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New success for *Healing Our World*

Dr. Mary Ruwart's best-known book, *Healing Our World in an Age of Aggression*, is a libertarian classic, a bestseller in which she explains patiently and effectively how — through the application of libertarian principles — severe disruptions in world peace could be smoothed.

On Oct. 12, the book moved beyond the realm of "libertarian bestseller" to become a bestseller on Amazon.com. Specifically, *Healing Our World* hit #18 on the list of bestselling books that day.

But wait, there's more: Not only was *Healing Our World* #18 out of all books on Amazon that day, it also placed in the top five bestsellers on nine different subcategories of books: It reached #1 in the "practical politics" and "economic policy and development" sections; #2 in the politics and United States history sections; #3 in social sciences, economics, and business and investing; #4 among history books; and #5 among all nonfiction books.

The sudden success of Ruwart's book was no accident or coincidence. Dr. Ruwart recently took a class that taught her exactly how to promote a book so that it could attain such success on Amazon.

Needless to say, she paid attention and the training was a success. And it didn't hurt that it's a great book.

"About three days before our campaign began, *Healing Our World* was ranked at about number 120,000 on Amazon, meaning it sold — on average — less than one book per day on that site," Dr. Ruwart said.

But then she advertised a special promotional campaign here in the pages of *LP News* and on her Web site, explaining what she was trying to accomplish, and offering free bonus material to anyone who purchased the book on Amazon on Oct. 12.

Those who purchased the See **LIBERTARIAN BOOK** Page 3

'Our Libertarian Future'

By **J. Daniel Cloud**
LP NEWS EDITOR

Hundreds of Libertarians and other liberty-minded folk converged on Atlanta, Ga., in mid-October for a three-day conference hosted by the Advocates for Self Government, to learn about the libertarianism in America and where the movement is headed.

It was the Advocates' 20th anniversary celebration. Called "Fast Forwarding our Libertarian Future," the event featured about 20 libertarian luminaries.

They included former presidential candidates David Bergland, Harry Browne and Ron Paul; Libertarian Party founder David Nolan; authors Ronald Bailey of *Reason* magazine, Michael Cloud of the Center for Small Government, Tom Palmer of the Cato Institute, Dr. Mary Ruwart, and Robert Ringer, author of the libertarian classic, *Restoring the American Dream*; as well as Advocates founder Marshall Fritz, Advocates president Sharon Harris, Center for See **ADVOCATES** Page 2



■ David Bergland, author and former LP presidential candidate, answers an audience question as (from left) other panel members Dr. Mary Ruwart, Michael Cloud and Sharon Harris listen in. At the Advocates for Self Government's 20th Anniversary conference Oct. 14-16, these four and many others shared their thoughts on the best ways to communicate libertarian ideas. (Photo by LP News Editor J. Daniel Cloud)

Libertarian city councilman relies on successes in his re-election campaign

By **J. Daniel Cloud**
LP NEWS EDITOR

Two years ago, Bill Lynn was elected to the city council in Davenport, Iowa, a city of about 100,000 near the Illinois line. Elections are held every two years, so Lynn is back on the campaign trail, looking forward to the election on Nov. 8.

In the Oct. 11 primary election, with three opponents, Lynn received 58 percent of the vote in his district — his nearest opponent receiving about 30 percent — so he is optimistic of his chances for re-election.

There are 10 aldermen in Davenport and as a Libertarian, Lynn is definitely in the minority. But the council seats (and elections) are nonpartisan, so party membership doesn't often enter into the Davenport political scene, he said.

In 2003 Lynn received only 14 votes more than his opponent, out

of about 1,800 votes. But that was enough to defeat the incumbent — "so I guess any margin of victory is better than none," he said in a recent interview.

Lynn reports that since he was elected the first time, the public has been very supportive of his stance on the issues.

Not so with the other aldermen and the mayor.

"They propose tax increases, and I oppose them," Lynn said. "The big thing now is adding fees, like stormwater fees. We already have the highest property tax rate we can, according to state law. I have generally fought the increases in fees, and to be blunt I've generally lost."

"But I'm pretty popular with the public. They are generally very supportive, unlike the other council members — who have probably attacked me more than anyone else."

Davenport's mayor is also "not real wild about me," Lynn said,

and he's one of the few people who have "tried to pin me with the Libertarian label. But that really slides right off. What the mayor is really confused about is what libertarianism means. He confuses 'libertarian' with 'anarchist.'"

"In fact, one of my best supporters recently said, 'You're a Libertarian. That means you don't believe in government, right?' So I explained to her that we do believe in government — we just believe in limited government."

Many times when the issue of libertarianism comes up, people are not making an attack, Lynn said. Rather, they're merely trying to understand exactly what the word means.

"I think one thing Libertarians do wrong is that we get defensive about being libertarian," he noted. "Many times I just say I'm not a Democrat or a Republican, and that's enough for most people."

For 11 years Lynn has been a

professor of economics at St. Ambrose University in Davenport. He has a Ph.D in economics from the University of Illinois, and said he has been surprised how much of a benefit his background has been on the city council.

"I've actually been quite amazed," he said. "I never realized that I would use my knowledge of economics at every meeting. It has been very helpful for me."

Lynn's primary issue on the campaign trail the first time around was crime in the city — "primarily break-ins and vandalism of vehicles," he said.

"When I was running for council last time, I suggested they adopt some new approaches to fighting crime. I am a big proponent of community-based policing. Just a few months ago we developed a community-based policing program, and the crime rates in the areas we've targeted has dropped like a rock."

See **BILL LYNN** Page 5

NEWS BRIEFS

Taking an unpopular stand against the Drug War

What do you do as an elected Libertarian when you're given the opportunity to offer support for a drug war task force? If you're Scott Davison — a retired Air Force officer and bomber pilot who was elected to the Burkburnett, Texas, board of commissioners in May — you respectfully decline.

The issue arose at the board's meeting on Oct. 17, when the commissioners were asked to sign a "resolution of support" for the North Texas Drug Task Force. A long-time member of the LP, Davison chose not to support this annual ritual — choosing instead to read a prepared statement explaining how the war on drugs has been "a colossal failure."

It should come as no surprise that the war hasn't been effective, he said.

"The reasons for that failure were made abundantly clear during the war on alcohol, ... commonly known as 'Prohibition,'" Davison stated. "That war did not make alcohol more difficult to obtain. It did, however, create huge, wasteful bureaucracies, corrupt many law enforcement and other government agencies, increase crime to an intolerable level, and provide limitless wealth to society's most violent criminal elements."

Those effects have continued under drug prohibition, he noted.

Davison pointed out that he is "the son and brother of law enforcement officials" and is "convinced of the good intentions and courage of the men and women who have enlisted in the Drug War."

However, he continued, he is "equally convinced that the best course of action to protect our families and society from the scourge of drugs is to bring an end to the failed war" rather than continuing to pour "more and more resources into a bottomless pit of failed public policy."

And for that reason he could not in good conscience vote in favor of the resolution.

Unfortunately, none of the other six commissioners present at the meeting agreed with Davison and he provided the sole dissenting vote on the issue.

San Diego may begin Instant Runoff Voting

The San Diego, Calif., city council is considering the use of Instant Runoff Voting in the city's elections.

In late September the city's Government Efficiency and Openness Committee reviewed the voting mechanism and subsequently presented a proposal to the rest of the council suggesting that IRV be adopted.

In this method of voting, voters cast a ballot for their favorite candidate, but also list who their second, third, etc., choices for the position would be. If no one candidate wins a majority of the votes in the first count, the later preferences expressed by voters are counted until one candidate emerges as winner.

Many Libertarians believe IRV could be beneficial to LP candidates, as it allows voters to cast votes for both the candidate they most support and for the "electable" candidate they least object — which could help LP candidates avoid the "wasted-vote" syndrome.

San Diego LP Chair Edward Teyssier said he supports the proposal because it would save time and money.

"We'd be able to accommodate any number of write-in candidates," he said. "We would have the winner selected by the majority in one election" rather than having continual runoff elections.

San Francisco already uses IRV in its elections, as do several other cities around the nation.

Libertarian calls for Cuba embargo to end

Lorenzo Gaztanaga, a Cuban American who is an active member of the Libertarian Party in Maryland, has recently renewed his vocal opposition to the United States' embargo on Cuba.

"I've known for years that the embargo was wrong, but it hit home deeply to my heart when my father passed away in Havana, Cuba, and I was not able to get down and be with my family — as I should have been able to do," Gaztanaga said.

The embargo against Cuba was ostensibly started to punish the island nation after its takeover by Fidel Castro's communists in the 1950s.

"There are no actual historical records that this sort of embargo has ever weakened a tyrant or helped the oppressed," Gaztanaga said. "The embargo destroys dialogue and enhances tyranny. Let us, the so-called free country, open the doors."

"For nearly two generations, young Cubans have struggled to make a living under the boot of the embargo — as well as under home-grown tyranny. This issue is neither right nor left. This is an issue of common sense."

Advocates conference in Atlanta

Continued from Page 1

Small Government president Carla Howell, LNC member Jim Lark, Roderrick Long of the Ludwig Von Mises Institute, Vince Miller of the International Society for Individual Liberty, and Kurt Weber of the State Policy Network.

The Advocates hold an anniversary celebration every five years in addition to their regular communication workshops, and even this conference turned out to be — to a great extent — an opportunity for libertarians to learn how to better communicate libertarian ideas.

For example, Tom Palmer chose, rather than talking about globalization, to speak about talking to others about that issue.

"We are morally connected to free trade, and too often people want to begin a discussion by saying that we simply have a right to free trade," he said. "That should be the last point you make in a discussion, not the first. You want to win allies, not arguments."

Other presentations were more explicitly communication related, with Carla Howell explaining how to address people's bias toward big government; Kurt Weber and Jim Lark detailing the best ways to communicate libertarian ideas to young people; and a four-panelist discussion that centered on brief explanations of libertarian ideas.

Libertarians need to learn that "we should not try to make converts," Lark said during a question-and-answer time after his talk. "I don't try to get my students to think like me. I simply try to get them to think."

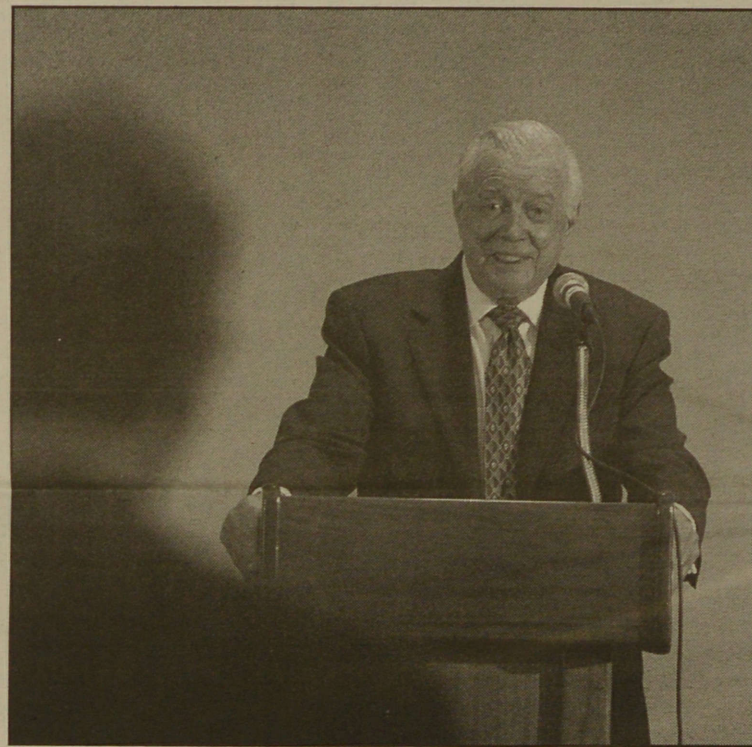
"I have this notion that libertarian ideas are simply better, and that if we can help people to think at all, they will realize that the libertarian perspective is reasonable."

Another topic many of the speakers addressed was the outlook for liberty in America and around the world.

"The Future of Liberty" was actually the name of one panel discussion, with panelists David Nolan, Vince Miller and Ronald Bailey expressing their views on the subject.



