

# The Liberty Quill

A Publication by the Libertarian Party of Santa Clara County

## COVID-19:

- Dangerous to Our Health
- Even More Dangerous to Our Liberty

*... a message from county chair Joe Dehn ...*

The COVID-19 pandemic is dominating the news, and changing our lives. The effects are being felt world-wide, across the United States, all around California, and especially here in Santa Clara County -- an area within the state where the problem surfaced early.



The dangers to our health are obvious, and being explored in great depth in the media. Projections are uncertain, but it seems clear that a large fraction of the population will, sooner or later, be infected. While not everybody will get seriously ill, a significant number will. And for some segments of the population, the chance of the illness being life-threatening will be significant. To have a chance of survival, these people will need medical care. And the example of how this has played out elsewhere shows that if the numbers become large enough, the medical establishment will not be able to cope.

To head off this catastrophic outcome, all manner of steps are being taken to slow down the spread. If the spread can be sufficiently slowed, the medical establishment may be in a better position to cope with the numbers. Which means fewer people may die. Unfortunately, all of the measures taken so far or under consideration also interfere with normal economic activity -- which can also have adverse effects on health. It is entirely possible that, as horrifying as some of the projected mortality rates are, ***the economic disruption from government mismanagement of the situation***

*could destroy even more lives.* And more fundamentally, they are interference with individual rights, to a degree that few of us could have imagined possible in this country just a few weeks ago.

## What are we as Libertarians to make of this? Some things to think about:

- 1) There is a difference between something being a good idea and making it mandatory.
- 2) There is a difference between something being risky and prohibiting it.
- 3) Many Americans already see risk to an individual as a risk to society as a whole, because they see society as a whole as responsible for what happens to every individual.
- 4) People are more willing to give up their rights in an emergency, not only because they are more likely to see it as necessary but also because they see it as temporary.
- 5) Unfortunately, it is usually harder to regain rights once their loss has been accepted.

Meanwhile, the advocates of more government control over everything are not hesitating to use this crisis as an argument for why people cannot be allowed to make their own choices. Everything from "Medicare for All" (even though a single-payer system didn't save Italy), to subsidies for (or even nationalization of) entire industries, to massive shifts in monetary policy, to new surveillance powers will be cited as necessary to address this crisis.

We, as Libertarians, don't want to see people sick or dying. We don't advocate people taking on unnecessary risk, or unnecessarily causing risk to others. Many of the measures being imposed by government may in fact be good steps for people to take. But we cannot allow our fellow citizens to forget that important difference, between something being a good idea and being required by law. We cannot let them forget the role that individual choice makes both in allowing our economy to function efficiently and making our lives worth living. We have no way of knowing at this point how long this crisis will last, but however long it lasts we must be there to remind our fellow citizens of what they have lost, and help guide them back on the path toward freedom.

For more libertarian commentary relating to this crisis, see the links in the "Commentary" and "Video Selections" sections below.

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## State Convention Report

The Libertarian Party of California held its annual state convention in Culver City (near LAX) over Presidents Day Weekend. At least ten members from Santa Clara County participated.

There were elections for several spots on the state Executive Committee, and for the state Judicial Committee.

There were also some changes to the state bylaws - but many of the proposals offered by the Bylaws Committee were never acted on. There was also no change to the LPC Platform. The Platform Committee offered several different options for replacing the entire Platform with something different, as well as a set of incremental changes, but the convention did not approve any of these proposals.



Since this is a presidential election year, there were many activities relating to that. Many of the more active candidates for our nomination were there, some had information tables, and there was a debate among six of them, followed by two straw polls. You can watch this debate online at:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=13OURsvOXeg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13OURsvOXeg)

This convention also elected the delegates who are to represent California at the national convention in May, where the actual choice of our nominee is to be made. Ten members from Santa Clara County were selected for this role – congratulations to them all!

Next year's state convention will be held in Concord, relatively convenient to us. Consider making plans to attend!

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## Libertarians Reach Out to New Citizens

Members of the LP of Santa Clara County reached out to new citizens and their family/friends at the naturalization ceremony held 27 February in Campbell. The LP booth included signs, literature, and voter registration forms. The Democrats also had a booth -- but not the Republicans.



