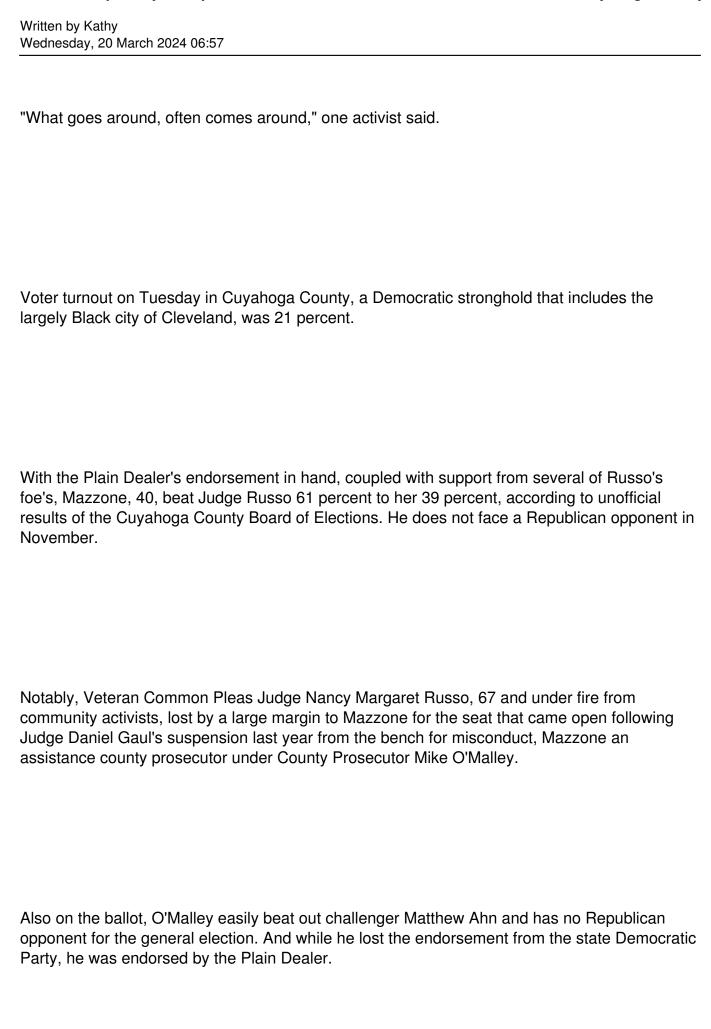
Written by Kathy Wednesday, 20 March 2024 06:57

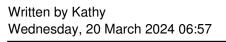


By Kathy Wray Coleman, editor

CLEVELAND, Oho-Ohio and Cuyahoga County voters took to the polls on Tuesday for the closely-watched primary election, which came with few surprises in predicted races such as the U.S. Senate race in Ohio and a judicial contest involving controversial County Common Pleas Judge Nancy Margaret Russo and her Democratic primary opponent, Carl Mazzone. He trounced her following opposition to her candidacy from Cleveland area community activists and her own county Democratic Party, not to mention the lack of an endorsement from the Cleveland Plain Dealer, Ohio's largest newspaper.

Activists elated over Russo's numbing loss said Tuesday that "it shows the power of community organizing and an organized vote at the ballot box, and is a message to other unfair judges that their unfair actions and malfeasance against the Black community and other vulnerable groups have noticeable and sometimes career damaging consequences."