■ Tom Palmer (above), director of Cato University, delivers his "Globalization is Grrreat!" speech at the Advocates for Self Government's 20th Anniversary conference. And below, television personality Hugh Downs fields questions about the current state of liberty in America, following his address at the conference. (Photos by LP News Editor J. Daniel Cloud)



Even Hugh Downs spoke to this issue, along with describing how the ideas of liberty are often ignored by both the media and the public.

From 1978 to 1999 Downs was host of the TV news magazine "20/20," sharing the stage with libertarian commentator John Stossel.

In 1997 he said in an interview that the Republicans and Democrats are two sides of the same coin — and that "all the really good ideas

belong to the Libertarians."

Downs said he finds it "particularly frightening" that the American people don't seem to care about the implications of the PATRIOT Act, which he describes as "dangerous."

That said, he noted that he doesn't think "we are doomed."

"George Washington believed that, given the truth and enough time, people will make correct decisions," he said. "I believe that's true."

"My feeling is that the libertarian consciousness is growing — and I think that's a good thing."

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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."

Free State Project political activity

A Sept. 22 article in the *Concord (N.H.) Monitor* points out that members of the Free State Project are getting involved in a host of political races this fall, in addition to political successes earlier this year.

Reporter Daniel Barrick interviewed two candidates for the Concord School Board race who are members of the project, quoting one of them — Web designer Seth Cohn — as saying he “would like to see more competition, more things like charter schools.”

As most Libertarians know, the Free State Project was started in 2001 with a goal of getting 20,000 liberty-minded people to promise to move to New Hampshire. Once they move to the state, the plan is to become politically active and create a libertarian-friendly government.

New Hampshire already has lower taxes and more freedom than most other states, so Free Staters have high hopes that their plan can succeed.

Cohn, for example, moved to Concord from Oregon, and hundreds of others have relocated to the state from around the nation.

Cohn is one of two Free Staters in the Concord School Board race, in which nine candidates are running

for three available seats.

Barrick also noted that “at least three Free-Staters are running for office in Manchester this year, including the school committee and ward selectboards, [and] project members said they expect to field candidates in Keene and Dover as well.”

In addition, the FSP “scored several electoral victories earlier this year, as members were elected to the Goffstown School Board and the budget committee and school board in Winchester,” the report continued.

And in Manchester, a FSP member led a successful effort “to put a spending cap amendment on the city’s November ballot,” Barrick wrote.

Don Gorman, who was elected to the New Hampshire House in 1992 as a Libertarian, is currently political director of the New Hampshire Liberty Alliance, according to the *Monitor* report — and he is training FSP members and other liberty-minded New Hampshire residents “in the ways of New Hampshire politics.”

2004 LP presidential candidate Michael Badnarik has reportedly signed up to join other Libertarians in New Hampshire for the Free State

Project.

In the 2004 presidential election, however, New Hampshire was one of only two states that did not attain ballot access for the LP candidate.

The other state was Oklahoma, where extremely onerous ballot access restrictions kept Libertarians off the ballot.

Of course, a candidate doesn’t have to run under the Libertarian Party banner to be considered a libertarian — witness U.S. Rep. Ron Paul, a libertarian Republican who in 1988 ran for president on the LP ticket. Nor do all FSP members claim to be libertarians, much less members of the LP, a fact Barrick made note of in his article.

But Barrick also noted the similar (though not identical) belief structures of the LP and the FSP, pointing out that the two groups’ memberships overlap in many cases.

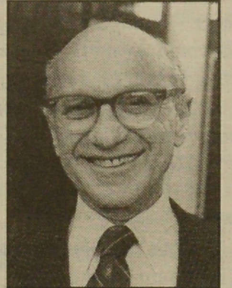
Finally, Gorman was quoted as promising that this will be the last legislative session in which there is not a FSP member or a member of the Liberty Alliance in the state legislature.

If a member of one of those two groups is elected, he or she will likely be a libertarian. But will that new legislator also be a Libertarian? We’ll have to wait and see.

POLITICS 2005

Intellectuals, trend-setters and space

■ Two magazines — *Foreign Policy* and the UK’s *Prospect* — recently asked readers to vote for the top five “public intellectuals” from a list of 100 that were chosen by the magazines. The top five? Noam Chomsky, Umberto Eco, Richard Dawkins, Vaclav Havel and Christopher Hitchens. The poll also included a line for write-in votes, for people not included on the offered list of 100. The top write-in vote-getter was none other than Milton Friedman, and the magazines pointed out that Friedman has identified himself as a libertarian.



■ The leader of Christian Exodus, a Christian separatist group that is trying to get conservative Christians to move to South Carolina and set up a state government based on the Bible and a strict interpretation of the Constitution, told reporters at an Oct. 15 seminar that he got the idea after hearing about the libertarian Free State Project.

■ As part of his proposal to send money to the victims of Hurricane Katrina, President Bush included approximately \$500 million in tax credits for casinos on the Gulf Coast. The casinos don’t need the money and they didn’t ask for the assistance — but Republicans are apparently seeking the gambling industry vote. On the positive side, U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf of Virginia is among those trying to take the casino tax credits out of the proposed legislation.

■ Michael Cartwright, a former chairman of the Georgia LP, was killed in a car accident on Oct. 6. A longtime activist with the state LP, Cartwright was particularly dedicated to improving ballot access laws and increasing voters’ political choices. He also wrote a book in recent years, *Social Libertarianism*, which is about Libertarian activism and principles in action.

■ NASA administrator Michael Griffin said recently that the space program is “trying to change the path” it is on “while doing as little damage as we can.” At President Bush’s urging, NASA hopes to get more Americans on the moon by 2018 — and they plan to spend at least \$104 billion on the program. But they probably won’t be using the space shuttles. They are working on a new generation of vehicles to deliver the lunar expedition. Maybe it’s time to up the ante on the X Prize, to see if a privately funded craft can beat the government to the moon.



■ Loretta Nall, the Alabama-based president of the U.S. Marijuana Party, is seeking the Libertarian Party’s nomination for governor of Alabama, according to an Associated Press report. She said she chose the LP because the party already has an organization in Alabama and because Libertarians support the legalization of marijuana. In order to get listed on the general election ballot in 2006, the LP will have to collect more than 40,000 signatures from voters in the state — a task Alabama LP Chair Mike Rster described as “virtually impossible.”

■ In Austin, Texas, members of Keep Austin Free have filed a lawsuit challenging the city’s smoking ban, saying that although the ban was put to a vote, the ordinance should be stricken from the books. The ban went into effect on Sept. 1, and bartenders and other restaurant workers are complaining that their tip income has declined sharply since its inception. Besides the financial damage to bars and other small businesses that were previously frequented by smokers, Keep Austin Free representatives point out that the smoking ban is being enforced unequally and unevenly.

■ Citizens Against Government Waste named U.S. House Majority Leader Tom DeLay (R-Texas) and Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Don Young (R-Alaska) as Co-Porkers of the Month for September 2005, for their response to requests that spending be cut to offset the costs of rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina. DeLay argued that cutting 6,000 special-interest earmarks from the recently approved \$295 billion highway bill would adversely affect “important infrastructure.” Landscaping along freeways and visitor centers are apparently extremely important to DeLay. And when asked about redirecting \$450 million set aside for two bridges to hurricane victims, Young rudely declines, calling the request the “dumbest thing I’ve ever heard.”

Libertarian book on bestseller list

Continued from Page 1

book that day were invited to go to a special Web site that had been set up, with material that could be downloaded without charge by anyone who purchased the book during the promotion.

“We had that site up for a few days before and after Oct. 12, for people who forgot exactly what day the promotion was,” Dr. Ruwart said. “We didn’t want people to miss out on the promotion just because they lost track of the date.”

As a result of the promotion, approximately 300 copies of *Healing Our World* were sold on Oct. 12.

The campaign was not a money-making operation: Dr. Ruwart estimates that she probably earned enough to pay for the promotion itself.

But there was a longer-term goal in mind.

“A primary idea for the promotion is that I was hoping to get a bigger press to pick it up, for further distribution,” she explained. “I have not gotten good representation at booksellers because we are a small press.

“And these ideas belong out there. This is a good way to advertise the movement.”

Whether or not the campaign will have the desired effect — getting *Healing Our World* picked up by a better-known press — remains to be seen.

But at least the book that was named *Freemarket.net*’s “Freedom Book of the Year” in 2003 got some

Healing Our World In an Age of Aggression

Dr. Mary J. Ruwart
Foreword by Nobel Peace Prize
Nominees Frances Kendall & Leon Louw

recognition on the Internet’s largest bookseller. That can’t hurt the book’s success — and it certainly won’t hurt the libertarian image.

And, Dr. Ruwart noted, her promotion’s success illustrates that the same could be done for other libertarian books.

Proposed changes to LP bylaws explained

[Editor's note: This is the third in a series of articles detailing the activities of the national LP's 2006 Bylaws Committee. The committee is considering alterations to the LP bylaws — proposed changes that will be voted on at the 2006 national LP convention in Portland, Ore. Previous proposals were printed in the September and October 2005 issues of LP News.]

To recap, the 2006 Bylaws Committee has decided to use sentiment polling to rank and filter all proposals for change that come before the committee. Each member indicates his sentiments for each proposal.

The possible sentiments are strongly opposed, somewhat opposed, neutral, somewhat in favor or strongly in favor. By assigning a numerical value from 1 to 5 for these sentiments, we are able to gauge the degree to which the proposal is supported.

By Dan Karlan

We welcome proposals from the membership at large. We also welcome the feedback of our members.

While there are 10 people on this committee, it is entirely possible that we will not see every advantage or pitfall that the various proposals present. So if you have a suggestion, please feel free to share it with us.

We will be launching a Web site for member review, but this site is not yet available. Until it is, please feel free to send your input to Chair Geoffrey Neale at liber8or@austin.rr.com.

■ Proposal 5: Allow for an alternate method for nominating presidential candidates

The bylaws specify that any candidate for president or vice-president who submits to the LNC secretary the signatures of 30 delegates is entitled to formal nomination time in front of the convention. There is no specification for a form or procedure that must be followed to acquire those signatures or deliver them to the secretary. At the 2004

convention, the Secretary received sheets of paper of varied form and content, on which the many signatures were so distributed that it was impossible for the secretary to vouch for the validity and non-duplication of names.

(Nothing in the previous sentence should be construed as indicating the secretary doubted the validity of any signatures.)

Several of us — including members of the Credentials Committee, who might have to implement at least part of one proposed mechanism — have come up with a process that will make the submission of the minimum 30 unique signatures much easier to validate. However, we want to make sure that the mechanism that is adopted is permitted in the bylaws.

A variation of this proposal would add a "binding" provision, in which the delegates who offer their signatures for a candidate would at the same time, and by this action, promise to vote for the candidate to whom they offer their signatures, on the first ballot.

■ Proposal 6: Require financials presented to convention to be outside audited

This proposal would mandate that the financial report presented to the convention delegates would have been audited by an agency outside the LNC, perhaps a commercial accounting firm. The delegates would by this requirement have considerable confidence in the numbers so provided.

■ Proposal 7: Change delegate apportionment method to be same as the Electoral College

This proposal would eliminate the 1,000-delegate membership dependency and the 400-delegate Presidential vote dependency, and would instead defer to the decennial census for the allocation of delegate numbers to individual affiliates.

■ Proposal 8: Drop the weakest finisher after every ballot

The bylaws specify that if there is no winner after the first ballot in the polling for the presidential and vice-presidential candidates, the

vote is repeated; it is only after the second ballot that the weakest finisher is dropped.

However, at nearly every convention at which there has not been a winner on the first ballot, a motion to suspend the rules — to allow dropping the last-place finisher immediately, rather than waiting until after the second ballot — has been entertained and adopted. This proposal would formally remove that delay, and bow to the consistent suspension of the rules.

■ Proposal 9: Allow LNC removal of a regional representative to the LNC

Bowing to current legal niceties, the LNC recently adopted a policy on sexual harassment and other objectionable behavior by LNC members towards other LNC members and towards staff. Enforcement of that policy, to protect the LP from potentially catastrophic lawsuits, requires that the LNC be capable of applying the ultimate penalty — removal from the LNC of the offending member.

But the bylaws currently declare that regional representatives — fully half the LNC — can only be removed by action of the corresponding affiliates. This proposal would confer on the LNC the ability to apply the penalty of removal to all LNC members. The proposal would still allow the corresponding affiliates to remove a regional representative, if necessary.

