

# LIBERTY PLEDGE

## newsletter

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SEPTEMBER 1998

### REVISION 11 OPPORTUNITY ...

## Florida LP fights for ballot access reform

**A**fter two years of lobbying, testifying, and coalition-building, Florida Libertarians have their fingers crossed that state voters will pass a measure this November to liberalize the Sunshine State's restrictive ballot access laws.

Revision 11, an initiative that would dramatically reduce ballot access barriers, "is the most important issue facing the Florida LP today," said Tom Regnier, state party secretary.

And, as November 3 gets closer — and as state Libertarians escalate their pro-Revision 11 campaign — the odds are looking good, he said.

"We have a good chance of getting the voters to voice their approval," Regnier predicted.

If passed, Revision 11 would make Florida ballot access law the same for all candidates. Now, smaller parties like the LP must collect tens of thousands of signatures to get on the ballot, while Republicans and Democrats just pay a filing fee.

"Florida easily has the most restrictive ballot access laws for minor parties and independent candidates of any state," noted Richard Winger, publisher of *Ballot Access News*.

To change the laws, the Florida LP launched a campaign in 1997, first convincing the state's Constitution Revision Commission to introduce the ballot access reform bill. Since then, the Florida LP has been campaigning to get it passed.

Florida Libertarians helped found Floridians for Fair Elections, a coalition of independent parties seeking fair ballot access laws. Libertarians also unleashed a blizzard of letters-to-the editor, appearances on radio talk shows, bumperstickers, and mailings to newspaper editorial boards.

The lobbying seems to be bearing fruit, said Regnier: Revision 11 has already been endorsed by the *Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel*, Gun Owners of America, the League of Women Voters, and Common Cause.

LP leaders say they plan to continue their campaign right up to election day — buttressed by a final barrage of pro-Revision 11 radio ads. But, as that date gets closer, they acknowledge that the final decision is out of their hands.

"Now it's up to the voters," said Regnier.

### THE PRICE OF SPEAKING OUT ...

## New Jersey Libertarian is expelled from board

**A**New Jersey Libertarian is fighting to regain his position on the West Milford Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) — after he was kicked off for saying publicly that "zoning is a confiscation of private property."

LP member Gene Richards presented a petition signed by 569 town residents to the West Milford Township Council on July 5, asking to be reinstated to his appointed position.

"Can't a person question laws?" Richards asked.

The petition that Richards presented to the five-member Township Council argued that his expulsion was a "violation of the First Amendment," and asked: "Who's next?"

The council, which had expelled Richards from the ZBA position on June 25 on a closed-door 3-2 vote, took no immediate action on his reinstatement request.

Richards got into trouble in February when the local newspaper quoted him telling pro-zoning residents: "Did anyone tell you that you had the right to control the properties around you?"

The problem with zoning laws, he said, is that "people buy an acre and they want control as far as the eye can see." As a Libertarian, he said, he took a different view: That zoning is the "confiscation of private property."

Other ZBA members filed a formal complaint against Richards, which led to his expulsion and subsequent campaign for reinstatement.

But Richards didn't retreat from his previous statements during his appeal to the Township Council in July, telling them: "People and private property are sacred."

LP Political Director Ron Crickenberger said the expulsion of Richards was an "outrage" — but may be a preview of similar events in the future as more Libertarians get into public office and are outspoken in their defense of liberty.

"Gene Richards' only crime is that he refused to back down from his principled defense of liberty and private property," said Crickenberger. "His expulsion shows how far defenders of the status quo will go to defend bad laws and to protect their political power."

## Libertarian slate looks once more for 3% vote

The Libertarian Party will file nomination papers Monday with the secretary of state for its slate of constitutional office candidates.

Dean E. Cook of Beverly is the party's candidate for governor, with Elias Israel of Burlington for lieutenant governor.

The rest of the slate is David L. Atkinson of Provincetown, secretary of state; Merton B. Baker of Hardwick, treasurer; and Carla A. Howell of Wayland, auditor.

George D. Phillies of Worcester is the party's candidate for Congress in the 3rd District. Rene Nadeau of Ashland is running in the 5th District.

Four years ago, Libertarian Peter C. Everett of Hanover polled 77,584 votes for secretary of state in the contest won by Democrat William F. Galvin over Republican Arthur E. Chase of Worcester. That was 3.48 percent of the more than 2.2 million votes cast, and over the 3 percent needed to qualify the Libertarians as a political party under state law.

◀ (TOP) *The Telegram & Gazette*  
Worcester, Massachusetts, August 22, 1998

◀ (BOTTOM) *The Houghton Lake Resorter*  
Houghton Lake, Michigan, August 20, 1998

▼ (TOP) *The Daily Oklahoman*  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, August 20, 1998

▼ (BOTTOM) *The Daily Reporter-Herald*  
Loveland, Colorado, August 11, 1998

# MAKE IT PLAIN

Some things I'll bet you didn't know (and probably will wish I hadn't told you about):

The National Science Foundation awarded a \$107,000 grant to Robert S. Wyer, a professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Wyer is using the money to do research to learn why people are angered or amused by tasteless humor and dirty jokes. He pays college students to read jokes with ethnic or sexual themes to other students, and then record their reactions.

