

General Election 2009

Written by Tom Kashatus Remember when the residents of Retreat State Hospital voted in the 6th Ward of Newport Township at Retreat and John "Jack" Riordan was the Township Commissioner from that ward? Remember when Retreat State Hospital became part of the 1st Ward, 2nd District in Glen Lyon and the residents and patients traveled by bus to vote in the Glen Lyon VFW? The other polling places were the hose companies in their respective communities - Glen Lyon No. 4 on Orchard Street, Glen Lyon No. 1 on E. Main Street, Wanamie No. 2 on Center Street, Alden No. 3 on E. Kirmar Avenue, and Sheatown Hose company on Robert Street. Remember when you went to the polls on Election Day and you had to push your way through a crowd of 15 to 20 precinct workers just to get to the door of the polling place and 75 – 100 residents would gather outside after 8:00 p.m. to hear the Judge of Election count out the totals? The vote count in each of the five wards totaled 500 or better. Many times the size of a family would be the determining factor in an election throughout the Township or especially in a particular ward. Remember when the United Mine Workers locals in Wanamie and Glen Lyon attracted more attention and controversy than municipal and county contests?

The inactivity shown in the pictures taken during the recent general election at the noon hour is typical of many precincts today throughout the county and state for most primary and general elections featuring local contests and reflects the apathy, in general, of the American voter of today. This issue has been discussed time and time again in newspaper editorials and even the experts can give no concrete answer as to why so many Americans do not participate in the election process.

At the local level John Zyla (D) (622 votes) of Sheatown and John Vishnefski (D) (584 votes) of Wanamie were elected to new four year terms to the Newport Township Board of Commissioners. This is the eight term for Mr. Zyla to be elected to the board and second for Mr. Vishnefski. With no Republican opposition this election the contrast was quite different from that in 1972 when he opposed the President of the Board and Chairman of the Democrat Party, Ernest Belles, and won a hotly contested primary in the 4th ward of Newport Township (Sheatown) as an independent Democrat. Also at that time Mr. Zyla was one of the leaders in the movement to have the township commissioners elected by all voters in the township rather than by Ward as was previously done for years and years. To his credit, Mr. Zyla has been successful in every election since, even when he took a break from municipal politics to run for a two year term on the Greater Nanticoke Area School Board. After winning a competitive primary contest, first time candidate Kenneth Angradi (D) of Glen Lyon will be the new Tax Collector. This post had been held by Arnold Morucci and his wife, Marie, for the past twenty eight years.

Elected to the Greater Nanticoke Area School Board were incumbents Jeff Koslofski, Robert Raineri, Gary Smith, Sylvia Mizdail, and newcomer Cindy Davis. All candidates had no opposition. Judges of Election who will be serving four year terms will be Joseph C. Hillan (1st Ward, Glen Lyon), Dawson Jenkins (2nd Ward, Wanamie and Alden), and Megan Tennesen (3rd Ward, Sheatown, Newport Center, and Ridgeview). Elected to Inspector of the Election Board (each party may be represented in this office) were as follows: 1st Ward, (D) Betty Straub and (R) Palmira Miller; 2nd Ward, (D) Dolores Antonik and (R) Teena Wrubel; 3rd Ward, (D) Phyllis Stamile. Successful Constable Candidates were Edward Pauska and Norman Bodek.

1st Ward - Glen Lyon

2nd Ward - Wanamie/Alden

3rd Ward - Sheatown/Ridgeview