

The Liberty Quill

A Publication by the Libertarian Party of Santa Clara County

COVID-19: Now Comes the Hard Part

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

It's now been more than six weeks since the "lockdown" began for us here in Santa Clara County. It was certainly a big shock both to our economy and to our liberty. I'm sure the politicians who did this thought it was a hard decision.



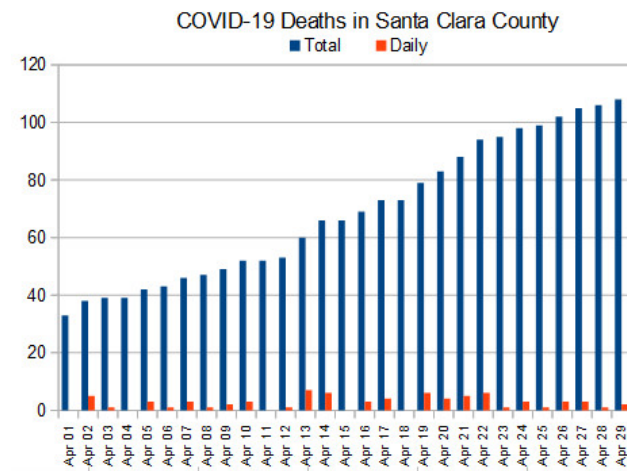
But the harder part is yet to come. Whether the kind of lockdown we now have was actually the best approach is something people will be debating for a long time. But most of the population was willing to accept it in the spirit of an "emergency measure", seeing it as similar to ones enacted in response to events like hurricanes and earthquakes.

But the key feature of an "emergency" is that it comes up suddenly. And it doesn't last forever. When a government declares a "state of emergency" with no defined end, we become justifiably skeptical. So it is important to understand exactly what emergency it was that was used to justify the lockdown.

The emergency was **not** that many people were likely to get sick. The emergency was not even that many people were likely to die. *The emergency was very specifically that the number of cases might increase exponentially*, resulting in the medical system being overwhelmed, in turn resulting in an unacceptable breakdown in dealing with both victims of this disease and everybody else who might need medical services for any other reason.

Fortunately, that's not where we are today. The accompanying graph shows the number of deaths from COVID-19 in Santa Clara County, based on official California

public health reports. The blue bars show total deaths to date. Obviously as long as any more people die that curve will continue upward, but the increase is not anything like exponential -- it looks pretty close to linear. To put the same thing another way, the number of people dying per day (the red bars) is pretty much constant (averaging a bit less than 3/day).



Presumably the rate would be higher now if none of the actions to keep it down had been taken. It will almost certainly increase somewhat if some of these actions are reversed. But the actions themselves are now creating continuing -- and cumulative -- very serious harm. There are trade-offs that need to be made. ([See the Commentary section below for discussion of many of these issues.](#))

Everybody seems to agree that we now need to look at reversing some of the restrictions, but there is very little agreement about which ones or how fast. And resolving those disagreements is going to be a lot harder than just giving that order for everything to stop.

The more we learn about this virus, the more likely it seems that it's going to be with us for a long time. That means we **cannot** continue to treat the situation as an "emergency", with politicians and bureaucrats shouting orders in all directions. We can survive that kind of government-directed approach without too much collateral damage in the case of an emergency like a hurricane or an earthquake because the immediate danger is over in a few days. That's not the kind of situation we are facing here. So it is essential that we get back, as soon as possible, to dealing with life in the ways that history has shown to be most effective in promoting both human happiness and prosperity -- by respecting individual rights and letting the market work.

This doesn't mean we should ignore the virus or go back to doing everything the way it was done before. Many of the specific techniques that have been applied to reduce transmission of this disease can and should continue to be applied. But they should be applied as part of a system of individual choice and responsibility. And the absurd notion that government should or even can properly divide our complex economy into "essential" and "non-essential" parts needs to be dropped immediately.

The free market must be allowed to operate, to enable individuals and businesses to make the trade-offs involved in getting things moving again. Letting the market function is essential to all of our hopes for the future -- including our future ability to respond effectively to this disease and ones that may come along after it.

And why is this part going to be so hard? Because the average politician today has

little understanding of either individual liberty or economics. And worse than that, this is true also of a significant portion of the general population. Too many people have been trained to believe that giving government control of the economy is actually a good thing. They don't understand what's wrong with it, so they are not inclined to resist it, or be in any hurry to reverse it.

And this is, for us as Libertarians, *the hardest challenge of all* -- how to undo the damage of a century or more of mis-education that has left the population not even able to understand the damage that politics is doing to their livelihoods and their lives.

Presidential Nomination Update

Starting last year, more than a dozen Libertarians have been campaigning around the country (and all across the Internet) for the chance to run as the LP's candidate in the 2020 Presidential Election. With the decision on our nominee scheduled to be made at the LP National Convention in late May, a variety of straw polls were held in many states to gauge the interest of delegates and other members.

