

Will You Invest and Hour in Montana Elections?

Many of your friends *may vote poorly* without your help. This guide is not perfect but it is at least thought provoking. Please send it to them.

2022 Voters Guide 10 – Congressional East, Supreme Court, MT Legislature, County: **Please Forward to Friends!**

Integrity and Cronyism: The more I have researched, the more I have realized that these races swing on these three issues.

- **Integrity:** Candidates misrepresenting or twisting the truth and depending upon voter ignorance and laziness. The lies even from “R”s are sobering.
- **Cronyism:** *“the appointment of friends and associates to positions of authority, without proper regard to their qualifications”* (Webster). I am regularly dumfounded as I see people of integrity support candidates that are problematic.
- **Laziness (the biggest one):** People voting who refuse to do their homework.

This guide is designed for serious patriots but you can read as much or little as you wish.

Feel free to call me or email me with questions at 406-672-9207 or rapence45@gmail.com. I voted YES on Billings issues except for writing in Denis Pitman for County Commissioner.

Dick Pence – Coordinator, [Big Sky Worldview Forum](#), rapence45@gmail.com

- Register to vote or check on your registration [here](#).
- One more thing – elections are expensive get out your checkbook

Contents:

- We found good info. at 2022 iVotersGuide.com [here](#)
- Montana Family Foundation Legislative Scorecard 2021 Legislative Session [Here](#)
- Montana Family Foundations voters’ guide for legislature and Courts [here](#).

- The Center for Legislative Accountability is also helpful [here](#). You can also look [here](#).
- Details and Principles – p. 1 (Seven Principles of Voting)
- Eastern District Congressional Race **See Update**– p.3
- Montana Supreme Court **UPDATE** [here](#) or on p. 9
- Montana Legislature – p.15
- Ballot Initiatives – p.21 See **updated** info on LR 131 Born Alive Infant protection Combating Mis-Information [here](#) or A Case for LR 131 from a Legislator [here](#) or below. And C 48 below.
- **Update** – Why the Write-In Campaign A Tale of Two Very Different Yellowstone County Commissioner Candidates p.21 or [here](#) Why it matters [here](#).

Details and Principles:

Design: This document is **not** designed for soundbite voters. I will add as much info as I can and you can read what you want

Election Dates:

Ballots go out – Friday, Oct. 14th.

Federal, State and County – Tuesday, Nov.8th.

My Seven Principles of Voting:

1st. My bottom line – is the candidate **primarily conservative** that will promote Christian based values? My only SINGLE ISSUE is LIFE.

2nd. Never vote for a Democrat. The Democratic party is now ruled by socialists. If the candidate is one, they are disqualified. If they are too uninformed to know what the party is, they don't belong in office. And, they will be pressured to vote in lock-step.

3rd. Never vote based on friendships – vote based on principles and values. Separate relational-emotional interests from principles.

4rd. Don't get in a hurry to vote. Liberals love early and mail in voting. So many times, I hear *"I would never have voted for him if I had known..."* and the information came out after they voted.

5th. Don't rely on mailer information you get in your mailbox. Do your homework and listen to people you trust. Case in point – Penny Ronning won in Ward 4 in 2016. Her flyers made her sound **like a Reagan conservative** and she is a Progressives activist, running for Congress.

6th. Be discerning, listen between the lines. Liberals know they **can't win on Socialist values** – they are masters at sounding conservative. Messaging conservative values in short sound bites is difficult. Don't be a sucker for emotional appeals.

7th.Vote Principles not Gender – oh yes, many will vote for a woman ONLY because she is a woman. Of all the women I have known on the City Council the last three elections, only one was and is consistently conservative. Most were radically liberal.

Eastern District Congressman – Matthew Rosendale vs Penny Ronning

A story of two Opposites

UPDATE ON Debate

The Billings Gazette states that you can call 406-657-1311 if you find “**Factual Errors**” in their reports. Where to start? Sunday that had a hit piece on Rosendale – [“Rosendale dinged in debate for opposing aid to Ukraine”](#) making it sound like that was the center of the debate – it wasn't. As a former Air Force officer, I stand with Rosendale against the aid to Ukraine. We have been sold a bill of goods and WHY all of a sudden are the Democrats all in on war?

Unlike most conservatives, Matt does his homework. **This government is so corrupt that God only knows where any aid** or bullets we send there way goes and so is Volodymyr Zelenskyy. He is a TOTAL GLOBALIST that quietly mocks America, the idea that he cares about borders is nonsense. I know, this is not common knowledge.

Penny Ronning's response to all the people being hurt is total emotionalism. Ronning is so far left she is off the cliff and actually believes she is a Centrist. She actually suggested Rosendale needed a history lesson as she charged headlong into an emotional rant that knew nothing of history.

Gary Buchanan is another Pro Planned Parenthood liberal masquerading as a conservative. Yes, Ukraine is hurting but arguably, this would not have happened if we had not pushed for them to be in NATO. Reality is, we can't fix the world. Do you know that our own military readiness is at risk because of what we have done?

Bottom line: The [ivotersGuide for Montana](#), lists Matt Rosendale as a **Verified Conservative**. The [Center for Legislative Accountability](#) gives Matt a score of 100%, 15 points higher than any living Montana Federal Legislator. He has been married to his wife Jean for going on 37 years. They have four sons and a granddaughter. He built a successful business. Matt has served at the local, state and national level, and his Christian faith is his bedrock. His 07/07/22 mailer was all about opposing abortion ***"The push for pro-life is truly a battle for the soul or our nation..."***

This is in stark contrast to his opponent Penny Ronning who has done NONE OF THE ABOVE and (as a staunch Feminist) is **all-in with Planned Parenthood** to ramp up the murder of babies.

No Equivocations: Rosendale **will always stand for godly, constitutional principles** that put Montana and America first. While many in congress are ready to *"give away the farm"* to secure foreign borders, Matt said **not until we secure our own**. Much of America has "drunk the Ukraine Kool-Aid." We are sending them weaponry that is our right-now supply, not our surplus and reliable sources tell us we have NO idea where this aid is going. We are supporting a radically **corrupt government** and a leader that is a **Globalist**.

His Conservative Commitment: Congressman Rosendale is a member of the [House Freedom Caucus](#) (*There is no official list*) with founding members such as Ron DeSantis (now Governor of Florida) and Jim Jordan from Ohio.