■ Proposal 10: Provide for automatic removal of officers and at-large members for non-attendance

While the LNC has the authority to remove officers and at-large members, this is an extremely severe action, and the LNC usually has much critical business to attend to. But an officer or at-large member who is absent from a significant number of LNC meetings imposes a severe burden on the remaining members, who take their commitment seriously.

This proposal would ease the difficulty for the LNC for this one reason: consistent non-attendance over the course of, perhaps 3 meetings: nearly one full year of LNC meetings.

In coming months, we'll keep you updated on other proposals.

■ About the author: Dan Karlan is secretary of the 2006 Bylaws Committee.

Ballot access reform push in Pennsylvania

Representatives of the Pennsylvania Ballot Access Coalition on Sept. 24 introduced their Voters Choice Act in a rally at the state capitol building in Harrisburg.

The Voters Choice Act would reform Pennsylvania's ballot access laws by leveling the playing field for third parties and independent candidates.

Under the current law, Democrats and Republicans must collect only 2,000 signatures to have their names placed on the statewide primary ballot, and none at all to appear on the November ballot — while third party and independent candidates must collect a minimum of 67,070 signatures.

So much for the Constitution-mandated "free and equal elections."

The proposed legislation would change the definition of a minor political party and would allow minor political parties to nominate candidates for all offices directly according to their party rules, and at their own expense, rather than by the existing taxpayer-funded nomination papers process.

Independent candidates would continue to nominate candidates for all offices via the current nomination papers process, but using the same signature totals currently required of the two old parties.

A crowd of about 40 supporters gathered at the rally to hear representatives from the state's largest third parties and independent campaigns speak.

Among the speakers were Ken Krawchuk, 1998 and 2002 LP gubernatorial candidate; Pennsylvania LP chair David Jahn; 2004 LP presiden-

tial candidate Michael Badnarik; former Green Party state chair Jennaro Pullano; Jim Clymer, national chair of the Constitution Party; and Reform Party state chair Jim Clymer.

"We are heading for a political train wreck in 2006," Krawchuk told the crowd. "Over one million voting-age Pennsylvanians risk being denied their right to vote for the candidate of their choice."

Clymer noted that if Utah had Pennsylvania's ballot access laws,

the Democrats would not be a political party, and if Massachusetts had them, the Republicans would not be a political party.

"The major parties have conspired to make Pennsylvania one of the most difficult states in the nation to acquire permanent ballot access, so they can maintain a monopoly stranglehold on the electoral process", he added.

Jahn pointed out that while the smaller political parties hold prima-

ry elections at their own expense, then collect many thousands of signatures to get on the Election Day ballot, the Republicans and Democrats hold primaries funded by taxpayers, and have a much easier time getting on the ballot.


"This is a process that is not healthy, as it permits the major parties to run and elect sub-par candidates with ease while our candidates are overwhelmed with ballot access hurdles," he said.



■ Representatives of the Pennsylvania Ballot Access Coalition include (from left) John Murphy of the Ralph Nader campaign, former Green Party state chair Jennaro Pullano, Constitution Party national chair Jim Clymer, former Libertarian Party gubernatorial candidate Ken Krawchuk, Reform Party state treasurer Tom McLaughlin, and Pennsylvania LP state chair David Jahn.

(Photo by James Babb of the Pennsylvania LP)

Beginner's Introduction



**A
Liberty
Primer**

Send \$6.95 to:
SIL, Box 10224, Rochester, NY 14610

Georgia voters narrowly approve another tax hike

Voters came within 117 votes of turning down a proposed Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax in Cobb County, Ga., on Sept. 20.

Activists with the libertarian-led Cobb County Taxpayers Association were given credit in the media for the extremely close vote.

The referendum will add an extra 1 percent tax to all sales in the county. It was approved with just

50.13 percent of the total votes cast.

By all accounts it was an unusual vote, with many voting precincts that usually support tax increases voting against the extra tax. Meanwhile, voters in precincts that commonly oppose tax increases voted in favor of it.

One action by the anti-tax activists — which encouraged many Republicans to vote against the tax

hike — was reportedly lauded by former Republican state representative Matt Towery as “one of the greatest political moves I’ve ever seen.”

Members of the anti-tax group managed to intercept a telephone recording that was being sent out by the pro-tax group.

The message featured former Gov. Roy Barnes — who is very unpopular with Republicans — asking

voters to support the tax.

The pro-tax group intended the message to go only to Democrats, but the anti-tax activists began sending it to Republican voters. The implied message: If Barnes supports this tax, Republicans should vote against it.

According to the *Marietta Daily Journal*, the Cobb County Taxpayers Association also made inroads to the southern part of the county, which

is predominantly Democrat and generally supportive of tax increases.

In this referendum, however, 42 voting precincts in south Cobb County cast almost 56 percent of their votes against the tax.

But it wasn’t enough, said Libertarian Lance Lamberton, president of the taxpayers association — noting that the anti-tax group “ran a spirited, if under-funded, campaign.”

Libertarian Bill Lynn running for re-election

Continued from Page 1

With that in mind, Lynn said he is telling his constituents quite simply that he has kept his promise to reduce crime — that his ideas worked — and he’s asking them to give him another two years to continue the job.

When you’ve done what you said you would do, not much more is needed.

Besides, advertising has proven to be nearly fruitless: “The wards are small enough in Davenport that TV and radio ads are really a waste of money,” Lynn said. “Instead, and I think this is critical, I just go out and knock on doors.”

Lynn has also sent out a series of three letters to the voters, defining problems the city has and explaining how they can be fixed.

Libertarians in office “need to be realistic,” he said. “Too often we Libertarians tend to become ideologues. We need to make sure we concentrate on the real issues where we live — like keeping taxes down and controlling government spending. I try to make sure I stick with issues that I can actually affect on a local level. Otherwise I’d just be wasting my time talking.”

And doing his job is enough, for now. When a Libertarian is elected to office, other Libertarians often assume that he or she will soon attempt a move to higher office.

Lynn has no intention of doing so. “I’ve had people ask me if I’d run for mayor or something, but I think I’m going to stay where I am for the time being. I’m still trying to accept the fact that I’m on the city council, that I got elected.”

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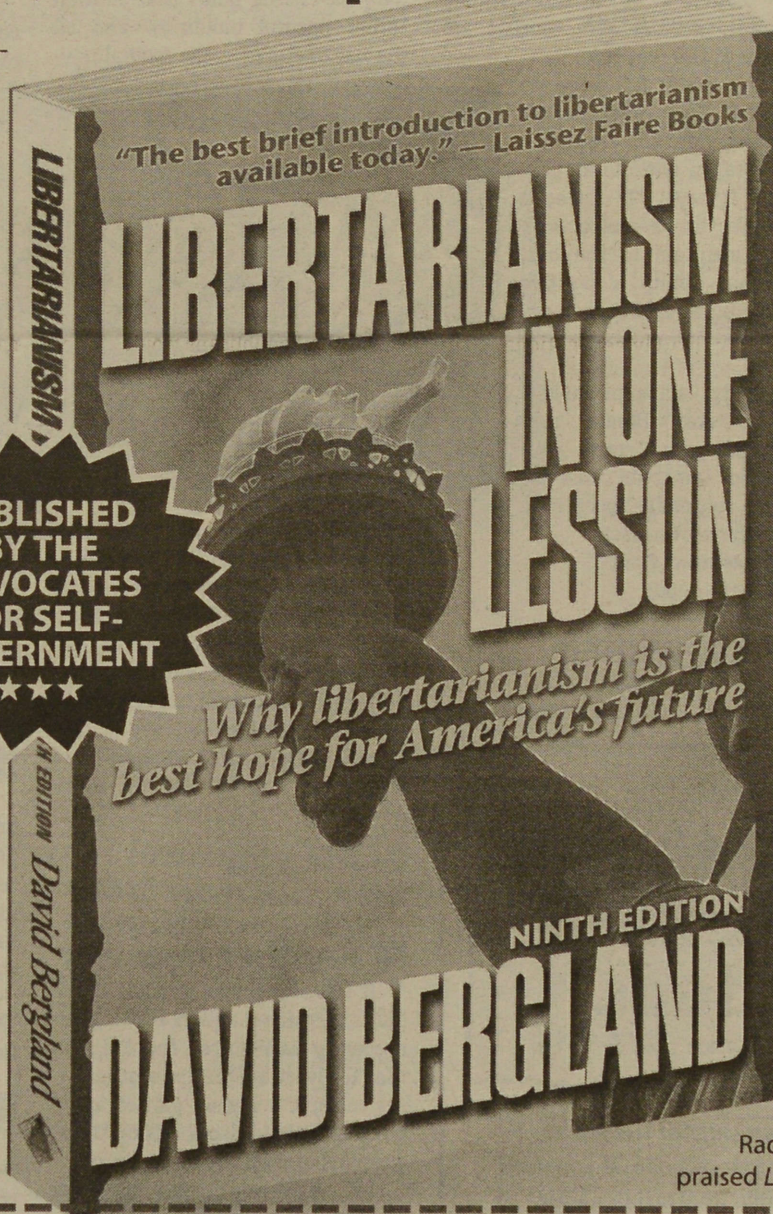
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TALKING POINTS

Fraud, biotechnology, the CIA and red-light cameras in D.C.

■ Fraud and food

\$180,000: Value of food and drinks comped during 17 months in 2002 and 2003 at Signatures, a favorite restaurant of congressional Republicans that's co-owned by Jack Abramoff, the Washington lobbyist under federal indictment for fraud.

—KNOW+TELL

Details magazine
October 2005

■ Biotechnology

The biotech scare is back — or, at least, a new movie is trying to bring it back. Playing in small movie houses, "The Future of Food" dusts off all the Greens' long-discredited arguments against agricultural biotechnology.

[T]he movie's overriding themes are allegations that biotech crops and food are unsafe and that a government-industry cabal is foisting dangerous products on an unwitting public.

Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Biotech crops and foods are among the most thoroughly tested products available. No other food crops in history have been so thoroughly tested and regulated. Before biotech products are marketed, they undergo years of safety testing including thousands of tests for potential toxicity, allergenicity and effects on non-target insects and the environment.

—STEVEN MILLOY

FOXNews.com

October 6, 2005

■ Stand your ground

Florida has a new law that gives legal protection to someone who shoots somebody else as long as the shooter feels threatened or is attacked.

Florida's "stand your ground" law, which took effect Saturday, says citizens no longer are obligated to retreat from an attack if they're somewhere they have a legal right to be, such as a public street. Shooters also get immunity from prosecution so long as the person shot is not a police officer.

A gun control group is handing out leaflets at Miami International Airport, making sure tourists are aware of the new law ...

The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence tells visitors, "do not argue unnecessarily with local people." It says, "If someone appears to be angry with you, maintain to the best of your ability a positive attitude, and do not shout or make threatening gestures."

Brady Campaign spokesman Peter Hamm says Florida's new "stand your ground" law could cause the most aggressive people in society to overreact.

—THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

October 4, 2005

■ Rebuilding

The only thing about which Democrats and Republicans can

agree these days is the astronomical cost of rebuilding the storm-ravaged Gulf Coast.

Estimates, on either side of the political aisle, reach into the hundreds of billions of dollars. How to pay these costs is a question fueling heated debate inside both parties.

Rep. Tom Tancredo has the best idea to date: Sell excess federal land.

Why should the federal government own more than 700 million acres — more than 30 percent of the total land area?

Even after exempting all the military bases, the lands that contain "other needful buildings" and all the national parks, the federal gov-



ernment still owns nearly 600 million acres, for no legitimate reason.

If Congress would take seriously Rep. Tancredo's idea and release this land to the private sector, the revenue generated could rebuild the Gulf Coast and more, and it would relieve the federal budget of the annual maintenance expense and lessen the tax burden on every American.

—HENRY LAMB

WorldNetDaily.com

October 1, 2005

■ Another new war

It was announced today that the FBI is recruiting agents for an anti-obscenity task force. The FBI said they'll divert agents from other areas to fight a war on pornography, or as President Bush is calling them, weapons of mass erections.

Let me ask you something. A war on pornography? Did I miss something? Did we catch bin Laden?

—JAY LENO

The Tonight Show

September 22, 2005

■ Impeachment

The neoconservative Bush administration prides itself on not being "reality based." Facts get in the way of the administration's illusions and delusions.

On the surface it doesn't look like

Bush can be stopped from trashing our country.