	New Hampshire	Georgia	Iowa	CA informal	CA official	Arkansas	Florida	Montana	Nevada	primary: NC	primary: MA	primary: CA	Alaska	Indiana	Kentucky	Virginia	Wyoming	Michigan	Ohio
1 st	VS	AK	JH	JH	JH	JH	JH	JH	JM	JH	VS	JH	JH	JH	JM	JH	LC	JH	JH
2 nd	KR	JJ	LC	AK	JM	VS	JH	JH	JJ	Mc	JH	JJ	JJ	JJ	MW	JJ	JH	JA	JJ
3 rd	JJ	VS	JJ	LC	JM	VS	JH	JH		KR	DB	VS	AK	MW	JM	AK		VS	VS
4 th	DB	DB	AK	JJ	JM	VS	AK	KA		VS	KR	KA	AK	MW	LC	JH	JJ	AK	KA
5 th	JH	SR	DB	MW	VS	misc.	DB	DB		KA	AV	KR		AK	VS	JH	JJ	LC	LC

AK = Adam Kokesh
 AV = Arvin Vohra
 DB = Dan Behrman
 JA = Justin Amash
 JH = Jacob Hornberger
 JJ = Jo Jorgensen
 JM = John Monds
 KA = Ken Armstrong
 KR = Kim Ruff
 LC = Lincoln Chafee
 Mc = John McAfee
 MW = Mark Whitney
 NS = Nick Sarwark
 SR = Sam Robb
 VS = Vermin Supreme

Rankings do not include "NOTA" or "no preference".
 Cells spanning rows indicate a tie.

Reminder: None of these polls are in any way binding on the delegates. Also, several of the candidates considered in these polls have since dropped out of the race (Kim Ruff, Lincoln Chafee, Mark Whitney).

The state convention season was cut short due to the pandemic - though some states were able to hold online conventions, and various sorts of online debates have also continued. And since most of these polls were conducted, *two more* candidates have started actively campaigning:

[Jim Gray - 2012 Vice Presidential Candidate](#)

[Justin Amash - Congressman from Michigan](#)

Both of these have received support from many members on the basis of their relatively high visibility among the general public. But they have also received a lot of criticism for having entered the race late, after so many other candidates had participated in the debates -- debates that were intended to allow delegates to get a good view of both their styles and their positions on issues. As both of these candidates have expressed some views that are at odds with the Libertarian Party

Platform, the question of whether they joined the race to avoid a fair comparison could continue to rage for some time.

For more details about the straw polls, debates, and the candidates themselves, including links to their campaign web sites, visit:

http://lpedia.org/Presidential_Candidates_2020

Charity Mission!

The LP SCC was there, we helped [Sleeping Bags 4 The Homeless](#) distribute food at three different encampments. The entire Activities Committee was there! All one of me. I had the Libertarian Activist shirt on. I was able to be somewhat helpful.

The best thing about this – and the reason I encourage more of you to do it – is that it strengthens your resolve. Go out and see your country, your people, like this. You will be more driven.

The answer, you should already know, is NOT more conventional charities like this. They are a short term band-aid, and a sad substitute for what really needs to be done.

We must solve the problem at the source by stopping the government action that creates homelessness, You've heard this many times from me. The real charity is to be a Libertarian activist. It really addresses the problem, *and* it involves more pain. You don't get any warm fuzzy feelings when you work against the warm, fuzzy, specious tyrants.

I think most of you already know this. I like to think that's the reason none of you were with me today.

I may do more conventional charities in the future, but for now my focus is back on target.

Bob Goodwyn activities@scclp.org

Commentary

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

The Key Indicator for Re-Opening the Economy is Hospital Capacity

Government officials are all saying we need more data before they allow the economy to "re-open". The key indicator they need to be looking at is hospital capacity. That's what the lockdown was supposedly about.

<https://blog.independent.org/2020/04/15/the-key-indicator-for-reopening-the-economy-is-hospital-capacity/>

False Debate About Reopening Ignores Cost of Control Measures

Discussions about plans to reopen which ignore the large and continuing costs of the current control measures make little sense.

<https://reason.com/2020/04/13/the-false-debate-about-reopening-the-economy-is-the-one-that-ignores-the-enormous-human-cost-of-sweeping-covid-19-control-measures/>

Suspend AB-5 Now to Allow Hiring Gig Workers

AB-5 imposes severe limitations on independent contractors working in California – not a good idea even in normal times, but even worse now.

https://www.independent.org/news/news_detail.asp?newsID=1268

And the People Woke Up

The vision being promoted of everybody just sitting at home reading while the earth heals is highly elitist - and reveals a lack of understanding of how our civilization actually works.



<https://forum.freedomfest.com/and-the-people-woke-up/>

Should Women Be Included in the Military Draft?

A commission set up to consider policy on the draft and national service recently recommended that women be subject to the same violation of their rights as men.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-52274164>

It's Time to Build

So many of our institutions seem to have failed us during this crisis, in spite of warnings that such a thing could happen -- why? And what is needed to build a better future?

<https://a16z.com/2020/04/18/its-time-to-build/>

Ending the Lockdowns is About Saving Lives

Ending the lockdowns that have been imposed in response to the coronavirus isn't just about saving money -- it's also about saving lives.