The mission of the Freedom Caucus says volumes about Rosendale:

"The House Freedom Caucus gives a voice to countless Americans who feel that Washington does not represent them. We support open, accountable and limited government, the Constitution and the rule of law, and policies that promote the liberty, safety and prosperity of all Americans."

His Mailer Relative to the border says: *Walls work and we ought to build one. Securing **our** border is as important as securing **other** borders. Demand that illegal*

immigrants remain in Mexico or be returned there. Criminalize fleeing from law enforcement at the border or here.

Understanding Reality: In a recent conversation, he said to me, “*The real issues in D.C. are spiritual.*” He is absolutely right.

Just the Facts: On his relatively brief and to the point [webpage](#) you learn that Rosendale worked his way up, serving and learning. First locally, then in the Montana House, then in the Senate where he was majority leader, then serving as Montana State Auditor. You can read about his actual accomplishments and also see what he did on the state Land Board.

Unlike many seeking government office, Matt Rosendale actually can be found on [Wikipedia](#). Unlike his challenger Penny Ronning you learn that he actually had a job, ran a business... stuff like that. He spent his career working in [real estate](#), [real estate development](#) and [land management](#).^[3] He grew his family real estate business from a single, five [agent](#) office into a full-service firm with 65 agents and four offices.^[4] Rosendale and his wife moved their family to [Glendive, Montana](#), in 2002,^[5] [twenty years ago] where they raised their children. He was twice elected chairman of the Glendive Agri-Trade Expo committee,^[6] a local group that puts on an [agriculture](#) exposition showcasing [agri-business](#) in eastern Montana.^[7] Rosendale also served as head of his local [Catholic parish](#) council.^[6]

His service record in a nutshell: Matt has been in Montana for about 20 years:

- One term in the Montana House of Representatives
- Two terms in the Montana Senate – Voted Majority Leader.
- One term as Montana’s State Auditor – cut operating expenses 23% and eliminated 7 vacant jobs.
- One term as Montana’s Congressman

Rosendale is clearly the most consistent conservative Congressman Montana has had in decades. Solidly Pro-Life, Second Amendment, for border security and election security. **A Bird’s Eye View of His Voting Record:**

- The [Center for Legislative Accountability](#) has become the Gold Standard for rating the voting records for all legislators. They develop rating for the [American Conservative Union](#). Here are some Montana scores:
 - Matt Rosendale - **100**.
 - Ryan Zinke – **69**.

- Steve Daines - 85
- Conrad Burns - 91
- John Tester - 11
- Rick Hill – 88.
- Ron Marlenee – 88.
- Denny Rehberg - 88.
- **LIFE issues:** As a committed Christian, Matt is solidly Pro-Life and has opposed abortion and Dr. Assisted Suicide issues.
- **Second Amendment:** He is an avid hunter, allows people on his home ranch near Glendive to hunt. He holds a lifetime rating from the NRA of “A.”
- **Border Security:** As an America first Congressman, he supports building the wall and securing our border even above working on other nations issues.
- **Election Security:** He supports requiring all voters in federal elections to present a government issued photo ID.

Who is Penny Ronning?

Penning Ronning would be Montana’s AOC – same agenda, slightly quieter.

Penning Ronning is a arrogant, radical Leftist who portrays herself as a moderate



The problem with Facebook is that your postings are like the energizer bunny, they just keep coming back to haunt you like this one from a couple of years

ago. Here, Penning sends a photo of the Gay Pride parade and the Planned Parenthood promoters to her LGBTQ Activist friend Alley Hay. Notice the exchange.

Alley – *“Thanks for the photo.”*

Penney – *“You are welcome. Thank you for all you do and for all you do for Planned Parenthood.”*

Penning Ronning in a Nutshell:

Penny is a radical Leftist who portrays herself as a moderate. If you read Penny’s [webpage](#) (it is like a book), you would think she accomplished everything except inventing the wheel. The claims are outlandish. The one thing you **never see** nailed down, for all her verbiage about a strong work ethic, is where she **actually had a J-O-B**. Her claims of accomplishment are all vague and relate to Not-For-Profit organizations, activism, etc. and a business that she never documents. In fairness, some of her work for protecting kids has been helpful.

Penny is a Joe Biden Progressive Democrat. She is a Pro-Abortionist who wants to enshrine Roe v Wade in Federal Law, ardent Feminist, Anti Second Amendment, Build-Back-Better, the Equality Act, Environmentalist, for less restrictive voting **and more**. If you don’t believe it, take a couple of hours and read her web page.

Penny is a staunch, 2nd Wave Feminist type. In the 2018 city council election, two of her far Left friends did not get elected. This was her public statement about that situation.

*“This council has been subjected to the leadership of **older white males** for the history of our community. We had the **opportunity to change that** and you chose not to take it.”*

At one of the candidate forums, in her closing statement, she went on an over-time, absolute feminist rant – it was stunning

[Penny says](#) she will call for the *Equal Rights Amendment* and Passing the *Equality Act*. This would destroy America culture faster than anything you can imagine.

[Build Back Better](#) – she will support this legislation that would destroy our economy.

[Penny will support “expanded automatic and same day voting.](#) Translation – no voter ID and same-day voting.

Penny supports [Roe V Wade](#) type legislation being established as Federal Law.

Penny supports sex education in public schools

[Ronning does not fully support the 2nd Amendment](#) – reading between the lines just a slight bit, you see she would be a typical Democrat in favor of limiting your freedom.

“Penny will be whatever you want her to be” – the words of a fellow counsel person. My observation? She **lied her way on to the Council** portraying herself as moderate to conservative. Another council person said, she **actually believes** she is a moderate.

LGBTQ Activism: In early 2022, Penny attempted to bring a Non-Discrimination Ordinance back to Billings – even though she knew it would probably Fail. NDO’s are nothing, but an attempt to promote a “Special Class” designation for LGBTQ people similar to class designations for race. A national Equality Act would be much the same along with total power to Planned Parenthood.

In summary, what jobs has Penny held or what has she accomplished? What you find about her is some vague allusions to being an artist... working to promote the good of kids. She is a consistent Progressive in every sense of the word.

Montana Supreme Court, Seat 2

Jim Brown vs. incumbent Ingrid Gustafson.

Showing up For Work?

