

# LIBERTY PLEDGE

## newsletter

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## Special Pre-Convention Expanded Edition

### Commanding presence: Retired Vice Admiral Michael Colley to address Atlanta Convention

When the topic turns to recruitment, Alabama Libertarian Michael Colley knows what he's talking about: The retired rear admiral once directed the efforts of 5,000 Navy recruiters.

Now he's focusing that same energy on recruiting more Libertarians.

"I feel very strongly that increasing membership should be a top priority for the party," he says. "It's obvious that the Democrats and Republicans aren't that much different from each other, and this year a lot of thoughtful citizens will pick our party."

But recruitment barely scratches the surface of Colley's naval experience: During the Gulf War, he commanded the Pacific Fleet submarine force of more than 40 ships from his headquarters at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. He also directed the Naval Academy's Division of Mathematics and Science for three years and held several other leadership posts.

Unusual training for a Libertarian, perhaps, but it was in the military that Colley's individualist, libertarian views were honed.

"As a career submarine officer, my operational experience was frequently characterized by stealth, power and independence from routine guidance and instruction," Colley says. "We were told the objectives of a mission and then we were expected to use our professional skills, training and imagination to execute that mission.

"This type of operation very much appealed to my sense of individual purpose and accomplishment. All citizens of this great democratic republic should be mindful of exactly what individual contributions are required for maintaining our freedom."

Colley also got firsthand experience with how government actually works -- or doesn't work -- when he spent several years of his military career working in Washington DC.

His conclusion: "The people we send to Washington don't remember the fundamentals of governing a representative republic, but Libertarians seem to understand individual liberty, limited government and free markets."

Though he has retired from his post as vice admiral and moved to the warm and breezy beaches of the Alabama Gulf Coast, he seems not to have slowed down much. He humbly

views his role in the Alabama LP as a Libertarian "worker bee," and recently found time to host an outreach booth at an arts and craft fair in Fairhope, AL.

He also travels the country as a science fair judge, wins beautification awards for his gardening

skills, and is helping to raise money for the creation of the National Submarine Science Discovery Center.

Colley is also a devout -- and generous -- Liberty Pledger, who recently quintupled his monthly gift after visiting LP headquarters in Washington, DC, where he was impressed by "the hard-working staffers who are toiling in the vineyards for the rest of us."

Colley sees philanthropy as an individual's way of supporting organizations that have touched his life.

"Good citizens should step up to support organizations so that they don't assume 'victim' status," and thus begin to depend on the government, he says.

For Colley, one positive of pledging is that it is an easy way to make sure his membership never lapses, although he still routinely responds to individual fundraising efforts for causes such as ballot access.

Aside from its practical benefits, Colley sees the pledge program as the foundation of national operations, and he is happy to help build a strong base of continuing support for the party.

The LP is among the many organizations Colley supports. As a distinguished veteran and Naval Academy graduate, he also gives to the Naval Academy Fund, the American Legion, and Disabled Veterans of America.

Those who attend the LP's National Convention in Atlanta will have the opportunity to hear Colley's Libertarian story firsthand, since he is scheduled to be the lead-in speaker for U.S. Rep. Ron Paul on Saturday, May 29. Colley may also host a workshop on new member recruitment, drawing on his practical experience in military recruitment.



Michael Colley

# Third-party threat: It's not just Nader

By Lawrence R. Jacobs

ST. PAUL, MINN. — The hot topic in handicapping the presidential election is whether independent candidate Ralph Nader will be the spoiler — again — by winning a small but decisive percentage of the vote in an evenly divided country.

But Mr. Nader is not the only third party candidate who could sway the electorate significantly enough to change history — as he did in 2000 by siphoning off liberal voters from Al Gore and as Ross Perot did in 1992 and 1996 by taking conservative votes from the GOP candidate.

A Humphrey Institute Survey found in February that 20 percent of voters are disaffected from the two major parties, and a significant number of them could be tapped by gifted candidates running as independent or **Libertarian** — if these candidates received the kind of press attention that Nader has attracted.

While Nader hurts the presumed Democratic nominee John Kerry, voters open to conservative third-party candidates who promote small government and criticize ballooning government budget deficits pose a significant threat to President Bush's re-election effort. Pundits have ignored the importance of the third-party swing vote, but the White House has not, working hard to head off damaging defections.

