

LIBERTY PLEDGE

newsletter

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JUNE 2000

It all comes down to the National Convention

A four-way race for president and a three-way race for LP national chair will climax at the Libertarian National Convention in Anaheim, California, June 29-July 3.

Under the watchful gaze of C-SPAN cameras, more than 1,200 LP delegates from all 50 states will gather to decide who will carry the Libertarian banner in the presidential race, and who will lead the party for the next two years.

"This is it: The Big Enchilada," said LP National Director Steve Dasbach. "Our 2000 presidential ticket, as well as the direction of the Libertarian Party, are in the hands of the delegates. The theme of the Convention is



America's
Future
LIBERTARIAN
NATIONAL
CONVENTION

'America's Future'—but the future of the LP will be decided, too."

In the marquee match-up of the Convention, former four-term New Hampshire State Representative Don Gorman and

1996 LP presidential candidate Harry Browne — the expected frontrunners — will face off for the presidential nomination. Also in the race are Arizona businessman Barry Hess and Californian Dave Hollist.

In a hotly contested national chair's race, **George Phillies** of Massachusetts, **Gary Copeland** of California, and **James W. Lark** of Virginia are campaigning for the two-year term as head of the Libertarian National Committee.

Delegates will also vote on changes to the LP Platform — and expected topics of debate include abortion, the death penalty, and the WTO.

Besides politicking, the Convention will showcase numerous speakers, including **Russell Means** (star of *The Last of the Mohicans*), former Reform Party chairman **Jack Gargan**, member of Ayn Rand's inner circle **Barbara Branden**, and singer/songwriter **Melanie**.

Reception planned for Liberty Pledgers

Members of the Liberty Pledge program have been invited to attend a special reception at the National LP convention in Anaheim, CA.

It will be held Friday, June 30, in the Veranda Room at the Anaheim Marriott at 6:30 pm.

"This reception is our opportunity to thank the people who, month in and month out, contribute so generously to the Pledge Program," said LP National Chair David Bergland. "We owe the party's progress to their steadfast support."

LP member and author Peter McWilliams dies

Peter McWilliams, the #1 bestselling author and outspoken critic of the War on Drugs who became an LP member in 1998, has died. He was 50.

McWilliams was found dead in the bathroom of his Los Angeles home on June 14. According to local sources, he had choked on his vomit — a grimly ironic coda to his three-year battle against the federal government over his right to use medical marijuana to quell nausea.



■ **McWilliams:** "Victim of the Drug War."

McWilliams, who suffered from AIDS and cancer, used medical marijuana — legalized in 1996 by California's Proposition 215 — to suppress the nausea that was a common side-effect to the powerful medications he took to stay alive.

