

LIBERTY PLEDGE

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newsletter

Libertarians Shine at the Conservative Leadership Conference

The Libertarian Party made a splash at the Conservative Leadership Conference earlier this month in Reno, NV. Among the line-up of impressive speakers from conservative circles, which included Grover Norquist of Americans for Tax Reform and David Keene of the American Conservative Union, were speakers from the Libertarian Party. Speaking for the LP was National Chairman William Redpath, and LNC board member Bob Barr.

Many people came out to hear multiple candidates for president, which included high-profile candidates like Mitt Romney, Alan Keyes and Duncan Hunter. Libertarian Wayne Allyn Root is a presidential-hopeful who also spoke at the event.

The LP was a co-sponsor of the Libertarian-friendly event billed as the "Western CPAC." As well as furnishing speakers, the LP also had an exhibitor booth that distributed Libertarian information, stickers, buttons and the World's Smallest Political Quiz ("WSPQ"). Additionally, the booth had membership forms for persons interested in joining the Party.

The CLC was held Oct. 11 - 13. Unlike other conservative conferences, the CLC was designed to focus more on economic and liberty issues rather than social issues. Chuck Muth, President of Citizen Outreach and a self-described libertarian, organized the event with the hopes of progressing the libertarian agenda of limited government and individual liberty. Because of this environment, the conference was adept to Libertarian principles and all LP speakers were warmly welcomed.

Redpath delivered an informative speech on ballot access issues and election reform, while Barr discussed the importance of Libertarianism in politics. Root gave a captivating speech on his presidential bid, with many calling it one of the best speeches of the event. All in all, the Libertarian element of the event was strongly felt.

Also in attendance from the Libertarian camp were the Outright Libertarians. Unlike their Republican counterparts who failed to show up at the CLC, the Outrights were welcomed and ran a very successful exhibit booth where they plotted conference-goers' political convictions on a large-scale WSPQ map. The majority of people plotted were Libertarians, with a few centrist and conservative outliers. Presidential candidates Mitt Romney and Alan Keyes refused to take the quiz.

"The event was by and large a success for the Libertarian Party," says Shane Cory, Executive Director of the Libertarian Party, who was in attendance at the conference. "Although attendance was less than expected, the LP made a great showing and we had a lot of positive feedback from those in attendance—both Libertarian and not."

Criticizing CPAC's heavy neoconservative bias, Muth says the CLC focused more on libertarian issues and less on social issues. "We wanted an event that catered to the Goldwater conservatives, without so much emphasis on the social issues," Muth says. "We wanted to stick to the 'limit the government' message, with more libertarian leanings."

When asked about this move away from social issues, which has defined the neoconservative movement since the Reagan era, Muth stated he felt the Goldwater-brand of conservatives were being overlooked. "I think there is obviously a niche of the electorate out there that isn't really interested in the social issues, but more in the limited government issues," says Muth, who believes this class of conservatives were overlooked in the 2006 elections. "I think this is a large part why the Republicans lost...they took the libertarian voters for granted."

While Muth isn't a Libertarian party member, he certainly sympathizes with the movement. Muth left the Republican Party last April, citing a number of

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Christopher Edes and Max Kessler Libertarians for Rochester School Board

Running for office is one of the greatest contributions an individual can make to the Libertarian Party. Max Kessler and Chris Edes have generously committed their time, money and ideas to the Libertarian movement by campaigning as Libertarian candidates for the Rochester School Board.

Chris Edes is a native of Rochester, New York. He studied at Carnegie Mellon University, where he majored in physics and English. Chris now works in the IT industry as a systems and network administrator. He is involved in the Rochester Bill of Rights Committee and the Rochester Civil Liberties Coalition, and he is the Chairman of the Greater Rochester Libertarian Party while serving on the State Committee of the Libertarian Party of New York.

Max Kessler graduated in 2001 from SUNY Brockport College, with a majors in health and computer sciences. Max is an entrepreneur at heart, and started the online mail-order software company, CyberMan Software. He is also President of the Rochester Radio Repeater Association, and is active in both the Greater Rochester Libertarian Party and the NYLP. Max's hobbies are ham radio, Linux, target shooting and antique car shows.