"The joke is on taxpayers-and we don't think it is funny," Steve Dasbach, national chairman of the Libertarian Party, said.

## Words Haunt Clinton

**T**HOSE rowdy folks at the National Libertarian Party have hit again. This time, they were on point — with Jesse Jackson-style rhyme.

Libertarian national director Ron Crickenberger wonders if Bill Clinton is "not ashamed to lie to his wife and his daughter about presidential fornication, why would he be ashamed to lie to the American public about federal legislation?"

On another front, much-

maligned Internet journalist Matt Drudge (who broke the Monica Lewinsky story last winter) has unearthed this nugget, initially reported in the Arkansas Democrat (August 6, 1974): "But now that the president has admitted wrongdoing, he should resign."

Those words were spoken by then-congressional candidate William Jefferson Clinton.

Is this a great country, or what?

# Libertarians: A growing alternative

By John Fryar  
Reporter-Herald Denver Bureau

**DENVER** — The Libertarian Party of Colorado is fielding more than 24 candidates for federal, statewide, legislative and local offices this year, offering alternatives to the Democrats and Republicans seeking those seats.

At the head of the Libertarian ticket is gubernatorial candidate Sandra D. Johnson, a 52-year-old volunteer activist from Fort Garland who said she's running because "it's time."

"It's time for quality education," Johnson said during a news conference convened by Libertarians last week. "It's time for good roads and better so-

lutions to our transportation problems. And because it's time for lower taxes."

Under the Libertarian approach, Johnson said, "marketplace competition is the only way" to achieve quality education. "It's time for the public school monopoly to face real competition. We must move government out of the way of progress so this will happen."

As for reining in state taxes and spending, Johnson vowed that she'd veto "any budget that increases spending over last year's. I challenge my opponents to do the same."

In literature distributed at last week's news conference, the Libertarian Party billed itself as "America's third-largest and fastest-growing political party."

The secretary of state's office reports that more than 2.5 million Coloradans registered to vote as of the end of July, 3,136 were Libertarians. That included 242 registered Libertarians in Larimer County, 62 in Weld County and 452 in Boulder County.

Johnson's Libertarian running mate is Dan Cochran of Loveland, a 41-year-old computer support engineer seeking to be Colorado's next lieutenant governor. He blasted what he said are unnecessary laws and regulations.

"People should be allowed to do as they choose as long as they don't infringe on the rights of others," Cochran said.

## Made in the USA

While the Democrats and Republicans continue to worry about President Clinton, the Libertarian Party is keeping watch over the country, in particular the Market Access Program (MAP) — a corporate welfare program that each year pours \$90 million of taxpayers' money into the pockets of wealthy corporations so that they can advertise their products in foreign countries.

Our favorite examples: \$3 million to the California Raisin Board to run "dancing raisin" ads; \$500,000 to the Popcorn Institute; \$14,000 to High Mountain Jerky; \$75,000 to the Mohair Council; \$120,000 to peddle alligator hides; and \$125,000 to Sire Power Inc., to advertise frozen bull semen.

"Who says politicians are stupid? They've even figured out how to breed pork with frozen bovine semen," says Ron Crickenberger, national director of the Libertarians. "Despite their promises, the GOP-controlled Congress has actually increased overall corporate welfare spending by \$500 million since 1996."

On June 24, the House voted overwhelmingly to continue the MAP. The Senate followed suit late last month.

▲ *The Washington Times*  
Washington, DC,  
August 31, 1998

► *The Daily Record*,  
Parsippany, New Jersey,  
August 12, 1998

▼ *The Blue Springs Examiner*,  
Blue Springs, Missouri  
August 17, 1998



TERRY DWYER

## Libertarians stand on side of freedom

The secret's out! Opinion Shaper Jeffery Huppert was right last Wednesday! We Libertarians really do "want to eliminate virtually all government laws and regulations and rely on individual responsibility for solving societal conflicts and problems." He wrote that Libertarians "hold liberal positions on many issues and conservative positions on others." Right again. We are, some say, fiscal conservatives and social liberals. We think Mother Government should stay out of both your wallet and your bedroom. We believe you should be able to put on blasphemous plays and operate adult entertainment centers, but no one should be forced to subsidize either.

He gave eight examples of horrible Libertarians ideas.

■ "No zoning." Libertarians would eliminate zoning, which would mean "your uphill neighbor can start a pig farm and send the consequences down to you."

Maybe not. Libertarians would have us rely on restrictive covenants — everybody in the neighborhood could agree to put a "no pig farm" provision in their deeds — and an enhancement of property rights, which would make it easier to get money from anyone (including government) who reduced the value of your property.

■ "No building codes." Libertarians wouldn't abolish all building codes, just government ones. There'd likely be private businesses guarantying the quality of construction. Builders would seek those guarantees, because that would increase the price they could charge.

Government building codes always seem to both favor the building industry and artificially increase the cost of housing.

■ "No vehicle inspections. Imagine the chaos if brakes weren't inspected every year?" (His question mark.)