This effort was organized by Activities Chair Bob Goodwyn. Also volunteering to bring supplies and staff the booth were Anirban Das, Mark Hinkle, Joe Dehn, and

## Commentary

*Opinions from around the web - not necessarily official positions of the LP of Santa Clara County unless so noted.*

### What would libertarians do in response to coronavirus?

There are no atheists in foxholes, so the saying goes. But what about libertarians in a pandemic? The rumors of our fear-induced inconsistency are much exaggerated, and, contrary to a bizarrely-argued "no libertarians in an epidemic" piece at The Atlantic, President Trump's irresponsible glibness and hypocritical scaremongering about "socialism" cannot be laid at libertarianism's feet.



Still, there is a legitimate question here: How would libertarians handle a pandemic? Does our usual opposition to state involvement in health care go out the window?

[theweek.com/articles/901738/what-libertarians-response-coronavirus](https://theweek.com/articles/901738/what-libertarians-response-coronavirus)

Or maybe there are ONLY libertarians in a pandemic:

[reason.com/2020/03/15/tired-there-are-no-libertarians-in-a-pandemic-wired-there-are-only-libertarians-in-a-pandemic](https://reason.com/2020/03/15/tired-there-are-no-libertarians-in-a-pandemic-wired-there-are-only-libertarians-in-a-pandemic)

"Certificates of Need" Are One Reason We Don't Have Enough Hospital Beds

[reason.com/2020/03/13/america-doesnt-have-enough-hospital-beds-to-fight-the-coronavirus-certificate-of-need-laws-are-one-reason-why/](https://reason.com/2020/03/13/america-doesnt-have-enough-hospital-beds-to-fight-the-coronavirus-certificate-of-need-laws-are-one-reason-why/)

Gallup: Coronavirus Worries Surge – Trust In Government Slides

[news.gallup.com/poll/295505/coronavirus-worries-surge.aspx](https://news.gallup.com/poll/295505/coronavirus-worries-surge.aspx)

South Korea Preserved the Open Society – Now Infection Rates Are Falling

[www.aier.org/article/south-korea-preseved-open-infection-rates-are-falling](https://www.aier.org/article/south-korea-preseved-open-infection-rates-are-falling)

The Fed Has Sufficient Tools – to Wreck the Economy

[mises.org/wire/fed-has-sufficient-tools--wreck-economy](https://mises.org/wire/fed-has-sufficient-tools--wreck-economy)

Health Bureaucrats Botched the Response – Trump Made It Even Worse

[reason.com/2020/03/19/health-bureaucrats-botched-the-response-to-coronavirus-trump-made-it-even-worse/](https://reason.com/2020/03/19/health-bureaucrats-botched-the-response-to-coronavirus-trump-made-it-even-worse/)

To Kill Markets Is The Worst Possible Plan

[www.aier.org/article/to-kill-markets-is-the-worst-possible-plan/](https://www.aier.org/article/to-kill-markets-is-the-worst-possible-plan/)

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# March Primary Election Results

*Latest results available - not yet final.*

## Presidential Preference Primary

Thirteen candidates seeking the LP's nomination for president were listed on the primary ballot, for consideration by registered Libertarians. (Independent voters also had the option of requesting this ballot.) These results are not binding on the California delegates to the national convention.

19.6%	5,396	Jacob Hornberger
12.5%	3,428	Jo Jorgensen
12.1%	3,343	Vermin Supreme
10.5%	2,902	Ken Armstrong
8.1%	2,241	Kim Ruff
7.5%	2,069	Adam Kokesh
6.1%	1,677	Sam Robb
5.9%	1,632	Dan Behrman
5.6%	1,554	Max Abramson
3.5%	964	Souraya Faas
3.4%	937	Steven Richey
2.6%	705	Erik Gerhardt
2.5%	678	Kennan Dunham

