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2016 Nebraska Democratic Caucus: Everything You Wanted To Know About The Caucus But Were Afraid To Ask

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Black Votes Matter

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Black Lives, Black Poverty and Black Votes Matter

2016 NEBRASKA DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS.

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE CAUCUS BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK.

The process of becoming the President of the United States is complex and lengthy. It begins with each of the major political parties deciding who will get the party's nomination and become the Democratic or Republican Party's candidate to become the President. It is important to note that the first step is entirely within each party separately. The Democrats do their thing as do the Republican. In a later column I will dissect the anatomy of a presidential campaign. This article will focus on primary/caucus season, which begins February 1st in Iowa.

But first let's review the basic process for a party's candidate to run for President against the other party's candidate. For simplicity I am not dealing with the possibility of a third party candidate. To become the party's nominee the candidate must receive the majority of the delegate's votes at the national Parties convention in the late summer of the presidential year. The delegates are representatives from every state. The number of delegates from each state is based on a complex set of variables but boils down to the population of the state. Example: Nebraska has 30 democratic delegates to the national convention and Ohio has 159 delegates.

Those delegates represent the candidate preferences of the voters from their states. Those preferences are determined at the states presidential primary or caucus. Let me repeat to become the party's nominee the candidate must receive the majority of the delegate's votes at the national Parties convention. The total delegates at the national conventions: Democrat (4482) in Philadelphia and Republican (2380) in Cleveland.

After the National conventions we leave the Primary/Caucus season and flow into the general election season which ends with the Presidential election the first Tuesday in November.

Back to the primary/caucus season.

Remember during the primary/caucus season the democratic candidates are only running against each other and the republican candidates are only running against each other. In 2016 for the democrats it's Clinton, Sanders and O'Malley. Or the Republicans its Trump, Rubio, Cruz and a host of others. Each going from state to state trying to get support before the state's primary or caucus. When a state has its election whether via a primary or via a caucus, delegates are assigned to the candidate based on his/her proportionate share of the

percentage of the vote they received in each state. Each of the 50 states has a scheduled date for their primary or caucus, beginning February 1st in Iowa and ending In June in Alaska. The Nebraska caucus is March 5th. As these elections occur candidates accumulate delegate commitments based on their election result in primary/caucus. The state's primary/caucus schedule and delegates at stake can easily be "googled"

Some states have a primary. A primary is a classic election day. With polling places and election booths, 12 hours available to voters to go to the polls at a time of their choice.

Nebraska and many other states vote their presidential preferences via a caucus. Which brings us to the focus of this article. What is a Presidential caucus?

A little Nebraska caucus background. Nebraska historically had a traditional presidential primary. In recent history the primary was always held on the second Tuesday in May. The problem emerged that by the time the Nebraska primary occurred in May the winner of the parties presidential race would already be determined. One of each of the party's presidential candidates would have a majority of the delegate by the time the Nebraska primary rolled along. That made for all practical purposes the Nebraska primary irrelevant. Since the winner was already determined by the earlier primaries who would care about the Nebraska vote?

Party rules prevented moving the primary to an earlier date. The Nebraska Democrats were able to have an earlier election if it were a caucus. In 2008 for the first time in Nebraska history Nebraska democrats changed to a caucus system and moved the caucus to much earlier date. As mentioned earlier, in 2016 the Democratic caucuses will be March 5th. Republicans still have a presidential primary in May.

What is a Presidential caucus?

Nebraska's presidential caucus is conducted designated sites. In Douglas County there are 14 designated sites. Most all are schools and your site is based on where you live and which legislative district (LD) you live in. To find out your LD# and/or site call the Douglas County Democratic Party at 402-558-5912 or website (douglscountydemocrats.com) North Omaha legislative districts are LD11 and the caucus site is Skinner Magnet school and LD13, the site is Nathan Hale Middle School.

On Saturday, March 5th at 10am arrive at your site. You will be asked to gather together with others who favor your candidate or with other undecided. After speeches and chances to change your mind, a count will be taken and the result will determine the winner and percentage of the count of each candidate. The counts from all the sites are consolidated and you have the result of Douglas County. The process at each site takes about two hours. Attendee can register at the site prior to the caucus. For the record Nebraska still has a primary (May10th) for all of the state and local offices and this year, to maintain the ban against the

death penalty. Democratic Presidential candidates will also be on the primary ballot but only the results of the caucus will count toward delegates.

We have officially kicked-off the 2016 primary/caucus season with a great meeting this past week. There will be other meetings to learn and volunteer before the March 5th Caucus. We also officially unveiled and distributed the new “Black Vote Matters” yard signs. We will be providing at least 1000 Yard signs in North Omaha to bring attention to our need to vote this year. If you desire a free yard sign call me at 402.812-3324.



*To review previous Black Votes Matter column articles visit **Omahastar.com**. Or **prestonlovejr.com**. Column began September 11, 2015*

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