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Liberty Pledge

NEWSLETTER

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On-air conversion: Radio talk show host joins the LP

A nationally syndicated radio talk show host joined the Libertarian Party this month, and did so in dramatic fashion — on the air during a live interview with LP National Director Perry Willis.

Jay Severin, broadcasting from WOR radio in New York City, and heard on more than 140 stations around the country, announced on March 7th that he was joining the Libertarian Party.

“He said, ‘I’ve been thinking about it,’ ” recounted Willis after the interview. “ ‘I’ve got your membership form right here, and I’m filling it out and writing a check, even as we speak.’ I said, ‘Welcome aboard! That’s exactly what we need. We think membership growth is what we need to take our place as a major party in this country.’ ”

Willis spent more than 30 minutes discussing the Libertarian Party — in a conversation ranging from the 1994 elections to crime control to the Republican’s Contract With America — and said it was clear that Severin was very supportive.

“[He agreed] that we have all the good features of the Republican Party — except that we *mean it*. And we have all the good features of the Democratic Party — except that we *mean it*. He really responded to that analysis,” said Willis. “He said he has been reading a lot of our literature, hearing from our members, and seeing us increasingly in the press. That convinced him that we’re becoming viable.”

As a new member, Willis said Severin promised to keep spreading the word about the Libertarian Party. “He said, ‘I talk about [the LP] all the time, and I’m going to continue doing that.’ ”

Willis said he has received very positive reactions to his appearance on the show from around the country, including a message from Karl Waldman, State Chair of the LP of Rhode Island, who wrote: “Keep up the excellent work! Your work in this area makes my job a lot easier.”

Severin is the second explicitly Libertarian talk show host on WOR’s syndicated network. He replaced Gene Burns, following Burns’ abrupt departure in October 1994. Burns has since relocated to San Francisco, and can be heard on KGO-AM radio.

Ballot access wars: LP starts lobbying efforts in 3 states

Libertarians in three states have geared up lobbying efforts to fight for or against new laws which would change ballot access requirements.

> **In Maryland**, State Chair Jesse Markowitz testified on February 23rd in favor of SB 261, a bill to ease ballot access requirements. Markowitz told a State Senate committee the bill was a “significant step in rectifying injustice — injustice that comes from ruling parties quashing opposition and preventing voters from hearing alternatives.

“This injustice is compounded because the people who make the rules are our opponents. Standing here before you today, I sort of feel as if I’m a Snapple salesperson. You are the Coca Cola and Pepsi soft drink giants. Unfortunately, the way the rules are written today, I have to get your permission before I may offer my product to the people of Maryland,” he told the committee.

> **In New Hampshire**, State Chair Jeff Emery said the party is “quietly working within the political process” to squash an amendment to require a party to get 1% of registered voters to maintain ballot status. The amendment is attached to a bill which protects NH’s first-in-the-nation presidential primary.

Currently, the state only requires that a party poll 3% in the gubernatorial election. The LPNH could keep its February 1996 presidential primary, but would be knocked off the statewide primary and the general election ballot in 1996 if it can’t double its current 0.5% of registered voters.

“We are quietly working within the political process to try to get this amendment removed. It is a very unpopular amendment tied to a very popular, and difficult to vote against, bill,” reported Emery.

> **In Illinois**, the state party is speaking out against a new bill to prohibit paid petitioners from collecting ballot access signatures. “The number [of signatures required to get on the ballot is] extremely prohibitive,” said State Chair Jeanette Clinkunbroomer. “Even with paid petitioners, it’s difficult to gather the required signatures. If we can’t hire people to help with this task, it’s all but impossible. The end result [of this bill could be] that voters will have fewer choices on election day.”

Spinning the dial

When Libertarian talkmaster Gene Burns left Boston two years ago, he only went as far as New York, and his radio show was syndicated, so Bostonians could still hear him on the air every weeknight.

