

LIBERTY PLEDGE

NEWSLETTER

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Genesee Libertarians building the campaign steps

by Jim Krencik

Excerpted from the *Daily News*

Published on Jan. 3, 2017

BATAVIA (NY) — With many Democrats and Republicans still feeling hung over from an election with more celebration and despair than most, there's a sense that things have to get going elsewhere.

Sitting around a table at T.F. Brown's [on] Monday, members of the Genesee County (New York) Libertarian Party were thinking of November and talking of how to get there.

The party wants to contest all three at-large city council seats up for election this fall, which former candidate Jim Rosenbeck, a Libertarian state vice chairman, said was looking likely.

They'd like to run in lots of races—nine county legislators and scores of town and village positions are up in 2017.

But as a new year dawns, Libertarian leaders said they needed to first continue building a campaign apparatus.

The committee agreed to create a vetting committee, whose approval would be another step in the candidate selection process. Who can be vetted took up a significant part of the meeting.

Their debate, Genesee County Libertarian Party Chairman Dave Olsen said, was based on a potential candidate for the legislature that members weren't sure was all-in on their current standards. Currently, the Libertarians endorse [only] candidates who have registered as Libertarians, or are unaffiliated with any party and have actively supported their party by carrying petitions for candidates in recent years.

Without official party status, party members see the col-

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Why I hope Trump will break many of his promises

by John Stossel

Excerpted from *FoxNews.com*

Published on Jan. 4, 2017

Two more weeks until the new administration begins!

I wonder if President Donald Trump will stick to his campaign promises—like reducing immigration and slamming consumers by imposing a 35 percent tariff.

Hope not.

But it could have been much worse.

Bernie Sanders wanted to make college free, even though professors say classes are filled with privileged students who party and just kill time.

Both Sanders and Hillary Clinton promised a higher minimum wage and a thousand other new commandments that would do more harm than good.

Every Republican candidate vowed to increase defense spending, even though the U.S. is going broke and already spends more than the next seven

biggest nations combined, while half the democratic world freeloads off America's armed forces.

I'm relieved that many of Trump's promises were vague or contradictory. That allows me to hope that he'll only do things that I like.

At this point, I'm in somewhat of an infatuation period, like that afflicting a teenager excited about a new boyfriend or girlfriend.

No, I'm not infatuated with Trump. His magical thinking scares me. What gives me optimism are many of [his] appointments. He's surrounded himself with people who "get it," who understand the harm done by overregulation and the benefits created by economic growth.

Larry Kudlow as economic advisor?! Paul Atkins, Andy Puzder, and Betsy

DeVos in important positions?! Who would have thought that?! Not me.

I bet Mitt Romney wouldn't have appointed them.

I also celebrate waking up and realizing that our president-elect is not Hillary

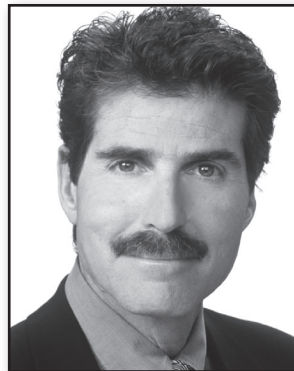
Clinton. We don't have to suffer through more years of progressive sanctimony.

So what will Donald Trump's presidency bring? Will America be "great again"? Will we "have win after win" until we "get sick and tired of winning"? I doubt it.

It would be easier to judge progress had the Libertarian Party candidate

won. We could measure whether the party kept its promise to shrink government, cut spending, lower taxes, decrease overseas military commitments, deregulate and butt out of people's private lives.

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John Stossel

Montana Libertarians reorganizing after chairman's death, planning convention in Helena

by Troy Carter

Excerpted from the *Bozeman Daily Chronicle*

Published on Jan. 4, 2017

At least four Democrats and six Republicans are hoping to replace Montana's Rep. Ryan Zinke when he leaves Congress to join the Trump administration. But so far, only Mark Wicks of Inverness is seeking the Libertarian Party's nomination.

Wicks, 46, was educated in aviation mechanics in Bozeman, but instead of fixing airplanes he became the third generation to run cattle on his family's ranch. He also travels eastern Montana selling fresh produce and has authored one book, *Wrath of the Dodo*, that portrays post-apocalyptic life in Montana.

Federal spending is out of control, he said, and the Affordable Care Act is bankrupting the country.

"Nobody is saying 'no.' They get a dollar and spend it twice," Wicks said Wednesday. "I'm tired of both sides fighting. There needs to be somebody in the middle who can stand up without strings attached and say what needs to be said."

"This is the year; it's time to break that glass ceiling and get a Libertarian into federal office," he said.

Party leaders are planning to hear from him and other would-be candidates soon. But Libertarian Party members told the Chronicle they're skeptical. Wicks is a political newcomer with no recorded votes, noted Josh Daniels, a recent statehouse candidate from Billings.

On Monday, Ron Vandevender of Craig, who took over as the party chairman after the last chairman, Mike Fellows, died in a car crash in September, said Libertarians are organizing a nominating convention in Helena in February. The exact venue and time haven't been set.

