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Get Out and Vote

by
Tom Holbrook

Well, I hope everyone got out to vote this past Tuesday, the 4th. Judy and I duly registered as Florida voters when we gave up Snowbird status, sold both our homes here and in WV and built our home in Winifred. Actually, Judy had registered several years ago when she originally moved here, it was I who had to break relations with my former home state of WV and start paying attention to FL politics. It was interesting using a voting machine for the first time... we were still using the paper ballot in WV when I moved.

Judy and I both feel it is important to be a part of the political process so we didn't want to miss out on our voting privilege. We first went to the precinct number that was printed on our registration card only to find it had been changed to Laurel Manor. When we got there we saw quite a few ladies coming out of the door with pies and/or cakes in their hands heading home. I told Judy I thought it was nice of them to give everyone who voted a pie of their own. Of course we found that it was a ladies' club meeting in another area of the Manor and had nothing to do with the voting at all.

The volunteers at the precinct were very helpful when we got inside... asking us if we had used voting machines before and letting us know they had a video we could watch to help us learn. I commented I didn't think it could be too difficult and proceeded to the table with the letters G – P so I could report in. The nice lady there told me since my card had the old precinct on it I would have to fill in and sign a form requesting a new registration card and report back to her after I had completed it. I thanked her and proceeded to the table with the request forms. I filled in the form, signed it and asked another nice lady if I had to wait until they issued me a new card before I could vote... she said no but I would have to wait a couple of weeks before I would it. I advised that would be okay since I probably wouldn't need it until November.

I returned to the first table, gave my name and was asked to sign a card and show her a photo I.D. which I did. Upon matching the signature on her card with the one on my driver's license she said that it wasn't the same signature, whereupon I informed her that I had just decided to change my signature to something simpler and therefore it was okay to use it. She very politely told me that the two signatures were supposed to match... not really wanting to tell me that I couldn't vote. I assured her I was who I was supposed to be and had the driver's license been obtained in the last two or three months instead of last year the signatures would match. She hesitantly acquiesced and told me to go to the voting area where a third nice lady was waiting to make sure I knew how to operate the machine.

The voting itself was fairly perfunctory since I knew absolutely nothing about any of the candidates for any office, except one of the candidates for U.S. Senator. I had asked several individuals prior to going to vote about some of the candidates but they were in the same boat as me... lacking knowledge about everyone. So I did what every red-blooded American should do in a situation like this... I did an eenie-meenie-minie-moe for some of the races and the others I voted for the person who had the most pleasant, not too officious sounding name. For future reference for those who think that sounds like a great system, be advised everyone I voted for... except one Senatorial candidate... lost the election. BUT...I had done my responsible civic duty and voted.

I don't mean to make light of the responsibility of voting... I feel it is necessary that we find out as much as we can about the candidates but having been here so short a time, there was no way I could find out anything about any of them other than what their TV ads said... and we all know we can't believe a word anyone says in them, so I did my best. Before I vote in November I will be more diligent in determining which person is the right person for the jobs being sought. I hope you will do the same.

Judy and I just got back from a day trip to Epcot... a place I hadn't been since the 80s... and we took in "The American Adventure" show at the American Pavilion and I want to tell you this... if you haven't see it you should, and if you have seen it, you know the importance of each American doing everything he or she can do to protect and carry on the legacy left us by our founding fathers and all those who have fought and died for our country's freedom since our beginning. Voting is an important part of that legacy.

See you next week.