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LP reaches out to conservatives at CPAC event in Washington

By J. Daniel Cloud
LP NEWS EDITOR

The Libertarian Party was a co-sponsor of the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) on Feb. 17-19 at the Ronald Reagan Building in Washington, D.C. — using the opportunity to reach out to other organizations, to get ideas for outreach and to tell fiscal conservatives that there is an alternative to the Republican Party.

More than 90 organizations sponsored the event, including the Objectivist Center, Americans for Tax Reform, the NRA, the National Taxpayers Union, the ACLU, Heritage Foundation, Bureaucracy Watch, the Drug Policy Alliance and a host of others.

According to CPAC's Web site, the event is the nation's oldest and largest gathering of conservatives, having been held annually for more than 30 years.

"While we aren't aligned with the political views of these other groups on all subjects, the other groups didn't necessarily line up on every issue, either," said LP Executive Director Joe Seehusen.



■ LP Executive Director Joe Seehusen and LP donor Michael McKay (above, left) take a welcome opportunity to speak with Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform, at a CPAC reception. (Photo contributed by CPAC.) LP Development Coordinator Jessica Neno Wilson and Affiliate Services Coordinator Samuel New (above, right) assist new member Jason Rosenfeld, who joined the LP after stopping by the party's booth. More than 100 people requested more info about the party during the conference. (Photo by LP intern John St. Leger.)



"By taking part in this CPAC conference, we hope to show that Libertarians are the true fiscal conservatives — much more so than the

Republicans are."

Speakers at the conference included libertarian-friendly people such as former U.S. Rep. Bob Barr of Georgia, Grover Norquist of Americans for Tax Reform and Adam Thierer of the Cato Institute, as well as such notables as Karl Rove, author Ann Coulter, Ohio Secretary of State Ken Blackwell, Pat Buchanan and Newt Gingrich. Vice President

Dick Cheney spoke at the presidential banquet.

Sam New, who organized the LP's activities at the conference, added, "The CPAC conference is one of the biggest outreach exhibitions of political action groups in the Washington, D.C. area, with about 4,500 people attending."

"I feel we were very well received," New said. "We met a lot of

people who are either supportive of our ideas or who simply support having an alternative to the big government ideal put forward by the Republicans and Democrats."

Seehusen agreed, saying conference attendees were "surprised, but glad to see us."

"I think this is a big step forward for the LP," he said. "Our profile

See **LP REACHES OUT** Page 4

Oklahoma LP case heard by U.S. Supreme Court

The U.S. Supreme Court debated Jan. 19 whether voters registered with one political party should be allowed to vote in another party's primary elections. The case (*Clingman v. Beaver*) stems from an election lawsuit brought by the Oklahoma Libertarian Party against the state — which is one of 24 states that have closed or semi-closed primaries.

Oklahoma Libertarians are requesting the right to hold an open primary in the state, which currently permits only closed or semi-closed primaries. If they prevail, qualified parties that hold primaries will be able to decide whether all registered voters may participate, or whether the primary should be restricted only to voters registered for that party.

The court has already said that states may not force political parties to accept primary votes from people registered in other parties — leading to the abolishment of the "blanket primaries" in California and Washington state. The question now is what should be done if a party wants to accept votes from those registered with other parties.

"We're taking the position that it's our business, not the government's, as to who votes in the candidate selection process," said Richard Winger, an LP member and publisher of *Ballot Access News*, which examines ballot access for third parties.

See **U.S. SUPREME** Page 3

State leaders discuss strategy

Representatives of 24 state LP affiliates attended the annual conference of the Libertarian Party State Leadership Alliance in St. Louis on Jan. 21-23, featuring a forum with elected Libertarians.

A loosely organized group, these leaders of state parties have agreed not to have an established membership or to burden themselves with rules. Rather, they emphasize making positive changes in their respective groups so that the party as a whole can become more successful.

"We hope to change the atmosphere so that when Libertarians discuss successes, they don't have

to speak in internal terms," said Mark Nelson, treasurer of the Libertarian National Committee and state chair in Iowa. "We want instead to look to actual, real-world change and events."

One way to make that happen is by presenting a unified message both inside the LP and to the outside world, Nelson said.

"For example, several states have established themselves as friends of small business, as the sole party that stands up for the rights of small businessmen," he said, encouraging others to consider focusing on similar efforts. "By singing as a chorus, we're more likely to be heard."

In a discussion of state party Web sites, Missouri LP Webmaster Glenn Nielsen noted that Libertarians can become better organized and more visible by using the Internet to better advantage.

Nielsen pointed to several candidates' and affiliates' sites that had a big spike in traffic the day before the November elections, saying that events of any sort — the bigger the better, of course — can drive traffic to Web sites.

Web sites can be frustrating and even divisive, with a primary culprit in negative reactions to the Libertarian Party's sites being discussion

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NEWS BRIEFS

Taxpayer Bill of Rights opposed by LP

What good is a Taxpayer Bill of Rights that allows the state government to accuse local governments of fiscal irresponsibility while simultaneously forcing them to spend more money than they have?

That question led members of the St. Croix Valley Liberty organization to oppose the Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) amendment to the Wisconsin Constitution that state legislators are currently considering.

The amendment was initially conceived to limit the growth of state and local government spending. It would require any local government to hold a referendum before increasing taxes, said Craig Mohn, chairman of St. Croix Valley Liberty.

"The problem is that this bill unfairly blames local governments for fiscal irresponsibility when it's actually state mandates on local government ... that make the current tax system unfair," he said.

Mohn noted that "a lot of other Libertarians will disagree with our decision to oppose TABOR, saying that any kind of low tax legislation is better than nothing," and acknowledged that such legislation has received hearty support from Libertarians in other states.

"Wisconsin certainly needs a major revision of its tax system, but the proposed amendment would be only a minor alteration, not the major change we need," he said. "[And] they've made so many exemptions as to who would have to follow it; almost every group that collects taxes would be able to opt out of this. It wouldn't fix anything."

LPIN director named press club president

Brad Klopfenstein, executive director of the Indiana LP since 2000, has been named president of the Indianapolis Press Club, a group of which he has been a member since 2001.

The club is made up of members of the press, people involved in public relations, legislators and other elected officials, lobbyists and legislative staffers — giving Klopfenstein a chance to get to know them on a personal level.

"When I joined, I made it a point to have lunch at the club at least twice a week, just to get some face time with the state's movers and shakers, and also to keep visible with the press," he said. "It worked."

Soon after joining, Klopfenstein was invited to help with a major fundraising event. His participation gave him the chance "to show that Libertarians are real people and can be counted on to do what they say they are going to do."

And in the fall of 2001, he was asked by the press club president if he would consider being a candidate for a position on the club's board of directors. When he ran the idea past Indiana LP Chair Mark Rutherford, Rutherford said something

along the lines of "I'll fire you if you turn this down." Klopfenstein was subsequently elected to serve a two-year term on the board — serving from 2002-2003. He was elected vice president of the group for 2004, then became president for 2005.

"My involvement in this club has been great for the LP," Klopfenstein said. "It has been a great opportunity to get to know reporters. Now that they are comfortable with me, they are far more likely to call me for quotes on stories that they are working on."

Four-year slide in LP membership ends

The Libertarian Party's membership grew in 2004, ending a four-year-long slump. Membership at the end of 2003 was 21,043, a number that grew to 22,177 by the end of 2004 — more than 5 percent growth.

This number includes both formal members — those who have signed the party's pledge — and those who subscribe to *LP News* but who have not signed the pledge to become full members.

"I think this bodes well for our party's future," LP Executive Director Joe Seehusen said, noting that the growth is due in large part to the donor-funded Operation Welcome Back, an outreach program inviting lapsed members to rejoin the party.

"Last year alone, 1,943 former members rejoined the party due to that program," he said. He expects the growth pattern to continue.

"We have a program in place to reach out and get new members from variety of sources, some on the left and some on the right," he said. "We're going to continue to explore looking to bring in registered Libertarians — as well as people from our natural allies including the National Taxpayers Union, Citizens against Government Waste and the Institute for Justice."

"We're also asking people to join us as we work to challenge the Patriot Act and repeal the death tax. It's going to be a great year."



■ Klopfenstein

Fight won against political advertising law in Alabama

The city attorney in Fairhope, Ala., recently told city police officers to stop enforcing a city law restricting campaign advertising. And other laws regarding political advertising will soon be reviewed to see if they are overly restrictive, thanks to activity by an LP officer in Fairhope.

Fairhope city officials have promised to revisit their laws regarding political advertising, after James Hines was ordered to stop putting campaign fliers on car windshields in the city last fall.

Hines is the Libertarian Party district chair in South Alabama and a resident of Fairhope, a suburb of Mobile.

Hines was ordered by a police officer to cease his canvassing efforts in September. In November he complained to the city council, asking them to tell him exactly what law he had broken by passing out campaign materials for Libertarian presidential candidate Michael Badnarik and congressional write-in candidate Dick Coffee.

Upon hearing Hines' complaint, the city council threw the question to City Attorney Marion "Tut" Wynne, who later said that there is, in fact, a law that prohibits distrib-

uting fliers as Hines was doing.

Wynne noted, however, that the law was not generally applied.

"When Mr. Wynne responded to me, he said that the city does have some leniency in enforcing these laws," Hines said. "But they have agreed to suspend enforcement of this law for the time being, while things get sorted out."

The city council has promised to "appoint a committee to look at all laws pertaining to political advertising, with the idea of amending those that are in conflict with constitutionally protected liberties," Hines added.

"The day after I made my protest to the Fairhope City Council, Police Chief Chris Browning said in a newspaper article that it was absurd that any of his officers would stop me or anybody else from distributing political fliers. What's absurd is that he's trying to pretend that nothing even happened."

Hines said he didn't object to being questioned for putting fliers on cars, because he understood how his actions could be viewed with suspicion.

However, the police officer told him it was illegal to distribute political literature in Fairhope, and

"he gave me the impression that if I continued to distribute the literature, I would be inviting arrest," Hines said.

In any event, the city attorney has now told the police chief that the law shouldn't be enforced because of its potential for selective enforcement and because of its apparent violation of First Amendment rights.

Now that the issue has the attention of the city attorney and change is promised, Hines said he has no intention of legal action against the city.

"I am thoroughly convinced that if I were to proceed with legal action against the city, I would prevail," Hines said.

"And certainly liberty and our rights are worth fighting for. But I want to give the committee time to review these laws without having their views be unduly biased by resentment of me."

"For the time being, rather than pushing the issue of my personal complaint, I've decided to just get out of the way, given that they are interested in appointing this committee to review the laws and based on the extremely helpful demeanor Tut Wynne has adopted."

LP joins fight to end death tax

Libertarian Party Executive Director Joe Seehusen was recently invited to join the American Family Business Institute's Death Tax Repeal Working Group, whose goal is to help all those advocating the end of the death tax become more informed and productive in their efforts.

"Death taxes — including estate taxes and gift taxes — are an immoral assault on our American way of life," Seehusen said. "Hardworking Americans work their whole lives to be able to leave behind a legacy to their children and their loved ones. And then, at their most vulnerable point, the Washington fat cats snatch it away from them

and flush it down the drain."

"I'm looking forward to working with this group, to explore ways the Libertarian Party can contribute to the effort to end the death tax. Many Americans spend their lifetimes paying taxes and still manage to save money to provide for their children and grandchildren after their deaths. But when they die, 40-50 percent of their savings are confiscated by the federal government."

Dick Patten, executive director of the American Family Business Institute, explained that the organization "exists for one reason: to kill the death tax. We believe there should be no taxation without res-

piration."

Patten said he and others with the institute are interested in having the Libertarian Party involved in this fight because of the party's emphasis on taxes.

"The death tax is the great barrier for a family farm or other family business to transcend to the next generation," he said. "And I know that lowering taxes is certainly a part of what the Libertarian Party is interested in. It seems like a good match."

The American Family Business Institute is pushing a bill it hopes to have approved by the current Congress — H.R. 64, which was intro-

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The Mission Statement of the Libertarian Party: "To move public policy in a libertarian direction by building a political party that elects Libertarians to public office."

SCLP opposes seatbelt bill

The South Carolina House of Representatives is considering a bill that would make seatbelt use a matter of primary enforcement — meaning the police would be able to pull drivers over for no reason other than the fact that they aren't buckled up. The state LP is a primary opponent of the legislation, which has already been approved by the Senate.

Currently, South Carolina law allows adult drivers to be given a ticket for not wearing a seatbelt only if they are stopped for another traffic offense or if children in the car are not legally restrained by seat belts or child safety seats.

The state Senate approved the bill on Feb. 2, but it must still be approved by the House and the governor.

"I can think of no other law that — through my compliance — could actually cause me increased injury and even death," said Ed Haas, press secretary for the state LP, in a January presentation to the state Senate Transportation Committee.

While seat belts do "reduce injury and prevent death in many traffic accidents ... it is equally undisputable that the same properly

worn seatbelt on some occasions actually causes injury, increases the severity of injuries and even causes death," Haas said.

"Given these circumstances, it should be obvious that all seatbelt laws are an unwarranted intrusion by government into the personal lives of citizens. Also, the use of a seatbelt is no real guarantee of safety. While some people might be saved in certain kinds of traffic accidents using a seatbelt, there is ample evidence that in other kinds of accidents some people have been more seriously injured and even killed only because of seatbelt use.

"The fact is, the government has no constitutional authority to willingly and knowingly maim and kill some people through forced seatbelt use, just because the government hopes others will be saved merely by chance."

The bill's chief sponsor, Senate Transportation Committee chairman Greg Ryberg, explained that in his opinion, "If you save 300 lives, that's a positive step by government," according to an Associated Press report.

But attempting to save lives by forcing people to buckle their seat-

belts is irresponsible, Haas argued. "The government has no right to take chances with a person's body. Any medical professional who would attempt to force a person — without full consent — to use a device, take a drug or medicine, or have surgery to protect that person's health, would be subject to full prosecution of the law.

"As long as the opportunity exists for a seatbelt to cause me injury rather than keep me safe; for as long as the possibility exists for the seatbelt to cause me death rather than prolong my life; for as long as these possibilities exist, the government has no right whatsoever to mandate that I use or not use my seatbelt."

The bill has been sent to the state House of Representatives, where it is expected soon to be debated by the Education and Public Works Committee before going to the full House.

A similar bill was approved last year by the House before going to the state Senate, but never made it to the Senate floor for a vote. This year, it was approved by the Senate on a 31-11 vote, before going to the House.

U.S. Supreme Court hears OKLP case

Continued from Page 1

"In Oklahoma, the two older parties have written incredibly hostile ballot access laws in an attempt to keep their competitors small and weak. Having an open primary is a way to get more people involved in our party."

In Oklahoma, a third party needs to collect more than 51,000 signatures to get on the ballot, a feat no third party was able to achieve in 2004.

The LP's case was originally filed in 2000. The party lost in U.S. District Court but won in the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals — leading the state to appeal to the Supreme Court.

"This is very exciting, because it's the first time the U.S. Supreme Court has taken an election-law case in which we are the primary plaintiff," Winger said. "We've tried at least 20 times before."

One issue the justices raised against Oklahoma's ballot access laws is that the state restricts changing voter registration. It's allowed, but must be done about two months before the election — when many people haven't yet started paying attention to elections. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor referred to this as "burdensome," and "an impossibly short window."

Political parties in Oklahoma have the right to choose whether or not to allow Independent voters to cast votes in their primaries, but the LP is the only party that allows it, said Chris Powell of the Oklahoma LP.

"I think the Supreme Court took


the case because it will give them a chance to really nail down what is constitutional as far as primaries go," Powell said.

