

# LIBERTY PLEDGE

## newsletter

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FEBRUARY 2002

## Anchorage, Alaska Libertarians file free-market taxicab initiative

Libertarians in Anchorage, Alaska have filed an initiative that would significantly deregulate the local taxicab market.

On February 5, LP activists submitted over 10,400 signatures to the city clerk's office to place the initiative on the April 2 election ballot. Only 6,240 valid signatures are required.

LP State Chair Al Anders said the initiative would allow any "qualified applicant" — as defined by current city standards — to receive a permit to drive a taxicab upon request.

Currently, would-be taxi drivers must appear before a Transportation Commission and argue that "public convenience and necessity" requires more permits, said Anders.



"This initiative would make the closed taxicab market, accessible only to a privileged few, into an open market accessible to almost anyone," he said. "The result would be increased competition amongst providers, and more choices for consumers."

Since 1984, only three new taxicab permits have been issued in Anchorage, boosting the total number of permits from 158 to 161.

Consequently, existing permits are often sold for

thousands of dollars, said Anders.

"If our initiative is approved, those permits will probably be worth as much as Enron stock," he said. "But I don't feel much sympathy for those who bought their permits in the closed market. The industry should be open to everybody."

The idea for the initiative came from Jerry Rohacek, an LP member and economics professor at the University of Alaska at Anchorage, said Anders. His students helped gather signatures, starting in November 2001.

The city clerk is expected to validate the signatures by the end of February.

## Party lobbies FAA for pilot gun rights

The national Libertarian Party mounted an e-mail campaign to try to convince the Federal Aviation Administration to allow commercial airline pilots to carry firearms to stop terrorists.

In late January, the LP sent an "urgent action item" to its 36,000-name e-mail list, urging Libertarians to contact the FAA and recommend that private airline companies be allowed to make their own rules about guns in cockpits.

This approach would allow passengers to choose which airline they frequent based on that company's

commitment to passenger safety, said LP Political Director Ron Crickenberger.

"While many of the [post Sept. 11] security measures implemented at airports won't help to deter terrorism, and may even be counterproductive, allowing the arming of airline pilots is sure to have a preventative effect," he said.

### In response

The campaign was launched in response to a provision in the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, which requires the approval of the Under Secretary for Transportation be-

fore any commercial pilot is allowed to carry a weapon.

Libertarians say pilots and airlines — not government bureaucrats — should make that decision, said Crickenberger.

"The decision to carry firearms should be left up to the people most directly responsible for passenger safety — the airlines and the pilots," he said. "Allowing pilots to carry firearms will be one small, but very important, step in preserving the basic human rights of self-defense for all of us."

The deadline for public comments on the provision was February 14.

### news blurbs

■ The LP signed a letter to President Bush, urging him to resist the "standardization" of state drivers' licenses as a "de facto national ID card system" because it violates states' rights and privacy. Also signing the February 11 letter: The Free Congress Foundation and the ACLU.

■ Award-winning science fiction author **David Brin**, whose non-fiction book *The Transparent Society* revolutionized the debate about privacy in the digital age, has been confirmed as a speaker at the 2002 National Convention in Indianapolis, July 3-7.

■ It's official: **Carla Howell** is running for governor of Massachusetts, she announced on January 29. Two years ago, she garnered 12% of the vote in a race for Ted Kennedy's U.S. Senate seat — the best-ever U.S. Senate result for a Libertarian.

■ Harvard professor **Robert Nozick**, whose 1974 book, *Anarchy, State & Utopia*, won the National Book Award and made libertarian philosophy respectable in academic circles, died on January 23 from stomach cancer.

■ N.M. Governor **Gary Johnson** has won the first 2004 LP presidential monthly straw poll, sponsored by the Cass County LP in Missouri. The anti-drug war GOP governor won 17.3% of the vote in the unscientific online survey that ended on Feb. 1. Trailing were Ron Paul (13.3%) and L. Neil Smith (9.5%).

