# LIBERTY PLEDGE NEWSLETTER

Published exclusively for members of the Libertarian Party's Monthly Pledge Program

FEBRUARY 1990

# Census Project Leads LP's Agenda

The Libertarian Party's major project for the near future will be one urging resistance to the upcoming 1990 U.S. Census.

The Census, conducted by the Department of Commerce every ten years to update population figures and compile other demographic statistics, is scheduled to begin April 1. Census officials hope for public cooperation and mention legal penalties against "resisters" only when necessary.

April 1st has been named "Census Day" by Census officials, but the day is still known to the rest of us as "April Fool's Day." The irony will certainly be pointed out by Libertarians active in local protest activities planned for the day.

The LP has recently put out a Census resistance mailing to over 20,000 people including the entire LP membership and contributor lists and "The Pragmatist" subscribers list. The mailing includes a card for recipients to attach to their Census Forms before returning them. The card informs Census officials that the individual has not cooperated fully, either by refusing to answer the questionnaire at all or by answering

Take note of the "Pledge Slips" enclosed in this mailing, and please double-check to be sure all information is correct: address, amount, and method of payment. In particular, if you charge your pledge to a credit card, please be sure the credit card number we have is correct. Thank You! only those questions relating to the head-count, as authorized by the Constitution. (The card allows individuals to check one of these two options.)

In two to three weeks, a decision will be made regarding whether to mail to additional lists, including the "Reason" magazine and the Ron Paul campaign lists.

There are currently three bills before Congress which will, to various degrees, do what the LP has called for: repeal the penalties for non-cooperation with the Census. Currently, failure to fully complete the Census Form (the short form has 19 questions; the long form has 65) can result in a \$100 fine. A fine of \$500 can be issued to those knowingly falsifying information on a Census Form. Please write your congressmen informing them of your support for these pieces of legislation.

### And Other Items of Note . . .

- Following last month's <u>Liberty Pledge Newsletter</u> mention of Nancy Lord's campaign for Mayor of Washington, D.C., we have heard from many people interested in contributing to her campaign. Contributions can be made to "Lord for Mayor" and sent to the LP National Headquarters address for proper forwarding.
- Tax Protest Day, coming up on April 16, will be the LP's next major project. For further details on local activities, please contact your State Chair.

# **Curt Kastens**' elusive Libertarian dream

Story by Barbara Frye

urt Kastens is a fanatic - just ask him. "I am a fanatic for freedom. I am just as fanatic as the man who blew up the Marine barracks in Lebanon, but in America, one's fanaticism has to be channeled into ... political education. If you have attended one of Congressman Steny

Hoyer's recent town meetings, a nearby flea market, a county fair, or this year's Fourth of July celebration in Laurel, you probably have seen him. He is usually there, near his rack of brochures, handing out printed solutions to everything from the affordable housing shortage to the drug problem. As the head of Prince George's County's

Libertarian party, Kastens leads an army of unreliable numbers. As usual with a small group bound by ideology, they are fiercely committed and fiercely critical of the political status quo.

To understand why, consider their credo, in Kastens' words: No individual or group of people have the right to initiate ssion against another person to achieve their political or social goals and that includes the

Now take that credo, and consider it the center point from which radiate in all directions the official Libertarian stances on any number

of issues. The effect is that sometimes they find themselves left of center. sometimes right of center, and sometimes in-between: something for everyone.

Not exactly. Conservatives and feminists alike might be mortified by the Libertarians' support of pornographers' right to operate; the right would not sit still for their plan to abolish drug laws; Ralph Nader would turn apoplectic at their antiregulation zeal.

Like most groups on the fringe, it's easy to be flip about the Libertarians. They are a small band of Don Ouixotes, tilting at the

(See LIBERTARIAN, page B-3)

## NEIGHBORHOOD

(LIBERTARIAN, from B-1) But seen up close, through Kastens' eyes, they are the most rational of fanatics. Indeed, their 20-year-old banner magazine calls itself "Reason." It is full of articles about how zoning regulations make affordable housing impossible, how public-funded mass tran

threatened ultimately by the growing eco-nomic strength of South Africa's blacks. Kastens is a forceful, eloquent spokesperson for the cause. "Libertarian opposition to government programs," he explains, "is rooted in the idea that they ... use funds that are acquired coercively, and they depend on laws which persecute dissenters."

portation is a wash-out, and how apartheid is

He continues, "Libertarians are willing to allow any activity, even if they think it is repugnant, as long as it is nonviolent. Mod-ern liberals and conservatives, on the other decision-making to solve the problems they think are most important.'