"To be honest, I'm not sure why the state of Oklahoma appealed the

10th Circuit Court ruling, except that the political establishment here tends to try to bully and repress just about everybody and they are particularly jealous of any attempt to open up the electoral process."



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LOOKING BACK

EDITOR'S NOTE: LP News has been published continuously since 1972. Each issue, we showcase a few top stories from 10, 20 and 30 years ago.

March-April 1975

HEADLINE: ROBERT MEIER APPOINTED AS HUTCHINSON'S SUCCESSOR

"National Director of the Libertarian Party Ned Hutchinson suffered a fatal coronary while playing tennis in Sacramento in late March," just weeks after being named director, LP News reported. The national executive committee appointed Bob Meier, former national finance chairman, as Hutchinson's replacement. Meier had been a member of the executive committee since 1972.

HEADLINE: MACBRIDE THROWS HAT IN RING FOR 1976 RACE

Roger MacBride — the Virginia elector who left the Republican Party to cast his electoral college vote for 1972 LP presidential nominee John Hospers — announced his candidacy for the LP nomination for 1976. MacBride went on to receive 174,199 votes as the LP's candidate in the 1976 presidential election.

"We shall never compromise one iota of our principles, and with that as our burning guide we will woo liberals, we will woo conservatives, and we will woo non-politicals," he was quoted as saying at the California LP's annual convention, when he announced his candidacy. "If we cannot win them entirely to our libertarian philosophy and party, we will make them supporters of our cause. ... It's enough that they learn about our approach and in effect say, 'Hey, that makes sense.'"

March-April 1985

HEADLINE: LP VICTORIES IN SPRING RACES

"Two LP members won elections to local offices in recent spring elections, bringing the current nationwide total of LP officeholders to 51."

HEADLINE: MARROU MAKES MARK ON ALASKA LEGISLATURE

"Libertarian Alaska State Representative Andre Marrou, elected ... last year, is making good on his pledge to act as the 'conscience' of the state legislature."

In the first months of his term, Marrou filed 20 bills for which he was the prime sponsor, including proposals to repeal a legislative pay raise and to limit state and federal government participation in businesses. He also co-sponsored 20 bills, including proposals to limit salaries for certain public employees and to exempt some food sales from regulation.

March 1995

HEADLINE: REP. MCCLARIN RESIGNS IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

"The Libertarian Party's recently elected New Hampshire State Rep. Jim McClarin has resigned his office. McClarin moved to another town in the state, and 'that disqualifies me from representing the district,' he said.

"We are obviously disappointed," said Jeff Emery, state LP chair. "It's difficult to elect Libertarians, and when we do elect one it is a source of great pride to the party."

"McClarin's resignation leaves Rep. Don Gorman as the sole Libertarian representative in the state house."

McClarin explained that he hadn't intended to get elected — that he had signed up solely as a "paper candidate" and later decided to take the race seriously.

HEADLINE: WSJ HIGHLIGHTS LP'S GROWING APPEAL

The Wall Street Journal featured the LP and the "growing appeal" of libertarianism on the front page of the Jan. 20, 1995, issue — demonstrating "once again the realization of many that the libertarian philosophy is rapidly gaining popularity with the American public," LP News reported.

"Whatever the cause, the signs of a drift toward libertarianism are everywhere," the WSJ story claimed. "And the tiny Libertarian Party, though widely viewed as a minor political force, has experienced an 11 percent jump in both contributors (to 20,000) and enrolled members (to 11,000) in the past year. ... A sign of the times: The LP is about to double its national staff and move out of its current, modest headquarters on Capitol Hill. The Libertarians' new home: the Watergate office complex."

LP reaches out to conservatives

Continued from Page 1

has been low for some time, and we were able to showcase our party in a positive light to many people and groups, including a large number of students and small business owners.

"As I spoke with representatives of various groups, they frequently noted that their belief systems include libertarian ideas, especially regarding their support of limited power for government and appreciation for individual rights. And many of them stopped by our booth to learn more."

The party's booth was manned by LP headquarters staff, including New, Development Coordinator Jessica Neno Wilson, development associates Kelly Kohut and Margaret Taylor, office assistant Matthew Dailey, intern John St. Leger and volunteer Pere Garlinghouse.

They handed out copies of *LP News*, the "New Vision" brochure and issue-specific brochures about gun rights, taxes and ending the welfare state, Wilson said.

"We also received requests for information from more than 100 people," she added.

"Both Sam New and I were also able to meet staffers with other organizations and spoke with many students who had never before encountered the LP."

The opportunity to meet people who otherwise would have been unfamiliar with libertarianism was a primary reason for the party to take part in CPAC, Seehusen said.

Michael McKay, an LP member and donor from Fairfield, Iowa, attended several events with Seehusen. He noted that "as the conference went on, more and more people kept coming up to us, saying they're leaning toward libertarian principles."

Wilson said she spoke with many young people who "call themselves conservative, but are learning that they are really libertarian."

**WE WERE ABLE
to find common
ground, to talk
about ways we can
work together and
help each other.**

—JOE SEEHUSEN

"Many people said 'I'm with the Libertarians on everything but the immigration issue,'" she said — to which she responded, "Wouldn't it be better to be with a political party whose platform you agree with on 80 percent of the issues, rather than with a party with whom you disagree on so many other issues?"

This concept had apparently not occurred to most of them, she added, noting that a number of requests for more information came

from people who acknowledged that they already agree with the party's stance on many issues.

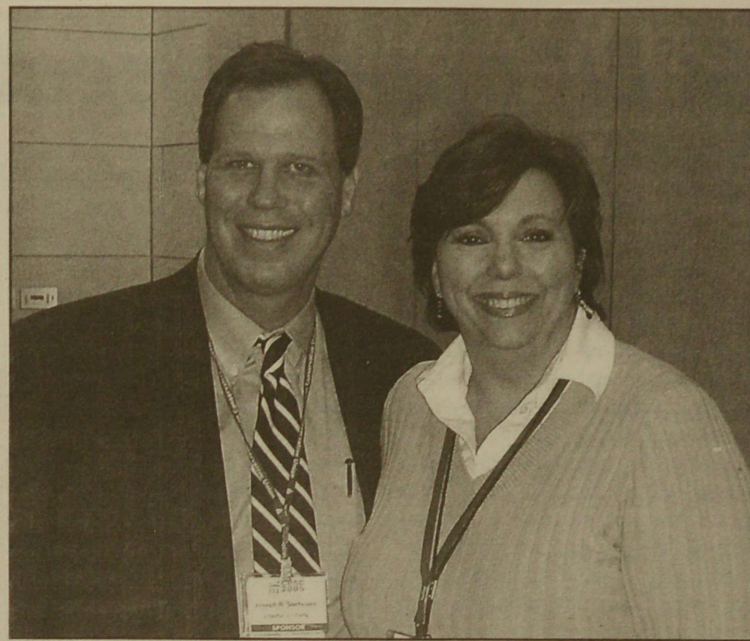
Communications Director George Getz also had an opportunity to discuss the LP's stance on the immigration issue.

Getz spoke with FoxNews.com reporter Kelly Vlahos, "who frequently calls to get an LP perspective for her stories," he said. "Kelly was doing an article about President Bush's 'guest worker' program, which would grant temporary work visas to some immigrants. She was having difficulty finding conservatives in favor of Bush's proposal."

During the interview, Getz was able to explain that Libertarians "know that immigration control is just another big-government program that can't work. In the process of rounding up a few thousand immigrants, the government will end up harassing employers, breaking up families and forcing every American to carry a national ID card."

And those are some of the issues Libertarians were able to focus on at CPAC, Getz said. "Libertarians support the right to work, we're pro-family, and we're against a national ID card. On those issues, we can appeal to the true conservatives, who have been abandoned by the big-government neo-conservatives."

In the same vein, Seehusen spent about 20 minutes on the air with Martha Zoller, a talk show host with Gainesville, Ga.-based radio station WDUN, telling an estimated 350,000 listeners "that George Bush



■ LP Executive Director Joe Seehusen spoke with radio talk show host Martha Zoller — and with Zoller's listening audience of about 350,000 around Gainesville, Ga. — during the CPAC conference. (Photo by LP News Editor J. Daniel Cloud)

is a socialist, and the Democrat and Republican parties are two rival socialist factions, vying for your money and freedom."

At the same time, Seehusen said, he and other Libertarians "were able to strengthen old connections with such groups as the Leadership Institute and the Americans for Tax Reform."

"Over the course of these three days, we were also able to build some new relationships for the party, by spending time with people like Wayne LaPierre of the NRA and with leaders of many other organizations," Seehusen said. "We were able to find common ground, to talk

about ways we can work together and help each other.

"This is the first time we've done a function like this in some time, and we put up a good presentation, both through our booth and through personal interactions with a wide variety of individuals.

"But it was also beneficial for us to study the other organizations that were there, to benchmark successful groups and see how they reach out to the public. By seeing how other groups successfully market themselves, I think we learned a great deal about how the LP can more effectively reach out to conservatives."

Conference provides state leaders a forum for ideas

Continued from Page 1

groups and e-mail lists, said Brad Klopfenstein, executive director of the Indiana LP.

"One of the first things I did when I became the Indiana ED was to eliminate all state LP-sponsored discussion lists, and it did wonders for harmony," he said.

If state and local affiliates choose

to keep their e-mail discussion lists, it's important to remember that they should be moderated and kept on topic, Nielsen said.

Campus organizing

"I know how to build a campus organization," LNC member Jim Lark said during a presentation on reaching out to college students. "How-

ever, I do not know how to build a campus organization in a way that does not involve hard work."

Central to the effort to start a campus Libertarian organization is one concept, Lark explained. "If you're going to start one group, start two — one that is explicitly Libertarian and one that deals with libertarian ideas."

Later, Lark joined National LP Youth Caucus leader Trevor Southerland in a more in-depth discussion of campus organizing with several conference attendees who were particularly interested in that topic.

Raiser's Edge

LNC Chair Michael Dixon was invited to address the state leadership about Raiser's Edge, the national LP's new database — freely admitting the conversion to the database has been fraught with difficulty.

"We could have waited six more months, then six more, as we tried to get it set up perfectly," Dixon said. "But recognizing that we get distracted by life as it happens, we knew we had to get it started. If we had waited until it was perfect, we could have gotten to 2006 or 2008 and still be thinking, 'It sure would be nice to have a good database.'"

Candidates forum

One of the most attention-grabbing sessions in the conference was a forum with elected officials. The panel featured Ben Brandon, who was recently elected as county executive in Dade County, Ga.; Beatrice Jones, who serves as a city council member in Hardeeville, S.C.; and the Oregon LP's Adam Mayer, who talked about what state affiliates can do to help candidates.

Many candidates cause themselves trouble by focusing on issues that don't pertain to the office they're seeking, Brandon said.

"In local races, focus on things that you can actually influence," he stressed. "And it would help if we could start trying to find ways to get people to agree with us, instead of giving them reasons to disagree with us right off the bat."

"What's important is this," Jones added saying, "Do they know you? Do they believe in you? And can they trust you? If the answers are yes, I don't think the party name makes any difference. What matters is the values people have. Push libertarian values, not Libertarian candidates."

Mayer added, "When it's a non-partisan race and there's no party affiliation, people look more closely

at the actual issues. They're not focusing on the label."

Another thing to remember about getting Libertarians elected to office is that the person must be electable, Brandon said. "You can't take people with zero experience, put them in office and expect them to do the job. You need to make sure they can do the job they're running for."

Libertarians also shouldn't expect immediate change when someone is elected to office, Jones said.

"You can't put a Libertarian in office and expect him to start applying Libertarian principles to everything," she emphasized. "You have to plan, build coalitions and convince other people. Then you can get something accomplished."

Other speakers included Mark Rutherford, who talked about the Indiana LP's small business initiative; National LP Communications Director George Getz, who led a workshop on writing press releases; LNC representative M Carling and LP legal counselor Bill Hall, who talked about campaign finance law; LNC representative George Squyres, who talked about the ongoing LP platform changes; and LNC representative Dan Karlan, who led discussions on conventions and ballot access.



■ South Carolina LP Chair Chris Panos, Monroe County (Ind.) LP Chair Margaret Fette and Dade County (Ga.) Executive Ben Brandon talk between sessions at the state leadership conference in St. Louis. (Photo by LP News Editor J. Daniel Cloud)

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- Treasure Map for finding people who urgently want freedom. (p.83)
- One deadly mistake that almost every libertarian makes — and how to avoid it. (p.96)
- "You know enough about libertarianism to buy it, but do you know enough to sell it?" (p.126)
- When to "Save Your Breath." (p.165)
- The Biggest Libertarian Communication Turnoff. (p.171)
- How to handle "The Toughest Prospects: Family and Friends." (p.185)
- Danger: "Counterfeit Libertarianism." (p.210)
- "The Unsettling Question Libertarians Almost Never Ask." (p.236)

And much more!

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"If you knew what I know about *Secrets of Libertarian Persuasion*, nothing on earth would stop you from ordering your copy today. If you want to make the world libertarian, this book was written for you." — **Carla Howell, President, Center for Small Government**

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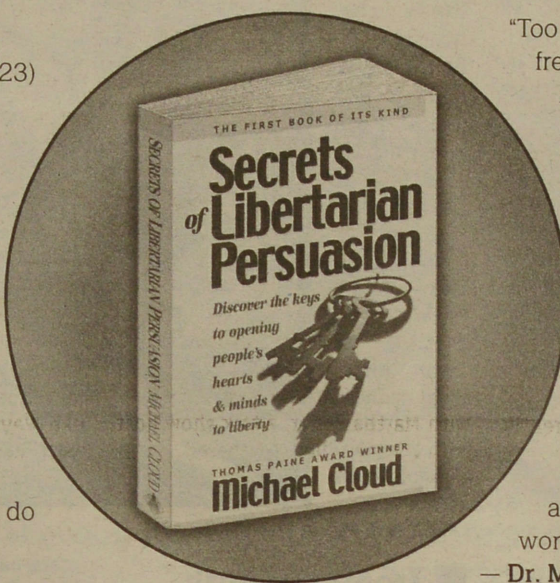
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[Continued]



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TALKING POINTS

Ayn Rand, privatizing roads and taxes as a laughing matter

FCC complaints

Mediaweek finds that 99.8 percent of all indecency complaints received by the FCC in 2003 came from one group, the Parents Television Council.

—JEFF A. TAYLOR
Reason
March 2005

Rent-a-road

"If you believe that, I have a bridge to sell you in Brooklyn" — so goes the old saw.

Now, George Pataki may actually be willing to sell you that span. Pataki ... has introduced a proposal that may see many of the state's roads, bridges and highways and byways wind up in private hands.

Newsday reported Thursday private firms could soon begin "buying" state transportation venues, which would provide much-needed cash for state coffers. To recoup their investment, the private firms would charge tolls for the use of the roads and bridges with an eye towards making a profit.

Private businesses could begin charging tolls and fees at tunnels, bridges or other roadways where they currently exist or where they make improvements, says the paper.

[T]he idea is getting serious consideration. To get it approved, however, state law regarding privatization of state assets would have to

be changed.
—NEWSMAX.COM

February 4, 2005

Tax forms

The [Middletown, Ohio] tax superintendent has been suspended without pay for a week for trying to inject some humor in the city income tax filing instructions.

The attempt at humor by Linda Stubbs was called "misguided" by city Finance Director John Lyons.

The forms — with such lines as, "If we can tax it, we will," — were sent last week to all Middletown businesses and residents who pay city income tax.

Lyons said revised forms were sent out immediately at a cost to taxpayers of about \$5,500.

Among the lines that city officials didn't think were very funny was this one:

"Free advice: If you don't have a profit in a five-year period, you might want to consider another line of work."

