

B.E.C.O.N
March 8, 2024

Breakfast was good, with eggs, ham, hashbrowns and BACON (I'm sure that was just for Shannon).

Thanks to Bill Kennedy for a nice Irish prayer.

Guests: Just the speaker – Mike Waters, who is running for district 3 County Commissioner.

Trina's friend – Yvonne Eckhardt with Luther's Lodge

Announcements:

Craig – nominations will start next week. Please step up and help lead the club. April 12 will be the actual date for voting.

Bill Kennedy said that March 29th @ 12:00 there will be a Vietnam Veteran's ceremony at the Veteran's National Cemetery in Laurel.

Dina reminded us that the district convention is May 3rd and 4th. The night of the 3rd will start things off with a Speakeasy, which will be a lot of fun and good food. Please show your support of the Billings clubs by attending this district convention.

Shawnee reminded us of the benefit fundraiser for Amber, Thursday 3/14 at the Legion 5pm – 8pm. Fantastic offerings, so come and support. Bring lots of cash, but they can take cards also, if necessary.

We received a nice thank you from the Freedoms Foundation for our \$3,000 donation.

Speaker:

Mike waters is an MSU graduate via the ROTC program, with a political science major. He went into the Air Force where he became a pilot and flew B1 Bombers for 9 years. He also taught at the Air Force Academy as an assistant professor.

His background: He's a 3rd generation Montanan, from Richie MT, where his family was in farming. His Grandfather, Otis Waters, homestead near Richie, and started the family farm. Otis was an agricultural pilot, which gave Mike the itch to fly. He respects his heritage but wanted to become an Air Force pilot. During his stint as a B1 bomber pilot, he did a short mission during Desert Fox and ended up flying missions in Afghanistan. He was able to fly around the world, therefore he can vogue that our world really is round and has a lot of water.

He had two young children when his wife passed away, so he left the bomber program and went to the academy to teach. After 22 years in the Air Force, and finishing his career in as a professor, he retired as a LT Colonel and returned to MT and settled in Billings.

Due to Mike's military background he wanted to get into Veteran Affairs work. He connected with Greg Gianforte and worked with him, then worked with Senator Daines, and finished that position last year. Mike lives in District 3 and decided to run for County Commission, where he would be replacing Don Jones.

B.E.C.O.N
March 8, 2024

He would like to take his leadership experience and his Conservative Republican leadership to the County. His main concerns are:

1. Safety - Crime & Public Safety, because of law enforcement and jail issues that we have in Yellowstone County.
2. Economy - Next on his agenda is property taxes, of which the County portion is about 29%. He said for a young family, or an elderly person on a fixed income, he wants to make sure it is worth raising their taxes (i.e. jail improvements that could affect everyone). He would question if the current government facilities are effective and efficient before raising taxes. He wants Yellowstone County to be a vibrant and safe place, where kids would want to stay and raise families.
3. Leadership - His third priority is Leadership. He thinks we need places like Metra Park and maintaining our heritage, but that takes good leadership, which he thinks we really need.

He wants to build trust. From the book "The Speed of Trust" he learned to be honest and forthright. Competence is a value that he believes will build trust.

Q&A:

1. He's running against another Republican Mr. Staley. Replacing Don Jones' position.
2. There's a push to increase the number of commissioners to 5. Mike thinks it's more important to require accountability and money would be better spent on issues like the jail. He thinks it's important to have 3 commissioners that can work together professionally, even if they disagree on issues.

Craig's reminder -

Dues change email – Please read it! Any input please email him, as the BOD meets on Tuesday 3/12 and they will bring their recommendation to the club.