INITIATIVE NEWS...

Measure to ax income tax in Bay State nearly wins

Although the initiative to eliminate the income tax in Massachusetts barely fell short in the November 5 election, Libertarians were jubilant about its showing at the polls.

With 99.9% of precincts reporting, a whopping 45.4% of Massachusetts voters cast votes in favor of the initiative, with the remaining 54.6% opposing it.

The showing made the initiative “the biggest demonstration of support for a bold libertarian proposal in party history,” said Carla Howell, whose Committee for Small Government (CSG) spearheaded the measure.

“In spite of every obstacle thrown at us, we [nearly] prevailed,” she said. “We’re electrified with our results, progress, and support.”

The Boston Globe, the most widely circulated newspaper in the state, said the strong support for the initiative sent a “strong signal to Beacon Hill about distaste for future tax increases as a way to solve the budget crisis.”

Had the initiative passed, the repeal would have saved the average state taxpayer $3,000 per year, and created an estimated 300,000 to 500,000 jobs in the state.

During the 17-month campaign, Libertarians aggressively defended the initiative on radio shows and on television.

Although the initiative was defeated, Howell said the revolution that it has launched has just begun.

“Libertarian activists from other states are asking us how to organize an End the Income Tax initiative in their states,” said Howell. “We have launched a nationwide trend that just may be the key to making government small.”

Ed Thompson gets 10.4%

Ed Thompson, the Libertarian candidate for governor in Wisconsin, garnered 10.4% of the vote (183,252 votes) in the November 5 election.

Thompson’s showing in the eight-way race was the second-best showing for a Libertarian candidate for governor in LP history.

“We didn’t win, and that’s really what I was hoping for,” said Thompson. “But I’m grateful for all the support I did get from people across the state – 183,000 votes is a lot of votes.”

Thompson won 55.9% of the vote in his home town of Tomah in Monroe County.

ELECTION 2002...

Final tally: 25 Libertarians victorious in 2002 elections

Over two dozen Libertarians were elected to local office in 2002, with victories occurring in five states across the USA.

In California, eight candidates were elected in contested races for non-partisan offices: Vern Dahl (Oceano Community Services District); Eric Lund (Cordova Recreation and Park Board, Sacramento County); Ron Gabbert (Ready Springs Union School District); Melisse Manfre (Orangevale Recreation and Park Board, Sacramento County); Jim Gardner (San Gorgonio Memorial Health Care District); Larry Torres (Los Alamos Community Services District); Francis Trowbridge (Rubidoux Community Services District); and Jack Hickey (Sequoia Healthcare District, San Mateo County).

Also in California, six Libertarians were elected to non-partisan office in uncontested races: Marshall Schwartz (Eden Township Hospital District, Alameda County); Lance Rosmaier (Southwest Healthcare District, Short Term, Kern County); Jerry A. Mercier (Independence Ranch Community Services District, San Luis Obispo County); William J. Alley (Shandon Joint Unified School District, San Luis Obispo County); Carle Hylkema (Guadalupe-Coyote Resource Conservation District, Santa Clara County); and Michael Wharton (Oxnard Harbor District, Ventura County).

Finally, incumbent Bonnie Flickinger was re-elected to the Moreno Valley City Council (District 4), and Lois Engel was re-elected to the Ophir Hill Fire District.

In Colorado, Bill Masters was re-elected as San Miguel County sheriff, and Bob Dempsey was re-elected as San Miguel County coroner.

In North Carolina, there were six winners: Dave Gable (Mecklenburg County Soil and Water Conservation Supervisor); John Hairr (Harnett County Surveyor); Bob Ritchie (Cabarrus County Soil & Water District Supervisor); Jeff Goforth (Cabarrus County Soil & Water District Supervisor); Renee Montague (Chatham County Soil & Water District Supervisor); and Robert Rosenthal (Durham County Soil & Water District Supervisor).

In Vermont, Hardy Macia was elected as a Justice of the Peace in Grand Isle.

In Indiana, Ed Dilts won an unopposed race for a seat on the Needham Township Board (Johnson County).

