

LIBERTY PLEDGE

newsletter

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County Commissioner in Oregon jumps to LP

Another Republican officerholder in Oregon has “jumped ship” and joined the Libertarian Party.

On March 8, Yamhill County Commissioner **Rob Johnstone** announced that he was joining the LP and changing his party affiliation. According to Johnstone, the change was long overdue.

“I actually had been thinking about changing for a long time,” he said. “The first libertarian book I ever read was Frederic Bastiat’s *The Law*. Since then, I’ve always felt my thinking resonated well with the consistent libertarian message.”

Just two months earlier, Oregon State Senator **Gary George** (R-District 2) had become a dues-paying member of the LP. Unlike George, however, Johnstone has officially switched his party registration as well, making him the highest-ranking Libertarian officer-holder in Oregon.

Oregon LP State Chair Adam Mayer said Johnstone’s switch was good news.

“I’m very happy about Commissioner Johnstone’s announcement,” Mayer said. “Our group has been very active at the grassroots level and these are the results. Not only private

citizens, but also politicians are realizing how positive and productive the party is.”

Even before joining the LP, Johnstone said his voting history had earned him the reputation as something of a libertarian.

Soon after his election to a McMinnville city council position in 1984, Johnstone led the charge to kill a hotel/motel tax proposal. He was also successful in defeating a measure that authorized the city to use tax money to subsidize local businesses — although that victory was only temporary.

Begged for money

“After the measure was defeated, members of the local business association begged for the money and got another council member to change his vote on the issue,” he said. “That’s when I first saw someone bought and sold.”

Johnstone said that after he serves out the remaining two years of his county commissioner’s term, he plans to take a reprieve from political life.

“I want to spend more time raising my five children,” he said. “Maybe after they’re grown I’ll run for public office again — this time as a Libertarian.”

NEWS FROM AROUND THE USA

KUBBY CHARGES ARE DROPPED

A decisive victory — that’s how Libertarians are describing the outcome of the Steve and Michele Kubby medical marijuana trial.

On March 2, all medical marijuana charges against the Kubbys were dismissed, and a Placer County, CA judge reduced two remaining drug charges against Steve Kubby to misdemeanors.

“We’ve always said we would prove our innocence,” said Kubby, 54.

The judge also ruled that Kubby, the LP’s gubernatorial candidate in California in 1998, could continue to use medical marijuana as allowed under the state’s Compassionate Use Act of 1996.

“This has been a great day for patients, Libertarians, and the cause of health freedom in California,” said state LP Executive Director **Juan Ros**.

The flurry of good news came three months after a hung jury — which was leaning 11-1 for acquittal — refused to convict the Kubbys on marijuana charges. During the trial, the Kubbys had argued they were legitimate medical marijuana patients.

However, the legal battle is not over yet: Kubby said he may now launch a recall election against the DA who prosecuted him.



■ Kubby:
Legal victory.

SEN. GEORGE FILES BALLOT BILLS

Just two months after joining the Libertarian Party, Oregon State Senator **Gary George** has filed a pair of bills to ease ballot access barriers for Libertarians.

George, who became a dues-paying LP member in January while keeping his Republican registration, filed:

- SB 777, to allow minor parties with a .5% voter registration base to maintain minor party status without having to get 1% of the vote in a statewide race.

“This would allow [the LP] to forego unwinnable races and run our best candidates in smaller, more winnable races,” said **Richard Burke**, George’s legislative assistant and former LP State Chair.

- SB 747, to allow minor parties to gain major party status if they enroll 3% of registered voters, instead of having to get 15% of the vote in a statewide race.

Ray Kirkus running for New Buffalo City Council

"I do not believe in increasing the spending limits of the city manager without city council approval." These are the words of Ray Kirkus, who declared himself a candidate for the New Buffalo City Council.



Mr. Ray Kirkus, who is the chairman of the Libertarian Party of Berrien County, will be challenging incumbent Mr. Jack Kennedy in the city council election of March 12, 2001. It is not official yet, however. Since this is a non-partisan race, Mr. Kirkus needs to gather 25 signatures, but not more than 50, from registered New Buffalo voters before he can be officially included on the ballot. The collection of signatures will begin on February 10th and must be submitted no later than February 20th.

There are several things that Mr. Kirkus aims to do if elected to the city council. One is to empower New Buffalo residents by working to take back certain controls from the state government and return it to the City of New Buffalo. "I believe more revenue generated by New Buffalo should stay in the community rather than having Lansing decide what's best for us."

