

LIBERTY PLEDGE

newsletter

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LNC sets budget and “core goals” for 2000

The Libertarian National Committee (LNC) has approved a record-setting budget for the party in 2000, and has agreed on a set of “core goals” for the coming year that include 50-state ballot access, 218 Congressional candidates, and more membership growth.

“The LNC is determined to make 2000 as successful a year as possible for the LP,” said national chair David Bergland. “We’re putting the elements into place that will let our party and our candidates build on our past growth — and accomplish even more in 2000.”

At its year-end meeting

in Washington, DC on December 11-12, 1999, the LNC approved a 2000 budget of \$5 million — which reflects both the party’s increased membership and heightened contribution levels of a presidential year.

TV advertising

With that revenue, the party plans to purchase at least \$1 million worth of TV and other media advertising, produce a half-hour television outreach program, and achieve 50 state (plus DC) ballot access for the presidential ticket, said Bergland.

In addition, the LNC set “core” goals of fielding a

majority of U.S. House seats (218), and growing the party to at least 46,000 members and contributors by the 2000 Convention, and 60,000 by the end of the coming year.

Other measurable goals set by the LNC include:

- To run at least 2,000 candidates for office.

- To launch the party’s new Internet site no later than March, 11, 2000.

- To retain party ballot status in 28-31 states after the November election.

- To offer more campaign and activist training seminars and workshops.

- To generate at least 130 media contacts every

month, with special emphasis on getting on television.

“Is this agenda ambitious?” asked Bergland. “Yes. But is it achievable? It is if we want to move our nation in a Libertarian direction.”

Ex-prosecutor joins Michigan LP

A former Democratic county prosecutor in Michigan has joined the LP — saying he wants to be part of a “party of principle [not] politics.”

In mid-December, Ghazey Aleck II, who served as the Clare County prosecutor from 1992-1996, quit the Democratic Party and became a Libertarian.

“This is the only party that is truly dedicated to the Constitution,” explained the 38-year-old attorney. “I’d rather be with the 1% who are right than with the 99% who are wrong.”

Aleck had returned to private law practice in 1996, rather than run for re-election to the partisan position. He said he may run for office again in the future — but this time as a Libertarian.

“If I don’t do something now, there won’t be any freedom left in our country for [our] kids,” he said.

Georgia LP campaigns for ballot access reform

The Libertarian Party of Georgia has joined a coalition to reform that state’s worst-in-the-nation ballot access laws — and has already gotten a Libertarian-crafted bill introduced into the General Assembly.

The party’s goal in 2000: To get that bill — H.B. 672, The Voters Choice Act — through the legislature and passed into law, so the party “can run many more serious candidates for [lower-level] races,” said LPGA vice chair Michael Cartwright, who is spearheading the effort.

H.B. 672 would dramatically reduce the number of signatures it takes to qualify

for non-statewide races like U.S. House and State Assembly. Currently, while statewide ballot access in Georgia is fairly easy, qualifying for lower-level races requires 10 times more signatures than the typical state around the USA — and “twice that as the next worst state,” said Cartwright.

Less than 1%

The laws are so tough that less than 1% of the candidates in Georgia U.S. House races are from any third party, he noted.

To remedy that, Cartwright wrote a proposed ballot access reform bill in

1999, and convinced three state legislators to sponsor it. The bill made it through the Governmental Affairs Committee, but then stalled.

To get H.B. 672 moving again during the 2000 legislative session, Cartwright also helped form a statewide ballot access reform alliance called the Voter Choice Coalition.

Composed of members of the Libertarian, Green, Natural Law, Reform, and Constitution parties, the coalition has set up a website and is collecting signatures on a cyberpetition to urge legislators to support the bill, he said.

Libertarian Party builds on minimalist message

By Mark Sullivan
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

WESTFORD - Members of the tiny Massachusetts Libertarian Party realize theirs is not a household name. "Are you with the libertines?" a well-meaning librarian asked a handful of party loyalists as they arrived recently at Fletcher Library for a meeting of the newly formed Libertarian Town Committee.

The gathering of eight grass-roots activists sparked the curiosity of one elderly library patron, who inquired, tongue in cheek: "Are you plotting to take over the world?"

Kamal Jain of Littleton, a Libertarian candidate for state representative, recalls his response: "We're not fo-

cusing on the world yet. We're starting locally."

Carrying a message of minimalist government, individual liberty, and free-market economics, the Libertarian Party numbers 7,600 registered voters in Massachusetts, but has been making a concerted effort to increase its base in the Bay State.

Libertarian committees recently have been launched in nine cities and towns, including Westford and Chelmsford locally, and are being formed in 15 other communities, among them Arlington, Burlington, Lexington, Littleton, and Woburn.

