

Georgia Federation of Republican Women

VOICES Magazine



Civics Education?

**Your Civics Test
Are You a Literate Voter?
Creating Civic-Minded Citizens**

**Make Civics a Priority
More Civics in the Classroom
American Education and Islam 101**

**The Next Generation: We're in This Fight Together
YRs Are Conduits for the Republican Message
Winning the Millennial Vote**

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Our Challenge

By Sherry Roedl
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Much is written these days about the millennial generation (people born after 1980)—the first generation to come of age in the new millennium. Those of us who are interested in politics hear over and over (and probably even say it ourselves) that it is now time for millennials to “step up” and take an interest in this country in order to get it back on the right track. However, the question is what do millennials consider the right track?

“Racially diverse, economically stressed, and politically liberal, millennials are building their own networks through social media—rather than through political parties, organized religion or marriage. Half now call themselves political independents, the highest share of any generation.” [Pew Research Center, Social Trends, Mar. 7, 2014] If this is accurate, it doesn’t bode well for the Republican Party. The Party can’t wait until these young adults mature and evolve from having an independent political view to becoming conservative. It will simply be too late for the Party and this nation.

If we expect this generation to “step up,” we—current baby boomers—need to get to work! What are **we** doing to instill in our children who fall into this age group or the generation ahead of them (Generation X) the values on which this country was founded? Have we taught our children to be fiscally conservative? Have we impressed upon them what a great country the United States of America is and how this nation came to be “the shining city on the hill?”

Our parents knew the greatness of this country. They lived through difficult times: the Great Depression; World War II; the Korean War; and,

the Cold War. We baby boomers got off pretty easy and, in my view, we have taken this great nation for granted. We lost sight of how this country became the best country in the world. We took our eyes off the ball, thinking our children were learning in school what they needed to learn about the founding of this nation. We thought they were being taught the principles upon which this country was founded. We thought they were being taught how our system of government differs from Communism and Socialism and what the consequences would be if we lost our system of democracy. While we were asleep at the switch, progressives infiltrated our educational system and our children are learning a very different history than the history we learned.

The challenge for us now is to teach millennials what it means to be a Republican. We need to do it in such a way that we encourage them to listen to our story without preaching. We need to impress on them how important it is for them to take up the standard now to ensure this nation continues to be the land of the free. We need to persuade them that Republican/Conservative ideology is the correct ideology—not Liberalism, not Socialism, and certainly not Communism. Our Founding Fathers set this country up to allow its citizens to enjoy a limited government where people are governed by laws and not subject to the whims of a dictator. The next generation must be encouraged to learn—and fully understand—and teach their children the difference between our system of government established more than 200 years ago and the system of government that the Democrats/Socialists/Liberals want for this nation. I pray that it is not too late.

Summer Issue

VOICES Mission: Educating and Empowering Women for Better Government

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VOICES Magazine

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Letter from the President

Civic Responsibility - Civics Education



**Ruby Robinson
GFRW President**

If you ask the average person in this country today to describe how much civics education our students get in an average school day; what students view as their role as citizens and how they act on those views, you will likely get a wide range of answers. I believe that reveals a very unfortunate reality about our current state of civics education.

If you are like me, you have probably seen the interviews on television of people in the street who cannot identify their own U.S. representative or senator, much less who the candidates are for president of the United States. Try asking the average person on the street about how the legislative process works or which country we fought in the Revolutionary War to achieve our freedom or the significance of the Constitution and it can ruin your day.

What my generation learned as second nature and what inspires respect and loyalty to this country is simply not being taught effectively in the current educational system. Civics, once public education's front line in preparing students to be good citizens, has been on the wane in recent years. What we know about how civics is taught and how well U.S. students achieve in civics is woefully inadequate. There is virtually no empirical research that can tell us about the state of civics education in the nation's schools.

So what does this mean for the future of civics education in the nation's schools as it pertains to instruction, achievement, and research?

It is often said that well-informed citizens are at the cornerstone of a strong democracy. Without even a basic knowledge of government, history, and a citizen's role in promoting and defending a robust representative republic, individuals are hamstrung in understanding their own rights and the rights of others. In an era when U.S. students are often compared with or competing against their international counterparts, it is crucial that they understand their own nation's history and system of government and how that has and will continue to impact the world around them.

Further exacerbating the problem is the inexorable flow of immigrants, both legal and illegal, into this country. The U.S. is allowing more than 1 million legal immigrants every year and another 300,000-400,000 are coming illegally. Just in the last couple of years, there have been 30,000-40,000 children who have come to this country alone. What possible chance is there to assimilate these people in this country if we cannot even teach them the fundamental tenets of democracy?

The current lack of research leaves the nation at a real disadvantage if we hope to understand and improve knowledge of civics and engagement among the various segments of our society. Without that common understanding and the cooperation that it will generate, I fear we are destined to experience the balkanization of this country, much like what has taken place in Europe.

By Natalie Olmi
GFRW 6th District Director

NFRW Trainer Visits Dunwoody



This was a first of its kind workshop in DeKalb County combining both GOP representation as well as members of Republican women's clubs in the 4th, 6th, and 7th Congressional Districts of metropolitan Atlanta.

Many Georgia Republican Women wear several hats in both the GFRW and GOP, holding key officer positions in both groups. So how do we, as Republican women, make a smooth connection between the two groups? We bring both groups together for comprehensive training in order to grow the Party.

Natalie Olmi, Past President of the North DeKalb Republican Women's Club and GFRW 6th District Director, coordinated the much needed workshop to broaden the educational scope of the women in the districts represented.

Kay VanSant, 3rd Vice President of the National Federation of Republican Women (NFRW), conducted the informative workshop incorporating aspects of four core areas for both the GOP and the Federation, as follows: leadership strategies, membership acquisition and retention, precinct development, and campaign practices.

VanSant emphasized getting new people involved from the beginning to utilize their personal and leadership skills. She told attendees how she joined one month and the next month the club had her at the door as a greeter. Although she admitted to being a bit nervous, she met everyone attending and never felt like a stranger.

The workshop explored precinct strategies for specific local neighborhoods, especially gated communities, to identify perspective members residing in these secured buildings or developments.

GFRW district directors were encouraged to work together to further the strength of clubs in their districts as well as start new ones with the Start Up Kit from the NFRW Web site.

"The election in 2016 is perhaps the most important in our history. It will take all Republicans—the National Federation of Republican Women, Young Republicans, College Republicans, and our minority groups — all supporting the grassroots efforts of our Party to get out the vote and bring us to victory in November 2016. The very survival of our country, as we have known her and loved her, depends on it."

Who is Kay VanSant?

VanSant's expertise comes in part from being NFRW Vice Chair of membership, leadership, and now 3rd Vice President. While in Arizona, she held positions of club president, state federation president, and Arizona State Treasurer. In addition, VanSant was a member of the Assistance League of Phoenix, Arizona. In Alabama, VanSant served as AFRW 2nd vice president and 4th vice president. She founded and served as president of the Cherokee County Republican women. She also is heavily involved in the Assistance League of Atlanta now holding several top positions. She is definitely a hard worker who loves politics!

QUOTES FROM ATTENDEES:

"I'm so glad to see the positive collaboration between our DeKalb GOP and North DeKalb Republican Women's Club. The women are the backbone of the Party. Every county should have training like we had today, throughout the state. Kay VanSant is exceptional in her background and experience. Even with her busy schedule, she was able to come to DeKalb County." ~ Brian Anderson, DeKalb GOP Chairman

"I thank Natalie for this wonderful training. Kay VanSant's presentation is an excellent combination of several NFRW PowerPoints and is a rich resource for all officers and members to provide instruction on the importance of women's clubs, how to grow membership, how to build leadership, and how to interact with the GOP more effectively. Highly recommend it. ~ Laurie Padgett, GFRW 1st Vice President.

"It was very informative and Kay gave us many practical ideas to take back to our club and the Gwinnett GOP. The precinct and leadership portions were very helpful. We will be putting that to good use." ~ Linda Williams, GFRW 7th District Director, and Carol Field of Greater Gwinnett, both hold positions in their women's club and the Gwinnett GOP



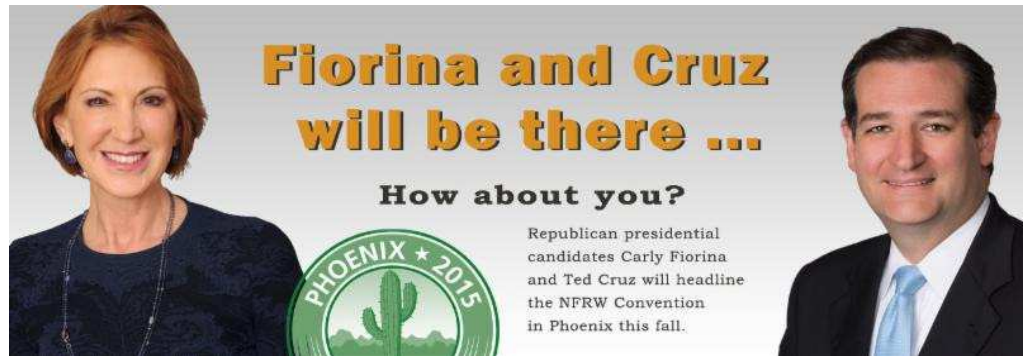
Kay VanSant (L) and Natalie Olmi (R)

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF REPUBLICAN WOMEN

The NFRW convention will bring together nearly 1,300 Republican women who are political and business leaders in their communities and states for three days of planning, education, and networking at the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort and Spa in Phoenix Sept. 10-13. Attendees will:

- Hear from candidates vying for the Republican nomination for president in 2016!
- Make their voices heard in the NFRW Presidential Straw Poll!
- Receive valuable training to make them more effective leaders and campaigners!
- Network with other Republicans from across the nation!

