

# LIBERTY PLEDGE

newsletter

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## The Real Kramer plans run for New York mayor

**K**enny Kramer, the man who inspired the Cosmo Kramer character on the hugely successful *Seinfeld* TV series, has announced that he is seeking the Libertarian Party's nomination to run for mayor of New York City.

"I'm in it to win," said Kramer. "With the success of Jesse Ventura becoming governor, why can't I become mayor?"

Kramer will seek the nomination at the state party's annual convention in Manhattan on April 28. There are no other candidates for the nomination, said New York LP State Chair Richard Cooper.

Despite the link to the zany Cosmo Kramer character, Cooper said the real Kramer would run a serious campaign for mayor — and focus on Libertarian issues.

### Not a joke

"Kenny Kramer is not a joke nor is his candidacy," he said. "[He is] serious about the problems of New York City and its oppressive, overreaching government."

In 1996, Kramer unsuccessfully sought the Democratic nomination for mayor, which he acknowledged was a "publicity stunt." But this time, said



■ **Kramer:**  
Not a joke.

Kramer, "I'm not kidding."

Kramer, 57, has worked as a stand-up comedian and manager of a British reggae band. However, he

became famous because he lived across the hall in a Manhattan apartment building from *Seinfeld* co-creator Larry David in the 1980s.

When David and Jerry Seinfeld launched the *Seinfeld* show, Kramer served as the inspiration for the "hipster doofus" character, Cosmo Kramer.

Played by actor Michael Richards, Cosmo Kramer was known for his hyper-kinetic physical comedy, outrageous schemes, and loyalty to his neurotic, amoral sitcom friends: Jerry, George Costanza, and Elaine Benes.

Capitalizing on the Cosmo Kramer fame, in 1996 Kramer created the "Kramer Reality Tour," where he ferried tourists around to New York City landmarks where the *Seinfeld* show was taped.

He has appeared on *Access Hollywood*, the *Oprah Winfrey Show*, and the *Today Show*.

## NEWS FROM AROUND THE USA

### SOUTH PARK CREATOR: LIBERTARIAN

**T**rey Parker, the co-creator of the politically incorrect and foul-mouthed TV cartoon *South Park*, has announced that he is a Libertarian.

Parker, 31, made the revelation in an April 4 *Los Angeles Times* article, where he described himself as a "registered Libertarian."

Parker and creative partner Matt Stone were interviewed by the newspaper about their new Comedy Central show, *That's My Bush!*, a send-up of the Bush presidency and TV sitcom clichés.

Although it was the first time Parker has publicly claimed a Libertarian affiliation, it's not the first time he's been tagged with that label: Last year, *National Review* complimented *South Park* for its "extremely amusing libertarian-minded political commentary."



■ **Parker: A**  
Libertarian.

### NATIONAL REVIEW: THE LP THREAT

**A** major political magazine says that Libertarian Party candidates have cost Republicans control of the U.S. Senate — but LP leaders say that if Republicans kept their promises, they would also keep their jobs.

On March 19, the *National Review Online* posted an article that claimed the "most underreported political phenomenon [is that] Libertarian Party candidates are seriously hurting Republicans."

The article, written by John J. Miller and Ramesh Ponnuru, noted that LP candidate Jeff Jared may have cost Republican Slade Gorton his U.S. Senate seat in Washington state in 2000, while Michael Cloud may have knocked Republican John Ensign out of his U.S. Senate seat in Nevada in 1998.

If not for those two defeats, Republicans would have a 52-48 majority in the U.S. Senate, instead of the current 50-50 split with Democrats.

But instead of worrying about Libertarians, Republicans should start worrying about their voting records, said LP National Director Steve Dasbach.

"I hope we're drawing votes away from any politician, of any party, who isn't working to reduce the size, power, expense, and intrusiveness of government," he said.

# Libertarian Party offers dwelling for the politically homeless

By Mike Rieman

Douglas Neighbor Staff Writer

After paying close attention to the impeachment process of former President Bill Clinton, Mike Raiford was left wondering if there was a political party out there representing his ideals and beliefs.