The party lists 30 candidates in legislative races across the state, and expects as many as a thousand volunteers to assist former state Libertarian chairwoman Carla Howell

in her recently announced campaign for the US Senate seat held by Democrat Edward M. Kennedy.

Libertarian activists believe their message of personal freedom and small government will hold appeal for many of the state's 1.8 million unenrolled voters, who make up more than half of the electorate, as well as for many of the state's nearly 1.4 million registered Democrats and 488,000 registered Republicans.

Libertarians argue for maximum personal freedom, and for the repeal of laws governing drug use, gun ownership, sex between consenting adults, marriage, and other matters of individual choice. They would end federal and state income taxes, end government subsidies to business
LIBERTARIANS, Page 12

Libertarian Party building in Bay State

LIBERTARIANS

Continued from Page 1

and agriculture, end affirmative action, tariffs, and foreign aid.

"We're the party of principle, dedicated to the proposition that government should be limited to what it does best," said Christine Schoaff of Westford, executive director of the Libertarian Association of Massachusetts.

Schoaff said private citizens acting voluntarily on the local level are better equipped than a faceless and far-off government to serve their own community, whether it be supporting libraries or schools or needy neighbors.

Party leaders hope to capitalize on its newfound ballot status as the state's third major political party, a designation secured when Libertarian candidate Howell pulled 6 percent of the statewide vote for auditor last fall.

Under state law, a party qualifies as "major" when it pulls more than 3 percent of the vote in a statewide election. With that status comes the right to conduct a state primary for the party's presidential candidates.

Lest they suffer the fate of the Reform Party, which briefly enjoyed major party status in Massachusetts after Ross Perot's nearly 9 percent showing in the 1996 presidential election only to lose it when the party did not offer a statewide candidate last fall, Libertarians are building a grass-roots base they hope will ensure a steady stream of candidates and their continued standing as a third-party alternative.

"When our party is fully built, we'll have a local organization in every city and town," state chairman Elias Israel of Burlington said in this month's state party newsletter, Massachusetts Liberty. Israel, who was the Libertarian candidate for lieutenant governor in 1998, said, "We will have activists in every part of the state, and they'll know how to organize... how to run candidates for office, how to get out the Libertarian vote, how to publicize the Libertarian name..."

But while Howell, buttressed by an endorsement by the Boston Herald, received more than 100,000 votes in the non-marquee election for state auditor last fall, the party's gubernatorial



GLOBE STAFF PHOTO / MARK WILSON

Libertarian official Christine Schoaff (left) offers a tax-cut petition to Susan Eckhardt of Chelmsford outside a Westford market.

ticket of Dean Cook and Israel barely registered on the radar screen, with only 32,000 votes out of more than 1.9 million cast.

Nationally, the Libertarian Party estimates its membership at more than 162,000. Party presidential candidate Harry Browne, an investment adviser, received 485,000 votes nationwide in 1996.

But Massachusetts Libertarians express optimism over their chances, seeing a prime audience in the Bay State's independent voters, and a weak rival in the Massachusetts GOP for the loyalties of those who support limited government.

"We want to be the second major party in this state," said Schoaff. "On average, 60-70 percent of elections statewide for representative and senator are uncontested. That's where our statewide effort is now. We want to give voters a choice."

"We are consistently in favor of reducing government and cutting taxes," she said. "When you ask people, 80 to 90 percent say government is too big, and 90 percent say they pay too much in taxes. We want to be elected because we want to fix this."

The message has apparently resonated with some first-time voters in their early 20s, who account for nearly half of the hundred or so registered Libertarians in the Nashoba Valley, and young high-tech executives, whose reference point

is the ultimate free market of cyberspace.

State chairman Israel, 36, works in the software industry, as does 31-year-old executive director Schoaff. Littleton legislative candidate Jain, 30, works in information systems when not reading Ayn Rand and free-market economists of the Austrian School.

Westford town committee chairman Brian DeRosa, a 20-year-old student at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell who runs his own Web-design firm, estimated that there are 35 registered Libertarians in Westford, between 25 and 30 in Chelmsford, and more than 100 in Lowell.

Heather Ashcraft, a 20-year-old student at Tufts University and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts whose parents live in Westford, is running for state representative from the Fenway section of Boston.

"My issues are freedom, personal liberty, lower taxes, and the government butting out of my life," she said. "It's not somebody else's responsibility to wipe your nose and make sure you don't beat up your neighbor."

Ashcraft was among a half-dozen Libertarians working the Market Basket shopping plaza in Westford one recent Saturday, gathering signatures for a Citizens for Limited Taxation and Government ballot petition to lower the state income tax to 5 percent.

The activists spoke of their favorite philosophers - Thomas Jefferson, John Locke, Rand, the economists F.A. Hayek and Ludwig von Mises - and their own views on individual liberty in such areas as abortion, home schooling, gun ownership, and drug and tobacco use.

