



Published for friends and supporters of the Libertarian Party

Liberty Pledge

NEWSLETTER

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Libertarian tells FDA bureaucrats: Privatize!

How many Libertarians have a chance to stand before an audience of Food & Drug Administration bureaucrats and bluntly inform them that their jobs should be turned over to private industry?

LP member Dr. Paul Smith had that opportunity on July 31st in Portland, Oregon, as a guest speaker at the annual convention of the Western Association of Federal Drug Officials — and his speech was so warmly received that he's been tentatively invited back next year.

"The reaction was definitely positive," said Smith about his speech, which focused on "what the [FDA] might do differently," from a free market perspective.

"I emphasized that we all want safe drugs and nutritious foods, and [their] mission to ensure these is very important. I pointed out, though, that their alliance with government ultimately thwarts [the FDA's] mission because no matter how cleverly you disguise it, behind every action you take lies the 'gun' you have been given by the government. And scientific inquiry cannot proceed at gunpoint."

Smith said he got his biggest laugh when he compared the FDA to the mythical chimera "which has the head of a lion, the body of a goat, and the tail of a serpent. Likewise, the FDA has lions in its leadership who roar loudly to provide the requisite noise to keep funding coming, the body of goats — or more precisely, scapegoats — who do all the work, and who are in turn wagged by that serpentine tail, Congress."

And that, said Smith, is the real problem with the FDA — "Its only real 'customer' is Congress. Contrast this to an organization like the Snell Foundation, which oversees bicycle and motorcycle helmet safety as a private organization. I pointed out how rapidly and effectively the industry responded to consumer demand for well-designed bicycle helmets, and contrasted this to several well-known FDA fiascoes, including the silicone hearings and the great cranberry scare."

The solution? Complete privatization of the FDA, argued Smith, who noted that "rational decisions are seldom made in the glare of the media. But as a public entity, dependent upon Congress for funding, [the FDA] has to be in the public spotlight by their very nature, and to ensure that Congress continues to fund them." Smith said afterwards that one listener told him that his remarks were "right on target," and another requested a copy of his speech.

Smith is a long-time Libertarian activist and a health care advisor for the Cascade Policy Institute.

National News Notes

Another newspaper columnist joins LP

Another newspaper columnist has joined the parade of journalists embracing the Libertarian Party.

In the *Dearborn Times-Herald* (Michigan) on August 6, 1995, columnist Tom Edwards announced: "I finally made a leap of faith! I've rejoined the Libertarian Party after a lapse of nearly 20 years. The LP platform is one of the most reasonable and rational documents I've read since the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights."

Gorman starts legislative "Friends"

The annual New Hampshire legislative session is over, but State Representative Don Gorman has left a legacy of liberty behind — the "Friends of the Constitution" caucus.

"These are basically Libertarian-type folks, even though most of them are registered Republican," reported Gorman about the group, already several dozen strong. "We've focused on the First and Second Amendments so far." Gorman said the "mission statement" of the group is to uphold the U.S. and state Constitutions — and that the members are 'as tough as nails and won't back down.'

"Libertarian" — Now it's an award, too

"Libertarian" is not just a popular political label anymore — now it's an award. *The Daily Press* newspaper in Victorville, California, has instituted the "Libertarian Achievement Award," to be presented to the area's "leading advocate of economic liberty." In its announcement of the award, the paper noted: "*The Daily Press* believes that Libertarian principles are the keys to a free economy's success."

Nancy Lord wins major "War on Drugs" case

Libertarian attorney Nancy Lord achieved a major victory against the "War on Drugs" last month, winning the acquittal of three men of felony charges of illegally cultivating marijuana in Madera, CA. Lord said she successfully defended the men by appealing to the jury's "sense of justice and conscience."

The defendants had been arrested after planting sterile cannabis seeds as a protest against laws prohibiting the cultivation of industrial hemp. "Their actions were clearly a protest, and acknowledged by all involved as such," said Lord.

Lord said she faced a hostile judge during the trial — but "the tactics of the court backfired. The jury was clearly insulted by the high-handed attitude of the judge, and moved to acquit the three defendants." The victory — which saved the defendants from a three-year term and a \$10,000 fine — proved that "Liberty and justice can happen one jury at a time," said Lord.

