

LIBERTY PLEDGE

newsletter

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Libertarian Party unveils online chat on its website

LP has its inaugural chat session with National Chair Michael Dixon

The Libertarian Party added live chat capability to its website last month. This will give party members a chance to directly interact in real-time with LP leaders.

On December 22, 2005, the Libertarian Party held its inaugural chat session with National Chair and monthly pledger, Michael Dixon. This chat session was the first in a series of scheduled chats. In the subsequent weeks, LNC members such as Mark Ruthford, Trevor Sutherland, and Jeremy Keil have participated in online chats.

Below is an abridged transcript of the online chat session with Michael Dixon:

eichenlaub: *There was a lot of discussion about next years change to zero dues membership.*

Michael Dixon: I see several interesting questions. Let's take zero dues. The changes at national are to reorient our activity to be more grass roots developmental and to get out of the way of local organizations that are actually doing the work.

That means training and resources. Beginning with the on line classes and face to face training at national and regional gathering.

civilwrongs: *What can I do at the individual level to convince more people in my community to vote or join LP?*

Michael Dixon: I have always suggested that Libertarians would do more good by talking to their neighbors about the efficacy of the free market and decentralized government.

It's the little things, like attending your local governmental body meetings, and lobbying the activists there to join you in your efforts.

TheObjectivist: *My experience has always been that people don't vote LP because they don't know what libertarianism means.*

Michael Dixon: And the way to combat this is to talk to more people everyday about who we are and what we believe. In reasoned tones we are our best and most inexpensive marketing effort.

capri: *What is the LP stand on city, municipal, state wide smoking bans?*

Michael Dixon: Sounds like a bad idea to me. Individuals should decide these things for themselves and their own property.

Westley: *How does the LP plan on dealing with the current energy problems?*

Michael Dixon: If you mean, the rising prices, probably nothing, as that is a market force. If you mean the likelihood that we are reaching the end of the petroleum economy, I would say nothing

as the market will definitely react and create alternatives.

CAnderson_TX: *I'd like to know why we don't see any stories about the LP on national news programs such as NBC Nightly News, ABC's World News Tonight, 20/20, 60 Minutes, etc. I think we can really publicize ourselves through national mainstream news programs.*

Michael Dixon: We are regularly in contact with these venues. However, until they perceive that our followers are sufficient to drive their ratings it is unlikely they will regularly host us. When we have had a compelling story to tell we have gotten attention.

Coloradoan: *How will the LP engage the "traditional" parties with regards to the Patriot Act, the spying on US citizens, etc?*

Michael Dixon: I think it is best to keep in mind that engaging parties is not a good return on investment. We need to engage voters.

Coloradoan: *The reason I asked how we can engage the traditional parties is because I see a phenomenon in the American voter which I call the "pendulum" effect. They go from one party to the other. We need to stop that pendulum.*

Michael Dixon: We need to provide alternative. That will shift the axis of the pendulum,

or stop its swinging altogether.

Remember I am not always interested in creating libertarians. I am interested in creating libertarian voters!

tris: *What, exactly, is the function of the LP? Is it only to provide the framework needed to get candidates elected under the party label? Are there better avenues for those of us who wish to donate to evangelistic efforts? What is the LP's vision?*

Michael Dixon: The function of the LP is to Move public policy in a libertarian direction by electing libertarians to office.

The function of the National LP is to help our affiliates and

"I think it is best to keep in mind that engaging parties is not a good return on investment. We need to engage voters."

— Michael Dixon

Help the LP Save Valuable Resources!

Every month we must spend time preparing mailings and making phone calls to lapsed pledgers that we must contact to update their information.

Pledgers can do their part in conserving valuable party resources by checking their monthly statements and alerting the staff to any necessary changes in regard to account information

To contact Chris Thorman with your updated information, just call 202-333-0008 ext. 221 or via email at chris.thorman@lp.org.

New regulation will tally registered Libertarians

By J. Daniel Cloud, LP News Editor
December 29, 2005

The state of Kentucky has always let voters register as Libertarian or as any other political party. There is a line on every voter registration card where people could write in their political affiliation.

But in the past, anyone who registered as anything other than Democrat or Republican were listed on the state's record books simply as "Other."

Effective Nov. 15, 2005, however, the state started properly coding people who write "Libertarian," "Green," "Constitution," "Reform," "Socialist Workers" or "Independent" on their voter registration form's "party membership" line.

Unfortunately, the newly approved system applies only to voter registration forms filled out on or after Nov. 15.

This means that anyone who is already registered as a member

"We have never been able to know how many registered Libertarians there in Kentucky, but now we can."

— Richard Winger

of one of the listed "minor parties" must re-register if they want to be coded correctly.

What difference does it make?

"We have never been able to know how many registered Libertarians there are in Ken-

tucky, but now we can," said Richard Winger of Ballot Access News.

If people who are already registered as Libertarian don't re-register, however, the state's count of Libertarian voters won't be accurate.