"It was a game for both parties," he recalled of the impeachment process. "When I realized what was going on, I decided it was time to get out of this. I had heard information on the Libertarian Party and I decided to get involved."

One call to the Libertarian Party state office set the wheels in motion for Raiford, who is chairman of the party in Douglas County.

After an initial meeting with five attendees, just two years later the party has grown to a base membership of more than 30 people.

Raiford has now found a place for his ideals and beliefs. He is no longer politically homeless.

Created in 1971, the Libertarian Party is the fastest growing third party in the nation.

Originally created to maintain America's heritage and freedom, the party is

being heard.

Calling for liberty and personal freedom, the Libertarians' beliefs also include a free market economy of abundance and prosperity and a foreign policy of non-intervention, peace and free trade.

Raiford said a return to the Constitution is necessary.

"I lean toward honesty," he said. "The Libertarian Party believes that we should return strictly to the Constitution. If we need to change it, there is a process to change it, but the Constitution is the law of the land."

Furthermore, Raiford said downsizing government will allow citizens personal rights and less interference in day-to-day happenings.

"We believe that government and regulations should be minimal. We believe government that works best does the least to interfere with peoples' rights."

Raiford said the Libertarian Party targets the thousands of citizens who have become apathetic and have lost interest in the two-party system.

"We know we have supporters from both the Democrats and Republicans and the independent voters. We want to

get the message out that there is a political home for you," he said.

In their meeting earlier this month, Raiford outlined some short-term goals for the local party.

"We want a government that is limited to protecting our freedoms, not one that's expanding its own budget at the expense of family budgets. The limited role of government and self responsibility are ideas which most voters in this country agree with," said Raiford.

In addition to outlining some short-term goals in their meeting, the Douglas County Libertarian party also elected three new officials to their board. Bill Hardin was named vice-chairman, Gail Ganas was named secretary and Angela Camp was voted in as treasurer.

This year the Libertarian Party plans to have a float in the annual Fourth of July parade through downtown Douglasville. Raiford said the exposure is a step in the right direction for the party.

The Douglas County Libertarian Party meets the fourth Thursday of every month. Party members plan to meet in different communities from time to time in a public outreach.

For more information, call Mike Raiford at (770) 489-5523.

▲ *The Douglas Neighbor*, Douglasville, Georgia, March 14, 2001

► *Rocky Fork Enterprise*, Gahanna, Ohio, March 8, 2001

▼ *The Denver Post*, Denver, Colorado, March 9, 2001

## Libertarian Party objects to city expenditure for YMCA

Franklin County Libertarian Party chairman Rick Sargent has called the use of tax money to supplement the construction of a Y branch in town a "gross misuse."

Sergeant, in a press release, said he has protested the expenditure of \$2-million for the Y branch to Gahanna Mayor Jim McGregor.

"City tax dollars should never be used to fund private development or to open such facilities," he said.

Sergeant said McGregor responded to his protest with an email message in which he repeated his statement, made at Gahanna City Council meetings, that having a Y branch in town is a better than asking voters to approve a tax levy to fund a recreation center.

McGregor cited a Gahanna Lincoln High School DECA survey that said 53 percent of voters would support a recreation center. That means, however, that 47 percent do not and would feel as if the money to build and fund such a center would have been taken from them.

"Quoting a study that is more than 20 years old as a justification for this investment is clearly out of line," Sargent said. "Subsidizing a YMCA branch places unfair competition towards other

recreation facilities that pay their own way without asking for tax handouts," he said.

McGregor, however, disagreed. "I do think it is inappropriate to do this whole project with public funds," McGregor said Tuesday. "But as a city, we use money to fund a lot of private organizations."

He pointed to financial assistance provided to The Olde Gahanna Sanctuary board to allow it to purchase that building, street repairs on South High Street around the Gahanna Historical Society buildings and the purchase, preparation and maintenance of soccer fields that are used by the Gahanna Soccer Association as good uses of city money.

The money provided to the Y would also be a good use of city funds, he said. "This is pretty typical of the way Gahanna has historically operated. We do the heavy lifting and let the citizens run the organizations.

