

Politics 2016 - My first experience with being politically active.

In February, I registered online to participate in the Democratic Caucus along with my sister. Having registered online we did not have to wait in line on February 20th to do so but went to the head of the line to check in.

The caucus was somewhat disappointing as it appeared that the volunteers were ill prepared to do what they were there to do. Our precinct meeting was very late starting and some people left because of that. Toward the end of the meeting we had to vote on delegates for the County Convention to be held on April 2.

We had voted two male delegates and several Alternates but we needed one more delegate to represent the women. None of the other women present were interested so I allowed my name to be put up for consideration and was duly elected the third delegate from my precinct.

Fast forward to March.

On March 27th, at 3:51 pm and 4:48 pm I received emails about pre-registering for the April 2nd convention. Unfortunately several things happened that day. I had a power failure that took me offline till 5:10 pm and my girlfriend came over for dinner and an overnight stay. As a result, I did not see the emails until 7:30 am after she went home. The online registration deadline was 6 am. This meant that I was going to have a long wait in line on April 2nd to register.

April 1st. I had a 2:15 appointment to finish the last link in my transition, my new Passport Application. Naturally I arrived early and there was literally no one ahead of me so I was able to get that done in short order and left the County Clerks office just 3 minutes AFTER my scheduled appointment. Why is that important? Because when I checked my email I had a message that, in order to avoid being in a long line Friday the 2nd, I could go to a local union hall between 5 and 9 pm that day. I arrived there shortly after 5pm and the line was already wrapped all around the length of the entire building and half way across the front back to the union hall front door. I finally got into the building just after 9pm. Because of computer delays in getting started, they had decided to stay open until everyone who was already in line by 9 pm was processed. I got processed and finally left the building about 10:03. I got a stamp on the back of my hand and a registration card which allowed me to bypass the line on Saturday and get into the Convention site as soon as I got there just before 10am.

I started out meeting Yvonne, a Sanders supporter and helped save two seats near us for a woman, and her mother who was handicapped, both Sanders supporters, at the front of the hall. I did some reading while we were waiting as, according to the rules of order, no business could be conducted until all delegates were duly registered and seated. Yvonne and I talked about books. She had a large hard cover book about Ava Gardner and I had my Kindle reader. We both did some reading but all four of us had great conversations. I also got to talk with Clinton supporters. One lovely woman wandered around with a lovely embroidered pillow with the slogan "A woman's place is in the White House." I surprised her by liking the sentiment but I was able to disagree that Hillary should be that woman.

While we were waiting for the report of registered delegates, alternates and unelected alternates to come in, we heard from a variety of candidates for various public offices from Judges to Senators and Nevada offices. There were frequent chants of "Bernie!! Bernie!! Bernie!!" echoed by Hillary!! Hillary!! Hillary!! throughout the early part of the convention and, until about 2pm, the Bernie chants out voiced the Hillary chants.

At one point, an unscheduled speaker charged up on stage and took the mic explaining that he has asked for a chance to speak and was denied. He advanced his case for a right to speak while security was called and he was ushered, politely, off the stage. This action did not sit well with many of the delegates and a chant of "Let Him Speak" continued until the Chair, quieted everyone down with the assertion that the man would be given a chance to speak. The two parties talked off the mic and then the man had his speak. Evidently some in front had given rude remarks and gestures as he made note of it and said "that's ok. In America you can ... disagree with me..." he closed his remarks, after speaking to his candidacy, with thanks for allowing Democracy to work. Clearly the Will Of The People prevailed over mere rules of order. My fellow delegates agreed that that would not have happened at a Trump rally and the likely course things would have followed there.

As I may have already mentioned, there was a lot of doing nothing while waiting for the initial and final reports of registered delegates and during those times there was lots of chanting. There was also a very entertaining young lady, probably 8 to 10 years old, who danced in front of our section waving a Bernie Sanders for president sign. She was all smiles and energy and most definitely not the least bit shy. At one point I signed to a woman near the girl if she were her child. She mouthed back yes and I gave her a 2 thumbs up which she answered with a thumbs up. Later, I took a short video of her dancing with a younger boy, possibly a friend or cousin as talking with her mother it was said he was not hers. I even showed her part of the video.

While there was the bulk of the time wasted in waiting, Convention business did precede with the party platform voted on, alternate delegates seated as full delegates and so on. The convention proceeded in a generally orderly manner but there was a disconcerting tendency of people to leave their seats and crowd around the platform. Many people chose to ignore repeated requests and orders to sit and clear that area in, what I felt, was a rather childish display of disobedience. It is bad enough when your children refuse to do as they are told but these people were supposed to be adults. What so awfully hard about returning to your seats rather than delay proceedings? Yes, the meeting did run late but there were other reasons, besides the crowd around the platform, for this. Surprisingly there were only 3 medical emergencies. One person had a seizure, another had a heart attack and, about 8:45 pm, a pregnant woman collapsed and process was delayed while emergency services took care of her and then took her to a hospital.

After that there was a display of the final lists of Clinton and Sanders Delegated for the State Convention which were duly voted on and then the convention was adjourned.

For my part I was proud to be part of the political process and equally proud to be accepted as a woman. No one looked at me funny or questioned my presentation, or my use of the women's restroom. In all it was a good day but I was one tired lady when I got home.

Next up - The State Convention May 14 and 15.

I probably won't attend the Democratic National Convention on July since I really can't afford to go although someone mentioned setting up a gofundme account to raise donations. I probably won't do that. Still, as I think about it - it would be interesting to see if I could raise enough to pay for my expenses, airfare, hotel and food, while attending the convention. I would have to allow 5 or 6 days since I would have to fly down the day before and might have to fly back the next day depending on how late the last day ends. Hotel rates of \$500 a night or more are daunting and I simply don't have that kind of money.