



Your Vote Is Your Voice

Oct. 29, 2018

A couple of years ago, I started researching my family history through ancestry.com, and I have been amazed at what I have found. I added the DNA information this year, and now I am even more curious about the past and my family's history.

I was recently shocked to be able to identify the exact location where my first known ancestor arrived in America. My grandmother's great-grandfather was born a slave on the Limerick Plantation in South Carolina in 1790. His name was William Limerick. I was able follow his progression from South Carolina through several states in the south where he spent time before eventually arriving in East Texas in Jasper County.

I found census documents and other artifacts, but the most amazing thing I discovered was voter registration records from 1867. My great-great-great-grandfather, William Limerick, was on the list as a registered voter. He was born a slave and registered to vote at the earliest possible opportunity. Once my family learned this, we made a commitment to make every effort to vote in every available election. This is a legacy we want to pass on to the next generation.

I believe that my story is much like many of your stories. Many folks long before us made significant sacrifices to have the right to vote. **The strength of democracy and our leaders is dependent upon citizens exercising their right to vote.**

Early voting runs through **Friday, Nov. 2**. General election day is on **Tuesday, Nov. 6**. Find your polling place, sample ballots and other important information at votetexas.gov.

This is a critical election, and it is important that your voice be heard at the polls. Your vote is your voice, and remember that elections have consequences. I will do my part, and I hope we can count on you to do yours.

Your vote is your voice!

Mike McFarland

