



**RESTORE
THE BALANCE**

**Rotary Presentation
October 10, 2024**

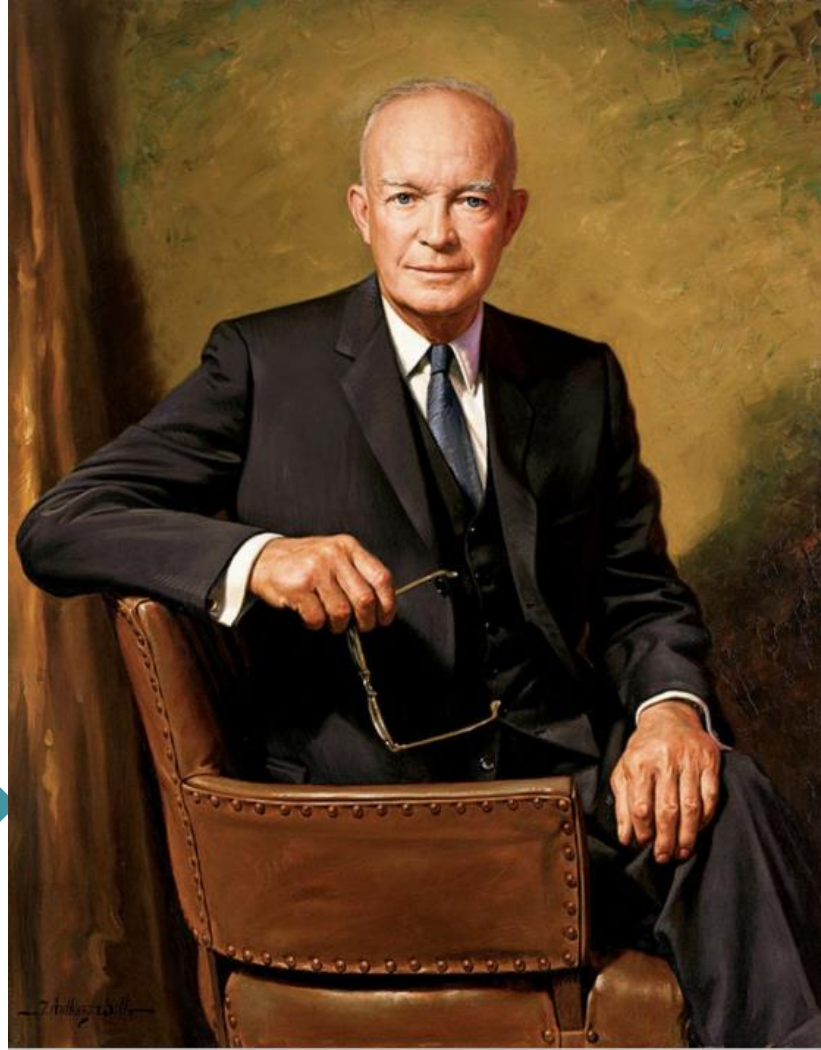
**Karen Zink
Louis Meyer**



Outline of presentation

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- Introduction
 - Who we are
 - Restore the Balance Founding Principals
 - What do we do?
 - Who are La Plata County Voters?
 - What is thoughtful Discourse?
 - The Candidate Questionnaire Process
 - What can you do?
 - Questions? We want to hear from you.





“Our American heritage is threatened as much by our own indifference as it is by the most unscrupulous office or by the most powerful foreign threat. The future of the Republic is in the hands of the American voter.”

-Dwight D. Eisenhower

Who We Are!



