



Lone Star Liberty

The Official Monthly Newsletter of the Libertarian Party of Texas

January 2006

Interest in LP Is Up As More than 200 File for '06

When filing closed on January 2, many LP activists breathed a sigh of relief as it became apparent that the Party will not face a petition drive next cycle. Libertarian candidates filed for every statewide race except Presiding Judge of the Court of Criminal Appeals. Six of our statewide candidates will be in two-way races making it extremely likely that at least one candidate, but probably all, will secure more than the five percent required to maintain ballot access.

As predicted the LP will field a record breaking number of candidates with 187 Texans filed for federal, state and district offices. County Chairs have confirmed at least 24 more filers for local offices bringing the total

to at least 211. (Chairs have until January 12 to send their lists so this number may increase.)

Libertarians filed for 30 of the 32 US House seats, 11 of the 16 Texas Senate seats, 97 of the 150 Texas House seats, and 4 of the 8 State Board of Education seats.

If nominated six of our candidates for U.S. Representative will face only one major party candidate. All of our State Board of Education nominees should be in two-way races and three of our State Senate nominees can expect two-way races.

Another sign of increased interest in the Party is the number of contested races. Twenty-three of the races filing with the State Chair drew more

than one individual seeking the nomination. Among these are three candidates filed for U.S. Senate and five candidates seeking the Texas House District 97 nomination.

Activists around the state have reported that there has been more coverage of LP candidate announcements and listings including our candidates than in the past. News organizations including radio, television, newspapers and online resources have carried information on our candidates and the AP carried a party press release that was then widely distributed.

An unofficial list of candidates is found at www.lptexas.org/candidates.shtml.

A Libertarian View of the 2005 Texas Legislature

By Robert "Rock" Howard

The 2005 legislative session felt different for Libertarians. For the first time there was genuine interest in our viewpoints. Most of this new respect was due to a simple dynamic: Libertarian candidates held the balance of power in several House Districts (HD) in 2004. Libertarians were credited with defeating incumbent Jack Stick in HD 50 and the lack of a Libertarian candidate was the key factor that allowed Todd Baxter to win his HD 48 race.

Our main effort in the 2005 main session was to get a vote on House Bill 1721, a bill to end "Primary Screenout." Todd Baxter filed the bill and Mark Strama, the Democratic winner of HD 50, was joint author. Two of the best libertarian leaders in the House, Tery Keel and Suzanna Hupp,

co-authored the bill. Sadly some Republican Party insiders decided (incorrectly in our view) that the bill was not good for their cause and so the bill was bottled up in committee and never received a vote.

The Texas Legislature has experienced a huge increase in filed legislation over the last few sessions. Well over 3,500 bills were filed this time. The vast majority of these were uninteresting to Libertarians, but several were quite interesting covering areas including taxes, eminent domain, medical marijuana, concealed carry rights, police technology, marriage and more. We decided to create a Scoreboard to rate the legislators and uncover any existing libertarian voting tendencies. This was a difficult task that was aided immensely by the biannual legislative ratings published by the Young Conservatives of Texas. Their survey identified a number of useful votes that rounded out the list that we had developed on our own.

We decided to split our survey into economic and social questions and then score the results on the familiar Nolan Chart that is employed by the World's Smallest Political Quiz. This was easy to do. Each legislator was given an initial score of 50/50 and each correct vote added a few points to the appropriate score while an incorrect vote lost points. In most cases abstaining or missing votes had no impact on the score, although in some cases we knocked off some points for those who were unwilling to go on the record with a particularly important vote. Special acts such as filing or signing on as a



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Candidates please note:

Submissions of party news, meeting minutes, photographs, biographies of candidates, suggested websites, letters to the editor, etc. is encouraged. Please send to Laura@libertyworks.org to submit.

Around the State:Activist Update

At least 8 media outlets ran an AP story on the record breaking number of LP candidates filed this cycle according to Google News. Many more included the information in articles about candidate's filed or included lists of local Libertarians who filed.

