



VIRGINIA LIBERTY

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Crickenberger being led away by two officers of the Federal Protective Service.

Special Report: My Arrest for Civil Disobedience
by Ron Crickenberger, LP Political Director,
LPVA Member, Candidate for Congress from the 8th CD

I was arrested on June 6 for civil disobedience, while protesting a federal government crackdown on medical marijuana clinics, LP Campus Coordinator Marc Brandl and 8 other drug reform activists were also arrested.

We had chained ourselves across the entrance of the Department of Justice on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington DC. We read statements to the press, and chanted slogans every time the police came to give us “one more warning.” Before the Federal Protection Service cut the chains and drug us away in tight plastic handcuffs, we posted a “Cease and Desist” order on the door, demanding that the federal government end its misguided, immoral war against sick and critically ill patients who ease their suffering with medical marijuana.

Our protest in DC was one of 55 actions with more than 1000 demonstrators in cities across America on Thursday. I participated as part of my congressional campaign, as did many other Libertarian candidates around the country.

Since September 11 of last year, the federal government has conducted at least 5 raids against medical cannabis dispensaries in California, throwing patients in the street, confiscating homes, and arresting caregivers. June 6 was picked as the day of action because a federal judge in California was expected to issue a ruling very soon that will effectively give the DEA a green light to escalate their raids — depriving thousands more patients of their safe, quality-controlled source of medicine.

Committing an act of civil disobedience was not an action I took lightly. I sought advice from LP Chairman Jim Lark, General Counsel Bill Hall, Sheriff Bill Masters, as well as all of the HQ office staff, and of course, my partner in life, Noelle. I recognized that, in addition to the obvious potential negative consequences to me, that there was the potential for negative as well as positive public reaction.

See “My Decision”, Continued on Pages 2 and 3

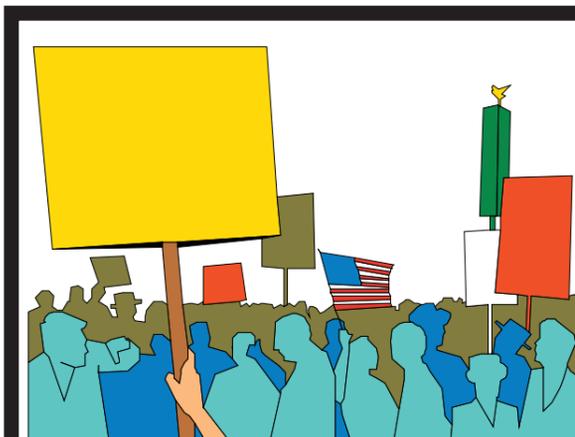
A New Administration and a New Look for the LPVA

by Chuck Eby (webmaster@lpva.com), Dave Briggman (communications@lpva.com)

April 6th marked a new beginning for the Libertarian Party of Virginia when Marianne Volpe was elected to the position of Chairman of the Party at the State Convention held at the Omni Richmond Hotel in downtown Richmond. Along with Volpe, Shelley Tamres was elected to Vice-Chairman, Scott Wakeman to Secretary and Garry Myers was elected to the position of LPVA Treasurer.

In the only race for Party office that was contested by a person, Volpe (Alexandria) edged-out Party newcomer David Briggman (Rockingham County). Tamres, Wakeman and Myers all soundly defeated NOTA (none of the above) to achieve their victories. Instant Runoff Voting (a centerpiece of Bill Redpath’s candidacy for Governor of the Commonwealth in 2001) was used in the election for Chairman as there were three candidates. All were elected to two-year terms.

One of the first official acts of the new Chairman, was the appointment of David Briggman to the position of Communications Director for the Party. In his position, Briggman took on the task of standardization of LPVA Communications and in doing so, commissioned a longtime friend, Steven J. Codraro, a professional graphic designer to create a new logo to be used on all Party written communications. The finished logo, above, was approved by the State Central Committee at it’s meeting in May and marks it’s published debut in this issue of Virginia Liberty. The logo was designed as a donation to the Libertarian Party of Virginia. Codraro is an award-winning graphic designer for the North County Times, a newspaper serving San Diego and Riverside counties in southern California.