Indeed, these small-government conservatives who are disenchanted with the major parties made a real mark in the 2002 elections: 2 percent or more of voters in 15 gubernatorial and U.S. Senate elections in 2002 cast their ballots for the Libertarian Party. And candidates running as independents cleared the 2 percent mark in seven other states. Numbers like these could be a decisive factor in a close contest between Messrs. Bush and Kerry.

Third-party candidates will have their greatest impact in critical battleground states in this year's presidential election.

While recent successes of the Green Party in New Mexico, Oregon, and elsewhere dominate political talk of Nader as a Kerry spoiler, far less attention has been devoted to the potential of Libertarian and independent successes to drain conservative votes from Bush in swing states. In Wisconsin, where Bush narrowly lost in 2000, the Libertarian candidate in the 2002 gubernatorial context took an impressive 10.5 percent, enough to help Democrat Jim Doyle break the four-term Republican hold on the state house. In Nevada, where the president prevailed by just 3 percent in 2000, the Libertarian and two candidates running as independents took a total of 4 percent of the vote in the 2002 gubernatorial race. Bush took New Hampshire by about 1 percent in 2000 — but votes for Libertarian candidates in the 2002 gubernatorial and US Senate races there totaled more. And in Missouri, another battleground state expected to be narrowly decided in November, the Libertarian candidate's 1 percent in the 2002 U.S. Senate race nearly upended Republican Jim Talent's razor-close win over Democrat Jean Carnahan. In Ohio, the U.S. Senate candidate for the Natural Law Party took 4 percent in 2002. Minnesota's unusually strong support for

Ross Perot's campaigns in the 1990s and its election of Jesse Ventura as governor in 1998 far surpass Nader's showings there.

These recent elections demonstrate an overlooked but potentially decisive reservoir of support for third-party candidates who run on a small-government platform.

Third-party candidates pose quite different threats to Kerry and Bush, according to the Humphrey Institute's February poll conducted by the University of Connecticut. Bush perhaps has the most to lose in the third-party trend because a conservative third party would erode his GOP base of support. Meanwhile, the threat to Kerry is less to his Democratic base than to the critical base of independent voters who might otherwise swing toward him in the absence of a third-party candidate.

The poll showed that in a one-on-one race with Kerry, Bush would win 87 percent of the GOP vote. But when given the option of Bush, Kerry, and a conservative third-party candidate, GOP support for Bush dropped to as low as 75 percent.

The support of voters for third-party candidates from across the political spectrum raises three challenges for pollsters, journalists, and other critical players in the presidential election.

First, pollsters who fail to offer voters the opportunity to indicate support for conservative third-party candidates run the

*The Christian Science Monitor*, opinion page --  
April 20, 2004

risk of missing the dynamics of the race and providing an inaccurate picture of the evolving campaign.

Second, the press should expand its coverage to encompass the campaigns of potentially influential third-party candidates besides Nader. Access to state ballots is a telling issue that the press has yet to investigate seriously. Nader was able to get on only 43 state ballots in 2000 and is struggling again this year to qualify on all state ballots. But by contrast, the Libertarian Party successfully placed its 2000 presidential candidate on the ballots of every state and is likely to have its candidate on many more state ballots than Nader will this year. And, if there's a question in the media — and within the Presidential Debate Commission — about whether Nader should be included in the debates, then the Libertarian nominee most certainly should be considered, too.

Third, conventional assumptions about the electorate as polarized Republican and Democratic camps misses the trend of the last three presidential elections — third-party candidates are tipping the outcome of presidential elections.

*Lawrence R. Jacobs is the McKnight Land Grant Professor and director of the 2004 Elections Project for the Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota.*

# Gray speaks at Weedfest

By Chris Togneri

A group of about 60 medical marijuana advocates gathered at a farmhouse in rural Winton on Sunday for a rally they dubbed “Weedfest.”

The goal of the event, the organizers said, was to promote support for the legalization of marijuana.

“It is not a dangerous drug,” said Judge James Gray, a **Libertarian** and Newport Beach Superior Court judge who is running for the U.S. Senate. “It is made dangerous when it is made illegal. Marijuana should be treated basically like alcohol.”

