

ARCADIA NEWS

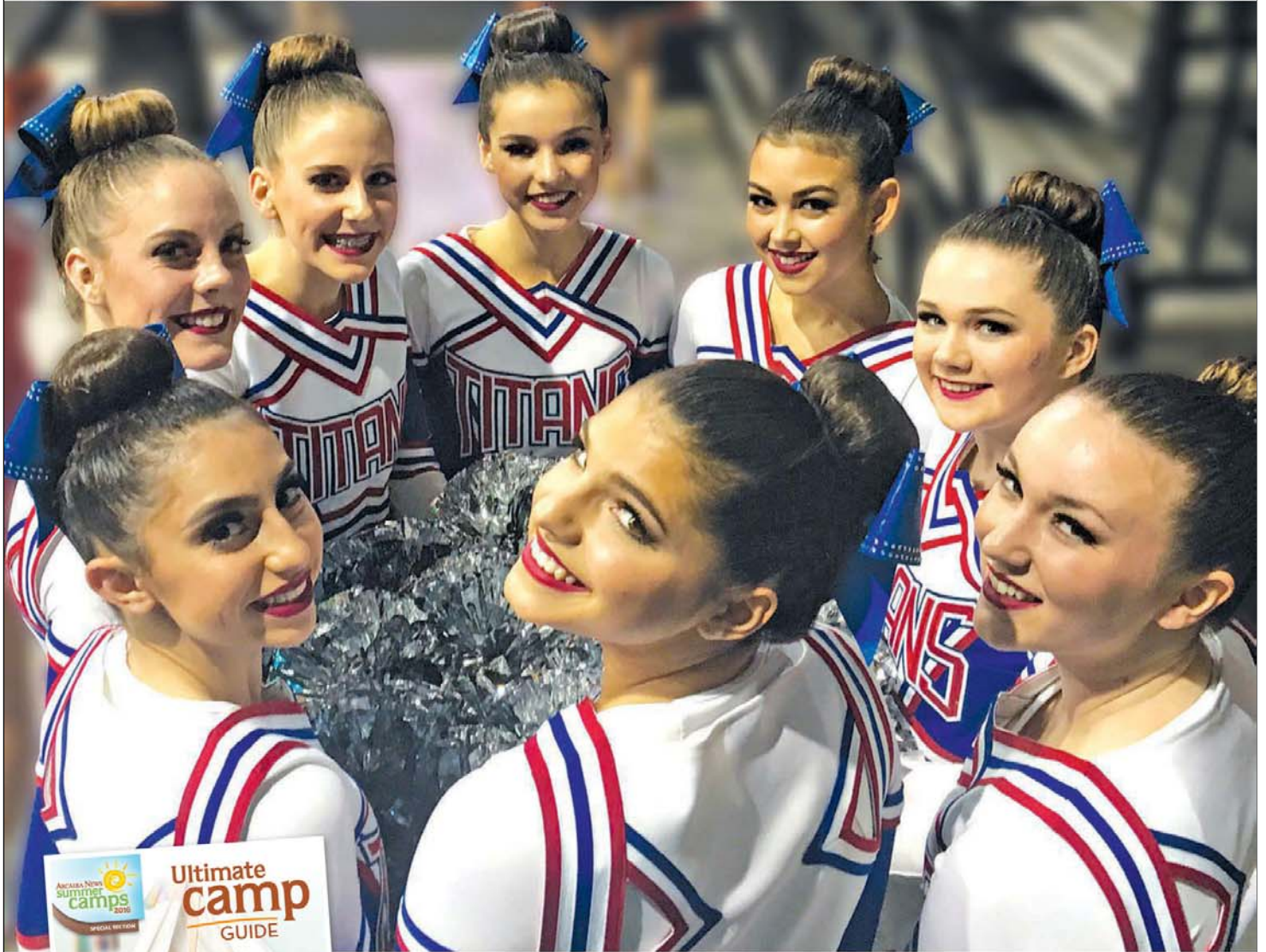


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Congratulations Arcadia High School Spiritline for your success at the State Championship. Read about their accomplishments on page 57.



