

Should we say “Vote” or “Please Vote”

The “Star” has graciously provided the PSJRA with 600 words each week to keep you up-to-date on redevelopment and related topics. This is a related topic. If it would encourage all eligible city residents to vote next Tuesday, I would simply write the word “vote” 600 times. Or I could write “please vote” 300 times.

When making a decision, I think of the importance of my first step toward a goal as the beginning of a radius in a circle. We begin by taking one small step in any given direction. After only one step, the direction may not seem overly critical; we can easily back-step or side-step. However, after 25 steps from the center point, to move sideways or backwards becomes more difficult (which usually translates to costly and time-consuming). As the circle widens, the initial direction becomes potentially insurmountable. Your personal and considered opinion of the best commissioner/mayoral candidates for Port St. Joe is a half-step. Casting your vote completes the step. The trajectory of that decision will be unfolded over time.

We all know that, in Gulf County, even two votes can make a critical difference. No one here can say, “Well, my vote wouldn’t count anyway.” Rest assured, your vote will make a significant difference to the future of Port St. Joe and Gulf County.

To celebrate and preserve history and the legacy of the past will keep our heritage alive. Keeping our families here and gainfully employed will keep our heritage alive. Unfortunately, people leave for a variety of reasons; and many of our historic buildings may be in jeopardy, requiring stabilization and updated infrastructure. People may need a financial lifeline to sustain until the “economic engines” like the Sacred Heart, WindMark Beach and the port are functional, jump-starting the economy to the benefit of all. With all due respect, the St. Joe Company and WindMark Beach cannot build real-life history into their beautiful, architecturally fabulous and market-analysis-perfect Town Center. Have you ever moved into a new house and wandered around in the middle of the night wondering, “What memories will we make here?” Only after years and years of daily living, holidays, joys and sorrows can brick-and-mortar be transformed through the essence of personal history. While JOE brings tremendous benefit, the historic value is already here, begging to be revered and protected.

We are in a wonderful and challenging period of transition—somewhat like adding new rooms (new memories) to an existing home (legacy).

To protect the past and embrace the future, we rely on our elected officials to understand options and opportunities, to bring front-line strategies and to create consensus in the best interest of the people they serve, now and far into the future. Your vote can place the most capable candidates in office, candidates who will provide programs to protect you, your families, our schools, our economy, our legacy, and our future. Gulf County will rely on you. Would it be possible to exceed the record turnout for the primary elections?

The time has passed for “business as usual.” I hope the time is passed for back-room deals; if it is good for the people, it should be shouted from the rooftops and not whispered in tones as thin as the promises behind them. Listen to what the candidates are saying. Pay attention to their platform. Make your decision and “please vote.” Yes, please, please, please vote. We will all benefit.