Gray said his candidacy will focus on two issues: repealing the “excesses of the Patriot Act” and the legalization of marijuana.

“If the Founding Fathers were here today, they’d take up arms against what’s happening to our country,” he said. “We are giving away our civil liberties, and we should be ashamed of ourselves. How we can look our grandchildren in the eyes is beyond me.”

The event was held in the back yard of a small, white farmhouse surrounded by strawberry fields. One of the organizers, Dustin Costa, used to live in the house, and grew medical marijuana there.

But in February, Costa said, police raided the house, confiscating 900 marijuana plants. He has since had to sell the property to pay his legal fees. The makeshift greenhouse where he used to grow marijuana is empty.

“I’m broke now, but I’m not giving up the war,” he said.

While Gray said he has never smoked marijuana, many people at Weedfest said they must smoke it daily to deal with painful medical ailments. But in doing so, they said, they are constantly harassed by police. Medical marijuana users lack legal protection, said attorney Richard Runcie of Fresno, because no civil case has set a precedent.

Runcie laid out the ideal plaintiff for such a case: An elderly lady with a chronic disease. She grows medical marijuana, but not a lot, “say 10 to 20 plants.” She gets arrested, the police refuse to give back her marijuana, and she is made to suffer.

“Then we’d have a civil rights case,” he said. “That would start backing off the police.”

Another attorney in attendance, Dennis Roberts of Oakland, compared the medical marijuana movement to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

The movement will continue in two weeks, said Costa, when a second Weedfest is held in Bakersfield.

And it will culminate in November, advocates said they hope, with the election of Gray to the Senate.

In the crowd, Laura McKenzie, a sufferer of depression and arthritis, listened to Gray’s speech. McKenzie, who drove down from Redding to attend Weedfest, said she had never heard of Gray before this event, but that she’ll vote for him now.

And she echoed the sentiment of many people at Weedfest when she said, “I hope he’s electable.”

(Left) *Modesto Bee*, Modesto, California -- April 19, 2004

(Below) *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, St. Louis, Missouri -- April 19, 2004

# Missouri LP wants respect

By Jo Mannies

About a year ago, political life didn’t look too great for Bob Sullentrup of St. Charles and his cohorts. But now, one of his party stalwarts has been elected to a local public office, and Sullentrup is a top national leader.

Perhaps it’s time that the Missouri Libertarian Party got a little respect.

Sullentrup is state chairman for the **Libertarian Party**, which he notes is one of only three parties – the others are the Democrats and Republicans – that are guaranteed that their candidates running for statewide office will appear on the ballot. All told, 37 Libertarians will be running for state and local office this fall, down from 52 two years ago.

Any of the other parties seeking to field statewide candidates this fall – such as the Green or Constitution or Natural Law party – first have to collect at least 10,000 signatures from registered voters. Same for Ralph Nader, who’s getting tons of headlines for his plans to run as an independent candidate for president.

The fact is, the Libertarian Party’s candidate for president – the party will select its nominee next month – is the only sure bet to be on Missouri’s ballot against Republican incumbent George W. Bush and the likely Democratic nominee, Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts.

“We’re not a third party, we’re an established party,” said Kevin Tull of Kansas City, the state Libertarian Party’s candidate for the U.S. Senate. “Yet, we’re still treated like we’re a third party.”

That may be starting to change. Earlier this month, Missouri Libertarians claimed two political boosts.

Sullentrup, a computer consultant, was named the national party’s new secretary, filling the remaining weeks of a term left vacant when his predecessor stepped down. Sullentrup will hold the post until the national Libertarian Party convention May 27-31 in Atlanta.

On April 6, the party also claimed a landmark local victory. Tamara Millay, head of the St. Louis County Libertarian Party, was elected the new marshal of Greendale, a small suburb near Lambert Field. Millay became the first Libertarian to get elected to office on the Missouri side of the St. Louis metro area. She won as a write-in, snagging 29 votes.

All share Millay’s joy over what they see as growing public interest in what Libertarians stand for. “I have been really re-energized by what I’ve seen around the country,” she said.

# Libertarians advise NH Governor Benson

By Daniel Barrick

A panel authorized by the governor to find inefficiencies in the state health and transportation departments is composed almost entirely of members of the Free State Project and includes a longtime antagonist of the Division of Children, Youth and Families.