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If you're heading to the ballpark for a Spring Training game, we've got some tips and tricks you need to know.

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Picking the right president – and the right attorney

By Tyler J. Carrell



With election season in full swing, it seems every news program is dissecting each perceived strength and weakness of the candidates. After a debate, pundits tell us who “won,” who “lost,” who looked immature, who came across too polished, and who wasn’t polished enough. On top of that, the candidates take shots at one another, arguing that one doesn’t have the right experience or is incapable of solving the country’s problems. So how can you separate the noise and the truth, and vote for someone who should truly be president? First, I suggest you choose the candidate whose positions on important issues align the most with your values. My second suggestion may surprise you. When looking for a strong commander in chief, look for the same qualities that you’d look for in a good lawyer. Here are some important characteristics to keep in mind when casting your vote, and when hiring a valuable lawyer.

COMMUNICATION

Former President Reagan was hailed as The Great Communicator for his effectiveness in conveying a message in a way that Americans with diverse backgrounds could understand. Similarly, a good attorney is someone who is clear about the strategy he or she is taking to effectively represent you. A sharp attorney also makes an effort to communicate with you frequently, keeping you in the loop with any developments in your matter. Finally, just as a useful elected official listens to his or her constituents, an effective attorney is responsive to the inquiries, emails, and phone calls of his or her client, and makes an effort to respond quickly and thoroughly.

OFFERS PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

It’s easy to find plenty of presidential candidates and attorneys who will promise you the world. While it is important to be enthusiastic and positive to the constituents or clients you are trying to serve, it is also critical that each have a proper understanding of what the resolution of their issue may look like. A worthwhile attorney should take the time not only at the beginning, but also throughout the representation, to discuss the possible scenarios with the client. In litigation, the client should be aware of what the possible damages are, what happens if the court grants a certain motion, and the potential cost of discovery. In a transactional matter, the attorney should review the critical legal documents with the client, so that they understand the obligations they are undertaking. If an attorney asks for your

LEGAL EASE

business by promising you something that seems too good to be true, odds are that it is. The right attorney is both willing and compelled to explain the risks of different strategies and what must be done for the client to obtain their desired outcome.

COMPASSION AND UNDERSTANDING

On the campaign trail, presidential candidates meet people with problems that are personal to them. Some have lost their jobs, some cannot afford their healthcare, and some feel like their needs are being ignored. As an attorney, people sometimes refer to me as “counselor,” and that role should be in the forefront of every representation. A lawsuit can be a highly emotional experience, and a great attorney understands that he or she must not only seek justice on behalf of their client, but also help provide their client some amount of closure from a traumatic experience. Good attorneys can listen to a client’s issue and professionally deliver sound advice and possible solutions. However, a better attorney understands a client, acts as a sounding board, empathizes with the client’s problem, and provides a solid plan of action.

HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

Finally, most Americans (rightfully) vote for a candidate that they trust. As a result, political debates and attack ads often imply that an opponent has done something wrong or cannot be trusted. When searching for an attorney, taking the time to get to know them and critically listening to their proposed plan of action should give you good insight into their integrity. As an example, I have had several clients tell me they appreciate when I tell them they *don’t* need an attorney, or when I suggest a more cost-efficient strategy. While I would like to pat myself on the back, the truth is I believe that is my ethical obligation.

So when you head to the polls or if you decide you need to hire an attorney, aside from finding someone with the right experience for the issue(s) important to you, trust your gut, and try to find someone who communicates well, offers realistic outcomes, understands your position, and will demonstrate a strict ethical code.

— Tyler J. Carrell is an associate at Gallagher & Kennedy, where he focuses his practice on commercial litigation, real estate transactions and bankruptcy. For more information about Mr. Carrell, please visit gknet.com.