

LIBERTY PLEDGE

newsletter

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Maine native pledges as gift to newborn daughter

Charles Jacques says commitment to liberty is no longer an 'optional endeavor'

Charles Jacques had a 50/50 chance of giving his daughter the most beautiful name in the world – Liberty. But his wife won the coin toss and thus, his newborn daughter ended up being named Isabella Grace (a lovely name in itself). However, as a consolation prize for Isabella, her father joined the pledge program -- and started pledging to the Maine LP as well.

“My decision to join the pledge program was my gift to my newborn daughter, a concrete step that I took to ensure that I was doing something, in some small way, to give her the gift of a truly free society,” he said.

A Maine native, Jacques also cites more practical reasons for joining the program.

“It was the recognition that small, regular giving was a way to dramatically yet painlessly increase my support for the Party, rather than trying to shake loose a larger contribution all at once,” he says. He finds the program to be a simple way to make sure the giving gets done. “Good things don’t just happen. They cost money. It has to come from somewhere.”

A member of the LP since 1994, Jacques’ relationship with the LP goes back to 1977, when he argued with his high school teacher about the morality of taxation and was asked whether he was “one of those Libertarians.” He then wrote to the Party requesting information and found that he was, indeed, “one of those Libertarians.” Jacques didn’t waste any time getting involved. He was elected state chair of Maine the following year, and helped organize the Ed Clark for President campaign in 1980.

Jacques even ran for City Council of Portland, Maine, in 1979, and came in fourth in a four-way race.

“I did everything wrong and loved every minute of it,” he said. He may also run for municipal office next year in his hometown of Monmouth, and is considering running for a statehouse seat in 2006. Jacques also assisted with ballot access efforts in Maine this year and says that now that they have achieved it, “I swear we’re never going to lose it again.”

Jacques has confidence in national party leadership and sees his pledge as a way to accomplish important goals. He credits Mark Cenci, state chair of Maine, and Michael Dixon, national chair, as sources of inspiration.

“The LP has struggled to gain momentum because too many of us are like me: We get all fired up for liberty only when elections roll around, then next election I’m disappointed because the LP somehow isn’t bigger, stronger, and better organized. I have come to realize that if I want Libertarianism to be a real force in politics and actually have an impact on my life and the lives of my children, I have to stop treating it like an optional endeavor.”

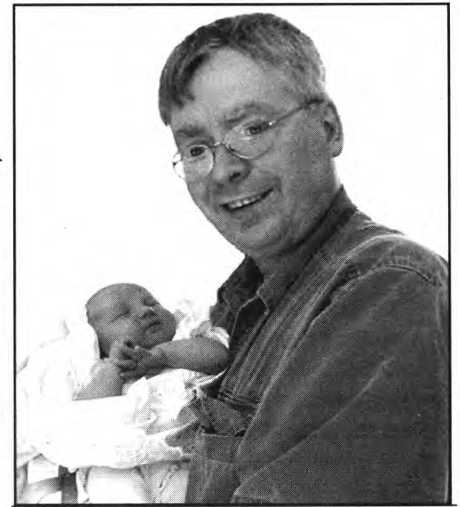
Another goal of his is to serve as a delegate to an LP national convention. He said he wished he had been able to attend this year, but was unable to do so.

He noted, “I was excited about the fact that the convention went so well and made money, without costing the taxpayers a dime. I love rubbing that in the face of my Democratic friends in Boston.”

When asked about what shaped his beliefs in favor of Libertarianism, Jacques commented, “Someday I’d like to run into a Libertarian who doesn’t answer Ayn Rand and *Atlas Shrugged*.”

Other motivating moments included hearing the Declaration of Independence read aloud in third grade and seeing Eugene McCarthy’s independent attempt for the White House in 1976. In his lengthy experience with the Party, he believes the biggest change has been that people now know what Libertarians are and have some idea of what Libertarians believe.

In sum, Jacques distilled his motivation for all he does and has done to support the Party down to two words, “Freedom matters!” He then added, “I may not have been able to name my daughter Liberty, but I still hope to give her the gift of it.”



Charles and Isabella Jacques

Could your pledge be expiring?

Did you know that over 300 of our current pledgers aren’t really pledging? That’s because the credit cards on file for them have expired dates.