Gov. Craig Benson chose John Babiarz, head of the state **Libertarian Party**, to chair the committee and select its members last month. Among the panel's 11 members are eight members of the libertarian Free State Project, a woman who has not yet moved to New Hampshire and Paula Werme, a Boscawen lawyer who has battled DCYF in court many times. DCYF is a division of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Members of the committee said their libertarian bent would help them find problems in state government that others had missed.

"We're not here to dismantle, we're here to look outside the box," Babiarz said. "We're here to give them a sanity check and say what works. The key aspect is looking at ways of making the process better and more efficient. All of us are outside-the-box thinkers."

The Free State Project hopes to move 20,000 people to New Hampshire within the next five years. The project's charter calls for effecting change – including shrinking the size of state government by two-thirds, repealing most gun and drug laws and doing away with public education – through electoral results. Not all of the project's members are affiliated with the Libertarian Party, though many are.

Babiarz said the governor's panel had met only once and that he was still trying to define the group's mission. He said panel members had been working closely with officials in the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Transportation to examine how both agencies work.

Werme is listed as an adviser to the panel. Reached by phone yesterday, Werme refused to comment on the committee or her involvement with it.

But Werme has had several publicized run-ins with DCYF and the court system in recent years. In 1999, Werme was ordered to return her license plate, which read "H8DCYF."

At the time, Werme said the plate "perfectly expresses my sentiments toward the Division for Children, Youth and Families, who violate my clients' rights on a daily basis."

Last December, the state Supreme Court ruled that Werme violated state rules of professional conduct when she advised a client to disclose details of confidential court proceedings to a Monitorreporter.

"The U.S. Supreme Court has said that you need not honor an unconstitutional statute," Werme said in December. "You're free to violate it. That's all I told my client."

"In plain English, DCYF lies and the courts believe them," the site says.

Werme has run for Congress and the state Legislature as a Libertarian candidate. Babiarz, the panel's chairman, said he and other panel members would consult Werme with questions as they continued with their work. Babiarz said some officials at the Department of Health and Human Services had objected to Werme's involvement on the committee, but he defended her participation.

"She has some insights that the rest of the members of the group don't," Babiarz said. "Sometimes you have to listen to what the critics say, not to form any biased opinion, but to get a heads-up on how things work."

Don Gorman, a former Libertarian state representative from Deerfield and leader in the Free State Project, said that

*Concord Monitor*, Concord, New Hampshire --  
April 14, 2004

the panel members' status as outsiders was the right match for the job.

"Look at the present system: It needs to be revamped," he said. "And if a house is on fire, you don't form a committee made up of builders and planners. You call the fire department."

Gorman predicted that the Free State Project's robust representation on a state panel, just six months after New Hampshire was selected as the project's home, boded well.

"I think in another four years, you're going to see a lot of Free State people in the New Hampshire Legislature," he said. "We don't have the manpower yet, but it's coming."

The committee's other members include Craig Peterson of Merrimack, who was appointed to DCYF's advisory board last month by Benson; Karen and Calvin Pratt, Free State Project transplants who moved from New Jersey several months ago; Dawn Lincoln, a Free Stater who has yet to move to New Hampshire; Rick Wickson of Derry; John Barnes of New London; Amanda Phillips of Bridgewater; and Michelle Dumas of Somersworth.

Asked about the panel's strong Free State component, Benson spokesman Wendell Packard said, "We're all part of what makes New Hampshire great. The governor doesn't exclude people."

Packard said the panel had no authority to implement policy but was simply giving advice to the governor and Health and Human Services Commissioner John Stephen. Attempts to reach officials at the department last night were unsuccessful.

The New Hampshire Liberty Alliance, a lobbying and social group aligned with the Free State Project, announced yesterday that Benson would be the keynote speaker at its June fundraiser. Packard said he could not confirm whether Benson would be there.

Benson was the keynote speaker at the New Hampshire Libertarian Party's state convention last November.

# Nader and Russo tell youth to brace for the draft

By Steve Miller

Presidential candidate Ralph Nader this weekend warned his constituents that a military draft is pending, and asked younger voters to prepare.