Election of Officers. Delegates will elect new officers. Nominees include: President—Carrie Almond, Missouri; 1st VP—Becky Johnson, Kansas; 2nd VP—Lynne Hartung, Nevada; 3rd VP—Eileen Sobjack, Washington; 4th VP—Kim Reem, Iowa; Secretary—Julie Harris, Arkansas; and Treasurer—Pam Pollard, Oklahoma.



Speakers. Keynote speakers include: Carly Fiorina, Republican candidate for U.S. president; Michele Reagan, Arizona secretary of state; and Kellyanne Conway, president and CEO of a polling company.

NFRW Awards. The NFRW will honor outstanding Federation leaders, states, and clubs with several awards during the convention, including:

- **Ronald Reagan Leadership Award.** Honors a state president who has provided extraordinary leadership and inspiration to her state and to the NFRW.
- **Betty Heitman Awards for State Excellence.** Presented to states that demonstrate excellence, achievement, or accomplishment in community relations, programs, campaign activities, and state functions.
- **Club Achievement Awards.** Presented to clubs that demonstrate excellence in

membership development, campaign activities, community relations, programs, and club functions.

- **Campaign Volunteer Awards.** Presented to states that demonstrate excellence in donating volunteer time to the benefit of the Republican Party, Republican candidates, or the NFRW.
- **Caring for America Awards.** Presented to clubs that demonstrate excellence in community service and outreach.
- **Membership Incentive Awards for States, Clubs, and Members.** Presented to states and clubs that demonstrate excellence in the area of membership development.
- **State Public Relations Awards.** Recognizes states that do an outstanding job of improving Federation visibility and attracting media coverage of Federation accomplishments.

Biennial Convention

The Georgia Federation of Republican Women will hold its Biennial Convention at Sea Palms Resort, located at 5445 Frederica Rd., St. Simons Island, Ga., Oct. 16-17.

Another dolphin cruise is planned for this event. GFRW business to be conducted will include the announcement of the slate of officers recommended by the Nominating Committee. New GFRW officers for 2016 will be elected and announced at this meeting. You will want to attend this meeting to make sure you cast your vote for your choice of GFRW officers. Please mark the dates on your calendars now and plan to attend the GFRW Biennial Convention at Sea Palms Resort in St. Simons Island in October.



GAGOP 2015 Convention

By **John Padgett**
GAGOP Chairman



Who Am I?

John Padgett, an entrepreneur, business owner, grassroots leader, and family man, is proud to serve as the Chairman of Georgia's Republican Party. Padgett has proudly worked in the grassroots of the Republican Party for 35 years, humbly serving as the Chairman of the Athens-Clarke County Republican Party four times, Chairman of the 11th and 12th Congressional District, Secretary of the Georgia Republican Party and member of the GAGOP Executive Committee. Padgett was elected to serve as Chairman of the Georgia Republican Party at the 2013 State Convention and re-elected in 2015. Above all, Padgett is a family man. Married to Mary for more than 30 years, the couple has three daughters and three grandchildren. The Padgetts are members of Highland Park Church and are proud to call the City of Athens their home.

The 2015 Georgia Republican Party State Convention was a huge success! Thousands of Georgia Republicans descended upon The Classic Center in Athens to hear from presidential hopefuls such as New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, and Texas Sen. Ted Cruz. With FOX News and CNN broadcasting live and more than three dozen media outlets present, news of the "SEC Primary" and Georgia's role in choosing our next president spread from coast to coast. Like Georgia Secretary of State Brian Kemp says, "The road to the White House now goes through Georgia!"

During the two-day convention, Louisiana Sen. Elbert Guillory joined Leo Smith, director of minority engagement for the Georgia GOP, and other minority engagement leaders from around the state to highlight successes from 2014 and chart a path for engaging African American, Hispanic, and Asian voters during the presidential election cycle. Before keynoting the victory dinner, Cruz joined hundreds at the Party's minority engagement reception. With more than 20 engagement ambassadors on stage with him, Cruz said that he had "never seen anything like this" anywhere else in the country. Delegates, alternates, and guests convened on Saturday to hear from our Party leaders and elected officials. I was honored to present awards to

Rachel Little, Jon Richards, and Mike Welsh for their hard work and dedication during the 2014 election cycle.

In the afternoon, the Resolutions Committee presented its recommendations to the convention delegation. All eight resolutions, including a resolution to elect the Georgia State Board of Education (SBOE) members and a resolution urging state leaders to consider an alternative to Advanced Placement U.S. History (APUSH), passed with overwhelming support.

Congratulations to Michael McNeely (1st vice-chairman), Debbie McCord (2nd vice-chairman), Mansell McCord (treasurer), John Wallace (assistant treasurer), Kirk Shook (secretary), and Layla Shipman (assistant secretary) for earning the trust of the delegation. I look forward to working with these leaders in the years ahead to move this Party forward.

Thanks to continued support from grassroots Republicans around Georgia, I have the privilege of serving another term as your state Party chairman. I am honored by the confidence you have in my leadership and commit to doing everything in my power to grow the Party, spread the conservative message, and secure victory at the ballot box. As I told those assembled on the convention floor, "there is still more work to be done, but together, we can remain undefeated!"

"People often say that, in a democracy, decisions are made by a majority of the people. Of course, that is not true. Decisions are made by a majority of those who make themselves heard and who vote — a very different thing."

~ Rep. Walter H. Judd of Minnesota

Big Court Appointments Ahead

By Randy Evans

Georgia's National
GOP Committeeman



No doubt, Gov. Nathan Deal has already made a lasting impact on Georgia's courts. Just into his second term, he has appointed almost 60 judges to the State (18) and Superior (34) courts, as well as the Georgia Tax Tribunal (2), the Georgia Court of Appeals (4), and the Georgia Supreme Court (1).

While legislators and the governor pass laws, courts interpret them. And, how they interpret them often has as much, if not more, impact on the law itself. This is especially true for the appellate courts. So far, Deal's appointments to Georgia's appellate courts have been meaningful, but not monumental. Of Georgia's 12 Court of Appeals judges, he has appointed four or just one-third. Of Georgia's seven Supreme Court justices, he has appointed only one.

However, all of that is about to change over the next few years, for two different reasons:

First, earlier this year, the Georgia General Assembly passed legislation creating three new judgeships on the Georgia Court of Appeals, increasing the number from 12 to 15. The three new Court of Appeals judges will not take office until 2016. Deal will appoint them later this year after the Georgia Judicial Nominating Commission interviews applicants and recommends a "short list" to him. These appointments will increase his total from four to seven, or just under half of the Court of Appeals.

Second, two justices on the Georgia Supreme Court will retire before Deal's term ends. Georgia's retirement laws provide that both appellate court judges and Georgia's Supreme Court justices must retire on or before the day he or she reaches the age of 75, or on the last day of the term in which she or he reaches 70, whichever is later. Any appellate judge who fails to resign then receives no retirement benefits.

Currently, two Georgia Supreme Court justices fall within this category, effectively mandating their retirement before Deal's second term ends: Chief Justice Hugh Thompson and Presiding Justice Harris Hines. To keep their retirement benefits, both must retire during or before 2018. (Deal does not leave office until 2019.) With their retirements, Deal will add two justices to Georgia's highest court. In his first term, Deal elevated Court of Appeals Judge Keith Blackwell to the Georgia Supreme Court. So, by the end of his term, he will have appointed three of the seven justices.

Like Justice Blackwell, Deal typically elevates judges from lower courts when making appointments. If that pattern continues with his Georgia Supreme Court picks, he is likely to elevate two Georgia Court of Appeals judges opening up two more positions on the Court of Appeals.

In addition to the two Georgia Supreme Court justices, one current member of the Georgia Court of Appeals also faces mandatory retirement during Deal's second term. Chief Judge Herbert Phipps also will turn 75 before Deal's term ends.

The net effect of the new judgeships and the anticipated retirements will be quite a few appellate appointments by Deal. Absent some change in direction, he could be looking at making eight appellate appointments in the next few years. And, that assumes no other vacancies on either the Georgia Supreme Court or the Georgia Court of Appeals for unforeseen reasons.

The impact on the judiciary becomes even greater when viewed in the context of the combination with Gov. Sonny Perdue's appointments. During his eight years, Perdue appointed two justices to the Georgia Supreme Court (Justices Harold Melton and David Nahmias) and two judges to the Georgia Court of Appeals (now Justice Blackwell and Court of Appeals Judge Stephen Dillard.)

Should Deal indeed make two more appointments to the Georgia Supreme Court, Republican governors will have appointed five of the seven Georgia Supreme Court justices. And, if things continue as they have in the past, Republicans will have appointed 10 of the 15 Georgia Court of Appeals judges by the time Deal leaves office.

However, before anyone on either side of any issue gets too worked up, it should be noted that Deal will be replacing two justices appointed by Gov. Zell Miller. As governor, Miller appointed Chief Justice Thompson to the Georgia Supreme Court in 1994 and Presiding Justice Hines in 1995.

Although Miller was (and is) a Democrat, most would agree that he is more Republican than most Democrats. As a result, no one should expect too much of a shift in the balance of the Georgia Supreme Court with Deal's upcoming picks. (In retrospect, Perdue's replacement of Chief Justice Norman Fletcher and Chief Justice Leah Sears with Melton and Nahmias had a much more significant impact on the court.)

The Georgia Court of Appeals will be a much different story. That court is in transition and Deal's picks could change it for two decades or more.

[From the *Atlanta Business Chronicle*]

Who Am I?

Randy Evans, a partner with Dentons, a multinational law firm, served as outside counsel to the speakers of the 104th-109th Congresses of the United States as well as senators, members of Congress and elected officials in Georgia. He is a member of the board of the Newt Gingrich Companies. Evans is a frequent lecturer and author on subjects of professional liability and ethics, government ethics and politics. He is also Georgia's National GOP Committeeman.