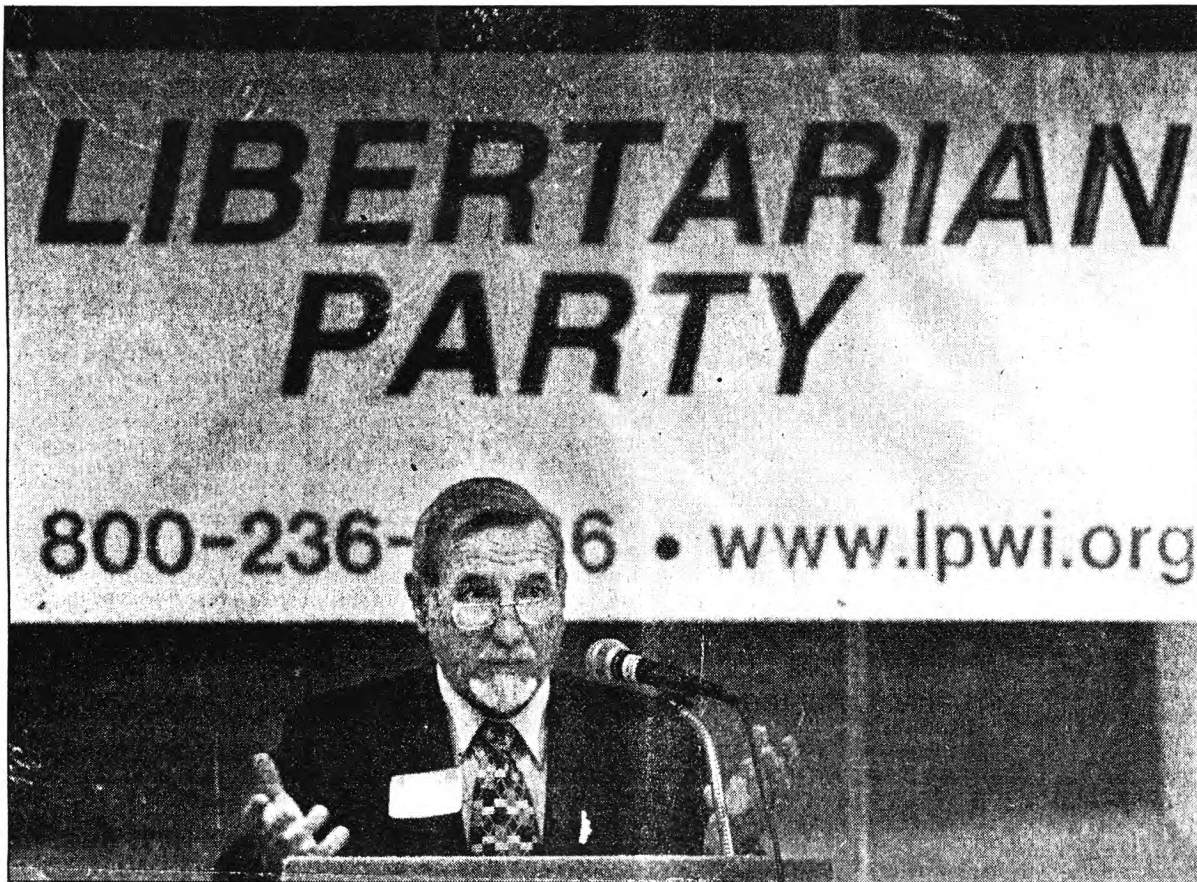
However, in late 1997, McWilliams was arrested on federal marijuana charges—and barred from mentioning the benefits of medical marijuana at his trial. Out on bail, he was prohibited from using medical marijuana — which led to his death, said LP National Director Steve Dasbach.

"The federal government killed Peter McWilliams by denying him the medical marijuana he needed to stay alive as surely as if its

drug warriors had put a gun to his head and pulled the trigger," he said.

McWilliams had joined the LP during a nationally televised C-SPAN speech at the Libertarian National Convention in Washington, DC in 1998.

He was a multi-million-copy-selling author of *How to Survive the Loss of a Love, DO IT! Let's Get Off Our Butts* (with co-author John-Roger), and *Ain't Nobody's Business If You Do*.



Four-term New Hampshire legislator Don Gorman addresses about 70 people at a rally for the Libertarian Party of Wisconsin held Saturday at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Brookfield. Gorman is seeking the party's presidential nomination.

Peter Zuzga/Freeman Staff

Running against big government

Libertarian Party presidential candidate visits Waukesha County

By RYAN AMUNDSON
Freeman Staff

OCONOMOWOC — You may not recognize Don Gorman's name, but it could appear on November's election ballot next to Al Gore's and George W. Bush's.

"People really feel that government is too big," Gorman said. "It's too intrusive. Many people have dropped out of the political process."

Gorman may represent the Libertarian Party as its presidential candidate. He was in Waukesha County during the weekend for the state's Libertarian Party convention in Brookfield.

A New Hampshire native and four-term state legislator, Gorman knows he has a lot of work to do to etch his name in the minds of people before they step into the voting booth this fall.

"My first priority is to get the nomination," Gorman said. "That is my main focus and con-

cern."

Should Gorman clinch the party's nomination, he will hit the campaign trail, meet the electorate and share his political viewpoints.

"The underlying theme of Gorman's political platform is to minimize the role of federal government. From gun control to abortion, Gorman wants Washington politicians to keep their hands off.

