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Liberty Pledge

➤ NEWSLETTER

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Two Libertarians elected in NH

But R's and D's continue to block Libertarian legislative agenda

Two New Hampshire Libertarians were elected to office in March and two more were re-elected, boosting to 24 the number of LP members serving in office in the "Live Free or Die" state.

"The fact that we had two high-profile Libertarians in their communities win the office of selectmen leads me to believe that the voters are ready and willing to vote for Libertarians," said Jim McClarin, campaign strategist.

Scott Ives won the position of Selectman in Dunbarton with 51% of the vote, and John Drabinowicz was elected to the Mason Town Budget Committee running unopposed.

In addition, Cecil Williams was re-elected to the Litchfield Board of selectman with 52% of the vote, and Howard Wilson's 55% vote total earned him another term as selectman in Andover. All were non-partisan races.

On the NH legislative front, Libertarian initiatives continued to be met by fierce resistance. An update:

➤ **Tax repeal:** A Libertarian-sponsored bill to repeal the Republican governor's Business Enterprise Tax (BET) was voted down by the House on February 17th. Libertarian House Leader Don Gorman (L-Deerfield) had warned that the bill, which added 45,000 small businesses to the state's tax rolls, could easily swell from its current \$27 million cost "to a potential of \$800 million."

➤ **Drug laws:** Gorman was unable to stop a Republican-sponsored bill to increase the criminal penalties for possession of crack cocaine. "Is the state of New Hampshire going to build prisons upon prisons upon prisons?" he asked the House. "It's not working, the War on Drugs is not working. We're in another Vietnam."

➤ **"Ultimatum" Resolution:** A resolution sponsored by Rep. Andy Borsa (L-Pelham) to allow the federal government to be dissolved if the national debt reaches \$6 trillion was rejected by the House.

"I'm ashamed. They had the opportunity to step out on a national issue — fighting the excesses of Washington," said Gorman. The resolution would have allowed 37 other states to call for a Constitutional Convention and declare the federal government "in violation of its constitutional authority" if the federal debt wasn't controlled.

Minnesota LP advances with gun, NOTA issues

The Libertarian Party of Minnesota is making progress in several areas — forging alliances with pro-gun rights groups and working to place "None of the Above" on the ballot, according to state LP treasurer Jack Stecher.

On the NOTA front, a Libertarian in public office is moving to get that option implemented.

"Paul Streeter, Vice Chair of the LP of Minnesota [and Charter Commission member], requested that the Minnetonka [town] Charter Commission discuss the addition of "NOTA" for local offices," said Stecher. "Should that meet with approval from the City Council, it will be adopted; otherwise, the Charter Commission may place the proposal on the ballot as a voter referendum."

Stecher said the party "is working to build a broad coalition that supports NOTA. We have established a working relationship with the Free Congress Foundation and approached the Minnesota Public Interest Research Group [which] has expressed support for the idea."

In the gun rights area, Stecher said he spoke with the NRA's local legislative action office, to inform them of the LP's work to get "a right to keep and bear arms amendment before the voters."

"[They were] happy to hear this, and sounded happy to be hearing from a state LP. The upshot: they seem more than happy to work with us," said Stecher. "I suspect that they'll start endorsing our candidates, once we start running candidates who can win."

Hawaii LP activist proposes 'stupidity tax' for politician

A former State Chair of the Libertarian Party of Hawaii has blasted a Democratic State Representative for proposing a "sin tax" on violent movies — proposing instead a "stupidity tax" on politicians.

In a public letter, Dr. Blase Harris wrote: "Rep. Duke Bainum has called for yet another sin tax, one on violent movies, in addition to the 'sin' taxes on alcohol, tobacco, and guns — not to mention the very heavy sin taxes on work, known as the federal and state income taxes."

Blase scornfully quoted fellow Hawaii Libertarian Maria Ashley, "who suggested a stupidity tax instead. That way we could collect more money from Rep. Bainum alone than we could get from all the sin taxes combined."

