TOM CRONIN
AND
BOB LOEVY
IN THE NEWSPAPERS

2020

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2016 two professors of Political Science at Colorado College, Thomas E. Cronin and Robert D. Loevy, were offered the opportunity to write periodic opinion columns for the local newspaper – the *Colorado Springs Gazette*. This launched a longtime project of the two professors writing for the newspaper for a number of years.

Previously Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy had written together for the *Denver Post*, but only periodically. They also collaborated on a book on government and politics in Colorado.

This book is a collection of the newspaper stories Cronin and Loevy wrote for the *Colorado Springs Gazette* in the year 2020. This book offers the opportunity to read the facts, ideas, and opinions of two scholars of Colorado politics all in one place for the calendar year 2020.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. To Stage a Comeback, Colorado Republicans
Would Be Wise to Remember Why Ike Was Liked 9

2. Why Iowans Love Their Caucuses and We Shouldn't 13

3. New Hampshire Primary Could Preview the Colorado Primary 17

4. Nevada Will Be in Saturdays Spotlight; 21
It Could Have Been Colorado

5. Colorado Is Right to Have a Super Tuesday Primary 24

6. Primaries Gear Up for Phase 3 28

7. Here's What Was New in the 2020 Presidential Primaries 31

8. Stress Tests for the Republic 35

9. Liberals Dominated Colorado's 2020 Democratic Primary 39

10. Junk the Presidential Primary System 43

11. The Virtues of Permitting Citizens 47
To Cast Their Votes by Mail

12. The Stealing of Votes – and What to Do About It 51

13. El Paso County Political Geography 101 54

14. Is Nancy Pelosi Nearing Her Last Dance In House? 58

15. El Paso County: Still "Reliably Republican" But Not Like It Was 64

16. County Courthouses Depict Numerous Styles 67

17. Colorado Democrats Learn to Cut by Necessity 75

18. Do National Conventions Even Matter Anymore? 78

19. Politicos Offer Up Further Reading For the 2020 Election 82

20. Wanted: A Colorado U.S. Senator Who Will Stay Awhile 88

21. The Paradox of Competition and Civility in Politics 91

22. Colorado Springs City Council Live – On Your Telephone! 95

23. Moving Blue: Colorado 19th Most Democratic State 99

24. Colorado Ballot Issues: Recommendations, Forecasts 102

25. Our Changing Two-Party System 106

26. States Polarization Count: Polarized Democratic – 12, Polarized Republican – 19, Non-Polarized – 19 110

27. Rocky Mountain West Is Most Republican Region – Barely 114

28. Second Thoughts about the 2020 Election 117

29. Colorado Voting Patterns – 2020 121

30. Second Thoughts on Colorado's 2020 Ballot Issues 130

31. What If Colorado Remains a "One-Party" Democratic State? 134

32. Another Round in the High-Density Zoning Battles 138

33. Victorian-Era Towers Survive Here in Colorado Springs 142

Colorado Springs Gazette
1-4-2020

TO STAGE A COMEBACK, COLORADO REPUBLICANS WOULD BE WISE TO REMEMBER WHY IKE WAS LIKED

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

The Republican Party has had a losing streak in Colorado for the past few decades. Democrats have held the governorship here for 38 of the last 46 years. The Democratic candidate for president has won Colorado's electoral votes for the past three presidential elections. In 2018 the Republicans lost all four major statewide elected offices.

Many voter polls indicate that President Donald Trump and many of his policies are less popular in Colorado than in most states. There is an emerging view that Colorado voting patterns, which had been characterized as "purplish" (a mix of Democratic Blue and Republican red) over the past generation, can now be more accurately described as leaning "bluish."

Three demographic trends pose a challenge for the current right-leaning Colorado Republican Party:

First is that Colorado has an unusually high percentage of voters (40 percent) who have a college or university bachelor's degree. Colorado is second only to Massachusetts in this regard. We can be certain these well-educated citizens vote in higher percentages than less-educated voters. More important, college and university educated voters are more concerned with issues such as climate change and, regardless of their economic views, more likely to be socially moderate if not liberal on issues such as gay rights and abortion.

Pollsters repeatedly point out the large number of well-educated suburban female voters who are conservative or moderate on fiscal matters but are more progressive on social and environmental issues.

Second is that Colorado is experiencing steady growth in Hispanic heritage voters. They now total 21.5 percent of the state's population. Colorado's African-American citizens comprise another 4 percent, and citizens of Asian heritage may soon be 2 percent. Yet this "minority" population combined will be approaching 30 percent of Colorado voters during the coming decade.

Minority voters do not necessarily vote in blocks. Yet majorities of them are very concerned with immigration, affordable health care, and broader educational opportunities than are conservative Trump-supporting Republicans.

Third is that Colorado has always been an urban state, thanks to its early history of gold and silver mining in mining towns. But Colorado is becoming even more urban today as population continues to grow in the Denver metropolitan area and on the Front Range. Rural areas remain static or only grow slowly. Both nationwide and in Colorado this urban-rural divide is often increasingly a Democratic/Republican divide. One anomaly in Colorado voting geography, however, is our handful of ski resort counties – Pitkin (Aspen), Eagle (Vail), Summit (Breckenridge, Keystone), San Miguel (Telluride), etc. These are all considered rural counties but are very bluish in their voting.

So as the Denver metro area and the ski counties go electorally, so goes Colorado.

Republicans thus face a major challenge in Colorado. State demographics are working against the Republicans. The state is adding well-educated voters, Hispanic voters, and urban voters just as all three groups are moving toward the Democratic Party.

Most Republicans, technically only about 30 percent of the registered voters in Colorado, will remain affiliated with the GOP for a variety of reasons. Some dislike the Clintons. Some fear the socialist-leaning "coastal" Democratic Party types that talk in favor of big-spending measures that they fear will hurt the economy and add to the national debt. And most

Republicans remain proudly free market capitalists and favor increased military spending.

Yet we know many Republicans who insist that being pro-capitalism should not be equated with isolationism and insensitivity to climate change science and issues of fairness and equality in economic matters. There is a middle ground in American and Colorado politics. On issues of health care affordability and education and responsible alliances with Canada and Europe there is a broad consensus of support.

Plans for reenergizing the Republicans in Colorado will be incomplete without a major attempt to appeal to Hispanic voters. Successful Republicans will have to have sensible plans to accept a pathway to citizenship for "Dreamers" (aliens brought into the nation as children) and other long-term taxpaying immigrants. Senator John McCain, a respected moderate Republican, worked on such plans.

Republicans should consider reframing the President Eisenhower policy strategies of the 1950s when Ike ran and governed as a moderate. He fully embraced foreign aid (the Marshall Plan) and moderate tinkering to improve New Deal programs. His pledge was to manage government more wisely and efficiently than the Democrats could – and to make progress in incremental steps rather than in expensive sweeping reforms.

Colorado has had its share of successful Eisenhower Republicans. Governors John Love in the 1960s and Bill Owens in the early 2000s and former Senator Hank Brown as well as former state Attorney General (and current Colorado Springs Mayor) John Suthers strike us as more Eisenhower than Trump.

Staging a party comeback in the Eisenhower moderate mode will not be easy. Powerful ideological forces pull the Republican Party in the direction of being anti-government, anti-globalization, pro-abortion, pro-gun rights, and anti-gay and lesbian rights. Think Ken Buck, Douglas Bruce, and Gordon Klingenchmitt. But, sadly for the GOP, these leaders hold the very issue positions that are driving highly educated voters, Hispanic voters, and urban voters out of the party. Failing to moderate on these issues will make

future electoral losses in Colorado inevitable for the GOP. To win will require a Colorado Republican Party that is more moderate on social and affordable health care issues.

The New Year of 2020 will be dominated by Trumpian politics in the Republican Party. But looking ahead to this coming decade, we think Eisenhower style moderation fits the demographic changes – more educated voters, more Hispanic voters, more urban voters – that Republicans must adjust to in Colorado.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy write regularly on politics and Colorado.

Colorado Springs Gazette
1-21-2020

WHY IOWANS LOVE THEIR CAUCUSES AND WE SHOULDN'T

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Since 1962 the United States has made a special issue of voter equality. The Supreme Court ruled in *Baker v, Carr* ruled that the populations of state legislative districts and U.S. congressional districts must be equal. The principle became best known by the slogan: "One person, one vote!"

Yet this coming Monday, February 3, with the Iowa caucuses, one of the unusually unequal and unfair voting procedures ever devised will begin. A relatively small number of early voting states – Iowa, New Hampshire, and a few others – will have a disproportionate say in who will be the major party nominees for president of the United States in 2020.

Voters in most other states, including Colorado, will have much less to say about who the nominees are. How much influence the states that vote after Iowa and New Hampshire will have varies greatly from presidential election to presidential election. As for Colorado, we vote after four early voting states – Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada, and South Carolina. Our primary is on March 3, "Super Tuesday," along with more than 10 other states and territories.

The general pattern is that a candidate must finish in the first three in the Iowa caucuses to be a viable competitor in the subsequent presidential primaries and caucuses down the line. Almost everyone else is virtually eliminated from the race for the nomination. It is a case of "get through" to the Iowa electorate or your chance to be a major party candidate for president is pretty low.

This giant lift from finishing in the top three in Iowa is known as "the Iowa bounce." It does not guarantee a candidate the party nomination, yet it

does make her or him a viable candidate for the next several caucuses or primaries.

What is so special about Iowans that they get the privilege to have this tremendous extra influence in the U.S. presidential nominating process? Are they smarter, or better informed, or more politically wise than the voters in the other 49 states? Does some special insight come from dwelling with the Mississippi River for your eastern boundary and the Missouri River for your western boundary?

The answer is there is nothing special about Iowa when it comes to picking presidential nominees. Moreover it is one of the least diverse states in the nation. As Coloradans, it is a good idea while watching the Iowa caucuses to ask this question: Why do these Iowa citizens have so much power in the presidential nominating process and we have so little?

Iowa is first because their state legislators unilaterally made them first. In 1972 Iowa political leaders scheduled the state's presidential caucuses one day and a week before the New Hampshire primary. Instantly the Iowa caucuses became the heavily publicized starting point on the presidential primary and caucuses calendar.

The brilliant part of this maneuver was that Iowa chose to hold caucuses rather than a primary. The state of New Hampshire has a law requiring that the New Hampshire presidential primary be scheduled one week earlier than any other state's presidential primary. By deciding to go with caucuses, Iowa avoided having New Hampshire schedule its primary a week ahead of Iowa.

Iowa's political leaders also did a clever job of creating the kind of precinct caucuses that attract media attention. On a Monday night in January or early February, Iowa Democrats and Republicans make their way to their separate precinct caucuses, usually held at the local public high school.

In the Democratic Party, the caucus attendees break up into smaller caucuses supporting particular presidential candidates. An important rule is that, for a presidential candidate to gain any supporters at the caucus, he or she must have the support of at least 15 percent of the caucus attendees. Those caucus attendees who initially support a candidate who gets less than 15

percent of the caucus attendees can, if they wish (and most will), walk across the room and give their support to one of the more popular candidates.

Thus in 2008, we saw many supporters of Democratic New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson, after failing to get 15 percent, shift over to the Barack Obama camp.

Republicans in Iowa come together and simply write their choice for the GOP nomination on a slip of paper.

Iowans love the attention and prestige of their outsized impact on the presidential nominating process. An added dividend is that presidential aspirants and the media spend untold millions on motel rooms, meals, rental cars and television ads in the "Hawkeye" state.

The most famous Iowa winner was Jimmy Carter, the relatively unknown former governor of Georgia who, in 1976, spent the better part of a year campaigning all over Iowa. His surprise victory in the Iowa caucuses bounced him into the lead for the Democratic nomination and eventually into the White House.

But others have done well in Iowa and then lost out further down the caucuses-primaries line. In 1988 the two Iowa winners – U.S. Representative Richard A. Gephardt of Missouri for the Democrats and U.S. Senator Bob Dole of Kansas for the Republicans – lost in New Hampshire and were soon out of the running.

We are surprised that more Americans do not get upset that Iowans and New Hampshire voters and citizens of other early voting states are so conspicuously over represented in the presidential nominating process. One reason is that the news media love the present system. The Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary and other early contests provide political events almost equivalent to the NFL Super Bowl. With such great media events on their hands, the news media are not going to be critical.

The "Iowa-New Hampshire First" system is unfair to other Americans – and that includes Coloradans.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy regularly write about Colorado and politics.

Colorado Springs Gazette
1-30-2020

NEW HAMPSHIRE PRIMARY COULD PREVIEW THE COLORADO PRIMARY

By Thomas E. Cronin and Robert D. Loevy

Coloradans will want to pay close attention to the New Hampshire presidential primary, coming up this Tuesday, February 11, 2020. Similar to Colorado, New Hampshire allows its citizens to register unaffiliated, and those unaffiliated voters can, if they wish, vote in either the Democratic or the Republican presidential primary.

Thus the way that New Hampshire's unaffiliated voters cast their ballots this Tuesday could give a good preview of how the unaffiliated vote will go in Colorado's presidential primary. We vote three weeks later on Tuesday, February 3, 2020, a date known as "Super Tuesday."

Unaffiliated voters in New Hampshire sometimes split up evenly and half vote in the Democratic primary and the other half vote in the Republican primary. When this happens, unaffiliated voters in New Hampshire can have a significant effect on which candidates win in both parties' primaries.

At other times, however, a big majority of the unaffiliated voters will like a particular candidate from one political party and vote as a large bloc for him or her in that party's presidential primary. When this happens, a candidate can score a big victory in New Hampshire and owe that victory to unaffiliated voters.

That is what happened with Arizona U.S. Senator John McCain in the 2000 Republican presidential primary in New Hampshire. Texas Governor George W. Bush won most of the votes from registered Republicans in that race, but a big majority of unaffiliated voters voted in the GOP contest and,

according to exit polls, cast their ballots 60 percent to 20 percent for McCain over Bush.

The result was an embarrassing loss in the Granite State for George W. Bush and a big boost for John McCain's candidacy. It took Bush more than two months to win enough primaries and caucuses to wrest the Republican nomination from McCain and go on to win the White House.

Therefore the big question in the New Hampshire presidential primary always is: Will the unaffiliated voters divide more or less evenly between the two parties, or will they mainly go for one candidate in one party – with dramatic results.

This time around in 2020, there is an incumbent Republican president running for reelection on the Republican side. That leads us to predict that most New Hampshire unaffiliated voters will choose to vote in the hotly contested Democratic primary. If these unaffiliateds mainly coalesce behind one candidate – say Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, or Joe Biden – that would definitely determine the New Hampshire winner this year.

And that also might give a big hint as to how unaffiliated voters in Colorado might all go into the Democratic presidential primary on Super Tuesday and have the major hand in determining the Colorado winner.

There are other reasons to take notice of the New Hampshire presidential primary. It is the oldest and most famous of the presidential primaries. Its results are "multiplied" and "exaggerated" because of their effect on states that vote later in the primaries and caucuses process.

Every spring in New Hampshire, when the snow begins to melt, the back roads become muddy and impassable. To enable New Hampshire voters to get to the polls, presidential primary day was held in January or February, when the ground and the back roads are still frozen and drivable.

The New Hampshire primary became important in 1952. Sherman Adams, the Republican governor, began an effort to secure the 1952 Republican nomination for General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the victorious commander of U.S. military forces in Europe during World War II.

Governor Adams instituted a presidential primary in which the voters cast their ballots directly for their favorite candidate rather than for uncommitted delegates to a state convention. As Adams planned, General "Ike" Eisenhower won in New Hampshire and got an early boost for his campaign for the 1952 Republican nomination and the White House.

If New Hampshire was going to have a Republican presidential primary in 1952, there also had to be a Democratic primary. The incumbent Democratic President, Harry S. Truman, said this new version of the New Hampshire primary was "eyewash." He declined to participate in it.

That was an error. Tennessee U.S. Senator Estes Kefauver ran in New Hampshire. In a giant upset, Kefauver beat Truman, a sitting U.S. president. Shortly thereafter, President Truman said he would not be running for another four years in the White House.

It was Senator Kefauver who first did one-on-one, door-to-door, diner-to-diner, town-to-town campaigning in New Hampshire. Kefauver also did the first New Hampshire "photo op." He put on a fur coat and had his photo taken while riding on a dog sled across the snowy fields of New Hampshire in the winter.

Alas for Kefauver, the Democratic Party in 1952 gave its presidential nomination to Adlai Stevenson, who was defeated by Dwight Eisenhower in the general election in November.

Television news played a major role in building the national significance of the New Hampshire presidential primary. The many small towns, with their white clapboard churches, wooden frame houses, and picturesque town halls, make attractive TV backdrops for campaigning candidates.

Along with Iowans and their caucuses, New Hampshire voters get the "first crack" at evaluating the presidential candidates, winnowing down the number of candidates with their votes. Candidates who voters in other states might have wanted to vote for often quit the race after doing poorly in Iowa and New Hampshire.

The key point here is “unfair.” New Hampshire voters have electoral powers denied to voters in most other states. They get major attention from campaigning presidential candidates and the news media that voters elsewhere never experience. In short, New Hampshire voters are “electoral royalty” who enjoy voting powers that we “electoral peasants” in other states lack.

It is puzzling why so many Americans allow New Hampshire voters to have these “exaggerated” and “multiplied” electoral powers over the presidential nomination process while voters in many other states have few or none.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy were longtime political science professors at Colorado College in Colorado Springs. They regularly write about Colorado and politics.

Colorado Springs Gazette
2-21-2020

NEVADA WILL BE IN SATURDAYS SPOTLIGHT; IT COULD HAVE BEEN COLORADO

By Thomas E. Cronin and Robert D. Loevy

The 2020 Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire primary essentially presented a tied race for the Democratic nomination for president. Vermont U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders and former South Bend Mayor Pete Buttegieg are running neck-in-neck after just two contests.

So its on to the two lucky states voting third and fourth. The western state of Nevada holds caucuses on Saturday, February 22. One week later, the southern state of South Carolina stages a primary election on Saturday, February 29.

This special one-state-at-a-time voting pattern ends at that point. On Tuesday, March 3, political party rules allow any state to vote, and a large number of states will participate in a caucuses/primary free-for-all known as Super Tuesday (one of those states is Colorado).

Nevada and South Carolina gained these coveted special positions in 2008 on orders from the national Democratic Party. There were many complaints that the first two states to vote – Iowa and New Hampshire – were predominantly white and middle class and did not adequately represent the many minority voters in the United States.

There also were objections that Iowa and New Hampshire going first were leaving large geographical regions of the United States out of the early caucuses/primary voting. Iowa was in the Middle West and New Hampshire in New England. But what about the Middle Atlantic states, the South, the Rocky Mountain states, and the West Coast states?

To rectify both the minorities problem and the geography problem, the Democratic National Committee (DNC) ordered up a stand-alone caucuses in Nevada and a stand-alone Democratic primary for South Carolina. Nevada has a significant number of Hispanic voters and, at the same time, is a western state (almost, but not quite, on the West Coast). South Carolina has a large percentage of African-American voters and is a typical southern state.

How lucky could Nevada and South Carolina get? Iowa and New Hampshire political leaders had worked hard to make their states extra influential in the presidential nominating process by maneuvering them into early voting positions in the primary/caucuses sweepstakes. Iowa created a caucuses rather than a primary to get ahead of New Hampshire. New Hampshire passed a law stipulating its presidential primary would be in front of any other's.

But Nevada and South Carolina political leaders did not have to lift a finger to get in preferred position. The Democratic National Committee did all their work for them by simply issuing a new party rule.

Nevada going third and South Carolina going fourth is one of the newer wrinkles in the presidential nominating process in the United States. The rule was put into effect in 2008 and has only been in use twice since – in 2012 and 2016. The new rule was most important in 2008 when an African-American, Barack Obama, was running for the Democratic nomination against Hillary Clinton. Strong support from South Carolina African-American voters enabled Obama to win in South Carolina. It was a big help to Obama in his successful drive to defeat Clinton for the nomination and win the White House the following November.

We are anticipating that Nevada and South Carolina will be unusually significant in the Democratic Party presidential nomination caucuses/primaries this year. With Sanders and Buttegieg having virtually tied in Iowa and New Hampshire, it is Nevada and South Carolina voters who will have the first shot at determining whether it will be Sanders or Buttegieg who will get the 2020 Democratic nomination. Contributing to

this scenario is that there are no Hispanic or African-American candidates left in the race to benefit from Nevada's Hispanic voters and South Carolina's African-American constituency.

There is another possible role for Nevada and South Carolina. One or the other might surprise observers by rescuing the candidacy of one of the candidates who did not do well in Iowa/New Hampshire, such as Elizabeth Warren, Joe Biden, or Amy Klobuchar. We do not expect this to happen, but it is a possibility.

This we do know. Because there was no clear winner in Iowa and New Hampshire, Nevada and South Carolina are going to be more important this time out than they have ever been before. Their lucky voters are going to have very significant votes to cast with important decisions to be made.

* * *

Colorado used to be one of three states in third position in the presidential caucuses primaries line-up (where Nevada is now). The other two states were Maryland and Georgia.

It happened in 1992. The Democratic National Committee opened up the Tuesday after New Hampshire and those three states grabbed the open slots. Colorado voted for California Governor Jerry Brown, Maryland voted for Massachusetts Senator Paul Tsongas, and Georgia voted for the eventual White House winner, Bill Clinton.

Think how important Colorado would be this year if our political leaders had held on to that third spot. Coloradans, and not Nevadans, would be voting third and starting to make that big choice between Sanders and Buttegieg – or perhaps reviving a different candidate's struggling campaign.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy are retired political scientists at Colorado College and have written extensively on presidential elections.

Colorado Springs Gazette
2-26-2020

COLORADO IS RIGHT TO HAVE A SUPER TUESDAY PRIMARY

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Congratulations to Colorado registered Democrats and registered unaffiliated voters. They have been voting by mail — or soon will cast their ballots at a vote center — in a "relevant" presidential primary. The results will be counted and announced on Super Tuesday, March 3.

"Relevant" means voting in a real election in which the final winner is still unknown. Under this nation's unsatisfactory presidential nominating system, many states' citizens cast their votes at caucuses and in primaries that are scheduled long after the winner has been previously decided in other states.

