



The Anderson County Democrat

The Official Voice of the Anderson County Tennessee Democratic Party Aug 2016 Issue 24

Come by the party headquarters for all things Democratic!

Don't forget! Party meeting at headquarters in Oak Ridge on August 25th!

Remember what's at stake! By Pat Fain

Thank you Herman Collins!

I have spent my life since John Kennedy supporting, financing and voting for Democrats. Sometimes, in fact many times, the winners of the nomination were not my first choice. I have however always respected them, shrugged off the internal fighting that is inevitable until the convention, and voted Democratic with enthusiasm. I have often been more left than the nominee, but never, never dissed the ultimate choice of the majority. The current culture of whining and pouting from the left is not simply immature, it is self defeating. It reminds me of my son who, at the age of three, one day got mad at me and announced that he was going into his room and break all his toys. I raised no objection and reminded him of the rule that all broken toys would be thrown away and no more new toys would come until Christmas. He retreated to his room and slammed the door. About 30 minutes later he came out, having broken no toys and resumed playing. Nothing more was said and he never did it again.

I sincerely hope the Bernie or Bust group has learned something positive. Bernie was a worthy candidate who fought a good fight and will continue to have the respect of the Hillary crowd. His rhetoric was occasionally a bit over the top, but certainly no more so than I have seen in other campaigns in other years. Unity is always what wins and disunity does not. You can do without toys for the next four years or you can develop the maturity to understand that you cannot win them all. If you look at the Republican presidents after Kennedy you will see how badly disunity can hurt not just us, but the whole world.

While the state of Tennessee will not be in play this year, I and many of my friends are planning to go to North Carolina and Florida to knock on doors or to work in phone banks to elect Hillary.

We are not just proud Democrats, we understand just what damage Trump is capable of. We choose to put the good of the country ahead of hurt feelings. Join us if you have learned the difference. Many of us felt the Bern and many were with Hillary, but none of us disrespected each other. All of us value Democratic goals.

"Hillary Clinton understands that a president's job is to worry about future generations, not the short-term profits of the fossil fuel industry."

Bernie Sanders



It was a close one! Herman Collins ran as a write-in candidate for State Representative after Mike McKamey dropped out. He came so close to winning. Sadly, Mr. Collins fell 60+ votes short of winning the primary.

All of us are disappointed that he came so close, but did not win. That said, all of us have much to be proud of. This campaign brought the whole party together to work hard to help him. Everyone gave their best from designing his web site, to managing his funds, to the phone bankers that helped spread the word. For a write-in campaign, doing as well as he did says a lot about us as a party. We deserve a pat on the back.

A special thanks should go out to Mr. Collins and his volunteers. He gave this campaign his all. He attended various events to promote him, got out in the community meeting people, and manned a tent at early voting locations in 90 degree heat. Anyone doing that alone shows true dedication to his campaign and to his party.

So please thank him for his efforts when you see him. We are lucky to have his dedication as an asset to the party.

Past issues can be found at:
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Anderson County Democratic Party: Respect...Inclusion...Equality

What is a Charter Commission? Is it important? By Pat Fain

Several months ago a group of Anderson County citizens started a petition that opened a process that could lead to totally changing the form and functions of the Anderson County government. A group of citizens filed to initiate the process. This involved asking the Election Commission to provide the petition forms for them and then getting 1776 valid voter signatures on their petition. They accomplished that task by the deadline and the requisite number were duly validated by the Election Commission. That means that a commission will be established when 8 people are elected to fill those 8 seats; with one person elected from each of the existing 8 districts that make up Anderson County. Early voting will begin October 19th, and will end November 3rd, and Election Day November 8th. The first question now has to be what is wrong with Anderson County government? Then, what are they trying to change and why do they want the changes?

There has been some open talk of wanting to impose term limits on the County Commission. How is this different from just voting them out? Well there are several who have been in office for 20 years or more. Are they running the county into the ground or something? The county just received an award for good fiscal management. The roads are pretty much in good shape. The education system is considered very good. County services can always be improved. Employment is adequate although pay is not where it should be. There are several industrial parks full of employers. So what is the problem? Well for one thing some of the individuals pushing the Charter Commission appear to be the same people who have sued the county or its employees or the Commission recently and who lost in court. Perhaps a clue will be forthcoming here.