"If we don't get the word out to our Kentucky members, the state will be issuing an official tally on Jan. 1, 2006, with an absurdly low number of registered Libertarians," Winger said.

So if you live in Kentucky and registered to vote prior to Nov. 15, 2005, go register again as a Libertarian, with the knowledge that the state will now go to the trouble of registering you as something other than "Other."

If you haven't registered to vote at all, do so.

And do it soon, even if it might be a while before the next election cycle.

Libertarian Party fielding record number of Texas candidates

KGBT 4 article
January 4, 2006

A record 187 candidates have filed with the Libertarian Party of Texas to run this year for federal, state and district offices across Texas.

That's the word from party officials.

That surpasses the previous record of 110 candidates in 2002 and doesn't include Libertarians who have filed for county-level offices.

Libertarian candidates have filed to run in 30 of the state's 32 congressional districts, eleven of the 16 state Senate districts and 97 of the 150 Texas House districts. Libertarians also have filed to run for all statewide elected offices except presiding judge of the Court of Criminal Appeals.

Party officials will submit an official list of the Libertarian candidates to the Texas Secretary of State's Office by January 12th.

The candidates are to be nominated at county and district conventions in March and at the state Libertarian convention in June.

Want to Be Interviewed for Liberty Pledge News?

Now is your chance! We here at national headquarters are on the lookout for great pledgers like yourself who have made a strong commitment to liberty.

If you are interested in being interviewed for the front page for a future issue of Liberty Pledge News, please send an email to pledge@lp.org with "Pledge News Interview" in the subject line. Or you may call (202) 333-0008 ext. 0 with your contact information.

Libertarian Party Files Lawsuit Against IVRPD

by Mollie Vandor, Staff Writer
Daily Nexus
Wednesday, January 11, 2006

With the filing of a recent lawsuit, the Isla Vista Recreation and Park District (IVRPD) has found itself facing its second major legal battle with the Santa Barbara Libertarian Party in less than a year.

On Dec. 15, the Santa Barbara chapter of the Libertarian Party filed suit against the IVRPD with the chapter's vice chairman, Michael Lamboley, named as plaintiff. In the suit, Lamboley's lawyer, William Hansult, alleges that the board violated the Brown Act - a California law requiring meetings of legislative bodies to be open to the public - during three closed session meetings in August and September.

IVRPD General Manager Derek Johnson said the board used the meetings to interview law firms looking to serve as the IVRPD's legal counsel. Since meetings dealing with district employment issues are exempt from the Brown Act, Johnson said the IVRPD did not violate the law.

"The district fully believes in the Brown Act," Johnson said. "We are confident in the district's position that the district lawfully met in closed session to interview legal counsel."

According to the text of the lawsuit, the Libertarian Party is asking Judge James W. Brown, who is presiding over the case, to issue an injunction against the IVRPD. The injunction would officially condemn the district's actions and prohibit the board from violating the Brown Act in the future. The party also calls for the board to pay the Libertarian Party's legal fees, as well as any other financial penalties the court deems necessary.

Lamboley said the IVRPD could potentially avoid a legal battle over the alleged violation if it admits that the lawsuit's accusations are correct and changes its procedures accordingly.

"The district can either say to the judge that [the Libertarian Party is] right and this is how they're going to fix it, or they can fight it and it could cost them money," Lamboley said.

According to papers Hansult filed at the Santa Barbara Superior Court in support of the suit, the Libertarian Party believes that legal action is the only way to keep the IVRPD from violating the Brown Act again in the future.

"The actions of the defendants ... were designed to purposefully and maliciously deprive the people of their right to know and to remain informed of the actions taken by the public body," Hansult stated in the supporting documents. "Further it is believed and hereby alleged that without this court's intervention and issuance of an injunction, that the board will continue to violate the Brown Act in similar ways."

IVRPD board member Bryan Brown said he thinks the Liber-

tarian Party is using the suit to get money from the district.

"They have consistently made it clear they're out for money," Brown said. "This is an attempt to gouge the district."

However, Lamboley said the lawsuit was motivated by a desire to hold local governing bodies accountable to state laws.

"The State of California has some of the best good government laws in the nation, but there are no provisions in the budget for enforcing those laws," Lamboley said. "They're on the books, but it's up to individuals or organizations to enforce these rules and basically that's what we're doing."

Brown said the suit comes down to how the judge decides to interpret the Brown Act.

"They're claiming that by interviewing attorneys in closed session, we violated the Brown Act because an attorney is not an official employee, they're an independent contractor," Brown said.

"The Brown Act says you can meet to discuss official employees, but there's a conflict in how the Brown Act specifies who is an employee."

In early 2005, a judge ordered the IVRPD to pay over \$40,000 in fines stemming from a lawsuit filed by the Libertarian Party in November 2001 over another Brown Act violation. Johnson said the suit ultimately cost the district close to \$300,000 in fines and legal fees.

