On-air conversion: Radio talk show host joins the LP

A nationally syndicated radio talk show host joined the Libertarian Party this month, and did so in dramatic fashion — on the air during a live interview with LP National Director Perry Willis.

Jay Severin, broadcasting from WOR radio in New York City, and heard on more than 140 stations around the country, announced on March 7th that he was joining the Libertarian Party.

“He said, ‘I’ve been thinking about it,’ ” recounted Willis after the interview. “‘I’ve got your membership form right here, and I’m filling it out and writing a check, even as we speak.’ I said, ‘Welcome aboard! That’s exactly what we need. We think membership growth is what we need to take our place as a major party in this country.’ ”

Willis spent more than 30 minutes discussing the Libertarian Party — in a conversation ranging from the 1994 elections to crime control to the Republican’s Contract With America — and said it was clear that Severin was very supportive.

“He agreed that we have all the good features of the Republican Party — except that we mean it. And we have all the good features of the Democratic Party — except that we mean it. He really responded to that analysis,” said Willis. “He said he has been reading a lot of our literature, hearing from our members, and seeing us increasingly in the press. That convinced him that we’re becoming viable.”

As a new member, Willis said Severin promised to keep spreading the word about the Libertarian Party. “He said, ‘I talk about [the LP] all the time, and I’m going to continue doing that.’ ”

Willis said he has received very positive reactions to his appearance on the show from around the country, including a message from Karl Waldman, State Chair of the LP of Rhode Island, who wrote: “Keep up the excellent work! Your work in this area makes my job a lot easier.”

Severin is the second explicitly Libertarian talk show host on WOR’s syndicated network. He replaced Gene Burns, following Burns’ abrupt departure in October 1994. Burns has since relocated to San Francisco, and can be heard on KGO-AM radio.

Ballot access wars: LP starts lobbying efforts in 3 states

Libertarians in three states have geared up lobbying efforts to fight for or against new laws which would change ballot access requirements.

> In Maryland, State Chair Jesse Markowitz testified on February 23rd in favor of SB 261, a bill to ease ballot access requirements. Markowitz told a State Senate committee the bill was a “significant step in rectifying injustice — injustice that comes from ruling parties quashing opposition and preventing voters from hearing alternatives.”

“This injustice is compounded because the people who make the rules are our opponents. Standing here before you today, I sort of feel as if I’m a Snapple salesperson. You are the Coca Cola and Pepsi soft drink giants. Unfortunately, the way the rules are written today, I have to get your permission before I may offer my product to the people of Maryland,” he told the committee.

> In New Hampshire, State Chair Jeff Emery said the party is “quietly working within the political process” to squash an amendment to require a party to get 1% of registered voters to maintain ballot status. The amendment is attached to a bill which protects NH’s first-in-the-nation presidential primary.

Currently, the state only requires that a party poll 3% in the gubernatorial election. The LPNH could keep its February 1996 presidential primary, but would be knocked off the statewide primary and the general election ballot in 1996 if it can’t double its current 0.5% of registered voters.

“We are quietly working within the political process to try to get this amendment removed. It is a very unpopular amendment tied to a very popular, and difficult to vote against, bill,” reported Emery.

> In Illinois, the state party is speaking out against a new bill to prohibit paid petitioners from collecting ballot access signatures. “The number [of signatures required to get on the ballot is] extremely prohibitive,” said State Chair Jeannette Clinkunbroomer. “Even with paid petitioners, it’s difficult to gather the required signatures. If we can’t hire people to help with this task, it’s all but impossible. The end result [of this bill could be] that voters will have fewer choices on election day.”
Spinning the dial

When Libertarian talkmaster Gene Burns left Boston two years ago, he only went as far as New York, and his radio show was syndicated, so Bostonians could still hear him on the air every weekend. But now Burns is far, far away, out of state and out of range. For the past month he has been doing fill-in work weeknights on KGO-AM in San Francisco, and might end up there full time if he gets an offer.

“Well, it’s a wonderful place to live and just an hour away from wine country, so that doesn’t break my heart,” Burns said yesterday by telephone.

He has a sort of “built-in following” in the Bay Area since his syndicated show from New York had been carried on another station. “So I know the station has been bombarded with letters and faxes” from listeners familiar with him.

Burns said that for the right amount of money, he could see staying on the West Coast. “If they make me a good competitive offer, I wouldn’t have any second thoughts at all about living here.”

But he did admit that he has a great affinity for Boston, where he spent eight years on WRKO-AM.