Reliable sources confirm that Justice Ingrid Gustafson is **rarely in Helena** – maybe once a month. While several of the Justices are in their offices in Helena almost every day, Gustafson depends upon remote internet connections to interact with the other justices or staff. Call me old fashioned, but I believe there is value in working in close proximity to those you are committed to working with. How do you have those important momentary interactions that help in doing your job well when your Zooming? James Brown is currently the Chair of the *Public Service Commission*. He goes to Helena to interact with other commissioners and the staff regularly.

Unintentional Endorsements?

Former Republican Governor **Marc Racicot's TV ads** supporting Gustafson are actually an indorsement for Brown. Racicot is infamous for standing for **nothing** – always having his finger in the wind. [He was chairman](#) of the [Republican National Committee](#) from 2002 until 2003. In September 2020, he announced his intention to **vote for Joe Biden**.

Almost every day the Billings Gazette has a hit piece on James Brown. Sunday there was a doozy [Lawyer to Lawyer – James Brown not Qualified for Court](#). Have you noticed **who is writing them**? Yup **Trail Lawyers** who have controlled this court for decades. Erik Thuesen from Helena is the author this time. He makes lots of accusations that sound disturbing. **But notice the undercurrent** – James has political interests and none of our Supreme Court members do. Really? That is the real issue here. If you read the rest of this article, you will discover that our Supreme Court is wildly political. I don't know Thuesen and neither do 99.9% of the readers who will believe almost anything. I have gotten to know James and I trust him! And yes, as you will see below, every significant Republican office holder has endorsed him. Stop kidding yourself, EVERY race is political.

Why is this race critical

Montana's Supreme Court is known to be one of the most liberal-activist courts in America. The Roe v. Wade decision by the US Supreme Court actually makes Montana a **magnet for abortions because** of our Supreme Court's interpretation of a clause in our constitution. **This will take every conservative talking to their neighbor.**

Exposing Judge Ingrid Gustafson:

In the sixteen bullet points below, you will meet a Liberal-Progressive Activists masquerading as a Supreme Court Judge. She is committed to legislating from the bench and supporting the Democratic Party with no respect for judicial conduct or the Montana Constitution.

- ✚ Gustafson is clearly known for **legislating from the bench**.
- ✚ Ingrid was appointed by Governor **Bullock**.

- ✚ The Montana Trial **Lawyers Association is spending about \$1.5M** to get her elected! Gustafson is known for ruling in lock-step with this Progressive group.
- ✚ Her campaign **manager is Judge Moses' wife** – the Billings judge who overturned three LIFE related Legislative Bills.
- ✚ **Election Integrity - ruling from the Bench:** In spite of the fact that the **MT Constitution** explicitly provides the Legislature with authority and discretion to **decide matters of elections:**
 - Gustafson voted to **overturn SB 169 requiring Voter ID...** *"voters don't need to show government issued photo ID in order to vote"* she said.
 - She voted to **overturn HB176** that would have eliminated **election day registration** mischief by the LEFT.
- ✚ As a judge in Billings, Gustafson has the distinction of being the **most recused-overturned District Court judge** of Yellowstone County.
- ✚ As crime surges in Montana, Gustafson is known for:
 - **Being soft on crime - anti-Law enforcement!** – favoring the accused not the victims.
 - She ruled with the majority in **ruling against district court law enforcement cases.**
 - County Attorneys are having a big problem with the **Supreme Court overturning** their cases
- ✚ Her **"business friendly score"** from the Montana Chamber of Commerce was an **"F"** She consistently decides cases in favor of plaintiffs and **against business owners.**
- ✚ Leaked emails show that members of **this court routinely took positions** on bills during the 2021 legislative session coordinating with special interest groups behind the scenes. (This and the next seven bullet points see the letter from Attorney General Austin Knudson here https://www.bigskyworldview.org/content/docs/Library/AG_Knudson_endorses_James_Brown.pdf)
- ✚ Members of the court and their taxpayer paid employees **actively lobbied against legislation** that increased **THEIR accountability** to the public.
- ✚ They have **let criminals back on the streets.** They have upended decades of precedence regarding time served.

- ✚ The court **blocked a legislative subpoena** that sought to reveal the aforementioned behavior. Six of the seven failed to recuse themselves. They have legislated from the bench and overturned settled Law to **benefit criminals**.
- ✚ They went against legislative intent **regarding restitution**, making it harder for crime victims to be made whole by those who preyed on them.
- ✚ They have **lessened mandatory punishment** requirements.
- ✚ They have **undermined the legislatures authority** to determine punishment for crimes – setting criminals loose before they’ve served their time.

Ingrid is clearly the Liberal-Progressive choice.

Who is James Brown?

Almost every day the Billings Gazette has a hit piece on James Brown. Sunday there was a doozy [Lawyer to Lawyer – James Brown not Qualified for Court](#). Have you noticed **who is writing them**? Yup **Trail Lawyers** who have controlled this court for decades. Erik Thuesen from Helena is the author this time. He makes lots of accusations that sound disturbing. **But notice the undercurrent** – James has political interests and none of our Supreme Court members do. Really? That the real issue here. If you read the rest of this, you will discover that our Supreme Court is wildly political. I don’t know Thuesen and neither do 99.9% of the readers who will believe almost anything. I have gotten to know James and I trust him!

James Brown is currently leader of the Public Service Commission (PSC). He owns his own law business and is known to be a solid conservative, committed to the rule of law. He adamantly opposes the Judicial Activism that has characterized our Supreme Court. The conservative [ivoterguide.com](#) characterizes James Brown as an **Originalist and Ingrid Gustafson as a **Proven Activist**.**

- ✚ James Brown is an **“originalist”** with a similar temperament as Justices **Scalia and Thomas**.
- ✚ In his role as **Chairman of the Montana Public Service Commission**, Brown serves the **same role as judges** by deciding on legal matters and cases that affect every person in Montana.
- ✚ He says *“I’m running to **preserve our rule of law**, follow the Constitution and bring **accountability** back to the judicial branch.”*

- ✚ He has **represented agricultural** clients across Montana and would bring a small business and agricultural background to the Court.
- ✚ James **will resist** the actions of **the activist judiciary** on the supreme court that have harmed Montana’s farm and ranch community.
- ✚ He will work to bring **consistency** to the Court, avoid the appearance of conflicts of interest, and avoid **legislating from the bench**.
- ✚ At a time when **confidence in the judiciary** is being shaken, James will work to **“restore faith in the rule of law.”**
- ✚ James is former Council for the Republican Party and has **litigated** against both the state of Montana and the Federal Government in order to protect **First Amendment Rights**

Brown is endorsed by *Montanans for Limited Government*, [Senator Steve Daines](#), Governor Greg Gianforte, Congressman Matt Rosendale, the Montana Shooting Sports Association, Attorney General Austin Knudson, and the Montana GOP because they know he is a **true constitutional conservative**.

