

To all women: Please get out on Tuesday and exercise your right to vote

In a couple of days, history will be made when we elect the 44th President of the United States. This column isn't about who I support, who I think will win or who I hope you will vote for.



Generations

Peg DeMarco

Instead, I wanted to urge you to take time out of your busy day on Tuesday and get down to the poll nearest you to vote

if you haven't already done so. I know you've been inundated with brochures, phone calls and television spots from all the candidates making pitches on what they can do for you if they're elected. During these next precious hours (yes hours and not days), I urge you to study all the messages and see how they affect you as women — the family matriarchs who struggle to keep it all together in a troubled world and an equally depressed economy.

Please remember that you, as women, are the nurturing glue that keeps families to-

gether. And as the family matriarch and the glue, it's really ultra important for you to make the right choice on Election Day so that the family will survive healthy and happily. So, I'm asking you to do a couple of things during the next day that may help get you even more pumped up to vote.

Think about the candidates and what they promise when you stand in line at the grocery store. This week, you may have had to pass by the meat counter because you couldn't afford to buy meat. Perhaps you, or your husband, are out of work due to a

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plant closure or you're a high school or college graduate that has been hunting for a job for months. Jobs are scarce all over and no one seems to have an edge these days to land one. Grocery time is stressful because necessities such as a loaf of bread and a half gallon of milk put a big dent in the budget. Even coupons don't help because you've got to buy three to get a break and three will surely push you over the limit.

Then think about the candidates when you run to the pharmacy and have to take the meat money to pay for a

prescription because you don't have health insurance. Perhaps they offered you a plan when they laid you off but the plan was more than \$500 a month (or close to \$1,000 for a family) and that wasn't in your budget either. So, you've gone without health insurance and pray every night before you go to bed that everyone stays healthy.

Even unemployment has run out.

Think about the candidates when you confront the utility person at the front door when you get home from the grocery store and need to beg for

one more day before he or she shuts off the electricity or the gas.

Think about the car in the garage that you can't afford to fix or the leak in the roof that seems to be getting larger and larger with every rain storm. Your credit cards are maxed paying for gasoline and there just isn't room for home repairs.

That is, if you have a home. Perhaps the saddest image of all is those of you staring at a foreclosure sign on a home

PLEASE SEE **DEMARCO, C4**

DEMARCO

FROM PAGE C1

that you saved your whole life for.

Think about where your retirement money has gone and how you will have to keep working rather than retire as you had planned. The ache in your back isn't going to get better, but you have no choice.

Figure out how the last couple of years have been for you — study the candidates running — and go to the polls informed and ready to cast your ballot for who you think will lead us into recovery and help you get back to a normal, happy home life.

Encourage young voters to cast their ballots — take them if you can so there's no excuse that they can't get there — and offer to help seniors get out and vote as well.

Don't be afraid if your husband or significant other is voting for one candidate and you like the other. Your ballot is yours and one that should be exercised and treasured because of all the suffering and hullabaloo that it took to get it for you.

The right to vote for us women wasn't just handed to us on a silver platter. I had forgotten that we women only got the right to vote officially on Aug. 26, 1920. It was an uphill battle for those early suffragette pioneers. Can you imagine the difficulties they faced? I'm positive their

speeches weren't met with apple pie and ice cream and yet they persevered so that women could enjoy equality and the importance of casting a ballot alongside men.

So, when you go out on Election Day and get ready to cast your ballot, please remember to vote from your head and from your heart.

Don't be afraid of change or taking a stand that perhaps you hadn't taken in the past. I assure you that the ghosts of the suffragettes will be standing right next to you, arms folded across their chests and smiles adorning their faces, when you cast your ballot. Make them proud.

Local author **PEG DEMARCO** lives in Morganton and writes for the Gab. E-mail news@morganton.com.