



# The Anderson County Democrat

The Official Voice of the Anderson County Tennessee Democratic Party Dec. 2015 Issue 7

*Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas, and Joyous Kwanza to all!*

*Fear - a Republican tool by Scott Julius*

*Hagia Sophia in Istanbul (photo by Scott Julius)*

Fear is a powerful tool. This tool is the primary weapon the Republican Party uses to support their views on many issues. From "Obama is coming after your guns" to "Syrian refugees could be terrorists so lets not let them in" the fear machine has been churning out material faster than Santa's elves at Christmas time.

People fear the unfamiliar or different. Many people have little exposure to other cultures and customs. Their window on the world comes from the fear factory of Fox "News" and the Republican Party's fear sales people. If only they knew that what they see on TV is a sales pitch to manipulate them into voting against themselves.

The latest Republican fear tactic is scaring people into being against accepting refugees from Syria. Many GOP presidential candidates have been in a contest with each other to see who can out fear monger the other. To show how extreme they've become, the most "moderate" response to accepting refugees from Syria has been from Jeb Bush who said we should only accept Syrian Christian refugees. That labels those who don't follow Christianity as at best second class people, at worst terrorists.

I've had the privilege of traveling to sixteen countries on five continents. Having not felt ready for college after high school, I saved my money to globetrot. I got to meet many different people in a variety of cultures. Guess what? These different people are only different and different isn't scary. I spent an hour talking with a Turkish man in front of the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul (see photo). I had tea with a Bedouin family in the middle of the Sinai. I watched kids play soccer on the streets of Cairo. These "different" people that are demonized really aren't that different from us. If living in a different culture was a high school graduation requirement the Republican Party would go extinct.

The Syrian refugees tend to be well educated and would make a great contribution to society. I for one welcome them. Fear may be the Republicans favorite tool, but I'm not scared. Nor should you.



## A Christmas Party for the Party!



The Anderson County Democratic Woman and the Anderson County Democratic Party will be jointly hosting a **Christmas Party** on Tuesday December 8th at 6:00PM at the Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church. Drinks and meat will be provided, but please bring a side dish. This is a great chance to reminisce about this past year and about our hopes for the next. We hope to see you there!

Did you know you can access issues of *The Anderson County Democrat* in two places online? You can find them on our Facebook Page, Anderson County Democrats (don't forget to like us!). To find the newsletter on the website, <http://andersoncountymdemocrat.com/>, click on The tab saying *The Anderson County Democrat*.

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

## Money in politics by Pat Fain

## Money in politics continued...

### The Power of Money and Political Corruption: Citizens United

The unfettered influx of money into politics since the *Citizens United* decision of the US Supreme Court may be the final chapter of how the greed and corruption of the very rich destroyed democracy in the United States. This legacy of the Roberts Court will be in the history books documenting how another great and naïve dream was crushed. Harsh statement. Harsher situation.

The Supreme Court, in 2008, ruled that corporations and unions have the same First Amendment right to free speech as do individual citizens and; that money is a form of speech. Essentially they said that limiting money would be the equivalent of arresting a protester in the park and putting him in jail for speech that is not viewed favorably by someone else. This ruling found existing laws controlling the amount of money that corporations could spend during a political campaign to be unconstitutional.

I spent 20 years of my life as a lobbyist. I can tell stories for hours of the how and the why money influences the laws and the political power balance within a functioning democracy. From the outside the influence of the lobbyist has sometimes been seen as insidious and undemocratic. However, the "good- guys" also hire lobbyists. Looking back on the political scene in Georgia from the mid 1970's to the mid 1990's I find an innocence and a promise in the unspoken rules that maintained a very real balance of power between the various interests of both legislators and lobbyists. We also had laws limiting money in politics.

*The key words here are balance and power. It was assumed that everyone would get a piece of the pie, but that no one interest would overwhelm all other interests. Most lawmakers used to look upon the making of laws and the budgeting of tax money as an honorable job. There were always constituents back home who were going to hold you accountable for maintaining a semblance of balance and honor. When your third grade teacher called you to account on Sunday, you wanted to be able to meet her eyes and say "Yes, ma'am". *Even those who did not vote for you wanted to be able to respect you.**

**The Citizens United case effectively ended the political balance of power on which our democracy has depended for stability and respect for over 200 years. Honor has become an archaic word, an archaic concept and an archaic practice. Balance is no longer in the political vocabulary. (Continued above)**

**The unique form of American democracy we have thrived under is a highly endangered concept and gasping for air. The very rich and the very greedy have won this round.**