# Liberties erode in name of 'national security'

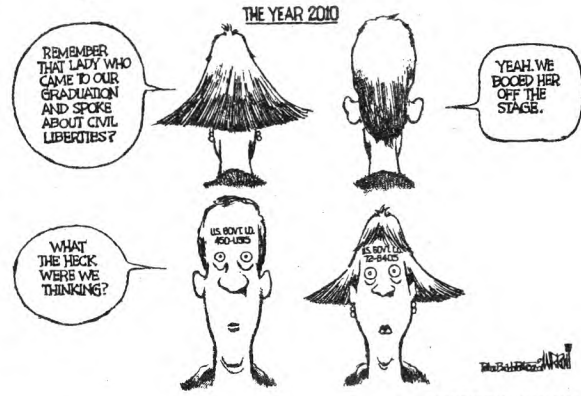
When Attorney General John Ashcroft told the nation, "To those who scare peace-loving people with phantoms of lost liberty, my message is this: Your tactics only aid terrorists," he wasn't blazing any new trails. He was merely doing what despots and would-be despots always do: attempting to intimidate into silence those who dare to question him.

Ashcroft's statement is one of the most astounding things to be said by a U.S. official in many years. To read it carefully — letting its full message sink in — is to be overtaken by a sense of horror that is otherwise hard to imagine. Every American should be offended to hear the government's chief law enforcement officer equate public expressions of concern about the threats to liberty from drastic "anti-terrorism" measures with joining al-Qaeda. Does Ashcroft have such a low estimate of the American people's intelligence?

Perhaps he needs to become acquainted with Thomas Jefferson. It was Jefferson who said, "The natural progress of things is for liberty to yield and government to gain ground." That's true in the best of times. It's doubly true during war — especially an Orwellian undeclared, open-ended crusade against an enemy as nebulous as "international terrorism." Ashcroft is a perfect Orwellian character.

In 1984, Big Brother told his people that "freedom is slavery." It follows that slavery is freedom. Ashcroft refuses to concede that the Bush administration is seeking to curtail liberty in the least. Those who see diminished liberty must be hallucinating, seeing "phantoms of lost liberty."

So when the president unilaterally abolishes due process for non-citizens, we are only imagining an erosion of liberty. And when Congress passes, without even reading, the administration's alleged anti-terrorism bill, which expands the government's powers of surveillance, permits secret searches of homes and weakens judicial oversight of law enforcement, again, we



## SHELDON RICHMAN COMMENTARY

are deluded if we think freedom is evaporating. I write "alleged anti-terrorism bill" because the new law does not restrict the expanded powers to suspected terrorists, but applies them to any criminal activity.

This is a classic power grab under the cover of an emergency. Sept. 11 has given policy-makers a chance to bring down from the shelf every new police power they have wanted for years. They assume no one will question the need for such broad powers, and if anyone does, they can shut him up by portraying him as an ally of the terrorists. The game is rigged in favor of power.

It is no comfort that the erosion of liberty in the name of fighting terrorism has a bipartisan cast to it. Democratic Sen. Charles Schumer of New York has given his blessing to oppressive government with an op-ed in the Washington Post titled "Big Government Looks Better Now."

As Schumer puts it, barely concealing his glee, "For the foreseeable future, the federal government will have to grow. . . . The era of a shrinking federal government has come to a close." Of course, the senator was trying to enlarge it long before Sept. 11.

Schumer insists that only the federal government "has the breadth, strength and resources" to keep us secure. Forgive me for asking, but did we not have a federal government on Sept. 11? Was it not in charge of our security on that date? Then what is the senator talking about? And if it isn't impolite to ask, just where does the federal government get all those resources? Last time I checked, it didn't produce anything. It simply took resources from the people who did produce them.

Once we understand that all government possesses is the power of legal plunder, our whole perspective changes. Schumer insists that "the notion of letting a thousand different ideas compete and flourish — which works so well to create goods and services — does not work at all in the face of a national security emergency. Unity of action and purpose is required, and only the federal government can provide it."

But he's got it wrong. Security is a service. Competition and innovation are valuable in the effort to keep ourselves safe. The last thing we need is central planning.

That's what we had on Sept. 11.

**SHELDON RICHMAN** is senior fellow at *The Future of Freedom Foundation*, a libertarian organization in Fairfax, Va., and editor of *Ideas on Liberty* magazine. He wrote this column for the *Knight Ridder/Tribune News Service*.

## THE INSIDER

Bob Rolfe | Content Editor

### Is Nader guilty of what he despises most?

As Marlon Brando once famously observed, "The horror. The horror!"

Yes, folks, Ralph Nader has been accused of "false advertising."

That's the same Ralph Nader who has devoted his life to crusades against anything and everything he considers evil or dangerous — including the presidential candidacy of Al Gore.

