

THE NEWS HERALD

Wednesday, October 16, 2024

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COMMENTARY

WHY IS NC A PURPLE STATE?



WOODY MARSHALL, NEWS & RECORD

Exa Lee, dressed as Rosie the Riveter, bumps elbows with N.C. Attorney General Josh Stein at the “Get Out the Vote” rally at the Greensboro Coliseum in Greensboro in 2020.

Western Carolina University professor explains

Buy this book. “Anatomy of a Purple State: A North Carolina Politics Primer” by Christopher Cooper. Read it before Election Day on November 5 and you will understand a lot more about elections in our state than you do now.

Author Chris Cooper is the Madison Distinguished Professor of Political Science and Public Affairs at Western Carolina University, and he is director of its Haire Institute for Public Policy. The institute is named for Phil and Connie Haire. Phil, a lawyer in Sylva, served in the legislature, on the board of governors of the University of North Carolina and as assistant majority counsel for the U.S. Senate Watergate Committee in 1973.

Haire’s death on October 8 was a per-



Cooper

sonal loss. He taught me about mountain politics and spent three days with me hiking the Appalachian Trail.

Cooper explains that Election Day is a misnomer in North Carolina because most votes are no longer cast on the traditional Election Day.

While many of us will go to the polls on November 5 and cast our votes at designated polling places, most votes will be cast in other ways such as absentee and early voting.

Cooper then explains why he calls North Carolina a purple state.

States that regularly vote Republican are called red states. Those that regularly vote Democratic are called blue states.

What is North Carolina — blue or red? Cooper writes, “There is no clear,

concise, or agreed-upon definition for purple state.”

It would be easy to argue that North Carolina is a red state. We have two United States senators who are Republicans. The majorities in both houses of the state legislature are Republican, and the Republican majority party is so strong that it can overturn any veto by the governor. It is, therefore, veto-proof.

In presidential elections, North Carolina has voted for a Republican candidate for president of the United States in every election since 1968 except 1976 when Jimmy Carter won and in 2008 when Barack Obama won.

Why then is North Carolina not a red state? Cooper would tell us to look at our governors. The current governor, Roy Cooper (not related to Chris), was elected twice and that Josh Stein, the

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Trump campaign crowdfunds millions in survivor aid online

Untraditional efforts raise \$14M-plus via GoFundMe

JAMES POLLARD
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Former President Donald Trump’s campaign is using GoFundMe to rally its network of deep-pocketed backers and everyday donors around the survivors of his July assassination attempt and Hurricane Helene’s destruction, bucking more traditional avenues of emergency relief.

The two high-profile fundraisers — organized by the Republican nominee’s national finance director — have drawn more than \$14 million.

They do not violate campaign finance laws, according to legal experts. Nor is the campaign allowed to pocket any proceeds

for its own political ends; a GoFundMe spokesperson said that the majority of the Butler, Pennsylvania, funds have been disbursed.

But the use of a crowdfunding platform marks an unorthodox response to crises from a political campaign. Never before has a major party’s presidential candidate turned to the for-profit company — which usually features desperate appeals for help covering tuition costs or medical bills — to mobilize their base toward outside charitable causes.

“It’s pretty unusual and actually quite odd,” said Brett Kappel, a longtime campaign finance attorney with Harmon Curran who has advised both Republicans and Democrats.

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EVAN VUCCI, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump speaks as Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp listens at a temporary relief shelter as he visits areas hit by Hurricane Helene on Oct. 4 in Evans, Ga.