

Will the "tea party" movement help or hinder

Commentators decry the success of the "tea party" movement across the country, predicting that it will mean defeat for the Republican Party in some races this fall and doom for the country if the movement ever succeeds.

Tea-party candidates are portrayed as right-wing zealots unfit for office. The people drawing the portraits are, however, mostly liberals in both parties who are on the losing side of this argument. Of course they think these people are dangerous.

They may be right about some of the candidates. Dr. Rand Paul, who won the GOP Senate primary in Kentucky, came across as an undisciplined thinker. (He's the son of Texas Rep. Ron Paul, a long-time libertarian who ran for the Republican presidential nomination, but the father has a more sober image.)

Most of these candidates have in common a decided bias against the "tax and spend" philosophy so prevalent among both parties in Washington today. Most exhibit a refreshing lack of social-conservative baggage: abortion, religion, prayer, immigration and other "hot button" issues don't mean as much to them, though we suppose you could find tea partiers who talk about every issue.

But the genesis of the movement is in its name, taken from the historic Boston Tea Party, a colonial anti-tax movement.

Tea partiers and tea-party candidates worry more about big, growing government in Washington and the statehouse than they do anything else. They rail at the burden of heavy taxation and big spending. And they see high taxes and big spending not as fiscal policy or a tool for re-election, but as just plain wrong.

Of course, the spenders see this as dangerous. They love spending and fear restraint.

Perhaps it is simplistic to think you could just go to Washington and vote against high taxes and big deficits. Maybe even tea-party candidates will want to spend money to get re-elected, once they've seen the mountaintop.

But for now, several of these "outsider" candidates are riding high: Sharron Angle in Nevada, Christine O'Donnell in Delaware, Joe Miller from Salina, in Alaska, Christine O'Donnell in Delaware, Ron Johnson in Wisconsin, Ken Buck in Colorado.

Many are inexperienced, say things they shouldn't, making themselves easy targets for party regulars, who are only too happy to torpedo them. But if they are a danger to anyone, it's the leadership-bound regular Republicans, especially the incumbents.

In Alaska, Sen. Lisa Murkowski - after losing to Mr. Miller in the primary - promised to run as a write-in candidate next month, perhaps giving the Democrats an edge. It comes down to that: hang on, undercut the winner, let the Democrats win, rather than lose control.

How those who won the primaries will fare in the fall against Democrats remains to be seen. Undoubtedly, they'll be smeared as wackos who would ruin the republic.

But with the unbelievable level of spending today, with the threat of higher taxes and more deficits, with the culture of incumbents buying their way to lifetime seats, what's left to ruin?

Some of the tea party candidates doubtless deserve to lose. Some won't. Their popularity already has pushed the rest of their party to the right. Come January, it'll be interesting to see who's organizing the House - and who's sworn in for the Senate.

The country does not need any more nut cases and wackos in Washington; enough of those already. But we do need more people who value liberty and Constitutional restraint, honesty and integrity over re-election at all costs.

Steve Haynes

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When one thing goes wrong it all goes wrong

According to folklore a cricket chirping on the hearth brings good luck. They are not welcome at our house, however. I've urged tolerance but if the rest of the family discovers one it is hastily dispatched. Perhaps this could explain our recent run of bad luck?

Fittingly it began on 9-11. A contractor doing some drainage work for us came roaring into the yard announcing he thought he had cut the fiber-optic cable. A quick survey of our fiber-optic services (phone, internet, and television) confirmed his news.

This seemed like a good time to get out of Dodge as everyone south of us would be without those services also. In the last piece of luck we have had to date we were indeed preparing to leave for a football game. By the time we got home all was well.

But our woes were only beginning. The cows got out. The grain trailer brakes did not work; fixed them and the truck brakes did not work. There were complications with both recent machinery purchases.

And the cows got out!

The AC did not work in either of the tractors the hubby needed. But it is fall so how important is that? Naturally we had a last blast of summer! We needed a little rain to cool things off and get the wheat up and happily it rained. A lot! Washing

This Too Shall Pass Nancy Hagman



through the terraces that were last fall's success story or so we thought!