<https://mises.org/wire/ending-lockdowns-isnt-about-saving-money-its-about-saving-lives>

California Doctors Say Lockdowns a Mistake from Health Perspective

Forcing everybody to "shelter in place" could be a big mistake just from the perspective of health, both because of the way the immune system works and because of curtailment of medical services.

<https://www.aier.org/article/open-up-society-now-say-dr-dan-erickson-and-dr-artin-massih/>

Local Governments Should Prepare Now to Head Off Financial Collapse

Local governments are likely to soon be facing a decline in tax revenue that will make it impossible to balance their books -- the best way to address that is to start cutting expenses now.

<https://thehill.com/opinion/finance/491503-far-worse-to-come-covid-19-collapse-of-state-and-local-governments>

Pensions Leave Cities With Bankruptcy as their Life Raft

Promises made by politicians to municipal employees in the past threaten their ability pay for current services. Proposals for reform have been ignored. Bankruptcy may now be the only way out.

<https://www.ocregister.com/2020/04/24/pensions-leave-cities-with-bankruptcy-as-their-life-raft/>

The Tyranny of Alleged Experts

There is great danger in putting our fate in the hands of "experts" who themselves have limited knowledge, have cognitive biases, and whatever their expertise in some specific field have no demonstrated competence in managing society as a whole.

<https://www.aier.org/article/the-tyranny-of-alleged-experts/>

California Cannot Sustain Great Depression 2.0 Much Longer

Between mid-March and mid-April, California obliterated all its job growth of the last decade. More than 3.1 million California workers filed for unemployment over this four-week period, which has increased the state's unemployment rate to at least 17 percent.

<https://www.hoover.org/research/california-cannot-sustain-great-depression-20-much-longer>

From Facebook

Some recent posts by local Libertarians.

Gouging is Good - Bob Goodwyn

As long as nothing is being done to limit competition, "gouging" is a well deserved profit ...

<https://www.facebook.com/bob.goodwyn.3/posts/3448368285190412>

About the Stanford Antibody Testing - *Joe Dehn*

That there are FAR more people who have been infected than the government has been reporting is a "good-news/bad-news" sort of thing.

<https://www.facebook.com/joe.dehn/posts/10102281756842798>

About Letting Grandma Die - *Bob Goodwyn*

We are getting some dangerous confusion on this issue, again. Let's clear this up ...

<https://www.facebook.com/bob.goodwyn.3/posts/3451136671580240>

Local News

Santa Clara County Expunges Thousands of Marijuana Convictions

[Mercury News] Santa Clara County has expunged 13,000 minor marijuana convictions that were rendered moot by the state's 2016 legalization of recreational pot use and sales, two months before a deadline set by the landmark law.

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2020/04/29/coding-and-cannabis-santa-clara-county-to-expunge-thousands-of-marijuana-convictions/>

San Jose Considers Re-Instating 'Sunshine Law' Provisions

[San Jose Inside] Late last month, the San Jose City Council suspended some of its "sunshine laws" to fast-track proposals related to the coronavirus outbreak.

<https://www.sanjoseinside.com/2020/04/17/san-jose-considers-reinstating-sunshine-law-provisions>

Governments Wrestle with 'Medical' vs. 'Recreational' Pot

[San Jose Inside] As state and local governments across the country have decided which business should be allowed to continue operating while most people are sheltering in place to avoid spreading the Covid-19 virus, the decisions are, naturally, often politically motivated ...

<https://www.sanjoseinside.com/2020/04/28/governments-wrestle-with-medical-vs-recreational-pot/>

A Home Delivery Robot Could Be Coming to Your Front Door

[Palo Alto Weekly] One Mountain View robotics startup is set to deploy its driverless vehicles on local streets as part of a new service to make contactless deliveries.

<https://www.paloaltoonline.com/news/2020/04/28/ordered-home-delivery-a-robot-could-be-coming-to-your-front-door>

Revelations About Excess Deaths in Santa Clara County Spark Calls for Greater Transparency

[San Jose Inside] Though the county listed Covid-19 as the official cause of death for 32 people in March, officials say many more cases of the novel coronavirus probably went undetected because of a lack of testing.

<https://www.sanjoseinside.com/2020/04/27/revelations-about-excess-deaths-in-santa-clara-county-spark-calls-for-greater-transparency/>

Video Selections

LPTV: Home Schooling in the Age of Corona

Nicholas Sarwark hosts Lauren Daugherty, publisher at Texas CEO magazine and co-founder of Evergreen Wrapping, and Kerry McDonald, author and education policy writer.

<https://youtu.be/641zyr7R5MY?t=55>

Desperate Mayors React to Coronaviurus

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6o2mHWZaCU>

COVID-19 and Politics

<https://www.hoover.org/research/doug-rivers-and-david-brady-covid-19-and-politics>

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 and let's see how we can work together toward liberty!

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. All events listed here should be considered **tentative**, depending on how the situation evolves. Check our web site for updates.

- 16 May - [Third Saturday Coffee Meet Up \(online\)](#)
- 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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