But now Burns is far, far away, out of state and out of range. For the past month he has been doing fill-in work weeknights on KGO-AM in San Francisco, and might end up there full time if he gets an offer.

"Well, it's a wonderful place to live and just an hour away from wine country, so that doesn't break my heart," Burns said yesterday by telephone.

He has a sort of "built-in following" in the Bay Area since his syndicated show from New York had been carried on another station. "So I know [the station has] been bom-

barded with letters and faxes" from listeners familiar with him.

Burns said that for the right amount of money, he could see staying on the West Coast. "If they make me a good competitive offer, I wouldn't have any second thoughts at all about living here."

But he did admit that he has a great affinity for Boston, where he spent eight years on WRKO-AM.

"People have been very upfront; there is no slot in the market right now," he said. "But it remains very high on my list of cities, so if something opened up, I would be there."

▲ *The Boston Globe*, Boston, Massachusetts
February 9, 1995

▶ *The Baltimore Sun*, Baltimore, Maryland
March 2, 1995

▼ *The Arizona Daily Star*, Tucson, Arizona
February 2, 1995



BARBARA HADDOCK TAYLOR/SUN STAFF PHOTO

People power

Earle J. Pearce (with sign), vice chair of the Baltimore City Libertarian Party, and others rallied in Annapolis yesterday in support of the sovereignty of the states and the people, which, they said, has been lost to the federal government.

Libertarians

With GOP in power, here's a closer look at these misunderstood liberty-lovers

By David B. Levenstam
For The Arizona Daily Star

CORALVILLE, Iowa - The mainstream media finally have discovered that libertarians comprise an important power center in the GOP. Libertarians include not only highly esteemed economists such as Walter Williams, Thomas Sowell and Nobel-laureate Milton Friedman, but also popular elected officials like Gov. Bill Weld, R-Mass., Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas, and House Majority Leader Dick Arney, R-Texas.

Yet the media appear confused as to what libertarians believe. Time Magazine contrasts the Republican Party's libertarian "problem solvers"

GUEST COMMENT

with those whom it regards as conservative, Christian troublemakers. Syndicated columnist E.J. Dionne Jr. refers to libertarians as "utopians." So just what do libertarians believe?

Libertarian ideology springs from that of the Founding Fathers, whose central political value was individual liberty - your right to do what you want with your property, including yourself. Contemporaries called the Founding Fathers' ideology "liberalism," from the Latin *liberalis* meaning "of freedom" or "befitting the free." The founders believed that government must be limited strictly to protecting life, liberty and property because government - as the monopoly of the use of legitimized coercion - is the gravest threat to your liberty. That's why the classic liberal founders wrote the Constitution to create a strictly limited government. That's also why many classical, liberal patriots opposed even so limited

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a government, fearing it would ignore paper limitations and become monstrous, as it has in the 20th century.

Classical liberal ideology governed America for roughly the 18th and 19th centuries. By the late 19th century, however, White Anglo-Saxon Protestant elites were influenced by German nationalistic socialism through the German Historical School - spread to America through the University of Wisconsin and similar ivory towers. As WASP elites grew fearful of new immigrants and new wealth in America, they became enthralled with the new scientific engineering, thinking they could use engineering principles to control society. Thus the elites sought a "new liberalism" that would allow them to use government coercion for social engineering.

The new liberal elites didn't discard your liberty immediately, but slowly grew less enamored of it and more addicted to government coercion. By the New Deal, which began in 1933, they had taken most of the steps from classical liberalism to national socialism, and liberalism came to mean the primacy of government over the individual. When "liberalism" became virtually synonymous with "statism" - and ideology of big government and little or no liberty - lovers of liberty invented "libertarian" to avoid confusion between classical and new liberalism. So libertarian ideology can be summarized best by the classical liberal writer Henry David Thoreau: "That government is best which governs least."