**It's not too late to be a
delegate to the
National LP Convention**

**Read an important
message on Page 4
from the Chairman.**





"My Decision" continued from Page 1

My Decision

Drug War Focus Strategy -- our plan to end drug prohibition at the federal level by 2010 -- it is my responsibility to network with the other drug reform groups, and to work with them to help implement our strategy. You can't do much more to demonstrate that you are committed to a cause than to get arrested in a civil disobedience action. So I had incentive to participate beyond just believing that it was the right thing to do.

I came into the Libertarian Party because of taxation. I spent most of my first years in the LP working on issues that were in the economic realm. I did not take up the issue of medical marijuana until it touched me personally.

I had long believed in drug legalization for both philosophical and pragmatic reasons. But I had looked on the concept of medical marijuana much in the same way that its opponents do: "medical marijuana, yeah right, nice try to work toward making it legal for you to get toked up." Despite years of LP activism, and lots of reading on drug legalization in general, I was pretty ignorant of the remarkable medical properties of cannabis. Then my best friend of 25 years sickened with cancer. She was on intense chemotherapy and couldn't keep any food down. She lost almost 50 pounds, more than a third of her body weight, in just a few months. She was on a "pain pump" which shot her full of heavy narcotics through an IV day and night. Unfortunately, Gina is not a medical marijuana success story. I knew enough to have heard that marijuana could help with nausea from chemo, but not enough to really push her to try it.

A few years later, I met Peter McWilliams, and saw first hand how quickly marijuana could relieve the nausea from chemo or AIDs medication "cocktails." His assertion that "one puff and the symptoms start going away" was demonstrated to me at the national convention where he spoke. I saw him going in just a few minutes from puking his guts up into the trashcan in the speaker's green room, to being able to compose himself and go onstage to give one of the most memorable speeches ever at an LP convention. I met Todd McCormick, who had cancer 9 times before the age of 10. Watching the other kids in the cancer ward die off from malnutrition due to chemo and radiation, and seeing her son going down that same road, Todd's brave mother Ann decide to try medical marijuana for her 9 year old. The difference was incredible. Todd was again able to regain both a healthy appetite, and a positive attitude, and survive. Todd effectively treated his pain with cannabis — until he was imprisoned for giving the same life-saving medicine to other patients.

I met Elvy Mussika who suffers from severe glaucoma. She treats it legally with marijuana, which lowers eye pressure. Elvy is one of the last 7 patients still alive in the federal governments "Compassionate Use" program, which actually supplies medical marijuana to these few patients. The feds have not accepted any new patients into the "compassionate use" program in many years. I guess we can afford armies of armed agents to raid clinic after clinic, but just can't possibly afford "compassion" for more than 7 people. Since then, I've met dozens of MM patients who have found what is often life saving relief from this oldest of nature's medications. Medical Marijuana is frequently helpful in treating the symptoms of AIDS, glaucoma, cancer, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, and chronic pain. Other patients and doctors have found it be very helpful for everything from arthritis to menstrual cramps. Having seen what I have seen, and learned what I have learned, how can I not do all I can to end this injustice for others?

The night before the action I had a lot of trouble sleeping. I was quite naturally worried about what might happen the next morning. Would we actually get arrested? Would they stop us before we could even get to the door? Would the police get violent? Would they pry open our eyes and pepper spray us like they did those protesters in Oregon recently? When it's all over - will I look like a hero, or like a fool? Or will anybody even notice? I read Martin Luther King Jr's "Letter from a Birmingham jail," defending the direct actions of the civil-rights movement. These words struck me most of all: "I must say to you that we have not made a single gain in civil-rights without determined legal and nonviolent pressure. We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed." "Justice too long delayed is justice denied. There comes a time when the cup of endurance runs over, and men are no longer willing to be plunged into the abyss for despair. I hope, sirs, that you can understand our legitimate and unavoidable impatience." Martin Luther King, Jr. 1963

The issue and the faces may have changed, but the desperate need for justice has not. And I thought a lot about my friends Gina and Peter, and cried a little for their being gone, and finalized my resolve. About 4:00 AM I wrote the following: "There are some of my friends that my action today of civil disobedience will be too late to help. I take this action so that others may not suffer needlessly in the future. I take this step with all due seriousness, after deep contemplation, and in loving memory of my friends Gina Purcell and Peter McWilliams."