The independent candidate noted that the federal government is filling seats on local draft boards as preparation for a reinstatement of the draft, which was eliminated in 1973.

"The Pentagon is quietly recruiting new members to fill local draft boards, as the machinery for drafting a new generation of young Americans is being quietly put into place," Mr. Nader said in a press release sent out to constituents and posted on his Web site during the weekend.

"Young Americans need to know that a train is coming, and it could run over their generation in the same way that the Vietnam War devastated the lives of those who came of age in the sixties."

Kevin Zeese, a spokesman for the Nader campaign, said draft boards are being rebuilt "right now" and that the demands on the U.S. military are growing.

"I don't think that Ralph feels that the draft is imminent, but we are looking at the shortage of troops in Iraq and the calls from [Senator John] Kerry for 40,000 more troops. What Ralph is saying is that if students don't start to organize right now, it will be too late," Mr. Zeese said.

Rumors of a draft reinstatement emerged in the fall when the Selective Service announced that it was recruiting members for the nation's 2,000 local draft and appeals boards. A Selective Service spokesman said yesterday that the announcement was made to help fill spots on the boards, as many members' 20-year terms ended.

"It was misread then," said the spokesman, Pat Schuback. "Their terms are expiring right now, and that's what is going on."

He noted that Selective Service, a branch of the Justice Department, has seen personnel numbers drop recently. The agency went from 166 full-time staffers in fiscal 2003 to 156 this year.

Another third-party candidate, **Libertarian** Aaron Russo, has joined Mr. Nader in warning Americans that a draft is a real possibility, despite denials from all quarters of the Bush administration.

Mr. Russo, one of three front-runners vying for the Libertarian nomination, said at a party forum in Virginia last month that "the draft is a bipartisan effort between Republicans and Democrats that will start after the 2004 presidential election, for obvious reasons," a prediction he repeats on his campaign Web site.

It would take legislative action by Congress to reinstate the draft, which was ended in 1973, about two months before the last U.S. troops were withdrawn from Vietnam. Registration with the Selective Service was halted from 1975 to 1980, but was reinstated under President Carter after Russia invaded Afghanistan.

A bill was drafted by South Carolina Sen. Ernest F. Hollings in January 2003, putting in place the parameters for a

draft. Its House companion legislation was introduced simultaneously by New York Rep. Charles B. Rangel. Both lawmakers are Democrats.

(Left) *The Washington Times*, Washington, DC  
-- April 12, 2004

(Below) *The Oklahoman*, Oklahoma City,  
Oklahoma, Editorial -- April 9, 2004

## Ruling enables hunt for votes

**Libertarians** are eternal optimists. They offer good ideas and put candidates on the ballot, but they have little prospect of winning an election in Oklahoma. Thanks to an appellate court ruling this week, however, Libertarians may soon harvest more voters from the ranks of Democrats, Republicans and independents.

The 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, in reversing the decision of an Oklahoma City federal judge, struck down a state law requiring that primary elections be closed to non-party members. The effect of the ruling is to allow political parties, if they choose, to open their primaries to non-party members.

Some states mandate open primaries. This allows Democrats to vote in a Republican primary or vice versa. This doesn't make much sense to us, but if a party is OK with crossover voters why should the state forbid the practice?

Open primaries do make sense for Libertarians. Their registration is so low (fewer than 500 in Oklahoma) that attracting non-members is essential. Oklahoma election law is skewed in favor of the major parties -- it's all but impossible for alternative party candidates to get on the presidential ballot, for example.

The ruling settles a lawsuit filed when Libertarians wanted to invite non-party members to participate in the 2000 presidential primary but were banned from doing so by the state Election Board.

All voters have the option of choosing an alternative party candidate in general elections. In 2002, Libertarian Roger Bloxham got nearly 51,000 votes (about 5 percent of the total) in his bid for a Corporation Commission seat. Of course, Libertarians must have at least two people on the ballot to justify a primary election. That's not easy with so few members; indeed, a high percentage of party members would have to run to compete in every race.

As of now, this isn't about winning. For Libertarians and presumably other alternative parties, it's about the right to invite non-members to vote in a primary. The court said the right to free association in politics outweighs the state's right to regulate elections. The court was correct.