The Founding Fathers' classical liberalism covered a spectrum from the more anarchic Thomas Paine, who believed that, "Government,

even in its best state, is but a necessary evil, in its worst state, an intolerable one," to the more statist Alexander Hamilton, who held that, "Real liberty is . . . found . . . in moderate government." Likewise, libertarians run a gamut from the anarcho-capitalist physicist David Friedman, who believes that everything, including courts and defense, should be done privately; to his father, Milton, who favors limited government plus market-oriented social programs.

Republican libertarians, in practice, tend toward Milton Friedman's end of the spectrum, making their policies less hostile to big government than were the Founders. While most libertarians want even less government than the Constitution originally allowed, those in the GOP seem to have a keen sense of the politically possible. They prefer successfully moving from Big Government to merely big government over the alternative of unsuccessfully trying to move immediately to small government. You won't find many utopian libertarians in the GOP.

You won't find many outside the GOP, either. Most libertarians believe that limiting government will not create perfection. They recognize that evil will continue to co-exist with good. But under liberty, nobody will have government's coercive monopoly power with which to impose evil, while everyone will have freer reign to implement good.

Libertarians know that liberty doesn't have to be perfect - just better than government. Fortunately, that isn't difficult.

David B. Levenstam is a Louis Pelzer Fellow in American history at the University of Iowa.

Libertarian ideas revolutionize GOP

IT WAS GOV. Christine Todd Whitman of New Jersey, speaking for the Republican Party in answer to President Clinton's State of the Union message, who said the Republican revolution is "a revolution of ideas."



Pardon me, governor, but you're 23 years late! The revolution started in 1972 when the Libertarian Party ran its first national ticket. As the Libertarian vice presidential candidate, I campaigned nationally that year pointing out at every news conference that I was not running to challenge the voting strength of the older parties, but to challenge their principles and their ideas. I issued an "intellectual call-to-arms."

Today there is no question that my call has been answered and that thousands of campaigns by Libertarian candidates since 1972 are bearing fruit. Libertarian ideas are revolutionizing the Republican Party and influencing voters throughout the nation. As evidence I offer the following:

The day after the Nov. 8 election, Linda Divall, a Republican pollster guest on the "MacNeill/Lehrer News Hour," said: "... The message of the election is the changing definition in the minds of voters on the role of government — 56 percent of the voters say government should do less (emphasis mine). What this means is we are seeing a Libertarian streak coming into this electorate."

A month after last year's election, E.J. Dionne of the editorial staff of The Washington Post wrote: "The rise of libertarian ideas and platforms are central to much of the GOP's new leadership. . . . It is the story of one of those quiet intellectual revolutions that can have enormous political impact."

Most recently, a front page article in The Wall Street Journal headlined its story, "Less is more: Libertarian impulses are spreading through the land." Gerald Seth, author of the article, writes, "Though many voters probably don't even realize it, much of the angry sentiment coursing through their veins today isn't traditionally Republican or even conservative. It's libertarian."

And just what are these ideas that are stirring voters to action at last? According to Whitman, they are "smaller government, lower taxes and less spending." While these views mark major trends in the new Congress, Whitman's statement is too limited ideologically for a true libertarian who is concerned about the intrusions of government into our personal lives as well as our pocketbooks. It is moral principle, above all, that energizes libertarians.

The principle that dictates all libertarian positions on every issue is simple to state but apparently very hard for many to understand. It is the principle of nonaggression: No person, organization or government has the right to initiate force against others. Dionne explains party positions this way:

"Libertarianism is a philosophy of radically limited government . . . Libertarians basically believe that the only legitimate functions of government are to protect citizens from force and fraud and to enforce contracts. If they had their way, libertarians would get the government out of everything else, including education, the postal system, Social Security, medical care, environmental regulation, farming — and that's just for starters."