The Kilgore News Herald ran a story including LP Governor's candidate **James Werner**. The Avalanche Journal in Lubbock included a December 20 story on LP **Lubbock County Commissioner candidate M.J. "Smitty" Smith**. The Austin American Statesman had a notice on LP candidates on December 28. KSHN radio reported on **Kris Overstreet's** campaign announcement for State Representative District 18.

KUHF radio in Houston reported on our record number of candidates as did the Fort Bend Herald. **Brazos County Chair Christopher Jagge** reports coverage on TV news stations WTAW, KBTX, and the ABC affiliate. The Eagle newspaper also ran an article headlined "Libertarians showing record ballot presence."

Wes Benedict was selected as the new Travis County Chair at a December 6 County Executive Committee Meeting. **Robert "Rock" Howard** resigned at the meeting in order to run for State Senate District 14.

Marvin Rutledge, Vice Chair for Polk County stepped up as Chair so Kris Overstreet could run for office. Marvin can be reached at gold@eastex.net.

State Chair Patrick Dixon appointed several new County Chairs in December. **Larry Nickerson** is Chair for Tarrant County. He can be reached at hlarrynickerson@hotmail.com. **Bill Burkhardt** is Chair for El Paso County. He can be reached at burkhartmar@netzero.com. **Rodney Ramsey** of Red Oak is Chair for Ellis County. He can be reached at occides@hotmail.com.

Clyde Garland of Brazos

County organized an OPH booth held December 17 and 18. He reports 105 people took the quiz with 30 scoring in the libertarian quadrant. Of those 18 left contact information and two agreed to be candidates.

Williamson County Chair Bryan Bracamonte announces that the county has a new website at www.txwclp.org.

Several candidates report having websites. U.S. Representative District 3 candidate **Christopher Clayton** has a website at www.claytorforcongress.org. U.S. Representative District 10 candidate **Michael Badnarik** has a website at www.badnarik.org. U.S. Representative District 20 candidate **Michael Idrogo** has a website at www.ilikemike.50megs.com. U.S. Representative District 22 candidate **Stan Norred** has purchased the domain name for www.norred4congress.com, but he is in need of a web designer. Anyone interested in helping can contact him at windstalker@windstalker.com. U.S. Representative District 25 candidate **Grant Rostig** has a website at www.grant4congress.com. U.S. Representative District 32 candidate **N. Ruben F. Perez** has a website at //voteperez.freeservers.com. State Representative District 18 candidate **Kris Overstreet** has a website at www.voteoverstreet.org.

David Richards had a letter on the eroding of our Bill of Rights printed in the Athens Daily Review on January 4. **Brent Sullivan** had a letter in the Houston Chronicle.

LP Publications Chair and Lone Star Liberty editor **Laura Coker-Garcia** has announced that she will be resigning her position effective after the April 1 LSL edition and she will not be seeking re-election as State Secretary. Anyone interested in joining the Publications Committee and helping out with any of our publications including the newsletter can contact me for information Laura@libertyworks.org.

Are There Any libertarian Views in the Legislature?

Continued from Page 1

co-author of a particularly good or bad bill also earned or lost points.

The results are shown on the accompanying graphs. The graph for the House is particularly compelling. We see the vast majority of Republicans near the crossroads of the Centrist, Conservative and Libertarian

far was Terry Keel of HD 47 in Austin. Sadly Terry is leaving the House although we can wish him well in his race for Place 8 in the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. Also stepping down is long time libertarian favorite Suzanna Hupp of Lampasas. She will be missed. The only other House member with demonstrated libertarian tendencies is Debbie Riddle of District 150 in Houston, however Ms. Riddle is more of a Reagan Republican as demonstrated by her authorship of several bills that crack down on social freedoms, but were missed by our survey.