At least the muddy fields give the hubby some shop time to fix all the broken stuff. But the cows got out so he ended up fixing fence instead.

It dried out and everything needs to be done at once. The corn picked, the wheat drilled, the cows put back in.

The price of all grains spiked but in typical fashion before we react prices are down. You can always recognize the market high one day too late.

We go to another football game. If you've seen the pictures of "the Cloud" over Bill Snyder Family stadium you will see us sitting in the North End Zone (our view of the impending storm blocked by the locker rooms) thinking, "Hey, why is everyone getting so excited? Leave the stadium? Why would you leave the stadium?"

Another week goes by and the hubby makes an observation, "It takes a long time to do nothing." The phone rings:

the cows are out!

Early one morning I realize the water pump is running and running and running. It's almost time to get up so I wait until his feet hit the floor to give the hubby the news.

He checks the house, no flooding anywhere, but outside the front door water is bubbling up and our house guest's car is disappearing into a sink hole. (I'm not lying, I'm a story teller!)

He had something else to do that morning. I can't remember what but a safe bet would be fix fence. So it was afternoon before he began digging up the yard. He did a temporary patch job on the water line, promising to replace it completely when the fall work is done.

And that will be-----?????????

To a casual observer it appears we have an open grave in the front yard. Elizabeth always says when things go wrong but it could be worse, "Well, no one died!" Maybe not, but if they do we are prepared!

The next day the cows were out again. The combine and two of the tractors had to be repaired!

Then I spotted a little cricket on the kitchen floor. I was poised to stomp him but I didn't have the heart. I like hearing crickets chirp.

And we could really use some luck!

When constitutional rights hurt others

Arguments began on Wednesday before the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of Snyder vs. Fred Phelps, the so called Christian pastor, aka Westboro Baptist Church of Topeka, KS. He and his followers, mainly his family of 13 children, 11 of whom are attorneys, seek to draw attention to the country's "sin of homosexuality" through the church's presence and offensive protests at military funerals. Mr. Snyder's son was killed in Iraq, and the grieving father has first-hand knowledge of the group's intervention and degradation.

This is a big one, where does freedom of speech end and the rights of an individual begin and this is what the High Court must wrestle with. Years ago, a book, In Our Defense, written by Ellen Alderman and Caroline Kennedy, analyzed each right and sought to explain how an issue can, on a personal level, be detrimental, but on a universal level offer a protection much

Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



needed in a democratic society.

Freedom of speech is probably one of the most divisive and debatable elements of our Bill of Rights. It is very much in our nature to want to control other's actions by limiting their behavior or at the very least aligning it more closely with our own. Fred Phelps, in my opinion, is using this American right to gain notoriety. I despise what this man is doing, but I will forever defend his right to do it...within reason. Laws are pending in numerous states to limit the group's access to funerals and cemeteries by enlarging an area

surrounding the funeral procession. Of course the states' action will be overridden by whatever decision the High Court reaches. As the High Court grapples with this case, they will most certainly refer to similar arguments which have come before the courts, such as anti-abortion protests.

Most likely the Court will not pass down their decision for several months. For the sake of military families and the tremendous sacrifices they have made, I would want the Court's decision to favor the Snyder family. But (there's that word again), if I can force myself to look at the bigger picture, I pray they find for the Fred Phelps contingency. I refuse to use the word church, although churches across the country will benefit from a decision for freedom of speech. Although this issue strikes at our emotional core, the lasting repercussions of the decision will define our future.



Dear Editor,

I would like to say "Thank You" to everyone that gave so generously of their time and talents to make The Moving Wall week an experience that we can always remember. There are so many individuals and organizations that helped that I can't even begin to name them all for fear of leaving someone out.

Thank you to the Moving Wall committee for being willing to meet every two weeks for seven months! It was a long haul but so worth every minute. This couldn't have been done without you.

Also, thanks to the Norton Telegram and KQNK Radio for all they did to inform the public of the events during the week.

Carol Erlenbusch
President, Norton Co. Arts Council, Inc.