

# LIBERTY PLEDGE

## NEWSLETTER

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October 2014

## A Libertarian Party Moment?

High-polling L.P. candidates contemplate a possible banner year for the third party

By Brian Doherty

Excerpted from *Reason*

Published on October 8, 2014

The Libertarian Party (L.P.) is showing signs of unusually encouraging midterm election results in November. This seems only natural for an era when both independence from major party identification and a general yen for libertarian ideas are growing.

According to estimates from longtime third-party expert Richard Winger, editor of *Ballot Access News*, the L.P. looks on target to achieve a historic record in votes for a third party in a midterm election: over 2 million votes for what Winger defines as “top line” races. That’s governor where applicable, federal Senate where it’s not, and offices such as secretary of state or attorney general where neither governor nor federal Senate are in play for the party. The L.P., according to Winger, has such top-line candidates on the ballot in 37 states this year, its highest number ever for a midterm election.

Everyone from *The Washington Post* to *USA Today* to *National Journal* to *Reason* have noted some surprisingly strong early poll numbers for various L.P. candidates—though third parties that expect early polling to equal actual results on election day tend to be disappointed.

Still, the executive director of the L.P.’s National Committee, Wes Benedict, thinks that the surprisingly high 6.5 percent total won by Robert Sarvis in the Virginia governor’s race last year (Sarvis is running again for federal Senate this year) marks a possible new age for the party. Benedict certainly credits Sarvis with attracting a new generation of candidates willing to put themselves through the often fruitless and frustrating wringer of running for office with the L.P.

Why are things different now? Benedict thinks the sea change in public attitude toward what used to be a “crazy libertarian thing,” reducing or eliminating the drug war (at least on marijuana), has helped turn derisive laughter to a sense that these Libertarians were ahead of their time on an important issue.

The post-crisis bipartisan bailouts also opened voters’ eyes to the essential sameness of the two major parties when it comes to widely despised crony capitalism, he thinks. And Benedict also points to sudden bursts in size and effectiveness of state affiliates in states such as Washington, Kansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi as helping the party field an unusually (but not historically) large total number of

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candidates on the ballot for all offices this year, around 750.

Benedict used to run a political action committee (PAC) dedicated to supporting L.P. candidates, Libertarian Booster, though it has gone into hibernation as he’s returned to official duties with the national party. As far as Benedict knows, no other significant PAC money has gone into Libertarian races, which are as thinly funded as ever this year except for one outlier, Chad Monnin, running for a state\* House seat in Ohio and spending at least \$100,000 of his own money on his campaign. (The national L.P. tends to do no spending for specific midterm candidates but has, Benedict says, been relatively steady with about \$1.2-1.4 million budgets for the past 8-10 years.)

Benedict recognizes that the Republicans, post-Ron Paul, have had a growing reputation for having a lively libertarian wing, though he thinks that’s a double-edged sword for the GOP when it comes to winning libertarian-leaning voters. Benedict credits the Republican Party apparatus’ crummy treatment of Paul fans in Louisiana with driving many Paul activists out of the GOP and into the Libertarian Party.

When the Republicans have the opportunity to use dirty tricks to keep Libertarian opposition off the ballots, they have done so in Illinois and Ohio. When they have the opportunity to bring forth their most prominent libertarian gun, Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul, to campaign for Republican candidates in states where L.P. candidates seem to be doing well (like Kentucky itself), they do so.

Still, the L.P. has some candidates who promise from early polling to do quite well and likely beat the spread between the Democrat and the Republican, thus shaping the outcome of the race.

# Libertarian gym owner could play key role in IL gov race

By Kerry Pickett

Excerpted from *Breitbart.com*

Published on October 6, 2014

A new Rasmussen poll shows the Illinois Governors race nearly a tie with the state's Democratic Governor Pat Quinn holding a two-point advantage over GOP challenger Bruce Rauner. In years' past a libertarian or any independent party line candidate was ignored as inconsequential to the election; however, the state's libertarian candidate for governor, Chad Grimm, could very well decide if Quinn stays in office.

Grimm, a 33 year old Golds Gym manager in Peoria, does not believe that he will best either Quinn or Rauner for the position of governor of Illinois, Chicago Magazine reported earlier in the week, but maintains the goal of his campaign is to get at least into the double digits in the polls come election day. Last election cycle four years ago Republican candidate Bill Brady lost by only one percent of the vote, around the amount of votes the Libertarian candidate Lex Green received:

“Our goal is double digits—13 or 14 percent. And remember, in 2010, all the third party candidates collectively, including the Green Party candidate Rich Whitney and Independent Scott Lee Cohen, did make a difference. All together they got 7 percent of the vote. If we break 5 percent, we make ballot access easier in future elections. [Grimm needed 25,000 signatures—he claims to have collected 45,000—while the two major party candidates needed only 5,000. Also, in 2010 Quinn beat Brady by less than half of one percent.]”

