

# LIBERTY PLEDGE

## newsletter

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## Party joins lawsuit to strike down new campaign finance 'reform' bill

The Libertarian Party has joined a lawsuit to overturn the campaign finance reform bill that was signed into law by President Bush.

At a press conference in Washington, DC on April 10, Libertarian Party Executive Director Steve Dasbach joined U.S. Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY), the National Right to Life PAC, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Christian Coalition, and others to sign onto the lawsuit, *McConnell v. FEC*.

The suit seeks to overturn the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act — formally known as the Shays-Meehan bill — which was signed into law by

President Bush on March 27.

The Libertarian Party joined the lawsuit in part because the campaign finance reform bill places an "unfair burden" on third parties, said Dasbach.

"Once again, Congress has passed a law with no thought to the consequences, and especially with no thought to the consequences to anyone other than Republicans and Democrats," he said.

### Fewer resources

"This bill places an unfair burden on all smaller parties, which have fewer resources and staff members to deal with its red-tape provisions."

Specifically, said Dasbach, the bill will make it illegal for young people under 18 to serve in some leadership positions in the Libertarian Party, will make it illegal for the party to take soft money contributions to build a headquarters (as the Republicans and Democrats have already done), and will make it illegal for the party to sell ads to corporations in its monthly newspaper.

"Some provisions of the campaign finance reform bill won't matter to the Republicans or Democrats, but they will have a significant impact on the Libertarian Party and other third parties," he said.

## Ayn Rand profiled on C-SPAN show

Novelist and philosopher Ayn Rand will be recognized as one of the most influential American writers of the 20th Century in an ongoing series on C-SPAN.

On Sunday, May 12, Rand will be the subject of a two-hour show that will discuss her background, her literary influence, and the impact of her 1943 novel, *The Fountainhead*.

The show, part of the *American Writers II: The 20th Century* series, will air at 3:00 pm ET, and then be rebroadcast the following Friday (May 17) at 8:00 pm.

## Three Libertarians elected

In a flurry of Spring victories, Libertarians have been elected or re-elected in Michigan and Wisconsin.

In Michigan, David Eisenbacher won a seat on the Troy city council, coming in first out of five candidates and handily defeating two incumbents.

In the April 1 election, Eisenbacher received 5,146 votes — 30% of the total — to earn a three-year term on the non-partisan, seven-member board.

The 30-year-old Eisenbacher said he was "pleasantly surprised" by the results.

"It feels really good to

have won so convincingly, considering that I had no polling data to gauge my support," said. "We won big."

In Wisconsin, Gene Cisewski was elected to the Iron County Board of Supervisors. Cisewski defeated a four-term incumbent, 61 votes to 38 votes, to claim the District 3 (Hurley) seat on the 15-member, non-partisan board.

Also in Wisconsin, Libertarian Kevin Scheunemann was returned to the Kewaskum Village Board when no challengers ran against him or three other incumbents. Scheunemann was first elected in 2001.

## News blurbs

■ The Libertarian National Committee has voted to call for the repeal of the USA/**Patriot Act**, charging that it "sacrifices" liberties in the name of fighting terrorism. At its meeting in Evergreen (CO) on March 16, the LNC urged the repeal of the bill, which gives the government the power to install the Carnivore e-mail snooping system.

■ California Libertarian **Mark Selzer's** cable access show is now famous ... in Britain. *The Libertarian Alternative* was featured on March 22 on the *Big Breakfast Show*, a BBC morning news-and-comedy program. The BBC wanted to film a "typical" American cable access show, with English comedian Squeaky McClean as one of the guests.

■ After a debate erupted among Virginia LP members over whether he was ethically qualified to represent the party as a candidate, **Jacob Hornberger** has announced that he will run as an independent for the U.S. Senate.

■ Award-winning movie producer **Aaron Russo** has nixed his plans to run for governor in Nevada, following a diagnosis of bladder cancer. Instead, he said, he will focus on regaining his health.