Anyway, seems that rumpled Ralph was on NBC-TV's "Meet the Press" on Sunday and, in a response to a question from host Tim Russert, he declared, "The Green Party is now the third largest party in America."

The Green Party, you will recall, is the organization under whose banner he helped hand the last presidential election to George W. Bush.

Well, Ralph's claim to No. 3 status has raised the hair on the neck of Ron Crickenberger, the political director of the Libertarian Party.

"How can Nader claim he's going to 'clean up the political system' when he can't even come clean on national TV?" Crickenberger demanded.

"Unfortunately for Nader, saying so doesn't make it so," he continued. "According to any objective standard, the Libertarian Party is today's largest, most successful third party. Year in and year out, we run more candidates for office and achieve more election victories than all other third parties combined."

Crickenberger offers these statistics to prove his point:

- Elected officials: 302 Libertarians, 131 Greens.
- Election victories in 2001: 96 Libertarians, 58 Greens.
- Candidates for office in 2001: 347 Libertarians, 281 Greens.
- Registered voters: 224,713 Libertarians, 194,873 Greens.
- Money raised in 2001: \$2.1 million Libertarians, less than \$0.1 million Greens.

The numbers, if they are correct, appear to back up his claim, as does this comment: "The real yardstick for third-party success is how many candidates you ran for office, and how many of those candidates won elections. . . . We have more people in office than all other third parties combined."

And Mr. Crickenberger couldn't resist one parting shot. Noting that Nader's latest book is called "Crashing The Party: How To Tell the Truth and Still Run for President," he added: "Libertarians understand that book has received excellent reviews. We urge Mr. Nader to read it."

Ouch!

▲ *The Duluth News-Tribune*, Duluth, Minnesota, January 15, 2002  
 ▼ *The Leader*, Indianapolis, Corning, New York, January 17, 2002

# DuPage Libertarians take fight for ballot spot to court

BY STACY ST. CLAIR  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

DuPage County Libertarians have taken their battle for a primary ballot spot to the courthouse.

In a lawsuit filed this week in circuit court, 16 party members asked a judge to accept their petitions to run for precinct committeemen and to place their names on voting cards in the March 19 primary.

The county election commission last week removed the would-be candidates from the ballot after ruling Libertarians were not an "established" party locally.

"This is a slap in the face to all DuPage residents," said Austin Hough, chairman of the Libertarian Party of Illinois. "This is not a tyrannical government — or at least it's not supposed to be."

The state party has offered to pay the legal bills for the candidates, who have dubbed themselves the "DuPage 16."

The election commission's rejection was a major blow to party leaders, who have designs to make DuPage County the launch pad for a Libertarian movement in Illinois. The traditionally Republican area caught officials' attention two years ago when one of its candidates received roughly 25 percent of the vote against state Rep. Vince Perisco in the 39th District.

Libertarians leaders viewed Elizabeth Quaintance's showing as an open invitation from DuPage voters to run other candidates. It was time, they decided, to establish a party infrastructure similar to that of local Republicans and Democrats.

In DuPage, the two major parties each elect committeemen from 700 precincts countywide. They serve purely partisan roles, working at a grassroots levels to get voters in their area to elect the party's candidates.

Libertarians do not need a formal election to organize themselves in such a fashion, but party leaders want the perceived prestige of having their committeemen's names on the ballot. "It gives us an air of legitimacy," said Ted Semon, who wants to run as a committeeman in Bloomingdale Township.

To be an established party, a party candidate must garner 5 percent of the vote in an election. Though Quaintance netted more than 5 times the required percentage, the election committee ruled her results established Libertarians in that specific district — not the entire county.

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

The appeal is expected to be settled before the primary.

# Libertarians are planning Wayne Co. organization

By Wendy Ward  
Staff writer

The Libertarian Party is planning a Wayne County party organization.

Issues of property rights will be an emphasis for the party, which plans to field local candidates in the fall elections.

"Wasteful spending and property issues are ones that people can get into," said Rex Bell of Hagerstown, the party's local contact.

There is no organized Libertarian party in Wayne County and the state party is helping organize one.

An affiliating convention will be held Jan. 21 at the Greens Fork Community Center.

"We're trying to affiliate as many counties as possible," said Sheri Conover Sharlow, communications coordinator of the Libertarian Party of Indiana.

The Indiana party organized in 1971. In 1994, it gained ballot access.

"What we're trying to do is give voters another option," Bell said.

