

# LIBERTY PLEDGE

newsletter

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## Michigan LP starts concealed carry campaign

The Libertarian Party of Michigan has launched a lobbying campaign — using radio advertisements and a new advocacy website — to try to pass a “shall issue” concealed carry law in the state.

On October 11, the party started a two-week radio blitz “aimed at getting people to contact their legislators on this issue,” said LP member Mark Heil. The law, if passed, would allow any state resident to qualify for a permit to carry a concealed weapon, unless the government had a specific reason to deny it.

The radio advertisements ran in such major cities as Detroit, Lansing, Bay City, Grand Rapids, and Flint, on such popular programs as Dr. Laura, Rush Limbaugh, and Art Bell.

### Push legislature

The radio ads will “push the state legislature to take up the concealed carry issue before next year’s elections,” said Heil.

The spots encourage people to call their state legislators directly, or log onto the party’s new website: SpeakOutMichigan.org.

“SpeakOutMichigan.org is an Internet-based lobbying system that allows a user to send e-mail messages to their state legislators about a specific issue,” said Heil. “It’s similar to projects

[from] the National LP [like] DefendYourPrivacy.com.”

The website urges people to protect the right of self-defense by passing a law to “bring Michigan in line with most of the rest of the country by adopting the ‘Shall Issue’ standard for obtaining a concealed carry permit.”

This would mean, explained LP state Executive Director Tim O’Brien, “that we will return to the traditional standard of ‘innocent

until proven guilty’ when someone applies for a carry permit. This puts the burden of proof back on the government to show why an applicant ought to be denied.”

The lobbying campaign will continue, said O’Brien, until the state House and Senate pass a “Shall Issue” bill, and it is signed into law by the governor.

“The campaign to restore our rights will go on until we win!” he said.

## Party sets candidate record

The Libertarian Party has shattered its record for the most candidates in an off-year election, with at least 215 candidates on the ballot in 24 states this November.

That’s a 39% jump from 1997, when the party ran 154 candidates — and the most Libertarians on the ballot in an odd-numbered year (when there are no presidential or Congressional elections).

It’s also twice as many candidates as all other third parties — Reform, Green, Constitution, and Natural Law — combined, said LP Political Director Ron Crickenberger.

“When Americans walk into the voting booth, there’s one party’s candidates they see over and over again on their ballot — the Libertarian Party,” he said. “That’s what makes us America’s *real* third party.”



■ Crickenberger:  
New LP record

## Red Ryder: The newest Libertarian

**R**ed Ryder—a famous old-time cowboy who starred in a series of movies in the 1940s — has joined the Libertarian Party. Well, kinda: In late September, the actor who plays the latest incarnation of the “red-headed cowboy” became a registered Libertarian, said Joseph Knight, New Mexico LP State Chair.

“Dave Saunders, who portrayed Red Ryder at the New Mexico State Fair, stopped by the LPMN booth to chat — and registered as a Libertarian!” he said.

## Party picks 2000 convention theme

The Libertarian Party has announced the theme for the 2000 presidential nominating convention: “America’s Future: Liberty, Responsibility, & Community.”

“We wanted to send a message to voters about the positive vision of the Libertarian Party,” said LP National Director Steve Dasbach. “At the same time, since this is our first convention of a new century, we wanted to position ourselves as a fresh alternative for the future. We think this theme accomplishes both those objectives.”

The theme will be emblazoned behind the main stage at the convention — and thus featured prominently on C-SPAN coverage — and will help shape the speaker’s list and program for the convention.

“Anyone who tunes in to watch the convention should get the strong message that we are the party of genuine liberty, personal responsibility, and community-based solutions,” he said.

The 2000 Libertarian National Convention is expected to attract up to 1,400 LP delegates from June 30-July 3, and will be held in Anaheim, CA.

## Libertarian Party Of Texas Responds To Excesses By Harris County Sheriff

AUSTIN — The Houston Chronicle reported that the Sheriff's Department of Harris County has been "carting" citizens to jail for minor traffic offenses which are punishable by fines only. The refusal to issue citations is part of a 'zero tolerance' program by the Sheriff's Department to discourage drag racing in certain areas. Libertarian Party State Chair, Geoffrey Neale, said he was saddened that the Sheriff of Texas's most populous county confused strict law enforcement with unconstitutional behavior.

"All citizens are protected under the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment against unreasonable bail. To require jail time automatically rather than issue a citation is an abuse of the officer's discretion and of the U.S. Constitution," said Mr. Neale. "A simple citation with promise to appear in court is the proper procedure in most traffic stop cases. To extend the sheriff's power to a complete denial of this common form of bail is a sneaky way to add jail time to a fine only offense. This "rewriting" of the crime-and-punishment laws of Texas by the officer on the street is profoundly un-American and the Sheriff of Harris County should end this procedure in

his Department immediately. Strict law enforcement need not and should not be unconstitutional," concluded Mr. Neale.