More about James Brown

His early days: Brown grew up in Dillon, attended Beaverhead County High School, and graduated in 1994 with a double major in History and Political Science from the University of Montana. He earned his law degree from the Seattle University School of Law and his Masters in Tax Law from the University of Washington. Prior to attending law school, Brown worked six years in Washington D.C. as a Congressional Aide, including for U.S. Senator **Conrad Burns** of Montana.

Background and Goals: [“As a fourth-generation Montanan](#) whose family homesteaded in Beaverhead County in the 1880s and as a private practice attorney for the last 17 years, he represented and defended the interests of Montana’s farmers, ranchers, and small businesses—and he will take those same Montana values to the Supreme Court as your next justice. **A few of Browns statements:**

He owns his own law firm, wherein he employs multiple Montanans. As a business owner, Brown understands what it means to **sign both the front and back of a paycheck**.

Brown is a **member of** the Leadership Montana program, the Montana Wool Growers Association, the Montana Shooting Sports Association, the Beaverhead Chamber of Commerce, and Montana Historical Society,

More about Ingrid Gustafson

Ingrid Gustafson is an incumbent. She is rated as a **Proven Activist** [by iVotersGuide.com](https://www.ivotersguide.com)

Ingrid Gustafson has [served](#) on the Montana Supreme Court since 2017 when she was appointed by Governor Steve Bullock. Prior to that, she presided over a general jurisdiction court serving for 14 years as a District Court Judge. Prior to taking the bench in 2004, Justice Gustafson practiced law for 16 years maintaining a broad-based private practice that included state and federal criminal defense, personal injury, and domestic relations cases. During her time as a Yellowstone County District Court judge, Gustafson was **the most recused judge by litigants**.

Ingrid says there is [no room for politics in the court room](#), the problem is what she does from the bench is **exactly the opposite** as you will see below.

In [one of her TV ads](#), a business owner says she is honest, ethical, and trustworthy. But the Montana Chamber of Commerce disagreed. (See below)

Notable recent shifting to get votes question: Why did Justice Ingrid Gustafson **recuse herself** from the court's decision **against firearms on campus?** Details: The Montana Supreme Court ruled against Montanan's Second Amendment right to carry a firearm on a college or university campus. However, Liberal Supreme Court Justice Ingrid Gustafson recused herself from the case.

However, she **did not recuse herself** when she was subpoenaed for her public emails. By ruling on the lawfulness of her own subpoena, she engaged in a clear **conflict of interest**. As the Bozeman Daily Chronicle put it "one fundamental fact remains: [you can't be the judge in your own case.](#)"

The Montana Chamber of Commerce gave her a 'F' grade on Business-related litigation <https://www.montanachamber.com/advocacy/montana-justice-coalition/>

Notable Problematic Cases:

- [Gustafson wrote *Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue*](#) (2018): **Wrote concurrence.** The case was over a program which "provide[d] a taxpayer a dollar-for-dollar tax credit based on the taxpayer's donation to a Student Scholarship Organization (SSO). SSOs fund tuition scholarships for students who attend private schools meeting the definition of Qualified Education Provider (QEP). The Department of Revenue later adopted Rule 1, **excluding religiously-affiliated private schools** from qualifying as QEPs, **(The US Supreme Court reversed this)**
- [Weems v. State](#) (2019): **Signed** Justice Baker's majority opinion. Held that Weems and Doe had standing to bring a suit against a law excluding their professions from providing abortions. (**Expanded who could administer abortions**, see [more here](#))
- [McLaughlin v. Montana State Legislature](#) (2021): **Signed** Justice McKinnon's majority opinion. Held that the legislature's motion to disqualify all members of the Montana Supreme Court was denied (16)... **The court's duty would be compromised if it stepped aside for every case involving separation of powers.** This was a case of the Legislature vs. the Court. (Read more [here](#))

Montana Legislative Candidates

Our endorsements are in **BLUE** and Opponents are in **Red**

<https://electionresults.mt.gov/ResultsSW.aspx?type=CTYALL&cty=51&map=CTY>

At this moment, I am only listing candidates that are in races the Republicans seem to have a chance to win. I have information on a few Republican candidates. If you wish, **send me information** on other Primaries. Include a similar type of description of their qualifications.

Montana Senate Races

Senate District 4 –John Fuller vs. Kyle Waterman, Kalispell

- Rated [Very Conservative by iVotersGuide](#) where you can find more
- John is a life-long Montana – he and wife Cynthia are committed Christians.
- **His teaching background in History, Government and Economics** prevents him from riding his horse into the sunset quietly while our nation stumbles into socialism, tyranny and bankruptcy.
- John has a [100% rating](#) from the Montana Family Foundation
- He is solidly Pro – Life and Pro-Second Amendment

- As a Representative in HD 8, Among other Bills, he sponsored HB112 to protect women's sports. See much more on his web site [here](#).
- He scored a [97%](#) on the Montana Legislative Loyalty for 2021.

Senate District 11 – [Daniel Emrich](#) vs [Tom Jacobson](#)

Senate District 22 —[Daniel Zolnikov](#) vs. [Terry Dennis](#)

Senate District 32 [Randy Chamberlin](#) vs. [Pat Flowers](#), Belgrade

SD 34 – [Shelley Vance \(Gordon's wife\)](#) vs. [Damion Lynn](#) Belgrade

SD 49 [Brad Tschida](#) vs. [Willis Curdy](#)

Brad is a strong Republican from Missoula his website is [here](#)

This will be one of the toughest races in Montana. SD 49 has been held by a radical, Lesbian activist for 8 years. Please consider making a contribution.

Brad is married to Leslee – they have five children and eight grandchildren. He is a life-long Montanan, educated in Montana. It's not hard to find information on him and his beliefs. He has 12 years of educational experience as a teacher and administrator. He is also a former business owner and understands that business and not government creates strong communities that prosper economically.