None of this has happened overnight. It has been a gradually accelerating snowball that began when Lewis F. Powell, a corporate lawyer wrote in 1971 what is now infamously called "The Powell Memo" declaring that corporations needed to be more assertive in influencing government to make laws supporting their corporate interests. Two months later he was named to the Supreme Court by Richard Nixon. This point of view was further enabled during the administration of Ronald Reagan who asserted his political and personal philosophy of governance in two simple sentences.... "Greed is good" and the very famous observation, "If you've seen one redwood, you've seen 'em all". (Continued on Page 4)

## An Invocation by Donald Morris

Invocation-Armistice Day, 2015

How do we pray, O Lord, when at the same moment in which we honor those fallen in battle, we object to war as a solution to human conflict? How do we celebrate the victory of our cause without endorsing the violence by which it was achieved? How do we pray for peace while preparing for war? If ambivalence invalidates prayer, then we come before you today with less than pure hearts; if it authenticates prayer, then we come before you as honest supplicants. If we gather in gratitude, we also gather in grief; if we gather in hope, we also gather in apprehension; if we gather in pride, we also gather in humility.

May those of us who have only read about war and never seen it, be careful of our florid commemorations. As we solemnly recount the wars since "the war to end all wars", may we do so with chastened but undiminished hope for the survival of humanity. And insofar as it is still possible for us to enter into the prophet's vision of a day "when justice shall roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" may we do so in sober awareness of the sacrifice and suffering entailed by our dreams. Amen.

## Hillary Clinton on Money in politics

## Martin O'Malley on money in politics

1. Impose a tax on high frequency trading that discourages unfair and abusive trading strategies.
2. Discourage excessive risk taking by holding senior bankers accountable.
3. Prosecute individuals when they break the law, this includes whistleblower protections.
4. Keep corporations accountable by ensuring penalties aren't seen as just a cost of doing business.

<https://www.hillaryclinton.com>

1. Will fight to overturn *Citizens United*. He will fight to ratify the *Democracy for All Amendment*.
2. Wants transparency in democracy. Believes in restricting political spending by dark money groups and enforce laws requiring broadcasters to disclose the true identity of sponsors that run political ads.
3. Fight for a new Federal Elections Commission, how it functions now encourages dysfunction.
4. Will establish a "Freedom from influence fund" to make small political donations go further.

<https://martinomalley.com>

## Bernie Sanders on money in politics

## Light Reading for the political junkie

1. Introduced the "Too big to fail, too big to exist" Act to break up big banks and forbid them from accessing the Federal Reserve's discount facilities.
2. Introduced a tax on Wall Street speculation to fund tuition free public universities.
3. Proposed limiting the ability of bankers to profit off of taxpayer bailouts of their institutions.
4. Sponsored an amendment to audit the Federal Reserve.

<https://berniesanders.com>

1. Want to more information on how to end the *Citizens United* decision? This is the place for updates and more information:

<http://endcitizensunited.org/>

2. The Republican Party has been unified in a demand for "Hard Money Policies". To learn more, look at this:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/13/opinion/republicans-lust-for-gold.html? r=0>

3. In this era of hate crimes, xenophobia, and fear this was a heartwarming story of the actions of a seven year old boy who donated the \$20 he saved to the local mosque after it was vandalized. We all could learn a lesson from his kindness.

<http://www.cnn.com/2015/11/19/us/boy-piggy-bank-mosque-vandalized/>

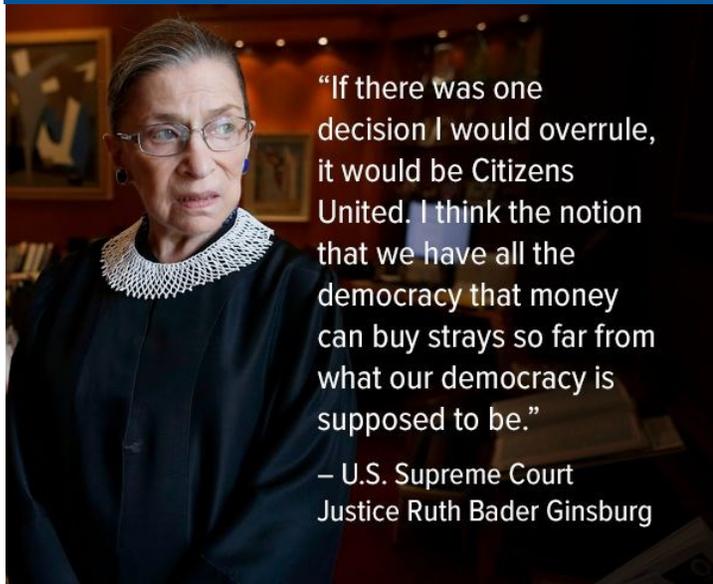
4. For further information on the Powell Memo talked about in Pat Fain's article please see:

