

LIBERTY PLEDGE

newsletter

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

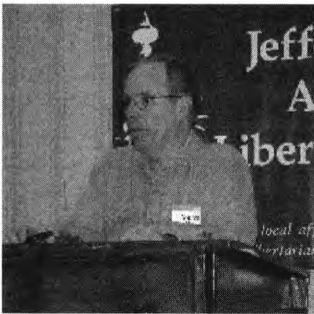
SEPTEMBER 2005

Longtime Virginia Libertarian quietly boosts liberty

Gary Westmoreland shows support for outreach by pledging monthly to the LP

There are many individuals within the Libertarian Party who believe that they are not doing enough to advance the cause unless they are writing large checks or donating extensive amounts of their time.

Then there are those like Gary Westmoreland who understand that the smaller checks and consistent volunteer efforts add up over time — and that a strong Libertarian Party that effects national change cannot become a reality without a dedicated member base that gives whatever it is able to the cause.



Gary Westmoreland at a Jefferson Area, Va. Libertarian event.

Westmoreland, 55, is a library clerk for the University of Virginia. Spending his days surrounded by a multitude of books and opinions has given him exposure to a wide range of political ideologies and the chance to engage in discussion.

“I attempt to not overly mix Libertarian politics with my work at the University of Virginia,” he said.

“My fellow employees know or could discover where I stand on the issues. I appreciate the fact that many of them would sign our ballot access petitions, and I thank them

for that then and now. I try to set a good example of what a libertarian is by demonstrating a strong work ethic and by being a good neighbor.”

Westmoreland first noted his libertarian leanings during his years in college during the late 1960s. The Democrats and Republicans were talking about the Vietnam War, the draft, and the general social unrest of the time, but neither party seemed to be doing anything.

After hearing presidential candidate Roger McBride speak at the University of Virginia in 1976, Westmoreland realized that the LP and its philosophies might be just what he was looking for. He officially joined the party a couple of years later, and is now a life member.

“The readings of the late Murray Rothbard influence my political beliefs,” he said. “I have also been continually influenced by the activity of and discussions with [former] National Chairman Dr. James Lark.”

Westmoreland is active in his local Libertarian Party affiliate, the Jefferson Area Libertarians, participating in events designed to draw in new members to the party.

The most significant thing that Westmoreland does to advance the cause of liberty is giving to the Liberty Pledge Program each and every month, which he has done since 1994. He does so because he believes that a pledge is a positive commitment and sup-

port to the party that allows for both short and long term planning.

He believes that having a consistent cash flow is important because it allows the party to maintain and expand its efforts to reach out to people around the country.

“Philanthropy is based on the voluntary desire to help your fellow man,” he said. “One of the most tangible means to express a person’s philanthropic impulses is by a donation of one’s time and/or money, no matter how large or small.”

Outside of the Libertarian Party, Westmoreland is involved with art and film exhibitions, as well as University of Virginia sporting events. He also volunteers for the Virginia Film Festival.

Westmoreland believes that the most important things for the party to accomplish in the future are membership growth, increased outreach, and more Liberty Pledge Program members. By increasing the number of members, the two major parties will be forced to take notice and take the idea of libertarianism much more seriously.

By increasing the number of pledgers, the LP would have more funding to extend its outreach, which would in turn drive up membership even further. More members and pledgers means more visibility, and eventually more power on the national level. This is something that every Libertarian hopes for.

“No matter how large or small, all of us can and should become Liberty Pledge donors,” he said.

Pledging is more important than ever with “zero-dues”

Recently, the Libertarian National Committee voted to set membership dues for the Libertarian Party at zero, opening the door for anyone to become a member of the party at no cost.

The shift to a zero-dues structure will essentially move the LP from an organization heavily focused on membership to an organization that is donor-based and focused on winning elections. The move to the zero-dues structure will take effect on Jan. 1, 2006.

Soon, the LP’s income will be based solely upon donations, so every pledge dollar counts. Current pledgers are strongly encouraged to increase their monthly pledge if possible in order to ease this transition. Pledgers are also reminded to check the credit card information on their slips to make sure that the number and expiration date are correct.