# It's Tax Day, let's party – at the U.S. Post Office!

By Gordon T. Anderson

If you're one of the millions of Americans who wait until the last minute to file your taxes, you may encounter some obstacles at the post office today.

Among them: political protesters, belly dancers, and folks dressed up like giant lemons.

It's tax time again. Across the country, all sorts of people are using April 15 as a day to sell stuff and to say stuff.

In five cities, including New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago, Westin Hotels have rolled out beds onto the sidewalks. Employees in fluffy robes demonstrate the virtues of a cozy night sleep -- either in a hotel or at home, since the chain's beds and linens are for sale. In each city, Westin plans to give away a bed to the last filer on line at a stroke before midnight.

Snapple is a familiar presence on the steps of the main New York City post office on Eighth Avenue. Last year, Snapple's man in the street wore a gorilla costume to hand out some 5,000 bottles of the company's Go Bananas drink, according to Judy Klym, a spokesperson.

Bananas are off the menu this year, and so is the gorilla. In its place: a group of women dressed up as lemons, handing out samples of the new Super Sour Lemonade.

"Life hands you lemons on Tax Day," said Klym. "We're saying 'Drink lemonade.'"

If lemonade's not to your taste, how about doughnuts? Krispy Kreme is handing out free food as well as discount coupons in Atlanta, Seattle, suburban Detroit, and Kansas City, among a number of other places.

As usual, activists will be out in force, too. The **Libertarian Party** (LP) will show up at dozens of locations nationwide to promote limited government.

In Minneapolis, Libertarians will carry signs emblazoned with Donald Trump's picture. The tag line: "You're Fired, but I can't fire the IRS." Protesters there will also hand out \$1-million bills, phony notes intended to dramatize the party's point that the federal government spends \$1 million every five seconds.

"We wanted to show a sense of humor with a serious spin," said Corey Stern, a member of the Minnesota LP.

Anti-tax protesters -- some dragging balls and chains, others dressed as patriots -- will also be out in Duval County, Fla., according to Doug Klippel, chairman of the Florida LP. "There is even a rumor that Lady Godiva may show up," he said.

Taxes won't be the only item on the political agenda, either. Gay rights activists are using Tax Day to challenge a proposed amendment to the Constitution, which would explicitly prohibit legal recognition of gay marriages. The group Don't Amend.com is organizing protests in several cities.

Why use April 15 as a promo day? No particular reason, other than the fact that people congregating at post offices represent a captive audience. So much the better if marketers

can coax a smile out of otherwise grumpy or frazzled filers.

"There's nothing we really want to get out of it, other than to show we're a part of the community," said Krispy Kreme's Amy Hughes.

Events at post offices aren't sponsored by the Postal Service. "A lot of times, people just show up uninvited," said Jim Rock, a spokesman for the USPS in the Chicago area. "My favorite are the Elvis impersonators."

Anyone can just appear -- it's public property, after all -- but logistical issues do arise.

In Idaho, the Boise Philharmonic used to send a brass quintet to serenade filers with funeral dirges and the like. The multi-year tradition ended last year, after Postal Service employees complained that the musicians were getting in the way of taxpayers.

"They moved us to a place across the street, where nobody could hear us," said the orchestra's Tony Boatman. "The only thing we got out of it was five cold musicians."

In northern Virginia, "Tax Blues Night" at the Clarendon post office has become an annual ritual, sponsored by the Clarendon Alliance since the mid-1990s.

"Every year, we try to bring a little happiness to people at a trying time," said Sona Viridi, a spokesperson for the group. This year, there will be eight bands, food from local restaurants, and belly dancers.

(Left) *CNN/Money*, New York, New York -- April 15, 2004

(Below) *The Daily Dispatch*, Henderson, North Carolina -- May 5, 2004

## Howe files for governor

OXFORD - Barbara Howe filed to run for governor of North Carolina as a **Libertarian** Monday.

Howe, a 51-year-old Oxford homemaker, was the Libertarian Party candidate in 2000. She won 80 percent of the vote in that year's first-ever Libertarian gubernatorial primary.

"Republicans and Democrats will offer only more of the same: higher taxes, limited choice in education, overregulation and more corporate welfare," Howe said in a faxed announcement Monday. "The Libertarian philosophy is one that emphasizes individual rights and personal responsibility. As governor, I will respect the rights of every North Carolina citizen.