Auburn Libertarian joins race for 4th District as hopefuls file

By **Steven T. Jones**
Journal Staff

AUBURN — Clyde Smith thinks government is broken, and neither of the two major political parties knows how to fix it.

That belief is what drew this 56-year-old Auburn resident to run for the 4th Assembly District as a Libertarian candidate. He is one of a whole slate of candidates meeting yesterday's filing deadline for state and judicial offices.

As a Libertarian, Smith advocates a drastic scaling back of government: deregulating most industries and repealing laws

that infringe on civil liberties, such as the prohibition of drugs.

He said the current anti-crime fervor in Sacramento is just the latest example of government dealing with the results of societal problems rather than the causes.

"The lowering of individual self-worth, that's one of the main causes," said Smith, a local contractor making his first foray into politics.

Smith will apparently get a free ride to the main event in November, where he will put his anti-government message up against those of the Demo-

crat and Republican nominees.

Fellow Libertarian Gary Hines of Angles Camp, who ran in the last election and took out nomination papers this year, has announced he is staying out of the fray.

The Placer County Elections Office reports that there are 1,172 registered Libertarians in the district, and 488 in Placer County.

Races in the mainstream parties also took shape yesterday, with Roseville resident Mark Norberg and Meadow Vista resident Charlie Fish filing Declarations of Intention to run on the Democrat ticket for the 4th Assembly District.

Auburn Journal
Auburn, California
February 10, 1994

San Luis Obispo County Telegram-Tribune
San Luis Obispo, California
February 14, 1994

Candidate's faith lies with public generosity

By **Jerry Bunin**
Telegram-Tribune

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Libertarian Assembly candidate Gary Kirkland has an enormous amount of faith in human kindness.

The Templeton High School teacher is convinced charitable organizations would receive so many donations if taxes were reduced that the neediest members of society would still be cared for.

"Americans are a generous people," he said. "If they see someone in need, they will step in and help much more efficiently than the government does now."

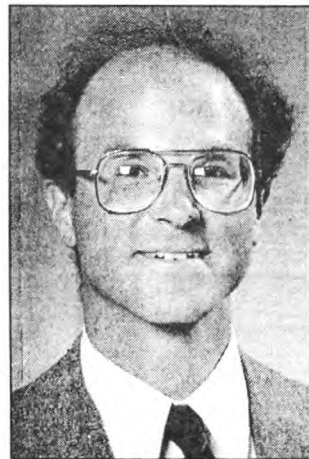
Kirkland, 45, blames many current social evils on the government for usurping personal responsibility.

For government and society, the Atascadero resident said, "The 11th Commandment is: Thou shalt not suffer the consequences of thine own acts."

The motorcycle helmet law, he said, typifies how the California Legislature continually prevents people from being responsible for their own behavior.

The biggest argument in favor of the law is how much the public was paying for helmetless riders who were seriously injured and lacked medical coverage, the 1975 Cal Poly graduate said.

Motorcyclists should have a choice, he said. They should be able to ride without helmets if they aren't inter-



Gary Kirkland is on the left. Last Thursday a profile of David Bersohn, a Libertarian candidate for Congress, ran with Kirkland's photo by mistake. The real David Bersohn is on the right.

ested in publicly funded medical care.

"Those who choose to brain themselves can be helped by charitable organizations or, if they choose, not be helped by anyone," he said.

Government welfare has also created the immigration problem, he said, noting that Libertarians support opening the borders so anyone can enter America.

If the government stops using tax money to provide health care and education to illegal immigrants, Kirk-

land said, the public will care a lot less about how many undocumented workers are in California.

Kirkland would also make automobile insurance voluntary.

"It would be my responsibility to protect myself," he said, even if that meant buying extra coverage against being in accidents with uninsured motorists.

He also doesn't think the government should provide relief to earth-

quake victims. People who moved to Los Angeles knew the area was prone to tremors, he said.

Kirkland, who has taught at Templeton High for 17 years, wants to see public education treated like public restaurants.

