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Press-Citizen

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PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Multiple elections saw no candidates

More than 100 local races across Iowa had zero participants

Nick El Hajj

Des Moines Register

USA TODAY NETWORK

Dustin Logan had planned to step away.

After four and a half years on Deni-

son’s City Council, the operations manager at the local ethanol plant said he was ready to spend his son’s high school competitive swimming years on the pool deck and in the stands.

“These are honored positions. They don’t pay (well), but that’s not the point,” Logan said of his role on the City Council. “We are supposed to care about the communities that we grew up in and that we currently live in, and make them better until we eventually pass the torch.”

Then the ballot for the Nov. 4 city and school elections came out. In the northwestern Iowa city of more than 8,000 people, not a single candidate filed to run for mayor.

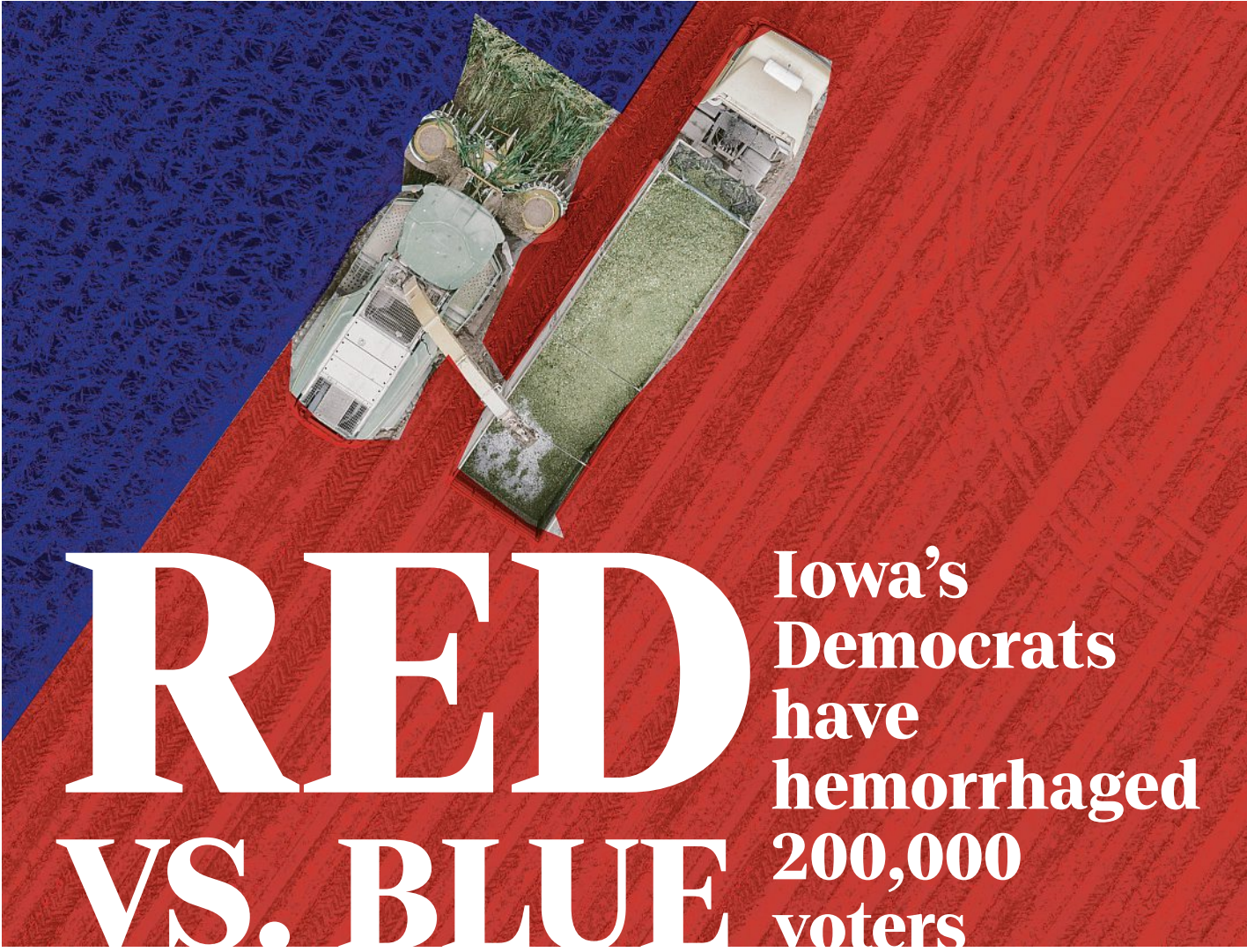
“To say I was disheartened is an understatement,” said Logan, who mounted a three-week write-in push — a “social media blitz,” radio interviews, Facebook posts — to win with 149 of the 215 votes.

Across Iowa’s city and school elections, similar dynamics were at play: 157

races in 122 cities had no candidates on the ballot, according to a Des Moines Register analysis of results published by the Iowa Secretary of State.

Some election staff spent the entire night after polls closed painstakingly tallying hundreds of handwritten names. In some races, just a handful of residents decided the winners. And in several communities where clerks or secretaries missed filing deadlines,

See CANDIDATES, Page 6A



RED VS. BLUE

Iowa’s Democrats have hemorrhaged 200,000 voters

NICK FOWLER /USAT TODAY NETWORK; GETTY IMAGES

Tim Webber and Brianne Pfannenstiel

Des Moines Register | USA TODAY NETWORK

Iowa Democrats were riding high after the 2008 election of Barack Obama, whom they helped catapult into the White House with the Iowa Caucuses earlier that year.

• Their political clout was reflected back to them in the ranks of their elected officials: Democrats held five of seven statewide offices, including a tenth-straight year in the governor’s mansion.

• And it was reflected, too, in the state’s voter rolls. More than 700,000 of Iowa’s 2 million active voters were registered with the Democratic Party – a more-than-100,000-person advantage over the GOP.

• But it has been – with very few exceptions – all downhill from there.

• “It’s just startling,” said Republican political consultant Jimmy Centers, who recalled the smatterings of blue that dotted the state in the not-so-

See RED VS. BLUE, Page 5A

Man argues he allegedly killed in self-defense

Ryan Hansen

Iowa City Press-Citizen

USA TODAY NETWORK

An Iowa City man on trial for murder intends to argue that he allegedly killed his child’s mother in self-defense.

The incident first gained traction following a “suspicious” death in January. A day later, Iowa City Police identified 33-year-old Victoria Skarda as the deceased, who was pronounced dead at the scene.

Joshua Perry, 35, was initially arrested and charged with domestic abuse assault and child endangerment a day after the death was reported.

In March, Perry’s assault charge was dropped and he was charged with first-degree murder.

He has since pleaded not guilty.

Iowa man accused of murder will argue ‘self-defense’

Perry’s attorneys filed court documents indicating that he will argue at least three defenses at his trial in January 2026.

In one filing, Perry’s attorneys write that he will contend that he was under the influence of drugs or alcohol when the death occurred.

Perry’s defense team will also argue that he was justified because he was defending himself, property or others. Perry’s lawyers also intend to argue he had “diminished responsibility,” which means they believe he had a “diminished” mental state.

See SELF-DEFENSE, Page 6A

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