"Our freedom is precious, but if we keep electing people who want to grow government, we are in danger of letting freedom slip away."

Howe is the chairwoman of the state's Libertarian Party. She lives outside of Oxford with her husband, Tom, and two of their children.

# Aaron Russo: A choice, not an echo

By Illana Mercer

The ostensible choice before the American people Nov. 2 is between Tweedledumb and Tweedledumber – between Kerry and Bush or Bush and Kerry, according to taste.

As \$40 million in Bush TV ads never cease to remind us, this president is a “war president.” That is, he has squandered the lives of hundreds of American men (and a few women), thousands of civilians and \$166 billion (and counting – fast) in taxpayers’ money in an attempt to force the Iraqi horse to drink from the water of “democracy.”

Not that Sen. John Kerry is a man of peace. As H.L. Mencken warned darkly, “Every election is a sort of advance auction sale of stolen goods.” Or of stolen lives. Kerry may be more inclined to defer to the United Nations for a license to conquer and kill, but he is as bright eyed and bushy tailed as Bush regarding a “bold progressive internationalism.”

Both the incumbent and his Democratic challenger are welfare wastrels. Economic prosperity (read jobs) will elude the United States until the government drastically downsizes its own ranks and curbs its reach.

This is exactly what Aaron Russo – who *will* be the **Libertarian Party’s** presidential candidate – plans to do. Russo likens our ever-accreting government to “The Blob,” the Steve McQueen film in which “an alien life form consumes everything in its path as it grows and grows.” This statist feeding frenzy has turned the once-sovereign American citizen into a subservient subject of the state, a “perversion” Russo pledges to terminate.

The slave-state may be nearer at hand than the skeptic imagines. Both parties – Democrats more energetically than Republicans – are dropping ominous hints about reinstating the draft. Russo, like the Lockean founding fathers, believes every American owns his life. This is a belief irreconcilable with conscription. “Americans have always responded in their country’s time of need,” Russo notes. However, “If this war was justifiable, the recruiting officers would have lines around the block.” Yet they do not, so the government wants the power to take our sons and daughters – often against their will – and make them pay, possibly with their lives, for an “immoral, unwinnable war,” Russo remonstrates.

Over and above their shared devotion to big government, Bush and Kerry both support illegal immigration, gun control, NAFTA and GATT, foreign aid and the PATRIOT Act. The terrible twins’ policy convergence is a wrecking ball aimed squarely at the already faltering American economy.

When combined with tax cuts, Bush’s stupendous spending will culminate in ever-growing deficits, inflation and unemployment, cautions Russo. In conjunction with tax increases, Kerry’s high-roller habits will culminate in poverty, lower incomes and unemployment. In contrast, Russo promises to unfetter the market. Once elected, Russo (in addition to taking control of America’s borders) will replace the income tax with a small sales tax. Once The Blob’s blood supply has been choked off, we can all say hello to prosperity. And to peace. Liberals and conservatives who reject

unprovoked wars of aggression have no horse to back in Bush vs. Kerry. Russo will bring our troops home. Unlike the front-runners, he knows that an “empire of freedom” is a contradiction in terms. Clearly, his truly patriotic platform has the potential to draw votes from both the Right and the Left.

Speaking of patriotism, Russo’s definition of an American patriot is someone who “stands up for the Constitution and Bill of Rights.” Because Mr. Bush has checked the founding documents at the White House door, government policemen can, if they wish, lock you up without trial, spy on you, monitor the books you borrow from the library, or the sites you frequent on the Internet. Russo knows that the urgency of repealing the un-PATRIOT[ic] Act cannot be overstated.

Russo practically beams when he speaks of the liberty that is the American birthright. What a refreshing change he is from the default choices: the shifty-eyed Ewok and the Wizard of Oz Scarecrow.

All kidding aside, there is something to be said about having a self-made man in the White House. In Aaron Russo, we have someone who is not a political neophyte (he finished close in the Nevada Republican gubernatorial primary in 1998) and is an award-winning entertainment entrepreneur (he has managed Manhattan Transfer and Bette Midler and produced the classic comedy “Trading Places.”) Aaron Russo is a man who made his fortune not through well-connected friends or a felicitous marriage, but through productive and voluntary exchanges on the free market.