—ASSOCIATED PRESS
February 4, 2005

Insulting Ayn Rand

A hundred years after her birth and nearly 25 years after her death, Ayn Rand remains a fascinating and enigmatic presence. She has been "mainstreamed" enough to have been honored by a U.S. Postal Service stamp in 1999 and to have

been featured on C-SPAN's American Writers series in 2002.

Her novels figure prominently in readers' lists of the 20th century's greatest books. Notably, in a 1991 survey of more than 2,000 Book-of-the-Month Club members about books that made a difference in their lives, Rand's magnum opus, *Atlas Shrugged*, came in second — albeit a very distant second — to the Bible.

Rand, a devout atheist, might have seen that as an insult rather than an honor.

—CATHY YOUNG
Reason Online
March 2005

Troop strength

The U.S. Army expects to keep its troop strength in Iraq at the current level of about 120,000 for at least two more years, according to the Army's top operations officer.

While allowing for the possibility that the levels could decrease or increase depending on security conditions and other factors, Lt. Gen. James J. Lovelace Jr. [said] that the assumption of little change through 2006 [is] "the most probable case."

Recent disclosures that the Pentagon plans to beef up training of Iraqi security forces and press them into action more quickly has fueled speculation that the Bush administration could be preparing to reduce the number of U.S. troops significantly this year. As more Iraqi troops join the fight, the thinking goes, U.S. troops could begin to withdraw.

But Lovelace's remarks indicated that the Army is not yet counting on any such reduction. Indeed, the general said, the Army expects to continue rotating active-duty units in and out of Iraq in year-long deployments and is looking for ways to dip even deeper into reserve forces — even as leaders of the reserves have warned that the Pentagon could be running out of such units.

—BRADLEY GRAHAM
The Washington Post
January 25, 2005

Divided nation

In a January CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll, in answer to the question of whether President Bush is a "uniter" or a "divider," 49 percent of Americans said he was a uniter, and 49 percent said he was a divider.

—CHUCK SHEPHERD
News of the Weird
February 11, 2005

Tort reform

"After years of stalemate, Congressional leaders from both parties say a landmark bill shifting more class-action suits from state to federal courts is likely to pass soon," the *Wall Street Journal* reports.

In *Can Tort Reform and Federalism Coexist?*, Cato

Institute senior fellow Robert A. Levy and Michael I. Krauss, professor of law at George Mason University, write, "Critics of federal tort reform have usually come from the political left and its allies among the trial lawyers, who favor a

decision was aimed at bringing more stability to the market, and called on consumers and producers to "walk together ... for prices to be acceptable."

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries also decided to temporarily suspend its price band of \$22 to \$28 a barrel, which was set in March 2000 and has largely been ignored since 2004.

—MATT MOORE
Associated Press
January 30, 2005

Electronic IDs

The U.S. House of Representatives approved on Thursday a sweeping set of rules aimed at forcing states to issue all adults federally approved electronic ID cards, including driver's licenses.

Under the rules, federal employees would reject licenses or identity cards that don't comply, which could curb Americans' access to airplanes, trains, national parks, federal courthouses and other areas controlled by the federal government. The bill was approved by a 261-161 vote.

The measure, called the Real ID Act, says that driver's licenses and other ID cards must include a digital photograph, anti-counterfeiting features and undefined "machine-readable technology, with defined minimum data elements" that could include a magnetic strip or RFID tag.

The Department of Homeland Security would be charged with drafting the details of the regulation.

—DECLAN MCCULLAGH
CNET News.com
February 10, 2005

Redistricting

Unlike most democracies, we place the power to shape political districts in the hands of politicians rather than an independent commission. Redistricting has evolved into the electoral instrument that best serves to protect and strengthen incumbency advantage. Redistricting creates winners and losers and, in the process of doing so, has degenerated into ... a conspiracy against competitive elections, undermining the fundamental notion of representation and placing the health of American democracy at risk.

In 2004, only 13 of 435 congressional seats changed from one party to another. The re-election rate for House incumbents was over 98 percent. Nine in 10 Americans live in districts where the outcome is so certain that their votes are irrelevant.

There are no easy solutions to the redistricting mess. Nevertheless, removing politicians' control over redistricting can help to lessen the problem. ...

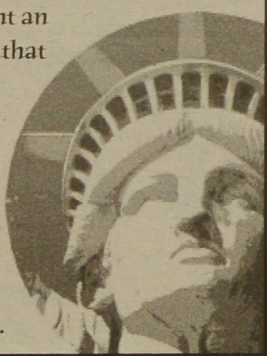
Over two centuries ago, James Madison warned that no democratic institution should decide the rules of its own membership. It used to be that, in an election, the voters chose the politicians. Now, the politicians choose the voters.

—PATRICK BASHAM
Cato Daily Commentary
January 13, 2005

"Tyranny is always better organized than freedom."

—CHARLES PEGUY, FRENCH PHILOSOPHER (1873-1914)

That's not all: It's got more people working for it, too. And it's better funded. That's where you come in. If you want America to someday live up to its noble libertarian ideals, the Libertarian Party needs to be able to mount an effective challenge to the political parties that are more interested in pushing us towards tyranny than towards liberty. How can you help? By naming the LP in your will or insurance policy. For a private discussion of this option, call National LP Treasurer Mark Nelson at (563) 340-6151. Or e-mail him at: treasurer@lp.org, and include "Planned Giving" in the subject line.



LP affiliate stricken from Maine town's Web site

After actively seeking local organizations to post contact information on their Web site, the town of Monmouth, Maine, recently decided to strike the local affiliate of the Libertarian Party's information from the site, reports Monmouth Libertarian Caucus Chairman Charles Jacques.

Jacques (pronounced "Jakes") said the town's "civic intent was laudable and made perfect sense: There should be a central resource for town residents to go to get contact information for local 'goings on,' whether social, religious, political or whatever."

And having noticed that neither the Democratic nor the Republican organizations in town had posted their information on the site, Jacques decided to list the LP's local contact information.

"The listings were very matter of fact," he said. "No content, no solicitation, no advertisement, just pure outreach."

"And I thought it would be fun if Libertarians were the first to take advantage of this tool to involve townspeople more fully in the affairs and politics of the town."

He sent the information in, and a few weeks later was told that the Monmouth Libertarian Caucus had been added to the listing.

But when the November elections rolled around, "some controversy was stirred in the town by the fact that local Libertarians were in fact organizing themselves and daring to share their opinions on local and state issues," Jacques said, noting that a "small but vocal core" of anti-Libertarian sentiment arose to suppress the advancement of libertarian ideas.

One member of the anti-Libertarian group happens to be a member of the town's board of "selectpersons." She doesn't like Jacques' Libertarian sympathies and "tried to have me removed from the town's budget committee on a technicality," Jacques said.

That attempt failed, being voted down by other members of the board, so the anti-Libertarian faction decided to ban all political organizations from the Monmouth Web site's "community links" section. The Libertarians were the only group removed — with no notice or prior discussion of the proposed action.

"If I had not happened to be at the town meeting where this was being discussed, I might never have known," Jacques said.

"Given the fact that our listing was the only political organization on the site, there can be no question that this was an attempt to limit and control speech. The message that this sends — and it seems lost on them — is that in Monmouth repression and suppression are favored over open debate and the free exchange of ideas."

"I was gratified to hear one of the decidedly non-libertarian citizens in attendance not only

question the wisdom of the town's move to such a policy, but to correct the anti-libertarian selectperson on her attempt to suggest that having such a listing constituted a town endorsement of a political view."

The fact that the town continues to list local businesses and other organizations (albeit of a non-political nature) that are unrelated to the conduct of town business on the Web site leads "one to wonder

if the policy stands even the most basic of First Amendment tests," Jacques added. "If the town opens its Web site to local organizations and businesses, it cannot restrict only political listings any more than it could bar only political organizations from using public facilities and space."

"Clearly, the motivation of the de-listing is intensely political and personal. This is an unbelievably

petty attempt to restrict access to Libertarian ideas."

One positive outgrowth of the town's strike against Libertarians is that the town will likely "generate more publicity and interest for us by denying us access to the Web site than we ever would have gotten from being on it," Jacques said. "Anti-Libertarians are probably doing themselves more harm than good by this foolish bit of petty

over-reaction."

Despite being kicked off the town's site, the Libertarians don't plan legal action.

"There is no sense in penalizing the majority of taxpayers in the town (who would be forced to defend such an ill-advised policy with public money) for the agenda-driven actions of a few of its elected officials and political activists," Jacques said.

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**— Dave Hoesly, Webster, NY
Computer engineer (retired)**

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THE PROFILE

MTV's Kennedy

By Bill Winter

THE ADVOCATES FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT

Former MTV veejay and television talk show host Kennedy has always said she's a philosophical libertarian and a registered Republican. She even has a pink Republican elephant tattooed on her upper left thigh. But Kennedy's allegiance to the GOP may be fading somewhat, if her comments on MSNBC's "Scarborough Country" (Nov. 17, 2004) are any indication.



In a discussion about the Federal Communication Commission's crackdown on "indecent" speech on radio and TV, Kennedy accused Republicans of restricting free speech and favoring "a moral dictatorship in this country." Specifically, she said she opposed the FCC's campaign against racy radio hosts like Howard Stern.

"You know what?" she said to several conservative panelists on the show. "You guys, you have become the humor police. And you're using the liberalization of governmental controls in

broadcasting the way that liberals do with the war on terror and guns. Any other time the Left wants to squash liberties, conservatives start barking up the tree of freedom. But all of a sudden, you know, you're doing the exact same thing. And it's very hypocritical. What happened to the libertarian bent in the Republican Party?"

No one has ever questioned Kennedy's libertarian bent; she talks openly and frequently about it. On ABC's "Politically Incorrect" (April 14, 2000), she said, "I'm a registered Republican; I'm an ideological libertarian."

In *TV Guide* (April 12, 2003), she said, "I consider myself a Republican. A little bit Republican and a little bit Libertarian." And in Portland, Oregon's *Willamette Weekly* (Nov. 10, 2004), she said although she's known as a conservative, she's actually more of a "small T' libertarian."

On most issues, Kennedy certainly sounds like a libertarian. According to *Metropolitan Living* magazine (September 1999), she "hates drugs but doesn't think they should be illegal, likes the Second Amendment but doesn't own a gun. She's big on personal freedoms that people take for granted." Kennedy also spoke out against high taxes on "Scarborough Country."

"I mean, I live in Seattle, where what we have to show for [our taxes] is a brand new \$500 million baseball stadium. And, you know, potholes." She told the *Penn State University Collegian* (April 9, 1996) that her political beliefs are "somewhere between P.J. O'Rourke and Ayn Rand."

Kennedy (born Lisa Kennedy Montgomery) is perhaps best known for her four-year stint as host of MTV's "Alternative Nation" (1992-1996). Wearing her trademark funky horn-rimmed glasses, she introduced videos and interviewed a who's-who of actors and musicians. Not everyone appreciated her quirky humor, offbeat fashion choices, and what one magazine called her "anti-glamour earthiness." In fact, *Rolling Stone* readers once voted her the music channel's "Most Hated" veejay.

After MTV, Kennedy went on to host the special "Who Wants to Be Governor of California?" and the show "Friend or Foe?" on the Game Show Network. She was a speaker at the 1996 Republican National Convention and a correspondent for CBS Sports at the 1998 Winter Olympic Games in Nagano, Japan, covering snowboarding. In 1999, she got her own radio show on KQBZ-FM in Seattle, Wash. That same year, she published a book, *Hey Ladies: Tales and Tips for Curious Girls* (Random House), which offered advice for teenage girls.

In 2004, she joined VH1's pop culture show, "Best Week Ever," as a panelist — a gig which *Willamette Weekly* said "gives her a chance to rehash the older, more boisterous Kennedy."

Kennedy also continues to be boisterous about her opposition to what *Metropolitan Living* called "overzealous, socially conservative Christian citizens who give the Republicans a bad name" and who use the Bible to justify their brand of conservative politics.

■ This is a recurring column about celebrities who call themselves libertarian. This article reprinted with permission from the *Advocates for Self-Government*. To read profiles of dozens of libertarian celebrities, visit: www.TheAdvocates.org/celebrities.html.

Libertarian-led coalition defeats property tax hike

Libertarians in Massachusetts recently worked with a coalition of other activists to defeat a property tax increase in Wayland, Mass., a 14,000-resident suburb of Boston. In a Jan. 25 referendum, 57 percent of voters opposed the tax.

The question went to the vote because the maximum tax increase allowed in a Massachusetts municipality is 2.5 percent per year, which this \$4.2 million tax would have exceeded, said Carla Howell, one of the primary opponents of the tax.

Howell, a longtime Libertarian, was the sponsor of the 2002 Massachusetts initiative to end the state income tax — an initiative that nearly succeeded, winning 45 percent of the vote.

Had it been approved, the Wayland tax increase would have paid for the design phase of a new high school building there, and another tax to bring in up to \$60 million to pay for construction of the school would almost surely have followed, said Michael Cloud, a Libertarian who worked with Howell in opposing the tax.

The coalition that formed against the tax included members of other political parties as well, notably a fiscally conservative Democrat who is both a former member of the Wayland board of selectmen and a current member of the town's Democrat committee, Howell said.

"At the local level, she's terrific about going after wasteful and unnecessary spending in the town, and she was wholeheartedly with us on this effort," Howell added.

Using the little money they had available, the coalition members sent a mailing to every home in Wayland, organized a phone bank to call people and let them know about the proposed tax increase,

and wrote a number of letters to the editor of the local newspaper.

"These days in Massachusetts, participation in local government is very subdued," Howell said. "[It] was quite unusual for there to be such activity and awareness of a local issue — and such a good turnout for a local election."

A large majority of voters opposed the town's selectmen, the school committee and other town officials in casting their ballots against the tax. They recognized that the town's officials are "looking to gouge the



■ Carla Howell

taxpayers with an unnecessary, extravagant high school building," she said — noting that the vote was 2,645 against and 2,005 in favor of the proposal.

"This was the largest turnout for a town election in quite a few years, including elections for selectmen, which is remarkable considering that it's January, that there was about two and a half feet of snow, and that many senior citizens weren't even here to vote," Howell said. "It's well known that the board

of selectmen purposely scheduled this election for the dead of winter, when it's hard for some senior citizens to get out of the house and when many of them are out of town for the winter, for vacation.

"The fact is, what they want to do is tear down a perfectly good school building and put up a new one to replace it. The school was renovated in the early 90s, and they promised then that the renovations would last 30 years. Now they want to tear it down and start a new one."

A primary component of the Libertarians' fight against the tax was simply showing voters that the ballot was, in fact, calling for a tax hike.

The ballot language didn't mention the words "tax increase," "tax levy," or even "tax," Howell said.

"We positively hounded our officials to reframe the issue as a vote for a new tax increase, rather than referring to it as a 'vote for a new high school,'" she said. "That didn't happen, so we had to make people aware that approving the design work on a new school would increase their taxes."

Now that the tax to pay for design of a new building has been defeated, the Libertarians and other tax opponents should have some breathing room.

"To spend any money on this, the town selectmen have to get it approved in an election, at the polls," Howell said. "They recognize they were soundly defeated in the vote, after working on this for a year and a half, so they're going to go back to the drawing board."

For now, though, the defeat of this proposed tax hike proves "you can not only fight city hall, you can beat it," she said.

Fighting death taxes

Continued from Page 2

duced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Rep. Christopher Cox (R-Cal). If approved, the bill would repeal the death tax — including estate and gift taxes — retroactive to Dec. 31, 2004.

"These transfer, estate and gift taxes punish lifelong habits of thrift; they discourage entrepreneurship; they penalize families; and they have a negative effect on other tax revenue sources," the bill says in part.

