



# Lone Star Liberty

The Official Monthly Newsletter of the Libertarian Party of Texas

February 2006

## Gene Freeman Files in Dist. 106 Special Election

Austin, TX - Libertarian Gene Freeman has filed to run in the special election to fill the vacancy in Texas House District 106.

Governor Rick Perry called the special election for February 28, giving candidates only six business days to file. The filing period ended on January 30.

"Gene Freeman left for a cruise with his family on Monday, but not before preparing his application," according to Wes Benedict, Executive Director of the Libertarian Party of Texas.

Gene is also a candidate for the Libertarian nomination for the November general election. Gene, 50, of Grand Prairie is a management consultant.

One Democrat, Kathy Hubener, and one Republican, Kirk England, have also filed for the race.

Pat Dixon, Chair of the Liber-

tarian Party of Texas, said, "We're very happy to see Gene Freeman in this race. His participation may have the same effect that Ben Easton's had in the District 48 special election. Ben Easton made it clear that he was a real fiscal conservative, unlike the Republican candidate. While that didn't translate into Libertarian votes, Easton's presence may have caused frustrated conservative voters to stay home."

In that January 17 special election, the Republican candidate received 37.8% of the vote, while two Democrats received a total of 59.9%. Libertarian Easton received 2.3%.

Dixon also noted, "Outgoing



Republican Ray Allen received lots of negative marks from the Young Conservatives of Texas for his 2005 voting record."

Dixon continued, "If Gene Freeman makes it clear he's against new taxes and throwing more money into the government school system, and Allen's record gets pinned on the Republican candidate, our Libertarian candidate should do well."

In 2004, District 48 was a close race with Republican incumbent Todd Baxter receiving 50.1% of the vote, and Democrat Kelly White receiving 49.9%. District 106 was similarly close: Republican incumbent Ray Allen received 52.6%, while Democrat Katy Hubener received 47.4%.

Gene can be reached at [gfreeman@oakwoodconsulting.net](mailto:gfreeman@oakwoodconsulting.net).

## Wes Benedict Files Finance Complaint on Bentzin

Austin, TX - Wes Benedict, an Austin Libertarian activist, has filed a complaint with the Texas Ethics Commission (TEC) against the "Friends of Ben Bentzin" (FOBB) campaign committee.

Benedict alleges that FOBB failed to disclose over \$250,000 in the finance report due on January 9, eight days before the election. FOBB waited until January 17 to disclose that information.

Benedict said, "The second report contained information about large contributions from individuals and PACs that should have been disclosed to voters on January 9. It could very well

have affected which voters turned out, and who they voted for."

Benedict continued, "I filed this complaint because of the magnitude of the violation. I also examined the other candidates' reports, but found no similar violations. Donna Howard failed to report her filing fees properly, but that did not seem large enough for a complaint."

A December 20 letter from the TEC made it clear that the "8th day before election" report should cover the period beginning on the date of the campaign treasurer appointment (unless earlier reports had been filed).

In addition to possible TEC penal-

ties, Texas election law makes a violating committee liable to opposing candidates for "twice the amount not reported that is required to be reported."

Wes Benedict serves as Chair of the Travis County Libertarian Party, and Executive Director of the Libertarian Party of Texas.

The TEC's letter may be found here: [http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/NTF/StRepDist48\\_2006.pdf](http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/NTF/StRepDist48_2006.pdf)

Benedict's complaint may be found here: <http://www.wesbenedict.com/ComplaintFOBB.pdf>



## Lone Star Liberty

Volume 16, Issue 2  
February 2006  
Available monthly  
online at  
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### Candidates please note:

Submissions of party news, meeting minutes, photographs, biographies of candidates, suggested websites, letters to the editor, etc. is encouraged. Please send to [Laura@libertyworks.org](mailto:Laura@libertyworks.org) to submit.

## Around the State: Activist Update

Libertarian candidates for the March nominations have been active.