### Heated political talks

His words are at once torrential and measured. They come quickly, but only after years of thought. Kastens grew up in Minnesota, the son of a loyal Democrat — "a truck driver and a union man." Staunch Republican grandparents made for lively family gatherings. "Politics was always an area of neated discussion. I'd see my grandfather get up and stomp around the room, and pound on the table when I was a little kid." he recalls. "and I was very curious what all this controversy was about. So that's why I had this nitial interest in politics.

From about age 8 until his freshman year in college, he remained a "plain old con-." A self-described anticommunist servative zealot, "I supported whoever was going to spend more on national defense,' members, laughing. "There are still a lot of people who feel that way," he adds.

Kastens remembers spending a lot of time in the library reading political journals. When e came across a short article on the Libertarians, it was not really a revelation but rather a seed planted. From there, he took course on the creed in college. By the end of the semester, he was converted

In 1982, with a fresh degree in political science, he did something decidedly un-Libertarian: he joined the Army for four years. Out in 1986, Kastens moved to Montgomery County upon getting a job with an industrial and restaurant equipment cleaning firm, and hooked up with the local Libertarians. A year later, he and his wife. Farideh, moved to Laurel, where he now drives a truck for Amyets

**Picketers** 

legalized

MARY T. FORTNEY / STAFF

The call for legalization of drugs

began Saturday outside Spangen-berg Auditorium at Gunn High

School with pickets carrying signs

and continued inside during a

town meeting held by Congress

DEA agent, an East Palo Alto de

tective and a psychologist - saw

the current war on drugs as futile.

term education programs, a

Instead they advocated long-

Even the three panelists - a

man Tom Campbell.

PALO ALTO

want drugs

During the late 1970s while Kastens was hanging out at the local library, the ian party was getting off the ground in Maryland Kastens served as the party's central committee chairman in Montgomery County during his residency there.

Upon coming to Laurel, he says, "I knew omething could be done here, because we had a lot of Libertarians here. There just wasn't anyone taking any leadership role to organize them into any specific activities. That's all I've done since I've been here."

Last summer he contacted each member of the state central committee in Prince George's County, all registered Libertarians in the county, and "prospects" he'd met at the county fair. In January the committee held its first formal election and the job of chairman fell to Kastens "by default." Of 12 people voting, "there were no challenges for

Kastens spends much of his time now soliciting money for projects from "known Libertarians" and "doing some outreach projects," looking for new conscripts. His ights, of course, reach beyond Prince George's into Anne Arundel and Howard

Although the number of Libertarians in Prince George's County seems to vary from year to year, it is never high. When registration closed a few weeks before the 1988 election, Kastens estimates, the county listed about 203 registered Libertarians.

Wading through the arcane laws of voter registration, Kastens explains that a small party must keep re-establishing itself. As long as a party's statewide candidates continue to amass an average of 3% of the vote: they can be placed on the ballot, time after time. But when it falls below the magic 3%, it loses recognition and its candidates' names

The Maryland Libertarian party lost recognition in 1988. In order to come back, they must gather the signatures of 10,000 registered voters on a petition. Kastens believes they now have over 13,000 signatures, but, allowing for signatories who think they are red but are not, he is pushing for 15,000 to ensure they end up with 10,000

### A spotty history

The party's national history is just as uneven. It fielded its most successful pres dential candidate, Ed Clark, in 1980. He received almost one million votes, and Kastens speculates that if the Independent candidate, John Anderson, had not run that year, Clark would have picked up more protest votes from disaffected voters.

Peninsula Times Tribune, Palo Alto, CA, Dec. 10, 1989.

switch away from a "take a pill

to cure all ills" culture and an ac-

always be happy and pain-free.

17-year-old alcohol addict.

part of the problem."

ceptance by society that life can't

The town meeting audience of 400 ranged in age from gray-

They reflected mixed views.