■ Republican New Mexico Governor **Gary Johnson** has said he does not plan to seek the LP's 2004 presidential nomination. Johnson gave a flat "no" when asked about a Libertarian presidential bid at a Feb. 28 press conference.

# Libertarian unveils novel fund-raiser

By **B.J. Plasket**

*The Daily Times-Call*

DENVER — The Libertarian Party has long struggled to gain public recognition and votes, but a Boulder man seeking the party's nomination for governor thinks he has come up with a way to combat those problems.

Ralph Shnelvar, a 51-year-old computer software writer and the managing partner of Information LLC, wants supporters to pledge a total of \$1 million to his campaign.

But he's not going to ask anyone to pay up unless the entire \$1 million is pledged by July 4. The money, he said, should bring recognition to the party.

"In the minds of TV, newspapers and even the voters, if you don't have the money, you're not serious," Shnelvar said.

Shnelvar, who entered the governor's race in January after former Longmont gun-shop owner Bob Glass bowed out, thinks the pledge drive will help both his candidacy and the upstart Libertarian party.

"Most politicians raise money and use that money to raise more," he said. "I'm doing it backwards. I want to raise all the money before they give it to me."

Shnelvar said the Libertarian Party's efforts to spread its message of limited government, individual freedom and personal responsibility suffers from what he called "the classic chicken-and-egg problem," in which the media and most voters ignore the party, making fund-raising nearly impossible.

"You have to have press, but the press doesn't know about us," he said. "We want to break that cycle."

He's also breaking new politi-

cal ground.

"As far as I know, I'm the first one to do anything like this," Shnelvar said.

Shnelvar said he will report the pledges to the secretary of state as they come in and the pledges will be part of a public contribution record he despises but must live with.

"It's all part of the erosion of political anonymity," he said. "Next, they will put cameras in the voting booth."

While the names of those who pledge will be public, Shnelvar will not begin announcing the pledge total until it reaches \$100,000.

The Libertarian Party, which fought for years for official recognition in Colorado, does seem to have made electoral strides in recent years. The party now boasts San Miguel County Sheriff William Masters and four members of the Leadville City Council as members, as well as Ron Elsis, a member of the Longmont Board of Adjustment and Appeals.

The party will hold its state convention in Leadville from May 17 to 19.

Shnelvar, who is battling 31-year-old James Vance for the party's gubernatorial nomination, said the July 4 deadline still gives him "time to spend the money wisely" before the November election.

If his million-dollar fund-raising plan fails, Shnelvar doesn't plan to abandon his campaign or his quest to advance the Libertarian philosophy.

"I'll go do what Libertarians do all the time," he said. "I'll be out there nipping at the heels of the big parties."

B.J. Plasket can be reached at 303-776-2244, Ext. 451, or by e-mail at [bplasket@times-call.com](mailto:bplasket@times-call.com).

# Libertarians ready to approve candidates

By **JOHN LeBAS**  
*Eagle Staff Writer*

Campaign '02

A third political party working to gain ground in GOP-dominated Brazos County will select candidates for the November general election during a convention this weekend.

Eleven area residents are seeking the Libertarian Party's nomination to local and state offices, said county chairman Christopher Jagge. Most of those nominations will be decided Saturday at the 2002 county convention, which starts at noon in the College Station Conference Center.

"Unless we run, many countywide races will be uncontested," Jagge said. "Single-party politics is not healthy for our system of government or for Brazos County."

Libertarians will also select local party officers and dele-

gates for the upcoming district and state party conventions, Jagge said.

The Libertarian Party does not hold a primary, as the Republicans and Democrats did Tuesday, to decide nominations. Instead, candidates are picked at conventions.

The convention is open to the public, but those who voted in the Republican and Democratic primaries may not participate.

The Libertarians are fielding about as many candidates for local offices as they did in 2000, the first year they appeared on the Brazos County ballot. Libertarians are

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## Party

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running for state House Districts 14 and 17; county judge; Precinct 1 justice of the peace; Precinct 2, Place 2 justice of the peace; Precinct 3 justice of the peace; Precinct 4 justice of the peace; Precinct 3 county commissioner; county clerk; district clerk; and county treasurer.