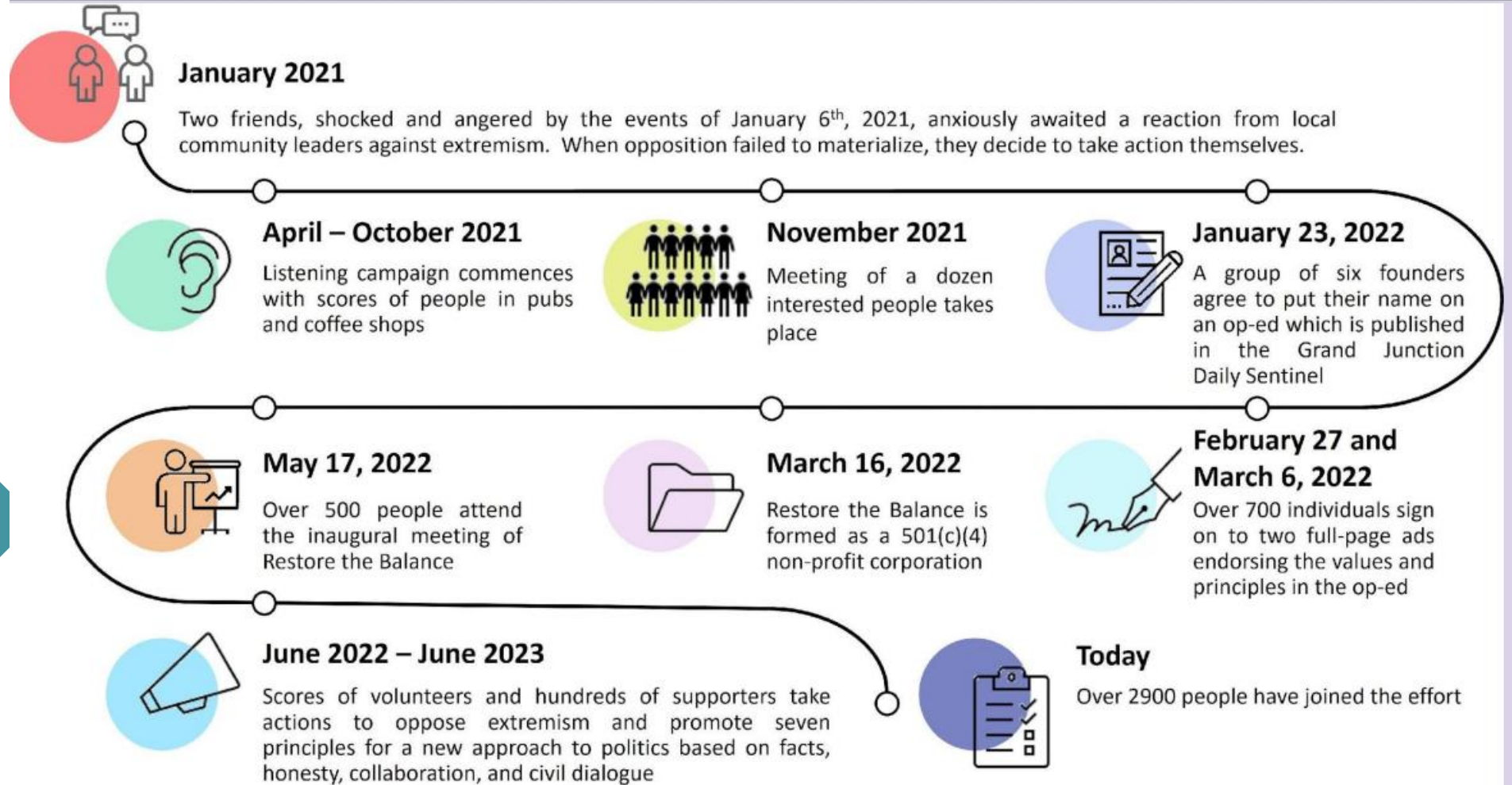
Plata County Branch

We are: We are your Friends and Neighbors

- Unaffiliated voters
- Republicans
- Democrats
- Neighbors
- Voter Engagement Advocates
- Educators
- Community Leaders
- Americans



RESTORE THE BALANCE: WHOSE IDEA WAS THIS, ANYWAY?