The current County Mayor got her position following a mayor who was indicted over money and a truck. At this point an interim mayor was named by the Commission to serve the final 2 years until the election could be held for the next full 4 year term. Early in her job, the new Mayor appears to have hired an outside investigator to prepare a report for her about the Law Director's office. No one on the Commission or in various parts of county government fesses-up to having talked to him, however. So that is just rumor right now. However, a law suit seeking the ouster of the Law Director followed this rumor pretty fast. There was a written report with serious claims about moral turpitude and performance of the Law Director. This was followed by a suit to remove him from office filed by, Landle Byrge, et,al.

Immediately, the Law Director's lawyer filed a Motion to Dismiss in the Chancery Court that was heard by an outside judge from Murfreesboro (conflict of interest required neutral judge). The order to dismiss was granted to the Law Director, and held the plaintiffs liable for all court costs. It seems that a judge cannot remove the Law Director because state law says that the Law Director is hired by; works for; is accountable to the Legal Services Advisory Committee and the County Commission and can only be fired by a two thirds vote of first the LSA followed by a 2/3 vote of the County Commission. (the LSA Committee consists of the Mayor, several department heads and three County Commissioners). However, the judge did not rule on the viability of the charges so that remained alive. The citizen's group/plaintiffs then asked the Legal Services Advisory Committee to meet to consider the remaining charges, several of which had

already been contained in other litigation and dismissed. After this ruling, the plaintiffs appealed to the Court of Appeals of Tennessee. A three judge panel declined to hear the case and upheld the lower courts findings. The LSA committee has been hearing the petition and arguments of the plaintiffs, accompanied by someone doing video recordings of the proceedings on several occasions. So far the committee has found no basis for any findings.

Meanwhile back at the court house other interesting things had been happening. The mayor submitted the bill for services of the investigator mentioned above to the Commission to authorize payment of \$22,000 to be paid by the county. The Commission said the Mayor did not have a line item in the budget for this expense and they did not think it was necessary anyway and denied the bill by unanimous vote. The mayor appears to have written or caused to be written, a check to the investigator following this denial. This later became a major audit exception in the independent Audit Report, because it had not been in the approved budget. The audit committee chose not to take up this issue.

The next part of the saga involves the Public Services Director in charge of inspecting buildings and home construction. Allegations were made in writing to the Law Director that he was inspecting without a license and that the state law required that he become certified within one year of hiring. It seems that the TBI has jurisdiction over Public Services law enforcement and they asked another employee to give them copies of the 5 inspections in question. The employee complied and gave them to the TBI. Following this, the case was sent to the District Attorney General to prosecute who took the case to the Grand Jury and got an indictment for five counts of criminal misdemeanors. The case went to trial and the Director was found not guilty by the jury. The trial transcript did say he admitted knowing about the requirement, however.

The employee who gave the copies of the inspections to the TBI had registered as a whistle blower and the Director called her very early one morning and fired her. She has subsequently filed a lawsuit against the city for \$250,000. She has also apparently charged that someone in the motor pool put a tracker on her car without her knowledge or approval. The case has been set for trial. Should she prevail in court, the county will probably end up paying her costs.

Now returning to the question of the Charter Commission and how all of this ties together. The most important thing about the law that allows this is that it requires that ALL parts of the current government must be either reauthorized, changed or newly developed or they will be eliminated entirely. This would all be done by 8 individuals elected in November. They will have up to two years to complete this task and in November 2018 the completed document will be voted up or down by the people. The transition would take another four years and go into full effect in 2022. Greene County just went through this process and their voters said no to becoming a charter county.

This reporting and exploration of activities and objectives of the Charter Commission initiative will continue in the next issue of this newsletter September 1, 2016. There is a lot more to the story.



Thank you.

Over the past four months I have met many incredible people and have been fortunate to have many of them join me on this journey. Together we have traveled Tennessee from border to border, speaking with people from all walks of life facing many different struggles – each one of them filled with the spirit that sets us apart in East Tennessee. To say our neighbors here are inspiring does not come close to how amazing our community really is.

Last night, the voters in East Tennessee came out and chose a new path – a voice for change and independence. I am humbled to be the Congressional nominee for the Democratic Party and I cannot wait to get back out on the campaign trail to talk to the very best people in the whole world.

I must say that I truly appreciate my opponents in this election for being intelligent, passionate, and classy the entire way. I look forward to seeing them continue to fight for a better community and real representation in Washington.

