

Don't be disheartened by opinion polls or the outcome of elections. History has *never* been made by the majority and it never will be. — L. Neil Smith



The Birmingham Libertarian

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**Double Header featuring Jimmy Blake
and Matthew Givens at Jim N' Nicks on the 14th!**



Jimmy Blake and Matthew Givens will both be at Jim N' Nick's at our August meeting. These two top-rated guests will be sure to turn out an SRO crowd, so please be on time to get a seat. Dr. Blake will be speaking on the proposed Masada plant, Birmingham's sci-fi project to recycle garbage into fuel. The taxpayers will take all the risks, of course. And find



out about Matthew Givens' race against the powerful president of the Public Service Commission, Jim Sullivan. His drawing 20% of the vote will secure us major party status in November's elections. Mr. Givens is touring the state, and this may be his only opportunity to speak to us. The press has been invited, so your attendance will be greatly appreciated.

The Greater Birmingham Libertarians

David Mitchell, Coordinator

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Birmingham, AL 35205

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Controversy Returns to Birmingham with Masada Plant

Another big plan has come to Birmingham. With this "big plan" comes promises of clean air, clean water, and all of our garbage just goes away.

With such big promises certain big hard facts need not be of concern.

A facility of the sort proposed has never been built and furthermore is unproven technology. We are a test project, paid for with our tax dollars. Any claims of saving the city of Birmingham money are a complete fantasy.

According to an early report done for consultant Malcolm Pirnie Inc. garbage costs will rise by \$6 MILLION per year. Yes, Virginia that means you and I get to fork over a little bit more.

How is all this supposed to work? The big plan at this time is for Birmingham and surrounding communities to bring their garbage to Masada and pay Masada a high \$41.50 per ton for "disposal". After Masada gets the garbage they will use a unique process to produce ethanol. Which they will then sell for a profit. Yes, they get to keep the money. Now this doesn't sound so bad does it? Except for the minor detail of who gets to pay for the plant? Well seems as though the folks at Masada are going to be taking out a small loan of \$183 million with you and me acting as co-signers. Now if you have ever co-signed on a loan, you know that you better have a good idea as to the honesty and integrity of your buddy taking out the loan. So if they screw up guess who gets....well you get the idea.

Masada also gets the land for the plant (also known as our western landfill) for \$1 per year for 99 years. But wait, there's more! We will add, at no additional charge, our EASTERN landfill into the deal. Nice of us, don't you think?

So, not only does Masada get the land for virtually nothing, we get to co-sign on their loan for the plant, we pay them for the raw materials, and they get the equipment at the landfill for free!

So what do WE get in the deal? Masada claims we will not only get rid of our garbage, but it will also reduce our dependence on the landfill and "clean up our air and water," according to an ad run by the corporation. But it somehow seems we could get cleaner air and cleaner water for a lot less than what this is going to cost us....

Some Thoughts on Deregulation of Utilities

Cleaner air comes from no one getting away with polluting. Take, for example, that Alabama Power gets away with dumping tons and tons of sulfur dioxide from their coal-fired plants into the air each year. They buy certificates from the EPA, all nice and legal. Sulfur dioxide, of course, is one of the primary components to creating ozone. If we are really concerned about ozone then everyone needs to be treated the same way if they pollute — no exceptions!

The need for competition between different power companies with different means of producing power comes into the equation. Delivery is now technologically feasible, so environmentally safe production of electricity should be a real concern for anyone wishing to enter into the competition. One of the facets of the competition would be minimal pollution. People would prefer to get their power as cheaply as possible. The other preference might be in the cleanest manner possible. There is little motivation at this time to run an environmentally safe power plant outside of EPA rules and regulations (other than not wanting to annoy the environmentalists too much...)

Cleaner water comes from no one getting to dump their wastes into public waters. Cleaner water also comes from competition between different water suppliers for our money. Open up the market and someone else might arrive with a better way of producing cleaner water and cheaper water. Those are the benefits of competition. Anyone else claiming anything about the need for safety and or responsibility is merely trying to stifle the market.

So we can get clean air and water cheaply or expensively. Which do you prefer?

Harry Browne catches Pat Buchanan in new national poll

WASHINGTON, DC — Libertarian presidential candidate Harry Browne has tied Pat Buchanan in the latest national polls — and hopes to capitalize on that surprising development by catching Ralph Nader next, the Libertarian Party announced today.