He has been endorsed by the NRA, MSSA, and MTSFW. His memberships include NRA / MSSA / MT Fish and Game Association / St. Anthony Parish / Montana Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife / Knights of Columbus

Up front on his webpage, Brad says this: **I have proven my commitment to:**

- Protecting and Preserving the Rights and Freedoms of all Montanans.
- Providing Necessary Resources for Local and State Law Enforcement and Fire Protection.
- Promoting Job Creation Through Limited Taxation.
- Forever Protecting and Preserving Access to Montana's Public Lands.
- Fighting to Reduce Business, Income and Property Taxes.
- Encouraging Responsible Development of Montana's Plentiful Natural Resources.
- Returning Healthcare Options & Control to Montanans.
- Defending Personal Freedoms & 2nd Amendment rights
- Creating More Efficient State Governance

Brad has served four terms in the Montana House of Representatives. He is recognized as one of the conservative leaders that is rock solid. In my personal dealings with Brad, that related to Republican party issues, he demonstrated solid commitment to doing things ethically in state-wide issues and treating campaign workers justly. He is a committed Christian.

His Record:

[Montana Family Foundation Legislative Score Card rating](#) – 100% (the previous woman in SD 49 held a Zero) This means that Brad voted For:

- The Born Alive Infant Protection act.
- Abortion Pill Protocols to protect women.
- Protecting Freedom of Association Speech on campuses.
- No abortion coverage in health care.
- Religion is Essential Act.
- Religious Freedom Restoration Act.
- Sex Designation on Birth Certificates not being easily changed.
- Parental Permission for Sex Education.
- (Further explanation of these bills is on the Family Foundation LINK)

Legislative Loyalty Score Card Score: (A good indicator of conservative consistency)

[2019 Session](#) – 96% (Third highest Republican)

[2021 Session](#) – 97% (Ranked tenth)

Montana House of Representatives

<https://electionresults.mt.gov/ResultsSW.aspx?type=CTYALL&cty=51&map=CTY>

HD 5 **Lyn Bennett** vs. **Dave Fern**

HD 15 **Ralph Foster** vs. **Marvin Weatherwax Jr.**

HD 28 – **Ed Hill** vs. **Paul Tuss**

HD 31 – **Arlie Gordon** vs. **Frank Smith**

HD 38 – **Greg Kmetz** – vs **Steve Muggli (Miles City)**

HD 42 – **Virginia McDonald** vs. **Sharon Pergoy**

HD 47 Thomas Madigan vs. Denise Baum

HD 48 Jodee Etchart vs. Jennifer Merecki

Jodee's web page is [here](#) *LISTENING. TAKING ACTION. IMPROVING LIVES*. She is a **passionate conservative**. This is a critical race of a SOLD conservative against a Radical Progressive AOC type – in spades. See below.

She is a mom, wife, and Physician Assistant who has made her life's work caring and advocating for others - and she will take that same work ethic to Helena.

She graduated from Montana State University-Billings with a BS in Human Services and from Rocky Mountain College with a BA in Physician Assistant Studies. **She has practiced as a PA for 20 years.** Jodee and her husband have been married for 19 years. Jodee enjoys spending time with her family, gardening, target shooting, and planning events.

Her Priorities:

- Property Tax reform and Fiscal Responsibility
- Economic growth and job creation
- Eliminate government overreach
- Protect Free speech and the 2nd Amendment rights
- Advocate for the vulnerable

Jennifer Merecki: A radical, Biden, AOC type Socialist.

On the [Courage To Change](#) website we find Jennifer's name (you have to sign up but we did) as one who has taken the pledge. Here are just a few of what Merecki pledged to **unwavering commitment** to support:

- Candidates who are committed to **social, racial and economic justice**.
- Expanding **union power everywhere**.
- Increasing investments for infrastructure projects that emphasize **sustainability, equity** and access for everyone;
- Adopting the **Green New Deal**, and its principles of jobs, **justice, and decarbonization**;
- **Healthcare as a right** and not a privilege;
- Making public **colleges** and universities tuition-**free** while **canceling all student debt**.

A little picture of Jennifer is disclosed in former races. In her [run for SD 22](#) she said this. *If you called her rogue or a rebel, she would take it as a compliment.* On her [current webpage](#) she touts herself as a person of integrity and carefully avoids issues of abortion and LGBTQ issues. But take a look at her endorsements. She endorsed by most of the Far-Left organizations like Montana Sportsmen Alliance, Montana Federation of Public Employees, Montana AFL-CIO, Conservation Voters etc. as well as by a host of Far-Left individuals.

She [supported Bernie Sanders](#) in the last presidential race.

Reading between the lines She is clearly a far LEFT Progressive. Merecki **wasn't sure if she would vote for Clinton if she was confirmed** as the party's nominee.

HD 50 [Mallerie Stromswold](#) vs. [James Reavis](#)

This is an important race because of who James Reavis is. Look carefully at his web page.

Mallerie voting record in the 2021 legislator was strong.

- She was given an Award for Political Achievement by The [Center for Political Achievement](#). She scored an 83%. The Republican House average was a 84% and the Democrats average was 13%.
- [Her Legislative Loyalty Card](#) was a 91% - her letter grade was a B.
- Her legislative score with the Montana Family Foundation was 75%, the highest Democrat scored a 17%
- Americans For Prosperity and the Montana Chamber of Commerce both scored her well.

His web page is here [James Reavis for Montana](#)

James is a public attorney and if you read the web page, it is vague. If you look at his web page, he is a Progressive through and through. But hidden in rhetoric is:

- The right to *determine* when you start a family - aka Pro-Abortion.
- Support of Public Schools fully funded - aka no support School Choice
- Support for clean water and air... aka Environmentalism. Green New Deal..
- Support for affordable health care... aka One payer health care.
- Full support of Unions...aka against Right to work.

HD 51 [Mike Yakowich](#) vs. [Carole Boerner](#)

Mike and his wife Yukiko have been married for 40 years. They have five children and four grandchildren. He is originally from Butte. He is a graduate of the University of Montana and has lived in Billings for 35 years. Mike's service record is amazing. Here are a few examples.

- He served 8 years on the Billings City Council helping us defeat a Non-Discrimination ordinance twice.
- Yellowstone CT Behavioral Health Local advisory board
- Mayor Reduce Suicide board
- Phillips 66 Refinery Citizens Advisory Committee

HD 52 Sherry Essman vs. Jenna Martin

Sherry Essmann and her husband Jeff have served Montana for years. They are solid conservatives and level headed people.