ACTION and ARREST

There were about 25 activists involved - half a dozen Libertarians, the rest Democrats and Greens. We had met for planning sessions at one of the hard leftist's homes, amidst posters with slogans like "Liberate us from Capitalism." I doubt he and I are going to agree on free-market economics any time soon. But he's my ally on drug policy, so I refrained from proselytizing about Hayek and Von Mises, and just talked drug reform. We met at 9:00 AM for a few practice runs. But as soon as all of us got into the van, something began scraping the ground as we drove. Somebody looked at it and said, "its just the muffler strap, we can still go on." I looked again and saw it was the gas tank strap instead! So we were perhaps about to turn a peaceful sit-in into an unintentional suicide car bomb! The driver hurried to beg a local repair shop to fix it quick, while we practiced chaining ourselves to a couple of trees that were about the same distance apart as the doors of the Justice Department. She got it fixed, and returned with just a few minutes to spare.

During the practice sessions, I ended up becoming the "point man," the one who would be first out of the van and first to be chained. And as it ended up, I would be the one who would have to walk straight at the guard who was right in front of the door. In addition to the 10 arrestees, we had 4 people serve as "lockers" who would actually fasten the chains and locks onto the large rings on the doors of the Justice Department. In addition to the chains, we had cushioned pipes that were covered with messages about medical marijuana. We threaded the chains through the pipes, and would hold hands to make it more difficult to separate us. We were not actually fastened to the chains, but would appear to be so. We also all had pictures of medical marijuana patients hanging around our necks with "Patient, Not Criminal" printed on them, along with their name and condition.

Our driver pulled to a stop on Pennsylvania Ave, and threw open the back door of the van. Heart pounding, and more adrenaline than blood flowing through me, I swung out of the van and headed straight for the door — and the guard. It's a little difficult to be inconspicuous when you are walking really fast, chained to other people, your arm is inside some strange looking pipe, and there's a big sign around your neck — but I did my best. I tried to keep an eye on the guard without making eye contact. I could tell he had spotted us when I was within about 20 feet of the door — but I kept walking. When I was about 10 feet away, the guard turned around and ran inside the building! 54 seconds from the time the door opened on the van, we were all chained in. Some guards appeared on the other side of the glass door, and chained it from the inside. A few minutes later the media and other demonstrators arrived. As they arrived, we began some chants. I've always felt kind of silly chanting at a demonstration, but I joined in. Rob Kampia of the Marijuana Policy Project, who had brought the media from the subway, began the public statements to the press about who we were and why we were there. Those of us chained to the door began making statements in turn, although we were interrupted a couple of times when the Police Chief came to give us our first and second warnings. Our response to his warning was to chant even louder. I then read the "Cease and Desist" order that was being posted to the doors of DEA offices across the country that day. I then pasted the order onto the door with my unchained hand - even though just putting a sticker on the door could potentially subject me to a destruction of federal property charge. The chief gave us his third warning. We chanted back at him. They then began to move all the media and other demonstrators away, and out of site of us.

Continued on Page 3





They first arrested Dave Guard, the one member of our group who was not chained. Then they cut the chains on Jennifer and Leslie, two young ladies from the University of Maryland's Students For Sensible Drug Policy, and tried to drag them away. But they lay down and hung on tight. Eventually their arms were pulled out of the pipes, and they were dragged away to the paddy wagon. They cut us away one by one and drug us away with varying degrees of resistance.

When it came my turn, Officer Williams in front of me was asking me if I was going to cooperate or be carried, at the same time the guy who was handcuffing me was making a point of jerking my shoulder around and squeezing my fingers painfully. I gave out a little "aarrgh" and Officer Williams said, "hey, lay off the guy." He asked me again if I was going to cooperate. My answer was, "the gentleman behind me has just convinced me not to." If I ever do this again, I'm determined to be carried off a little more gracefully — if such a thing is possible in that situation. In the heat of the moment, I couldn't decide whether to go feet first or feet back. Plus, the very polite Officer Williams kept urging me to cooperate so that "they would not accidentally hurt me." My normal nice guy instincts to help out when someone nicely asks me for assistance were somehow still kicking in, even while the officer on my other arm continued to "make a point" by twisting my wrist and arm further. So I ended up doing something like the Russian bent-knee dance as they carried me off, and feeling like I looked pretty silly. Maybe the humorous aspect was why they picked me to show being dragged away on the local evening news.

Once in the police station, we all changed from resistance mode to persuasion, chatting up the officers about drug reform policy as if they were our old buddies. I don't think we made many points with this group though — one of the officers even said he would arrest his own mother on her deathbed if she smoked medical marijuana. When we challenged him, he would not back off from the statement. "The law is the law." The same officer also flatly stated that police "had intelligence" about our plan, apparently confirming our suspicions that we had been followed earlier.