## Libertarians' ballot removal challenge is denied

An Illinois Appellate Court panel maintained Thursday that a group of Libertarian Party candidates were properly removed from the ballot for statewide office in 1998.

The court upheld objections to gubernatorial candidate James Tobin and six other candidates on the grounds they collected too few signatures on their nominating petitions.

The decision upholds rulings by the Cook County Circuit Court and the Illinois State Board of Elections. After the board ruled on Oct. 13, 1998, that there were not enough signatures, the candidates filed a motion for an emergency injunction with the Circuit Court. The judge tossed out the petition on technicalities, including a missed deadline for appealing the board of elections' decision.

## Libertarians sponsor tax cut initiative

The Ford County Libertarian Executive Committee voted Wednesday night in a special meeting to sponsor a ballot initiative to effectively cut the County Corporate Fund Tax rate by 20 percent.

County Libertarian Chairman Larry Gardner said, "It's time we got something done about the local situation instead of just talking about it".

The petition must be filed by May 7, and will present the question to Ford County voters who will have the opportunity to reduce the maxi-

mum tax rate by voting in the referendum.

"This is a binding referendum that will force the Ford County Board to cut taxes and end out of control spending that has quadrupled the budgets of some county offices in a little more than ten years," explained Libertarian Secretary Michael Harri. "I challenge the local politicians to look at the fields this year and tell voters it isn't time for a property tax cut."

Volunteers will be canvassing the county to get the required 10 percent of the registered voters to sign the petition.

The Libertarian Party is the third largest political party in the nation, and the second most active party in Ford County. The Libertarian Party favors small government, personal freedom, and personal responsibility.

◀ *The Houston Forward Times*, Houston, Texas, September 28, 1999

▲ [TOP] *The Chicago Tribune*, Chicago, Illinois, September 24, 1999

▲ [CENTER] *The Ford County Press*, Melvin, Illinois, September 16, 1999

▼ *The Indianapolis News*, Indianapolis, Indiana, September 3, 1999

## Libertarian attacks his mayoral opponents' ads

By Bill McCleery  
STAFF WRITER

Libertarian mayoral candidate Andrew Horning has joined the fray surrounding his opponents' promises to improve public schools.

He said Republican Sue Anne Gilroy and Democrat Bart Peterson have been deceptive with recent television ads.

"You'd think they were running the state's most expensive school board race," he said, speaking at the Student Activity Fair at Indiana

University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

Also on the Nov. 2 ballot is John Gibson, mayoral candidate for the independent Our Party.

Both Gilroy's and Peterson's ads have drawn criticism that the mayor has no legal authority over Indianapolis Public Schools.

"They shouldn't be wasting time on that," Horning said. "It is clearly outside their domain."

Peterson and Gilroy have said the mayor must provide leadership in a realm so important to the city.

Horning said his attacks were aimed not so much at Gilroy and Peterson as "the two-party system and the corporate nature of its support," which he said promoted dishonesty.

"Anyone familiar with campaign rhetoric is familiar with exaggeration and outright deceit," he said. "Government . . . is a reflection of us. It is up to us to earn a better reflection."

Standing at a Libertarian Party booth, Horning spoke to students and others who browsed inside two

tents set up at the IUPUI campus.

One passerby complained to Horning about being detained earlier this year by police who had set up checkpoints to search cars for drugs or other possible violations.

"We're headed toward the kind of authoritarianism that used to cause us to shudder," replied Horning. "I'm the only candidate who's come out against that. Isn't that amazing?"

He said one of his goals as mayor would be to get rid of undue interference by government.

# Lobbying The Legislators Now Electronically Easy

By Matthew Benjamin  
*Investor's Business Daily*

Four years ago, some California parents found they had something in common. They were all unhappy with the math instruction their children were receiving.

But the group had almost no bankroll and little experience influencing public policy.

Their answer? The Internet.

The group, which took the name Mathematically Correct, built a Web site to broadcast its concerns and recruit like minds to its cause. As people visited the site and read about the issue, membership swelled. So did the feedback received via phone and e-mail by state and local officials.

Two years later, California raised its standards for school curricula and textbooks to where they're among the nation's most rigorous.

Members of Mathematically Correct "were very important, in many ways, to the change," said Marion Joseph, a member of the California Board of Education.

## The New Internet Math

"It would be absolutely impossible to do this without the Internet," said Michael McKeown, group co-founder and professor of molecular biology and virology at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in San Diego.

