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"LETTERMAN'S GONE...SO NOW WHAT DO I DO FOR LAUGHS?"

My presidential campaign

Today I am announcing my candidacy for the Republican Party's nomination for President of the United States of America. You might justifiably point out that I — a Democrat — would be an odd choice to lead the Republican ticket. To these naysayers, I counter that, by adding me to the field, Republicans would have enough candidates to field two complete football teams. This way, Bobby Jindal gets to play, too.

If elected, I promise to take the oath of office, put the New York Yankees on the list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations and then promptly resign. My short list for Vice President so far includes Orioles manager Buck Showalter, Costco CEO W. Craig Jenilek and Joe Biden, any of whom would lead this country with far more experience, wisdom and humor than I or, for that matter, any of the other current Republican candidates.

My shortcomings are legion. I have little experience relevant to this job that I do not intend to do, and I'm willing to put forth no effort at any point during this campaign.

But with George Pataki entering the race, I realized that I, too, am a largely unknown heterosexual white man in America. Even Bob Ehrlich is thinking about getting in. If they can, why not I?

I know what you're thinking. "Who the heck are those guys?" That's my strategy. I'm going to put on a gray suit and a red tie and slip in behind these guys. I'm a middle-aged white guy with short hair. I'll blend into the crowd of candidates long enough for voters to get sick of everyone else. I figure it'll take two months until I'm the frontrunner.

Sure, the primary process will be hard for a liberal Democrat. A sober-minded politician would shudder at the staggering impossibility of winning over the torch-and-pitchfork crowd that controls the primary process, but not being sober is something that will separate me from the field.

My opponents will inevitably bring up my history of causing Republicans to lose elections. Ask yourself, my fellow Americans, whether this is any different than my friends Rick Santorum and Ehrlich, both of whom got booted out of office all on their own.

In my more lucid moments I plan to make the case that there's nothing wrong with the Republican Party that not



JASON STANFORD
Cagle columnist

being Republican can't fix. In fact, it's my Democratic bona fides that could win back the White House for Republicans. Shifting demographics, ideologies and generations are slowly putting the GOP out to pasture. But instead of broadening its appeal, the Republicans have made their party so small and pure that it can't win back the White House.

That's where I can help. I already don't agree with most of the stuff they stand for. I represent the voters they need to win over.

But that's just a process argument that the pundits can recite on the Sunday morning gab fests to sound smart. What's really going to get me elected is an anti-government stance that will unite this country: Everyone should get to punch their member of Congress in the nose.

See? Now you want to vote for me, don't you?

Obviously, there would be restrictions: The privilege to sock one's elected representative in the kisser would be limited to people who actually voted in every single election from president down to Inspector of Hides. And you only get to do it once every two years. This would inevitably increase voting participation and encourage Americans to read the newspapers.

And while punching politicians might be cruel, it could serve as a deterrent to doing the wrongheaded things that have made Congress less popular in opinion polls than North Korea, cockroaches and lice. True, you'd never get another smart person to run for Congress ever again, but in most cases no one would notice a difference.

In conclusion, I promise never to disgrace the Republican Party by acting like a real Republican. All the GOP needs to do to win the White House is to nominate a liberal Democrat. Vote for me, and you get to punch Congress in the nose.

I'd better start working on my victory speech.

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Jason Stanford is a regular contributor to the *Austin American-Statesman*, a Democratic consultant and a Truman National Security Project partner. You can email him at stanford@oppresearch.com and follow him on Twitter @JasStanford

Magna Carta: The 800th anniversary

“Magna Carta? Wasn't that the show Tom Selleck was on before 'Blue Bloods'?”

Sigh In fact, Magna Carta (Latin for “Great Charter”) is one of the most significant documents in history, drafted by the Archbishop of Canterbury to make peace between King John of England (infamous from the Robin Hood legends) and a group of rebel barons.