"You should have the choice to send your kids to the schools of your choosing," he said, and people who couldn't afford to pay for a private school could depend on charitable organizations for financial help.

Too much of the money now budgeted for public education in California, he said, goes to pay for administration.

Kirkland, currently president of the local chapter of the Libertarians, was recruited into the party in 1986 by the Libertarian's present congressional candidate, David Bersohn.

Kirkland has been married for 22 years and has four children. He is the only Libertarian running for the 33rd Assembly District.

Incumbent 33rd Assemblywoman Andrea Seastrand is running for Congress.

John Ashbaugh is the only announced Democratic candidate. Republicans running are Tom Bordonaro, Barbara Norris, Marquis Miller, DeWayne Holmdahl, Joni Gray and Tris Colman.

The district is made up of San Luis Obispo County and the northern Santa Barbara County cities of Santa Maria, Lompoc, Orcutt and Guadalupe.

Libertarian appointees

Most new appointees to governmental committees usually toil in relative obscurity during the initial year of their first term. These individuals must learn background information and procedure. Some even hesitate to express their opinions.

Two individuals who received appointments this year by the Sussex County Board of Freeholders might not have the luxury of avoiding the spotlight at the beginning of their tenures.

Breaking tradition of picking party loyalists to serve on the various committees, the all-Republican freeholder board has named two Libertarians to serve on two important panels.

At the request of freshman Freeholder Dick Durina, the freeholders selected Ed Wiessmann of Sparta, a sales representative, to be a member of the county Solid Waste Advisory Council and Libertarian Party Chairman Michael Pierone, a computer programmer, to serve on the county Economic Development Advisory Committee. Wiessmann unsuccessfully ran for freeholder last year.

Because of their party's philosophy, which includes making government smaller by privatizing many departments, cutting expenses and lowering taxes, people are likely to pay closer attention to the votes cast by Wiessmann and Pierone than to ones made by other first-year members. Both men have said they believe private enterprise not government should provide solid waste services and support economic development efforts.

Political party shouldn't be a deciding factor in governmental appointments. Just because someone isn't a member of the party in power doesn't mean that individual doesn't have expertise, or even opinions, in a particular field that would benefit government.

Libertarians aren't the only people who believe in less government, although they are more zealous and generally favor more cutbacks than other residents.

Wiessmann and Pierone will be closely observed as they perform their new responsibilities. They are proceeding in uncharted territory.

New Jersey Herald
Newton, New Jersey
February 6, 1994

Libertarians pan crime proposal

HONOLULU — Hawaii Rep. Neil Abercrombie's bill to treat crimes against tourists as a federal offense is not receiving the support of the Libertarian Party of Hawaii.

In a statement issued yesterday, the Libertarians said there are enough laws for the police to arrest and convict perpetrators of crimes against tourists.

The party said instead of "swatting at the symptoms," Rep. Abercrombie should be working for real solutions to violent crimes.

Among those listed included the de-criminalization of drugs; elimination of federal regulations which decrease business opportunities; reducing in federal spending; and elimination of mandatory minimum wages, employee benefits and unemployment taxes.

The party said there is a need for fewer laws, which would leave police with more time to "do their real job — protection of our lives and property, residents and visitors alike."

Last week, Abercrombie introduced legislation which would make it a federal offense to commit crimes against tourists.

Not very practical

But N.H. Libertarians made a point

Shut down the federal government when the national debt reaches \$6 trillion? There's merit in the principle, but not much practical application — and we suspect the state's Libertarians know it.

Sponsors and supporters of the idea to dissolve the federal government when the national debt reaches a set limit know there is no likelihood of success for their proposal. What they want to do is call

The federal debt

attention to the runaway debt and the federal deficit that adds to the debt each year. It's akin to slapping the mule between the eyes with a 2x4 just to get its attention.

We hope supporters of the dissolution measure are right in one sense — that the American people are fed up with the irresponsible spending policies of the past several decades — spending policies that have driven into debt Americans not yet born.

