



# Goldwater alums offer this advice to Tea Party: Sometimes you win by losing

By Vaughn Hillyard

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Election Day 2013 wasn't kind to the Tea Party.

**Ken Cuccinelli** lost in Virginia. The non-Tea Party candidate **Chris Christie** won in New Jersey. And an establishment-backed Republican defeated a Tea Party candidate in an Alabama GOP congressional run-off.

But as Lee Edwards, a distinguished fellow at the conservative Heritage Foundation, sees it, winning on Election Day isn't the whole story. "Sometimes you win by losing," he said.

He knows this from experience, serving as information director in **Barry Goldwater's** 1964 presidential campaign.

Goldwater, of course, was blown out in that election nearly 50 years ago. **Lyndon Johnson** beat him 61 percent to 38 percent in the popular vote, and 486 to 52 in the Electoral College. Also that year, the Republican Party lost 28 of 35 Senate seats and more than two-thirds of U.S. House contests.

Yet Edwards and others argue that Goldwater's influence on the Republican Party has outlived his defeat in 1964.

"We knew we laid down a foundation of ideas and also a political structure on which Nixon built his successful candidacy in 1968 and then, ultimately of course, Ronald Reagan, who wouldn't have won the nomination without Barry Goldwater in 1964," he said.

At the time of the '64 campaign, Goldwater and his conservative backers were a slighted faction inside the Republican Party.

Then-New York Gov. **Nelson Rockefeller** took to the GOP convention floor in 1964 to protest the rising insurgency, referring to “these extremists” who “have no program for America -- no program for the Republican Party.”

**George Romney**, the Michigan governor and father of **Mitt Romney**, refused to endorse Goldwater.

“We were dismissed,” Edwards said. “We were regarded as unimportant. We were regarded as sort of out of the mainstream.”

### **The Goldwater alumni**

Other alumni from that 1964 Goldwater campaign also now work for key parts of the conservative movement that -- to varying degrees -- back the Tea Party today.

In addition to Edwards, Ed Feulner (who founded the Heritage Foundation), Ambassador Bill Middendorf (who serves on Heritage’s Board of Trustees), and Ed Crane (who founded the libertarian Cato Institute) were all part of the ’64 Goldwater campaign.

And despite the Tea Party’s defeats in 2013 and its low poll numbers, these men believe the Tea Party has reshaped the Republican Party -- for the better.

“Americans have this deep-seated respect for individual liberty, whether you call [it] Tea Party or Goldwaterism or Rand Paulism, it’s there and is powerful. Maybe it needs a little more sophisticated P.R., but it’s there,” said Cato’s Crane, who was a member of Students for Goldwater at the University of California, Berkeley.

“The Tea Party people are determined,” Edwards added. “They are deeply, deeply worried. They are angry. And that’s the kind of emotion that can keep people committed and keep working.”

Feulner, the Heritage founder who helped organize campaign events in Pennsylvania for Goldwater, believes that the GOP’s 2016 presidential nominees will represent conservative principles from both the Tea Party and Goldwater.

“Whether it’ll be somebody who’s virtually identified and carries a label of ‘Tea Party’ across their chest or not is, I think, less significant than the principles that she or he will stand up for. And that I think will be the conservative principles that undergird the Tea Party movement that go back to Barry Goldwater,” Feulner said.

The younger generation agrees.

Mike Needham, 31, CEO of Heritage Action, an influential fundraising organization for Tea Party conservatives, goes on to say: “There’s always been that tension between the Republican Party that says, ‘Look we can’t roll back the liberal welfare state’ and those who say, ‘No, that’s exactly what we’re here to do.’”

But here's the counterargument to the win-by-losing proposition: Goldwater's landslide defeat in 1964 provided Democrats with the majorities to further the welfare state -- passing Medicare and Medicaid into law in 1965.

In other words, the other side can also win -- by winning.