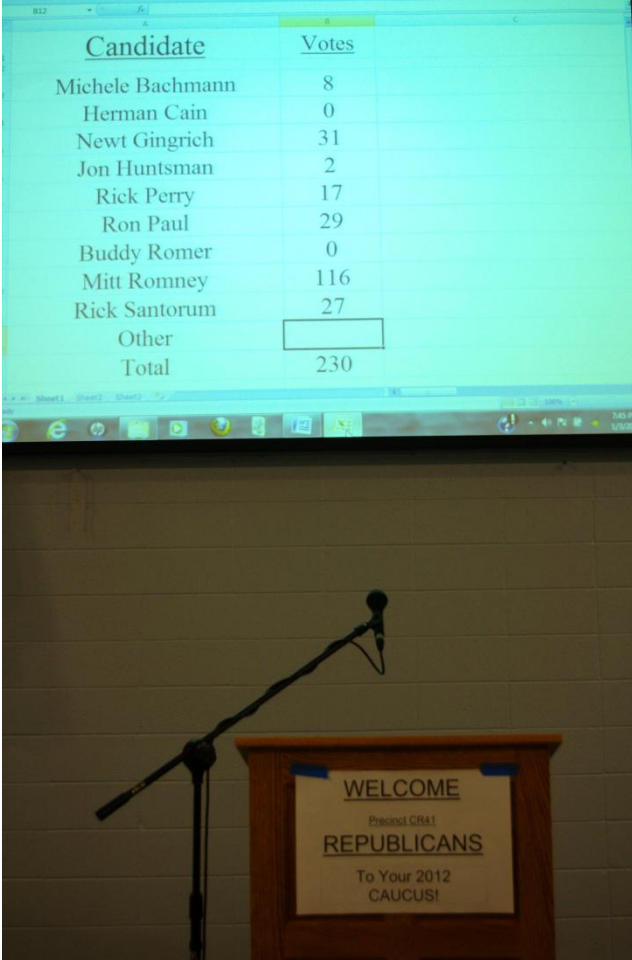


# Linn County's 2016 Republican Precinct Caucuses

I have attended every Republican precinct caucus wherever I have lived in Iowa since 1972. I am sharing some observations made over those years.

There is a huge difference when it comes to caucusing in a contested presidential year. The usual handful in an off year swells in largely Republican precincts to well over 100. In 2012, 230 votes were cast in what then was CR 41.



Candidate	Votes
Michele Bachmann	8
Herman Cain	0
Newt Gingrich	31
Jon Huntsman	2
Rick Perry	17
Ron Paul	29
Buddy Romer	0
Mitt Romney	116
Rick Santorum	27
Other	
Total	230

We almost filled the Lutheran Church event room with Republicans in 2012. The hall was sealed at 7:00 P. M. We had little difficulty verifying that only qualified residents of the precinct could participate. The room allowed us to conduct our caucus with no distractions.



Presidential preference ballots were counted in the kitchen. This gave representatives from all candidates present a chance to work undisturbed as they counted ballots. It went smoothly.



I have seen a single site in Linn County used for all Republicans to caucus twice. It was done in 2004 when President George W. Bush was unchallenged for the nomination. It was done in the off year of 2014.



Single site caucuses are good for one thing only; publicity.

More Republicans are likely to attend a caucus in, or near their neighborhood. In a caucus influencing who will be the next president, the vast majority attending come to vote their choice for president and leave.

These are the faithful Republican voters of November who are otherwise not active. They are not interested in driving half way across town, paying to park, listening to long list of speakers etc. before casting a presidential preference.

Having individual precincts caucus in a large hall is not easy. In 2004 and 2014 people were wandering around wondering where their caucus was. Add to that the din of caucuses meeting nearby. It was messy.

In 2004 and 2014 it was largely the faithful who attended. Their numbers were far lower than a presidential caucus with more than an incumbent seeking the nomination. It is not unreasonable to expect 10,000 to 12,000 Republicans to attend the 2016 Iowa presidential caucuses in Linn County.

It is the Linn County Republican Party Central Committee's responsibility to organize the 2016 caucuses. It is essential that Linn County Republicans organize the caucuses so as to encourage the largest possible participation. It is essential that the caucuses run as smoothly as possible.

The 2016 caucuses are not about obtaining publicity at a single location. Confusion and frustration at a single, or too few sites will generate negative publicity.

The Linn County Republican Party Central Committee must endeavor to hold precinct caucuses within the respective precincts as far as is practical.

Doing so worked in 2012 and for years before that.