In addition to being citizens who made a difference, the founders of Mathematically Correct were pioneers in cyber-advocacy.

Because it's an ideal conduit for information and ideas and can unite voices otherwise separated by geography, the Internet is becoming the new weapon for political advocates and lobbyists, especially at the grass-roots level.

"Creating a Web site to take legislative action is a part of the process that you're going to go through" to wage a grass-roots campaign, said Pam Fielding, a consultant and co-author with Daniel Bennett of "The Net Effect: How Cyber-Advocacy is Changing the Political Landscape."

Fielding's firm, located just outside Washington's Beltway, specializes in cyber-advocacy. Called E-advocates, the firm uses new ways to push agendas and sway public officials.

E-advocate's parent company, Capitol Advantage, is the leader in online advocacy technologies. Its flagship product is software called CapitolWiz. Buyers install the software on their Web sites. Then, when people visit those sites, they can use the software to learn

more about a particular issue, find out who their local lawmakers are and send e-mail to those officials.

CapitolWiz is used by 350 organizations, including the National Rifle Association.

To use CapitolWiz, users type in their ZIP code and click a button, and up come all the elected officials who represent their district. You can check voting records and easily send e-mail with your opinion or concerns.

Organizations install CapitolWiz and suggest specific issues and concerns, like gun control or health-care reform, to address in e-mail messages to lawmakers. Sometimes they'll provide a completely scripted message, and all you do is affix your name and address.

CapitolWiz costs \$2,000 for the federal version and \$9,000 for a version including all state legislatures. It's also available at the America Online Inc. and Yahoo Inc. Web sites.

Capitol Advantage claims that more than 2 million e-mails to Congress were generated through its software in the last nine months.

Can e-mail successfully sway public policy? It can.

## An E-Mail Lobby Win

Late last year, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. proposed a regulation called Know Your Customer, which would have required banks to monitor account transactions for suspicious activity. Such a proposal usually generates a few hundred comments from bankers.

But the Libertarian Party, appalled at what it considered the proposal's invasion of privacy, went on the offensive. With the help of Capitol Advantage, it set up a Web site called DefendYourPrivacy.com.

Libertarian Party spokesman George Getz says the campaign generated more than 225,000 e-mails. The deluge, he says, convinced the FDIC to withdraw the proposal by March.

"We just drove a stake through the heart of Know Your Customer," he said. "E-mail has become the musket of the 21st century."

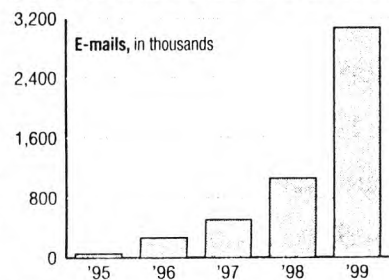
The FDIC doesn't disagree. "We got 250,000 comments, and I am sure that played no small part in the board's decision," said FDIC official Christie Sciacca.

Though it helps, you don't need \$2,000 in software to start a cyber campaign. All you need is a computer, a modem and Net access.

Mathematically Correct has no plans to buy packaged software. "\$2,000 is our budget for 10 years," joked co-founder McKeown. His group remains active, yet it still has no headquarters, nor even a desk. "There is no physical locus," McKeown said. "We exist in cyberspace."

## Making Contact

A look at the number of e-mails sent to and from U.S. senators for the month of February



Source: U.S. Senate

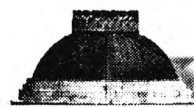
# Libertarian candidates square off

All the attention has been on the crowd of people seeking the Democratic and Republican nominations for governor. But there's also competition to carry the Libertarian Party banner in the 2000 election.

Libertarian candidates Larry Clark of Union Grove and Barbara Howe of Oxford will compete in the party's May primary. Howe

was the party's nominee for U.S. Senate last year.

Clark and Howe have promised a clean competition. Clark



UNDER THE DOME  
POLITICS

even appeared at a picnic for Howe last weekend, where the two signed a resolution pledging debates and positive campaigns.

And this is only the beginning, according to Sean Haugh, chairman of the Libertarian Party of North Carolina. He said he expects Libertarians to compete for 61 legislative seats, as well as Council of State offices.

"We're ready to be a major player and serve at all levels in North Carolina government," Haugh said.

◀ *Investor's Business Daily*,  
Los Angeles, California,  
September 27, 1999

▲ *The News & Observer*,  
Raleigh, North Carolina,  
September 2, 1999

## New Mexico Governor Resists Draft Efforts by Libertarians

By MICHAEL JANOFSKY

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M., Oct. 5 — Embracing Gov. Gary E. Johnson's support of legalizing drugs as a symbol of his political independence, a local group announced today that it was starting a campaign to draft him as the Libertarian Party candidate for President.