The congressional mid-term elections are a year away. Moreover, the Democrats have failed as an opposition party and are compromised by their support for the war. Bush has three more years in which to mire America in wider war. If Bush succeeds in starting wars throughout the Middle East, his successor will be stuck with them.

There still is a way to bring reality to the Bush administration. The public has the Internet.

Is the antiwar movement well enough organized to collect via the Internet signatures on petitions for impeachment, perhaps one petition for each state? Millions of signatures would embarrass Bush before the world and embarrass our elected Representatives for their failure to act.

—PAUL CRAIG ROBERTS

LewRockwell.com

October 11, 2005

■ Justice Miers?

Harriet Miers is not just the close confidante of the president in her capacity as his staff secretary and

then as White House counsel. She also was George W. Bush's personal lawyer. Apart from nominating his brother or former business partner, it is hard to see how the president could have selected someone who fit Hamilton's description [of favoritism to be avoided] any more closely.

Given her lack of experience, does anyone doubt that Ms. Miers's only qualification to be a Supreme Court justice is her close

connection to the president? Would the president have ever picked her if she had not been his lawyer, his close confidante, and his adviser?

—RANDY BARNETT

The Wall Street Journal

October 5, 2005

■ Rebuilding II

President Bush has pledged to grant millions of dollars in tax breaks to national casino companies rushing to rebuild casinos along the Gulf Coast, giving residents who haven't already lost their house a chance to do so.

—LEWIS BLACK

The Daily Show

October 2, 2005

■ Farm subsidies

The Bush administration will try to jump-start stalled negotiations over a global trade deal on Monday by offering to make steep cuts in domestic farm subsidies and export subsidies if other countries make similar concessions, senior administration officials said on Sunday.

The American offer comes after weeks of closed-door negotiations between the United States Trade Representative, Rob Portman, and members of Congress who have said they would not approve any deal unless they were convinced that American farmers could make up for

the loss of government aid through new access to foreign markets.

Farm subsidies in the United States total more than \$19 billion annually.

—DAVID E. SANGER

The New York Times

October 10, 2005

■ Disciplinary action

CIA Director Porter Goss, defying the spy agency's inspector general, said on Wednesday that he will not pursue disciplinary action against former and current CIA officials over intelligence lapses involving the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

Despite widespread calls for accountability, Goss said the CIA would risk undermining the readiness of its operatives to take risks in the U.S. war on terror if it were to single out individuals for missteps that occurred in the run-up to the 2001 attacks.

CIA inspector general John Helgeson recommended in an internal report last August that Goss convene a performance accountability board to examine the roles played by specific CIA officials charged with protecting the United States against Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda network.

The inspector general's report, which is classified, was sent to Congress in August.

—REUTERS

October 6, 2005

■ Red light District

Red-light cameras [in Washington, D.C.] have generated more than 500,000 violations and \$32 million in fines over the past six years. City officials credit them with making busy roads safer.

But a Washington Post analysis of crash statistics shows that the number of accidents has gone up at intersections with the cameras. The increase is the same or worse than at traffic signals without the devices.

Three outside traffic specialists independently reviewed the data and said they were surprised by the results. Their conclusion: The cameras do not appear to be making any difference in preventing injuries or collisions.

The District started the camera program in 1999, and from the beginning, officials said they were aiming to curtail red-light running and accidents.

The city has cameras at 45 intersections. They take photographs of cars running red lights, generating tickets that are processed by a private contractor. Police oversee the issuance of tickets, which carry \$75 fines, and the money goes into the city's general fund — nearly \$5 million last year.

The analysis shows that the number of crashes at locations with cameras more than doubled, from 365 collisions in 1998 to 755 last year. Injury and fatal crashes climbed 81 percent, from 144 such wrecks to 262.

—DEL QUENTIN WILBER AND DEREK WILLIS

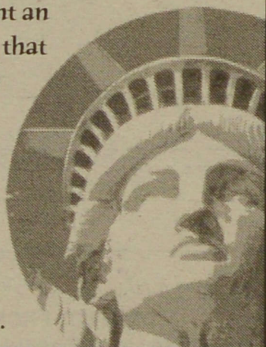
The Washington Post

October 4, 2005

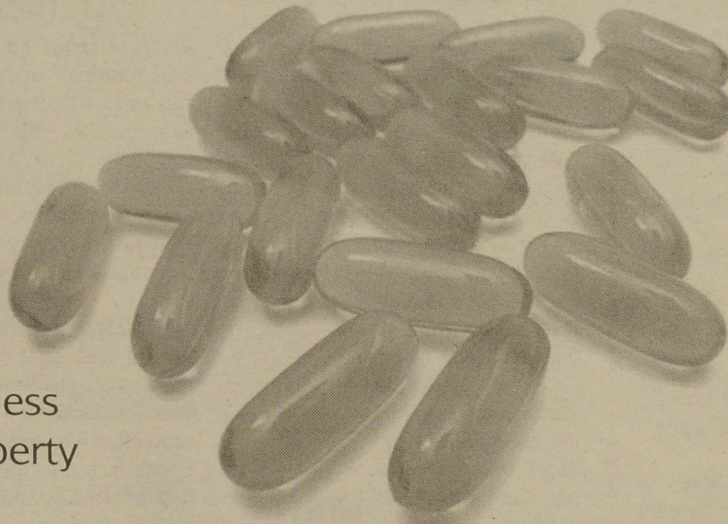
"Tyranny is always better organized than freedom."

—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.



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THE REVIEW

A fresh look at economics

■ *The Invisible Heart: An Economic Romance*, by Russell Roberts. Published 2001 by MIT Press. 271 pages. Hardcover. \$18.95. Available at www.amazon.com.

Reviewed by J. Daniel Cloud
LP NEWS EDITOR

Not every author would have the audacity to attempt telling a love story with Adam Smith, economics and an abhorrence for government regulation as a backdrop.

And to be quite honest, that's not what Russell Roberts does in *The Invisible Heart* — although that is what the flycover text would have you believe.

No, what Roberts actually wrote was a conversational defense of capitalism, with a burgeoning romance between a liberal-minded female English teacher and a male economics professor (who is a die-hard fan of Adam Smith, Frederic Bastiat, and Milton and Rose Friedman) as the sometimes-believable reason for conversation.

The title comes from Smith's reference in *The Wealth of Nations* to "the invisible hand" that allows an individual's actions done for his or her own benefit to also provide an unplanned benefit for others in the community.

"Self-interest isn't good or bad," says Sam Gordon, the economics professor. "It's a fact of life. ... We try to get

ahead. It's a fundamental part of our humanity. And the marketplace channels our nature in a way that serves others."

Make no mistake: Roberts is no Randian. The protagonist defines greed and self-interest differently than Ayn Rand did, and the book actually benefits from the difference. Gordon believes in altruism, but more than that, he believes that some government regulation is necessary. In other words, he's not a complete anarcho-capitalist.

However, for the most part Gordon detests government regulation — and it's obvious that this is the author's opinion, as well.

Gordon and his lady friend begin by amiably discussing their differences of opinion, frequently spending page after lively page in discourse about the respective merits of their vividly contrasting views. Roberts is careful to allow "the opposition" ample time to present its case, thus providing the reader with what is in effect a primer on how to talk to people who simply don't understand the benefits of a free-market, capitalist system of economics and government.

Along the way, a surprising subplot is woven between sections of the dissertation on the benefits of capitalism — and it's done very adeptly, in a manner that illustrates the conversation between the two primary characters and later provides a source of concrete examples for the sometimes abstract concepts under discussion.

Roberts holds a doctorate in economics from the University of Chicago and teaches economics at Washington University in St. Louis. He previously authored *The Choice: A Fable of Free Trade and Protectionism*, which was named one of the "best business books of the year" in 1994 by *Business Week*. He is obviously more than comfortable and proficient when explaining economic theory.

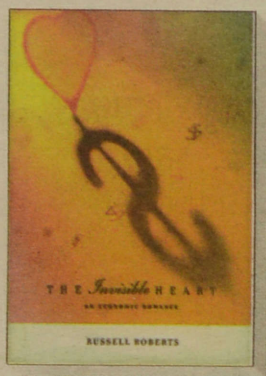
The Invisible Heart is billed as "an economic romance" — and the romance is where Roberts hits some snags. No, he doesn't try to give Harlequin a run for its money. He doesn't attempt a Robert James Waller type of romance, thank God. Nor is he as ham-handed as, say, Ernest Hemingway when tackling male-female relationships. He simply doesn't try very hard.

That doesn't detract from the book, however. Provided a reader goes into the book expecting a mostly light-hearted discussion of economic theory, backed by plenty of anecdotes in support of the theory, he or she won't be disappointed.

Roberts doesn't restrict his protagonist to economic theory. Other issues raised in *The Invisible Heart* include seatbelt and air bag laws, the dumbing-down effect of television on the American psyche, the benefits of private charity over government welfare, and an unusual take on intellectual freedom in privately funded schools.

Almost every reader stands to benefit from the fresh illustrations of economic concepts Roberts has formulated, and many will appreciate the novelistic aspects of the book as well.

Besides all that, any novel that includes a back-page thumbs-up from Milton Friedman — who called it a "well-written love story that also teaches an impressive amount of good economics" — can't be all bad, right?



THE FORUM

While reforming immigration law, restore the rule of current law

Few issues stir the passions as much as Immigration Reform.

Nearly every ethnic group, regional interest and political interest uses it as a way to recover waning status with their constituencies and to gain relevance and power.

For evidence, one needs only to look at the host of pundits spewing solutions — some of which are reasonable, while others are simply fear- and hate-mongers.

I am personally torn between idealism fostered by my immigrant Irish roots and the sensibilities of lawful conduct required for peace, order and national stability.

My 30-plus-year career with the U.S. Customs Service and extensive work and travel in some of the world's less orderly places has instilled in me a real understanding of the necessity for peace and order.

We must have peace and order, but at what cost? The political reality is that whichever political administration attempts resolution, the ramifications will almost certainly be costly in political terms.

Another reality is that something must be done before the lawlessness tolerated in immigration law creeps into the enforcement of other laws.

I have visited and lived in places where laws exist solely to provide income for the officials who enforce them. The national consciousness in those places is not equitable treatment for all, just for those who can pay to have officials look the other way.

Strain from immigration

Economists disagree on the impact immigration has on the American economy. Rice University's Donald Huddle says that, in 1994, legal and illegal immigration drained \$51 billion more in social welfare and job displacement costs than immigrants paid in taxes, while the Urban Institute asserts that each year immigrants contribute \$25 billion to \$30 billion more in taxes than they receive in services.

Clearly immigrants are straining the social infrastructure in some states, but competition provided by immigrant workers is very unlikely to be the main reason for lost job opportunities and worsened labor conditions for U.S. workers.

Before disaster hit the Gulf Coast, the national unemployment rate was so low that it would have been described as "full employment" in the 1950s.

Whatever the numbers of undocumented workers, there was little evidence that they were taking jobs from other willing workers.

Dealing with immigration

The real issue is that our leaders want to become elite rulers and exercise unchecked power. The only protection we have is fairly enforced laws enacted by our representatives (not created by the judiciary).

The first step to any resolution would be to create a taskforce — led by border patrol officers and including officers and compliance examiners from other governmental entities — to aggressively enforce the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act.

Provisions in the law can be used to penalize employers who hire undocumented workers. I suggest that when such action is taken, the number of new arrivals would be reduced to the point where border patrols will realistically be able to focus on the real "bad guys." I would also guess that a number of others would return home rather than be documented as criminals in the United States. The overall result would be a much more manageable situation.

Other proposals

In examining both the Bush administration's proposal (which would require that all illegal entrants to return home prior to any temporary worker application) and that of McCain and Kennedy (which would provide a minimal fine prior to application for a temporary worker visa) I find that the resources required to effect any kind of meaningful official processing would never become available and the cost to the prospective worker would be prohibitive.

I also predict that the increased undocumented entry activity, precipitated by the expectations of another amnesty, would continue to make reasonable enforcement unworkable.

I believe both proposals could be combined to form a reasonable immigration policy — but only after

it becomes clear that our laws are being enforced.

For instance, anyone who can secure employment at a price the worker will accept and the employer will pay would be able to secure a temporary work visa, subject to security concerns being allayed.