By David Perdue

U.S. Senator

July 15, 2015

Speaking Out On Education

A quality education is critical to our kids' success. I've seen that firsthand my entire life. My mom and dad were school teachers. I also married a teacher.

One of my first jobs was with the Head Start Program helping kids learn to read. That experience never leaves you. It only reinforces how important it is that our children not fall behind. Once they do, we know that students are less likely to graduate from high school or even find a job.

I've also seen the frustration our teachers face with Washington's one-size-fits-all mandates. I can assure you that our parents and teachers know much more about our children's education needs than bureaucrats in Washington.

Georgians sent me to Washington to fight for local control of education choices. Today, we have an opportunity to do just that in Congress. I am encouraged that the Senate is actually working to put in place conservative solutions that I've been talking about for some time.

First, get money out of the hands of federal bureaucrats and back to the classrooms with no strings attached. We need to direct decision-making back to the local level so our schools are best equipped to help each child succeed.

Second, stop the federal mandate for Common Core. The federal government should not force states to adopt specific academic standards or reward one over another for doing so. States and school districts should determine the best curriculum for their students.

Third, we need to end federal requirements for high stakes testing. Instead of teaching to the test, we should empower our teachers to meet the needs of each individual student.

Finally, we cannot allow President Barack Obama and the Department of Education to continue to go unchecked. For too long, out of touch federal bureaucrats have run our education system, and look at the results. We need to act right now in order to rein in this overreach and shrink Washington's role in education.

These are the principles I am fighting for as we debate an important education bill right now on the floor of the Senate. As a parent, and now a grandparent, my goal is to empower parents and teachers to do what's best for our children, and finally get Washington out of our classrooms and out of our way.

Amendments Championed During Reform Debate

End All Federal Testing Requirements: End all mandated federal testing outright, putting testing decisions and discretion back in the hands of states. (*Senator Cruz, Senator Perdue co-sponsored*)

Stop Federal Mandate For Common Core: Stop the Education Secretary from mandating Common Core and intervening in any academic standards or curriculum development in states and local school districts. (*Senator Crapo, Senator Perdue co-sponsored*)

Remove Washington's Grip on Grant Money (A-PLUS Amendment): Consolidates all federal education dollars into one fund so states and local school districts can spend their grant money in new and innovative ways. (*Senator Daines*)

Protect Student Privacy: Establish a committee on student privacy to keep our kids safe and their personal information private. (*Senator Hatch*)

Allow Parent Opt-Outs For All Federal Testing: Grant all parents access to student testing information and make available the ability to opt their students out of all federal testing. (*Senator Lee*)

Give Parents Choice For Testing: Require schools to notify parents about any assessments and testing, and their rights to opt their children out of mandated testing. (*Senator Isakson*)

Strengthen Local Control Of Budget Decisions: Prevent the Education Secretary from interfering in local school administration or budgeting decisions in states and school districts. (*Senator Fischer*)

Help Students Save: Allows students to simultaneously receive college-credit from courses taught by college-approved teachers in secondary education, allowing students to save money on expensive college credits and get a head start on earning a degree. (*Senator Gardner*)

Opportunity School Districts: A Bold Step Forward for Georgia Schools

By Senator Butch Miller
GA Senate District 49

Georgia loves to publicize the fact that it is repeatedly named one of the best states for business in the country. However, as we continue to rise up the business ranks, we continue to fall further down the education ranks in certain geographical areas. Time and time again, studies show that a solid education lays the foundation for a bright and productive workforce. We are failing future economic development, but, more importantly, we are failing Georgia students and families when we look past underperforming K-12 schools.

During the 2015 legislative session, Gov. Nathan Deal asked the Georgia General Assembly to consider a unique proposal designed to boost student achievement and expand educational opportunities for Georgia's students. This proposal was set forth through two pieces of legislation: SB 133 and SR 287. After much consideration and debate by both the Georgia House and Senate, SB 133 and SR 287 reached final passage in both chambers. In fact, SR 287 reached a constitutional majority in both chambers, as required by law. It was an honor to stand with Deal as he signed SB 133 into law on April 21.

SB 133 is subject to the constitutional amendment set forth by SR 287. If approved by Georgia voters, a statewide Opportunity School District would assume all operational

and managerial responsibility for selected failing public elementary and secondary schools in Georgia. The constitutional amendment is set to appear on the November 2016 general election ballot.

If Georgia voters pass this constitutional amendment, the provisions outlined in SB 133 will take effect. This school district would fall under the purview of the Governor's Office of Student Achievement, and the Opportunity School District superintendent would be appointed by the governor, as well as subject to Senate confirmation. The superintendent's responsibilities would include developing operational procedures for this statewide school district and providing an annual progress and operations report to the Georgia General Assembly.

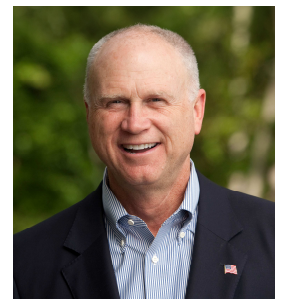
This model has brought success to other southeast states, including Louisiana and Tennessee. Specifically, Louisiana has seen success in New Orleans, where 66 schools are currently under the oversight of a statewide school district. New Orleans has seen a steady increase in state test scores, and it is possible these schools could become some of the best performing schools in Louisiana. Tennessee is still in the early years of operating a statewide school district, but as the numbers continue to roll in, it is anticipated that Tennessee will see results similar to Louisiana's.

The foundation for educational success starts with individual schools; but, when the foundation is crumbling, it is the state's moral obligation to step in and provide the support needed. This method of reform has been successful in other states, and I am confident that if approved by voters, it will be successful in Georgia as well.

The future of this innovative new path for education now rests in the hands of Georgia voters. Casting a YES vote for this measure in November 2016 means casting your vote to break a cycle of failing schools. It is time to take a bold step forward to improve school accountability measures and student achievement in Georgia.

Who Am I?

Senator Butch Miller, Hall County, represents the 49th Senate District, which includes Hall County and portions of Jackson County. He serves as Vice Chair to the Transportation Committee and as Secretary to the Banking and Financial Institutions. Miller is also a member of the Appropriations, Education and Youth, and Ethics Committees.



Do you know the answers*? How about your children, can they answer these questions correctly?

- ◆ Which Constitutional amendment related to voting rights for women?
- ◆ What determines the number of representatives a state will have?
- ◆ If both the president and the vice president can no longer serve, who becomes president?
- ◆ Which Constitutional amendment makes it illegal to institute a poll tax?
- ◆ When was the Constitution written?
- ◆ Name one of the writers of the Federalist Papers.

* Answers can be found at CivicsQuiz.com

YOUR Civics Test

By Cindy Theiler, Associate Editor

I have to admit when I was asked to write about civics education and learned I could take a free online test to see how good my knowledge was in this subject, I panicked just a little. After all, it had been some years since I had a government or history class in school.

After summoning up some courage, I took a short, 50 multiple-choice question, online test at CivicsQuiz.com. The questions included:

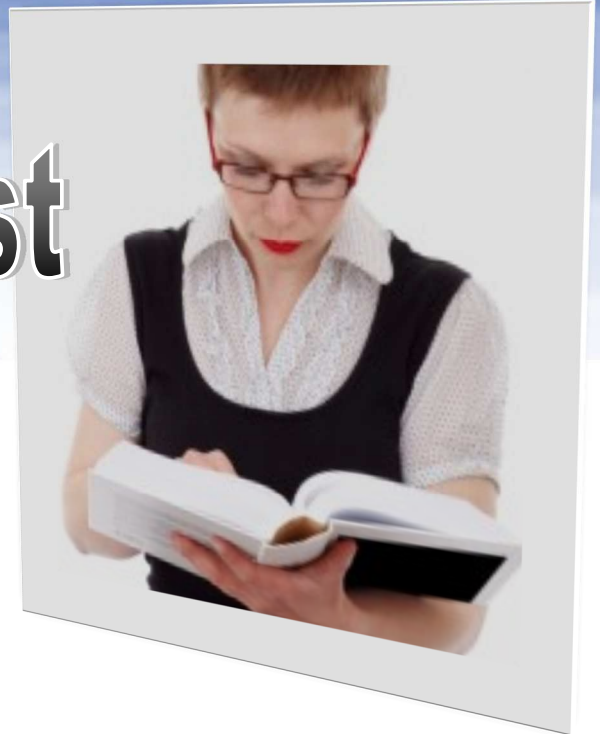
- How many amendments does the Constitution have?
- We elect a U.S. Senator for how many years?
- If the president can no longer serve, who becomes president?

Most of the test questions are taken from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' civics exam that immigrants trying to become U.S. citizens must pass to obtain their citizenship. While I can fortunately (and honestly) say I passed with flying colors, the same cannot be said for our nation's eighth-grade students today, according to the 2014 results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Only about a quarter of students tested showed solid performance or better in U.S. history, civics, and geography on tests known as the Nation's Report Card,

the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* reported.

According to the Pew Research Center, only about one-third of Americans can name the three branches of government, and then know what each does. How will the New Generation know how our government works and who we are as a nation if they don't fare well in civics? And if they don't know how government works, what is the likelihood they will be active and engaged citizens? Probably not good.

[Civics Education Initiative](#), a project of Joe Foss Institute, a non-profit dedicated to creating informed, engaged citizens through civic education and awareness, has a mission to help close the civics education gap and prepare America's youth for civic engagement. Created in 2014, the goal is to enact legislation in all 50 states by Sept. 17, 2017 (yes, the 240th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution) that would require all public and private high school students to take and pass a 100-question U.S. Citizenship civics test prior to graduation. Eight states have already passed legislation; the initiative is expected to be on the Georgia Legislature's agenda in 2016.