In particular, Gorman said government has no business sticking their noses into the current anti-trust suit being leveled against Microsoft. He is adamant.

"That's a great example of a runaway government putting its boot in the neck of a free enterprise corporation," he said. "Billions have been wiped out in the stock market because (the federal government) is in an area where they have no business being.

"Microsoft is an extremely dan-

gerous bomb they should not be playing with," he said.

Gorman also doesn't want to send troops overseas to be "policemen" for other countries.

"We are not, and should not be, the world's policeman," he said. "I have a real problem using the American military as a hired cop. We have troops in 120 countries around the world. We have no business having military in these countries. Bring these troops home."

Gorman is also upset with the way the federal government has addressed the Elian Gonzalez case and the Waco standoff.

"These were storm trooper tactics," he said. "Nobody has been brought to justice. Nobody has been indicted. There are some serious questions."

Gorman sees himself as a far different candidate for president than Gore and Bush.

"Al Gore is an out-and-out socialist," Gorman said. "He

believes in big government, big taxation."

Gorman sees Bush as almost a carbon copy of Gore.

"We have arrogance, money and power," he said about the likely Republican nominee for president. "He'll probably distribute that in a different way. He comes from the philosophy of big money, powerful government and strong central authority."

While few Libertarians hold powerful positions in federal and state government, Gorman sees his party making strides.

"The Libertarian Party is here to stay," he said. "We've gone through, and are still going through some growing pains, but we will be a growing force in politics in a very short time."

(Ryan Amundson can be reached at ramundson@conley.net.com)

Libertarian Takes On Sen. Kennedy

By STEVE LEBLANC
Associated Press

WAYLAND – She vows to kill the federal income tax, abolish the U.S. Department of Education and counts marijuana smokers among her most ardent supporters.

She's Libertarian Carla Howell and, barring a last-minute Republican miracle, she could be the toughest competition U.S. Sen. Edward Kennedy faces in November.

"You couldn't get a better candidate than Carla Howell," said anti-tax activist Barbara Anderson. "Her theme is small government and Kennedy is the poster child for big government."

The 44-year-old health care consultant is already her party's standard-bearer in Massachusetts. In her 1998 run for auditor, Howell won 6 percent of the vote, guaranteeing the party official status.

Now Howell is setting her sights higher. As a candidate for U.S. Senate, Howell is not only taking on a scion of the state's most famous political family but arguably the most powerful politician in Massachusetts.

"We are a fast-growing party that is gaining strength rather than the two dinosaur parties who are losing people," Howell said yesterday, sitting in the wood-paneled basement of her modest Wayland home.

Political analysts say Howell's chance of victory is extremely remote. But even if she fails, Howell could make history simply by propelling her party into the political spotlight.

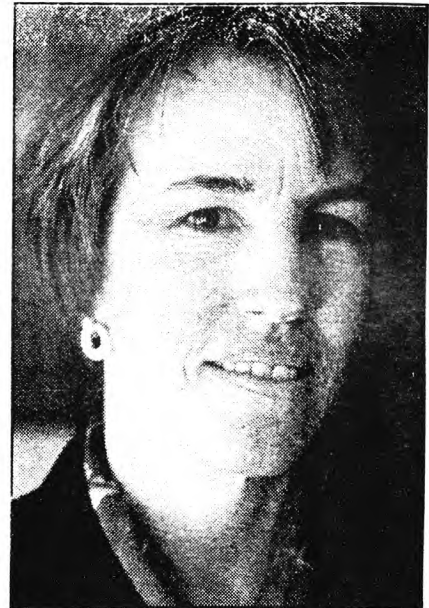
And for that, Howell can thank the Massachusetts Republican Party.

By failing to field their own candidate, the GOP has raised Howell's status from obscure third party candidate to Kennedy's most viable opposition.

The sole Republican still in the race, Jack E. Robinson, appears to be falling short of 10,000 signatures needed to get on the ballot. Robinson said he filed 13,000 signatures, but by the end of yesterday, only 9,066 had been certified.