Crucial to this is that government should in no way become a matchmaker between workers and jobs. The existing grapevine works very well and could be supplemented by commercial employment agencies.

The government could then provide detached oversight in the process, rather than being a participating party.

It seems to me that taxpayers' hard-earned money should never be confiscated to benefit other private interests. It already happens much too often.

Rather, existing employee organizations could be expected to aggressively organize these new workers or otherwise apply sufficient pressure to remedy any wage or work condition disparities.

Temporary work visas could be renewed indefinitely so long as the worker is employed or covered by unemployment insurance.

It is critical that the visa applications be processed within a reasonable time, something that is not even a dream today, when it routinely takes years to approve a visa.

After the worker has been employed and has remained a responsible member of the community for five years, application could be made for permanent residence — which would include any immediate family members.

This would also provide eligibility for any public benefits that are available. After a further five years the permanent resident would be expected to seek naturalization or return to temporary worker status.

I would suggest that this process of becoming a temporary worker, attaining permanent resident status, then becoming a citizen should be the only legal path to residency and citizenship.

And throughout the process, the employers — who, besides the immigrants themselves, are the primary beneficiaries — should be held responsible for any liabilities and other costs associated with the temporary worker, not the public pocketbook.

■ **About the author:** Fred Drew, who lives in Brownsville, Texas, recently became a member of the Libertarian Party, but says his sentiments have been libertarian for some time. His op-ed pieces are frequently published in the Brownsville Herald.

By Fred Drew

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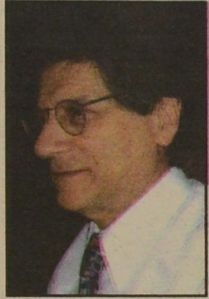
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New York Libertarians claim victory over election board

The New York City Board of Elections recently tried to keep retired computer science professor Gary Popkin off the ballot as the Libertarian Party's candidate for Brooklyn Borough president, but Popkin took his case to court and triumphed.



Election law required Popkin to collect 4,000 valid signatures from Brooklyn voters to qualify for the ballot.

So NYC Libertarians presented the board of elections with more

than 6,000 signatures on a petition for multiple candidates — including mayoral candidate Audrey Silk and other city-wide candidates.

The board of elections said Popkins didn't have enough signatures and using a multi-candidate petition form is against the law.

Former New York State LP Chair Richard Cooper had discovered that there is an explicit provision in election law for multi-candidate petitions, which makes it easier for the LP (and other small parties) to

run more candidates.

Popkin's campaign team appealed to the courts, and Judge Joseph S. Levine decided that Popkin had earned a place on the Libertarian lineup for the November election, with 6,083 signatures.

"Popkin struck a blow for all New Yorkers dissatisfied with the Republicans and Democrats who have ruined New York, by making it easier for independent candidates to get on the ballot, thus giving the voters a choice," Cooper said.

The Libertarian Party had previously gained the right — through a Green Party court victory — to have voters register Libertarian if they choose.

"My petition contained 6,083 unchallenged signatures from residents of Brooklyn," Popkin said. "I am pleased that the judge agreed, and I can now devote my time to spreading the libertarian message of personal freedom and personal responsibility."

Among other campaign items,

Popkin is speaking out against the Brooklyn Nets Arena, smoking bans and restrictions on commercial commuter vans — which, according to his Web site, provide an essential service to low-income Brooklyn residents.

Popkin also advocates the exemption of small businesses in Brooklyn from licensing requirements, saying that the excessive restrictions make it unnecessarily difficult for low-income Brooklynites to start small businesses and improve their lives.

Winnable race in a central Georgia town

Jeff Edgens, a Libertarian in Georgia, is running for a city council seat in Irwinton — a town with only about 370 voters.

"Opportunity knocks for us in middle Georgia," said Mark Mosley, chairman of the Georgia LP. "The races where we stand the best chance to win are nonpartisan races in small municipalities."

Edgens is the assistant dean of Georgia Military College and has strong family ties in the area, since his family has been in the community for almost 200 years, Mosley said.

Considering these facts, combined with the natural advantages — it is a nonpartisan race in a small town — Edgens has a good chance of winning the race.

And he should be able to do so with an extremely small campaign budget, Mosley added: "Jeff has a campaign plan that requires only \$500 for newspaper ads, radio ads and yard signs to saturate the Irwinton market and win the race."

Three of Edgens' family members are already in local government in the county, giving him an added advantage.

Edgens graduated from Georgia Military College in 1985, and earned his bachelor's degree from Presbyterian College in Clinton, S.C. He also holds a master's degree and a doctorate in public policy and administration, from the University of West Florida and Michigan State University, respectively.

His professional career ranges across the public policy field with stints at agricultural organizations, land grant universities and activist work with free market think tanks.

Edgens said he is running on three simple planks: reducing taxes, reducing spending, and protecting property rights.

PEIRCE LIBERTARIAN FOR GOVERNOR

Economist, Dr. Bill Peirce Announces Candidacy for Ohio Governor; Race Hotly Contested

Columbus, Ohio - A tight race for Ohio Governor, has just tightened further, Case University Economist Bill Peirce has announced his intention to run.

Secretary of State Ken Blackwell (R) and Congressman Ted Strickland (D) are expected to evenly divide Ohio's voters.

Scandal and corruption, including the historic indictment of current Ohio Governor Bob Taft, have charged the political atmosphere.

The Peirce campaign will be a real factor in this race. The campaign's plan to raise \$100,000 for print, radio and television advertising by the end of 2005 has shaken the political establishment in Ohio. "We've already raised \$12,000 in just two weeks," notes Campaign Treasurer Bill Ferry, "but we'll need help from around the country to raise the level of awareness and defeat Blackwell and Strickland." Call 1-877-YES-OHIO for info.

About Dr. Bill Peirce

William S. Peirce grew up in Lexington, Massachusetts, where his ancestor, Solomon Peirce, was wounded in the first battle of the American Revolution on April 19, 1775. The Peirce family has a long history of activism in the defense of liberty and opportunity in their community.

Bill Peirce is currently Professor Emeritus of Economics at Case Western Reserve University. He has taught there since 1966. He served as the Chair of the Economics Department at Case for six years. Peirce has published many articles and books, including:

- Bureaucratic Failure and Public Expenditure
- The Economics of the Energy Industries
- Technological Innovation and Ind. Leadership (with Bela Gold, Gerhard Rosegger, and Mark Perlman)

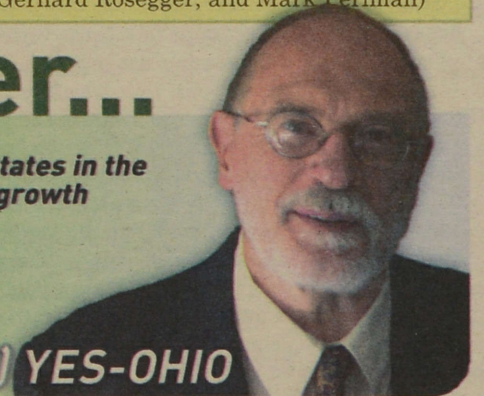
Freedom to Prosper...

Ohio, over the past 25 years, has grown from one of the lowest taxed states in the country to nearly the highest. Economic development and population growth in Ohio are among the lowest in the country.

As governor, I will remove the roadblocks to a successful economy, and ensure Ohio is given the freedom to prosper.

Thank you for your vote,
William S. Peirce

CALL (877) YES-OHIO



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THE PROFILE

TV's Trey Parker

By Bill Winter

THE ADVOCATES FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT

When PBS's Charlie Rose asked Trey Parker pointblank on a Sept. 26, 2005, show if he was a libertarian, the outspoken co-creator of "South Park" was uncharacteristically coy.

"It's possible," he admitted.

It's not that he's embarrassed about being a libertarian. It's just, Parker said, that the question was, well, "It's like: Are you gay?"

Then he laughed uproariously.

It was a typical Parker moment. He managed to compare politics to sexual orientation, and transform an enigmatic answer into a punch line.

But Parker's evasiveness wasn't the result of discomfort with talking about politics. He just doesn't want to be pigeonholed. Working from his libertarian perspective, Parker (along with creative partner Matt Stone) has been able to infuriate both right-wingers and left-wingers with barbed political satire. And that's the way he likes it.

Parker, 36, studied film and classical music at the University of Colorado at Boulder, where he met Stone. They

teamed up to create crude cartoon shorts, including one that featured early prototypes of the major "South Park" characters. Another short, "Frosty vs. Santa Claus," was a precursor to "The Spirit of Christmas." It caught the eye of a television producer and led to an invitation to create "South Park". The show, which debuted on the Comedy Central cable network in 1997, features cartoon fourth-graders who live in a fictional town in the Rocky Mountains, curse constantly, and battle menaces including a Godzilla-size Barbara Streisand.

"South Park" is rife with libertarian themes. It has mocked the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, anti-smoking activists, the War On Drugs, government-mandated diversity, public school sex education, and nature-worshipping environmentalists. It also tees off mercilessly on left-wing celebrities like Rosie O'Donnell, Michael Moore, and Rob Reiner.

Given its eagerness to poke fun at liberal icons, it's no surprise that some conservatives rushed to claim "South Park" as their own. In his 2005 book, *South Park Conservatives*, author Brian Anderson argued that the show is at the forefront of a conservative revolt against liberal media.

But Parker rejects the "South Park Conservative" label. In an interview with *In Focus* magazine last year he said, "What we're sick of — and it's getting even worse — is [the idea that] you either like Michael Moore or you wanna ... go overseas and shoot Iraqis. We find just as many things to rip on the left as we do on the right. People on the far-left and the far-right are the same exact person to us."

But South Park Conservative claims aside, most commentators understand that the show is libertarian. On LewRockwell.com (April 27, 2004), Michael Cust said the program is "sharp, witty, funny, and very libertarian." On FrontPageMagazine.com (April 16, 2003), Eli Lehrer noted the show's "persistently libertarian politics." "South Park" even gives an occasional insider's nod to libertarianism; one show featured the Ayn Rand School for Tots.

Following the success of "South Park", Parker and Stone took their libertarian sensibility to the movies. The duo wrote, directed, or starred in "Orgazmo" (1997), "BASEketball" (1998), and "South Park: Bigger, Longer, and Uncut" (1999). (One of that movie's songs, "Blame Canada," was even nominated for an Academy Award.)

In 2004, they released a marionette movie, "Team America: World Police," which was a send-up of action movies, America's interventionist foreign policy, and do-gooder liberal actors. "Team America" featured raunchy puppet sex, puppet cursing, a puppet Kim Jong-il, and gory puppet slaughter.

So — at the risk of asking "Are you gay?" — is Trey Parker really a libertarian?

Yes, he doesn't always play coy. When asked to describe his politics in an April 4, 2001, article for the *Los Angeles Times*, he said he was "a registered Libertarian."

■ Each month, LP News features a 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.

Elected Libertarian allows voters to opt out of paying school taxes

Ben Brandon, a Libertarian who was elected in 2004 as county manager of Dade County, Ga., has kept his principal campaign promise.

He told voters in the county that he would let them decide whether to exempt senior citizens from county school taxes. The referendum was held on Sept. 20, passing with almost 80 percent support and "completely removing homeowners age 65 and above, with no income limit, from the *ad valorem* school property tax rolls," Brandon said.

The exemption is voluntary: Only those senior citizens who request to be dropped from the school tax rolls will stop paying the tax.