“A hearty congratulations to all our Libertarian winners!” said LP Political Director Ron Crickenger. “I have no doubt that these individuals will make the party proud.”
Ed Thompson: A tough Libertarian

By DENNIS CHAPMAN

I am a party room at the back of Keiser's Class Act bar, Ed Thompson slams a shot on a pool, takes a gulp of Diet Pepsi and says, "I knew it would be tough, but I didn't know it would be this tough." He, tired from another day of pushing his underfunded Libertarian campaign around Wisconsin and attempting to carve out a way into the governor's race.

"I'm trying to raise up for a $10,000 fund-raiser before a hometown crowd.

He's a friend of Jim Meckstroth, his manager and corner man during more than 35 years of Thompson boxing competitions, frets about Thompson. "This is as down as I've seen him in this campaign. The polls are showing him at 6%. The polls are bogus," said Meckstroth, a retired cattle farmer.

Minutes later, Thompson has the right attention of 80 people jammed into the pool room, starting slowly and picking up steam as he runs with his common-man evangelism: "I got so damn mad!" Thompson ruminates. "We drove 100,000 miles. We walked the streets. We knocked on doors. We did it the right way. We were campaign reform. We've got something to offer. We've got honesty. We've got the truth."

On a roll, Thompson feels off the applause, and seems to shrug off the frustration.

"Get into this fight. Roll up your sleeves. This is not about Ed Thompson, Bill. Believe me. It just landed on me. This isn't a three-way race. It's a two-way race — with common people against career politicians," he boomed with a preacher's fervor.

After the speech, and a standing ovation, a small businessman worked his way from the back of the room and reached into his pocket. He pulled out a wadded $20 and handed it to Thompson.

The campaign rolls on.

A varied career

Thompson's life has been a checkboard of success, failure and up-and-down climbing. His father included an abbreviated stay at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a stint in the Navy and a job as a waiter before he landed at the General Motors plant in Janesville.

But the smallest-earned life of Elroy, where on Christmas Day in 1943 he was born into a process that included former Vogue Manager Tommy G. Thompson. So, he returned to take a job

Continued from above.

Thompson's front door to politics was opened when the Tee Pee was one of 40 Monroe County bars raided in 1971 by police who confronted illegal gambling machines. The charges against Thompson were later dropped after the prosecutor could not find enough unbridled justices to hear the case.

Thompson won the presidency of the county Tavern League and targeted District Attorney John Miltzak in the next election.

"My case is the law, and every house and every member and you've got to vote out," said Thompson. "I believe in them. They win't do work in a successful bid to have video gambling machines discontinued in 1996.

The charges against his sights on becoming Tomay's mayor in 2000 — and without ever having attended a Council meeting, he upset two-term incumbent Bud John with a large turnout of previously unregistered voters.

They said I should be a councilman first, and I agreed with them, but they liked me," said Thompson, who worked to hold down spending, cut bureaucracy and opened government to the public through cable TV access and question-and-answer sessions at council meetings.

Vendetta meeting was key


"I talked to him for about an hour, and he put his big arm around me, and said, 'You run and win.'" Thompson said. "I thought, 'He did it. He didn't have any experience.' But I was naive."

Thompson won with 9% of the total vote for governor in an uncontested primary, shorn of the 6% that would have guaranteed him a $300,000 state campaign grant and a seat at the first televised gubernatorial debate.

Since then, he's been acting for exposure and sometimes succeeding. When Tommy G. Thompson showed up on television, he was a根据 the previous content and the given information, please answer the following question:

What is the name of the author of the article? Dennis Chapman

What is the title of the article? "Ed Thompson: A tough Libertarian"

What is the main topic of the article? The campaign of Ed Thompson, a Libertarian candidate for governor of Wisconsin.

What are some of the challenges that Ed Thompson faced during his campaign? Thompson faced challenges such as low polling numbers, a lack of financial resources, and external factors like the political landscape and opponents' strategies.

What steps did Ed Thompson take to build support for his campaign? Thompson engaged in grassroots organizing, held rallies, and received endorsements from other politicians and community leaders.

What specific events or moments did the article mention that were significant for Ed Thompson's campaign? The article mentioned the 1996 case where Thompson defeated two-term incumbent Bud John with a large turnout of previously unregistered voters, and his failed 2000 campaign for mayor of Tomahawk.

What are some of the accomplishments or notable moments in Ed Thompson's political career? Thompson's career included elected and appointed positions in local government, as well as his unsuccessful 1996 campaign and the 2000 campaign noted in the article.

