

Happy New Year 2014 Community Comment: Mike Goldsby, January 1, 2015

Happy New Year, a time to reflect on the past year and think about what lies ahead.

A couple of pieces of news that you may not have heard at the end of 2014. A Republican dominated House Oversight Committee issued a report that found no evidence linking the White House to the IRS scandal, the scandal where the IRS targeted some conservative political groups applying for tax exempt status. The congressional investigation took over 18 months. Even though they found no evidence, they will likely start a new investigation next year.

Also, Republicans in the US House of Representatives Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence issued a report debunking most of the Republican allegations over the White House handling of Benghazi. In 2012, the embassy was attacked by over 100 heavily armed gunmen. Four people were murdered, 10 were wounded and all were evacuated.

The day after the attack, Presidential hopeful Mitt Romney attempted to capitalize on the tragedy and blame the White House. A series of Republican allegations followed. Over two years later, the Republican dominated Select Committee report found no evidence that the White House delayed a response, denied air support or personnel support in the response and rescue. In fact, they commended the people who responded rapidly. They found no evidence of an intelligence failure before the attack. They did find that the CIA prepared flawed talking points that contributed to incorrect statements following the event.

This was not the desired result, so some Republican House Members are planning another Benghazi investigation, the 8th one so far. That's something to look forward to in 2015.

I checked out some published Predictions for 2015. Forbes Magazine last year accurately predicted steady economic growth, lowering unemployment and a solid stock market. But their editorial Board admits they missed the collapse of the oil market and suddenly improving relations with Cuba.

For 2015, they predict continued steady growth in the US economy and merger madness in the telecom industry.

Fortune Magazine predicts China's economy will experience a giant slowdown that will have a global effect. They predict that the Apple Watch will eventually hit the market. They also predict that wireless chargers will replace cords and battery packs for all of those electronic devices. They believe that the Stock Market will end next year even better than it did this year. And, bad news for some of you, they predict the price of a latte will go up 25 to 30%.

Time Magazine predicts that more States will legalize marijuana and that will influence the job landscape. They predict the pot industry will produce jobs but that there will also be need for more drug counselors, high school drug educators, car insurance adjusters, human resources people and, of course, lawyers, all to deal with the negative impacts of the drug.

Time predicts more employers will institute workplace wellness programs as they recognize healthy employees are good for business. And they predict that more students will opt out of liberal arts degrees and opt into community colleges and on the job training.

So I hope that you have a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. This is Mike Goldsby for Community Comment.