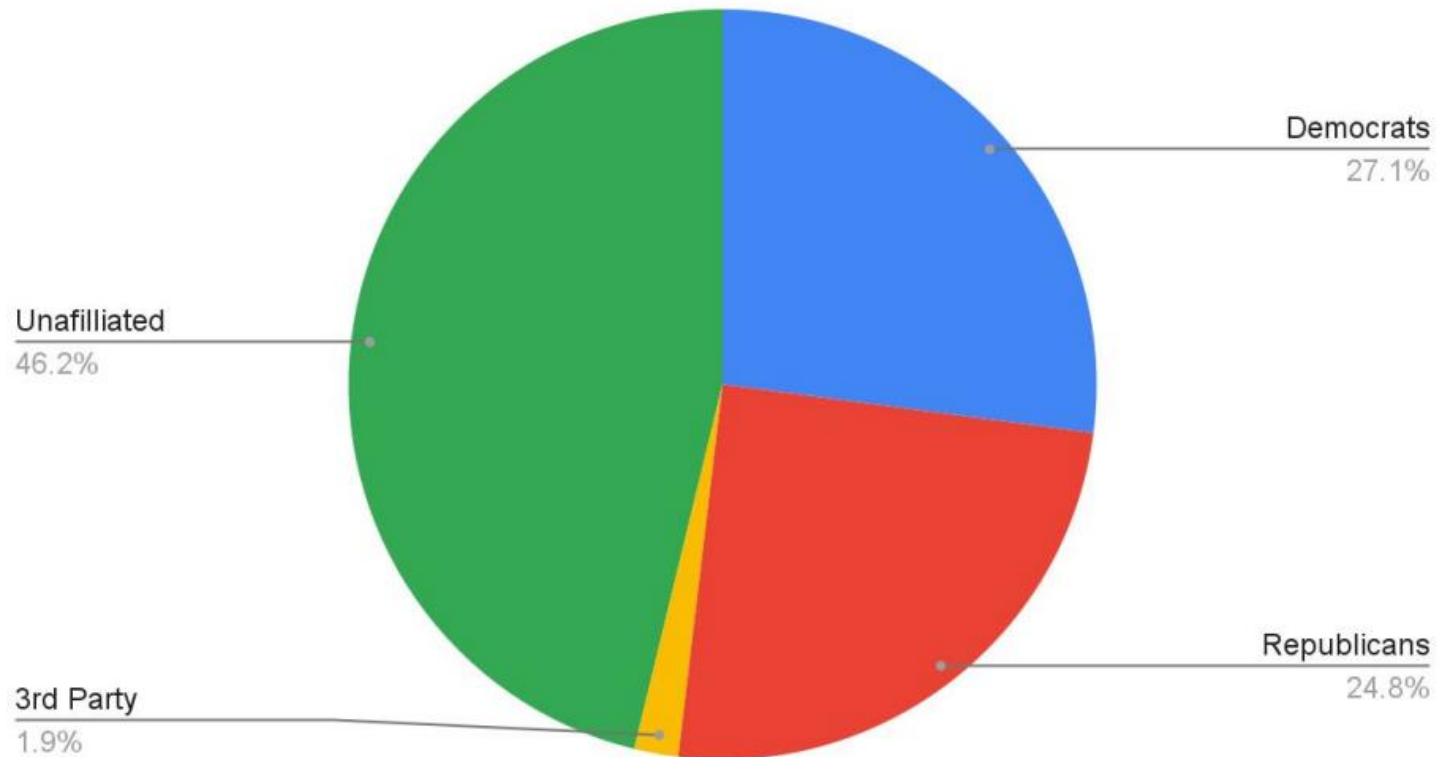
RTB's Founding Principals



1. Political Parties, Citizens, and elected officials should vigorously compete over values, principles, and ideas. However, citizens are not just spectators; they are integral players in this process. Their active participation is crucial, and they must also find common ground to solve problems and pass needed legislation.
2. Facts, supported by objectively examined evidence, are the basis for what to believe and how to act.
3. No one person or political party has a monopoly on the best public policy proposals; communication and good faith negotiations are essential to the legislative process
4. The public interest must come before party interests for voters and elected officials alike
5. Extremists of all kinds attract supporters and money by appealing to fears and resentments, amplifying divisions instead of genuinely addressing problems
6. Citizens should be free to run for or hold office without being threatened or harassed
7. Citizens may certainly exercise their freedoms, but they may recognize their responsibilities to the community.