He also wants to work on getting the city council to start being more accountable to the people of New Buffalo. "I will not rubber stamp unauthorized expenditures. I do not believe that the city council knows what is best for local residents. Local residents should be able to decide for themselves what is best, and take responsibility for those decisions. Councilmen are mere servants of the people."

Mr. Kirkus believes that the city council needs to be accountable for every ordinance passed and every penny spent.

Libertarians forming Southern Tier chapter

By DAVID HILL
Journal Staff

■ On the Net: www.lp.org

LANSING — Fresh from a presidential election in which third-party candidates could be credited or discredited with swinging the outcome, Libertarians from seven counties plan to meet here Saturday with hopes of forming a Southern Tier chapter of the party.

The meeting, billed as the first convention of the Southern Tier Libertarian Party, is scheduled for 4 p.m. at the Village Office Campus, 2333 N. Triphammer Road.

The agenda includes electing officers and a representative to the April state convention, said Alexandra Stocker, who is helping to organize the meeting.

The meeting grew out of an informal group of people who've been e-mailing one another. The national party provided a list of people in the seven counties with ties to the national party, Stocker said.

The counties are Tompkins, Schuyler, Chemung, Broome, Steuben, Tioga and Chenango.

The party has about 25 members — who have paid a \$25 membership fee — in Tompkins County and close to 100 in the region, said William Kone, another organizer. Nationally, the party has 300,000 registered members, almost twice the Greens and more than the Reform Party,

said Kone.

Restrictive ballot laws require New York Libertarians to raise far more signatures than those of the major parties to get on the ballot, and the party isn't officially state-recognized, said Kone.

The party's 2000 presidential candidate, Harry Browne, drew about 340,000 votes nationwide, while Reform Party candidate Patrick Buchanan may have drawn conservative votes from George W. Bush, and Ralph Nader of the Green Party was widely seen as drawing votes from Vice President Al Gore.

Brown's showing may have suffered from the closeness of the race and some Libertarians not wanting to harm the major-party candidate they were leaning toward, Stocker said.

The biggest push Saturday will be to make people aware of the Libertarian Party platform, which stresses personal responsibility and less government, and draws both liberals and conservatives, Stocker said.

It is against gun control and laws against abortion, for free trade and against most foreign aid, and abhors both drug laws and most business and environmental regulations.

▲ *The Ithaca Journal*, Ithaca, New York, February 22, 2001 ▲ (RIGHT) *Southcountry Gazette e3 Shopper*, Three Oaks, Michigan, February 19, 2001
▼ *Bellingham Herald*, Bellingham, Washington, January 31, 2001

Libertarians lose bid for seat on county redistricting panel

BY AUBREY COHEN
THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

Libertarian Party leaders failed to convince the Whatcom County Council on Tuesday to include representatives on the once-a-decade committee that will make recommendations on county redistricting.

State law requires the Legislature every 10 years to set up a committee consisting of two representatives

from each of the two parties with the most seats in the Legislature, with those four members selecting a fifth. It also calls for local governments to set up their own committees, but does not say who should serve.

The Whatcom County Charter says the County Council will appoint two representatives "from each major political party," but does not define a major party.

The Libertarians said they should be included because they had major party status under state election law last year.

"We will challenge it if we have to in each of the counties," said Tom Spanos, chairman of the Whatcom County Libertarian Party. "Our position is we have the same legal footing as a major party in Washington to be included as the Republicans or Democrats."

Deputy Prosecutor Dave Grant said the county charter's reference to major parties parallels the state law, which says the state redistricting committee should draw members from the two parties with the most seats.

He said the definition of major party that the Libertarians were using was for a different purpose.

The County Council could interpret the charter differently and include the Liber-

tarians, but the charter talks about appointing two members from "each" major party, Grant noted. "You're going to have to choose whether it's the Republicans or the Democrats that you're not going to allow to participate."

Some council members seemed to sympathize with Spanos, but said the charter required them to name two Republicans and two Democrats.

The council voted 4-2 to appoint Republicans Todd Gunn and Les Reardanz and two Democrats to be chosen by that party.

Council members Barbara Brenner and Connie Hoag voted against the motion, saying they did not want to appoint two people who have not yet been named.

