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LIBERTY PLEDGE NEWSLETTER

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LP Activist to Meet With Perot

A leading Libertarian Party activist in Nevada has been invited to a personal dinner with billionaire Ross Perot, and hopes to enlist the support of the former independent presidential candidate and his millions of followers for national ballot access reform.

Tamara Clark, the Chair of the Nevada LP, is scheduled to meet with Perot in Las Vegas on July 17th. The dinner is a thank-you from the feisty political maverick after Clark warned him that Republicans and Democrats in the Nevada House planned to yank Independent candidates from a state bill easing ballot access requirements.

Clark said she had warned Perot about the bid to expel Independent candidates from the Nevada bill out of simple fairness. "We're in favor of ballot access because we want to give Americans the biggest possible choice. We wouldn't deny anyone else the same rights we're fighting for," she explained.

Perot and his lobbying machine jumped into action, and the Nevada bill passed with equal protection for third parties and Independents intact. (See related story.)

At the dinner, "my goal is to get him to help us out with the Penny Bill," said Clark. "He has the ability to bring this issue to the public." The Penny Bill would ease ballot access restriction in all 50 states, and would make it more likely that third party candidates would be allowed to participate in presidential debates.

How does Clark feel about meeting the peppery Perot? "I'm very excited!" she said. "I'm very interested in meeting a person who has changed American politics!"

A "Magical" Libertarian

Internationally renowned stage magician Penn Jillette — of Penn & Teller fame — pulled a rabbit out of a hat and announced recently that he voted for Libertarian Andre Marrou in 1992. In a column in the June 1993 issue of *PC Computing* magazine, Penn wrote: "The man and woman team I voted for [for president] were on the ballot in all 50 states, yet weren't in any of the TV debates . . ." The only candidates that qualify: Andre Marrou and Nancy Lord!

Shadow Cabinet Gets Underway

Bid to increase media attention

The Libertarian Party's brand-new Shadow Cabinet fired its opening press salvo last week, in what will be an on-going bid to make the national media give more coverage to the party.

The Shadow Cabinet — 14 prestigious, libertarian-minded experts, scholars, and Washington insiders — mirrors the Federal Cabinet, and will provide the Libertarian perspective on President Bill Clinton's policies. The group will "put some ginger in the public debate" on policy alternatives, promised National LP Chair Mary Gingell.

The first press release featured former Congressman Ron Paul blasting Clinton's proposed "deficit-reduction" budget plan as "the whopper of the century."

"All too many of President Clinton's budget cuts are really tax increases and his near-term snips in spending are counterbalanced by expanded federal programs. Most serious cutting is postponed to the Never-Neverland future of other terms and other presidents," charged Paul, the Secretary of the Treasury for the Shadow Cabinet. "By 1998, Clinton will have requested \$1 trillion in new spending, and \$1.7 trillion in new debt — the largest expansion of federal spending and debt in history."

The Shadow Cabinet plans to produce one press release a week on a wide range of controversial and topical issues.

Ballot Access Win in NV

The Libertarian Party of Nevada has won a major ballot access victory in that state, and "will never have to petition again!" according to State Chair Tamara Clark.

The state LP was at the forefront of a successful lobbying effort to ease ballot access requirements. The bill passed the House and Senate, was signed by the Governor, and became effective on July 12th.

The law reduces the vote total to 1% from 3% needed for a "minor" party or independent candidate to qualify for a place on the ballot, and guarantees that any "minor" party on the ballot in 1992 will be on the ballot in 1994.

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TWO LIBERTARIANS, ONE DEMOCRAT

BY DOUG HISSOM

State political history will be made in Tuesday's special election primary for the 14th Assembly District when two candidates appear on the ballot under the Libertarian Party banner. Libertarians are trying to secure the title as the top third party in Wisconsin and have been aggressively putting candidates on the ballot for local elections.

City Pages

Libertarians have generally had a low presence in Wisconsin politics, but have recently

fielded candidates for the 1st Congressional District race, three special state Senate elections and several local races. The Labor & Farm Party has been at the top of the state third party heap, but lately has focused on municipal elections. Libertarian candidates were also on November's ballot for the 4th Congressional District and U.S. Senate races. Nationwide, Libertarian presidential candidate Andre Marrou took fourth place with 281,805 votes.

Libertarians adhere to the belief that the role of big government should be as limited as possible in social and economic realms; they represent a sort of free-wheeling laissez-faire attitude that appeals to people on both the political right and left. The state party economic platform calls for the elimination of income taxes, corporate taxes and many government regulations and regulatory agencies. Party social policy planks call for legalizing so-called victimless crimes like prostitution, gambling and recreational drug use.

The creation of a Libertarian primary here is unusual nationwide as well, given the low number of candidates the party generally has, says national party press secretary Gery Johnson. Johnson said college students as well as the traditional free market business owners are attracted to the party.

Nationwide, four sitting state legislators are members of the Libertarian Party—all in New Hampshire. Local party members expect a mention for this primary.

The 14th opened up when Republican state Rep. Peggy Rosenzweig won a special state Senate election for now-Congressman Tom Barrett's seat. The 14th district is Republican turf. The two Libertarian candidates in the race stress the economic platform planks over the social. Both also represent the different wings of the party.

"I'm more of a disaffected Republican," says Steve Deibert, 20, a senior at UW-Milwaukee majoring in history and mass communication. "I've often liked the sound of Republicans, but hated the actions."

