

Vincent Backen, Republican Candidate - Montana Senate District 1



Captain Vincent George Backen, 64.

Currently, an active duty Master Mariner and Unlimited Tonnage Pilot in the Merchant Marine. Conservative Republican.

Vincent is a fifth-generation Montanan with deep roots in Lincoln County and a lifetime of hard work, service, and giving back. His family arrived in Montana after the Civil War when 1st Lt. Jesse James Dennis, Company G - 53rd Kentucky Mounted Infantry, settled in Brusett, Montana, with his wife Drusilla, their daughter Dora and son-in-law August Voegele.

Dora and August had a daughter, Myrtle. Vincent's grandfather is George Backen, the son of Myrtle and Claude Backen. Vincent's Great-Grandmother, Myrtle, died shortly after giving birth, then George was raised by his grandmother. Dora and her grandson are buried in Libby, Montana.

George Backen's Father, Claude Backen was a ranch hand drifter and after Myrtle died he was sent packing at the end of a shotgun.

Strong and smart in true Montana style, George married Charlotte Poulton, who hailed from Great Falls and would become the owner of the *Angeles Tavern* in Coram. George bought a stump ranch in Whitefish before buying a quarter section on Upper Bobtail Creek in Lincoln County, a property that is still owned by Backens today.

Vincent's father Dale Backen (son of George and Charlotte) was born in Whitefish. His mother, Virginia Dorio, is a first generation American-Sicilian. Together, they moved to San Jose seeking opportunity.

Vincent grew up in a safe and loving home until his father died when he was 5, forcing a young, widowed mother of three into the projects. One memory kept him grounded, the time he spent as a small boy on the Bobtail property - reminding him of family, security, and hard work. He never forgot poverty's sting or the happiness of a two-parent home where Dad provided and Mom nurtured faith and family.

At 14, Vincent was taken by his Uncle, Bert Dorio, to the Bering Sea. Working as a fisherman in the family business, he learned discipline and respect on the ocean. Now in his 50th year at sea; from Bering Sea fisherman, to U.S. Marine Corps 0311 rifleman, to Captain in the Merchant Marine.

Vincent has four grown children and is a Grandfather to three girls and four boys. Vincent sees the world through a father's eyes - prioritizing family, faith (a Conservative Catholic Christian attending St. Joseph Parish in Libby), and Montana's future.

Vincent has invested everything he's earned, exemplifying bottom-up benevolence. In 2002, he purchased a ship: the *M/V White Holly*, turning it into a research vessel; *in situ* ocean research and training for Merchant Mariner careers, which operated for 14 years.

In 2014, seeing Libby struggle, he sold his assets (including the *M/V White Holly*) to buy shuttered downtown properties. Breathing hope into the town through private action, he built an affordable gym, boxing & wrestling club, classic bookstore, hostel, art gallery, event center, and refurbished a restaurant. Revitalizing the town of Libby.

If families need it and the government won't deliver, courageous citizens must step up. Vincent promotes hand-ups, not hand-outs; private investment over endless government programs.

Vincent has worked under Title 46 (navigation and shipping) and Title 33 (U.S. Code on navigation), giving him insight into both private industry and government regulation.

Currently, elected to serve on Libby's Government Study Commission, tasked with examining the Montana Constitution and its codes; and how they affect form, function, effectiveness and limitation of local government. The Commission's task is to propose to the electorate their recommendations for approval. The purpose of recommendations is to improve efficiency, transparency and accountability of local government.

A strong believer in honest work, fair taxes, efficient government, and real solutions while, at the same time, tired of career-do-nothing-politicians while working families get marginalized - Vincent decided to run as a Republican for Montana State Senate in District 1- representing his district.

As a bold and proven leader, he will serve District 1 as a full-time Senator. A champion for private investment in Western Montana, that leaves Lincoln County better for all families including his own grandchildren's future here.

Captain Backen, Montana roots, benevolent entrepreneur, with a Father's heart.