Wednesday, November 7. 2007

DaBean/FlyYukon: The Ron Paul of Activeworlds

DaBean/FlyYukon, while currently in third place out of the three candidates for AWTeen Governor, could draw a significant number of votes in this election. DaBean, unlike the other candidates, hasn't posted a detailed platform containing numerous paragraphs of text. Instead, he and Kapara have simply stated they would ask for community suggestions and implement whatever the community wishes to get done. While community input is a great idea, his lack of specificity and weak assertion of leadership could also be seen as a sign of weakness by the voting public.

First, DaBean's greatest strength is perhaps his recognition that the Peacekeepers are a worthwhile resource and that their help would benefit AWTeen. The Peacekepers have existed for over ten years and have developed a well-tested training system that hasn't resulted in any major incidents for a long time. Whereas Strike Rapier and Matthew propose to implement their own system of dispute resolution as soon as possible after election, DaBean proposes to leverage the PK's to provide training, and that's a step in the right direction. Strike Rapier and Matthew, on the other hand, fail to see the PK's as a resource, instead believing they are a hindrance to the world's development.

DaBean has also stated his policy towards openness and transparency. I don't believe it offers any advantage over Matthew's. Whereas I support the confidentiality of information about pending events or building projects where the goal is to surprise the public, I disapprove of withholding any other type of data, even ejection logs. DaBean opposes the publication of world ejection logs.

Fortunately, however, my arguments on public accountability and ejection logs may be moot. Recently, Flagg stated that all ejections must be submitted to Activeworlds, Inc.. Whether Flagg would release the information to everyone else is less clear, but the idea that someone is watching over ejections to make sure they are performed responsibly is a comforting one.

The biggest concern with DaBean's campaign, however, is the idea of "community involvement." At first, "community involvement" sounds like a great idea. After all, who wants a world run by dictators and bureaucrats? We've already had a world like that and don't need one like that again. However, the possibility exists for the world to move too far in the opposite direction, that is, towards anarchy. There will need to be some points where DaBean steps in and takes control.

Don't forget, however, that DaBean brings to the table valuable experience as one of the Caretakers of AWNewbie, a post in which he has done an excellent job. AWNewbie is a welcoming world that has become a significantly positive influence on Activeworlds. He certainly hasn't demonstrated weak leadership in that world, and DaBean makes up for many of his shortcomings in that he has a no-nonsense attitude towards world management. He doesn't want to organize any committees or have votes among committee leaders. Instead, he wants to empower users to manage their own affairs and work as a passive leader - the Ron Paul of Activeworlds.

Indeed, DaBean and Paul have many commonalities. Both are dark horses who present significantly different ideas than the leading candidates. Both want to limit the size of the government and let people live their lives, or in DaBean's case, to let people do what they want in AW without Governor interference. They both want to divide power amongst smaller entities (in Paul's case, the states, and in DaBean's case, the leaders). They are both fed up with the current system and push dramatic changes. And they both have the potential to become strong contenders for the position for which they are running, if they can convince people of the need for change.

In conclusion, DaBean has a lot of experience, but may have difficulty determining where to draw the line with his "community leadership" approach. If he can overcome this limitation, he may find himself moving up in the straw polls as the election draws to a close.

Posted by Brant in Campaigns at 12:53

I'll certainly agree that DaBean seems to have a good head on his shoulders. He strikes me as a good combination of practical experience and sensible judgment. He's the one candidate that, when I read about him, I don't find anything that immediately makes me uneasy. So long as he can maintain the favor of the community, I see his more open ended policy being very beneficial to shaping a new identity for AWTeen based not on the ideals of the past (or "glory days") but rather on a new generation's vision for the future.

As for the Ron Paul comparison, it's a novel idea.

Anonymous on Nov 9 2007, 14:37

Doh, accidentally posted it while not logged in.

Anonymous on Nov 9 2007, 14:38