Dionne is on the mark. To see how far the Libertarian Party has come in fulfilling its goal of a "free society," I

dug out a brochure used during my campaign in 1972. Radical for its time, part of the brochure declares:

"Whether you tend to support liberals or conservatives, you will probably admit one thing: the politics of today are a disaster . . . The left regulates and relieves you of your earnings in the name of 'social obligation' — the right does the same for 'duty, honor, country' or some other altruistic premise. Where does this leave you?"

"Until now, it has left you without a choice. No party has said anything about your sovereignty. No party has held that your pursuit of happiness is an end in itself, rather than a tangent to 'social welfare' or 'national security.' No party has said that the use of force to accomplish any end blatantly denies your right to pursue happiness" (emphasis mine).

Rep. Newt Gingrich, with wonderful wry humor, says the right to pursue

"Libertarianism is a philosophy of radically limited government. . . ."

happiness does not mean that the government should provide happiness stamps or happiness pills. That certainly reflects libertarian philosophy.

For years libertarians have been pointing out that:

1. Government handouts create dependency and discourage citizens from tending for themselves and solving their own problems.

2. Providing for anyone's needs should be a personal responsibility dictated by one's ability and inclination to contribute.

3. Forcibly relieving citizens of their just earnings for the altruistic purpose of serving the "public good" is morally wrong.

In politics, only the libertarians expressly repudiate altruism as a basis for public policy. The Libertarian Party statement of principles specifically states: "Individuals should not be forced to sacrifice their lives and property for the benefit of others." To guarantee that principle, libertarians require all their candidates to pledge in writing never to advocate the use of force to achieve social goals.

Yet, without the power to use legal force to confer benefits on selected groups, libertarians cannot promise to solve our social problems as present politicians do. How, then, are they to get elected?

The answer to that question was best stated by my 1972 running mate, Professor John Hospers, former dean of the school of philosophy at the University of Southern California. When asked by an elderly woman what he would do for her if she voted for him, Hospers said, "Madam, I will let you alone." The electorate needs to recognize that this policy is the only basis for governing in a truly benevolent, peaceful and moral nation.

Voters have not yet traveled far enough up the libertarian philosophical path to forgo all the goodies their representatives promise them. Nor should they. Any sudden collapse of the welfare state would be disastrous to those who have become dependent on government help and are unprepared for the responsibility of self-actualization.

Change takes time. But the message that voters have sent to government to "do less" is a good start toward motivating productivity and rekindling the American Dream.

Tonie Nathan of Eugene, a freelance writer and political consultant, is the national director of media relations for the Libertarian Party.

Roger MacBride, 65, Libertarian And 'Little House' Heir, Is Dead

By WOLFGANG SAXON

Roger Lea MacBride, who became guardian of Laura Ingalls Wilder's "Little House" series of young-adult novels, who later drew on them in his own writing and who ran for President in 1976 as the Libertarian Party's nominee, died on Sunday at his home in Miami Beach. He was 65.

The cause was heart failure, said his daughter, Abigail Adams MacBride.

Mr. MacBride, a lawyer who was also a writer of children's books, became the guardian of the "Little House" series in 1968, upon the death of Mrs. Wilder's daughter, Rose Lane. Mrs. Lane, an adherent of the laissez-faire objectivist philosophy of the novelist Ayn Rand, was an only child who herself was childless and who had adopted Mr. MacBride as a political disciple. He was her executor and sole heir.

The "Little House" books recalled Mrs. Wilder's hardscrabble frontier childhood in the 1870's and became a popular success during the Depression. Mr. MacBride helped to turn them into the hit television series "Little House on the Prairie" in the 1970's. In recent years, he had begun writing his own series of historical young-adult novels, based on Mrs. Lane's childhood on a Missouri farm.

Mr. MacBride was born in New Rochelle, N.Y., and graduated from Princeton University and Harvard Law School. He joined the Wall Street firm of White & Case but moved on to open a small practice in Vermont, where he served a term in the State Legislature.