Although U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont has emerged from early contests in Iowa, New Hampshire, and Nevada with a lead, the race for the Democratic nomination is not over.

Colorado Democrats and unaffiliateds can vote for Sanders, or they can vote against Sanders in what is still a realistic effort to deny him the nomination.

In the process they can help to pick an alternative to Sanders from Joe Biden, Pete Buttigieg, Elizabeth Warren, or Amy Klobuchar. Or they can support former New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg, whose name is appearing on Super Tuesday in the race for the first time.

Super Tuesday this week is the first date on which Democratic Party rules allow any state to schedule a presidential caucuses or primary. About 14

other states are joining Colorado in grabbing this opportunity for an early vote.

Having a large number of states vote on the same presidential primary election day was the mid-1980s brainchild of the Democratic Leadership Council, a group of moderate Southern white Democrats who wanted to see the Democratic Party nominate more Southern oriented and more moderate candidates for president.

If a large number of Southern states voted on the same day as early in the primary schedule as possible, it would give a boost to presidential candidates from Southern states.

The Democrats found it easy to implement Super Tuesday in the 1980s because most of the state legislatures in the South still had Democratic majorities in both houses.

But Super Tuesday did not work well for moderate Southern Democrats in the 1988 primary season. The Southern vote split between Jesses Jackson, an African-American with a strong Civil Rights record, and Al Gore, a moderate U.S. senator from Tennessee.

With the Southern vote split, a northern liberal, Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis, won a number of key Southern states on Super Tuesday in 1988. Dukakis went on to win the Democratic nomination but lost the general election to Republican George H. W. Bush.

Four years later, in 1992, the moderate Southern candidate for the Democratic nomination for president was Bill Clinton, the governor of Arkansas. This time the Southern scenario worked. Bill Clinton won on Super Tuesday and went on to win the Democratic nomination and the White House.

By 2000, Super Tuesday had changed in character. It was no longer dominated by the Southern states. A number of states from around the nation caught the Super Tuesday craze and front-loaded their presidential caucuses and primaries on to that early date. Foremost were California and New York, the two most populous states in the nation. In addition, many of the New England states, except for New Hampshire, clambered aboard as well.

No rational individual or organized group set out to create a single presidential caucuses and primary day on which many states, some of them quite populous, would all vote. Super Tuesday evolved over the years out of totally random forces. It was an accidental product, created by the uncoordinated actions of a wide variety of persons and organizations, most of whom paid no attention whatsoever to what the others were doing.

Everything changes when so many states are holding presidential primaries on the same day. No longer is the campaign limited to one or two states with voting populations that are totally unrepresentative of the American people as a whole. Regional influences (New England liberalism versus Southern conservatism, etc.) negate one another. Populous states hold caucuses and primaries, as do states with small populations.

Candidates turn to a completely different campaign style. Shaking hands at the factory gate and chatting in some grandmother's kitchen is done only briefly, if at all, for the daily photo opportunity. The presidential caucuses and primaries become more like the general election in November, with candidates jetting from state to state and doing campaign events in giant airport hangars and sports arenas. Appeals to giant masses of primary voters are mainly delivered by television spot ads and direct mail.

We think Colorado made the right choice in scheduling its presidential primary on Super Tuesday. True, we are one of several states voting on Tuesday, but the race is still very much alive. Best of all, Colorado

Democrats and unaffiliateds are getting to participate in a "relevant" election.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy are retired political scientists at Colorado College and write on Colorado and politics.

Colorado Springs Gazette
3-8-2020

PRIMARIES GEAR UP FOR PHASE 3

By Thomas E. Cronin and Robert D. Loevy

Welcome to Phase 3 of the United States presidential nomination process. This is the three-month period from early March to early June when about 3/5ths of the 50 states, spread across the nation, hold many presidential primaries and just a few caucuses.

The action begins this Tuesday, March 10, when six states cast their 2020 primaries and caucuses ballots. Key among them will be the industrial Midwest state of Michigan. Then after that, on March 17, four more states will vote. Three of them, however, are populous states with many delegates at stake – Florida, Illinois, and Ohio.

If one candidate sweeps those three big states, at that point the Democratic contest could be over and the winner the de facto Democratic nominee.

To review, Phase 1 of the primaries and caucuses was the four contests in Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada, and South Carolina. With their individual early voting dates officially designated by the Democratic National Committee, these four states receive direct personal campaigning from the major party candidates for president. The popular image of hope-to-be presidents meeting families in their kitchens in Iowa and New Hampshire is an accurate one.

Phase 2 was last week's Super Tuesday, when 14 states, seven of them in the South, voted all on the same day. Colorado joined the Super Tuesday voting for the first time in 20 years. Because only three days separated the South Carolina Democratic primary from Super Tuesday, there was no opportunity for Iowa/New Hampshire style personal campaigning in the

Super Tuesday states. Candidates turned to the internet, television advertising, television debates, and speaking to large audiences in major cities to make their plea for votes.

Phase 3 is a jumble. Individual states schedule primaries and caucuses anytime in the three-month period they want to. No rational individual or organized group set out to create this lengthy period in which many states hold nominating contests. Each state does what its state legislature, or in some cases its political party leadership, decides for it.

Here is what to keep an eye on in Phase 3:

- It is different every four years. States move their primaries or caucuses around frequently from one date to another. Some even move back and forth between Phase 2 (Super Tuesday) and Phase 3. California and New York are two populous states that have moved their presidential primary day around quite a bit over the past 40 years or so. Over the long haul, Colorado has had trouble choosing between primaries and caucuses as well as whether to vote on Super Tuesday or not.
- There are big days on which a large number of populous states are holding primaries or caucuses. Then there are times when just one populous state is voting. States voting on big days receive less campaigning from candidates because of so much activity crammed into just one day. In contrast, states that are fortunate enough to have the voting day all to themselves will experience many more candidate visits.
- It is good for a candidate during Phase 3 to enlist the support of state and local party elected officials. Endorsements from a state's governor, U.S. senators, mayors, and state legislators give the candidate good publicity at virtually no cost.
- National media coverage is the best way to campaign for votes during Phase 3. An interview on a national news program creates free TV exposure in every state holding a primary or caucuses on a particular day.

- An occasional problem in Phase 3 is there is no way to determine when a candidate has definitely won his party's nomination for president. Some losing candidates take themselves out of the race, something that has already happened in 2020 with a number of major Democratic contenders. Other candidates, however, refuse to quit and continue their campaign long after the news media have declared that another candidate is the certain party nominee.

Since 1960, a winning candidate has generally emerged in both political parties prior to the end of Phase 3. In some cases, winners have been declared after Phase 2 (Super Tuesday) or right after Phase 1 (Iowa, New Hampshire, etc.). In 2008 a lengthy competition between Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton was not decided until almost the start of the Democratic National Convention (Obama got the most delegates and the nomination).

Throughout the past 60 years, Phase 3 (or earlier) has essentially produced both the major party nominees for the November election.

This year's race for presidential party nominations is proving lengthier than most. Vermont U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders did best in the first four primaries and caucuses (Phase1), but former Vice President Joe Biden scored a stunning come-from-behind victory on Super Tuesday (Phase 2). Right now it looks like Phase 3 is going to be a slugfest for the Democratic nomination between Sanders and Biden.

Prepare for what may be a lengthy, and exciting, Phase 3 grind.

Colorado Springs Gazette
4-5-2020

HERE'S WHAT WAS NEW IN THE 2020 PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARIES

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

The coronavirus pandemic has in effect put an early end to the 2020 race for the Democratic nomination for president of the United States. Vermont U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders is reported to be "assessing" his political future after being "routed" in state primaries in populous Texas, Michigan, Florida, and Illinois. Press and pundits see former Vice President Joe Biden as having an "almost insurmountable" lead in winning the delegate votes needed for the nomination.

That makes this a good time to review the current presidential nominating system and see what was new and different in 2020. The nominating system is always changing as states and political parties tinker with its many aspects.

A big change was the creation by the Democratic National Committee of monthly candidate TV debates that were presented live on major cable and over-the-air television stations last summer and fall. There had been candidate TV debates in previous presidential primaries and caucuses, but they usually were on lesser known cable channels and rarely included all the candidates. An important new feature in 2020 was requiring candidates to do well in public opinion polls and fund raising in order to be allowed to move on to the subsequent month's debate.

We think the debates made a big difference. They had the effect of making it a national race rather than one narrowly focused on early-voting states like Iowa and New Hampshire. Month-by-month the debates plus the polls established Joe Biden as the leading, though weakening, candidate. At

the same time, the debates plus the polls enabled a relatively unknown newcomer, South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, to establish himself as a major national contender.

All of this hurt Bernie Sanders in the Iowa caucuses, which he expected to win easily. Sanders narrowly lost Iowa to Buttigieg. In our view, Buttigieg could not have won Iowa without the Democratic Party's national TV debates plus the polls.

Another difference in 2020 from past nominating struggles was the failure of the Iowa caucuses to produce election results on caucuses night. Turning the reporting of results over to an inadequately tested computer program resulted in firm results not being available for several days. Since the early 1970s the American public had been accustomed to getting the first report of votes in a nomination struggle from Iowa. This lack of timely results harmed both Buttigieg and Sanders by downplaying the "bounce" each should have received from their near tie for first place in Iowa.

We found one benefit from the big mess-up in Iowa. In discussing the fiasco, a number of commentators wrote about how unfair it is for Iowa, with its lack of minorities and "big city" voters, to get the extra influence of voting first. Some writers even presented reforms for the primaries that pointedly took Iowa out of getting to vote first.

And speaking of Iowa-style caucuses, they now have mainly been replaced by primaries. That happened in Colorado for 2020, as our state legislature replaced caucuses with a presidential primary held on Super Tuesday, which was won by Bernie Sanders. Only three states are staging caucuses this year – Iowa, Nevada, and Wyoming.

Iowa invented the Iowa caucuses in order to get to vote prior to New Hampshire, which insists on being the first primary. Nevada, which votes third, was assigned caucuses when the Democratic Party made it the state that would show Hispanic preferences in the presidential selection process. That means Wyoming is the only state holding caucuses that does not have a special reason or advantage to holding caucuses.

This is a major change. There were enough caucuses in 2008 that Barack Obama was winning caucuses while his opponent for the Democratic nomination, Hillary Clinton, was winning primaries. Most of the caucuses that helped Obama beat Clinton in 2008, and eventually win the presidency, are now primaries.

That is a change we support. Caucuses, with their low turnouts and lengthy evening meetings, tend to over-represent the extremes of the two political parties – more liberal for the Democrats and more conservative for the Republicans. Primaries, with their higher voter turnouts and shorter periods of time required for voting, tend to produce more moderate results. We think the greater emphasis on primaries over caucuses this year helped a moderate, Joe Biden, snatch the Democratic nomination away from the more liberal Bernie Sanders.

Another change we noticed for 2020 was the reemergence of Southern Super Tuesday and its dynamic effect on the Democratic race. Originally created by Al Gore and Bill Clinton to make Southern states a real force in the Democratic presidential primaries, Super Tuesday lost some of its Southern flavor when a large number of non-Southern states also chose to vote on that date. Enough of those states dropped off of Super Tuesday (New York is a good example) that it now has regained much of its original Southern character. It is well known that African-American voters in those Southern states on Super Tuesday in 2020 voted strongly for Joe Biden and helped him overwhelm Bernie Sanders on that key day of voting.

So there were four big changes in the 2020 Democratic presidential primaries to date. 1. The monthly TV debates with polling and fund raising tests for moving on. 2. The Iowa caucuses counting and reporting disaster. 3. The replacement of presidential caucuses with presidential primaries. 4. The reemergence of Southern Super Tuesday.

Of course the biggest difference in 2020 will be the total interruption of the presidential primary process by the coronavirus. We will have to wait for all those postponed primaries, probably held sometime this summer, to

get the definitive word that Joe Biden won the 2020 Democratic party nomination for president.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy are retired professors of political science at Colorado College who write on Colorado and national politics.

Colorado Springs Gazette
3-28-2020

STRESS TESTS FOR THE REPUBLIC

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

During the 2008 economic crisis, we became aware of "stress tests" for banks and other lending institutions. A "stress test" is basically an assessment of whether a bank or lending institution has enough cash on hand to be able to cover its debts and the demands of its depositors. In other words, can the bank survive under the financial stresses of the recession.

Today, the Coronavirus pandemic and resulting worldwide economic downturns are testing our institutions as they have rarely been tested before. Do our governmental institutions have the strength and ability to handle this double crisis? How does our government rate on a stress test?

Federal Reserve Board. The Federal Reserve Board, under chair Jerome H. Powell, has responded impressively to our current crisis. It is reusing several strategies deployed in the 2008-09 financial crisis, yet it has gone well beyond past practices. Thus, the Fed is now lending money to large corporations as "bridge financing." Its "Main Street Business Lending Program" is creative and unprecedented, as is its widespread buying of corporate bonds.

CDC, NIH, National Health Services. Seventy-nine-year-old NIAID Director Anthony Fauci, Ambassador Deborah Birx, U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams and other top health officials have helped reassure and guide the national government's response. These offices are seldom in the limelight, yet they are now reminding us of the many invaluable and affirmative activities of our national government.

The Vice-Presidency. One of America's most ambiguous and paradoxical institutions, the influence of the vice-presidency depends on the

whim of a president. Vice President Pence has stepped up to his assignment as Chief Coordinator of the government's Coronavirus Task Force. We have heard from him more than at any other time in his three years of service. He has appeared to be bipartisan in his work with federal agencies, Congress and the nation's mayors and governors. He builds upon the leadership previously shown by vice-presidents, such as Henry Wallace during WWII as well as Dick Cheney with George W. Bush and Joe Biden under President Obama.

Governors and Mayors. The current crisis reminds us once again that our government, unlike that of China, Russia or Saudi Arabia, is a distinctively federal system made up of 50 states as well as the national government. Many of the policy-making and problem-solving responsibilities of governing reside at the state and local levels. Both Democratic and Republican state governors, and some big city mayors, have shown resilient leadership in dealing with the pandemic.

The Role of Government. War, recession, and now a pandemic inevitably alters the shape and scope of governmental power. Americans traditionally have loved freedom, liberty and a smaller rather than a larger heavy-handed government. While today we may understand the urgency of social distancing and medical guidelines, still we have never liked the idea of the government telling us how to lead our lives.

Crises inevitably bring calls for more governmental action, more centralization and, people fear, the diminishing of civil liberties and personal freedoms. The current crisis is no exception. It raises the perennial issues of freedom versus authority and individual versus collective rights. These are issues debated by Machiavelli, Hobbes and the American founders over the centuries.

American Elections. We have never—even during the Civil War and through World War II—postponed a presidential election. Yet we are postponing state presidential primary elections, virtually suspending the 2020 presidential campaign. There is a big push right now for more states to follow the path of Colorado, Oregon and three other states that have

demonstrated the virtues of voting by mail-in paper ballots. But there is considerable uncertainty about how best to conduct county and state assemblies and prepare for this summer's national nominating conventions.

Former Vice President Joe Biden has essentially been side-tracked in his campaign for the Democratic nomination. It is awkward for him to second guess the Trump administration at a time like this. It can be done yet it has to be done delicately.

Meanwhile, Biden's major opponent, Bernie Sanders, has highlighted the reality and the injustice of inequality in America, yet lecturing about a needed new revolution seems ill-timed as the country copes with a pandemic attack and likely recession.

President Trump has had to cancel his popular rallies yet has managed to exploit the almost daily televised Coronavirus health briefings. He has worked to reassure the country and support his health advisors. He also has made confusing and at times misleading ad-hoc comments about the pandemic. His gratuitous criticism of the Chinese and Obama are notably unproductive. No one benefits from this type of blame-gaming.

Congress and the Treasury. Kudos to 80-year-old House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin for persevering in crafting an economic stimulus and "recovery" package. Congress seldom acts quickly, and this is one of the most complicated and high stakes pieces of legislation ever enacted. Congress is just doing its job when it haggles, negotiates hard, and slowly works toward compromise and, eventually, action.

Americans are not happy about "bailouts" of banks, automobile companies, airline, or anyone. The idea of bailing out cruise line companies is jolting in a country with hundreds of thousands of homeless. Then there is the question of Boeing airlines. It's one of our largest and most strategic companies. But we need it, and it needs a bailout.

Many Americans will rightly wonder why a government that has not achieved health insurance for everyone can favor bailouts for businesses large and small.

FEMA, U.S. Military, and National Guard. The Federal Emergency Management Agency, the military and the National Guard all deserve praise for mobilizing resources to help the hardest-hit areas of the country.

Doctors, Nurses and Drug Researchers. The crisis has produced countless heroes who are working incredibly long hours under the most exacting of circumstance. Our hospital system is being tested as never before. Our medics and first responders can't shelter in place. They have demanding jobs to do. Kudos, too, to the drug researchers and drug companies racing to devise better testing and new vaccines.

Good Neighbors. Difficult times bring out the generosity from good people. We are all hearing about younger neighbors volunteering on behalf of older neighbors, corporations donating to the unemployed, star athletes providing funds to their arena's furloughed "gig workers", and churches, food banks, and countless others stepping up and helping those in need.

There is a limit to how much any of our governments can do for us during hard times. National, state, and local are being stress-tested as never before. They have survived such tests in the past, and they will survive this one.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy regularly write on American politics and Colorado.

Colorado Springs Gazette
4-12-2020

LIBERALS DOMINATED COLORADO'S 2020 DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Colorado Democrats, joined by unaffiliated voters who chose to vote with them in the 2020 Democratic Colorado presidential primary on Super Tuesday last March 3rd, are continuing their recent march to the political left. The most liberal candidate, Vermont U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders, swept to victory in 55 of Colorado's 64 counties.

We just examined the official results as reported on the Colorado Secretary of State's election website. This is what we learned.

Sanders lost six counties to former Vice President Joe Biden. Two counties, Cheyenne County (county seat Cheyenne Wells) and Yuma County (Wray), went for former New York Mayor and publishing tycoon Michael Bloomberg. Phillips County (Holyoke) had a three-way tie between Sanders, Bloomberg, and Biden.

The anti-Sanders counties had a lot in common. All but one were lowly populated rural and agricultural counties located on the Eastern Plains or in the Eastern Slope mountains. The one exception was Douglas County (Castle Rock), which is a heavily Republican suburban county in the Denver metropolitan area. It voted for Joe Biden.

The rural agricultural counties that Sanders lost to Joe Biden were Baca County (Springfield), Crowley County (Ordway), Custer County (Westcliff), Jackson County (Walden), and Kiowa County (Eads).

But for the exceptions noted above, Bernie Sanders rolled to easy wins in county after county in Denver metro, along the Front Range, in the

ski counties in the Rocky Mountains, and did particularly well in Southern Colorado with its large numbers of Hispanic voters.

Although there were many candidates on Colorado's Democratic presidential primary ballot, only four received substantially more than 1.1 percent of the vote. We limit our analysis to those four. They were Bernie Sanders, 37.9 percent of the statewide vote; Joe Biden, 25.2 percent; Michael Bloomberg, 18.9 percent; and Massachusetts U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren, 18.0 percent. Votes for other major candidates such as South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg and Minnesota U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar were not reported because they dropped out of the race just before the date of the Colorado primary.

We were surprised by Elizabeth Warren's fourth place finish in a Colorado Democratic presidential primary. Colorado gave women the vote early on, in 1893, and has been one of the top states for having high percentages of women in both house of the state legislature. But gender did not seem to be an issue for Colorado Democrats and the Democrat leaning independents who joined them this time out. The election apparently centered more on three social welfare issues that Bernie Sanders regularly promotes – Medicare for all citizens, a free public college education for all students, and eliminating most student loan debt for recent college graduates. These issues worked to Sanders's advantage.

Elizabeth Warren was stuck in single digits and the teens in Colorado. Her worst county was Conejos County (Conejos) in Southern Colorado, where she came in at 6.6 percent. Her best county, at 23.4 percent, was small and eccentric Mineral County (Creede) in the Rio Grande valley.

Bernie Sanders did very well in Colorado in Hispanic voter rich Southern Colorado. He polled 44.7 percent of the vote in Alamosa County (Alamosa) to Joe Biden's 23.0 percent. He racked up 41.9 percent in Costilla County (San Luis) to Biden's 26.5 percent. He recorded his highest vote percentage in the state, 54.3 percent, in Saguache County (Saguache) where Biden got only 15.9 percent. Saguache was Biden's lowest county vote percentage.

Sanders had been doing well with Hispanic voters before coming to Colorado. A week before the Colorado primary, running in the Nevada presidential caucuses, Sanders won Nevada easily with the strong support of Hispanic voters.

Sanders also did well in Colorado ski country, a recently emerging center of liberal voter strength in Colorado. Typical was Gunnison County (Gunnison), home of the Crested Butte ski area, where Sanders scored 49.8 percent to Biden's 19.2 percent. Farther west in San Miguel County (Telluride), Sanders slammed Biden 46.8 percent to 20.8 percent.

We should note that Sanders had a supporter and volunteer base that dates back to his 2016 presidential race. He had made dozens of appearances in Colorado over the past five years, including campaigning on behalf of both presidential nominee Hillary Clinton in 2016, and candidate for governor Jared Polis in 2018. He had acquired name recognition and a fan base.

We saw the Sanders campaign and the Warren campaign as both being decidedly liberal in character. While Sanders hammered on welfare and health issues, Warren ran a slightly more moderate campaign, albeit a more detailed campaign with "plans" and price tags for achieving liberal goals. In an effort to measure the full liberal strength of registered Democrats and unaffiliateds voting in the Democratic presidential primary in Colorado, we combined the Sanders and Warren votes on a county by county basis.

Denver, the richest source of Democratic votes in Colorado, went for Sanders-Warren combined with 60.4 percent of the vote. In Boulder County (Boulder), this liberal duo copped 61.3 percent. Larimer County (Fort Collins), a populous Front Range county, went for Sanders-Warren by 60.8 percent. Statewide the liberal Sanders and Warren received 55.8 percent of the primary vote compared to just 44.2 percent for moderates Biden and Bloomberg combined.

