *what happens when the people finally realize how they have been outmaneuvered by the oligarchs*. So will we choose the short, ultimately self-defeating path to

change or will we be get smart and focused and change the politicians themselves and their cronies who make and enforce this status quo. We are up against a relatively small group of the "entitled-rich" and their "wannabe's" who have indeed outplayed us so far. Let's see if we can change the game.

The first thing you have to know is the rules of the game. Next comes the strategy. I spent more than 25 years as a professional lobbyist at a state capitol and in Washington. I will make it simple. WE ELECTED THESE FOOLS AND SYCOPHANTS! Most of the people do not want to be involved in politics; it is too complicated; it is too nasty; the players are too creepy. It's mostly true. BUT THEN YOU GET WHAT YOU *DID NOT* VOTE FOR! We used to be a democratic republic. We liked it. Let's see if we can recapture that way of life.

Debate Watch Party a success!



On Thursday, February 11th Democrats from across Anderson County gathered at Fulin's Chinese Restaurant in Oak Ridge for the debate watch party. This debate was aired by PBS and broadcast live from Milwaukee. Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders squared off over the issues. It got heated like spicy Chinese food at times, but that made the debate anything but dull!

What got me was that some of us were "Feeling the Bern" and others were "Standing with Hillary", yet we all got along. We debated among ourselves, laughed, and clapped at statements both candidates made. You know why this is so critical? Because at the end of the day we're all Democrats and have the same goal. So thank you to all who came and thank you for the party unity I saw. Let's keep it up!

Money and the Abuse of Money in Politics by Pat Fain

It really is necessary to understand some of the fundamental realities of how American politics work. First there are three branches of federal government. While each branch operates independently, they are very intertwined in their collective function as equals in constitutional governing. The president runs the entire business of the government as chief executive officer and commander in chief. The President has all authority in both domestic and foreign affairs, and in the enforcement of all laws. The President can veto any law passed by both houses of Congress and they can only over-ride his veto by a 2/3rds majority vote of both houses.

The Congress operates as two separately elected groups with officers elected by their colleagues. They write the laws and create and approve the budget. They ratify treaties. The US Senate also approves the Justices of the Supreme Court, Cabinet officers, Ambassadors and military leaders as nominated by the President.

The Supreme Court of the United States is the court-of-final-judgment for all the legal systems within the US and oversees all other federal courts. The US Supreme Court is the final arbiter of whether laws passed by the Congress are constitutional and determines how they may or may not be enforced. The term "checks and balances" is apt.

The people also have a constitutional right to peacefully assemble and petition the government for redress grievances. Perhaps most sacred of all is the 1st Amendment right of free speech. *This is where the lobbying comes in and this is the place that the balance of power and rights between individuals and corporations has become so skewed as to now threaten the very foundations of our republic.*

The inequality between a corporation and an individual is simply money. While both have a right to make political contributions, the sheer amount of corporate money unbalances the playing field. The constitution was carefully written to balance the equities. When money is used to deliberately destabilize this equitable balance, then the interpretation of the Supreme Court is critical, but they have now declared the laws Congress wrote to achieve such balance unconstitutional. So today we can attribute much of our economic and political instability to equating money to speech and corporations to people.

Money buys favors; favors means writing the laws and regula-

tions the money pays for; the people get screwed; industry gets tax breaks for moving off shore and business subsidies; the American worker takes the hit; the poor get poorer. The line is pretty straight. ***Additionally, when we vote for a US Senator or President we are voting for the next member of the Supreme Court.*** Be very careful who you vote for.

The irony is that while an excess of money has overbalanced the scales, we cannot continue as a voting electorate unless we have access to knowledge about the candidates and that takes money. We tried public financing after the Nixon debacle, but the rules and limitations never made this a viable alternative. It made it too easy for someone with very deep pockets to opt out.

There have always been many great elected officials who stuck to their own ethical values no matter how much money they accepted for campaigning. There still are today. One role of the media is to equate how a politician votes/performs with who contributed to their campaign. Contributions are necessary for democracy to function. Voting a recognizable special interest line that you have never previously brouched rarely demonstrates concern for the public interest or independence of mind and decision making, however. Knowing the political philosophy and ethical standards of the candidate and testing them against our own is required.

If you know how the government process works you can be a better voter. Thoughtful skepticism is a requirement and **money should not be the chief factor in how you decide to vote.** Democracy is hard. Thomas Jefferson told us that the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. *Photo by Scott Julius*



Upcoming Events... From the Anderson County Democratic Party Chair

February 20th: East Tennessee Regional Training at Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church 10-4 PM, Lunch Provided

February 25th: Chili Supper and Auction at Claxton Elementary School, 6 PM

March 5th: County Convention for Delegate Selection— Oak Ridge Civic Center Social Room— registration will begin at 11:30 AM— DOORS CLOSE AT 1:00 PM EST. Call to order promptly at 1:05 PM EST. Anyone in line to register may complete registration. NO ONE ALLOWED IN AFTER DOORS CLOSE!!!

March 24th: Party meeting at ATLC in Oak Ridge, 109 Viking Road, 6 PM.

April 21st: Party meeting, 3rd Floor of Clinton Courthouse, Judge Elledge's courtroom at 6 PM

May 26th: Party meeting at ATLC in Oak Ridge, 109 Viking Road at 6 PM.

Light Reading for the Political Junkie

1. **BREAKING NEWS!** Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia dies at age 79. [This is why it's now absolutely imperative the next president is a Democrat and why you must get out to vote.](#)
2. This article connects well with Pat Fain's article. [Learn how even the 1% will one day regret the current income inequality.](#)
3. The right goes on and on about the evils of socialism. [Maybe they'd think twice when they read this.](#)
4. An interesting analysis of the routes to victory for both parties by the progressive think tank "Center for American Progress". The "Path to 270" can be read by [clicking here.](#)
5. This is an interesting change for us. We found a list of reasons why you should vote Republican. Like if you think the rich don't have enough money or if you don't support veterans. [Read more here.](#)
6. Here is proof positive that one can change from a hard core Republican to a Democrat. [Read about the story of a man who finally saw he was voting against himself by voting Republican.](#)
7. It was a sad day when the Supreme Court blocked President Obama's climate change regulations. [Learn more here.](#)
8. Did you miss the February 11th debate? [Watch it here.](#)

TNDP Day of Training on Feb. 20th

Would you like to know more about how to get involved in and work on campaigns this election season? Then the upcoming training on February 20th is for you! Come to the Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church from 10 AM-4 PM (lunch will be provided) to learn how to make a difference. The Tennessee Democratic Party is putting on this training to help us organize, run a successful campaign, and get out the vote. It is imperative we make the 2016 elections a good one for Democrats. This is your chance to learn the finer points of making our vision our reality.

Someone once said "Lead and they will follow", momentum starts with you and the time to get moving is NOW! So please [RSVP](#) here and we look forward to seeing you.



"Healthcare must be recognized as a right, not a privilege"

Bernie Sanders

"Obamacare is a very important step forward on behalf of our country"

Hillary Clinton