Many candidates have announced the launch of websites: Dallas County JP candidate **V. Rose Mercer** [www.voteforrose.com](http://www.voteforrose.com); State Rep. Dist. 52 candidate **Lillian Simmons** <http://xld.com/s/home.htm>; State Rep. Dist. 65 candidate **John Shuey** <http://mysite.verizon.net/resrrkj6/>; State Rep. Dist. 150 candidate **Scott W. Smith** [www.sendsmithtoAustin.com](http://www.sendsmithtoAustin.com); U.S. Rep. Dist. 21 candidate **James Arthur Strohm** [www.strohmforcongress.net](http://www.strohmforcongress.net); U.S. Rep. 22 candidate **Bob Smither** [www.smither4congress.us](http://www.smither4congress.us); U.S. Rep. 23 candidate **Cecil H. Lamb** [www.lambforcongress.com](http://www.lambforcongress.com).

State Rep. 24 candidate **Brady Lee Hutchinson** spoke on January 24 to the Rice University College Libertarians. He also announces a website at [www.bradyhutch.com](http://www.bradyhutch.com).

State Rep. 112 candidate **Matthew Mosely** attended a January 30 Richardson City Leaders Luncheon, a photo of him with the city's Mayor and the director of the lunch was expected to appear in Feb. 1 edition of the Dallas Morning News.

State Senate 25 candidate **James "Bob" Thompson** was interviewed for an article in the January 13 New Braunfels Herald. He also had a letter to the editor recommending that people vote out the politicians and vote in representatives of the people in the January 18 edition of the Austin American Statesman.

U.S. Rep. 10 candidate **Michael Badnarik** held several town hall type meetings this month and has three more planned for February (see calendar for information). **Emily Cowan** joins his campaign team as Volunteer Coordinator.

Lt. Governor candidate **Judy Baker** announces a website at [www.judybaker.us](http://www.judybaker.us). **Guy Mc-Lendon** has signed on to the campaign as webmaster. Judy plans a "whistle stop" tour for March 3 in The Woodlands.

The five-way race for the nomination in State Rep. 94 has dropped to four with the withdrawal of **Richard Cross**. The popular district is in Tarrant County.

**Aggie Libertarian Alliance** members planned to hand out quizzes and flyers at the February 1 MSC Open House on campus.

**Gray County Libertarians** now have a website at [Graycountylib.blogspot.com](http://Graycountylib.blogspot.com).

Denton County Chair **Rob Vigus** has announced that their Executive Committee has decided to adopt the buffalo as the official mascot for the county party in the hopes that this can create a type of branding that will increase their numbers. Rob is asking for logo submissions from any Libertarian. The only requirement is that submissions must have a buffalo on it. Contact Rob at [robpolic@yahoo.com](mailto:robpolic@yahoo.com).

Brazos County Chair **Christopher Jagge** wrote a letter to the editor to the Bryan College Station Eagle January 28 (not yet published) that criticizes the Supreme Court for putting two Republican Judge candidates names on the primary ballot after they failed to submit required petition signatures. Chris pointed out the petition requirements Libertarians had to meet and asks voters should they vote for judges who think they are above the law?

Harris County activists **Carol Caul and Bill Ware** earned news coverage on TV station KPRC-2 for their effort opposing TxDot's project to elevate I-610/I-10 interchanges and its effect on nearby Memorial Park and neighborhoods.

TxDot's plan does not include modern noise abatement technology. Bill and Carol are calling for an environmental impact statement and public meetings. They have formed a group called 610 Memorial Park Stakeholders and are holding meetings. Reach them at 713-680-2500.

# Release: Big Money Grab Begins

State Board of Education District 10 candidate Martin Thomen sent the following media release Jan. 30:

AUSTIN - True to character, one Republican candidate for State Board of Education spends more money than she raises while another loans \$3000 dollars to himself to keep his campaign afloat.