By voting so strongly for Bernie Sanders, Colorado failed to become part of the national narrative in the Super Tuesday presidential primary

voting. Although California also voted for Sanders, the biggest story that night was that a large number of Southern states with high percentages of African-American voters went for Joe Biden. This portrayed him, rightly or wrongly, as the best bet to win the Democratic Party presidential nomination.

Exactly the same electorate – registered Democrats and unaffiliateds choosing to vote in the Democratic primary – will be voting in the June Colorado U.S. Senate primary. Popular former Colorado governor John Hickenlooper, a moderate, is considered the frontrunner. But well-regarded former Colorado House Speaker Andrew Romanoff is running against him as a liberal. The results we just reviewed from Colorado's Democratic presidential primary, in which liberal Bernie Sanders came in a strong first, suggest the Senate primary could be a closer race than some pundits have suggested.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy are political scientists at Colorado College who write on Colorado and national politics.

Colorado Springs Gazette
4-18-2020

JUNK THE PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY SYSTEM

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

It's time to send the current complex, irrational, unfair and ridiculously long system of state primaries and caucuses that nominate presidential candidates to the dumpster.

Teddy Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson were among the early champions of holding a national primary to let party voters decide their party nominees for the White House. Americans, across party lines, favor this method. And this is how we nominate most state and city officials.

The 2020 primaries and caucuses were a good example of the unfairness built into the present system. Competitive voting between Sanders and Biden ended on Tuesday, March 17, when Biden, for the third Tuesday in a row, defeated Sanders in most of the primaries being held on that day. To most observers, the race for the Democratic nomination was over. Within a month all of Biden's rivals had dropped out and endorsed him.

But there was a problem. Twenty-two of the 50 states had not held their primaries or caucuses yet. That is 22 states where Democrats (and in some states unaffiliated voters as well) were denied their right to cast a meaningful ballot in the 2020 Democratic Party presidential nomination contest.

Both populous and not so populous states dropped into this “too late and left-out” category. Big states such as New York and Pennsylvania were disenfranchised along with small states like Rhode Island and Wyoming. Middle-sized states – Maryland, New Jersey, Oregon, etc. – lost meaningful participation as well.

When the coronavirus situation clears up a bit, postponed presidential primaries will be held. Loyal party members will troop to the polls (or mail-in ballots) to cast their votes. Yet what kind of election is it when the winner has already been known for weeks or months?

The general pattern in U.S. presidential elections is that presidential primary contests are routinely over about halfway through the primary calendar, usually in March or April. (The full calendar runs from early February to early June.)

Some are de facto over after only two contests – the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary. That occurred in the 2004 Democratic contest when John Kerry quickly disposed of former Vermont Governor Howard Dean. The only contest that went the full length of the primary calendar, February to June, was in 2008 when Barack Obama upset Hillary Clinton for the Democratic nomination and then went on to win the White House.

That so many states get left out of meaningful participation in the primaries and caucuses voting is just one of our many reasons for wanting to reform the presidential nominating system in the United States. Here are others.

It is bordering on the ridiculous that two states, Iowa and New Hampshire, are allowed to vote first and have a magnified influence over who wins and who loses. The small populations of these two states and their lack of minority voters add to the unfairness. In a reformed system, no states will get the unfair advantage of voting first and thereby unduly affecting the final outcome.

Super Tuesday, the first date on which any state can conduct a primary or caucuses, continues to be dominated by Southern states. That gives the South tremendous leverage, not shared by other regions of the nation, to propel forward particular presidential candidates. This year's Super Tuesday propelled the candidacy of Joe Biden for the Democratic nomination, mainly because high percentages of Southern African-Americans supported him.

Thus we have a system that greatly empowers certain state voters and completely disenfranchises others.

If we are to have equal treatment of all American voters in the presidential nominating process, Congress must pass a law creating two national presidential primaries, one for each major political party. On the same day, perhaps on a Tuesday in early August, all party members throughout the nation in each major political party will cast their vote for their favored candidate for president. Two or three weeks later, if no one has won a majority, the top two plurality winners in each political party will runoff against each other. In the runoff, the majority winner of that race will be the party nominee.

The president of the United States is the only nationally elected official in the country. It makes sense for Congress to create a national system, guaranteeing voting equality to ever party member, for selecting major political party nominees.

There is nothing radical about this proposal. Most states use statewide primaries to nominate party candidates for state offices. Many cities do too. And a few states and many cities have runoffs between the top two finishers in the primary to guarantee majority party support for the winning nominee. Both Denver and Colorado Springs use this system to elect their mayor.

Here are a few questions asked about this change. How would one qualify to run in a party's national primary? There would have to be some type of signature petition process such as Colorado has. A candidate would have to collect signatures from perhaps a million party members spread across the country. Details of this requirement will be determined later.

What about "third parties?" They would continue their current process of selecting their tickets at their national conventions.

What about the voting rights of independents and unaffiliateds? We would like to see the Colorado system adopted – thus permitting independents to select the party primary of their choice. But this could be left up to the states.

What about the helpful presidential primary TV debates? These still would be held by the political parties having a competitive race. They could be held somewhat along the lines the Democratic National Committee sponsored them these past few months. But they should be limited to just a few in the late spring or early summer.

What about conducting the balloting by mail? We like the mail-in systems used in Oregon, Colorado and Utah. And nearly half the states now allow some form of no-excuse absentee voting. We think this will be widely adopted, but this is a matter individual states can decide. States will still be responsible for running their elections.

Are there some downsides to this reform? Yes, money and name recognition will remain overly important. And little known or ideologically attractive candidates who might have won in Iowa (like Jimmy Carter, Bernie Sanders, Pete Buttigieg or Rick Santorum) will be disadvantaged.

Voters should be treated equally. Let's get rid of our highly unfair and unequal system of presidential primaries and caucuses. Congress should replace it with a National Primary and Runoff system.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy are political scientists at Colorado College who write on Colorado and national politics.

Colorado Springs Gazette
5-3-2020

THE VIRTUES OF PREMITTING CITIZENS TO CAST THEIR VOTES BY MAIL

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Americans believe in the consent of the governed and the right of every citizen 18 years of age and older to vote. More recently, many Americans have come to believe in the right to vote by mail.

Five states, including Colorado and Utah, have allowed all citizens to vote by mail in recent years. Just about every state allows ill or absent citizens, such as military or diplomats, to send in their votes by mail. Some states, such as Nebraska, permit voting by mail in rural counties where the drive to get to a polling place is considered a hardship.

States such as Arizona and California permit what is called "no excuse" requests for absentee ballots. No reason need be given to get a mail-in ballot. These states have seen a marked increase in the number of voters preferring this method of voting.

Most election officials in most states predict we will see more voters voting by mail in 2020 than ever before. Journalist Ron Brownstein notes that six key "swing states" – Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Florida, Arizona and North Carolina – already permit their citizens to vote by mail for any reason.

A recent *Wall Street Journal*/*NBC News* poll found that 58 percent of Americans favor mail-in voting. An even higher percentage, 67 percent, support holding the coming November 3rd presidential election by mail-in ballot because of the tragic Coronavirus pandemic that has hit the nation. Packing into traditional polling places, where the virus can spread, is a risk many Americans would like to avoid this year.

There is a political party divide on this. Eighty-two percent of Democrats back voting by mail as a permanent change, as do 61 percent of independent voters. Only 31 percent of Republicans, however, support it.

President Trump has slammed this reform as "crazy" and "very dangerous." "Republicans," he warned, "should fight very hard when it comes to this [reform]." He even predicted that, if voting by mail was nationalized, "you'd never have a Republican elected in this country again." Presumably, Trump was referring to presidential elections.

But Republican legislators in the South have echoed Trump's concerns, saying "this will certainly drive up turnout. And that will be extremely devastating to Republicans [down here]."

Voting by mail is most strongly endorsed by those who consider themselves "very liberal" and most strongly opposed by those who identify as "very conservative." It is favored by a majority in nearly every state, with Alabama and Mississippi being the exceptions.

Democrats generally believe voting by mail is more convenient for those who work two jobs, are handicapped or whose work makes it difficult to spend time waiting in line to vote. Republicans who are supportive of voting by mail note that Republican candidates are typically benefitted by older voters, who tend to be more conservative and who would take advantage of voting by mail. Texas, for example, provides "no excuse" absentee ballots for anyone over the age of 65.

Yet many Republicans, as well as some others, worry about election integrity. They worry about election fraud. One source of fraud is "vote-harvesting," when an operative "harvests" votes from people who do not plan to vote themselves. This has happened on rare occasions in North Carolina and Miami. The fear is that this would be all too easy in retirement homes.

Election officials in Washington state and Colorado – where every election is vote-by mail – say that voter fraud is exceedingly rare. The *Economist* concluded that more American were killed by lightning than participated in absentee voter fraud in recent years.

Will this November's presidential election be conducted by voting by mail procedures? Unlikely. In addition to Republican opposition, there would be prohibitive start-up costs for those states with little or no experience with voting by mail.

Here are the key questions:

Q. Which state does the best job of protecting mail-in voting integrity? Colorado and Washington are thought to be the states with the best practices. Colorado, for example, has a sophisticated signature verification program where every signature on a mail-in ballot is verified against signatures that have been obtained earlier, for example, when we obtain our drivers licenses or register to vote. Bipartisan inspectors examine cases in dispute, and some voters are contacted to verify the accuracy of their ballot.

Election administrators emphasize the importance of having up-to-date and accurate voter registration records. Colorado mails postcards to voters before elections and makes judgments about not mailing ballots to addresses where the postcards are returned as undeliverable.

Q. Does voting by mail increase turnout and advantage one party over the other? Voting by mail modestly increases voter turnout. Researchers find it increases turnout more in local and primary elections than in more highly publicized national elections.

Many studies conclude there is no significant advantage to one party over another. In a recent election in Wisconsin, however, voters who voted early or by absentee ballot seemed to lean toward Democrats. Some researchers believe that, while older voters are more comfortable voting by mail, minorities are less inclined to do so.

Q. What about internet voting? Internet voting is already permitted in some circumstances. For example, military personnel are encouraged to vote by internet. These voters may have to provide photo ID or selfie photos for verification.

The National Cybersecurity Center, located in Colorado Springs, has been collaborating with several states and counties to help make internet

voting secure for overseas and disabled voters. They recently helped King County (Seattle) conduct a special district issue referendum by internet.

Forrest Senti, an executive at the Cybersecurity Center, agrees that no voting method is completely without flaws. Yet voting by internet, he notes, is becoming increasingly more secure and does increase voter participation.

Most of us do business over the internet. We deal with banks and manage investments. Recent months have seen a surge in Zoom conferences, telemedicine and internet shopping. Internet voting is likely to evolve slowly, and only as one of several options, including voting by mail. There are still issues of malware infections and possible cyber interventions.

Coloradans should be proud to live in one of the early states that pioneered the process of voting by mail. Several states have contacted state elections officials in Denver asking for counsel as they prepare for significantly increased voting by mail. It has been impressive that there has been virtually no partisanship in how our voting by mail process has been administered by our state officials.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy regularly write about Colorado and politics. They are co-authors of "Colorado Politics and Policy."

Not Used
5-7-2020

THE STEALING OF VOTES – AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Our thanks to Janice Taylor for her letter-to-the-editor noting the problem of voter fraud that is often mentioned in connection with mail-in voting. She was responding to our opinion column advocating both mail-in voting and, in the future, digital voting on the internet.

Vote fraud in the form of casting votes for other people, living and dead, has long been a problem in American electoral life. It reached its greatest notoriety in the late 1800s when political bosses at the top of powerful political machines wielded strong control over the nation's big cities, particularly on the East Coast and in the Midwest.

Tom Cronin grew up in the Boston area and Bob Loevy in Baltimore.

Both witnessed the illegal excesses of their hometown political machines that often put former governors and top legislators in state and federal prisons for awhile.

One widespread form of voting in the early United States was paper ballots. States passed strict laws on how ballots should be marked (with an X and no other letter or sign) and with what instrument (a pencil not a pen). Ballots not properly marked were declared "spoiled" by election judges and not counted in the election.

Political boss controlled election judges made skillful use of the spoiled ballot. They would set low standards for ballots supporting machine backed candidates, accepting check marks made with ink pens and letting the ballots count in the election. With opposition ballots, however, strict

standards were set and the many "spoiled" ballots that resulted were thrown in the wastebasket.

It was hoped that voting machines would cure the high amount of vote stealing associated with paper ballots. Instead of marking paper ballots, voters would pull levers and the votes would be tabulated by the voting machine. Less chance for error was the main selling point.

But voting machines were as open to hanky-panky as paper ballots. Under the "jam," political machine members got in line to vote early and took their time voting. The resulting long lines of people waiting to vote drove away non-political machine voters who did not have time to wait. Sometimes political bosses would physically jam the voting machines with paper clips, nails, or even screwdrivers, thereby creating longer waiting lines while a repairperson was being sent from the voting office.

And there was the "demonstration," where a political machine member would ask an election judge how to vote on the voting machine. The election judge, part of the ploy, would carefully pull the levers next to the names of the political machine candidates, thus casting illegal votes for them. If multiple demonstrations were requested, then multiple votes could be stolen for each political machine candidate.

Over the years, there were attempts to steal votes from voting machines by obliterating a rival candidate's name on the ballot. There were recorded cases of chisels and nitric acid being used to affect this "name dropper." More frequently black tire tape was placed over the rival candidate's name. The logic was simple – if you cannot see a candidate's name on the voting machine you cannot vote for her or him.

In Baltimore in the 1950s there was the "Mickey Finn." This was giving an uncooperative election judge a drink with a powerful laxative in it. While the judge was out of the room, all the other vote fraud tricks described above could be undertaken without being observed or curtailed. Also frequently used was the "switcheroo," where election judges, reading the results off the voting machine to be sent downtown to voting headquarters,

would switch the results in such away the political machine candidate would come out the winner.

The big point here is that elections are only as honest as the people running them. The best guarantee of election honesty is when Democratic Party election judges carefully watch the work of Republican judges and vice-versa. Whether paper ballots, or voting machines, or mail-in ballots are used makes little difference if the judges running the election are not truly bipartisan and thus truly honest.

We are reminded of a voting precinct in East Baltimore during the 1950s famous for its large Democratic electoral majorities. It turned out that the Republican election judges in the precinct were both members of the local Democratic Club. There was little hope for voter honesty there.

In our original column we praised the vote-signature verification techniques now available to election officials. As one election official told us several years ago, the professionals at the election office can now do a better job of verifying voters than underpaid election judges scattered out into the many voting precincts.

That is the main reason we praise the mail-in balloting currently in use in Colorado and look forward to digital voting by internet in the future.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy are longtime political scientists at Colorado College who write about national and Colorado politics.

Colorado Springs Gazette
5-31-2020

EL PASO COUNTY POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY 101

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Republicans dominate, but Democrats are a force in El Paso County.

El Paso County, with its county seat at Colorado Springs, produces more votes for the Republican Party than any other county in Colorado. That said, the county also contains a significant body of Democratic voters who dominate a considerable geographic portion of the county and win some important elections, mainly for the state legislature, as a result.

A recent precinct-by-precinct study of El Paso County, using results from the 2018 election for governor, revealed that Democratic voters tend to be concentrated in the older parts of the county, particularly those with housing constructed in the late 1800s or early 1900s. Republicans, on the other hand, have mainly settled in the newer parts of the county, especially those developed from the end of World War II to the present day.

In the 2018 governor election, Democrat Jared Polis won statewide but lost El Paso County to Republican Walker Stapleton by 58.7 percent Republican to 41.3 percent Democratic.

With the 2020 presidential election well underway (mail-in ballots for Colorado's June 30th primary will be mailed early next month), let us look at where the Republicans and Democrats prevail in El Paso County – and therefore Colorado Springs – going from west to east.

Beginning in Ute Pass in the foothills of Pike's Peak in the communities of Cascade, Chipeta Park, and Green Mountain Falls, the flavor is moderately Republican. The GOP candidate received 53.3 percent of the two-party vote compared to 46.7 percent for the Democrat.

On to Manitou Springs and Old Colorado City plus west Colorado Springs. These are some of the oldest communities in the state let alone El Paso County, with many structures dating to the late 1800s. Manitou Springs clocked in electorally at 67.9 percent Democratic and Old Colorado City and adjoining portions of west Colorado Springs at 65.0 percent Democratic.

Next there is the general downtown area of Colorado Springs, from below Cimarron Street on the south to Uintah Street on the north. Although there is much that is new and modern in the immediate downtown area, there is an amazing amount of turn of the 20th century housing in and adjacent to downtown. At a whopping 75.5 percent, it is the most Democratic part of El Paso County.

Just south of downtown is the old neighborhood of Ivywild, anchored by the repurposed former Ivywild Elementary School. This area voted 58.8 percent Democratic.

North of downtown sits one of the oldest and best preserved Victorian neighborhoods in Colorado Springs – the Old North End. It cast its ballots 65.5 percent Democratic. To the East is the Patty Jewett neighborhood, a group of early 20th century Victorian and Arts-and-Crafts homes opposite Patty Jewett municipal golf course. It voted 71.8 percent Democratic.

East of downtown is Shook's Run, and east of there is southeast Colorado Springs, noted for its many economic and educational challenges. Here much of the housing is immediate post-World War II small ranch houses and apartment buildings. It is 60.4 percent Democratic.

And that is about it for solidly Democratic areas in Colorado Springs. Looking back at Manitou Springs, we see an east-to-west stretch of the city running through Manitou, Old Colorado City and downtown that ends in southeast Colorado Springs. This is the Democratic Party heartland in El Paso County.

Moving on, let us look for areas that are evenly split between the two political parties. One is located due east of downtown and runs out to Union Boulevard. It has Constitution Avenue on the north and E. Pikes Peak

Avenue to the south. This mix of older and newer homes is just barely Democratic – a mere 52.6 percent Democratic to 47.4 percent Republican.

Another area showing something of a two-party balance is the town of Fountain in southern El Paso County. It is 54.5 percent Republican versus 45.5 percent Democratic. Move north of Fountain into Security and Widefield, however, and these two post-World War II communities are more strongly GOP at 57.2 percent Republican.

Speaking generally, as one moves north of downtown Colorado Springs, voting gets more Republican and stays that way. Rockrimmon, a large community west of I-25 and south of Woodmen Road, has been being built ever since World War II. It was 59.3 percent Republican. Also west of I-25, in the large ranch houses on the north side of Woodmen Valley Road, the tally was 65.5 percent Republican.

It is the same story on the east side of I-25 in the northern part of Colorado Springs. The large area of newish housing north of Austin Bluffs Parkway was 60.3 percent Republican. Other relatively new areas of construction were: Mountain Shadows – 62.1 percent Republican; Northgate – 71.0 percent Republican; and Briargate – 64.3 percent Republican.

This preference for the GOP was also found near and along the border with Douglas County: Monument and Palmer Lake – 63.3 percent Republican; Lake Woodmoor – 70.3 percent Republican; and Black Forest – 75.8 percent Republican.

In an effort to discover what is happening in a new and active part of Colorado Springs, the rapidly developing area east of Powers Boulevard to Marksheffle Road was studied. Apparently newcomers are Republicans – 60.8 percent Republican to be exact. Another newly developing area, Meridian Road north of Woodmen Road and U.S 24, came in at 73.9 percent Republican.

Although Republicanism is strongest to the north in El Paso County, there are two Republican areas southwest of downtown Colorado Springs. One is the Broadmoor area around the Broadmoor Hotel. It was 59.8 percent

Republican. The other was Broadmoor Bluffs at 63.0 percent Republican. Nearby Skyway is borderline at 51.8 percent Republican.

The last area to be considered is the Eastern Plains of El Paso County. As in all Colorado rural areas, these ranch lands and dry farms are the most Republican of all. They voted Republican for governor in 2018 with 79.5 percent of the vote, the highest figure, Republican or Democratic, in the study.

In our book, *Colorado Politics and Policy: Governing a Purple State*, we note that, in Colorado, the farther you go from the 16th Street mall in Denver, the more you find stalwart Republicans. The same is true in El Paso County. The further you go in any direction from Poor Richard's restaurant on N. Tejon Street in downtown Colorado Springs, the more you find stalwart Republicans.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy are Colorado College political scientists who have been voting in El Paso County for many decades.

Colorado Springs Gazette
6-7-2020

IS NANCY PELOSI NEARING HER LAST DANCE IN HOUSE?

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi is the highest-ranking woman elected official in U.S. history. She is often controversial, competitive, and gives at least as much as she takes from President Donald Trump.

She is second in the line of presidential succession, after vice president Mike Pence, even though she and President Donald Trump apparently don't speak to each other. She questioned the truth of his alternative facts well before Twitter got around to doing so.

The wealthy Pelosi, who is 80, is one of the politically best connected and most influential speakers in the past hundred years.

Her dad, Thomas D'Alesandro, was already serving in the U.S. Congress when she was born. Seven years later he became a three-term mayor of Baltimore. Her older brother would later serve as a mayor of Baltimore as well. Her brother in law was an elected member of San Francisco's Board of Supervisors.

Well before she had finished elementary school, Pelosi had become a student as well as practitioner in the political arts of fundraising, friend-raising, precinct walking and giving out patronage.

She represents one of the most liberal and Democratic congressional districts in the country and, not surprisingly, has a consistent record of fighting for progressive causes, including LGBTQ rights, pro-choice, strengthening Obamacare, opposing the partial privatization of Social Security, fighting for immigrant rights and opposing the Trump tax cuts.

There are several biographies of Pelosi that explain her eight decades in politics and nearly 34 years in the US House of Representatives. One of the best and most flattering, just published, is by Molly Ball: *Pelosi* (Henry Holt, 2020). Also indispensable to understanding Pelosi's political education and early political success is Vince Bzdek's *Woman of the House: The Rise of Nancy Pelosi* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2008).

Pelosi is private, controlling, pragmatic, and controversial. She may be an icon for many on the feminist left, yet she is a villain for many a hardcore conservative. For at least a decade, Republican campaign managers have tried to attach their Democratic opponents to Pelosi. Republicans have regularly used her as a symbol to raise funds and denigrate what they call the "left-wing socialists" in Congress. And at least a few dozen Democrats, in Congress and running for Congress, have outright opposed her. They deliberately distanced themselves from her in order to position themselves as centrists or moderates.