How did Ed Thompson's campaign differ from that of his opponents? The article highlights Thompson's grassroots approach, including reliance on volunteer organizers and personal appearances at events.

What is the status of Ed Thompson's campaign at the time the article was written? Ed Thompson was a candidate for governor in Wisconsin, with a focus on issues such as reform and limited government.
Libertarian getting closer eye

Some see Coffee as alternative to warring Democrats in Chatham

By Anne Blythe

PITTSBORO — Michael P. Coffee, the Libertarian seeking a Chatham County commissioners seat, has been fielding numerous invitations of late to coffee klatches, teas and and meet-and-greet affairs.

In a county where only 78 of the 32,518 registered voters are Libertarians, the electronic technician always planned to run a serious campaign but never expected the level of interest in his candidacy that has emerged in recent weeks.

"It's getting very interesting all of a sudden," said Coffee, 42.

The recent intrigue comes in part because the two Republicans in the commissioners race dropped out in late September, in time to keep their names off the Nov. 5 ballot. The withdrawal means that two of the three commissioner races are uncontested.

Coffee, who moved to Chatham nearly a year and a half ago from Buncombe County, provides voters a choice in District 4, where the Democratic primary contest has been described as one of the most caustic in recent history.

"One of the positives about my campaign is [that I'm getting support from across the spectrum, because, you know, I've got something for everybody," Coffee said.

Many Chatham residents continue to analyze the heated primary match between Bunkey Morgan, the Republican-turned-Democrat, and Gary Phillips, the commissioners chairman who lost his bid for re-election by a mere 320 votes. Questions linger about whether Morgan actually lives in the district where he is running for office. The Chatham County Board of Elections is set to hear a second complaint today, several months after reviewing the first challenge and finding it had no merit.

Some Phillips supporters describe the Morgan victory as a carefully planned coup by the Republicans, but Morgan and his supporters describe the conjecture as ill-conceived.

There has been growing discontent, they say, in southwestern Chatham, where many agricultural and blue-collar workers live. Morgan tried to capitalize on that sentiment.

Staff writer Anne Blythe can be reached at 932-6741 or ablythe@newsobserver.com.

What Sophocles would have said in APT

The Libertarian Party candidate for governor was excluded from this evening's televised gubernatorial debate because polls did not show him with at least 5 percent support. The Advertiser, a debate co-sponsor, invited the candidate to share what he would have said if he had been part of the 8 p.m. debate on Alabama Public Television. APT also will televise debates between U.S. Senate candidates Sue Sanders and Jeff Sessions at 6 p.m. and between lieutenant governor candidates Bill Amiston and Lucy Baxley at 7 p.m.

By John P. Sophocles

As a major party candidate for governor, my position on virtually every issue of importance differs sharply from my opponents. But readers likely do not know what I stand for, because the news media in Alabama have locked me out of the televised debates and often have excluded me from their reporting on the gubernatorial election.

The long-run future well-being of Alabama hinges on citizens being able to vote for candidates who view governing as something different from dancing to the tune of the AFA, Alfa, Bobby Lowder, and other entrenched special interest piper. I refuse PAC money and individual contributions in excess of $1,000. Here are my positions on important issues:

- **Education:** Virtually all of the discussion of education assumes that whatever "problems" we have here in Alabama can only be fixed by increasing spending and government control. This means raising taxes, which I strongly oppose.

- If education is going to be treated as a state-provided entitlement, the state should provide an education that is uniform for all children, and designed to teach students how to speak, read, write, understand rudimentary arithmetic and think well. There is no reason to include art, athletics, music, etc. as part of education.

- Parents and private scholarships should be paying for these extras on their own. Many aspects of public education should be privatized. The cost savings would amount to many millions of dollars per year that could be redirected towards meeting genuine educational needs. Furthermore, privatization eliminates the inefficiencies caused by employing bad teachers who double as coaches.

- By spending more money at public schools does not result in better-educated children; it results in administrators, teachers and lobbyists getting richer.

- What will improve our children's education is competition. I advocate non-revenuefixed competition to promote competition in the provision of education.

- **Constitutional reform:** I am the only candidate on the ballot that is against the rewrite. Constitutional rewrite is a vehicle for raising taxes and increasing government intrusion in our lives.

