

LIBERTY PLEDGE

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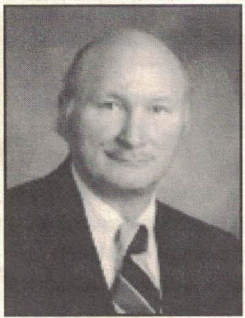
MARCH 2005

newsletter

New Mexico Libertarian celebrates 26 years as LP Member

Ed Nagel's history of activism is highlighted by two legal wins vs. government

When describing Ed Nagel, the word "activist" seems a gross understatement. This New Mexico Libertarian has been working for liberty for a long time, and he makes his living promoting liberty – specifically, alternative schools and home schooling.



Ed Nagel

Nagel joined the Libertarian Party after meeting former LP presidential candidate Ed Clark in 1979, but he had been involved in the broader libertarian movement since the early 1970s.

Nagel earned his Master's degree in education in 1971 and moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico, joining the Santa Fe Community School, of which Nagel is now principal. The school's mission is to "provide structure and direction for home-schooling families."

However, in 1974, the state of New Mexico threatened to close down the school, claiming it failed to comply with their "standards" for public schools.

"So, we sued -- and won," Nagel said.

In 1975, the state Supreme Court stated that there was no constitutional authority for the state to exercise control and management over non-public schools. After that decision, Nagel said, "alternative schools in New Mexico mushroomed. The following year we introduced our 'home study' program as a legal umbrella for children whose parents wanted to teach their own, outside the confines of any school."

But Nagel wasn't satisfied with those achievements. Concerned about the future of the home-schooling movement, he led the charge to create a nonprofit to educate parents about schooling choices, the National Association for the Legal Support of Alternative Schools.

Home schooling is now an option in all 50 states, but Nagel remains an active advocate for liberty. He wrote an article for LP News in 2004 urging readers not to forget "the high price their predecessors paid" to achieve these educational choices.

Another important way Nagel remains active is by pledging to the national LP. He became a Liberty Pledger in 1997 and a Life Member in 1998. He continues to pledge because of his attachments to the values for which the LP stands.

"I love the constitutional principles upon which this country was founded," he said. "The Libertarian Party represents everything I believe in – plus, giving makes me feel good."

Like many other Libertarians, Nagel finds philanthropic or political donations to be a counterpoint to taxation.

"For myself, I like making contributions on a voluntary basis for those projects in which I believe, contrary to the forced tax-

ation by our government for projects in which my opinion does not count," he says.

And even though his signature issue is educational choice, Nagel realizes that "when one Libertarian project succeeds, we all benefit." Because of this, he also supports the Marijuana Policy Project, Cato Institute, Downsize DC and many individual Libertarian campaigns for office on a regular basis.

He also supports the goals of the Free State Project, though he lives in New Mexico instead of in New Hampshire, Nagel says he has joined the NHLP and is looking for property to buy in that state so that he can register to vote there.

Even with four children and eight grandchildren, and several books and articles to his name, the New Mexico Libertarian still finds time to participate as a county chair, state central committee officer, and candidate for office.

Nagel ran for Congress in 1992, 1994 and 1996 against Bill Richardson, who is now governor of New Mexico. Nagel said that he loved the experience of running for office, noting that the debates were particularly easy, in his opinion.

"All I had to know in order to answer almost any question was whether a proposed action was authorized by the Constitution and/or whether it would infringe on anyone's constitutional rights," Nagel said.

Above all, Nagel said, the campaigns gave him a "forum for educating people about the LP and advocating, for example, an end to the Drug War," which is one of his favorite issues.

Nagel has a strategy for the LP in 2008: He believes celebrity candidates are the way to go. He advocates the establishment of a committee to recruit libertarian celebrities with solid name recognition to run for office. "I believe this is the key to cracking into this country's political egg," he says.

In his spare time, Nagel likes to spend time with his children, grandchildren and wife – as well as play chess and travel. He calls it "practicing retirement," which may be as close as this busy Libertarian gets to the real thing.