Her campaigns for House leadership positions have regularly been contentious. Most recently, after the 2018 elections, she reluctantly agreed with several moderate Democrats, led by Colorado U.S. Representative Ed Perlmutter, to term-limit her speakership. This will permit just one more term if Democrats win in next November's elections. And even then, she will have to use her skills and fundraising abilities to retain her "last dance" term as speaker.

What explains her political success?

She was born to politics. Her father and mother built a political machine based in Baltimore's "Little Italy." They were campaigning every two years and most of the time in between.

She majored in political science at Washington, D.C., Trinity College. She briefly volunteered in JFK's presidential campaign of 1960 and attended his inauguration in January 1961. She interned in the US Senate in 1963, before moving to New York and soon afterwards to San Francisco.

Her husband, Paul, graduated from Georgetown and earned an MBA from NYU. He launched a lucrative venture capital and real estate career.

Nancy raised a large family. One of Paul's high school classmates was Jerry Brown, who later was elected California governor. That connection and similar business and civic alliances led to Nancy Pelosi becoming a political fundraiser for California Democrats.

Over the years she would become part of Congressman Phil Burton's political machine in San Francisco, all the time staying involved in the D'Alesandro political machine in Baltimore. She developed close political relationships with San Francisco's Mayor Joe Alioto and New York Governor Mario Cuomo. She helped organize presidential candidate Jerry Brown's successful Maryland presidential primary run in 1976 (when he was running against Jimmy Carter).

Brown, the son of former two-term California Governor Pat Brown, was asked at the time if he had benefited from the powerful political clout of the D'Alesandro (Pelosi) machine. Brown acknowledged as much and quipped: "In my Father's house there were many machines."

Her fundraising skills led to her being elected chairwoman of California's Democratic Party, chair of the Host Committee for the 1984 Democratic National Convention, and chair of the Democratic US Senate Campaign Committee. She was a prolific fundraiser. She raised funds from the likes of Tom Steyer, Harvey Weinstein, and similar Hollywood types, and even from Donald J Trump on at least one occasion.

How did she rise so fast in Congress?

It helped that her dad served in Congress earlier. She was the first daughter ever to succeed in her father's U.S. House footsteps, even though her district lay 3000 miles west of his.

(Our former Colorado College student, Liz Cheney (R., WY), also followed in her dad's footsteps. She is now the third-highest ranking Republican in the U.S. House, and stands a decent chance of becoming the second woman speaker of the House in U.S. history. You heard that here first!)

Having a safe seat helped Pelosi. She raised money and campaigned for other Democratic candidates, whose districts were more competitive. She

won strategic appointments to powerful House committees such as Appropriations and Intelligence. She forged alliances with other influential members of Congress, such as George Miller, Jack Murtha, Barbara Boxer, John Lewis and Jim Clyburn. She learned from them, fought with them, and was a friend raiser. She remembered birthdays and anniversaries and gave away countless boxes of chocolate. She has a special fondness for chocolate.

It helped that her husband's business flourished so well that she became among the wealthiest members of Congress. She was smart, attractive, well-spoken, strategic, and ultimately pragmatic. As one of her top aides once put it: "You want a fighter, she'll show you a fight...She has no fear."

How is Speaker Pelosi viewed?

Everyone who knows this mother of five and grandmother of nine sees her as distinctively a woman of faith. She is a lifelong traditional Catholic. She often cites biblical passages to reinforce her public policy initiatives.

Congressman Hakeem Jeffries of New York, as he nominated her for speaker for the third time in early 2019, called her a legendary legislator, a sophisticated strategist, "a voice for the voiceless, a defender of the disenfranchised," and "a powerful, profound, prophetic, principled public servant."

Barton Swain, the conservative editorial writer for the *Wall Street Journal*, views Pelosi as a tough, determined politician, "a capable legislative leader, a political fundraiser of stupendous talent and a committed liberal who nonetheless knows when to moderate her stance for strategic purposes."

Even Donald Trump has acknowledged her prowess as someone "who knows how to get things done." In 2018 he said that she deserved to be reelected House speaker and even volunteered to get her a few Republican votes it she couldn't rally some of her reluctant Democratic colleagues.

Why, then, are Pelosi's public approval ratings no better than Trump's?

Americans have always held the institutions of the Supreme Court and the presidency in higher regard than Congress. Ironically, Americans view the "people's branch" as the "bickering branch," unwieldy, slow-moving, and

suffering from hyper-partisanship and stalemate. Pelosi is a symbol of this: head of a divided party within a divided House within a divided U.S. Congress.

Pelosi is also a symbol of a long-time-serving politician at a time when about half the population favors term limits for Congress. It is because we don't have term limits that Pelosi is in her 33rd year. Had she been term limited - for example to 4 or 5 terms - it is unlikely she would be speaker or have the political standing or public policy savvy to challenge the president as she does now.

Pelosi is also a symbol of opposition to Trump. She is against Trump's wall, and she is a champion of immigration reform. While she was at first reluctant to move ahead on impeachment, her hand was eventually forced when even centrist young professionals in the House pressed for hearings. She has dared to challenge Trump directly, as when she tore up his 2020 State of the Union address, disgusted with what she deemed his "falsehoods." She has walked out of White House meetings with Trump and insulted him with negative characterizations, just as he does her.

Pelosi has a little of the famed Florentine knack for fighting fire with fire – even as she is still relatively soft-spoken, polite, and spiritual in her demeanor.

Is this Pelosi's last dance?

Being speaker is hard to do well. Just ask speakers Jim Wright, Tom Foley, Newt Gingrich, Dennis Hastert, John Boehner, or Paul Ryan. All had short and unusually turbulent terms. Republicans Ryan and Boehner retired in frustration with dealing with the Tea Party, made up of Freedom Caucus members of their own party. Wright and Gingrich left under the cloud of ethics investigations. Hastert did succeed in serving out four terms as speaker, yet a few years later he was serving a federal prison term for financial misdeeds (involved in covering up charges of sexual abuse back when he was a high school wrestling coach). Foley lost the speakership when his district and the nation turned their backs on Democrats.

Speaker Pelosi, Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin won high praise for their quick legislative and regulatory efforts to respond to the coronavirus health and economic pandemic of 2020. Pelosi has now crafted relief for local and state governments, the unemployed and the U.S. Postal Service, and related matters. This effort has widespread support, yet has become embroiled in partisan politics. It has become ensnared too, in President Trump's campaign against voting-by-mail. Pelosi's bill provides funds to states that would help finance voting by mail.

Pelosi and Republicans are also arguing and negotiating over the best way to re-open small businesses - directly aiding employees, or helping the companies that employ people, or a mix of both. This may be her last fight, and there is no doubt she is fighting hard on this, and also to win more investment in infrastructure.

Whether Pelosi's "last dance" is this term or next, Democrats will be hard-pressed to find a successor as determined, persistent and effective as she has been. The Pelosi political story is a fascinating and remarkable one. She will join James K. Polk, John Nance Garner, Sam Rayburn, John McCormick, Carl Albert and Tip O'Neill as outstanding Democratic speakers of the House.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy are Colorado College political scientists who regularly write on Colorado and American politics.

Not Used
6-11-2020

EL PASO COUNTY:
STILL "RELIABLY REPUBLICAN"
BUT NOT LIKE IT WAS

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

As the 2020 presidential election heats up, El Paso County remains the great voting fortress of the Colorado Republican Party, but it is not quite the GOP voting fortress it used to be.

Over the past forty years, the Republican percentage of the two-party vote in presidential elections in El Paso County has dropped from the high 60s and low 70s to the high 50s and low 60s. That is still a lot of Republican votes from Colorado's most populous county, but it is not as good as it used to be.

The historic case for El Paso County being super Republican is a strong one. During the Ronald Reagan-George H. W. Bush years, the county consistently voted more than 70 percent Republican. The biggest year was 1984, when Reagan was running for a second term in the Oval Office. El Paso County voted 75.8 percent Republican, a GOP record in the county in presidential elections that stands to this day. Three out of every four voters in El Paso County chose to keep Reagan in office.

Reagan's vice-president, George H. W. Bush, ran to succeed Reagan in the White House in 1988 and won both the nation and Colorado. Bush racked up the second largest GOP majority in El Paso County in the 1980s – 70.8 percent Republican.

In the last five presidential elections, however, the Republicans have been fading a bit, both in Colorado and in El Paso County. In 2000 and 2004, Republican George W. Bush (the son of George H. W. Bush), won the presidency both times and Colorado both times. In an unusual coincidence,

the younger Bush carried El Paso County by the same percentage in both elections – 67.5 percent.

The message was clear. Carry El Paso County by 67 percent of the vote and you could still win Colorado's presidential electoral votes.

In 2008, however, things started to go badly for the Republicans – in the nation, in Colorado, and in El Paso County. A major economic upset took place six weeks before Election Day. The Great Recession began, and the Republicans paid the price at the polling place. The Democratic candidate, Barack Obama, won the presidency as well as Colorado. In El Paso County, the Republican vote dropped to 59.6 percent, the lowest figure recorded for Republicans running for president in the county in the 44 years from 1972 to 2016.

Things got no better for the Republicans four years later in 2012. President Obama was reelected, and the Democrats collected Colorado's electoral votes in the process. In El Paso County the Republicans scored 60.5 percent, only .9 percent better than in 2008.

Four years ago, in 2016, Republican Donald Trump carried El Paso County with 62.4 percent of the vote. That was almost 2 percentage points better than in 2012, but it was not enough to swing the state to the GOP. Democrat Hillary Clinton won Colorado and won the national popular vote. Alas for Clinton, she lost in the Electoral College, and Trump moved into the White House.

From the past 16 years of presidential voting behavior in Colorado, 2000 to 2016, we draw the following conclusions. To win Colorado for the presidency, the Republicans must poll at least 66 percent or more of the two-party vote in El Paso County. If the Republicans tally 63 percent or less of the El Paso County vote, the state will go Democratic. If El Paso County votes 64 or 65 percent Republican, the statewide result is probably too close to call.

There is another way to look at this. Routinely El Paso County votes around 14 to 15 percent more Republican than Colorado as a whole.

To us, the unusual thing about El Paso County is its steadiness in supporting the Republican Party. In the average presidential election year, El Paso County always gives 65 percent or so of its vote to the GOP candidate.

Look at the unusual situations required to get El Paso County out of that 65 percent furrow. It took the unusual popularity of Ronald Reagan's presidency to get El Paso County up to 75.2 percent Republican in 1984. A major economic recession, coupled with Barack Obama's personal appeal, was required to draw El Paso County down to 59.6 percent Republican in 2008.

El Paso County's "always Republican but not so much lately" is interesting when compared to other Colorado counties. Denver, Boulder, and the ski counties are moving more strongly Democratic. Agricultural counties on the Eastern Plains and the Western Slope are moving staunchly more Republican. El Paso County just stays roughly in the same place. The county loves Republicans, but that love can fade a little from time to time.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy are Colorado College political scientists who comment on national and Colorado politics.

Colorado Springs Gazette
7-12-2020

COUNTY COURT HOUSES DEPICT NUMEROUS STYLES

ByTom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Colorado is divided into 64 counties, but there are many more than 64 court house type buildings in the state. Population growth in the various counties over the years has been very uneven, with the populous counties now usually requiring more than one building to handle a vast array of county government functions. In a number of rural counties with low population growth, however, picturesque Victorian era court houses have survived basically untouched to the present day.

Victorian Era. Any court house decorated with towers and/or a cupola can be labeled Victorian. These court houses were built in Colorado between 1861 and 1911, the last years of Queen Victoria's reign in Great Britain. Usually when people think of historic court houses, they have the Victorian style in mind.

Of Colorado's 64 counties, 17 have a court house that fits the Victorian mode. That is more than one-quarter of the total. Excellent examples are the Bent County (county seat Las Animas) court house in southeastern Colorado, the Pitkin County (Aspen) court house in the cental mountains, and the San Miguel County (Telluride) court house in southwestern Colorado.

One beautiful Victorian court house in Colorado – Conejos County (Conejos) court house – was destroyed by fire and replaced with a modern building. In El Paso County (Colorado Springs) and Park County (Fairplay), older court houses have been "retired" and repurposed. El Paso County's old

court house is now the Pioneers Museum. Park County's former court house is the public library.

In Dolores County (Dove Creek), when the county seat was moved to Dove Creek, the Victorian court house back in Rico was turned into the Rico city hall. In Adams County (Brighton) in the Denver metropolitan area, the former court house is now the Brighton city hall.

Classical. Seven Colorado court houses resemble Greek temples, a style that is popular with U.S. Government buildings in the nation's capital of Washington, D.C. Rows of round columns, often topped with triangle-shaped pediments, are the major characteristic of this type of county court house. If it looks something like the Parthenon in Athens, it is Classical.

A straight-forward expresssion of the Classical style can be found in rural Jackson County (Walden). Four columns topped with a pediment grace the front entrance of the building. More elaborate Classical court houses, with long rows of columns, are in Denver City and County (Denver), Pueblo County (Pueblo), and Weld County (Greeley).

Romanesque. When you see arched windows or arched doorways, think Romanesque. Good examples can be found in Elbert County (Elizabeth), Custer County (Westcliff), and Teller County (Cripple Creek).

Art Deco. This style of court house became popular in the first half of the 20th century. Art Deco court houses are square or rectangular in shape and are two or three stories high. They are very plain and functional in overall appearance, but they often are decorated with square pillars or half-columns sticking out periodically from a flat wall. There also may be a bit of decoration around the main entrance. They often ressemble the large public high school buildings constructed in the same time period.

Excellent examples of Art Deco court houses in Colorado include Chaffee County (Salida), Garfield County (Glenwood Springs), Montrose County (Montrose), Morgan County (Fort Morgan), and Routt County (Steamboat Springs).

The Art Deco style was given a boost during the Great Depression of the 1930s. In the New Deal effort to stimulate the weak economy, the Works

Projects Administration (WPA) of the U.S. Government provided money to construct new court houses. So many were done in Art Deco that the architecture was referred to as WPA Art Deco.

Modern. With its rapid population growth in recent years, Colorado has 15 counties with modern court houses. In the case of the more populous counties, there often are a number of modern buildings that comprise the "county government campus." Rather than being square or rectangular in design, modern court houses can have a variety of shapes mixed together. There also is great variety in building materials. Brick, steel, glass, stone, and stucco are often mixed together in no particular pattern.

Jefferson County (Golden) gathered its various county offices into a single building complex large enough to be nicknamed the Taj Mahal. Readily visible along Interstate 70 heading west out of Denver, the building is stunning in appearance and fulfills the original idea of a county court house combining all county functions – courts, county clerk, county commissioners, etc. – under one roof.

Adams County (Brighton) took a different approach. It built a new campus of county buildings in the outskirts of the county seat. Courts were in one building, county offices in another, with all of it in a grassy parklike setting.

Most counties just add new and modern buildings as they need them. El Paso County (Colorado Springs) built a modern courts building along with a new building for county commissioner meetings across the street. In an unusual move, the county took over an unused drab-looking factory building on Garden of the Gods Road and made it the county services center.

Eclectic. A few county court houses in Colorado are so distinctive they defy general categorization. The Alamosa County (Alamosa) court house is a fine example of Spanish Colonial architecture. Gunnison County (Gunnison) took an unused high school building and converted it into a criminal courts building. Hinsdale County (Lake City) has one of the few court houses in Colorado still in use made out of wood.

For court house lovers, there is a free photo album of county government buildings in Colorado on the internet. Go to: http://faculty1.coloradocollege.edu/~bloevy/ColoradoCourtHousesBook

Colorado College political scientists Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy enjoy keeping an eye on all 64 of Colorado's counties.

Bent County: Bent County (county seat Las Animas) on Colorado's eastern plains has a beautiful Victorian-era court house dating from 1889. Towers at all four corners, with a central tower in the middle, give it a real Victorian flair.

Jefferson County: Jefferson County (county seat Golden) built this beautiful new modern-style county building which houses many county government offices in one place. Its size and grandeur, along with its big central tower, gained it the nickname Taj Mahal.

Pueblo County: All those marble columns give Pueblo County a Classical style court house. It reminds the onlooker of the U.S. Capitol building, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Chaffee County: A square building with inlaid decorations such as flat pillars marks this as an Art-Deco style court house. Chaffee County (county seat Salida) is in the Colorado mountains.

All four photos by Robert D. Loevy.

Colorado Springs Gazette
7-26-2020

COLORADO DEMOCRATS LEARN TO CUT BY NECESSITY

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

The Colorado Democratic Party cannot win for losing. The blue party is winning elections in Colorado, but non-electoral events keep it from enjoying the financial fruits of victory.

Those events are Tabor, the Great Recession of 2008, and, this year, the coronavirus pandemic.

This analysis assumes that, when they gain political control, Democrats want to spend government money on expanded social services. For this trait Republicans charge Democrats with being "big spenders." Four things Democrats like to spend money on in Colorado are K-12 public schools, higher education (public colleges and universities), health care for the poor (Medicaid), and transportation (highways and mass transit).

Our story goes like this. Back in the 1980s, Colorado Republicans were enjoying the long presidential coattails of Ronald Reagan in 1980 and 1984 and George H. W. Bush in 1988. The Republicans had solid majorities in both houses of the state legislature, which prevented Democratic governors Richard Lamm and Roy Romer from spending much money on Democratic style government services.

This period of Republican dominance started coming to an end in the 1990s when Democrat Bill Clinton won the presidency in 1992. With the Reagan-Bush Republican coattails gone, the Democrats began electing more state legislators and occasionally taking control of one house of the state legislature or the other.

These legislative victories enabled the Democrats to take control of the state Reapportionment Commission in 2001 and gerrymander both houses of the state legislature in their favor. In 2004, the Democrats stunned the Colorado political world by winning majorities in both houses of the state legislature for the first time in decades.

But when it came to spending money, the newly empowered Democrats had a problem. The Tabor Amendment to the Colorado state constitution, adopted in 1992, put strict limits on state revenues. Increases in state taxes required the approval of state voters, and state expenditures could not grow faster than both population growth and inflation. Referendums on statewide tax increases were difficult to win, and budgets limited to population growth and inflation made it hard to keep up with the state's fiscal needs.

A bright spot occurred when Bill Ritter won the governorship for the Democrats in 2006. His expansive spending plans for Colorado state government were ended, however, by the Great Recession that began in the fall of 2008. As the national and state economies suffered through the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression of the 1930s, state revenues dropped and a Democratic governor had to take a financial butcher's knife to state budgets rather than increase them.

Bill Ritter declined to run for reelection as governor in 2010. We are convinced the stark state fiscal situation due to the Great Recession of 2008 helped to convince him to voluntarily drop out of Colorado electoral politics.

This brings us to the present moment. Colorado Democrats rode the anti-President Trump blue wave of the 2018 elections into winning solid control of both houses of the state legislature and elected liberal Democrat Jared Polis governor. In the meantime, a booming national economy was hyping state revenues from income taxes and sales taxes.

Surely the session of the Colorado legislature beginning this January 2020 would enable the Democrats to raise spending on public schools, public colleges, health care for the poor, and transportation. Best of all, in the favorable political atmosphere created by the rapidly expanding national

economy, there was talk of perhaps, at long last, convincing the voters to loosen the stranglehold of Tabor on state revenues.

And then the coronavirus arrived in Colorado in February of 2020 and ruined everything for the Democrats. The state economy suddenly went bad and tax income fell precipitously. With the grudging approval of Governor Polis, the Democratic state legislature, which has adjourned for the year, was forced to reduce spending rather than dramatically increase it. And the bad economy dismissed all thought of citizens voting favorably on increasing taxes or limiting Tabor.

We acknowledge the accomplishments of Colorado's Democrats since they took control of both houses of the state legislature and the governor's office. They have strengthened the rights of racial and ethnic minorities, protected gays and lesbians, and limited police powers. They have made voter registration easier and instituted all mail-in voting for state elections. And, if you are a Democrat, it is always nicer to have Democrats running state government rather than people from the other party.

Please note that the Democratic Party achievements listed above did not cost very much money.

As for the Republicans in Colorado, they have lost control of state government over three decades but have seen their fiscal conservatism protected by Tabor, the Great Recession of 2008, and the coronavirus pandemic. Those Republicans who share the Libertarian Party's dislike for big government and big spending have, in a strange backhanded sort of way, been the biggest winners of all.

We are certain Democrats will continue to try to win votes by promising to increase expenditures for public K-12 education, public higher education, Medicaid, and highways and passenger trains. Will they ever succeed at getting the needed tax revenue? So far, as we said, Colorado Democrats cannot win for losing.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy are longtime Colorado College political scientists who keep an eye on Colorado and national politics.

Colorado Springs Gazette
8-2-2020

DO NATIONAL CONVENTIONS EVEN MATTER ANYMORE?

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Despite being on-line and digital because of coronavirus, we think the upcoming Democratic and Republican national conventions this month will be valuable to watch and potentially could affect the presidential race between incumbent Republican President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger Joseph Biden.

Thus we are looking forward to watching them and learning from them.

Those cheering delegates that will not be present have not mattered for the past 68 years. It was in 1952 that the two major U.S. political parties staged the last competitive national conventions. In the Republican Party, World War II military hero Dwight D. Eisenhower, affectionately known as "Ike," was pitted against U.S. Senator Robert Taft of Ohio. Taft was ahead of Eisenhower in the delegate count when the convention opened for business. Skillful maneuvering by the Eisenhower forces on the convention floor enabled Ike to win a majority of the delegate votes and thus become the 1952 Republican nominee. Eisenhower was elected president the following November.

But such competitive conventions have been gone for more than half a century. Convention delegates have nothing to do these days but cheer on the presidential candidates who were chosen by the voters in presidential primaries and caucuses the previous winter and spring.

For that reason, we have long referred to the national conventions as "coronations." The "crown of candidacy" is placed on the primary-caucuses winners with appropriate pomp and ceremony. The "coronations" have long

existed solely for the television advertisements they create for the political parties. They provide an opportunity, all on TV, for the political party to parade its distinguished veterans as well as hype its new up-and-coming young office holders.

And important things can happen at national "coronations." Let's look back.