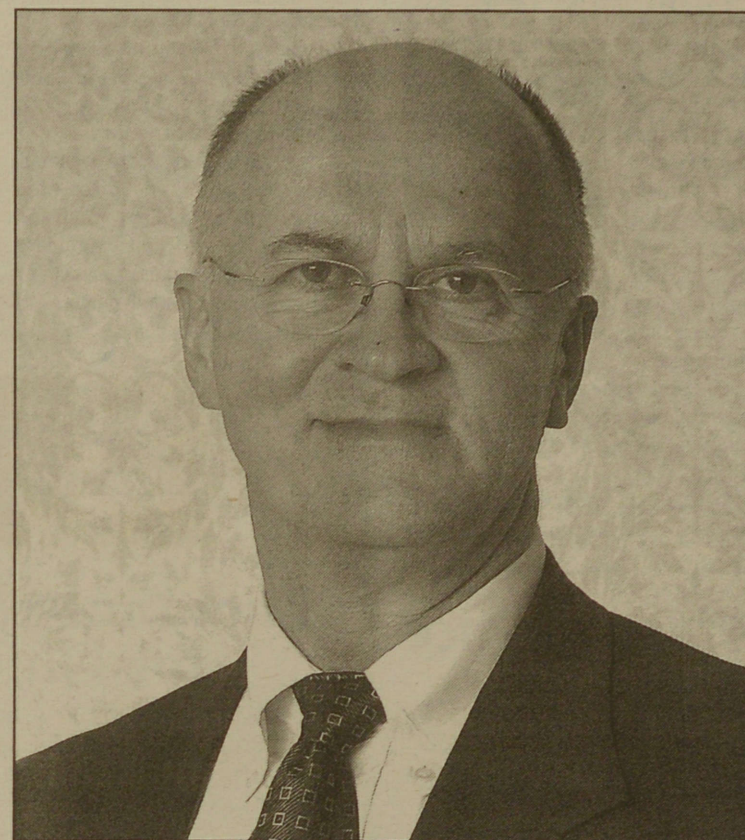
"Being a Libertarian, I didn't want to force anyone to keep more of their money," Brandon said, adding that approximately 22 percent of Dade County's taxpayers can now be totally exempt from property taxes.

He expects almost all of those eligible to take advantage of the tax break.

While running for the position — a partisan campaign in which he defeated both a Republican and a Democrat — he spoke with many elderly voters who said that property taxes were their biggest concern, spurring Brandon's decision.

"This will allow over 1,000 homeowners to choose whether to take themselves completely off the property tax rolls in Dade County," Brandon said after the tax break was approved.

"It's a Libertarian law: How you



spend your money is your choice and nobody is going to stop you if you choose to keep giving it to government schools. No other property owners' taxes will increase as a result."

How can taxes be cut for some people without raising other people's taxes?

Spending in the county government has been cut drastically since Brandon took the lead — as county manager he is also chairman of the

county commission — and Brandon is dedicated to lowering taxes and cutting spending even more.

Some critics, including some Libertarians, have said Brandon is playing political favorites by giving a tax break to only one group of voters.

Brandon said in response: "At the time they had students in school, they were paying property taxes. At some point you need to give people a break."



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AFFILIATE NEWS

Helping victims of Katrina and setting standards for candidates

■ FLORIDA

Fundraising efforts for Katrina victims

Members of the Florida LP have recently been active in raising money for the victims of Hurricane Katrina, including holding a car wash in St. Petersburg, raising more than \$1,000 for the cause.

The car wash was the brainchild of Libertarian activist Scott Palacheck, who reported that the effort "blossomed into a neighborhood event," with many people expressing their support by giving donations without bothering to have their cars washed.

St. Petersburg's Republican mayor, Rick Baker, even stopped by on a goodwill visit — and stuck around to discuss civics with the car-wash volunteers.

In the days leading up to the fundraiser, Palacheck and other local Libertarians managed to get three local news stories and a mention on television news, as well as garnering co-sponsorships from local businesses.

Meanwhile, members of the local Libertarian Club organized blood donations and otherwise pushed St. Petersburg residents to take action.

■ INDIANA

LP sets the bar high for 2006 elections

The Indiana LP is calling for candidates for its Victory! 2006 campaign, but they aren't just looking for paper candidates.

The Indiana affiliate is one of the more active — and effective — state parties and they want to prove that they're a force to be reckoned with in the state.

"Our goal is to elect another 10 people to office in Indiana in 2006, and to become a major party according to Indiana election law by gathering over 10 percent of the vote in the secretary of state's race," says a press release sent out by the party.

"To do that, we must start now. Mike Kole has already been actively campaigning for the secretary of state's office for almost a year. We now need the efforts of others to start actively campaigning for local offices so that they can win in 2006."

Indiana LP leaders have already heard interest from several potential candidates and they're hoping to have at least 50 "filed and active" candidates by Nov. 8, when Kole plans a media tour of the state.

The goal for the tour is to introduce Kole to the media who haven't yet encountered him and to have

him introduce the local active candidates at the same time.

High expectations have been set for the candidates. They are expected to:

- Be willing to appear on radio or television at least once to explain their goals to the public.

- Fill out all candidate paperwork sent to them by newspapers and other media outlets.

- Dress appropriately for all media events.

- Raise at least \$250 for their campaign or spend at least 20 hours working on their own campaign.

- Write at least a couple of letters to newspaper editors or post comments to Libertarian Mike Sylvester's blog, explaining why they are running for office.

- Come up with a simple platform explaining what they want to accomplish while in office.

- File all necessary paperwork with the appropriate election office.

- Provide a one-page personal biography.

- Find at least one person to assist with the campaign.

- Read at least one book on how to run for office, or attend a candidate training seminar.

- Have a publication-quality head-and-shoulder digital photo available for the press.

There are currently 14 Libertarians in public office in Indiana — seven elected to office and seven appointed. If the state party holds its candidates to high standards, those figures showing their success will have to be heavily altered next fall.

■ NEW HAMPSHIRE

Ruwart nominated for president

At their annual convention on Oct. 15, members of the New Hampshire LP voted to commit a delegate

to the 2008 national LP convention to vote for Dr. Mary Ruwart, who they hope will agree to run for president on the LP ticket.

The NHLP convention delegates had earlier agreed that the LP needs to follow a different approach to the presidential election, to allow the party's presidential candidate more time to build name recognition and to raise money for campaigning after receiving the LP nomination.

According to a press release from the state LP affiliate, Brendan Kelly of Seabrook gave a speech pointing out "the many great qualities Dr. Ruwart would bring to a presidential race, among them the fact that she's a respected doctor and author, and cannot be dismissed by the media or by her opposition."

The convention was held at the Third Party National Conference in Merrimack, N.H.

Convention delegates also nominated candidates for the 2006 general election, including: Richard Kahn of Hudson for governor; Dan Belforti of Portsmouth for U.S. House, district 1; and Chester Lapoint of Concord for U.S. House, district 2.

■ TEXAS

State power expanding propositions opposed

The Texas LP is actively opposing two amendment propositions on the November ballot — both of which concern legislators' hopes to collect tolls along public roads.

One proposition would authorize six-year terms for Regional Mobility Authority members; the other would authorize using tax money to move private rail lines into the state's proposed "Trans-Texas Corridor."

The mastermind behind Propositions 1 and 9 is a Republican who plans "to constrain old and new highways with checkpoints and tax collection booths," explained Texas LP Executive Director Wes Benedict.

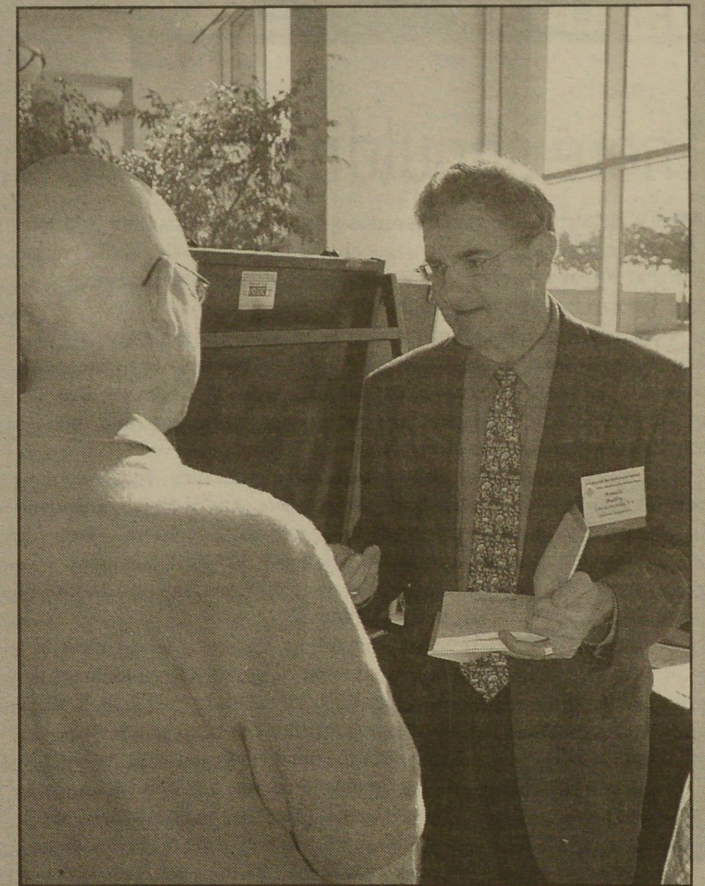
He noted that the toll-collection plan "is in direct opposition to the Texas Republican Party's platform."

With Republicans like this, he commented, "who needs Democrats?"

It's not that Benedict supports most Republican legislation. It's not even that he opposes the idea of toll roads.

"In theory, the concept of private toll roads financed by private funds is a good idea," Benedict said.

"But these aren't private roads subject to competition. These are monopolies that prohibit competition. Props 1 and 9 would simply ... keep [the] tax-raising bureaucrats and politicians in power longer."



■ Ronald Bailey, science correspondent for Reason magazine, autographs a copy of his new book, *Liberation Biology: The Scientific and Moral Case for the Biotech Revolution*, for an unidentified fan at the Advocates for Self Government's recent conference in Atlanta. The title of Bailey's speech says it all: "Why you should relax and enjoy the brave new world of immortality, stem cells and designer babies." (Photo by LP News Editor J. Daniel Cloud)

■ WASHINGTON

College Libertarian runs for school board

Astrid Gielen, a sophomore at the University of Washington and an activist with the LP of Washington, is running for school board in Seattle — opposing a local businessman who has amassed an extensive list of endorsements, including those of the Seattle Education Association and the Municipal League of King County.

The election will be held Nov. 8 for the seat, which is being vacated by a one-term member.

According to an Oct. 18 article in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Gielen "is pushing for what students want: a choice of programs, including those currently threatened" by the Seattle public school system's focus on core curriculum.

Gielen says the school system needs to offer more alternative and Montessori-type schools, recognizing that different students learn in different ways.

Her opponent says the same, calling for Montessori and alternative schools throughout the school district, but he wants to restrict school choice by eliminating the city's current open enrollment and dividing the district into regions.

Gielen reportedly was in a gifted program in middle school, but wasn't challenged enough in high school.

She transferred to an alternative school, later earned her GED, and enrolled at the University of Wash-

ington in the fall of 2004 — where she helped form the Libertarian Club.

She said she entered the school board race after a representative of the King County LP encouraged members of her club to run for public office.

In September, Gielen was charged \$300 by the state Public Disclosure Commission for failing to file the required public disclosure forms.

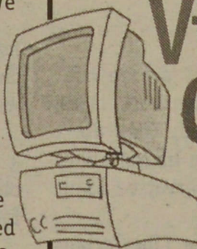
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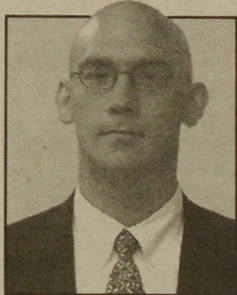
THE EDITOR

There shouldn't be a law

In Winchester, the small Tennessee town where I had my first job with a newspaper, there was a city ordinance on the books saying that no lawn within the city limits could have grass more than a foot (or was it 10 inches?) high.

Now, this was not one of those laws like the one that says every household in Georgia must own at least one firearm or the one that says you can't spit on the sidewalk in Chattanooga, Tenn. — one of the laws that few people obey, even fewer know exist, and the authorities don't bother enforcing.

No, this was a full-fledged, enforced city ordinance. People were periodically fined for not mowing their lawns. And if they continued to neglect their grass (and/or weeds, as was more commonly the case) the city public works department would mow the yard for them and charge an exorbitant fee.



By J. Daniel Cloud
LP NEWS EDITOR

In many cities, there are laws concerning the parking of broken-down vehicles on cement blocks around the house. There are laws governing the size, shape and type of signs businesses can post on their own property. And there are multitudinous laws governing the use, maintenance, and general appearance of historic properties — laws approved on the local, state and even federal levels.

When I was a teenager, I spent more than my fair share of time mowing lawns and otherwise whipping people's unkempt yards into shape. To the uninitiated, it might appear that I — who made a living for a number of years as a landscaper

— would revel in the idea that government was throwing more business my way by legislating the height of grass.

There is a reason, however, that I refer to them as "the uninitiated."

