

The Connecticut Libertarian

December 2001

The Official Newsletter of the Libertarian Party of Connecticut

www.lpct.org

2001 Election Results

by James Madison

Amid all the news of bombing Afghanistan, Anthrax in the mail, and congress destroying our civil liberties at a furious rate, you may have missed the rather subtle political event that occurred on Tuesday, Nov. 6th – municipal elections.

The Libertarian Party ran a total of 27 candidates this year. Most of those were in Windham and Willimantic, where the highly motivated LPCT members ran candidates for everything from First Selectman to the alternates and vacancy on the zoning appeals board.

The Secretary of the State's office (SOTS) will eventually post all the election returns on the Internet, but being a government agency, they can't be expected to do it in a timely fashion, so we rounded up the numbers for some of the higher profile offices ourselves:

- Lori Jeffers, First Selectman in Windham, 216 votes of 3,879 cast for 5.57% of the vote.
- Richard Lion, Mayor of Hartford, 260 votes of 13,463 cast for 1.93% of the vote.
- Arline Dunlop, Mayor in Meriden, 240 votes of 14,101 cast for 1.70% of the vote.
- Sergio Camacho, Board of Education in New London, 226 votes of 4,186 cast for 5.40% of the vote.
- George Eggert, Planning Commission in Bethlehem, 36 votes of 1,180 cast for 3.05% of the vote.
- Mike Pretnar, Board of Representatives in Stamford, had to withdraw from the race for personal reasons.

When the full election results are posted on the Internet, you will be able to view them by going to the SOTS web site at www.sots.state.ct.us, clicking on "Election Services," and then clicking on "Election Results."

Our thanks go to all our candidates for their hard work and willingness to put themselves at the forefront in delivering our message of freedom through limited government.

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2002 Election Preparation Begins

by Richard Connelly

The 2001 elections are over, but it is not too early to begin thinking about the 2002 elections. This is a year when we could run a statewide ticket: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Comptroller, and Attorney General. To do this, we will need candidates as well as 7,500 valid signatures. This requires that we collect about 12,000 total signatures.

In addition, all State Representative and State Senator seats are open. If you are interested in being a candidate or know someone who is, please e-mail me at: riconnely@juno.com.

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The Future of School

by Ned Vare

Learning, we are told, is what comes primarily from something that's done to us instead of something that we get for ourselves. It is perceived as an activity that almost no one enjoys and is done only in places where no one wants to be – schools. It's no longer perceived as one of the strongest human drives that it is, along with hunger and sex. Educationists want us to believe that our children can learn only if we purchase their services, namely teaching.

Today, schools, especially government-run ("public") schools, deny the value, even the existence, of curiosity. The schools create the curriculum – basically identical for every child. They assign the teachers, and the place and time for all instruction. The school presents information, then tests the students on that information. The students' curiosity is not acknowledged; their interests are not deemed important; their questions and timetables and concerns, even their civil rights, are ignored.

The truth about learning is that it is NOT something that one person can do to, or force upon, another. Learning is not produced by the teacher, but always by the learner. Teaching can help only when it is requested. What is the best environment for this "natural" learning? One where the learner is left alone and given time; one which allows the individual's innate curiosity to flourish... "I think, therefore I am." – Descartes

Here's Dan Greenberg, head of Sudbury Valley School: "...if you bother the person, if you insist the person stop his/her own natural learning, and do instead what you want, between 9AM and 9:50 and between 10AM and 10:50 and so on, not only won't the person learn what s/he has a passion to learn, but s/he will also hate you, hate what you are forcing upon them, and lose all taste for learning, at least temporarily.... Imagine a teacher forcing spinach, milk and carrots down each student's throat. Sudbury leaves its students be. Period. No maybes, no exceptions. We help if we can when we are asked. We never get in the way. People come here primarily to learn. And that's what they all do, every day, all day.

"The future belongs to people who can stretch their minds to handle, mold, shape, organize, play with new material, old material, new ideas, old ideas, new facts, old facts. These kinds of activities don't take place in the average school even on an extra-curricular basis... At Sudbury, these activities are, in a sense, the whole curriculum." (The Sudbury Valley School Experience, SVS Press, Framingham, MA)

The difference between this approach and the public school experience was brought home to me recently. I met a public school social studies teacher with eight years on the job. He described his teaching method as anathema to the

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usual method in which the students are told what to do every minute of the day. He lets his students choose their own projects and the ways they go about their own learning. He told me that his students enter his classes totally at a loss to know how to do that, accustomed as they are to having all their time and actions prescribed for them. This teacher's job is in jeopardy, and he knows it. Why? Because the state's mission is not to turn out independent thinkers, but dependent consumers, factory workers and soldiers.