Her Goals for Montana

- Build a robust, vibrant economy where everyone can learn the value and the virtues of self-reliance and a strong work ethic.
- Recognize and uphold the Constitutions of the United States and Montana and maintain our freedoms and liberties.
- Provide safe and sound communities where the police are respected, supported, and praised for their good work
- Maintain a school system that respects the values of its students and their parents, and provides for educational choice.
- Accept personal responsibility and maintain our independence.

HD 52 **Jenna Martin** find her website [here](#)

Five minutes on her web site will tell you that Jenna is a big government, Green New Deal, Progressive. She worked at the Billings Psychiatric Hospital and Headstart, and volunteered at the Crisis Center and the HUB (before it was shut down). [And boy, did it need to be shut down – talk about corruption!]

Her indorsements tell you a lot:

- Montana Federation of Public Employees – this is largely the teachers union. Need we define how far left they are?
- The Montana Conservation Voters – the title sounds kind of conservative but this group is far LEFT, lots of big money. Think Green New Deal

Her Issues: they scream far Left.

- I've voiced frustration at the **defunding of public schools [what defunding?]**, and have been to countless "hearings for public comment" where the public comment (especially in cases of **clean energy**, environmental regulation and **gun control**), has been outright ignored.
- I support legislation that **strengthens** unions, strengthens pensions, raises the minimum wage, and prevents all workers from experiencing further **economic exploitation**.
- Funneling money from public education systems to private and charter schools leaves low income, rural students without little to no education options. [Exactly the opposite is true]

HD 60 **Dan Skattum** vs. **Laurie Bishop**

A constitutional Conservative vs. a far Left Progressive.

HD 65 **James Cocco** vs. **Kelly Korthum**

HD 68 **Caleb Hinkle** vs **Joe Hancock**

Caleb Hinkle, Republican Bozeman Website is [here](#)

Is rated as a Conservative by [2022 IVotersGuide](#).

Caleb served his state and country in the Montana Army National Guard as an 11C Indirect Fire Infantryman. He has also over the past 10 years fought for a more free and fiscally conservative Montana at the grassroots level. "My votes this session show I am a conservative." More info also [here](#).

Endorsements:

- 100% [Montana Family Foundation Legislative](#) score cared.
- He is Pro-Life and carried the Personhood Amendment, defining life as beginning at conception and giving the unborn full legal rights.
- "A" rating with the American Conservative Union.
- Montanans for Limited Government - 100%.
- "A" rating from the NRA
- Single highest rated legislator with Americans for Prosperity
- Human Rights Network – 6% (That's a good score for a conservative)

HD 77 **John Fitzpatrick** vs. **Sara Novak**

HD 92 Mike Hopkins vs. Gary Stein

[Ballot Initiatives We Support](#)

C-48 (SB 203) Vote Yes

Subject: “An act submitting to the qualified electors of Montana an amendment to Article II, Section 11, of the Montana Constitution to **explicitly include electronic data and communications in search and seizure protections.**”

Type: Constitutional Amendment

Status: Legislature referred SB 203 to the 2022 General Election Ballot.

Fiscal Note: No fiscal note.

LR-131 (HB 167) Vote Yes. : Babies born in Montana due to a failed abortion may not receive medical care and **can actually be laid aside and allowed to die without this. There is no Federal law to prevent this.**

- **Subject:** “An act adopting the **Born-Alive Infant Protection Act**; providing that infants born alive, including infants born alive after an abortion, are legal persons; requiring health care providers to take necessary actions to preserve the life of a born-alive infant; providing a penalty; providing that the proposed act be submitted to the qualified electors of Montana; and providing an effective date.”

Type: Legislative Referendum

Status: Legislature referred HB 167 to the 2022 General Election Ballot.

Robin Sartell of [Abortion Survivors Network](#) is living proof that this is actually happening as you can view [here](#). **See updated info on LR 131 Born Alive Infant protection Combating Mis-Information [here](#) or A Case for LR 131 from a Legislator [here](#) or below.**

A Tale of Two Very Different Yellowstone County Commissioner Candidates – Will This Election Define Our Future for the Next Decade?

[“You’re next Don”](#) (at 33:41) **Mark Morse gives away the plan.**



(Pictured here Mark Morse below, Denis Pitman top left, John Ostlund top right – screenshot June 14, 2022)

Dick Pence

Update – Morse Campaign Letter Exposes Lack of Message

Mark Morse's [recent campaign letter](#) (10/04/2022) exposes the superficiality of his message:

- First, he labels Denis Pitman as **arrogant**. Ask a couple hundred people if they think Pitman is arrogant. This is nonsense, see page 7 *Who Are these Candidates?*)
- Then he says Pitman is **unresponsive**. This from a candidate who let Ostlund do most of his messaging for him? Ask people all over the County if Denis shows up at their events.
- Finally, he refers to an **unproven allegation of collusion**. John Ostlund and Mark hired Gene Jarussi, **commonly known to be a Progressive activist**, to carry the law suit against Jones and Pitman.
- Mark lists the date as 09-22-22 as if this is current news when in fact this has been in the mill for months.

Where is the John Ostlund Leadership Headed and What is His Agenda?

If you read even as far as page 2 of this and if integrity means **anything** to you, you will be angry about this election because... **You have been lied to!** This white paper is designed to give a though examination of this important race.

Prior to the June 7th 2022, Commissioners election, Commissioner John Ostlund was successful in **steering the conversations** away from the essential matters of

the county to several more controversial issues. It is not unreasonable to suggest that these efforts significantly impacted the primary election of Mark Mores over incumbent Denis Pitman. As we will discuss, these actions were done in plain sight, they were observable. Further, these efforts were *not only* pointed at eliminating Commissioner Denis Pitman but also Commissioner Don Jones.

Because of this unprecedented effort to remove two fellow Republican, it is sensible for us to consider these issues. What motivations would lead one commissioner to openly promote a plan to get rid of the other two? We will document this relevant accusation and also ask the question that is the elephant in the room – **where is this going?**

I will also suggest that, at *this moment* in time, Ostlund’s effort to eliminate the other two Commissioners is on track to be successful. It is only judicious to consider these questions at this point, **before the General election** in which Denis Pitman is electing to do a write in campaign. I will ask the question; **will this impact the direction of the leadership of the county for the next decade?**

Denis Pitman has elected to do the heavy lifting of a non-party, write-in campaign for the November election because he cares deeply about this community. This is an important moment for our county and we must not allow the **conversation to be hijacked** by the shallow mantras - *sore loser, the people have spoken, time to move on* etc.