A famous, and infamous, national convention took place in the Democratic Party in 1968. The Vietnam War was raging and evoking anti-war protest demonstrations on the streets of Chicago outside the convention hall. Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota, who supported the war, had an iron grip on the nomination. Soon the war protesters were engaged in violent confrontations with the Chicago police, who looked over-whelmingly powerful in their riot gear and used night sticks, police dogs, and tear gas to clear the war protesters from the streets.

As the convention proceeded, the television networks gave close-up coverage to the rioting and the police response on the streets of Chicago. The net effect was to project a very negative image of the Democratic Party and its responsibility for escalating the war in Vietnam. Those negative images contributed to Hubert Humphrey losing the November election to Republican candidate Richard M. Nixon.

The Vietnam War was still an issue at the time of the 1972 Democratic National Convention. Some of the delegates were hippies who dressed in casual clothing rather than suit coats and neckties or ladies' dresses. They sported purple sunglasses and draped love beads around their necks. Most of all, these new ultra-liberal Democratic delegates supported party nominee U.S. Senator George McGovern of South Dakota, an outspoken opponent of the Vietnam War. Incumbent Republican President Richard Nixon easily defeated McGovern in the 1972 November general election.

A major "gaffe" occurred at the 1980 Democratic Convention when incumbent Democratic President Jimmy Carter was being re-nominated for president. Struggling to project an image of party unity, Carter wanted to be seen on prime-time television shaking the hand of popular U.S. Senator Ted

Kennedy of Massachusetts. Every time Carter extended his hand to Kennedy for a hand shake, Senator Kennedy pointedly moved away. The television cameras recorded the entire comedy as President Carter followed Kennedy across the speaker's platform, Carter's hand outstretched for a handshake that never was. President Carter was defeated in the 1980 general election by Republican Ronald Reagan.

In 1992, the Republicans convened at the Houston Astrodome. The Republican nominee designate, incumbent President George H. W. Bush (the elder), sought to mend a few fences with the conservative wing of the party by inviting news columnist and television pundit Patrick Buchanan to address the convention.

Instead of mending fences, Pat Buchanan tore a few down. In perhaps the most ill-tempered and abusive speech in party convention history, Buchanan labeled Bill Clinton, the 1992 Democratic Party nominee, a Vietnam War draft dodger and a supporter of gay-and-lesbian rights. Buchanan charged that Al Gore, the Democratic vice presidential nominee, was an environmental extremist. Buchanan's cantankerous speech caused the GOP convention to project an image of "meanness" and "rancor" rather than "party harmony."

In contrast, Bill Clinton's Democratic Convention in 1992 stands as a runaway success. The convention was held in Madison Square Garden in New York City.

Not content to have politicians running his convention, Bill Clinton hired two successful Hollywood television producers. Instead of televising dull speeches by middle-aged men and women, the Hollywood producers focused on Bill Clinton and family. Bill and Hillary were shown with their teen-age daughter, Chelsea, walking down the street toward the convention hall. It was as if Bill Clinton was walking to meet a divinely-ordained destiny. The millions of television viewers watching could virtually feel this warm, fuzzy, magical political moment that had been so carefully crafted by Hollywood experts.

The lift that Democratic nominee Bill Clinton received from the 1992 Democratic National Convention helped him to defeat the elder George Bush and go to the White House.

It is obvious what our two major political parties need to do to have successful all-digital national "coronations." Most important is to avoid "gaffes," such as President Carter chasing Ted Kennedy for a handshake in 1960 or Pat Buchanan giving a highly confrontive and opinionated speech at the Republican convention in 1992. Then go for "golden moments," such as Bill, Hilary, and Chelsea Clinton walking a New York street toward the convention hall, also in 1992.

Do not let coronavirus take away your enjoyment of the 2020 Democratic and Republican national conventions.

Colorado Springs Gazette
8-16-2020

POLITICOS OFFER UP FURTHER READING FOR THE 2020 ELECTION

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

No other nation has an election success record like ours. We have held 58 consecutive presidential elections since 1789 and we've never postponed one. Moreover, we've witnessed the peaceful transfer of power from one political party to another 22 times.

Now we've begun our 59th presidential election, and most people understand it will primarily be a referendum on President Donald Trump. His has been an unusual presidency, and the country is, to understate it, divided about him and his "America First" policies and COVID-19 pandemic leadership.

Dozens of authors have weighed in on Trump or the state of the nation. We share here brief reviews of several of these books, ranging from very pro-Trump to decidedly anti-Trump. At least four of these authors are Republicans or conservatives.

• David Horowitz, "Blitz: Trump Will Smash The Left and Win" (Humanix Books, 2020). Horowitz, a staunch conservative, is a prolific best-selling author. Donald Trump Jr., the president's son, says, "If you are interested in debating the deranged liberals with facts, you won't want to miss this book."

And if you are a regular FOX TV-viewer, this book will reinforce that networks's narratives: the Mueller investigation was a partisan scam; Trump has been a patriotic defender of our borders and our Second Amendment rights; he's been our most pro-Israel president; and he's our best defense

against the "Green New Deal," which the authors says should be called "Green Communism".

Moderate Republicans, Independents and Democrats will not enjoy what they read here, yet may develop an understanding of the Trump-believers and why most will be sticking by their man.

• John Yoo, "Defender-In-Chief: Donald Trump's Fight for Presidential Power" (All Points Books, 2020). Yoo is also a conservative. A respected constitutional law professor at the University of California at Berkeley, he was a legal advisor at the Department of Justice in the George W. Bush administration, where he was noted for his approval of broad presidential discretionary authority.

Yoo says he has never met Trump, doesn't approve of Trump's immigration policies, and does not find the president personally appealing. Yet Yoo is a Hamiltonian Federalist with originalist judicial beliefs. He believes Trump has correctly defended presidential authority and, in most instances, defended presidential prerogative.

Thus he writes that Trump was correct during the impeachment hearings, when he fought back against State Department and National Security Council staffers who believed he acted unconstitutionally in his dealings with Ukraine. Regardless of his motives, Trump was correctly defending the original Constitution when he differed with these intelligence and FBI officials.

Yoo also defends Trump's dealings with Iran, Syria and Afghanistan. While Trump's decisions are sometimes impulsive, and he seems intoxicated with executive orders, he is acting as the Founders intended, Yoo says, pursuing the constitutional right of future presidents to take the means necessary to protect the nation's security.

It should be noted that there is no coverage of Trump's COVID-19 policies, or Trump's attitudes about Black Lives Matter or racial injustice.

• John Bolton, "The Room Where It Happened" (Simon and Schuster, 2020). Bolton, a noted Republican hawk, had served for many years in Republican State Departments, and briefly, under George W. Bush, as an acting U.N. Ambassador. He campaigned aggressively to be appointed secretary of State or national security advisor for Donald Trump. He was twice passed over for both jobs.

He succeeded in becoming Trump's third national security White House advisor, but it ended with his resigning a few days before he was likely to be fired. Trump told Fox's Sean Hannity that he knew Bolton was "a washed-up guy", but "I gave him a second chance."

Bolton's is a well written if very self-serving memoir. He relishes sharing his firsthand narrative of West Wing policy fights. Bolton goes relatively easy on Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. But once Bolton's book came out, Pompeo blasted Bolton as a "traitor."

Bolton is toughest on Trump. He alleges Trump was no match for Vladimir Putin, and was delusional in his dealings with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un . He says Trump asked China's President Xi Jinping to help his reelection prospects by buying more U.S. farm products. Trump also told Xi, so Bolton claims, that some of his (Trump's) supporters wanted to change the 22nd Amendment for him. (The 22nd Amendment provides for a two term limit for the American presidency.)

Bolton accuses Trump of putting politics ahead of the nation's interest and sound long-range policies. He faults Trump's dealings with Turkey and Ukraine, and deems Trump unfit to serve as president.

• Stuart Stevens, "It Was All A Lie: How the Republican Party Became Trump" (Knopf, 2020). Stevens has been a leading, and usually successful

Republican campaign strategist for five decades. His book traces the history of the Republican Party from the Barry Goldwater years to the present. He lays out how the GOP became the "white grievance party" that it is today.

Trump, Stevens writes, didn't hijack the GOP — the party had already become Trump. Trump, or his like, was just inevitable. This is an angry rambling account of how Stevens believes his party lost its moral compass. He apologizes for having played a part in this wayward journey, noting that he usually — although not always — worked for principled Republicans like George H.W. Bush, Mitt Romney, Bill Weld, Charlie Baker and Larry Hogan.

Yet he was there in the room — "in the tribe" — as the Party embraced Goldwater's attack on the Civil Rights Act, embraced the "southern strategy" of George Wallace, and adopted a "race-baiting politics of resentment."

Steven says the Trump White House welcomes and empowers those on the right who peddle conspiracy theories and religious and racial bigotry on the internet. Donald Trump, he writes, did not change the Republican Party as much as he gave the Party permission to reveal its true self.

This is a deeply personal expose. Stevens was dedicated to the Republican Party until he recently joined the "Lincoln Project," a group of Republicans who have split from Trump, and are now actively seeking to defeat him. Steven's sense of failure is palpable.

• Eric A. Posner, "The Demagogue's Playbook: The Battle for American Democracy from the Founders to Trump" (All Points Books, 2020). Posner is a respected professor of constitutional law at the University of Chicago. He writes that Trump may have clashed with Congress, the courts and the media, yet he has rarely violated the laws or the Constitution. Meanwhile, he notes, Trump's executive actions, especially with regulatory agencies, have mostly been blocked or reversed by the federal courts.

Posner's splendid book surveys the demagogic personalities that have arisen in our republic. His rogue's gallery profiles Andrew Jackson, Georgia's Tom Watson, Huey Long, Father Charles Coughlin, Sen. Joseph McCarthy and George Wallace. While not calling these men " dictators," he shows how they borrowed strategies from "the demagogues playbook".

American demagogues were frequently nativists, and harbored anti-immigrant, anti-Semitic, anti-Asian and anti-Catholic sentiments.

"The demogoguery that brought Donald Trump to power has deep roots in the democratic culture of the United States, above all the populist and anti-elite strain that goes back to the beginning of the republic." Trump's strategies include vicious personal attacks, divisive appeals, especially against immigrants, contempt for the truth, attacks on elites and attacks on traditional political institutions.

Posner says it would be wrong to call Trump a dictator — but, "if a demagogue is a politician who verbally attacks institutions and tries to shake confidence in them, then Trump is a demagogue." Posner, who has impressive mainstream(not liberal) legal credentials, minces no words in his verdict about Trump and Trumpism. "We need to see him as a political monstrosity who should be repudiated by the body politic, so that politicians who eye the presidency in the future will be deterred from using Trump's ascendance as a model."

• Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, "How Democracies Die" (Crown, 2019). These two Harvard University scholars have extensively studied how democracies in Europe, Africa and Latin America failed. They recognize that demagogues emerge from time to time in every society. Their book concentrates on the guardrails constitutional republics try to put in place to prevent military coups or the drift into authoritarianism.

The obvious guardrails are a written constitution, freedom of the press, safeguards for opposition parties, fair and regular elections, and independent legislative and judicial branches of government.

But Levitsky and Ziblatt emphasize that constitutions are always incomplete, and institutions alone are not enough to ensure the health and survival of a democracy.

The authors argue convincingly the constitutional democracy is fragile even in the best of times. Civic civility has to be almost as important a priority as sound policies that promote economic growth and economic opportunities for everyone.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy have been writing about presidential elections for more than fifty years. They have worked as staff aides in Congress and the White House and participated in ten national presidential nominating conventions. They are also authors or editors of about twenty books on American politics.

Not Used
8-16-2020

WANTED: A COLORADO U.S. SENATOR WHO WILL STAY AWHILE

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Colorado is currently engaged in a hard-fought race for U.S. senator. Incumbent Republican Cory Gardner is campaigning hard to not be unseated by his Democratic opponent – former Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper.

Colorado has a mediocre record when it comes to producing great U.S. senators. There have been no outstanding national Senate leaders from Colorado, men like Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota (Democratic whip for the Civil Rights Act of 1964) or Everett Dirksen of Illinois (Republican minority leader who delivered key Republican votes for the Civil Rights Act of 1964). No Colorado U.S, senator has been credited with a big U.S government program, such as Nebraska's Senator George Norris has been praised for winning the votes for Tennessee Valley Authority dams and reservoirs and electrical generation facilities in the 1930s.

Part of the problem is that Colorado's U.S. senators have not stayed in the Senate very long. It is common knowledge that power and influence in the Senate grow with the amount of time a senator is on the job. Colorado's U.S. senators, particularly in recent years, have stayed only for one term (6 years) or two terms (12 years). It is senators who get reelected for three terms (18 years), four terms (24 years), and five terms (30 years) who gain "seniority" and become nationally famous senate leaders and are really in a position to get U.S. Government facilities located in their home state.

Colorado's most recent three-term (18 years) U.S. senator was Gordon Allott, who left office after the 1972 general election 48 years ago.

In the almost half century since Allott, Colorado has had an unbroken string of one-term and two-term U.S. senators. Most have been good politicians with good records of service, but they disappointed us by not staying long enough to gain real seniority and wield real Senate power.

Of course a number of them left office involuntarily by being defeated. Gordon Allott tried for a fourth term and was defeated in 1972 by Democrat Floyd Haskell. Haskell met the same fate as Allott six years later in 1978 when he was thumped by Republican Bill Armstrong. Meanwhile, two-term Republican Peter Dominick lost to Democrat Gary Hart in 1974, and one-term Democrat Mark Udall fell to Cory Gardner in 2014.

Impressive as this list of defeated Colorado U.S. senators may be, the list of those who stepped down voluntarily is more significant. Democrat Gary Hart, who ran unsuccessfully for U.S. president, left his Senate seat after only two terms in 1986. He was followed by Democrat Tim Wirth, who served just one six-year term and departed in 1992. Wirth was succeeded by Democrat Ben Nighthorse Campbell, who switched to Republican but retired in 2004 after only two terms due to medical concerns. Democrat Ken Salazar followed Campbell but quit after four years in 2009 to become President Barack Obama's secretary of the interior. His successor, Michael Bennet, is still in the U.S. Senate in his second term.

As for Colorado's other Senate seat, Republican Bill Armstrong, an unusually popular Colorado vote-getter who looked like he could stay in the Senate forever, departed after two terms in 1990. Armstrong's successor, Republican Hank Brown, served but one six-year term and left in 1996. Republican Wayne Allard stepped in, but 12 years later in 2008 stepped out. As previously noted, the Democrat who came next, Mark Udall, was defeated by Republican Cory Gardner in 2014, who is this year defending the seat against Hickenlooper.

So in the 48 years from 1972 to 2020, four Colorado U.S senators were defeated when they ran for reelection while seven voluntarily declined to run for reelection. Only Ben Nighthorse Campbell had the good excuse of medical problems for retiring.

The damage done to Colorado by all those retirements, several by senators who seemed to be certain of reelection, is hard to measure but definitely there. Seniority and long service are what count in the U.S. Senate, and Colorado has obviously wasted a lot of seniority and service with so many Coloradans ending their Senate careers early.

Is it the sunshine in Colorado? Is it the lure of those high Rocky Mountains? Is it the friendliness of Coloradans compared to the Washington crowd? Whatever it is, it is pulling Coloradans out of the U.S Senate much more than is good for the state.

The Coloradans who have stood out in the U.S. Congress were in the House of Representatives. Edward Taylor served 32 years in the House, from 1909 to 1941, and used his seniority to pass the Taylor Grazing Act, which benefitted western Colorado ranchers by allowing private herds to graze on federal lands. Wayne Aspinall stayed in the House 24 years, 1948-1972, and saw to the enactment of legislation building dams and reservoirs in Colorado and nearby states.

Colorado had a significant U.S. senator back at the turn of the 20th century. Henry Teller, for whom Teller County is named, was an outspoken supporter of silver in the monetary struggles of the 1890s. He left the Republican Party over the silver issue but continued to be elected to the Senate as a Democrat. Edwin C. Johnson served in the Senate from 1937 to 1955 but was mainly noted for opposing President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal economic reforms.

Colorado needs longer service from its U.S. senators. No matter which candidate wins the upcoming Senate election – incumbent Republican Cory Gardner or challenger Democrat John Hickenlooper – we want the winner to take his vitamins, get plenty of exercise, and run repeatedly for reelection. Colorado is due for a long-serving U.S. senator with lots of seniority and the power to do really good things for the nation and the state.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy are political scientists at Colorado College.

Colorado Springs Gazette
9-6-2020

THE PARADOX OF COMPETITION AND CIVILITY IN POLITICS

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

The 2020 national and state election campaigns are entering the post-Labor Day stretch and are not pretty. Our Colorado U.S. Senate race, between Republican Cory Gardner and Democrat John Hickenlooper, seems to be guided by the old adage: "If you can't say something nice about your opponent, then by God let's hear it."

And the presidential election has become ugly and, in places, deadly.

Most Americans dislike, if not hate, politics. Yet giving up on politics is not an option.

We don't like conflict, either. Yet every community and the world are full of people with differences, often sharp differences. If you prize liberty, you will have differences.

There is no escaping politics and political life if we are humans. People enter compacts and join communities to survive and flourish. Once that happens, politics is inevitable.

Politics, when properly conducted, is how we work through our differences and identify and promote commonly shared goals. Politics, in its most positive version, is when people listen civilly to one another and negotiate pragmatic accommodations that allow us to resolve conflicts and live peacefully.

Politicians need, by definition, to be ambitious and get up on the public stage. Part of what politicians have to do is posturing, acting and showmanship. They are forced by the election system to be self-promoters and boast that they, more than their opponents, will make a significant difference when elected.

Politics is always a mixture of personal striving and personal competitiveness, pitting rivals against one another who are simultaneously advocating for both their public policy choices and the claim that they would make the best leader.

Politics is hard, messy and full of temptations. Biting the apple of power, with the accompanying adrenaline rush of personal importance, changes those who succeed in getting into the "political room." Those changes can sometimes be ravenous in terms of swollen egos. Yet the best of politicians effectively help the republic navigate competing interests to arrive at something approximating the public interest. The best of politicians help us define and make progress.

We are all turned off by negative campaigning. Most of this year's campaigns involve too many smearing ads aimed at diminishing the credibility of the opponent.

Campaign strategists pounce on any weakness or character flaws, perceived or real, of their opponent. Why? Because it so often works. But, in tearing down opponents, these tactics tend to discredit everyone in public life and leave the voters with little trust in our political system.

The late conservative columnist Charles Krauthammer had it right when he wrote: "Every two years the American politics industry fills the airwaves with the most virulent, scurrilous, wall-to-wall character assassination of nearly every practitioner in the country – and then it declares itself puzzled that America has lost trust in politics and politicians."

Here is the challenge. More than any other form of government, the kind of representative democracy that has emerged under the American Constitution requires a politics of faith combined with a politics of skepticism.

It requires faith concerning the common human enterprise. It requires a belief that if most people are informed and caring they can be trusted with their own self-government. It also necessitates an optimistic view that when things begin to go wrong, the people can be relied on to reset politics and government in a more desirable direction.

Yet a healthy skepticism is needed as well. Constitutional democracy requires us to be questioning of leaders. We must never entrust any group with too much power. And we should always doubt those who profess to have all the answers.

We know there are few issues where truth, right and the angels are all on one side.

Although we prize majority rule, we also know to be skeptical enough to ask whether the majority is always right. Democracy requires us to be vigilant about whether we are tolerating and protecting the rights and opinions of others. We must always question whether our policy processes are advancing the goals of liberty, equality and justice.

In short, the democratic ideal rests upon a complicated blend of faith in the people and skepticism of them – as well as faith in leaders and skepticism of them.

Because of the negative bias that incentivizes the media, we regularly read about Governor Shakedown, Mayor Kickback, Senator Flip-Flop, or Representative Pay-to-Play. No wonder the popular view that "All politicians are guilty – until proven innocent."

Politics is like fire – it can be invaluable yet it can cause enormous damage. Hitler, Stalin, Franco and Castro were politicians and political operatives. Fidel Castro self-servingly once boasted: "We made a revolution to get rid of the politicians." He was wrong.

Blessed are the politicians who admit to being politicians and respect politics as a means for obtaining group collaboration for the common good. Politics is inevitable, necessary and desirable if we can keep it honorable and fair.

Beware people saying: "This isn't a time for politics," or "We need to put politics aside." Beware those who say what we need is "leaders, not politicians." The need is for politically gifted leaders and leaders with savvy political talent. Remember that Washington, Lincoln, the Roosevelts, Truman, Reagan and Obama were politicians well before they became respected presidential leaders.

Truman rightly joked that a "statesman" was a politician who died several years ago.

Three cheers for those who have the guts and stamina to run for political office and thereby offer ideas, choices, and plausible paths forward. They work to provide the glue that holds together a nation of feisty individualists.

Politics can be more than a necessary evil. It can be a liberating and freeing activity. Politics is at the crucial heart of a representative republic. It is to democracy what the experimental method is to science, what melody is to music, what imagination is to poetry, and what powdery snow is to Colorado skiers.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy regularly write about Colorado and American politics.

Colorado Springs Gazette (internet only)
9-12-2020

COLORADO SPRINGS CITY COUNCIL LIVE – ON YOUR TELEPHONE!

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Like so much else in our lives, Colorado Springs City Council meetings have been changed by the coronavirus (Covid 19). We got a sampling of the new world of City Council's relationship to its citizens last month when a zoning issue came up in one of our home neighborhoods. Due to coronavirus, all City Council meetings now are held digitally over the telephone rather than in person.

You have long been able to watch City Council on cable television or streaming to your computer, but that did not allow for citizen input. The new telephone-based system, Webex, allows the public to phone into Council meetings and be heard directly by the Council members.

The issue was a typical one for the City Council. A private property owner wanted some variances to the planning regulations to build on a vacant lot, and the neighborhood association opposed the variances strongly. In this case, however, the entire matter was going to be handled digitally rather than in person.

With the Webex system you do not need a personal computer, or a laptop, or a smart phone to participate. That's good for folks who are economically challenged and may not own or have access to one of those devices but do have a telephone.