I disagree with the source of political problems in Alabama is the state Constitution. The problem is erosion of representation in the legislature, as the fixed number of legislators "represents" an ever-increasing number of citizens. Alabama cannot afford the litigation cost that will result from a rewrite — it is the "Full Employment Act for Politically Connected Attorneys."

If history is any guide, many citizens will lose (and then have to fight to regain) their civil rights following a rewrite. I applaud the Black Caucus' stand against the rewrite. Both my opponents have a terrible history of not respecting the civil rights of property owners. The first attempts by Jack Venable's committee to rewrite the Constitution verify fears that citizens' rights will be lost.

- **Competitive contract reform:** Recently passed bills like HB 23, introduced by Riley croaky Mike Hubbard, ensure that contracts are bid less than competitively. So any governor's hands are tied on this one.

Riley runs expensive ads (paid for with special interest money) saying "no sweetheart deals under my watch," knowing most Alabamians are unaware the old boy network has already been institutionalized in Montgomery. Per Riley to deliver on this campaign promise, he must repeal his own buddy's legislation to do so.

Think he'll even try? I will.

- **Tax reform:** Moving toward a low uniform tax will increase revenue and end the practice of politicians using the tax code to pick winners and losers in our state. This will allow our economy to flourish, by diversifying toward our comparative advantages, mitigating the impact of downturns in the business cycle.

John Sophocles, a university professor and economist, is the Libertarian Party candidate for governor. His website is www.votesoph.com.
Valley Views: Julie Fox

Stop giving away your liberty

On Sept. 15, my niece attended an exotic pet show at Lee Watson's Crosswinds Farm in Streamwood. It was raided by federal agents, who locked down the event and held each and every person there.

No one was allowed out of the building in which the show was held until their belongings were searched. Local police searched cars for everything from exotic pets to drugs to improper child seating.

The intent was allegedly to crack down on infractions of laws pertaining to the exotic pet trade.

Instead of coming into the facility and checking that vendors were in compliance with the law, local and federal agents of the government terrorized individuals, innocent spectators as well as vendors, and bastardized their constitutional rights in the process.

Where does it end? Do we still retain any constitutional rights in this country? I was shocked and appalled to hear about this. We're referring to a pet show, not terrorist activity. Do these people deserve to be-treated this way simply because they attended a pet show?

When will we come to our senses? Ever since the terrorist attacks that occurred on Sept. 11 of last year, we have given free rein to government to strip away our freedoms in the name of security, and been completely blind to the effects it will have on us.

Please think long and hard about the words Benjamin Franklin, one of our founding fathers and a man whom many consider to be one of great wisdom, spoke: "They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."

Think about it. Ponder it long and hard. One can't take it too seriously. We forget how important it is until it affects us. Unfortunately, when it affects you, it may be way too late for anyone to do anything about it, because you didn't heed the words of warning the first time, or the second time, or the third or 10th time they were uttered.

You chose to ignore the importance of liberty. When you do that, it will come back to bite you. It may not be today, or tomorrow, but it will happen someday, I guarantee you, and then it will be too late. All your allies will already be snatched up by the arm of the "law" as you have chosen to let it be.

I have chosen to spend my time defending these rights, and working for the only party that truly believes in them, the Libertarian Party.

Although individuals may differ, at the core there is no difference between Democrats and Republicans anymore. No one truly cares about your freedom other than the Libertarian Party.

Quit kidding yourself. Look long and hard at how these parties have defended your freedoms. These are the parties that have allowed police raids on such things as exotic pet shows. These are the parties that give police the right to stop you in your car and search it when you have done nothing wrong. These are the parties that have allowed the erosion of your freedoms.

The only party that truly cares about your freedom is the Libertarian Party. That is why I give so much of my time and effort to support the Libertarian Party, and you should, too.

On Nov. 5, don't choose to ignore the ballot box because you are disgusted with the system. This time, make a move to change it.

If you're tired of the same old thing from government, make a move to change it.

Vote for a change on Nov. 5. Vote Libertarian. Let's end the madness and put freedom back into our lives again.

Fox, of West Dundee, is treasurer of the Libertarian Party of Illinois and the Libertarian candidate for state comptroller.