Missing Visionary Leadership: MetraPark and Good-Old-Boy Management– You have been lied to

It was initially my intent not to discuss the Metra Park issue because, the truth is, that it is a side issue - an alternative to management – that it is not a central concern of commission business. It **became, THE** issue promoted by Commissioner Ostlund.

But then I happened upon the report by Venue Solutions and it made me angry. They spent hours interviewing Metra employees, looking at the finances, etc. **This report exposes Ostlund, the Gazette and many others for promoting management that borders on corruption – contracts not put up for bid, unprofessional dealings, mismanagement and unfair treatment of staff, and the list goes on.** Read the report and see if you can come to a different conclusion.

Understand that this is completely aside from the private vs. public management discussion but it exposes an agenda.

Opponents of Denis Pitman are shouting from the rooftops *“He lost because of his promotion of Private management of the Metra... this was a referendum on the Metra...the people have spoken.”* Like the judge who says to the lawyer who objects to a line of questioning, I am saying *“Ostlund and company, you opened the door.”* Maybe we ought to look at this issue head on. Set aside your opinion for a minute and look at the facts. Here we find *different bedfellows*. August 18th at 7:30 the Billings Chamber is having a [meeting](#) and you can go. They are clearly promoting private ownership. Whatever your thoughts are about this idea, I suggest you spend a few minutes looking at their [MetraPark Resource Library](#). The Chamber did not do this report, The report was completed in 2022 and authored by [Venue Solutions Group](#), experts in, “venue services, including operations, engineering, security, guest services, sustainability, and administration.

This report screams of unprofessional management in a host of ways. Here are a few of their findings in bullet point format:

- Few, if any **written policies** and procedures...
- Currently there is **no documented process** for performing work orders and preventive maintenance at MetraPark...
- **Annual performance reviews** have **not been performed** for full-time MetraPark employees which is not consistent with industry ‘best practices.’ **This scream of good-old-boy management.**
- **Lack of overall organizational goal setting** and setting of employee expectations
- There seems to be a **culture of ‘No’** at MetraPark and that the staff doesn’t often seem willing to try and fix issues for people renting the spaces.
- A perception that **MetraPark staff doesn’t have a customer service and/or problem-solving culture**; and noted challenges in collaborating and communicating with staff for a successful event.
- A **pervasive perception** that there is not enough professionalism and little responsiveness to the needs of event sponsors.

- **Contrary to recent headlines**, MetraPark **does not operate at a profit**. The facility's operational deficit requires a hefty multi-million-dollar subsidy of taxpayer dollars. At a recent Commission meeting, a well-known member of the Metra Board suggested that Metra Park was profitable

Re-framing the Debate - Returning the Narrative to the mission of the Commission.

The vast majority of Yellowstone County voters could not pick Mark Morse out of a police-type line-up for eye witnesses. They have no idea who he is - his character or relative experience. Did we elect Mark on a **single issue** not knowing him?

Elections should be about the candidate's **integrity and character, experience and reputation**, and **qualifications and fit** for the position. **This time around it is essential that focus the conversation on these factors. There are stark differences** in the aforementioned qualifications with the two candidates that we need to be exposed.

These factors and the essential business of the county were brushed aside as the voter's attention were shrewdly diverted to **speculations about the future of Metra Park** which is a side issue – a consideration of possible different management. But in the Gazette and other places, it was made to sound as if Pitman and Jones were going to destroy the facility completely. **Emotional cries of us "losing the place we all love and have memories of as children"** filled the sky. And, it worked.

Exposing "The Plan" how we got here – a Little History:

By now, many of you have seen how Mark Morse ***gave away "the plan"*** at the end of the June 14th Commissioner's meeting. He began to shout about transparency and then added ***"You're next Don,"*** openly exposing his and John Ostlund's devious plan to get rid of Don Jones and Denis Pitman. It is **impossible to overstate** this moment and how it **drew the curtain back**. You can listen at this [LINK](#) at 33:41 minutes. This was NOT just some slight Freudian slip of the tongue. It let the cat out of the bag. In a split second, it also confirmed my sense **that Mark's judgement and people skills are problematic.**

John Ostlund has been entrenched in the County Commission for 20 years. A life-long bureaucrat, he retired from the County and is in his fourth term with four years left. Prior to Denis Pitman's election, he was in control of the commission. Then, four years ago, Don Jones was elected and Ostlund *became just a commissioner*. But what's the rest of this story – has anybody thought about that?

So here is the plan and it was not subtle, this was done in plain sight if you were paying attention.

Part A was, **recruit somebody to run against Pitman**. Mark Morse was his choice. Admittedly, Mark was not articulate, or experienced, was known for being brash and outspoken. However, he was willing to follow John's leadership.

Part B was, **mount a recall petition to remove Don Jones**. There were unsubstantiated, distorted accusations about how Don and Denis had illegal meetings. Two commissioners are not allowed to meet without the third if there is meaningful business discussed. This was mounted as an excuse for a petition drive to oust Jones. John has a very close friend who openly led the recall effort - they apparently like to fly airplanes together. That failed so, back to **Plan A**.

But before we go on Part C – realize this. John and Mark have made it plain that they **will drive Jones off of the commission after this election, thus the comment "You're next Don"**. From conversations with Don, it is apparent that if the environment on the commission remains the same, he probably will not run again. If Jones even finishes his term, **who will Ostlund recruit next?**

Part C was to **frame the debate**. Here are a few of the *frames* – ideas to make the public think that Denis is out of touch with the county:

- ✚ Pitman was out to **hand over total control of the Metra Park to a California business**. This plays to the popular mentality in our state that **distrusts any outside influence**. Park employees would lose their jobs, we would lose 4-H at the fair, anything to do with horse events would stop – the list went on. With the Media's help, it worked. **The TRUTH** is that they were examining *the possibility* of letting firms who do **Executive Management** of venues like Metra Park give them proposals – the County would NOT lose control. The disinformation was that this

would give control to a California firm. Reality is, there are NO firms in Montana that manage venues like this.