City Council gives out a telephone number to call and a meeting number to get you into the meeting. Once you are phoned in, you can hear everything the Council members are saying as well as those who are giving information to Council. That included the applicant (the person wanting the

variances), relevant city administrators (traffic, planning, fire department, etc.), and those opposed (a large number of residents of the neighborhood and their association leaders).

So that you do not have to sit at home or in your office quietly, the Webex system enables you to mute (turn off) the microphone on your telephone. You do that by punching "Star" and "6" on your telephone dial. (Star is the small five-pointed star on the telephone dial.) Press Star-6 and you are muted and can talk to others at home or at the office with you. Press Star-6 a second time, your phone microphone is turned on, and City Council and everyone else at the meeting can hear what you have to say.

Council President Richard Skorman, who was in the Council chamber, had to frequently remind meeting participants to use Star-6 to mute their phones when it was not their turn to speak. This occurred when people inadvertently said "Please get me more coffee" or "Am I having to pay for this long-distance call" into a turned on telephone and were heard by everyone at the Council meeting.

One problem with going telephone only with Webex is that you cannot see any of the photographs, maps, charts, and other visual aids that are projected at City Council meetings. These visual aids are an important part of the decision-making process. If you are equipped with a TV set, however, you can watch the proceedings live on TV and see the photos-maps-charts, etc. that way. Unhappily, you will soon notice that the telephone audio and the TV version are somewhat out of synchronization. So far, City Council has not been able to fix this synchronization problem.

Those skilled enough at home/office electronics to phone in with Webex and watch on TV saw an almost empty Council chamber. Council President Richard Skorman was there to preside with one other Council member present. The other seven Council members were attending by telephone. A few city administrators were also present, but masks and social distancing were very much the order of the day. All of the neighborhood residents were phone ins.

The meeting progressed nicely as the applicant made his case. Then various city officials got their turn to size up the situation. This took quite a while but eventually it was the neighborhood's turn to speak-up, all of it by telephone. The city government had requested prior to the meeting that those who wished to speak e-mail in their names.

Council President Skorman read the names of neighbors who wished to speak in opposition to the variances and then let them make their statement. It was a long list of names. As Skorman kept reading name after name and letting them speak, it began to give the impression that there were a lot of people opposed to the variances. It was the digital version of a mass of people showing up personally at a Council meeting (under the old pre-coronavirus system) to support this and oppose that.

Unfortunately, about half the people who had e-mailed in their names to speak were unable to make their phones work properly. It was sad when Council President Skorman called so many names for people to speak and there was nothing but silence. Difficulties using the Star-6 microphone turn-on system seemed to be the problem.

Despite that, we are optimistic about this new way of conducting City Council meetings. We think the bugs in the Webex system will get ironed out and all citizens will gain the skills to successfully phone in their opinions and complaints to city council.

And we think many citizens will not want to go back to the old "in person" City Council meetings when the coronavirus pandemic is over. It was nice to not have to get dressed up, drive downtown to City Hall, and hunt a parking place. Most of all, you did not have to sit minutes or hours in the Council chamber waiting for your agenda item to come up. You could phone in at the start of the meeting, mute your phone with Star-6, and do other work or read the newspaper or whatever else you wanted to do until your agenda item was the order of business.

In short, attending the digital version of City Council was easier, pleasanter, and, most important, a big timesaver. We think many more people will be giving their verbal opinions to City Council if they can

telephone in rather than going to the major hassle of coming downtown in person. That result will be good for democracy in Colorado Springs.

It is similar to mail-in voting. It is so much easier to fill out your ballot at your dining room table. Who would ever want to go back to all the extra time and travel to vote in a polling place?

At last report, the neighbors and the applicant were trying to work out a compromise solution to those variance problems.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy are political scientists at Colorado College and longtime residents of Colorado Springs.

Colorado Springs Gazette
9-27-2020

MOVING BLUE:
COLORADO 19TH MOST DEMOCRATIC STATE

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Coloradans will soon be voting in the 2020 presidential election, choosing mainly between incumbent Republican President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger former Vice President Joe Biden. This is a good time to look at how Colorado compares in its voting behavior with the other 49 states.

Throughout the past decade of statewide elections (2010 to 2018), Colorado averaged 52.2 percent Democratic. Compared to 50 states of the United States, Colorado ranked as the 19th most Democratic state in the 2010s decade. Eighteen states were more Democratic. Thirty-one states were more Republican.

The shift from the decade of the 1980s was quite dramatic. In the 1980s Colorado was the 31st most Democratic state. It has now moved up twelve places to 19th most Democratic state.

Ranking 19th most Democratic places Colorado near the middle of the 50 states but favoring the Democratic Party. There is notable variety in how the 50 states vote in political party terms. The most Democratic state, Hawaii, is 68 percent Democratic. The most Republican state, Wyoming, votes 73.5 percent Republican. The other 48 states fall in a wide range between.

The elections we used to calculate these figures were U.S. president, state governor, and U.S. Senate races.

Close by Colorado's 52.2 percent Democratic rank in these state political party rankings are Florida (50.1 percent Dem), Wisconsin (50.2

percent Dem), Pennsylvania (52.3 percent Dem), and Michigan (52.4 percent Dem). Although most opinion polls show Republican Trump again losing in Colorado in 2020, all four of the other states – Florida, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and Michigan – voted for Donald Trump in 2016 and were key components in his surprise electoral victory to the White House. And, not surprisingly, these other four states are considered battleground states in this election.

We calculated Colorado's two-party voting average in the decade of the 1980s for comparison to the present decade of the 2010s. The 1980s were a strong period of Republican dominance in the nation and Colorado. Ronald Reagan won the presidency twice (1980 and 1984) and the elder George Bush won it once (1988). Reagan's and Bush's electoral coattails enabled Colorado Republicans to win many elections lower down on the ballot.

Colorado's two-party average in the 1980s was 52.4 percent Republican. That can be measured against the present decade of the 2010s of 52.2 percent Democratic. That is a shift of 4.6 percent Republican to Democratic over the four decades. That is not an unusually large shift as state shifts in party voting go. The significant point is that, in moving 4.6 points Democratic, Colorado crossed the 50 percent mark (52.4 Republican to 50 percent even to 52.2 percent Democratic). That is the 50 percent mark where Republicans stopped winning most of the elections in Colorado and the Democrats started winning most of them.

We went looking for other states where the electorate moved 4 points or so Democratic across the 50 percent mark that determines which political party wins most of the elections. The closest were Virginia, which shifted 5.5 points Republican to Democratic, and New Jersey, which shifted 6.4 points Republican to Democratic.

At the same time, some states were the opposite of Colorado and moved across the 50 percent mark from Democratic to Republican. Montana went from 50.6 percent Democratic in the1980s to 52.9 percent Republican

in the 2010s. Louisiana moved from 51.8 percent Democratic to 56.3 percent Republican.

Colorado's similarity in its vote shifting to Virginia and New Jersey, two high population states on the East Coast, bore out one of our major themes about Colorado voting behavior. Instead of resembling most Rocky Mountain states, which are mainly Republican, Colorado tends to vote similarly to East Coast states which have large population corridors (similar to Colorado's Front Range population corridor) running through them.

Colorado has obviously shifted Democratic, yet it is unclear how much this will continue. The state has moved steadily more Democratic over four decades, from 52.4 Republican in the 1980s to 52.2 percent Democratic in the 2010s. Characterized by us as purple (a tossup between red Republican and blue Democratic) in recent years, Colorado is now moving into "leans Democratic" territory.

What explains the shift in partisan hue? There is not a single answer. Here are a few plausible contributors. Democrats tend to do well among well-educated voters with college and advanced degrees. Colorado voters are among the most educated in the nation. Democrats also do well among urban populations, and Colorado has become even more urban in recent decades.

The Republican base in Colorado has been more divided on social issues (abortion, same-sex marriage, and legalized recreational drugs). There are fewer comparable issues dividing Democrats. Finally, Democrats have increased their vote margins in the richer states (Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, California, Maryland, etc.) The strong economic growth in Colorado in recent decades has pushed our state into this more prosperous group.

Colorado Springs Gazette
10-11-2020

COLORADO BALLOT ISSUES: RECOMMENDATIONS, FORECASTS

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Registered Colorado voters will have now received your mail-in ballots – or they should arrive within a day or two. We believe voters should pay almost as much attention to the ballot issues as to the candidates.

We offer below our recommendations and forecasts. A few of them are tough to decide and, as you will note, the two of us differ on a couple of them. We acknowledge we have no hard data to guide our predictions. They are merely estimates made a month before election day.

Eleven issues are on the ballot in the upcoming 2020 general election this November. Here is the Cronin-Loevy take on each one:

Prop. 113/Senate Bill 42 – National Popular Vote. This is a proposal to bypass the Electoral College in presidential elections by giving all of Colorado's electoral votes to the national popular-vote winner. Many Democrats support this to prevent Republicans from winning the electoral vote (and the White House) while losing the national popular vote.

Cronin: **No.** Loevy: **No.** Yes, it is time to get rid of or greatly overhaul the Electoral College, yet this is not the right way to do it. An amendment to the U.S. constitution would be the right way. *Our forecast: Prop. 113 will fail.*

Prop. 114/Initiative 107 – Reintroduction of Gray Wolves. The gray wolf would be carefully introduced west of the Continental Divide. Ecologists favor it; ranchers generally oppose it.

Cronin: **No.** Loevy: **No.** This complex issue, with real implications for livestock growers and back country hikers and skiers, should be decided by

the legislature and governor, not the voters. *Our forecast: Prop. 114 will fail.*

Prop. 115/Initiative 120 – Prohibit abortions after 22 weeks. This proposed law limiting abortion rights is up for its fourth try with Colorado voters.

Cronin: **No.** Loevy: **No.** Abortion foes may be attempting to copy Douglas Bruce, who got TABOR, "a vote on all tax increases," adopted on his third try with the statewide electorate. We find it too restrictive. *Our forecast: Prop. 115 will fail (again).*

Prop. 116/Initiative 306 – Reduce State Income Tax. State income tax rates will be reduced from 4.63 percent to 4.5 percent. The lost revenue to Colorado state government will have to be made by cutting other state programs, most likely road funds and higher education support.

Cronin: **No.** Loevy: **No.** We like the idea of rounding-off the state income tax rate to a more even number, but we would prefer to round up to 5.0 percent rather than down to 4.5. We would use the increased tax money for the state's five most important programs – K-12 education, highways, higher education, Medicaid (medical aid for the poor), and prisons. Coronavirus has hit the state budget hard with major cuts. This is not the moment to cut the state income tax rate. *Our forecast: Prop. 116 will fail.*

Prop. 117/Initiative 295 – Fees for new state based enterprises. If you support TABOR with its "a vote on all tax increases," then this makes sense. The state legislature has been avoiding TABOR by raising fees for state programs rather than increasing taxes. This would require a vote to raise fees just as a vote is currently required to raise taxes.

Cronin: **No.** Loevy: **No.** On the other hand, if you agree with TABOR critics that state government in Colorado is badly under financed, then you should oppose this strenuously. *Our forecast: Prop. 117 will fail.*

Prop. 118/Initiative 283 – Paid family and medical leave. This creates a required state run family and medical leave program paid for by employers and employees. Whether the financing provided will actually pay the costs of the program is questionable.

Cronin: **No.** Loevy: **No.** Colorado already has constitutionally and legally required programs that the state cannot afford to support financially. The state is currently running a large deficit in legally required spending on K-12 education. This program, though desirable in many ways, could prove a future financial nightmare for Colorado. In prosperous economic times, this proposal might pass. *Our forecast: Prop. 118 will fail.*

Amend. 76/Initiative 76 – Citizen qualification of electors. This changes the Colorado constitution, which now reads "every citizen" can vote." The new language would say "only a citizen" can vote. It is designed to prevent immigrants without U.S. citizenship from voting in Colorado elections.

Cronin: **No.** Loevy: **Yes.** This is an unnecessary change, Still, some people want to clarify that immigrants need to become citizens of the United States if they are going to vote in Colorado elections. A collateral effect – it would incentivize immigrants to try to quickly gain U.S. citizenship in order to be able to vote. *Our forecast: Amend. 76 will pass.*

Amend. 77/Initiative 257 – Eliminate gaming limits in Central City, Black Hawk and Cripple Creek casinos. This would remove the $100 maximum betting limit in the three mountain towns in Colorado that have casino gambling. Each town would also have to gain local voter approval to raise the limits.

Cronin: **Yes.** Loevy: **Yes.** Those opposed to gambling in Colorado might as well give up. The Colorado lottery and gambling in the three mountain towns have been going on for years with no major visible ill effects. *Our forecast: Amend.77 will pass.*

Amend. B/Senate Concurrent Resolution 1 – Repeal the Gallagher Amendment. Sent to the voters by the state legislature, this would eliminate the requirement in the state constitution that sets a property tax ratio of 55 percent on commercial property and 45 percent on residential. The long term effect of the requirement has been to drive down homeowner property taxes and drive up business property taxes.

Cronin: **No.** Loevy: **Yes.** We think tax policy should be set by the state legislature rather than in the inflexible state constitution. People are probably willing to pay more property tax on homes in order to give a fairer property tax break to Colorado businesses. But this is an anti-tax state. *Our forecast: Amend. B is a toss-up.*

Amend. C/House Concurrent Resolution 20-1001 – New bingo licenses. We're in pain! Is anything as mundane as bingo licensing policy really in the state constitution? This constitutional amendment sets employee policies and license requirements.

Cronin: **Yes.** Loevy: **Yes.** It's in the state constitution, so we have no choice but to deal with it there. At a future date, the state legislature should get this out of the state constitution and handled as regular state legislation. *Our forecast: Amend. C will pass.*

Prop, EE/House Bill 1427 – Taxing nicotine products. Colorado has a record of approving things like smoking and gambling and then taxing them heavily. Vaping products would be included in this tax program. The proposal is supposed to raise $294 million for public education.

Cronin: **Yes.** Loevy: **Yes.** We are worried this could raise the cost of nicotine and vaping so high that an illegal black market will develop. Moreover, this is a decidedly regressive tax. *Our forecast: Prop. EE will fail.*

For those who have read this far, here is our "month before election day" forecast in the Colorado presidential and U.S. Senate races: Biden – 54 to 56 percent in Colorado; Trump – 41to 43 percent. Hickenlooper – 50 to 53 percent; Gardner – 47 to 50 percent.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy regularly write on Colorado and national politics. In the recent past our forecasts have been mostly yet not always accurate.

Colorado Springs Gazette
10-6-2020

OUR CHANGING TWO-PARTY SYSTEM

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

You were probably as surprised as we were to see on our mail-in ballots that we had 21 different choices for president. Many of those choices were from political parties rarely or never heard of. Yet about 97 percent of us will cast our ballots for the Democratic or Republican tickets.

It is true that one of the biggest changes in recent years in Colorado and elsewhere has been the significant increase in people becoming independents (unaffiliated) in their voter registration or at least in their attitudes.

But there is no independent party. We are a two-party system, but if you look closely, there have been some fascinating shifts or realignments taking place within many of our states – though less so here in Colorado.

Our four-decades study of voting in the 50 states revealed that a number of states have been moving more strongly Democratic over the years while a number of others have been moving equally strongly to the Republicans.

The end result is to reduce the number of states in the middle where either party has a chance of winning. Colorado, although considered "leaning Democratic," is one of those middle states.

The study involved all presidential, governor, and senator elections in all 50 states from 1980 to 2018. The results for each state were averaged together by decade and the results for the 1980s decade (1980 through 1988) compared to the 2010s decade (2010 through 2018).

California, for instance, moved 13.9 percentage points toward the Democrats, from 53.2 percent Republican in the 1980s to 60.7 percent

Democratic in the 2010s. As California moved more strongly Democratic, it became more difficult for Republicans to win statewide elections there. California has become a "one-party state."

An even more dramatic shift took place in the neighboring state of Oregon. It shifted 13.1 percentage points Democratic, from 56.9 percent Republican in the 1980s to 56.2 percent Democratic in the 2010s.

It should be kept in mind that these notable shifts in voting averages toward one political party or the other do not mean the other party cannot win an occasional statewide election. For example, Maryland and Massachusetts are one-party Democratic states, but each currently has a popular Republican governor.

Similar shifts to the Democrats were hitting the East Coast north of Washington, D.C. Two populous states, New York and New Jersey, led the rising Democratic tide there.

New York shifted 11 points more Democratic, from 54.5 percent Democratic in the decade of the 1980s to 65.5 percent Democratic in the 2010s. New Jersey jumped 6.4 percent more Democratic from 51.4 percent Rep in the 1980s to 55 percent Democratic in the 2010s.

First Conclusion: State shifts have been taking place in the Democratic Party. The leading areas of shift to the Democrats are the Pacific Coast states and the upper North Atlantic Coast states.

We then looked for states that were two-party in the 1980s but had since started voting heavily Republican. Tennessee shifted a striking 17 percentage points toward the Republicans, ending up at 64.5 percent Republican in the 2010s. North Dakota shifted 14.7 points to the Republicans, landing at 67.4 percent Republican in the 2010s.

Except for Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and Virginia, the entire southern United States qualified as shifting Republican. Gone for now are the days when the Republican Party had strong roots in New England, in the Midwest, and Nixon's and Reagan's California. The South is now one of the most Republican parts of the 50 states and growing more Republican all the time.

Second Conclusion: Partisan shifting is as noticeable in the Republican Party as in the Democratic Party. The major centers of Republican strength now are the South, the Rocky Mountain states, and the High Plains states.

Overall, we categorized 12 states as one-party Democratic and 19 states as one-party Republican. That leaves 19 states committed to neither major party. These are states where either Democrats or Republicans can win statewide elections. These are states that are not, so far, one-party dominated.

Six of these middle voting states were in the Midwest – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The most populous state in this middle category was Florida. It was 51.2 percent Republican in the 1980s and 50.1 percent Democratic in the 2010s. The list of in-between states includes other populous states such as Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Virginia.

Conclusion Three: There are 19 of the 50 states in which the shift to one-party domination is not occurring, either in behalf of the Democrats or the Republicans. The main contingent of these middle states comes from the Midwest, and that is why the Midwest tends to swing the balance of power in U.S. presidential elections between the Democratic East and West Coasts and the Republican South and Far West.

Colorado is one of the 19 middle states at this time. It averaged 52.2 percent Democratic in the present decade of the 2010s. Colorado is two-party compared to the other 50 states but leaning Democratic in recent years. Colorado Republicans may not be as optimistic this election season, but need to remember – at least for now – they hold three of the seven seats in our delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives, a majority of the University of Colorado Board of Regents, and have seen Hank Brown, Bill Owens, John Suthers and Cory Gardner, among several others, win statewide races over the past two decades.

America is one of the few two-party nations in the world. Our election procedures and Electoral College (and its winner-take-all

arrangements practiced in 48 states plus the District of Columbia) discourage robust third parties – even though many Americans yearn for more choices. The two-party system is here to stay for the near future. But that doesn't mean – as we have demonstrated – that allegiances within the parties don't change and shift. That's happening all the time, more than is generally appreciated.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy write about Colorado and national politics.

Not Used
10-6-2020

STATES POLARIZATION COUNT: POLARIZED DEMOCRATIC – 12, POLARIZED REPUBLICAN – 19, NON-POLARIZED – 19

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

It has been widely reported that American politics has become "polarized." This is the idea that states are becoming either more Democratic or more Republican. As this process continues, it is said, compromise and cooperation are harder to find to solve America's many social and economic problems.

Are all 50 states polarized? If so, which ones are polarized Democratic and which Republican? We set out to answer these questions by studying voting changes in all of the states over four decades – from the decade of the 1980s to the present day 2010s. We used presidential, governor, and U.S. senator election returns from every state.

The overall results: 12 states are polarized Democratic; 19 states are polarized Republican; and 19 states are non-polarized. Colorado is one of the non-polarized states.

We found only two states were polarized Democratic for the entire four decades of the study. We defined polarized Democratic as voting more than 55 percent Democratic over a decade. Hawaii was 64.6 percent Democratic in the decade of the 1980s and 68.0 percent Democratic in the decade of the 2010s. Maryland was 56.8 Democratic in the 1980s and 59.9 percent Democratic in the 2010s.

More interesting were a group of states that were evenly split between the two major political parties in the 1980s but moved decisively toward the

Democrats by the 2010s. Prominent were the three Pacific coast states. California moved 13.9 percentage points toward the Dems, from 53.2 percent Rep in the 1980s to 60.7 percent Dem in the 2010s. Oregon shifted 13.1 percentage points Dem, from 56.9 percent Rep in the 1980s to 56.2 percent Dem in the 2010s. Washington state joined this polarizing Democratic club by transiting 5.7 points Dem from 50.9 percent Dem to 56.6 percent Dem.

Similar waves of Democratic polarization were hitting the East Coast north of Washington, D.C. Two populous states, New York and New Jersey, led the rising Democratic tide there. New York shifted 11 points more Dem from 54.5 percent Dem in the 1980s to 65.5 percent Dem in the 2010s. New Jersey jumped 6.4 percent more Dem from 51.4 percent Rep in the 1980s to 55 percent Dem in the 2010s.

Tagging along were the small population states of Delaware and Rhode Island. Delaware shifted an amazing 18 percentage points Democratic by being 56.4 percent Rep in the 1980s and 61.6 percent Dem in the 2010s. As for Rhode Island, the shift was 7.1 percent Dem with the 1980s at 54.5 percent Dem and the. 2010s at 61.6 percent Dem.

First conclusion: Polarization is real in the Democratic Party. The leading areas are the Pacific Coast states and the upper north Atlantic Coast states.

We found the same trend toward polarization in the Republican Party, but the strongest polarizing trends were centered in the South, the High Plains states, and the Rocky Mountain states. Whereas the Democrats had a relatively small number of very populous states polarizing Dem, the Republicans tended to have a larger number of less populous states shifting in the Rep direction.

We began with states that were as Republican in the 2010s as they were in the 1980s. We found six, half of them in the Rocky Mountain states. They were Alaska, Idaho, Kansas, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

We then looked for states that were two-party in the 1980s but had since polarized Republican. Tennessee rolled a whopping 17 percentage

points toward the Republicans, ending up at 64.5 percent Rep in the 2010s. North Dakota shifted 14.7 points to the Reps, landing at 67.4 percent Rep in the 2010s. The one high population state in the Republican polarizing group was Texas, which gravitated 5.4 percentage points toward the Reps and ended up at 57.5 percent Rep in the 2010s.