New and renewing Liberty Pledgers

Christopher Ashcraft	Brian Helfrich
Collin Barber	Barbara Howe
Philip Baron	Tom Howe
Charles Bigelow	Mary Anne Hughes
Dean Bostedor	Michael Jacobs
Neil Bray	Sergei Kostenko
Jake Burnum	Jacob Lambert
Katherine Byrne	Jascha Lee
Mark Byrne	Thomas Lemberg
David Cape	Brian Lewis
Paul Chouinard	Hubert Lowry
Martin Coalson	Frank Mancini
Andrew Collins	Matthew Mashek
Kyler Collom	Alexander O'Dell
Richard Creamer	David Olsen
Jim Dedman	Paul Panichelli
Jamieson Deuel	Rob Power
Christopher Eaton	Keith Quarles
Reed Ebarb	Brandon Ross
William Edwards	Wayne Rudolph
Scott Eighmey	Teresa Rushing
Anthony Fasano	Scott Sanford
Rodrigo Feliu	Jeffrey Schachter
Michael Fewster	Neil Schelly
John Finnell	Brian Sharples
Michael Frank	Ronald Shultis
Alfred Garcia	William Sloane
June Genis	Richard Stovall
Shawn Golder	Russ Wallace
Tomas Gomez	Shane Wernsing
Russ Haddad	Aaron Yeagan
James Hankins	Maximilian Zoia

The state party has incorporated, redesigned its website, updated its campaign finance papers, and organized a search committee to contact those they think will be strong candidates.

Since Fellows's death, the state party has incorporated, redesigned its website, updated its campaign finance papers, and organized a search committee to contact those they think will be strong candidates and [to] vet the volunteers.

Libertarians are also working on establishing steady fundraising, which has long hindered their messaging. The nominating convention will give them an opportunity to continue building the party, said Vandevender.

Nathan Pierce of Billings is a member of the ad hoc congressional search committee. He said Tuesday that Fellows's death, and the need

to replace him both as a U.S. House candidate and party chairman, [have] prompted members of the party to take on new responsibilities.

"We're trying to get county committees per Montana law and trying to solidify a board of directors," Pierce said. "Everything has been sort of interim after Mike Fellows. He did a wonderful job of promoting the Libertarian brand for so many years and we want to continue that.

"And now we have a group of new people who are young and vibrant and are hoping to make the party a force to be reckoned with, to give voters another alternative."

Right now, there's just one Libertarian county central committee, in Ravalli County. Libertar-

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Genesee Libertarians building steps

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lection of signatures as a major hurdle and a signal of interest in pushing their collective goals ahead. It's a callus of commitment [that] those gathered felt they shared, and were willing to extend support, if it's earned.

"If someone carries petitions, it's knocking on doors, many hours at the fair...if someone is willing to do that, to take part, we're willing to recognize them as a general member," said Rosenbeck, who estimated there were 70 to 80 registered Libertarians in Genesee County.

In the case of their unidentified candidate and others, the question is where effort and views overlap, or fail to be achieved. The Libertarians want to run candidates at all levels, but not if it doesn't help build a party in Genesee; in that sense, they need to be Libertarians as much as the Republicans and Democrats want people *they* can support.

Olsen said they want people who fit the party's perspec-

"We want to see innovation that creates smaller government, and enables ways for people to do things themselves."

— Dave Olsen,
Genesee County Libertarian Party Chairman

tive of "limiting government size and scope, more personal freedom and economic liberty," but for a city, town, county race, that means more than saying "no" to bad ideas." It's shared services and having an open mind to new ideas.

"It's things like having to use all the sheriff's deputies to transport women in prison to court," Olsen said, suggesting that having fewer municipal courts may help. "We want to see innovation that creates smaller government, and enables ways for people to do things themselves."

They hope to start lining up a slate of candidates before May, with a county convention scheduled for June 5. •

Montana LP reorganizing

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ians say they are discussing organizing regionally using the Public Service Commission's five districts, instead of the county-based model used by Democrats and Republicans.

As for their congressional candidate search: "We've got a few names. They are preliminary right now so we can't release them," Pierce said. "But we do have a list of about five names."

They approached Bozeman City

Commissioner Jeff Krauss about becoming their candidate, but he declined.

"I'm looking for new opportunities, but a statewide race for Congress is a bigger bite than I can chew," Krauss said.

Roger Roots, an experienced candi-

date from Livingston, told the *Chronicle* he won't seek the nomination. He's occupied with an out-of-state court case.

Like Krauss, Libertarian Francis Wendt of Belgrade, who unsuccessfully ran for Bozeman's House District 61 seat in November, said he's also not ready to take on a statewide campaign but will support whoever does.