“People have been very upfront; there is no slot in the market right now,” he said. “But it remains very high on my list of cities, so if something opened up, I would be there.”

——

The Boston Globe, Boston, Massachusetts
February 9, 1995

The Baltimore Sun, Baltimore, Maryland
March 2, 1995

The Arizona Daily Star, Tucson, Arizona
February 2, 1995

Libertarians

With GOP in power, here’s a closer look at these misunderstood liberty-lovers

By David B. Levenstam
For The Arizona Daily Star

CORALVILLE, Iowa – The mainstream media finally have discovered that libertarians comprise an important power center in the GOP. Libertarians include not only highly esteemed economists such as Walter Williams, Thomas Sowell and Nobel-laureate Milton Friedman, but also popular elected officials like Gov. Bill Weld, R-Mass., Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas, and House Majority Leader Dick Armey, R-Texas.

Yet the media appear confused as to what libertarians believe. Time Magazine contrasts the Republican Party’s libertarian “problem solvers” with WASP elites grown fearful of new immigrants whose central political value was individual liberty – your right to do what you want with your property, including yourself.

Libertarian ideology springs from that of the Founding Fathers, whose central political value was individual liberty – your right to do what you want with your property, including yourself.

Libertarian ideology springs from that of the Founding Fathers, whose central political value was individual liberty – your right to do what you want with your property, including yourself.

People power

Earle J. Pearce (with sign), vice chair of the Baltimore City Libertarian Party, and others rallied in Annapolis yesterday in support of the sovereignty of the states and the people, which, they said, has been lost to the federal government.

Earle J. Pearce (with sign), vice chair of the Baltimore City Libertarian Party, and others rallied in Annapolis yesterday in support of the sovereignty of the states and the people, which, they said, has been lost to the federal government.

Earle J. Pearce (with sign), vice chair of the Baltimore City Libertarian Party, and others rallied in Annapolis yesterday in support of the sovereignty of the states and the people, which, they said, has been lost to the federal government.
Libertarian ideas revolutionize GOP

IT WAS GOV. Christine Todd Whitman of New Jersey, speaking for the Republican Party in response to President Clinton's State of the Union message, who said the Republican revolution is a "revolution of ideas.

Pardon me, governor, but you've 23 years late! The revolution started in 1972 when the Libertarian Party ran its first national ticket. As the vice presidential candidate, I campaigned nationally year after year, speaking out at every news conference that I was not running to change the voting strength of the older parties, but to challenge their principles and their ideas. I issued an "Intellectual call-to-arms.

Today there is no question that my words have been answered, and that thousands of campaigns by Libertarian candidates since 1972 are bearing fruit. Libertarian ideas are revolutionizing the Republican Party and influencing voters throughout the nation. As evidence I offer the following:

The day after the Nov. 8 election, Linda DiVall, a Republican polemicist guest on the "MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour," said: "The message of the election is the changing definition in the minds of voters on the role of government — 56 percent of the voters say the government should do less (emphasis mine). What this means is we are seeing a Libertarian streak coming into this election.

A month after last year's election, E.L. Dinklage, the editorial staff of The Washington Post wrote: "The rise of libertarian ideas and platforms are central to much of the GOP's new leadership. It is the story of one of those quiet but huge intellectual revolutions that can have enormous political impact." Most recently, a front page article in The Wall Street Journal headlined its story, "Less is more. Libertarian impulse on the rise."

Gerald Seth, author of the article, wrote: "This may probably don't even realize it, because of the many of the angry sentiments and solutions they voted for, but today isn't traditionally Republican or even conservative. It's libertarian.

And what are those ideas that are stirring voters to action at last? According to libertarians, they "are smaller government, lower taxes and less spending." While these views mark major trends in the new Congress, Whitman's statement is too limited ideologically for a true libertarian who is concerned about the intrusions of government into our personal lives as well as into our pocketbooks. It is moral principle, above all, that energizes libertarians.

The principle that dictates all libertarian positions on every issue is simple to state: mỗi person has the right to initiate force against others. Dienne explains party positions this way: "Libertarianism is a philosophy of radically limited government. Libertarians basically believe that the only legitimate functions of government are to protect citizens from force and fraud and to enforce contracts. If they had their way, libertarians would get the government out of everything else, including education, the postal system, Social Security, medical care, environmental regulation, farming — and that's just for starters.