"Most of Livingston County is Libertarian, they just don't know it yet."

Livingston County Libertarian Party
background information sheet

Libertarians may locate state office in Brighton

By Fred Menko
STAFF WRITER

A background sheet prepared by the Livingston County Libertarian Party states way down at the bottom, "Most of Livingston County is Libertarian, they just don't know it yet."

Three hundred county residents knew it enough to get together earlier this year and organize a county committee.

And those numbers might strike some fear into the county's dominant political party. The Livingston County Republicans boast a mailing list of approximately 400 people, but local party chair Dan Garber is quick to point out many more voters identify with the party.

"Based on votes in the county, we'd say there are more (Republicans) than that," Garber said.

Garber supports the Libertarians' efforts to form a party in the county.

"I encourage it," Garber said. "I think the Libertarian philosophy is similar to the Republican philosophy on many issues. I think it creates more interest and provides a different perspective on some issues."

Supporting the party's efforts are easy for Garber, who doesn't believe the party is in a position to steal any county seats real soon.

"I don't believe (the Libertarians can win)," Garber said. "But, I think they are certainly going to be in position to give the voters a way to express their dissatisfaction with the two major parties."

And Libertarians believe their timing is good because of the growing disenchantment with the major parties.

Although, the Libertarians are a relatively new party to Michigan's political scene, said Doug MacDonald, the party's first county chair, the party's success is the result of the disenchantment voters have had in recent years with Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives.

"One of the main issues behind the disenchantment of voters is this loss of identity," MacDonald said. "There are many people who consider themselves liberal, but don't agree with what liberals say. The word 'liberal' doesn't mean what it meant when they made it part of their identity."

And government continues to grow bigger every year and the county's two biggest parties don't seem to offer a change.

"Next year, we will spend more money, we will have more rules and regulations," MacDonald said. "Government will keep getting bigger. When '96 comes around, we will not see real change. This is why there is a need for a third party."

On Sunday, Aug. 6, the Libertarians threw a state party picnic at the Silver Fox Estates Homeowners Association Pavilion in Brighton.

The county's move toward the Libertarian party has been noticed by the party's state organization, which has named Brighton its first pick for the location of a state office.

The reason Livingston County was chosen was because of the growth and because of the support Jon Coon got here, as well as the fact that it's near the metro area and on the way to Lansing — which is where we all hope to be going," MacDonald said.

Libertarians posturing to win elections at the local level

Livingston County voters can expect to find the Libertarians on their ballots in upcoming years.

Although the county party won't be supporting its local candidates while it invests in its infrastructure, local party chair Doug MacDonald said, the Libertarians are watching many of the issues in the local government units.

"We watch all of the recall drives that are going on and we think this represents the need for the Libertarian Party in Livingston County," MacDonald

said. "We intend to run people for the local races and for the 66th House seat."

A platform sub-committee has been formed, MacDonald said, but has not been active yet.

MacDonald said for the first few years the Libertarians may only affect campaigns by stealing votes from Republicans and Democrats. But, he hopes it will be only short-term.

"My goal is not to be election spoiler," MacDonald said. "It is to win. If we have to cross a few elections as election spoilers we will, but our goal is to win."

Last year, the Libertarian party recorded 3,224 votes in Livingston County — the second largest percentage of the popular vote in any county in Michigan. Macomb County had a 7.11 percent Libertarian vote, while 6.94 percent of Livingston County voters cast votes for Libertarians.

The party's philosophy supports a low level of social and economic control or restraints, MacDonald said.

"There're a lot of different ways you can sum it up," MacDonald said. "The way I like to sum it up is we believe that people should be free to live their lives however they wish as long as they hurt nobody else."

MacDonald is relatively new to the party having only discovered the group during Jon Coon's 1994

run for U.S. Senate.

"What's really fascinating is that I was a Libertarian philosophically to begin with," MacDonald said. "Before I found the Libertarian party I voted for one party more than the other, but was never really satisfied."

The problem for MacDonald was discovering to which party he really belonged.