If we want our children to understand civics principles and practices and be educated voters in the future, it's important not to forget civics education. The test reminded me that the U.S. Constitution has 27 amendments: I had forgotten that fact.

Test YOUR Civics Literacy Level!

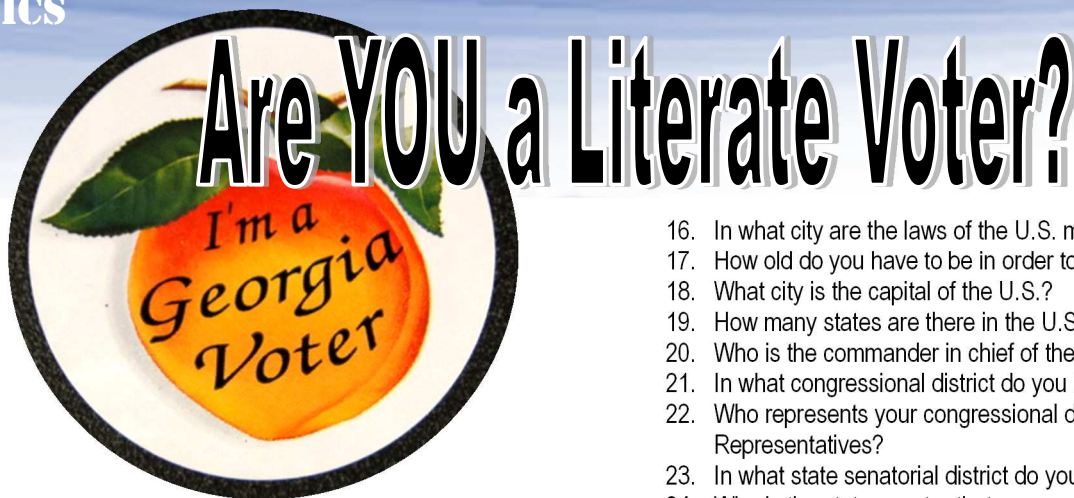
Go to one of the following links and find out what you remember (or what you have forgotten) in the area of CIVICS.

- <http://www.billoreilly.com/quiz?categoryID=4&quizID=757>
- <http://civicsquiz.com/>
- <http://civicsquiz.com/u-s-civics-resources/>
- <http://www.civiced.org/>
- http://opi.mt.gov/civics/Civic_Students.html



Who Am I?

Cindy Theiler is associate editor of VOICES Magazine and recording secretary for the Cobb County Republican Women's Club. A journalism major, Theiler served as a newspaper reporter and editor for 10 years, and then later utilized her communication skills during a 26-year career at Georgia Power. She currently does freelance and grant writing.



By Rita Fink

Citizenship is the status of a citizen with its rights and duties. Civics is the study of the responsibilities of citizenship. What has happened to teaching civics? How many teachers today could define it?

Let's look at one of the most important aspects of citizenship: voting. It is a duty as well, yet look at the pitiful percentages of Americans who vote in every election except the presidential election. It is a citizen's responsibility to study the issues and the candidates. To have a real democracy, you have to vote every time. With absentee ballots and early voting, there is no excuse for not voting. It is so easy to register today.

When I registered to vote (many moons ago) I had to read a paragraph to the registrar to prove I was literate. Those who were illiterate (uneducated) had to be able to answer 10 of the following 30 questions in the 1949 Voting Registration Act:

1. Who is the president of the United States?
2. What is the term of office of the president?
3. May the president be legally elected to a second term?
4. If the president dies in office, who succeeds him?
5. How many groups compose the Congress of the U.S.?
6. How many U.S. senators are there from Georgia?
7. What is the term of office of a U.S. senator?
8. Who are the U.S. senators from Georgia?
9. Who is the governor of Georgia?
10. Who is the lt. governor of Georgia?
11. Who is the chief justice of Georgia?
12. Who is chief judge of the Court of Appeals of Georgia?
13. Into what two groups is the Georgia General Assembly divided?
14. Does each Georgia county have at least one representative in the Georgia House of Representatives?
15. Do all Georgia counties have the same number of representatives in the Georgia House of Representatives?

16. In what city are the laws of the U.S. made?
17. How old do you have to be in order to vote in Georgia?
18. What city is the capital of the U.S.?
19. How many states are there in the U.S.?
20. Who is the commander in chief of the U.S. Army?
21. In what congressional district do you live?
22. Who represents your congressional district in the U.S. House of Representatives?
23. In what state senatorial district do you live?
24. Who is the state senator that represents your senatorial district?
25. In what county do you live?
26. Who represents your county in the Georgia House of Representatives?
27. What is the name of the county seat of your county?
28. Who is the ordinary of your county?
29. Who is the judge of the Superior Court of our circuit? If there are more than one, name one additional judge.
30. Who is the solicitor general of your circuit?

Could you answer 10 of them? Could a teacher answer 10 of them? And is this taught today?

These 30 questions come from the textbook, *Georgia Government and History*. Perhaps if we made it more difficult to register, there would be more respect for the responsibility to vote.

Source: Saye, A.B. (1957). *Georgia Government and History*. Evanston, IL: Row Peterson & Co.

Who Am I?

Rita Fink is an avid political campaigner, having worked in campaigns in both Florida and Georgia. She was a paid campaign worker for Gov. Claude Kirk, first Republican governor of Florida since reconstruction. She was national college co-chair of the Young Republicans and later ran for a city-wide seat for the Atlanta School Board. Fink is a member of the Buckhead Republicans Club.



“A popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it is but a prologue to Farce or Tragedy or perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance, and a people who mean to be their own Governors must arm themselves with the power knowledge gives.”

~James Madison

The Future in the Hands of Our Children

By Richard Woods
Georgia's School Superintendent

My first several months in office have been exciting and very rewarding. As I focus on initiatives to better educate Georgia's future generations, a couple of issues have been front and center: (1) math changes and (2) ensuring our children know about the country's founding fathers and the founding documents, such as the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.

Getting math right for the students and teachers of Georgia has been a priority of mine since day one. One of my first actions as your state School Superintendent was working with the state Board of Education to provide a needed choice between integrated mathematics and traditional/discrete mathematics (with assessments to match each option) for our schools. Prior to this action, schools that chose to offer the traditional discrete mathematics option were penalized by having only one assessment option—integrated mathematics.

I regularly hear from parents, especially those of elementary school students, unable to help their children with math homework, and math teachers who struggle to master instruction due to a lack of textbook options and unclear expectations for state tests.

I want to make a few things clear:

- What many have labeled as "Common Core" methods for teaching mathematics are not methods mandated by the Georgia Department of Education;
- Georgia's standards direct school districts, schools, and teachers to use basic arithmetic algorithms, fact fluency, and standard processes for addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division; and,
- The Georgia Department of Education provides resources (which may be used at district discretion) supporting the use and instruction of basic arithmetic algorithms.

January 30, 2015 – "I am in agreement with Governor Deal and the State Board of Education that our Social Studies – and Science – standards must be Georgia-owned and Georgia-grown. We will conduct a full review of our Social Studies standards to ensure that they have proper focus on the Founding Fathers, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and all aspects of American History."

Offering choices and clarification are some of the steps we are taking to address the concerns surrounding mathematics in our state. We will continue to monitor this issue closely to ensure our students have the best education possible.

Another key issue that concerns me today is that some of our young people have forgotten what our veterans fought for—our freedom. They need to know about the greatness of America and the importance of sacrifice. And they need to understand how and why our nation was founded.

That is why I am leading an initiative to place a copy of the U.S. Constitution in the hands of every fourth grader in Georgia, while not using taxpayer money to fund the project. The Constitution is the bedrock of our beliefs and values as a country. Understand it, study its words. This is a document that begins "we the people," not "we the government."

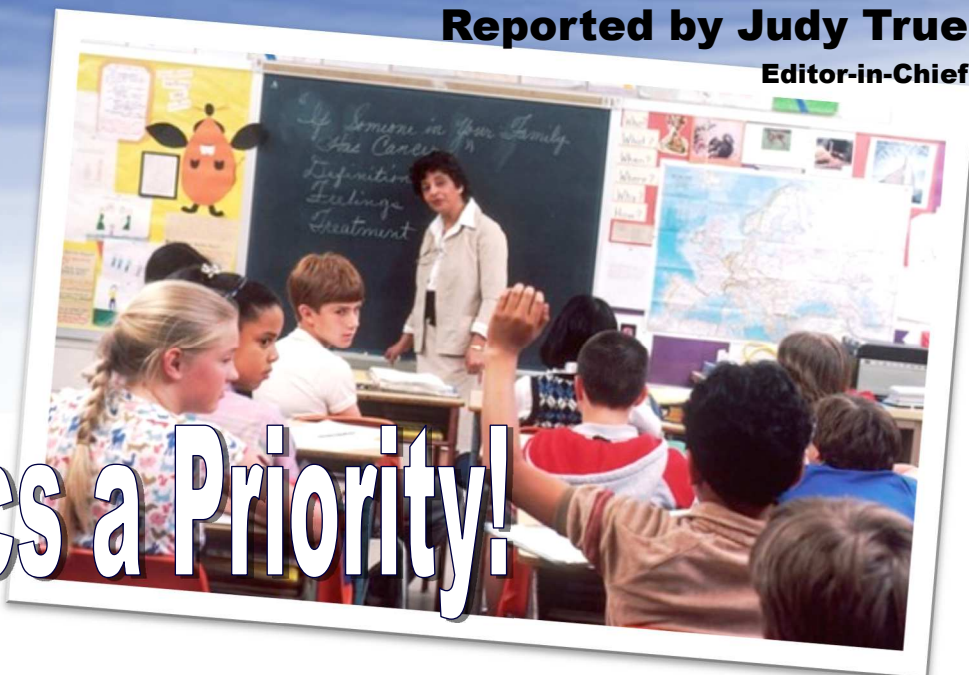
Knowing that next year more than 120,000 fourth graders will be able to carry those words with them, literally and figuratively, is a great thing. I'm thrilled to provide these Constitutions as a gift to our students and, as a former social studies educator, thrilled to provide them as a resource to their teachers.