Does Mr. Huppert really think we and our insurance companies don't care if our brakes work? Are we incapable of doing anything intelligent if government doesn't make us?

■ "No food inspections."

Selling rotten, unhealthy food is bad for business. Libertarians believe, given a free market, that food companies, stores and customers could and would develop methods of ensuring the quality of food.

■ "No environmental regulation."

Libertarians would likely replace regulation with taxes on pollutants. Pollution is inevitable. Under regulation, there's a great reward for successful lobbying to get special privileges. Under a system of pollution taxes, the only reward would be for reducing pollution.

■ "No regulations of the insurance and banking industries. Imagine Joe Averageguy against City Bank Corp. No contest."

Libertarians wouldn't let powerful interests bully people. They believe enforcing contracts is a legitimate function of government. Under a Libertarian government, powerful interests wouldn't get special privileges as easily as they now do. "Joe Averageguy" would be better protected.

Libertarians suspect an abolition of banking regulation would lead to a private insurance system in which there'd be co-insurance (If a bank failed, each depositor would lose a part, say 20 percent, of his deposit, so potential depositors would consider risk as well as interest rate.)

But we really don't know what would happen. We have faith that freedom is the most practical and ethical way to approach any problem, but we never know just what solutions free human minds will devise.

■ "No inspection of amusement park rides." There'd likely be a private, Underwriter's Laboratory-type, system of approval.

■ "No immigration restrictions." In a pre-welfare era, that made sense. In a post-welfare era, it would again.

Immigrants arrive with two hands and only one mouth. A Libertarian United States would have more opportunity and less security, and wouldn't use tax money to discourage assimilation. The quality of our immigrants would improve.

Libertarians believe a restrictive immigration policy is no more moral than was the Berlin Wall. People, even people who weren't born here, have a natural right to seek out freedom and opportunity.

Libertarianism works. Countries' economic growths seem to be directly related to their freedom, and inversely related to their percentage of government employees.

And libertarianism is morally right. Both liberals and conservatives rely on compulsion. Libertarians believe in freedom and persuasion.

Stalin, Hitler and Mao believed in force. Jesus Christ — not a conservative (He preached resisting temptation, not eliminating it) and not a liberal (He said sell all you have and give it to the poor, not take other people's money and give it to the poor) — George Washington and Thomas Jefferson believed in freedom and persuasion.

We Libertarians are more comfortable on their side. Please consider joining us.

TERRY DWYER lives in Morristown and is a math tutor. His column appears on Wednesday.

## Fair's fair, right? It depends

Next time you are filling a little cup for a mandatory drug test at work, think about your members of Congress and their staffs who have declined to require the tests for themselves. Libertarian Party chief Ron Crickenberger complains: "Why is there one set of standards for politicians who make the laws and another for ordinary Americans who suffer under them?"



# DAVID BERGLAND

National chair for Libertarians says he has held the party's philosophy since before he knew it existed



## HE IS

As all Libertarians believe, a self-made man.

## LIBERTY AND RESPONSIBILITY

The Costa Mesa resident was elected last month to serve as the national chair of the Libertarian Party.

Bergland's involvement with the party dates from the 1970s. He was the party's 1976 vice presidential candidate, served as national chair from 1977 to 1981, and was the presidential candidate in 1984.

Bergland's libertarian values and beliefs formed long before he officially joined the party.

"I recall being a teenager and becoming involved in discussions, and, without having a name for it, always coming out on the side of personal responsibility and individual liberty,"

Bergland said. "Upon discovering that there was a political organization that was along the same lines, there wasn't much of a decision to make."

## MEAGER BEGINNINGS

Bergland said growing up poor helped shape his beliefs.

"If I worked for it, it's mine," Bergland said. "I don't want anyone taking it away from me."

That includes government. Libertarians believe in small, non-intrusive government whose only function should be protecting its citizens from violence or war.

Bergland went to UCLA for his undergraduate studies while raising a family and working for the Los Angeles Fire Department. He later received a full academic scholarship to USC.

Some would say he is a self-made man, but he's not the only one, Bergland said.

"As a great believer in personal responsibility, I'm a self-made man," Bergland said. "So is everyone else."

## THE YEAR 2000

Bergland predicts that the mainstream is on its way to becoming increasingly libertarian.

"In, say, the last 20 years or so, libertarian positions on a great number of issues which were viewed as radical or crazy ... are now in the mainstream," Bergland said.

Some of those issues include privatizing education, eliminating income tax and ending the government's war on drugs.

## BIGGER AND BETTER

One of Bergland's goals as

national chair is to increase membership.

California is home to more libertarians than any other state. Orange County has been one of the more active regions, Bergland said.

In fact, Anaheim was chosen last month for the Libertarian Party's convention in 2000.

Bergland said the party plans to quadruple membership in the next two years. More often than not a member of the Libertarian Party is a white man in his 30s or 40s, well-educated, and earning a high income.

"I see the Libertarian Party by the year 2000 presidential election as being too large to ignore," Bergland said. "I expect us to be a real player."

— Story by Elise Gee,  
photo by Don Leach