With more contributions to fund their efforts this year, the party is having an easier time attracting supporters and spreading its message, Jagge said.

That message basically mirrors the golden rule, and Libertarians believe strongly in individual rights and responsibility, Jagge said.

"That is the blessing of living in a free nation," he said.

Nationally, the Libertarians have taken a strong stance for drug legalization. Locally, one of their biggest concerns is Brazos County's condemnation of land for a planned

exposition center.

Jagge said imminent domain is outdated and is misused to obtain land for use that really isn't in the interest of the public at large.

"At one time it was used only for roads, and maybe fire stations and police stations," he said. "But nowadays imminent domain is used for the pet projects of politicians or for private interests."

Although Brazos County is still considered GOP country, Jagge said the Libertarian Party offers voters another option. In 2000, the Libertarian candidate for Brazos County tax assessor-collector got more than 1,000 votes while running against a Democrat and a Republican.

It wasn't enough to win, but Jagge said it indicates a growing number of voters aren't opposed to selecting Libertarian candidates.

Statewide, about 180 Libertarians are seeking office this year. That's up from 100 two years ago.

■ John LeBas' e-mail address is [jlebas@theeagle.com](mailto:jlebas@theeagle.com).

▲ *The Daily Times-Call*, Longmont, Colorado, March 15, 2002  
▶ *The Eagle*, Bryan, Texas, March 16, 2002

# Libertarians to field nominees

**Barry Smith**  
Star Raleigh Bureau

RALEIGH — Noticeably absent from the election filings, which closed Friday, were candidates from the Libertarian Party.

The party, however, will be on the ballot this year and leaders say they plan to nominate a slate of candidates at their state convention in May.

State law requires new political parties with enough petitions to get on the ballot to nominate their candidates at a convention rather than file at state and county boards of elections as Democrats and Republicans do.

While the Libertarian Party has been on the ballot for a number of elections, it had to requalify because it did not get 10 percent of the vote in either the presidential or gubernatorial elections in 2000.

"Libertarians never get 10 percent of the vote so they are always decertified as a political party immediately following a presidential election," said Johnnie McLean,

state deputy director of elections.

"We had to go through the petitioning process to requalify in North Carolina as a new political party," said Barbara Howe, who chairs the state party and was the party's nominee for governor in 2002.

New parties are required to obtain signatures on a petition equal to at least 2 percent of the number of people who voted in the last presidential or gubernatorial election. The Libertarians have already done that, Ms. McLean said.

While the Libertarian Party will have to nominate its candidates at a convention this year, party candidates will be able to file for office the same way as Democratic and Republican candidates in 2004, Ms. McLean said.

She said that she knows of no other party circulating petitions to get on the state ballot this year.

"They normally do that in anticipation of the presidential elections," Ms. McLean said.

Sean Haugh, executive director of the N.C. Libertarian Party, said the party does plan to field candidates for a number of offices this year.

"We are committed to running a full slate for Congress and we have set a goal that there will be no unopposed candidates for the General Assembly," Haugh said.

Ms. Howe said the party has an announced candidate for the U.S. Senate seat up for grabs in North Carolina this year, George Allen Esworthy of Apex.

Other candidates can seek the nomination for that office, Haugh said.

Last year, one Libertarian was elected in a non-partisan race in a Madison municipal election.

Another Libertarian lost by 15 votes in a non-partisan Lenoir City Council election, Ms. Howe said.

The N.C. Libertarian Party will make its nominations at its state convention to be held at the Village Inn in Clemmons on May 4-5.

## Bean-sprout swirl?

Days after telling readers about "fat taxes," we learn that legislation to impose a "fat tax" on soft drinks in California and study new taxes on junk food is the first wave of a new war on fat by politicians.

But not all politicians.

The Libertarian Party says the "war on fat" by politicians other than themselves "should be vigorously fought by every American."