Scott Lee Cohen, however, had more name identification than Brady, but for all the wrong reasons. Cohen was pushed off the Democratic ticket by party leaders for Lieutenant Governor after allegations of domestic abuse, steroid use, and accusations that he abused a prostitute surfaced. He went on to run as an independent.

“There was a push every four years to get the libertarian on the ballot. I think as far as the average voter is, whoever happens to be on the libertarian ticket is pretty much interchangeable. Nobody really knows that much about them other than they're libertarian,” one former Illinois Republican Party official told Breitbart News.

Rauner, a wealthy Chicago businessman known more as a “behind the scenes donor type of guy” to the Illinois GOP base is still essentially an unknown figure to Illinois Republican Party regulars used to a household party name like George Ryan. However, the Libertarian Party in Illinois is not necessarily known for its enthusiasm either.

“If it's not R or D, it's another choice. I don't see even a big Ron Paul push or anything like that. It doesn't seem any different than any other previous libertarian endeavors,” said



Chad Grimm

***“Grimm ... wants to eliminate the minimum wage; eliminate the state income tax; and says, ‘you have a right to a gun unless you’re in custody and the right to buy a gun so long as you’re more than 18 years old.’”***

the former GOP official, adding, “I don't think the Libertarian is in it to be a spoiler because the Libertarian is in it every time, and I don't think they're going to get more than the same number of votes they usually get.”

He explained, “The polling from four years ago, no one bothered to include Scott Lee Cohen in most of the polls, so they all showed Brady probably winning. So I don't know that the reason that we're talking about the Libertarian this time is because this cycle, unlike last time, they're actually counting a third party candidate, whereas in the past, last time, they had to ignore the reality.”

Grimm, a former Republican, wants to eliminate the minimum wage; eliminate the state income tax; and says, “you have a right to a gun unless you're in custody and the right to buy a gun so long as you're more than 18 years old,” also told Chicago Magazine he would, “pardon those in prison for victimless crimes such as marijuana and non-violent gun possession” as well as legalize marijuana.

# Overby picks up key endorsement in Florida's District 13 race

By Karl Dickey

Excerpted from *Examiner.com*

Published on October 9, 2014

Libertarian Party candidate Lucas Overby picked up a key endorsement ... in his bid to represent Florida Congressional District 13 (CD13) constituents in Washington, D.C. Former CD13 candidate Eduardo Jany put his weight behind Overby instead of incumbent David Jolly.

Jany had originally intended to run as a Democrat; however, due to Florida statute he was not able, so was running without any party affiliation before bowing out of the race. Jany's name will appear on the ballot, yet votes cast in his name will not be counted. There is also a write-in candidate in the race; however, only two names will appear on the ballot in CD13 — Lucas Overby and David Jolly.

Jany said yesterday, "I am so pleased to continue to receive the support and encouragement of my friends in the Pinellas area. While I have decided to withdraw from candidacy for District 13, I know that it is of the utmost importance that our community has a viable alternative to the Republican platform. I would ask voters to carefully consider voting for a candidate who has espoused ideas like mine with regard to education, opportunity, women's rights, marriage equality, current tax policies and energy practices. All of these are so important to our District. We cannot afford to continue with a status-quo Congress that fails to make decisions and is mired in argument and discord. It is time for collaboration and progress and this is why I would like to lend my support to Lucas Overby."

Overby commented yesterday on Jany's endorsement, "I'm both honored and humbled to accept Eduardo Jany's endorsement. It stands as proof that we share the same vision; reaching across party lines in support of the working families of our district. Serving our constituents will remain my highest priority, and I look forward to working with those who share this goal."

## New and renewing Liberty Pledgers

- |                      |                          |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Douglas Arcidino     | David J. Misco           |
| Andrew Barton        | Jessica Mitchell         |
| Donald W. Bergemann  | Dennis D. Morris         |
| Brian Blum           | Michael C. Neviasser     |
| Mathew J. Bradford   | Bryce Newman             |
| Michael J. Brauer    | Kenneth J. Parmalee      |
| Mike Carpenter       | Tom Podczaski            |
| Mark Condit          | John N. Prentice         |
| Ryan C. Conley       | Jerald L. Robertson      |
| Joel Cool-Panama     | Elena Rodriguez          |
| Paolo Costabel       | Susan S. Ruch            |
| Skyler Daché         | Lawrence K. Samuels      |
| Kerry G. Daniel      | Andrew Savage            |
| James F. Findlay     | Curtis M. Sawyer         |
| James C. Fleming     | Joshua Schake            |
| Bart J. Geraci       | Guy Shurley              |
| Michael G. Grover    | Michael Smith-Cappadonna |
| David Hagen          | Thomas Snee              |
| Lawrence D. Hamilton | Kenneth K. Snider        |
| Scott E. Henderson   | Paul A. Stanton          |
| Gary E. Johnson      | Teresa Stimpson          |
| Hans Klein           | Steven L. Straley        |
| Scott A. Kohlhaas    | Tim Talley               |
| Daniel J. Law        | Michael White            |
| Brendan M. Mai       | Richard Wiggins          |
| William M. Manuel    | Bernhard Wolf            |
| Arthur C. McCartney  | Clayton Yancey           |
| James McNeal         |                          |

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

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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.

