

VOICES

Magazine

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The tired, poor, huddled masses yearning to be free

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The tired, poor, huddled masses yearning to be free . . .

By Sherry Roedl, Editor

My maternal grandparents emigrated from their home in the hill town of Colletorto, Italy—a municipality located in the southern region of Molise in the province of Campobasso. This tiny hill town is home to about 2,000 people (as of December 2013) and covers an area of less than 14 square miles. It's about 5 hours west of Rome by train and, when I visited my great aunt in 1969 with my mother, it looked like something out of the Middle Ages.

My grandfather, Pasquale, was seventeen and my grandmother, Vincenza, was nineteen when they left their home country. What courage they had to leave their homeland at such tender ages. They traveled by boat across the Atlantic in the mid-1800s and arrived at Ellis Island where they were processed legally into this country. At some point Pasquale and Vincenza met, married and established their residence in Youngstown, Ohio. They had three daughters, my mother being the youngest.

Beyond what is written above, I know little else about their story. I do know that they wanted their daughters to be accepted as American. They insisted that the girls learn English and that no Italian be spoken in their home because Pasquale and Vincenza wanted to learn English also.

My mother's birth certificate shows her given name as Maria Joanna, but her family Americanized her name and everyone always knew her as Mary Jane or later in life, "MJ." It was important to have an American name so that the child "fit in" with her schoolmates. This was especially important because "foreigners" were often ostracized.

My grandparents were productive members of society. They came to this country legally and obeyed the laws. They did not demand that they be treated differently; they did not expect signs to be printed in Italian. They worked hard to assimilate into society which was not an easy thing to do, but they did it.

I have no problem with legal immigration. The United States of America has always been a melting pot. We should encourage people of all cultures—who seek to better themselves and give their children a healthier lifestyle, a better education, and freedom to practice their religion—to come to our land of the free through legal means. However, I **do** have a problem with those who skirt our immigration laws. Once deported, if they choose to return, they must enter following legal steps for immigration.

This country cannot afford (with our national debt approaching \$19 trillion) to allow illegal immigrants to soak up our resources at the expense of our own citizens. We have seen much information on the strain illegal immigration puts on our healthcare and educational systems, as well as our entitlement programs. While the U.S. is certainly the most generous nation on Earth, if we continue to allow immigrants to enter illegally, we are jeopardizing our own economic well-being—not to mention our national security.

Illegal immigration is a complex issue. It is also a highly-charged political issue. The politicians have *talked* about securing our borders for more than a quarter century. That's part of the problem—illegal immigration has been talked to death. The result: all talk; no action. Maybe it's time to get politicians out of the mix. Maybe it's time for *We the People* to take charge of the issue. Certainly, with all the think tanks operating today, a viable solution to this thorny issue can be reached. We've had people throughout our history meet all kinds of challenges: the Wright brothers figured out how to build a machine that allowed them to fly; a president challenged us to put a man on the moon—and we did; a college drop-out changed the way we communicate with one another. Today, Apple is one of the most successful corporations in the world. American ingenuity needs to awaken from its slumber. The illegal immigration problem is a challenge that can be solved. We don't have a choice!

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By Barbara Hickey

Letter from the President

While standing on the stage in front of you at our Georgia Federation of Republican Women's Winter Meeting, I was so touched by your smiling and engaged faces! That message told me that I was not only honored to stand before you, but that we had a wealth of talent, commitment, and energy.

It was after adjourning the meeting that I made a promise to continue to deserve your attention by having a strategic plan that will not only lead to the continuing success of GFRW but also your great clubs.

Each of you who attended the meeting was given the GFRW 2016-2017 Strategic Plan for the Board of Directors that covered Ken Blanchard's, *The Secret—What Great Leaders Know and Do*.

I would like to expand on his acronym SERVE and present some ideas that you shared in Cindy Theiler's (GFRW 3rd Vice President) survey.

SERVE

SEE THE FUTURE: We need to envision that, due to our hard work and dedication to Republican principles, we have gotten **all** Republican candidates elected. Even when they are not our "first choice," we know our mission is to elect Republicans because they believe in a *strong defense, less government involvement in our lives, and fiscal responsibility*. Stephen Covey's first habit of his *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* is to be proactive. We have to seek information about opportunities to be better educated on elections at all levels, on legislative issues (national, state, and local), and on Republican women who need our support in their run for political office.

ENGAGE AND DEVELOP OTHERS: We have a wealth of talent in GFRW and must welcome, educate, and engage the hearts of our members in order to ensure that we have the tools that produce *wins* in the Republican columns. When we are visible and reach out to our members as a mentor, we not only build up our clubs but we also give our members the confidence to "pay it forward" to our newest members. Through workshops, great speakers, and the use of our GFRW and NFRW websites, we have the tools that we need to attract new members, increase our knowledge of the political arena, as well as build a better community where we live.

REINVENT CONTINUOUSLY: We need to ask ourselves, "Am I learning and growing?" Am I doing enough to encourage others in our clubs, am I sharing my ideas and plans? How can I do better and how can I be more effective?

(Continued on next page)

VOICES Magazine

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VOICES Magazine provides a forum for a wide spectrum of opinions and permits divergent viewpoints without implying the endorsement of the Federation. Bylined articles represent opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of GFRW.

Unless otherwise credited, images are from archives of members, clubs, state federations, and NFRW.

(Continued from Previous Page)

Stephen Covey has dedicated his life to making us effective in every role we play. Through two PRINCIPLES OF ORGANIZATION, he has shown us the way to greater effectiveness. I am constantly reminding myself that his Habit 3: *Put First Things First* gives me more control over my life and helps me to achieve my vision.

The first principle of organization is **scheduling**. Covey suggests:

- Organizing and executing our time and efforts according to priorities.
- The key to scheduling is weekly planning. Planning is most effective when we move from the “top-down.” From general to specific, from values to daily activities.

The second principle of organization is **delegation**, where we employ the efforts of others. Covey recommends Stewardship Delegation, where the parties have a clear, up-front, mutual understanding and commitment to:

- Desired results—allowing them to determine the best methods and means within established guidelines.
- Guidelines—correct principles summarized in the form of standardized procedures.
- Resources—human, financial, technical, or organizational that can be drawn upon to accomplish the desired results within the specified guidelines.
- Accountability—a performance plan developed by all parties.
- Consequences—upfront positive and negative results of an activity.

VALUE RESULTS AND RELATIONSHIPS: As not only your president, but also your cheerleader, I promise to build better relationships and connections across Georgia. Please invite me to your meetings or events. I will do this and encourage you to also build strong relationships by:

- Listening, investing time, caring about our members, accentuating the positive, and recognizing all efforts!

EMBODY ALL VALUES: We cannot only talk about our Republican values—we have to be a **positive Republican** who loves her country, and believes that our finest days are ahead for us because our God knows our heart and wants all good things for us.

Let's do it together!

Barbara

Meet NFRW President Carrie Almond Of Missouri



Profile by Kate Burch of Ohio

Carrie Almond, new president of the NFRW, learned a guiding principle from a childhood friend, Robin, who was an aspiring twirler. At the end of every routine, no matter how many times she had dropped the baton, Robin would throw out her arms and crow, “Ta-Da!”

A few years ago, when Carrie was feeling low, she remembered how “cool” Robin had been and gave herself a big “Ta-Da!” “It made me feel good!” Since then, she has made it a point to encourage women, remind them they are special, and to give each other those “Ta-Das!”

This positive spirit of energy and enthusiasm colors her life and work, as an officer in the NFRW, as a leader for Republican women in her state of Missouri, as executive vice president of Citizens Bank and Trust, and in her family life.

A Republican “before I was born,” Carrie is the granddaughter of a Missouri Federation president, a national committeewoman, and an ambassador to Luxembourg. Carrie held several offices in the Missouri Federation. She was an NFRW member-at-large, treasurer, and vice president before seeking the presidency. She says the job is bigger than she is. When she stumbles, she trusts the women of the NFRW to pick her up.

She views this as an absolutely critical year for Republicans and for our country. Her biggest goals as president are to increase membership and UNITY in the Federation, increase voter registration among Republican-leaning women (of whom she says there are 23 million nationwide!), and unite all women behind our Republican presidential nominee following the convention this summer.

When she has time for other things, she enjoys reading and crafting, and spending time on her farm. She has a talent for flower arranging and has created many centerpieces for charities. She is married to Scott Huddleston and has four step-sons, four dogs, and one rescue kitty. One of her dogs, a Maltese named Reagan (of course), travels with her when she goes to D.C.

Read more about Carrie Almond: www.nfrw.org/almond



DEMOCRATS AND WOMEN'S ISSUES

By Rae Chornenky

Past President, NFRW

see the need for yet a third national law ensuring equal pay for women when Congress already enacted its first such legislation more than 50 years ago—in 1963. There is even an Equal Pay Day—[April 12 this year].

Women make up nearly half of our workforce. However, the February report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows in President Barack Obama's administration economy, women earn 82.5 cents for every dollar men earn. For women of color, the gap is reportedly wider.

Recently, *U.S. News and World Report* made clear that, in Obama's administration, the poverty rate among women was the highest it's been in nearly two decades.

In Obama's federal government—

- Women have lower pay grades than men have.
- In the Obama White House, female staffers make on average eighty-eight cents for every dollar a male staff member earns.
- More women occupy lower positions in the Obama administration.
- The median salary for female employees is nearly \$9,000 less than the median for men.

Let's finish with a look at Clinton's own "war on women." Clinton portrays herself as a champion of women in the workforce, but women working for her in the U.S. Senate were paid only seventy-two cents for each dollar paid to male staffers. By comparison to a cross-section of all workers in the District of Columbia, women were earning ninety cents for each dollar earned by men, a significantly smaller gap than existed in the Clinton office. The median annual salary for a woman working in Clinton's office was \$15,708.38 less than the median salary for a man, according to data

compiled from official Senate expenditure reports.

Republican policies have always far outpaced those of Democrats in terms of women. It is very interesting to take a look at the history of women in the Republican Party:

- 1872: The first official recognition of women in a major political party platform appears in the Republican party platform.
- 1878: At the personal request of Susan B. Anthony, a Republican senator introduced into Congress the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution giving women the right to vote.
- 1896: This first equal rights of women plank carried in any major political party platform is contained in the Republican Party Platform.
- 1919: The first act of Congress after a Republican majority was regained was the passage of the 19th Amendment.
 - * The Sargent Amendment, as it was known, had been defeated four times by a Democrat-controlled Senate. The 19th Amendment languished in the Democrat-controlled Congress until Republicans came into power.
 - * When the 19th Amendment was submitted to the states for ratification, twenty-six of the thirty-six states that ratified it had Republican legislatures.
 - * Of the nine states that voted against it, eight were Democratic.
 - * Twelve states, all Republican, had already given women full suffrage.

Armed with all of these facts, it is time we stand up to the Democrat hypocrisy of alleging there is a Republican war on women. Republicans have long-championed the rights of women, as history proves, and Republicans promote women in leadership with respect and energy.

We are all aware of the narrative pushed by Democrats during recent elections that Republican policies and politics have an anti-women agenda. For too long, Democrats have hypocritically attempted to take the moral high ground in this debate. The facts regarding the Democrat track record on women's issues that matter are appalling.

On the topic of Democrat sexual harassment in the workplace, sexual harassment claims spiked at the State Department under Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. The *Washington Examiner* reports that, according to a State Department report issued June 18, 2015, sexual harassment claims significantly increased during Secretary Clinton's tenure, continuing through John Kerry's term. The State Department's inspector general found the "significant increase in harassment inquiries" was enough to warrant the need for mandatory harassment training for State Department employees. The Clinton campaign would not respond to a request for comment.

Certain economic "war on women" claims made by Democrats focus on Republican refusal to



An Educational Plan for a Brighter Future

By Dr. Ben S. Carson

Education is the great liberator. My own personal story shows how dramatically education can liberate a person from a life of poverty. Through education, I went from studying in the prestigious halls of Yale to saving lives in the operating rooms. I was able to climb the ladder of opportunity on the rungs of education.

My success was due largely to a mother who challenged me to read books and write book reports, even though she could not read herself. Along with caring yet persistent teachers, I was able to see beyond my circumstances and become more than I ever thought I could be. My mother's perseverance ensured that I would become an educated man. She wanted me to have choices in my life rather than a life chosen for me. Education offered those choices, and much, much more.

I want our children and grandchildren to have the same choices. I want them to have a premier education so they can reach their potential, develop their God-given talents and abilities and live the American dream. Our children should always know that they live in a great land of opportunity where they can grow and thrive, regardless of their parents' background or zip code.

As a [former] Republican presidential candidate, I recognize the urgency for reforming our educational system so our children can become not only productive, valued members of society, but can also be competitive in the global community. That's

why I [...] developed an educational plan that helps our children realize their dreams and would enable American exceptionalism to thrive again.

Currently, the American education system is failing our children. Neither increased federal funding nor greater federal control have delivered real results. Without change, our students will not be prepared for the challenges of the 21st century. My treatment plan consists of five principles to restore American exceptionalism in our schools:

1. **School Choice:** I [...] actively support school choice programs, such as vouchers and charter schools, giving families the freedom to make decisions best suited for the realization of the students' God-given potential.
2. **Empower Parents, Teachers, Local School Districts and the States—Not Washington:** In education, as in so many endeavors, the best decisions are the ones made by those closest to the issue. [...]
3. **Encourage Innovation:** Everywhere I travel, I am inspired by the creativity of educators whose ideas offer real promise for tomorrow's students. Rather than micromanaging these educational innovators with one-size-fits-all regulations that suppress their ingenuity, we should promote innovative ideas in education.
4. **Reward Good Teachers:** It is long past time to give teachers the respect and the resources they deserve. Instead

of an outdated system that rewards tenure over performance, I [...] advocate for flexible block grants to the states to advance and reward teacher quality and to develop teacher evaluation systems that focus on effectiveness in advancing student achievement.

5. A Simpler, More Streamlined

Student Loan Process: The Department of Education needs to get out of the lending business. We need a simpler, more streamlined, and more transparent financial aid process that gives students and their families the kind of clear, reliable information they need to make good decisions.

Education provided me with the tools and knowledge necessary to liberate me from the plague of poverty. It opened my world to countless opportunities, including the opportunity to run for the president of the United States. Every child should have access to the same opportunities that were so integral to my own success. With your help and my common sense education plan, "We the People" can ensure that our children will have access to the premier education they deserve in order to secure a brighter future for us all.

Who Am I?

