Monocacy Area Voters Supported Garagiola and Bartlett

By John Clayton

As expected, Upcounty Democrats in the precincts surrounding Poolesville and Barnesville firmly supported District 15 State Senator Rob Garagiola in the recent District 6 primary for the seat currently held by Roscoe Bartlett of Buckeystown; however, the local numbers weren’t enough to offset down county and Western Maryland voters who turned out for John Delaney of Potomac. Delaney won the primary election by a comfortable margin with 54.2% of the vote to 29.1% for Garagiola.

Upcounty Republicans joined their new Frederick County District 6 cohorts by helping to send incumbent congressman Roscoe Bartlett back into the race for another two-year term with 43.6% of the vote. He won a 35.8% plurality in Montgomery County. Several other Republican candidates received sufficient support to keep Bartlett below 50% of the vote.

In the two precincts that surround Poolesville, Garagiola carried 56.4% of the vote, as compared to 36.2% for Delaney. In the Barnesville/Boyds precinct, Garagiola did even better, with 59.8% of the vote, almost doubling Delaney’s total. Mr. Garagiola continued to do well in the contiguous Darnestown/Seneca precinct, but moving eastward down Route 28 into the next Darnestown area precinct, his numbers began to decay, as they would through almost all Potomac-area precincts. Our neighbor to the northeast, Clarksburg, bucked the Upcounty trend with 52.3% voting for John Delaney.

On the Republican side, Brandon Rippeon of Darnestown finished second in the combined Poolesville/Dickerson and Barnesville/Boyds precincts with 20.6% of the vote. Robin Ficker of Boyds, and David Brinkley of Frederick, garnered 14.4% and 12.8%, respectively. Bartlett ran stronger in Clarksburg, winning 48.6% of the vote.

Mr. Bartlett generally maintained his plurality down through Darnestown and Potomac, winning most precincts, albeit often with lower percentages, with more votes going to challengers Brinkley and Ficker. Brandon Rippeon did extremely well in Darnestown, winning the Darnestown/Seneca precinct with 40.1%, and almost winning Darnestown/Jones Lane, but he did not do as well further down county.

In the western counties that also comprise District 6, the two winners fared even better than they did down in Montgomery County. Delaney maintained or exceeded his percentage everywhere except Garrett County, which has the fewest voters by far. Garagiola did not come close to his 34.9% Montgomery County percentage anywhere else. Physician and Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran Milad Pooran of Frederick finished third with 9.5% of the Democratic vote overall, and ran more successfully the further he got away from Montgomery County.

Roscoe Bartlett posted much higher percentages away from Montgomery County, coming close to winning half of the vote in Frederick and Allegheny Counties. Brinkley came in second in all five counties, doing his best work in Garrett County, with 33.3% of the vote. Kathy Afzali of Frederick County finished third overall with 10.2%, running strongest in Frederick and Washington Counties, and collecting 9.1% of the Republican vote in Montgomery County.

In District 6 overall, in this primary election, 51.7% of the voters were Republican, and 48.3% Democrats. Looking ahead to the general election in November, Democrats outnumber Republicans in the district, but there are many unaffiliated registered voters who have yet to make their voices heard.

Our area’s voter turnout was slightly lower than the state’s as a whole, where almost 21% voted, and well ahead of Montgomery County, where just over 14% of registered voters bothered to vote. In all of our local precincts, a higher percentage of Republican voters showed up than did Democrats. The two precincts that cover the Poolesville/Dickerson area had a combined (Republican and Democrat) turnout of 18.7%, with 20.3% of Republicans and 16.9% of Democrats voting. In the precinct encompassing the greater Barnesville/Boyds area, 25.6% voted, 28.6% Republicans and 23.1% Democrats. Statewide, rural counties had much higher turnout than more populous areas. In the 2008 presidential elections, 77% of registered Maryland voters participated.