Compared to the Texas House, the Texas Senate is a true basket case. Only Senator Kevin Eltife votes in a manner that is somewhat Libertarian (although his track record for cutting taxes and spending when serving

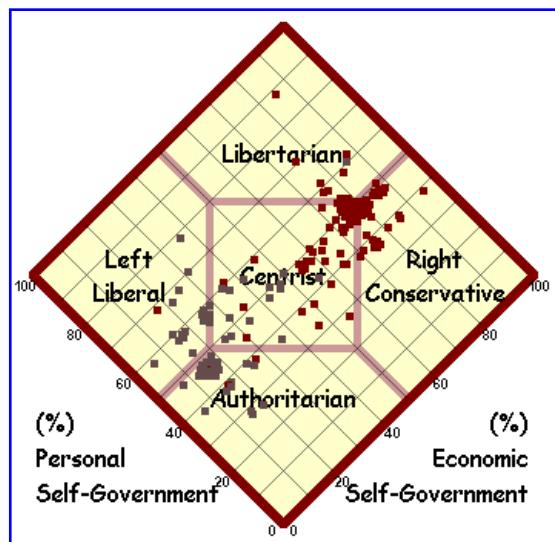
as Mayor of Tyler makes him someone that we need to know better.) Interestingly our survey suggests that there are no clearly conservative Texas Senators! The scores are scattered all over the place with Republicans scoring just as bad or worse than Democrats in many instances. Clearly we have better support for our perspectives in the Texas House.

What does this mean for the future? We have been lucky in the past that some friendly legislators were willing to work with us, but the real trend is clearly towards more costly and more intrusive government. Now that some of our best friends are leaving office, it is time for us to turn up the heat by impacting more and more election outcomes. We have started by running a candidate in the HD 48 special election and that has

already earned us some attention including face-to-face meetings with the frontrunners as well as some useful media coverage.

In November 2006 we see the possibility of impacting up to 10 Republican incumbents be demonstrating that they are weak on economic issues. There are also 8 Democratic incumbents who we might be able to help defeat by running to the left. There are also a few open seats up for grabs and some two-way races where Libertarian candidates can pick up the protest vote.

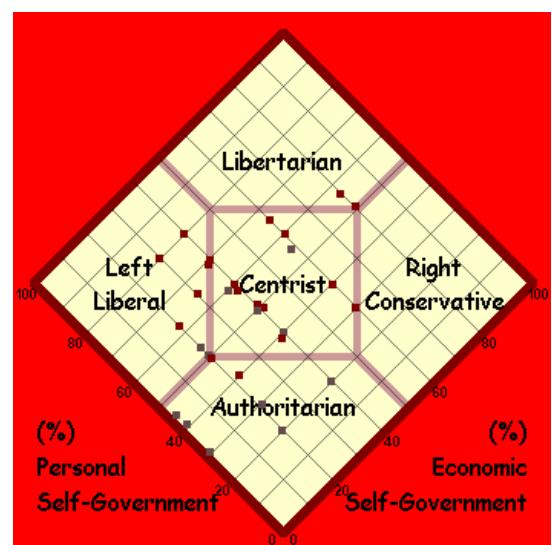
Detailed tactics for the general election must await the end of primary season and for the petitioning process to play out, but at least we know that our candidates will be armed with specific information on incumbent voting records. This, together with the increasing dissatisfaction of both Republican and Democratic voters for their own parties, bodes well for our vote totals in 2006. If we also see increased par-



quadrants. Meanwhile the Democrats are mostly near the intersection of the Centrist, Liberal and Authoritarian quadrants. There are also some interesting exceptions including a few Republicans that vote as moderate libertarians.

What does this mean? First we see that Republicans generally agree and Democrats generally disagree with Libertarians on economic issues. This is not a surprise but it is interesting to see the individual House Republicans who are weak on economic freedom as well note that the group as a whole is much less financially conservative than we would prefer. On social issues we see that almost everyone comes in near 50%. Looking closer we see that Republicans tend to be strong on gun rights and property rights and weak on practically every other social freedom issue. Most Democrats are exactly the opposite.

