



Civility in Campaigning

By D. A. Sharpe

The 2018 Party Primary Elections season has begun in Texas. Anyone wanting to be a candidate in either the Democratic or the Republican Party's March 6, 2018 Primary Election has registered by December 11th. On December 21st, they met with the respective County Party Chairs to determine the order in which their names would appear on the ballot, in those cases where two or more candidates are running. This is done by the candidates drawing for numbers themselves, or some neutral person drawing for absent candidates.

In the case of the Wise County Republican Party drawings, Chairman Allen Williamson asked me to address the candidates about civility in campaigning!

The lead phrase for the address was, "Anyone who slings mud, loses ground!" That characterizes the spirit expected to be displayed between candidates. The candidates were exhorted to express their campaigns in terms of the positive characteristics or issues each planned to bring to their office.

The caution given the candidate was to avoid taking occasion to focus on perceived negative attitudes or facts about his or her competing candidate. To build a campaign on criticizing the opposition degrades the election process. It also degrades you as a candidate, as voters tend not to be drawn to naysayers! It reflects a type of insecurity in a candidate who seems to rest on slinging mud.

Avoid displaying being offended or prompted into anger. Learn how to allow insults or criticisms slide off you, without your resorting to a display of anger. Particularly in the Party Primary elections, your opposition is someone whom you hope will support you in the November 6, 2018 General Election, if you win and he or she loses.

Conduct a campaign for which your Mother would be pleased and proud!

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Word Count 292