Thomen recently asked, "Should we elect people to office who publicly flaunt poor accounting skills?" These candidates are apparently confident that they will raise the thousands of dollars they feel is necessary to win a non-paid position on the State Board

of Education.

"That seems a little like fuzzy mathematics to me," quipped Thomen, "but I'm sure they'll see the payoff somewhere higher up on the political gravy train." He also noted that many candidates for State Board of Education double as political insiders, yes-men and women and make decisions based on the party line instead of people's needs.

Thomen pointed out that he does not want political donations and continued to beleaguer his opponents as thousands of Texans changed the channel.

## Election Results

Libertarian Ben Easton, candidate for State Rep District 48 in a special election held on January 17, received only 2.3% of the vote, but that was sufficient to prevent Democrat Donna Howard from winning the election that day. Howard had 49.5% of the vote, while second place finisher Republican Ben Bentzin had 37.8%. Democrat Kathy Rider was third with 10.5%.

The Austin Chronicle reported on the election in its January 20 edition.

—from the Austin Liberator

## Letters to the Editor:

U.S. Rep. District 22 candidate Bob Smither and Galveston County activist David Dannemiller had the following published in the Friendswood Reporter News with the title "Random Drug Testing for FISD Students?"

Recently parents of students in FISD received a survey soliciting opinions about a possible random drug testing (RDT) policy within FISD schools. We would like parents and the school board to consider a few things.

- RDT is not effective in changing the drug use patterns of students. Researchers at the University of Michigan, who conducted the only nationally representative survey of drug use in the nation's schools, concluded that:

"Drug testing of students in schools does not deter drug use, University of Michigan researchers have concluded, based on a large, multi-year national sample of the nation's high schools and middle schools."

See:<http://www.umich.edu/news/Releases/2003/May03/r051903.html>

- From a practical perspective, the drug problem is a low priority compared to many other needs in FISD. The flyer that came out prior to the re-

cent bond election contained a lengthy list of basic maintenance needs - replacing carpet and air conditioners, and fixing roofs. Even more fundamental and important are curriculum needs. Many classes don't have a book for every child. Many books are photocopies.

The use of FISD tax money for a program known to be ineffective cannot be justified.

In addition to the practical aspects, there are other reasons to oppose RDT in our schools.

- RDT is a clear violation of our children's rights as spelled out in the fourth amendment to the U. S. Constitution. Remember that RDT is no based on probable cause, which is the usual threshold required by law enforcement. It may be popular to ignore these constitutional rights, but it is not right.

- RDT of students NOT EVEN SUSPECTED of taking illicit drugs sends the wrong message to our kids - "we don't trust you, and we don't respect your privacy."

- The RDT proposed by FISD targets those students least likely to be using illicit drugs - those in UIL and other extracurricular activities. One of the few things that do reduce the use

of illicit drugs by students is participation in extracurricular activities.

See:<http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/2k4/activities/activities.pdf>

- The survey spells out that participation in these activities will require a student to consent to RDT. In the sense that participation in extracurricular activities is not mandatory the program is advertised as voluntary, but UIL participation is the basis of many college scholarships and other extracurricular activities are certainly considered. Failure to consent to this search would deny the student the opportunity to apply for these scholarships. The "voluntary" RDT policy being considered is effectively mandatory.

Trish Hanks is Superintendent of Schools for FISD. She sponsored the survey and is looking for input. Whether you participated in the survey or not, please contact Ms. Hanks to let her know you are against random drug testing of our children. She can be reached at [thanks@fisdk12.net](mailto:thanks@fisdk12.net) or 281-482-1267.

David Dannemiller and Bob Smither Friendswood, Texas

# Frederick Drew Comments on "Stupid in America"

Friday, January 13, ABC aired a John Stossel special called "Stupid in America."

I didn't see it but found that it was a prime topic of conversation in my "mainstream" so I secured a transcript. I also looked at comments from a variety of sources.

Generally, in the education world the higher you go up the food chain, the more vehemently the report was attacked. Also, as expected, those viewing social responsibility from a more liberal point of view were the most aggressive in their attacks with conservatives more supportive.