✚ **Convince the Recreational Marijuana Activists that Pitman** was the one that would take away their pot. If you followed this, there was a complex situation before **all three Commissioners finally voted to put Recreational Marijuana back on the Ballot**. There are reasons to believe John's influence was involved. **IF... in fact you could PIN the second public vote on Denis Pitman** - that the revote was his doing - then you have reason for a **battle cry** from the marijuana Lovers to vote against him. It is not speculation; we know that the marijuana people came out against Denis in force. Pitman's picture began to mysteriously appear in Pot shops with slogans of **VOTE HIM OUT**. **Here is the critical rest of the story:**

- The Total votes cast for in the **Commissioner race were 28,423** – more than for any other county issue, Sheriff, Clerk of Court etc.
- The **glaring exception was, there were 45,812** votes cast in the Recreational Marijuana issue - 26,729 for keeping recreational marijuana dispensaries in the county.
- If only **1 in 20** of the 45, 812 total voters– were **persuaded to vote against Pitman** you have your **margin of victory** for Morse.

✚ **Pitman destroyed the HUB**. Pitman and Jones led an effort to move the **HUB** to better serve the disadvantaged. There was significant mismanagement going on. The Gazette and other liberals caused a huge stink about this, accusing them of being insensitive to these folks. In the end, **all three Commissioners** voted for the change, but John made it sound like it was **all Pitman!**

✚ **The Election Money Issue - all three Commissioners voted for this**. But why was all the noise you heard **aimed only at Pitman?** Background - before the last major election, Yellowstone County Elections Administrator, Bret Rutherford asked the Commissioners to accept a grant of \$320,593 to run the election in the county. The money was later discovered to have been from Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook. It did turn out that there were no strings attached, but there was much concern about taking the money, after the fact. Lesson learned. You can examine a detailed accounting (every \$) at CTCL [Breakdown](#) of the money spent.

Part D - Follow the Money. Mark Morse spent a ton of money on billboards and media. **Where did that money come from?** Ironically, a good chunk of it came from **those opposing dispensaries.** To their credit, Ostlund and Morse's election strategy was better. They came out early even before the school board election. Pitman came out later.

The Bottom-Line Question – Who Are These Candidates?

In my earlier [Voters guide](#) (p. 13), I make the case that this election's defining issue was ***what are the candidates' reputations for working with people*** - those in a committee or governing group? You can find much more about these two in my guide.

Who Is Denis Pitman?

Denis Pitman has been a public servant for over 14 years. He served on the Billings City Councils for eight years before a six-year term on the commission. The commission is his **first time in the government employment.** He has owned and operated several private businesses and still does. Talk to ANYONE who has worked with him on boards and they will tell you he is even handed, fair, and decent to work with. **His service** also includes being past-president - Heights Kiwanis, past-president - Heights Business Optimist club, past chair of Heights Community Development Task Force, board member of the Friends of the USS Billings LSC15 and Yellowstone County Veterans Cemetery Board. **You don't get elected president** of service organizations if you are difficult to work with.

As a person of faith - for almost 30 years, Denis has been a mortician - entrusted with caring for families at a difficult time in their lives. He has done **hundreds of funerals during Covid**, especially for people in need who wanted a godly touch in their loved one's funeral.

His experience with the city makes him much more aware of the benefits of **City and County working together.** Denis and his wife Paula have been foster parents for over 15 years, they have adopted 7 children.

Who Is Mark Morse?

Mark spent 25 years as a Postal Inspector and twelve years in the Yellowstone County Sheriffs Reserve. He ran a private investigator business specializing in workers compensation. Mark also ran a large ranch in central Montana for two

years. He has a reputation as running businesses well, the issue is with his reputation working with people.

Mark Morse has been categorized by **very different officials as problematic to work with - even toxic** at moments as you saw in the LINK Bove. He is hyper critical of elected officials but **has never had to make “that tough vote**, that controversial call.” A former Legislator categorized him as hard to pin down – one who would throw out random sound bites, but not go on record. A current Montana Legislator categorized him as having **almost no people skills**. One of his former Post Office employees echoed these sentiments. He was appointed to the **Lockwood Fire Department** board, but again, displayed poor abilities to work on a team and is no longer on the board.

It is one thing to hear such accusations coming out of a single source but these **comments came from several sources. The only way a personality like this would work** on our commission is if there was a situation of lock-step agreement on direction.

It all comes down to one name...

And it’s not Mark Morse, it’s John Ostlund. Mark demonstrates little ability to speak or act upon his own behalf. If you had been at the *Farm Bureau Debate* in Lockwood the week before the election you would have seen this **on full display**. We would show you this, but the Farm Bureau **has locked it down to members only**. Anybody smell an agenda?

Or, at the Republican Women’s Luncheon the week before – all he could do was read from a script. The debate was not even a contest – while it was pathetic, it was also very revealing. Mark displayed **no ability to communicate, think on his feet or respond to unscripted questions**.

Mark understands part of the Metra debate, but **believes government can run it better**. He knows little about county affairs and that was on full display at the debate.

John has been labeled by those who have worked with him as a **narcissist**. If their right, this well defines the history of John’s leadership. It’s way beyond just being arrogant, self-centered, manipulative, taking credit for others’ ideas, and having a sense of entitlement. The bottom line with John is a need for power and

control. Many are even afraid to cross him. And we must ask the question, after he gets total control **where is he headed?**

Tuesday, July 7th, I [attended the Yellowstone County Commissioners meeting](#) as they discussed Executive Management of the Metra Park. I invite you to listen – and watch the body language. I had listened to a similar meetings June 14th that was very troubling so I wanted to be in person for this one. **The dynamics of interaction were beyond troubling, they were distressing.** It was fully on display that Commissioner John Ostlund was like the monarch, the ruler, and the other two Commissioners were just a nuisance.

Mark has **no record** of accomplishment in public service. He was promoted as a conservative, but we have **no record** of him being actively involved to verify this. We have **no real record** of his *relative* accomplishments or his ability to work with people.

From record of public service to reputation of working with people, this election should have been a slam dunk for Pitman. **Now, it's time we took back the conversation to what matters for Yellowstone County.**

Without question, ***an uniformed electorate drank the Kool-Aid that the Gazette and John were feeding them - they are ultimately*** to blame.

But now, the challenge is before us. **Do we “seed” the future** of the Yellowstone County governance to the wishes to Ostlund and Morse or do we do take up the challenge of making **the first ever write-in election in Montana a *success for the people?***