We encourage all Liberty Pledge members to pledge by credit card as a cost-saving measure. This ensures that more of your donation goes to helping the party and less to administrative and mailing costs.

The pledge program staff is working to correct these expiration dates. We have been calling pledgers with expired cards on file and will be ramping up that effort in the coming weeks.

You can save time by checking the expiration date on your card and contacting the pledge program coordinator, Jessica Neno Wilson, to update it. You can contact her by calling (202) 333-0008 ext. 235 or by e-mailing her at JessicaWilson@hq.lp.org.

Badnarik may cost Bush support, poll finds

By Peter Wallsten

WASHINGTON — Democratic strategists have long fretted that Ralph Nader could draw votes from their presidential candidate. But a new survey suggests that President Bush faces a potential threat of his own from a more obscure spoiler: Michael Badnarik.

In the survey, conducted in three Midwest battleground states, some voters who said they would choose Bush over Sen. John F. Kerry in a two-candidate race also said they would pick Badnarik, the **Libertarian Party** nominee for president, if he were added to the ballot.

The survey was conducted in Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin by the University of Minnesota's Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs. It will be made public today.

The numbers for Badnarik were small: He drew 1% to 1.5% of the vote in a four-way race with Bush, Democratic candidate Kerry and Nader, an independent. But analysts said the results suggested that the small-government Libertarians could attract enough conservatives disaffected with Bush's leadership to swing a tight race, just as Nader attracted discontented liberals in 2000.

"This shows us that there is a small, but potentially very significant, number of upper-Midwesterners who are interested in voting for the Libertarian Party, and that they appear to be hailing from the wings of the Republican Party," said Lawrence Jacobs, a Humphrey Institute political scientist, who directed the poll.

The survey suggested that the Libertarian had potential to steal support from Bush where it could hurt most: among much-coveted independents.

In Wisconsin, the survey showed that 8% of independents would back Badnarik. That cut Bush's performance among independent voters in the state from about 50% to 43%.

"Those voters, without even knowing the candidate, are so upset with Bush they are willing to say, 'I'm going to vote for a Libertarian,'" Jacobs said.

The telephone survey, conducted June 21 to July 12, had a margin of error of 4 percentage points. It included 589 registered voters in Minnesota, 575 in Wisconsin and 614 in Iowa.

Of those states, Badnarik has secured a place on the ballot only in Wisconsin. But ballot access is so easy in Minnesota and Iowa that the Libertarians are all but certain of success there, Richard Winger, editor of Ballot Access News, said. "Since there have been Libertarians, there has never been a presidential election where the Libertarians were not on the ballot in those two states," he said.

Nader has drawn far more attention than Badnarik, 49, a computer programmer from Austin, Texas. In the Humphrey Institute poll, Nader drew as much as 5% of the vote in a four-way race, and he appeared to draw more support from Kerry than Badnarik took from Bush.

But it is unclear how many state ballots will include Nader. Badnarik is already on the ballot in 30 states, Winger said, and the Libertarian Party says its candidate has made the ballot in all 50 states for the last three elections.

The impact of third-party candidates has received renewed attention since 2000, when Nader ran as the Green Party candidate and won thousands of votes that many analysts thought would have gone to Democrat Al Gore, likely putting Gore in the White House.

Republicans sought to discount a threat from Badnarik, noting that, even in the Humphrey survey, Bush won support from 90% of Republicans.

Vin Weber, a former Republican congressman from Minnesota who is advising the Bush campaign, said the impact of the Libertarians would be so minimal that it fit more in the category of what the weather was like on Election Day.

"I have not been involved in a single discussion yet where the impact of the Libertarian Party has been raised as a significant risk factor," Weber said.

(Left) *Los Angeles Times*, Los Angeles, CA -- July 21, 2004

(Below) *News 8 Austin*, Austin, TX -- July 18, 2004

Gay rights activist speaks to Texas Libertarian Party

By News 8 Austin Staff

The Travis County **Libertarian Party** held its monthly Distinguished Speaker Series Sunday.

The executive director of the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas was the guest speaker.

Randall Ellis spoke about the U.S. Senate's defeat of the anti-gay marriage amendment earlier this week, and the importance of family for all Americans.

"There are 43,000 registered same sex households in the state of Texas according to the 2000 Census, a number which I know is very low, but those are couples, families that need protection and deserve protection under the law," Ellis said.