Dienne is on the mark. To see how far the Libertarian Party has come in fulfilling its goal of "a free society," I dug out a brochure used during my campaign in 1972. Radical for its time, part of the brochure declares: "Whether you tend to support liberals or conservatives, you will probably admit one thing: the policies of today are a disaster. The left regards and relieves you of your earnings in the name of 'social obligation' — the right does the same for 'holy, honored, country' or some other altruistic premise. Where does this leave you?

Until now, it has left you without a choice. No party has said anything about your sovereignty. No party has held that your pursuit of happiness is an end in itself, rather than a tangent to 'social welfare' or 'national security.' No party has said that the use of force to accomplish an end blatantly denies our personal pursuit happiness (emphasis mine)."

Rep. Newt Gingrich, with wonderful irony, says he now pursues happiness. He states: "Happiness does not mean that the government should provide happiness, or happiness pills. That certainly reflects libertarian philosophy.

For years libertarians have been pointing out:
1. Government handouts create dependency and discourage citizens from solving their own problems.
2. Providing for anyone's needs should be a personal responsibility dictated by one's ability and inclination to contribute.
3. Forcibly relieving citizens of their own earnings and forcing others to sacrifice their lives and property for the benefit of others.

Yet, without the power to use legal force to force benefits on others, libertarians cannot promise to solve society's problems as present politicians do. How, then, are they to get elected?

The answer to that question was best stated by the 1979 running mate, Professor John Hospers, former dean of the school of philosophy at the University of Southern California. Asked by an elderly woman what he would do for her if she voted for him, Hospers said, "Madam, I will let you alone." The electorate needs to recognize that this policy is the only basis for governing in a truly benevolent, peaceful and moral nation.

Voters have not yet traveled far enough up the libertarian philosophical path to force all the goodies their representatives promise them. Nor should they. Any sudden collapse of the welfare state would be disastrous to those who have become dependent on government help and are unprepared for the responsibility of self-actualization.

Change takes time. But the message that voters have sent to government to "do less" is a good start toward motivating productivity and rekindling the American Dream.

Tone Nathan of Eugene, a freelance writer and political consultant, is the national director of media relations for the Libertarian Party.

Roger MacBride, 65, Libertarian And ‘Little House’ Heir, Is Dead

BY WOLFGANG SAXON

Roger Lea MacBride, who became guardian of Laura Ingalls Wilder’s "Little House" series of young-adult novels, who later drew on them in his own writing and who ran for President in 1976 as the Libertarian Party’s nominee, died on Sunday at his home in Miami Beach. He was 65.

The cause was heart failure, said his daughter, Abigail Adams MacBride.

Mr. MacBride, a lawyer who was also a writer of children’s books, became the guardian of the “Little House” series in 1968, upon the death of Mrs. Wilder’s daughter, Rose Lane. Mrs. Lane, an adherent of the laissez-faire objectivist philosophy of the novelist Ayn Rand, was an only child who herself was childless and who had adopted Mr. MacBride as a political disciple. He was her executor and sole heir.

The "Little House" books recalled Mrs. Wilder’s hardscrabble frontier childhood in the 1870’s and became a popular success during the Depression. Mr. MacBride helped to turn them into the hit television series “Little House on the Prairie” in the 1970’s. In recent years, he had begun writing his own series of historical young-adult novels, based on Mrs. Lane’s childhood on a Missouri farm.

Mr. MacBride was born in New Rochelle, N.Y., and graduated from Princeton University and Harvard Law School. He joined the Wall Street firm of White & Case but moved on to open a small practice in Vermont, where he served a term in the State Legislature.

Later, after moving to Virginia, he joined the anti-government Libertarian Party and drew national attention in 1972, when, as one of Virginia’s 12 Republican electors, he cast his vote not for Richard M. Nixon and Spiro T. Agnew but for the Libertarian candidates, giving them their only vote in the Electoral College.

As the Libertarian Presidential candidate four years later, he was on the ballot in 32 states and drew 173,011 votes.


His daughter said another book, “In the Land of the Big Red Apple,” was due out next month. Just before his death, she said, he had completed a fourth book in his HarperCollins series, tentatively titled “Beyond the Horizon,” and was working on several others.

Besides his daughter, who lives in Charlottesville, Va., and Miami Beach, Mr. MacBride is survived by two sisters: Patricia Hendrickson of Westport, Conn., and Pamela Colgate of Darien, Conn.
Webb seizes spotlight

A Libertarian Party activist since the 1970s, she believes government is best defined by what it should not do. Webb is often on the losing end of 4-1 council votes, citing philosophical reasons for opposing city action. She drives a station wagon with stickers reading: "Fear the government that fears your gun" and "Let's legalize freedom."

