



Published for friends and supporters of the Libertarian Party

# Liberty Pledge

► NEWSLETTER

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## Happy 25th Birthday, Libertarian Party!

The Libertarian Party celebrated its 25th anniversary on December 11th—marking a quarter century as America's most active, successful, and influential third party.

"We've established ourselves as the most important third party of the latter half of the 20th century," said Steve Dasbach, the party's national chairman. "Now we're working to become the dominant *major* party of the first half of the 21st century."

During its 25 years, the party has run thousands of candidates for public office, elected hundreds of officeholders, racked up tens of millions of votes, and grown to include 125,000 registered voters in 28 states.

It was on December 11, 1971, when eight individuals met in Colorado Springs (CO) and formally voted to form the Libertarian Party. The impetus? The imposition of wage and price controls by President Richard Nixon.

Growing concern over Nixon's "authoritarian" presidency made the group decide, recalled David Nolan, one of the founding members, that "a new political party, dedicated to the uncompromising defense of individual liberty, was needed now!"

Since then, the Libertarian Party has helped to fundamentally shift the nature of American political debate.

"Libertarian ideas that were considered outlandish 20 years ago—like privatizing government services, ending the War on Drugs, and so on—are part of mainstream politics now," said Dasbach. "Libertarianism has become one of the most powerful intellectual forces in America."

Indeed, the party's philosophy has permeated the nation's political dialogue to an astonishing degree—which hasn't escaped the notice of the media. Libertarianism has been called "the real inspiration behind the Republican revolution" (*New York* magazine, 1995), and "the cutting-edge politics of the time" (*The Village Voice*, 1996).

Beyond its philosophical victories, the Libertarian Party has also helped redraw America's political map, rewrite the record books on third-party success, and reform the nation's ballot access laws.

"For 25 years, Republicans and Democrats have been hoping that we'll go away," said Dasbach. "No chance of that! Every time they suggest a new tax, or impose more censorship, or get America involved in another futile, bloody war, or subsidize their corporate clients, the Libertarian Party will be there to point out their sins."

## Two bestselling authors admit they're libertarians

Libertarianism has taken a literary bent over the last several months, with two well-known authors announcing that they are libertarian—essayist and novelist Joan Didion and Charles Murray, author of *Losing Ground*.

"I'm a libertarian," Didion stated in the September 2nd issue of *New York* magazine. According to the article, Didion had confused friends by veering between political admiration for Barry Goldwater and Jesse Jackson, but said, "It would take me all day to explain why I think my position has been consistent—but I think that it has."

Didion is the author of the novels *Play It As It Lays*, *Salvador*, and *A Book Of Common Prayer*, and the collection of essays *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*.

Meanwhile, Murray announced his libertarian beliefs in a bold fashion: He has written a book entitled *What It Means to Be A Libertarian*, scheduled for publication in January.

In the November 18th issue of *The New Yorker*, Murray argued that the federal government could be cut by 40%—and "you'd get large numbers of people who'd realize we don't need it. Most people are already living lives where they could do without the government just fine."

But despite his libertarian rhetoric, Murray isn't perfect: He admitted he voted for Bob Dole this year. "I voted for Dole because my wife said if you want to vote against Bill Clinton you have to vote for Dole. If I hadn't voted for Dole, I would have voted for Harry Browne," he said.

## Magicians & triathletes for Browne

Besides winning the support of radio talk show hosts and investment advisors, Harry Browne also won votes in 1996 from . . . *magicians and triathletes?*

That's right: Browne won the support of Jillette Penn (half of the famous magic duo Penn & Teller) and Jeff Devlin, identified by *Inside Triathlon* magazine as one of America's "top triathletes."

In the October 20 issue of *The State Journal-Register* (Springfield, Illinois), Penn said Browne had his support because "a vote for him means an awful lot. Anybody who goes to the polls to vote for Clinton or Dole is not only misinformed but also, on some level, evil."

And in the December issue of *Inside Triathlon*, Devlin said, "If we elect a Republican or Democrat, everything will stay the same. [Browne is] actually able to articulate some common sense and make valid points."

# It makes America work

*Thankless campaign draws its reward from small school*

I didn't intend to run for Congress this year. But, like the loyal party activist that I am, I allowed my name to be placed in nomination, intending to become a "paper candidate." However, that just isn't me — once in the fray, I became immersed in the battle to win office.