To increase your monthly support or update your information, contact Kelly Kohut to update your pledge. You can contact her by calling (202) 333-0008 ext. 244 or by e-mailing her at pledge@lp.org.

Libertarians challenge NC's entire electoral law

Democracy in North Carolina took a hit Monday when the State Board of Elections removed the Libertarian Party from the ballot.

Libertarians intend to repair the damage quickly. They'll file a lawsuit challenging the entirety of the state's election laws.

"We're tired of being treated like second-class citizens," said Thomas Hill, state party chair. North Carolina has one of the most restrictive ballot access laws in the country. Even Iraq has more parties on the ballot, Hill noted. "That's just vulgar," he said.

The party will also seek an immediate injunction to stay the board's decision in order to protect the candidacy of candidates for Winston-Salem and Charlotte city councils. "We're going to do whatever we can to keep our candidates on the ballot," Hill said.

Denying voters a choice at the polls is the ultimate abuse of power, said Richard Norman, who's running for Winston-Salem City Council.

"Americans have long cherished their right to choose their leaders in free and open elections — like we demand in other countries," he said. "In North Carolina, those in power severely restrict that right and that's just plain wrong." If Norman's candidacy for North Ward is invalidated, only one name will appear on the ballot in November. "Sort of like the defunct USSR," he said.

The SBOE decertified the party because they failed to obtain the more than 75,000 petition signatures needed to stay on the ballot. The Libertarian lawsuit will challenge all provisions of the state's ballot access laws.

That includes the petition signature requirement as well as the necessity to pull 10 percent of the vote in the gubernatorial or presidential race in order to stay on the ballot.

County boards of election must mail a notice to nearly 13,000 registered Libertarians requesting they complete a new voter registration form.

Libertarian voters will have to register as Republican, Democrat or unaffiliated.

This will be very costly, unbudgeted expense for most county boards, Libertarian Party officials note. Counties will also have to do this work twice. First, they'll have to notify Libertarian registered voters the party has been removed from the ballot. Then they'll have to re-register these same voters when the Libertarians successfully complete their ballot petition drive.

This process could take years, party officials point out, noting there are still voters still listed in the Reform Party, which was decertified three years ago and hasn't run a candidate since. In contrast, Libertarians have been on the ballot continuously since 1996, despite having to overcome the highly restrictive ballot access regulations.

Party officials will urge Libertarians to return their registration forms with the Libertarian party affiliation block checked, or written in.

Meanwhile, the Libertarians will continue collecting petition signatures and vow "We will be on the ballot in 2006."

(Left) Published on www.lpnc.org in August 2005

(Below) Published on www.lpo.org on August 18, 2005

Libertarians call on Taft to resign: OH governor indicted on ethics charge

Governor Bob Taft will face four criminal misdemeanors Thursday for failing to disclose golf outings and other favors in his financial disclosure statements since 2001.

Taft is the first Ohio governor to face criminal charges while in office. He faces a maximum fine of \$1,000 and up to six months in jail on each count.

"Governor Taft needs to accept the responsibility for these ethics violations and resign," declares Ohio Libertarian Party Executive Director Robert Butler. "He has fired his own staff members in the past for similar lapses in judgement."

"We can not have a sitting Governor who, by his own admission, is guilty of criminal behavior," adds State Libertarian Chair Jason Hallmark. "It's unthinkable that he could remain in office under this cloud. Ohio needs an effective Governor to solve our economic crisis."

"If you cut government down to the minimum necessary size, no one will offer favors to the politicians because the politicians won't have any gravy to dish out," notes Libertarian gubernatorial candidate Bill Peirce. "It just goes to show that politicians, as well as Ohio businesses, would be safer if the state of Ohio would let private companies sell workers' compensation insurance instead of running a monopolistic Bureau of Workers Compensation."

Taft still has a year and a half remaining in his final term in office. "Presumably, this time will be spent defending himself in court," notes Butler.