"I followed politics more closely than most and I didn't know much about the Libertarian Party," MacDonald said. "Frankly, I didn't know how too many of the voters can know what they're about when they don't get to speak and share their platform."

The Libertarians began holding monthly meetings on the second Monday of every month at 6:30 p.m. Their most recent meeting

was Monday at Mexican Jones, 675 W. Grand River Avenue, in Brighton.

The group's discussion topic was "Is the U.S. Government violating the second amendment?"

The group has already held two meetings this year. The first topic was first amendment violations by the government and the second topic was the raid on Waco.

Although the topics, like the raid at Waco, are also rallying points for groups like the Michigan Militia, MacDonald said, members of the party don't necessarily agree with the militant group.

"This is not a militia issue," MacDonald said. "One of the problems with the current Waco investigation is that it seems to be political."

"It seems to be one party pointing the finger at the other. We see a pattern starting of more and more government intrusion. Some of it seems to be illegal."

MacDonald believes the federal government should only provide a military, a criminal court system and a civil court system.

"Police duties should be left to the state or local government units, he added.

"I think the vast majority of what the government is doing it shouldn't be doing," MacDonald said.

One of the things the Libertarian Party feels is that the federal government shouldn't be policing the use and trafficking of drugs, MacDonald said.

"It's also one of the issues the voter can't stomach or dislikes for any number of reasons," MacDonald said.

But, Libertarians believe the legalization of narcotics will result

"Overall, Libertarians believe that we are all responsible for ourselves. Libertarians want to go back to the constitutional form of government that our forefathers intended."

Theresa Pollock
Secretary, Livingston
County Libertarian Party

"A Libertarian is a person who believes in freedom of action and thought."

American Heritage
Dictionary

In a decrease in crime, he said.

But, like every political group, not all Libertarians agree on every issue.

"We have differences," MacDonald said. "We don't 100 percent agree on every thing."

▲ *The Livingston County Press*, Howell, Michigan, August 16, 1995

▼ *The Delaware County Daily Times*, Primos, Pennsylvania, August 13, 1995

Political competition restricted

By KEN STURZENACKER
Times Guest Columnist

While Colin Powell, Ross Perot and Jesse Jackson consider independent or third party campaigns, Democrats and Republicans in at least 10 states are working overtime to stop them before they start.

In recent months, legislators have tried to restrict ballot access in Alabama, Alaska, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Main, New Hampshire and New Mexico. New barriers would also cripple ballot access hopes of existing third parties, such as the Libertarians.

In Alabama, HB-66 would boost the signature requirements for independent candidates 500 percent. As it is, Alabama was one of only nine states which did not have any independent or third-party candidates run for statewide office in 1994.

As they do in Pennsylvania, Democrats and Republicans in most states share a monopoly on ballot status,

under terms they themselves wrote into law.

"Oh, yes, little parties," they say, "we'll let you play in our elections with us. But we get to make the rules, run the clock, and count your score ourselves."

For the Libertarian Party, for example, to win equal status in Pennsylvania would require 15 percent of all the registered voters be registered Libertarian, about 900,000 total, more than double the number of voters who claim no party affiliation.

If that standard were applied in Massachusetts and Washington, D.C., the Republican Party would not have status as a major party because its percentage of total registered voters falls below 15 percent.

If two corporations in the private sector were to restrict potential competition and to share monopoly power the same way, most of the corporate officers would be convicted and jailed for conspiracy and illegal restraint of trade.

Democrats and Republicans practice them routinely. Nothing in the Constitution of the United States or this Commonwealth limit Pennsylvania to only two major political parties.

A new party formed for the 1994 election in the

United States would have needed to collect 3,501,629 valid petition signatures to run a full slate for state and federal candidates.

By contrast, a new political party in Russia needs only 100,000 signatures to get on the ballot for all offices. Only 10,000 signatures are required in South Africa.

About seven percent of all Pennsylvania voters have chosen to register outside the old parties. But in the 1992 presidential election, only 81 percent of the votes cast in Pennsylvania went to the candidates of the parties which want to deny voters other choices.

Why are Democrats and Republicans afraid of what you might want?

Whatever the reason, do not expect them to make it easy for you to hear the issues discussed or to have the range of choices you might like to have. The opponents of your freedom to make your own choices have denied you those choices long before you get to the ballot box, the last arena of our freedoms.