The most libertarian voter by



icipation of independent voters, then our large slate of candidates should benefit further. Finally, a tactical approach to impacting specific elections can help us further increase the respect for the Libertarian Party and the interest in our approaches to governance.

Stacker Favors Consumer Empowered Education

Press Release:

Lubbock resident, Brandon Stacker, has filed an application for the District 15 State Board Of Education nomination with the Lubbock County Libertarian Party.

Stacker says he will run an active campaign focused on empowering students and parents.

"We need to follow the examples of private enterprise by empowering the consumers of education which are parents and children. Public education must be brought into the 21st century using free market principles," said Stacker.

Stacker said he would advocate having local school boards and parents make decisions about which textbooks are used as opposed to the state board deciding. "The more deci-

sions made locally the better" said Stacker.

Stacker said he would also advocate the use of virtual classrooms in which students learn by reading online books and taking internet based classes thus reducing the need for physical classrooms, which will in turn save property tax dollars. Stacker said by using the internet students could actually take most of their classes at home thus eliminating the need for brick and mortar public buildings and paper books. Stacker said progressive countries like Brazil are successfully making the change to internet-based education and many American colleges are internet based such as the University Of Phoenix.

Addressing concerns about the lack of social interactions that internet

education might bring Stacker said students with similar interest would still meet in person for club activities, sporting events and other activities.

Stacker said he is also an advocate of charter schools and vouchers. "We need a charter school in every community to foster competition. We need a competitive free market for education dollars" said Stacker.

Stacker said " my proposals will face strong resistance from entrenched bureaucracies but failed policy's should not be held hostage by those who implemented the failure"

Stacker is self-employed as a disc jockey.

For More Information Contact: Brain Stacker @ 806-535-6341 or David DeLamar @ 806-773-6382.

Jefferson County Chair Dispute

A dispute between Jefferson County Chair Dean Tucker and the former County Chair Alan Lee went public this month with an article in the area's largest newspaper *The Beaumont Enterprise*.

Alan, who was elected County Chair at the March 13, 2004 County Convention, was considered inactive by the County Executive Committee after he failed to attend six consecutive monthly meetings.

At their June 22, 2005 meeting the Jefferson County Executive Committee voted to declare the office of Chair vacant as allowed by their Bylaws. Their Bylaws state that "The CEC shall meet at least once a month" and that "If any CEC member fails to attend two successive meetings, the other members of the CEC may declare the office vacant for that reason."

The Executive Committee voted to appoint Dean Tucker as the new County Chair.

Alan contends that he was not aware that the Jefferson County had

Bylaws and that he suspended meetings after a tax-roll back petition drive December 2004, because local activists were "burnt out." Alan reports he was planning to resume local activity when Hurricane Rita hit the area delaying his efforts.

Alan asked the State Party in early December to look into the matter, because he was not given due process in being removed from office.

State Chair Patrick Dixon reviewed the documentation sent by the current Jefferson County Executive Committee and determined that there was "no cause to intervene and overturn the decision of the Jefferson County Libertarian Party."

However, Alan does not accept the decision and is determined to pursue the issue. To this point he accepted as Chair an application from a candidate for County Judge and turned in paperwork to the County Clerk on that candidate's behalf. Dean also accepted an application for office and this issue was reported in the newspaper.

SLECT Report

The main outcome of the December 10 State Libertarian Executive Committee of Texas (SLECT) Meeting was the creation of an Operations Committee (OpComm) that will empower a small group of individuals to make operational decisions on behalf of the Texas SLECT between quarterly meetings.

Serving on the OpComm are the State Chair Patrick Dixon, State Vice Chair Nancy Neale, State Treasurer Geoff Neale, State Secretary Laura Coker-Garcia and Christopher Jagge, who serves as an elected non-officer member. A standing Policy Manual was also approved.

