

# Hold your nose & vote Republican in primary

**Rick Price, of Sagle**  
**Letter to Sandpoint Reader**

If you don't vote the Republican ballot in the upcoming primary, you're missing a chance to pick your leaders. Two weeks ago, Alan Millar wrote about the importance of voting, and voting the Republican ballot, this coming [May 17](#) to help pick our state legislators. The Republican ballot is the place to be at the county level as well. This May we have elections for Bonner County Sheriff and two of three county commissioners that have multiple Republican candidates, but, sadly, no Democratic opponents. As Allan pointed out in his piece, this leaves the Idaho Democratic voter, and more importantly the proud and majority group in Idaho, the independent voter, thinking there is little they can do. Luckily this is not the case. Anyone who has not registered for another party, can register as a Republican now at the courthouse, or at the polls on election day, and have a say in who our sheriff is and who will be running Bonner County.

If you are one of those people who gets hives thinking about voting Republican, I can sympathize, but it's really not as bad as it sounds and when it's the only way to have a voice in an important election, I believe you have a moral imperative to do so. Remember it is our tax dollars that pay for this election. Despite Republican attempts to limit who votes in the primary, it is a public election and we are citizens. I've been doing it the past two years. It's easy, and I get the same satisfying feeling of civic pride when I leave the voting booth that I always have in the past.

Our present sheriff, Daryl Wheeler has aligned himself with a group known as the Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association. Like our state Representative Sage Dixon who has a, "Little Supreme Court in my head," these folks think it's okay to decide which laws to enforce, therefore acting more like judges than law enforcement officers. The other candidate is Terry Ford. He is a retired state trooper who has come to realize he retired too soon. Everyone who has known Terry speaks highly of him and he understands the sheriff's job is to enforce the laws as written.

Commissioners : Our current County Commissioner, Todd Sudick is going to end up costing us a lot of money. There are at least two solid lawsuits by former employees of the Planning and Zoning office against the Commissioners because he thinks his role as a commissioner includes yelling at the planning staff and telling them they need to illegally change their decisions. Our county cannot afford his bullying behavior. His opponent, Jeff Connolly, is a 15-year veteran of the Priest River City Council. Instead of just talking to Republicans, "Being inclusive with all the constituents is something I take very seriously," Connolly says. He thinks planning and zoning are an important part of county government.

The other commissioner race will be decided in the primary as well. Dan Macdonald is taking on former commissioner Lewis Rich for an open seat. While both of these fellows are quite conservative, they understand that their job is to keep the county running and not to dismantle it.

In Idaho, it's an old axiom; the most conservative person wins the Republican primary, and the Republican wins the election in November. The Coeur d' Alene Press recently said, "The Republican primary is essentially rigged to favor the most conservative candidates." If you're having trouble thinking about voting Republican, here are a few ideas: Get a clothespin to put on your nose. Ask someone to join you at the polls for moral support. Vote early (now!) at the courthouse so your neighbors won't see you. Remember the winner of this [May 17](#) election will be the office holder. Help make the change to a better Bonner County. Just vote.