Donald Gorman, leader of the Libertarian Party in the House of Representatives, told the House State-Federal Relations Committee last week that when the national debt reaches \$6 trillion, the country will be bankrupt because all federal revenue will be going into servicing the debt. If true, it's an interesting revelation. If true, it also makes the idea of shutting down the federal government duplicative. There won't be any money to perform the services for which it exists.

The whole idea sounds ludicrous — on the surface. It sounds bizarre until we consider that the last we knew, the federal debt was approximately \$3 trillion.

To paraphrase the late U.S. Sen. Everett McKinley Dirksen: A trillion here, a trillion there and pretty soon you're talking about real money.

Clearly, the Libertarian proposal isn't going anywhere. It's just not practical — and the Libertarians know it. While the Legislature does some strange things from time to time, there is no reason to believe the House will send the proposed resolution on to the Senate. It probably should get an "inexpedient to legislate" tag from the State-Federal Relations Committee. But the discussion in committee and the discussion that will follow on the floor of the House will have been worthwhile.

The discussion hasn't been a waste of time. It is never a waste of time for the Legislature to discuss and debate the issues that matter — the issues which affect the more than 1 million people who reside in New Hampshire or the 280 million citizens of this country.

The Libertarians' point has been well-taken.

Foster's Daily Democrat
Dover, New Hampshire
February 14, 1994

Tribune-Herald
Hilo, Hawaii
January 11, 1994

Libertarians making inroads in Sussex?

Party, encouraged by appointments, sets sights on winning local elections

By **TONY BORELLI**
Daily Record

If the Libertarians had their way, they would abolish the political positions they now hold in Sussex County. This is the party that believes most government is unnecessary and taxation is theft.

But members of the county's increasingly influential Libertarian Party say they hope to tap the independent spirit of county residents to win elected offices.

With the support of newly elected Republican Freeholder Richard Durina, they have placed a prominent party member on one Sussex County board and expect another appointment soon, the

first countywide posts held by avowed Libertarians in Sussex or Morris.

"It's a golden opportunity for Libertarians in New Jersey," said Michael Pierone, Sussex County Libertarian chairman.

After years of supporting presidential, congressional and state legislative candidates, the party has set its sights lower, planning municipal and school board campaigns for this year and perhaps an off-year freeholder challenge in 1995.

Republicans, who control the Legislature and, beginning tomorrow, the governor's office, will have no one else to blame if government and spending are not



Libertarian William Dundas received nearly 9,000 votes in his unsuccessful 24th District race against Sen. Robert Littell.

slashed. So voters may turn to the Libertarians' more strident promises of reduction, experts say, and party members hope.

"Sussex County is a special laboratory for this dichotomy," said Libertarian Edward Wiessmann of Sparta, the third-place finisher in November's freeholder race.

"They've become increasingly influential," said Frank Fischer,

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The Libertarians have 'become increasingly influential.'

Frank Fischer, professor at Rutgers University



'Sussex County is a Republican stronghold, and it's going to stay that way unless we really foul up our mission.'

Thomas Clark, Sussex County freeholder

■ Party

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professor of political science at Rutgers University.

But the idea that Libertarians will ever gain majorities even on municipal governing bodies is "probably about as likely as the Martians landing," Freeholder Thomas Clark said. "Sussex County is a Republican stronghold, and it's going to stay that way unless we really foul up our mission."

Incumbent Republicans say the Libertarian philosophy is untested and unworkable. Some political analysts say Libertarians' supporters are mainly protest voters and one-issue fanatics, and that the party is doomed to be co-opted by larger parties.

Libertarians generally believe the only appropriate functions of government are national defense and enforcement of laws against force or fraud.

They believe most other governmental functions should be abolished or left to private industry and charities, and that laws should not restrict any personal behavior, such as drug uses or gun ownership, unless it violates the rights of others.

No Libertarians hold elective office in the state. The party may run a candidate for freeholder in 1995, but it will concentrate on municipal and school board races this year.