They handcuffed some of us very tightly. I have some existing nerve problems in my right hand, and the cuffs quickly caused my hand to go to painfully numb. One of the girl's hands was swelling and changing color, and all they would say was "we'll loosen them 'soon'". "Soon" ended up being about two hours for them to just cut the plastic cuffs off and put them back on a little looser.

It really seemed like they were not used to the procedure for arresting people. They fumbled over the paperwork for what seemed like forever. They did not process any one of us the same way. Some of us they searched over and over. Some of us they never searched. Some of us had our ties and belts and shoestrings taken. Some did not. They had to ask us to spell simple words for them. After about 3 hours at the Federal Protection Service office, we were driven across town to a DC precinct holding cell. Our cuffs were finally removed after about 3.5 hours. We were charged with "incommoding," a rather unglamorous sounding crime that essentially means trespassing in order to block an entrance. We were offered the opportunity to "post and forfeit" a bond. This is essentially a "no contest" type of plea that closes out our cases. We accepted, paid \$50 each, and will not have to appear in court.

You might think they would release us at that point. Nope.

We kept ourselves amused as best we could, talking about war stories from other demonstrations, and discussing what our next steps might be. One of the highlights of the afternoon was when someone found a cockroach in the toilet. Hey, there's not much to keep you amused in a holding cell. While the democrats and libertarians were debating what to do - should we liberate the cockroach - or have a betting pool on how long he could swim - Adam, the Green Party guy, flushed him.

You would think that we would not have been expecting efficiency and logic from our captors. The processing officers spent much of the afternoon watching Scooby-Do and other TV shows instead of bothering to photograph and fingerprint us. A little after 6:00 PM, they let the first five of us out. The rest were released a couple of hours later.

THE RESULTS

We engaged in civil disobedience specifically in order to get media attention to the issue of medical marijuana. We wanted the public to know that this is an issue so critical to so many sick people that others are willing to risk jail to bring it to the public's strong attention. We certainly succeeded enough to declare the action a success. The biggest hits we know of were the two major news wire services, Reuters and United Press International. The LA Times, Washington Times, and Washington Post ran stories, as did many smaller papers. Local TV news affiliates around the country covered the demonstrations. Noelle had the rough experience of watching me being drug away in handcuffs on the nightly news in DC. We are still assembling a comprehensive list of all the media hits, but it's safe to say we reached millions with our message.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Drug reformers are already discussing larger direct actions in the future. But there are vital steps to be taken right now by the Libertarian Party if we want to keep the medical marijuana issue in the public eye. The next important step in our Drug War Focus Strategy is to produce a quality, hard-hitting, easily customizable TV commercial about medical marijuana that can be used by any LP candidate. We want a commercial that will resonate with the 73% of Americans who believe that medical marijuana should be legal, and that physicians and patients should make medical decisions, not law enforcement. We want a hard hitting commercial that can make it dangerous for politicians NOT to vote for medical marijuana, and that can help candidates in tight races knock the worst drug warriors out of Congress and state legislatures. We want to make it so that not only can it be run nationally, but so that any LP candidate or local party can easily use it just by adding their own tag line and we want a commercial that will convince people that a policy of compassion is better than one of incarceration, and that will motivate them to vote for the Party of Principle and our candidates.

We haven't finalized a script yet, but we are leaning toward something like this: Picture a "little old lady in tennis shoes," except she's also in a wheelchair. Her husband's beside her, her children in back, along with their many trophies from school. She starts talking about how the voters in her state voted to make her medicine legal, and her doctor recommends it, but the government sent armed agents to close down the dispensary. She explains how painful and life threatening her condition is, and how medical marijuana is the medicine that treats it more effectively than any other. And she says politicians who have taken away the medicine that gives her relief. She talks about the threat of arrest for using medicine that could help save her life, and how her doctor is threatened with loss of license just for recommending marijuana. And she asks, "Why would they do that to me, I'm a cancer patient, not a criminal?" Then a tag line with: "Our policy toward medical marijuana patients should not be one of handcuffs. This year vote common sense compassion, not incarceration. Vote Libertarian." And there would be space on the end for either a candidate or local party tag. Would you like to see a commercial like that? Do you want to see us produce a commercial: That will resonate with the 73% of American voters who are on our side on this issue? That any one of our 2,000 candidates this year could easily use for their campaign? That could be used by the national LP, and any state or local party, to persuade voters that we are the party of common sense and compassion? That could move just enough voters to switch from an incumbent drug warrior to the Libertarian candidate that the prohibitionist goes down to defeat? Medical Marijuana is probably the only issue where 73% of the public is on our side - and 90% of current elected officials are on the other. It passes in every state where it is put to a vote of the people, and we must force the federal government to respect the will of the people on this issue. This is an issue where the Libertarian Party can play a critical role in ending an insanely cruel policy the produces nothing but suffering. But to play that critical role, we have to give our candidates and local parties the right tools.