Ken Sturzenacker is chairman of the Libertarian Party of Pennsylvania.

Youngest voters don't like labels

Poll shows less trust in government

By Niki Ziegler
Commercial-News Staff Writer

DANVILLE — Roger Trolinger doesn't see much difference between Republicans and Democrats, shies away from political rallies and says he'll vote with his head, not his party, when he punches his first ballot.

"I have views on things like the death penalty and abortion, but I'm not going to vote for someone just because they're Republican," the 17-year-old Oakwood High School student said.

Trolinger's political philosophy mirrors that of the nation's youngest group of voters, who have leapt over traditional party lines to create their own mix of liberal and conservative.

These 18- to 30-year-olds, the so-called Generation X, are relying less on party affiliation and more on specific issues to cast their votes, some national polls say.

A USA TODAY/CNN/Gallup poll shows Generation Xers have less faith in government at all levels, from police to the presidency, than their baby-boomer parents.

They also are more likely to want big government out of their fiscal and social lives.

That type of thinking helps out the state's Libertarian Party, which promotes individual rights and small government.

The party's membership has grown by 20 percent in the past few years, and one state official thinks young voters turned off by party politics are a large part of the growth.

Michael Ginsberg, Illinois Libertarian Party chairman and, at 31, on the outer cusp of Generation X, said young people throughout the state realize that government infringes on too many parts of their lives.

Ginsberg thinks the "less is best" philosophy of Libertarians appeals to individualistic 18- to 30-year-olds.

"We want to put individual responsibilities and individual rights where they belong — with the individual," he said.

Ginsberg, who received 4 percent of the vote during his 1994 run for state comptroller, said young voters reject major party platforms limiting their right to do what they want with their bodies, their possessions or their money.

Although these voters may sway toward the traditional parties, their single-issue voting favors Libertarian tenets, he said.

"When you're 18 to 22, it's very hard to figure out what your philosophy is," Ginsberg said.

But Christian Doellner, a 29-year-old student at Danville Area Community College, said party

What is a Libertarian?

What is a libertarian? Libertarians say government should play a minimal role.

And libertarians don't like government butting into private lives, whether it's hassling gays or controlling firearms.

This mix of fiscal conservatism and social liberalism often confuses people. But to libertarians, it's just an extension of Thomas Jefferson's maxim: "Government which governs least, governs best."

Although libertarianism blossomed in the 18th century, the Libertarian Party wasn't founded until 1971, during Generation X's birth. It now has about 150 local officeholders. Its 1992 presidential candidate, Andre Marrou, received 291,627 votes (0.03 percent).

What libertarians believe:

- **Economy.** A free market; minimal regulation; low taxes.

- **Civil liberties.** Free speech, even for pornographers, flag burners and religious extremists.

- **Social policy.** Legalized drugs; no gun control; no military draft.

- **Foreign policy.** Keep out of other countries' affairs.

USA TODAY

affiliation is strong among his classmates. He said students rarely discuss the Libertarian Party's middle ground.

"Vermilion County, by nature, is a very conservative area," Doellner said. "In all of my classes, there are probably more conservatives than liberals."

Doellner said 18- to 30-year-olds can't be lumped into one political subgroup.

Older Generation X'ers, he said, remember Watergate and tend to be more liberal, while Reagan-era voters identify with conservatives.

"Younger students, the 16- to 20-year-olds, are more influenced by conservatives like Rush Limbaugh," he said.

Trolinger said he watches Limbaugh's television show but doesn't agree with everything the talk-show host says.

Unlike Doellner's classmates, Trolinger's friends don't say they belong to either party, but instead share his opinion.

"With Republicans and Democrats, things probably don't fall much different between them."

◀ *The Commercial-News*
Danville, Illinois, July 29, 1995

Ann Arbor candidate list loses 'None of the Above'

By ANDREA NOVEL
Special to the Free Press

Ann Arbor Libertarian Party members are being thwarted in their effort to put their 1st Ward candidate "None of the Above" on the city council ballot this fall.

Seems they can't prove that "None of the Above" meets city charter requirements, which include being a resident of that ward.