Who Are La Plata County Voters?

La Plata County 2022 Active Voters by Party Affiliation



What Does Restore the Balance Do?

- We give a voice to moderation
- We stand up to extremism
- We encourage democracy-focused voting
- We send questionnaires to candidates
- We assess candidate's commitment to RTB principles
- All over the Western Slope! With branches in LaPlata, Delta, and Mesa County

What Does RTB Do?

- We host speakers,
- Political civility training,
- And provide opportunities to create a more informed and democracy-focused electorate
- We support election measures that empower voters in our democracy

RTB WANTS TO BUILD AN ALTERNATIVE TO EXTREMISM IN OUR POLITICS

- Extremism in politics contributes to gridlock, distrust, and the destabilization of the nation's civil, governmental, and institutional structures. But....

What is extremism?



EXTREMISM IS:



- The denial of objective reality, promoting the “Big Lie” that the 2020 Presidential Election was stolen.
- Seeing or hearing only one side of the story
- Prioritizing partisan interest before public interest
- Use of intimidation and name-calling instead of respectful disagreement.
- Engaging in combative and divisive discourse
- Tolerating or encouraging violence
- Appealing to fears, resentment, and class warfare
- Those that are more interested in dividing us than uniting us.



Power of communication

How do we Bridge The Gap?

“Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply.”

-Stephen R. Covey

Through Respectful Discourse

-
- Avoid judgmental words and name-calling
 - Focus on the common good
 - Identify shared values and identities
 - Listen and debate ideas
 - Respect divergent opinions
 - Use facts



The Candidate Questionnaire Process



- Candidates are allowed to respond to our questionnaires
- Their responses are rated using a weighted average scoring process
- Candidates are assessed based on their responses to the questionnaire and independent research

RESTORE THE BALANCE

Election topics:

1. Supports RTB's principles
2. Putting public interest ahead of party
3. Qualified to serve
4. Grasp of issues



Candidates were scored based on responses to each topic:

CO State House of Reps. Dist. 59

Clark Craig 96%

Katie Stewart 100%

CO State Senate Senator Dist. 6

Cleave Simpson: 100%

Vivian Smotherman: 100%

La Plata County Commissioner

Paul Black: 96%

Matt Salka: 100%

Marsha Porter-Norton: 100%

La Plata County Treasurer

Moni Grushkin: 100%

It is important for the voters to know none of these eight candidates portrayed extremism in their responses. The questions, the candidate's full responses,

Candidate Questionnaire Results

Restore the Balance's Candidate Questionnaire Summary					
	Supports Restore the Balance's principles (40%)	Putting public interest ahead of party (20%)	Qualified to serve in the office they are seeking (20%)	Grasp of issues facing Western Colorado (20%)	Total Score (out of 100)
Colorado State House of Representatives District 59					
Clark Craig	36	20	20	20	96
Katie Stewart	40	20	20	20	100
Colorado State Senate Senator District 6					
Cleave Simpson	40	20	20	20	100
Vivian Smotherman	40	20	20	20	100
La Plata County Commissioner					
Paul Black	40	20	20	16	96
Matt Salka	40	20	20	20	100
Marsha Porter-Norton (unopposed)	40	20	20	20	100
La Plata County Treasurer					
Moni Grushkin	40	20	20	20	100

What Can You Do?

Vote

Spread The Word



How To Get Involved?

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- Visit our Website: restorethebalance.org
 - On Facebook [restorethebalancecolorado](https://www.facebook.com/restorethebalancecolorado)
 - Twitter: @RTBCOLO
 - Join our Mailing List
 - Donate
 - Volunteer





**We want to
hear from you.**

Questions?



Thank you

