



Lone Star Liberty

The Official Monthly Newsletter of the Libertarian Party of Texas
January 2007

Letter From the Chair

Dear Friends of Liberty:

We need your support now to get us through January.

In September, our Executive Director, Wes Benedict, asked many of you for urgent financial help so he could order 200,000 Quiz Across Texas door hangers in addition to the first 100,000 he had already ordered. You came through, he ordered them, and by the time of the election Libertarian volunteers had distributed well over 200,000 of the door hangers throughout Texas. (We still have about 50,000 door hangers in stock, and since they weren't specific to the 2006 election, they won't go to waste but will be used in the future.)

This unprecedented outreach effort helped a whole lot of Texans learn about the Libertarian Party.

We put such a strong emphasis on the Quiz Across Texas project that we spent all our remaining funds on it. That's a good thing—it's why the project was so successful. However, it means that we need your financial help now to pay off all remaining expenses from November and December and to keep operations going. If we raise \$4,000 from this e-mail, we should be in decent shape through January.

If not, we risk losing our staff and going back to the days of having an outdated website, unanswered phone calls and e-mails from the press, and little help for new people who want to get involved.

Please donate \$500 or \$100 or \$50 to the Libertarian Party of Texas (LPT) now: <http://lptexas.org/donate.shtml>

Our November 7 election results were truly inspiring and showed strong improvement across the board. From our November 8 press release:

“The party had 168 candidates on the ballot, its highest count ever.

“By getting more than 5% in at least one statewide race, the LPT is automatically qualified for ballot access in 2008.

“Overall trends:

“In 2002, Libertarian candidates in a three-way race for U.S. House received an average of 1.6% of the vote. In 2004, they received an average of 1.7%. In 2006, they received an average of 2.6%. (Note, “three-way” means a Libertarian running against a Republican and a Democrat, with no other candidates in the race.)

“In 2002, Libertarian candidates in a two-way race for U.S. House received an average of 8.8% of the vote. In 2004, they received an average of 6.9%. In 2006, they received an average of 17.0%.

“In 2002, Libertarian candidates in a three-way race for Texas House received an average of 2.4% of the vote. In 2004, they received an average of 2.7%. In 2006, they received an average of 3.6%.

“In 2002, Libertarian candidates in a two-way race for Texas House received an average of 10.3% of the vote. In 2004, they received an average of 9.7%. In 2006, they received an average of 16.0%.

“LPT Executive Director Wes Benedict said, “The results show that voters are no longer afraid to vote Libertarian. More and more voters know who we are and what we stand for.”

“In this 2006 election, 22 Libertarian candidates for federal and state offices received over 20% of the vote. The last time Libertarian candidates for federal or state offices earned more than 20% of the vote was in 1992: two Libertarians broke the threshold that year.”

You can read the full press release here: <http://lptexas.org/release-20061108.shtml>

Many of you are members of the national Libertarian Party. Please note that none of your contributions to the national party are shared with our state party. We are required to raise all our funds separately. So please make a separate contribution to the LPT.

If you have any questions about donating to the LPT, you can just reply to this email. Or feel free to call our Executive Director, Wes Benedict, at 512-442-4910.

Over the last two years, we have made tremendous strides in improving our organization, outreach, and campaigns. To continue this progress, we need your help. Please donate today: <http://lptexas.org/donate.shtml>

Sincerely, Patrick Dixon, Chair



Star Liberty

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Laura Coker-Garcia

Submissions of party news, meeting minutes, photographs, suggested web sites, letters to the editor, etc. are encouraged. Please send to Laura@libertyworks.org or to bcunningham2@verizon.net to submit.

Libertarian activists who are interested in volunteering as reporters, editors, columnists, etc. can join our working group at Lonestarliberty@yahoo.com.

Fund Raising Challenge

from Wes Benedict, Executive Director

This note is to inform you that I have set a goal for myself to raise either \$48,000 in one-time or \$4,000 in monthly contributions (above current monthly levels of slightly over \$3,000/mo), or an equivalent blend of the two types of contributions by February 28th, 2007. If I do not reach that goal, I plan to resign on February 28th. I estimate about a 50% chance of reaching the \$48k/\$4k goal.