"We are pro-choice in everything," said Schoaff. "If you're not harming someone else, someone else shouldn't tell you not to do something."

For now, increasing the Libertarian Party's name recognition remains a pressing challenge for members, who say they constantly find themselves dismissing mistaken associations with '60s hippies or the far-right perennial candidate Lyndon LaRouche (who is, they note, a Democrat).

"My parents were shocked when they heard I had become a Libertarian," confessed Ashcraft. "They thought it was a dirty word."

Libertarians offer voters local option

New city committee spearheads drive for less government, taxation

By Anne Scadding
TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

WALTHAM — They are advocates for small government and less taxation, and promise that like-minded Waltham voters will have a new choice when it comes election time.

Nine people from across the city joined together in August to form the Waltham Libertarian City Committee.

Daniel MacKenzie, chairman of the committee, pledged that while his group may have been quiet during the recent city elections, residents will now come to know their name.

"It's been a little frustrating over these last couple of months. We got going just a little too late to have anybody in the city election on Nov. 2, so we were kind of lying low," MacKenzie said. "Now, we're ready to step up our activity and become more prominent in the city."

While the Libertarian Party was founded in Colorado in 1971, it only recently regained its major party

status in this state during the November 1998 election, MacKenzie said.

MacKenzie was first drawn to the Libertarian Party four years ago by its message of less government and lower taxes, he said.

"I've seen my government just become too large over time, too large and too intrusive," MacKenzie said. "My main motivation was the high rate of taxation I'm facing under the Democratic and Republican-controlled government."

The party's state chairman, Elias Israel, has mandated that one of the most important tasks, statewide, is for it to form city and town committees, MacKenzie said.

LIBERTARIANS, Page A3



Daniel MacKenzie

LIBERTARIANS, From A1

MacKenzie, who moved to Waltham from Belmont last year, began to attend monthly Libertarian activist meetings, which are held at Bickford's restaurant on Main Street.

"I started attending the regular activist meetings, and right about that time, Elias Israel made the statement that it was very important to get these city and town committees formed," MacKenzie said. "So, I just networked."

To form a city committee, state law requires a political party to form at least one ward committee first, which in this case is Ward 2, MacKenzie said.

In a press release, MacKenzie described the Libertarian philosophy as "simple."

"You own yourself. Your money, body, property and time belong to you," he wrote. "Government should not interfere with your life as long as you are not hurting anybody

else."

Citing a local example, MacKenzie noted that this year's city budget increased by 6 percent "with virtually no opposition from any city councilor."

Walter Ziobro, a member of the city committee, has been a member of the Libertarian Party since the early 1970s, shortly after it was formed.

"I came to the Libertarians when I heard there was a party that espoused a point of view I believe in," Ziobro said. "I said, this is a good match here."

While the committee's goal is to elect candidates to office, it also hopes to be an eye-opener for voters, he said.

"I hope at the very least we bring new ideas to the community. We hope, at some point, to win elections," Ziobro said. "I think we have a value in bringing our special perspective to issues here."

Gubernatorial candidate favors medicinal marijuana

By BARRY SMITH
Gazette Raleigh Bureau

RALEIGH — Libertarian Barbara Howe launched her campaign for governor with a platform that supports the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes, tax credits for education and health care and alternative crops for tobacco farmers who may struggle as a result of the tobacco settlement.

"It is particularly senseless to keep terminal patients from relieving their pain with marijuana, if that is what they want to do," Howe said.

She said she would use every power available to the governor to end such a prohibition.

Howe, 46, is a Monroe native and resides in Oxford. She has not held political office, but is no newcomer to politics. She ran for North Carolina House of Representatives in 1992, for Congress in 1996 and for the U.S. Senate in 1998, all on the Libertarian Party ticket.

Howe supports lifting the cap on the number of charter schools and "Taxpayer Choice Scholarships," which would allow some tax credits for private education. She said introducing free-market competition would improve all education, both

public and private.

She said she plans to cut the regulation and bureaucracy that decreases farm profits. She also wants to help farmers find alternatives to tobacco, such as corn, hemp and soy.

"Many of you may not know that current law favors Canadian farmers over our own," she said. "In Canada farmers are allowed to grow the valuable hemp crop. It's an outrage that North Carolina farmers are denied this same opportunity."

Howe supports redirecting law enforcement efforts from "victimless crimes" to "real crimes like murder, robbery and rape." She also pledged to protect the "basic right of self-defense — the right to keep and bear arms."

▲ *The Daily News Tribune*
Waltham, Massachusetts
November 29, 1999

► *The Gaston Gazette*
Gastonia, North Carolina
November 10, 1999

Wayland Libertarian takes on Kennedy

By Steve LeBlanc
CNC STATEHOUSE BUREAU

She would end the federal income tax, kill off the Department of Education, disband the Food and Drug Administration and privatize Social Security.