"It made things tough," Johnson said. "It made the district's

ability to provide its services tough." Brown said the district has been bracing for the second lawsuit since Craig Geyer, who was the Libertarian Party's chief witness in the 2001 suit, attended one of the meetings in question and informed IVRPD board members that he

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— Michael Lamboley

thought their closed session agenda violated the Brown Act.

Geyer said he is not involved in the lawsuit and declined further comment. The lawsuit itself cites an anonymous citizen who attended an IVRPD meeting and informed the board about the alleged Brown Act violations.

Brown said the IVRPD hopes to have this lawsuit resolved more quickly than the last one, which was in litigation for three years. He said he thinks the two lawsuits show that the Libertarian Party is specifically targeting the IVRPD.

"I think they have a grudge against us for reasons I don't entirely understand," Brown said.

The district plans to discuss the suit in further detail at its Jan. 19 meeting, Johnson said.

Hansult could not be reached for comment.

Louisiana Libertarian on the Campaign Trail — for 2007

By J. Daniel Cloud, *LP News* Editor
January 11, 2006

A Louisiana man who helped many evacuees from New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, which hit the Louisiana coast on Aug. 29, 2005, is running for the Libertarian Party's nomination for governor.

T. Lee Horne is a resident of Franklin, La., the community to which many Libertarians sent money and relief materials after the townsfolk made it clear they would not seek or accept government assistance for hurricane refugees.

In fact, when volunteers with the Red Cross got lost on their way to New Orleans, they were sheltered by Franklin volunteers. The Red Cross workers said the town was doing a fantastic job, and that the Red Cross wouldn't be needed there.

It was Horne who initially called Louisiana LP Chair Vinson Mouser and told him about Franklin's relief efforts, and Mouser passed the word along to national LP headquarters.

Horne said he saw results from the LP's call for assistance via LP.org and a mass e-mail, and reports that the effort made a big difference for those helping people evacuate from the New Orleans area.

"A lot of materials and a good bit of money came in that we didn't know where it came from, so it's hard to say what came because of the LP's involvement and what didn't," Horne said. "But I do know that several hundred dollars at least came directly from the party's help.

"And it was needed. People were coming in to Franklin from New Orleans, having broken radiator hoses or fan belts, or tires that didn't hold up on the trip, and we were able to help them. So in addition to the shelter and material goods, we were able to get a number of cars back on the road."

As it happens, Horne's campaign activity helped a number of people get out of the deluged Gulf area.

Horne has been driving around the countryside in Louisiana for almost two years now — he started campaigning for the 2007 gubernatorial election in 2003, he reports — and has memorized many of the backroads.

People in Franklin know of this, and when they started getting calls from friends and family who couldn't leave New Orleans because the major roads were blocked, they started calling Horne for directions.

It's not every candidate whose campaign peregrination actually contributes to saving lives.

At 55 years of age, Horne has time to drive around the state because of the nature of his business: He manages trust funds for

families and is on the board of directors for a few small corporations, and his business is done primarily via computer.

When he's not working in Franklin or New Orleans — where he keeps an apartment — he has been spending a great deal of time driving his old camper van around the state, handing out magnetic business cards announcing his candidacy. And he said people are starting to recognize him and tell him about where they've seen his card posted — including on newspaper boxes and in public restrooms.

How did a small-town man with no political experience get interested in running for governor?

The same way many others do: by realizing that something had to be done.

"I was talking with some friends over drinks and supper one night, looking at the state of affairs in the state, and I was disgusted," Horne recounts. "I remember being in college and talking about taking care of the stupid social problems here at home before we even thought about fixing other countries' problems, and I started thinking about what a mess we've made of it.

"I kept looking for somebody to do something, and finally decided it was time to do something myself.

"Before, I was busy running my business. But after the last

"I kept looking for somebody to do something, and finally decided it was time to do something myself."

— T. Lee Horne

election — and due to the War on Drugs and the PATRIOT Act — I started thinking, 'what the hell are they doing?' This is my generation. We were going to fix our country's

problems, and we've made it so much worse.

"Well, somebody needs to do something to stop it."

In Louisiana, Horne thinks he's the man for the job.

And he's putting his own money into the campaign. So far he has spent close to \$25,000 on the race, and the election's almost two years away. He has produced a television commercial and was getting prepared to start fundraising when Hurricane Katrina hit.

"It seemed tacky to be fundraising while the state was dealing with a huge disaster like that, so I held off on asking people for money," Horne said.

Until he starts getting his commercials on the air, and presumably after, Horne will keep touring the state and meeting people, so that people will know who he is when they hear his name.

"I can take care of my business anywhere there's an Internet signal, whether it's New Orleans or Shreveport or Cut Off," he said. "So I've been going to fairs and festivals all over the state. At the Festival of Lights in Nacogdoches, they really welcomed me. They let me walk down the parade route with the parade, handing out my magnetic business cards and introducing myself. That was a good day."

It's safe to say T. Lee Horne doesn't intend to be merely a paper candidate when the polls open in late 2007.