"They have submitted that name, but we will not have that name on the ballot," Ann Arbor Deputy Clerk Yvonne Carl said. "There has to be a real person in order to run."

But Emily Salvette, chairwoman of the Michigan Libertarian Party and secretary for its Ann Arbor caucus, said the charter rules shouldn't apply. "None of the Above" isn't a candidate; it is a different political position," she said.

While this is the first time "None of the Above" has been submitted as a candidate in Ann Arbor, it's a long-standing practice of the party nationwide. And in Nevada it's an option on ballots statewide.

The rationale behind it is that many times in a race, the voters just don't like the candidates, said David Raafaub, an Ann Arbor attorney who's running as the Libertarian candidate in the 4th Ward council race.

"There's some spirit of fun there. But it's always based on some implied criticism of politics as usual," he said.

Under the Libertarians' theory, if "None of the Above" won, the seat would go vacant. Which in the case of the council would mean one fewer person getting a salary and arguing over issues, Raafaub said. Five of the council's 10 seats are up for election Nov. 7.

In Ann Arbor, however, when voters currently write in "None of the Above" their vote isn't counted, Carl said.

The local Libertarians didn't have a serious candidate in the 1st Ward, where Democratic incumbent Patricia Vereen-Dixon faces Republican John Kidle.

The party has candidates running for the four other council seats up for election.

So why not make a serious statement, Salvette said of the decision to push for candidate "None of the Above."

"It's the crazy politics in this town," Paul Ungrodt, an Ann Arbor resident and businessman, responded when he heard about the effort. "We do some very strange things, being a university town."

He wouldn't vote for "None of the Above," although folks in his office got a laugh out of the idea.

Carl said the city clerk's office "kind of chuckled" when it received the filing. "Our first reaction was what do we do with this?" she said.

"It's a novel idea but it's definitely got some merit."

She noted that voters already write in "None of the Above," along with Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck.

Members of the party's Ann Arbor caucus aren't sure how they'll respond to the city's decision not to put "None of the Above" on the ballot.

Some suggested that they might file a lawsuit to try to get it on the November ballot, or run a write-in campaign, or drop the issue in Ann Arbor and push for a hearing on a Michigan House of Representatives bill that would put "None of the Above" as an option on all state ballots.

▲ *The Detroit Free Press*
Detroit, Michigan, August 10, 1995

► *The Columbia Press*
Columbia, Pennsylvania, July 26, 1995

Don't believe all promises

Protect your wallets. Politicians in Washington promise to balance the budget.

Check their credibility before you are tempted to believe them. You'll find a fatal flaw which makes all their balanced-budget promises worthless.

Guest Column Ken Sturzenacker

Deficits for 26 consecutive years have made the national debt 4.8 trillion dollars. At 5.5%, the interest costs \$1,000 for every man, woman and child in America every year. That's \$1,000 every year leeching away from your ability to buy a home, vacation, start a family, send a child to college, and plan for your retirement. All of the federal government's other operations cost extra.

So make no mistake, the federal budget needs to be balanced, very quickly.

During his '92 campaign, Bill Clinton promised to balance the budget in five years. Three years later, he's now promised to balance it in 10 years. That's an eight-year delay.

In three tries, Clinton has not proposed a balanced budget for the next fiscal year. He and the 1993 Congressional Democrats are responsible for a \$150 billion tax increase. The first three deficits of his White House tenure will average \$180 billion a year, half a trillion in new debt.

If Clinton gets his way, those numbers are likely to get much worse.

The Congressional Budget Office says Clinton's assumptions are far too optimistic. The CBO estimates eight of the ten annual deficits in the Clinton plan will be more than \$200 billion each, adding another two trillion dollars to the existing 4.8 trillion dollar national debt.

Despite their rhetoric, the Republican's 7-year plan also increases spending: \$55 billion the first year, \$38 billion the second year, plus an average of \$45 billion each of the next five years, for a total increase of more than \$315 billion in new spending.

Balancing the budget with higher spending means only one thing: higher taxes.

Is that what you voted for in '92, or '94?