When one man in the audience ad-

vocated separating use from

abuse, saying he resented being la-beled a criminal because he liked

"to blow a joint once in a while."

semeone else shouted, "You're

Overall, most of the questioners

seemed to support at the least de-

criminalizing drugs with some re-

strictions on their use. Many of

The pickets outside were an in-

formal group, including some

members of the Libertarian Party

and of Save Our Liberties, a Moun-

tain View-based group. A man who

their remarks drew applause.

eniors to a self-described

David Bergland ran a largely unnoticed

Libertarian campaign in 1984, and the 1988 society in Maryland even before the Revol-Libertarian candidate, Ron Paul, received uton. less than 1% of the vote in Maryland and

across the natio With a little bit of armchair psychiatry, it's easy to see why someone like Kastens could champion such a tiny movement. Not to dismiss his political education, this slightlybuilt man with thinning blond hair and wirerimmed glasses might have been the kid bullies inevitably pick on: small, somewhat nerdy, and very serious.

As he talks about intellectuals in the Libertarian tradition — 18th-century free-market bellwether Adam Smith and 20thcentury novelist Ayn Rand, for example— it is impossible to imagine him telling a joke. His is the intensity of someone who has long

He presses on "because I am so frustrated by the way the liberal and conservative politicians and the vast majority of voters in this country have abandoned the idea that freedom is the highest political value and a limited government's only role is to protect that freedom."

Kastens, though, manages to temper his etermination with cold realism: "Our chances of making Libertarianism a mass movement again in America are very poor .. but that is not going to stop me and a few other Libertarians here in P.G. County from trying to do our part . ... I have reached a point where if no one else lifts a finger I will continue to do whatever I can to promote a consistent view of freedom."

Kastens' consistency makes for an unsparing ethical code that he acknowledges will political periphery. Liberals and con-servatives, Republicans and Democrats, would find no congenial home here. Consider Kastens on affirmative action: "I believe that individuals as part of a ... collective group whether they wish to be or not . ...

"A business employer-employee rela-tionship is a private association," he de-"just like a marriage or a friendship is, and the government has no business There's no job out in the American economic that's got someone's name written on it. And therefore for a person to hire whites only, or blacks only, that's not aggression.'

such a sharp swerve over to the right. Kastens heads in the other direction 'Lest you think that I'm some sort of a racist," he cautions, "how many racists do you know who want to allow open mmigration to this country, and allow the whole country of Haiti to move here to try to improve their life if they want to?" He also points out that it was two "early Libertarians," Samuel Chase and Luther

PICKETS

called himself a Republican liber-

tarian was handing out copies of a

news story of former Secretary of

Robert McGuire, a special agent

in San Francisco with the Drug

Enforcement Agency, cited a fact

that another panelist, psychologis

Richard Miller, also picked up on

Americans are heavy users of both legal and illegal drugs.

McGuire noted the U.S. population

consumes 60 percent of the

are trying to escape reality." he

said. "The enforcement effort is

"This tells me a lot of people

world's drugs.

not going to work."

State George Shultz's call for con

trolled legalization of drugs.

Continued from A-1

While such action is fine for individuals, it is not for the government, Kastens insists, to offer a hand up: "Many people think it's okay for the government to redistribute those who don't have it made, and I say that's still theft, because these people may have wished to use their money for something else.

'And even if we live in a society in which all the wealthy people aren't concerned about anything other than owning a BMW and and the winter vacation in Vail. Colo., if that's the values that the people in our society hold then that's the values that should be reflected in our society, and we shouldn't have a bunch of politicians coming in to impose their morality on us.

#### The party line

Kastens is rolling through a kind of ibertarian catechism that is almost certainly sign of someone who receives way too few or way too many chances to speak his people are born at a higher standard of living than others. But to me this is no more unfa than being born with a higher amount of intelligence or some personal ambition or some trait that can make one person success ful in an endeavor where another fails."

While Kastens admits that a cycle of poverty exists, he insists that individuals can pull themselves out of the mire. He cites teenage pregnancy and substandard public on as two "factors." but returns quickly to his individualistic creed. "If any ndividual isn't happy with his life, ... more than likely he can probably blame 85% of this problem on himself, maybe 10% on his parents, and maybe 5% on everything else put together.