The future of our country lies in the hands of these children, and a good understanding of our founding fathers and the documents they created is critical to our nation's continued success.

Who Am I?

Richard Woods is Georgia's School Superintendent. He has more than 22 years of pre-K through 12th grade experience in public education, having taught high school for 14 years and serving as a department chair and teacher mentor. He also has been a purchasing agent for a national/multinational laser company and a small business owner.





Make Civics a Priority!

Many thanks to friend and colleague Jennie Hendley for her assistance in the preparation of this article.

In this era of shrinking budgets and “college and career” readiness, social studies and civics education have fallen on hard times. For years, educators have lamented about the trend away from building civic literacy. Lawrence Hardy, senior editor of the *American School Board Journal*, observes that the vast majority of states signing on to Common Core standards, proponents of civic learning are saying a third pillar (civics education) of a strong educational foundation needs to be added. (Hardy, 2012).

Make Civics a Priority. Ted McConnell, executive director for the Civic Mission of Schools describes the problem another way. “We maintain that this new education reform mantra — preparing students for college and career — is incomplete. It’s about preparing student for college, career — and citizenship.” (cited in Hardy, 2012)

Across much of the country, civics education isn’t a priority. Some say it’s been squeezed out by those subjects being most tested, e.g., math and language arts.

Why the need to focus on civics education, civics literacy? Sandra Day O’Connor, retired associate justice of the U.S. Supreme

Court, says it succinctly: “Sadly, civic education has been in steady decline over the past generation, as high-stakes testing and an emphasis on literacy and math dominate school reforms. Too many young people today do not understand how our political system works. They lack the tools to shape their communities through their own participation.” (Day-O’Connor, 2008)

“Too many young people today do not understand how our political system works. They lack the tools to shape their communities through their own participation.”
~ O’Connor, 2008

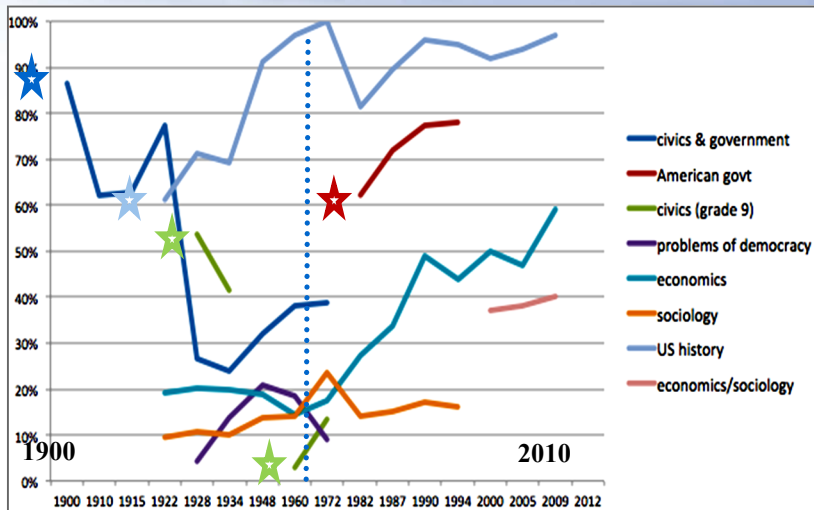
How Students “Measure Up.” Andrew J. Rotherham (2011) describes the stark reality when reviewing the proficiency level of students taking the 2010 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) History Test. Less than one-quarter of all students performed at or above the proficiency level. “And just 17 percent of eighth graders scored at the proficient level.” Rotherham went on to propose encouraging the media to: (1) convert their vast resources into curriculum to sell for use in the schools and universities, and (2) provide

free access to their amazing digital archives. NAEP results released in May 2015 showed no significant progress. Only 18 percent of students are proficient in history and less than a quarter in civics. Fewer than one-third of those tested knew that the United States government as a democracy is a political belief shared by most people in our country. (O’Connor and Glenn, 2015)

What Teachers Have to Say. Teachers note that since the 22 standards are to be covered in one semester, “there is little time for in-depth study or real understanding of the true meaning of being an active and informed citizen in today’s society. Again most of the standards refer back to the federal government and the structure of the government, not the actual participation as a citizen.”

One civics teacher reports that years ago “students explored the Constitution and the processes of government.” She described one student whose project was to paraphrase the Bill of Rights and then ask adults to sign his petition to have these rights added to the Constitution. Out of 20 adults he approached, only one recognized the rights as being a part of the Constitution. (This was more than 30 years ago— illustrating that civics literacy problems are not new.)

Continued on next page



FOLLOW THE STARS

Percentage of American students who've had various courses on their transcripts (1900—2012)

- ★ Civics & Government
- ★ American Government
- ★ US History
- ★ Civics (Grade 9)

The early '70s saw a serious drop in the teaching of courses in civics/government and 9th grade civics.

Peter Levine. September 2014

So in essence, we can all agree there is **need**. Next is **how**. What do teachers have to say about how civics *could be* taught?

A recently retired Georgia teacher of government reported that “government” is taught in her school as a one semester course in the 12th grade. Students receive little information on which to build their knowledge, as U. S. history is not taught until the 11th grade in many school districts. There are some references to U.S. history in the elementary fifth-grade curriculum and Georgia history is addressed in the eighth grade. She also observed that for the purposes of teaching government/civics in Georgia schools, the two topics are considered to be the same subject. Classroom instruction focuses on the structure of the government and not the actual participation necessary as a citizen. Instruction emphasizes the federal government with little attention to state and local government.

Recommendations for Civics Education

Teachers interviewed offered the following recommendations:

1. Some information regarding “civics” education should be taught at every level from primary to secondary. Example: Kindergarten could include being responsible and showing respect for others and other topics could be introduced each year.

2. Students in grades 9-12 should have some community service component required for high school graduation.
3. Incorporate activities that involve students in the government process, for example:
 - Registering to vote;
 - Encouraging formation of school-wide political parties to promote student candidates and party platforms for student government elections. (School colors: the Blue Party, the Gold Party);
 - Electing class officers and student cabinet members;
 - Using voting machines for school elections so students are familiar with the process;
 - Having students debate and understand both sides of an issue.
 - Involving students in designing and teaching lessons that incorporate the standards;
 - Focusing on local and state elections so students see how their actions have impact; and,
 - Assisting at polling areas during elections.

One teacher said, “Civics education should begin in the home as should all education; however, since a large majority of Americans feel that they really cannot have an impact on society I do not see most young people getting a “civics” education. (Name withheld)

In closing, consider teaching citizenship as a skill, taught over time with “the same devotion we give to reading, math, and the pursuit of scientific knowledge.” Overhaul civics education to make it relevant to digital learners—through activities that will develop “muscle memory” for citizenship. (O’Connor and Glenn, 2015)

Sources:

Georgia Department of Education. (2012, August 2). *Social Studies, American Government/Civics, Standards*. Page 8 of 9

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University System of Georgia. (2015, April 7). *Staying on course: high school curriculum requirements for the University System of Georgia*. Retrieved from https://www.usg.edu/student_affairs.

Teacher interviews (names withheld)

“Liberty cannot be preserved without a general knowledge among the people, who have a right...and a desire to know.”
~ John Adams

Georgia Curriculum Standards

Civics in the Georgia Curriculum

Georgia Standards define requirements for coursework. The 22 standards defined for American/Government/Civics are introduced by the following description: *The government course provides students with a background in the philosophy, functions, and structure of the United States government. Students examine the philosophical foundations of the United States government and how that philosophy developed. Students also examine the structure and function of the United States government and its relationship to states and citizens.* (GA Department of Education 2012)

The standard most closely related to civics is: The student will describe how thoughtful and effective participation in civic life is characterized by obeying the law, paying taxes, serving on a jury, participating in the political process, performing public service, registering for military duty, being informed about current issues, and respecting differing opinions. (SSCG7)

Georgia graduation requirements call for three units of credit in social studies with one unit in U.S. History, one unit in World History, a half unit in Economics and the final half unit in American Government/Civics.

"The admissions policy for University System of Georgia (4-7-2015) requires three Carnegie units of college preparatory social science with one unit focusing on U.S. studies and one unit focusing on world studies. Forty courses are listed from which the student may satisfy the third social science requirement. **Three of the 40 high school courses deal with 'American Government/Civics.'** The third Carnegie requirement could be met by any of the remaining 37 courses including: anthropology, psychology, Asian Studies, Latin American Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, or Sub-Saharan Studies." (www.usg.edu/student_affairs)

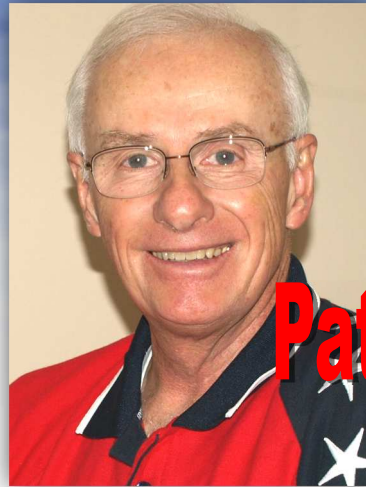
Resources:

Georgia Department of Education. (2012, August 2). *Social Studies, American Government/Civics, Standards.*

University System of Georgia. (2015, April 7). *Staying on course: high school curriculum requirements for the University System of Georgia.* Retrieved from https://www.usg.edu/student_affairs.

