

By Russ Pankonin, The Imperial Republican Co-Publisher

One way a person can make an impact on our school, the community or county government is to step forward and place your name on the ballot for one of the various elected offices.

In fact, there's still time to do so. The deadline to become a candidate for the May Primary Election is Monday, March 1.

At the city level, there are seats up for election on the city council, airport authority, Imperial Public Power board and mayor positions.

At the county level, all of the elected offices, with the exception of one commissioner district seat, is up for election this year. These include the clerk, assessor, sheriff, treasurer, attorney and two commissioner seats.

Four seats will be elected on the Chase County Schools board and three on the Wauneta-Palisade Schools board.

Six of 11 seats on the Upper Republican Natural Resources District board are up for election this year, as well.

With the ever-looming water issues, this board will play a big role in keeping the ag economy in southwest Nebraska viable.

You now have the opportunity to step up and make a difference.

All too often, it's much easier to sit in the coffee shop and complain about everything that's wrong with our local government. You can change that!

Head to the county clerk's office and file for election and take the challenge to become part of the solutions.

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With the unrest of people in our nation with growing deficits, a lethargic economy, unemployment, the battles over health care and the growing partisanship in our Congress, this year will be an interesting election on the state and national scene.

Through several recent special elections, the people have already told Democrats, who control both houses of Congress and the presidency, that they are not happy with the condition of our country.

Granted, the Democrats did inherit a number of these issues from the previous administration. But, that excuse only lasts for so long.

There's a new documentary out called "Generation Zero" that examines just what caused the financial meltdown in late 2008 and early 2009 that has put our country in the condition it is.

The theory is that the generation of baby-boomers always had everything given to them by a previous generation who wanted to make it better for their kids.

Both before and after the near collapse, our government has continually spent America deeper and deeper into debt. This affects not just the present generation but generations to come.

Everybody wants the benefits but no one wants to pay the price. Just let the government do it for us . . .

Our national leaders need to take a lesson from Nebraska—you can't continue to spend if the revenue isn't there to pay for it. That's why the governor and Legislature cut more than \$300 million in spending during a special session late last year.

With the national economy continuing to lag, tax revenues decline as well. Rather than cut spending, we as a nation continue instead to borrow.

Our elected officials continue to tell us what we like to hear—no new taxes. However, we as a people have a tough choice to make.

If we continually want Washington to dole it out, then we have to pay for it. The alternative is making do without and be willing to endure the sacrifices that will return this country to the economic world power it once was.

Bearing the pain now will be a lot easier today than down the road another 10-20 years.

Let's see if we can elect leaders who are willing to speak the truth and help lead this country back to prosperity.