Already, some Republican activists are giving Howell a closer look.

"I would lean toward the Libertarian



Libertarian Carla Howell (AP Photo)

candidate and I think a lot of other Republicans would do the same," said state Rep. John Locke, R-Wellesley. "What's the alternative? Either vote for the sitting senator or blank the ballot."

Howell is not just relying on disaffected Republicans. She had already cobbled together a coalition of anti-tax activists, gun rights supporters and backers of liberalized marijuana laws.

▲ *The Milford Daily News*, Milford, Massachusetts, May 17, 2000

▼ *The Republic*, Columbia, Indiana, May 22, 2000

Cotham to represent Libertarian party

By John Clark
The Republic

Sara Cotham believes the gulf between Rep. Baron Hill, D-Ind., and his Republican opponent Michael Bailey is wide enough to squeeze in a whole political party.



SARA COTHAM

"The citizens of the 9th need a moderate in this race," said Cotham, chosen last weekend to represent the Indiana Libertarian Party in the race for the 9th Congressional District seat.

"By voting for Bailey you are getting a lot of government management of your personal life and your family life. With Baron Hill you are getting a lot of government reaching into your paycheck and your pocketbook.

"I am concerned about the huge amount of tax that Hoosiers are paying, and now that Bailey is in the race I am concerned about

the lack of trust he has for adults and their decision-making abilities."

Cotham, 29, was the first person to be chosen as state executive director for the party. Nationally, she was the first female Libertarian to be an executive director, but she doesn't see herself as strictly a Libertarian.

"I am not running to promote awareness of the Libertarian Party. I am running to serve the people in Washington for the next two years," Cotham said.

Although the party has been successful in some city races, most recently winning a spot on the Greenfield City Council, no state or national politicians are members of the Libertarian Party.

"I can say it is way past time," Cotham said. "If you look at how much you are spending on taxes and the number of laws that keep being passed to restrict our freedoms that were granted to us by our founding fathers, we are already paying a high price tag for not having a Libertarian in federal office."

Cotham believes the party's platform, pruning the federal gov-

ernment back to its Constitution-mandated size, will appeal to a wide spectrum of moderate voters. And while the Libertarian Party is conservative on government and constitutional issues, it is liberal on many social issues.

"I certainly am a fiscal conservative, but I don't think the American people should have to choose to give up half of their freedoms," Cotham said. "I want to reduce the size of government in all areas. Hill and Bailey want to reduce different halves, but increase the other."

Cotham earned a bachelor's degree from Middle Tennessee State University in 1993 and was a high school teacher for five years in Indiana.

"I grew up with a politically active and a civically aware family," she said. "My father served on Lamar Alexander's Cabinet when he was governor of Tennessee. Civic duty has always been a strong force for me growing up."

Without the backing of a major political party, Cotham realizes fund raising will be difficult. Still, she plans to run a frugal but effective campaign.

Bio box

Name: Sara Cotham.

Hometown: Jeffersonville.

Age: 29.

Occupation: Director of membership development, American Institute of Wine and Food.

Family: Single.

Prior political office held: None.

Prior political office sought: None.

Community involvement: Jeffersonville Jaycees.

Information: lpin.org

ive campaign.

"Libertarians are famous for being good money managers," Cotham said. "We don't believe in wasting government money so we won't waste our own money. I have a very understanding and flexible work environment, and I have a very sturdy Ford truck."

Indiana's 9th District covers southern Bartholomew County and Brown, Jennings and Jackson counties.

Libertarians hold their convention

Browne wants party to break 'marginal mold'

By Barry Smith
Freedom News Service

RALEIGH — Libertarian presidential candidate Harry Browne brought a message of optimism to party faithful Saturday, both for the future of the party and for the changes the party could bring to the nation once a Libertarian is inaugurated president.

Speaking to the N.C. Libertarian Party State Convention, Browne called on delegates to help the party break out of "marginal mold."

"If we can just break out of the 1 percent mold, if we can get 3 or 5 percent, we are going to change poli-

Libertarian

tics forever," Browne said. Getting such an increase would prompt the news media to pay more attention to Libertarian candidates, he said.