I was nominated in May, but it was late August before I finally worked up enough enthusiasm to formally announce my entry into the race. The local media called me a "perennial" candidate (I had run for office six times before) and asked me why I was running this time. My answers didn't impress them.

The first major hurdle to overcome was fund raising. I sent off a quick plea to friends and relatives. To save money I used copies of my page in an old Oregon Voters' Pamphlet that stated my positions of six years ago when I had previously run against the same incumbent. I pasted labels over past campaign envelopes rather than buy new ones. I received enough funds to pay for immediate needs.

During the next two-plus months, I spent endless hours writing news releases, speeches, statements, fund-raising letters and answering questionnaires. I ended up with permanent cramp in my neck.

Then I spent endless hours on the phone asking for help, lawn sign locations, endorsements and money. I ended up with a red, sore ear.

Then there were lawn signs to be installed in muddy lots and weed-filled yards. I ended up with muddy boots in a dirty car.

Then I spent endless hours driving to other counties in my district, hauling materials in and out of locations where candidate fairs were held, shaking hands and passing out the literature. My right hand is sore and I have a backache!

Then I spent endless hours walking my district, delivering literature door-to-door. Aah, at last, some good results: I'm losing weight.

During the Washington/VO game, a student volunteer and I stood at an entrance to the stadium path footbridge over the Willamette River and passed out literature. It was very cold and my hands soon became so stiff that it was difficult to separate each pamphlet and give it quickly to the passers-by. But it was rewarding to have them recognize me, call me by name and wish me good luck.

My volunteer was so encouraged by the response that he said, with the optimism of youth, "I think you have a chance to win." I knew better, but didn't want to disillusion him.

On one awful day, I went to Albany for a candidates' forum. I forgot to turn off my headlights when I arrived, so of course my battery was dead when I came back to the car. With the help of one of my opponents, I arrived home only to discover my 1983 Chevy was leaking oil badly and couldn't be used. Then I discovered my computer wouldn't "boot up" and was unusable.

Somehow, it all worked out — until the day before the election.

In a last ditch effort to get my message out, a volunteer and I spent hours on the University of Oregon campus distributing materials and talking to students. On the way home, I was side-swiped by a van. No one was hurt, but my car was almost totaled.

The accident terminated my campaign activities. I'm glad it didn't happen until the last day.

Inside of me, the question still remained: Why am I doing this? Why am I running?



(c) RICHARD MILLHOLLAND/L.A. Times

The truth is, I enjoy campaigning. Even though I knew I didn't have chance of winning with five persons splitting the anti-incumbent vote, I enjoyed meeting new people and hearing other ideas. In addition, I felt my Libertarian positions were educating and influencing many people. I could see their eyes light up when I said something that struck home.

But the most memorable appearance was at a high school in Philomath. The class of seniors was attentive for more than an hour. The questions they asked were more perceptive and challenging than those of the media or other audiences. The students were neater, more polite and more informed than other classes I have talked to over the years.

I had begun to lose confidence in my fellow voters. They seemed uninterested in the social problems facing them and uninformed about the issues. The Philomath seniors changed my view. In that class I saw a search for truth, a spirit of independence and a willingness to consider varying viewpoints that I find lacking in many

citizens today.

When I look back at this, my seventh campaign, I know it is the Philomath students and their teacher, Mike Crocker, I shall remember most fondly. They restored my faith in the ability of human beings to seriously consider national problems and deal with them.

Unlike the editor of a paper I encountered who declared himself a pessimist, these students are optimists, willing to face their futures with courage, honesty and a belief that they can succeed in solving problems and reaching goals. They project the American spirit that made this country productive and prosperous and gave us the highest living standard in the world.

They are the future, and after meeting them, the future looks bright to me.

*Tonie Nathan was the Libertarian candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives for Oregon's 4th District. In 1972 she was her party's first Vice-Presidential nominee and became the first woman in history to receive an Electoral College vote.*

## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A LIBERTARIAN:

### A Personal Interpretation

Charles Murray. Broadway, \$20 (192p)  
ISBN 0-553-06928-4

Murray (coauthor of *The Bell Curve*) is a skilled polemicist, and his manifesto for a radically downsized government should both gather adherents and challenge opponents. He argues from two basic points: freedom (associated with responsibility) is our birthright; and in most cases, government intervention has been ineffectual. While Murray allows for some level of state and local government, he recommends scrapping most federal agencies that deal with domestic policies. Arguing that civil rights laws have actually retarded progress against racism, he cites evidence that discrimination against Jews and the Irish declined without legislation; but this ignores the special stigma of race. Murray advocates a \$3000 education voucher for each child and suggests optimistically that medical patients paying full fees will subsidize the costs of the indigent; but this says nothing about those in between—the majority of the population. Welfare and Social Security payments should end, to be replaced by individual saving and community support from voluntary associations. Murray's proposals posit a more responsible populace—a worthy goal—yet they also assume a neighborly concern that may be lacking in our increasingly fragmented society.

