

# LIBERTY PLEDGE

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December 2007

## newsletter

~Joe Johnson~

### Elected Libertarian Furthering Freedom in His Community

Elected Libertarians are working all over the country to lower taxes, increase freedom and deflate government. Joe Johnson is a perfect example of an elected Libertarian positively influencing his community. Joe is presently serving as a Trustee of Frederick, Colorado (Frederick's equivalent of a city councilman). As a Trustee, Joe has tirelessly defended Libertarian principles, including leading the campaign against a tax increase his fellow trustees would not give up on.

Joe Johnson was born in Gibbsboro, NJ in 1964. He moved to Colorado in 1994 and is married to Elizabeth Johnson. Joe is an account executive at BI Inc., which makes electronic monitoring systems for corrections agencies. He is a long distance runner and enjoys outdoor activities. Joe first learned about the Libertarian Party in the early 90s, after which he pondered the validity of the "wasted vote;" until 1998, when he became an active Libertarian, "after feeling 'dirty' coming out of the voting booth." As he says, "Once you understand that no matter the issue, more liberty is always the answer, then you look at issues much differently."

Joe is very active in the Libertarian Party of Colorado. He served as Chairman of the Boulder County LP from 07/01 - 07/02, during which they attracted many new members. His dedicated efforts helped give Colorado voters the choice of a full slate of Libertarian candidates in 2000 and 2002. This feat strengthened the party's reputation, and now the local press includes 3rd party candidates in the elections section of the newspaper.

Joe is a highly motivated Libertarian activist, he says, "I'd rather be on the front lines fighting for what I know is right, than face the man in the mirror each night, and have to come up with excuses for my inaction." He decided to run for Trustee of Frederick in

2004 out of concern that liberty would be lost with the town's rapid growth. Joe engaged voters in a discussion about liberty, saying, "most people are too busy to become involved until you show them that it's just too important to be complacent." Joe got out and spoke to the voters, "When I ran for office in 2004, I knocked on every door in town at least once - and wore through the soles of a pair of shoes in the process. I won by a landslide in that race simply because the message of liberty resonates with people... you just have to actually talk to them. It's not easy, but it's vital." Thanks to his exceptional campaign efforts and dignified message, Joe was victorious.



Joe has defended Libertarian principles with every vote. Unfortunately, he is often the only trustee doing so, "but like our nation's founders before me, I'll keep fighting for what I know is right until enough of my compatriots join the fight and we once again make liberty the standard." Joe was especially disgusted by a recent vote on an emergency response system bill. The trustees were to vote on the measure without having a chance to read it. The trustees "were told that most towns and cities are adopting it, and that it is simply too complex to expect anyone to actually read and understand. At which point I [Joe] said: 'bad laws are less the result of men who are evil, than of those who are lazy. I for one am willing to do the work necessary to understand this system before voting on it, is anyone else?' The vote went 4-2 in favor of adopting the system - unread." Does this blasphemous disregard of constituent's rights and tax dollars remind you of something ... perhaps the Patriot Act?

Joe's biggest battle has been a hotel lodging tax first placed on the ballot in 2004 by a 5-1 trustee vote. The lodging tax (measure 2A) is an extra tax on top of

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the sales tax. Frederick is a rapidly growing town that currently has no hotels. Most voters understand that if they want to encourage the town's continued growth they should attract tourism—not tax it! Joe personally funded and manned a “NO on 2A” campaign to compete with the city's “yes on 2A” campaign. The voters overwhelmingly told the government NO to the tax. Disregarding the voter's decision, Joe's fellow trustees put the tax on the ballot again in 2005. The voter's told the government NO a second time. Unwilling to give up on the prospect of expanding their power, the trustees yet again put the measure on the ballot in 2007. The voters had to tell the government NO a third time. “With each defeat, they come back with a new plan to 'sell' it to the voters...How many times do the people have to say 'NO' before elected officials will listen?”

Joe Johnson is a fantastic example of what individual Libertarians can accomplish for their community. He has shown his constituents that elected Libertarians can be trusted to stand by their small government principles. Joe has shown unwavering strength and integrity in his fight for a free society. But as Joe says, “my town is small, and I need others to stand up and run for office in their towns to do the same... It's time to direct the discussion, but we need people to get elected to do that.” This is so true, which is why every Libertarian should give what they can, be it time, money or ideas, so that we can break the two party system and restore liberty to the American people. We are proud of Joe: he is a true Champion of Liberty and an inspiration for us all.