"This is our next great battle of American politics: keeping politicians out of our refrigerators," says Libertarian spokesman George Getz. "If we don't stop them now, they'll slap new taxes on soda, hamburgers and ice cream — while subsidizing tofu, broccoli and bean sprouts."

In California, state Sen. Deborah Ortiz has introduced a bill that would impose a new tax on distributors of soft drinks and other sweetened sodas. The bill would add about 2 cents to the cost of a typical 12-ounce soda, and the money — as much as \$300 million a year — would be used to fund childhood-obesity prevention programs.

Mr. Getz counters that our eating habits are none of Uncle Sam's business, saying the government should not be allowed to "micromanage our menus and tax our Twinkies."

▲ *The Washington Times*, Washington DC, April 2, 2002

# Libertarians absent from filings

## ■ Party will be on ballot, still plans to field candidates

**By BARRY SMITH**  
Gazette Raleigh Bureau

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Howe said that the party has an announced candidate for the U.S. Senate seat up for grabs in North Carolina this year, George Allen Esworthy of Apex.

Other candidates can seek the nomination for that office, Haugh said.

She said the party has of goal of getting three people elected this year. "We think that's a reasonable goal."

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Sean Haugh  
executive director  
of N.C. Libertarian Party

Last year, one Libertarian was elected in a non-partisan race in a Madison municipal election. Another Libertarian lost by 15 votes in a non-partisan Lenoir City Council election, Howe said.

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▲ *The Daily Times-Call*, Longmont, Colorado, March 15, 2002  
▲ *The Gaston Gazette*, Gastonia, North Carolina, March 6, 2002

# Libertarians will hold state meeting locally

*Business convention in Ashland will elect officers and delegates as the party tries to build an organization with some clout*

By **DANI DODGE**  
Mail Tribune

Libertarians are holding their state convention in Ashland this weekend as part of their strategy to be a force in state politics.

At the annual business convention, more than 50 Libertarians will elect officers and party delegates, make candidate endorsements, discuss their platform and spread the word about libertarianism.

"There's been a large cultural shift in the party," said Richard Burke, executive director of the Libertarian Party of Oregon. "Rather than being a political party just to agitate and introduce issues, we've tried to be a real political party and part of that success is building a statewide organization."

In past years, the party held business conventions in Bend, La Grande and Newport. Their annual nominating convention is held in the Willamette Valley. Ashland Libertarian Gino Casternovia said he hopes the Ashland convention will help build a strong Jackson County Libertarian Party.

"We have a lot of people who think this way in the area, but we aren't organized," said Casternovia, who runs an educational business service. "There's no Jackson County Libertarian organization and I would love to foster that."

Founded in 1971, the Libertarian Party is the third-largest political party in the United States and the state. Out of the 112,260 registered voters in Jackson County, 998 are registered as Libertarians, according to the Jackson County clerk's office. Less than 1 percent of the state's voters are registered Libertarian.

Libertarians believe in a free-market economy, dedication to civil liberties and personal freedom, and a foreign policy of nonintervention and free trade.

"We believe in truly limited government," said Burke, who lives in Cedar Mill, "meaning fiscally conservative and socially tolerant."

Libertarians agree with conservative Republican approaches to fiscal policy, such as decreasing taxes, but on the other hand side with more liberal Democratic policies on social issues such as the Death with Dignity Act, the use of medicinal marijuana and allowing women to make their own choices on abortion.

"We have Democrats and Republicans and they are arguing over how much to spend on social programs," Casternovia said. "A Libertarian would say show me where the authority is to create a social program. These should be handled by the people, not the government."

Casternovia said political questions should be answered by going to the country's founding documents like the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

## Voter registration in Oregon

Democrat: 744,948	Socialist: 705
Republican: 687,614	Natural Law: 697
Non-affiliated voters: 414,380	Constitution: 694
Libertarian: 14,634	Other: 32,423
Pacific Green: 11,424	<b>Total: 1,907,519</b>

Libertarians have won about 30 or 40 local nonpartisan elections in the state over the last few years, Burke said. For instance, Burke is president of the Tualatin Valley Water District board of commissioners, the second-largest water provider in the state. Libertarians have been elected to school boards, a mayoral position and a county commission, Burke said.