LA LP chair joins rescue workers in New Orleans

By J. Daniel Cloud, *LP News* Editor

Vinson Mouser, chairman of the **Libertarian Party of Louisiana**, lives about an hour and a half from New Orleans, so he was pretty far removed from the immediate damage caused by Hurricane Katrina and by the failure of levees surrounding that city.

But Mouser is a volunteer fireman in Bunkie, La., and his fire department was asked to assist in New Orleans rescue efforts.

He volunteered to go, took vacation time from his day job, and on Tuesday after the storm hit he headed down to the coast with three other volunteer fireman and about 25 others from Avoyelles Parish, hauling eight boats to assist in the rescue.

"When we got to New Orleans, we were supposed to go to a staging area and wait until we were told where to go," Mouser said. "But there was no one who knew what we were supposed to do. We were told to just go get some rest for the night and be ready to go on Wednesday morning."

Eventually a state trooper came along and directed them to a large parking lot about three miles from where the major storm damage was.

"We made dozens of phone calls, trying to find out where we were supposed to go, and nobody knew," Mouser said.

While they waited, their land-locked flotilla of eight boats grew to 50, then 100, "and later there were up to about 300 boats waiting in the parking lot, waiting for someone to tell us where to go and what we could do to help," Mouser said. "We kept trying to get in contact with FEMA, with any other emergency personnel, and we just kept being turned away.

"The only time we saw anyone with FEMA was when a FEMA truck pulled up with six men in it. Each of them had radios, so they could have called and asked somebody where we should go. But they couldn't tell us anything. They just said, 'We're medical. We can't tell you anything,' then rolled up their windows and drove away. They were no help. It seemed like there was nobody in charge."

On Wednesday morning, the gathered would-be rescuers decided to just put their boats in the water and get to work without waiting for someone to tell them how they could join a more concerted, planned rescue effort.

"We drove down to the causeway that morning and people just started launching their boats," Mouser said. "We set up our own search grid and started searching. Pretty much immediately we met some major difficulties."

These difficulties included encountering a railroad bridge that was sticking out of the water, too low to pass under with the boats. Mouser and the others in his group ended up getting out of their boats, lifting the craft out of the water and over the bridge, and lowering them back to the flood water.

"Once we got on the other side of the bridge, we started down toward the Ronald McDonald House," Mouser said. "We had heard there were people trapped there. But when we were going down Canal Street, some people came out of a church and said they had 25 people trapped in the church. We

were able to get three out immediately, elderly people who could barely walk.

"We ferried them back the way we had come, looking for a way to get across the railroad tracks. We finally found a little piece of high ground where there was a golf cart, got permission to use the cart, and shuttled people down the railroad tracks about two and a half miles to where they'd be safe."

Mouser and the others worked all day rescuing stranded people from their homes, until late in the day when their 911 dispatchers told them to leave because it was getting too dangerous to be there.

"Throughout the day, many, many people said they certainly wanted to leave, but told us to go pick up others first who needed help worse," Mouser said. "They said to go get other people first, as long as we remembered where they were so we could come back later and get them. Several of them told us, 'If nobody else tells you, thank you from the city of New Orleans.'"

At one point Mouser and the others in his group saw a group of men swimming around in the fetid water, then heard a female voice yelling at them, telling them to leave. A few seconds later the woman began shooting a shotgun at the men, just yards from where the relief workers were, telling the men to get out of her neighborhood.

What can people do to help?

"People are going to be needing jobs, money to get by or get started with," Mouser said. "This isn't going to be gone in a month or two. It's going to go on for many months, probably. People can give to charities they trust, or they can try to find individual families or individuals from that region who need help. We're past the time for food and clothes, I think. Probably the best opportunity is to get something started to get direct monetary help to people."

Speaking of Libertarians specifically, Mouser said he knows that several families in New Orleans and the broader Gulf Coast region have been displaced, and of several individuals who are missing — or who have not been heard from since the hurricane hit.

As Mouser said, the storm damage — and damage caused when the levees surrounding New Orleans failed — isn't going to go away in a matter of days, weeks or even months.

