



By Mike Rader

Your Coke County Tea Party met this past Friday. We were honored to have two special guests: Russ Duerstine, a professional political consultant; and our County Treasurer, Hal Spain. Some of our group was absent; they saw the movie "OBAMA 2016" in San Angelo. We recommend this movie as an eye-opener for everyone.

We learned so much at this meeting. First, we were introduced to potential tax increases across our county. Then information was provided about other tax increases including a new tax for OBAMACARE on home sales, starting in 2013 of 3.8%. That TAXMAGEDDON will mean the loss of the Bush Era Tax Cuts – raising all our taxes including the lowest from 10% to 15%. The "Marriage Penalty" is back. Couples filing jointly will have a higher tax rate than individuals. Capital gains taxes go from 15% to 20%. The Death Tax will now be collected on estates of \$1 million or more. It had previously only been collected on estates valued \$5 million and over. The Death Tax is especially bad if your property is valued at \$1 million or more – most beneficiaries cannot afford to pay the taxes.

We then reviewed the 2010 CENSUS results. There were 3,301 residents, a loss of more than 200 from the 2000 CENSUS. Two other statistics stood out. Our county has 1,220 persons who are aged 55 and up. 22.4% of our population are aged 18 and below, and they live in poverty. A lively discussion occurred over the CENSUS figures and the possibility of raising taxes.

Mr. Duerstine provided much needed training to the group. He told us our most important Texas race was for the Texas Third Court of Appeals. This court handles all appealed state lawsuits. The candidates who are supported by Tea Parties are: David Puryear, Bob Pemberton, Jeff Rose and Scott Field. It is important to have conservatives on this court, since this court's decisions are rarely sent to the Supreme Court. Then Mr. Duerstine trained us on "Where can we best help" to elect conservatives. He provided sample questions to ask, how we can participate locally and nationally. We agreed to work first in our county to gain experience, then to take our experiences and work in the swing states.

Mr. Spain briefed us on where our tax money is spent. Our county has a budget of approximately \$1.9 million. Approximately \$1.6 million are for personnel costs. This is salaries, FICA, healthcare, insurance etc. This is a double-edged sword. While this figure appears huge, some of our salaries are far below neighboring counties. Our costs are mainly financed by property taxes, about \$1,646,000 with the remaining coming from county fees. So you can see, there are no easy solutions.

We encourage all conservatives in Coke County to come out and work with us. Our next meeting will be in approximately two weeks. Look for the announcement in the *Observer/Enterprise*.

Coke County Comment

By Jim Clendennen

The importance of Coke County in the Texas Third Court of Appeals election.

If you think that your vote in Coke County can't make a huge difference in elections, then read this and know that the Coke County voters can have leverage far beyond the voters in Houston, Dallas, or San Antonio.

The Texas Third Court of Appeals sits in Travis County. Coke County is part of the 24 county district that elects judges for the Texas Third Court of Appeals. Along with Coke and Travis counties, Bastrop, Bell, Blanco, Burnet, Caldwell, Comal, Concho, Fayette, Hays, Irion, Lampasas, Lee, Llano, McCulloch, Milam, Mills, Runnels, San Saba, Schleicher, Sterling, Tom Green, and Williamson counties make up the judicial district.

Travis County includes the City of Austin and is the most liberal County in the district and the state. The 23 rural counties' voting power combined is just about equal to Travis County. Therefore in elections, the decisions are almost always about 50/50 liberal – conservative.

What makes the election of conservative judges to Third Court of Appeals so important is that all lawsuits filed on behalf of the state of Texas or against the state of Texas are filed in Travis County. If a lawsuit is appealed, which almost all are, the appeal is made to the Texas Third Court of Appeals. Only 10% of the lawsuits that appear before the Texas Third Court of Appeals go on to the Supreme Court. Therefore 90% of lawsuits involving the state of Texas are decided in the Texas Third Court of Appeals.

Consider a hypothetical scenario. If the EPA files a lawsuit against the state of Texas, it will go to Third Court of Appeals. If the Liberals have control of the court, then any lawsuit involving EPA and the State of Texas would be decided in favor of the EPA. In this case, it really wouldn't matter what kind of good legislation came out of the Texas legislature because it would be struck down by the Texas Third Court of Appeals.

Actually, this scenario might not be so hypothetical. The EPA is currently planning to put several central

Texas salamanders on the endangered species list in order to halt economic development along the I-35 corridor, one of the most prosperous areas in the United States. If and when this happens, state and federal lawsuits will abound. We cannot afford to become victims of the Environmental Protection Agency as did the state of California when the EPA made the Delta smelt a protected species and impoverished one of the most productive farming areas in the entire world.

Coke County voters, November will be the time for you to go to the polls and wield your power. This year, there are four seats on the Texas Third Court of Appeals up for election. Three of those seats are held by solid constitutional minded conservatives. The fourth seat will be decided between Scott Field, a constitutional conservative who is running against Diane Henson, a complete leftist and supporter of Atty. Gen. Eric Holder. We cannot afford to let any anti-constitutional statists be seated on the Texas Third Court of Appeals. When you vote this November, vote for those who will uphold the United States Constitution and the Texas Constitution. Cast your vote for David Puryear, Bob Pemberton, Jeff Rose, and most importantly Scott Field.

My name is Ed Blackburn. I'm one of the newest strangers to these parts, although I visited here more than frequently since I was a child. I grew up in Houston, worked 30 years in the farm and ranch brokerage and appraisal business in and around the Dallas/Fort Worth area, as well as writing for the media and doing a stint

as the New Media (Internet) Director for KTVT (CBS) in Fort Worth.

But I had enough of the Big City so I moved to San Angelo in late 2007, living 50% of my time in Angelo and the balance at my ranch south of Robert Lee.

Another "but" ... as much as I like San Angelo, last month I decided to move to my ranch and become a citizen of Coke County...just registered as a voter the other day. Enough about me.

The folks in Robert Lee have graciously greeted and embraced me in typical West Texas style, for which I'm deeply appreciative, and I hope to contribute whatever I can to the community.

More than that, Kay Hurst and Marshall Millican invited me to participate in an exciting new organization called "Vision With A Purpose (VP)," a concerned group of Robert Lee citizens who are determined to breathe fresh air into a community wounded by drought, water problems and wildfire.

I have attended several of the VP meetings and have been extremely impressed by the "get high behind" attitude of its members. The ideas floated by its members from both a short term and long term perspective are inspiring and efforts are already in the works to implement some of those ideas.

Mary Bessent recently wrote in the *Observer Enterprise*, "...through the workings of all the groups in Robert Lee who love this community, I see that the best is yet to come." How true.

As a newbie, I'm humbled by having been given the opportunity to become involved. That said, I would encourage everyone to become more involved. "Vision With A Purpose" is a good place to start.

Please join us in celebrating
Alene & David Key's
65th Wedding Anniversary



Saturday, September 8, 2012
3:00 to 4:00 pm
Robert Lee Baptist Church
Fellowship Hall
22 W. 11th • Robert Lee

Your presence
is your gift.
Casual Attire

HOLIDAY CLOSING NOTICE

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will be closed
Monday, September 3.*

In Observance Of

*Memorial
Day*



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