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Tazewell County Board

*Continuing a Family Tradition of Community Service*

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### *January ASO Magazine Column*

## Representatives Responsibility to Communicate

The 2012 Primary Election has official started as the candidates turned in their petitions for elected office earlier this past month. This is a rare election in which every elected representative office is up because of the once-a-decade redistricting process. Here in Tazewell County, each citizen is represented by seven County Board Members. How many of you can name each one?

Part of the issue may be you have not taken the time to look into the County Board. Maybe you know one or two members and feel that is enough. In the end the way I see it, it is not fully your responsibility to get know your County Board Members. If they want to be representatives, should they not make an effort to let you know who they are?

We hear from our elected officials during election time when they come knocking on your door and asking for your vote. Reaching out during election season is a step in the right direction, but the more important step is 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.

In this day and time when the ability to communicate is as readily available and inexpensive, 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?

In my last election, I pledged to improve the transparency of Tazewell County politics. One step I took to achieve this pledge was to fund my own website ([www.JohnCAckerman.com](http://www.JohnCAckerman.com)) to allow the citizens of Tazewell County access to several important documents regarding Tazewell County that are not currently available elsewhere on the internet. When you add to this website my Facebook page and frequent letters to the editors concerning the topics of the day, I hope the citizens of Tazewell County see that I am making the effort to communicate to them.

While everyone does not need to have a website, Facebook page, or other communication tools, it is important that they are making the effort to communicate what they are voting for and why they are doing so. If not, ask yourself how can they be truly representing you and your needs.

*John C. Ackerman*

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