If Hollywood needed to invent a challenger to Democratic Sen. Edward Kennedy, they couldn't have created anyone whose views differ more than Libertarian Carla Howell.

"The reason I'm running is because Sen. Kennedy is a big government, high-tax Democrat and the Republican leadership will give us a big government, high-tax candidate," said the Wayland resident, who

kicked off her candidacy for U.S. Senate at a campaign rally in Waltham on Friday night.

"Small government is beautiful," she added, echoing her campaign theme.

When Howell says small, she means it.

As a Libertarian, Howell believes the role of the federal government should be limited to defense. Virtually every other initiative - from housing to environmental protection to the "war on drugs" - should be turned back to the states, placed in private hands or abandoned.

Ending those programs means ending the federal income tax. That money would be better spent by individuals and private charities than the government, Howell said.

"What small government leaves us is the resources to take care of our needy, educate our children and care for our elderly," she said. "Reform doesn't work. I propose huge tax cuts and huge spending cuts now. We must be bold."

For Howell, "being bold" means drastic and immediate cuts. By chopping the entire "alphabet soup" of federal programs at once, Howell hopes to avoid the partisan

bickering that crops up when individual initiatives are targeted for cuts.

Even Howell concedes her candidacy is a long shot at best.

Kennedy has held the Senate seat for more than 30 years and is a Democratic icon in what is still largely a Democratic state. In past elections he has fended off the challenges of better-known and better-funded candidates than Howell.

A spokesman for Kennedy said the state's senior senator is gearing up for the 2000 campaign.

"Sen. Kennedy is proud of his record in the Senate for the people of Massachusetts and he looks forward to the campaign," said spokesman Will Keyser.

Despite the odds, Howell insists she is in the race to win. She hopes to raise up to \$1 million, although to date she has raised just over \$10,000, she said. She also plans to take her message statewide and onto the Internet.

"Third parties can win," she said, pointing to the unlikely success of Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura.

But Howell was quick to portray even a loss at the ballot box as a win for her new party.

"We will win in either case. If I win I will go to the Senate. If I don't win, we will grow bigger. People will believe they have a choice," she said.

Howell is already a veteran of Massachusetts politics.

Last year she ran for state auditor and captured 6 percent of the vote - more than 100,000 ballots. In Framingham, she won 1,233 of 18,602 votes. Howell's relatively strong showing means the Libertarian Party is now considered an official party by the state.

That designation is more of a psychological boost than anything else. Howell hopes it will win her the right to debate Kennedy before the 2000 election.

"I propose huge tax cuts and huge spending cuts now. We must be bold."

Carla Howell



PHOTO BY MARK FISSETTE

Libertarian Carla Howell kicked off her run for the U.S. Senate seat held by Ted Kennedy at the Waltham Weston Hotel Friday night.

The party is also hoping to field candidates in two dozen Statehouse races next year.

"We are growing very strong," said Howell, 44, who has lived in Wayland for the past 10 years and works as a management consultant.

Howell isn't the only challenger hoping to unseat Kennedy.

Pro-life activist Philip Lawler, former editor for the Boston Catholic Archdiocese's newspaper The Pilot, has already announced he will run against Kennedy as the candidate for the tiny Constitution Party of Massachusetts.

And Republican Plymouth District Attorney Michael Sullivan is publicly considering jumping into the contest to represent the GOP.

Howell acknowledged that her

zeal for smaller government may not be shared by all, but said she is determined to give voters a choice. She said smaller government will reawaken a work ethic and sense of community that big government has stifled.

It will also prove to be an economic boon to families, she claimed.

"When we eliminate all of the programs, when we say we need to start fresh and give people back their money, that's a huge amount of prosperity," she said. "Many people would be happy to make that trade in exchange for prosperity."

The one exception Libertarians make is for defense.

Howell said the true function of the federal government is to pro-

tect tenation from outside military aggression.

But she even defines that narrowly. If elected Howell favors pulling troops out of all foreign countries and conflicts. The way for the United States to have a positive influence on the rest of the world is through trade and freecommerce, not through the military, she said.

"They (other countries) don't have soldiers stationed in Framingham," she said. "We need to open our borders and trade. This is how to reach out to the rest of the world in a positive, peaceful way."

In the end, Howell said, she will win or lose based on her views about small government.

"Everyone else talks small government," she said. "They talk the talk, they don't walk the walk."

■ www.harrybrowne2000.org — Harry Browne is the leading contender for the Libertarian Party. Probably because the Libertarian Party almost is ignored by the mainstream media, this Web site describes the party's views as much as Browne's. In the past, netizens have been overwhelmingly Libertarian, so slick techno-gimmicks aren't needed and weren't used.

▲ *The Daily News Tribune*
Waltham, Massachusetts, November 8, 1999

► *The Tribune-Review*
Greensburg, Pennsylvania, September 5, 1999