Repealing the death tax would eliminate "less than 1 percent of the federal budget," Patten said. "It's not that much of the federal government's budget, in the big picture."

"But more than that, it's just plain wrong for the government to have the gall to say, 'OK, you've

died, so give us half your life savings.'"

This issue is a battleground between "two completely different worldviews," he added. "There's [one side] whose political belief is that wealth should be redistributed by the government. For them, this is a perfect model for how the rest of the world should operate: Take money from those who save and redistribute it."

"And then there are those of us on the other side, including the Libertarian Party, who believe that we have constitutional rights to protect property rights and that property rights are an extension of our right to life. When I die, it should be my right to bequeath my money to whoever I want — and the government shouldn't be able to take 50 percent of it to spend as they please."

Online Resources for LP Members

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GUEST COMMENTARY

Making the most of Libertarian campaigns

In a recent article entitled "The Libertarian Vote Total" [See December 2004 LP News] I said that because of the legal barriers placed in the way of third parties, we should not expect our campaigns to garner large numbers of votes.

Instead, we should use the presidential and local campaigns as valuable instruments for outreach and for building the party to the point where we can be competitive.

To capitalize on the opportunities an election campaign offers, I believe the following are important guidelines:

Since the presidential candidate has the opportunity to reach — through TV and radio interviews — far more people than other candidates can reach, the presidential candidate should be chosen first and foremost on his ability to articulate libertarian positions and principles in a few words and in a forceful way. Almost everything else needed can be achieved by people on his campaign staff.

The candidate (whether national or local) must present a pure libertarian message, so that listeners begin to generalize and realize that even their favorite government programs probably are a mistake. If the candidate doesn't know how to deal quickly and persuasively with some issue, he should take the time to discover good answers for it — perhaps even seeking help from people who do know how to handle that issue effectively.

A local candidate who isn't articulate should join a Toastmasters club or take special speaking lessons. To represent the LP properly, he needs to learn to think on his feet, organize his thoughts into brief statements, respond to questions, and take the offensive in interviews.

Each candidate should focus on three or four issues, appropriate to the office he's running for, couching each issue in terms of dramatic benefits that the individual listener could have if the libertarian position were adopted. He also should develop the skill of discussing any issue in terms of the individual listener's life — how the listener is being hurt by the prevailing policy and how his life would be improved dramatically by the libertarian approach to that issue.

Wherever possible, the candidate should focus on the benefits of changing present policies, rather than trying to ward off some misguided new proposal. When an interviewer wants to talk about some Republican or Democratic proposal, the candidate should be able to point out its dangers quickly, and

then show the benefits of solving the alleged problem through libertarian principles. We will attract more people by showing them how much better their lives could be than by scaring them about a new danger.

Every candidate, national or local, should assume he won't win his election — even if he thinks he has a chance to win. His principal goal should be to build positive name recognition for the Libertarian label, so that his campaign will benefit all other campaigns — present and the future. If he focuses on building his own name recognition, he will have achieved nothing positive if he loses the race.

In interviews the candidate should use the word "libertarian" frequently: "The Libertarian position is ...," "The Libertarian way to handle this would be ...," "Libertarians want you to be free to ...," and so on. The candidate's principal task is to build respect and name recognition for the Libertarian label. We need to establish in people's minds

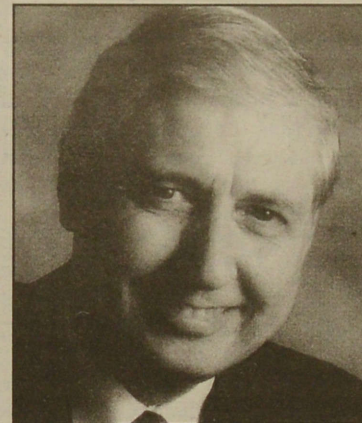
that Libertarians have specific, realistic ways of making their lives better, and that only Libertarians really want them to be free to live their lives as they think best.

TV and radio ads should be one minute long, because it takes a full minute to present a Libertarian position persuasively. They should emphasize the word "Libertarian," so they build name recognition for the Libertarian label and help local candidates. An ad that focuses on the candidate's name and just says, "Vote for ..." is a waste of money.

TV ads should have the phone number and Web site address on the screen for many, many seconds — long enough for someone to grab a pencil and write down the information. Radio ads should give this information several times during a one-minute ad. Generating inquiries is a primary reason for running campaign ads.

Bumper stickers and yard signs are more valuable if they say "Vote Libertarian," rather than displaying a candidate's name. This is true for

local candidates as well as the presidential candidate. A "Vote Libertarian" sign helps all Libertarian candidates, the party and the libertarian



■ Harry Browne

movement — providing a lasting benefit. A sign with a candidate's name helps no one after the campaign is over.

I must acknowledge that we didn't adhere strictly to every one of these principles at all times in

my presidential campaigns. But we learned a great deal — both about a proper campaign strategy and about the tactics necessary to get media appearances, spend money efficiently and other technical matters.

If we run a large slate of candidates, we shouldn't expect all of the candidates to be as persuasive as the presidential candidate. But each candidate should take the time to develop good answers to the questions he will get and good approaches to the issues he wants to stress.

If we concentrate on the opportunities — especially by building the LP as rapidly as possible and running persuasive presidential campaigns — we make it more likely that someday we will be able to run competitive races all up and down the Libertarian ticket.

■ **About the author:** Harry Browne, author of *The Great Libertarian Offer* and several other books, was the LP candidate for president in 1996 and 2000.

Where does the Libertarian Party go from here?

Whenever I give a talk about reforming our nation's drug policy, I begin my comments by asking the question: "How many people here feel that our great country is in better shape today than it was five years ago with regard to the problem of drug use, and all of the crime and misery that go with it?"

Almost never does anyone feel that we are doing better. Then I tell them that nothing I say will be controversial, because everything flows from that agreed-upon fact.

Regarding the War on Drugs, we can have no legitimate expectation of being in better shape next year than we are today, unless we change our approach. We must look at what our country has done for the last five, 10, 50 and even 100 years that has worked, and what has not worked. Then we can begin to focus our policies on things that have been shown to work, and away from those that don't.

In a somewhat different context, I now ask the same question of the LP. Is our party in better shape today than five years ago? Personally, I do not believe it is. And we can have no legitimate expectation that it will be in better shape next year — unless we change our approach.

This past year I took an unpaid leave of absence from my duties as a judge of the superior court in Orange County, Calif., and ran as a Libertarian candidate for the

U.S. Senate. In doing this, I had a headquarters, a paid campaign staff and organized fundraising, and I devoted 100 percent of my time to the campaign.

Numbers of supporters devoted their efforts to helping me campaign. We raised about \$220,000. I was included in at least 75 different radio and television shows.

My candidacy was endorsed by the *Long Beach Press Telegram* and by Milton Friedman. Both the district attorney and the sheriff of Mendocino County signed a letter endorsing my campaign. We also had paid radio and television commercials broadcast about 25 times per day for the last month of the election in Mendocino County and in Orange County.

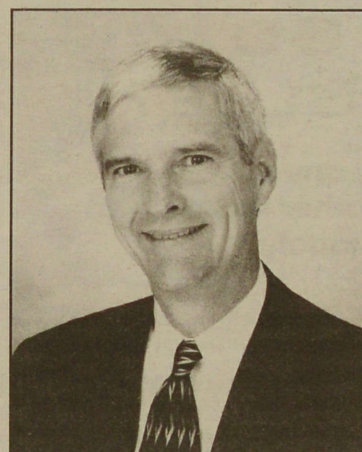
After all of this effort, we received almost 180,000 votes in the election. That sounds like a lot, until you understand that it comes to less than 2 percent of the total votes in this statewide race. In Mendocino County, where we had so much going for us, we received only 5 percent of the vote.

We worked hard. I believe deeply that we were right on the issues. I was a sitting judge, and, in my biased view, a presentable candidate. How can we do better?

There is no question in my mind that America needs and will benefit from the LP and its approaches to real problems. The voters are hungry for what we offer, but we still are not making progress. Therefore, we must change our approach.

Where does the LP go from here? In my view, we should have

a two-pronged plan. The first is for us to try to find people who have libertarian views and either have a large amount of name recognition or a large amount of money — and hopefully both — and recruit them as candidates for



■ Judge Jim Gray

state or national offices. And then we should support them heavily. Secondly, if we cannot find the well-recognized or financially well-equipped candidates, we should find strong, presentable and articulate Libertarian candidates for a few local election campaigns, and pour our resources from all around the country into those campaigns.

If we can get a few strong Libertarian candidates elected to local offices, we can build momentum and gain voter recognition. Because our principles of increased liberty, less government spending and heightened responsibility work!

With regard to the first prong, a

stalwart Libertarian from Southern California and I actually thought we had a chance in this past election.

We heard that retired General Norman Schwarzkopf had strong libertarian principles and might be interested in running as a Libertarian for president. So we were prepared to fly to Florida to talk with him, and maybe recruit him. However, in speaking to one of his staff members, I was told that he felt that he could do more for his country by continuing to do what he was doing than to run for president.

It was certainly a long shot, and it didn't work, but in my view that is where our efforts should go. Do not underestimate the impact that our principles can make upon people. Eventually we will break through.

But in the meantime, we should try to scale down our sights to more local elections. If we find the right few local candidates and provide them with our national resources, we can win those elections. Then we can show the world that Libertarian principles not only sound good, but they work.

And then when we are asked in the future whether the Libertarian Party is progressing, we will be able truthfully to say, "Yes! The LP is finally on the move!"

■ **About the author:** James P. Gray is a judge on the Superior Court in Orange County, Calif., and the author of *Why Our Drug Laws Have Failed* and *What We Can Do About It: A Judicial Indictment of the War on Drugs*.

AFFILIATE NEWS

Opposing a gun ban, staying in the race and defeating tax hike

■ CALIFORNIA

Libertarians oppose San Francisco gun ban

Several Libertarian groups in the San Francisco Bay area have joined with members of gay gun rights group the Pink Pistols, Gun Owners of California and other advocacy groups in condemning a proposed ban on firearms within the San Francisco city and county limits.

"San Francisco has already made it inordinately difficult to defend one's self while on the street, at the ATM or while using public transit, by their overly strict policy in granting concealed handgun permits," said Michael Acree, chair of the San Francisco chapter of the Outright Libertarians — a group that promotes the LP to the gay community — noting that there are only 10 such permit holders in the entire city.

"Now they plan on making it equally difficult for us to defend ourselves and our loved ones in the places we live, by confiscating our handguns from our very homes and apartments," Acree said.

The proposed law would go into

effect on Jan. 1, 2006 — and city residents would have to surrender their handguns within 90 days of that time, to avoid penalties. The proposed law would also prohibit the local sale of other firearms and ammunition.

"While the right of self-defense is the most important principle here, there is also the matter of taking property by threat of force, without just compensation," said Richard Newell, vice-chair of the San Francisco chapter of the Outright Libertarians.

"In my book that is called robbery," Newell added.

■ COLORADO

LP helps defeat \$51 million tax hike

Following a skin-of-their-teeth referendum on Jan. 18, voters in Northglenn, Colo., have been spared from a tax hike that would have cost them \$51 million over 20 years. The proposal failed with only a 13-vote margin of victory for Libertarians and others opposing it.

Area Libertarians had vehemently opposed the tax, pointing out that

private enterprise already provides the services that would have been included in the new tax-funded recreation center.

Northglenn politicians wanted to spend \$32 million on the proposed renovation and expansion of their existing recreation center, an amount that due to interest would have grown to \$51 million over the 20-year payoff period.

"Supporters of the recreation center renovation emphasize that there will be no 'new' taxes required to build this white elephant," said a press release from the Colorado LP, issued before the referendum. "Libertarians ask: Why not eliminate this unnecessary tax burden, already on the residents of Northglenn, and work with private enterprise to provide these services?"

Northglenn is a city of about 37,000 residents, just 12 miles from Denver. Only 11 percent (2,511) of the city's 22,677 registered voters bothered to go to the polls for the referendum — with 1,262 voting against the new center and 1,249 favoring it.

Residents were allowed to vote on the recreation center proposal

only after two petitions were circulated, asking the city council to put the question on a referendum.

■ COLORADO

Working to recall a county commissioner

Michael Spalding, chairman of the Jefferson County LP, is one of two people in the county who have taken out papers to recall Rick Sheehan, a county commissioner.

Sheehan has been accused of sending sexually explicit faxes about county employees to the Webmaster of a local Internet site. He denies the charge, saying his wife and other family members sent the faxes.

A year ago, Spalding was instrumental in the recall of Arapahoe County Clerk Tracy Baker.

"Sheehan is ... indicative of all the corruption" in the county's government, Spalding said.

The other prominent local figure seeking to recall Sheehan is Greg Stevinson, a businessman who said Sheehan's handling of that situation and his use of county funds to pay outside legal bills are reason enough to let the voters decide whether the commissioner should stay in office for two more years.

For either of the two recall efforts to be successful, the petitioners will have to collect almost 43,000 signatures — 25 percent of the 171,788 votes cast in the 2002 race between Republican Sheehan and his Democrat rival.

■ GEORGIA

Republican candidate asks LP'er to withdraw

David Corr, chairman of the LP of Bibb County, Ga., is running against two Democrats and a Republican for a city council seat in Macon.

Recently, "the Republican candidate called me at home ... and offered to reimburse my \$300 filing fee if I would withdraw from the race," Corr said. "He worries we may split the vote, causing a Democrat to win."

"Needless to say, I refused his offer."

The election is to be held March 15 to replace a councilman who died in office in September 2004. The council seat has been vacant since his death.

When Corr ran for mayor of Macon in November 2004, he received 25 percent of the vote following a six-week write-in campaign — leading Georgia Libertarians to believe he has a great chance to win this council election.

"I am in it to win, and I'll never be bought out," Corr said. "The fact that [the Republican] felt compelled to make such an offer shows the fear the other parties have when we actually make it on the ballot."

■ INDIANA

Proposed smoking ban defeated in LaPorte

The mere mention of the Libertarian Party was apparently enough to kill a proposed smoking ban or-

dinance in LaPorte, Ind., earlier this month.

The mayor had proposed forming a "study committee" to target small business owners — such as restaurants and bars — by banning smoking in such businesses. And it looked like a done deal, says Indiana LP chairman Mark Rutherford, noting that 11 of the 14 city council members were expected to approve the formation of the committee.

However, two small business owners spoke against the creation of such a committee — and the smoking ban that would almost certainly have been proposed by it. This prompted "one councilor to suggest that a member of the LP be added to the committee," Rutherford said.

The proposal was duly defeated.

"The Libertarian Party of Indiana, through its efforts against smoking bans in LaPorte, Indianapolis and Bloomington, is proving to small business owners that the LP is the only political party that serves their interests," Rutherford said. "The LaPorte County LP is to be commended in its efforts in this regard as well."

LaPorte Libertarians are very active and are one of the top county parties in the Indiana LP, he said.

"That group is very visible and has changed the political debate in LaPorte County," he added. "At election time, its yard signs, bill boards, radio commercials and candidates are very visible, and in the 'off' season, the members remain visible and active."

"The party also has a county headquarters at a very visible downtown location on one of the main streets of the city, and they are building a base from which 'overnight success' is very possible. They are already politically powerful enough that the mayor of the city stopped by for the grand opening of the local headquarters."

■ VIRGINIA

Libertarians call for refund of taxes

Libertarians in Virginia are calling for taxpayer relief as the estimated budget surplus in their state has climbed well past \$1 billion.

"Lawmakers should be returning the surplus to the people who paid that \$1 billion, not coming up with new ways to spend it," said Steve Damerell, the Virginia LP chair.