Overall, I was very pleased with the 2006 election results and the efforts of our candidates and that our volunteers made to distribute the "Quiz Across Texas" campaign materials. In order for me to be interested in staying involved through 2008, I'd need to see in the short-term the likelihood of ramping things up a bit for 2008.

I plan to spend a significant amount of time in January continuing to analyze in detail our election results, causes and affects, and other items in order to make a compelling presentation geared towards recruiting a few new large donors to supplement our many small donors.

I will not take any pay for the month of December, and will only take half of my pay for January and February, mostly because we don't have funds available to pay me, but also that gives me the freedom to concentrate on detailed analysis that might help for the longer term. Art will take 50% pay for December.

I will have to put on hold all long-term projects such as database upgrades, a potential website upgrade, and institution of a membership plan. Also, expect support on almost everything from me to be extremely limited during this time period. If successful, that will allow me to spend time in March through June on these bigger projects and catching up with all of the new people who have expressed interest in the party.

I have had to spend a significant amount of time in December on personal items such as moving to a new apartment, clearing out the storage unit where our campaign materials were, upgrading and fixing bugs in my computer, cell phone, PDA, truck, etc. (basically taking care of many personal items that I've neglected over the past year while working on Libertarian stuff).

The SLECT may decide to search for a replacement Executive Director at any time. I

will mostly stay out of that process if it occurs for various reasons, but primarily because I don't want any appearance that I somehow take personal responsibility for the success of a new person. Most state LP Executive Directors around the country that were in place when I started no longer hold their positions. The SLECT must take ownership for the success of a new Executive Director, or that new person needs to take responsibility for his/her own success.

I genuinely do intend to work especially hard to meet the \$48k/\$4k and make 2008 the biggest year ever for the Libertarian Party of Texas. I just can't guarantee it. And again, I'll repeat the point that my singular focus will be on analyzing November's elections results, preparing a business plan to present to larger donors, and making those pitches. I will not be responding to most other requests.

Sincerely:

Wes Benedict

Executive Director

Libertarian Party of Texas

Why I am a libertarian, continued

*From local Libertarian Anthony Steele:
Reprinted from Austin Liberator*

I am a libertarian because I believe in the concept of limited government. When I mention this fact to someone, I usually get the response "But you're really a Republican, aren't you?" Nothing could be further from the truth I tolerate conservatives, but I'm not one of their kin.

Before I discovered the Nolan chart (<http://www.theadvocates.org/quiz.html>) and through it the LP, I was a staunch yellow dog Democrat, like my parents and grandparents before them. I believed that government was there to help, and that social freedoms could be taken for granted under the Democrat's benign rule. However, I was at a loss to explain why the drug war persisted (with tacit Democrat support) or why the term "Politically Correct" was ever coined (by a Democrat) Even when the Democrat's dominated the legislature and Democrats held the Presidency, social liberty never increased.

When the Republicans came to power, they talked of reducing the size and expense of government. My fellow Democrats cried over this, but I could not understand how

reducing government, and the tax burdens on the people, was necessarily a 'bad' thing. Having more of my money to dispose of as I wished seemed like a good thing to me. Having less government interference in my life was one of my goals, as well. I thought I might have something in common with Republicans after all.

Strangely, the cost of government never got smaller, even when the Republicans dominated the legislatures, and a Republican held the Presidency. The Republicans did reduce taxes, but the debt burden passed on to the next generation of Americans went through the roof. I started to think that the politicians were not being truthful with us; and if they were lying to us about their intentions, then what else were they lying to us about?

When I was told "read my lips" and then watched taxes rise anyway; and when I heard "It depends on what the definition of is is" used as an excuse to cover the questionable activities of a president (activities that were the least egregious of the impeachable offenses that he could have been charged with) I began to see the truth that I know today: If a politician has words coming out of his mouth, he's most likely lying.

