



## SMITHVILLE REVIEW

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## It's our responsibility to vote

I've always voted, no matter how bad the choices were in an election. I feel it's my patriotic duty to make my opinion known otherwise I have no room to complain when things don't go like I want. Feel free to check my voting record. I've missed one election in my life and that was an uncontested primary back when I was in college. Frankly, if I don't vote I feel guilty. Why is that? Well, first off, a lot of people have given their lives so that me and you can get into our air conditioned cars, drive over on nice roads to a climate controlled room, walk across carpeted floor and push a couple of buttons on a computerized screen without fear of someone shooting us or burning down our house. Freedom isn't free even though a lot of people take it for granted as evidenced by the

poor turnouts most places have for elections.

Sure, those brave men and women have fought and died to give you the right not to vote if you don't want to. Just the same as you can burn the American flag and millionaire football players can take a knee before the football game. It's freedom of expression. Just try looking a World War II veteran in the eye and telling him that you choose not to vote.

Myself, I think voting is not only a right but it's a duty. For those of us who haven't served, who haven't put ourselves in harm's way, it is the least we can do and I do mean the least. We make it easy for folks now. You have two weeks

to early vote so you can come and go at your leisure, usually without lines. Early voting here is at the courthouse, right in the middle of town. It begins for the Democratic Primary today. Then, if you just can't spare five minutes during that time, there's an entire day to vote. For the Democratic Primary it's May 1.

Now I'm not going to bad mouth you if you don't vote in the primary. You may have another party affiliation and that's okay. It is an open primary if you do want to vote, meaning anyone can cast a ballot during the primary.

It's the folks who won't go to the polls in August and November who irritate

me. They are the very ones who whine and complain about their government but won't take the time to click a few buttons.

And, bringing it home to a personal level, I have a brother-in-law, Sgt. Charles Allen who stepped on a landmine in Afghanistan back in 2011. He lost both legs and an elbow to the blast and is confined to a wheelchair but wouldn't you know it, he rolls himself right into the polls every election and uses his good arm to cast his vote. If he can roll himself into the polls I think I can use my two good legs to walk in a do my patriotic duty. You do what you want but as for me, I'm voting every chance I get.

Contact Duane Sherrill at news@smithvillereview.com



**THAT NEW GUY**  
by Duane Sherrill

## Tax day approaches

The day of April 17 is soon approaching, when Americans are expected to file their individual tax returns for 2018. Federal income tax was first introduced in 1861 to help fund the Civil War, but it was repealed in 1872 as unconstitutional. In 1913 the 16th amendment opened the way for the present income tax system.

Most governments throughout history have taxed their citizens, and the question of paying taxes even came up in the Bible. In Matthew 17, Jesus and His disciples traveled to Capernaum, where a tax collector asked Peter whether Jesus paid taxes. When Peter asked Jesus about it, Jesus explained that most kings taxed only strangers living in their lands, people who had usually been captured in battle. However, as a good citizen, Jesus instructed Peter to go fishing, and out of the mouth of the first fish he caught, he was to take a piece of money, and use it to pay taxes for himself and Jesus.

Later, in Matthew 22, the Pharisees, who were among the religious leaders of the day, tried to find ways to entangle Jesus in what He said. They sent representatives to ask Jesus what He thought about paying tribute, or taxes, to Caesar, the Roman Emperor. Jesus realized what they were trying to do, and so He asked them to show Him a piece of tribute money. When they brought Him a penny, He asked whose inscription was on it, and of course they said it

was Caesar's. Jesus then gave them a response they did not expect when He said, "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God." They didn't know what to say after that, and so they left Him and went their way.

Some people thought that Jesus had come to help overthrow the Roman government, but His purpose was a totally different one. His purpose was to establish a whole new kingdom. Instead, He came to establish a spiritual kingdom, a kingdom of the heart. He spoke regularly about the kingdom of God and often told parables to help people understand better the nature of the kingdom of God. These parables were simply stories from everyday life that contained deep heavenly meanings and applications.

One of the 12 disciples that Jesus chose to be His followers was Matthew, also called Levi, who gave up His position as a tax collector in order to follow Jesus. One day Jesus met another tax collector named Zacchaeus, who also gave up his position to follow Jesus. Also, he underwent a dramatic change, offering to repay fourfold anyone he had cheated in collecting taxes from them. Following Jesus requires integrity.

Larry R. Steffe is pastor of the Center Hill Brethren In Christ Church on Miller Road in Smithville. Everyone is welcome to attend. For information, you may email lrsteftefn@yahoo.com.



**GUEST EDITORIAL**  
by Larry R. Steffe

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR TO THE POLICY

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## The cost of living

According to a recent Financial Times article, the apartment prices in Manhattan have plunged. Last year, you needed to fork over \$2.21 million for the average apartment, but now, you can scoop one up for the low, low price of only \$2 million.

Leave me out of the apartment hunt. For one thing, you couldn't pay me to live there again. And then there's the little matter of not having anywhere near \$2 million, nor being likely to get it in the future. Even if the price really plunged -- to, say, \$1 million -- I still couldn't afford it. There are probably very few people who work at the Financial Times who could afford it, either. So why are they using the word "plunge"? The more accurate headline would be, "Absurdly Overpriced Manhattan Apartments Now Just Insanely Overpriced." Divorces, children, college loans, rent, maintenance charges and mortgages eat up money like sharks going through chum. Not to mention, you also have to furnish that \$2 million apartment. And who's going to clean it?

It's only Saudi princes and Russian mobsters who own those apartments you see featured in glossy magazines -- the ones with two-story windows and views of the park and the skyline. Only rapacious Wall Streeters and their undeserving spawn own apartments with slash-free rooms. Meaning, no living/dining room, bedroom/office, kitchen/bath/weeping parlor for them. Those places are for the help. People like you and me.

"If the Russians had won the Cold War and forced people to live in apartments like mine," said my work friend Marie at a long-ago brunch, "we'd rise against our oppressors and slaughter them with glee. But when we do it to ourselves, we think it's wonderful. It's Manhattan!"

"What makes it even worse," she said, "is that I'm second-homeless." Marie was talking about the plight of many worker bees in Manhattan, who were so poor that they couldn't afford second homes in the Hamptons or the Catskills. The people who are buying those \$2 million apartments also have second, and sometimes third, homes far away from the city center. I called Marie this week to make sure she'd heard the news about all the bargain apartments that she could be buying now.

"Yeah, thanks for telling me," she said. "I'll call a real estate broker as soon as I get off the phone with you. What's the down payment on that, like, \$200,000? Yeah, I can make that work. And then 30 years of paying \$24,000 for the monthly mortgage? Sure. Let me just call my boss and see if I can get her to give me a thousand-percent raise. And a big bonus."

"Thanks for reminding me what a loser I am," she added. "Do me a favor, would you? Lose this number. Bye."

You just can't make some people happy. Contact Jim Mullen at mul-len.jim@gmail.com.



**VILLAGE IDIOT**  
by Jim Mullen