Bylaws will be passed and officers elected at the con-

## At a glance

The Libertarian Party is organizing a Wayne County affiliate.

■ An organizing convention will be held at 6 p.m. Jan. 21 at the Greens Fork Community Center.

■ More information on the Libertarian Party is available at [www.lp.org](http://www.lp.org) or at [www.lpin.org](http://www.lpin.org).

vention. Anyone may attend but only dues-paying members of the Libertarian Party may vote.

"There's nothing that says you can't vote Libertarian (in the fall general election) if you don't pay the \$25," Sharlow said.

"But the only people who can vote on bylaws and on officers are dues paying members."

Members pay annual dues of \$25 to support the party. The Libertarian Party does not accept government matching funds from qualifying presidential races.

People can pay the dues and become members at the affiliation convention.

- ▲ (LEFT) *The Naperville Daily Herald*, Naperville, Illinois, January 16, 2002
- ▲ (RIGHT) *The Palladium-Item*, Richmond, Indiana, January 11, 2002
- ▼ *The Sun*, Macon, Lowell, Massachusetts, January 7, 2002

# Billerica Libertarian to challenge Meehan for seat

By CHRISTINE McCONVILLE  
Sun Staff

BILLERICA — Libertarian Ilana Freedman is planning to announce tonight her candidacy to challenge U.S. Rep. Martin Meehan for the congressional seat in the 5th Congressional District. "I really think this opportunity is long overdue for the district," said Freedman. "The people of Massachusetts are looking for another approach to solving the problems we have."

Freedman criticized Meehan's disregard for his term-limits pledge. Meehan, a Lowell Democrat, promised constituents that he'd step down after four terms, but he's now running for his sixth.

Freedman has only been living in Billerica since 1999, but in that short time, she has

gained tremendous recognition. She and her husband, Richard, are both Town Meeting representatives who have embraced the give-and-take of local politics. They are visible and active participants on Town Meeting floor.

Freedman sees her plans to jump from local office to national office as a logical and positive step.

"The original intent of our founding fathers was that we would be governed by citizen legislators, people who came from the private sector, went into government for a short time, and then went back to the private sector," she said. "Over the years, government has gotten so large, and legislators have become so distant from their constituency."

Freedman says that government has too much interference in American lives.

"We pay almost 50 percent of the money we earn in taxes of one kind or another. That's huge.

"There are legitimate roles that the government can play, of course," she continued.

"Government should be involved in defense and security and in things between states, like air pollution, but the government shouldn't be involved in micro-managing education or personal life choice," she said.

Freedman is an industry analyst and an expert on the impact of disruptive change. Since 1993, she has been a senior partner of Gerard Group International, a private consulting firm that specializes in strategic positioning and industry trend forecasting.



Freedman

OPINION AND COMMENTARY

# Analyzing what we hate about politics

Several years ago, I devised a movie classification system based on an analysis of character development, core theme and conflict resolution. If, for example, the central characters are tough, independent men who never cry, and if they answer questions with their guns, the movie falls into the category, "Republican." On the other hand, if the central characters are women who win revenge against their Republican husbands in a tear-jerking court scene, I deem the movie "Democratic."

*The Matrix* and *Shrek* are "Libertarian" movies because the central characters are independent but accountable; and, oh boy, can they fight when liberty is on the line.

Sadly, there is a new category for movies that are so amoral, so insidiously misleading and seductive that I fear for the future of our nation should this category persist. I call these movies "Soma" (you know, the happy drug from Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*) and they are an insidious disease. I can't advocate legally banning this cinematic scourge, but as a concerned patriot, I must warn you of one particularly egregious example and urge you to avoid it.

I'm referring to *The Princess Diaries*, now in rental stores.



Andy Horning

Please don't misunderstand. Sometimes I like bad movies, and I don't even mind that it's a thoughtless contortion of the classic *Little Lord Fauntleroy*. But contrary to the impressively polished, selfless and educated Fauntleroy, the message of this remake seems to be that any unpopular 15-year-old, given sufficient doses of self-worth and a shallow lesson in deportment, can and should rule a nation.

No, I'm not worried that this could actually happen. I am more worried that we think it can happen, when it can't.

Soma flicks present a rose-colored surreality that leads us to believe that anybody can call a press conference and get a room full of eager reporters. We're shown that anybody with a sweet thought can grab the public imagination and lead us all to a brighter tomorrow. We're lured into

the expectation, ultimately, that unlike all of the mighty nations before us, ours will last forever because ordinary folk of modest means and a good heart can rise like cream to the top of our political heap and do the right thing at just the right time.