"I'm working on trying to get a (Gallatin) county party so that we can have these conversations," said Wendt on Tuesday. "Moving forward, we need to have a convention." •



I would like to make a one-time donation to the LP:

- \$5,000
- \$1,000
- \$500
- \$250
- \$100
- \$50
- \$25
- _____ Other

I would like to increase my monthly pledge to this level:

- \$2,500
- \$1,000
- \$500
- \$250
- \$100
- \$50
- \$30
- _____ Other (minimum \$10)

(Please make checks payable to **Libertarian Party**.)

Please bill my Visa MasterCard AmEx Discover

Card number: _____ Exp.: _____

Name on card: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Occupation*: _____

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Home Phone: _____

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* Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation, and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year. Political contributions are not tax-deductible.

GOP road plan a slap at fiscal conservatives

by John Pickerill

Excerpted from the *Lafayette Journal & Courier*

Published on Jan. 4, 2017

As the Indiana General Assembly begins their 2017 session this week, one would assume the Republican-dominated state government would be pushing legislation for a more limited and fiscally responsible government (and one that protects individual liberty, freedom of religion, the right to keep and bear arms, and the sanctity of life).

After all, that's what their 2016 state convention said they stood for. However, that would be a bad assumption. The Republican leadership actually intends to increase taxes.

The heart of their legislative agenda is a gasoline tax hike on Hoosiers, from 18 cents per gallon to 26. Why? So they can spend an additional \$900 million to \$1.2 billion a year to maintain roads and fund new highway projects. They're also talking about new tolls on highways and imposing new BMV fees.

So much for the Republican Party's promise: "We believe that budgets should be balanced and should reduce spending, rather than increasing taxation."

To add insult to injury, House Speaker Brian Bosma's agenda is to triple the spending on the new pre-school pilot program, [when] he says we don't have enough money to maintain our existing roads and bridges. His counterpart, Senate President Pro Tem David Long, wants to double this pre-K spending. If these Indiana Republican leaders were the fiscal conservatives they claimed to be, they would fix the road problem by reducing spending elsewhere to pay for their road funding plan, instead of raising taxes.

If Republicans merely held true to the principles they say they stand for, this \$900 million in cuts would be easy.

First, all of the sales tax on gasoline should go to road main-

tenance—not just one-seventh of it—all of it. That's \$400 million that gets squandered elsewhere in the general fund.

Second, if they really believed in economic freedom, Bosma and Long would eliminate the \$95 million the state spends on so-called economic development, which turns into politicians handing out government favors to those who contribute to certain political campaign committees.

Third, they can reduce regulations; start [by] eliminating the \$50 million on the Gaming Commission and Horse Racing Commission, who make it more difficult every year not only for casinos and race tracks but philanthropic clubs to operate.

Fourth, show the kind of fiscal discipline in the state-funded university system as what the private sector has to deal with in tough times. Get rid of top-heavy bureaucracies, and start by eliminating the \$368 million Commission for Higher Learning and transfer its functions to the universities themselves.

Next, put new construction at universities on hold (\$46 million). Have [them] run leaner by reducing their budgets by 15 percent, freeing up \$285 million for roads. Last, since government loans are feeding the college student debt bubble, it would be prudent to reduce this as well. A 25 percent reduction in these subsidies would free up \$90 million.

All totaled, these cuts would give Bosma and Long their additional \$900 million for roads without raising taxes.

Budgets should be balanced by reducing spending, not by raising taxes. The 2017 legislative session will reveal whether Bosma and Long are the fiscal conservatives they claim to be, or are mere lackeys of the Indiana Chamber of Commerce and their other special-interest campaign contributors. •

John Pickerill is former chairman of the Montgomery County Republican Party. He has since joined the Libertarian Party.

Stossel on Trump's promises

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Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson, sounding like the Founders of our nation, often answered reporters' grandiose questions by saying, "I'm not running for *king*." Unlike Donald Trump, a narcissistic bully who often tells us he's "in charge," Johnson understood that decision-making power is best left in the hands of individual citizens.

Libertarians also respect Friedrich Hayek's insight: "The curious task of economics is to demonstrate to men how little they know about what they imagine they can design."

Will such modesty carry weight in

Trump's administration? I'm hopeful. So are stock-market investors. But none of us knows enough to be sure.

I assume 2017 will be about the same as the years before, even with someone as unusual as Trump in the White House.

He talks about "draining the swamp," but we've seen how quickly he can pivot back to business as usual.

Many Iowa voters love the federal government's ethanol subsidies (even though they're cruel and expensive to most of America), so during Iowa's Republican primary, Trump joined the ethanol-praising club. In fact, he said regulators should force gas stations to *increase* the ethanol they use.

It was a pander to try to take votes

from Trump's main Iowa rival, Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, who courageously said the ethanol mandate should be phased out.

Trump is a businessman, so I assume he knew that the ethanol mandate is a special interest scam. But in Iowa, Trump just said, "Ethanol is terrific."

I fear that 2017 will bring us more of the same: politicians doing what they think will make the loudest voters happy.

They want us to think we can have it both ways—that we can reduce deficits while boosting spending on infrastructure and defense and not touching entitlements. That's what Trump has promised.

I hope he breaks many of his promises soon. •