▲ *Publisher's Weekly*  
New York, NY  
November 18, 1996

# One vote for the Libertarians

**M**any years ago, my college instructor in political theory asked the class to state where each of us stood on the political spectrum. It's a lecture I find myself returning to every four years because of my personal tendency to roam across the political landscape at will.

My position in society has afforded me the opportunity to personally meet and interview, at length, candidates for high office in three states, including the current president of the United States. I make no apologies for having voted for Bill Clinton for president four years ago, because I knew him. But he was an exception since my presidential ballots prior to 1992 were marked for Gerald Ford, John Anderson, Ronald Reagan and George Bush.

I am otherwise a notorious ticket splitter. Since I do get to speak with a lot of people who run for political office, especially at the local level, I depend upon my personal appraisal of the person running for the office in question.

What I have lacked is a basic political philosophy. The presidential

309 E. AUSTIN



By  
Mike  
McNeill

votes listed above would tend to indicate that I'm a pretty conservative voter, but I've never thought of myself that way. A lot of voters describe themselves as being fiscally conservative, but socially liberal. One of our recent letter writers suggested that one cannot be both. I disagree. The problem is one of definition. Most people incorrectly define "liberal" as the opposite of "conservative," when in fact, they are points along a spectrum of political beliefs ranging from fascism on the extreme right, to anarchy on the extreme left.

In this election cycle, I found myself giving more thought to my presidential vote than ever. And I found myself more uncomfortable with the views of the Republican and Democratic candidates for president than ever.

Generally, I see people asking government for more, more, more, and that both major parties, despite their protests to the contrary, seem intent on providing "more," which means more of my tax money. The most important problems of our nation are going unsolved and ignored.

I am appalled at the arrogance of the major parties, which have excluded the voices of others from debates about this country's future. This means fully half of the electorate has tuned out of the political debate, which in turn means that if Bill Clinton or Bob Dole wins the presidency, only about a fifth of the potential electorate will actually have cast votes in support of the winner. More dangerously, people of the moneyed special interests will have undue influence on the public policy of the United States.

At the same time, I've found myself attracted to the political philosophy of the Libertarian Party and its 1996 presidential candidate, Harry Browne. I voted for him. This is a personal endorsement and should not be considered an endorsement by the *Marshall News Messenger*.

I don't have any delusions about the Libertarian Party sweeping into

office. But I consider the philosophy of Libertarians as having already won the public debate, if not the political one.

There can be no denial that most Americans have concluded, as Browne says, that the federal government does not work and cannot be made to work, and that reliance on the rules of the Constitution, the exercise of personal responsibility in all aspects of life, and the unleashing of free enterprise and individual liberty will make the United States the place the Founding Fathers intended it to be.

The Libertarian philosophy doesn't fit a "liberal" or "conservative" peg. Liberals cannot imagine life without a huge federal government. Conservatives can't accept that they should not be allowed to regulate lifestyles. Libertarians maintain that government should leave businesses and individuals and their money alone, so long as they are not violating the rights that the Constitution provides all Americans.

I think most Americans believe as I do, even if they decide not to vote that way this year.

*McNeill is managing editor of the Marshall News Messenger.*

▲ *The Marshall News Messenger*, Marshall, Texas, November 3, 1996

▼ *The News-Virginian*, Waynesboro, Virginia, November 1, 1996

## Both parties have lost libertarian principles

By JAMES COLLINGS JR.

Election day is four days away. I can't say everything I need to say in 300 words, nor will I try.

The Republicans and Democrats get four or five stories each, every day. I have seen two stories about the Libertarian congressional candidate. I have seen none about the senatorial, presidential or vice presidential candidates.

But I'm not going to complain about unfair press coverage. First, because it would do no good. Second, because the press has a vested interest in keeping the Democrats and Republicans in power.

