

Republican Party of Fond du Lac County: Recognizes 165th birthday of GOP

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Alan Bovay founded GOP in Ripon, Wisconsin

Ripon, Wisconsin- The Republican Party was founded right here in Fond du Lac County on March 20, 1854, inside the Little White Schoolhouse in downtown Ripon.

“When you’re the chairman of the Republican Party of Fond du Lac County, you’re often reminded about the rich history of our party,” said Rohn Bishop, Chairman of the Republican Party of Fond du Lac County. “Our Republican Party was founded to oppose the expansion of slavery.”

In 1856 the GOP’s first presidential nominee was a military officer and former explorer named John C. Fremont. Mr. Fremont campaigned on the slogan “Free soil, free men, and Fremont” Unfortunately Mr. Fremont was defeated by Democrat James Buchanan, so slavery would continue.

Then in 1860, Republican Abraham Lincoln would be elected President, and our party would fight the Civil War, enact the Emancipation Proclamation, and then push through the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the Constitution. These

amendments ended slavery, guaranteed to blacks the right to due process and equal protection under the law, and makes clear the right to vote cannot be denied due to race.

The Republican Party would go on to push through the 19th amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote. Throughout the late 20th century the GOP would oppose and defeat Communism, push for free markets, smaller government, individual liberties, the unborn, and unleash the greatest economic expansion in our nation's history.

“Being a Wisconsin Republican is special. Not only was the party born here, but Wisconsin Republicans have been leaders in the party, and not just 165 years ago,” Bishop added. “It was Wisconsin Republican Tommy Thompson that invented Welfare Reform and School Choice, it was Speaker Paul Ryan who was a leader in Entitlement Reform, and it was Scott Walker who took on the big government union bosses to reform state budgeting practices and balanced a \$3.6 billion deficit. For the better part of the last decade, it's been Wisconsin Republicans who've been leaders and have tackled the big issues.”

It is Ripon attorney and founder of Ripon College, Alan Bovay, who's credited for creating the Republican Party, who once said, “We went into the little meeting held in a school house Whigs, Free Soilers, and Democrats. We came out of it Republicans and we were the first Republicans in the Union.”

You have to wonder, if they knew that little meeting, held in Ripon, Wisconsin, would change the course of American history?