No matter how much I might like the extra money, I could never with a clear conscience exult in the ability to take advantage of government regulation. And what goes for money-making also goes for my personal feelings on appropriate neighborhood upkeep.

I do not care for the sight of a run-down house rising from a sea of uncut weeds, surrounded by a fleet of cars with square wheels and missing engines. I am drawn to decrepitude, so I might like to take photos of such a place — but I wouldn't want to live next to it.

That said, I would not even think of complaining to any government entity if my neighbor's grass grew too tall or if their vehicles were inoperable for a longer period that I deemed appropriate.

My standards should not and will not be forced on others, at least not at my instigation.

Nor do they need to be.

All across America there are neighborhoods springing up where a voluntary association establishes the criteria for maintenance and "proper" appearance.

In other neighborhoods, particularly historic districts, the various owners get together after the fact to establish community standards — while some communities simply recognize what the standards are and don't bother codifying them.

This type of standard is reasonable. Whenever property owners can agree amongst themselves to manage their properties in a homogenous fashion, they are more than welcome to do so. It makes for some very enticing neighborhoods, where property values are likely to rise and where newcomers are likely to automatically — without coercion or threat — go along with the norm.

In neighborhoods with a government-enforced homogeneity, on the other hand, the property owners do not have a choice whether or not to comply, and they are less likely to happily comply with the regulations. Nobody likes being forced.

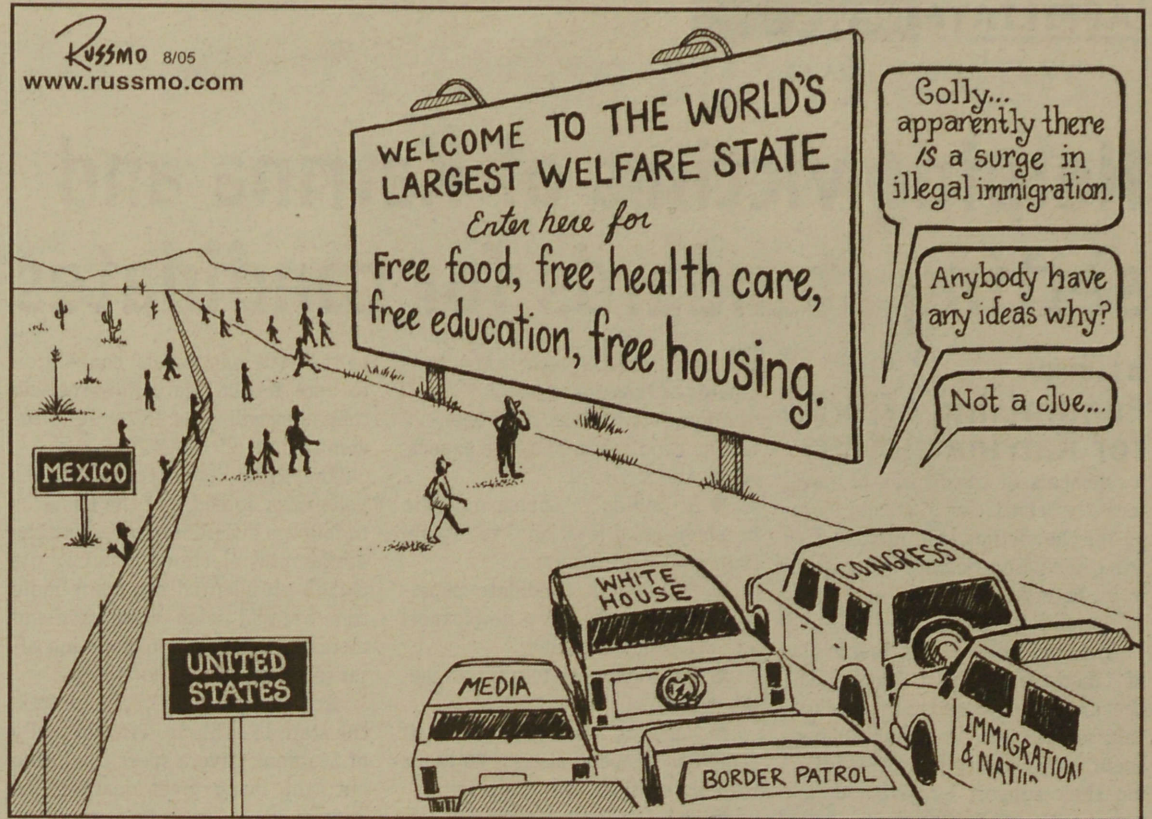
To some extent this is a matter of necessity: There is often no need for government to legislate standards. Peer pressure and community standards alone frequently suffice.

It is also a question of force, the great libertarian no-no. It simply is not right for one person to force another to cut his grass or to get rid of a broken-down car — no matter how good an idea it might be.

But most of all, this is a matter of property rights. If you don't like the looks of your neighbor's lawn, don't ask the government to force him to comply. Point out to him that you don't like it, if you feel led, but don't make a crime out of the "infraction."

Better yet, offer to help him mow the yard, fix the car, or paint the house. Use the opportunity to make a friend.

How's this for a slogan: "Make a difference, not a law."



THE MAILBOX

■ Radical

Some Libertarians call our party the "radical middle of the road." For two reasons, I prefer to call our party the "traditional middle of the road."

First, "radical" has a good connotation for some teenagers and intellectuals. But for the vast majority of voters, "radical" has a bad connotation. Second, the Libertarian Party platform is based on the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. What could be more traditional than that?

Calling our party "traditional" is better marketing and more accurate than calling it "radical."

—LEONARD SCHWARTZ
Oak Park, Michigan

■ Fair Tax book

I just finished reading the Fair Tax book and believe this is an issue the LP should be supporting. I know all the "pie in the sky" arguments "we need to eliminate the IRS (income tax) and replace it with nothing" but this is a once in a lifetime chance for the LP to actually "do something" and be recognized as a political party with practical solutions.

Please actually read the book. It is only 180 pages and can easily be read in a day.

There are so many positives about this proposal that most Libertarians, if it is properly presented, will get behind this issue. The Iraq war has divided our party, this might help to bring it together. I know I will be personally disappointed in the LP if it doesn't become part of a coalition that supports the Fair Tax.

—DAN SCUPIN
Miramar Beach, Florida

■ Middle class

Please, please, please consider a slogan such as "The party of (and for) the middle class" for the Libertarian Party.

We are for the people and by the people — not for the government or by the government. There are many reasons why I say this. Spe-

THE LIBERTARIAN
Party platform
is based on the ...
Bill of Rights.
What could be more
traditional than that?

—LEONARD SCHWARTZ

cifically, due to the Democrats and Republicans, both the upper and under class are represented, but we are the only party that represents the (shrinking) middle class.

—MELISSA F. PASCHENKO
Via e-mail

■ Puzzling

Often, when I tell people that I'm a Libertarian, the first thing they do is act puzzled. They don't understand why we're liberal about some things and conservative about others.

I respond that the Libertarians favor small government, the smaller the better. We agree with liberals about some issues, such as the First Amendment, and we agree with conservatives on other issues, such as the Second Amendment.

I point out that about 60 percent of our members were once conservative and 40 percent were once liberal, but found out that the Libertarian view was closer to what the philosophy they actually hold.

—KEN MITCHELL
North Canton, Ohio

■ Fair Tax II

This is in response to William A. Samuel's concerns about the Fair Tax not being fair. [MailBox, October 2005 LP News]

He states that the Fair Tax will not be fair for him and others like him living off Social Security and capital investments. I understand a lot of retirees and others with fixed incomes have concerns over the Fair Tax. They state "we have already paid taxes and should not have to pay them again". They don't realize how much tax they are still paying, on investments and social security as well as imbedded taxes in the goods they buy everyday.

The Fair Tax benefits them enormously. How?

For one thing, Social Security checks are currently taxed. That tax would go away under the Fair Tax.

A vast majority of capital investments are currently taxed unless they lose money, and taxes on gains would go away with the Fair Tax. Finally, the Fair Tax proposal has a provision for everyone to get a check back in the sum of taxes paid for the bare essentials to live.

As you can see, under the Fair Tax you will be taking home much more money and your fixed income will stretch much further.

The big kicker is most people seem to forget the imbedded tax that adds to the cost of everything

THE MAILBOX

we buy. That imbedded tax we all pay today (which goes away with the Fair Tax) is very close to the same percentage as the Fair Tax imposed, therefore goods you buy today are very similar in price to goods you would buy with the Fair Tax in place.

And let's not forget the big picture: We would eliminate the 16th Amendment and the governmental control it allows. Think of future generations and impacts on our country, not just how it affects us today.

Everyone please read the actual legislation. It makes sense for all Libertarians.

—CRAIG REPLOGLE
Indianapolis, Indiana

Justice, or not

Does not a chief justice of the United States Supreme Court need, for effective leadership, to have served as a working associate justice for time enough to acquaint himself or herself to the protocol and history of the office, as well as to the personalities of the other justices?

Does law not require that the effectiveness and competency which comes from such a working relationship be demonstrated and be required before one can be "graduated" from active participation at a lower court, into a higher court, or into a higher position at a lower court?

Is the quality of American jurisprudence completely at the whim of politicians, voters, and other partisan electors?

Was the aim of the U.S. Constitution to make the judicial branch of our government more or less independent of such whims, or was it to enable partisans to stack the courts with other partisans?

Is it not therefore an unconstitutional act to subvert the basic integrity of the intent of the law by the current actions taken by the Bush/Cheney administration?

I think America is dead.

—DAVID MELVIN THORNBURGH
Miami Beach, Florida

Welfare state

Twenty-five years ago I first heard the American political system described as a welfare state.

I was stunned then. But now it is obvious.

Our political system consists of an axis of two cooperating gangs masquerading as political parties creating theater for the media — as they go about their business of stealing working Americans blind.

It is tempting to call these two gangs "the War Party" and "the Welfare Party."

The War Party recently started two wars and is threatening more. The Welfare Party supports these wars because their polling indicates that opposing the wars might adversely affect their chances of getting what they really want — control of the \$2.5 trillion-per-year federal money spigot.

Despite what they say, both gangs use warfare and welfare to grow government — and the cancerous non-stop growth of government over the last 60 years documents how successful these gangs are.

—MIKE FORD
Austin, Texas

German liberty

Some interesting developments have emerged in Germany recently. Elections for Germany's chancellor are deadlocked due to voters giving almost equal numbers of seats

to the conservative Christian Democrats (CDU) and the socialist Social Democrats (SDP) — almost a German version of the United States' 2000 elections.

The interesting part of it all of this is that this time the smaller parties have picked up seats in Germany's lower house of parliament (Bundestag) making them a factor as to which major party to hold power there. I was pleasantly surprised to find out that the libertarian Free Democrats (FDP) picked up almost 10 percent of the Bundestag's seats and it looks like they, along with the Greens, will be the "kingmakers."

I am almost hoping the SDP prevails because if they do, Germany's parliament could still be deadlocked — since the CDU and FDP are in the majority and in coalition in Germany's upper house (Bundesrat).

The political gridlock could mean greater liberty for German citizens overall.

In my view, the FDP should get more recognition in the libertarian movement due to the fact that they have held seats in Germany's parliament since the party's founding after WWII.

I also believe that, in light of Germany's political chaos, state LP affiliates in the United States should make an even larger push for proportional representation, which would make them a significant factor in legislative races like the smaller third parties (like the FDP) are now in Germany.

—MIKE RENZULLI
Mesa, Arizona

Wal-Mart

I found the editor's responses to the two letters about Wal-Mart (MailBox, October 2005 LP News) to be right on the mark.

As the response to Mr. Baier indicates, nobody is forced to do busi-

ness with Wal-Mart. The people in and around Titusville, Penn., were elated when Wal-Mart opened just across the city limits. They were so welcoming because they now had another choice besides (1) driving 15-30 miles to buy goods at competitive prices or (2) paying high prices (with little inventory to choose from) at local retail establishments. Many product lines simply were not available locally before Wal-Mart came to town.

Wal-Mart started out as a small business — one single retail outlet — as was stated in Robert Weissberg's article ["Wal-Mart: Free to Compete,"] in the September 2005 LP News.

Now that Wal-Mart has shown itself to be a successful business, growing from such humble beginnings into the largest retailer in the span of one lifetime, is it somehow "right" to trample on the rights of Wal-Mart's owners to freely compete?