The presence of this show in prime time, on a prime day by a news organization not usually known for conservative bias, indicates a very important issue.

Some of the descriptions ring true with my personal experience. One in particular was: "At age 10, American students take an international test and score well above the international average. But by age 15, when students from 40 countries are tested, the Americans place 25th."

I have participated in Texas UIL intermural academic competitions judging student essays for the "Ready Writing" classification. Many middle school students submissions are excellent by any standards, but when these same students reach high school the quality of their work declines substantially to just bigger words with no substance and the analysis that I enjoyed earlier is nonexistent.

This is no surprise because I have been hearing the same stories from acquaintances who are teachers for many years in New Jersey and now here in Texas. They all support these assertions.

Stossel's program went on to say: "The common cry is: "We need to spend more money on our schools." President Bush bought into that when he let Ted Kennedy write the education bill that became the No Child Left

Behind Act.

When I read this more than 690 page law, I found it was mostly a quality assurance requirement to get money from the federal government. The thrust of it was: 1. that each state develop a set of criteria, standards and expectations; 2. that those standards be applied equally; 3. that a method be developed to identify those instances where the standards were not met and to correct any problems; 4. that the plan and its results be forwarded to the federal government. Essentially, if a state lives up to the rules it makes, it gets the money. If you don't take the money—you don't have to follow the law!

The concept will be familiar to many who deal with the auto industry or supply companies in Europe. It is referred to as the ISO 9000 quality system. It seems clear there is something wrong with the educational system and it gets worse the longer the student is exposed to it.

In Texas we are anxiously awaiting the coming legislation relative to the state funding of public education. Extorting more money from an already taxed out citizenry won't even contribute to the solution. Per pupil spending has doubled over that last 30 years and schools' results do not improve. U.S. schools that spend the most, such as Washington, D.C. and New York City, have the worst results. More money has not equaled better education.

Another complaint I hear often is that poor families produce children that are disadvantaged in school. I have not found this true in my personal life even though I grew up in a depressed border community in a disadvantaged family. One Brownsville public school in disadvantaged area has some of the best results in the city and a parochial school that is free to the students, because they are disadvantaged, has extraordinarily high results.

As a first step, school choice would improve the situation by providing for

competition. I expect it would reduce costs as well.

I think the whole concept should be examined. No one school can meet all the needs of all students. We have many special needs such as non-English speakers, learning problems identified as Special Ed, and health and discipline issues. No one school is equipped to deal with that kind of diversity. We need to reconsider political correctness issues and provide specialized education to meet these needs.

One glaring area is with ESL and Bilingual programs, none of which have yet been implemented as designed. In Brownsville there is a parochial school that has extraordinary results imparting English; perhaps those needing training could prepare there for something more at a mainstream program to come later.

I am concerned that the federal government exerts so much influence as to determine what is being taught in our schools and how it is taught. Those decisions should be made in the communities with parental cooperation; at the worst no higher than the state level.

A primary goal should be that the Fed not be involved in setting criteria. It can be done! The school system that I attended as a youth, to this day does not accept federal support and thereby does not have to follow the requirements of "No Child Left Behind." Graduation levels are higher than many systems that spend much more money and similar percentages of students go on to Universities.

Since the Fed is already involved, we should dissolve the Department of Education and return the budget to the states, based on the amounts collected from its residents. That alone should provide all the funding needed! As a large number of workers would be displaced, now would be the best time; as the "baby boomers" retire.

*Frederick has written for LP News and a variety of other publications. He has a blog at [www.The-Drews.com](http://www.The-Drews.com).*

# Events of Interest to Texas Libertarians

**Feb. 4 (Sat.) Noon Brazos County LP Meeting, C&J BBQ, 1010 S. Texas Ave., Bryan.** Speaker is Charlotte Swain, Bail Bondsman formerly with the Bryan Police Department. For information contact Chair Chris Jagge at [c\\_jagge@msn.com](mailto:c_jagge@msn.com).