"I like making contributions on a voluntary basis for those projects in which I believe, contrary to the forced taxation by our government for projects in which my opinion does not count."

— Ed Nagel

Libertarian Corr to try for city council seat

By Mike Donila

City Council candidate David Corr says he's the "taxpayers' best friend."

Vying for the open seat on the council, Corr said he'd like to see the council cut funding to nonessential departments. In other words, everything that doesn't include the police, fire and engineering departments and the municipal court.

Corr says some of the city's other departments, such as recreation, can survive on less funding and private donations. Others, such as the Public Works, which is responsible for garbage collections, should be privatized, he said.

"By giving the taxpayers some relief, we'll cause the community to grow – we'll be creating jobs," said Corr, 50. "This reduces crime and even gives us a chance to give our police officers a pay scale. In return, that'll bring in more officers to fight crime and get out in the community."

Corr is well-known around City Hall. As chairman of the Bibb County **Libertarian Party**, he's a regular at City Council meetings, where he rails against any type of tax or fee increase.

And March 15, he'll be one of four candidates hoping to secure Jim Lee's old seat, which represents a large portion of southwest Macon, including the Bloomfield area and Colonial Mall Macon. Lee, who held the seat for almost 25 years, died in early September.

"Macon is in a fiscal mess and it needs somebody willing to make the tough decisions to get its finances in order and restore ethical government to its citizens," Corr said.

"The foremost issue is the finances – we can't continue to raise taxes. We've raised them for the past two years ... and we're still in a bankrupt situation. Economics 101 will tell you that raising taxes discourages citizens and businesses from locating to a city."

Corr, a University of Georgia graduate with a degree in political science and a minor in philosophy, became passionate about politics in high school.

After graduating from college in August 1977, Corr began his career in the insurance business. But, he says, he always took time to keep up with the local government.

In October 2001, Corr helped form the 25-member Bibb County Libertarian Party. As chairman, he was charged with recruiting candidates for local races.

When no one qualified to challenge Mayor Jack Ellis for his seat in November 2003, Corr decided to take him on as a write-in candidate, kicking off a grassroots campaign through

the Internet and venturing door-to-door, spreading his party's message of individual freedom and economic liberty.

In the end, Corr secured 25 percent of the vote, setting what state elections officials said could be a record for a write-in candidate in a large municipality race.

Last year, he campaigned against a special purpose local option sales tax, and claims partial responsibility for its defeat.

"I've got experience – I've been fighting these issues a number of years," Corr said. "My opponents have not actually taken any position on any of the items – they say they're for unity and consensus, but that's vague, they're only speaking in generalities. That doesn't say where they stand. They'll go about raising taxes and spending as the mayor and council have in the past."

Corr said he'd refuse to vote in favor of any budget that includes a tax increase or increases the "size, scope and cost of government."

As a councilman, Corr would focus his efforts on working with the police department to address violence and property crimes, as well as fraud.

Corr said the council also needs to do a better job reducing spending, but the body has improved in the past year, as ordinances that restrict the administration's power have been passed.

He does take issue with the mayor, particularly after Ellis said he wouldn't sign a budget that included a tax hike, and then did so.

"You have to say what you mean and mean what you say," Corr said.

Libertarians form locally as third party political option

By Mary Bulkot

If you feel government has become too intrusive in your life, "come check us out," said Christa Siering, chairperson of the new Ithaca **Libertarians** chapter, officially established at a founding convention Feb. 18.

Although there are only about 20 party members in the county presently, Siering hopes the ranks will swell once people realize they have an option other than the two major parties.

Many still view any third party as being akin to a third leg – something that's unusual but not useful. But Siering said the Libertarian Party makes the political process more accessible.

According to its Web site, the Libertarian Party is America's largest, most successful and fastest growing third party. It was created in December of 1971 by a handful of people meeting in David Nolan's living room in Colorado. Today, the party is organized in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The party's platform hearkens back to America's libertarian foundation, from which the country deviated with disastrous results according to its members.