Later, after moving to Virginia, he joined the anti-government Libertarian Party and drew national attention in 1972, when, as one of Virginia's 12 Republican electors, he cast his vote not for Richard M. Nixon and Spiro T. Agnew but for the Libertarian candidates, giving them their only vote in the Electoral College.

As the Libertarian Presidential

▲ *The New York Times*, New York, NY
March 8, 1995

◀ *The Register-Guard*, Eugene, Oregon
February 27, 1995



United Press International, 1976

Roger L. MacBride

candidate four years later, he was on the ballot in 32 states and drew 173,011 votes.

Mr. MacBride wrote a Libertarian Party manifesto, "A New Dawn for America: The Libertarian Challenge" (Green Hill, 1976), which remains in print. His other books in print, at HarperCollins Children's Books, are "Little Farm in the Ozarks" (1994) and "Little House on Rocky Ridge" (1993).

His daughter said another book, "In the Land of the Big Red Apple," was due out next month. Just before his death, she said, he had completed a fourth book in his HarperCollins series, tentatively titled "Beyond the Horizon," and was working on several others.

Besides his daughter, who lives in Charlottesville, Va., and Miami Beach, Mr. MacBride is survived by two sisters: Patricia Hendrickson of Westport, Conn., and Pamela Colgate of Darien, Conn.

Webb seizes spotlight



Staff photo by Scott Weersing

POLITICAL MAVERICK: Simi Valley City Councilwoman Sandi Webb stands in her City Hall office next to a poster of a man who stood up to the Chinese tanks near Tiananmen Square. Webb calls him a hero.

Councilwoman triggers gun debate

By Steve Silkin
Staff writer

Sandi Webb's eyes mist as she gazes at the poster on her office wall: A lone protester facing down a row of tanks near Tiananmen Square.

"That guy stood up to an entire army," said the Simi Valley city councilwoman, her voice hushed. "This man here is truly my hero."

She pauses a moment. "Him and Spock!" she blurts out, pointing to her "Star Trek" poster.

But it was Webb's choice of another hero — William Masters, a San Fernando Valley man who said he shot two graffiti vandals in self-defense — that has thrust her into a national debate on guns.

Webb, 46, has long demonstrated a non-conformist streak. In 1990 she conducted part of her City Council campaign — her first bid for office — on roller skates.

A Libertarian Party activist since the 1970s, she believes government is best defined by what it should not do. Webb is often on the losing end of 4-1 council votes, citing philosophical reasons for opposing city action. She drives a station wagon with stickers reading: "Fear the government that fears your gun" and "Legalize freedom."

She believed that Masters acted not as a vigilante, but as a good citizen under attack.

She called him a "crime-fighting hero" in a letter to the editor. She invited him to move to Simi Valley. And she sent a 25-pound bag of rock salt to the Simi Valley Police Department, with a sign that said: "I wasn't joking!" The bag and the sign underscored her suggestion that police shoot taggers with rock salt.

"But I was joking," she now protests. Los Angeles prosecutors said Masters

IT'S YOUR CALL

Do you approve of Simi Valley Councilwoman Sandi Webb carrying a concealed gun without a permit?

Call 581-6776

Yes — ext. 9103

No — ext. 9104

Call in your comments before 9 a.m. Monday.

acted in self-defense and declined to file charges. Meanwhile, Webb became a wanted woman on radio and TV interviews.

During one of them, she said she carries a concealed weapon when she drives to Hollywood for her 14-year-old daughter Aubri's acting auditions.

Webb does not have a permit to carry

Please see **WEBB** on **A8**

"This is where the rubber meets the road," she said. "We're not debating philosophical issues. We're down in the trenches."

An architectural design consultant, she first felt the urge to run because of constant frustrations with the bureaucracy.

"You can tell the decay of a civilization when you have to get more permits — from people who don't do anything — to do something, when it takes longer to go through the process than to do the project," she said.

She also was angered by a city plan to build offices and a restaurant at the Civic Center and lease them to private businesses.