## ~The Mills Family~ Perseverant Candidates

Running for office is one of the greatest contributions an individual can make to the Libertarian Party. Only with diligent candidates, running dignified campaigns, can the LP fulfill its mission. Bob Mills and his wife Heather exemplify individuals who, in the face of an almost insurmountable two-party political machine, would not give up, and have been successful because of their perseverance.

Bob and Heather live with their son Trenton in Biddeford Maine. They are both very active in their community. Bob has served on many Biddeford com-

missions, including, Wastewater, Cultural Affairs, Environmental and Downtown Development. In addition to this, he has been the Assoc. Supervisor at the York County Water & Soil District and is involved with his local AmVets, American Legion, the York County Veteran's Alliance, and Heart of Biddeford group. Bob also serves on the playground committee at his son's kindergarten. Bob is also at-large representative for the LPME. Heather is involved in the historical preservation and airport commissions. Being active in your community provides name recognition and shows your community that you genuinely care about local affairs,



Bob and Heather Mills with their son Trenton.

essential qualifications for winning local elections.

Bob and Heather are both seasoned candidates.

Bob has run for office nine

times! Heather

has also run many times. Bob just won his race for the Biddeford City Council with an amazing 79% of the vote. Heather was just victorious in her race for the Biddeford School Committee. Through the years they have learned how to run an effective campaign. Bob notes the importance of the local newspaper: “I wrote a letter every week for almost two years after losing the County Commissioner race. People got to know and appreciate my opinions. They know I will fight for the people and not be afraid to speak my mind.” Bob says the most important tactic is getting out there and talking to people, “go to every door ... each time I heard I was the only candidate that visited their door ... The personal visit is very important. I even went out the night before election.” He says candidates should “Pick a list of attainable goals, list them on a flyer, with your credentials and a picture and take it door to door.”

Bob and Heather saw exorbitant taxes, and elected officials ignoring their wishes, and decided to change it. They exercise their right to run for public office because they believe in the American ideal that the government belongs to the people. Running for office give voters a Libertarian choice and enables you to make your community a better place. The Libertarian Party deeply appreciates our candidates!

## 2008 National Convention

The Libertarian National Committee will be hosting the Libertarian National Convention in Denver, Colorado from May 22-26, 2008. The Convention is being planned by the company Denver 2008, headed by BetteRose Ryan and Michele Poague. While any presidential nominating convention has its inherent excitement, the 2008 convention promises to be a particularly interesting one!

BetteRose describes the atmosphere at Libertarian National Conventions as “an almost overwhelming sense of ‘it can be done.’” She noted the relief and rejuvenation that Libertarians feel in meeting so many others who share their views. In a sense, she says, “the National Convention is a place for activists to refresh their minds, rekindle old friendships and reactivate their political passion.”

Although the main excitement of this year’s Libertarian National Convention will come as delegates nominate the Libertarian Party’s presidential and vice-presidential candidates for the 2008 election, BetteRose wants to make sure that the friends and family of these delegates also have a great experience with the Libertarian Party. She hopes to do so by having an excellent lineup of speakers for “breakout sessions,” which non-delegates can attend while the delegates work.

These breakout sessions will address current issues concerning the Libertarian Party, from home schooling, to First Amendment rights, to women’s issues. Sometimes, the speaker may not even be a card-carrying Libertarian, but he or she will share the Libertarian view on the particular issue being discussed. BetteRose thinks this will help the Libertarian Party grow by investigating some “unexplored territory” and building bridges with like-minded activists.

BetteRose says she is “very appreciative to have former Congressman Bob Barr as our main speaker” at the National Convention. Bob Barr is a nationally recognized political figure and a witty and insightful speaker. David Harsanyi, author of *Nanny State...*, will also be addressing delegates and guests. In addition, many successful Libertarian candidates will share their stories and encourage members run in local elections themselves. A list of confirmed speakers is available at <http://www.denverlpcon.com/speakers.html>.

The Libertarian National Convention will present an amazing opportunity to rub shoulders with the

Libertarian Party’s presidential nominee! BetteRose recalls how much it meant to her when she had her picture taken with the Libertarian Party’s 1972 vice-presidential candidate Tonie Nathan, the first woman to receive an electoral vote. The attendees at the 2008 LP National Convention promise to be a “Who’s Who” of the libertarian movement.