Ben S. Carson is a retired neurosurgeon and a former Republican presidential candidate (2016). For details on his education plan and solutions for other important issues, please visit Dr. Carson's website at <https://www.bencarson.com/>.

[Photo by Judy True]



Ensure Change in America -VOTE!

By Dr. Traci Lawson McBride

Photo by Judy True

In the 2012 presidential election, the Georgia Secretary of State's website showed that three-fourths of Georgia's 5,428,980 registered voters, or 72 percent, exercised their right to vote, almost 25 percent more than the national voter turnout average of 59 percent for the same year. Georgia ranked 34th and 36th in voter turnout for the 2012 and 2008 presidential elections, respectively. As the nation finds itself in the midst of another presidential election year, getting out the vote is critical in our democratic process.

As our nation's population increases, more and more attention has been given to maintaining the integrity of the vote along with an assurance that no individual who is eligible to vote is disenfranchised. In recent years, voter eligibility continues to be a focus of debate. Many have called for providing identification when voting; others debate whether undocumented immigrants who have identification (i.e., a driver's license) should be allowed to vote. While these specific issues must be decided by each state, encouraging, motivating, or cajoling voters to actually cast a vote has become a primary function of local political party leaders.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, "In many elections, women vote at higher rates than men." In 2012, this was the case in the United States, where the voting rate was 63.7 percent for women, compared to 59.7 percent for men. While this disparity did not hold true in the 2012 election in Georgia, candidates have become very aware of their voting "audience" and are held accountable if found to be pandering to one gender over the other. The minority vote in Georgia has become of greater focus as more and more Hispanic

voters are casting votes, 10 percent in the 2012 election. As demographics change and new voters become a part of the electorate, the Georgia GOP must diligently work toward improving participation of all voters in the election process.

The challenge to get out the vote in this election cycle has been made more difficult as the greatest number of Republican candidates entered the race, many of them with staying power until the Iowa caucus on February 1. Out of a field of seventeen candidates in October 2015 to the [three Republican candidates who remained after Senator Marco Rubio suspended his campaign on March 15], the challenge for the GOP is to work toward unifying the party around the candidate who will secure the Republican nomination. Of course, this challenge has developed into a major hurdle as the remaining candidates have gotten caught up in the muck and mire of politics, attacking one another personally.

To be the informed, educated electorate that Jefferson and others espoused in the Constitution, the candidates must make a concerted effort to explain specific policies and solutions to the American people. Unfortunately, it appears, whether through reality or perception, that the media and public would rather see wrestlers in a ring, gladiators on the field, or clowns at the circus. To actually discern each candidate's platform has become such a difficult task for many voters that apathy, anger, disillusionment, and fear rather than information are what seem to drive the vote and momentum surrounding one or more candidates. The GOP must rally from now until the convention in Cleveland this summer to provide accurate platform

information and facts to the electorate, or history may once again repeat itself with many voters simply sitting at home—as was the case of the 2012 presidential election.

If Republicans want to ensure that a president is elected with an R beside his/her name, the GOP must radically change its strategies of the past and be much more intentional in getting out the vote in November. Now more than ever before, Republican organizations must actively recruit members, seek new and innovative ways to connect with voters in their communities, and ensure that all citizens are not only registered to vote but also exercise their civic duty by following through and voting in November.

Everything is on the line this November; Republicans must act accordingly to preserve life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for generations to come. The challenge is ours—let's meet it!

Who Am I?

Dr. Traci McBride is a retired school administrator from Hall County Schools, currently serves as the Assistant Principal of Heritage Academy in Braselton and will serve as Academic Dean for Lanier Christian Academy, Flowery Branch, in the fall. An officer in the Republican Women of Hall, McBride ran for the Hall County School Board in 2014, actively campaigned for GA State School Superintendent Richard Woods in 2014, and most recently served as Lead Coordinator of the Education Policy Advisory Committee for Dr. Ben Carson, former Republican presidential candidate.





POSITIVE AMERICAN MOVEMENT GAINS MOMENTUM

By Scott Pederson

A grass-roots movement called Positive American, designed to unite the country, is gaining momentum by concerned citizens and is being supported by community leaders around the country.

On Sunday, October 9, 2016, churches throughout the country are committing a portion of their service to celebrate and honor Positive Americans in their community such as veterans, public safety officials, as well as citizens in their community who are doing positive acts. Any citizen can get involved by spreading the word to their local church to commit to being a part of the national celebration.

I am among the many Americans who have grown tired of hearing only the negative stories about our great country. In the midst of a very divisive political season, Positive American shines the light on aspects of our country on which both political parties can agree. We believe that a majority of Americans are very good and very positive people who love their country.

The movement starts with citizens making the Positive American Promise which includes flying the American Flag on patriotic holidays, thanking those who have served in the military and public safety, exercising the right to vote, helping another American in need, recognizing that we are "One Nation Under God," and inspiring a new generation of Positive Americans. Mayors of communities across the country are also encouraged to create proclamations for Monday, October 10, as Positive American Day (traditionally celebrated as Columbus Day) in their communities.

Also under development are Positive American red, white, and blue wrist bands signifying that a citizen has made the Positive American Promise, and believes in and loves his/her country. The wrist bands will be available for only \$1 and proceeds will help fund the Positive American Movement across the country, as well as support Positive American charities that assist military and public safety veterans.

"This Positive American movement is coming at the right time for those of us who believe in American Exceptionalism and want to paint a vision of what we can be as a nation. I hope it spreads across the nation!" said Congressman Barry Loudermilk.

If your community or church would like to participate in the Positive American movement, you can contact Mr. Pederson at positiveamerican@celebratepositive.com.

Who Am I?

Scott Pederson, President/CEO – Celebrate Positive, LLC has spent more than 30 years of his career marketing some of the most high profile events, corporations, and celebrities in the world. He has staged a World Series and negotiated endorsement contracts for professional athletes. Pederson has also designed numerous programs for companies such as Gatorade, Nike, and General Mills.

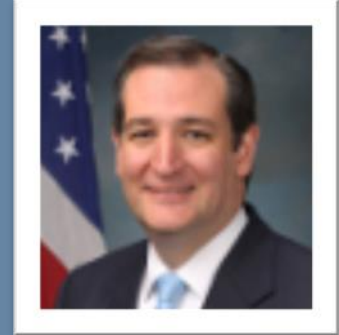
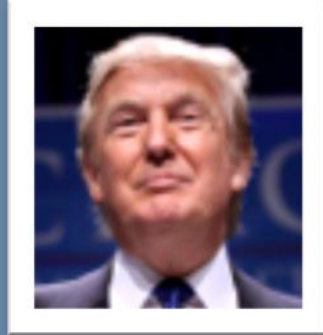


After serving as the Director of Marketing for the Kansas City Royals and Regional Sports Manager for Miller Brewing Company, he founded Universal Marketing Associates in 1990 before merging his company with Leader Enterprises, Inc., in 2000. Under his ownership/leadership of Leader Enterprises, the company grew to a \$12 million agency. Leader's marketing and public relations plan for Lance Armstrong's "LiveStrong" yellow wrist band programs is considered one of the most successful cause-marketing campaigns in history.

Pederson sold his interest in Leader Enterprises six years ago and started Celebrate Positive, LLC, so that he could focus his efforts on developing movements with themes of positivity. With the help of Super Bowl XL Most Valuable Player Hines Ward, the Positive High School Athlete Awards were created in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Georgia where more than \$100,000 in scholarships have been given away to student-athletes who have overcome obstacles, given back to their communities, and been a positive influence in their schools. In 2015, he launched Positive American, a movement to increase patriotism and create a national movement in advance of the 2016 General Election.

Presidential Candidates Speak

“Should Undocumented Immigrants Be Allowed to Become Legal Residents?”



[Editor's note: This information was taken from the Internet: <http://2016election.procon.org/view.answers.election.php?questionID=002025#donald-trump> — Source: ProCon.org — “The Leading Source for Pros & Cons of Controversial Issues”]

Pro (Yes): John Kasich

"And could you imagine again what it would be like in a family of somebody who came here illegally but has been law abiding when they get the notice that they're going to have to leave and maybe leave their children here?"

When you hear those things, I think somebody's got to stand up and call it out. I do think we need a fence. I think we need to control our border for sure. But if you're a law-abiding person that has lived here, we'll give you a path to legalization, not a path to citizenship. It is important that we control our border. We lock our doors so people don't wander into our homes.

The country has a right to control its border, too. To say we're going to pick 10 or 11 million people out and shove them out of here, do you remember after World War II when they imprisoned Japanese and what a dark spot, a dark stain on our history. The idea that we're just going to deport all of these people is not going to happen. And it's just not right.

So it may be appealing right off the bat for people who are frustrated about illegal immigration. And I am, too."

[Source: CNN, "SMERCONISH: GOP Pres. Candidate John Kasich on CNBC Debate Controversy; GOP Candidates Bash Liberal Media; Political Battle Over Not Prosecuting Cosby; Surviving Politics, TV, and Addiction. Aired 9-10a ET," www.cnn.com, Oct. 31, 2015]

Con (No): Donald Trump

"I don't think you'd even be talking about illegal immigration if it weren't for me. So, we have a country of laws, they're going to go out, and they'll come back if they deserve to come back. If they've had a bad record, if they've been arrested, if they've been in jail, they're never coming back. We're going to have a country again. Right now, we don't have a country, we don't have a border, and we're going to do something about it, and it can be done with proper management, and it can be done with heart."

[Source: CNN, "GOP Presidential Debate. Aired 8:10-11:15p ET.," transcripts.cnn.com, Sep. 16, 2015]

Not Clearly Pro or Con: Ted Cruz

"I want common sense immigration reform to pass. I think our immigration system is broken, I think there are large bi-partisan majorities in this country that want common sense immigration reform to pass. And this bill [the *Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013*], in my opinion, has two major problems. Number one, it doesn't fix the problem. It doesn't stop illegal immigration.

...[T]o work and fix the problem, and to be able to pass, this bill should respect the rule of law by not creating a path to citizenship for those who are here illegally. In my opinion, the path to citizenship is unfair to the millions who have followed the rules, who have waited years or decades to come here legally..."

[Source: Ted Cruz, "Sen. Ted Cruz Closing Statement on Immigration Reform Bill Mark-Up," cruz.senate.gov, May 21, 2013]

Why Immigration Is Shaking Up the 2016 Election

By Dan Stein

President of FAIR*

[*Federation for American Immigration Reform]



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Two issues have dominated the 2016 campaign: the erosion of the middle class and immigration. These two issues are not unrelated.

For the first time in memory (except for those who lived through the Great Depression), the middle class does not constitute a majority in this country. There are many reasons for the decline of our middle class, but America's excessive and irrational legal immigration policies, and our long-term failure (and, under President Barack Obama's administration, outright refusal) to enforce laws against illegal immigration have contributed mightily to this phenomenon.

For the past half century, we have lived with a *legal* immigration policy that serves no identifiable public interest objective. We admit about a million new legal immigrants to the United States each year—more than twice the population of Atlanta—only about 6 percent of whom are selected because they possess skills that will benefit our country. Virtually all of the rest come irrespective of their skills and education, but rather because they happen to be a relative of another recent arrival.

At the same time, we have allowed at least 12 million illegal aliens (even encouraged, under Obama) to settle here. An estimated 8 million U.S. jobs are currently filled by illegal aliens—jobs that might otherwise have gone to disadvantaged Americans grasping for that first rung up the economic ladder.

In addition, their presence in our labor market has resulted in severe wage depression for many other workers. Harvard economist George Borjas has found that a 10 percent

increase in illegal workers in any sector of the U.S. labor market results in a 3.7 percent wage decline for native-born workers. In an era when millions of Americans are losing their grasp on middle class status, a 3.7 percent pay cut is a significant blow.

Until fairly recently, the impact of our irrational immigration policies has been concentrated on our lesser-skilled and lesser-educated citizens. Now the pain is being felt by our better educated and higher skilled workers as well. Americans with degrees in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) disciplines have lost jobs or seen their wages stagnate because of guest worker programs that allow employers to hire foreign workers in preference to Americans, or even to replace them. Moreover, the Obama administration just rewrote government regulations that provide businesses tax incentives to employ recent foreign graduates over newly-minted American STEM graduates.

Americans' concerns about the impact of immigration on their lives are not a case of mass hysteria or xenophobia. On top of other phenomena, like globalization and automation, current immigration policies are undermining their core interests and dimming prospects for their children.

Of all the factors eating away at the middle class, immigration is the most controllable—if we can muster the political will to reform our policies in a way that promotes the greater good of the American people. Unfortunately, all recent efforts at immigration reform have been little more than attempts to

satisfy the demands of the people who have broken our laws and business interests seeking even greater access to foreign labor. Not surprisingly, these efforts have been rebuffed by the American people and alienated voters.

Moving forward, what is needed is immigration reform that recognizes that the American people are the primary constituency of our immigration policies. We need to dramatically reduce our immigration intake and select people based on an objective assessment of their likelihood to succeed economically and assimilate culturally.

We should deport illegal aliens when we catch them, but even more importantly we need to discourage people from violating our laws. We need to prevent illegal aliens from claiming jobs by making E-Verify a mandatory part of the hiring process for all employers and stepping up enforcement and penalties against scofflaw employers. In addition, we need to eliminate non-essential, non-emergency benefits and services to illegal aliens and end sanctuary policies that shield lawbreakers.

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The Democrats have gone all-in on amnesty for illegal aliens and massive increases in immigration, recognizing that increasing multiculturalism and growing dependency on government serves their long-term political interests. The ball is now in the Republicans' court. Being the party of "amnesty-lite" is not going to impress anyone, as primary voters have made abundantly clear in 2016.

There is a huge [...] immigration policy vacuum waiting to be filled representing the public interest and those struggling to remain part of the middle class. Someone just needs to step up and claim it.

Who Am I?

Dan Stein is an attorney who has worked for nearly 35 years in the field of immigration law and law reform. He has been in his present position as President of Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) since January 2003. Prior to leading FAIR, Stein was the Executive Director of the Immigration Reform Law Institute, a public interest litigation group that has represented a variety of organizations in immigration and administrative law matters. A native of Washington, D.C., Stein's interest in immigration began as a professional staff member of the U. S. House of Representatives' Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control, where he studied U.S./Mexico border issues and international crop substitution efforts.



Illegal Immigration and the U.S. Economy

The \$64 million question: Are illegal immigrants a boon to our economy or are they a drain? The answer: Depends on whom you talk to on this subject.

