

LIBERTY PLEDGE

newsletter

Libertarian National Committee, Inc. ♦ 2600 Virginia Ave, NW, Suite 100
Washington DC 20037 ♦ Phone: (202) 333-0008 ♦ Fax: (202) 333-0072

MARCH 1999

ELECTIONS 1999 . . .

Libertarians win 10 races in local March elections

At least 10 Libertarians were elected or re-elected in local elections around the USA in March, giving the Libertarian Party new officeholders on school boards and budget committees — and even one Weigher of the Coal.

In all, three Libertarians were elected and two re-elected in New Hampshire; one LP member was elected in Michigan; one Libertarian won in Vermont; and three Libertarians were elected in Oregon.

The races — held on March 9 — were all non-partisan.

“Victory by victory, Libertarians are making their presence felt in local elections around the country,” said Ron Crickenberger, LP Political Director. “These victories demonstrate that not only are more Libertarians running for office, more of them are doing what it takes to actually get elected.”

Cruised to victory

In Oregon, **Richard Burke** cruised to victory in his race for Tualatin Valley Water District Board of Commissioners (Position 4). He won 59.1% of the vote in the two-way race.

In Oregon’s Beaverton School District, the King family scored two perfect victories: **Beth King** won 100% of the vote in an unopposed race for Aloha High School Local School Committee (Position 2), and

her husband **Robert King**, also unopposed, won 100% of the vote for Beaver Acres High School Local School Committee (Position 1).

In New Hampshire, getting back in office was also a family affair:

John Babiarz won re-election to his position as Grafton Cometary Trustee, and his wife **Rosalie Babiarz** won re-election to her post as Town Auditor.

In Marlborough, LP member **Gene Donahue** was a two-time winner: He was elected to a three-year term on the town’s Budget Committee and also as Treasurer of the Recreation Committee.

In Greenland, **Steve Bacon** won a seat on the Budget Committee in an uncontested race. And in Deerfield, former Libertarian House Leader **Don Gorman** won election as Trustee of the Trust Fund.

In Michigan, LP member **Felicia O’Brien** won her race for Township Clerk in Wrenshall.

In Vermont, **Hardy Macia** was elected to the Grand Isle Selectboard in a squeaker — he won his two-way race with 50.6% of the vote.

But Macia didn’t stop there: He also won election as Weigher of the Coal.

“Vermont hasn’t used coal in over one-half century, so it is an old position still on the books,” he explained. “I wanted to be able to tell my grandchildren that I was once the Weigher of the Coal.”

ONLINE NEWS . . .

NY TIMES: LIBERTARIANS THE ‘NET-SAVVY PARTY

Which political party is the most ‘Net savvy? The Libertarian Party, suggests a recent article in the *New York Times*.

In a March 11 story in their online edition (NYTimes.com), the newspaper wrote that the LP “is a standout among political parties in its Internet outreach,” and noted, “for the Libertarians, the Internet is a natural choice, because their political stance happens to mirror the views of many politically passionate inhabitants of cyberspace.”

The article also noted that the LP generates 75% of its information requests online, and raises at least \$1,000 a month from its website.

BROWNE PLACES 2ND IN 2000 ONLINE POLL

It’s still 20 months until the 2000 presidential elections — but at least one possible LP candidate has started showing up in online polls.

On March 10, **Harry Browne** placed second in an unscientific presidential poll (open to all parties) sponsored by WorldNetDaily.com.

Browne, the LP’s 1996 presidential candidate and possible candidate again in 2000, got 20.97% of the vote, finishing just behind conservative Republican Alan Keyes, who got 25.23%.

If Libertarians were heartened by the strong showing, Democrats have reason to be worried: Al Gore, the self-proclaimed “creator of the Internet,” won just 0.41% of the vote.

KYLE HANNON

Two main parties beware; outsider might be gaining



It pays to check the rear view mirror from time to time. Last year in The Masters golf tournament,

David Duval and Fred Couples were locked in an epic battle to the end. The sportscasters were detailing every move of the two as they worked their way down the final stretch. Then, seemingly out of nowhere, Mark O'Meara birdied three out of the last four holes to win the prize and leave the other two scratching their heads.