"My main reason for running as a Libertarian is that I'm a Libertarian in principle," says Larry Hoger, 35, a Wauwatosa fast-food restaurant owner.

Hoger will have none of the general state Republican view of reducing taxes on businesses in order to help the economy. He cites a \$5 million grant the state gave General Motors for worker retraining as "ludicrous."

"I'm opposed to government involvement and want government cut out as much as possible," he said. "It's stupid to give inducements to big business to come or stay in the state. That's becoming a national problem, with all states doing it.

The only one making out on the deal is big business. And they don't stay here because they're more committed, but because they can get more.

"Just lowering the property tax rate will keep businesses here, rather than giving them money," he said.

The school tax levy is the most effective way to reduce property taxes, he said, and along those lines he favors school choice. Hoger said creating competition among school systems would alleviate "the pressure public school systems feel to give teachers a raise every year." Morally, it would give parents a choice regardless of income, he said, and parochial schools should be included. Deibert agrees.

Big government? Not here, Hoger says: Public funds should not be used for a stadium nor should taxes be raised for a Downtown convention center; businesses will do it if it's worth it to them.

"The government sits back and tries to think of ways to spur the economy. Government can't spur the economy, it only slows it down," Hoger said. "Let's look at the state tourism budget. We're spending millions of dollars [\$7 million in 1993] telling people to come up here and spend. We don't even know if it's working. If it is working, then let the businesses that benefit from advertising pay for it."

Deibert uses the college experience to look at ways to reduce expenses. He says the UW System could cut wasteful programs and privatize others. Privatizing government services is an extensive plank in the Libertarian Party platform.

He said the food service plans for the UW System could be jobbed out, which would reduce prices for the university community as a whole. An example of a needless position at UWM is the assistant chancellor for Affirmative Action, Deibert said.

"They can't keep anyone in that position for more than a year and then they have to spend thousands of dollars advertising it," he said.

Deibert said he would also like to see less federal government policies forced on the state. "I'm a firm believer in states' rights," he said, citing recent federal government orders that UWM pay civil rights fines.

Deibert said he was approached to run by Ken Zollner, a colleague on the *UWM Times* student newspaper, where Deibert said he has been a writer for three years.

Zollner was state campaign coordinator for the 1992 Libertarian Party presidential ticket and also ran in the 1988 state campaign for then Populist Party presidential candidate David Duke. Deibert said he came to Milwaukee in 1990 and knew of the Duke affiliation, but "[Zollner] must have been 15 years old at the time."

Hoger, of 3016 N. 121st St., is married, has four children and owns two fast-food restaurants called Judy's. Deibert, of 1580 N. Farwell Ave., is single.

The two don't attack each other with the intensity of, say, the Moody-Checota battle for the U.S. Senate last fall. Deibert does say that Hoger's tax stances are like "a one-string violin he's playing. He's got a good philosophy, but I have more details." Hoger is confident about winning the primary and has what state party establishment there is

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behind him.

On the party's social issues, Deibert favors legalizing marijuana for medicinal purposes, but doesn't have an opinion about recreational use. "I don't know. Most of the people that I know that have used this have become very unproductive in society."

Hoger says the victimless crime laws are keeping the jails crowded, causing violent criminals to be released early. He said he would support building more prisons if that would keep violent prisoners off the streets, but first he would start "getting people out of jail who are in for revoked licenses and non-payment of child support."

"There have been laws against prostitution for a long time and it doesn't work to stop it. And as far as the argument that it wrecks the neighborhood, I don't want to see it in my neighborhood either, regardless if one of them is getting paid for it. There are laws already taking care of that," he said. Legalizing certain recreational drugs would take the profit motive out of most of the drug-related crimes, he said, but added that there should be a phase-in period.

Deibert says he'll spend about \$100 on the primary. Hoger says he has raised \$600 so far and will spend about \$1,500 total in the race.

Neither local candidate has approached the national party apparatus for financial support and none will be given at this time, spokesmen say. After the primary, some funds may come in. The national Libertarian office used to fund only candidates with a shot at winning, but national campaign director Ron Crickenberger says Wisconsin's matching fund law can be used to back hopefuls here. If a candidate receives 6 percent of the vote, the campaign qualifies for matching funds from a state pool. "It's the best state policy I know of," he said.

Local party members agree that 6 percent is possible. In the state Senate election that opened up the 14th seat, the Libertarian took about 2 percent of the vote, doing best in the Wauwatosa area. It's generally considered solid Republican turf. Libertarians predict their candidate will do better if the Republicans give the nod to someone far to the right, which in this race could happen. There is also a Libertarian in the special 79th Assembly District election to replace state Sen. Joseph Wineke.

State party vice chair Gene Cisewski said 35 to 40 candidates have already lined up for the 1994 statewide elections, including those for governor, attorney general, state treasurer and secretary of state. Local ballots will include Libertarians, predominantly in Milwaukee, Dane, Washington and Winnebago counties.

Five Republicans will also be on Tuesday's 14th Assembly primary ballot: Susan J. Fisher; Barbara Kraetsch; Mary Jo Paque; Michael Steinhafel; and Scott Walker. Primary winners will join Democrat Chris Ament, son of County Executive Tom Ament, in the June 29 general election. Chris Ament officially joined the Democratic Party the day before nomination papers were due.