Government should not compete with business, Webb insisted. Others agreed; the warm reception she got at city hearings on the plan led to her candidacy.

At first, her performance on the council was greeted skeptically. One gaddy called her "a puppet in a briefcase" because of her Libertarian positions. She would sometimes break out in nervous laughter during meetings. She'd also announce she was voting a particular way only because some fellow council member had.

But she lost none of her theatrical flair.

To protest state funding cuts to cities in 1992, she drove a truckload of turnups to Sacramento. Her message: "You can't squeeze blood from a turnip."

During last year's campaign, council colleagues said that Webb had grown into her role.

But they aren't saying that now — not since Webb's pronouncements on the Masters case have brought unwanted national attention to Simi Valley once again.

Other council members believe the city was unfairly tarnished during the 1992 Rodney King trial. And some citizens have said that Webb's support of Masters — whose victims were Latino — confirms suspicions that Simi Valley is a haven for racists.

On the record, Webb's colleagues are diplomatic. Privately, they speak in stronger terms.

"I don't know what is wrong with that woman," one said after Webb admitted packing a gun on her trips to Los Angeles.

But Webb makes no apologies. She said gun permits violate the right to self-defense. Few are granted, she points out, so the requirements must be unreasonable.

"Make it so the honest, upstanding citizen can get a permit," she said. "Get rid of the farce."

Webb said she began carrying a gun in her 20s, after being raped in San Bernardino.

The rape occurred in her apartment. After she served dinner to a date, he tried to force her into sex. She resisted, and he began suffocating her with a pillow.

At that point, she thought: "Do you want it that bad? It's not worth my life. Take it." She did

not report the crime, but she said it's one reason she feels strongly about guns.

"It kind of makes things more emotional when they try to take away your protection," Webb said. "How many of you guys have been raped in your own home?"

WEBB: Uses flair

Continued from A1

such a weapon and has been taken to task by citizens and her colleagues.

"I can understand why people are upset," said Mayor Greg Stratton. "You can't go around picking and choosing which laws you're going to follow and be seen as logical."

Webb, however, said she is as rigorously logical as Mr. Spock.

"I took an oath of office to uphold the Constitution," she said. "I believe some laws aren't constitutional."

Webb joined the Libertarian Party in the 1970s after reading Ayn Rand's "Atlas Shrugged."

"The basic philosophy is freedom: To do what you want as long as you're not hurting your neighbor," she said.

Through the Libertarians, she met her "contractual husband," electronics engineer Dan Wiener. Wiener was the party's state chairman at one point, and Aubri is now the regional chairman.

Wiener and Webb are not married under civil law, but have a written contract that they renew annually on their "anniversary."

"Life is never dull around Sandi," Wiener said. "I've never

bothered to ride the roller-coaster at Magic Mountain because I figured it couldn't possibly compare to the real thing."

Webb's father died when she was 4. The family lived on Social Security and her mother's odd jobs.

Webb said she now believes the government should not have given her mother "charity."

"My mother was a very intelligent woman," Webb said. "I think it kept her from getting a career."

Today Webb is to address the Libertarian Party's state convention. Her topic: What it's like to hold local office.

SANDI WEBB

- Born: July 16, 1948, in Los Angeles.
- Moved: To San Bernardino County in 1952, to San Diego in 1975, to Glendale in 1976 and to Simi Valley in 1979.
- Family: "Contractual husband" Dan Wiener, and daughter Aubri, 14, who was delivered at home with the help of a midwife.
- Education: A.A. degree, architecture, San Bernardino City College, 1975.
- Business: Drafting design and consulting — California Design, since 1990.
- Elected: To Simi Valley City Council in 1990; re-elected 1994.
- Delegate: Of the state Libertarian Party.
- On graffiti: "We are all so sick of tagging: The mindless destruction of property."
- On concealed weapon permits: "They tell us we have the right to protect ourselves, but we're not allowed to carry anything with which to do it."