Chris and Max are proudly running as Libertarians for the Rochester Commissioner of Schools, at-large. According to the Rochester City Council, Rochester public schools pay \$19,000 a year per student. Chris and Max both want to cut wasteful spending and focus on tactics that can actually increase student performance.

As Chris says: "I want to address the disgraceful lack of financial transparency and accountability." He suggests furthering this goal by connecting school administrator's pay to student performance. Chris' "everybody wins plan" is his response to the exorbitant per-student cost of Rochester Public schools—a cost that far exceeds the average private school tuition.

Chris suggests that up to half of the per-pupil Rochester public school allotment be paid toward the tuition of students who transfer to private schools. Chris and Max also want to explore alternative methods of education and increase information technology.

Max stresses the importance of protecting the separation of church and state in public schools, and protecting students from the Patriot Act.

Both believe in individual responsibility and want to increase parental involvement in student education. Max suggests encouraging this by applying charges to parents whose child fails and must repeat a grade. Chris and Max both support school choice and the free discussion of innovative ways to improve education.

The LP congratulates Chris and Max for collecting the 1,500 signatures necessary for them to be on the ballot.

Both candidates have informative and professional Web sites (Max's www.maxkessler.org and Chris' www.vote-for-chris.net) that delineate their political positions and provide the opportunity to donate. Chris and Max have debated in a school forum with fellow candidates, and garnered local press. They are utilizing the most effective tool for Libertarian candidates: getting out there and talking to voters. As Chris said: "Nothing is more effective than listening to people and responding in a way that is thoughtful and respectful."

Chris and Max are bravely competing with the Democratic political machine that dominates Rochester. As Max said: "We're not cronies of State Assemblyman David Gantt. Gantt owns Rochester politics. With the exception of Mayor Bob Duffy, who was elected two years ago, all of Gantt's hand picked candidates win all Democratic Primaries, and Democrats have won every City of Rochester election for about the last 30 years." Rochester voters had no real choice til now, but Chris and Max are giving them one. The Libertarian Party thanks both Chris and Max for their invaluable contribution to the Libertarian movement.



Chris Edes and Max Kessler

Interview with Nevada LP Chairman, Jim Duensing

Pledge News: How big is the LPNV?

Jim Duensing: We have just under 8,000 registered Libertarians in Nevada; almost 5,000 of which are in Clark County. We are slightly more than 4,000 registered Libertarians away from permanent ballot access.

PN: What are some things going on right now for the LPNV?

JD: Right now, we are organizing the Libertarian National Leadership Conference, to be held on Presidents' Day Weekend in 2008. This Leadership Conference has been called the "State Chairs' Conference" because the short business-session of the meeting is run by the state chairs of the various affiliates. However, the conference has always been aimed at every activist, organizer, officer and candidate. This conference will be the biggest and best yet.

PN: How is the reorganization of the LPNV in Washoe County going?

JD: The organization of a strong, quality affiliate in Washoe County is my most important goal as chair. Clark County has about 65 percent of the registered voters in the state. Washoe County has approximately 25 percent. Together, that's most of the state. I won't be satisfied until every county is organized and winning the majority of its elections. Getting the second-biggest county functioning in time for this next very important election is critical for our success over the next four years.

PN: Why is it important that you grow?

JD: More political movement takes place in Presidential years than at any other time. This election is when all of us who care about our freedom and that of our posterity will donate as much time, money and other support as we can to bring this party to the forefront of American politics. By the end of this campaign, with the right candidate and the right support, the Libertarian Party could be a serious threat at every level of American politics. It will take all of us working together in each of our states to accomplish that.

PN: Do you have any advice for other groups looking to do the same thing?

JD: As for my role as chair, I just try to find people like that in every community in my state. I've found some now in Reno. There are others there and every-

where else. We just need to find them and help them become a leader. Trust me, it's invigorating when you step up unafraid of the consequences and proudly fight for your liberty. If you need any help, contact your state chair or go to www.LPNevada.org and contact me directly. I'll help anyone anywhere who is willing to work with me for our freedom.

PN: What do you see in the future for the LPNV?

