

Wood County Road Trip (w/ Presidential Straw Poll)

Submitted by Jeff on Fri, 11/02/2007 - 4:03pm.

Yesterday evening I drove to Bowling Green to have dinner with my friend and ODB front-pager Earl, and to attend a meeting of the Wood County Democratic Party Central Committee at the Bowling Green Simpson Park Building. Earl and I ate in a friendly and busy restaurant on Main Street, Sam B's (short for Samuel Beckett's, and known in its former location as Samuel Beckett's Sandwich of the Absurd). While Earl was *Waiting for Yellow Dogot*, he ordered me a juicy Reuben sandwich (which was *Happy Days* for me), but then it was *Endgame* because the meeting was about to start.

Earl's directions to the restaurant included the comment that it's in the only three-story building on downtown Main Street, so I confirmed this by looking to the left and to the right and whack me with a stick if he isn't right. We hustled over to the park building where committee members were gathering. I was pleased to meet such Democratic luminaries as long-time Wood County Commissioner Alvie Perkins, former county party chair Al Baldwin, and current chair Mike Zickar. Also on hand were Dr. Earl Campbell, briefly a Congressional primary candidate; Ohio House candidate Jeff Bretz; and Judge Dwight Osterud, among many others. Bretz and Perkins were circulating signature petitions. Zickar observed of Perkins' snazzy yellow sweater vest, "I see you've got that nice outfit, Alvie, you must be running for something."

Zickar (pictured at right) ran the meeting and covered a lengthy agenda of old and new business at a brisk pace. Notable topics included the application process for becoming a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in Denver next August and preparations for next Tuesday's election. In the 5th Congressional District it is a double election, meaning that voters must sign in and cast ballots twice - once for the regular election and once for the special Congressional primary. This creates the tremendous burden of finding additional poll workers to handle the extra voting. When it was his turn to report on the committee's [web site](#), webmaster Earl took advantage of the opportunity to suggest that committee members (and their friends and family) take advantage of the Ohio income tax credit for state political contributions to attend the annual chicken paprikash dinner hosted by State Rep. Peter Ujvagi (D-Toledo).

Courtney Foley, Field Director for Robin Weirauch (D-Bowling Green), gave a brief report on the congressional campaign. Their new campaign office is open at 116 S. Main Street. Explaining why the race is winnable for Weirauch, she emphasized that turnout would be very low and get-out-the-vote efforts therefore more determinative than usual, that the 5th District went blue for Ted Strickland and Sherrod Brown in 2006, and that Paul Hackett nearly won a special election in the more conservative 2nd District in 2005. "The 5th District special election will show America how Ohio will go in 2008," she said. "A vote for Robin is a vote against Bush." She said that Weirauch had recorded a TV commercial the day before, and the campaign needed contributions to get it on the air, as well as to attract big name Democrats to come and stump with the candidate.

At this event I learned that a young and very enthusiastic young candidate, Justin Zollars (D-Bowling Green), pictured (did I mention that he is young?), declared his candidacy in the 2nd Ohio Senate race five days before. He gave what he called his second political speech ever. He managed a county commissioner campaign in 2006 and is presently managing a judicial campaign. He spoke passionately about his ideas for improving life for Ohioans. When Ohio House candidate Jeff Bretz spoke he said that he has already had his first fund-raiser of this campaign. He raised \$10,000 altogether in his first run for this office and plans to raise much more than that this time around.

A reporter from the Los Angeles Times, Peter Nicholas, was at the meeting to interview everyday Ohioans about their preferences in the 2008 presidential election. As it happened, the committee conducted a presidential straw poll, and as an Ohio Daily Blog exclusive, here are the results from Wood County:

36% Hillary Clinton
27% John Edwards
13% Barack Obama
11% Dennis Kucinich
5% Joe Biden
4% Bill Richardson
2% Mike Gravel
2% Chris Dodd