He goes on: "It's not whether you're rich or poor, but how you got to where you're at that's important. And the fact that 40% of the black population still lives in poverty, this is much more complex than just discrin There's the factor of drugs and so on, and I don't think I can solve the problem, and I certainly don't think the vernment can solve the problem." Kastens takes aim at other governmental

trespasses he condemns: laws against prostination, gambling, and drug-selling. He calls "economic enterprises" which some would kill in order "to impose their moral values on others.

Kastens stands up for pacifists who refuse to pay taxes "to fund our military-industrial complex because it goes against their ...

He refers to the deportation of illegal

Palo Alto

kenders Drug and Alcohol Pro- years."

gram in 1982 and now heads Park-

treats chemical dependents, con-

side Medical Services, which

"A common thread in all the

need to escape from feelings —

depression, elation, grief, They

have not learned to be comfort

able with the feelings humans

have. Our culture tells us we are

As a result, he indicated, people

Miller criticized the term "war

"It's not a war," he said. "The

turn to drugs as a way to anesthe-

and life isn't like that."

on drugs."

ed to feel good all the time

people with additions that I see is

Miller, who founded the Co- long haul for five, 10, 15, 20 for hurting others. Someone else.

The third panelist, Detective

Sgt. Michael Boone, constantly

sees drug-associated crime in East

Replying to a charge from the

don't want to legalize drugs be-

cause they'd then be out of jobs

legalized, you would need to cre-

ate a new police force for quality

"You'd need some clear delin-

eation of where, when and what

kind of categories of drugs could

Boone and a man in the audi-

ence both stressed the need for

controls to prevent people under

be used," he said.

analogy is that we drop a bomb the influence of drugs from driv-

and the war is over. It's going to ling, operating machinery or doing

take working together over the other activities with the potential

Boone replied, "If narcotics were

ience that the DEA and police

aliens to their home countries as "kidnap

As far afield as these opinions might seem. there is one conflict within the Libertarian party that mirrors a conflict throughout American society: the question of abortion. It makes Kastens uneasy and it makes his hard line bend in different directions.

"It's really a terrible issue for Libertarian to come to grips with," he begins, "because there's the possibility that there's two people involved, and if there is, then would the mother having an abortion, technically, by definition, be aggression'

The party line is pro-choice, with which Kastens says he used to disagree. "but I'm really undecided now. I keep hearing this one commercial over and over where the prochoice people are saying 'who decides'

"I don't want to see fetuses killed, but then I don't want to be throwing women into prison for doing that," he says. "Even though Libertarians are very open-minded and carefree people, there are certain things that would be prohibited: murder, rape, robbery, assault, vandalism, and so on, and if abortion would fall into this category of murder, then the state would have the right to outlaw it." He says this with an agonized tone of voice that many people take on when trying to stay in the middle of this debate

Kastens' reaction to the abortion question is rare, in that it puts him in league with most Americans who consider themselves centrists: "It is a very complicated and tricky issue, and it's not one I like, and that's one reason I'll probably never run for office myself, because I'd probably antagonize both the pro-life and the pro-choice people.

For now, though, Kastens will lead his local Libertarians on a crusade to bring attention to the issues they consider most pressing. They want to bring all foreigned troops home, cut defense spending by 80%, "get tough with polluters," and, in a swipe at the gun law that Marylanders vote to institute last year, "defend the Second Kastens thinks the Libertarians could never

he an effective part of the two major parties. They cannot, he argues, "get lumped together with all the Repbulicans who want to legislate morality, involve America in entangling alliances from Antarctica to the Arctic, and involve the government in excompany over another.

"To win in the Democratic party prion the other hand, "a Libertariar would have to compromise so much, he or she would no longer be a Libertarian."

Kastens mentions casually that the

values,", and he eondowns the draft as the borowian mescot is the porcupine. It is the perfect choice, with its needles poised to prick-those who approach it from all sides

suggested employers should have:

anartment owners should be able

to evict drug-using tenants.

drugs to juveniles just as with alco-

hol," another man commented;

His remark drew a loud burst of

laughter, reflecting skepticism en

how well alcohol controls work. 43%

12th Congressional District, does

not support a change in drug laws

but believes it's worthwhile to

study what's happening in other

countries such as the United Kine

dom and the Netherlands 300

er a situation in which no moral

judgment is placed on drugs adds

dicts obtain drugs legally, it takes

the money out of pushing drugs.

