

## **Reagan Republicans prez Jeff Ward responds to question: Is his group unstoppable:**

The question posed on Huckleberries Blog was on whether the Reagan Republicans are unstoppable. This is, on its face, quite silly. Of course we are stoppable. Nothing is “unstoppable” in politics. Since we began in the summer of 2009 the majority of what has been written about our group online and in the press has been the creations of someone’s flight of fancy. Our group is neither invincible nor despicable. We are not some irresistible juggernaut. From liberal blogs you would think we were some kind network of Bond villains plotting world domination. We are just a volunteer group concerned about the future of our community, state and nation. The only difference between the Reagan Republicans and other community organizations is that we see politics a mechanism for making things better.

There is no restriction on our membership and the general membership elects our board. Among our members are some of the most respected leaders in our community who would not associate with us if we were up to nefarious activities. Unlike the leadership of certain other groups, with whom we have been unfairly and recklessly bundled, we have never attempted to ideologically purge the Republican Party. That would be against our stated purpose outlined in our Bylaws. We do promote Republicans who run for office over Democrats. We do so because we share the same beliefs about the nature of government. What kind of backward logic criticizes a Republican group for supporting Republicans running for office?

As to a partisan group supporting candidates in non-partisan offices, I see it as simply the right thing to do. Everyone “in the know” in our community knows the political affiliation of the non-partisan candidates. It is the height of elitism to think this knowledge should not be shared with the average voter. To deny the voters the right to know the beliefs of candidates, their general philosophy, and with whom they politically associate, is the refuge of rascals trying to pull the wool over the voters’ eyes. There are no “non-partisan” candidates, just non-partisan ballot listings.

The greatest lie (and I must call it a lie because everyone who repeats it knows it’s not true) is that Reagan Republicans is an extremist group with extremist views. I guess many of our members would be quite extreme in Berkeley, Cambridge or Madison but here in Northern Idaho, our members are pretty darned mainstream. It’s actually hard to say that the Reagan Republicans are ideologically “anything” since we have no official platform or even a written set of common beliefs. We have no ideological test for membership. I know I disagree with each member of our board on at least one or more issues. We certainly are not ideologically monolithic, no matter what our detractors fantasize.

So why all the invective and attacks hurled our way? Well, we have been fairly effective. Our greatest detractors have been those who have had their rears handed to them on a plate while competing with the Reagan Republicans. But, we have had our share of losses too. We don’t stop and move out of town when we lose. We keep fighting because we

believe in our cause. Are we unstoppable? I guess we are, only in that we will not give up fighting for our cherished principles regardless of the outcome of elections. -- Jeff Ward