

AG ONE Newsletter

Issue 2018.7 ***May 21, 2018

AG ONE is a periodic newsletter on legislation, regulations and agricultural topics produced by Phillips Associates expressly for the Pennsylvania State Council of Farm Organizations (PSCFO), an organization of over 60 organizations sharing an interest in promoting Pennsylvania's Number One industry, Agriculture. Questions or comments should go to PSCFO leadership or to 717/232-9665 or email to xenobun@aol.com. AG ONE Newsletter, PA State Council of Farm Organizations, 26 North Ninth Street, Lemoyne, PA 17043. Material may be cited as long as PSCFO is given appropriate credit.

Dear Reader:

Now that the 2018 Primary election has concluded, looking at what happened is the subject where political prognosticators, analysts and fortune-tellers earn their fees. This issue of AG ONE Newsletter is meant to inform you as to races throughout the state that may or may not be in your media market and to point out relevance to agriculture. Regarding the May 15 primary election, in contested primary elections, do you know the candidates for State Representative who either have farms or have farming experience? The good news is that it shows interest from the Agricultural Community in public policy. The bad news is that there are 203 seats in the House up for election in 2018 and 25 Senate seats up for grabs and there are still not enough farmers seeking public office. Sincerely, *Vince Phillips*

DENNIS WOLFF WINS NOMINATION FOR U.S. REP.

Dairy farmer and former PA Secretary of Agriculture Dennis Wolff won a contested Democratic primary in Pennsylvania's 9th congressional district. He will square off against former State Treasurer Republican Dan Meuser. The district includes all or parts of Lebanon, Schuylkill, Northumberland, Montour, Columbia, Luzerne, and Carbon Counties. This is an open seat held by Rep. Lou Barletta who won the Republican nomination to face off against incumbent U.S. Senator Bob Casey. Casey holds a seat on the Senate Agriculture Committee.

OWLETT WINS HOUSE SPECIAL ELECTION

Farmer turned manufacturer Republican Clint Owlett won the special election to succeed Rep. Matt Baker (R-Potter/Tioga/Bradford) who resigned his seat in the PA House to take a position in the Trump Administration. Owlett has a dairy farming background, helped run the family farmers' market and is now in the construction business. The seat stays Republican.

WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER TWO SPECIAL ELECTIONS?

- Democrats were able to take the seat held by Republican Rep. Scott Petri (R-Bucks) who left his House seat to head the Philadelphia Parking Authority. **Winner of the special election was Helen Tai, a township supervisor who owns a business consulting firm. She is a Penn State Master Gardener.**
- The third special election was a break-through moment for **Washington County Republicans when GOP candidate Tim O'Neal won 54.7% of the vote in this historically Democratic district.** He succeeds former Democratic Rep. Brandon Neuman who won a judicial election. Neal is a construction firm executive who also has energy industry experience.

WHICH CANDIDATES HAVE AGRICULTURAL BACKGROUNDS?

In addition to those cited above, there were several candidates in contested primaries with agricultural backgrounds.

- Republican candidate for Governor Scott Wagner grew up on a farm.
- Current Rep. Judy Ward (R-Blair) faces organic farmer and farmers' cooperative manager Emily Best for an open Blair/Fulton County Senate seat. (John Eichelberger's seat.)
- Incumbent Mark Gillen (R-Berks)'s opponent, Democrat Douglas Metcalfe, grew up on a farm and is now a nonprofit manager and school board member.
- PA's Perry County has two farmers running against each other. Incumbent Republican and House Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee member and Majority Chair of the House Urban Affairs Committee Mark Keller is opposed by Democrat Karen Anderson.
- Republican Jonathan Hershey (Juniata/Mifflin/Franklin) grew up with farming and his family's farm equipment operation. He worked for U.S. Rep. Charles Dent on Ag issues.
- Republican Barb Gleim (Cumberland) earned an MBA from Delaware Valley University in Food & Agribusiness. She also farms and raises cattle. (Rep. Steve Bloom's seat)

HOW DID MEMBERS OF THE SENATE AGRICULTURE & RURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE DO?

Unlike the House where all members run for election every two years, the Senate has elections for one-half of its members every two years. **Neither Majority Chair Elder Vogel (R-Beaver) or Minority Chair Judy Schwank (D-Berks) are up for election. Seeking re-election this fall and running unopposed in their respective primaries are:**

- Republican member Michelle Brooks (R-Erie/Crawford/Mercer/Warren) who is opposed by Democrat nurse Sue Ann Mulvey.
- Republican member Ryan Aument (R-Lancaster) who faces Democrat electrician William Troutman, Jr. in the fall.
- Democratic member John Blake (D-Luzerne/Lackawanna) against Republican Frank Scavo, an aftermarket auto parts distributor general manager.

HOW DID MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE & RURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE DO?

All House members are elected every two years. **Majority Chair Martin Causer (R-Cameron/McKean/Potter)** was unopposed in the primary and has no opposition in November. **Minority Chair Eddie Day Pashinski (D-Luzerne)** was unopposed in his Democratic primary but has an opponent for the fall, Republican grocery product selector Gregory Wolovich.

- Member Steve Bloom (R-Cumberland) did not run for re-election to his House seat due to his campaign for Congress.
- Member Kevin Haggerty (D-Lackawanna) did not run for re-election. Contenders for that district are Democratic Capitol Hill staffer (for Senator Blake) Kyle Mullins vs. Republican industrial salesperson Earnest Lemoncello.
- Member Emilio Vazquez (D-Phila.) fell in the Democratic primary to grocery store owner Danilo Burgos.
- Several committee members were unopposed in the primary or won their primary and do not have fall opponents: Representatives Mike Tobash (R-Schuylkill), Sid Kavulich (D-Lackawanna), David Zimmerman (R-Lancaster), Morgan Cephus (D-Phila.), Karen Boback (R-Luzerne/Lackawanna/Wyoming), Russ Diamond (R-Lebanon), Jordan Harris (D-Phila.), Christopher Rabb (D-Phila.), and Austin Davis (D-Allegheny).