(Above) *Macon Telegraph*, Macon, Georgia – March 2, 2005

(Right) *Ithaca Times*, Ithaca, New York – March 2, 2005

Conservatives, GOP split on illegal workers

By Kelley Beaucar Vlahos

WASHINGTON — President Bush has told the nation he still plans to advance a proposal he made a year ago to grant temporary visas to illegal immigrants already in the United States, but many members of the conservative base that helped re-elect him say they staunchly disagree, and they are warning the White House not to take their loyalty for granted.

“What you have here is a huge grassroots base that hears about giving any sort of amnesty to illegal aliens, and they’re ticked off,” said William Greene, president of RightMarch.com, an activist organization that generates awareness of hot conservative issues and makes its members’ positions known through targeted mail and faxes to members of Congress.

Greene was of the majority opinion at last week’s Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in Washington. A straw poll conducted throughout the conference found that 54 percent disagreed with guest worker visas.

Bush proposed a plan in January 2004 that would grant temporary legal status to illegal aliens already working in the U.S. The status would last three years, with the possibility of renewals.

Meanwhile, a bipartisan group of senators filed the Agricultural Job Opportunity, Benefits and Security Act of 2005. This bill would provide temporary green cards and the opportunity to earn the right to permanent work status to illegal migrant farm workers if they can prove they have been working for a period of 100 days since Jan. 1 and agree to a background check.

But some conservatives say these and other “amnesty-lite” proposals are rewarding people for breaking U.S. laws. And they say they don’t believe Republicans will provide the votes to push it through for the president.

“This idea is not popular at all,” John Vinson, an editor at the Americans for Immigration Control Inc., said at CPAC. “They say this is not amnesty, but this is amnesty. Amnesty is a pardon for law-breaking, period.”

Gary Aldrich, founder and head of the Patrick Henry Center for Individual Liberty, said one would be hard-pressed to find anyone around CPAC who disagreed.

“I don’t know of a single organization here that is suggesting we should lighten up on immigration status,” said Aldridge, who indicated that at least 100 congressmen have already been identified as those who will stand against guest worker status proposals.

“There is an undercurrent in the conservative movement of nervousness,” about the issue, he said. “I think this is a good example of the rift between true conservatives and those in the Bush administration along more neo-conservative lines, who see some benefits out of this politically.”

But there were a few groups and individuals willing to say they aren’t as much against the idea of guest worker visas as their conservative colleagues.

The Libertarian Party, which has disagreed with many of the Bush policies, including the war in Iraq and the Patriot Act, said it agreed with the president on this one.

“Libertarians support the Bush guest worker program. [Aliens] are here working, they’re abiding by the law, of course they should become citizens — we think all immigrants who come here to get a job and better themselves should be able to do so,” said party spokesman George Getz. “This is one small step in the right direction.”

Then there are individuals who say they just don’t the share passionate opposition to it that other conservatives have.

“It’s not my hot-button issue,” said Chris Green, president of RightGear.com, which was selling pro-Bush, pro-conservative t-shirts at CPAC. “It’s about individual liberty for me, and I know these people coming here want individual liberty. If they are here already, and they aren’t criminals, if they are here for three years and they work, sure.”

(Left) *FoxNews.com* – February 22, 2005

(Below) *New York Sun*, New York, New York – February 28, 2005

Libertarian sues Bloomberg over campaign finance

By Associated Press

Manhattan **Libertarian Party** chair Jim Lesczynski filed suit in New York County Supreme Court today to overturn New York City’s lavish Campaign Finance Program.

Lesczynski declared. “The city’s obscenely extravagant six-to-one matching funds program is not only fiscally irresponsible, but it violates our Constitutional protections against compelled political speech.”

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Campaign Finance Board Chairman Frederick A.O. Schwarz, Jr., the Campaign Finance Board, and the City of New York are named as defendants in the complaint. The complaint alleges that compelling taxpayers to bankroll political speech with which they disagree violates the free speech clauses of the New York State and U.S. Constitutions.

“Libertarians oppose all forms of welfare, whether for individuals, corporations or politicians,” Lesczynski said. “I vehemently object to the content of their campaign messages, which promise more taxes and less freedom, but I object even more to being forced to pay for those repugnant messages.”