She believes that Masters acted not as a vigilante, but as a good citizen under attack.

She called him a "crime-fighting hero" in a letter to the editor. She invited him to move to Simi Valley. And she sent a 25-pound bag of rock salt to the Simi Valley Police Department, with a sign that said: "I wasn't joking!" The bag and the sign underscored her suggestion that police should shoot taggers with rock salt.

But I was joking," she now protests. Los Angeles prosecutors said Masters acted in self-defense and declined to file charges. Meanwhile, Webb became a wanted woman on radio and TV interviews.

During one of them, she said she carried a concealed weapon when she drove to Hollywood for her 14-year-old daughter Aubri's acting auditions. Webb does not have a permit to carry a concealed weapon.

IT'S YOUR CALL
Do you approve of Simi Valley Councilwoman Sandi Webb carrying a concealed gun without a permit?

Call 581-6776
Yes — ext. 9103
No — ext. 9104
Call in your comments before 9 a.m. Monday.

 acción de Simi Valley
councilwoman Sandi Webb carrying a concealed gun without a permit?

Call in your comments before 9 a.m. Monday.

This is where the rubber meets the road," she said. "We're not debating political issues. We're down in the trenches.

An architectural design consultant, she first felt the urge to run because of constant frustrations with the bureaucracy.

You can tell the decay of a civilization when you have to get more permits from people when you don't do anything — to do something, when it takes longer to go through the process than to do the project," she said.

She also was angered by a city plan to build offices and a restaurant at the Civic Center and lease them to private businesses.

"I wasn't joking," she now protests.

WEBB: Uses flair

"I think it's one reason she feels strongly about guns," says Aubri's acting auditions.

At that point, she thought: "Do you want it that bad? It's not worth my life. Take it." She did not report the crime, but said it's one reason she feels strongly about guns.

"It's one thing to say, 'I'm against violence.' But if you're a natural-born fighter, you have to do something. You can't just push it under the rug," she said.

SANDI WEBB

- Born: July 18, 1948, in Los Angeles.
- Education: A.A. degree, architecture, San Bernardino City College, 1975.
- Delegate: Of the state Libertarian Party.
- On graffiti: "We are all so sick of tagging: The mindless destruction of property."
- On concealed weapon permits: "They tell us we have the right to protect ourselves, but we are not allowed to carry anything with which to do it."

"You can't go around picking and choosing which laws you're going to follow and be seen as a legalistic person," Webb said.

"I was joking," she now protests.

The family lived on welfare. Sandi Webb's eyes mist as she gazes at her "Star Trek" poster.

"Him and Spock!" she blurts out, pointing to her "Star Trek" poster. But it was Webb's choice of another hero — William Masters, a San Fernando Valley man who said he shot two graffiti vandals in self-defense — that has thrust her into a national debate on guns.

Webb, 46, has long demonstrated a non-conformist streak. In 1990 she conducted part of her City Council campaign — her first bid for office — on roller skates.

She pauses a moment.

Webb, however, said she is as rationalistic as Mr. Spock.

"I took an oath of office to uphold the Constitution," she said. "I believe some laws aren't constitutional."

Political Maverick: Simi Valley City Councilwoman Sandi Webb stands in her City Hall office next to a poster of a man who stood up to the Chinese tanks near Tiansanmen Square. Webb calls him a hero.

A Libertarian Party activist since the 1970s, she believes government is best defined by what it should not do. Webb is often on the losing end of 4-1 council votes, citing philosophical reasons for opposing city action. She drives a station wagon with stickers reading: "Fear the government that fears your gun" and "Let's legalize freedom."

She believes that Masters acted not as a vigilante, but as a good citizen under attack.

She called him a "crime-fighting hero" in a letter to the editor. She invited him to move to Simi Valley. And she sent a 25-pound bag of rock salt to the Simi Valley Police Department, with a sign that said: "I wasn't joking!" The bag and the sign underscored her suggestion that police should shoot taggers with rock salt.

But I was joking," she now protests. Los Angeles prosecutors said Masters acted in self-defense and declined to file charges. Meanwhile, Webb became a wanted woman on radio and TV interviews.

During one of them, she said she carried a concealed weapon when she drove to Hollywood for her 14-year-old daughter Aubri's acting auditions. Webb does not have a permit to carry a concealed weapon.