I want to thank my staff and the dozens of volunteers who have built this campaign into what it is.

There is so much work to be done over the next 95 days. We are going to need all the help we can get. I hope that you will continue with me. Please [donate](#), sign up to [volunteer](#), like our [Facebook Page](#), and simply tell your friends about our fight. Together, we can make a better Tennessee for all of us. Thank you, again, for everything.

Now, let's go take our community back!

Melody

It is the First Amendment and don't you forget it! by Scott Julius

We are lucky in this country that we have the ability to speak out as we please about any issue or leader we want. If we do not like our President, it is our right to speak out against him or her. Is there a policy or issue you feel strongly about? Then you are free to advocate for or against it in a civil manor. Your voice cannot and will not be silenced.

That is not the case in other nations. In Russia, workers were bussed to nationalistic rallies supporting the annexation of Crimea. I dare think what would happen to your job, much less your life if you balked at going. During the military junta in Burma (Myanmar), crowds of people were forced to attend rallies supportive of the brutal government. During the 2010 Presidential "election" in Belarus, thousands of protesters stormed the streets of Minsk in protest of the dictator Alexander Lukashenko. Hundreds were arrested, including seven opposition candidates in a post-election crackdown. This is just the tip of the iceberg. Freedom to speak out is non-existent in countries many are familiar with like China, Vietnam, and Iran. It is also non-existent in countries many are not familiar with such as Uzbekistan, Eritrea, and Laos.

This freedom to speak up has been on my mind a lot lately. Last month someone, in broad daylight, stuck a Donald Trump bumper sticker over my Hillary Clinton one. Thankfully, it came off easily and the stickiness even helped clean the sticker. I was incensed that someone thought a stunt like that would change my mind or cause me to vote for their thuggish candidate. I will not be put off by or deterred by voter intimidation by anyone. At least I do not have to worry about being beaten, arrested, or killed for supporting Hillary Clinton in a part of the country as bright red as this. Should Trump win, it will only make his supporters feel that much more empowered to silence anyone who opposes him.

As Democrats in a very red part of a very red state life can be difficult. We are always on the defensive with many friends, family, and neighbors believing the most ludicrous things. My heart breaks as I see people march to the polls to vote against their own self-interest each election. So much needless suffering happens due to failed Republican policies. Those who get hurt the most by their policies tend to be those who gleefully vote Republican. It is our duty to fight to get people to see past the fearmongering propaganda of the right. Easy task? Heck no! We have to do it and this requires us to speak up.

Those of us who have yard signs or bumper stickers for Democratic candidates may have experienced such problems already. I have heard of Democrats in Anderson County who have had Hillary signs stolen and of Democratic candidate signs being vandalized. A friend of mine in Colorado was cursed at and nearly ran off the road for having the nerve to have a Bernie Sanders sticker on her car. It will

only keep getting worse from here. I am already wondering how many Hillary signs I should pick up to replace those that will inevitably get stolen or vandalized.

The First Amendment means the right to speak your mind peacefully (ok, maybe not yell "fire" in a movie theater). That includes the right to support people and issues that are unpopular. Around here, what we support makes us persona non-grata in many circles. People think we need to just shut up and be silent. They see us as a minority whose voice needs to be kept quiet. By vandalizing or stealing signs/stickers or trying to verbally intimidate us Trump supporters and Republicans think they can "teach us a lesson". "Deal with it and keep quiet you dang liberals" is the message they send.

It is time we teach them a lesson of our own. Only ours does not require the use of vandalism and violence. Keep the signs and stickers up. Keep countering Trump's xenophobic propaganda. Keep writing letters to the editor debunking right-wing writers.

After all, it is the First Amendment and don't you forget it!

Light Reading for the Political Junkie

1. The *Oak Ridge Today* ran a [brief article](#) about the opening of the Party Headquarters last month.
2. This is a valuable election to get out and vote, not only for President, but for state level races too. Read more about how the Democrats could win at the [state level here](#).
3. [This article is a bit dated, but it rings true today](#). Some people are praising the merits of voting for a Third Party candidate. Doing so will only help get Trump elected. If the people who voted for Nader in 2000 had voted for Gore, perhaps we would not have ended up with eight years of George W. Bush.
4. Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump are already polar opposites in more ways than one. [This New York Times article](#) shows how those two differ on taxes. Hillary's as you guessed is middle class friendly, Trumps not even close.