# Treasurer candidate seeks to cut state post

By Roberta Baumann  
From the *Waunakee Tribune*  
Published on October 5, 2014

If you'd like to see the [Wisconsin] state Treasurer's office disappear, vote for Jerry Shidell.

The Rhinelander resident is running as a Libertarian in the Nov. 4 election primarily to see the office eliminated, he said.

"My slogan is, 'Hire me, then fire me,'" said Shidell, a retired businessman.

Shidell outlined the process of eliminating the state constitutional office. First, the state Legislature must vote twice to do so; next, a referendum would appear on a ballot, and the voters could choose to amend the constitution accordingly.

The way Shidell sees it, doing so would save taxpayers and have little effect on state operations.

According to Shidell, all the treasurer does is affix a signature to checks and act as one of the commissioners of the Bureau of Public Lands.

"I consider the office to be a total waste of time and \$100,000 of taxpayer dollars per year," Shidell said.

Despite Shidell's support for less government interference, he has been elected to office twice. He served as mayor of Rhinelander for a term ending in 1978. During this time, he discovered that even those who say they would like minimal government will support programs that help them.

He also just completed a term on the Oneida County Board of Supervisors. He agreed to run for state Treasurer when the Libertarian Party was seeking a full slate of candidates in the statewide elections, he said.

"I am always trying to express my viewpoint that we need to get government off the backs of people," Shidell said.

Still, he adds that seeing someone like himself in office is a bit of a conundrum.

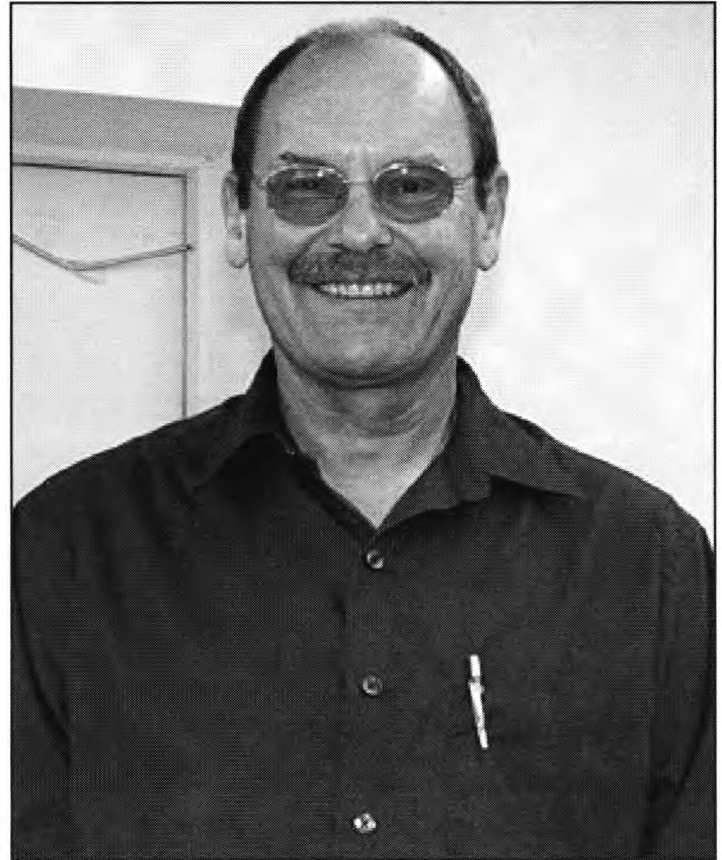
"For someone like me to [run] for office is almost counter-intuitive," he said.

But his first task if he gets elected will be to eliminate his own job, he added.

As a Libertarian, Shidell is not a member of the "Red and Blue" team, and so is not influenced by either party, Shidell added.

Shidell is a retired small business owner, who formerly operated a pizzeria, video store, bookstore and cable television advertising business. He currently owns rental properties, and his wife runs a small bookstore.

Four other candidates join him on the slate for the Nov. 4 election: David Sartori, Democrat; Matt Adamczyk,



Jerry Shidell

***"My slogan is, 'Hire me, then fire me,'" said Shidell, a retired businessman. The way Shidell sees it, doing so would save taxpayers and have little effect on state operations. According to Shidell, all the treasurer does is affix a signature to checks and act as one of the commissioners of the Bureau of Public Lands. 'I consider the office to be a total waste of time and \$100,000 of taxpayer dollars per year,' Shidell said."***

Republican; Andrew Zuelke, Constitution; and Ron Hardy, Wisconsin Green Party.

According to their answers to a League of Women Voters Dane County questionnaire, Adamczyk also supports eliminating the treasurer's office.