I discovered something else in the course of nearly 30 years of following politics: Government is a weapon. It is a loaded gun that you point at wrong doers to make them stop what they are doing. That is the only 'help' that government can give; and it doesn't even do that cheaply. If you want government to do something for you, then you are employing force to get it done

Everything that government does can be done by private industry better, faster and cheaper. The fewer government run programs, the less force that is present in our system; less force means more freedom.

Jefferson, Adams and the others who founded this country understood this. The Democratic party (I was told) was the party of Jefferson. Because of this, I was a Democrat. What I did not realize was that the limited government principles of Jefferson and the founders were abandoned by the Democrats in the 1940 election; which brings us back to the Nolan chart, and the LP.

Chart the beliefs of the founders, and nearly to a man they will turn up Libertarian; Jefferson was solidly so. When I took the test, I too charted as solidly Libertarian. It has been more than 10 years since I took the test, lodging protest votes against the two

major parties, discussing issues with fellow libertarians; and it's been only recently that I have come to the realization that I was indeed a Libertarian in belief, and not just a political misfit.

Ask any libertarian why they are what they are, and you will get a different story. Some are former Republicans and some, like me, are former Democrats. Most of them are of the younger generation, fresh out of college and worried about the future they face at the hands of an ever-expanding federal government.

If there is a core libertarian belief, then this is a good portion of it; that government at least return to constitutional limits, and be responsive to the people who fund it. That force not be employed except in response to force. That we are all capable of governing ourselves, just as has been done throughout our history.

These were the beliefs of our nations founders; and because I claim these same principles as my own, I must be a libertarian.

Providing political cover

*From Noelle Davis of Texans for Medical Marijuana
Reprinted from Austin Liberator*

For the past five months I have traveled across the state meeting with Texas State Legislators to ask them to support a medical marijuana bill during the legislative session starting January 9th. I am glad to report the overwhelming majority of both Democrats and Republicans said they agreed that patients should not be locked up for following their doctors' advice. However, as of today at least, none feel politically safe enough to join Representative Naishtat in bravely breaking the silence and offering a solution that has proven effective in 11 other states. Now I have not met with all the legislators, so I still hope to find some who are brave enough, but simply have not been asked yet.

Two of the legislators I spoke with shared exactly the same reason why they would not publicly support our bill: they fear their primary opponent or general election opponent running a TV commercial against them saying, "He voted to LEGALIZE MARIJUANA!!!" Sadly, they are probably right to fear such intentionally deceptive commercials.

The number one reason legislators gave

as to why they won't publicly support medical marijuana is that they do not have enough political cover. They want political cover in the form of public support for medical marijuana legislation from groups like the Texas Medical Association, their local prosecutors and law enforcement groups. So far my attempts to talk with these groups have been mostly met with silence. Two law enforcement associations have said they will likely remain neutral, which in the game of Texas politics is sometimes the best you can get.

Several of the legislators also said they are not hearing from medical marijuana supporters in their district, and one said he had only heard from people who are opposed.

This is where you come in. Your personal participation will have a huge impact on the effectiveness of this campaign. The time has come to start educating your state legislators either by a phone call, hand written letter, or the most effective method (when you are well prepared), a personal visit.

Why do you personally care if they support medical marijuana legislation? Please tell them either by calling, writing or personally visiting, and ask them to support a policy change that would save state law enforcement the precious resources of money and time, while creating a program that will help some of the most vulnerable people among us. Hear are the main points that need to be included in a bill to make it an effective law:

- *Protect registered seriously ill patients - and their registered caregivers - who possess and cultivate limited amounts of marijuana with their doctors' certification from arrest and prosecution by state authorities; create registry identification cards, so that law enforcement officials will be able to easily tell who is a registered qualified patient or caregiver and who is not, and establish penalties for false statements and fraudulent ID cards;

- *Protect doctors from being punished for advising their patients that - in their sincere professional judgment - the benefits of the medical use of marijuana for the patient would exceed the risks;

- *Allow patients and their caregivers who are arrested to raise a medical defense in court; and prohibit the public use of marijuana and driving under the influence of marijuana, among other common sense restrictions.

