Best of the Rest: The Other Election Map

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If you block out the disk of the Sun, as in an eclipse, you see its corona: a wild aura of plasma loops, arcs, and jets, where gravity no longer holds sway. And so it is in American politics.

The map below shows which candidate and party received the most votes in each county in last week's U.S. Senate election, excluding Democrats and Republicans. None of the candidates shown actually won.

[ map ]

[(Cross-hatched areas had no significant minor party candidate, and blank areas had no election. Colors are randomized.) PUT THIS INTO THE KEY, WITH THE BIT ABOUT RANDOMIZATION BENEATH.]

The Libertarian Party received the third most votes nationally, collecting 846,000 of the TK total votes cast. [Sentence on Libertarian hotspots?] The Green Party shows up prominently on the Mexican border, across Arkansas, and in Delaware, with local affiliates West Virginia Mountain Party and Oregon Pacific Green Party also placing 3rd [behind Ds & Rs? Clarify] in some counties.

I ACTUALLY LIKED THE QUOTES FROM SOME OF THE CONTENDERS. PASTING BACK IN HERE; MAYBE ADD A COUPLE MORE, LEADING OFF WITH LIBERTARIANS, AND MAKING IT MORE OF A BULLETED LIST WITH A SHORT INTRO SENTENCE, MAYBE GIVING CONTEXT – ARE THESE FROM, SAY, CONCESSION SPEECHES?:

Delaware victor [Andrew Groff (Green) promises](http://www.andrewgroffforsenate.us/?page_id=2), “We will not be slaves to corporate political party manipulation.” Airline pilot Curt Gottshall (Independent) takes the Wyoming seat on [a platform](http://www.curtgottshall2014.com/about-1.html) of returning “honor and integrity” to Washington. Bob Baber of the West Virginia Mountain Party, which opposes mountaintop removal coal mining, [describes his fiscal responsibility](http://youtu.be/TdQj20ZYltU?t=1m5s) as “tight as the bark on a tree.”

THEN JUST END ON THE LONGFELLOW?

“And as the evening twilight fades away / The sky is filled with stars, invisible by day.”   
—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow