

LIBERTY PLEDGE

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

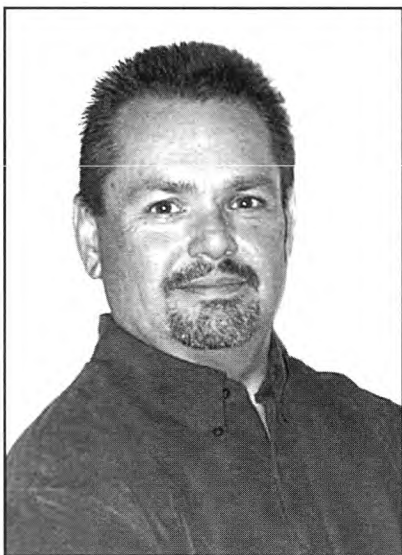
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newsletter

Party newcomer already planning political career

California member Kevin Maevers doubles his monthly pledge

Extreme confidence and commitment can be found in unexpected places. Although a relative newcomer to the Libertarian Party, Kevin Maevers speaks with the authority and assurance of a long time advocate. Since joining the Party in 2002, he has become a monthly pledger, engaged in local level activism, and is already planning his political career.



Kevin Maevers

Maevers, a land developer from California, never considered the LP until he began to listen to the Gary Nolan show while working for a radio station in the mid-1990s.

"Between listening to Gary Nolan and doing my own research, I found that I had far more in common with the Libertarian Party than with either of the major national parties," he said.

Maevers continued trying to live with the Republican Party, but found their moralistic policies distasteful. Upon realizing that even the Republicans had taken up the "regulate, tax and spend philosophy of Democrats," he was through with them.

One visit to the World's Smallest Political Quiz website and a read through the LP's statement of principles made the transition complete. Motivated by a combination of research and frustration, Maevers decided to "make the jump" and join the LP in 2002.

"I could no longer stomach a political party that was so far out of step with my personal beliefs," he said.

For Maevers, joining a movement is not a part-time affair. He is a serious political thinker who backs up his beliefs with action. He said, "I felt that there was room for improvement within the local organizations and that maybe I could provide some immediate assistance and even some leadership."

Having been involved with political campaigns since 1988 as support staff, Maevers felt he had experience to offer. He recently moved to Riverside County in California and is already involved in the local organization there.

Maevers also felt it was important to make a financial commitment to the Party and he chose to become a monthly pledger in 2003. "I firmly believe that it is my responsibility to financially support the party, especially if it is my desire to take an active role in the state and local organizations and also to represent the Party

in an upcoming election [2006]," he said.

Giving, for Maevers, is a way not only to help the LP meet its practical needs, but also a way to send a message.

He commented that even though the American people already "donate" much of their paychecks to the government in taxes, we remain "the kindest, most generous group of people in the world."

Philanthropy is a means of "financial protest," showing a better way to provide what our country needs.

Recently doubling his monthly pledge amount is another sign that Maevers plans on becoming increasingly involved. He said he was impressed by the integrity of the Party and the way his money is being handled. When some credit cards were double charged last month, Maevers found the candid apology honest and refreshing.

"I should follow my political convictions with my personal cash," he said. More practically, a career change has made it fiscally possible for him to contribute more.

Maevers has a keen sense of civic duty and prides himself on having voted in every election -- local or national -- since 1978. Ronald Reagan is a role model for Maevers, not with respect to policy, but certainly with his political style. Maevers met Reagan in 1971 during his tenure as governor of California, and he was struck by how Reagan's "power and talent of communication, personal drive, and political conviction had the ability to bring the people of the United States together," he said.

Maevers stays motivated by reading the Declaration of Independence, Constitution and Bill of Rights, which hang on his office wall. He also keeps up to date on policy issues by perusing the Heritage Foundation and Cato Institute websites.

Everything for Maevers seems to relate to his future career as a Libertarian political figure.

He states his desires in a matter-of-fact way that inspires confidence in his ability to follow through with his goals.

"It is my desire to run for office in 2006," he said with characteristic finality.

Maevers is currently pursuing a PhD in psychology and honing his public speaking skills "in anticipation of [his] future political career."

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— Kevin Maevers

Strong ‘constitution’ helps Libertarian candidate

By Susannah Rosenblatt

SALEM, Ore. — Michael Badnarik is hardly a household name. But some analysts are wondering if the Libertarian Party’s presidential nominee — almost entirely absent from the national media’s consciousness — might be pulling a Ralph Nader on the right.

Could Badnarik, a 50-year-old computer programmer from Austin, Texas, have cost President Bush a key state or two by attracting the votes of some conservatives, much as Democrats worry about Nader siphoning liberal voters from John Kerry?

At the least, Badnarik’s potential appeal to some conservatives is undeniable.

Gun rights? Check. Free trade? Check. Lowering taxes? Badnarik wants to scrap the Internal Revenue Service. In fact, he would like to abolish most of the federal government, along with public schools and welfare.

Badnarik got the Libertarian nomination after driving across the nation and explaining to audiences why he should be president, occasionally running out of cash to keep going.

Helped by an impressive debate performance in May at the nominating convention in Atlanta, Badnarik beat out two better-known opponents, producer Aaron Russo and talk show host Gary Nolan.

“To say I was a dark horse in the campaign is a blatant understatement,” Badnarik said recently while traveling to a speech at Willamette University in Salem, Ore.

Since his nomination, Badnarik has visited 42 states, secured ballot access in 48, raised nearly \$1 million, and left some pollsters wondering about his possible effect on the election.

In a race in which a state or two is “decided by a hair,” Badnarik “could be the kingmaker,” said Larry Jacobs, director of the 2004 Elections Project at the University of Minnesota’s Humphrey Institute.

Jacobs said the Libertarian ticket would be fortunate to draw 1% of the vote nationwide. But “there may be a few battleground states where they’re able to reach 1% or even 2%, perhaps tilting the [state] in John Kerry’s direction,” he said.

For his part, Badnarik has zeroed in on New Mexico and Nevada. He has aired television ads in both — \$60,000 in New Mexico, about \$50,000 in Nevada — and visited them.

The 33-year-old Libertarian Party espouses fiscal conservatism and a dramatically reduced federal government,

coupled with social progressivism, all under the umbrella of personal freedom.

He advocates the rapid removal of U.S. troops from Iraq, arguing that America is “not supposed to be policeman of the World.” He disagrees with the Bush administration’s doctrine of preemption and would attack nations harboring terrorists only if presented with clear evidence of a threat.

He also said that if the passengers aboard the planes that crashed into the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001, had had guns, the terrorists “wouldn’t have gotten past the beverage cart.”

Badnarik favors legalizing drugs and considers a constitutional ban on gay marriage “bigotry.” Abortion is a stickier question among Libertarians, and Badnarik describes the party as split on the issue.

Badnarik has struggled to make his voice heard. He was arrested with Green Party presidential hopeful David Cobb three weeks ago trying enter the second presidential debate at Washington University in St. Louis, but the stunt hardly made news.

“Michael has jokingly said we’d have to set ourselves on fire in the middle of the road to get attention,” said Badnarik’s assistant, Jon Airheart. “Of course, that only works once.”

More than one Texan in the Presidential race

By Kristen Mack

There’s more than one Texan on the ballot for president this year. Libertarian Michael Badnarik — the only third-party or independent presidential candidate on the Texas ballot — is from Austin.

Badnarik campaigned in Houston on Saturday [October 23] and spent the rest of his time on the trail in his home state.

“I’m a legitimate candidate from a legitimate party,” he said at a gathering of about 25 people.

Badnarik is actually on the ballot in more states than Ralph Nader. Badnarik is on 48 ballots. Nader is on 35.

He’s been traveling the country since January; he packed up his place in Austin, put all of his belongings in storage and hit the road.

Badnarik is running, he said, because he can’t vote for President Bush or Democratic candidate John Kerry and respect himself in the morning.

He cannot support a candidate who will continue the war in Iraq or operate government in a deficit, he said.

Badnarik says he wants to cost both Bush and Kerry the election, but at the same time he isn’t packing his bags for the White House just yet.

“We are just beginning this fight,” he said. “We will continue to exist, and we will restore liberty.”

(Left) *Los Angeles Times*, Los Angeles, California – October 29, 2004

(Below) *Houston Chronicle*, Houston, Texas – October 30, 2004

Bob Barr goes for the Libertarian Party

By Tom Baxter and Jim Galloway

Defeat alters a politician. Some become permanent reservoirs of anger. Others simply crumple in the face of wholesale rejection.

Bob Barr adapted. He became more interesting.

Perhaps you saw last night's airing of the Atlanta Press Club/WPBA-TV debate on the proposed amendment to ban same-sex unions. Barr was one of six panelists — and the only one to upset audience expectations. The man who nearly chased Bill Clinton out of the White House declared Georgia's gay-marriage amendment to be so poorly drafted that it should be kicked back to the legislature for a re-write.

But for his razor-edged defeat by Paul Coverdell in 1992, in a runoff for the U.S. Senate nomination, it might have been Barr who we consider the father of the modern Georgia Republican party. Barr instead settled for Congress, until his 2002 defeat by GOP insider John Linder.

The former federal prosecutor is as conservative as ever. But no longer does he feel obliged to carry Republican water. Gay marriage is one bucket he's declined — an issue of "no urgency," he says. And George W. Bush is another.

He won't vote for Bush. But he won't vote for John Kerry, either. "I have serious questions about both presidential candidates," he said.

Does that mean he's voting Libertarian?

"Yep," Barr said Thursday. That would be Michael Badnarik.

It's not unexpected. Barr spoke at the Libertarian national convention in Atlanta in May. Libertarians note that Barr has invited Joseph Seehusen, the party's executive director, to be a guest on his radio program two days before the presidential election.

In the final weeks of the campaign, Bush the Rancher has been roping in the hard conservatives who have strayed over issues such as the deficit, the Patriot Act, even the war in Iraq. On Tuesday, Pat Buchanan gave his blessing, however unenthusiastic, to Bush.

"A presidential election is a Hatfield-McCoy thing, a tribal affair. No matter the quarrels inside your family, when the shooting starts, you come home to your own," Buchanan writes in *American Conservative* magazine.

Barr noted Buchanan's decision to be lassoed. "I was surprised," he said. "I was disappointed."

The Patriot Act isn't Barr's sole disagreement with the Bush administration. But it's the most emblematic. "Conservatives of all people ought to stand up for the belief that there needs to be limits on executive power. [The Bush administration] says that terror trumps everything. To me, nothing should trump the Bill of Rights."

Some versions of the truth hurt. Others sting no more than a charred, third-degree burn.

(Left) *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, Atlanta, Georgia – October 21, 2004

(Below) *New York Times*, New York, New York – October 24, 2004

Fox News commercial seen as a 'Nader Nibble'

By John Tierney

A Nader nibble from the right?

A commercial made its national debut on Thursday on the Fox News Channel, aimed directly at Mr. Bush's Republican base. It starts with a middle-aged man disgustingly dropping his *Wall Street Journal* on the kitchen table. "What kind of conservative runs half-trillion-a-year deficits? Gets us into an unwinnable war?" he asks his wife, but adds helplessly, "I can't vote for Kerry."

"Then don't," she says, cheerily suggesting an alternative who is not quite yet a household name: Michael Badnarik, a computer consultant from Austin, Tex.

Mr. Badnarik is the presidential candidate of the Libertarian Party, which says he could "Naderize" Mr. Bush. A recent Zogby/Reuters national poll showed him tied with Ralph Nader at one percentage point each - not much, but possibly critical. Unlike Mr. Nader, Mr. Badnarik is on the ballot of every battleground state except New Hampshire.

"If we have a rerun of Florida 2000 in Pennsylvania, Michael Badnarik could be the kingmaker by drawing independent and Republican votes from Bush," said Larry Jacobs, director of the 2004 Election Project at the Humphrey Institute of the University of Minnesota, which has been tracking third-party candidates.

Mr. Badnarik, reached by telephone on Thursday while campaigning in Michigan, said that polls commissioned by his campaign showed him at 2 percent in Wisconsin, 3 percent in Nevada and 5 percent in New Mexico.

He dispatched quickly with most of the major campaign issues. Foreign policy? "I would be bringing our troops home from Iraq and 135 other countries." Taxes? "I would eliminate the I.R.S. completely." Health care? "Of all the things I want the government out of health care is probably the first thing."

The only issue he ducked was abortion. Although the Libertarian platform supports abortion rights, he said, the party is almost evenly divided on the question. "It's not a religious issue," Mr. Badnarik explained. "It's a property-rights issue: at what point does the baby take ownership of its own body? I do not have a clear-cut answer."

Voting Libertarian is not just for conservatives

By Rebecca Cook

After all the time, money, and energy spent on the 2004 elections, everybody overlooked the one powerful voting block that may determine the next governor of Washington state: gay Libertarians.

That's no joke — and in hindsight, it's so obvious. Libertarian gubernatorial candidate Ruth Bennett is an out lesbian who appealed to liberal voters by making gay marriage rights the main issue in her campaign. One pre-election poll found that most Bennett supporters identified themselves as Democrats.

At last count, she had more than 50,000 votes — a pittance, but a huge factor in a race that will probably be decided by half that amount. Democrat Christine Gregoire was leading by about 4,000 votes late Friday against Republican Dino Rossi, with hundreds of thousands of ballots yet to be counted. The race remains too close to call.

Conventional wisdom says Libertarian candidates — with their focus on property rights, free markets and limited government — appeal to conservative Republicans. But Libertarians' laissez-faire philosophy can extend to social issues such as abortion, marriage and drug policy, which means they can appeal just as strongly to liberal Democrats.

Conventional wisdom was dashed against the rocks of political reality in Washington this election. Libertarians are making a difference in several crucial, close races — and they're just as likely to get votes from Democrats as they are from Republicans.

Bennett deliberately pursued liberal votes in a strategy designed to make both parties pay attention to Libertarians. Her only campaign ad ran in the Seattle Gay News.

"It wasn't that I like one candidate more than the other," Bennett said. "We want to influence the outcome."

If Libertarians equally threaten Republican and Democratic victories, Bennett reasons, Republicans and Democrats should be equally eager to court Libertarians — or risk being outflanked by one in their next campaign.

"We can run really hard on big government and gun rights issues, or we can choose to run on social justice issues," Bennett said.

At first Bennett's strategy seems Nader-esque — if she peels enough votes away from Gregoire, the winner will be a Republican who opposes same-sex marriage rights instead of a Democrat whose position is much closer to Bennett's own.

But Bennett said she'll have no regrets if that happens. She believes her Libertarian leverage will better serve her cause in the long run.

"I can go to either of them and say 'Look, the issue of same sex marriage is very important. So Rossi, I don't want you doing any constitutional amendment crap,'" Bennett said. "Any Libertarian in the race is going to get at least 1 to 2 percent. Do you want it to come from your votes or from Democratic votes?"

Bennett explained, "It's not that we want to do this as threats. But this is how politics works."

The Libertarian vote affected close legislative races as well. A prime example is District 26, representing the Gig Harbor area. Both legislative incumbents there felt the sting of Libertarian competition, coming from both the left and the right.

(Left) *The Sun*, Bremerton, Washington — November 7, 2004

(Below) *The Sun-Sentinel*, Miami, Florida — November 2, 2004

Gonzalez provides needed opposition in Florida race

By Madeline Baró Diaz

With most of the votes counted, U.S. Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart, R-Miami, had an overwhelming lead over Libertarian candidate Frank González in District 21, which includes parts of western Broward and Miami-Dade counties.

González is a Cuban-American who opposes the U.S. embargo on Cuba, government regulation, the war on Iraq and the Patriot Act. Although Libertarians are seen by many as being in line with Republicans in their quest for lower taxes and smaller government, González played up his similarities with Democrats in an attempt to make inroads in a district where Diaz-Balart is seen as an effective congressman.

González, who has worked as a flight attendant and a waiter, got on the ballot by personally collecting more than 3,000 signatures at shopping centers and other locations.

"I was expecting better," González said Tuesday evening after seeing the results, "To the extent that I've gotten what I've gotten, it's been definitely a decent return."

González noted that he did better than a Democrat who challenged Diaz-Balart a few years ago. González said that perhaps if he had run as a Democrat he would have done better, but decided to stick to his guns as a Libertarian.

Diaz-Balart, one of three Cuban-American U.S. representatives from Florida, is known for strong constituent service and for work on foreign policy. He is a staunch supporter of strong measures against the Cuban government and a proponent of programs that would help some immigrants get permanent residency or guest worker status. He also supports affordable health care and tax cuts.