## District Offices (candidates identified as Libertarians)

### Joe Dehn

US House, District 17  
3,473 votes - 2.2%

### Bob Goodwyn

US House, District 18  
4,313 votes - 1.9%

### John Webster

State Senate, District 13  
5,700 votes - 2.1%

### Kennita Watson

State Assembly, District 24  
5,959 votes - 4.5%



## Tax/Bond Measures

**Proposition 13** (statewide bond measure)  
Rejected - 53.3% NO

## **Local Tax Bond Measures Rejected**

Measure I - \$900M bond

Measure J - \$60M bond

Measure K - \$298 parcel tax

Measure N - \$32.5M bond

Measure O - \$125 parcel tax

Measure P - \$98 parcel tax

Measure Q - \$149 parcel tax

Measure S - \$132 parcel tax

Measure V - \$125M bond

Details: [results.enr.clarityelections.com/CA/Santa\\_Clara/101316/](https://results.enr.clarityelections.com/CA/Santa_Clara/101316/)

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## **Local News**

### **How Would You Spend City Funds?**

For the second year, residents of San Jose will be able to provide insight into what they believe should be of interest and/or prioritized through "The Balancing Act", an online exercise to balance the city's budget.

[sanjose.abalancingact.com/2020](https://sanjose.abalancingact.com/2020)

### **Mastering DoubleSpeak**

San Jose mayor voices support for Assembly Bill 1905, a bill that would eliminate the mortgage interest deduction (MID) for taxpayers' second homes. It would also cap the deductions for primary home loans acquired in 2018 or later for loans of up to \$750,000, down from \$1 million. The tax incentive is only available for people who itemize their taxes.

... to make housing affordable?

[sanjosespotlight.com/sam-liccardo-joins-california-mayors-to-support-tax-break-reform-to-tackle-homelessness/](https://sanjosespotlight.com/sam-liccardo-joins-california-mayors-to-support-tax-break-reform-to-tackle-homelessness/)

### **Voters OK District Voting In Sunnyvale, Reject It In Santa Clara**

Voters in Sunnyvale approved a change to a district-based voting system for their city council, while Santa Clara voters rejected it.

[patch.com/california/cupertino/voters-ok-district-voting-sunnyvale-reject-it-santa-clara](https://patch.com/california/cupertino/voters-ok-district-voting-sunnyvale-reject-it-santa-clara)

### **Santa Clara County Would Spend \$170m In New Children's Budget**

The budget proposes spending \$170 million in county funds on children, youth, and family programs this fiscal year and about \$859 million total when accounting for funding from state, federal and other sources.

[patch.com/california/campbell/santa-clara-co-supes-push-more-childrens-programs](https://patch.com/california/campbell/santa-clara-co-supes-push-more-childrens-programs)

## **San Jose labor leaders question missing signatures after measure fails to qualify**

Labor unions tried to put forward a ballot measure that offered campaign financing reform (something most people want) AND on the same exact vote would have moved San Jose mayor's election to presidential years. However the petition for the confusing and dual purposed initiative did not pass the county registrar's signature validation test.

[sanjosespotlight.com/san-jose-labor-leaders-question-missing-signatures-after-measure-fails-to-qualify/](http://sanjosespotlight.com/san-jose-labor-leaders-question-missing-signatures-after-measure-fails-to-qualify/)

## **Silicon Valley lawmaker wants to bring Andrew Yang's universal income plan to California**

Andrew Yang's presidential run ended in February, but Assembly member Evan Low is trying to bring one of Yang's key issues to life in California: Universal Basic Income. Low, who was Yang's national campaign co-chair, recently introduced a bill in the state Assembly that would provide \$1,000 a month to many California residents in an effort to address financial disparities and "rewrite the rules of the economy".

[sanjosespotlight.com/silicon-valley-lawmaker-wants-to-bring-andrew-yangs-universal-income-plan-to-california/](http://sanjosespotlight.com/silicon-valley-lawmaker-wants-to-bring-andrew-yangs-universal-income-plan-to-california/)

## **San Jose Orders Gun Store to Close**

After customers lined up around gun stores in several counties this week — including outside the Bullseye Bishop in San Jose — San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo declared that "gun stores are non-essential."