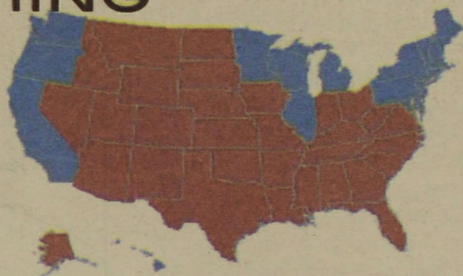
In 2004, the Virginia General Assembly passed several new taxes and increased spending by \$7 billion. The tax increases were estimated to cost taxpayers \$850 million, an estimate that increasingly appears to be low. Recent reports state that Virginia taxpayers were overcharged as much as \$1.2 billion.

Republicans in the House of Delegates followed the news of the surplus with several new spending proposals, none of which included refunds to Virginia taxpayers — leading Libertarians to decry the immense \$60 billion budget.

"Last year's 13 percent spending increase cannot be justified by population growth or inflation," Damerell said. "It's time to cut this bloat."

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Proposed Nebraska bill could ease third-party ballot access

A bill in consideration by Nebraska's unicameral legislature would ease third-party ballot access in that state, says Richard Winger of *Ballot Access News*, which tracks third-party politics in the United States.

Currently a third-party candidate must win 5 percent support in an election in every two-year election cycle in order to win ballot access for his or her party for the next two years; if no candidate does so, the party loses its spot on the ballot in the subsequent election.

Under the proposed bill — Legislative Bill 473 — a party would be able to win ballot access for four years instead of two, meaning that minor parties would no longer have to struggle to get 5 percent of the vote in a statewide election in a presidential year.

"Voters are generally more generous in non-presidential-election years, and are more likely to vote for parties other than the Republicans and Democrats," Winger said.

If the legislation is approved — it was introduced on Jan. 13 and was referred to the Government, Military and Veteran's Affairs Committee on Jan. 18 — it will virtually guarantee future ballot access for active minor

parties, Winger added.

"We will only have to go through a ballot access attempt every four years, instead of every two years," he said. "And because there are five statewide positions on the ballot in non-presidential-election years, the Libertarian Party should have no trouble at all maintaining ballot

— it does appear that achieving 5 percent of the vote in a state-wide election should be attainable.

The Libertarian Party "didn't even bother to get on the ballot in 1994," Winger said. "Libertarians were totally missing from the ballot in Nebraska's statewide races that year," so it's impossible to tell how they would have fared.

In 1998, however, the party ran candidates for secretary of state and attorney general, and secretary of state candidate Michelle Miller took 7.21 percent of the vote with both a Republican and a Democrat on the ballot.

Then in 2002, Libertarians ran only for U.S. Senate and Nebraska secretary of state, with the secretary of state candidate getting less than 2 percent, Winger said. "There was one race that had only a Republican running, and we would certainly have gotten at least 5 percent, but we didn't even run a candidate. In the treasurer's race there was only a Republican and a Nebraska Party candidate, and the Nebraska Party candidate got close to 25 percent."

"If we are allowed to get ballot access every four years, which this bill would allow, we'll be living in easy times," Winger concluded. "No more ballot access petitioning."

**IF WE ARE ALLOWED
to get ballot access
every four years ...
we'll be living
in easy times.**

—RICHARD WINGER

access — without having to get petition signatures to get back on the ballot."

Currently, political parties can get ballot access in counties, cities and congressional districts — or statewide — by gathering signatures from at least 1 percent of the voters in the affected area in the most recent governor's election.

Looking back at the past three off-year elections — 1998 and 2002

UPCOMING

April 9, 2005

Minnesota LP Convention, in downtown St. Paul, Minn. Featured speakers to include keynote speaker Michael Badnarik, 2004 LP presidential candidate; author James Bovard; Mark Selzer, host of the "Libertarian Alternative" TV show; Michael Wilson, director of the film "Michael Moore Hates America." Badnarik will also host his class on the Constitution on April 10. For more information, visit www.lpmn.org or e-mail convention@lpmn.org.

April 16, 2005

Massachusetts LP Convention, at the Natick Hampton Inn, with a focus on opportunities for local activism in Massachusetts. Convention to run from 9:30-4:30, with registration from 8:30-9:30. For more information visit www.lpma.org, or call Rich Aucoin at (781) 899-1418.

April 23-24, 2005

Michigan LP Convention, in Mt. Pleasant, Mich. Speakers to include Joseph Bast, president of the Heartland Institute. Executive Director Robert Butler of the Ohio LP will hold a campaign training seminar. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.LPMich.org.

April 29-May 1, 2005

Pennsylvania LP Convention, at the Harrisburg Hilton Hotel. Speakers to include LNC representative Jim Lark, Matthew Brouillette of the Commonwealth Foundation, and 2004 LP presidential candidate Michael Badnarik. Contact Ron Goodman for more info, at cumberland@lppa.org.

April 29-May 1, 2005

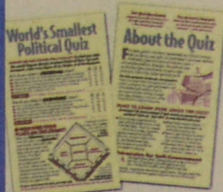
Indiana LP Convention, at the Holiday Inn Lakeview in Clarksville, Ind. Speakers to include syndicated columnist Vin Suprynowicz; Willie Star Marshall, mayor of Big Water, Utah; Abdul Hakim-Shabazz, Indianapolis radio show host; and Jason Shelley of the National Federation of Independent Business. For more information, visit www.lpin.org, e-mail lpinhq@lpin.org, or leave voice mail at (317) 487-8337.

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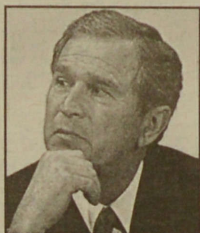
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POLITICS 2004

Guns, prostitution and global warming

■ According to a Feb. 15 article in the *Bozeman Daily Chronicle*, the Montana House of Representatives has "collectively thumbed their noses at the federal government" by approving a bill that would exempt guns made in Montana from federal regulations, as long as the guns remain inside the state. If the bill passes on a third vote, it will go to the state senate. One representative questioned the plan — noting that the state may as well "say we aren't subject to the income tax." Now there's an interesting concept!

■ "President Bush's proposed \$2.7 trillion federal budget lists \$424 billion in discretionary defense spending, and another \$497 billion in discretionary non-defense spending," says Massachusetts Libertarian Michael Cloud. "Everything else is categorized as non-discretionary spending. Gravity is non-discretionary. Every dollar of government spending is 100 percent discretionary. The next time someone tells you that a government budget item was 'mandated by law,' tell him that the mandate is discretionary: legislators have the authority to amend or repeal the law."



■ A young unemployed female IT professional in Germany was until recently receiving government unemployment benefits as she looked for a new job. However, because of the government's rules, she was required to accept the first job that was offered to her — or lose the benefits. Her first job offer came from the sex industry, and she lost her unemployment benefits by turning down that job. Some wags in cyberspace referred to this as an example of what would happen in the U.S. "if the Libertarians managed to get prostitution legalized."

■ A key study that has driven the argument about global warming has been called into question. Nicknamed the "hockey stick" graph because it shows a drastic upswing in temperatures in the 20th Century, the graphic supposedly proves global warming can be traced to human activity, including the consumption of fossil fuels. However, a recent study by a Canadian minerals consultant revealed potentially critical flaws in the study. Will the new critique completely debunk theories of human causes for global warming? Maybe not. But it is sure to further fuel the debate.



■ National LP headquarters recently received a package containing a plaque from the American Muslim Alliance. AMA gave the award to the Green, Independent and Libertarian parties at its 2004 national convention "for showing courage of conviction in upholding American ideals, for demonstrating total honesty and integrity in dealing with ... Americans of all religions, colors and creeds, and for doing the right thing at the right time and for the right reason."

■ A judge in Chelan County, Wash., recently refused to order a re-vote in Washington's extremely close governor's race, saying he did not have the authority to order a statewide second election as requested by the Republican Party. The Republicans are contesting the election of Democrat Christine Gregoire, who was named governor only after a second recount. Gregoire defeated Republican Dino Rossi by just 129 votes out of nearly three million ballots cast. Libertarian Ruth Bennett earned more than 63,000 votes in the election. The case is expected to go to the state Supreme Court.

■ It's supposed to be "common knowledge" that government employees are underpaid. But according to figures released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2004, government employees make much more than people working in the private sector, points out Richard Rider of the San Diego (Calif.) Tax Fighters. "Nationwide, state and local government employees earn an average of \$23.52 per hour," Rider notes. "Private sector employees earn only \$16.71. In short ... the real 'public servants' are the hard working ... people in the private sector who pay excessive taxes to provide our public employees with far more compensation than the free market says they deserve."

■ AustinChronicle.com recently noted that Libertarian Steven Adams is the strongest opponent to the foremost candidate for an Austin City Council seat. As an opponent of toll roads in Austin, Adams should pull the vote of the "disgruntled conservative vote," the Web site said — adding that "the hardcore anti-tollster vote may find a home next to Adams's name."

THE VOLUNTEER

To maximize effectiveness, put your strengths to work

The Libertarian Party is reaching a point where it is necessary for our state parties to become more organized in order to achieve more success. As a state party grows, there are problems that occur when people of different backgrounds and skills try to work together to promote liberty. There are certain factors that must be considered in order to prepare for this growth.

By Adam Mayer

Organization is the essential key for the Libertarian Party to keep growing. There are people who want change overnight and those who want change to happen incrementally. And there are people who want to explain our message in long detailed essays and those who want to use sound bytes. The important thing for everyone, however, is to be focused on one goal.

There is one thing that the Democrats and Republicans are good at — they know how to get elected. They have structured organizations that work with their candidates to get them into office. They have people who donate time and money to promote their candidates; people to write speeches and literature; and people who run campaigns.

As Libertarians we forget that the average person does not care much about politics. As long as the newspaper is at the front door in the morning, the refrigerator is full of food and the car is still in the driveway, people will not become political.

The Libertarian movement is made of four parts: activists, intellectuals, politicians and administrators. Each of these is necessary to make sure we succeed in the political arena. All are equally important if we are to accomplish our goals.

Activists

Activists are those out in the public arena promoting the Libertarian message. They are the volunteers who collect signatures for ballot measures and get candidates on the ballot, and they're the people who show up to public meetings. They write letters to the editor and help on campaigns.

These are the people who are on the front line promoting the Libertarian message to the public. They wake up the average person, they make unrest and they want change. Someone who wants change to happen immediately is best suited as an activist, while someone who wants change to happen incrementally is

better suited as a politician.

Most people when they first get involved with the Libertarian movement are activists. It's a great way to learn about the organization and the philosophy of libertarianism. Many activists are college students who have the time and energy to help with the movement — even though they generally lack the money that would allow them to become donors.

Intellectuals

Intellectuals are the people who write philosophy, platforms, bylaws, resolutions and editorial pieces for newspapers. They are the ones who know Libertarian philosophy and are good at writing about it. Simply put, they are the word-weavers. They prepare their ideas in a written format, which politicians can then present to the public.

losophy that our activists and candidates have been promoting over the years.

Politicians

Politicians are those who run and get elected to public office. Their job is to present the Libertarian message in sound bites through interviews with the media, public speaking events and in one-on-one discussion. When elected, Libertarian politicians work to promote the Libertarian agenda and to make Libertarian policy into law.

The politician listens to the activists to learn what issues are the most important and listens to the intellectuals to learn how to approach them. Where the activist pushes for change, the politician makes the change more comfortable to the average voter.

Good politicians speak well



■ During a Libertarian State Leadership Conference forum on getting Libertarians elected to office, Adam Mayer (center), chairman of the Oregon LP, shares a laugh with elected officials Beatrice Jones — a city council member in Hardeeville, S.C. — and Ben Brandon, who was recently elected to the position of county administrator in Dade County, Ga. (Photo by LP News Editor J. Daniel Cloud)

Good intellectuals can explain Libertarianism in a way that can be understood and will sway people to our side. Their role is performed behind the scenes: writing speeches for candidates; researching issues; and helping the movement present its message.

In Oregon there is an organization called Cascade Policy Institute (CPI), which is similar to The Cato Institute. The majority of people who work for Cascade are Libertarians. In the media, CPI is generally known as a "free-market think tank," but that is now seen as synonymous with "libertarian."

Cascade Policy Institute is not affiliated with the Libertarian Party of Oregon. In fact, they don't call themselves Libertarian, but members of the media do — because they recognize the libertarian phi-

in public and look good in front of cameras. They need to appear knowledgeable on the issues and speak with compassion and charisma. They need to win the support of the public, and they have to get people to listen to them and to like them. Again this is one area where the Democrats and Republicans are experts. They don't always have a strong message, but they do get elected.

The politicians are the people who present the Libertarian message to the public in person and in the media. They speak at schools, neighborhood associations and on radio talk shows. They are the ones who do interviews with newspapers and TV stations.

Politicians don't have two hours to spend discussing how the Consti-

See **FOCUS** Page 13

THE FORUM

Is it always honorable to die in service of your country?

As a veteran myself, Veteran's Day always saddens me. It is noble to honor bravery and supreme sacrifice in a righteous cause. But have our politicians always sacrificed youth for good purposes?

On Veteran's Day, we pretend that they have. The Roman poet Horace once wrote, "It is sweet and honorable to die for your country." But he was an apologist for the Roman war machine, and I doubt that death felt sweet to young Romans lying disemboweled on foreign battlefields. What can we say — what can we do — for those who died in unjust wars?

The Department of Defense estimates that 1.2 million Americans have died in service to their country since the Revolutionary War. Another 1.4 million have been wounded. In some of these wars, it could be argued that freedom was at stake, that our nation needed to be defended.

But in most cases, the wars were avoidable and were about things other than our liberty. Do we really honor the dead by pretending otherwise, or do we merely increase the likelihood that more young men and women will die to no purpose in the future?

At the turn of the last century, we fought the Spanish to give ourselves an imperial colony in the Philippines and an economic dependency in Cuba. The men who

died in that war died for an ignoble cause. In World War I, we intervened on the side of imperial Britain and France against imperial Germany. There was no great moral issue involved in that war. The Americans who died in it died in vain.

We were later told that South Vietnam had to be saved from North Vietnam or the communists would roll to victory in the entire region. But communism failed in spite of the fact that we lost in Vietnam. The Americans who died in that war died in vain. Since then we have fought a war with Iraq to restore fat sheiks to their thrones in Kuwait.

Now we are fighting another war there that we were led into under false pretenses.

Clearly, when it comes to war, our politicians get it wrong more often than they get it right. And young men lost their lives for no good purpose. The dead and wounded may have been noble in their bravery, but their deaths were unnecessary — too high a price to pay for a cause that was questionable at best.

Anytime you lose a loved one, you search for meaning. It is easier to accept death if you can find a meaning for it. This is true even

if the death didn't happen on the battlefield. I am not trying to deny meaning to those who've lost loved ones in war. Instead, I am trying to replace a fraudulent source of meaning with a truthful one. It will give true meaning to the death of those lost in mistaken wars if we resolve to never let it happen again.

Too many good young men and women, with their own dreams, plans, hopes and ambitions, as well as their own families, friends and children, are being sent to die.

They're not dying to keep us free. They're not dying for their country. They're dying for the ambitions and plans of politicians in a quest to create a brave new world.

It's even possible some politicians mean well, but their intentions must not be allowed to send young people to die in their wars.

Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz believed Iraqis would embrace us as liberators. President George Bush has said he still expects that to happen — despite overwhelming evidence to the

contrary. Their intentions are good, but the results are not. Wolfowitz and Bush didn't trust the generals who said it would take 500,000 troops to do the job. Instead, they thought our good intentions would be enough to win over the Iraqis.