Big Labor's favorite think tank, Economic Policy Institute, contends that immigrants—undocumented or not—are a benefit to the economy overall. However, Adam Davidson, co-founder of National Public Radio's "Planet Money," (a podcast and blog) writes in an article appearing in *The New York Times Magazine*, February 12, 2013, "Labor economists have concluded that undocumented workers have lowered the wages of U.S. adults without a high-school diploma—25 million of them—by anywhere between 0.4 to 7.4 percent." Davidson also says that according to economist Giovanni Peri (University of California, Davis), "(f)rom 1990 to 2007, undocumented workers increased legal workers' pay in complementary jobs by up to 10 percent."

A frequent argument about illegal immigrants having a positive effect on the economy is that undocumented workers perform jobs that don't require much skill, i.e., basic tasks, and, therefore, allow the skilled worker to be more productive. For example, an illegal immigrant on a construction site can perform time-consuming clean-up chores which allows the contractor to finish a job quicker and cheaper. In a restaurant, waiters can wait on more tables if they have help busing tables.

Another argument for undocumented workers having a positive effect on the economy is that immigrants spend most of the money they make. In order to lease an apartment or car, he/she must have a taxpayer I.D. number and, therefore, he/she pays taxes on the money he/she earns. In this same article, Davidson states that the Social Security Administration's chief actuary (Stephen Goss) points out that "undocumented workers contribute about \$15 billion a year to Social Security through payroll taxes." According to Goss, very few undocumented workers are eligible to receive benefits, but "[o]ver the years,

undocumented workers have contributed up to \$300 billion, or nearly 10 percent, of the \$2.7 trillion Social Security Trust Fund."

[Source: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/17/magazine/do-illegal-immigrants-actually-hurt-the-us-economy.html?_r=0]

In an article by H.A. Goodman entitled "Illegal immigrants benefit the U.S. economy," April 23, 2014, 09:00 a.m., Goodman writes "...the aggregate economic impact of illegal immigration is debatable, but any claim that they've ruined the country doesn't correlate to the views of any notable economist." Goodman also quotes Jorge Borjas, a Harvard economist, who claims that "the average American's wealth has increased by 1 percent because of illegal immigration."

[Source: <http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/203984-illegal-immigrants-benefit-the-us-economy>]

According to Lydia Wheeler writing for *The Hill*, 02/25/16, 01:02 p.m. EST, a new report by the Institute of Taxation and Economic Policy showed that "[u]ndocumented immigrants living in the U.S. collectively pay about \$11.64 billion in yearly state and local taxes." This same institute's report claims that granting legal status to the 5 million illegal immigrants that President Barack Obama's executive actions would shield from deportation could "boost current state and local tax contributions by more than \$805 million." "A second study from the Migration Policy Institute and the Urban Institute found that under the president's Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) program, families could see a 10 percent increase in income."

[Source: <http://thehill.com/regulation/administration/270743-reports-obamas-immigration-programs-benefit-the-economy-families>]

[Source: <http://thelawdictionary.org/article/how-does-illegal-immigration-hurt-the-economy/>]



Photo: Public Domain

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION AND JAIL POPULATION

A Parallel?

By Neil Warren

Cobb County Sheriff

Having served as a law enforcement officer in Georgia since 1977, I have seen a lot of state and federal programs come and go over the years. Often times these programs disappear after a few years as the next great new idea comes along. One of the rare exceptions is the 287(g) program utilized here in Cobb County.

As I recall, our relationship with then INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) started back in the mid-1990s. In 2004, I took notice of a newly-announced federal program that would train and equip our staff with the skills needed to identify persons who did not have the legal authority to be in the United States. As we studied the 287(g) program, I also watched as the size of our jail population continued to grow. Clearly, there was a parallel between the problem of illegal immigration and the number of foreign-born persons ending up in my jail.

On February 12, 2007, the Cobb Sheriff's Office entered into an agreement with the Department of Homeland Security and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to enforce the 287(g) program. The goals of this program were simple and clear-cut: anytime someone was arrested and taken to the county jail, we would seek to verify that he/she had a legal right to be in the United States. If we suspected he/she had entered the country illegally, we would notify ICE who would then further investigate the person and, if appropriate, take custody and eventually deport that person.

When we announced the program, the reaction from those outside Cobb County included claims of racism and even reports that we were targeting the Latino community for harassment. Within our own county, residents reached out to let us know how much they appreciated and supported the new program. We had seen a trend prior to 2007 where our jail was close to maximum capacity and we were having to build new additions. Often, the accused were persons who had entered our country illegally and then committed a crime in Cobb County. In 2008, we had 5,382 foreign-born persons booked into the Cobb County Jail. More than half of those were determined to be illegal aliens and were eventually turned over to ICE.

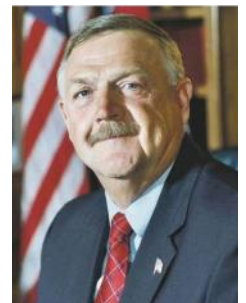
We knew we had a great program in place and a successful partnership with ICE, yet the media and special interest groups continued to fight us each and every day. The Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials took a special interest in our program and insulted, threatened, and physically protested our actions. We had cases where individuals would swear up and down that the Cobb Sheriff's Office had targeted them by pulling their vehicle over and harassing them. Each complaint was scrutinized and the investigation would reveal that the claims were fraudulent. Encounters that never occurred, yet the media would only report the allegations and rarely the results of the investigation.

Despite all these external forces, the voters of Cobb County continued to support me and my focus on identifying criminals who have entered our country illegally. Having stayed the course with the 287(g) program, this has proven to be far more than just another new program, it is a powerful tool in keeping our community safe.

As sheriff, it is my duty to stand up and fight for our community and the good people who rightfully and lawfully call the United States of America home.

Who Am I?

Neil Warren is Sheriff of Cobb County and has served Cobb County law enforcement since 1977. He has a BS Degree in Criminal Justice and is a graduate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy, the GA Bureau of Investigation Academy as well as the Cobb County Police Academy. Warren is on the Advisory Board for the North Central Georgia Law Enforcement Academy. He currently serves on the GA Sheriffs' Association Legislative Committee and was appointed by Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle to the Public Safety Advisory Board.



Time to Close the Borders

By Laura Hollis

Photo. Public Domain

[Editor's Note: Article reprinted with permission of Creators Syndicate, Inc.]

Enough.

More attacks, more carnage, more death—this time in Brussels, Belgium. After the Charlie Hebdo attack, the social media hashtag was “Je Suis Charlie Hebdo.” After the Bataclan attacks in Paris, it was “Pray for Paris.” Now it is “nous Sommes Bruxelles” (“We are Brussels”).

No, we're not. But we *will* be, unless steps are taken to prevent any more attacks.

We are hearing the usual platitudes from President [Barack] Obama and others: “We will not be defeated.” “We will conquer terror.” There is zero political will behind these statements. If there were, you would see immediate efforts to prevent—at the very least—immigration from countries that spawn terrorists and sponsor terror. You can no more “conquer terror” by letting terrorists into your country than you can prevent theft by letting thieves into your home.

It is time to close our borders. It is time for a temporary moratorium on immigration.

In fact, it is past time. We have been amply warned. Brussels was hit [March 22, 2016]. Paris was hit in January and again in November of last year. The United States suffered terrorist attacks in San Bernardino last year, at the Boston Marathon in 2013, at Fort Hood in 2009, and, of course, in New York City on Sept. 11, 2001. (In fact, if you want to see something truly sobering, check out the Wikipedia page titled, “List of Islamist Terrorist Attacks.” Pay attention to the

escalation—from a handful of incidents in the 1970s to nearly an attack a day somewhere in the world in 2015. Even assuming that contemporary record-keeping is more thorough, the numbers are staggering.)

In addition to the planned terrorist attacks, Europe is dealing with widespread crimes committed disproportionately by migrants, including hundreds of incidents of sexual assault in Germany and Sweden, theft and other property crimes, and even murder.

Our situation in the United States is not much better. With our own porous borders, over 100,000 illegal immigrants cross into the United States each year. In 2014, nearly 10,000 unaccompanied children from Mexico and Central America crossed the border *every month*.

Are we sending them back? Nope. Are we sending back those who commit crimes? Not with any consistency. Also in 2014, according to testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, the Obama administration released “193 illegal immigrants with homicide convictions, 426 people with sexual-assault convictions, and 16,000 with drunk-driving convictions.” Over the past three years, more than 100,000 illegal aliens who have been convicted of crimes and who should have been deported have been released by the Obama administration back into the general population.

Some who *have* been deported return to commit additional crimes with impunity. Last year, 32-year-old Kate Steinle was killed in San Francisco. The man accused of her murder, Juan Francisco Lopez-Sanchez, has seven previously [sic] felony convictions and had been deported five times. San Francisco [authorities] refused to turn him over to federal authorities, pursuant to its “sanctuary city” policy.

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ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

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[Recently], in Framingham, Massachusetts, a woman was gang-raped and her boyfriend beaten by four illegal immigrants from Guatemala. Two of the accused attackers had been previously deported, one for drunken driving and disorderly conduct. They managed to make their way back to the U.S.

Meanwhile, the Obama administration cuts aerial surveillance at the border by 50 percent, and our border patrol agents say that they are being instructed not to enforce immigration laws.

Why are we putting up with this?

It's not possible to read a conservative publication without hearing the mewling and whining of the "NeverTrumpers." Do you want to know why Donald Trump is walking away with the Republican nomination? *This is why.*

And all of you—including President Obama—who are so sure that Hillary Clinton will beat Trump in a walk? Don't be so sure. Clinton just announced that she wants to extend Obamacare benefit [sic] to illegal aliens. How convenient! If they're injured assaulting

American citizens, their health care will be paid for—by those of us who are still working.

I'm well aware of the objections to a moratorium on immigration. There are those who say, "You are punishing those who did nothing wrong."

To that I reply, don't blame us; blame those who have exploited our generosity and our liberty.

And some will argue (as they always do), "If we close our doors, then the terrorists have won."

Wrong.

If we leave our doors open, then the terrorists win. If we allow people to pour across our borders, then the terrorists win. If we refuse to do meaningful background checks, then the terrorists win. If, knowing—as we do—that our current practices create an increased risk of attacks and mayhem and destruction and death, we do not change those practices, then the terrorists win.

[The terrorists] know they can do what they like; they can disrupt our lives and slaughter our citizens; and, nothing will change.

It is an election year. Here is my take on things: The decision to place a

moratorium on immigration sends the message that protecting American citizens and lawful residents is more important than whatever benefits might be obtained by an open-borders policy.

Any candidate who cannot or will not make the public statement that protecting America's citizens and lawful residents is his or her single most important priority does not deserve to hold public office.

And probably will not get the presidency.

Who Am I?

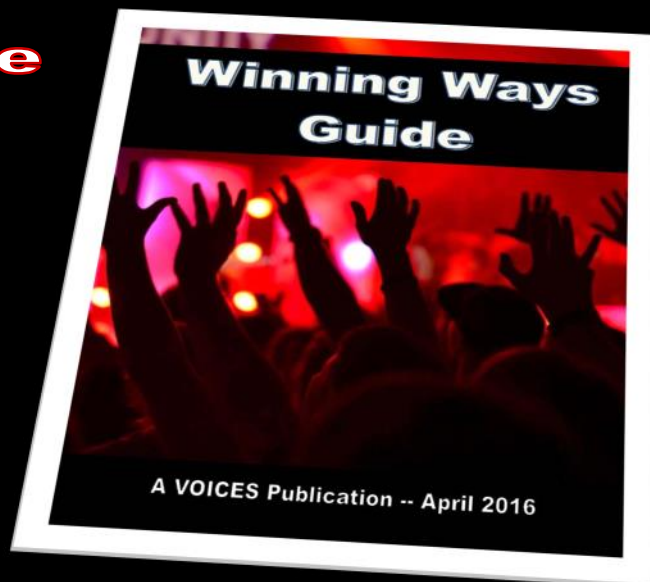
Laura L. Hollis, JD, teaches entrepreneurship and business law for Mendoza College of Business and is Concurrent Associate Professor Law at Notre Dame Law. She resides in Indiana with her husband and two children.



Watch for the Winning Ways Guide

VOICES Publications brings to you *The Winning Ways Guide*, created for veteran grassroots campaigners as a *refresher* resource and for novice volunteers as a tutorial. Its purpose is to educate and empower Republican women to ensure that qualified Republicans—men and women—get elected to public office. We hope you will share the tools provided in this guide with your Republican sisters throughout Georgia and across the nation.

The Winning Ways Guide is a compilation of articles contributed to *VOICES Magazine* over the past several years by various authors. Our vision for this guide is that it will be a living document. As trends change, the guide will be updated so that its users will have the most up-to-date information and tips available to them in their efforts to elect Republicans to public office.



Is a Wall Really the Answer?

By John Simpson

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For the GOP, immigration has been omnipresent in the election this season. Republican front runner Donald Trump pledges to build a wall on the Mexican border that gets endlessly taller with every commendation from our neighbors to the south. Republican presidential contender Ted Cruz ruthlessly attacked fellow Republican Marco Rubio on immigration by calling a 2013 bipartisan immigration proposal the "Rubio (Chuck) Schumer Amnesty bill."

Clearly, both candidates base their position on growing discontent with U.S. immigration policy, but is the only policy option to build a wall? And, is immigration reform really a choice between deportation and amnesty?

The reality is that populist campaign promises rarely reflect the on-the-ground realities of public policy problems. Millions of so called "conservative Americans" have flocked to Trump's pledge to build a wall. Yet, analysis of this proposal suggests that such a wall would cost more than \$25 billion to build, require twice as much concrete as the Hoover Dam, and take 40,000 workers more than four years to build. In his defense, Trump claims that he would force Mexico to pay for the wall by implementing a 35 percent tariff on Mexican goods in an effort to close our \$58 billion trade deficit. What perhaps Trump and many conservatives who support him fail to realize is that those tariffs will not be paid by anyone in Mexico, they will be paid by U.S. consumers who suddenly find products to be 35 percent more expensive. If raising taxes on

Americans wasn't concern enough, ending free trade with Mexico may very well have the opposite effect on immigration by encouraging more migrants to seek work in the United States and find new, innovative ways to circumvent Trump's new wall.

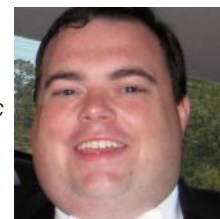
Illegal immigration is a symptom of a much broader poverty crisis in Mexico and Central America. The United States has more than seven times the per capita income than Mexico (\$30,000 vs \$4,000). Central America fares even worse with U.S. per capita incomes exceeding those in Guatemala more than 15 times, nearly 30 times in Bolivia, and 40 times in Honduras. Quite simply, immigrants are clamoring to come to the United States because it is the greatest beacon of hope and prosperity the world has ever known. Stemming immigration, therefore, is not about a wall to keep people out, but giving them an economic reason to stay in their home country. This is exactly what free trade does by offering job opportunities and better wages in areas that previously only had poverty and despair. Reversing free trade proposals like North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) would actually exacerbate our immigration problem while simply extracting tariff revenues from U.S. consumers, not our trading partners.