"They do a great job of it," he added.

Sargent, in his letter, urged Gahanna to return the \$2-million to taxpayers instead of donating it to the Y. "Once that is done, the citizens who want a Y branch in Gahanna can donate that money directly to that group," he added.

### WESTERN SLOPE

## Libertarians file complaints

**MONTROSE** — The Western Slope Libertarian Party filed complaints Thursday with the secretary of state alleging the city of Montrose and Montrose Memorial Hospital have violated election laws in an upcoming vote on smoking regulations.

The Libertarian Party is alleging the city unlawfully demanded the Libertarian Party register as a political action committee because the party has been campaigning against an ordinance that would ban smoking in many indoor places in Montrose. That ordinance will be voted on April 3.

The Libertarian Party also alleges the Montrose hospital is spending money on a campaign warning of the dangers of second-hand smoke. Because of the timing of that campaign, Libertarian Party officials are claiming the county-funded hospital is spending taxpayers' money on a lobbying effort.

Montrose officials have denied the Libertarians' allegations.

## *N.C. political activists work to plant third party options*

By **BUCK YOUNG**  
STAFF WRITER

Tired of Al Gore or George Bush?

Talk to Andy Nilsson or Sean Haugh. Nilsson's Independence Party and Haugh's Libertarian Party are planting third party seedlings in Eastern North Carolina.

Last weekend, Nilsson, chairman of the steering committee, with 15 like-minded individuals gathered for a meeting and to interview perspective Independence Party candidates at Pitt Community College in Greenville.

"One gentleman from New Bern, Bill Harper, has run twice as unaffiliated for Craven County Commissioner. He expressed interest in running next time as an Independence Party candidate," said Nilsson.

Nilsson has had e-mail and phone contact with possible candidates from Nash and Halifax counties, but no nibbles from Edgecombe, Wilson, Martin, or other down east locals.

The focus of the Independence Party is money, or more exactly the restricting of money in political campaigns.

"Big business injects money into both parties. We all know what the payoff is," said Nilsson. "We want a ban on soft money and lowering the maximum contribution limits in North Carolina from \$8,000 in an election to an individual total of \$500."

For the Libertarian Party, there is a statewide petition drive to reclaim ballot access in North Carolina.

The party failed to get 10 percent of the vote for either governor or president in November, forcing them to gather sig-

**See THIRD PARTY, page 5**

▲ *The Daily Southerner*,  
Tarboro, North Carolina, February 23, 2001

► *The Metropolitan News-Enterprise*,  
Los Angeles, California, February 22, 2001

## **Third Party**

Continued from front page

natures to requalify as a "new" political party under state law.

High voter turnout in 2000 raised the number of signatures required to qualify by more than 7,700 to a record 58,892 registered voters. Since not all signatures gathered are deemed valid, party leaders estimate they will have to get as many as 98,000 signatures to complete the drive.

"It's a tall order," said Haugh, the party's executive director. "North Carolina is the toughest state in the

country to get on the ballot. The fact that no one in North Carolina was allowed to vote for Ralph Nadar or other Green Party candidates last year proves the requirements are too strict. But we think we have the resources and experience to make it happen."

Philosophically, the Libertarian Party is supports absolutely minimal government. The Independence Party gets into areas like public funding to "introduce finance reform and regulate industries in environmental sensitive areas such as bonding hog farms before they are permitted," said Nilsson.

## **Libertarian Party Endorses Systems in Which Voters Rank All Candidates According to Preference**

(CNS)—The Libertarian Party of California yesterday endorsed a voting system that would prevent candidates from winning elections without a majority of the votes cast.

"We must prevent situations like the one in Florida last year from ever happening again," said the party's executive director, Juan Ros. "Americans need fundamental voting reform, and Libertarians have found the perfect solution."

Under the proposed reform, known as "instant runoff voting," voters rank candidates in their order of preference. If a candidate receives a majority vote, that candidate is declared the winner.