Between now and the beginning of

April, if every person receiving this message contacted their legislators and successfully encouraged one friend or family member to reach out to their legislators also, that might generate enough "political cover" to get the legislators in Austin to do the right thing and support Representative Naishtat's bill.

We need your help telling people what we are trying to achieve and explaining how they can join you in playing an important role in speaking up for safe access. You can find who represents you in the Texas State Legislature, and their contact information, by inserting your address at the following link: <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/>

Thank you for demonstrating your courage and commitment by speaking up for safe access!

Texans for Medical Marijuana 21st Birthday Lobby

*From: Karen Heikkala,
kheikkala@sbcglobal.net*

Dear Patrick,

Wishing you and yours a joyful and peaceful holiday season!

When you break out your new 2007 calendars be sure to mark the dates for our regional meetings around the state in preparation for TMM's February 21st lobby day. Please pass on the invitation to your friends and family to join us at one of the following regional meetings:

Houston

Thursday, January 11, 2007 - 6:30p 8p

Oak Forest Branch Library

1349 West 43rd Street

Houston, 77018

Directions - From the intersection of 610 and Ella go north on Ella. Take a left on 43 streets. The library is on the left about 2 blocks from the intersection.

Dallas

Tuesday, January 16, 2007 6:30p 9p

Lakewood Branch Library

6121 Worth St.

Dallas, 75214

San Antonio

Wednesday, January 17, 2007 6:30p 9p

Landa Branch Library

233 Bushnell

San Antonio, TX 78212

Directions - Via IH-10: Exit Hildebrand Ave. East on Hildebrand to McCullough Ave.

South on McCullough to Bushnell. East on Bushnell for two blocks. Library is on left side of road.

Via US-281: Exit Hildebrand Ave. West on Hildebrand to Shook Ave. Left on Shook, 0.3 miles to Bushnell Ave. Right on Bushnell. Library is on the right.

Austin

Thursday, January 18, 2007 7p 9p

1210 Rosewood Ave.

Austin, 78702

Directions Traveling on E. 11th St. off of IH 35, go straight past the first light onto Rosewood Ave. Turn left into the first driveway on Rosewood. Park in the parking lot and come on in the front door.

Best Wishes,

Karen and Noelle

www.TexansforMedicalMarijuana.org

Internship Opportunity for Texas Libertarians

I am pleased to serve as General Counsel for Texans for Fiscal Responsibility (TFR), which promotes lower taxes and less government spending - some of the same principles the Libertarian Party works to advance.

We at TFR are looking for two part-time interns. I am enclosing below a description of this opportunity, which does include compensation. For those of you who are not a student or otherwise in the market for an internship, please consider forwarding this message to anyone you know who might be. Best wishes to all of you this holiday season.

Sincerely,

Marc Levin, General Counsel
Texans for Fiscal Responsibility

www.empowertexans.com

919 Congress, Suite 1135

Austin, TX 78701

512-477.6703 phone

512-477-6701 fax

mlevin@empowertexans.com

TEXANS FOR FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY INTERNSHIPS

Texans for Fiscal Responsibility is looking for two part-time interns to serve during the legislative session. Interns will assist in gathering information on legislative votes,

contacting legislative offices, assisting with our voter/taxpayer information campaigns, and much more. These positions do include compensation! For more information, please send your resume and a cover letter to: msullivan@empowertexans.com.

Texans for Fiscal Responsibility exists to create and sustain a system of strong fiscal stewardship within all levels of Texas government. TFR will inform elected officials about policy solutions that are consistent with the principles of limited government and build support for these positions among key constituencies.

The greatest threat to our state's economic growth and competitiveness is the weight of government on the economy. If government and taxes are allowed to grow without restraint, the economy will contract, thereby limiting opportunities for all Texans. We seek policy outcomes that provide increasing levels of economic liberty and opportunity for all Texans by controlling the size of government

Letters to the Editor

Correction: I read the following in the "*Lone Star Liberty*":

"North Texas LP News

Denton County – Rob Vigus has resigned as Chairman of the Denton County. LP. Vice Chair James Gholston will serve as the interim Chairman. Other members of the County Executive Committee are Dan Rose (Secretary), John Shuey (interim Treasurer following the resignation from that position by David Croft), David Croft, and past Chair Mike Ellsberry."