JD: The LPNV will be the majority governing party of Nevada. We are a grassroots organization breaking through the boundaries that separate the poor inner city of Vegas and the wealthy retirement communities of some of our wealthier suburbs. We are already winning. It's just a matter of time before we can declare total victory. I want you to be able to feel the same level of joy that I feel in bringing people together and healing the pains fostered by the establishment parties. But, I can't fully describe it to you. You have to experience it.

Welcome to the Liberty Pledge Club!

Mark Alper
Ashley Auld-Susott
Jeremy Cady
Sean Carothers
Scott Ferguson
F. Heinzelman
Glenn Higa
Daniel Hogan
Phillip Aron McCart, II
Lee Robin
Jeff Rodriguez
John Simms
Michael Simpson
Ryan Underwood

Thank you for your generous support!

Volunteers: A Call To Action!

As Kevin Knedler, chair of the Libertarian Party of Ohio, likes to say, you have to have assets to be successful: money, recognition, and people doing the work for you. Our monthly pledgers are vital assets to the Libertarian Party, and we sincerely appreciate your donations. Another essential constituency is our volunteer base, and Knedler's Ohio is just one of many state affiliates that have been making excellent use of their volunteer resources.

In Texas, California, Alaska, Georgia, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, and elsewhere, Libertarian Party volunteers are showing up and showing off. With outreach booths and petition drives at events, from gun shows to wine tastings, our volunteers are educating and recruiting more and more people to the Party of Principle. They're working to get us on the ballot and on people's minds. But this type of outreach isn't the only opportunity for volunteers to participate in their state parties.

States are beginning to recruit and organize volunteers in new and effective ways. State parties are contacting the national office to ask about "how-to" manuals for their volunteers and to request volunteers for specific types of jobs. While in the past, the Libertarian Party has issued a general appeal for volunteers, the new volunteer positions the state parties need filled give volunteers specific goals and allow our affiliates to show volunteers how much they are appreciated.

State affiliates need volunteers to host booths and discussion groups, but they also need help with the daily office routine, including data entry, account management, and Web design. As the membership of the Libertarian Party grows, so does the need for volunteers to take on the responsibilities of gathering, distributing, and systematizing information.

Fortunately, new volunteers means a diversified talent pool, where volunteers can pick and choose activities that correspond to their strengths and preferences. Extroverts can host fundraising dinners. Introverts can work with databases or design websites. And the more skillful, committed volunteers the Libertarian Party acquires, the less time and energy each volunteer has to devote, keeping them from "burning out."

While ballot access petitioning requires a large volunteer force, the candidates the Libertarian Party puts on that ballot need volunteer man-power as well.

Grassroots activism requires people with skills from fundraising to public speaking to media relations. Candidates, like state parties, have been making substantial use of volunteer talents over the last few months.

The Libertarian Party would like to thank the donors and volunteers who have worked so enthusiastically to promote our cause and the state parties which are doing a great job of putting this enthusiasm to use.

In a party so driven by voluntary efforts, there is always something to be done. Unfortunately, it's not always easy to know who to ask about volunteering. If you are interested in learning about volunteer opportunities in your county or region, or learning about candidates with campaigns that need your help, contact your local Libertarian Party affiliate. If you need more information, please call the Libertarian party's National Volunteer Coordinator, Elizabeth Brooks, at 1-800-ELECT-US.

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objections to the recent direction the GOP has taken. "It was coming on for a long time," Muth says of his decision to leave the Republican Party. "They spent worse than Democrats when they were in power and violated a lot of rights."

"Barry Goldwater was the first and only Republican Presidential candidate I ever supported," said David Nolan, founder of the Libertarian Party, in a 1998 *LP News* article commemorating Goldwater. "If the Republican Party had remained true to the principles of Barry Goldwater, the Libertarian Party probably would not exist, because it would be unnecessary. Barry Goldwater was my political hero...and the greatest President we never had."

The purpose of the Libertarian Party's presence at the CLC was to reach out to potential voters who felt disenfranchised from the Republican Party. In that respect, the LP did very well. "Everyone who stopped by our table was willing to talk about Libertarianism and the new political landscape," says LNC Media Coordinator Andrew Davis. "They all had the same story: 'The Republican Party no longer represents my beliefs, and I don't know what I'm going to do.' Of course, I told them they could always find a home with the Libertarian Party, and I think the majority of them took that to heart."