The distinguished Speaker series is sponsored by the local Travis County Libertarian Party, but many of the speakers are not a member of the political group.

The speaker series is held every third Sunday of every month at 3700 Lake Austin Blvd in the room that the city council currently uses for their public meetings.

Badnarik is the logical political alternative

By Larry Wilson

Michael Badnarik, the **Libertarian** candidate for president, doesn't look much like a Sex Pistol in his sober suit and tie.

But he shares at least one sentiment with Johnny Rotten, who, amid the posing of much of the rest of the punk movement, claimed a difference: "We mean it, man!"

Badnarik sees the posing of other politicians in much the same way as they claim to favor smaller government while at the same time allowing bureaucracy to multiply.

President Clinton, he says, talked about ending the era of big government while allowing it to grow over 2 percent during his time.

President George W. Bush has been worse while railing against liberal spenders, Badnarik says, claiming that government has grown by 7.5 percent during Bush's term -- much of it, of course, in increased military outlays.

Badnarik came by the office last week with local Libertarian leader Ted Brown of San Gabriel as part of an essentially endless road trip around the country seeking a little free exposure for his campaign. Having raised just a quarter-million dollars -- not enough to pay the caterer at a Bush or John Kerry fund raiser -- the Libertarians can't afford political advertising. They don't even have campaign literature, referring me instead to www.badnarik.org (Not bad, actually: take a look for a funny little swipe at Ralph Nader, Bush and Kerry).

Nerds? Of course they're nerds. Libertarians are the Mr. Spock-like literalists of campaigning, with tin ears for the emotional music of political discourse, raising their hands to say, "But that's not logical!"

Badnarik, a student of the Constitution, would rather see himself and his party as the grown-ups in the room. Realizing that they have little chance of electing many true believers to Congress, much less the White House, he insists that even one or two would make a vast difference. "It's like a bunch of high schoolers at a party drinking beer and smoking cigarettes. What happens when an adult shows up? They have to kick the cans under the couch and straighten up," he says.

Nader was wrong last week when he told the Vroman's crowd that he's the only candidate calling for bringing the troops home from Iraq. Libertarians are more anti-war than thou, corporate crusader. Badnarik says that what he terms American adventurism of the last 50 years hasn't established more freedom or democracy in the world; we're just "creating more enemies, and doing the kinds of things that led to 9/11 in the first place."

Though the Libertarian Party supposedly has about 600 elected officials in place around the country, they are entirely in county or city government; none are even in a state legislature. But that doesn't mean that American friends of liberty of all political stripes ought not to try on some of these free-thinking ideas for size.

(Left) *Pasadena Star-News*, Pasadena, CA -- July 17, 2004

(Above) *The Herald-Sun*, Durham, NC -- July 16, 2004

Carolina Libertarians oppose gun buyback

By Eric Olson

DURHAM -- The **Libertarian Party** of North Carolina on Friday criticized the Durham Police Department's recently announced effort to buy back guns in the Walltown community, saying the move was politically motivated.

Barbara Howe, the party's state chairwoman, issued a news release Friday stating that criminals "love buyback programs because they disarm their victims, leaving them easy prey."

Durham homicide Detective K.A. Cash came up with the buyback program after an ongoing dispute between rival groups led to the recent murder of a 26-year-old Durham man. The Criminal Investigations Division launched the buyback program this week within a limited scope and time frame.

Although police officers are not in elected positions, Howe said they benefit from political maneuvering, nonetheless.

"There is politics involved in funding and that sort of thing," she said. "All government agencies are politically connected in some way or another."

Howe said buyback programs encourage criminals to steal guns and then sell them to police. She said police should concentrate on solving "real crimes, such as rape and murder," according to the news release.

So far this year, Durham police have made arrests in 11 of 18 murders and in three murder cases from prior years.

The department's clearance rate stands at 77.8 percent, while the national average hovers around 64 percent, according to statistics from the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

In addition, Blake said that of the 753 guns police seized in 2003, only 28 were reported stolen.

"That's good, I'm glad they are doing their job solving homicides," Howe told *The Herald-Sun*, "but I just think the gun buyback is costing the taxpayers money and won't get the guns off the street from the people who are doing the crimes."

When asked if her own statements were politically motivated, Howe, who is running for governor, said, "That's an interesting question. I think pointing out government actions that I see as mistakes is what a candidate does."