Except for Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia, the entire southern United States qualified as polarizing Republican. Gone forever are the days when the Republican Party was based in New England and the Midwest. The South is now the most Republican part of the 50 states and growing more Republican all the time.

Second conclusion: Polarization is as real in the Republican Party as in the Democratic Party. The major centers of Republican polarization are the South, the Rocky Mountain states, and the High Plains states.

We ended up categorizing 12 states as polarized Democratic and 19 states as polarized Republican. That left 19 states committed to neither major party. These are states in which either Democrats or Republicans can win statewide elections. These are states that are, as yet, non-polarized.

Six of these middle voting states were in the Midwest – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The most populous state in this middle category was Florida, which shifted 1.3 percentage points to the Democrats. It was 51.2 percent Republican in the 1980s and 50.1 percent Democratic in the 2010s. The list of in-between states includes other populous states such as Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Virginia.

Conclusion Three: There are 19 of the 50 states in which polarization is not occurring, either in behalf of the Democrats or the Republicans. In those states, both major political parties can compete and hope to win statewide elections. But the main contingent of non-polarized states comes from the Midwest, and that is why the Midwest tends to swing the balance of power in U.S. presidential elections between the Democratic East and West Coasts and the Republican South and Far West.

Colorado is one of the 19 non-polarized states at this time. It averaged 52.2 percent Democratic in the present decade of the 2010s. Colorado is non-polarized compared to the other 50 states but leaning Democratic.

We consider Colorado voters to be lucky to live in a state where, over the long haul of four decades of voting, neither political party succeeded in winning so many elections that our state qualifies as polarized. The Republicans were strong, but not dominant, in the 1980s. The Democrats are doing well now, particularly in the recent 2018 elections. But no major political party has risen to power in Colorado the way the Democrats have polarized California and the Republicans have polarized Tennessee.

Colorado: Beautiful mountain scenery, great snow skiing, and, best of all, non-polarized in its long-term voting record.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy are retired political scientists at Colorado College in Colorado Springs.

Colorado Springs Gazette
10-25-2020

ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST IS THE MOST REPUBLICAN REGION – BARELY

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

The eight Rocky Mountain states comprise the most Republican region in the United States, voting 57.8 percent Republican during the current decade of the 2010s. Close behind the Rocky Mountain states, however, is the South – just one-half of one percentage point behind – at 57.3 percent Republican.

With the presidential election days away, about the safest bet you can make is that incumbent Republican President Donald Trump will win the Rocky Mountain West and the South.

Colorado is one of two states in the Rocky Mountain West not conforming to the Republican pattern in the region and supports the Democrats. In the present decade of elections (2010 to 2018), Colorado averaged 52.2 percent Democratic. The other Rocky Mountain state voting for the Democrats was New Mexico, at 53.6 percent Democratic.

The elections studied for this survey were U.S. president, state governor, and U.S. senator. The period studied was from 1980 through 2018.

Colorado gets its Democratic fervor from the large Democratic vote in the Denver-Boulder metropolitan area. New Mexico bills itself as a "Tri-cultural Society" (Anglo-Hispanic-Native American). Its preference for the Democrats comes from strong support in the Hispanic and Native American communities.

The three most Republican states in the Rocky Mountain West – and they are very Republican – are Utah (68.8 percent Republican), Idaho (66 percent Republican), and Wyoming (73.5 percent Republican).

Utah is Republican because of the conservatism of its large Mormon population. Idaho and Wyoming are fertile ground for the GOP because they are rural agricultural states with no large metropolitan areas.

The last three Republican states in the Rocky Mountain West are Nevada (52 percent Republican), Montana (52.9 percent Republican), and Arizona (55.1 percent Republican).

Nevada has two major cities, Las Vegas and Reno. Gambling casino and hospitality workers in those two cities sway Nevada in the direction of the Democrats, yet the state remains Republican. Montana is a traditional farming and ranching state and thus pro-GOP. Arizona is apparently undergoing demographic and partisan change with the Democrats now being competitive with Republicans.

It is the vast amount of farming and ranching lands dotted with small cities that give the Rocky Mountain states their overall strong Republican flavor. On the other hand, growing Democratic cities in Colorado and New Mexico and elsewhere in the region somewhat curtail that Republicanism.

The South has been moving Republican for the past four decades. In the 1980s, the South was 50.3 percent Democratic. It is now 57.3 percent Republican. That is a shift of 7.6 percent to the Republicans, the largest shift made by any region of the United States from the 1980s to the 2010s.

The Republican percentage of the vote in the vast majority of the Southern states runs in the high 50 percents to the low 60 percents. There are two exceptions to this strong regional GOP showing. Virginia, thanks to sprawling Democratic suburbs south of Washington, D.C., is 53.2 percent Democratic. Florida, perhaps the swingiest state in this presidential election, sits in the middle of the two major parties at 50.1 percent Democratic.

The longtime conversion of the South from the most Democratic region of the nation to one of the most Republican is one of the striking realities in contemporary American politics. There is no question that the South will easily surge past the Rocky Mountain states and become the most Republican region of the nation.

The thirteen states of the Midwest were once the center of Republican Party strength in American politics, but in 2020 the Midwest is the region most famous for swinging the balance of voting power between the two major political parties. It contains two strongly Democratic states in Minnesota (56.2 percent Democratic) and Illinois (54.6 percent Democratic). These Democratic states are offset, however, by Republican supporting states like Iowa (56.6 percent Republican) and Kentucky (55.2 percent Republican) and Indiana (54.1 percent Republican).

Yet the Midwest is most famous for having states that fall right on the midline between the two major parties. Best examples: Wisconsin (50.2 percent Democratic), Michigan (52.4 percent Democratic), Ohio (50.4 percent Republican), and Missouri (51.8 percent Republican).

New England is the smallest region geographically. Similar to the Midwest, New England long ago was prime Republican territory. Now in the 2010s it is Democratic territory, clocking in at 54.7 percent Democratic. New England's most Democratic state is Rhode Island, which registers at 61.6 percent Democratic.

The last two regions in our study are also the two most Democratic in the country. The Pacific Coast states are 56.3 percent Democratic and the Middle Atlantic states are 56.9 percent Democratic. These two coastal giants are the big regional vote producers for the Democratic Party.

Taken together, the regions of New England, the Pacific Coast, and the Middle Atlantic comprise 17 states. Only three of the 17 averaged Republican during the 2010s decade. They were New Hampshire, Alaska, and West Virginia.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy are Colorado College political scientists who write on Colorado and national politics.

Colorado Springs Gazette
11-14-2020

SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT THE 2020 ELECTION

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Our 59th consecutive presidential election has, we believe, just concluded. We are, like most people, awaiting the 23rd peaceful transfer of national political power from one political power to another.

Former Vice President Joe Biden appears to have won at least 77.4 million votes (to Trump's more than 72 million votes), more than any candidate has won in U.S. history. He beat President Donald Trump by more than 5 million and has won a higher percentage off the popular vote, 50.8%, than any challenger to an incumbent since FDR's defeat of Herbert Hoover in 1932.

Trump is going noisily into the night, yet when he leaves he will join Hoover, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter and George H. W. Bush in the one- term presidency club. It should be noted that Harry Truman and LBJ are partial members of this group since their hopes for reelection were dashed by their parties.

We've only had seven presidents serve out two full terms as opposed to 12 who served just one or one-and-half terms in the White House since 1900. The notion of a two-term tradition is a bit misleading.

Biden's was a somewhat paradoxical win. He did win half of the states, plus D.C. and one congressional district in Nebraska. He also won a higher percentage than just four other elections in the past 15. He also won every state that Hillary Clinton had won in addition to "flipping" five key battleground states and Nebraska's second congressional district.

Yet Biden underperformed most of the national polls and therefore most public expectations.

Many Democrats had expected, or at least hoped for, a blue wave and the recapturing of the U.S. Senate. That didn't happen, and Biden appeared to have virtually no coattails for congressional and state legislative candidates. At this point, Republicans have picked up at least a half-dozen seats in the House, and flipped the governorship in Montana. Democrats lost a Senate seat in Alabama and have won two – in Colorado and Arizona.

The fact it has taken a week or more to tally the votes and that President Trump and some of his advisers are contesting the election adds to the muted tone of Biden's apparent victory.

The Biden win is a bit clouded too by other factors. Trump outperformed as well. He won several million more votes than he had in 2016. His base stuck with him. He won 93% of registered Republicans and did better with Hispanics than he did four years ago. His 47.5 election percent also outperformed his presidential job approval ratings that had averaged around 44%.

Trump was an impressive campaigner right until the end.

His amazing three day recovery from COVID added to his Rambo swagger image. Most people would agree that he would have won had it not been for the COVID crisis. On the other hand, his handling of COVID was part of his undoing. Still, Trumpism will live on.

It looks as though Biden will earn 306 electoral votes. If he does it will exceed what many of our recent presidents earned (Truman-303, JFK-303, Nixon in 1968-301, Carter-297, George W. Bush in 2000-271). And Biden's 306 would match President Trump's 306 in 2016, which led him to claim he had won a mandate from the American people.

There are justifiable complaints once again that pollsters were wrong and misleading about many of our elections. They were, however, correct in suggesting that this year's races in Arizona, Georgia, Pennsylvania and North Carolina would be very close.

The polls were spot on in the two major races in Colorado. Colorado was one of the few places that really had a blue wave. Biden won an impressive 55.3% compared to Trump's 42.1% of the vote. Libertarian Jo Jorgensen won 1.6% , and for the record, Trump's pal, Kanye West, won about 7,640 Colorado votes for .2%.

Note that Biden won by more than 13 percentage points, compared with Hillary Clinton's less that 5 percentage points four years earlier. That's a blue move in a week that also gave us a blue moon.

Former Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper, with the help of a big money advantage, defeated Republican U.S. Sen. Cory Gardner by a 53.5 to 44.2 percentage. Gardner's defeat was the only real defeat of an incumbent Republican senator.

In Arizona, Democrat Mark Kelley won in a race against Sen. Martha McSally, who had been appointed to complete Senator John McCain's unexpired term.

Why did Biden do so well in Colorado? Trump was unusually unpopular here. Trump did not do well among college-educated voters, and Colorado is the second highest state in the nation in this category. Liberal counties really produced for Biden – with Denver, Boulder and Pitkin counties, for example, averaging about 78% for him. Whereas Republican strongholds like El Paso and Douglas counties averaged just a meager 53% of their vote for Trump. Biden won the majority of Colorado's unaffiliated voters and won the important Denver suburbs.

Why did Wall Street appear to like Biden's victory? We think it liked the message of moderation and compromise — and it liked that there would not be a big blue wave. It doubtless liked that the Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren and AOC wing didn't add to their caucuses and that programs such as the Green New Deal, defunding the police and universal health care will not be the center of attention. Further, Democrats Hickenlooper and Kelley are moderates. Wall Street, like all of us, is also heartened by the progress of vaccine research.

There are still a lot of unanswered questions about 2020. Why were the polls so misleading? Why did Colorado go so blue? Why did Trump do as well as he did? Why has Trump insisted there has been widespread fraud?

Meanwhile, three cheers for the amazing voter turnout in this year of a pandemic, and for mail-in voting which Coloradans had learned to love, for the U.S. Postal Service and for the countless county clerks and volunteer election vote counters and observers.

Democracy can be messy, but it has served our republic well.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy write regularly about Colorado and national politics.

Colorado Springs Gazette
Perspective Section
11-29-2020

COLORADO VOTING PATTERNS – 2020

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Four major Denver suburban counties moved so strongly Democratic in the 2020 presidential election that it now appears the Democrats will dominate statewide elections in Colorado for years to come.

Those four counties were Adams (north and northeast Denver suburbs), Arapahoe (south and southeast suburbs), Jefferson (west suburbs), and Broomfield (northwest suburbs).

At the same time, two counties outside the Denver metro area, traditionally relied upon to pile up big Republican majorities, somewhat weakened in their support for the GOP.

Those two counties were Douglas (county seat: Castle Rock) and El Paso (Colorado Springs). Weld County (Greeley) replaced them as the most reliably Republican populous county in the state.

In the meantime, Denver and Boulder continued to be the two Democratic powerhouses in the state. Larimer County (Fort Collins) moved solidly Democratic. Pueblo County (Pueblo), at one time reliably Democratic, could not make up its mind as to which political party it preferred.

The skiing counties up in the Rocky Mountains maintained their strong trend to the Democrats, and Colorado's rural agricultural counties remained the most solidly Republican part of the state.

In the Denver suburbs, Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, and Jefferson counties used to be reliably Republican and caused Colorado to be viewed as

a Republican state. All traces of that disappeared in the 2020 presidential election.

Political scientists consider 55 percent to 60 percent a Big Win and 60 percent plus a Landslide. Democrat Joe Biden won Adams County with 58.4 percent of the vote (Big Win), Arapahoe County with 62.7 percent (Landslide), Broomfield with 64.1 percent (Landslide), and Jefferson with 59.5 percent (Big Win).

From 2016, when he was first elected president, to the 2020 presidential election, Donald Trump's percentage of the vote statewide in Colorado dropped 4.2 percentage points, from 47.3 in 2016 to 43.1 percent in 2020. The Trump losses were heavier than that statewide 4.2 percent in three of the four Denver suburban counties. Arapahoe: -4.9 percentage points. Broomfield: -6.2. Jefferson: -5.8.

We decided to look at how the Republicans in 2020 compared with their performance in Colorado in 2004, the last time a Republican candidate for president carried the state. That was George W. Bush, with 52.4 percent Republican in 2004. Trump received 43.1 percent of the Colorado vote in 2020, so the statewide decline was -9.3 percentage points.

Again, three of the Denver suburban counties dropped considerably more than the state average of -9.3. Arapahoe: -14.7 percentage points. Broomfield: -16.4. Jefferson: -12.1.

Democrat Biden clearly defeated incumbent Republican president Donald Trump in the place in Colorado where it counts the most – the Denver suburbs.

It was bad enough for the Republicans that the four Denver suburban counties were going strongly Democratic. Adding to GOP woes was a decline in the usual performance of Republican voters in Douglas and El Paso counties.

Douglas County reported in 2020 at 53.7 percent Republican. That was down -6.2 percentage points from 2016 and -13.3 percentage points from 2004.

El Paso County in 2020 came in at 55.6 percent Republican – down -6.8 points from 2016 and -11.9 points from 2004. That -6.8 percentage point decline in the El Paso County Republican vote from 2016 to 2020 was the largest drop for any major county in the state.

The one bright spot for the Republicans in 2020 was Weld County (Greeley). It gave Trump a sizeable 59.3percent (Big Win) Republican vote. That was down a little but compared favorably with the Weld County vote in 2016 of 62.2 percent Republican and in 2004 of 63.6 Republican. Weld County now has clear title to being the most Republican populous county in Colorado.

It is sometimes easy to overlook Denver and Boulder counties because they are so consistently Democratic. In 2020 Denver went 81.4 percent Democratic for Joe Biden, the highest Democratic percentage for any county in the state. Boulder County was close behind Denver at 78.9 percent Democratic, good enough for second place.

If Denver's voting has not changed very much, its position in the Denver metro area has changed. It used to be that Denver was a Democratic city surrounded by Republican suburbs. Now it is a Democratic city surrounded by Democratic suburbs – very Democratic suburbs.

Larimer County (Fort Collins), the home of Colorado State University (CSU) was Republican back in the day but went 58 percent Democratic for Joe Biden in 2020. Larimer County can now join the Denver suburban counties as reliably Democratic.

Normally Democratic Pueblo County surprised everyone in 2016 when it voted narrowly for Donald Trump at 50.3 percent Republican. In 2020 it jumped back Democratic at 50.9 percent Democratic, a shift of only 1.2 percentage points. The site of a steel mill and a number of other industries, Pueblo had enough white working class voters supporting Donald Trump to remain undecided between the two major political parties at this time.

Up in the Rocky Mountains, the Colorado skiing counties continued their strong preference for the Democrats. Look at these 2020 Joe Biden

figures at the Landslide 60 percent or higher level: San Miguel County (Telluride) – 77.5 percent Democratic; Pitkin County (Aspen) – 76.4 percent Democratic; Summit County (Breckenridge) – 70.3 percent Democratic; Gunnison County (Crested Butte) – 66.0 percent Democratic; Eagle County (Vail) – 65.3 percent Democratic; Routt County (Steamboat) – 64.1 percent Democratic.

The place where President Trump and the Republicans are really popular in Colorado is the rural agricultural counties, particularly out on the Eastern Plains. Cheyenne County (Cheyenne Wells) went for Trump by 88.3 percent, Baca County (Springfield) by 85.5 percent, and Washington County (Akron) by 87.6 percent. The most Trump-supporting county was Kiowa County (Eads), which chalked up 89.0 percent Republican in the 2020 presidential election.

Here is part of the Republican problem in Colorado at the present time. The most Democratic counties, Denver and Boulder, are in the most heavily populated part of the state. The most Republican counties are in rural agricultural areas with very small populations.

BALLOT ISSUES

Of the eleven issues on the statewide ballot in Colorado in 2020, nine were approved by the voters. The two losers were limiting abortions and allowing paid managers and operators in charitable bingo parlors. The bingo issue was approved by a majority of the voters at 52.3 percent YES but failed to get the 55 percent required to change the state constitution.

Here is a look at how various counties in Colorado voted on the eleven statewide ballot issues.

Amendment B – Property Tax Assessments (Gallagher)

A previous state constitutional amendment greatly favored lowering residential property taxes at the expense of increasing business property taxes. Despite the fact adoption of this amendment could lead to increases in

residential property taxes, this tax change plan was popular all over the state, probably due to support for the business community. Denver County voted 68.2 percent YES, along with Boulder County at 67.4 percent YES and Eagle County (Vail) at 63.9 percent YES. Significant opposition appeared on the rural-agricultural Eastern Plains, with Cheyenne County (Cheyenne Wells) voting 61.5 percent NO and Kiowa County (Eads) voting 57.8 percent NO.

Adopted – 57.5 percent YES; 42.5 percent NO

Amendment C – Bingo

This was a housekeeping measure that never should have been in the state constitution. The electorate responded as if it was a serious problem and voted along familiar liberal vs. conservative lines. General attitudes toward gambling seemed to guide the vote, with Democratic areas voting YES and Republican areas on the fence or voting NO.

Denver County at 62.2 percent YES and Boulder County at 60.4 percent YES voted for it strongly, along with the ski counties such as Pitkin County (Aspen) at 63.0 percent YES and San Miguel County (Telluride) at 60.4 percent YES.

The Denver suburbs were slightly for it – Arapahoe County at 53.0 percent YES and Jefferson County at 50.9 percent YES. Narrowly against was El Paso County (Colorado Springs) at 51.3 percent NO. Weld County (Greeley) voted YES by only 84 votes. The only real opposition came from rural-agricultural counties such as Delta County at 58.3 percent NO and Kiowa County (Eads) at 57.0 percent NO. Mesa County (Grand Junction) on the Western Slope also was opposed to Bingo at 56.3 percent NO.

Not Adopted – It received 52.3 percent of the YES vote but 55 percent was required to add it to the state constitution.

Amendment 76 – Be A Citizen To Vote

This amendment clarified that only citizens were allowed to vote in Colorado elections. Some observers interpreted it as being anti-immigrant,

but that idea seemed to only reach Colorado's most liberal and Democratic voters. Among the few counties that voted NO were Denver at 55.3 percent NO, Boulder at 58.9 percent NO, Pitkin (Aspen) at 53.4 percent NO, and San Miguel (Telluride) at 55.0 percent NO.

Adopted – 62.9 percent YES; 37.1 percent NO

Amendment 77 – Expand Gambling In Mountain Towns

There does not seem to be a limit to how strongly the voters in Colorado will support gambling in the three mountain towns of Blackhawk, Central City, and Cripple Creek. This amendment allowed each town to raise betting limits. Support was widespread throughout the state, with slight opposition appearing in rural-agricultural counties. Custer County (Westcliffe) voted 52.2 percent NO.

Adopted – 60.5 percent YES; 39.5 percent NO

Proposition EE – Raise Nicotine Taxes

This was another proposal that enjoyed widespread support throughout the state. Colorado voters seem to like to legalize questionable behavior such as smoking nicotine and then raise taxes on it. The main opposition was in rural-agricultural counties on the Eastern Plains. Case in point – Washington County (Akron) at 59.8 percent NO.

Adopted – 67.6 percent YES; 32.4 percent NO

Proposition 113 – Bypass the Electoral College

This proposal allocated Colorado's Electoral Votes in presidential elections to the national popular vote winner rather than the Colorado vote winner. It obviously favored the Democrats, who won the popular vote twice in the past 20 years but lost the White House to Republicans who won in the Electoral College.

As expected, the vote followed closely along Democrats vs. Republican lines in Colorado. Denver voted 73.1 percent YES to lead all the habitually strong Democratic counties such as Boulder, Pitkin (Aspen),

Eagle (Vail), and San Miguel (Telluride). The Denver suburban counties scored in the middle 50 percents on the Electoral College issue: Adams at 55.0 percent YES, Arapahoe at 56.5 percent YES, and Jefferson at 54.3 percent Yes.

Right on cue, the major Republican counties opposed the proposal: El Paso County (Colorado Springs) 59.8 percent NO; Douglas County (Castle Rock) 57.8 percent NO; Weld County (Greeley) 59.8 percent NO.

Rural-agricultural Colorado was very much against doing away with the Electoral College. Kiowa County showed the way at 85.7 percent NO.

Adopted – 52.3 percent YES; 47.7 percent NO

Proposition 114 – Reintroduce Gray Wolves

Gray Wolves, like the one that chased Red Riding Hood, were to be reintroduced in Colorado west of the Continental Divide. State funds were to be used to reimburse farmers for cows and sheep lost to gray wolves.

As expected, this proposal was well received in populous parts of the state such as Denver at 66.3 percent YES and Boulder at 67.8 percent YES. It received narrow support in the Denver suburbs, with Arapahoe County at 53.5 percent YES and Jefferson County at 51.1 percent YES.

