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An Editorial Commentary

Elbert County Republican's Annual Lincoln Day Dinner FundRaiser

The Real Story Scott Wills Doesn't Want Told

by Michael Phillips

Everything I'm about to tell you is 100% the truth; except for the parts that aren't.

I waited for my personal invitation from Scott Wills for what seemed like forever. Every day, stationed by my mailbox, I whittled on a nearby dead log. Finally after having carved a full-blown 3D rendition of *the Last Supper*, I gave up. No invite. Being old, I'm no stranger to disappointment, but this was a real blow to the gut. Scotty had invited me to ride his houseboat on Lake Fondis. We'd shot-gunned rats together at the Compactor. He'd invited me to his dog's bar mitzvah. I thought we were best buds. Now I wasn't fancy enough to hang out with all his GOP elites?

I admit, I'm not a Republican. In my defense, I'm not a Democrat either. I'm sure Scotty invited Kurt Schlegel and pretty boy Brooks Imperial and they're actually libertarians - Republicans only for convenience or contrivance. If you don't believe me, ask Imperial to square his position on Capitalist greed with the teachings of Jesus sometime. No, his head won't explode. He loves to argue, mostly well beyond the point of actual sense, But the Greed thing, that makes the vein on his forehead will throb like a red-wiggler. It's a cool party trick, so tell all your friends.

Hey, I clean up as well as those two lib guys. Well, maybe not as spiffy as Kurt because he's just dreamy; but I'm old and gray; I can look the part of a Republican... Why didn't you invite me?

Gosh darn, I was just like, you know, bummed. I've always enjoyed Republicans. Watching constipated GOP politicians blurt out the same orchestra party lines, seeing them goosetstep their way "word-for-word" through the litany of BS while their deer-in-the-headlight-faces reveal how hypocritical or truly clueless they are as to what they are saying - that's entertainment. Their regimentation and dedication to talking points over facts or reality, it's fascinating. And watching is free, if you don't count the huge price to pay if they actually get elected.

I especially enjoy the flip-flops. When the same goosetstep mentality finds them arguing the righteousness of the opposite side of their original position; it's more fun than football. Then as a bonus I can turn the TV dial and contrast it all with Democrats charging off into a thousand different directions. I present this as scientific proof positive that Darwin got it backwards and that soon there will be a drastic increase in the monkey population. It's not just the politicians mind you; it's the general population's lack of



Del Schwab and John Shipper will coast into re-election simply because they are GOP's anointed; all contenders will be thrown under the bus as usual. There won't be any meaningful debates with the opposition, and the GOP's amnesia for the colossal screw-ups made by their previous elected officials means a solid Republican vote. Face facts, why pretend it's not a lock and raise money for non-existent battles? I always thought conservative meant you don't waste money. Nope, I saved my \$30 for a rainy day when I might have to buy some genuine Chinese-Made plastic crap from Walmart or a coffee and donut at Starbucks.

I did miss the best part - the Lincoln Dinner's Obama bashing. Oh Republicans love to blame and bash. I think I've heard Obama blamed for every single ill known to man including: mosquitos, grasshoppers, locusts, blizzards, BP's oil spill, smallpox, Snookie, burnt toast, bad tacos, whooping cough, Cancer, babies crying on airplanes, ridiculous gas prices, and Donald Trump's hair. But this being a rural county, I'm sure Scotty's locals probably came up with some really good zingers, like blaming Obama for cow pies and yucca plants.

A thoughtful person might consider it all just playing to folk's frustrations and underlying bigotry, but not me. I know it's just fodder for the party to rally the troops. It's boogiemanism, for the rank and file to get them all lined up and facing to "the right." That's not bigotry; it's all just good natured boogieman-bashing by self-proclaimed conservatives who also profess to be religious. And shucks, I missed it. But wait! "Rush Limbaugh is a slut. Yo momma Obama. Glenn Beck has no neck" Ah, now I feel better.

Bummer man, I also missed the speakers. Granted, a lot of it would've been a re-hash of the boogieman stuff (never can get enough), but I'm sure there was also red meat campaigning too. I bet the generalities and hot button phrases oozed like butter on pancakes. The rhetoric itself is never new; Republicans have been beating the old saw, "take our country back," since it was already back. The special part is watching the audience getting all riled up. Nothing more fun than watching a crowd of oldsters stirred into action and opening their wallets, "for the cause." The passion of old folks working "for the cause" is breathtaking, especially when you consider that "the cause" is primarily doublespeak for "elect me, I need a job." Elders, faces flushed, twitching in their seats, suddenly aware that they aren't dead yet - it's inspiring. As the wallets

intellectual curiosity. Don't question anything, just accept the slickly packaged taradiddle and you too may be swinging from the trees in no time. Is this specific to the GOP? Hardly, there are enough vines to go around. A political party doesn't exist without its own taradiddle.

Our local politics are a little different, not much, but a little. We are quainter. For example I had my heart set on seeing Andy Wyer prance around all dressed up and pretending to be honest and wise like Abraham Lincoln. It's a stretch, but squinting your eyes when he's in the shadows and if you don't actually listen to him, you can almost convince yourself that Andy is Lincoln or someone famous and larger than life, like Kirstie Alley. It's high theater and I'm sure that the ever blustery Craig Curl will soon pitch it as a local TV show, "Who wants to be an EiCo Icon?" Surely Curl is working on one of his famous vaporous grants for the funding. With some theater lightening and lots of makeup, Andy could've played John Metli signing in our world famous one-acre Metropolitan Water District, but Abe Lincoln is a better choice. With Abe, all Andy needed was a stovepipe hat and he didn't even have to learn to speak weasel. Sorry I missed the show, Andy. Maybe next time, if the county is still here and hasn't been turned into Nyquistville.

Sure I could've slapped down the \$30 fee and feigned the secret GOP handshake for entry. It was billed as a fundraiser, but being a actual conservative, I figured I had more use for my money than the GOP. After all, they cater to the likes of Grant Thayer who has more money than God and is the perennial head of the Planning Commission to protect his interests. I, on the other hand, have a lonely little piggy bank that barely clicks when you shake it. Did Bill Harris and Scotty really need my money to keep trumpeting their need to fund an upcoming difficult campaign season? This is Elbert County; who are you kidding?

come out nobody ever questions "the cause." It's like *The Mindless Passion*, - which could also be a rock band for zombies.

The Lincoln Dinner has passed for another year. If Scotty hadn't snubbed me, I might have gone for the entertainment value. Frankly though, the down side of growing older is that you've seen it all before. A lot. What might seem new and radical to a younger person (who has just discovered "this rad new group, The Beatles") becomes just so much "*been there, done that, grew out of it*" to us whitehairs. Looking behind the political façade, it's all rather a lame waste of time and resources. Maybe Scotty was just trying to spare my feelings and keep me from getting bored. Naw, he's a Republican so obviously he's a cold hearted bastard who'd kill for a warm flat beer and a pickle.

What would be more interesting than the Lincoln Day Dinner would be a fundraiser where Del Schwab and John Shipper were required to actually debate their opponents (gasp, maybe even Democrats). I'd pay \$15 to see that. And if opponents were required to go at each other with broadswords, winner gets the office; I'd go as high as \$35. Larry Ross chasing John Shipper with broadsword, now that's good wholesome GOP fun for all ages. I'm surprised it hasn't caught on nationally... Karl Rove is probably too busy cashing in SuperPac money to think of it at the moment.

Okay Scott Wills, if you want my money you damned well better send an engraved invitation next time. But, if you move the next Lincoln Dinner to Hooters, save the stamp and just put me on the list now.

In the meantime, Scotty, Polo next Saturday?