The promises from both Democrats and Republicans are phony and useless. No political promise has any value after the politician's term of office ends. Every promise made which cannot be fulfilled while in office is worthless. Every candidate who expects you to believe otherwise insults your intelligence.

Knowing that now, can help us understand which candidates are serious. Most of these Democrats and Republicans have never voted for a balanced budget next year. Why should any of us believe they have the discipline to balance it in some future year?

Challenging federal level incumbents and candidates to cut spending and balance the budget in this term of office will improve the honesty of the 1996 campaigns.

Refusing to accept anything less will help save you and every member of your family \$1,000 a year and more for the rest of your lives.

Editor's note: Ken Sturzenacker is chairman of the Libertarian Party of Pa.

RUGGED INDIVIDUALISTS

◀ Tucson Citizen
Tucson, Arizona
July 4, 1995

• Libertarians see Independence Day as representing the party's basic ideals.

By KATHLEEN ALLEN
Assistant Features Editor

They want to legalize drugs, wipe out gun laws, and get government off our backs.

They are Libertarians – liberals and conservatives making strange bedfellows. Today, the Fourth of July, is a big holiday for members of the party.

"It represents what this country was founded upon – the basic ideals of the Declaration of Independence, which we believe in," said Peter Schmerl, lawyer and chairman of the Pima County Libertarian Party.

This year, Schmerl has a lot more company to help him celebrate this day.

In Pima County, the number of Libertarians has more than doubled in the past 12 months.

"Half are new registrants and half are party changers," said Schmerl. "I would say we are taking from both parties pretty evenly."

That doesn't surprise Schmerl. His party embraces the best principles of the Democratic and Republican parties, he said.

"We believe in the civil liberty aspects that are traditionally liberal, and we believe in the free market aspects that are traditionally conservative," he explained.

The party has grown in Pima County and the state because of an active voter registration drive, he added.

Because of low voter registration numbers in the past, Libertarian candidates are not automatically listed on ballots.

There are 3,408 registered Libertarians in Pima County, representing 8 percent of the registered voters. A year ago, their numbers were 1,314.

"If we can increase the registration base, we'll be on the ballot permanently," explained Schmerl. "We need two-thirds of one percent statewide by Oct. 1. We've already passed that in Pima County." Statewide, Libertarians represent about 4 percent of registered voters, said a spokeswoman for the Secretary of State's office.

Libertarians are hard to pigeon-hole, but here are some of their basic beliefs:

- An emphasis on free speech and



JOEL ROCHON/Tucson Citizen

tolerance.

"Those are issues similar to what the American Civil Liberties Union might take on," said Schmerl. "We have an emphasis on First (speech) and Fourth (search and arrest) Amendment protection. Those are traditional liberal issues."

• Support of such traditionally conservative issues as "free enterprise, free trade, and issues, such as the Second Amendment's right to keep and bear arms," said Schmerl. "We're liberal

in all amendments to the Constitution – we favor them all."

• The elimination of welfare and other government entitlement programs.

"We believe in a drastically reduced government involvement in welfare or entitlement programs," said Schmerl. "We think it's come to the point where government intervention in the economy has actually created more problems than it's solved."

• The legalization of drugs, because the war on drugs has had the same weak

impact as the war on poverty.

"Drugs should be considered a medical problem, not a legal problem," said Schmerl. "The drug war is a practical failure."

While Libertarians may have far-flung beliefs, most share a passionate desire for privacy.

"Libertarians value their privacy," said Schmerl. "That's a very common tenant. Our philosophy is, 'If you leave me alone, I'll leave you alone.'"

Continued from 1B

usual," explained Walker. "There's no difference between Democrats and Republicans. Both parties are bent on continuing a big government intrusion into our lives."

It took some soul searching for Walker to buy into some of the Libertarian Party's philosophy, particularly on drugs.

"But research convinced me the drug laws aren't working. What are the solutions? People getting back to being responsible for their own actions. If someone wants to take drugs and kill themselves, that's their right. Just don't ask me to pay for it."

He also objects to government's intrusion into child rearing.

"Is it child abuse to spank your child? I don't think so. But look how far the bureaucrats have taken it, such as a Florida woman who slapped her child in the market and was arrested."