He predicted that there would be both a Libertarian president and Congress elected within a decade.

Browne, 66, authored books on investments for 30 years. He also wrote investment newsletters and had an investment counseling business.

He has lived in Tennessee for the past five years, but grew up in southern California.

"I didn't vote for 30 years because I didn't see any point in trying to choose between the Republicans and the Democrats," Browne said.

The only other time Browne has sought political office was in 1996, when he was the Libertarian Party's candidate for president. He is the leading Libertarian candidate this year.

See **LIBERTARIAN/A2**

They will always bow to whoever has the most political influence."

Browne will be pushing to get the Libertarian candidate included in this year's presidential debates.

He compared getting the Libertarian Party into the major debates to the marketplace.

"It's a challenge," he said. "It's what any company has to face to work its way into the marketplace and be a viable alternative. None of it is insurmountable."

The only exception, he said, was that in the marketplace you normally don't have the force of government working against you.

He encouraged party members to use the word "libertarian" when writing letters to the editor of newspapers or calling in on radio talk shows.

Browne is calling on eliminating the income tax and Internal Revenue Service, calling off the drug war and eliminating gun control laws.

EDITORIALS

CIVIL LIBERTIES

LEGISLATING AWAY RIGHTS

It was just a few weeks ago that GOP lawmakers were condemning the Elian Gonzalez raid. Now their outrage rings hollow in light of a bill that would give the government license to commit virtually the same offenses those lawmakers found so shocking.

The offenses would be permitted under the Methamphetamine Anti-Proliferation Act. It's being sold as another weapon in the war on drugs. But this weapon would come at the expense of liberty.

The troubling portions of the bill are an affront to the Fourth Amendment protections against illegal searches and seizures. The bill would let law enforcement officers search property and seize assets without the knowledge of their owner. Not until after the fact would the owner be notified that a warrant had been executed.

The American Civil Liberties Union calls the bill "a virtual wish list for the Department of Justice. It includes some provisions — including one that would allow police to conduct 'black bag' secret searches of private homes and businesses — that were solidly rejected when offered as stand-alone legislation."

Another provision of the bill guts the First Amendment's guarantee of freedom of speech. It makes it illegal to publish or advertise information about drugs and drug paraphernalia. Even linking to a Web site that contains such material would be punishable.

The Libertarian Party shows that sponsors and supporters aren't thinking, or just don't care, about free speech.

"For example, this press release would be illegal if we note that www.smoketoy.com has information about buying marijuana pipes," said Steve Dasbach, the party's national director.

Rep. Bob Barr, R-Ga., plans to offer amendments that would remove the privacy-infringing sections of the bill. Barr should have some knowledge of how the drug war can infringe on liberty. He was a federal prosecutor before being elected to Congress.

A few in Congress share Barr's position. But when it comes the bill's breach of the First Amendment, it seems someone on Capitol Hill hit the mute button.

But it's the bill's removal of checks on the power of police that is most disturbing.

Incidents such as the spreading police scandal in Los Angeles, where officials believe dozens of officers framed, beat and needlessly shot suspects, and the police shootings of Amadou Diallo and Patrick Dorismond in New York City reveal the threat to liberty that unchecked power represents.

Yet the Senate has already passed the measure, and the House appears bent on doing the same. And don't expect the president to curb government power with a veto. After all, he endorsed the Elian raid.

No funds, please

Libertarian Party presidential candidate Harry Browne says he doesn't want taxpayer money and is refusing to accept matching campaign funds from the federal government, Cox News Service reports.

Mr. Browne said he is eligible to receive up to \$750,000 for the primary season. He explained that taking the cash would betray his party's drive for a minimal government with no national tax, no gun-control laws, and no anti-drug law-enforcement programs.

◀ *The Sun Journal*
New Bern, N.C.
May 7, 2000

▲ *Investor's Business Daily*,
Los Angeles, CA,
May 31, 2000

▶ *The Washington Times*,
Washington, DC,
June 12, 2000