

## **URGING GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES TO ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE**

There are two questions most frequently posed to me by my loyal readers. The first one is that it is amazing that anyone with half the sense of a nanny goat would take anything I say seriously. (Wait. That's not a question. Sorry.) Let's try the one about "Why are political campaigns always so negative." Readers tell me they are frustrated that candidates can't talk about positive issues, but only try to tear down their opponents.

Georgians would like to see a positive and uplifting political campaign for a change. A good place to start would be the race between incumbent Republican Gov. Sonny Perdue and his opponent, Democratic Lt. Gov. Mark Taylor. Both men have solid records of accomplishment on which to run. There is no reason for them to attack each other. If they would avoid the negative approach, not only would that be welcomed by the voters, but the candidates could save themselves some big bucks because they could jettison all the political consultants who make a living dishing up political doo-doo for their clients to sling at each other. The consultants could then go do something meaningful with their lives, like pulling wings off of flies.

Wouldn't it be refreshing to see both candidates take the high ground for the remainder of the gubernatorial contest in Georgia?

Gov. Perdue could run an ad saluting Mark Taylor for his untiring efforts to improve the quality of life for Georgia farmers and all the Dairy Queen owners in the state by religiously eating eight meals a day, seven days a week. Perdue could say how impressed he is that the Big Guy cannot only inhale a super-sized double cheeseburger in a single bite, he could eat a horse in full gallop. Taylor could respond by thanking Perdue for the kind words and praising him for being the only governor in the nation last year to give an elephant a physical, drastically reducing the number of health benefit claims filed by elephants in our state.

Gov. Perdue could emphasize in his campaign messages that Mark Taylor has made an outstanding lieutenant governor and that it is a shame no one has noticed, since the job of lieutenant governor is about as meaningful as female appendages on a boar hog. Taylor could then create an ad saying how inspiring it has been to have an athlete as the state's chief executive, and how well the governor has performed his duties over the past four years, despite the fact he played too many football games without his helmet on.

Taylor could applaud Perdue's financial shrewdness by asking how the governor got a retroactive \$100,000 tax break after he bought some swamp land in Florida. Perdue could say modestly, "It was nothing, really. All you have to do is have some friends tiptoe a little special-interest bill through the General Assembly when nobody is paying attention, which is most of the time — and be governor." Taylor could reply that he would like to do neat stuff like that, too, if he is elected governor, assuming that his daddy will continue to give him his weekly allowance.

Gov. Perdue could issue a statement begging Lt. Gov. Taylor not to involve national Democrats — including Howard "Yah! Yah!" Dean, Teddy Kennedy and President Peanut — in the campaign. Their enormous popularity in Georgia would most certainly wreck his chances for re-election. Taylor could say he has never heard of those people, but that he definitely plans to call on his good friend and primary opponent, Secretary of State Cathy Cox, for help — if he can find out where she is hiding.

I could go on, but you get the idea. A positive political campaign. No more mudslinging. No more attack ads. This might trigger a whole new trend in politics: Voters demanding of the candidates that if they can't say something nice about their opponent, say nothing at all. Granted, candidates have always managed to say nothing at all in their campaigns, but at least this way they would be positive when they did it.