[www.eastbaytimes.com/2020/03/18/coronavirus-san-jose-orders-gun-store-to-close-in-one-of-first-tests-of-essential-under-shelter-order/](http://www.eastbaytimes.com/2020/03/18/coronavirus-san-jose-orders-gun-store-to-close-in-one-of-first-tests-of-essential-under-shelter-order/)

## **Palo Alto Special Election Cancelled**

The Palo Alto Unified School District had requested a special election for a parcel tax measure, which was to be Measure A in a by-mail election on 5 May. The LP of Santa Clara County had endorsed a **NO** vote on this measure. This election has now been cancelled, at the request of the district.

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## **Video Selections**

### **Don't Expect Millions to Die From Coronavirus, says Richard Epstein**

Do the estimates of deaths from this virus make sense? Are the schemes being considered for massive distribution of income likely to help -- or hurt?

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCnT2owc1Z8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCnT2owc1Z8)

### **Is Price Gouging Immoral? Should It Be Illegal?**



In an emergency, are sellers who raise prices of scarce items violating anybody's rights? Or are they actually playing an important role in addressing the real problems that arise in such a situation?

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=h9QEkw6\\_O6w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h9QEkw6_O6w)

### Coronavirus is the Health of the State

The coronavirus pandemic threatens a world-wide wave of sickness, but it's the healthiest thing to happen to government power in a very long time. It'll leave the state with a rosy glow, but our freedom will end up more haggard than ever.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=2bsjbmpvl2g](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2bsjbmpvl2g)

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## Meeting Reports

A regular business meeting of the Central Committee of the Libertarian Party of Santa Clara County was held Saturday, 7 March, in Milpitas. One week later, the Executive Committee of the Libertarian Party of California held its meeting in San Jose.

At the county meeting, there was discussion of the recent primary and of the state convention. Among the state bylaws changes that were approved, two were reforms of the membership suspension process that were proposed by members from Santa Clara County, in response to the suspension of two of our officers last summer. These changes will require several elements of "due process" before the state Executive Committee can take this kind of action, as well as make clear that holding suspension proceedings in open session is an option if the accused member is willing to waive privacy. The state chair is also appointing a special committee, which will include one member of our county Executive Committee, to do a new investigation of that case.

At the state meeting, in addition to the usual reports of officers and committees, appointments were made to the Bylaws Committee (to prepare proposals for consideration at the next convention), the Platform Committee Coordinator (who organizes the Platform representatives from each county to make proposals for the Platform), and several other committees. The next state EC meeting is scheduled for 13 June in Long Beach.



*State EC meeting in San Jose.*

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## The Libertarian Party Needs You!

The Santa Clara County Libertarian Party's work relies on **members like you** who volunteer to put our goals and plans into action.



*Please volunteer now to help with these important activities:*

- Secretary - Vacancy
- Activities - Plan events and keep the energy up!
- Campaigns - Advocate action to support candidates and libertarian policy!
- Fundraising - Got ideas on how we can raise funds? We want to hear it!
- Membership - Outreach and growth is at the core of what we do and how you can help!
- Newsletter - Help us build content to keep you informed!
- Publicity - We can always use a fresh voice when posting on social media or interacting with the press!



Interested in learning more? Contact us at [info@scclp.org](mailto:info@scclp.org) and let's see how we can work together towards liberty!

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## Calendar Summary

Important note: Due to the COVID-19 situation, many events that would normally be held in upcoming weeks and months have been cancelled. In particular, **our regular coffee meeting scheduled for 21 March has been cancelled**. All events listed here should be considered **tentative**, depending on how the situation evolves. Check our web site for updates.

- 18 April - Third Saturday Coffee Meet Up
- 16 May - Third Saturday Coffee Meet Up
- 21-25 May - [LP Presidential Nominating Convention](#)
- 6 June - LP SCC Central Committee Meeting
- 20 June - Third Saturday Coffee Meetup
- 4 July - San Jose Rose White and Blue Parade

**Do you have ideas for activities that don't require in-person contact?** Contact our [Activities Chair](#), Bob Goodwyn, with your suggestions.

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