Immigration is a complex issue that cannot simply be broken down into talking points about a wall and deportation. Comprehensive immigration reform requires policy-makers to

take a hard look at the impediments to legal immigration with a keen eye to the systemic poverty problems that exacerbate the influx of undocumented workers. That begs the question, what is conservative about mobilizing such a massive industrial effort and capital expenditure to keep people out of the United States of America? Is the party of family values really committed to breaking up families and deporting mothers and fathers? Conservative voters should demand immigration solutions that do not cost billions to implement and do not tear families apart. Conservative voters certainly should not be mislead to believe that immigration policy is a binary choice between deportation and amnesty.

Who Am I?

John B Simpson, *Principal, Simpsons Public Affairs, is an experienced communicator with more than a decade of experience in both state and federal government. Simpson's representation focuses on companies in regulated industries where he designs and executes communications and advocacy strategies that shield businesses from burdensome and unnecessary government involvement. He is an expert at developing effective messages, building and managing coalitions, and developing innovative advocacy strategies. Simpson's representational experience spans organizations of all types from publicly-traded corporations to trade organizations and Wall Street investors.*





Our World Is a Dangerous Place!

By Johnny Isakson—U.S. Senator

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Every day we are reminded that the world is still a dangerous place. President Barack Obama has weakened America's leadership and abdicated our responsibility in the world, and we see the dangerous results all too clearly. Russian President Vladimir Putin is emboldened; Chinese cyber attacks threaten our corporate and governmental data; the terror group Boko Haram is running rampant in Africa; Iran and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, known as ISIL, are filling the vacuum created by the absence of U.S. leadership in the Middle East.

Yet, President Obama continues his strategy of breaking down our military might and leading from behind. Now, he's planning to close [the] Guantanamo Bay detention facility.

After Ukraine turned over weapons of mass destruction amid Russian aggression and an escalating conflict, the United States did nothing to help them and Russia took advantage of the vacuum. In Syria, after [...] Obama drew a red line in 2013 that was crossed over and over again by Syrian president Assad without consequence and Russia again took advantage.

We are not exercising the will to make the right things happen. We are not exerting the leadership that our citizens and the peace-loving world

expect from the United States of America. ISIL also is taking advantage of our weakened foreign policy. The Commanding General of U.S. Army Forces Command, General Robert B. Abrams, has explained that a "long-term strategy" means an eight- to 15-year time period before ISIL is finally worn down. During the proposed extended period of conflict, we are likely to watch as thousands of innocent people will be killed or murdered and hundreds of American troops may die at the hands of radical Islamic terrorists.

We are not exerting the leadership that our citizens and the peace-loving world expect from the United States of America.

A containment policy is not only foolish, but impossible. If somebody is willing to kill himself in order to kill you or burn you [alive] in a cage on the courthouse steps without a trial, the only way to defeat them is to kill them before they can kill you. You can't negotiate with such people. You can't accommodate them. You can't contain them. You have to kill them.

Our president, with the support of his [Democrat] party, has cut our military to levels that will soon be as low as they were before World War II.

As a veteran of the Georgia Air National Guard, I know that air attacks work when carried out in concert with a specific strategy involving all military resources, but air attacks that have no specific strategy and no support from the ground do not work. We have to have a comprehensive and realistic military approach in the Middle East to effectively go after and destroy ISIL.

Until we put the troops on the ground that are necessary to carry out a coordinated attack against ISIL, this terrorist group is going to continue to grow. And if we don't secure our borders, ISIL will take advantage of our generosity. That's why as your senator, I've fought for swift and decisive action to ensure we have a smarter strategy in place to keep radical jihadists out of the United States.

The world is a dangerous place, and we need serious leaders who will listen to our military experts and give them the support they need to carry out the mission of eliminating ISIL off the face of the earth.

As long as I am in Congress, I am going to work to give our military, our State Department, and our foreign services the manpower, the money, and the personnel to carry out any mission that we take on. I will fight to prevent the closure of Guantanamo Bay. I will do everything in my power to protect our country, our families and our state, and to restore our nation to that "shining city upon a hill" that is a beacon for all.

By U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson

VA Has Long Way to Go



[Op-ed as published in *The Atlanta Journal Constitution* on December 28, 2015]

Last year, we all watched with horror as a devastating scandal unfolded at the Department of Veterans Affairs. Veterans around the country were dying as they waited for care. The resulting investigation revealed more tragedies, seemingly every day. As a Senate, we came together to pass the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014 to give veterans the access they needed to quality health care and to begin to clean up an agency in total disarray.

When I took over as chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs at the beginning of this year, almost a year after the scandal broke, I dedicated my service as chairman to 1st Lt. Noah Harris of Georgia, who died in Iraq in 2005. His motto was, "I do what I can." I promised to do everything I could to help the brave men and women who served our country like Noah. I'm proud to report the committee and Senate have been working together to do what we can to

serve our veterans—and we're seeing results.

At the beginning of this year, I laid out five broad goals for the committee to pursue during my time as chairman: Overseeing the implementation of the Veterans Choice Program, improving the experience of service members transitioning from active duty to veteran status, protecting victims of military sexual trauma, combating veteran homelessness, and ensuring the VA provides access to mental health care for veterans.

The largest undertaking we have had as a committee has been holding the scandal-plagued VA accountable through our critical oversight. So far, we have held committee oversight hearings to address all five of these goals.

This year, we left the comfort of the U.S. Capitol and brought our committee's oversight directly to the VA to hear firsthand from the leadership and rank-and-file employees what actions they're taking on behalf of our veterans. We have traveled to Denver to address the rampant mismanagement of the construction of the VA medical center there. We went to Gainesville, Ga., and Eagle River, Alaska, to look at the implementation of the Veterans Choice Program. Recently, we went to

Phoenix to assess the aftermath of the wait time scandal.

We take our responsibility to hold the VA accountable very seriously, and I look forward to more committee oversight hearings and visits next year, particularly to address the VA's information and technology strategy and to examine the department's backlog of disability appeals.

As the most bipartisan committee in the Senate, our members have worked together to craft meaningful legislation that will have a huge impact on the lives of veterans across the country.

The first thing the Senate did this year was pass the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act, a bill I'm particularly proud of because it addresses the terrible problem of suicide among veterans.

We've passed numerous provisions to improve the Veterans Choice Program so that qualified veterans have more access to care outside the VA. To cut down on the bureaucracy that has plagued the department, we required the VA to develop a plan to consolidate all non-VA health care options into one Choice Program. Implementing this plan will be one of my top priorities next year.

Following the mismanagement and billion-dollar cost overruns at the Denver VA hospital, we also took action to reform the VA's construction programs so that magnitude of waste of taxpayer dollars does not happen again.

All of these important provisions have been signed into law and are already having a positive impact on the lives of our veterans. And at the committee level, we have passed legislation that goes even further to hold bad actors at the VA appropriately accountable, as well as to improve veterans' health care and benefits, which I strongly encourage the Senate to pass when we return next year.

While negative headlines about the Department of Veterans Affairs have continued through the year, there's another side to the story, and that is what our committee and Congress [have] been doing to help veterans. I'm the first to admit there is still much more work to be done, but we've been working hard to begin making the necessary changes to ensure veterans will be well-served moving forward. I'm proud of the work the Senate has done, and I'm committed to keep working hard next year so veterans get the care and services they deserve.

Veterans Serving Veterans

By Dr. Traci Lawson McBride



Photo: Public Domain

Many Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) are active throughout our state, assisting the thousands of veterans who need additional support that is not directly provided by the Veterans Administration. The many VSOs existing in Georgia primarily operate independent of one another, typically founded as a result of our country's participation in wars/conflicts. Realizing that returning soldiers have a myriad of unique needs beyond just medical care, VSOs often stand in the gap, offering assistance to vets and their families through relationships with other veterans. There are more than 100 VSOs that assist veterans in Georgia, including AMVETS, The American Legion, Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Marine Corps League, Military Officers Association of America, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Wounded Warriors, and the Wounded Warriors Project. A complete list can be found on the Veterans Administration's website at http://www.va.gov/vso/VSO-Directory_2013-2014.pdf.

Each VSO has its own charter, by-laws, and policies. Luckily, across the state, several of these organizations understand the importance of collaboration through strength in numbers. In Hall County, Georgia, members of the local DAV, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Marine Corps League, and Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) formed the Northeast Georgia Veterans Coalition to work together to collaboratively serve more veterans in the area. Representatives from each organization, often the leadership for each VSO, meet quarterly to share ideas, offer more support for veterans, and develop plans together to make a positive impact for veterans and their families in the community. Partnering with local judicial officials, this organization was instrumental in assisting the development of veterans' courts that specifically assist the unique needs of veteran offenders and continues to work diligently for veterans, veterans' families, and veterans' causes in northeast Georgia.

The Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Chapter 17, in Gainesville-Hall County is one of the most active VSOs in the state. Working together with its sister organization, the DAV Auxiliary (DAVA, Unit 17), the group maintains a strong alliance

with Golden Corral—collecting funds for disabled veterans in the local community during the weeks surrounding Veterans Day and then assisting the restaurant through sponsorships for children of disabled vets to attend Camp Corral each summer. This partnership and other fundraising efforts allowed DAV, Chapter 17 to raise the most funds in the state in 2011, which gained the attention of the National DAV. In recognition of this accomplishment, the National DAV awarded Chapter 17 with two handicapped-accessible vans in 2012. These vans have continued to be used to transport veterans for appointments at the Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital in Decatur, Georgia. Over the past year, Chapter 17 raised more than \$65,000, which provided funds for veterans' assistance in the northeast Georgia area. These funds were spent on everything from living expenses, such as utility bills and mortgage payments, to the construction of wheelchair ramps and provision of food and clothing. One veteran needed a new roof on his house while another needed his septic tank pumped—all of these specific needs were met by the local DAV. All in all, the disabled veterans of this chapter logged in a total of 8,228 volunteer hours to improve the lives of fellow veterans in their community.

Additionally, the chapter was blessed by many donations from individuals to companies that provide not only funds but items for veterans. One company donated brand new electric wheelchairs and scooters that the organization loans to needy veterans, which are returned when no longer needed. Currently, the chapter has more than 100 wheelchairs—valued at \$300,000—out on loan to disabled veterans. Another company, upon its closure, donated to the chapter new, electric, state-of-the-art hospital beds. Seventeen of these beds—valued at \$95,000—were given to a local nursing home that houses several veterans in Flowery Branch, Georgia. Forty more of these beds—valued at \$220,000—were set aside for a nursing home in Jeffersonville, Georgia, that houses many veterans from the VA facility in South Georgia.

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The March meeting of the Gainesville-Hall County DAV, Chapter 17, began with a Missing Man Remembrance—made popular in a Chick-Fil-A location in Marietta, Georgia, in November 2015. The restaurant chain, which typically offers free meals to veterans on Veterans Day, decided to also honor veterans who remain missing. This display includes a small table with a single place setting, serving as a poignant reminder of the families throughout the country who have waited now for years for their loved one to come home. According to the [Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency](#), there are still more than 1,500 POW/MIA soldiers unaccounted for from the Vietnam War alone. In addition to the table and place setting, a document is displayed on the table that is read during the ceremony which highlights the significance of the items on the table. The reading of the document reiterates that truly “while all gave some, some gave all.”

Certainly VSOs, such as this DAV chapter, realize the importance of the community. Community partnerships continue to provide essential support and assistance for many veterans in our state that are so often overlooked by other well-meaning organizations, fulfilling the mission set forth by President Abraham Lincoln, now adopted by the Veterans Administration: “To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan” by serving and honoring the men and women who are our heroes—America’s veterans.



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- Help them get new issues of **VOICES Magazine**, **FOCUS, News You Can Use**, and **The Republican Woman**.
- Help them access their “news” by clicking on the link provided and go directly to a full-color, PDF file of the magazine. (**VOICES Magazine** is published three times a year—spring, summer, and winter. **The Republican Woman** is issued two or three times per year. **FOCUS** is issued three times a year. **News You Can Use** is issued weekly.)
- Help your friends access and copy the magazines from www.gfrw.org and www.nfrw.org.

**Federation publications archived
on the GFRW and NFRW websites
are just a click away from your computer screen.**

Local Club Participates in Veterans Outreach



Ron Johnson, head of the Veterans Outreach Program for the Georgia GOP, appeared on the March program of the Republican Women of Hall. Johnson shared information about how Republicans can fund wheelchairs for Georgia veterans across the state. Following a collection from attendees, Johnson was presented with a check for \$408.



RW Hall President Lauren Bell introduces Ron Johnson



RW Hall Treasurer Rebecca Yardley presents check to Johnson with GAGOP 9th District Chairman Bruce Azevedo



Public Domain

Ways to Help Veterans

Information compiled by staff

There are a number of ways Republican women can help our deserving veterans:

1. As part of your community outreach programs, hold seminars for veterans' wives. Provide them with information on how to apply for VA mortgages, the GI bill, and other programs for which they are eligible.
2. Donate to groups that serve veterans: The Independence Fund, K-9 Warriors, Battle Buddy Foundation, The Gary Sinise Foundation, Building for America's Bravest (Stephen Siller's Tunnel to Towers), the USO, Fischer House, etc. There are a number of charities that support veterans and their families. You can check out the charity on Charity Navigator (Your Guide to Intelligent Giving).
3. Volunteer for an organization that supports military families and veterans.
4. For more sources, Google: Organizations that help military families in Georgia.
5. Hold a Veterans' Information Expo.