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Californians out to recall anti-pot DAs

By Thomas D. Elias
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

SAN RAFAEL, Calif. — Advocates of medical marijuana use who won public approval of their cause in a 1996 ballot initiative are now using recall campaigns against county prosecutors around California in an attempt to muscle law enforcement into accepting legalization of medipot.

Already, activists for the American Medical Marijuana Association (AMMA) in Orange County's Dana Point have qualified a recall of Marin County District Attorney Pamela Kamena for a May 22 special election vote. The special election will cost the county an estimated \$500,000.

The group has also "warned" a half-dozen other district attorneys to cease prosecuting patients who smoke marijuana to ease the pain and nausea of some illnesses or face a recall. To force a special election, petitioners must collect valid signatures of 15 percent of voters who cast ballots in the last general election.

"We see recall actions as a means of convincing local prosecutors to comply with Proposition 215," said Steve Kubby, founder and director of the AMMA. "This

isn't a vindictive thing on the part of patients. It's a matter of survival."

Proposition 215 legalized the use of pot for medical purposes with a physician's recommendation. The initiative passed by a 56 percent to 44 percent margin and has produced confusion and controversy ever since as U.S. attorneys, judges and some local sheriffs and prosecutors refused to recognize it as a defense in marijuana possession cases.

Statewide, defendants in 23 criminal cases have used it as a defense since the initiative was passed. Of those, 16 persons have been acquitted of possession charges.

A jury in the Sierra Nevada Mountain town of Auburn voted 11-1 to acquit Mr. Kubby of most drug-possession charges last month stemming from a 1999 raid on his home near Lake Tahoe. Mr. Kubby, who ran in 1998 as the Libertarian Party's candidate for governor of California, and his wife were tried on a variety of drug-possession charges after police netted more than 100 small marijuana plants in that raid.

Mr. Kubby says he has used marijuana since 1976 to combat a rare form of adrenal cancer. His

physician testified that he needs the pot to survive. Mr. Kubby was convicted only of one count of possession of a hallucinogenic mushroom but has appealed that verdict on grounds the mushroom was a souvenir that had long since lost its potency.

One of the district attorneys who has been warned of impending recall is Bradford Fenocchio, who supervised the Kubby prosecution.

The recall in leafy Marin County, just across the Golden Gate Bridge from San Francisco, comes despite what its district attorney, Ms. Kamena, calls her "progressive view" about medipot. Her office has issued guidelines exempting from prosecutions anyone with fewer than seven mature cannabis plants and less than half a pound of dried marijuana.

"These people want you to believe this is about medical marijuana," Ms. Kamena told a news conference last week. "It is not. This process is about the rule of law and the entire legal process."

Lynette Shaw, director of the AMMA's Marin County branch, argued that even when medipot patients are not prosecuted, authorities in the county frequently confiscate their supplies.

"We're looking at 300 people

who lost their pot," she said. "After they get arrested and lose their pot and go through all these hoops, only then are they let go. They're harassing these poor patients to death."

Opponents of the Marin County recall say the petition signature drive that qualified the issue for a vote was misleading. The petitions, they note, did not mention medipot and instead attacked Ms. Kamena for prosecuting a woman convicted of falsifying a court document in a child-custody case.

Retired county Judge William Stephens told the San Francisco Chronicle he believes the recall effort is "a fraud being perpetrated on the citizens of this county. The primary interest of those seeking to advance the petition is to have the district attorney look away when marijuana is used."

Meanwhile, most prosecutors say they will not allow themselves to be pressured by any recall efforts.

"We're not going to react to someone wanting to put some type of political pressure on us to make a decision on how we should apply the law," said Edward Berberian, assistant district attorney of Sonoma County.

Engineering professor chairs national Libertarian Party, works for membership growth

By Sam Bresnahan
Cavalier Daily Associate Editor

When Systems Engineering Prof. Jim Lark is watching the game, he's not having a Bud. That's because he's enjoying a unique brew he made himself.

"I've brewed some beers that I would stack up with the best in the world," Lark said with pride.

Beer brewing, however, occupies only a small part of the time Lark spends outside of academia. With the rest of his free time, he searches for ways to advance individual freedom and promote personal responsibility. As the national chair of the Libertarian Party, Lark stands firm in these two principles which form the basis of the LP platform.

"I tell my friends I have two full-time jobs and I only get paid for one," he said.