Continuing in the “party” vein is the possibility of a meet-and-greet costume party the Wednesday before the Convention. The theme for the masquerade would be “freedom,” and guests would come decked out to imitate their favorite freedom fighter or issue. If the idea takes off, there may be judges—and there may be a prize!

So whether you want to meet your friends or meet the Chairman of the LNC, whether you want to talk to your favorite activists or just dress up like them, the Adam’s Mark hotel in Denver is the place to be in May! Visit [www.denverlpcon.com](http://www.denverlpcon.com) to register today!

### Welcome to the Liberty Pledge Club!

Helen	Aylesworth
Kemet	Babcock
Bob	Callahan
Jesse	Cantrell
James	Gordon
Brian	Gray
Robert	Howard
Andrew	Howard
Matthew	Iorio
Joyce	Lucas-Clark
Jason	Macstay
David	Metz
Angell	Pasley
Robert	Pendergrass
Paul	Ratchford
Brian	Richard
Merwyn	Riddle
Douglas	Ross
Scott	Stewart
Deborah	Sviridova

**Thank you for your generous support!**

## 2007 In Review

As the year winds down to a close, it's a great time to reflect on the progress of the Libertarian Party in 2007. This year has been a very exciting period for the LP, with impressive membership gains, big media hits and several new-hires. Add on top of that the build up to the 2008 presidential race!

Coming off a low-point in membership levels in Dec. of 2006, the LP had a lot of ground to make up.

The year's excitement kicked off in Feb. of this year with the LP's participation in the 2007 CPAC event, which is regarded as one of the biggest, young-conservative events in the nation. Although the LP's exhibit booth was in a less than splendid location in the exhibitors hall, LP gear and Party information was passed around to hundreds of conventioners. The biggest hits were the mock-up membership cards with information on how people could join the party.

In July, the LP hired Andrew Davis as the media coordinator at the national office. Andrew was a recent graduate of Clemson University in South Carolina with a background in political science and journalism. He was hired to fill an empty communications position that left the LP handicapped in media relations. Since his arrival, media attention to the Libertarian Party has increased dramatically, and the Party has gained more national exposure.

Some of the big hits include an interview with National Chairman Bill Redpath to be published in an upcoming edition of *Playboy* magazine, an interview with LNC representative Bob Barr on the newly-launched Fox Business Network and a media tour for Shane Cory in Oklahoma when he went there to promote the ballot access initiative petition now being circulated.

Three weeks later, the LP hired Elizabeth Brooks for the position of volunteer coordinator, another position the LP badly needed to fill. Elizabeth, who recently graduated from Duke University, immediately began to organize and coordinate volunteer efforts that had largely been ignored for some time. Faced with a monstrous task only months prior to the 2007 elections--one of the biggest events of the year needing volunteers--Elizabeth worked hard to organize a calling-drive to support our great candidates running for office.

The newly hired Sean Haugh has hit the ground running in trying to build on Stephen's work with the LP in the political director position. Sean spent much of first weeks as the Political Director in Oklahoma, assisting in the ballot access initiative petition, as well as coordinating election efforts for the Nov. 7 elections. Sean, who hails from North Carolina, has a long history with the Party and also runs Candidate Tracker on the LP Web site.

The 2007 election produced spectacular results that only added to the success of this year. Amazing Libertarian candidates ran across the nation, and nearly one in five won in races where Libertarians were running. Additionally, Michigan had 80 percent of their Libertarian candidates win in elections in that state. Libertarian incumbents did incredibly well, with all but one winning reelection, and even a few Libertarian incumbents running unopposed.

The LP also participated in the 2007 Conservative Leadership Conference, a libertarian/conservative conference in Reno, NV. The organizer, Chuck Muth from Citizen Outreach, invited several Libertarians to speak at the conference that focused mainly on conservative economics and policy. These Libertarians included former Congressman Barr, Chairman William Redpath and Libertarian presidential hopeful Wayne Allyn Root. Root, along with Republican presidential contenders Mitt Romney and Duncan Hunter, were the only presidential hopefuls to speak. The Libertarian Party was thankful for the leading role it played in the conference and the opportunities it presented to spread the Libertarian message.

Because of the eventful 2007 year, membership rose an impressive 20 percent from December last year to December this year. These exciting gains come as more and more people are abandoning the Republican and Democratic Parties. *The Washington Times*, who did an article on rising LP membership earlier this year, quoted LP Executive Director Shane Cory as saying people are "sick of same old politics as usual and are looking for a viable alternative, and we're that viable alternative."

As the Party continues to see success, Cory's statement rings even truer.