The strong Republican counties split over gray wolf reintroduction, with El Paso County (Colorado Springs) in support at 51.1 percent YES but Douglas County (Castle Rock) going 54.9 percent NO and Weld County (Greeley) tallied at 58.4 percent NO.

Obviously rural-agricultural counties on the west side of the Continental Divide with many cows and sheep were strongly opposed. Delta County went 75.3 percent NO and Mesa County (Grand Junction) checked in at 69.5 NO.

Adopted – 50.5 percent YES; 49.1 percent NO

Proposition 115 –Prohibit Abortion

This proposal prohibited abortions after 22 weeks. It was one of the few conservative proposals on the ballot, thus a YES vote was conservative

and a NO vote was liberal. The voting generally ran along Democratic-Republican lines, with Democrats voting NO and Republicans voting YES.

But even Colorado's three major Republican counties could not gin up much support. El Paso County (Colorado Springs) voted only 52.8 percent YES. Weld County (Greeley) gave a lackluster 52.1 percent YES. And Douglas County (Castle Rock) narrowly voted against limiting abortions with 50.7 percent NO.

Not Adopted – 41.0 percent YES; 59.0 percent NO

Proposition 116 – Lower Income Tax Rates

Colorado is moving Democratic when voting for candidates and liberal when voting for ballot issues, but all that does not seem to apply when it comes to cutting state income taxes. This proposal to lower state income tax rates won support throughout the state, but particularly in the Denver suburbs: Adams County at 63.3 percent YES; Arapahoe County at 57.5 percent YES; and Jefferson County at 53.4 percent YES. Only Denver County at 54.5 percent NO and Boulder County at 60.1 percent NO and a few of the skiing counties provided any opposition.

Adopted – 57.9 percent YES; 42.1 percent NO

Proposition 117 – Vote on State Fee Increases

This was a cousin to the Tabor Amendment, which was adopted in 1992 and required a vote on all tax increases. In response to the state legislature raising user fees instead of taxes, anti-tax forces in Colorado put this proposition on the ballot. It requires a vote of the people on all major state fee increases.

The Denver suburbs narrowly supported this proposal, but it went over big in the three major Republican counties: El Paso County (Colorado Springs) at 61.1 percent YES; Douglas County at 59.1 percent YES; and Weld County (Greeley) at 59.0 percent YES. As usual, the only major opposition was in Denver, Boulder, and the skiing counties.

With a citizen vote required on raising fees as well as a citizen vote required on raising taxes, the ability of the state legislature to control the state's finances was further reduced.

Adopted – 52.5 YES; 47.5 NO

Proposition 118 – Paid Medical Leave

The proposed program would pay the salaries for mothers and fathers who stayed home with new babies. It also would pay for company employees to stay home to care for sick children or relatives. The costs of the state program would be paid from salary deductions from the employees and payments by the employers. Critics questioned whether the employee deductions and company payments would be sufficient to pay the high costs of the program, thus requiring a big money bailout from state taxpayers.

We were surprised by the popularity of this program with state voters. Denver supported it with a 74.7 percent YES along with Boulder at 71.7 percent YES. The Denver suburbs were on board with both Adams and Arapahoe counties going 61.4 percent YES. The most amazing development was lack of opposition in the major Republican counties. El Paso County (Colorado Springs) actually voted for it at 51.5 percent YES, as did Weld County (Greeley) at 50.2 percent YES. Douglas County (Castle Rock) voted 53.0 percent NO.

Only the rural-agriculture counties strongly opposed Paid Medical Leave. For instance, Washington County (Akron) on the Eastern Plains voted 71.8 percent NO.

Adopted – 57.7 percent YES; 42.3 percent NO

Colorado College political scientists Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy have been observing Colorado's 64 counties for more than 50 years.

Colorado Springs Gazette
12-6-2020

SECOND THOUGHTS ON COLORADO'S 2020 BALLOT ISSUES

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Colorado has two separate forms of government. The first, with which we are quite familiar, consists of the governor and the state legislature operating in the state Capitol building in Denver. It is a representative form of government, with the governor and the state legislators being elected to represent the voters.

The second form of government in Colorado is the state ballot issues we vote on every two years at the November general election. We just finished voting on the eleven ballot issues for 2020. This process, however, is not representative government. It is direct democracy, and whatever the voters adopt becomes the law of the state.

Instead of operating out in full public view, as the governor and state legislators do, those who control the ballot issues portion of Colorado government mainly work out of public sight. We therefore call voting on ballot issues the "Nameless-Faceless" portion of Colorado state government. We are rarely told the names or see photographs of those who draw up the ballot issues, pay people to get the signatures needed to put the issues on our ballots, and then raise and spend the money to get the ballot issues approved by the voters.

That contrasts with elected state officials, such as our state legislators and governor, who publicly run for office, are clearly identified with political parties and major political issues, and have to cast public record votes for legislation or, in the case of the governor, issue well-publicized vetoes of legislative bills.

We are particularly concerned that, in some instances, money contributed to support or oppose ballot issues is hidden from public identification. The influence of this "dark money" is particularly concerning when it comes from outside the state of Colorado.

The state legislators and the governor are forced to live within a state budget and balance that state budget. They have to do the painful job of voting to raise revenues (pass tax increases) and then make state expenditures fit within the limits of those state revenues. This puts a limit on new ideas and programs for the state legislature. Many good ideas are dropped because "there is no money to pay for them."

No such fiscal and budgetary limits exist where ballot issues government is concerned. Attractive and expensive new programs can be adopted by the voters and the state legislature has to find the money to pay for them. This happened in the 2020 general election when Colorado voters, by a generous margin, created a statewide Medical Leave Program to pay for time off from work for pregnancies and sick family members. Although the program is supposedly self-financing, the legislature will have to pay for any operating deficits.

Also under ballot issues government, the voters can cut taxes and not have to worry, as the state legislators and governor have to do, about the effect on the state budget. This also just happened in the 2020 election, when Colorado voters lowered state income tax rates and thereby reduced state revenues. It is our state legislators, not the voters, who will have to undertake the unpleasant task of cutting out vitally needed state programs to pay for the voters' tax cut.

We also think the state Title Board should do a better job of simplifying and shortening the "ballot titles" that voters read just before voting on ballot issues. We found the ballot titles on some of the financial issues to be unclear and complex and sometimes outright misleading.

The ballot issues portion of Colorado state government is mainly biased toward liberal issues and against conservative issues, although there

are exceptions. Our recent study of ballot issue voting found that, when voting on ballot issues, Colorado voters break down into four major groups:

1. Most Liberal: Denver, Boulder, the skiing counties in the Rocky Mountains.

2. Somewhat Liberal: Close-in Denver suburbs (Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, and Jefferson counties) plus Larimer County (Fort Collins).

3. Somewhat Conservative: Douglas County (Castle Rock), El Paso County (Colorado Springs), Mesa County (Grand Junction), and Weld County (Greeley).

4. Most Conservative: Under-populated rural-agricultural counties on the Eastern Plains and the Western Slope.

Anyone who knows Colorado can see that the most voters live in the highly populated Most Liberal and Somewhat Liberal groups. On a high number of ballot issues votes, the election returns show Denver and the Denver suburbs enforcing their liberal viewpoints on outlying counties and rural-agricultural counties that are much more conservative.

Of the eleven ballot issues decided by Colorado voters in 2020, seven essentially boiled down to the more urbanized parts of the state enforcing their will on the rural-agricultural counties.

A case in point was the ballot issues vote in 2020 on reintroducing gray wolves into Colorado. It was a major issue in the low population rural-agricultural counties because wolves tend to kill and devour calves and lambs. It was a close vote statewide, but liberal voters in Denver Metro (where no gray wolves will be introduced) succeeded in forcing gray wolves into Colorado despite solid opposition from the rural-agricultural counties.

We think Colorado is getting a national reputation for being a state where liberal reforms will be readily adopted at the ballot box by Colorado's electorate. Out-of-state issue-oriented foundations and liberal advocacy groups have plenty of money to spend to pay petition signature gatherers as well as pay for issue campaign advertisements. These out-of-state foundations and advocacy groups are probably preparing right now to try to get their particular liberal causes adopted by Colorado voters in 2022.

As mentioned earlier, in most cases, the out-of-state operatives planning to do this will be essentially nameless and faceless to Colorado voters. The sources of their "dark money" will be unknown.

Colorado College political scientists Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy comment on Colorado and national political issues.

Colorado Springs Gazette
12-13-2020

WHAT IF COLORADO REMAINS A "ONE-PARTY" DEMOCRATIC STATE?

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

Now may be the time to speculate on what political and governmental life in Colorado will be like if the state remains a "one-party" Democratic state?

Colorado went blue in the 2020 elections, with Democratic Party presidential candidate Joe Biden and Democratic U.S. Senate candidate John Hickenlooper scoring impressive victories over their Republican opponents. This of course built on a blue wave in 2018.

And as the *New York Times* reported this week, four of Colorado's metropolitan areas (Colorado Springs, Fort Collins, Boulder, and Denver) were among the leading areas in the nation swinging more Democratic in 2020 than in 2016.

So one-party politics could already be here in Colorado.

One change is already in progress. The Democrats are exceeding the Republicans in political party registration. As of November 1, 2020, there were 1,129,733 active registered Democrats in Colorado, about 100,000 more than the 1,028,239 active registered Republicans. Of course, the largest numbers of active voters in Colorado register unaffiliated (1,541,199), but the Democrats have a solid lead now among those who choose to register in one major political party or the other.

We expect the Democratic Party lead in registered voters to grow. The increase in registered Democrats will be driven in part by the fact that registrants are likely to perceive that almost all the statewide officials in Colorado are Democrats. That makes registration as a Republican less

attractive because you will not be able to vote in the Democratic primary, the election in which the real decision is made as to who will hold statewide office in Colorado.

In Colorado you have to be registered either Democratic or unaffiliated to vote in the Democratic primary.

It can be argued that exactly that situation existed in the 2020 U.S. Senate race in Colorado. Winning the Democratic primary, in which he had to defeat former Colorado Speaker of the House Andrew Romanoff, was a tougher fight for John Hickenlooper than defeating his Republican opponent in the general election.

Polls showed Republican Cory Gardner with little chance of winning from the beginning to the end of the Senate general election campaign, mainly because he was a Republican. That he was a Republican, however, probably hurt him less that that he was seemingly running on a Trump-Gardner ticket.

Also driving up Democratic voter registrations will be the plans of young Colorado women and men with political ambitions. Since registering Republican may be a liability for winning high office, the politically ambitious may likely put aside their real party preferences and decide to register Democratic.

As the Democratic primary election becomes the main event in statewide election to office, voter turnout in the Democratic primary will go up. In the meantime, voter turnout in general elections will stay steady or go down because the Democrats may regularly win most elections. News media may increasingly give top billing to the Democratic primaries for statewide office and take a ho-hum attitude toward the "one party always wins" general election.

As the Republicans fall further behind the Democrats in statewide Colorado, the party will become limited geographically to those areas, mainly rural agricultural counties and outlying suburbs of major metropolitan areas, where Republican voters still predominate. The Republican Party's last remaining area of real political strength will be

electing county commissioners and other county officials in the under-populated regions of the state.

The same will be true of those Republicans who succeed in getting elected to the state legislature. They may become a permanent minority, and they will spend most of their time criticizing the Democratic majority in both the state Senate and the state House of Representatives with little actual political effect.

Competition over bills in the state legislature will mainly be between moderate Democrats and progressive Democrats rather than between Democrats and Republicans. When the Democrats split on a controversial bill, the few Republicans around could cast deciding votes on a bill or two. Obviously, when the Democrats are united, the Republicans will be outvoted – and lose – every time.

We might see a "problem solving" caucus emerge in the Colorado legislature similar to what has happened in the U.S. House of Representatives. Moderate Democrats, hoping to weaken the forces of the Bernie Sanders "lefties," will reach out to moderate Republicans to seek more centrist legislation. This will probably be inevitable in Colorado, at least on some policy issues such as water, criminal justice reform, and infrastructure.

For a while at least, the Republicans should continue to dominate in sizeable metropolitan areas outside the Denver-Boulder metropolitan area. We are talking here about El Paso County (county seat Colorado Springs), Weld County (Greeley), Douglas County (Castle Rock), and Mesa County (Grand Junction). But even these current GOP stalwarts are not as Republican as they once were, and their downtown urban cores are turning Democratic.

As the Democrats take more control of government policy and practice in one-party Democratic Colorado, the Republicans main chance at winning statewide political office will come when the Democrats make mistakes or push too far to the left or otherwise antagonize large numbers of moderate voters. The statewide office of governor is where the results of this

disenchantment with the dominant Democrats will first likely appear. An occasional charismatic Republican candidate for governor, pledging to clean up the Democratic mess in Denver, will win the governorship, temporarily clip the wings of the dominant Democrats, and might even win reelection.

That's what happened in states like Massachusetts, Maryland, and Vermont. In one-party Democratic Massachusetts, Republican Charlie Baker is a popular two-term Republican governor. In one-party Democratic Maryland, Republican Larry Hogan has been elected and reelected by pledging to correct the faults of Maryland Democrats. We should expect the same kind of occasional Republican governors in one-party Democratic Colorado.

And many independents in Colorado like the "check and balance" of having the governorship in different party hands than in the one-party dominated state legislature. That is probably why there are Democratic governors in a number of Republican states right now, as in Kentucky, Louisiana, and North Carolina.

For the present, however, the Democratic Party has out organized the Republican Party in Colorado. With all major statewide offices occupied by Democrats, including two U.S. senators, the GOP in Colorado has fewer places to go to groom candidates for statewide offices in future elections.

Republicans do, however, run a handful of our bigger cities, with Mayor John Suthers in Colorado Springs and Mayor Mike Coffman in Aurora being the most visible examples.

Things are really going to be politically and governmentally different in Colorado if we remain a one-party Democratic state.

Colorado College political scientists Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy regularly write on Colorado and national politics.

Colorado Springs Gazette
12-20-2020

ANOTHER ROUND IN THE HIGH-DENSITY ZONING BATTLES

By Bob Loevy

The argument over allowing higher population densities in older established neighborhoods in Colorado Springs is about to heat up again.

The city government is moving forward with RetoolCOS, a program to rewrite the city's residential and commercial building codes and put more people and more automobiles in less space.

One proposed change will increase the population density in R-2 Two Family zones by permitting the construction of modern Four-Family apartment buildings in the zone. This doubling of the permitted neighborhood population density will also approximately double the number of automobiles driving about and parking in the neighborhood.

Under present R-2 Two-Family zoning, these so-called "fourplexes" are not permitted at all. No more than two families can live on a single lot.

Front-yard setbacks, the distance from the front of the Two-Family house to the front sidewalk, will be reduced from 25-feet to 10-feet. Side yard setbacks will be reduced to as low as 1-foot.

To mark these increases in population density, numbers of automobiles, and appearance, RetoolCOS will change the name of the existing R-2 Two-Family zones to R-Flex-Low zones.

This higher-density zone change should be of major concern to older neighborhoods in Colorado Springs that surround the downtown area. Mainly built in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, these neighborhoods are filled with Victorian style houses, bungalows, and cottages. Many are zoned

R-2 Two-Family, but often the majority of the homes in the zone are actually used as Single-Family residences.

Putting modern-design four-unit apartment buildings into these older neighborhoods will clash aesthetically with their present Victorian design. For instance, N. Nevada Avenue north of Colorado College has some of the most historic Victorian Single-Family homes in our city but is all zoned R-2 Two- Family. It will become dotted with modern Four-Family apartments if R-Flex-Low zoning is applied.

Other neighborhoods surrounding downtown that include much R-2 Two-Family zoning include Old Colorado City and the West Side, the residential areas east of Colorado College, most of the homes east of downtown along E. Boulder, E. Platte, E. Bijou and E. Kiowa streets, the area southwest of downtown, and along both sides of Brookside Street.

If your home was built prior to World War II, there is a good chance it may be zoned R-2.

Here is an illustration, provided by the City of Colorado Springs, of the type of multi-family building that would be allowed in the present R-2 Two-Family zone when the city turns it into an R-Flex-Low zone.

The worst case scenario is that speculators will buy beautiful Victorian homes and bungalows in our present R-2 Two-Family Zones, tear them down, and replace them with modern Four-Family apartment buildings. Since theses apartment buildings will be a permitted use in the R-Flex Low zone, no special permission from the city will be required to tear down the old historic homes and build modern flat-roofed apartments to replace them.

R-1 Single-Family zoning, the zoning on most newer homes in Colorado Springs, will remain basically unchanged under the RetoolCOS proposal. But residents of R-1 Single-Family zones will be affected when driving their automobiles. Many of the major streets into downtown Colorado Springs (such as the afore-mentioned N. Nevada Avenue) are lined with R-2 zoning. The increased density of homes and automobiles in R-Flex-Low zones will increase street traffic and make downtown less accessible.

The battle between supporters of higher population densities and older established neighborhoods is a nationwide conflict. Supporters of high-density want more people walking in the neighborhood and more emphasis on mass transit. Also the Four-Family apartment buildings may be cheaper to rent and thus might supply more affordable housing.

I am for mixed zoning where Fourplexes are built alongside Single-Family homes, but only in newly built neighborhoods on open land where buyers know ahead of time they are getting a home in a high-density section of town. I oppose Fourplexes in older neighborhoods where buyers bought in R-2 Two-Family zones and expect them to stay Two-Family.

There is no more important time than right now for homeowners to know what the zoning is on their home. There are many people in Colorado Springs living in Single-Family homes who do not know they have R-2 Two-Family zoning and could have a Fourplex open up next door – or across the street – once R-Flex-Low zoning takes effect in their neighborhood.

Colorado Springs is frequently ranked as one of the best cities in the United States in which to live and raise a family. It seems illogical to use rezoning to raise the densities of both people and automobiles when the quality-of-life in our city is rated highly just as it is.

The city government in Colorado Springs wants to hear from its citizens about the proposed higher-density changes in the R-2 Two-Family zone. You can let them know your opinion by sending an e-mail to RetoolCOS@ColoradoSprings.gov.

Do not hesitate to make your views known. The city has set a deadline of December 30, 2020, for receiving comments.

Colorado College political scientist Bob Loevy is a longtime Victorian house hugger. Along the way he has served as a city Planning Commissioner, two times as a city Charter Review Commissioner, and as chairman of the former city Open-Space Committee.

Colorado Springs Gazette
12-27-2020

VICTORIAN-ERA TOWERS SURVIVE HERE IN COLORADO SPRINGS

By Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy

They have been visible to you for as long as you have been hanging around the downtown region of Colorado Springs, but chances are you have paid little or no attention to them. They are those excessively decorated square, octagonal, and rounded towers located at the corners of Victorian-era homes.

They hide from you downtown, in the Near North End between downtown and Colorado College, on the Colorado College campus, and in the Old North End north of the college. You won't ordinarily see them as you hurry about your busy life. You have to get out of the car and go for a walk in order to observe them closely and appreciate their great "curb appeal."

Towers tend to be located at a corner of the home – right or left – on the side facing the street. Yet sometimes towers are located along the side of a house or at a rear corner. They also can be found in the center of the façade of a home, often rising above the front door and looking like the pilot-house on a steamboat. There is a house on Wood Avenue that has two tall towers, one at each corner of the front.

These Victorian-era towers come in all sizes. Some are tall, stretching upward for three stories. Others are short and squat, occupying the corner of a bungalow or cottage. Most are two to two-and-a-half stories high and are capped with a conical roof shaped like a "witch's hat," the kind found on the Wicked Witch of the West in the film *The Wizard of Oz*.

Atop the witch's cap you may or may not find a finial – a cast iron pipe jutting straight up in the air that comes to a point or ends with a small round ball. A rare few finials have snakes or other weird animals curling up them.

Our Victorian-era towers come in a variety of shapes. Some are square while others are octagonal or rounded. In all cases they demonstrate the skills of late 19th century carpenters who could design and execute such unusual architectural forms. Rounded towers, with rounded glass windows, are particularly admirable.

It is fun to be inside a home with a tower and see how the occupants are using the somewhat unusual interior space. In one home a card table and chairs had been set up to create a game-playing area for chess, checkers, bridge, or any other table game. Inside another tower, this one at Colorado College in the Career Center, chairs and a desk were ready for personnel officers from business firms to interview job-seeking graduating seniors.

In most cases, however, the interior of a tower creates an interesting looking corner of a living room or dining room. It can also be a great place to display that antique family chair or table you inherited from Aunt Annabel.

Most of our Colorado Springs towers are fashioned from wood. In many cases, the outside walls of the tower will be covered with a variety of wood surfaces, such as siding or regular square shingles or shingles shaped like fish scales. Putting a different wood surface on different stories of the tower just adds to the Victorian-era charm.

Towers can also be built of brick or stone. A favorite is at the El Paso Club building at the northwest corner of E. Platte Avenue and N. Tejon St. across from Acacia Park. This tower is built of brick and is three-and-a-half stories in height.

We can thank Queen Victoria of England and the gold strikes at Cripple Creek and Victor in the 1890s for our ornate residential towers.

Colorado Springs was founded in 1871and began to develop during the last 25 years of the reign of Queen Victoria in England. She passed away

in 1901, but she gave the name Victorian to a period of architecture famous for an elaborate decorativeness that manifested in the form of towers, often clock towers, on large public buildings. This propensity for building towers was then copied on residences built during the same period, both in Great Britain and the United States.

When gold was discovered by Bob Womack at Cripple Creek and Victor in 1891, the instant wealth flowed down the mountains to Colorado Springs. Stock trading and manufacturing mining supplies concentrated in the Springs rather than at high elevation in Cripple Creek and Victor. The result was plenty of money to decorate the new homes of our gold-profiting upper middle-class with beautiful and ornate Victorian-era towers.

Colorado Springs is lucky to have this treasury of homes with towers. Slow down a bit, go for a walk, and appreciate them.

Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy are political scientists at Colorado College.

Jpeg photographs in order of preference:
1519 North Nevada
1223 North Nevada
1423 North Nevada
122 East Washington
1410 North Tejon

1519 N. Nevada Avenue

1223 N. Nevada Avenue

1423 N. Nevada Avenue

122 E. Washington Street

1410 N. Tejon Street