As LP chair, Lark works to make his party more powerful, prominent and moving in the right direction, and often, this has meant putting aside his scholarly projects.

LP delegates elected Lark this past summer during the party's national convention. His unpaid position at the head of the party will last two years until the next LP convention in 2002.

Lark's supporters say they hope he will take the party reins and bring together the different factions.

"The chair, in my opinion, is rather like the captain of the team," Lark said, continuing his analogy to apply to his party's need for growth. "It's like going into a weight room and pumping yourself up to the point where you're now ready to take on the big boys of politics."

Throughout Lark's life, he has proven he can take the initiative and succeed.

Back in 1975, before Lark entered Virginia Tech, he taught himself calculus because his high school did not offer it. He did not waste his time in college either.

After taking 25 credit hours each semester and enrolling in summer classes, Lark graduated with a math degree in only one and a half years.

He left Tech with more than just a degree; he also came away with

serves as the national campus coordinator for the LP at the University.

When Lark was a graduate student at the University, he founded Students for Individual Liberty in 1987 and University Libertarians in 1989. Now Lark advises all seven Libertarian student organizations, which collectively are called the Libertarian Coalition. He believes targeting students will strengthen the party in the long run.

"They may be more inclined to listen to ideas," Lark said of young adults



Intellectual revolutions proceed inch by inch... My hope is that we're laying the foundation for explosive growth."

Jim Lark
Libertarian Party National Chair

an awareness of Libertarianism. Lark became fascinated with Libertarian ideas during the 1976 presidential election. One of his professors who followed Libertarian politics inspired Lark to get involved.

Lark said his strong belief in the "animating principles" of the LP encouraged him to become politically active.

"I can't ask other people to do what I'm not willing to do myself," he said.

To say Lark is politically active is to understate his level of involvement with the LP. In addition to serving as the national chair, he also works with the LP of Virginia and the Jefferson Area Libertarians in Charlottesville.

It is only appropriate that Lark also

who are not yet set in their political ideologies.

Matt Heiser, a second-year College student and president of both the Liberty Coalition and Students for Individual Liberty, said Lark can bring in many prominent speakers because of his strong connections within the LP.

"He's able to impart a good deal of knowledge to us about the political aspects of Libertarianism," he said.

Lark officially joined the LP in 1984 before he started the two groups Heiser now heads and said his background in mathematics influenced his political philosophies.

"The beauty that you see in a well-crafted, logical argument biases you in the direction of putting a value on

rational, consistent thinking," Lark said.

The LP, whose guiding principles are individual liberty and personal responsibility, provides a consistent framework for this type of thinking, he added.

Lark applies logical thought to almost all aspects of his life, including scholarly research, political philosophy and even sports. His sports experience includes his time as technical advisor to the Radford men's soccer team.

Lately, Lark's academic and political commitments have left him little free time for such leisurely activities. That does not stop him from pursuing other interests, however.

Lark has several ideas for books he would like to write. Possible topics include the ways societies handle risk and the mathematics of financial engineering.

But right now Lark has a more important task to deal with — running the LP while fulfilling his duties as a professor.

As the national chair, Lark hopes to raise the number of active LP members. "My hope is that we're laying the foundation for explosive growth," he said.

Lark, who believes the LP would benefit from a stronger, more organized infrastructure, also hopes to provide "a strategic vision for the party."

But Lark knows it may be a long time before the LP has as much political clout as the Democrats or the Republicans.

"Intellectual revolutions sometimes proceed inch by painful inch," he said.

Lark sees his role in this revolution as setting the stage for the future.

"My hope is that the next LP chair will be the best we've ever had," he said. "I will have laid the foundation."

Libertarians talk boldly — of winning

Senate race showing buoys convention

By Rick Klein
GLOBE STAFF

MARLBOROUGH — As he kicked off the Massachusetts Libertarian Party's annual convention yesterday, master of ceremonies Jim Sullivan made a bargain with the audience.

"You pretend that I'm funny, and I'll pretend that we have a hope in hell of electing someone," said Sullivan, a voice-over artist and Watertown resident.

He was joking, of course, and the fact that Libertarians can engage in such self-deprecating humor is one sign of how far the party has come. Libertarians are flying high and talking big in Massachusetts these days as they look ahead to next year's elections.

"We're in great shape," said Elias Israel, the state party chairman. "We're growing fast."