In politics, Republicans and Democrats could find themselves scratching their own heads as a third party takes power. The timing seems right.

Washington County, Indiana, has little in common with Washington, D.C. other than its name. Hoosiers who are familiar with the area might know it for the auto races in Salem, but they probably would not consider it as the birthplace of a political movement. Maybe it's not. Nonetheless, in the last election, Washington County elected the first Libertarians to partisan office in the state's history.

In case you are not familiar with them, Libertarians are the original "less government" party. In Washington County a new township trustee and a member of a township advisory board won on the Libertarian ticket. These victories may not be for especially powerful offices, but they show that Libertarians are capable of organizing a campaign and earning votes.

Sara Cotham, executive director of the Indiana Libertarian Party, said things are looking up. "I feel incredibly encouraged," she said. "This year was a watershed year. We ran more candidates than in the past and I think that impressed a lot of people in Indiana. We received an amazing amount of positive media this year."

Cotham added that the nearly 100 Indiana Libertarian candidates ranked third largest in the nation. Currently, she said, the state party is writing a county organizing manual to give people the tools to win more races for the party. They are looking forward to having a good group of candidates in 1999 and 2000.

In Elkhart County Scott Baker is the chairman of the Libertarian Party. He has run in every election since 1996

and said he intends to run in every election until he wins or until a better candidate comes along. He said local interest in the Libertarian Party is "gradually increasing."

If you wonder why you never heard of Libertarians before, it may be the party's fault. Baker said the party used to concentrate on promoting its ideas in hopes that candidates would follow. Now, they are concentrating on the candidates in hopes that policy changes will follow.

Cotham describes Libertarians as fiscally conservative and socially progressive. She said existing government bodies are spending a lot more tax money and being a lot more intrusive than they should be.

I would describe the current political parties this way. The Republicans claim to want smaller government, but you suspect the next bill they pass will include a tax break for giant corporations and a requirement that you and your spouse sleep in twin beds. The Democrats claim they are there to help you, but you are concerned that their next legislation to help "the common man" will take a big slice of your paycheck to give to someone who doesn't work as hard as you or to fund a new program for left-handed performance artists.

Basically, the Libertarian position is that government rarely has a good reason for spending tax dollars on big corporations, lazy employees or performance artists and never has a good reason for peeking in your bedroom. They were pleading for smaller government long before the Republican class of 1994 took it to Congress and long before President Clinton declared that the era of big government was over.

On the controversial side, Libertarians' "government

hands off" beliefs tend to support school choice and abortion rights while opposing gun control.

Perhaps the most debatable idea is drug legalization. Many Libertarians claim that the massive, expensive war on drugs has not reduced drug use but has made drug dealers very rich. They compare it to prohibition and Al Capone.

We may have an opportunity to see how these issues play out. Now that the Hoosier Libertarians have a couple victories under their belts, they will probably find fund raising a little easier. With more funds will come more victories. Realistically, how far will it go? Take a look at Minnesota.

New Gov. Jesse Ventura did not run as a Libertarian, but when he told voters they had to stop looking to government to solve all their problems, he was speaking the Libertarian message. It helps that he was already well-known. But the most encouraging aspect of the Ventura victory is that it proved an outside candidate can win.

As our president's impeachment dilemma drags on, the one statement I hear most consistently from regular people is, "I'm just sick of both parties." At the same time this nausea is growing, the traditional parties have been losing clout. Patronage is gone. Ideology is weak. Candidates, including our new Sen. Evan Bayh, will gladly leave their party affiliation out of their ads because they will get more votes without a party label.

The two minor Washington County offices won't send the state GOP and Democrat machines into chaos. But it ought to cause them to glance in the rear view mirror.

Kyle Hannon is an Elkhart writer and publisher. He wrote this column for The Truth. filibstr@skynet.net

Minority political parties kept on the outs

TRACY RYAN

Tracy Ryan represents the Libertarian Party of Hawaii.