In other action the SLECT approved a budget for 2006, chose Wichita Falls as the site for the 2006 State Convention, and for the second time failed to pass a resolution supporting the FairTax.

John Shuey was added as a representative for Dist. 9 and T. Evan Fisher was added for Dist. 23.

The next meeting was not set.

Events of Interest to Texas Libertarians

Jan. 7 (Sat.) Noon Brazos County LP Meeting, C&J BBQ, 1010 S. Texas Ave., Bryan. For information contact Chair Chris Jagge at c_jagge@msn.com.

Jan. 9 (Mon.) Candidate Lists Due: State LP Chair will deliver to county chairs list of statewide and district candidates.

Jan. 10 (Tues.) 7 p.m. Williamson County LP Meeting, Hunan Lion Chinese Restaurant, Round Rock. For information contact Chair Bryan Bracamonte at chairman@txwclp.org.

Jan. 12 (Thurs.) Candidate Lists Due: LP Chairs required to turn candidate lists in to local and state election officials.

Jan. 14 (Sat.) 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. John Taylor Gatto's speech "The Trapped Flea Principle and Other Weapons of Mass Instruction," United Way Center, Houston. Gatto is a former NY State Teacher of the Year and author of "The Underground History of American Education." Tickets \$15. Benefit for the Brazos Valley Sudbury School. Call Mimi for information and to reserve your spot at 713-876-7705 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Jan. 17 (Tues.) Special Election Dist. 48, parts of Travis County. LP candidate is Ben Easton.

Jan. 17 (Tues.) 7 p.m. Bexar County LP Meeting, Contact David Alter at [davydoodle_ @hotmail.com](mailto:davydoodle_@hotmail.com).

Jan. 17 (Tues.) 6 p.m. Polk County LP Meeting, The Custom Shop, 220 E. Denham St., Livingston. Call 936-685-4992 for information.

Jan. 28 (Sat.) Parker County LP Meeting. Contact Chair Daniel Barker for time and location at parkerlp@yahoo.com.

Jan. 28-29 (Sat.-Sun.) Youth Leadership School in Austin. Tuition for the 30 hour course is \$30, which covers all materials and meals for the weekend, as well as lodging for out-of-town students. Contact A.E. "Fonz" Smith ASAP at asmith@limail.us or 512-517-4389 for information or to register.

Feb. 6 (Mon.) Last Day to Register to Vote for participation in Precinct and County conventions.

Feb. 11 (Sat.) Filing opens for candidates for non-partisan local political subdivisions holding elections in May.

March 3 (Fri.) County Chairs Post Notice. Each County Chair should post a notice on the County Commissioner's Bulletin Board listing the time and location for all precinct conventions. A copy should also be given to the County Clerk. Deadline to post is March 4 on Saturday. You may also post County Conventions at this time, but deadline is not until March 8.

March 7 (Tues.) 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Primary Election Day.

March 13 (Mon.) Filing closes for candidates for non-partisan local political subdivisions holding elections in May.

March 14 (Tues.) Libertarian Party Precinct Conventions. You must be a registered voter who has not voted in the primary in order to participate. By rule all participants are delegates to the County Convention. Precinct Conventions also elect Precinct Chairs and may pass resolutions.

March 18 (Sat.) Libertarian Party County Conventions. Conventions will elect County officers, nominate candidates for local office, and choose delegates to the District and State Conventions.

March 25 (Sat.) Libertarian Party District Conventions. Time and location is set by the Chairs for counties within the district. State Party Secretary will notify Chairs of the need for a District Convention. These Conventions will select the nominee for district offices.

May 13 (Sat.) Election Day for non-partisan local political subdivisions.

June 10 (Sat.) Libertarian Party State Convention, Wichita Falls, TX. Time and location to be determined. Election of Party officers, and District Representatives for the Executive Committee, consideration of rules and changes to the Platform, nominations for statewide offices.

Oct. 10 (Mon.) Last day to register to vote for November General Election.