

Elections

It's Friday – time for our next guest blog. We'll continue the series with our friend, Paul Smith. Enjoy!

The November 2010 elections are right around the corner, which means an increase in the frequency of political ads. Why? Because most voters don't make up their mind of which candidate they are going to support until very close to the election. This results in candidates working double time during those golden weeks before the election to make an impact.

Unfortunately, there will be candidates who become so desperate to be noticed that they will resort to tactics that are less than civil. Some may even believe that the only way for their star to rise is if they can bad-mouth their opponent enough to bring them down. The results, all too often, are attack ads from both sides with each ad sinking lower than the last.

I'm reminded of John F. Kennedy's admonishment: "So let us begin anew – remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof." When he spoke these words, our nation was divided by deep emotional scars; not all that different from today.

Thankfully we do have one key difference today; we have a generation who have learned what true character really is through the Character Counts program. This generation, many of whom may not quite yet be of voting age, is now able to spot qualities such as: honesty, loyalty, good manners, self-control, personal responsibility, compassion, forgiveness, and respect.

Thanks to the Character Counts program, this generation is able to recognize the unfortunate weaknesses many who are running for office this fall will reveal; even as they spot the truly strong ones: the ones who consistently practice the

civility that Kennedy spoke of.

I look for the day when this Character Counts trained generation can truly bring civility back to the political arena.