

Tom Hearn: RE: 2013 election outcome

Character, honesty, integrity, compassion, a positive optimistic viewpoint, and how you treat people over time matters in life and also matters in politics. I am old enough to remember President Nixon (known as "tricky Dick") and how during the 1968 and 1972 elections he and his handlers tried to change his terrible public image from previous elections and his time as vice president and present Richard Nixon as someone that he wasn't. Nixon tried to present himself as somebody who could be trusted, who had integrity, and as somebody who had "a secret plan to end the (Vietnam) war." I was amazed 45 years ago that people believed that nonsense and his true character showed itself later in Watergate through all the lies and criminal activity that went along with it, finally forcing him from office.

So what is this post about? When looking at local politics Mary Souza tried to present herself as somebody she is not. She tried to say that she would unite Coeur d'Alene and "heal the divisions" when she has been one of the most divisive local politicians I have been aware of in recent years (maybe other than Brent Regan). I'm sure she is a very nice person to her friends and family and the picture on her website of her family is impressive.

But Mary Souza and the people she was running with ran an incredibly negative campaign. If you look at their campaign literature it was full of attacks on their opponents and very little about what they would do if elected. I don't need to repeat all the nasty things they said about their opponents but it was amazing to me that Mary Souza and the others she ran with felt they could slam their opponents with personal attacks and lies and then if elected expect to lead Coeur d'Alene in a way that unites people.

Whether it is Reagan's "shining city on a hill" or Obama's "hope and change" people respond to a positive message. And people don't care about what you say and the image you try to present in life and in politics (as with Nixon years ago) as much as they care about what you do. Character, integrity, and how you treat people matters. There is plenty of negativity and pain in this life that we all encounter as part of the human condition. We don't need or want that attitude in our lives and in our elected officials. We want to feel hopeful about the future and we want people in government who can get along with others and who are people of good character who are working to bring about positive change. We do not want people in positions of authority who attack and divide people and appear to be angry and divisive.

I congratulate the winners in last night's election. They ran a positive, hopeful campaign, maintained their integrity and deserve their victory.