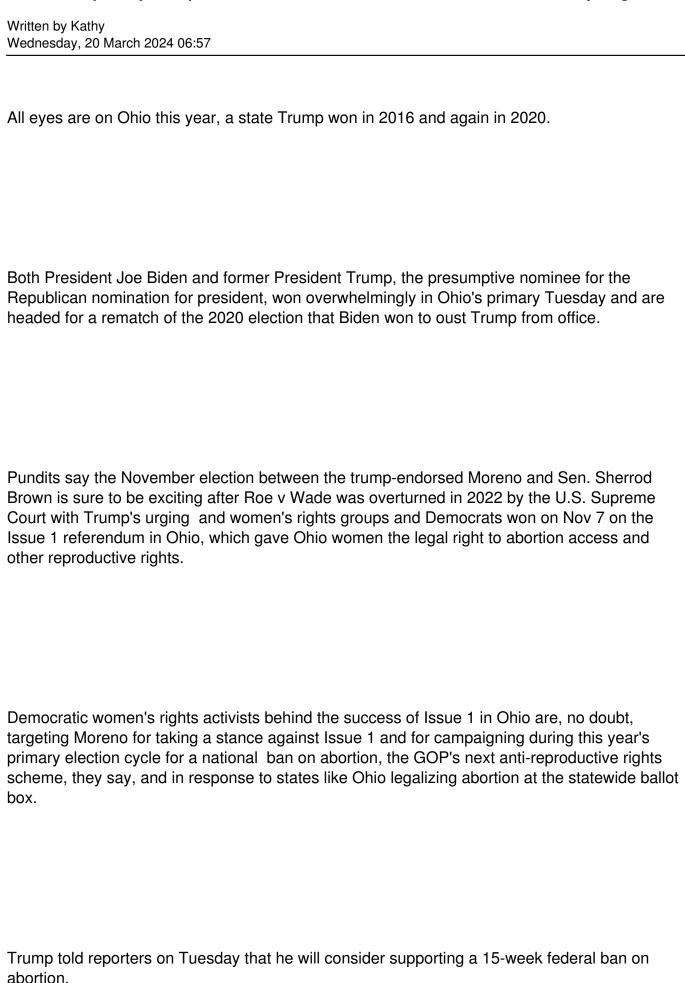


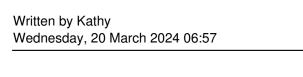
On the bench since 1997 and rarely without controversy, Judge Russo's current six-year term ends in January of 2027, and she will be too old to run again since state law has an age limit of 70 for judges in Ohio, unless completing an elected term or serving as a stand-in retired judge.

Russo is the second common pleas judge targeted by activists for alleged impropriety in recent years, behind Common Pleas Judge John O'Donnell, who lost three bids for the Ohio Supreme Court with the help of Black Cleveland activists and Black leaders upset over his bench acquittal of a former White Cleveland cop (Michael Brelo) of voluntary manslaughter charges for viciously gunning down two unarmed Blacks in 2012 following a car chase. O'Donnell ran unopposed Tuesday, though still under scrutiny from activists and Black people for his prejudicial behavior on the bench.

Turning to the U.S. Senate race in Ohio, GOP front-runner candidate and businessman Bernie Moreno pulled through with former President Donald Trump's powerful endorsement, winning the Republican nomination for the U.S. Senate over state Sen. Matt Dolan and Secretary of State Frank LaRose, and hoping to unseat Democratic opponent U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown.

Sen Brown is a popular Cleveland Democrat and three-term U.S. senator who ran unopposed in Tuesday's Democratic primary and is the target of GOP operatives nationwide as Congressional Republicans seek to change the Democrats' razor-thin majority in the U.S. Senate by outdoing them in the November election.



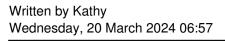


In other closely watched races relative to Tuesday's primary, there were no surprises regarding state legislative and congressional races, with 11th Congressional District Congresswoman Shontel Brown, who is Black and a Warrensville Hts. Democrat, running unopposed and facing little known opposition in November. Her heavily Democratic district includes Cleveland.

Ohio Supreme Court Justice Melody Stewart, the first Black and first Black woman elected to the state's highest court, was unopposed and appellate judge Lisa Forbes won over appellate judge Terrie Jamison, who is Black, in the fight for another state Supreme Court seat. Democratic Justice Michael Donnelly also was unopposed, and all of three Dems who won will face a Republican in November with Ohio the only state in the nation that can turn its majority Republican state Supreme Court predominately Democratic this year.

Black County Juvenile Court Judge Alison Nelson Floyd won over her Democratic opponent Joseph O'Malley, and Magistrate Joy Kennedy, also Black, ran unopposed for the common pleas seat open due to the retirement of Judge Shirley Strickland Saffold, a Black longtime common pleas judge. Kennedy faces a Republican in November.

Black Common Pleas Judge Cassandra Collier-Williams was unopposed in the primary and so was Judge Lauren Moore, who is Black too and seeks an elevation by voters from the majority Black Cleveland Municipal Court bench to the 8th District Court of Appeals, a policy making appeals court. Neither Collier-Williams nor Moore face an opponent in November.



Sources say that this year's election will do little, if anything at all, to change what Blacks endure as a people from county judges and prosecutors, collectively.

Data explicitly show that Black adults and juveniles in Cuyahoga County are disproportionately indicted, prosecuted, and imprisoned in comparison to their White counterparts, and that racism and public corruption routinely plague the 34-member largely White general division common pleas court and the county prosecutor's office.

<u>Clevelandurbannews.com</u> and <u>Kathywraycolemanonlinenewsblog.com</u>, the most read Black digital newspaper in Ohio and in the Midwest, and the most read independent digital news in Ohio.

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We interviewed former president Barack Obama one-on-one when he was campaigning for president. As to the Obama interview.

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