The question, he said, is wheth-

Campbell, who represents the

"We can control distribution M.

# Politics in Poland—and Ohio

As I read The Enquirer's article "Polish Reforms Allow New Political Parties" on Dec. 31, I was pleased and appalled. I was pleased that Poland now will have many competing political parties from which to choose. I was appalled to realize that it is easier to form a new political party in Poland than it is in Ohio.

As, a longtime activist and former candidate of the Libertarian Party of Ohio, I am painfully aware of what it takes to form a new political party in this state. We have worked against the stringent requirements set up by Republicans and Democrats for years.

To be recognized as a new political party in Ohio, a group must collect signatures of 34,000 to 50,000 registered voters. (The actual number depends or the vote for president or governor at the previous election.)

### Getting on the ballot

In the spring of 1982, after a tremendous amount of work, the Libertarian Party in Ohio met the state's requirements by filing 62,881 signatures with the secretary of state and received "balt status." That fall, we ran candidates for all statewide offices as well as a full slate here in Hamilton County. (I ran for the U.S. House of Representatives.) For the Libertarian Party to keep

ballot status, our candidate for governor Phyllis Goetz, had to get 5% of the vote. Goetz ran a terrific race, campaigning all over the state. She was the clear winner of the Cleveland City Club's candidate debate. (If you don't believe me, ask former Enquirer reporter Bob Weston; Goetz did not receive 5% of the vote.

so the Libertarian Party is no longer recognized as a political party by the were spent on meeting ballot requirements that too little time could be spent



. the Poles are better off

on the important job of getting the cam-

paign's message to the voters.

Democrats and Republicans know that the 5% requirement is so high that no new party candidate will ever receive the number of votes needed to maintain ballot status. The large petitioning requirements, combined with the requirement of getting 5% of the gubernatorial vote, are the one-two punch designed to sabotage any new political party.

Not only are the Democratic and Republican parties afraid of allowing new political parties to compete against them: they don't even want to let independent candidates participate.

The petitioning requirements for independents are so large that they prohibit virtually any independent candidate from running. For example, an independent running against Tom Luken or Bill Gradison for Congress would have to collect more than 2,000 signatures of registered voters in order to appear on the ballot. Gradison or Luken have to collect only 50

I have some hope that the inequity between independents and major-party candidates may soon be eased. State Rep Lou Blessing, R-Cincinnati, will be introducing legislation in the Ohio House this year requiring that all candidates be treated the same regardless of whether they are party or independent candidates. I hope that both the public and legislators see the wisdom of passing such legisla-

It is time for political reform in Ohio Options for the voters are just as important in Ohio as they are in Poland. And currently. Ohioans have fewer choices than Poles. I personally am sick and tired of meeting requirements the only purpose of which is to protect the monopoly positions of the Republican and Demo-

### **Broadening participation**

The fresh ideas that new political parties and independents can provide will broaden the political debate and offer a realistic way for more people to participate in the political process. Current restrictive legislation is unfair and destructive to the American values of open access to the political process.

Libertarians believe in the traditional American values of minimizing the role of government and maximizing the rights and responsibilities of the individual. Republicans and Democrats continually expand the role of government at the expense of the individual. As an example, the Ohio Revised Code consists of more than 30 volumes with a total weight of nearly 500 pounds.

It is time to make the political process Ohio as open as it is now in Poland.

James A. Berns is a longtime activist in behalf of the Libertarian Party in the

## Washington Times, Wash. D.C., Jan 2, 1990.

# Readers respond to U.S. intervention in Panama

Intervention will not work. It has never worked and it never will. The first piece of evidence the interventionists point to as proof of positive results is Grenada. However, unti 1979 these same interventionists claimed that America's intrusions into Iran during the 1940s to install the shah was necessary and success ful. Thirty years later, as our planes are blown out of the sky and Mus ims express their hatred toward us, Americans wonder why.
Will the United States, acting as

the world police, accomplish any-thing other than short-term goals at the expense of tomorrow's retali-

Recent history has provided an excellent example that intervention will always fail. If we examine South and Central America and Eastern Europe, it is obvious intervention doesn't work. Nowhere has ther non-democratic regimes than in Eastern Europe. Yet, because the United States didn't possess the fire power to do much about it, we did no ntervene for 40 years During thi sinated leaders, and propped up gov ernments in every South and Centra

American country.