The provisions of the charter were agreed to on June 15, 1215 at Runnymede — meaning Magna Carta will soon be celebrating its 800th birthday.

Too bad modern media didn't exist to record the goings on. The warring factions would have made for great pay-per-view. (“Putting the feud into feudal!!!”)

Of course one of the claims to fame of Magna Carta was that it was the first FORMAL document stating that a king had to follow the laws of the land. (Previous INFORMAL documents included, “Y'all ought not be doin' that kind'a stuff. What would your



DANNY TYREE
TYRADES!
Cagle columnist

momma think, bless her heart?”)

Yes, Magna Carta declared unabashedly that the KING is not above the law. You'll find that as Number 7 in Barack Obama's book “10 Reasons Why I Wanted To Be PRESIDENT.”

If you think of Magna Carta at all, you probably think it has a long unbroken history. In fact, both sides violated it almost immediately, modified versions were issued in 1216, 1225 and 1297 (let's not even get into the XP, Vista and Magna Carta 8 versions) and only three of the 63 clauses still remain in English statute law.

In fact, Pope Innocent III annulled the whole thing almost immediately, declaring that King John signed it under duress. (“If you don't stop making people do things under DURESS, I've saved a special corner of hell for you, where you will wail

and gnash your teeth for all eternity what are you rolling your eyes about?”)

Technically, John did not sign Magna Carta, instead affixing the royal seal (as was the custom). Historians did, however, find one copy wherein John tried to have the last word by inserting a handwritten “I'm rubber and you're glue...”

We now take the provisions of Magna Carta (such as trial by jury and due process of law) for granted, but they were not originally intended for the common people. The barons were just looking out for themselves. In fact, one of the clauses in Magna Carta was that if the Crusades were successful, the Holy Land would be renamed One-Percenter Land.

Magna Carta had a tremendous impact on the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights, the French Revolution and our current foreign aid and immigration policies. (No, wait — the latter two didn't come from the Great Charter. They were devised under the

influence of OLD Charter.)

Amazingly, after all these centuries, four of the 13 original copies of Magna Carta are still known to be in existence. Another four copies met a sad fate. Cheech and Chong bought them early in their careers and the vellum looked soooo much like ZigZag papers in the dim light...

The British Library is conducting grand ceremonies for the anniversary. A mock trial for the barons is being held July 31.

I wonder what the original participants would say if they could see us now? (“Y'all, we never said nothin' about a guaranteed right to drive on the wrong side of the road! What would your mommas think, bless their hearts?”)

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Firefighters, Navy deserve thanks

Editor,
About the recent fire in Boardman, I read all about the hard work that went into containing and then extinguishing the fire. The bravery that these people have every day is something that

should be honored more often, and the article was a good start to thanking these brave people, but at the same time I was sad to see how little was said about the Navy's involvement. The Boardman Bombing Range continued to fight that fire after all the departments left. I personally think that there should be some sort of

article thanking the few men out there for continuing to fight and extinguish the fire.

These men serve our country and are helping to protect our homes and farms as well. So let's give them the thanks they deserve too. Thank you.

KATIE VEACH
HERMISTON

THANK YOU

Pregnancy Care Services thanks supporters

Editor,
Pregnancy Care Services would like to recognize the local businesses of Hermiston and Pendleton for their generous contributions making our 2015 Walk/Run for Life and Mayfest a success. Over 100 people came out to participate in these events and collected over \$5,550 to help us continue offering life-affirm-

ing services to our communities. Thank you for being difference-makers!

Abby's Legendary Pizza, Barhyte Specialty Goods, Big John's Hometown Pizza, Buckin' Bean Coffee Roasters, DG Gifts, Diana's GF Bakery, Dickey's Barbecue Pit, Double J Drive Thru, Dr. Neal, Eden's Kitchen, Grocery Outlet, Les Schwab Tire Center, ISU-The Stratton Agency, Pediatric Specialists, Pendleton Art and Frame, Pendleton Dairy Queen,

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