A couple of corrections:

* John Shuey is the Treasurer, not the interim Treasurer.

* When I resigned as Treasurer, I dropped off the Committee.

I am still receiving the bank account statements at my home address. I think this is the third that I have received since I resigned. John Shuey, as Treasurer will you look into to why I am still receiving this?

David Wallace Croft

<http://www.CroftSoft.com/people/david/>

Events

2 January 2007 Monthly TCLP business meeting. 6:45 - 8:30 p.m. Old Quarry Branch Library, 7051 Village Center Drive, Austin. Social hour at 8:30 p.m. at the nearby El Arroyo restaurant, 7032 Wood Hollow Drive. Visitors welcome at both events

6 January 2007 Williamson Co. Independent Texans organizing meeting. 1:00 p.m. For more information, email Jagi3@aol.com or call 255-4083.

13 January 2007 SLEC Meeting, Austin, Texas, Location: Noon, La Palapa Mexican Restaurant <http://lapalapaustin.com/> 6640 Hwy 290 East Austin, Texas 78723 Restaurant phone: (512) 459-8729

16 January 2007 Bexar County LP General Meeting, 7:00 PM, Kevin Tunstall: Elections; Campaigns, Strategy and Analysis; China Bay Chinese buffet, 1007 NW Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78213, (210)524-9333

18 January 2007 Regional meeting for Texans for Medical Marijuana. 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. 1210 Rosewood Ave., Austin. Open to the public

27 January 2007 Anti-war rally. 1:00 assemble at City Hall, Austin, March to capitol. antiwarcampus@yahoo.com

20 February 2007 Bexar County LP General Meeting, 7:00 PM China Bay Chinese buffet, 1007 NW Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78213, (210)524-9333

20 March 2007 Bexar County LP Business Meeting, 7:00 PM China Bay Chinese buffet, 1007 NW Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78213, (210)524-9333

17 April 2007 Bexar County LP General Meeting, 7:00 PM China Bay Chinese buffet, 1007 NW Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78213, (210)524-9333

15 May 2007 Bexar County LP General Meeting, 7:00 PM, China Bay Chinese buffet, 1007 NW Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78213, (210)524-9333

19 June 2007 Bexar County LP Business Meeting, 7:00 PM, China Bay Chinese buffet, 1007 NW Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78213, (210)524-9333

17 July 2007 Bexar County LP General Meeting, 7:00 PM, China Bay Chinese buffet, 1007 NW Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78213, (210)524-9333

21 August 2007 Bexar County LP General Meeting, 7:00 PM, China Bay Chinese buffet,

1007 NW Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78213, (210)524-9333

18 September 2007 Bexar County LP Business Meeting, 7:00 PM, China Bay Chinese buffet, 1007 NW Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78213, (210)524-9333

16 October 2007 Bexar County LP General Meeting, 7:00 PM, China Bay Chinese buffet, 1007 NW Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78213, (210)524-9333

20 November 2007 Bexar County LP General Meeting, 7:00 PM, China Bay Chinese buffet, 1007 NW Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78213, (210)524-9333

18 December 2007 Bexar County LP Business Meeting, 7:00 PM, China Bay Chinese buffet, 1007 NW Loop 410, San Antonio, TX 78213, (210)524-9333

Group calls for return of projected state surplus to taxpayers

*From Texas for Fiscal Responsibility:
Reprinted from Austin Liberator*

TFR offers vision, leadership on tax relief, spending reforms

Advocacy efforts focused on promoting sound fiscal policy among lawmakers, taxpayers

A new organization, Texans for Fiscal Responsibility, developed to promote government accountability to taxpayers and citizens was unveiled last month in Austin. The mission of TFR is to create and sustain a system of strong fiscal stewardship within all levels of state government that serves to empower all Texans.

