



By William C. Thomas and Mike Phillips

Reflections on a RINO Primary

"RINOS" WIN; "REAL REPUBLICANS" LOSE

COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 1:

DeI Schwab 1044
Robert Rowland 2113 **Winner**

COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 3:

John Shipper 1116
Larry Ross 2018 **Winner**

It makes sense to appeal to the party in a primary election, but perhaps the reason that Ross and Rowland beat Shipper and Schwab was not so much an appeal to the party, but a question of what the party represents.

For over 18-month a small contingent of dedicated citizens have been examining just exactly how their local government has been operating while coasting under the mantra of "business-as-usual." The researchers have endured both stonewalling and criticism. They were told there was nothing to find; until a lot of incriminating things were unearthed. The resulting media attention, court actions, and public outcries may be slowly causing introspection among the larger heretofore uninvolved population. Now questions are being asked, "Does my political party and government, truly represent me or just itself."

The turnout was low. Of the 9,000+ folks able to vote in this election, only a few over 400 bothered to cast a ballot in person. The rest "stayed home," "mailed it in," or "blew the whole election off." This points to a general disaffection with all the candidates; not just the incumbents.

The low turnout could also be explained by the fact that the Republican Party in Elbert County has silently stood by while its representatives spent money foolishly and ineffectually without providing any financial cushion and almost bankrupting the County; the Republican Party has established some sort of litmus test for its members by length of time they've been Republicans; the Republican Party has almost maliciously railroaded primary candidates onto a side track or has pushed them off the road.

The low turnout could also be explained by the fact that the incumbent Commissioners, as representatives of the Republican Party, have ignored or refused to answer questions posed by the Press, have allowed water districts to be set up with little or no supervision, and have installed cameras that peek into every area of the Courthouse. The incumbent Commissioners, as representatives of the Republican Party, have also threatened freedom of speech and the right to earn a living.

That Rowland and Ross won by decent margins against Schwab and Shipper could indicate that the Republican Party may wish to reexamine itself and ask if its current practices are in tune with the beliefs of its members. It should also delve into the operational ethics of their long-time "Old Guard" leadership and consider replacing the lot. It could also mean that Rowland and Ross worked harder, answered more questions directly, and kissed more babies.

If, as was feared by pundit Brooks Imperial, those who changed party affiliation would sway the election came true, it could possibly have happened on June 26; but surely the handful of voters who changed their affiliations from Independent or Democratic to Republican this Primary Election was hardly a landslide. At the moment we do not have an accurate count of who RINOized themselves for the primary and who did not. But it was an interesting idea nonetheless.

Maybe it was just too damn hot and smoky to risk going out into it, or to bother firing up ma's dune buggy.

No: The Republican Party and its candidates may wish to look at their rules, definitions, and methods. The results of this Primary Election are a great place to start.

Since we will no longer be Republicans after June 27th, we offer that good advice to our adopted party. Thank you. It was fun. Now, could you please cancel all the calls we get from the Romney campaign? We don't trust his hair.