(Left) *WorldNet Daily*, commentary -- April 30, 2004

(Below) *The Indianapolis Star*, Indianapolis, Indiana -- April 25, 2004

## Indiana LP nominates Gividen

The Indiana **Libertarian Party** has chosen Kenn Gividen, a political activist and self-employed direct marketer from Columbus, as its 2004 gubernatorial candidate.

Gividen, 51, won the nomination over two candidates at a party convention Saturday in Indianapolis.

On his Web site, Gividen said he would seek to curb state spending and champion “libertarian principles of small, responsible government.”

Gividen is current chairman of the Libertarian Party of Bartholomew County and founder of the Libertarian Party Writers Bureau. Also at Saturday’s convention, the party nominated Joe Hauptmann, a Zionsville physics teacher, to run for state schools superintendent. Sam Goldstein, of Indianapolis, was chosen as a candidate for the Indiana House of Representatives in District 86.



Libertarian Party  
National Convention  
2004  
May 27-31 Atlanta, Georgia

## Libertarians head to Atlanta for convention

By Matthew C. Quinn

The **Libertarian Party** will nominate a presidential candidate in Atlanta next month with all the hoopla of a national convention.

But no one — including the party faithful — holds any illusion that a third-party candidate can win against President Bush or Democrat John Kerry.

Instead, the presidential run is about getting the Libertarian message out and building interest in the party, which advocates limited government.

“The No. 1 goal is to change public policy by electing candidates, and it’s much more likely we’d elect a local candidate,” said David Lockhart of Forest Park, the Georgia party’s political director. “The grass roots works best for us.”

More than 700 delegates are expected at the party’s five-day national convention over Memorial Day weekend, May

Divisions over the issue created a dust-up when some members objected to inviting Boortz, who supports the war, to speak at the convention. But the campaign to “Boot Boortz” was beaten back and he’s lined up to speak at a Saturday breakfast.

“There’s room for dissent,” said Getz. “We’re delighted to have him.”

Candidates for this year’s presidential nomination include Hollywood producer Aaron Russo, former syndicated radio talk host Gary Nolan, constitutional law teacher Michael Badnarik of Austin, Texas, and former California congressional candidate Dave Hollist. The convention will also choose a vice presidential candidate.

In 2000, the party’s presidential candidate, Harry Browne, received 384,431 votes, or 0.36 percent of the national total. In Georgia, he won 36,332 votes, or 1.4 percent.

Patrick Basham, senior fellow at the Cato Institute, a Washington-based research group that shares many of the Libertarian Party’s positions, said a large number of Americans subscribe to Libertarian positions.

The party’s problem, he said, is “how do you persuade people they are not wasting their votes” by casting them for a third-party nominee.

“It’s difficult to be optimistic,” he said. “Most people who want less government choose what they view as the lesser of two evils.”

The state and local levels are where the party’s best hopes lie. About 600 Libertarians hold offices across the country, 350 of them in elective posts that include an alderman in Davenport, Iowa, and a Superior Court judge in Orange County, Calif. No Libertarians are known to currently hold elective office in Georgia, Lockhart said. But the party is fielding about a dozen candidates this year for offices that include the U.S. Senate.

Ken Parmalee of Morrow, chairman of the Clayton County party, said the party is running five candidates in Clayton and Henry counties and has high hopes for gaining a state legislative seat.

“I’d say our chances are pretty decent,” he said. “Our chances are zero if we don’t run.”

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27-31, at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in downtown Atlanta. The schedule includes a blues concert featuring guitarist Jimmie Vaughan and a breakfast hosted by Atlanta’s best-known Libertarian syndicated radio talk show host, Neal Boortz.

And despite the fact it’s only symbolic, there will be a hotly contested fight to nominate a standard-bearer who will carry the party’s anti-tax, anti-war and pro-individual freedom banner into the presidential campaign.

The party opposes foreign aid and adventurism, wants the government to get out of regulating marriages and favors gun ownership, drug legalization and open immigration. Libertarians also want to eliminate state and federal income taxes and privatize many government services.

The party has also opposed the war in Iraq from the beginning, national spokesman George Getz said, though what he called a “vocal minority” supports the war.