"Local offices are what affect people's lives the most," Burke said. "They are the ones who say whether I can put up a fence in my yard."

He said by getting people elected to these local offices, the party is building a "fence team" of state legislative candidates. Burke said even though they don't have the ability to win legislative elections now, they will influence state politics through elections.

"We've said we will run spoiler candidates on Republicans who vote for taxes and we will," Burke said. "We are in a position to determine the majority party in the (state) House and the Senate."

Bill Lunch, a political science professor at Oregon State University, said that Libertarians really don't have that kind of power yet. He said while it is true that in a

really close race, particularly in the Portland suburbs, Libertarians could tip the race to Democrats, it's not likely. He said a Libertarian candidate could attract 2 to 3 percent of the vote in those races, but usually things like campaign spending imbalances and differences in voter appeal would have a bigger impact.

Still, Libertarians are willing to try and have made some headway. Burke cited a letter he received from state Rep. Cliff Zauner, R-Woodburn, on Feb. 18.

"I feel your efforts were instrumental in helping to unite my caucus in the House against any tax increases," Zauner wrote.

Burke said party officials expect to run candidates for the Legislature by 2006. He said Libertarians have been elected to legislatures in five states.

"If we could elect four or five candidates we could control it," Burke said. "On social tolerance issues we side with Democrats and on fiscal conservatism, we side with Republicans — so by electing enough legislators we could be the swing vote in the Legislature."

To learn more about the Libertarian Party, you can stop by their convention at Windmill Inn of Ashland, 2525 Ashland St. They will hold a party on Friday night and the convention starts at 9 a.m. Saturday. Radio personality Lars Larson will be the speaker at their Saturday lunch. The convention will continue until late in the afternoon Saturday. To attend the lunch, make reservations at 503-781-7574. For all other events, simply show up.

Reach reporter Dani Dodge at 776-4471, or e-mail ddodge@mailtribune.com

▲ *The Mail Tribune*, Medford, Oregon, March 7, 2002  
▼ *The Cary Daily Herald*, Cary, Illinois, March 1, 2002

## Libertarians win ballot spot for committeemen

By **CHRISTY GUTOWSKI**  
*Daily Herald Legal Affairs Writer*

DuPage County Libertarians won their battle Thursday for a primary ballot spot.

Circuit Court Judge Ronald Mehling ruled county election officials erred when tossing out the petitions of 16 would-be party candidates for precinct committeemen. The judge reversed the board's decision, ordering that the names appear on the March 19 ballot.

The election board had ruled the Libertarians were not an "established" party locally. To qualify, one of a group's candidates must garner 5 percent of the vote in an election.

The Libertarians, who dubbed

themselves the DuPage 16, argued they met the requirement two years ago when one party candidate, Elizabeth Quaintance, received 26.2 percent of the vote against state Rep. Vince Persico in the 39th District.

Though she netted more than five times the required percentage, the election board found her results established Libertarians in that specific district — not the entire county.

All 16 candidates live within the 39th District, which was reconfigured last year. The county rejected the argument, saying the committeemen's post is a countywide office.

In DuPage, the two major parties each elect committeemen from 700 precincts countywide. They serve purely partisan roles, working at grass-

roots levels to get voters in their area to elect the party's candidates.

Libertarians said getting committeemen on the ballot would help the party establish and legitimize itself in DuPage County.

"This means we're an established party in DuPage," said Ted Semon, a Libertarian committeemen candidate. "This gives us a way to become much more involved in DuPage County."

The Libertarians thought about getting an injunction to throw out absentee ballots already cast because there wasn't an Libertarian option when absentee balloting started several days ago.

♦ *Daily Herald staff writer Stacy St. Clair contributed to this report.*