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A double take in D.C.

They'll share a condo — and many political views — when Rand Paul joins his father, Ron

By MENGFEI CHEN
WASHINGTON BUREAU
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Associated Press photos

Analysts say Rand Paul, left, and his father, Ron, share similar beliefs on government and its role, but don't expect the son to be a copy of his dad while in office.

WASHINGTON — For much of his 21 years in Congress, Rep. **Ron Paul** has been a party of one.

The Lake Jackson Republican's libertarian sensibilities make him a cult figure to some and a painful thorn in the side to others, including members of his own party. In retaliation for prizing ideology over party, he often was passed over by the GOP hierarchy for plum posts.

Next year, however, looks different for the Paul family.

Rand Paul, one of five children of Ron and Carol Paul, will share his father's Virginia condominium — after winning an election of his own. In addition to a change of clothing, he will bring a tea party agenda of deficit reduction and limited government that is remarkably similar to the ideas that Ron Paul has been espousing for decades.

That shouldn't be much of a surprise. After all, Rand Paul grew up watching his father on the political stage.

In 1976, 13-year-old Rand paid rapt attention as a group of insurgent conservatives fought on the floor of the **Republican National Convention** to replace **President Gerald Ford** with **Ronald Reagan** on the party's ticket. One of the foot soldiers in the Reagan revolution - unsuccessful that bicentennial summer but triumphant four years later - was his father, then a freshman congressman from Texas and one of only four GOP lawmakers with the temerity to endorse Reagan.

"Seeing him stand up for someone he believed in, not just doing whatever the establishment wanted him to, meant a lot to me," Rand Paul said in an interview.

A different time

More than 34 years later, what happened at that Kansas City convention still influences the younger Paul, who is soon to become a Republican senator from Kentucky after crushing the GOP favorite in a bruising primary and cruising to a win over the state's Democratic attorney general in the general election.

That same November election might change things for Ron Paul, too.

Last month the 75-year-old Pennsylvania native, who moved to Texas when his son was a child, was named chairman of a **House** subcommittee that oversees the **Federal Reserve**, a secretive board that has been one of his favorite targets over the years.

The senior Paul recalled that young Randy - who dropped the "y" from his nickname at his wife's suggestion - was always interested in politics. He called Rand's populist primary challenge to establishment favorite Trey Grayson "natural" and said he was happy to lend his support. But Ron said he did not interfere in the details of Rand's campaign and will not try to guide his son's actions now that he has been elected.

"By the time you've raised your kids to be 12 or 15, you've had your chance," Ron Paul said. "He'll ask questions, and we talk a lot, especially about the unintended consequences of government action, but I would never give him advice."

If anything, Randal Howard Paul is the one who tries to influence his father, often with books he finds intellectually stimulating. Ron Paul says his son's literary offerings span a "wide range," but most cover sociology and history. Recently, Ron said Rand recommended a book on **William Lloyd Garrison**, the prominent 19th-century abolitionist who was at times reviled by his contemporaries for his dedication to unpopular ideas.

Still, the elder Paul's influence on his middle son is unmistakable.

Rand Paul is a doctor, like his dad. Both prefer to be called "Dr. Paul" rather than "congressman" and "senator." Both define themselves as political outsiders, even though Ron Paul has been in Congress for 21 of the past 34 years and Rand Paul, despite having never held political office prior to his Senate run, benefited greatly from his father's name recognition, Internet fundraising network and loyal political operatives.

And when it comes to economics, "the acorn didn't fall far from the tree," said Laurie Rhodebeck, a **political science** professor at the University of Louisville. Both admire obscure Austrian economists. Both want to reform monetary policy. Both want to slash government spending and regulation.

Ron Paul says the dollar will be "ruined" unless Congress limits the "amount of power that the Fed has to monetize debt." Rand Paul agrees and says that stricter oversight of the Federal Reserve will be among his top priorities in the Senate.

Rand Paul also plans to introduce **term-limit** legislation - something his father, now a veteran incumbent, supported



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during his first years in office. Lawmakers, Rand Paul said, need to "live with the rules they create."

Nothing personal

Political analysts say it would be a mistake, however, to say that Rand Paul is a carbon copy of his father.

"In his two presidential campaigns, Ron Paul ran to educate," said John Samples of the libertarian [Cato Institute](#). "Rand Paul is more about holding power and making changes, pushing the agenda to libertarianism."

Occasionally, Rand Paul may push in directions his father won't go. But the junior Paul promises it'll never get personal.

"We don't really have heated disagreements," he said of his relationship with his father. "Neither of us are yellers. I do joke that I don't criticize my dad on TV or I might get kicked (out) from the adult table."

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