



# Boys don't make good Governors!

end. But can they? Will they?

Can Rita Meyer break the stranglehold men have held on the Wyoming governor's office?

And, can she become the first female Republican governor of the self-proclaimed "Equality State?"

While two women have been candidates for governor in the recent past - Republican Mary Mead in 1990 and Democrat Kathy Karpan in 1994 - neither won election. And in the 120 year history of electing governors in the State of Wyoming, only one, Nellie Tayloe Ross, a Democrat, won an election for governor and that was, basically, to serve the remainder of the term of her deceased husband. She did win election, though. She was not appointed to fill the seat. Actually, another man served for three months until a special election was held and Mrs. Ross won. She was, however, defeated when she sought re-election in 1926.

So, for 86 years, the "Equality State" has not again elected a woman governor. Pretty amazing, isn't it?

From the time Wyoming was established as a territory until statehood in 1890, eight different men served as Territorial Governor - two twice (Francis E. Warren and E.S.N. Morgan). From the time of statehood until today, with Francis E. Warren serving as Wyoming's first governor (for six weeks in 1890 until he became a U.S. Senator), 30 men have occupied the governor's office. And one woman. That's equality, no?

Another way of putting is that, in 120 years of statehood, a woman has been governor for two years.

Of further interest, of the thirty (30) men, two were grandfathers of candidates who have or may surface in 2010. Clifford Hansen (Matt Mead) and Milward L. Simpson (Colin Simpson). Cliff Hansen went on to the U.S. Senate, Simpson was defeated in a bid for re-election in 1958.

So, Rita Meyer has not only what could be a crowded and formidable field of Republican candidates to contend with, she has the history and tradition of Wyoming politics.

That might be one tradition Wyoming voters should want to

Rita has two things going for her that neither of the women who ran before her had. Kathy Karpan had one and Mary Mead had one but neither had both. Rita is a Republican and she has won a statewide race in Wyoming.

In 2006, when the M&M boys traded nameplates on offices because of their fear of the repercussions they might suffer if they challenged term limits (a challenge they were certain to win), Rita ran for the office being vacated by Max Maxfield and won it handily. Certainly, part of her success came by virtue of being a Republican (see Jim McBride) but, in Rita's case, she was by far the better candidate. McBride was not. In fact, Jim McBride would not be the better candidate if he ran unopposed.

Some may argue that you can't vote for a woman if she's not a candidate and there is some merit to that defense. As far as this writer can determine, there have been no other female candidates for governor in 120 years, winner or loser, except for Nellie Tayloe Ross, Mary Mead and Kathy Karpan. Some may have been eliminated in primary elections but none other than those three in the general.

Mead and Simpson feel an entitlement but Wyoming voters statewide aren't too generous or kind about enabling dynasties. See Pete Simpson.

Can Rita win? Yes, she can win. Does it make a difference if Dave challenges Wyoming voters will and seeks a third term? Yes. He is a consummate politician and a skilled campaigner. But times are not on his side and he has done more for cronyism than Tammany Hall. Arranging for his underqualified wife to become a federal judge might just be his undoing.



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## Brett Favre

Detractors must be all atwitter after the NFC Championship game between the Vikings and Saints, criticizing Brett Favre and predicting whether he will call it quits.

To set the record straight, I am not a Minnesota Vikings fan even though we lived there for virtually all of our adult lives until moving to Cheyenne in 1986. I have always been a Green Bay Packers fan and converted to being just a Brett Favre fan after what the new Packers leadership did to him after a 13-3 2007 season.

I have never understood how a new coach and a new team general manager could determine that a QB who led the stiffs he had playing with him in the Packers 2007 season was disposable - disposable for an untested and unproven late first round draft pick. A QB who had appeared in seven games over his first three seasons with 35 completions and no TD passes. He was sacked nine times in those seven brief appearances and fumbled three times and lost them all.

It wasn't as though Brett Favre was over the hill. His replacement took the same 13-3 Packers team to a 6-10 record in 2008. Or that his replacement was an exceptional talent needing exposure. What he was is a player who would play for less money. In 2008, Rodgers was only the 19th highest paid player on the Packers team - making less than half what Brady Poppinga, the Evanston, Wyoming LB who was drafted after Aaron Rodgers in the 2005 NFL draft, made. Half.

Favre was fired by the Packers and exiled to the New York Jets. Once again, he took a terrible team and turned them into winners. The Jets were 4-12 the year before he arrived and 9-7 in his only

season as QB. New system. New town. Same winner. Brett Favre.

The Vikings were 10-6 the season before the arrival of Favre and had elements of being a championship team. They had the best running back in football, a No. 1 rated defense and a dependable kicker. In 2009, Favre led the team to a 12-4 record and the NFC championship game. They lost that championship game to the New Orleans Saints - a game the Vikings dominated in everything but the final score. But that's all that matters.

All except one of the best teams in the NFL end their season with a loss. The Vikings were not to be that one team. Favre took a pounding and, while his late interception removed any chance of a last second field goal to win the game, other stars of the Vikings earlier committed critical turnovers - in terms of field position.

Favre threw that last pass "across his body." Announcers and sportswriters acted as though he could never do that. He's done that hundreds of times and completed the pass. This one did not connect and the fault was not all Brett's. His usually dependable receiver made no effort to come back to the pass - something he had done repeatedly all season. The pass was intercepted and the Saints won on questionable officials' calls in OT.

Should Favre retire? If that is a fair question then one must ask if Tony Romo should retire. Should Adrian Peterson retire. Should Ben Roethlisberger retire?

*Note: Carrie Underwood will sign the National Anthem at the Super Bowl. It will be the next best thing to seeing Favre at QB. Her rendition is incomparable.*