Congressional races are "way out of our league," Pierone said. "It's the credibility issue: Nobody believes you're going to win, so they don't vote for you. We finally woke up and realized you have to start at the bottom."

In Sussex County, the numbers could be daunting.

All five freeholders are Republican, and Republican majorities govern most towns. Republican registered voters outnumber Democrats 3 to 1, while Libertarians don't even have the numbers

'The Republicans tend to view the Libertarian Party as sort of a junior Republican Party. I don't agree with them.'

Michael Pierone, Sussex County Libertarian chairman

to qualify for party registration and primary elections.

In the freeholder election, Durina received more than 10 times the votes of Wiessmann. Durina received 27,425, Democrat Robert Dabinett took 9,861 and Wiessmann received 2,225.

But Pierone said he is encouraged by the nearly 9,000 votes William Dundas received in his unsuccessful 24th District race against state Sen. Robert Littell, although that number is roughly equal to the number of Sussex County's registered Democrats, who did not field a candidate.

The Libertarians' fortunes in Sussex received a boost in the fall from Durina, who campaigned on a government-cutting platform and told voters to support Wiessmann if they could not support him.

This month, on Durina's recommendation, Wiessmann was appointed to the Solid Waste Advisory Council, which advises the freeholders on trash disposal and related matters.

And the board is expected to appoint Pierone to a seat on the advisory committee to the Office of Economic Development — exactly the kind of office Libertarians dislike most.

Wiessmann and Pierone want to "wean" their committees, gradually turning them away from regulation to encourage private industry initiative, and eventually converting them to or replacing them with private groups like chambers of commerce.

That Libertarians are joining governmental bodies they want to abolish is not unheard of, said Gerald Pomper, professor of polit-

ical science at the Eagleton Institute for Political Studies at Rutgers University.

Reagan technique

"You can get on something in order to destroy it," he said. "This was a favorite Reagan technique: Get a majority on a regulatory body who don't want to regulate anything."

Durina said to a degree, he agrees with the Libertarians that government should intrude less into the activities covered by the solid waste council and the economic board. But he said of the Libertarians, "I would caution them, they're not political appointments, and they should leave politics at home, as I try to do."

Durina said he appointed "the person, not the party" in each case, seeing energetic people who wanted to serve the county. He said he would not support a Libertarian candidate over any of his Republican freeholder colleagues, since he does not support the entire Libertarian platform, and he does not see the party as a threat to the GOP.

"They're going to challenge us to represent the people better," he said of Wiessmann and Pierone.

Clark and Freeholder Erma Gormley agreed.

"We will be rather watchful to see how they handle themselves," Gormley said.

Morris watching

Also watching will be Morris-Essex party Chairman Lou Stefanelli, who said the 10 or so Libertarians active there and the

40-odd contributors to state and national campaigns have become discouraged.

"The fact that people over the border are succeeding might help with that," he said. The Morris group has not run any local or county candidates recently, but he said they are seeking municipal candidates for 1995.

While Pierone and Wiessmann are at work, Gormley said, they may learn something.

"Very often the very people who complain about something, when they have the opportunity to see all the ramifications and everything that's involved, they often change their minds," she said.

But Pierone said that won't happen.

"The Republicans tend to view the Libertarian Party as sort of a junior Republican Party," he said. "I don't agree with them. I kind of get the feeling that they think they will appoint us to government, we'll find out how hard it is to cut government, and then we'll become Republicans."

Fleeting success

Political analysts say that while Libertarian candidates may stay true to the cause, their voters may not, making their success fleeting.

"One thing that happens to third parties is they get co-opted, and that sounds like what might be happening there (in Sussex)," Pomper said. "Either a major party moves to adopt some of their program, or the grievance that led to the formation of the third party disappears."

But Fischer said that if Governor-elect Christie Whitman fails to make the budget cuts she has promised, it will help the Libertarians.

Daily Record
Parsippany, New Jersey
January 17, 1994