JOBS:

1. Hire Heroes USA—"Transforming Military Service into Civilian Success"—This organization is headquartered in Alpharetta, Georgia, with additional offices in Torrance, California, San Diego, California, Auburn, Washington, Colorado Springs, Colorado, Dallas, Texas, and Raleigh, North Carolina. The success rate of this organization in finding jobs for veterans is more than sixty-six veterans every week. Hire Heroes USA is a 501(c)(3) and services are provided at no cost to veterans. <https://www.hireheroesusa.org/>
2. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs—Veterans Employment Toolkit <http://www.va.gov/vetsinworkplace/veteranresources.asp>
3. RecruitMilitary—"a veteran-owned and operated company that helps employers connect with America's best talent—its veterans." <https://recruitmilitary.com/>

PROJECTS FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE:

- **Emergency Shelter (ES):** Provides temporary or nightly shelter beds to people experiencing homelessness
- **Transitional Housing (TH):** Typically provide homeless people with up to 24 months of housing and supportive services
- **Safe Haven (SH):** Provides temporary shelter and services to hard-to-serve individuals

PROJECTS FOR FORMERLY HOMELESS PEOPLE:

- **Rapid Rehousing (RRH):** Provides short-term and medium-term rental assistance and housing relocation and stabilization services to formerly homeless people experiencing homelessness
- **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH):** Provides long-term housing with supportive services for formerly homeless people with disabilities
- **Other Permanent Housing (OPH):** Provides housing with or without services specifically for formerly homeless people, but that does not require people to have a disability.

Veterans can get assistance in purchasing a home by applying for a VA mortgage. According to Terry Savage (a nationally known expert on personal finance, the markets, and the economy), veterans are not taking advantage of this benefit. Of the 5.75 million Americans who served in the Gulf Wars, more than 4 million veterans are not taking advantage of this program. How is it that our veterans are unaware of the fact that they can get a low, fixed-rate 30-year mortgage with zero down payment. [Veteran must have served a minimum of ninety days active duty during wartime or 181 continuous days during peacetime and honorably discharged.]

[Source: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/terry-savage/veteran-benefits_b_4250696.html]

EDUCATION ASSISTANCE:

Veterans are entitled to 36 months of education benefits under the GI bill. For in-state students, these benefits include full tuition and fees. A housing allowance and a stipend for textbooks is available. Google: Education opportunities for veterans.

[Source: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/terry-savage/veteran-benefits_b_4250696.html]

A Stark Contrast

By Frank Strickland



Photos: Public Domain

All too often, I read reports of America's veterans who bravely serve our country in the worst of conditions and then return home only to face unemployment, improper or nonexistent medical treatment, and post-traumatic stress disorder. These soldier-citizens, who should be held in the *highest* esteem by their fellow Americans, leave the armed services and find themselves in poverty because they can't find work or are ill because the Veterans Administration medical system either cannot or will not take care of them. Worst of all, they are often left forgotten.

While our veterans struggle with these problems, another group of people living in this country do not. To the contrary, many people who are living in this country illegally have jobs, which, of course, they hold illegally. They have the benefit of good healthcare through our indigent care system. They are the beneficiaries of lobbying groups who seek more government benefits for them, as well as religious and charitable organizations that provide them with free services, food, and other necessities.

Where are the employers who are looking to give a hand up to a fellow citizen who risked his or her life for you and me, rather than an employer looking for the cheapest labor available, even if those employees are illegal? Where is the healthcare *first* for our heroes? Where are the lobbyists for veterans? Finally, why are there special charitable and religious programs for people here illegally and seemingly none for those who are not just legal residents, but the *best* of us?

We see protests all the time from those who believe that the United States must welcome everyone in the world to come here and take advantage of every government benefit. Yet we see no protests for the rights of American veterans and no outcries for solutions to the myriad of problems faced by them when they return home.

We revered and still revere our veterans of the world wars. Sadly, some Americans treated many of our Vietnam veterans with disdain, which was disgraceful. We treat our current veterans with something worse than disdain: We treat them with apathy.

It's time we rally around our military—active and veteran—and return to them what they've given to us: a good life. Let's show our appreciation for them as seen in our actions and not just the occasional applause at the airport or a ballgame.



Who Am I?

Frank Strickland, of the law firm of Strickland Brockington Lewis, LLP, serves as general counsel of the Georgia Republican Party; director of the Georgia Legal Services Program, Atlanta Legal Aid Society and Federal Defender Program, Inc. He is a graduate of Leadership Atlanta, a Master in the Bleckley Inn of Court, a member of the Board of Governors of the Republican National Lawyers Association (RNLA), and current Chairman of the Atlanta Lawyers Chapter of The Federalist Society. Frank served in the United States Coast Guard and is a Commander, U.S. Coast Guard Reserve (retired). Frank received his undergraduate education at Vanderbilt University and earned his law degree from Emory University.

The Other Stain on the Character of Our Nation

By Sherry Roedl, Editor



Photo from Truth UnCensored.net¹¹

During one of the recent presidential debates, Republican presidential candidate Carly Fiorina spoke about a stain on the character of our nation. Unfortunately, it seems there are many stains on the character of our great nation these days.

One of those stains relates to how our government in particular and society in general treat, or rather mistreat, the men and women who have served honorably in the service of this nation in our armed forces—versus—people who enter this country illegally (or those who enter this country on a legal visa but don't follow the laws regarding their allowable length of stay).

It's the stain of permitting government benefits and jobs to go to lawbreakers rather than to our veterans. It's the stain of the Veterans Administration outlandishly spending taxpayer money on artwork and conferences, instead of on the men and women whom they are supposed to serve. It's the stain of men and women who served in the military finding themselves homeless. It's the stain of our veterans not easily transitioning from military life back to civilian life. It is the stain of our veterans being labeled in a specific way which results in their being denied benefits they should rightly receive.

The challenges our veterans face are many. For many veterans, finding a job is a major hurdle. In a January 5, 2015, article written by David Frum for *The Atlantic*, he reported: "Last month [December 2014], the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS) released its latest jobs study. CIS, a research organization that tends to favor tight immigration policies, found that even now, almost seven years after the collapse of Lehman Brothers, 1.5 million

fewer native-born Americans are working than in November 2007, the peak of the prior economic cycle. Balancing the 1.5 million fewer native-born Americans at work, there are 2 million more immigrants—legal and illegal—working in the United States today than in November 2007. **All the net new jobs created since November 2007 have gone to immigrants.**

However, even with job growth in the last two years (November 2012 to November 2014), 45 percent of employment growth has gone to immigrants, though they comprise only 17 percent of the labor force."²

In Georgia, the veteran population in 2014 was 690,208; the veteran population in the U.S. was 21,369,602. The unemployment rate for veterans in Georgia was 7.6 percent vs. 5.3 percent for the U.S.³ According to the Pew Research Center in an article by Jens Manuel Krogstad and Jeffrey S. Passell, "(u)nauthorized immigrants make up 5.1 percent of the U.S. labor force."⁴ This 5.1 percent equates to 8.1 million unauthorized immigrants in our labor force who are either looking for work or have, in fact, found a job.⁴

Why can't our veterans find good-paying jobs? Do they lack the job skills? Are jobs going to illegal immigrants? Some would argue that illegal immigrants possess a different skill set than veteran job seekers and, therefore, do not compete with native-born job seekers. Others claim that military training is not always transferable to civilian jobs.

I contend that the dire plight of our veterans begins before their honorable discharge. In my view, our servicemen and women are grossly underpaid. Do you know that the

median annual income of an E2 Army Private is \$18,612—that's about \$9/hour? For an Army Staff Sergeant (E-6), the median annual salary is \$31,904 or \$15/hour. These are soldiers who are involved in combat missions, risking their lives in order to keep you and me safe. In contrast, salaries for members of the U. S. Congress in 2014 amounted to \$174,000—\$191,533.⁶ Then, we have a rookie in the National Basketball Association earning annual salary of \$398,762—\$507,336.⁷ So shooting a basketball through a hoop is more valuable to our society than shooting an enemy whose main mission in life is to eradicate we "infidels" from the face of the earth?

Where are the Democrats—those who talk about income inequality ad nauseam—on this issue? How does a man or woman support a family—let alone himself/herself—on \$18,612 or even \$31,904 a year? More importantly, what does that veteran do when he or she returns to civilian life perhaps with no savings, a mortgage, a car loan, and no prospect of gaining employment? In many cases our veterans are competing with immigrants who have entered this country illegally.

Our culture today is upside down. It seems to me that we as a society should do everything we can to ensure that our veterans are given first chance at a job over the illegal immigrant. Perhaps, American corporations could develop programs—a bridge, so to speak—that would make it easier for a veteran to more easily transition from the battlefield to the corporate world. Our proud veterans would appreciate a hand-up, rather than a hand-out. This could be the hand-up that changes their lives.

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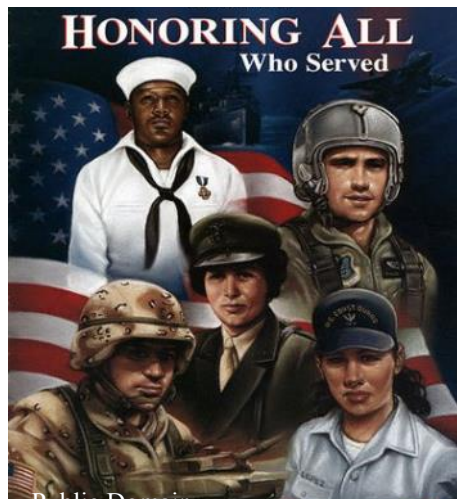
Another disturbing issue our veterans face is homelessness. The number of homeless veterans in Georgia is 1,443.⁷ For the U.S., this number is 49,933.⁸ The good news is this number is declining. The bad news is nine percent of these homeless vets are female.⁹ “Among the recent Iraq and Afghanistan cohort of veterans—who are more frequently female than their older counterparts—an experience of sexual trauma while serving in the military greatly increases the risk of homelessness.”¹⁸

Besides homelessness, many of our female vets also deal with post-military sexual abuse, trauma, and in some cases devastating wounds. According to Sean Piccoli in an article entitled, “5 Top Issues Women Veterans Face When Returning Home.” (Tuesday, July 7, 2015), Piccoli states that in addition to unemployment and homelessness, invisibility, falling through the cracks, and self-isolation are major challenges female veterans face.¹⁷

Our veterans also face many obstacles when dealing with the Veterans’ Administration (VA). In an article by Emily Wax-Thibodeaux that appeared in *The Washington Post* on October 9, 2015, it was reported that the VA spent \$483,000 on a rock sculpture outside one of its facilities in Palo Alto, California. The VA also spent \$285,000 on an art installation (a lighted artwork on the side of a parking garage displaying quotes from Abraham Lincoln and Eleanor Roosevelt in Morse Code). Wax-Thibodeaux also reports that the VA Palo Alto Health Care System spent \$6.3 million in consulting and art services.¹³ In addition, the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of the Inspector General found “improper expenditures and abuses by government employees” at two VA human resources conferences to the tune of \$6.1 million.¹⁴ Then there’s a VA hospital in Denver where the cost to build the facility went from \$328 million to \$1.7 billion!¹⁵ The consequence of this wanton spending (and I’m sure there are many abuses that have gone unnoticed and unreported) is that our veterans suffer long wait times in seeking treatment for serious medical issues and the VA cuts medical services, as a result of lack of funding. [In September of 2015, House lawmakers were informed that the Veterans Affairs Department had a \$2.6 billion budget shortfall for the fiscal year.¹⁶]

With regard to health issues, our veterans often have to fight the government to get the proper medical discharge to receive the benefits they are due. A reporter for Fusion (an ABC News/Univision joint venture), Alissa Figueroa, uncovered some disturbing information: men who

report being raped (some 96,000 service members since 2006) were discharged with “personality disorder,” which the military considers a pre-existing condition. Being labeled with a personality disorder/pre-existing condition results in the soldier being denied a lifetime of disability and medical benefits which the military reserves for soldiers who are traumatized during service. This classification of more than 31,000 soldiers saves the military more than \$17.2 billion in disability and medical benefits. No worries—the veteran can appeal his/her discharge to the Board of Correction of Military Records. Guess what happens when the traumatized veteran tries to appeal his/her discharge to get it corrected in order to receive the proper benefits—nothing. Figueroa’s investigation of more than 3,000 appeals cases found that *none* had been overturned. “Figueroa found that the Corrections Board doesn’t even read those soldiers’ submissions. In fact, the board spent an average of three minutes and forty-five seconds before rejecting each case.”¹⁸



While it is *alleged* that our veterans are being denied benefits, it is a fact that many illegal aliens get food stamps, unemployment and disability benefits, health insurance, and public housing by gaming the system with forged documents. Then due to our government’s failure to recognize those forged documents, our lax security measures, and our government’s unwillingness to stop people to verify their immigrant status, illegal immigrants gain access to benefits.¹⁹ President Barack Obama has made it possible through his amnesty programs for illegal immigrants to get social security numbers (SSN) and work permits. “With a SSN, illegal immigrants become eligible for both CTC (Child Tax Credit) and EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit) payments.”¹⁹ If these amnesty programs remain for the next ten years, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that illegal immigrants will receive more than \$20 billion in EITC payments, \$3 billion in health care benefits, \$2

billion in Supplemental Security Income, and \$1.6 billion in food stamps.²⁰ In an article by Alan Gomez for *USA Today*, September 2, 2015, Gomez reports that “(a)bout 51% of immigrant-led households receive at least one kind of welfare benefit, including Medicaid, food stamps, school lunches, and housing assistance.”²¹ Meanwhile, we have veterans and their families who can’t make ends meet. Something is seriously wrong with this picture.

The brave men and women who volunteer to leave their families for months/years at a time and make countless sacrifices during their deployments to foreign lands deserve the very best this country has to offer. However, the opposite tends to be the norm. Many of our military families struggle to pay their mortgages (if they are fortunate enough to own a home), put food on the table, or clothe their children. We have veterans who are dealing with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and/or devastating physical wounds. There are others who find it difficult to return to the relationships they had before experiencing the horrors of combat. Additionally, many face health issues and the related challenges that result from these health issues, such as filing for disability benefits, struggling with combat trauma, learning to live with devastating wounds, and rebuilding relationships.

It seems the character of our nation is blotched with many ugly stains. Many of these stains are the result of unintended consequences; others are the handiwork of unscrupulous politicians and bureaucrats. It is up to *We the People* to eradicate these reprehensible blotches from the character of our nation. We owe it to the men and women who are willing to serve—voluntarily—in our armed forces at great personal cost to ensure that the United States of America remains the land of the free. As evidenced by the recent VA scandal, the U.S. government has done a pretty poor job of serving its veterans. My challenge to you is to return the favor to our veterans in some way—individually, or as a federated Republican Women’s Club—to show your gratitude for the sacrifices they and their families have made on *your* behalf. Many of our veterans and their families are hurting. We can do much to extinguish their pain.

Sometimes, it’s just acknowledging that we appreciate their service with a heartfelt “thank you.” We owe the men and women who served our nation more than we can every repay them. Let’s work together to bleach these stains from the character of our nation.