That the New Mexico Governor is an unwavering Republican who has already rejected the overture, saying he has no interest, has not deterred the group's efforts to get his name on the ballot in all 50 states in time for next year's elections. Members of the group said they would soon file papers with the Federal Election Commission.

"We're hoping he'll change his mind," Ashley Gauthier, an Albuquerque lawyer and Republican-turned-Libertarian, said at a news conference here, where she and others praised Governor Johnson for reducing taxes, promoting alternatives in public education and challenging the Clinton Administration to abandon its current drug policies — all favorite Libertarian positions.

"We think the Governor would be a good candidate," Ms. Gauthier added. "Maybe he just doesn't realize how much the public supports him."

Bill Winter, a spokesman for the Libertarian Party, which is based in Washington, said: "The national office has to remain neutral, but we understand the benefits of a high elected official running for President. He would bring the party credibility it has not had before."

No Libertarian has ever made much of an impact at state or national levels. The party has run candidates for President since 1972, but with negligible effect. Ed Clark, a California lawyer, made the best showing when he won 921,199 votes in 1980. Ronald Reagan, in a landslide victory over President Jimmy Carter, won 43.8 million votes that year, to Mr. Carter's 35.4 million.

Mr. Johnson, a 46-year-old triathlete who has acknowledged using drugs in his youth, has insisted that his political life will end when his second term expires in 2002. He is a former businessman who never held public office before he was first elected in 1994, and he says he wants to climb mountains, not seek another office.

But even by turning down the offer to run for President, the Governor has elevated the Libertarian profile through his campaign to change tactics in fighting drugs by legalizing them, a strategy that Libertarians have embraced for years. Speaking forcefully on the issue for the last two months, Mr. Johnson made his case again today in a speech at the Cato Institute, a research organiza-

tion in Washington.

More generally, Libertarians favor shrinking the size and cost of government and eliminating regulations that restrict free trade and personal choices. More members of the party tend to be former Republicans than former Democrats, and the party says it has active organizations in all 50 states and more than 300 party members serving in elected positions in 36 states.

"I do consider it very flattering," Mr. Johnson said in a telephone conversation before his speech, referring to the draft movement. "But I'm a Republican, and I'm not going to run for President."

Whether Mr. Johnson runs under the Libertarian banner or not, the party plans to choose its Presidential nominee at a convention next summer in Anaheim, Calif.

Here in New Mexico, Libertarians are busy registering voters. They need about 1,000 more to qualify as a major state party, which would guarantee that Libertarian candidates would be listed on state and local ballots.

## Congressional convicts

Responding to a report that an astonishingly large number of U.S. senators and congressmen are wife-beaters, drunks, shoplifters, check-bouncers, business failures, and drug abusers, Steve Dasbach, national director of the Libertarian Party, tells us:

"Mark Twain once said Congress may be America's only 'distinct criminal class' — and this new study suggests he was correct. If even half these charges are true, expecting Congress to serve as a moral role model is like asking Bill Clinton to serve as a poster boy for monogamy."

▲ *The New York Times*,

New York, New York, October 7, 1999

◀ *The Washington Times*,

Washington DC, September 7, 1999

▼ *The Orange County Register*,

Santa Ana, California, September 7, 1999

## Congress on parade

Members of Congress are adept at championing causes near and dear to the hearts of Americans, such as fighting crime, battling illegal drugs, punishing drunken drivers and wife beaters, promoting small business and upholding family values.

If a new report by the Web site Capitol Hill Blue is accurate, many members of Congress really are experts in those subjects — though not in the manner most Americans would suppose.

After seven months of investigations, interviews, the checking of public records and newspaper articles about current members, the Web site has created a "disturbing portrait of a group of elected officials who routinely avoid payment of debt, write bad checks, abuse their spouses, assault people and openly violate the law."

Capitol Hill Blue provides some in-depth reports about specific legis-

lators and their shameful deeds, but the raw numbers are what are really shocking: 27 with drunken driving arrests, 117 who have bankrupted at least two businesses, 29 accused of spousal abuse, 71 with credit reports "so bad they can't get an American Express card," 19 accused of writing bad checks even after the much-publicized congressional check-kiting scandal, 14 with drug arrests, eight arrested for shoplifting, seven arrested for fraud, three for assault and 21 facing current lawsuits.

The report quickly gained the attention of the national Libertarian Party, which concluded that the investigation "may help puncture the myth that senators and representatives are somehow superior to ordinary Americans, or better equipped to solve the nation's problems."

How true.

The sooner Americans grasp that concept, the sooner they'll look with confidence to themselves to confront and solve whatever problems life hands them.