Will the future be any better than the past? Not if history is any guide. When politicians go to war, they usually get it wrong, and young men and women die for no purpose. The American people then engage in a game of "let's play pretend" to give false meaning to their losses.

Bring the troops home and keep them here. Put an end to the perpetual war for perpetual peace. Have them march in a parade.

That's much sweeter than — and just as honorable as — having a wreath laid on your grave. And which of the dead wouldn't prefer to be doing that on the 11th day of the 11th month?

■ **About the author:** *Jeffrey A. Robertson is an attorney who currently serves as chair of the LP of Lincoln County, Mo.*

Political morality vs. religious morality

By our constitution, there is supposed to be separation between church and the state. Religious freedom is guaranteed, but should, as much as possible, be kept out of the political arena.

Since religious beliefs are faith-based and highly personal in nature, it should be easy to see that an elected official, representing all of the people, cannot successfully unite those people if his decisions are based upon his particular brand of religiosity and the rest of his constituents are ignored.

What does this have to do with the Libertarian Party? What does this

have to do with the political state of our nation? Religion presently has everything to do with elections and understanding the voting public.

Understanding a candidate's religious view goes a long way towards figuring out how they will perform once elected. The very survival of our party and others depend upon our ability to understand why the religious right so feverishly re-elected George W. Bush and why they gave the Republican Party the power that Hitler and Mussolini had to kill people to obtain.

After the election the media made mention of it, and any citizen not in a coma realized it: George W. Bush was re-elected, and the Republican Party gained nearly unprecedented power, with votes cast by the religious right.

Of even more concern to me is that the religious right appeared to ignore the major political issues and, cast their votes based upon their brand of religious morality. In their quest to stop abortion and same-sex marriage they seem to have totally disregarded a wrongful war, a staggering national debt, our troops dying in Iraq and Afghanistan and the systematic dismantling of the Bill of Rights.

Political morality has been ignored; it was almost nonexistent. That issue — and how it came to happen and how to combat it — should now be put on the front burner if we are to stop the Republican steamroller.

We must identify the root cause for the religious right vote and how it came about. How to correct it will take the effort of every citizen who

believes in democracy, freedom and our Constitution.

Our elected officials have a responsibility to make their decision based upon political morality. If they don't — if they make decisions based upon their particular brand of religious morality — and seemingly have a total disregard for the rest of the nation's citizens, then they'll end up with a country divided and at odds with itself.

When voters keep putting people like that into office they are asking for, and will get, only one thing: tyranny. And Americans' feelings toward tyranny were quite thoroughly explained in the Declaration of Independence.

■ **About the author:** *Augustus D. Suiter is a Libertarian in San Bernardino, Calif.*

Focus on your strengths rather than attempting too much

Continued from Page 12

tution should work; that is the job of the intellectual.

Candidates that run for offices that are not currently winnable, such as statewide offices and congressional seats, do so to promote the Libertarian message to as many people as possible.

Administrators

Administrators are the people who run the day-to-day organization. They deal with policy, planning and regulations. Their job is to ensure that the bills are paid, the rules are being followed, and the office staff has what it needs to do its job. In the Libertarian movement, this is the role of the state party.

Each state party has a chair, officers who serve on the executive

committee and usually representatives of the county or regions in the state. The administration is the glue that holds the Libertarian movement together.

The administrators offer the resources the activists, intellectuals and politicians need. In order for a state party to be successful, the role of the administrator is to work behind the scenes and not on the front line.

The state chair is to work behind the scenes making sure that everything is getting done. It is not a position of glory or fame; it's a job designed to manage the political party. When the state chairs of a political party spend their time trying to promote themselves, their party will suffer.

In Oregon, problems occurred

during the 1990s because people were not in roles appropriate to their skills.

Intellectuals were trying to be politicians; activists were trying to be administrators; and politicians were trying to be activists. There were constant fights at meetings and public events because each side believed it knew the best method. As a result many people left the organization. Thankfully many have come back since things have become better organized.

It's important to realize that activists, intellectuals, politicians and administrators can work together, but first individuals need to know where their strengths are.

Someone who is a great activist may not make a good politician. Someone who is a great politician

may not make a good administrator. Someone who is a great administrator may not make a good intellectual. Someone who is a great intellectual may not make a good activist.

If you are currently the state chair and realize that you are not an administrator but more of an intellectual, you need to look for someone who can do the job better when your term ends. If you are good as an administrator and not a good politician, then don't resign and run for U.S. Senate.

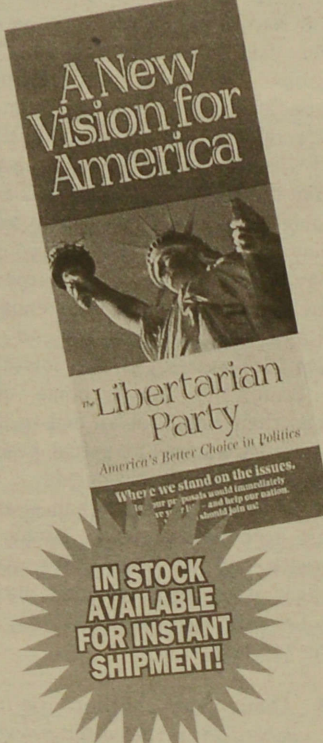
The best path to success and to minimize infighting is to develop an organized structure that involves all Libertarians. The task is to get people to work at what they are best skilled at.

This is also the most difficult as-

pect of organization, being honest with yourself and trying to motivate people into changing their role in your state Libertarian movement. When the organization is small, people will wear many hats and take on some or all of the roles. As an organization grows, it is hard for some to give up the control that they've held while the group was small. It's important to remember that the state party is not the most important thing; it is just one part of the entire Libertarian movement.

We are a small party, and there is room for everyone. Make sure people apply their skills where they are best suited.

■ **About the author:** *Adam Mayer is chairman of the Libertarian Party of Oregon.*



A New Vision for America

The Libertarian Party

America's Better Choice in Politics

Where we stand on the issues.

IN STOCK AVAILABLE FOR INSTANT SHIPMENT!

★ ★

They're back!

★ ★

Our popular "New Vision for America" brochures are back in stock and ready for immediate delivery.

To celebrate, we're offering a **20% DISCOUNT** and **FREE SHIPPING** if you buy them by the box. Normally, these brochures sell for 25 cents each, but you can get them for under **19 CENTS** each if you purchase them by the box in quantities of 650 or more. **That's just \$120 per box – plus we'll pay the shipping!**

"A New Vision for America" is a 24-page, full-color outreach brochure ... a prospecting tool that presents our vision for America in a positive, upbeat manner. And it's loaded with gorgeous photographs of Libertarians in action. "A New Vision for America" takes a warm, human approach – telling true stories that illustrate Libertarian principles. Instead of focusing on how bad the Republicans and Democrats are, we gently ask readers to imagine a better America – an America of prosperity, tolerance, and freedom.

This pocket-sized (8.5" by 4") booklet fits easily in a pocket or purse, and is perfect for handing out at state fairs, politically homeless booths and other outreach events. Order your "New Vision for America" brochures today! Smaller orders are priced at **\$25 per 100**. (LP pays shipping.)

LP Literature & Books

■ **Why Government Doesn't Work** by Harry Browne. The 1996 Presidential campaign manifesto: Explains why government doesn't work, and why it will never work as well as voluntary solutions. Outlines a Libertarian plan for victory. Hardbound, 245 pages. **Cost:** \$11.95

■ **Libertarianism In One Lesson** by David Bergland. Expanded 8th edition. The classic introductory work. Outlines Libertarian positions on all major political issues and contrasts them to liberals and conservatives. A must-read. Softbound, 158 pages. **Cost:** \$10 each; or 5 for \$35.

■ **Which Political Party is 100% Pro-Gun Rights?** Full-page flyer. 2-color (red & blue). Hard-hitting defense of the Second Amendment, designed especially for the gun community. Explains why the LP will never betray gun owners – unlike the Republican Party, which constantly sells them out. **Cost:** Sample: 50¢ or \$7 for 100

■ **America's Libertarian Heritage** by David Bergland. 16-page booklet. Concise overview of Libertarian philosophy and solutions in an easy-to-read question-and-answer format. **Cost:** \$1 each

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2-COLOR ★ LIBERTARIAN PARTY BROCHURES ★ 4-COLOR

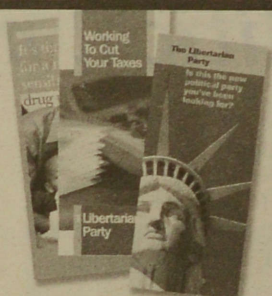


2-COLOR

- Making Your Neighborhood Safe Again
- Ending the Welfare State
- What Happened To Your Family Budget?
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- Is This the New Political Party You've Been Looking For?
- Working To Cut Your Taxes
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Bumper Stickers

\$1 each; \$7.50 for 10; \$50 for 100. Size: 11" x 3"

■ **ENOUGH IS ENOUGH/VOTE LIBERTARIAN** (Red, white, & blue).

■ **I'm Pro-Choice on Everything!** (Red, white, & blue!)

■ **Don't Blame Me ... I Voted Libertarian** (Blue & white; 800-ELECT-US phone number below.)

■ **Vote Libertarian/800-ELECT-US** (Blue & white.)

Buttons

Cost: \$1 each; \$7.50 for 10; \$50 for 100

■ **Don't Blame Me, I Voted Libertarian** 1-800-ELECT-US

■ **Vote Libertarian** 1-800-ELECT-US

■ **Libertarian Party: Pro-Choice on Everything** 1-800-ELECT-US

Tools for Campaigning

■ **Libertarian Political Action: Techniques for Effective Campaigning:** 32 pages. Comprehensive explanation of winning campaign techniques for Libertarian candidates. Includes everything from creating a campaign timeline, deciding on issues, raising money, working with volunteers, dealing with the media, and organizing a Get Out The Vote (GOTV) effort. A must read for every Libertarian candidate – state, local, or federal! **Cost:** \$3.00 each

■ **LP Statue of Liberty Logo master.** Camera-ready sheet, ready for scanning. **Cost:** \$1 each

■ **LP Statue of Liberty Logo on PC Disk:** 3.5" DOS-compatible computer disk. **Cost:** \$3 each

■ **Newsprint Ads:** "Libertarian Party – Defenders of Liberty." Camera-ready print ads. One each of six different ads: General, lifestyle, drugs, guns, draft, and taxes. Plus additional multi-sized "Lower Taxes/More Freedom" LP advertisements. **Cost:** \$3 for set

Banners

■ **Large Banner.** (18" x 5'). White lettering on bold blue background. The first line says: "Libertarian Party." The second line says: "800-ELECT-US." Perfect for local Libertarian Party meetings, state or county conventions, Operation Politically Homeless (OPH) booths, etc. **Cost:** \$40 each

ORDER FORM

There is no charge for standard shipping. Allow up to 2-3 weeks for delivery. Or: Add \$5 for same-day shipping. Call (202) 333-0008 Ext. 221 for instructions on rush deliveries. Minimum order: \$5.00. Orders shipped via UPS; please add \$5 for Post Office box deliveries. Make checks payable to: Libertarian Party

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- Brochure: "What Happened/ Family Budget?"
- Brochure: "Ending the Welfare State"
- Brochure: "Making Neighborhood Safe Again"
- Brochure: "Equal Rights/America's Gun Owners"
- Flyer: "Political Party/100% Pro-Gun Rights?"
- America's Libertarian Heritage booklet
- Fact Sheets: LP history/bibliography (package)
- World's Smallest Political Quiz
- "Million Dollar Bill" Literature

Bumper Stickers

- Don't Blame Me...I Voted Libertarian
- I'm Pro-Choice on Everything!
- ENOUGH IS ENOUGH/VOTE LIBERTARIAN
- Vote Libertarian/1-800-ELECT-US

Banners

"LIBERTARIAN PARTY" (18" h x 5' w)
Second line says: "1-800-ELECT-US"

Tools for Campaigning

- Libertarian Political Action Booklet
- Statue of Liberty logo master
- LP Statue of Liberty logo on 3-1/2" PC disk
- Newsprint ads: "Libertarian Party – Defenders of Liberty" set of seven.

Books for Sale

- Why Government Doesn't Work**
By Harry Browne
- Libertarianism In One Lesson**
By David Bergland

Buttons

- Don't Blame Me, I Voted Libertarian
- VOTE LIBERTARIAN/800-ELECT-US
- Libertarian Party: Pro-Choice on Everything

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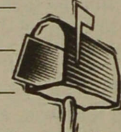
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Empower teachers — by allowing school choice

By Joseph L. Bast
PRESIDENT, THE HEARTLAND INSTITUTE

Compared to professionals in other fields, public school teachers are surprisingly unfree.

In order to teach in most states, they must take courses at teacher colleges that are widely condemned as being useless or even counterproductive in the classroom. They must join teacher unions and have hefty dues withheld from their paychecks — money that is used in political campaigns without their consent.

Merit pay to reward and retain outstanding teachers is off-limits in nearly all government school systems.

Public school teachers lost the rights that other professionals take for granted because the usual marketplace forces that protect and reward professionals do not operate inside the public school system.

Teachers, for example, are protected against competition and individual responsibility. The absence of competition allows many superintendents and school boards to frequently change academic assessment methods and tests, making it difficult for critics to prove the absence of year-to-year progress.

The logic of bureaucracy also rewards centralization of authority, resulting in school districts and high schools that are much too large for a single curriculum to be best for many or even most students.

With multiple and constantly changing curricula, there can be no certainty as to what students should have mastered in earlier grades, making it almost impossible for school boards, superintendents and principals to accurately assess the performance of individual teachers.

With objective measures of professional competence missing, teachers rightly fear favoritism and other kinds of managerial abuse.

The solution, offered by powerful teacher unions, is complex and detailed collective bargaining agreements which severely limit the principals' managerial prerogatives. In some respects this strategy works: Teachers are almost never terminated for incompetency, and even the most troubled schools are nearly impossible to shut down. But this "solution" has badly damaged the teaching profession and the children in the schools.

Teachers disrespected

Teaching has become a disrespected profession, with the overwhelming majority of teachers recruited from the bottom third of American college graduates.

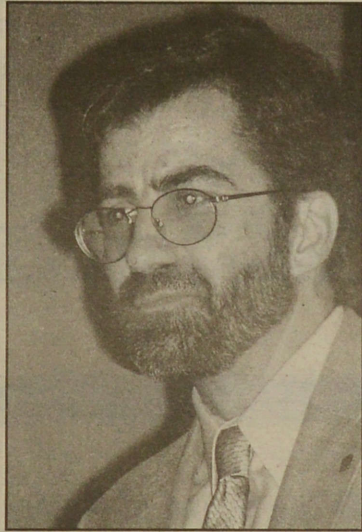
Real teacher pay has risen by 12 percent since 1982, but pay rose faster for college graduates as a group and in comparable professions. For example, pay for nursing rose by 17 percent over the same period.

Many public school principals have been forced to work around incompetent or otherwise lackluster staff members and teachers, rather than replacing them. This places greater demands on competent teachers and sometimes puts students at risk.

Empower teachers

There is a better path for public school teachers to follow.

Allowing schools to utilize



■ Joseph L. Bast

marketplace standards to reward good teachers and effectively punish bad ones would result in better schools for the children.

And allowing parents to choose the schools their children attend would allow the teachers to recover their lost freedoms, while also boosting the productivity of K-12 schools.

If parents were allowed to choose schools for their children and if public funds followed the child, the tactics used by superintendents and school boards to avoid accountability would no longer be necessary or possible.