Today, while the free citizens of Eastern Europe are enjoying their living to our south are still existing under a communist or fascist dicta torship, a U.S.-dominated banana public or a tentative democracy

Left alone, people will see who their real enemy is — their rotten government. As long as we interfere

in another country's affairs, the peo ple will believe that the Yankee in-truder is the root of their troubles. Only after we have left for good will

TOMAS ESTRADA-PALMA Maryland Libertarian Party

### Our keepers

The keepers of moral authority in Harrisburg are not about to consider drug legalization. For many years the only ones advocating such podoms were a handful of college intellectuals and libertarian ranks have been the mayor of a major city, a former secretary of state and a federal judge. Meanwhile, the Harrisburg "social

engineers" plan to solve the dope prob-lem with more and more guns and bigger

lem with more and more guns and bigger and bigger prisons.

We are fortunate that state officials are working so hard to make these decisions for us and force us to avoid such "personal vices." After all, every dollar that we "poor souls" spend on marijuana is one less dollar we have to spend gambling on their dearest state (moreone). Letters. (monopoly) lottery. LEO Z. ALMAN

Research Chairperson
Libertarian Party
of Western Pennsylvania

# Arnold

## Public access TV gives good look at Libertarians

he most fascinating result of our cable TV monopoly system is the public access channel. On the Eastside, Viacom subscribers can flip to Channel 29 and see things that you won't see on the commercial and public broadcast channels.

Some public access programming looks like it arrived on the last tramp steamer from

Mars, but most of it is competently produced and of genuine public interest. One outstanding feature is The Libertarian Alternative, a quality monthly talk show produced by Bellevue's Tom Isenberg and Kirkland's Dave Van Horn. It appears at 8 p.m. the first Friday each

ISENBERG, a technical writer for a Redmond com-

puter software firm, is the moderator of the all-volunteer production. "We take one issue each month," he said, 'usually one that doesn't get full treatment in the other media. We've handled drug prohibition, how government rent control is one of the main triggers of homelessness, the day care dilemma, gun control, environmental issues, and other subjects.

"We ts-2ry to get guests from a wide spectrum," Isenberg said. "We get lay people and we get people who worry about these issues for a living. For example, we've had architects discussing problems with zoning laws, and school teachers talking about the failure of public education.

"Dave Van Horn and I have done eight shows of The Libertarian Alternative series now. When I first started working in public access television I produced a single feature segment at a time and tried to find somebody with a series who would use it - or I appeared as a guest on other producers' shows. But as Dave and I got more experience we decided to do our own series.

ISENBERG HAS BEEN a Libertarian for many years and now serves as an elected official of the Washington State Libertarian Party. He said, "I've always been frustrated by the fact that we don't get much coverage in the media. I was introduced to public access cable TV by another Libertarian, Larry Hays of Bellevue, who was learning to produce public access programming. He suggested that I check it out and showed me the ropes at ICI studios in Seattle.

"Scott Scowcroft of TCI studios helped me learn to produce television shows. It's a little involved finding people to help with set construction, finding a director and camera operators - it's all volunteer labor done by people who really believe in public access TV.

'When the idea for the Libertarian series came along Dave and I pretty well knew what we wre doing. I've got each show down to the standard TV talk show formula. I find many of our guests through my contacts within the Libertarian Party.

How does a Libertarian who opposes most forms of government intervention feel about working in a medium that is mandated by government? (In return for the cable monopoly, local government requires the cable company to provide studio facilities for public access productions and to broadcast the results.)

Isenberg says, "I figure it this way: It's a cable monopoly, so I don't feel too much pity for a cable company whining that they have to provide these expensive facilites. If it were up to me there wouldn't be a cable monopoly and then I wouldn't take advantage of the government coercion of cable companies.

What's on Isenberg's agenda? "We're going to get a little more technologically advanced and do some location shooting. I hope to see well-edited complex stories in our series soon.

Ron Arnold is a Bellevue writer and media consultant. His column

Westworld, Denver, CO, Jan. 24-30, 1990.