**Feb. 5 (Sun.) 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Harris County LP Meeting, 9614 Oregano, Houston.** For more information contact Chair Jeff Daiell at [jeffdaiell@yahoo.com](mailto:jeffdaiell@yahoo.com).

**Feb. 6 (Mon.) Last Day to Register to Vote** for participation in Precinct and County conventions.

**Feb. 8 (Wed.) 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Campaign Event, Manor.** U.S. Rep. District 10 candidate Michael Badnarik hosts a town hall question and answer session, Shadowglen Clubhouse, 11525 Shadow Glen Terrace, Manor. See [www.badnarik.org](http://www.badnarik.org) for information.

**Feb. 11 (Sat.) Filing opens for candidates for non-partisan local political subdivisions** holding elections in May.

**Feb. 11 (Sat.) 1 p.m. "America...From Freedom to Facism"** a film by Aaron Russo screens at the Alamo Drafthouse Theater, 409 Colorado St. Austin. Free and open to the public. Sponsored by the We the People, see [www.givemeliberty.org](http://www.givemeliberty.org) for more information.

**Feb. 13 (Mon.) 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Campaign Event, Elgin.** U.S. Rep. District 10 candidate Michael Badnarik hosts a town hall question and answer session, Elgin Civic Center, 404 N. Main St. Elgin. See [www.Badnarik.org](http://www.Badnarik.org) for information.

**Feb. 14 (Tues.) 7 p.m. Williamson County LP Meeting, Hunan Lion Chinese Restaurant, Round Rock.** For information contact Chair Bryan Bracamonte at [chairman@txwclp.org](mailto:chairman@txwclp.org).

**Feb. 15 (Wed.) 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Campaign Event, Austin.** U.S. Rep. District 10 candidate Michael Badnarik hosts a town hall question and answer session, Marie Callender's restaurant, 9503 Research Blvd. #400, Austin. See [www.Badnarik.org](http://www.Badnarik.org) for information.

**Feb. 21 (Tues.) 7 p.m. Bexar County LP Meeting,** Contact David Alter at [davydoodle\\_@hotmail.com](mailto:davydoodle_@hotmail.com).

**March 3 (Fri.) County Chairs Post Notice.** Each County Chair should post a notice on the County Commissioner's Bulletin Board listing the time and location for all precinct conventions. A copy should also be given to the County Clerk. Deadline to post is March 4 on Saturday. You may also post County Conventions at this time, but deadline is not until March 8.

**March 4 (Sat.) Noon to 4 p.m. SLECT Meeting, La Palapa restaurant, 6640 Hwy 290 East, Austin.** For more information contact State Chair Patrick Dixon at [Chair@lptexas.org](mailto:Chair@lptexas.org).

**March 7 (Tues.) 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Primary Election Day.**

**March 13 (Mon.) Filing closes for candidates for non-partisan local political subdivisions** holding elections in May.

**March 14 (Tues.) Times vary from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Libertarian Party Precinct Conventions.** You must be a registered voter who has not voted in the primary in order to participate. By rule all participants are delegates to the County Convention. Precinct Conventions also elect Precinct Chairs and may pass resolutions.

**March 18 (Sat.) Libertarian Party County Conventions.** Conventions will elect County officers, nominate candidates for local office, and choose delegates to the District and State Conventions.

**March 25 (Sat.) Libertarian Party District Conventions.** Time and location is set by the Chairs for counties within the district. These Conventions will select the nominee for district offices.

**May 13 (Sat.) Election Day** for non-partisan local political subdivisions.

**June 10 (Sat.) Libertarian Party State Convention, Wichita Falls, TX.** Time and location to be determined. Election of Party officers, and District Representatives for the Executive Committee, consideration of rules and changes to the Platform, nominations for statewide offices.

**Oct. 10 (Mon.) Last day to register to vote.**