

## OUR VIEW

### No doubt it's one of Idaho's uglier primary elections

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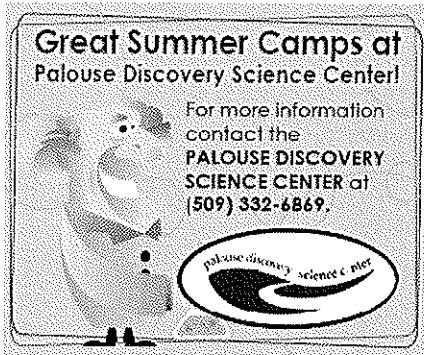
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Murf Raquet, for the editorial board |

There was a perfect storm of sorts with this election cycle in Idaho - a contentious redistricting effort that pits a number of incumbents against one another and a not-so-behind-the-scenes-effort by right-leaning Republicans to unseat fellow GOP members who have strayed a bit too close to the center.

If the GOP tactics are successful, the 2013 legislative session should be little more than a good old boys club with a handful of Democrats on the fringes.



This primary, we have also said farewell to the concept of a secret ballot by having to request a particular party's ballot. That request is part of the public record, so those who care to search can find out what party you voted for in the primary.

If you vote Republican, you have to affirm your affiliation to the party - can you say loyalty oath? - before you are allowed to vote. The beauty of this plan is the county taxpayers are paying for the GOP to have it's closed "let's-build-a-mailing-list" election.

Gone are the days when only the voters knew what party they voted for.

So far, the Democratic candidates have conducted themselves in a more civil manner. That's probably because they are a rare breed and any political sniping could have a negative effect on the candidate pool in years to come.

Republicans seem to be in contests to see how far right they can go. In Latah County, the GOP is a bit more level-headed compared to those in northern and eastern Idaho.

The rightier-than-thou antics have even taken the form of a cross-burning near Priest River hosted by a Ku Klux Klan imperial wizard who is a candidate for sheriff.

For some who haven't voted yet or who haven't voted because they don't want to declare a party - good luck however you decide. For others, as you place the "I Voted" sticker on your person, think about what is needed to return to a primary where party preferences are not part of the public record.