# FORT COLLINS, MOVE OVER

Mary Margaret Glennie is trying to convince people to move to Fort Collins. Over the past three years she has sent out hundreds of packets filled with demographic profiles, newspaper clippings about the economy, a list of potential employers and propaganda from the Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce.

The booster kits are carefully organized and fastidiously completea chamber of commerce dream. Except they're only winding up in the mailboxes of Libertarians.

It's all part of Freedom Now, the ongoing personal project of Mary Margaret (as she prefers to be called) to bring a thousand Libertarians to the sedate northern Colorado college town of 93,000. Mary Margaret concluded several years ago that if just 1 percent of a given population shares the same ideological point of view, that group could have a profound impact on the rest of the population, politically and socially. "If you are out of step with socialy. If you are out of step with the political system, that's how you survive—by coming together," she says. With a thousand Libertarians coming to Fort Collins, Mary Margaret figures, the city will be a much nicer place to live.

At least it will be a much more Libertarian place to live-something Mary Margaret came to appreciate five years ago. She was an active figure in the state's Republican party when someone accused her of being a Libertarian, she recalls. She mistook the

word for "libertine"-a slut-and got insulted. But after consulting the dictionary, she decided her critic was right: Mary Margaret soon relinquished her position as a national Republican delegate to become a Libertarian delegate. Her ensuing battles on local issues-fighting against tax-subsidized development projects, for instance—led the daily paper to dub her a political "terrorist" and "Fort Collins' Moammar Khadafy."

Those descriptions don't jibe with Libertarians' fundamental belief in "non-aggression," especially by government. "By definition, a Libertarian will leave me alone," she explains. "With a higher percentage of Libertarians [in Fort Collins], other people would understand our peaceful nature.

Though libertarian ideals have been around as long as our government, she says, the political party is relatively new. It was founded in Colorado in reaction to Richard Nixon's wage and price controls, and the state ranks eighth in the country in Libertarian population. Mary Margaret describes the average Libertarian as having a "scientific profile" or being a "free spirit," and considers "live and let live" the ideal motto. The two U.S. politicians who had the worst impact on personal freedom, she says, were Franklin Roosevelt for his "New Deal" policies and Lyndon Johnson for his "Great Society"

Unlike those cornerstones of liberal Democratic values, the Libertarians are dedicated to minimizing government control, which they view as coercion



Libertarian? Mary Margaret Glennie wants you

even when well intentioned. Their approach would stimulate free enterprise, says Mary Margaret, which is more efficient than bureaucracy. She envisions such results as a privately owned police force keeping peace in a Libertarian town. "If your goal is to have the greatest freedom, education, health care and standard of living, unquestionably the Libertarian way of living produces that goal," she says

Tired of constantly fighting the system on her own, Mary Margaret created Freedom Now three years ago to enlist some help. She asks recipients of her packets to send \$6 to help underwrite her copying and mailing costs. So far she's received 600 serious inquiries about moving to Fort Collins "about half plan to move here," she says-but only a couple of dozen have made the leap.

Moving to a new town is a momentous decision, she admits, and that's why her kits are so complete. She even includes information from Employment Connections, a Westminster-based employment agency. Bob Wayand, who runs the agency, say he's not Libertarian but agrees with a lot of the party's philosophies. "I want as little involvement of government in my life as possible," he says.

The Fort Collins booster groups whose material is included in Freedom Now kits don't mind the exposure, either. "I'm not sure we have a formal reaction to her," says chamber Executive Vice President Mike Hauser. The great thing about this country is we have the right to pursue any political belief we want. Besides, facetiously speaking, I'd say that's an unusual form of economic development.

Ed Stoner, executive director of the Fort Collins Inc. economic development group, opposed Mary Margaret on her anti-development battles when he sat on the city council. Yet he echoes Hauser's tolerant attitude toward Freedom Now. We have not put any effort into encouraging or discouraging her; we have no opposition at all; the Libertarian point of view is not adversarial to Fort Collins Inc.'s goal," he says. "It's mostly to have more people to associate with who have like minds-I can understand

Mary Margaret is optimistic that those like minds will eventually arrive. "There are a couple million Libertarians on the planet," she notes, "and I'm only looking for a thousand."

—Gil Asakawa