[Editor’s Note: See page 25 for list of sources]

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Homeless Veterans by the Numbers in the U.S.¹²:

- 11% of the homeless adult population are veterans
- 20% of the male homeless population are veterans
- 68% reside in principal cities
- 32% reside in suburban/rural areas
- 51% of individual homeless veterans have disabilities
- 50% have serious mental illness
- 70% have substance abuse problems
- 57% are white males, compared to 38% of non-veterans
- 50% are age 51 or older, compared to 19% non-veterans

In Georgia⁷:

- 9.2% of veterans in Georgia are unemployed
- 7.9% of Georgia's veterans live in poverty
- 18.4% of Georgia veterans have a service connected disability rating

Female Homeless Veterans²⁹:

- 20,944 female veterans were identified as homeless or at-risk of homelessness between October 2011-September 2012; 40% of these were in 5 states: CA, TX, GA, FL, NY (Kane 2013)
- Numbers of homeless women veterans are expected to increase as more women return from Iraq and Afghanistan.
- For female veterans, the risk of homelessness is highest among the 18-29 year age group

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**, **FOCUS** 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.

It's The Principle, Not The Individual

By U.S. Senator David Perdue

Public Domain

Regarding the vacancy on the Supreme Court, many of our colleagues in the minority party have said the same things that we are saying today. Let's stop kidding each other. This kind of political showmanship and, yes indeed, hypocrisy is exactly what makes everyone back in my home state absolutely apoplectic with Washington.

The last time I addressed the Supreme Court vacancy on the Senate floor, I urged my colleagues on the other side of the aisle not to let the nominations process get bogged down in partisan politics. To not let this process turn into political theatre. That's not what this should be about.

Because that's exactly what's happened far too often in this body ever since the [Robert] Bork nomination way back in 1987.

The organized campaign of vilification and character attacks surrounding Judge Bork's nomination was so unprecedented and so extreme that it took the creation of a new word—the verb “to bork”—to describe what had happened.

The process for nominating justices to the Supreme Court has been thoroughly politicized ever since. That politicization has done great damage not only to the court, but to this body, the United States Senate. And it has expanded beyond just Supreme Court nominees and now affects so many of our nominees for circuit judgeships as well.

That's what happened in 2013 when then-Majority Leader [Harry] Reid broke a tradition almost as old as the Senate itself, by

invoking the nuclear option and breaking the Senate's filibuster rule to stack various circuit courts.

I don't think I need to remind any of my colleagues that when the Democrats were in the minority there was no shortage of protests heard in this room about how sacred an institution the filibuster was. Keep in mind that the nuclear option was invoked after the Senate had confirmed the president's first nominee to the D.C. Circuit by a unanimous 97 to zero vote.

It was an act of raw political power, the nuclear option.

**What's at stake
here is the integrity
of the process, not**

We heard [recently] that the president has named his nominee to the Supreme Court. But, let's be clear, any previous confirmation, record as a judge, or professional qualifications are not the issue here, for any nominee. What's at stake here is the integrity of the process, not the person. It's the principle, not the individual.

Because our judicial nominees to the Supreme Court, the circuits, and the district courts deserve better than to be used as pawns in a political fight. And that's exactly what would happen if the Senate was to consider any nominee in the middle of this political season.

I am new to this institution, but this has been the view of my colleagues in both parties who have served in the Senate for far longer than I have.

This was their view no matter who the nominee was. This was their view even when there wasn't a vacancy to fill.

The former chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Vice President [Joe] Biden, recognized this in 1992 when he said, “once the political season is underway, and it is, action on a Supreme Court nomination must be”—I want to emphasize that must—“must be put off until after the election campaign is over. That is what is fair to the nominee and is central to the process. Otherwise, it seems to me, we will be in deep trouble as an institution.”

I agree.

The vice president correctly saw that when we inject a nomination into a contentious election-year atmosphere, we do a disservice not only to the nominee but to the institution of the United States Senate itself. It's my view that enough institutional damage has already been done to the Senate through these politicized nominations.

Now, I'd like to say a little about the text of the Constitution, we hear both sides talk about this, but let's see it in detail. I've heard many of my Democratic colleagues claim that the Senate has an obligation to schedule hearings and hold a vote on this nominee.

Well, we've all read Article 2, Section 2 of the Constitution.

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Every member of this body knows that the Constitution says nothing about hearings or votes on judicial nominees. It's simply not there. Senators of both parties have always understood this and have said so for years, regardless of who was in the majority.

In 2005, Minority Leader Reid said, "Nowhere in the Constitution does it say the Senate has a duty to give presidential appointees a vote."

Before that, in 2002, the former Chief Judge of the D.C. Circuit, Abner Mikva, who was a Carter appointee, said: "The Senate should not act on any Supreme Court vacancies that might occur until after the next presidential election."

The senior senator from Nevada and Judge Mikva were right then, and Chairman Grassley and my Republican colleagues are right now.

Despite many of them previously making the exact same points we are today, my Democratic colleagues are continuing this diatribe of telling us to do our job. I'd respectfully say to my Democratic colleagues today, we are doing our job.

Our job as senators is to decide how to responsibly exercise the powers of advice and consent delegated to us under our Constitution.

The responsible course of action here—a course of action endorsed by both Democrats and Republicans for decades—is to refrain from initiating the nominations process in the midst of an election-year political fight.

The responsible course of action is to avoid the political theatre that this nomination would become.



June: Caucuses and primaries are expected to last until the year is almost halfway over. Several states have not yet finalized the dates for their events.

July 18-21: The Republican National Convention will be held at the Quicken Loans Arena in Cleveland.

July 25-28: The Democratic National Convention will be held at the Wells Fargo Center in the Philadelphia Convention Center.

[Source: *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, Monday, Nov. 9, "Election Extra"]

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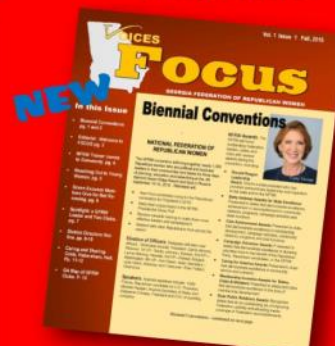
MAGAZINE



WEEKLY NEWS YOU CAN USE



NEWSLETTER



The Next Supreme Court Justice?

By Randy Evans
Georgia's National
Committeeman for the GOP

[From the *Atlanta Business Chronicle*,
Mar 11, 2016, 6:00am EST]

Amidst the clamor and bustle of the rough and tumble 2016 presidential primaries and caucuses, President Barack Obama and the U.S. Senate are set to do battle over the vacancy left by the death of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia.

Make no mistake, the Constitution empowers the president to nominate people to serve as justices on the nation's highest and most powerful court. The very same document leaves no doubt that the U.S. Senate has the right to confirm, reject, or simply ignore the president's choice.

As an interesting aside, the Constitution grants the Congress the right to decide how many justices serve on the Supreme Court. Originally, there were five associate justices and a chief justice for a total of six. The total reached a high of 10 in 1863. The number has been nine since 1869.

Contrary to popular belief, there are no official qualifications to serve on the high court—not even a minimum age. The youngest was Justice Joseph Story who was only 32 years old when he joined the court.

In fact, members of the high court do not even have to be lawyers. But the fact of the matter is that every person to serve on the Supreme Court has been a lawyer. Harvard Law School has had the most alumni serve on the court—20.

So far, 112 justices have been nominated by a president and confirmed by the Senate. This includes 17 chief justices. Of the 112, only four women have served on the Supreme Court, with three of them serving now. Retired Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, appointed by President Ronald Reagan [in 1981] and confirmed by a 99-0 vote in the Senate, was the [first].

From the theater so far this year, some might think that this is the first time battle lines have been drawn over a Supreme Court vacancy with such serious consternation. Yet, believe it or not, 17 presidents have submitted nominees who were not confirmed. (Indeed, the term “borked” came from the Senate's refusal to confirm President Reagan's nominee Robert Bork.)

In total, 151 people have been nominated to serve on the Supreme Court, but many failed to make it to the court for a variety of reasons. In most cases, the Senate either rejected or failed to confirm the nominee. In others, the nominee was withdrawn or withdrew on his/her own.

While not the rule, the simple truth is that the president does not always get to have his choice automatically confirmed to the court.

In fact, some presidents had their picks rejected multiple times by the Senate. President John Tyler had four picks that did not make it—one rejected, two withdrawn, and one with no action taken by the Senate. Presidents Millard Fillmore and Ulysses Grant each had three failed nominations. Many more had two that did not reach the high court.

The suggestion that the current battle over Justice Scalia's replacement is about President Obama ignores pretty settled history. Fights over seats on the U.S. Supreme Court between the president, the Senate, and sometimes the Congress have occurred since the court began. Even President George Washington had two failed nominees—one withdrawn and one rejected.

Even the Congress has gotten into the fray on occasion. In addition to adjusting the number of justices up and down, Congress acted to prevent President Andrew Johnson from appointing anyone to the court. His nomination was voided by the Judicial Circuits Act of 1866 prior to his nominee's consideration by the Senate.

(Continued on next page)

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. A frequent lecturer and author on subjects of professional liability and ethics, government ethics and politics, Evans is also Georgia's National GOP Committeeman.

The Next Supreme Court Justice

(Continued from previous page)

After all, nominations to the U.S. Supreme Court are serious business. Nominees, if confirmed, serve for life—subject only to removal by impeachment. Only one has been impeached by the House of Representatives (but not convicted by the Senate)—Samuel Chase in 1804. And, as life spans have increased, justices now serve decades after confirmation to the bench. More significantly, rightly or wrongly, they can make as much or as little law as they choose; and, absent a constitutional amendment, there is little that the president or Congress can do about it.

So, not surprisingly, presidents, senators, and congresses care a lot about the people appointed and confirmed to the Supreme Court.

[However], there is much more involved with this Supreme Court seat—Justice Scalia's seat. It reflects the balance of power between two very different factions of the court—the liberal wing and the conservative wing. While purportedly not partisan, the court is in fact divided and, for now, it is largely evenly divided. In many ways, it is reflective of just where the country is—largely evenly divided. In fact, it also reflects just where the other two branches of government are—evenly divided between a Democrat president and a Republican Congress.

Interestingly, when it comes to the other two branches of government, the American people get to weigh in and decide which direction to go next. As history now has it, the president and the Senate have that same chance in this all-important election year—to hear from the American people about which direction to go next.

In November, just a few months from now, the American people will get the chance to voice their own opinions about which direction to go next. Why would the president and the Senate not want to hear what the American people have to say before such an important decision? After all, the Constitution does begin with "We the People of the United States...."

Who Am I?



Meredith Christianson, is a fourth-year student at Georgia Institute of Technology, majoring in Business Administration with a concentration in finance and will minor in pre-law. She will graduate in May 2016. After completing her undergraduate work, she plans to attend law school. Christianson has been involved with the Georgia Tech College Republicans since the fall of her freshman year and currently serves as Chairman.



By Meredith Christianson, Chairman Georgia Tech College Republicans

We, Georgia Tech College Republicans, are spending most of our time and effort trying to educate young voters on the values of the Republican Party. The media tends to portray our party as a group of old, white men trying to stifle personal liberties. Obviously, this is not the case. Many young voters and college students believe that voting isn't important or that they could never agree with Republican principles. The College Republicans are focused on changing those opinions. We spend time getting to know our peers and being involved in different organizations so that Republicans are no longer just associated with news, but instead are people you know and with whom you enjoy hanging out. This personal connection means a great deal to many college students and it is a great way to open up discussions about the presidential election.

By building up a friendship, we are able to plan events and activities outside of our normal weekly meetings. This semester, Georgia Tech College Republicans hosted several debate watching parties. Our largest event was a debate watching party where we partnered with the Atlanta Young Republicans. With this partnership we were able to rent a larger venue, which opened up opportunities for a greater number of people to attend. The College Republicans at Georgia Tech treated this event as a debate watching party and a networking event. It can be hard for college students to connect with Young Republican chapters and we like to foster that transition.

We as individuals also spend a lot of time campaigning for the Republican Candidates we support. It is highly encouraged to start student groups for each candidate and help his or her campaign in any way possible. One of the greatest strengths College Republicans has is the large amount of flexibility of our members. We are able to go door-to-door or work phone banks without having to completely rearrange our schedules. Last election cycle, our club held phone bank nights where our members would get together, order in food and phone bank for a few hours. This makes campaigning into a social outing, which usually means more people will attend. Even though we cannot give a lot of money, we can give our time, which is what some candidates need more than anything else. Right now our club does not support any individual candidate because we like for our members to support whoever they believe should win the nomination. Once the primaries are over, we will do our best to support whomever the Republican Party chose to represent us in the election. College Republicans was created to get young people involved in politics and to help Republicans become elected. The Georgia Tech chapter of College Republicans strives to carry out those two goals in any way possible.

Augusta Bound



Photo: Judy True

Georgia Republicans will gather in Augusta June 3-4 for the 2016 State Convention.

With a growing downtown, new convention center, and adjoining hotel with state-of-the-art facilities, Augusta is the ideal location for delegates, alternates, and guests to gather before the presidential election kicks into high gear.

With a goal of electing at-large delegates and alternates to the Republican National Convention in Cleveland and a National Committeeman and Committeewoman to serve as our representatives at the RNC, this convention is vitally important.

Furthermore, our time in Augusta will serve as an opportunity for grassroots conservatives to mobilize and recommit to working together to win back the White House in 2016.

Augusta is on the brink of greatness and serves as a great backdrop for our state convention. Just a few miles away from the Augusta Convention Center is the epicenter of healthcare in Georgia. With the state's flagship medical and dental schools, the Charlie Norwood VA hospital, and University Hospital, Augusta is training the healthcare providers of tomorrow—today.

Several miles west is Ft. Gordon—the new home of our country's Cyber Command. On base, military and government workers do their part to keep Americans safe at home and abroad.

In addition to serving as hubs for cyber security, manufacturing, healthcare, and golf, Augusta is also fertile ground for Georgia Republicans.

In 2014, grassroots activists from throughout Georgia's 12th Congressional District—which is anchored by Augusta—worked in conjunction with the State Party to oust longtime Congressman John Barrow from his perch on Capitol Hill. Thanks to the well-trained grassroots army, GA-12 is now well represented in Washington by conservative businessman Rick Allen.

Augusta is also a hub for the Georgia GOP's Minority Engagement movement. Under the leadership of Leo Smith, we have built significant infrastructure in this region over the years and have key ambassadors working to spread our conservative message with voters of all ages, races, and backgrounds.

As you work your way through precinct, county, and district conventions, remember that we are on the same team with the same purpose. At the end of the day, it doesn't matter if "your candidate" or "my candidate" wins the nomination. It matters if "our candidate" wins back the White House!