But if no candidate receives a majority of the first-choice votes cast, the candidate with the lowest vote total is eliminated and that candidate's votes are transferred to the next-choice candidate listed on each ballot: in effect, holding a runoff without the need for additional balloting. The process repeats until one candidate receives a majority of the votes cast.

"IRV eliminates the problem of multiple candidates splitting the vote, throwing elections to less popular 'spoiler' candidates," Ros said.

Ros also said his party has an ulterior motive.

"Most important for us, IRV will eradicate the perception that voting for a third party is a 'wasted' vote, since voters can cast their first choice for a third party and if that candidate is eliminated, their vote would go to their second-choice candidate."

## COMMUNITY REPORT

# 'Reform' bill threatens freedom, official tells Libertarians in city

■ FEC member argues McCain-Feingold would only protect incumbents.

By **JOE McDERMOTT**  
*Of The Morning Call*

A Republican member of the Federal Election Commission told Pennsylvania Libertarians on Saturday the McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform bill will hurt citizen involvement in future campaigns.

"For the most part this is an incumbent's protection bill," said Bradley A. Smith, a one-time Libertarian Party member nominated to the FEC by President Clinton. "We are stomping out grassroots politics in the U.S."

Smith was the lunchtime speak-

### BETHLEHEM

er for the Pennsylvania Libertarian Party's annual convention this weekend at the Radisson Hotel Bethlehem.

Scheduled as a convention speaker weeks ago, he planned to talk about third-party involvement in the political process. But two weeks of debate and today's scheduled vote for the reform bill changed his mind, he said.

Comments made by senators over the past two weeks, Smith said, make it clear they are more concerned with protecting themselves than eliminating potential corruption in campaign financing.

The bill would allow incumbents to raise more money if they face a self-financed opponent, restrict a challenger's ability to criticize incumbents through television ads and rein in political party support for challengers — who need it most, he said.

"So what they've produced is a law that has a lot to do with protecting incumbents. It doesn't have a whole lot to do with reducing corruption," said Smith, the author of "Unfree Speech — The Folly of Campaign Finance Reform."

However, a higher individual contribution level, better acceptance of Libertarian ideals and a move by younger voters toward different politics are signs for optimism, he said.

One of the veteran third parties in the country, the Libertarian Party in Pennsylvania has fallen on rough times. State Chairwoman



Lois Kaneshiki said the group's goal this year is to improve candidate performance in local elections.

"I would like to communicate to people that this year's elections are very important to the Libertarian Party," said the Duncansville, Blair County, woman.

Kaneshiki said one Libertarian target this year will be Election Board posts, as the party tries to boost its visibility and role in the election process.

Though alternative party registration has grown — nearly one in 10 registered voters in Pennsylvania is independent or aligned with a third party — the Libertarian Party's poor showing in the 2000 elections bumped it off the state's list of acknowledged political parties.

Kaneshiki said the Motor Voter law, which allows voters to register when they renew their driver's licenses, has skewed registration numbers.

"One of our problems is that because of the national party platform, we can be seen as extreme on some issues," Kaneshiki said, mentioning the Libertarians' national push for legalized drugs as an example.

"The war on drugs, it is no secret, is a monumental and fantastic failure," breakfast speaker Diane Fornbacher told delegates and



At Libertarian Party convention at Radisson Hotel Bethlehem, Future of Freedom Foundation President Jacob Hornberger talks with high school students about Libertarian philosophy, above. At left, Freedom High junior Laura Weisbein listens as another student questions Hornberger. DOUGLAS BENEDICT  
*The Morning Call*

members. "It is eating away at the freedoms we hold dear."

Jacob Hornberger, founder and president of the Future of Freedom Foundation, told a group of Freedom High School students that Libertarians generally believe people should be permitted to do anything they want as long as it doesn't physically injure others.

In a forum with about eight students, he prompted students to answer their own questions, but also admitted there are limitations on Libertarian philosophies.

Freedom junior Laura Weisbein, who organized the forum, was happy with the debate despite a paltry turnout.

"I'm learning it's very hard to argue with someone who knows a lot more than you do," she said. "As for the philosophy, I'm very Libertarian. It's the application of the philosophy that's the problem."

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