"Give politicians the power, they go to extremes. The government is literally taking over our lives, giving undue power to the state to rule our lives and how we raise our kids."

Where Walker most feels the pressure of too much government is in his business. He has one full-time employee just to fill out the paperwork.

"We have the Security Exchange Commission looking over us, and the National Association of Securities Dealers," he said with frustration.

"There's tremendous paperwork. It's unbelievable." The Libertarian Party's call for homosexual rights isn't a problem for Walker.

"I don't have the right to tell someone else what to do with their sex life," he said. "Just because I don't believe in something doesn't mean someone else doesn't have the right, as long as they don't force their ideas on me."

The Libertarian Party is a good fit for him, said Walker. And he thinks many others will find the same.

"Once this party starts to grow," he said, "I think a lot of Democrats and Republicans will come over."



Walker

LIBERTARIAN PROFILES

By KATHLEEN ALLEN
Assistant Features Editor

Libertarians are famous for valuing their privacy, according to Peter Schmerl, chairman of the Pima County Libertarian Party.

But the Tucson Citizen managed to convince a few recent registrants to explain why they switched their party membership.

Longtime liberal John Zajac grew up around guns. As he became older, he moved away from them.

But when a friend became a crime victim, Zajac decided he wanted to own a handgun for personal protection. And he thought he might like a few other guns, too.

"At the time I was considering this, the Clinton administration began pushing the assault weapon ban," recalled Zajac, who was then a Democrat.

He didn't like the ban, and joined a Second Amendment rights group. "After reading the (assault weapon) bill, I became convinced that it was a big

boondoggle," said Zajac, a biologist who is trying to establish a digital sound editing business for films and television.

After reading the assault weapon bill, Zajac became a Republican and supported successful Republican senatorial candidate Jon Kyl, who is pro-gun rights.

But when Kyl and Republican Rep. Jim Kolbe both voted for a crime bill that contained the assault weapons ban, Zajac knew the Republican Party wasn't for him, either. He reregistered Libertarian.

"I still consider myself a liberal person," said Zajac. "But the problem with the word is the meaning has radically changed. In 1895, a liberal was what we call a Libertarian now."

Zajac, who has been active in the party since joining last October, supports the privatization of schools, the legalization of drugs, a voucher system for public housing, homosexual rights and abortion rights.

"The amendments (to the Constitution) don't exist to create a welfare state," said Zajac.

"They exist so all have the opportunity to make the most out of life without the fear of being defrauded."

"The Libertarian philosophy is a government of limited power that's decentralized and weak in the sense that it isn't running around policing everyone's lives."

Tucson writer Elizabeth Wenning was an Independent, but she usually voted Democratic.

Then she discovered the Libertarian Party.

"It stood for everything I believe in," she said. Joining a party was never particularly important to her. But she wanted to see the Libertarians grow, so she signed up.

"I knew I would be more helpful to them if I officially declared myself,"

Wenning explained. "As a third party, they need all the attention they can get."

What appealed to Wenning was the Libertarian live-and-let-live philosophy.

"I don't hate the government," she said, "but I do believe that the less they can do, the better off we can all be."

Restrictions, and many laws, only penalize citizens, she said. That's why she favors the right to own guns, a hands-off approach on efforts to clean up the film and television industry, and a different attitude toward welfare.

Wenning said she trusts in people enough to believe that if the government

stopped trying to take care of the homeless, citizens would step in.

"I'm not what you would call a non-charitable person," she said. "My problem is that programs aren't voluntary; the government is forcing us to participate whether we want to or not."

With the loosening of government regulations comes the loosening of purse strings, she believes.

"If there is less governmental regulation, it would be easier to start your own business and make more money," she said. "If we have more expendable income, we would be more charitable."

But she isn't in favor of an immediate back-off by government.

"Some Libertarians do want to go with a drastic hands-off approach, and others realize it will have to be more gradual so people can get used to it," she said. "I'm in the latter group."

James Walker hates big government. It costs him money and time in his business as a certified financial planner.

And besides, it isn't working, he says. So last year Walker, who says the "conservative" label fits him, left the Republican Party and joined the Libertarian Party.

"I finally got fed up with politics as

LIBERTARIANS, continued/4B



Zajac



Wenning