Ballot access refers to the right of individuals to run for elected office, to have their name on the ballot. The U.S. Constitution created no restrictions limiting ballot access due to a person's view or party affiliation.

The so-called "two-party" system was not created by our Constitution. Many of its framers were wary of political parties. They warned against factions competing for political power in order to reward their supporters.

Today all states have regulations aimed at allowing only the Democratic or Republican parties access to political power. This practice is generally defended as a means of preventing "fractionalization" — a situation where no one party has a majority as an elective body. Such thinking assumes voters can't properly pick their representatives for themselves. Not surprisingly, it helps the parties in power while hurting everyone else.

Our nation functioned for over 100 years without legal barriers to minority political parties. As late as the 1930s, there were a number of socialists and progressives serving in the U.S. Congress and in state and local offices.

In Hawaii, small parties must qualify by getting signatures from 1 percent of the registered voters. Only then can they run candidates for public office. Next they must get 10 percent of the total primary vote to appear on our general election ballot. Or they must get more votes than a partisan candidate in the primary.

Since there are seldom contested races in the nonpartisan primary, few people ever bother to pick that ballot to vote on. Nonpartisan state legislative candidates are eliminated because people want to vote in the interesting governor's or U.S. House race in one of the two major parties' primaries.

Hawaii has traditionally suffered from a shortage, not an excess, of qualified candidates.

By forcing people to run as either Democrats or Republicans, it has also caused those party labels to lose some of their clarity. Too many people running as major-party candidates don't support the ideals or principles of those parties.

Don't you think it's time for our Legislature to make it easier for people of principle to run for office under a party or nonpartisan label that best describes their views and philosophy?

▲ *The Elkhart Truth*

Elkhart, Indiana, January 31, 1999

► *The Honolulu Advertiser*

Honolulu, Hawaii, January 28, 1999

Libertarians to scrutinize pot busts

Committee to look into 'political persecution' after party leaders' recent medical marijuana arrests

By Dana Bartholomew
Staff writer

Two Simi Valley Libertarians will help investigate "political persecution" following the recent arrest of party leaders for possession of medical marijuana.

Former councilwoman Sandi Webb and Aaron Starr, an accountant who served as her campaign strategist, were appointed this week to a six-member Proposition 215 Blue Ribbon Committee to aid those arrested for medical pot.

"Our whole drug war has failed com-

pletely," said Webb, who favors legalization of drugs with controls placed on driving. "It's turned our entire country into a police state.

"Our whole civil rights have been violated. Prohibition didn't work for alcohol and it's not going to work for drugs."

Proposition 215 was a state medical marijuana initiative approved by voters in 1996 but fought by the federal government.

Last month Steve Kubby, a Libertarian Party candidate for governor in 1998, was

arrested with his wife on drug charges.

Last summer Peter Williams, a Libertarian best-selling author, was arrested and charged with conspiracy to grow marijuana. Williams had blasted federal drug policies 19 days earlier during a nationally televised Libertarian convention speech.

The Libertarian Party of California, which holds its convention this weekend in San Jose, formed the Blue Ribbon committee to investigate allegations of "political persecution," according to state party leaders.

"Libertarians will not sit still while decent, law-abiding citizens are being persecuted for standing up and expressing their political beliefs," said Mark Hinkle, state party chairman, in a prepared statement.

"We know this happens in Cuba and North Korea, but it shouldn't be happening in California."

Webb, who was defeated in November despite national Libertarian support, is making a run for Libertarian Party's secretary of the state at this weekend's convention.

▲ *The Simi Valley Star*, Simi Valley, California, February 12, 1999

Pride and insult

A Justice Department investigation into whether a North Carolina high school has violated the civil rights of an American Indian student because its sports team is named the "Warriors" could ultimately land our Washington Redskins in court.

Indian-rights activists involved in the case cite 2,500 high school, college and professional sports teams that have offensive and — pending Justice Department action — perhaps "unlawful" names.

The Justice Department went on the warpath after the mother of a student at Erwin High School in Asheville wrote to federal bureaucrats that her son was "deeply offended" because his school's teams had names like Warriors and Squaws.

