

“It does not require a majority to prevail, but rather an irate, tireless minority keen to set brush fires in people’s minds.” –Samuel Adams

Town Crier Committee Report

The Truth makes us free...We live in an Era of Lies

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Beginnings and Endings

Editorial

By Lance Thate

With the publication of Vol 13 No. 01, the TCCR begins its 13th year. The question that swirls around in my head is: Is it a beginning or an end?



TCCR Staff Photo

A search of Wikipedia finds that the Tea Party movement was supposedly a right wing movement within the Republican Party. The Koch Brothers, Dick Armey and Americans for Prosperity were the alleged forces behind the movement. This narrative is completely false. It is the narrative created by the Democrat Party with the cooperation of a complicit Republican Party.

In St. Augustine, Florida, on April 15, 2009, a grassroots Tea Party group rallied at the Castillo de San Marco. About 1000 people showed up. On the same day a grassroots group held a rally at “The Landing” in Jacksonville about thirty miles to the north. Five thousand (5000) people attended that event. I was one of the 5000. I joined the First Coast Tea Party (FCTP) on that memorable day. Meanwhile across the Country similar rallies were taking place. In all, between 500,000 to 750,000 patriots rallied from coast to coast on the very first day of the movement’s adventurous political journey. The exact number of groups is unknown. All this was inspired by Rick Santelli’s CNBC rant in February. Neither political party could create an event of this magnitude. Many believe that it was a

“God Thing.” It was the beginning of the American people’s awakening. There were over one hundred groups spread across the 67 counties in Florida alone. This phenomena occurred across the nation. Hurrah for the American people.

As it turned out, the original Tea Party in St. Augustine failed when its sole leader left town abruptly. So it was that in August of 2010, the Tea Party in St. Augustine was reorganized by Republican operatives. The grassroots control was lost. By this time Republican operatives were busy gaining influence in other Tea Party groups as well.

I became the Treasurer of the newly formed Saint Augustine Tea Party (SATP). Eventually a substantial number of our Tea Party members began joining the local Republican Executive Committee (REC). I was the last Tea Party member inducted at the time. Republican leadership was beginning to understand that patriotism is stronger than party loyalty. Tea Party values and candidates were too disruptive for the globalist Republican leadership to handle. Grassroots Tea Party members were hated then—just like they are today.

In the beginning Tea Parties accepted Republican control because in 2009 and 2010 the goal was to gain GOP control of the House of Representatives and shut down Obama’s transformation of America. Needless to say that didn’t happen. Didn’t even come close. The Republican leadership continued to fund the Communist agenda of the Democrat Party. Tea Party members were very naive in the beginning. They actually expected results.

By June, 2011 the love relationship with GOP leadership started to wear thin in the SATP. In response, certain SJC-REC Board members attempted to separate the grassroots members from the Tea Party they had started. An attempted coup d’état ensued. The struggle to remain independent continued for several years with a final termination of the Republican efforts obtained in a successful courthouse battle. While there are a handful of grassroots Tea Parties still in existence in Florida, I believe the SATP may be the only Tea Party to break free of Republican control in the State of Florida. The SATP sustained independence because the SATP focused on engaging the people, not the politicians.

During the difficult Obama years the grassroots members of the SATP honored me by electing me Chairman of their Tea Party. I remained Chairman of the SATP for approximately nine years. During this period, the SATP witnessed numerous Republican controlled Tea Parties shutting down or having their activities greatly reduced. It wasn't the Democrats that curtailed the Tea Party Movement; it was the Republicans. The enthusiastic Tea Parties were too much for the lifeless Republicans so State

Committeemen and State Committeewomen began, in earnest, a campaign to control or destroy Tea Parties in Tallahassee. I suspect that this occurred in other states as well. Control is just as lethal as setting out to destroy a Tea Party group because, after the takeover, apathy sets in. Grassroots movements and political parties do not mix well. The purpose of political parties is to organize people to accomplish the party's agenda. It is why the Founders of this Country rejected the notion of political parties in favor of individual citizen participation and governance.

By 2014 Republicans were in control of most Tea Party groups. That's when Karl Rove announced on Fox News, that the Tea Party movement was dead. The propagandist media collaborated with the Republican pronouncement. In an instant, news coverage of Tea Parties vanished—five glory years and then it was over. Well not really, because the movement had clearly started its transition to what is now called MAGA politics.



