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I have to admit that when asked to be the Activist Focus person for September in SD 10 I was a bit surprised! My first thought was there must be a mistake, I'm not an Activist, I'm just an active member. Then I had to think, what actually is a Grass Roots Activist? The best definition I could come up with was an "active member" so then I guess I had to accept the fact that I was a SD10 Republican Party Activist. My roots in the Republican party go deep, even though my roots in TX are not quite as deep. I grew up in Virginia and moved to Texas after doing some Christian Missionary work in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania. My Maternal Grandmother was the Executive Secretary for the Republican Party of Virginia for many years. I don't really know when or for how long since I was very young at the time. But I do know that I inherited a picture that Ronald Reagan signed for her when she was the Executive Secretary and he was the Governor of California. He was elected President in 1980 and I was just starting High School. Suffice it to say, that I was raised in a conservative but not necessarily politically active family. Growing up in the Washington, DC suburbs I did get to see a lot of the inner workings of the Federal Government since most of my neighbors worked at the Pentagon, in the Secret Service or in some other branch of the Federal Government. In fact the children of one of the Secret Service agents shot in the assassination attempt of President Reagan went to school with me.

I went to college at what is commonly referred to as Virginia Tech, officially know as Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. I don't want to say that any University is conservative, but when you compare it to schools such as UVA it was definitely more to the right. Since VT is an agricultural based school you tend to get more of the rural residents attending and rural people tend to be more Republican than city folks. I am proud to say that VA has voted Republican in the Presidential races as far back as I can remember.

I moved to TX to attend Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in May of 1998. Upon arriving in TX I vaguely knew one person. She was the daughter of the Pastors secretary at my home church in VA. She was probably 10 years younger than me so we really had only met in passing. We had spoke on the phone and email frequently since she had also done some mission work. She was working for a photography company when I arrived here and was gracious to get me a part time job with the same company.

About a year later the owner hired me to be his Lead Photographer and Photography Manager. I believe it was before the 2000 Tarrant County Lincoln Day Dinner when HQ called the company I was working for to see if they could hire a photographer to do the photo line at the Dinner. We were hired and I chose myself to be the photographer. My job kept me busy on the weekends and many evenings so I had not really met many people outside of work. So I got to thinking, I bet there are some Republican groups I could get involved with and meet new friends through them. After contacting HQ I was directed to the Tarrant County young republicans. I did meet some people there and we are still friends to this day. I was elected as programming chairman before I aged out. Michael Kennedy (whom I met at the YR meetings) called one night to see if I could help at a primary where they needed election workers in Stop 6, I agreed and since then have continued as an election judge/worker. As an election official the Party called to ask if I would be on the signature verification committee for the absentee ballots. I agreed and met several members and the President of the Metroplex Republican Women's Club. I have been and/or are affiliated with the Young Republicans, Arlington Republican Club, Metroplex Republican Women's Club, and North Tarrant Republican Club, as well as photographing events for the Fort Worth Republican Women, Southeast Republican Club, Northwest Republican Club, SD 10 events, state conventions and local, state and national campaigns. I was honored by Attorney General Abbott twice in 2006, first when I was invited to his VIP reception on election night, and then again when he chose one of my photographs to place on the Christmas card he sent to over 23,000 households.

I guess if I had to sum it all up I would say that I have chosen to put my actions into supporting causes that line up with my beliefs. I feel my role as an active party member (i.e. activist) is to use the primary season to fight hard for people that line up with my beliefs, and then after the primary to put aside our differences and vote for whichever Republican won the nomination. Even if they are what we could call a RINO. If we didn't do our work in the primary then we are to blame, not the candidate we let get nominated. We should not penalize the state/nation by electing someone from the other party because we got tired, lazy or don't "like" who won the primary. We all have an opportunity now (the 2008 presidential race) to fight hard up to the conventions to support who we would prefer to see in the White House. But then in November of 2008 we have the obligation not only to support whichever candidate wins the nomination, but to put all our strength and energy into making sure that we "get out the vote" to gain back a Republican majority in the Congress and keep a Republican in the White House.