As a result, the Justice Department sent a detailed list of questions to the school's administrators, asking about the history of the team name, the origin of its Indian mascot, the school's policy on racial discrimination, and the racial breakdown of students, faculty and administration.

If the Justice Department prosecutes, the school could lose as much as \$8 million in federal funds.

"Civil rights allegations have become a modern-day witch hunt . . .," Libertarian Party Director Steve Dasbach informs this column. "What this case shows is that the Department of Justice has become a bigger threat to our civil liberties than any high school sports team is to our civil rights."

Redskins spokesman Mike McCall, reached yesterday, reiterated the team's position that "the name was never intended to offend anyone. Over the long history of the Washington Redskins, the name has reflected positive attributes of the American Indian, such as dedication, courage and pride."

FDIC Web site draws 37,000 hits

WASHINGTON — A new Web site that allows people to sign an electronic petition against the FDIC's controversial "Know Your Customer" regulation attracted 37,114 signatures in its first seven days, the Libertarian Party announced.

"The purpose of this Web site — www.DefendYourPrivacy.com — is to drive an e-mail spike into the heart of Know Your Customer," said the party's national director, Steve Dasbach. "The fact that 37,114 people have already signed our electronic petition shows we've tapped a vein of widespread anger about this outrageous proposal."

The Web site explains the Know Your Customer regulation, allows concerned people to send e-mail comments to the FDIC and lets individuals automatically notify other people about the site via e-mail.

Under the Know Your Customer proposal, banks would be required to closely monitor and report customer activity, such as large deposits or unusual bank account activity.

Officials said the number of public comments to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. has swelled dramatically, with the federal agency getting up to 8,000 e-mail messages a day opposing Know Your Customer.

The FDIC will accept public comments about the regulation until March 8.

▲ *The Union Leader*, Manchester, New Hampshire, February 24, 1999

◀ *The Washington Times*, Washington DC, February 23, 1999

▼ *The Orange County Register*, Santa Ana, California, February 17, 1999

Swarming to 'Antz'

Perhaps we're making a mountain out of an anthill. But "Antz" — an animated drama released on videocassette earlier this month — has such a strong pro-liberty message that, had any of the editorial board members seen it in time, it might have been included in the Register's Nov. 28 feature on the Best Libertarian Movies of all Time.

As the official "Antz" website explains, the story centers on a "misfit worker who longs to be an individual in a society that is interested only

in the good of the colony." And it is a "celebration of individuality in the face of overwhelming conformity."

It sounds like a plug that could apply to the movie version of an Ayn Rand novel. But unlike, say, "The Fountainhead" — the Rand classic that we named the fifth best all-time freedom-loving movie — "Antz" has a simple enough message and light enough touch to introduce the concepts of individualism and freedom to children.

"Antz" reinforces a healthy message that should be reason enough for people to swarm to the video stores.

Libertarians have word for N.C. government: Cut

Democrats and Republicans return to the General Assembly facing a budget shortfall that could reach \$1 billion. While they ponder how they can still fund their aggressively spreading programs, the Libertarians offered them a simple solution: cut state government in half.

"There's at least \$6 billion in the state budget that would be better off staying in the taxpayers' pockets," said Sean Haugh, chair of the Libertarian Party of North Carolina. "And we've got the figures to prove it."

The Libertarian plan runs 25 pages, listing 465 state programs to be trimmed, reformed or in most cases cut altogether. The list of taxes the plan abolishes is almost as extensive. The result is a North Carolina state government almost exactly half its current size.

Highlights of the Libertarian 1999 State Budget Plan are:

- Aggressively rooting out corporate welfare and abolishing the Department of Commerce;
- Redirecting the Department of Transportation to maintain current roads by eliminating the Highway Trust Fund and the enforcement arm of the Department of Motor Vehicles;
- Giving parents more school choice with a \$2,500 per pupil tax credit for private alternatives and devoting a much greater percentage of public school resources directly to public school teachers;
- Ending the War on Drugs in North Carolina, saving over one-quarter of the

Guest Column

by The Libertarian Party of N.C.

resources currently devoted to corrections and the court system;