Board chairman and Midland businessman Tim Dunn announced that the organization will be headed Michael Quinn Sullivan. Sullivan comes to TFR from the Texas Public Policy Foundation, where he served as vice president and director of media and government relations. TFR was originally founded in early 2006 as Empower Texans.

"It is an honor to be selected as president of Texans for Fiscal Responsibility," said Sullivan. "I look forward to working with state lawmakers and citizens interested in making government more transparent and accountable to taxpayers. With so many vested interests in Austin lobbying hard for programs that spend the taxpayers' dollars, the hard-working Texans asked to foot the

bill need to be represented."

Sullivan said TFR will initially be engaged in seeking to ensure the \$15 billion surplus is returned to taxpayers in the form of tax relief. The organization's website and blog is available at www.empowertexans.com.

"If lawmakers spend the surplus, they commit taxpayers to future ongoing spending and tax increases," he said. "Instead, the legislature should be encouraged to do the right thing: commit themselves to putting taxpayer protection at the top of the budget priority list by using the surplus for tax relief. For the sake of long-term opportunities for economic growth, Texas must enact strong limitations on government spending, and cap the revenues government can take from the people."

In addition, TFR will promote a series of budget reforms this legislative session, including: reducing the impact of the newly created business tax; urging lawmakers to not exceed the current spending cap; protecting "dedicated" revenues for their designed purpose; requiring lawmakers to provide greater budget detail; enacting reforms to the current appraisal system; and, promoting transparency in spending.

During the session, TFR will score members of the legislature on fiscal responsibility issues and then disseminate the results to taxpayers in their districts. Sullivan said lawmakers will be notified in advance of votes that could be included in their score.

"Texas has historically held to conservative budget principles. But as we have seen nationally, it is far too easy for lawmakers to lose sight of those principles. By keeping voters and taxpayers informed, Texans for Fiscal Responsibility will help legislators remain accountable," added Sullivan.

TFR's team also includes Marc Levin. An accomplished writer, researcher and attorney, Levin will serve as general counsel.

Texans for Fiscal Responsibility
919 Congress Ave., Ste. 1135
Austin, TX 78701
(512) 236-0201

www.empowertexans.com

DONATE and/or ORDER MORE MATERIALS 2006-09

Help us reach our **STRETCH** goal of 250,000 door hangers placed throughout Texas. \$100 will help us pay for 2000 more door hangers!

Enclosed is a **one-time donation** for you to put to use immediately for our November 2006 outreach efforts:

\$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100
 \$50 \$25 Other \$ _____

__ Visa __ MC __ AmEx __ Disc Card Number: _____

Name as it appears on card: _____

Expiration Date: _____ Signature: _____

Please make checks payable to the "Libertarian Party of Texas."

State law requires us to report the occupation of any individual who contributes more than \$50 in a reporting period. Employer optional. Political contributions are not tax deductible. No corporate contributions.

Occupation: _____ Employer: _____

Materials are FREE! We need donors and volunteers. Some of you are both:

	<p>Door hangers</p> <p>If you've already put up 200, consider ordering 400 this time.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 200 (for beginners) <input type="checkbox"/> 400 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p>		
	<p>Yard signs Qty ____ (10 max)</p>	<p>Bumper stickers Qty ____ (20 max)</p>	

Donors of \$50 or more please do exceed our suggested maximum quantities for materials!

Your contact information:

Name:
Mr/Ms/Dr _____ First _____ Middle _____

Last _____ Suffix _____ Nickname _____

Address:
Street _____ Add2/Apt _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ County _____

Phone:
Home _____ Home 2 _____

Work _____ Cell _____

E-mail (print clearly): _____

Occupation: _____

For additional information, please contact our Executive Director, Wes Benedict, at (512) 442-4910, 8:00 am - 10:00 pm, 7 days a week (Director@LPTexas.org).

Please return in the enclosed envelope today!

Mail to: Libertarian Party of Texas, PO Box 41059, Austin, TX 78704. Fax to: 512-233-0613