Superintendents would have no incentive to mislead parents or voters. Accurate information about student achievement and professional competence from third-party rating systems would become widely available, as in the cases of consumer reports on automobiles, hospitals and other goods and services.

If school choice were allowed, school districts and individual schools would become smaller, allowing for a variety of curricula to be applied consistently based on the needs of students and preferences of their parents. This would make possible more accurate evaluation of each teacher's contribution to a student's learning. Schools that retain incompetent or dangerous employees would quickly lose students to those with merit-based employment policies.

Successful schools would pay more for teachers with proven ability because they would have greater resources — from privately or publicly financed tuition — with which they could pay teachers.

Libertarian SOLUTIONS

Excessive bureaucracy would not be tolerated, and more money would flow to teachers and classrooms. Principals would no longer be prevented from offering higher pay to exceptional teachers or to those teaching difficult-to-master topics.

Finally, under a system of school choice, teachers would be free to start their own schools and compete for students, free of the bureaucracy and regulations that presently handicap them.

A wide range of exciting opportunities would emerge as old assumptions and dogmas — that have been kept alive for more than a century behind the walls of monopoly and bureaucracy — are finally subjected to criticism, and as those walls fall before new and better ideas.

Under a voucher plan, government would continue to be involved in schools, but private businesses and not-for-profit organizations would compete for government and private funds in a competitive education industry.

Vouchers would allow parents to choose, without financial penalties,

the schools their children attend. No other proposed reform addresses so many of the causes of government school failure.

When Milton Friedman and other pioneers of the school voucher movement advocated school vouchers in the early 1960s, they were met with skepticism and disbelief.

**SCHOOLS THAT
retain incompetent
... employees would
quickly lose students
to those with merit-
based employment
policies.**

Today, however, vouchers are at the epicenter of the national school reform movement. Many eyes are on Milwaukee, Cleveland, Maine, Vermont and Florida — which are home to voucher programs that allow some 28,000 children to attend private schools at public expense.

And the U.S. Supreme Court's 2002 ruling that vouchers are constitutional has removed any

lingering doubt about the reform's legality.

Support for school vouchers — and thus, for school choice — is growing in nearly every part of the country and in nearly every group with an interest in the education of the nation's children.

Parents support school choice because they know their own children's special educational needs and talents better than any government school administrator possibly could.

Parents want to be allowed to make choices in their children's education — and they know vouchers would give them the ability to make educators and school administrators more responsive to their advice and concerns.

And meanwhile, many teachers support vouchers because they know they will be treated as professionals in schools that compete for children.

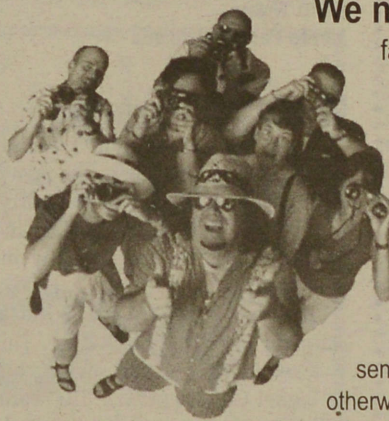
■ **About the author:** Joseph L. Bast is president of The Heartland Institute in Chicago and coauthor, with Herbert J. Walberg, of *Education & Capitalism* (Hoover Press 2003). He can be contacted at jbast@heartland.org. Some material also taken from Bast and Walberg's 2003 book, *Let's Put Parents Back In Charge!*

Picture yourself...in LP News!

Did you know that a majority of the photographs included in this newspaper are submitted by our readers? Despite this wonderful help, we frequently find ourselves scratching our heads because we often cannot use the photos submitted.

We need your help! We want to vary our content, and put the best face on the LP, our members and Libertarian activities!

Help us picture you! To stand a good chance of getting your photos in *LP News* — where they'll be seen by Libertarians nationwide — follow a few simple guidelines.



✓ **HI-RES:** If you send a photo via e-mail, make sure it is a high-resolution image — meaning at least 300 dpi. We cannot use images found on a website.

✓ **SEND THE ORIGINAL:** When sending a digital photo, please send the original image. Do not edit it. That way, we can crop, adjust color, or otherwise modify the image for the specific spot where we need it.

✓ **CLOSE-UP AND PERSONAL:** When taking pictures of speakers or other events, always remember: Closer is better. Don't be afraid to stand in front of the crowd for a minute or two and get a good picture.

✓ **ACTION SHOTS:** Even if it's only one person, get photos of that person doing something — even laughing. If you've got a group, show them interacting, working on a project, talking to each other — anything other than lining them up and having them smile for the camera or sitting around a half-cleared dining table looking at each other over the scattered remains of a dinner meeting.

✓ **FOCUS:** If you have an activity with 10 or 15 people, don't try to work all of them into the photo unless it's absolutely necessary. Focus on people doing things and on the people who are important to the story you're trying to tell.

✓ **SEND IN A VARIETY:** If you take 12 photos and don't know which one is appropriate, feel free to send them all.

✓ **SEND IN AS MANY AS YOU CAN:** We can always use pictures!

Questions? Contact Daniel Cloud at (202) 333-0008, ext. 226, or by e-mail at editor@hq.lp.org.

THE DIRECTOR

Progress report

On May 27, 2003, I had the privilege of becoming your executive director. Thanks to you, our members, we have made a lot of progress since then. Because of your generous support of the party, we have been able to become financially stable, grow membership, retool the entire "back office" and begin the outreach part of being a national political party.

You provided the resources to pay off hundreds of thousands of dollars in bills when we had no other way to pay them. You paid for the launch of "Operation Welcome Back," an outreach program inviting lapsed members to rejoin.

And rejoin they did. Last year alone, 1,943 former members rejoined the party. This contributed to making 2004 the first year of membership growth in four years. We grew the party by 1,134 members after four years of membership decline. You made this possible. We installed a new QuickBooks accounting software system that lets us generate reports faster and easier, freeing up staff time. You paid for the new database software, Raiser's Edge, which is already beginning to pay for itself in saving staff time. Onerous federal election reports that used to take the better part of a week now can be done in hours. Your willingness to invest in our back office is what made this possible.



By Joe Seehusen
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Speaking of that first letter, "We're in Deep Trouble," I promised in it that I would spend your money and control costs as if the business were my own. Our vendor costs have gone down while our vendor service levels have risen. The cost of membership renewal has been reduced and continues to decline. We now have a comprehensive donor, pledge and member call center responsible for increasing member contributions. Our costly and cumbersome material sales function has been outsourced to a vendor who can serve you better and less expensively. I have significantly reduced overall staff payroll and benefit costs. The cost of producing *LP News* has been reduced. And finally, through your generosity, we have significantly met our budget on the expense and revenue side. This financial stability and reduced overhead give us the opportunity to plan for progress and growth rather than lurching from one cash shortage to the next.

Now I have turned my attention to two areas vital to a national political party — namely outreach to constituent groups and developing a legislative agenda. I have been mining my personal network from my old radio talk show days to create outreach and to increase visibility for the party in the political community. I've been connecting with the leadership of such organizations as The Institute for Responsible Citizenship, a group that mentors African-American youth to champion free markets and individual liberty and pursue senior positions in government; Americans for Tax Reform; American Family Business Institute; The National Rifle Association; Citizens Against Government Waste; and The National Taxpayers Union.

I have also been having face-to-face meetings with prominent members of the media.

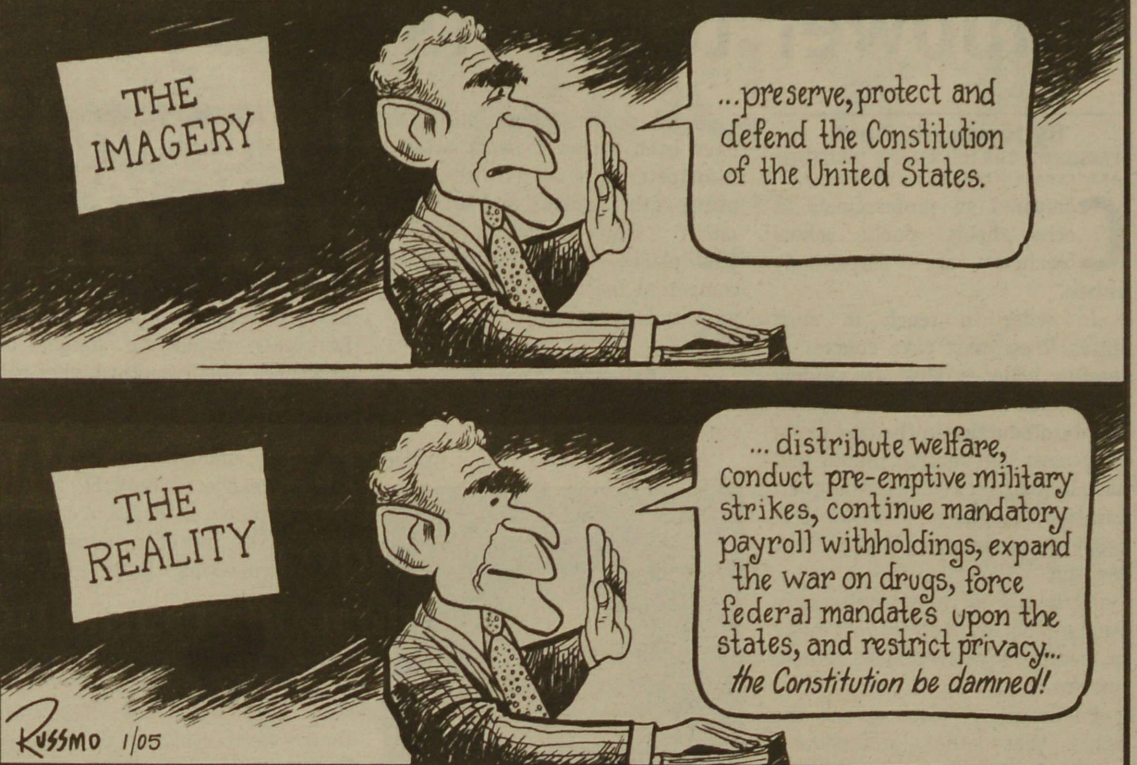
We made our first appearance as a co-sponsor of the February 2005 Conservative Political Action Committee convention in Washington. Our booth was well-situated for foot traffic and staffed with smiling faces. More than 4,000 participants found a copy of our "New Vision for America" brochure in their welcome bag.

We have the beginnings of a legislative agenda. I've just joined the Death Tax Repeal Working Group — which is comprised of the heads of over 50 organizations committed to working to have passed in the Congress and signed by the president, a permanent repeal of the death tax. The group is currently backing the Cox Bill — H.R. 64 — whose stated purpose is to repeal the federal death tax, including the estate and gift taxes and the tax on generation-skipping transfers. I am meeting and working with the leadership of such organizations as National Beer Wholesalers Association, 60 Plus (Seniors), Club for Growth, National Cattlemen, American Legislative Exchange Council, National Electrical Contractors, the Small Business Survival Committee, Empower America/Freedom Works, National Federation of Independent Businesses and the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

Much has been accomplished in recent months and there is much we should all be proud of.

Thank you for the trust you place in me when you fund our projects and operations. Thank you for making our progress possible.

www.russmo.com



THE MAILBOX

■ Social Security

[Re: *Libertarian Solutions*, January 2005 *LP News*] I agree with Anthony Gregory's premise that Social Security is a bankrupt system that needs to be sacked.

Not only was the system created when there was a 16:1 ratio between payers and retirees, the retirement age was the same as the average life expectancy: 65. That means most folks were dead when it came time to collect. Folks now get to collect for an average of nine years.

The sooner it is eliminated, the less money we'll have to lose.

—BILL WOHLER
Menlo Park, California

■ Global warming

As a new Libertarian, I find it disheartening that there are many, both within and without the party, who believe that Libertarianism and environmentalism are mutually inconsistent.

It is possible to believe in global warming and be a libertarian. This is a world that needs saving, but as Daniel Quinn puts it, "The world will not be saved by people with old minds and new programs. It will be saved by people with new minds and no programs."

It is perfectly acceptable to believe that our current CO2 emission levels are acceptable, but also to believe that more freedom can solve this problem, while less freedom will make it worse.

Please don't be hostile to those of us who are actually concerned about the world we leave to our children, grandchildren and beyond. Not all of us think the nanny-state is the answer — indeed, I think the nanny-state can only get in the way.

—DARYL SAWYER
Fresno, California

■ The Sound of Music

I watched the end of the classic film "The Sound of Music" on Christmas night. Beyond the love story, the music and the spectacular photography this film is held dear to our hearts because it is a moral story of one man's courage in the face of the overwhelming evil of his time.

Captain von Trapp, being a moral man, wanted nothing to do with the Nazis. In the end he took his family and fled from his country to avoid serving their immoral cause. At the time, I'm sure his government branded him as a coward and a deserter.

LIBERTARIAN IDEAS
are extremely
popular. When's the
last time you met
anyone who thought
the government
should be bigger?

—JOHN R. PACK

Today, we hold Captain von Trapp up as a cultural icon and a heroic example for children. He is the brave individual who followed his conscience against his misguided government.

Now George Bush is no Hitler, and I do not intend to make that comparison. But I wonder: How many of our reservists today will be viewed as heroes if they refuse to serve in a war that they feel has no moral foundation?

Will we call them cowards, deserters and draft dodgers, or will we

hold them up as modern day versions of the heroic Captain von Trapp?

—WILLIAM FRED JOHNSON
Knoxville, Illinois

■ Libertarian radio

Your tribute to the late David Brudnoy was excellent. It was certainly a sad day for Libertarian talk radio when he died.

However, Libertarian talk did not die with him on that day. While it may be absent from Boston and many other markets around the country, it doesn't have to be.

My show, "Free Talk Live," has been around since 2002, but until recently only in Sarasota, Fla. We are new to syndication and are actively looking for affiliates. Currently we're on in Kansas City, Mo.; Providence, R.I.; Sarasota, Fla.; and Alcoa/Marysville, Tenn.

I would like to invite those Libertarians who would like to have Libertarian talk radio in their market to call the program director of their favorite talk radio station, tell him or her that "Free Talk Live" is now syndicated, and that you think it should be added to their lineup.

If it helps our shows get on in new markets, that means millions more listeners being exposed to the Libertarian message!

—IAN BERNARD
Sarasota, Florida

■ Cutting off heads

To equalize requires an unequal equalizer, and Libertarians thinking about "equality" should remember this.

The pursuit of egalitarianism by government force results in less, rather than more, equality. And, of course, even on its own terms

THE MAILBOX

the supposed pursuit of monetary equality tends to backfire. Not many of Stalin's Russians had their own movie projectionists.

As Alexander Rustow put it in *Freedom and Domination*, when equality is proclaimed, "there must at least be persons who issue precisely this proclamation and, above all, implement it and undertake the important task of cutting off the heads that tower above others. Thus, every politically serious attempt at instituting radical equality inevitably leads to terror and dictatorship in their most blatant forms."

—ANDREW LOHR
Chattanooga, Tennessee

Mega-platform

Thank you for printing Beatrice Jones' "To be effective, build coalitions" [February 2005 *LP News*].

There are a lot of Libertarians who erroneously think liberty went down in flames during this past election. Some even berate the voters. This is a lot like blaming a business failure on the customers — instead of adapting the business to the market.

Polls consistently show that some libertarian positions are extremely popular. When was the last time you met anyone who thought the government should be bigger? And yet Libertarian candidates perform poorly.

I suggest that we relegate libertarian theory to the chit-chat at social functions and focus the party's efforts on those libertarian positions that the public can accept.

Do we change our ideals? No. But do we confront someone who wants to see the abuses of the Patriot Act ended with an hour-long lecture on why municipal fire pro-

tection should be handled by the market? Not if we want his or her vote!