Governor's Directive for Social Studies Resources

Gov. Nathan Deal directed the Georgia Department of Education to develop curricular resources with foundational tenets that ensure that every child learns the importance of American government, with emphasis on our nation's founding documents, citizenship including voting and civic responsibility, economics education, and fiscal responsibility. The curricular resources will include materials that any local system could infuse into its existing Social Studies instruction. (Georgia Department of Education, 2015)



By Ron Meier
Founder of The
Forsyth County
Patriot Club

Patriot Clubs

**A Sign of Hope
for the Future!**

Our best hope for a return to our founding principles is through the generation currently in our schools, who will become our future business, government, and non-profit leaders.

Simply changing administrations over many decades since the mid-1960s has merely slowed down the Liberal Progressive train. To derail that train, children currently in school need to be exposed more deeply to our history, culture, founding documents, our Founding Fathers, and the Constitution. In order to facilitate this goal, I founded the Forsyth County Patriot Club 18 months ago to help Georgia be recognized as a state producing students who have a superior knowledge of what America was designed to be and why.

As I thought about how to do this, I recognized that people in general respond to personal incentives, rather than to be lectured. What better personal incentives than to present to students contests based on history, which would require them to do their own independent research as they prepare their entries for the various contests. There are several organizations, including the American Legion and Constituting America, that conduct history-focused contests for students from first grade through college. These contests could keep students engaged in contest prep through the school year.

We are working with teachers to encourage their students to enter these contests to earn cash prizes, awards, recognition, scholarships, and trips simply by engaging in history research beyond what is taught in the classroom. Additionally, we are available to be advisors to school history clubs and mentor students as they prepare for these contests.

It's a win-win for the students, the schools, and for America!

Who Am I?

Ron Meier, a graduate of West Point, served in the Army for four years, including a tour of duty in Vietnam. His civilian career was in corporate and personal finance and investments. For 13 years prior to his retirement, Meier was a faculty member of the College for Financial Planning in Denver where he developed and taught investment courses to financial professionals. Meier leads the Cumming American Legion Post 307's Constitution Oratorical Contest program. He won the Constituting America essay contest in the senior category in 2014.

American Education and Islam 101?

By David R. Bores

Public Domain

The Institute of Religion and Civic Values (RCV), formerly known as the Council of Islamic Education, is located in Fountain Valley, Calif., and is the gatekeeper through which the majority of American secondary education text books on history, social studies, and religion are vetted. According to Diane Ravitch, former Under Secretary for Education during President George H.W. Bush's administration, publishing houses rely heavily on RCV's approval which serves as the "...content gatekeeper with virtually unchecked power over publishers." In the words of its founder Shabbir Mansuri, RCV is "...waging a bloodless revolution (by) promoting world cultures and faith inside... classrooms...and (is) eager to expunge critical thought about Islam..."

For example, RCV's influence is seen in Houghton-Mifflin Harcourt's 2006 edition of "World History: Medieval to Early Modern Times." It stipulates that "Muhammad respected Jews and Christians...because their holy books taught many of the same ideas that Muhammad taught." However, the text omits that "...the Qur'an refers to Christians and Jews as 'apes,' 'pigs,' 'dogs,' and 'worse than cattle.'" The text book continues: "Muslims generally practiced religious tolerance, or acceptance, with regard to people they conquered...." Again, there is no mention that, historically, Islam spread through violence and that conquered Christians and Jews were offered the options to convert to Islam, submit to its rules and pay a special pole tax of protection, or be killed.

Another example of RCV's power is found in Houghton-Mifflin's seventh-grade text titled

"Across the Centuries." The book claims that "jihad" is "...an Islamic term...often misunderstood" meaning "...inner struggle to achieve spiritual peace." The book fails to mention that jihad is referenced in 109 verses of the Qur'an, mandating violence against non-Muslims through "holy war" to impose Islamic law.

According to a 2008 study conducted by the American Text Book Council of 10 widely used middle and high school text books, they present "...a picture of Islam...pristine and peaceful that (borders) on...Islamic proselytizing (and) presents an incomplete or confused view of Islam that misrepresents its foundations and its challenges to international security." In other words, Islam is presented as just another alternative lifestyle, peaceful like other religions that must be protected by the First Amendment. Any attempts to question this position, lead to charges of intolerance, blasphemy, racism, or islamophobia.

In today's environment of political correctness and historical revisionism, the truth about Islam is being suppressed. Students are not being told about the impact of Islamic fundamentalism that mandates Muslim women be subjugated to the authority of male family members; permits husbands to beat their wives for disobedience; authorizes non-Muslim women be considered spoils of war to be taken as sex slaves; considers any attempt to leave Islam as apostasy punishable by death; mandates that Muslim rape victims be considered guilty of adultery, to be stoned to death; and, promotes the extermination of Christians throughout the Middle East and Africa. This constitutes self-

censorship by replacing historical facts with non-offensive and false information about past events.

The Islamization of knowledge that our sons and daughters are receiving will leave them unable to recognize the real threats to our nation in the future unless action is taken to reverse this trend. Fortunately, some local parents are fighting back. In Tennessee, a group called Textbook Advocates is publishing the "Textbook Tattler" and, in Texas, a group called "Truth in Texas Textbooks" is attempting to re-impose local control over what their children are taught about Islam. We need to have similar concerned citizens in Georgia exercise their local control over this matter, just like many in other states are doing.

Who Am I?

David Bores served for 23 years in the United States Army in the Military Police Corps and retired in 1991 in the grade of Lieutenant Colonel. David served as Chief of Police for the City of Woodstock from January 2009 to December 2011 and previously as a senior officer and member of the command staff of the Cherokee County Sheriff's Office from 1993 to 2009 where he held the rank of major. Since retiring, he has been diligently educating Americans in multiple venues about the threat of Islamic Law to our Constitutional Republic. He teaches an outstanding two-day course several times a year at the Georgia Police Academy. He has also served as adjunct instructor for undergraduates at Kennesaw State University and at Reinhardt University.





Make the System Work for the Child

By Chase Reed

**Chairman of the Hall County
Young Republicans**

The sun can barely be seen rising in Boston. A young man around the age of 13 rides to the silver shop where he works. Unlike many his age, he's not in school; instead, he has taken an apprenticeship. Like his father before him, he wants to be a master silversmith; he's good at it, too. The young man described above is none other than American Revolution patriot Paul Revere. Revere would later use the connections he made, the skills he acquired, and the profits he made to fund the revolution, not to mention his service to this unborn nation at the time of his infamous "midnight ride." Many might scoff at the supposed "lack of education" of Revere. Yet how can we deny the wealth of knowledge he had or his strong sense of civic duty?

There's a growing epidemic in this country that declares the amount of diplomas someone hangs on their wall somehow gives them a certain level of privilege. Starting in middle school, we have begun imprinting in the minds of students they'll never succeed in life if they don't go to college. Sure, they hear the stories of Bill Gates or Steve Jobs who fought the status quo and succeeded despite the odds. However, those stories are one in a million, just like those who become major league athletes. What about the children who just want to be normal? They may seek higher education after high school or they might choose to go straight to work.

We've created many programs focusing solely on children both at the high ends and low ends of the academic spectrum. Unfortunately, this not only further divides these two groups, but also leaves out a huge chunk of children sitting in the middle of the bell curve. I'm not arguing for mediocrity here, only reality.

If we want to create a more civic-minded and involved citizenry, we must make the educational system work for the child and not the child work for the educational system.

We must shift the focus in education from a cookie cutter experience for different demographics to a tailor-fitted one to meet each child's academic needs. If a child tests extremely well in reading and writing, don't force him or her to take the advanced math class. Just because he or she is academically advanced in a certain subject doesn't mean that child is, or even should be, advanced in other subjects. There is a stigma in our educational system that says just this.

Why don't we teach classes in high school such as consumer mathematics anymore? We've replaced the need to teach how to balance a check book with how to bisect a circle or find imaginary numbers. Frankly, unless a student is seeking a degree in mathematics to one day work in some sort

of mathematical field, he or she shouldn't be required to take these classes. A student who realizes early on that he really wants to be an auto mechanic shouldn't have to sit through four years of college prep classes when he'll more than likely end up in a technical school. Let him apprentice with a mechanic, get his hands dirty, and learn the trade. Because we as a society have become so focused on making sure these children know that non-college graduates make far less than people who go to college, we're sending children to places of higher education who really don't need to be there. It is not a bad thing to tell a student that college might not be for him or her. Not only are we setting students up for failure, but we're also devaluing the overall nature of a college education for those who choose to seek higher learning.

What is the answer, you might ask? Let's identify students' strengths and place them on paths of success by taking career-ready classes specifically focusing on their career path leaving out courses that do not apply. This concept is called tracking, and liberals hate it. They claim it limits what a child can do based on his socioeconomic status. However, in reality it enables students' strengths and empowers them to be the best at what they want to do in life. If we want to create a more civic-minded and involved citizenry, we must make the educational system work for the child and not the child work for the educational system.



Who Am I?

Chase Reed is the current Chairman of the Hall County Young Republicans where he revitalized and re-chartered the club. In addition to chairing the Hall County YRs, he serves the Georgia Federation of Young Republicans as the North Georgia Regional Director. He also serves on the Executive Committee of the Hall County GOP. Reed attends The University of North Georgia where he is majoring in political science. He also is a political consultant who works tirelessly to get conservatives elected at all stations of government.

More Civics in the Classroom

By Rebecca Youngblood



Photo: Tea Party Tribune

There is no question there should be more civics education in our schools today. It is a crucial part of the foundation for good citizenship. Former South African President Nelson Mandela said, "No country can really develop unless its citizens are educated." American students need to be much more educated about their state and federal governments and how they work. Students need to know and understand the principles and values that are the foundations of American government; these can be found within the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.