Howe said a book written by John Lott, "More Guns, Less Crime," provides evidence that when the public is armed, crime declines. "Criminals don't want people who will fight back," she said.

Open up the debates to Libertarian candidates

By Las Vegas Review Journal Editorial Board

Anyone with a theoretical chance should be allowed to take part.

Democrat John Kerry on Thursday accepted a schedule for three presidential debates and one vice presidential showdown, proposed by a commission controlled entirely by the Republican and Democratic parties.

The first presidential debate, set for Sept. 30 at the University of Miami, will deal with domestic policy. The third, on Oct. 13, on the subject of foreign affairs, is scheduled for Arizona State University.

The second forum, on Oct. 8, will feature a supposed "town hall format" at Washington University in St. Louis, where "undecided voters will question the candidates on any issue."

And if you believe those voters and their questions will be "walk-ins" off the street, unscreened by chaperones of both parties, we have some lovely ranchettes we'd like to sell you near Gila Bend.

"These commission debates have become an important tradition in presidential campaigns and voters depend on them to help inform their choice," Mary Beth Cahill, campaign manager for Sen. Kerry, said in a statement.

How apropos. A canned statement.

It might be more accurate to say voters would like the presidential debates to help inform them, but that the current sanitized format -- designed to minimize the chance either candidate will encounter an unexpected question or otherwise be challenged to abandon his memorized "talking points" -- have become such a snore that they attract a smaller viewership every election cycle.

A legitimate, all-inclusive presidential debate would definitely not have to include "dozens of wacky candidates, including the Nudist Party and the Flat-Earthers," as those who favor maintaining the current stultifying monopoly are wont to insist.

In fact, Richard Winger of San Francisco-based Ballot Access News says a 2004 presidential debate including all candidates who are on the ballot in enough states to have a theoretical chance to win the presidency would include only six men: President Bush; likely Democratic nominee Sen. John Kerry; Independent Ralph Nader, **Libertarian** Michael Badnarik; Green Party candidate David Cobb, and Michael Peroutka of the Constitution Party.

Since "everyone knows" the winner will be either Mr. Bush or Mr. Kerry, why should the two front-runners -- and the voters -- have to waste time with these minor party candidates, comes the constant refrain?

But the presumed "fact" that no one else can draw a double-digit return and thus be in a position to seriously affect the election's outcome -- perhaps even throwing a close three- or four-way race into the House of Representatives -- is a self-fulfilling prophesy.

A Catch-22 is created. The press barely covers the other

four candidates because they supposedly don't have a chance -- and they don't have much of a chance because the voters never hear from them given they're not allowed in the debates and thus the press doesn't cover them.

Meantime, voters constantly and rightly complain that today's politicking doesn't involve them and doesn't address the most pressing issues of the day.

It wasn't necessary for Burger King to actually overtake McDonald's share of the hamburger market -- to "win" -- to have a serious impact on McDonald's corporate behavior. One hamburger chain introduces a chicken sandwich? Soon the competitors offer grilled chicken, fried chicken, chicken salads and chicken wrapped in pita bread.

The debates have become sterile exercises in candidates ignoring questions and instead segueing into whatever pre-formulated and memorized claptrap their campaign advisers have tested and proved with the "focus groups."

The answer is to stage real debates, open to all presidential candidates who have a theoretical chance of winning. And if the two major party candidates won't come, televise them anyway, with straw dummies in the two empty chairs, properly signifying how much they really want the voters to know.

(Left) *The Las Vegas Review Journal*, Las Vegas, NV -- (Editorial) July 19, 2004

(Below) *The Fresno Bee*, Fresno, CA -- July 27, 2004

Fresno Libertarians oppose library tax measure

By Jim Steinberg

Backers of extending the current eighth-of-a-penny Fresno County library tax will face an opposition argument on Nov. 2 ballots.

Rodney Austin, chairman of the Fresno County **Libertarian Party**, also opposes the measure. He says it provides "free" what library users should be able to pay for in book and computer stores.

"Our tax burden is large and increasing," Austin says. "That is not good when our Valley economy is not strong."

He says that in opposing the measure he tries to represent more than 1,300 Libertarian Party members in the county. Austin said the Libertarian Party has not decided whether to place a ballot argument against the measure.

Measure B expires in March 2006 unless renewed Nov. 2 by voters.