Homeschooling is growing fast today, not only for the positive reason that it allows free rein to children's curiosity, but also because it avoids the negatives of public schools that distrust the students and teachers and stifle individual interests and talents. The Sudbury School can be described as group unschooling – the best of both worlds.

Since the original Sudbury Valley School in Framingham, MA opened in 1968, there are now about a dozen more schools using its design. One is in Hampton, CT, and a new one will open in the Hartford area in the fall of 2002 (info@mountainlaurelsudbury.org).

The world of alternatives to government education is vast and growing steadily. For example, there are now two thousand websites that offer cyberschooling – self-directed learning of any subject imaginable. There are also many websites and over five hundred e-groups dedicated to homeschooling, with an estimated 1.5 million kids now participating.

I'm with Dan Greenberg: the future belongs to those who are trusted early to direct their own learning. I believe that the public school system's days are numbered because it is mired in the nineteenth century, still acting as equal parts factory, prison, and insane asylum. There is no one curriculum, no one way and no one place or time for education. Ironically, schools are places that slow, and even prevent, learning.

Doing Something? Write about it!

The Connecticut Libertarian welcomes submissions from members. Articles of 300 to 500 words with photographs are ideal. Send submissions or inquiries to TCL@lpct.org.

FOI Challenge Fails

by James Madison

HARTFORD—As discussed in a previous newsletter, the dauntless Ken Mosher filed a complaint on behalf of the LPCT. He filed a Freedom of Information (FOI) complaint against the Secretary of the State (SOTS) to obtain a list of voters registered with other third parties.

The SOTS claimed that it only had the responsibility under FOI to provide the entire list of *all* registered voters at a cost of \$300 instead of the smaller requested list which would have cost less than \$30 under FOI rules.

The FOI commission found in favor of the SOTS, citing a number of cases that showed that the government merely has to provide collections of information as they exist in the government systems (e.g., entire voter registration database) rather than in the form specified by the individual making the request (e.g., just third-parties).

The FOI law provides for the plaintiff to challenge the ruling. After discussions among a number of LPCT members, it was decided not to challenge the case. The FOI law as written only requires that the government provide the data in its complete form, it does not require that the government pare it down to meet the individual needs of citizens. While this may be a deficiency in the law, it is not a misinterpretation or misapplication of the FOI law itself and therefore not a situation for which the FOI commission is empowered to act.

Meeting Notice: The LPCT will meet from 9:00 a.m. to noon on Saturday, December 8th in East Hampton. The phone number there is 860-267-6358. All members are welcome, and bringing visitors is *strongly* encouraged. The atmosphere is casual, and all things Libertarian are up for discussion, from the purely philosophical to the painfully practical. Hope to see you there!

Directions:

From Hartford and the North:

- Take Rt 2 East, then exit 13
- Take right at end of exit onto Rt 66W
- You will pass Lake Pocotopaug, McDonald's, then 2 lights at town center.
- At 2nd light, arrive at an intersection with a Liberty Bank and a church.
- Take a left onto Main St., go straight through at next stop sign.
- At the intersection with Main/Rt 16, you'll see Food Bag on left.
- Go straight, crossing Rt 16, onto South Main St.
- Go 1/2 mile, take Right onto Daniel St.
- Go 1/2 mile, 47 Daniel St. on left, gray with blue trim, rear lot.

From Waterbury, New Haven, and the West:

- Take Rts 84E, 691E, or 95N as needed to reach Rt 91.
- Take Rt 91 North, then exit 22S to Rt 9 South.
- Take exit 16 to Rt 66 East.
- Go over Portland Bridge, stay on Rt 66 for about 5 miles.
- Get on Rt 16 by going right at the "Y" in the road.
- Stay on Rt 16 for about 4 miles until you reach East Hampton.
- You will reach a 4-way light with a Food Bag on the left.
- Turn right onto S. Main St.
- Go 1/2 mile, take Right onto Daniel St.
- Go 1/2 mile, 47 Daniel St. on left, gray with blue trim, rear lot.

From eastern CT:

- Take Rt 2 West
- Take exit 18 to Rt 16 West
- Stay on Rt 16 for about 10 miles until you reach East Hampton.
- Turn left onto S. Main St.
- Go 1/2 mile, take Right onto Daniel St.
- Go 1/2 mile, 47 Daniel St. on left, gray with blue trim, rear lot.