- Privatizing alcohol sales in North Carolina, doing away with the ABC system and the Alcohol Law Enforcement agency;
 - Halting Smart Start and several other expensive new initiatives;
 - Transferring Medicaid and other social services to private charity;
 - Ending most federal grant programs and funding the remaining ones with state money;
 - Generating revenue by selling state properties such as the state railroads, Global TransPark and the Governor's Western Mansion;
 - Abolishing the Departments of Administrative Hearings, Cultural Resources, Insurance and the State Controller, as well as the office of Lt. Governor, turning their functions over to the private sector.
- "Getting rid of the Lt. Governor would probably take a state Constitutional amendment," said Haugh, "but the General Assembly can do the rest this session. We hope they will do the right thing and let our citizens keep their hard earned dollars, instead of squandering billions more on

their pet projects."

If all the Libertarian budget cuts were enacted, the state would be able to completely abolish the personal income tax, along with a host of other taxes and fees. The sales of surplus property would cover the money needed for buying out the almost 19,000 state employees employed by the affected agencies.

The Libertarian Party ran over 40 candidates for office in North Carolina in 1998 and is already qualified for the ballot in 2000. Libertarians promote solutions based on voluntary cooperation over government action. They advocate individual choice and personal responsibility on all issues and limit government to protecting people's lives and liberty.

▲ *The Jefferson Post*
Jefferson, North Carolina
February 9, 1999

▼ *The Journal Inquirer*
Manchester, Connecticut
February 11, 1999

The impeachment of the president: right action, wrong reasons

By Carl E. Vassar

It's a shame that Bill Clinton was impeached ... for the particular reasons he was impeached, that is.

Clinton deserved to be impeached and should be removed from office, not for his sordid sex-and-lies scandal, but for his crimes against the Constitution.

If you look at Clinton's record in office, you'll see that his real crimes are not the ones he tried to cover up or lied about to grand juries — his real crimes are the

ones he boasted about in press conferences and in State of the Union speeches: his repeated violations of the United States Constitution.

Clinton's crimes against the Constitution are the real criminal legacy of the president's time in office — not the less damaging charges of perjury and obstruction of justice related to the Monica Lewinsky cover-up.

Clinton committed perjury when he put his hand on a Bible and swore to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States. Instead of keeping his word, Clinton spent his entire term of office ignoring, abusing, and violating the guiding document of this nation — launching wars without congressional approval and routinely violating the First, Second, Fourth, Fifth, Ninth, and

Tenth amendments to the Constitution.

And Clinton obstructed justice when he signed so-called "anti-terrorism" legislation that sharply curtailed the right of habeas corpus; authorized the massacre at Waco, Texas; and expanded the power of the federal government to seize private property without compensation under asset forfeiture laws — to name just a few examples.

There are no greater crimes that a president can commit — other than perhaps treason — that are as serious and damaging to the nation as Clinton's serial abuse of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. And there is no more fitting punishment for those crimes than for the U.S. House of Representatives to impeach him, for the U.S. Senate to convict him, for freedom-

loving citizens to scorn him, and for history to despise him.

Among his long list of constitutional violations, Clinton:

- violated the First Amendment by supporting censorship of the Internet and by demanding a ban on commercial advertising by cigarette companies.
- violated the Second Amendment by signing the Brady Bill and by arbitrarily banning so-called "assault weapons."
- violated the Fourth Amendment by restricting the right of Americans to employ encryption technology to prevent government spying on electronic communications; and by supporting legislation that will mandate national ID cards with biometric identifiers, such as fingerprints.
- violated the Fifth Amendment

by expanding the asset forfeiture power of the federal government; and by signing "anti-terrorism" legislation that sharply limited the right of habeas corpus.

● violated the Ninth and Tenth Amendments — which reserve all power not specifically delegated to the federal government to the states and to the people — by attempting to put America's health care industry under federal control; and by numerous other executive actions and decrees.

These are crimes of the stature and magnitude that deserve impeachment, conviction by the U.S. Senate, and removal of the president from office.

Carl E. Vassar is chairman of the Libertarian Party of Connecticut.

READER'S
FORUM