Did you know that the Constitution is the oldest governing document still in use today? In 2017, we will celebrate its 250th birthday! In order for our country to continue to develop and grow, students today must be educated problem solvers. Students need to have a strong foundation based on the history of our country. From those roots, teachers need to nourish students and encourage them to create their own leafy branches. It is through the strength of the roots and all of the branches and leaves together that America will continue to be a world leader.

To form these roots, students need to be able to understand what a democracy is. They need to know why the founding fathers created a democracy. Students need to know what the three branches of government are and why they are necessary. This understanding will lead to a deeper knowledge of the legal system and how that system protects their rights and keeps them safe. Students need to understand America's global role as well. Most importantly, students need to understand why democracy depends on the active participation of citizens. Each year, fewer people go to the polls to vote. This is a trend that needs to be turned around. However, it cannot be changed without first educating our youth.

As a mother, I want my son to give back to our community and country. I want him to embody the meaning of patriotism. I want to make sure he understands why it is important to be an active, involved, and responsible citizen. When my son was 10 years old, I told him he needed to do something to give back to others. After being unable to find a volunteer opportunity within the community, he asked me if he could start his own non-profit. We discussed how much work it would

be, but he was ready for the commitment. He went to school and asked three of his teachers where there was a need in our community, and they suggested he help out those in the military. This is how Change 4 Georgia was born. Since then, he has inspired thousands of young people across the country to get involved. There are more than 60 members in his organization, and they have raised more than \$1 million in cash and in-kind donations. They also have collected more than 109,000 books to help with the literacy rate here in Georgia. This boots-on-the-ground organization is Civics 101 in action.

The Change 4 Georgia business model is one that can easily be replicated in our public schools. All we need is an interested teacher and parent; the students are already there and ready to participate. With a little guidance, our young people can accomplish amazing things and grow up to be phenomenal leaders. American business magnate Bill Gates said, "As we look ahead into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others." With support, teachers and parents can empower the next generation to grow and become great leaders. Our students need to be part of the solution, not part of the problem. As we approach 2017, we need to reflect on how great our country is and how strong it has been for so long. We need to educate our youth so that one day they will celebrate the 300th birthday of the Constitution, and their children and grandchildren will continue to celebrate the governing document that is the basis of **the greatest country in the world, the United States of America.**

Who Am I?

Rebecca Youngblood is mother to frequently featured Remington Youngblood, a prominent teen entrepreneur and staff member on VOICES Magazine. Youngblood describes her full-time job as "raising my son to be a compassionate, civic-minded patriot." She serves as his secretary, chauffeur and number one fan.



YR CHICAGO 2015

YR CHICAGO, LLC | 70 S. LA GRANGE RD. | LAGRANGE, IL USA 60525

By Meagan Hanson Candidate for YRNF Chairman

Usually when I quote a liberal president, I'm adamantly disagreeing with him. This case is different. On the television show, *The West Wing*, President Josiah "Jed" Bartlett said, "Decisions are made by those who show up." Despite the fact that that brilliant line was written by the ultra-liberal Aaron Sorkin, it transcends partisan politics and, more specifically, directly relates to my campaign.

"Show up" has become shorthand for simply getting bodies to the voting booth, when it should mean taking part in the political process from the beginning to the end. For me, it means to run for chairman of the Young Republican National Federation (YRNF) at the national convention July 29–August 2 in Chicago.

What is the YRNF? It's an organization of conservative, young professionals across our nation between the ages of 18 and 40. Our primary goal is to elect Republicans to office through campaign and grass roots efforts. YRs have been successful in having an impact in numerous congressional races, but I am confident we can do more.

My platform addresses two issues that are imperative for the future success of our party: preparing Young Republicans to run for office, and actively spreading the conservative message to our peers—both of which will have short-term and long-term positive effects for the Republican Party.

Republicans need to cultivate and support Young Republican candidates as they run for city councilman or United States senator. With the right plan and the right support, the YRNF is the perfect incubator for these leaders of today and tomorrow, and my team has a detailed plan to help prepare our YR members to run for office.

My platform also focuses on membership growth and communication. Growing our Young Republican numbers means growing the farm team to support Republican candidates. After planning and executing multiple door-to-door trips over the course of my three years as Georgia YR chairman, I know the importance of having volunteers. Heading into the election cycle of 2016, it is imperative that the YRNF is at its peak for membership.

To grow our membership, we have to take back the Republican message that has been perverted by the liberal media. We have to reach young people, peer to peer. This means we have to establish our presence on the web and grow our social media presence. The Republican Party doesn't have a problem with its message; we have a problem with our messaging. The members of the YRNF will be excellent conduits of the Republican message.

As young professionals, we want to be involved in the decision-making; as Georgians, we want to show up and represent your interests. I encourage you to help Georgia Young Republicans be active in the political process.

[Editor's Note: Hanson was unsuccessful in her efforts to become the YRNF chairman. Dennis Cook of Chicago, IL, was elected chairman. We congratulate Hanson on a hard-fought campaign.]



Who Am I?

Meagan Hanson's love for politics began at an early age walking door to door with her grandmother in Birmingham, Alabama. She went on to be involved in the Alabama College Republicans and then worked on Capitol Hill for United States Sen. Jeff Sessions of Alabama. She has served in many roles, including campaign manager, consultant, and fundraiser. For the past three years, Hanson has served as the Chairman of the Georgia Young Republicans. She is an attorney in Atlanta and sometimes substitutes for panelists on FOX 5's *The Georgia Gang* on Sunday mornings.

By John Simpson

Winning the Millennial Vote

Millennials are a lazy, narcissistic generation spending their days snap chatting, Facebooking, tweeting and texting, while living in their parents' basements because they have no earthly idea what they are going to do with their future. These are not our nation's future leaders and certainly not indicative of the values of the Republican Party. Whether we like it or not, that is the message Republicans are sending to the next generation of voters.

Young people don't vote, so what's the big deal if the GOP isn't fully accepting of millennials? The simple fact is that millennials are more engaged than their generation X counterparts before them by a full 10 percentage points. In the battleground states of Florida, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, Barack Obama won 61 percent of the millennial vote. Had Mitt Romney achieved just a 50-50 split of that voting bloc, the election would have gone in his favor.

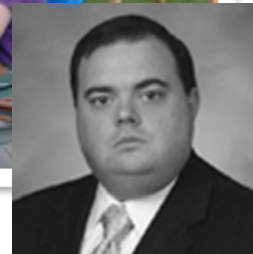
So why isn't the GOP attractive to millennials? It's primarily because of the party's focus on social issues. More than any other generation, millennials support gay marriage and a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants and are far less

religious. None of this is to suggest that Republicans should abandon their principles simply to appeal to millennials. In fact, quite the contrary, millennials actually respond quite well to the GOP fiscal conservative message. More millennials than any other generation support reductions in social security benefits to save the program. Studies show that millennials are better than baby boomers at tracking their expenses; and, a recent survey by Northwestern Mutual found that 64 percent of millennials would rather save than spend.

If Republicans are going to win the next election, we need to change the welcome mat at the front door of the GOP. We must avoid the temptation to fixate on social issues and taut our fiscally conservative credentials. Winning the millennial vote and, quite frankly, future elections, will require a GOP perception that looks more like Barry Goldwater than the Moral Majority.



Photo: Tom Wilson



Who Am I?

John Simpson is principal of Simpson Public Affairs, a government relations consultancy. With more than a decade of experience in and around Congress, Simpson advocates on behalf of clients of all sizes to protect their business interests and advance their policy agendas. Simpson is an expert at developing effective messages, drafting legislation, monitoring Congressional activity, and creating innovative legislative strategies. He has advised organizations of all types from publicly traded corporations to trade organizations and Wall Street investors.

YOUNG LEADERSHIP

Watch for Federation FOCUS in your email box!

You spoke—we heard you—we listened.

The staff of **VOICES Publications** announces the "birth" of our latest publication—**FOCUS**, a newsletter that will be sent to you on a regular basis and will "focus" solely on federation and individual state club news.

This new publication serves two purposes: (1) to decrease the size of **VOICES Magazine** which many GFRW members requested and (2) provide federation and club news in its own newsletter to disseminate information about local clubs and what is happening at the state and national federation level.

We are pleased to announce that Cindy Theiler, Associate Editor of **VOICES Magazine**, will be the Editor of **FOCUS**. Please send your news to Theiler at cindy.theiler1@gmail.com.

We welcome your feedback. This is your newsletter. Use it or lose it!



YR The Next Generation: We're in this fight together!

By Robert Lee
Georgia Young Republicans Chairman

One of the greatest pet peeves that we Young Republicans have is when we hear from fellow Republicans, "You are the future!" The truth is, we're not the future. We are very much a part of the Republican Party *now* and will continue to be so for a very long time. In counties across the state, Young Republicans are leaders in their respective party organization. Three of the district chairmen are Young Republicans. Indeed, we are very much part of the Republican Party.

However, it goes without saying that for many of our members, that level of involvement isn't possible. Careers and families take up so much of our time. When given a choice, those two responsibilities inevitably will take a priority over a committee meeting on a late Wednesday night. Therefore, we at the Georgia Young Republicans have to be quite aggressive in providing value to our membership that extends beyond simply being a Republican.

This year we will approach the growth of our organization with the consumer—our current members and the new members we hope to recruit—always at the forefront. Our training will focus on tools for professional and personal development as much as political training. We will offer a

completely new brand to increase the exposure we have across the state. Most importantly, we will grow and flourish by helping our current chapters recruit new members and growing new chapters in locations we've been traditionally absent.

Our entire efforts can be seen in the Georgia Young Republicans 2015-16 Strategic Plan, which can be downloaded at <http://clk.gop/n1MxfM>. In this plan, you'll see exactly how focused we are this year in building GYR into a machine ready to compete in the 2016 elections.