Since Jay Rutledge, the Libertarian congressional candidate, is starting to get noticed; the Republicans and Democrats have decided to make him something he is not. It is no accident that Jay Rutledge is not listed under the Libertarian party on the ballot.

It will also not be a bureaucratic snafu that keeps him from being listed where he belongs before election day. It is a calculated move by the Democrats and the Republicans to confuse the votes and keep his vote total low.

If you believe I am paranoid, stop and consider the following. In 1980, the Libertarian party made the ballot in all 50 states. After that election they changed the laws in order to make it more difficult for third party candidates to gain ballot access. When you register to vote you have

three choices. Republican, Democrat, or Independent. It is illegal to be registered any other way.

For the past month I have been walking around Waynesboro, Staunton and the county. Four times, the police have tried to stop me. I could give you an entire page of examples, but if these three don't show you that Republicans and Democrats are intent upon keeping power concentrated between themselves then you are blind or you don't want to see the truth.

That truth points up the fact that both parties have lost the libertarian principles this country was founded upon. While they enforce it in different areas of life both parties are authoritarian. "Mark not John" either way it doesn't matter. You still get a Warner!

If what I have been told is true. The first Collings came to this continent in the late 1600s. Some of them died for the Declaration of Independence. In my hikes I have met many people who could make similar statements. To those of you I didn't meet, who could make a similar statement. We need to take our country back.

This I know to be true. My grandfather was an immigrant from Italy. He came here seeking freedom. To his disappointment he didn't find it.

If you listen to the Republicrats you will hear all of them saying that government has the answers. If that is true then why did the Soviet Union collapse?

No one would dispute that we are in decline. If you look at history it is easy to see that personal freedom declined as a nation declined. America can only be strong if Americans are free!

If you agree then you are a libertarian. Your party, the Libertarian Party, needs you. On Tuesday, get to the polls and vote. Encourage all your Libertarian friends to vote.

Explain to them that they will have to look for Jay Rutledge because he's not on the ballot in the right place. Also explain to them that they have to either write in Libertarian or Shelly Tamres for the senate. Due to the biased election laws her name does not appear on the ballot.

And keep pushing the national theme of Harry Browne and Jo Jurgenson that government doesn't work. Because it doesn't. We have to take back our country from these authoritarians who want to tax and regulate us to death.

For those of you who think you might be libertarians, but aren't sure, call me at 942-5663. I'll give you the world's smallest political quiz. We'll find out if you're a liberal, a conservative, an authoritarian, a libertarian, or a centrist.

*James A. Collings Jr., 39, of Waynesboro, is a heating, ventilation and air conditioning technician.*

► *The Register-Herald*  
Beckley, West Virginia  
November 6, 1996

## First Libertarian gets elective post in county

■ He was one of four running for six seats on parks commission.

By KAREN JOSEPH  
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Washtenaw County has its first Libertarian elected official. Granted, running with three other candidates in a race with six open seats made things a little easier for Brett Cashman to win a seat

on the Superior Township Park Commission.

"It was a lock," admitted Emily Hopp Salvette, the party's state chairwoman. "But that's OK, we'll take wins where we can get them." And Cashman wasn't the only Libertarian in the area to taste vic-



See LIBERTARIAN, A13

## LIBERTARIAN: 1st November wins for party

tory. In nearby Lenawee County, Libertarian Brian Wisneski was elected to a seat on the Clinton Township Board of Trustees.

The election Tuesday was a turning point for the Libertarians in the state, Salvette said. It was the first time, she said, Libertarians had won elected office in a November election.

The only previous win for Libertarians was in April 1988, when a Libertarian was elected mayor of the small town of Addison in Lenawee County, Salvette said. He has since died.

This week's wins "show that at the local level, we are getting the message out, and that we can win these races," Salvette said.

"It just gives us experience, (and) builds a political resume for people in the party who want to run for higher office."

The 38-year-old Cashman, a technical support engineer for an industrial laser manufacturer in Plymouth, admits his election was a fluke. "My friends really kidded me about that," he said. "Of course, I had no idea how many people would be running when I signed up."

How does a Libertarian, who believes in private property, work in a system of publicly owned parks? "What I probably can do is add a little different perspective," Cashman said. "There are some things I'd like to be able to do — be a voice to help get corporate sponsorships (and) get volunteers to get involved."

Cashman said he was able to deliver his party's message in the election. "I think I showed the voters that the Libertarian message was one of common sense," he said.