The confidence is fueled in part by the exceptionally strong showing of Libertarian candidate Carla Howell in a US Senate race last



GLOBE STAFF FILE PHOTO/TOM LANDERS

CARLA HOWELL
Party's standard-bearer

fall. Howell received more than 308,000 votes, and while Senator Edward M. Kennedy crushed everyone else in the race, Howell ran nearly even with the Republican candidate, Jack E. Robinson.

That election has made Howell the state party's standard-bearer — and something of a hero to Bay State Libertarians. Israel said he'd love to see her enter the governor's race and further raise the party's profile in Massachusetts.

"There's a lot of name recognition built in for her. That's a valu-

able commodity," he said.

Howell said yesterday that she's received hundreds of e-mails urging her to run for governor next year. She said she is considering it but probably wouldn't decide for months.

Delivering the convention's keynote address, Howell said Libertarian candidates must make bold statements and can't be satisfied with gradual change. She railed against welfare, the war on drugs, public schools, and government as a whole.

"Boldness is the key to Libertarian breakthroughs," Howell said. "Small government is beautiful."

The 200 attendees gave her standing ovations before and after she spoke. Globe columnist Jeff Jacoby was the featured speaker during the convention's banquet last night.

The convention itself felt more like a corporate motivational retreat than a political event. Party members bantered with actors portraying George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Paul Revere.

But modern-day politics was

definitely on the agenda, with party leaders signing up new members and starting to recruit potential legislative candidates.

With Massachusetts' Republican Party facing tough times, many Libertarians see an opportunity to fill a void. That could, in part, explain Howell's strong showing in the Senate race, in which Republicans offered Robinson little support, Israel said.

"People were looking for a real choice, and they found it in Carla," he said. "We'll see a couple of races where" electing a Libertarian to the Legislature "could happen in 2002 and 2004."

Dean Cook of Beverly, who has sought the governorship and a state representative's seat under the Libertarian banner, said the party is growing healthier in Massachusetts with each passing year. When he first joined the party about 15 years ago, Cook said, he knew just about everyone who went to the meetings.

"Now, every time we come, there's new people," Cook said. "And as I tell people all the time, even if we don't win, there's no such thing as a useless race."

▲ *The Boston Globe*, Boston, Massachusetts, February 25, 2001

▼ *The Home News Tribune*, East Brunswick, New Jersey, January 18, 2001

Libertarian launches bid for governor

By MICHAEL SYMONS
GANNETT STATE BUREAU

TRENTON — Mark Edgerton, the Libertarian candidate for governor, kicked off his long-shot campaign yesterday at the Statehouse and introduced his campaign manager — a Minnesotan who guided former wrestler Jesse Ventura's successful run for governor there in 1998.

Edgerton said he's in the race to win, not merely to match the 4.7 percent of the vote Murray Sabrin drew as the Libertarian candidate for governor in 1997. Campaign manager Doug Fried-

line said the same, conceding it won't be easy but promising to make some noise.

"We are really here to move ahead and try to win this campaign," Friedline said. "I'm not sure the landscape will allow us to do that at this point, but I really believe there is a huge opportunity to at least control the outcome of this election.

"And like in Minnesota, where none of the media believed we had a chance to win, it can happen," said Friedline, who noted Ventura — best known for wearing a feather

boa and smashing metal chairs over wrestling opponents' heads — was outspent 25-to-1.

Edgerton has virtually no name recognition among voters. The 50-year-old lives on Lake Hopatcong and is a licensed real-estate broker. He works in national real-estate marketing and sales and founded his own realty company at age 27.

"Like Thomas Jefferson, we adhere to the notion that the government that governs the least, governs the best. Thus, wherever and whenever we can, we strive to reduce the size and

power of government," Edgerton said.

Edgerton said the drug war failed and had "a terrible impact on our civil liberties." He said competition creates better schools and supports tax credits for families to defray school-tuition costs. He said the state should create the position of lieutenant governor.

He said property taxes shouldn't be the exclusive method of school funding. He supports having a constitutional convention to reform the state's tax system. He supports efforts to stop the state from

selling school-construction bonds without getting voter approval.

But he was most expansive about a campaign-finance bill pending in the state Assembly, which has already passed the state Senate, that would permit candidates to receive public-matching funds only for contributions raised from New Jersey sources.

Edgerton said two aspects of the bill would harm any third-party candidate and serves to protect Senate President Donald DiFrancesco, R-Union, who will seek the GOP nomination.