Thank you for all that you do for the Georgia Republican Party. We look forward to seeing you in Augusta!

For more information on the 2016 State Convention in Augusta, please contact Brad Hughes at brad@gagop.org or call 404-257-5559.

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.

GaGOP

Get Involved 2016

Step

1

February 2016

Start in your neighborhood

Precinct Caucus (Mass Meeting)

Early involvement begins at the grassroots level in your voting precinct. At this caucus you will elect delegates and alternates to attend your county convention in March.

Note that the over 80,000 population counties have discretion on when to hold their precinct caucuses. They must be held between 2/11/16 and 2/20/16. Contact your county chairman for the date and time of your Precinct Caucus. ****THIS IS A CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEARS****

Step

2

March 19, 2016

County Convention

Under 80,000 population counties will hold precinct caucuses at 9am immediately prior to the county convention.

Your County GOP will hold a convention on Saturday, March 19th, 2016 at 10am at a place designated by your county party.

Delegates will vote on who will represent your county at the District and State Conventions. If you are an elected delegate or alternate you will receive a notice of the location.

Step

3

April 16, 2016

District Conventions

These are based on U.S. Congressional Districts. Locations are decided by each individual district. If you were elected in March as a delegate or alternate to the District Convention then you will be notified of the location.

At This Convention:

- The Delegates will elect 3 Delegates and 3 Alternates from each US Congressional District to the GOP National Convention in July 2016.

Note: Although you do not have to be present in Step 1 to be elected as a delegate or alternate from your precinct, at least one person must be present from your precinct in order to caucus. Attendance increases your chances of attending the County, District and State Conventions as a delegate or alternate.

Step

4

June 3-4, 2016

**The State Convention
Augusta Trade & Exhibition Center
Augusta, Georgia**

Delegates to the state convention will:

- Elect At-Large Delegates and Alternates to the National Convention in Cleveland in July 2016.
- Elect a National Committeewoman and National Committeeman for four year terms to represent Georgia at the RNC.
- Conduct other necessary and proper business.



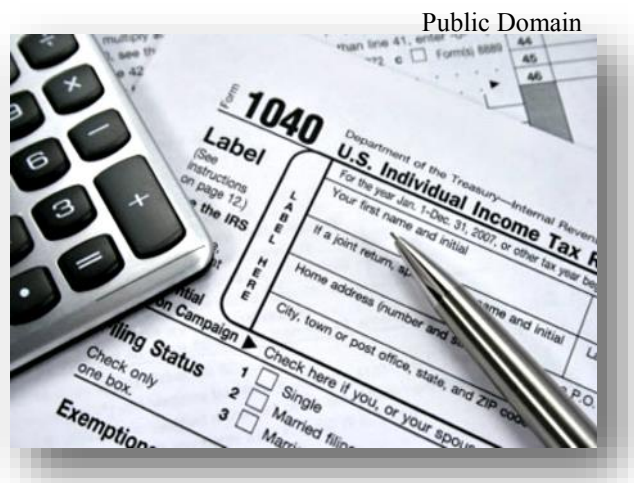
Additional information can be found by contacting:

The Georgia Republican Party
404-257-5559 www.GAGOP.org
or Your County Republican Party

Prepared by: Linda Herren, GA National Committeewoman, Republican National Committee

Tax Reform. A Needed Boost for Georgia's Economy

By Kelly McCutchen
President of the Georgia Public
Policy Foundation



Public Domain

The Georgia Senate deserves a hearty congratulations for approving a pro-growth tax reform Wednesday (March 16) that would reduce Georgia's marginal personal income tax rate for the first time since it was implemented in 1937.

To be the best place to do business in the nation, Georgia needs a more competitive tax code. In the Southeast, only South Carolina's top income tax rate of 7 percent is higher; nationally, 28 states have lower marginal rates.

The proposed income tax changes can be explained in less than a minute.

- Georgia's six tax brackets would be collapsed into one tax bracket of 5.4 percent (a reduction of 10 percent from the current top rate of 6 percent).
- Personal and dependent exemptions would increase by \$2,000 each (\$2,000 more for each family member).
- Itemized deductions would be limited to charitable deductions, medical expenses, and up to \$25,000 of mortgage interest. (Click [here](#) to calculate your mortgage interest.)

After six years of failed attempts, legislators have learned two critical lessons:

- **One—keep it simple.** Instead of a nearly 100-page bill full of multiple tax increases, decreases, and technical language, this *six-page bill* adds just 10 lines to the code and changes four numbers.

The tax code is simplified as well: No more tax tables, no more bracket creep as you earn more money, and your taxes are easy enough to calculate on your phone and fill out on a postcard.

- **Two—get the numbers right.** Instead of a last-minute cobbling together of ideas with uncertain and conflicting fiscal notes, this proposal has been studied and analyzed for two

years. Tax reform is hard enough; throw in uncertainty about the economic impact and it is impossible.

The legislation builds off the solid recommendations of the 2010 *Special Council on Tax Reform and Fairness for Georgians*. National groups have also praised the plan. The Tax Foundation analyzed the proposal and predicts it would significantly improve Georgia's ranking to 18th overall on the State Business Tax Climate Index, up from the current ranking of 39th.

Most economists would agree it is a “pro-growth” tax reform plan. That means higher sales for small businesses, higher incomes, and more jobs for individuals and families. In North Carolina, which shifted from a 7.75 percent income tax rate to a 5.75 percent flat tax in 2013, median household income grew from 2012 to 2014 by \$5,231—\$2,500 more than the national average. As middle-class incomes have stagnated over the last decade, this would be a welcome change for Georgians.

Nevertheless, there are always critics.

The worn-out class warfare card has already been played, despite the fact that under this proposal the average family of four that itemizes would pay no tax on the first \$34,000 of income.

Georgia State University's analysis broke out Georgia taxpayers into 20 different income groups and found this proposal either lowered or had no change on the median and average taxpayer in **every** income group.

In reality, the income tax is not a tax on the wealthy; it's a tax on becoming wealthy. The wealthy can hire professional advisors to help them find loopholes and tax shelters. They can purchase non-taxable investments, time their income streams or just spend six months of the year in Florida. It's the working class that gets stuck paying the bulk of income taxes, which limits their ability to accumulate wealth.

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Some claim the tax cuts are too great, even though the cost is less than the annual cost of Georgia's film tax credits. As opposed to these and other targeted tax credits, this law would apply to everyone instead of just one industry.

Some argue the bond rating agencies won't be happy. Yet Standard & Poor's writes that North Carolina's "favorable" economic climate has "helped spur strong domestic in-migration, which has been good for population and economic growth." The tax reforms enacted by North Carolina in 2013 and 2015 were far bolder than the Georgia proposal, reducing both their corporate and personal income tax rates dramatically at a projected loss of revenue of \$500 million. Even so, North Carolina has retained its AAA bond rating.

Finally, critics conveniently overlook the fact that more than half of all business income is taxed through the individual income tax, not the corporate income tax. This is because more than nine out of 10 businesses are organized as "pass-throughs"—either Partnerships, Sole Proprietorships, or S Corporations. Reducing the personal income tax affects more than 800,000 small businesses in Georgia. Much of this revenue is likely to be reinvested in the businesses, increasing jobs and employee pay.

Georgia has the opportunity to take a small, but meaningful, step toward tax simplification and great economic growth. Let's hope that six years of diligent work won't go down the drain.

For more information, read: "**Pro-Growth Tax Reform in Georgia: Claims vs. Reality**," [here](#).

Who Am I?

Kelly McCutchen is President of the Georgia Public Policy Foundation, an independent think tank that proposes market-oriented approaches to public policy to improve the lives of Georgians. Nothing written here is to be construed as necessarily reflecting the view of the Georgia Public Policy Foundation or as an attempt to aid or hinder the passage of any bill before the U.S. Congress or the Georgia Legislature.

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Treasurer Training



By the NFRW Leadership Development Committee

The Leadership Development Committee announces the posting of *Treasurer Training* on the NFRW website, www.nfrw.org. The content of this module focuses on information to assist club and state federation treasurers to better perform their duties.

The responsibilities of the treasurer are twofold: financial and membership reporting.

The financial aspect of the job determines the treasurer to be the custodian of the club or state funds, including receiving and dispersing all monies, maintaining accurate records according to accepted accounting practices, and reporting the financial status of the organization to the board of directors and to the membership. The treasurer usually serves as the chief financial officer of the club or state federation.

The membership reporting function requires the treasurer and the membership chairman to work closely together to maintain and report accurate membership numbers and required data. The membership reporting schedule and procedures for state federations are determined by NFRW and are announced each year on the NFRW website. This schedule will be modified by the state treasurer to ensure that clubs report their data in a timely manner to allow prompt reporting by the state federation treasurer to NFRW.

Each of our 50 states has very different laws concerning finance, candidate, and Political Action Committee (PAC) reporting. Therefore, it is critical that all treasurers know their state laws for governing these activities. They must also know the bylaws and financial policies of their club and state, and they must comply with all to adhere to our "**be safe—not sorry**" mantra.

Again, this very informative *Treasurer Training* module may be found on the NFRW website's Member Center inside the Digital Resource Library and under the Leadership Development heading.

2016 Georgia Legislature Session Results

Yays and Nays for Top Bills and Resolutions*

House Bills and Resolutions — Did Not Pass



HB 6: Would allow weighted grade-point averages of greater than 4.0 for international baccalaureate, advanced placement and dual-credit courses in science, technology, engineering and math for HOPE scholarships for incoming college freshmen.

HB 22: Would restore funding for HOPE grants for technical college students that was cut in 2011.

HB 561: Would name the “adoptable dog” the official state dog. Added to SB 168 which did pass.

HB 588: Would enforce the legal purchasing limits on pseudoephedrine

HB 677: Would create up to four “destination” casino resort licenses.

HB 713: Would allow the termination of custody rights if a child was conceived due to rape, incest or sexual servitude. Added to SB 331 which did pass.

HB722: Would expand the list of disorders that would qualify for the state’s medical cannabis program.

HB 756: Would allow private business owners to cite religious beliefs in refusing service to gay couples who plan to wed.

HB 762: Pertains to the disposal of aborted human fetuses.

HB 797: Would allow motorcycle and moped operators 18 and older to skip wearing a helmet.

HB 816: Would allow students to have voluntary prayer in school, before athletic events, ceremonies, and more.

HB 827: The Pursuing Justice for Rape Victims Act would require law enforcement to more quickly submit neglected sexual assault evidence to the state’s forensic labs for processing. Its language was added to SB 304, which did pass.

HB 1055: Would repeal the state’s certificate of need for hospital construction.

HB 837: Would apply the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act to Georgia and its courts. Some of its language was added to HB 757. [Vetoed by Gov. Nathan Deal]

HB 838: Would mandate a minimum 5 percent commission be paid to insurance agents who sell small-group health insurance policies.

HB 849: Would create a state civil rights act barring discrimination in public accommodations for anyone based on race, religion or national origin.

HB 870: Would bar any school from joining an athletic association that prohibits religious expression by student athletes.

HR 502: Would amend the state constitution to halt the diversion of state fees for other purposes.

HR 807: Would amend the state constitution to allow casino gaming in Georgia.

HR 962 and HR 963: Would shift legislative and congressional redistricting power from the General Assembly to an “independent nonpartisan commission.”

Senate Bills and Resolutions — Did Not Pass



SB 6: Would create special Georgia driver’s licenses and ID cards for immigrants who lack legal status but have received deferred action from the federal government.

SB 129: Would require a government to meet a strict test before infringing on someone’s religious practices. Would say the law could not be used to discriminate against anyone.

SB 254: Would, in cases of conviction for possession of marijuana, preserve voting rights and eligibility for food stamps.

SB 264: Would set the rules governing legalized horse racing.

SB 266: Would call on casino supporters to “declare every red cent” spent trying to legalize casino gambling.

SB 278: Would increase penalties for pimping and pandering.

SB 284: Would allow religious nonprofit organizations to opt out of serving gay couples or following government antidiscrimination requirements. Much of its language was added to HB 757.

SB 293: Would increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

SB 303: Would require a gun lock be furnished to the retail purchaser of a gun.

SB 312: Would set a minimum award amount for HOPE, which would provide full tuition for students eligible for HOPE scholarships and grants at all 22 technical colleges and 14 of 29 schools in the University System of Georgia.

SB 322: Would force colleges to report all accusations of sexual assault to a law enforcement agency outside of campus police.

SB 330: Would allow for a ballot initiative in DeKalb and Fulton counties that, if approved, would raise the sales tax by a half percent to fund at least three major MARTA expansion projects.

SB 410: Would name the English bulldog the state dog.

SR 809: Would give Georgia voters a vote on whether to limit how cities contract with third-party vendors for parking enforcement. This bill aimed at Park Atlanta.

House Bills and Resolutions — Passed



HB 514: Would allow for the creation of the city of South Fulton.

HB 727: Would limit when and where fireworks can be used and give local governments more control to regulate their use.

HB 750: The supplemental state budget for this fiscal year.

HB 757: Originally said no member of the clergy could be forced to perform a same-sex wedding ceremony. Senators amended it to allow businesses and individuals to refuse service to anyone if it violates their religious beliefs. A compromise between the chambers protects religious nonprofits and says no individual could be forced to attend a marriage ceremony.

HB 792: Would allow anyone over the age of 18 or enrolled in classes to carry a Taser or stun gun on public college and university campuses.

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House Bills and Resolutions — Passed



HB 801: Would give extra credit toward HOPE scholarship to students taking tougher courses.

HB 808: Would strip the State Bar of its three appointments on the Judicial Qualifications Commission.

HB 811: Would extensively change the state code dealing with banking and finance.

HB 859: Would allow anyone 21 or older with a concealed weapons license to carry a gun anywhere on a public college or university campus, except for inside dormitories, fraternity and sorority houses, or at athletic events.

HB 927: Would expand the state Supreme Court from seven to nine justices.

HB 941: Would bar police officers accused of use of improper force from attending entire grand jury proceedings and says if the officer testifies, prosecutors can cross-examine him or her.

HB 951: Would exempt state and local sales taxes for tickets to the Super Bowl and other major sporting events held in Georgia.

HB 965: Would make it easier for patients to obtain the treatment that former President Jimmy Carter received for his cancer diagnosis.

HB 1036: Would place a temporary moratorium on petroleum pipelines.

HR 1113: Companion legislation to HB 808; would deconstruct and then re-create the Judicial Qualifications Commission.

SB 193: Would strengthen sentences for domestic abuse convictions.