"It's just such a terrible disaster, there's no words to describe it," he said. "There are going to be thousands dead. And there's oil and gas all over the place, in addition to all the blood and everything. It's going to take months and months to get everything cleaned up"

Government officials have ordered all New Orleans residents to leave the city. While a government edict doesn't sit well with many residents (and with most Libertarians), Mouser said that in this case, leaving the city makes sense.

"I understand that people want to protect their property, but there comes a time when you have to protect yourself instead and just pull out," he said. "Anybody that's staying there voluntarily is crazy. That city is a huge toxic mess."

Michael Badnarik sets eyes on Congress

Michael Badnarik, the 2004 presidential candidate for the Libertarian Party, has announced his candidacy in the 2006 election for Texas' 10th congressional district. The announcement was made August 6th in Kansas City during an outreach dinner with the Libertarian National Committee.

Texas' 10th district congressional seat is currently held by Republican Michael McCaul, a former federal prosecutor who is responsible for a program that has prosecuted more than 1,000 people for possessing firearms. McCaul also points with pride to his role in fighting terrorism, which currently includes sitting on the Homeland Security Committee and being a strong advocate for preserving and expanding the PATRIOT Act.

While his opponent has been a career government employee, Michael Badnarik was a high-level computer programmer by trade until he shifted to teaching to pursue his passion for the Constitution. Badnarik created and teaches an eight-hour "Introduction to the Constitution" class and is also author of *Good To Be King: The Foundation of Our Constitutional Freedom*.

The Badnarik for Congress campaign has set its focus on three general issues — Family, Property, and Security — each addressing one to three topics. The Family focus will be on Parental Rights and federal bounties on broken families. The Property focus will be on eminent domain abuse and federal subsidies to local governments who maintain redevelopment agencies. Under Security, the campaign will clarify the immigration and border questions and federal aggravations of international relations, and oppose the PATRIOT Act trend toward totalitarian government.

Campaign staff notes that this campaign is relevant to Libertarians all across the country, because a congressman's votes affect everyone in the country. The campaign is talking to long-time supporters all over the country and getting their support. The campaign expects to vastly increase Libertarian-oriented voter registration and membership in the 10th and surrounding districts.

Badnarik says he is very excited about the campaign, smiling "I am looking forward to being the first Libertarian elected to Congress."

The campaign has established its headquarters in Austin Texas, and is in the process of updating the badnarik.org website. Badnarik has retained the services of California business and political consultant, Allen Hacker.

Badnarik's Web site is www.badnarik.org.

(Above) Published on www.lp.org on August 18, 2005

(Right) Published on www.lp.org on August 30, 2005

Indiana Libertarians Defeat Restaurant Tax

Libertarians in Fishers, Ind., a suburb of Indianapolis with a population of over 53,000, were instrumental in defeating a 1 percent food and beverage tax, making Fishers the only city government in Hamilton County, Ind., that failed to enact the tax.

Efforts to defeat the restaurant tax were coordinated by Indiana Libertarian Party Political Director Brad Klopfenstein and LP Secretary of State candidate Michael Kole. In a recent appearance before the Republican-controlled city council, Klopfenstein stated, "It's time to stop being tax-and-spend Republicans. We'll be very eager to run candidates against any council member who votes in favor of the tax."

In a follow-up, Kole spoke in opposition to the tax explaining that its defeat would give restaurants in Fishers a competitive advantage over restaurants in nearby Marion County, and in other Hamilton County municipalities that have imposed the tax. As Kole stated, the Fishers City Council should seek to make local businesses more attractive, not less.

Working in unison, Klopfenstein and Kole demonstrated once again that mobilized Libertarian activism can pose a significant threat to the tax-and-spend establishment that has been created and implemented by Republicans and Democrats.

Welcome to the Liberty Pledge Club!

Arthur Lurie
Benjamin Jasper
Christian Wilson
Dominic Saltarelli
Donald Silberger
Earl Prochaska
Harland Machia
J. Robert Latham
John Kuhn
Jonathan McGlumphy
Justin Niceswanger
Lynne Shepard
Michael Manness
Paula Werme
Rick Petty
Robert Beebe
Ron Harders
Sidra Johansen
Zachary Ryan

Thank you for your generous support of the LP!