"Harry Browne, the surging stealth candidate, has done what most political pundits said was impossible: He's turned the presidential election into a five-way race," said Steve Dasbach, the party's national director.

"Harry Browne has caught up with Pat Buchanan, whose campaign is leaking air like a punctured Zepelin. And Ralph Nader better start looking into the rearview mirror of his sputtering Corvair — because Harry Browne is aiming to pass him next."

According to a new national public opinion poll released by Rasmussen Research this weekend, Browne has tied probable Reform Party candidate Buchanan at 1.6% among likely voters. Over the past month, Buchanan's numbers have been stagnant or dropping, while Browne's support has increased as he began running national television ads.

Browne is also just a few percentage points behind Nader, who stands at 4.0% in the same poll.

The Rasmussen poll represents a three-day rolling average of 2,250 likely voters — and is significant because Rasmussen Research is widely considered the most accurate election polling company in America.

The Rasmussen numbers will surprise most political pundits, said Dasbach, since they show that Harry Browne — a candidate who has received practically no media coverage and who is still unknown by two-thirds of the public — has caught up with Pat Buchanan, a politician and TV commentator who has been in the public eye for three decades.

"These poll results show that Harry Browne is the candidate of the future, and that his campaign message of individual empowerment, free enterprise, social tolerance, and free trade is starting to catch on with a new generation of Americans," he said.

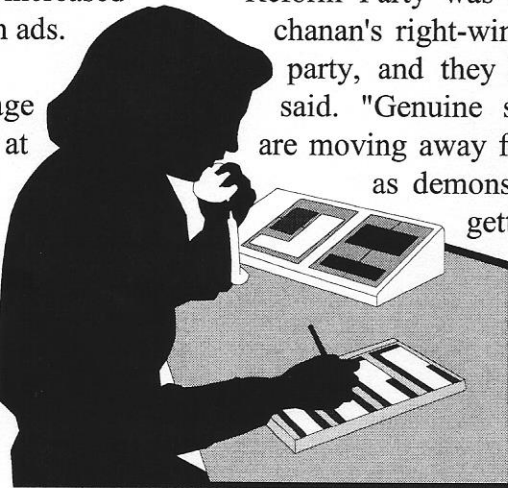
"By contrast, Pat Buchanan is a candidate of the past. His message of fear, intolerance, and government control doesn't play well in the Internet age. And by the time the Reform Party's 12-round national convention brawl is over this coming weekend, we hope that Harry Browne will have pulled ahead of him for good."

Where is Browne's growing support coming from?

Anecdotal evidence suggests it comes from disillusioned Reform Party voters, conservative voters who are dismayed at George W. Bush's embrace of big government, and independent voters who want fresh, new solutions, said Dasbach.

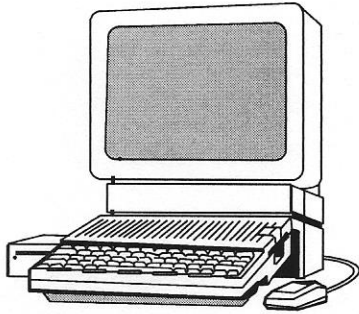
"The libertarian-leaning, Jesse Ventura wing of the Reform Party was left out in the cold when Buchanan's right-wing brigade seized control of the party, and they have found an alternative," he said. "Genuine small-government conservatives are moving away from Bush and towards Browne, as demonstrated by the 21% support he's getting in online conservative polls like ConservativeHQ.com. And independent voters, hungry for the positive Libertarian message of fiscal responsibility and social tolerance, are finding a like-minded candidate in Harry Browne."

"You add up these constituencies, and it helps to explain why the Libertarian is moving up, and Pat Buchanan is sinking. Harry Browne still has a long way to go, but, as this new Rasmussen poll indicates, he's on the move."



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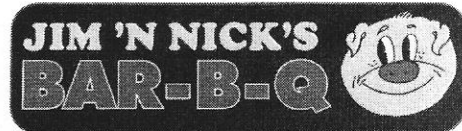
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The Greater Birmingham Libertarian Supper Club is open to everyone. We discuss issues of the day, politics, taxes, and personal freedom. Meetings are held the second Monday of the month unless there is a holiday, when meetings are moved to the third Monday. We begin at 6:30 (dinner 6:45) unless otherwise noted. There is no charge to attend and contributions are gladly accepted. And of course, bring a friend. This month's meeting is being held at::



Jim 'N Nick's Bar-B-Q

220 Oxmoor Road

Just off I-65

942-3336

September's meeting on the 11th!

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