Of course, we don't want to do this on our own. It does not help the Republican Party and our elected officials if we don't approach this plan with the goal of building stronger relationships in and out of the Republican Party. This is especially true of our relationship with you in the GFRW. Consider inviting one of us to speak at an upcoming meeting or making a contribution. Just as importantly, let us know how we can help you.

We're in this fight together. It's not just time for the Young Republicans to step up; we all as Republicans have to step up to the plate. The Georgia Young Republicans will do its part, and we hope to work alongside you.



Who Am I?

Robert Lee, Chairman of the Cobb County YR's, was recently elected Chairman of the Georgia Young Republicans to begin serving in August. He is a member of the GAGOP State Committee and is Vice Chairman of IT and Communications for the 11th District GOP. A businessman, Lee owns and manages 2gStrategies, a consulting firm aiming to help political organizations and small businesses increase the value of their efforts and services.

CAPTURED FROM THE INTERNET

July 4th Weekend

Patriotism is NOT a sin, and national holidays have more to them than beer, picnics, and baseball games.

Even if you learned all this some time in your life, it is good to be reminded of what our founders were willing to give up for the freedom they sought for their beloved fledgling nation. We need to think about what WE are willing to do!



Pictured Left.
Interns Sophia Hernandez and Erica Barker, event organizers, with Rep. Elise Stefanik and NFRW President Kathy Brugger.



Millennials Flock to NFRW Intern Reception

Event Organizers—Erica Barker (GA) and Sophia Hernandez (CA)

Over 100 aspiring your leaders from across the country joined the National Federation of Republican Women on Capitol Hill for the second annual NFRW Intern Reception. Rep. Elise Stefanik, the youngest woman ever to serve in the U.S. Congress, was the evening's headliner, offering advice to young people interested in pursuing politics.

The event was organized by NFRW Executive Projects Coordinator Anushya Ramaswamy and the Federation's two 2015 Dorothy Andrews Kabis Internship recipients, Sophia Hernandez (a rising junior at California State University, San Marcos) and Erica Barker (a rising senior at

the University of North Georgia in Dahlonega).

"I've found a passion for educating my peers, as well as garnering female interest in the Republican Party and dispelling the myths that may keep women from affiliating," Barker said of her intern experience. "The Kabis Internship is, without a

doubt, the best internship in Washington, D.C.," Hernandez added. "The experience will stick with me for a lifetime."

The Dorothy Kabis Internship program is funded through the generous donations of NFRW clubs and members.

[Reprint. From *NFRW Capital Connection*. Week of July 13, 2015]



Working for the Federation

By Erica Barker
NFRW Intern (GA)



Sophia Hernandez and Erica Barker with former U.S. Treasurer Bay Buchanan

Earlier this year, I was one of two female college students awarded the tremendous opportunity to spend eight weeks this summer interning with the National Federation of Republican Women at its headquarters in Washington D.C. As I write this, I am currently halfway through my paid internship (thanks to the Dorothy Andrew Kabis Memorial Internship) and it could not be more rewarding. At headquarters, I consistently converse with several members of Republican Women chapters around the nation and am assisting in planning the 38th Biennial Convention that will take place in Phoenix, Arizona, this September. Interns at NFRW may assist in several different areas, including publications, meetings and convention planning, website, membership database, fundraising, etc.

Working for the NFRW has been such a wonderful and invigorating experience. I got my start in Republican politics by joining the Cobb County Republican Women's Club in Marietta. I fell deeply in love with the organization and the people within it. I have had the pleasure of making so many great friends and mentors through multiple Republican Women Clubs and I am forever grateful for the continued support and guidance they offer me.

I consider myself extremely lucky to be able to work for this organization at a national level. I would certainly argue that I have

one of the best internships in D.C. Not only do I get to spend each day working toward a goal I am very passionate about—growing the female base of the Republican Party, but I also get the opportunity to hear some amazing speakers like Representative Elise Stefanik (NY-21) and Senator Shelley Moore Capito (WV). My experience as an intern for the National Federation of Republican Women has been beyond fulfilling and I am extremely excited to be able to continue working toward my passion when I return to Georgia in early August.

Who Am I?

Erica Barker is a rising senior at the University of North Georgia majoring in political science with a concentration in American politics. A native of Dahlonega, she has been a member of CCRWC since June 2014. Her internship ended July 24, 2015. Barker is also the Political Director for the GA Association of College Republicans and chairs the UNG College Republicans.



Do club members receive what they pay for?

Ensure that your club members receive what they pay for:

Urge your club treasurer to send updates of the club roster and members' addresses to the GFRW treasurer. Include mailing addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses. Without e-mail addresses, members will not receive **VOICES Magazine**, GFRW E-Newsletters, Legislative Updates, VOICESmail or NFRW's *Republican Woman Magazine*.

Update address changes:

When members move or change e-mail addresses, forward a copy of these changes to the GFRW treasurer, so that members will continue to receive publications and notices.

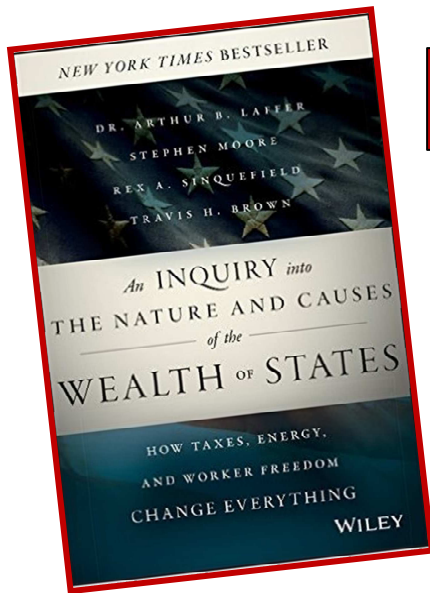
Announce when new issues of the magazine are available:

Put the links to the publication on your club website and in your club newsletter. Encourage members to click on the **VOICES Magazine** link in their e-mail announcement from GFRW.

Pass around a copy of VOICES Magazine during club meetings:

Display **VOICES Magazine**, *The Republican Woman* magazine, or the latest **VOICESmail** on a laptop computer for members to view before or after club meetings.

Ask computer-savvy members to forward the VOICES links to their friends, neighbors, and local GOP members.



Book Nook

By J. D. Van Brink

Chairman of the Georgia Tea Party

Introduction – Arthur Laffer, Stephen Moore,

Rex Siquefield, and Travis Brown, all proponents of supply-side economics, collaborated in 2014 to pen *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of States: How Taxes, Energy, and Worker Freedom Change Everything*. While quite wonkish with tables and graphs galore, it provides a detailed comparison and contrast of tax, energy, and labor policies among the 50 states.

Evidence – The evidence is clear and overwhelming. While all taxes are economically harmful to some extent, sales taxes are the least harmful and income (both personal and corporate), property, and inheritance taxes are the most harmful. Also, while some states are fortunate to have an abundance of exploitable resources (most notably, oil), state policies regarding these resources produce very different economic outcomes (Texas quite well, California quite poorly). In addition, Right-To-Work (RTW) states that do not require workers to join unions or pay union dues have higher population, personal income, Gross State Product, and tax revenue growth, whereas minimum wage laws produce higher unemployment. Furthermore, the states without an income tax actually provided more and better public services for education, healthcare, police, fire, prison, and transportation. Amazing.

Where Does Georgia Stand? – Georgia is a RTW state with sensible energy policies, no state inheritance tax, and a AAA S&P credit rating. We rank seventh in population growth and eighth in overall tax burden for the most recent 10-year period ending in 2012. However, we do have room for improvement regarding our income tax policies. With one being the best, the authors rank Georgia as

26th for our personal income tax and 13th for our corporate income tax. On a positive note, Republican State Rep. John Carson (East Cobb, District 46) introduced the More Take Home Pay Act (HB 445) in 2015. If enacted in 2016, over three years we would transition our personal and corporate income tax rates from 6 percent to 4 percent and our state sales tax rate from 4 percent to 5 percent. To remain competitive in our region, we would also need to pass state legislation to allow our counties to have fractional sales tax rates. However, about 52 percent of Georgia's state budget is paid for with federal dollars, which come from taxing, borrowing, and printing. The Restoring the 10th Amendment Act (S. 1045), sponsored by Georgia's U.S. senators Johnny Isakson and David Perdue, would provide special standing for state government officials to challenge proposed federal regulations state officials deem to be outside the Constitutional scope of the federal government. If enacted, Georgians would have more control of our lives and budget.

Conclusion – Former U.S. Ambassador Daniel Patrick Moynihan famously said, "Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not to his own facts." The fact is that Progressive policies on taxes, energy, and labor have been tried and, relative to free market policies, have failed miserably, limiting liberty and prosperity and hurting most the very people the Progressives claim to champion. Our Founders' vision of Federalism makes each state a laboratory for developing and testing economic policy. As *Wealth of States* quantifies, Americans have been voting with their feet by moving to the states that have free market policies, giving those states more representation in Congress over time. After the 2020 census, if not sooner, these states may provide the model, and the votes, to change Federal economic policies. Meanwhile, roll up your sleeves; we have work to do in Georgia.



Who Am I?

John David (J.D.) Van Brink earned his MBA from Tennessee Technological University in 1984. In 1992, he founded Van Brink Systems, Inc., an IT consulting corporation, and is the owner and CEO. He has worked at Olin Corporation, EDS, General Motors, IBM, Barclay's American Bank, Duke Power, and The Institute for Nuclear Power Operations (INPO). He also works as a software developer at Total System Services (TSYS) in Kennesaw, GA. He is the founder and chairman of the Georgia Tea Party™ and The Simple Tax and enjoys reading books on a variety of topics, including history, economics, politics, and philosophy.