Where do we draw such a line? At the point of incorporation? When a successful entrepreneur employs a hundred, a thousand or a million people? When other businesses start actively seeking to do business with it? When it crosses state or national boundaries to transact business?

Just when is a business too big to be considered a small business or too successful to be regarded as "fair competition?" Who should be empowered to make such a judgment on behalf of the "collective good?"

I find it unfathomable that any libertarian would despise commercial success, without reference to specific instances of fraud, deceptive practices, or the use of force to establish that success.

Nowhere in libertarian philosophy is it anathema to be so successful that your enterprise may popularly be considered "big business."

The real issue is the struggle between free competition and arbitrary government regulation of free enterprise — not "small business" versus "big business."

—DAN BEATTY
Centerville, Pennsylvania

Wal-Mart II

In his recent letter to the editor, Steve Baier says that Wal-Mart stores are filthy, disorganized, full of cheap merchandise and that nobody should shop there. Sounds like a typical liberal rant to me. Our local Wal-Mart stores are exactly opposite of his description and I love shopping there for everything from oil changes to groceries.

And by the way, nobody should try to tell me where I should or should not shop.

—JIM KILPATRICK
Austin, Texas

Fair Tax again

Following are a number of real-world scenarios that show just why I call the Fair Tax "the Unfair Tax."

Under the Fair Tax, if the kid next door mows your lawn for you, the government will expect him to collect an extra 23 percent from his few customers to fund the Unfair Tax. But someone who makes millions selling stock won't have to collect a single penny of the tax, because investments are exempted.

Some say we would never expect a teenager to collect taxes for mowing lawns. But the bill doesn't exempt teenagers. Do you think we should we encourage teenagers to learn how to sneak under the radar and avoid paying taxes in their entrepreneurial enterprises?

If you buy a used home from a realtor, you won't pay the Unfair Tax. But if you buy a new home from a contractor, you'll pay over \$100,000 for the Unfair Tax (given typical new home prices these days).

What's fair about that?

A new car dealer will be forced to be a government tax collector and charge a 23 percent Unfair Tax on all sales. But a used car dealer won't have to charge any Unfair Tax at all. Once again, one-year-old used cars will be more valuable than new cars!

What's fair about that?

Internet-based businesses that sell to a U.S. customer will be forced to collect the 23 percent sales tax. But the Feds can't collect from a foreign Internet-based business that sells to that same U.S. customer. There's simply no practical way to do it.

So the foreign competitor gets away with selling to the same customer but not charging the tax — a huge competitive advantage.

Just as there are tax protesters who live in the shady edge of legality by finding ways to legally justify not paying income taxes, we can be absolutely certain that there will be a new black market in goods and services where people secretly sell to each other without charging the dreaded 23 percent Unfair Tax. Thus, only honest people will pay taxes.

What's fair about that?

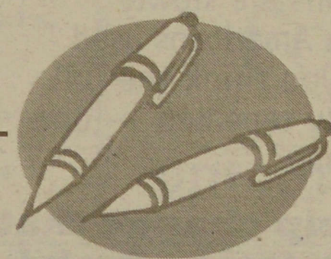
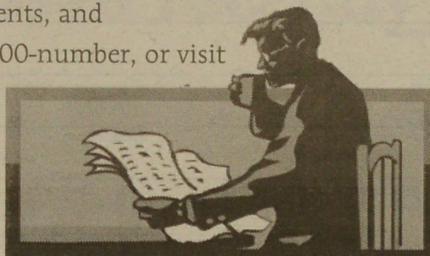
The Fair Tax is a myth. It's more accurately an Unfair Tax. I wish people would stop calling it something it isn't.

—WALT THIESSEN
Warrenton, Virginia

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THE VOLUNTEER

Becoming a Libertarian: One voter's journey to the LP

Columbia County, New York, has a political demographic that is very similar to the rest of the state: mainly Republican and Democratic with a smattering of third parties. There are about 11,000 unaffiliated voters.

A former member of the Conservative Party, I cut my political teeth during a contentious district attorney race in the mid-90s. At the time my father was the chairman of the party and I served as a committeeman in the Conservative Party, which held some nominal sway in the local political arena.

My initial attraction to the Conservatives, besides being born into the party, was the promise that they would promote liberty and preserve freedom. As a soon-to-be driver in the mid-80s I was repulsed by the idea that Mr. Coumo sought to force me to wear a seatbelt.

By Eric Sundwall

And as a result I spent some of my teenage hours at the party's booth at the county fair, seeking to persuade others into the fold.

The transition to college and a degree in political science lent itself to numerous ideological configurations thereafter, but I never strayed far from the core of liberty and freedom.

Over time, party affiliation became less important. After studying political philosophy in Copenhagen during my last semester of college, my political thoughts and ideas transcended any prosaic interests in my little county.

After a couple years, I realized that people would pay more for my computer skills than any political ideas.

Opting out of corporate life, I settled into a small business with a partner I could trust — my dad. Starting and maintaining a small business is rough.

Most people do not want the constant hassles and worries that

come along with running a small business. But somehow we managed through the roughest years and are still challenged by everyday situations and obstacles.

Freedom and liberty are still our primary motivations, even in business decisions.

My first presidential ballot was cast for Ron Paul. Even at the age of eighteen I knew my sympathies lay with the Libertarians.

In 1992 I wrote in "no confidence" on the presidential ballot, though I understood later that the Libertarian should have been my choice.

As I get older — and more radical — I'm becoming more certain that less government is the answer.

My father always kept the faith in freedom and liberty, never taking a state job when offered and maintaining a rigorous independence from the tempting pressures of the powerful pachyderms.

He went into business after "retirement" and maintains influence

among Conservative Party members who truly value freedom and liberty.

In September 2003, a court ruling determined that New York voters could, for the first time, register as Libertarians. This privilege was previously reserved for parties that had obtained more than 50,000 votes in the most recent gubernatorial election.

Despite a ridiculously uphill battle, I am now engaged in swaying members of the Conservative Party to become Libertarians.

While Libertarians continue to nominate and support independent candidates, they constantly face the "lesser of two evils" dilemma that tends to occur in an electoral system which favors two strong parties.

People feel they simply can't take the chance of voting for someone who doesn't have a realistic chance of winning.

So far I've managed to persuade five or six people to register Libertarian in the last few months, and it is my goal to get 100 people registered and a chapter started in Columbia County. Looking at the current Libertarian enrollment in the state, this would make Columbia County the biggest chapter in the state.

To this end, I have started a Web site (www.ColumbiaCountyLP.org), have gone to the Hudson Board of Elections to find out who else is registered, and have sent a mail-

ing to other registered Libertarians about the Web site and about forming a county LP affiliate.

My next goal is to obtain the county's registered voter list on disk and to begin mailing Conservatives about the Libertarians. I can think of at least a dozen for whom this would be appealing.

Whatever the practical reality of such a goal, it is something to work toward. I've watched the New York Conservative Party climb to over 1,000 members in the last 20 years, and I believe the Libertarians can do the same.

The Conservatives in New York have no national reach or effect, and the appeal of the Libertarians, for me, is their national presence.

For the past year it has seemed like I have been laboring alone, in anonymity, but I know like-minded individuals are out there working for a principle based on liberty.

The complete lack of fiscal restraint in both major parties has created a jaded desperation amongst the average taxpayer.

Libertarians tend not to judge individuals on their personal choices and enjoy a great deal of restraint when it comes to interfering in others lives.

It is not a leap for Libertarians who practice social and cultural tolerance to refrain from government regulation in personal or family affairs.

I'm proud to say I am a Libertarian based on these principles.

The Power of Just One Signature

X *Steve Sault*

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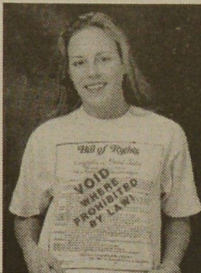
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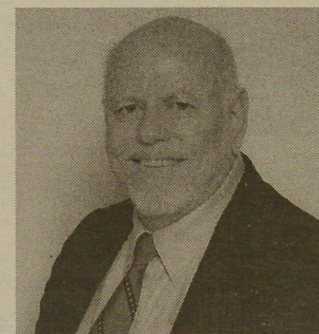
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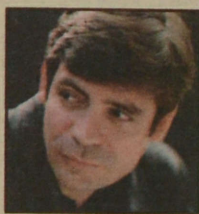
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UPCOMING

■ November 4-6, 2005

Reason's Dynamic Cities Conference, at the Mirage, in Las Vegas, Nev. Speakers to include Drew Carey, *Reason* magazine editor-in-chief Nick Gillespie, Reason Foundation founder Bob Poole, columnist Jacob Sullum and others. For more information or to register, go to www.reason.org/vegas.



■ Gillespie

■ November 11-13, 2005

Illinois LP Nominating Convention, in downtown Springfield, Ill., at the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel and Conference Center. Live entertainment, workshops and candidate forums. Speakers to include Dr. Mary Ruwart, Harry Browne, Debbie Hopper and Raymond R. Carr. For more information, contact Jeff Trigg at (800) 735-1776, e-mail director@lpillinois.org, or go to www.lpillinois.org.

■ November 12, 2005

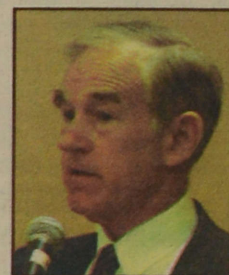
Ohio LP Special Nominating Convention, at the Hyatt on Capital Square, Columbus, Ohio. Dr. Bill Peirce is the only declared candidate, but other Libertarians are welcome to join the race. For more information, call (800) 669-6542, e-mail hq@lpo.org, or go to www.lpo.org.

■ November 12-13, 2005

Libertarian National Committee meeting, Embassy Suites in Baltimore, Md. All LP members are welcome to attend. For more information, contact your LNC representative.

■ November 18-19, 2005

Gold, Freedom and War, a benefit conference for LewRockwell.com, at the Radisson Villa Hotel, San Mateo, Calif. Speakers to include U.S. Rep. Ron Paul, Cindy Sheehan, Justin Raimondo, Lew Rockwell and Anthony Gregory. For details, go to www.LewRockwell.com, or call (800) 348-8001.



■ Paul

■ November 19, 2005

Regional Small Business Conference, in Fort Wayne, Ind., at Don Hall's Guesthouse and Conference Center. Speakers to include LNC representative (and Indiana LP chair) Mark Rutherford; Mike Kole, candidate for Indiana secretary of state; and Mike Sylvester of the Indiana LP. For details, call Sylvester at (260) 338-0833.

■ November 19-20, 2005

Liberty 2005, the Annual London Conference of the Libertarian Alliance and the Libertarian International, at the National Liberal Club, in London, England. A host of speakers, including Dr. Richard Ebeling, president of the Foundation for Economic Education. For details, go to www.libertarian.co.uk/conf05.htm.

■ February 24-27, 2006

Liberty at Sea '06, Three-day cruise hosted by the California LP, aboard Royal Caribbean's *Monarch of the Seas*. For details, call (727) 525-9696 or go to www.CA.LP.org/libertyatsea06.

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■ **PAGE 10** *Profile: South Park's Trey Parker*



FIRST WORD

"Unlike liberalism and conservatism — which for the most part are just based on attitudes and feelings — libertarianism is based on principles.

"The principles I'm talking about are the rights to self-ownership and private property. These rights can be derived from the simple recognition that murder, rape, theft, extortion, fraud, coercion and slavery are universally wrong. They are wrong in Blacksburg, they are wrong in New York City and they are wrong in Tanzania.

"Those wrong actions have one thing in common — they all violate either self-ownership or property rights. Self-ownership is your exclusive right to make decisions regarding your own body. Rapists, slave-owners and murderers violate that right by imposing their will on their victims' bodies.

"The libertarian concept of property rights can be summed up in one sentence: You have a right to own the product of your labor, as long as it was justly obtained. Thieves and defrauders take the product of your labor (the money you worked so hard to earn) without your consent, which violates your property rights.

"Libertarians are steadfast defenders of small, limited government. The result of a system of limited government that protects self-ownership and property rights is what we call freedom. People are free to do whatever they wish except harm others by violating their rights.

"Libertarianism is a principled ideology that offers a clear distinction between right and wrong and a plan for a more prosperous and harmonious society."

—MICHAEL HUGMAN, Virginia Tech's *Collegiate Times*, October 7, 2005