I suggest the Libertarian Party scrap its entire mega-platform and replace it with a general statement of principles plus a specific set of proposals for a few hot button areas where the general public agrees with us.

—JOHN R. PACK
Parker, Colorado

Trust the pilots

In order to gain a significant voting pool, Libertarians must pick out very intrusive government programs to battle. Taxes are always unpopular, but every politician since Caesar has promised to lower taxes. Few have, so no one believes such a claim.

How about our Potemkin-like airport security, much sound and fury signifying less than nothing?

No one enjoys the long lines at the airports, which ostensibly deter terrorists, yet failed to stop any of the Sept. 11 hijackers.

Thousands of lives are disrupted by flight delays, re-routings or terminal closures, but how many valid arrests? Can the TSA honestly claim to have prevented a single skyjacking?

Why do the FAA and TSA drag their feet on arming pilots? Surely a veteran military pilot who can be trusted with 400 lives and a \$60,000,000 airplane can be trusted with a .45!

Why can't the cabin crew be taught basic martial arts, so they can't be easily subdued by hijackers? Why can't explosives screening be automated and unobtrusive?

Because politics is about showmanship! A problem solved leaves

nothing to campaign about.

—KEN OBENSKI
San Diego, California

A sad day

Like the writer of the letter regarding gay marriage as a proposed rallying point for the LP, I considered the issue a hands-down win for us from the get-go. It is a hot-button topic and seems to involve freedom on its face, but it is not the slam-dunk it appears to be.

Running for state representative in Michigan last year opened my eyes.

When I received my questionnaire from Pride Source, I approached it with relish, convinced that I was a shoo-in for their endorsement because as a long-time Libertarian, I believe in personal freedom and the pursuit of happiness, unhindered by moralicans.

What I found in the Pride Source questionnaire was disillusionment. What they were looking for was a candidate who would, if elected, promise to use the strong arm of government in their favor and pledge the use other people's money to promote their agenda.

It's a sad day for liberty lovers to realize that only promises of initiating force against peaceful people can win endorsements of special interest groups, even ones so seemingly tailor-made for the LP.

—RETTA FONTANA
Rochester, Michigan

Satanism

I'm disappointed by the recent LP press release that states that hate crime laws being applied to crimes against Satanists is proof that they should be overturned.

Hate crime laws are at best redundant and at worse unconstitutional, but if we are to have them, and we do, then they should be

applied uniformly. Suggesting that certain religious beliefs are more worthy of protection than others is not a libertarian position. Why should all religious minorities not be protected equally?

The point of the press release was a good one — that we do not need hate crime laws federalizing all manner of crimes and corrupting the judicial system by making thoughts subject to punishment — but the approach to making the argument was despicable. The main thrust of the argument was a transparent appeal to bigotry against a small religious minority.

—SEAN JOHNSON
via e-mail

Ruwart for President

It appears that for many years the party has been using the same methods to get a Libertarian president. Our efforts have been consistent and the results have been poor. Clearly a change is in order.

If we are serious, we need to have our presidential candidate run for at least two years, giving him or her a chance to become well known by the voters. This should have some positive results. I propose that we draft Dr. Mary Ruwart to represent us, and I feel she would present a positive image.

Dr. Ruwart would be non-threatening to those who think we are gun nuts or junkies. Also the media would be less likely to accept ignoring a woman candidate who has been running for two years.

—BRENDAN KELLY
Seabrook, New Hampshire

Corporate communism

I must give the president credit on using free-market spin doctoring poised to rip us off while bait-and-switching the old concept of screwing the taxpayer. The Yale boys have grown bored with simply lobbying for increased government spending to fill their pockets and controlling us with our money. Now the plan is to forcibly allow you to put your money into a so-called private account.

A private account used for purchasing shares of whose interests? You can bet it won't be in the interests of the depositor (victim) and like the present system, won't be available for withdrawal at the time of its — or your — maturity.

If a method of socialism is privatized, then it should also be given a more suitable name complementing this metamorphosis. How about "Corporate Communism?"

—GREG CALLAWAY
Middletown, Delaware

Insurance

I am a business owner with no employees, and one big problem that those such as I have is that we cannot participate in a group health insurance plan.

We have to get individual policies and go through the harsh scrutiny of underwriting, which in my experience always results in denial,

aborted applications, or at best, approval with highly inflated premiums.

Employers avoid this because the law requires insurance companies to write group plans without underwriting. Underwriting examines individual medical histories for potential future claims. The solution to this would be association group health insurance plans, where for example, I as a CPA would join my state CPA society. After a year's membership, I could be included in their group policy.

My understanding is that insurance companies can now do this, but they all refuse because they are afraid that high risk individuals would join associations just to get the insurance. However, the risk would be spread wide by healthy members in the group, which is supposed to be the purpose of insurance in the first place.

But the insurance companies won't write association groups unless the law forces them to do so, like the law forces them to write underwriting-free employee groups.

My question is this: What is the libertarian solution to this problem? I don't like the law forcing insurance companies to write policies that they don't want to, but when they all collude against their customers, what do you do?

—JERRY L. DIXON
Santee, California

Socialism abroad

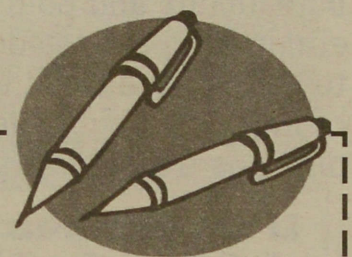
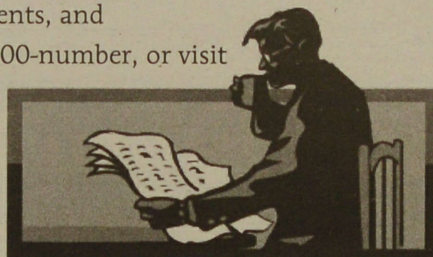
The more George W. Bush makes proclamations about spreading democracy overseas and "saving" the world, the more our liberties at home are being chiseled away. Bush may be liberating the world, but he's enslaving Americans. In fact, if Bush's vision of American interventionism becomes a part the foreign policy landscape, Americans will virtually become the world's slaves. I don't want to foot the bill to free the world.

We have a massive federal deficit, and Bush is spending billions — eventually trillions — of our money to aid foreign nations who see America as nothing more than

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a rich fat cat tossing them scraps. Bush thinks that by giving everyone our money — and even worse, sacrificing our children — the world will grow more secure and less anti-American. If anything, as we've seen with Western Europe, this will only further spread resentment toward America. Socialism doesn't work at home, and it doesn't work abroad.

—JON STUDOWSKI
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Controversy

The front page of the January 2005 *LP News* must have had enough controversy for everybody. The article entitled "OH recount creates controversy" was to me the least controversial of the three stories.

Congratulations are in order, of course, to Ben Brandon, for being elected county executive in Dade County, Ga. But I would ask him to reconsider his position of taking senior citizens' property off of the school tax roles. I am all for phasing out all kinds of taxes across the board, as quickly as the matching spending cuts (also across the board) can be made. However, playing political favorites seems exceedingly un-libertarian to me, especially considering that certainly many of Dade County's current seniors burdened prior school budgets with their own children. Until such

time as we can eliminate all taxes, everybody should pay equally, even the poor and elderly.

Congratulations also to Ruth Bennett for her respectable showing in the race for governor of Washington. But I am appalled that she said "it seemed obvious [Ruth] was taking votes from the Democrats." Everybody repeat after me: Third parties do not steal, take or draw votes from anybody. In the first place, absent violence or fraud, nobody can "steal" or "take" a vote from its only rightful owner, the voter. Second, if there's any "drawing" of votes occurring, the big old parties are drawing them away from the up-start parties.

In Bennett's case, simply ask yourself how many individuals likely voted for her when they really wanted the Democrat or Republican to win. Zero, I'd think. Now, how many votes did the D or R get from those who really wanted Bennett to win? There's your vote siphoning.

—LARRY GOULART
Abington, Pennsylvania

Confusion

In response to the "Armageddon" and "What's our stance?" letters [See **MailBox**, January 2005 *LP News*], what Libertarians have these letter writers been talking to?

To the Armageddon letter, dis-

agreeing with a war waged against a country that didn't attack us first does not make us socialists. It makes us Libertarians.

To the "What's our stance?" letter: Libertarians are neither pro-American nor pro-Europe. In fact we're anti-UN! Why are there only two sides to everything?

There are always more than two sides to any story!

I shudder to think of what Libertarians these two have come in contact with. Libertarianism is pretty simple, in my opinion. Leave the people's personal liberties alone, and don't continuously pass laws that prohibit people's freedom.

—BETH KREPP
Gahanna, Ohio

The pledge

I suggest that if he or she has been properly admitted, the average LP member knows very well where he stands on a whole range of issues, and far more so than the average American and for reasons for which he can give excellent account.

That's because upon admission to membership the LP'er solemnly signs a declaration that he doesn't believe in the initiation of force to achieve political or social goals. No other party has anything like such a clear principle!

To the extent that any LP member has "no idea where we stand," I'd say that that person does not be-

long in the party because he cannot have read, or at least understood, that declaration and so was not properly admitted to membership.

—JIM DAVIES
Newbury, New Hampshire

Gay marriage

The letter by George Buckner regarding "gay marriage" in the January *LP News* reflects the national confusion between domestic agreements and marriage. Arguing about policy makes no sense until the underlying premises are clearly defined, as Ayn Rand taught us.

There is a reason that different terms exist to express "marriage" and "domestic union." The underlying principle here is that marriage is a binding agreement between two persons, the purpose of which is to create the optimum environment for begetting and raising the next generation of humans. Marriage is not a constellation of benefits; it is a constellation of obligations.

Persons who engage in "domestic unions" are not getting "married." Rather, they are forming a contract which establishes their choice of living arrangements for the duration of the contract. The United States Constitution prohibits any state from passing "any bill ... impairing the Obligation of Contracts" (Article I, Section 10), so homosexuals have every Constitutional protection they need to establish contracts of domestic union.

To look at it another way, repealing any governmental benefits to married couples makes more libertarian sense than extending such benefits to all other kinds of contractual arrangements.

—HAL ROUNDS
Somerville, Tennessee

Taxation

Anthony Gregory is right about Social Security. End it now! And yes, end it for the reasons he outlined too. But more importantly, base its immediate end on the American moral reason: "No taxation without representation."

Everyone talks about details of Social Security, but not about its fundamental mechanism, which is to tax the unborn to pay our reward in the future.

These future Americans are not now afforded their representation in Congress while that body levies and lays debt upon them. Thus, taxation without representation. This is as evil as the old English practice of inherited debt.

Just because our great-grand parents colluded for their personal enrichment to enslave their progeny doesn't hold us to continue this practice.

Slavery, in whatever form it is manifested, is always wrong. Therefore Social Security should be ended, and ended now!

—PHILIP HAMMACK
Bend, Oregon

Do you think our government has gotten too big and too powerful? Do you think bureaucrats and politicians are slowly eliminating the freedoms Americans used to take for granted? Do you think the Bill of Rights is being silently repealed — one precious freedom at a time?

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*Warning (from the blog of B.L. Foley, attendee to the 2004
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... I think it's great, of course."*

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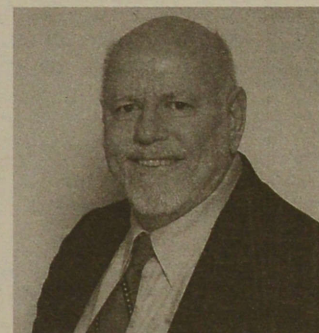
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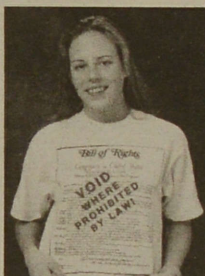
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UPCOMING

March 4-6, 2005

Missouri/Kansas/Nebraska LP Convention, the Holiday Inn Sports Complex, in Kansas City, Mo. Speakers to include Dr. Mary Ruwart; National LP Secretary Bob Sullentrup; Missouri LP Webmaster Glenn Nielsen; and author Tom Rustici. For more information, e-mail info@lpmo.org, call (877) Vote-4-US, or go to www.lpmo.org.

March 5, 2005

Oregon LP Convention, the Best Western New Kings Inn Motel, 1600 Motor Court NE, in Salem, beginning at 9 a.m. Business to include amendments to the LPO's constitution and election of officers. LNC member Jim Lark, a University of Virginia professor of systems and information engineering, will be the luncheon speaker. For information, call (800) 829-1992 or visit www.lporegon.org.

March 17-19, 2005

Austrian Scholars Conference 2005, The Mises Institute, Auburn, Ala. To include 80-plus presentations on economics, history and philosophy, with speakers to include Thomas J. DiLorenzo of Loyola College; Mark Thornton of The Mises Institute; Alberto Mingardi of the Bruno Leoni Institute; and Edward Feser of Loyola Marymount. For information, call (334) 321-2100, e-mail pat@Mises.org, or go to www.Mises.org.

March 19, 2005

Delaware LP Convention, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the Holiday Inn Select, Claymont, Del. Speakers to include Sen. Colin Bonini; former state chair and gubernatorial candidate Ken Krawchuk; LNC representative Jim Lark and others. For more information, go to www.de.lp.org or e-mail chair@de.lp.org.

March 19, 2005

New Jersey LP Convention, at the University Inn on Rutgers' Cook Campus. Speakers include 2nd Amendment attorney Evan Nappen; Amanda Phillips of the Free State Project; and R.J. Lehmann on insurance reform. Entertainment by Poker Face. For more information, visit www.NJLP.org.



■ Paul Topete
of Poker Face

March 19, 2005

Wisconsin LP Convention, at The Pallas, 1657 S. 108th St., Milwaukee, Wisc. Speakers to include state LP Chair Ed Thompson and 2004 LP presidential candidate Michael Badnarik. For more information, contact Linda Liberty at (800) 236-9236.

April 2, 2005

Iowa LP Convention, at the Cedar Rapids Marriott. Speakers to include Ed Fallon, 2006 Democrat candidate for governor; Bob Vander Plaats, 2006 Republican candidate for governor; and Michael Whalen, policy chair of the National Center for Policy Analysis. Also, joint strategy session with representatives of the Green Party, regarding ballot access strategy. For more details, see www.lpia.org; call (563) 340-2597; or e-mail lpiachair@mchsi.com.

April 2, 2005

Nevada LP Convention, at the Silver Club Hotel/Casino in Sparks, Nevada. Business session from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., dinner at 6 p.m. For information, contact Emily Rahn at (775) 747-4073, erahn8@yahoo.com, or P.O. Box 13644, Reno, NV 89507.

For more Upcoming Events, see page 11

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- **PAGE 15** Give parents school choice

FIRST WORD

"While I am a registered Republican, I find Libertarian Party candidates generally stand for issues the Republican Party used to find important but has since abandoned. Those issues include limited government, free trade, free enterprise, market-based health care, educational choice, deregulation, ending welfare, lower and fewer taxes and defending the rights of the individual."

—THOMAS J. LUCENTE JR., *Lima (Ohio) News*, Oct. 8, 2004



"I saw a bumper sticker I actually liked this week. It said, 'God is not a Republican or a Democrat.' Of course, this was no real surprise to me. I've always thought God was more of a Libertarian. You can vote for whom you want. But think about the Libertarians. Their main planks are individual liberty and personal responsibility. Those are some of the same things I hear Republicans say while they actually give more power to the federal government for things like education and homeland security. The Libertarians also push nonintervention. Since God seems to be letting us fumble around down here without smiting those who really need it, I'd say those views match up with his."

—RAY WAITERS, *Rocky Mount [NC] Telegram*, Feb. 10, 2005