The FCTP that I joined boasted, at one time, that it had 8000 members; it had a very active website, conducted substantial rallies and held a great number of Tea Party meetings across the City of Jacksonville landscape. The FCTP was the center of the Tea Party movement in Northeast Florida. In 2010 it sent the Dartmouth to Washington DC. You can see the Capital dome in the 2010 picture. The FCTP should have retained its prominence as it was located in the 13th largest city in the country with at least a dozen satellite groups. Billie Tucker was the FCTP Chairwoman in those days.

The FCTP's grassroots leadership was moved out and replaced by Republican operatives according to FCTP members who witnessed it. This was accomplished the same way that Trump Clubs and the Trump Organization itself have been infiltrated today. Tea Parties that had Republican leadership ended up as do nothing organizations and do nothing organizations ultimately fail.



TCCR Staff Photo 2015

Coinciding with the FCTP's decline, the minuscule SATP began to rise in stature. When the owner and builder of the Dartmouth decided to dispose of it, it was the St Augustine Tea Party that became the recipient. When the Tea Party Express made its cross-country tour, it was the St Augustine Tea Party that was selected to host the event in the Northeast Florida area.

Its bimonthly meetings attracted patriots from a great diversity of organizations. A forum was created, if you will. Patriotic diversity included members of groups such as the Republican Liberty Caucus, The John Birch Society, Saving Southern Heritage, Oathkeepers, The Sons of the Confederacy, Three Percenters, Fair Tax and others. The featured speakers were often selected from these aforementioned groups. It was a winning strategy as the SATP meetings attracted people from five surrounding counties.

The unifying force that tied the SATP together was the Town Criers weekly activities in the streets of St. Augustine. The SATP focused on people, not politicians, The historic district has a national demographic and the Town Criers addressed national issues. This publication faithfully reported on their adventures.



TCCR Staff Photo

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October 25, 2023

What will Make the Saint Augustine Tea Party

There is no doubt that the Saint Augustine Tea Party (SATP) was once a vibrant and thriving organization. SATP members met continually for regular outings and meetings and rallies. The Tea Party was everywhere. It was in the streets of the old historic district. It was at City Hall. It was in the newspaper. It was on television. It was at the County meetings. It was at the



TCCR Staff Photo from 2011

Board of Education meetings. And, unlike all of the other national Tea Parties, the SATP was uniquely recognized by its historic attire and its public engagement. In fact, if there's one word that characterized the early Tea Party movement it was... **engagement**.

Tea Party members engaged the public. Tea Party members engaged their elected officials. Tea Party members engaged the press. Some engagements were friendly and cheerful ... like walking down Saint George Street handing out free pocket Constitutions. Some engagements were thought provoking ... like the ever evolving signs reflecting current events. Some engagements were political ... like showing up at party meetings and government meetings. Some engagements were educational ... like the many SATP meetings with speakers sharing their knowledge. And finally, some engagements were confrontational ... like defending the veteran monuments and opposing communist demonstrations. But whatever the form or forum, the SATP was indisputably ... engaged.



TCCR Staff Photos from 2011 and 2012



TCCR Staff Photos from 2011



TCCR Staff Photos from 2011



TCCR Staff Photos from 2011 and 2012



TCCR Staff Photos from 2012



TCCR Staff Photos from 2012 and 2014



TCCR Staff Photos from 2013, 2014 and 2015



TCCR Staff Photos from 2011, 2015 and 2016



TCCR Staff Photos from 2017 and 2018



TCCR Staff Photos from 2019 and 2020



TCCR Staff Photos from 2020



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Of course, a lot has happened since the Saint Augustine Tea Party was founded. There have been wars and recessions and pandemics and Trump and Obama's Biden. There has been open confrontation with BLM Communists, Antifa and Occupiers. There has even been considerable political friction with certain elements of the Republican Party. But, through it all, the Saint Augustine Tea Party has held firm to its founding principles of lower taxation, personal responsibility, smaller government, and abiding by the Constitution of the United States.

So what will make the Saint Augustine Tea Party Great Again? The same thing that made it great over a decade ago ... engaging the press, engaging the political parties, and engaging the politicians. But most of all the SATP needs to continue to engage the public. Public engagement has been the life blood of the SATP from its inception. The historic district of Old Saint Augustine hosts a daily flux of both local and national visitors. The Saint Augustine Tea Party carved out a symbiotic niche in that environment that feeds both visitors and Tea Party members alike. The SATP needs to go home to its roots with the people on the street. It needs Town Criers.

In summary, the Saint Augustine Tea Party needs to return to the source of its strength – among the people.



TCCR Staff Photo One of the last SATP meetings in St Augustine FL in 2021

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Communism**

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Come join us. We are a small Committee with many tasks to do to preserve the Liberty. We are blessed to see the awakening of America.

Lance L. Thate,

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