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Tazewell County Board

*Continuing a Family Tradition of Community Service*

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## Representatives Responsibility to Communicate

*“The American Founding Fathers believed deeply –*

*in the ability of a human being to learn enough in order to take part in self-government;*

*in the capacity of people to make sense of their lives if given reasonable conditions within society itself;*

*in the responsive power of men when exposed to great ideas;*

*in people to stand upright spiritually without ornate or complicated props;*

*in man to live under due process of law;*

*in man to make basic decisions concerning his religion or his politics or anything else – again given the conditions that made this possible.”*

**Norman Cousins**

Over the past few months I have noticing a growing new trend. Tazewell County Board Members Melvin Stanford and Russ Crawford have expanded their Facebook pages to cover political discussions with their constituents.

Over in McLean County, my good friend Kathy Michael has closed her successful blog, McPundit, due to her election as McLean County Clerk but has started a new one aimed not at political discussion but as a way to communicate about the operation of her new position.

Also in McLean County, newly elected County Board Member Susan Schaffer is currently building a website to communicate with her constituents, using my current website as a model.

I find this increased constituent service by these elected officials refreshing and they should be rewarded for their efforts. Over the past few elections, electronic communications usage as a campaign tool has grown.

The more important step is the one being undertaken by these individuals in continuing this communication once elected. Too many times we see individuals that make the effort to be seen or heard when they are up for election, but afterwards they could care less about what the people want.

My website continues to grow and enlarge. In April of this past year, it marked its first year in service. To date over 6,500 residents of Central Illinois have taken the time to review it. In a continual effort to reach out and make the political updates concerning Tazewell County more readable available, I

introduced a Facebook Page and Blog in late 2009. To date the blog has been viewed by over 1,650 residents and my Facebook page has grown to include over 2,500 individuals.

I have found these efforts beneficial not only as a means to distribute my information but also as a means to gather information and insight. Every day I receive at least one message on one if not all of these electronic medias from a constituent. Many have questions about how to obtain information on an issue or how to contact the other County Board Members or how to make their voices heard on a cause that concerns them.

It is time we hold our elected officials more responsible for continued communication. After all, they chose to be elected as a representative of the people and a large part of that responsibility is listening to what your constituents want. If good, clear, ongoing communication with the electorate is not a priority with these individuals, what is their main priority, other than getting elected/appointed?

As always, I consider it an honor and a privilege to serve you on the Tazewell County Board and if I can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me.

***John C. Ackerman***  
***Look for John on the Web at:***  
***[www.JohnCAckerman.com](http://www.JohnCAckerman.com)***