[http://reclaimdemocracy.org/powell\\_memo\\_lewis/](http://reclaimdemocracy.org/powell_memo_lewis/)

5. Want to know what the capabilities of the super rich in politics can be? Read this:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/30/us/politics/illinois-campaign-money-bruce-rauner.html?emc=edit\\_ee\\_20151130&nl=todaysheadlines-europe&nid=35531281& r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/30/us/politics/illinois-campaign-money-bruce-rauner.html?emc=edit_ee_20151130&nl=todaysheadlines-europe&nid=35531281& r=0)

## Justice Ginsburg said: (www.pinterest.com)



"If there was one decision I would overrule, it would be *Citizens United*. I think the notion that we have all the democracy that money can buy strays so far from what our democracy is supposed to be."

– U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg

## Money in Politics by Pat Fain continued from Page 2 Photo below by Scott Julius

(Continued from Page 2) Welcome to the Wall Street mega banks; the climate deniers and the declining real wages of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and to Citizens United. In 2016 the super rich 1% will control more wealth than the rest of humanity combined.

We get the Supreme Court we vote for. *Every time we vote for a United States Senator or a President we are voting also for members of the Supreme Court.* Anyone who believes that the Court is apolitical needs to buy a bridge. The U.S. Constitution, (Art.III,Sec.2) only says that "the judicial Power shall extend to all Cases in Law and Equity, arising under this Constitution, the Laws of the United States and Treaties... " The Constitution primarily defines jurisdiction and leaves it up to the Court to write its own rules.

The doctrine that the court may declare a law unconstitutional or define the meaning of the words came about in 1803 in *Marbury v. Madison*... "A law repugnant to the Constitution is void." With these words, Chief Justice John Marshall established the Supreme Court's role in the new government. Thereafter, the Court was recognized as having the power, when an appropriate case is before it, to review all acts of Congress relied upon in the case and judge whether they abide by the Constitution. Then in *Culloch v. Maryland*, 1819, Marshall wrote "Let the end be legitimate ... and all means which are ... consistent with the letter and spirit of the Constitution, are constitutional ." Chief Justice Marshall invoked this phrase to establish the right of Congress to pass laws that are "necessary and proper" to conduct the business of the U.S. government.

Thus did the very first Supreme Court of the United States define the parameters of the power of the Court. The Supreme Court, by its own definitions, is an activist body with power defined by the Court itself. So there can be no doubt that a later court may and has redefined its power to suit its own political inclinations and make or change legal findings when supported by a 5-4 majority.

The only way to reverse a Supreme Court ruling is to wait for one of them to resign, retire or die and then to get a relevant new case in front of a new court to rule on. This is the route that resulted in Citizens United. It is also why the best legal minds in the country are calling for a Constitutional amendment. It is a toss-up which way is slower.... death or amending the Constitution. We can shout and argue until we are blue in the face that the Founders did not mean to make corporations the equivalent of individuals vis-à-vis the First Amendment, but unless one of the 5 voting in the majority has a religious epiphany and another case comes before them, we will continue down the slippery slope to

total disenfranchisement of individual citizens in favor of the corrupt control of elected officials by their very rich and influential patrons.

A Democrat majority Congress could pass a series of laws that would require disclosure of the source and destination of all money and give more power to shareholders of public companies. The control of political money by the shareholders and other laws would require a sea change in who gets elected but does little to limit privately held corporate donations. This, however, is why you are being asked so often to contribute to Democratic political campaigns, even out of state. It is not the best solution, but may be the most available one right now. It is also why these corporate interests are pouring so much money into Republican campaigns.

Democracy is a covenant between the governed and the governing authority. When the covenant is broken the result is chaos. (see the Republican debates) When the governing authority abandons the playing field and shuts down the government, the result is anarchy and when the voters are disenfranchised and discouraged by gerrymandering and purging of voter records, the conclusion is an oligarchy in the name of theocracy. That is the slippery slope we are currently experiencing. I do not believe that it is already too late to stop. There are more Democrats in the nation than Republicans. Republicans out-vote Democrats because more of them show up to vote. **If democracy dies in America it will be as much the fault of the Democratic non-voter as it is of the greed of the 1%.** To quote Woody Allen, 80% of life is showing up.