Ha. We have an election cycle under way. You're getting mail from politicians you haven't heard from since the last election, and you're paying for it. Both liberals and conservatives are telling you about the wonderful things they'll do with your money. Their styles vary from blazing six-guns to glycerin tears, but almost every one of them wants more power over you; and with the media already stuffing your head with "Politicians to Watch" lists and other free publicity for the powerful elite, you're more than likely going to give it to them.

Over the next several months, I intend to share with you a view of our democratic process that the mightiest politicians have never seen: the barnacle's view of this ship of state in the heat of our democratic process.

As a guy who has called press conferences that nobody attended, I have a few things to say about the media. As a candidate for both governor and mayor, I've hobnobbed with some politicians and a whole lot of political

hopefuls, and I'll share some observations. I'll try to reveal the unseen matrix of exclusionary laws and immoral practices that are designed to crush all opposition to everything we hate about politics.

While we'd like to think that good always triumphs over evil, our taxes, unquestioned campaign donations, bad laws and manipulated voting ensure that evil still pays very well. Perhaps we like princess stories with happy endings, but that's not how elections work. They're more like bad movies. They're expensive to produce, the stars are troublesome, and for many of the players, each election amounts to no more than a resume for the next one.

Maybe American government works like a pendulum, and an upswing is sure to come. But I'm not counting on that. If our democratic process is to survive, it'll take effort from people who've never cared, never tried, or who've already quit.

Let's do this election right. For my part, I can't be as entertaining as a movie, but I'll try to be more informative than a yard sign and more truthful than a campaign promise.

■ Horning works for a medical ultrasound company by day and writes *Libertarian* musings by night. Contact him by e-mail at [andrewhorning@juno.com](mailto:andrewhorning@juno.com)

## Young Libertarian speaks out

### Nineteen-year-old candidate seeks JP slot in election

By VANESA SALINAS

Valley Morning Star

HARLINGEN — Dressed in a black suit and tie with an American flag pinned to the coat, Miguel Leija, Jr gave a speech to members of the Rhizome Club, an auxiliary of the Libertarian Party Cameron County.

Leija, from Harlingen, is running for Justice of the Peace Pct. 5 place 2 and believes a new and fresh face should be seen in politics.

"A vote is such a little thing that we forgot, that one vote at a time, one person speaks," said the 19-year-old candidate. "And together with others, makes a sound that can be heard for a long time."

The Rio Hondo Elementary School teacher said he is prepared to give it all he has and bring in a strong campaign to run against current Justice of the Peace David Wise starting March. He plans to advertise his campaign with banners



Star photo by Matthew Hinton

**GETTING TO KNOW YOU:** 19-year-old Miguel Leija Jr., left, shakes hands with Libertarian Club Chairman Wendell Drye. Leija recently graduated from college and is running for Justice of the Peace Precinct 5, Place 2.

and television and radio ads.

Financing is not a problem for Leija. He believes many Libertarians are hurt by their campaign budgets, but through fund raising and selling a limousine business he owned, he managed to raise \$15,000, which he plans to use for his campaign.

"The Libertarian party is the only political party that unwaveringly stands as a bulwark against the encroachment of the state, to defend your freedom," Leija said.

Leija graduated from American Academy at the age of 15. He graduated with a

bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Concordia College and University in Austin at the age of 18.

He plans to pursue a master's degree in political science at the University of Texas at Brownsville. If he is elected as JP, he will be taking night classes.

Integrity, honesty, fairness and strictness are what Leija wants to implement if elected. He said he will not incorporate any Libertarian views to the job because "the law still stands the same, it's just the point of a different party."

"Abide by the laws and be strict," is the way Leija described he would be if chosen as JP.

Despite hearing criticism for his age, Leija feels confident he will be victorious November 5 — a week before his birthday. He feels it will be "good birthday present" to win.

In case he doesn't win, he still has plans in the political field. He plans to run sometime against State Representative Jim Solis. From there he plans to move up the ladder.

"We want people to know that young men and women are striving for a better future," Leija said.

▲ *The Valley Morning Star*, Harlingen, Texas, January 13, 2002

▲ *The Indianapolis Star*, Indianapolis, Indiana, January 14, 2002