

My Day as an Elector by Pat Peale

Monday, December 15 was a cold blustery day in Austin, but for me it was a beautiful, exciting day. The Texas Electoral College was to meet in the Capitol to cast the votes reflecting the voters of Texas - and we all know that Senator McCain and Governor Palin took 55% here in Texas.

My emotions were running high because I had been asked to run for Chair of the Texas Electoral College, which is a tremendous honor. Anyone of the electors could have been running as they are outstanding in that they have contributed to the Republican Party as County Chairs, SREC members, TFRW officers and members and fundraisers. As all of you know the electors are selected at convention in your Congressional Districts. There are 34 - one from each CD and 2 at-large representing our two senators.

I came down on Sunday, late, because Cooke County had had their annual fundraiser on Saturday and I hosted a breakfast Sunday morning for RR Commissioner Elizabeth Ames Jones, who had been our speaker. Now God does look out for me, because when I received my packet for the event, it showed that there was no transportation from Louie's restaurant, where Governor Perry was hosting a luncheon for the electors, to the Capitol. I mentioned that to the Commissioner and she went into full mode, and well - Monday at 1:15 the vans arrived to take everyone to the Capitol, and ran until the last one was returned to their cars.

I couldn't eat lunch, I was so nervous, plus I was trying to get around asking for support. Usually I can take things like this in stride. We arrived at the Capitol at 1:52 p.m.-8 minutes before the Secretary of State was to call the session to order. And the first point of order is to elect the Chair. It was a little confusing, because no one knew whether speeches were allowed and if so how long. It turned out NO speeches just nominations. There were three running - Bob Long nominated me and 7 others stood to 2nd the nomination (and that wasn't planned). The third person decided not to run. I won by 2 to 1.

And then the panic did set in - the Secretary of State asked for the Honorable Chairman Peale to come forward. My knees were shaking so badly (and I was in heels) I wasn't sure I wasn't going to have to crawl to the Speaker of the House podium. When I got there - it was awesome - the speaker's big gavel, the gorgeous Texas Christmas tree, all the electors, the full floor and the gallery. What was little old Pat Peale doing here? Fortunately, I had made some notes in the morning about the electors and the college and the differences of the states in how they select their electors, and points of interest that maybe some people didn't know.

Then I was given an envelope with the Order of the Day - I could barely get the state seal off, the envelope was so well closed! We then elected a Secretary, who was Mary Darby from Garland. We proceeded to cast our votes - for President someone's ballot was not collected, so that gave us a scare to be one short. After finding that ballot, we cast the Vice-President's. While we were taking the vote, I wanted to recognize all of the electors, their districts and how they were connected-so we asked for those who were County Chairs to stand, then SREC members and then -which was beautiful, because of the red the TFRW members. Last but not least, I asked for the men who supported our TFRW members. That was the most fun!!

After all votes were cast, each elector had to sign six copies ascertaining the vote. We placed those in envelopes that are sent to Washington to be opened by the President of the Senate in joint session on January 6th. I then presented a resolution to be sent to Senator McCain and Governor Palin, stating that the electors of Texas had indeed represented the voters of Texas by casting the will of Texas for them as President and Vice-President.

By then my knees had stopped shaking, I picked up the gavel and hammered us adjourned, and felt so proud, humble and honored to have served in this capacity.