

Do you remember the first time you “got into the voting booth” and casting a ballot that counted for a U.S. Presidential election? Ironically, mine was almost 4 years after first casting what felt like a ballot for President. More on that in a moment**, but before we go there, it seems worth making a voting “public service announcement” for all of us regardless of political persuasion.

If you have not done so already, please check that your voting registration is current by calling the Board of Elections (513 632-7000) or going on the internet to <http://boe.hamilton-co.org/> or www.StopThePurge.com and clicking the “check your registration” link. For most of us doing so will confirm our address is correct and we are set to vote in the November election.

However, it’s important to also check the status of our loved ones living in Ohio. Two examples in my own life provide reasons why.

Our younger son, Sam, took a teaching job in NW Ohio a couple years back and moved there, dutifully changing his address. After that experience he then moved back home for a year while settling in to his next job. He didn’t change his voting registration, so Sam might anticipate that he could vote still at his usual home precinct, right? Fact is, unless Sam changed his voting registration he would have received a provisional ballot that might or might not be counted [I should note he recently moved to Northside and re-registered.]

Similarly, a friend in his 80s heard me telling the story of Nuns on the Bus Cincinnati and their registration efforts. This friend, after hearing this, wondered if his voter registration was in the correct place. We looked him up and the location was wrong due to some health-related moves. He also would have received a provisional ballot if voting at his local precinct.

So, please check your voter registration status and also do so for those you love. The deadline is October 11th. We don’t want our memories or those of our family members to include being forced to vote a provisional ballot and/or waiting in long lines while others in front of us are checking/arguing with poll workers about why they’re no longer in the voting books at their local precinct. :-)

Enjoy the day...and the memories!

**In case you were wondering, our high school did a mock election in 1976. Many of us – including me – were not eligible to vote in the real election but we did have a simulated election. Contrary to national results, BGHS students voted in President Gerald R. Ford, with independent and socialist candidates getting much better percentages than they did nationally. It was a fun experience – one I’ll never forget (in fact, I’ll be sharing more about that with Cliff and Sam in the days ahead, including going through my high school yearbook...)

Steve Long, an Anderson Township resident, is an “aspiring memory missionary.” He and wife Kim are having fun with Long Memories efforts (www.LongMemories.info), focusing on helping others in “Making, Capturing, Organizing and Sharing Memories...Now and (Virtually) Forever!”