

Spafford GOP committee disregarded rank and file

To the editor:

7-20-2005

SK
Press

I am among the registered Republicans in the town of Spafford who would like to express some concern that our local republican committee seemed to have prematurely announced "the Republican candidates" for town offices. Many of us were quite taken back to see the photo announcement on the front page of the Press/Observer!

Then to the surprise of many, we found that what none of us had been told is that this photo represents a major deviation from how Republican candidates have always been selected in Spafford. Under the long-standing caucus system all Republican voters in Spafford had direct input into candidate selection. The Republican committee always announced the people's choice after the caucus, which was held in recent years in late summer. That is what we Spafford Republicans have all come to expect.

This year is different: the direct voice of the Republican voters in Spafford has been dispensed with - regarding candidate selection. There will be no caucus. No direct input from the republican electorate. Apparently the Republican committee (four people) recruited candidates of their choice - which include relatives and close associates. It is both a surprise and a disappointment to many of us.

Why the change? Our research confirms that months ago the Spafford Republican committee notified the Board of Elections that they would eliminate the long-established practice of the Spafford Republican caucus (where any Republican may nominate from the floor and where any registered town republican has a vote).

Republican voters across Spafford were not consulted and we did not receive official notice or explanation of a change. We now have a case where a small group (of four) has broken with long tradition and selected the candidates for all of us. Why the lack of communication? This was an important change and one that directly affects over 600 Spafford Republican voters. Is our input and voice not important?

It is too late for any of us to do anything about it now. Even the timing of the photo appears to be carefully calculated. It was released for July 14th publication - the last day any Republican could submit a petition to the board of elections and be considered for a primary. What we have is a done-deal.

It appears that someone has already made our choice for us - at least on the Republican ticket.

ED LUKENS