

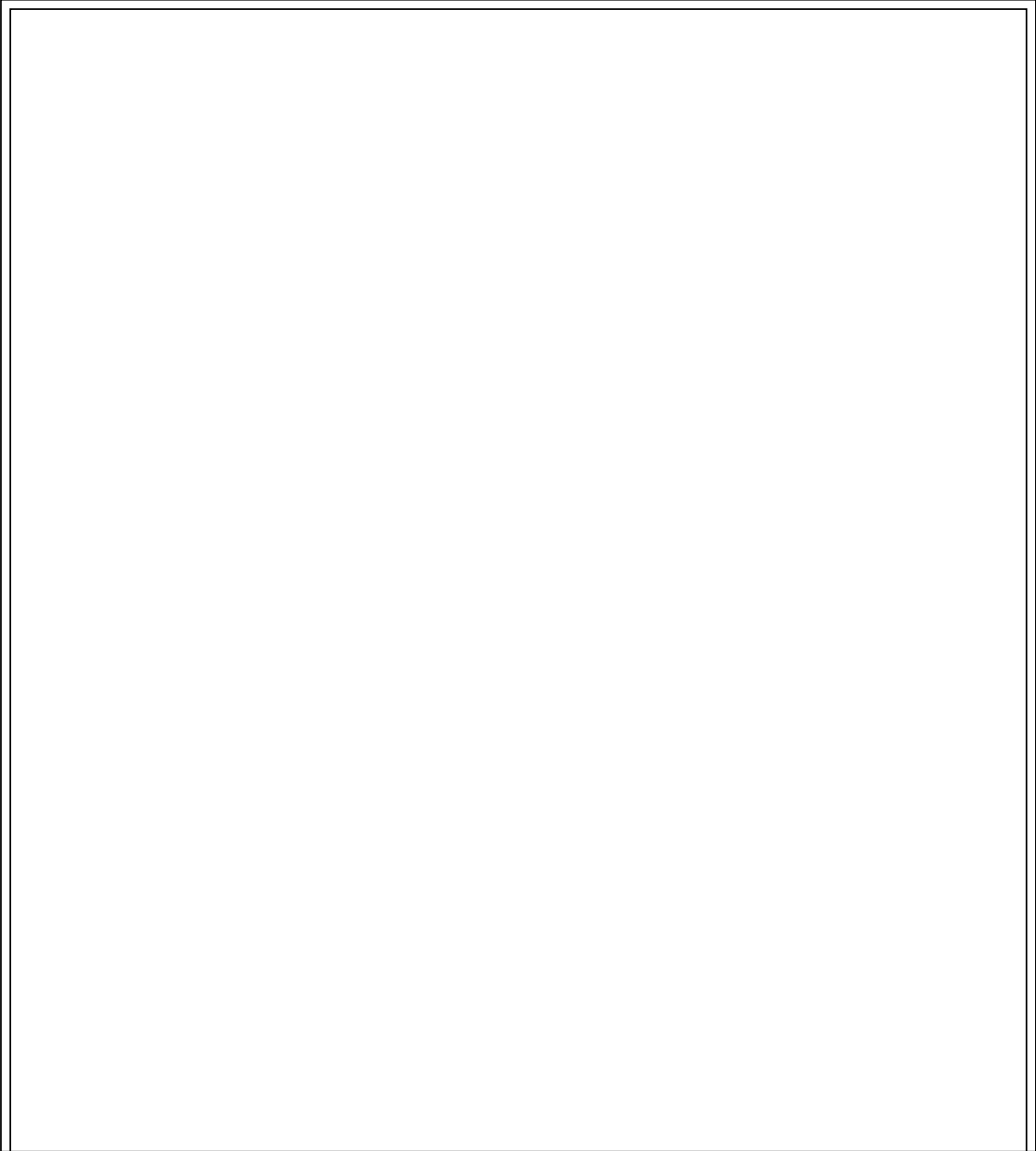
Interview: Sean Astin of ‘Rudy’ Fires Up During Election Week

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on November 4, 2012 - 9:00pm

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CHICAGO – Sean Astin has distinguished himself through two memorable roles – that of the title character in the Notre Dame film “Rudy” and as Samwise Gamgee in “The Lord of the Rings” trilogy. But not many people know that he is a passionate civic supporter, once serving as campaign manager for his friend Dan Adler, who didn’t survive a congressional ballot runoff in 2011.

Born Sean Patrick Duke in Santa Monica, California, Astin made his film debut in the legendary “The Goonies” at age 13. After doing supporting roles in notable films like “War of the Roses” (1989) and Memphis Belle (1990), Astin did a memorable turn as the lead in “Rudy” (1993) as a million-to-one student athlete for the Notre Dame football team. His next act was the iconic “The Lord of the Rings” trilogy from 2001-03, where his Sam Gamgee character and the rest of the LOTR universe will live in cinema history. He characterizes himself today as a actor, director, voice artist and producer.





Sean Astin at C2E2 in Chicago, April, 2012

Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com.

HollywoodChicago.com caught up with Astin just before an appearance in April at the Chicago Comic & Entertainment Expo (C2E2), and he offered these thoughts for Election Week and beyond.

HollywoodChicago.com: You are active in politics, even serving as a campaign manager last year. What excites you about that particular game, and what – in your opinion – distresses you about how information is manipulated on your opponent’s side, the Republicans?

Sean Astin: I love politics because at its core it’s about helping people, to me public service is a sacred obligation, and I think every citizen should be involved in some stage or another in the mechanics of government. I love when people express themselves on behalf of what they believe in, the solution is to keep people working together.

As far as Republicans go, they are having a rough time. They can’t figure out how to find their voice. I’m glad they have a nominee, and every politician has to find a way to communicate their viewpoint from their perspective. As a Democrat, I find myself getting upset when Republicans do that, because it seems more unfair. But I’m sure the average Republican voter looks at what Democrats do and feels the same way. I ultimately think the smart thing to do is to have a healthy two party or more dialogue going, and I think you can’t overstate how TV news ratings drive how the dialogue is presented. Overall it’s all about raising money, I’d love to see change about the way that is done.

HollywoodChicago.com: Since you came from an acting family, at what point did you express to your parents that you wanted to be part of the profession?

Sean Astin They actually came to me when I was eight years old, when I co-starred with my mother in a TV movie. I hadn’t conceptualized it

before then. I kind of wanted to be a director before I did that.

HollywoodChicago.com: If J.R.R. Tolkien were to appear in front of you right now, what would you tell him or ask him, since you were so much part of his legacy?



Astin I would first say thank you. Then I would ask him what he thinks of modern technology in society, and I would finish by asking him what he thought of the movies we made.

HollywoodChicago.com: What is the advantage of being identified through two classic film roles in your lifetime, and are there any disadvantages?

Astin The advantages are obvious – we’re standing here while 80 people are waiting to get my autograph, and pay money for it. I’ve got a daughter in private school. [laughs] As a by-product, it’s about working with people who are at the top of their field, as an artist that is a privilege. The downside is less obvious, and I don’t want to sound like I’m whining. I have to continue to reinvent myself, and when I’ve been identified with those two roles like I have, people feel like they know me. In trying to find something different, it becomes a battle.

The next Chicago Comic & Entertainment Expo (C2E2) will be April 26-28, 2013. [Click here](#) [17] for more details and to purchase tickets.



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