Smoking ban gets clinical hearing

By John Fritze

A tiny hearing room in the City-County Building was packed Thursday night as Indianapolis officials held the first public hearing on one of the city's most polarizing ideas: a smoking ban for restaurants and bars.

But residents and advocates who turned out for the City-County Council committee's discussion got an earful of science — rather than an all-out brawl — as the debate turned toward the medical effects of secondhand smoke.

"It's a toxin," said Andrew Hyland, an epidemiologist with the Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo, N.Y., who was asked to testify on the effect that bans in other parts of the country have had on air quality.

Indianapolis officials are considering one of the most stringent bans in the nation. Proposal No. 45 would prohibit smoking in many places, including restaurants, bars, city parks, near automated teller machines and within 50 feet of the entrances to any of the buildings in which smoking would be banned, including offices.

If Indianapolis approves the ban, it would follow Bloomington, New York, Boston and Columbus, Ohio. Nationwide, about 1,900 communities have smoking regulations in place, according to an anti-smoking group.

Based on occasional applause, the majority of about 100 people who turned out favor the ban.

But not everyone was clapping.

"I don't think I need to be saved from secondhand smoke as much as I need to be saved from these guys trampling on my rights," said Brad Klopfenstein, director of the state's **Libertarian Party**.

In an hour-long presentation, Hyland presented studies documenting air quality improvements in bars where smoking was outlawed. He also argued that restaurant employment and tax receipts were up in cities with bans.

"They may not be happy about it, but people eventually go outside" to smoke, he said. "Safe work site regulations have become the norm, not the exception."

An attempt two years ago to prohibit smoking in Indianapolis failed, but this year the new Democratic council president, Steve Talley, supports the measure and is pushing it to a council vote later this year.

The proposal is being heard by the newly created Children's Health & Environment Committee. Four of the committee's seven members are sponsoring the proposal, so the ban is virtually guaranteed to pass out of committee and receive a vote by the full council.

Dozens of anti-smoking advocates turned out to support the measure.

Nick Baker, a community advocacy specialist with the American Cancer Society "Other cities are trying to pass these ordinances and are being successful."

(Left) *Indianapolis Star*, Indianapolis, Indiana — February, 25, 2005

(Below) *The Athens News*, Athens, Ohio — February 24, 2005

Libertarian decries abuse of eminent domain

By Clay Flaherty

The head of Ohio's **Libertarian Party** warned a small group of Ohio University students Monday about the government's excessive use of eminent domain to take over private properties.

"Ohio is known for the worst eminent domain abuses in the country," Robert Butler, executive director of the Libertarian Party of Ohio, declared during his talk in Bentley Hall. "Most people don't realize the government can take away their home until it's too late."

Eminent domain is a legal process that allows the government to take privately owned land for public use, or for private uses deemed in behalf of the public welfare.

Butler acknowledged Monday evening that the government may have legitimate reasons to exercise eminent domain, such as the construction of highways and utility lines. However, he also cited incidents where the "public good" is not being served with eminent domain.

"Where we start to disagree (with the use of eminent domain) is when a private developer starts to profit from your land," he said.

Dan Corbett, president of the Ohio University Libertarians, said he agreed with Butler's analysis of eminent-domain abuses. "Eminent domain had its place, but when you use it for private development, it seems like a really thin argument," he said.

Butler also touched on the difficulties facing third-party initiatives in Ohio. According to Butler, it's nearly impossible to gain recognition as a minor political party in Ohio. "It's easier to be recognized as a political party in Iraq than in Ohio," he said.

He added that Ohio is out of touch with its neighboring states in terms of political awareness. According to Butler, Indiana has had automatic ballot recognition for Libertarian candidates for 10 years.

However, Butler expressed optimism concerning future efforts by the Libertarian Party of Ohio, especially in Athens. "The Libertarian presence at Ohio University has grown significantly," he said. "I hope this will lead to the official formation of an Athens County Libertarian Party."