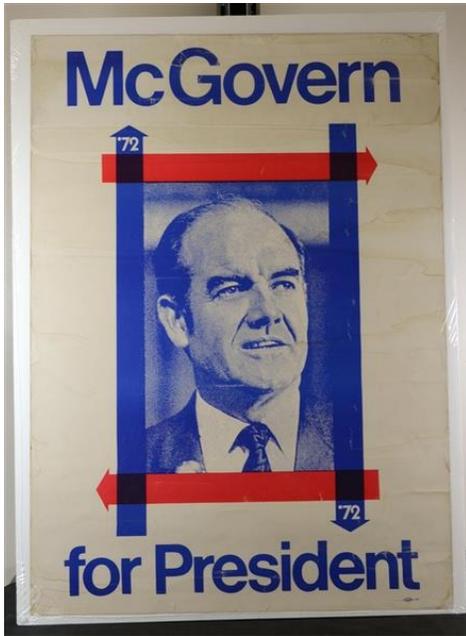


My First Political Memory...

September 15, 2016

Many people already know that I am a political junkie. I watch the political news nearly every day. During the election seasons, I watch it like I drink caffeine – I'm addicted. I watch conservative news...liberal news...unbiased news...comics poking fun at the candidates. I see memes about both candidates, both parties and both sides of the political debate.



My first memory of politics (other than the Watergate hearings interrupting my summer daytime television in 1974) was the election in 1972. In '72, Nixon was running for reelection against McGovern who was running as a Peace Democrat in the middle of the Vietnam War. It was a polarized election (based on what I have read since).

We were living in Las Vegas, Nevada and so were in the Pacific Time Zone. Mom and Dad went to vote late in the day (after getting off work), and they were insistent that they were going to vote for George McGovern because they didn't want their vote to count for Nixon. In the West, it was already certain that Nixon was going to win (even before they went to vote). The election was so lopsided the outcome at that point was so certain; it really didn't matter how the Western states went.

Even though the outcome was already decided, they went to vote anyway – because they did not want to be seen as supporting Nixon.

Now, jump forward 44 years later...Mom and Dad have passed and gone on to be with the Lord, and our country is engaged in another controversial, conflicting political campaign. But I will tell you that the actions of my parents 44 years ago are informing me today.

I have decided in my heart and my mind, having watched the run up through the primaries and watching the Republican and Democratic conventions that I cannot, will not and I resolutely resolve not to vote for Donald Trump. I believe that Trump is a con man whose only interest is self-promotion, self-aggrandizement, and entertainment. He is a reality star who seems to think that the political race is simply another episode in a reality TV show where he seeks to be the star.

Whether it is his proposal to ban Muslims (which is contrary to the religious freedom of our country) or the anti-Mexican rhetoric of his campaign, his refusal to acknowledge that he had anything he needed to ask God for forgiveness for, and the suggestion that if Hillary is elected that there are 2nd Amendment solutions available to some (denying that he was alluding to assassination), or his offensiveness in the way he speaks about his political opponents, these things demand of me personally not to vote, not to support and not to endorse anything related to Trump.

As a result, I have decided that I will vote – I am an American, and I prize my right to vote too much not to exercise it. I will vote for Hillary Clinton for President. I don't take that action lightly. She is certainly not my first choice, and I think that she is a flawed candidate. There are issues in her past that are troublesome (but not nearly as troublesome as the right-wing conservatives might suppose).

I agree with someone I heard quoted on a focus group for CBS on a morning before the conventions. A lady was interviewed, and she said, "In a nation of three-hundred and thirty million people, these are the best two we can come up with?" Yes...these are not the best.



But between the two, I will do like my parents. I'll go to the booth, even if the election is already decided in favor of Trump...I will go to the booth and vote for Hillary because Trump has so offended me, my values, my faith, my core.

I would not suggest to tell you what you should do. As for me, this is my choice, and as my parents' choice to support McGovern needed to be respected (and I respect them for it), mine must be as well.

Who would have known that the decision this election year would have been decided and modeled for me 44 years ago? Who knew?