SB 199: Would allow a voter to walk into a polling precinct wearing National Rifle Association cap.

SB 208: Would incorporate the city of Stonecrest in DeKalb County.

SB 255: Would change state wage garnishment laws.

SB 269: Would stop so-called "sanctuary cities," or local governments that don't fully cooperate with federal immigration authorities.

SB 309: Would prohibit state schools from participating in an athletic association that limits religious expression on clothing.

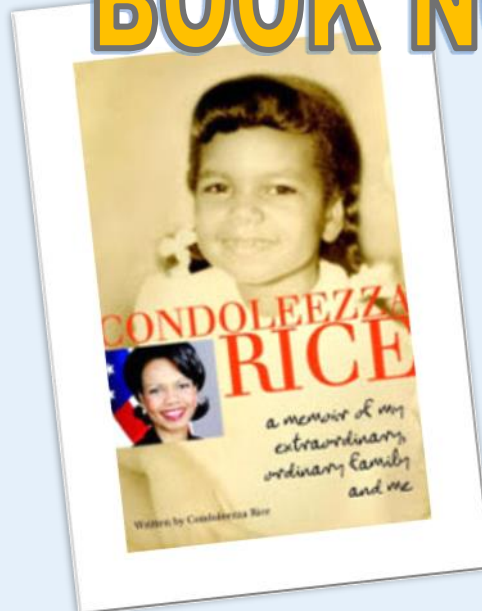
SB 355: Would allow test scores to count for 10 percent in teacher ratings.

SB 364: Would reduce the weight testing results have on teacher evaluations to 30 percent.

SB 369: Originally a fireworks bill, was amended to allow Atlanta to levy a sales tax to expand MARTA and allow North Fulton to raise money for roads.

[*Source: *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, Sunday, March 27, 2016, A 11]

BOOK NOOK



Mamie Eisenhower
Library Project

Condoleezza Rice:
**A Memoir of My
Extraordinary,
Ordinary Family
and Me**

by Condoleezza Rice

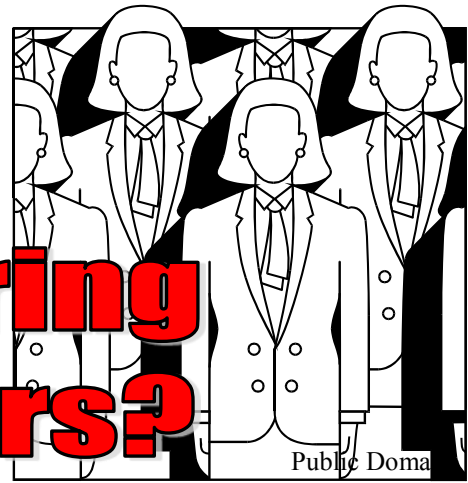
In this captivating memoir for young people, looking back with candor and affection, Condoleezza Rice evokes in rich detail her remarkable childhood.

Her life began in the comparatively placid 1950s in Birmingham, Alabama, where black people lived in a segregated parallel universe to their white neighbors. She grew up during the violent and shocking 1960s, when bloodshed became a part of daily life in the South.

Rice's portrait of her parents, John and Angelena, highlights their ambitions and frustrations, and shows how much they sacrificed to give their beloved only child the best chance for success. Rice also discusses the challenges of being a precocious child who was passionate about music, ice skating, history, and current affairs. Her memoir reveals with vivid clarity how her early experiences sowed the seeds of her political beliefs and helped her become a vibrant, successful woman.

Condoleezza Rice: A Memoir of My Extraordinary, Ordinary Family and Me is a fascinating and inspirational story for young people. Includes a sixteen-page photo insert.

We invite you to read, discuss, and share.



Are you nurturing your "A" players?

New members can provide a rich source of talent for federated clubs. However, identification of the talent available and productive utilization of that talent requires club officers and committee chairs to pay special attention to their membership base.

Talent management means an organization's strategy for managing its best performers. Talent management considers the club's relationship with its best officers and committee chairmen. It looks at the life cycle of the top members from:

- attracting them to the club;
- attracting them to the best leadership teams within the club;
- coaching them to become leaders;
- developing them as club leaders;
- evaluating them as club leaders; to,
- planning for their succession

All of this comprises the "life cycle" of talent management. It does not mean ignoring the rest of the membership base, but it does mean paying special attention to your top performers. They are the ones who make a difference. Thus, it pays to provide a variety of services and activities that attract, reward, and grow a club's potential "A" performers.

While current tech and telecom businesses are now a booming industry, early on they experienced extreme highs and lows—and had the potential for developing explicit lessons regarding the management of budding talent. (At that stage, they had difficulty finding enough executives, let alone "A" players.) Many of the "less qualified" found their way into senior executive roles and many found themselves in over their heads. Employers had not paid enough attention to how potential talent was treated and trained within the organization.

Nonprofit organizations and volunteer groups can have similar problems. Without nurturing and developing members' talents, club leaders can find themselves without the "A" players needed for a natural, healthy succession of leadership. If your club has the same leaders, year after year, ask: "Is my club providing the training tract needed to nurture "A" players? Are my club leaders making a concerted effort to bring new members into the leadership roles and

activities within the organization? Does the club provide training through committee participation?"

Women who are the potential "A" players in your community have numerous opportunities for participation and they **will** seek the group that enables them to fit in the leadership culture of that organization. Once joining a group, they become susceptible to poaching from other organizations if the group does not provide for utilization of their talents or reward of their interests. Use 'em or lose 'em!"

Are you an "A" player? Do you feel you are working toward participation at the top level of your club or of the federation? Do you have the talents needed in your particular organization? If you do not fit in the leadership culture of the group or you have been viewed as a "prima donna," you may be vulnerable to being poached—or approached—by an organization that can provide leadership opportunities within its group.

Organizations that attract the "A" players have several characteristics in common:

- The organization is growing;
- The organization is financially strong;
- The folks at the top model leadership;
- The organization rewards "A" players; and,
- The organization respects and expects discipline and accountability.

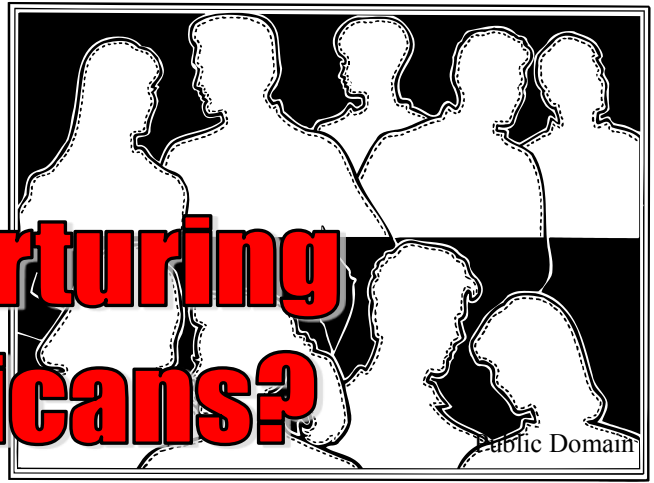
If your club does not have a number of top players participating, consider how your club can:

- Build membership;
- Become more financially strong;
- Develop skills and talents among the current crop of members;
- Reward your "A" players;
- Build consistent procedures and processes of operation; and,
- Develop a system for promoting accountability.

Pay special attention to your top performers. They are the ones who will make a difference to the growth and health of your club. Provide a variety of services and activities that attract, reward, and grow your club's "A" performers.

By Erika Johnson

Are you nurturing future Republicans?



As an extremely conservative Republican mother of five children, I often joke that the manner in which my kids will rebel against me is by becoming a Democrat. Fortunately, so far my children—ages 15, 15, 15 (yes, triplets), 12, and 10—have modeled my husband's and my own conservative views on politics. However, I know that once off at college, this could change. I know this especially because I was raised in a Democrat household and did not evolve into being conservative until I attended law school at the University of Georgia. In my parents' defense, they were Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) Democrats, my father having lived through the Great Depression and my mother seeing the benefits of some of FDR's policies. Neither would recognize the current Democrat party where Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton compete to see how far left they can reach and stumble over each other to give away more "free stuff."

So how do we influence our children's political views and try to enlighten them that conservatism is the right path? I think there is a lot we can do to help our children grow politically. The first is to actually be involved in politics. I spend a good portion of my day on *Real Clear Politics*, *National Review* and the FOX News websites. When my children get in the car, they can see I have been listening to FOX News or conservative radio personality Rush Limbaugh, and I make them aware of the current political events of the day. They notice when I put political bumper stickers on my car and put signs in our yard for a particular candidate. They have accompanied us to rallies for

conservative leaders and have gone door-to-door in support of local politicians. When my children were young, I always took them to the polling stations and emphasized the importance and privilege of voting in a free democratic society.

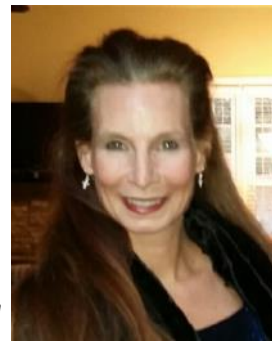
One of the greatest means of influencing our children's views is having political discussions at the dinner table. I know it can be difficult to even have family dinners these days, with increasingly busy lives and children going in all directions, but even once a week can be enough to engage your children in serious discussions about what is happening in the world. These discussions have made all of our children well-informed on the differences between a conservative and liberal belief system. We stress the core values of conservatism such as: freedom, American exceptionalism, lower taxes, limited government, belief in the individual, and individual responsibility. Hopefully because of these frank discussions, our children will hold true to these values.

At a time when our public education system grows increasingly liberal, it is even more important that we cultivate our own values into our children's belief system. Be involved in your children's education. Find out what they are hearing or seeing at school. I remember when my triplets were in elementary school and they were shown a video singing the praises of Mexico. I swiftly countered that impression with the reality of the country's major shortcomings. There are so many liberal influences on our children today—school, social media, culture—that we must make our own conservative beliefs heard loud and clear.

Ronald Reagan once said, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free." It is just as easy to substitute conservatism for freedom and the consequences just as dire. If we cannot show our children the importance of true conservative values and the importance of the Republican party in governing this country, we will not be able to put it back on a path that leads to the nation our founding fathers envisioned.

Who Am I?

Erika Johnson is a 1992 graduate of the University of Georgia School of Law. After clerking for the Honorable J.L. Edmondson of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit in Atlanta, she worked as a products liability attorney for Jones, Day in Atlanta and Goodwin, Procter in Boston. Johnson now spends her time raising her five children while staying active in local and national politics. She is a former member of the Local School Council and current President of the PTA at Settles Bridge Elementary School.



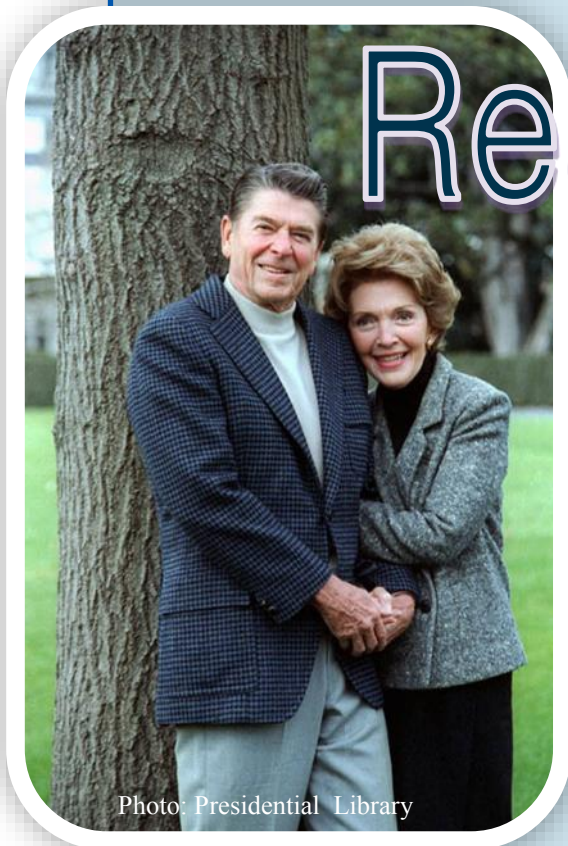


Photo: Presidential Library

Reagan Club

2016

Want to be a Reagan Club member for 2016? Annual dues are \$100. In addition, your local club can join the Reagan Club. Enjoy extra benefits of GFRW when you become a Reagan Club member. Membership dues support GFRW's efforts to advance the participation of Republican women in all areas of politics and to promote Republican candidates and philosophy. If you want to learn more about Reagan Club, please contact Rosan Hall at rhall2@aol.com.

Individuals

- JoAnn Birrell
- Bobbie Frantz
- Jim Hall
- Rosan Hall
- Lydia Hallmark
- Barbara Hickey
- Jim Hickey
- Toria Morgan
- Millie Rogers
- Varie Rustin
- Sara (Sally) Snyder
- Ullainee Stokes

- Cindy Theiler
- Judy True
- Linda Williams
- Rose Wing

Clubs

- Cobb County RWC
- Gwinnett Republican Women
- Republican Women of Henry County

Reagan Club is on its way to making 2016 a very good year. We held a reception at GFRW's Winter Board Meeting on Friday evening, Feb. 5, for *all* GFRW members in attendance. Participants were treated to a bountiful buffet and thoroughly entertained by a DJ while attendees made good use of the dance floor. It was jokingly suggested by several of our very active members that we consider taking dance lessons before our next meeting.

The Reagan Club was started by Emma Hinesley, a GFRW past president. Over the years, it has been a fundraising arm of GFRW. Without the contributions of GFRW members and their spouses, GFRW clubs, and other Republicans, we would not be able to provide the support for candidates across Georgia. Thank you to those who have joined since the first of 2016 and I hope we can count on many more to participate.

~ Contributed by Rosan Hall, Reagan Club chair



In Memory of Nancy Reagan

"A woman is like a tea bag,
you cannot tell how strong she is until you put her in hot water."

In the days following the passing of Nancy Reagan on March 6, 2016, at the age of ninety-four, much was written. Over and over again, she was described as having grace, charm, and a passion for America, as well as being fiercely loyal to her beloved Ronnie, our fortieth president. She represented our nation with dignity and class. She was the strong woman behind the man who found herself in the hot water of politics. Her "Just Say No" program raised awareness of drug abuse. She beat breast cancer and, in sharing her diagnosis publicly, she undoubtedly saved lives.

She was indeed all that, but more importantly, she was a woman of substance. We mourn her passing, but are forever enriched by her service to our country. May she rest in peace.

~The Staff of VOICES Publications