

# The Columbus Dispatch

## Along the Way: Liz Sidoti begins new chapter

David E. Dix

October 20, 2019

Elizabeth “Liz” Sidoti, one of the most successful journalists ever to come out of Portage County, has begun a new chapter in her storied career.

Liz has been named a managing director of the Washington D.C. office of Abernathy MacGregor, a leading public relations firm that brings “expertise across government, media, and business strategic enhancements, including new corporate governance and research capabilities and across growing communications, engagement and advocacy needs of CEOs, board directors, and senior executives.”

Liz says the change fits her entrepreneurial side because in her new role she is helping develop her new employer’s recently opened Washington D.C. office. Fortunately, she said, Abernathy and MacGregor’s reputation precedes it and clients are coming to them in sufficient numbers to keep the new office busy for a long time to come.

She joins Abernathy MacGregor having served for five years as head of U.S. Communications for BP where Liz managed crisis response while developing and delivering communications and advocacy programs to strengthen BP’s U.S. reputation following the Deepwater Horizon incident, the horrible oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010.

Prior to that, she spent 15 years with Associated Press where she became the national political editor and correspondent responsible for news coverage of the White House, Congress, national and statewide campaigns, public affairs and voter attitudes. As a result, she is unusually well qualified to provide advice to clients who need to strengthen their public profiles.

In addition to her Abernathy MacGregor duties, Liz is also employed as an adjunct professor by Georgetown University’s School of Public Policy where during the fall semester she teaches a graduate course in corporate engagement in politics and public policy.

Liz and her husband, Andy Davis, are both Roosevelt High School graduates who reconnected in Washington. He works for the CATO Institute, a renowned conservative think-tank. The two retain close ties with Northeast Ohio. A graduate of Ohio University’s Scripps School of Journalism, Liz also stays in contact with her alma mater.

Liz’s parents, Roger and Mary Sidoti are retired educators, he from the Kent Schools where he served as principal of Roosevelt High School, she from the Stark campus of Kent State

University. Roger serves on Kent City Council and this year is president of Kent Rotary. He also does consulting with those in education.

#### NEW TESLA DRIVER

Kent State President Todd Diacon recently became the owner of a new Tesla, the electric battery propelled automobile associated with Elon Musk, the technology entrepreneur who holds citizenship in the U.S.A., Canada and South Africa.

President Diacon's office said the boss purchased the less expensive model, which sells in the \$35,000 range. He is proud to drive an American-made automobile that is environmentally friendly, the office said.

Tesla is assembled in Fremont, California and operates a parts plant in Reno, Nevada. According to Google, the Tesla was the top selling American made car in the USA in 2018. Only the Toyota Camry, the Honda Accord, and the Honda Civic were better selling models and although they are assembled in the USA, they are of Japanese origin, but great cars also.

#### SHERWIN WILLIAMS MOVE

General Motors' closing of its Lordstown plant was heart-breaking, but if Sherwin Williams leaves Northeast Ohio, our area will have suffered an even bigger loss. The company says it is out of room in downtown Cleveland and will move in four years. Sherwin Williams has been in Cleveland since 1866 and is a world leader in paints and special coatings.

I hope Greater Cleveland and the state of Ohio mount a full-court press to come up with a site and package that persuades Sherwin Williams to stay in Northeast Ohio.

The company employs more than 3,500 in Cleveland. I remember hearing a KSU professor in the chemistry department talk about the research in paints and coatings he was doing for the company. Surely, we have the excellent colleges and universities in Northeast Ohio that can provide the brain power Sherwin Williams says it wants to attract.

A recent report on poverty in America by the Economist, the weekly news magazine, singled out Cleveland for having more than half of its children in families living below the poverty line and Youngstown, the once powerful steel center, for having formerly had a population of 175,000 that has since dropped to 65,000.

Losing a wonderful company like Sherwin Williams would compound our Northeast Ohio problems.

Incidentally, the report said Lyndon Johnson's Great Society reduced poverty among the elderly and said a similar effort is needed for impoverished children. It said the tax cuts of recent decades went mostly to the wealthy. Those tax cuts and the Great Society entitlements have not left enough money to balance the federal budget or to address America's decaying infrastructure, the report said.

David Dix is a former publisher at the Record-Courier.