Although Cashman was offered the Republican nomination, he

turned it down, because "the name of the game is staying with your principals."

Wisneski, who works as a facilities management supervisor at Parke-Davis Pharmaceutical Research in Ann Arbor, was listed on the ballot along with incumbent Republican Connie Furgason to win one of two open seats on the board. He finished ahead of another Republican who waged a write-in campaign.

The 37-year-old Wisneski said his unusual party affiliation made him a hard sell with voters.

"When I first told people I was running, they said 'Good, go for it,'" he said. "Then I told them I was a Libertarian and they started locking up their livestock at night."

However, voters did relate to some of Libertarianism's basic principals, like efficient use of taxpayers' dollars.

Once officially sworn into office this month, Wisneski plans to sit down with the clerk and review the township budget line by line. "We have some high administrative costs in my opinion," he said.

He promises legalizing drugs and other more extreme Libertarian platform planks won't be a part of his agenda. Although he may be inclined toward such moves, Wisneski said he knows they would be political dead meat in the township.

The major plank in the Libertarian platform is its stance for individual freedom. The party promotes the philosophy that the government that governs least governs best.

But principles didn't get Libertarians far in other races in the state. Last Tuesday, Michigan voters cast 34,636 votes — or only 1 percent of the total — for Libertarian U.S. Senate candidate Kenneth Proctor.

## Despite loss, Libertarian secures party's position on next ballot

By MANNIX PORTERFIELD  
REGISTER-HERALD REPORTER

Dr. Wallace Johnson finished a distant third in West Virginia's gubernatorial race Tuesday, but he felt like a big winner.



Johnson

Carrying the Libertarian banner for governor, Johnson attracted about 2 percent of the vote — twice as much as needed to give his party instant access to the ballot in the next election. "We think this is a victory," the Beckley gastroenterologist said from his home as returns came in. "It's less than I expected. I really expected to get around

4 percent. But it still seems to be steadily going up. I think this has been a successful campaign."

Johnson said he likely would have garnered a bigger share of the gubernatorial pie had the Pritt-Underwood race not been saddled with the "fear factor."

The doctor said many voters told him in the final hours of the campaign that they were voting for Cecil Underwood out of fear that Charlotte Pritt would be elected.

"People actually came up to me and said, 'I'd really like to vote for you, but I'm so scared that Charlotte is going to get,'" he said.

Johnson answered such people by telling them to "vote your hopes, not your fears."

On the eve of the election, Johnson predicted the Libertarians would collect between

5 and 10 percent. All they needed was 1 percent to avoid gathering signatures in 1998 to put candidates on the ballot.

Two years from now, Johnson said the party would field about 20 candidates, possibly some for Congress. His own political future was undecided.

"I'm happy," he said. "I think we achieved one of the goals with some margin to spare."

Then, in a humor that distanced him from Pritt and Underwood, he quipped, "At least it's not close. I don't have to stay up to 4 to see what we did."

After a vacation in the Bahamas, the doctor planned to make steps toward efforts to influence legislation in the 1997 session, depending on who occupies the governor's mansion.

## Libertarian doc who opposes Medicare wins House seat

Of the seven physicians elected to the U.S. House of Representatives last week, the most interesting may be Ron Paul, a Texas obstetrician-gynecologist.

Paul, a Libertarian, defeated Democratic lawyer Charles "Lefty" Morris with 51% of the vote compared with Morris' 48%.

This will be Paul's third trip to Congress. He served as a Republican in the House in 1976-1977 and 1979-1985.

After leaving the GOP, Paul was the Libertarian candidate for president in 1988, losing by only 40 million votes to winner and fellow Texan George Bush.

Though a Libertarian, Paul ran in the 1996 Republican congressional primary against incumbent Rep. Greg Laughlin. Paul won by portraying Laughlin as a liberal Democrat in Republican clothing who supported the Clinton administration's healthcare reform plan. Laughlin switched to the GOP from the Democratic party shortly after being elected in 1994.

Paul is known for his controversial stances, including advocating a return to the gold standard and the abolition of the Medicare program, which he criticizes as unworkable. Paul was supported by the Texas Medical Association.

### ▲ *Modern Healthcare*

Chicago, Illinois, November 11, 1996

### ◀ *The Ann Arbor News*

Ann Arbor, Michigan, November 9, 1996

News Staff Reporter Sarah Holland-er contributed to this report.