Will you please contribute right now to give our candidates and local parties this "peace weapon" to use against the drug warriors? Please go to: www.lp.org/contribute?pro=medmjad02=2002-0119 to make your best possible donation. Whether you can donate \$5, \$50, \$500, or \$5,000, your donation is needed today, so that we can get this powerful tool into the hands of our candidates early in the campaign season. Please donate today. Help us end the needless suffering and threat of arrest of critically ill medical marijuana patients. On behalf of the tens of thousands of patients who are desperately counting on our help, thank you.

Ron Crickenberger Political Director



A Message from our Chairman



Dear fellow Libertarians,

It has been two months since the State Convention, and we have made great progress adding new volunteers to the LPVA team. Those additions have not come without a couple of losses however.

I would like to thank two volunteers in particular who have recently left us: Garry Myers, Treasurer, and Steph Abdon, Virginia Liberty Editor.

Garry has taken a job in another state, and will eventually return to us, but Steph is returning soon to her home state of South Carolina.

We wish them both the very best, and since they are great activists, we know we'll hear a lot of good things about them. Good luck, Garry and Steph!

We have many volunteer positions, and we need your help to succeed. The LPVA needs a State Campaign Coordinator, a Candidate Recruiter, and candidates for next year and beyond. Please call me at 703-960-2973, or email me at chair@lpva.com if you would like to participate in building an election-winning team.

Thank you,
Marianne Volpe
Chairman, Libertarian Party of Virginia

National Convention: Last Chance to be a Delegate!

Dear Virginia Libertarians,

The National Convention of the Libertarian Party is July 3-7, 2002, in Indianapolis. I am encouraging you all to attend, for this is an event not to be missed. The National Convention is a thrilling experience, with great speeches, humor, important party business and socializing with hundreds of your fellow Libertarians. This is an important convention for the Libertarian Party of Virginia, for we are honoring the service of Dr. James Lark as National Chair. Dr. Lark completes two years of hard work for liberty and for the Libertarian Party at this convention, and I would like to see as many Virginians there to celebrate his success as National Chair as possible.

The Virginia delegation was allotted 49 delegate spaces, and less than half of those slots were filled by delegates elected at the State Convention on April 6, 2002. To request to be a delegate, please fill out the appended form and either email it to: Chair@lpva.com, or mail it as soon as possible to: Libertarian Party of Virginia, 4201 Wilson Blvd. Suite 110-164, Arlington, VA 22203-1859. Bylaw 21 of the Virginia Constitution and Bylaws requires that delegates added after the state convention must have the unanimous consent of the rest of the delegates. As soon as we can poll the elected delegates, we will let you know that you have been added.

To register for the National Convention, go to the webpage at:

<http://www.lp.org/conv/2002/registration.html>

For more information, go to:

<http://www.lp.org/conv/2002/> or call 800-272-1776.

Delegates can be added up to the meeting of the Credentials Committee on July 3, but our requirement for the unanimous consent of our delegates to additions makes time of the essence. Please contact me at chair@lpva.com or Scott Wakeman, Secretary, at secretary@lpva.com if you have any questions about the process.

Thank you and see you in Indianapolis.

Sincerely,

Marianne Volpe
Chairman, Libertarian Party of Virginia
4201 Wilson Blvd. Suite 110-164
Arlington, VA 22203-1859
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“Celebrate Fairfax” booth celebrates Liberty

By Chuck Eby

Fairfax - June 10, 2002 - The Libertarian Party of Fairfax County discovered that the number of Libertarians in Fairfax County is second only to the number of “Centrists” as measured by the World’s Smallest Political Quiz. This discovery was made at this year’s “Celebrate Fairfax” - Fairfax County’s annual fair - where the Fairfax Libertarians hosted an outreach booth, like it has done on-and-off for the past eight years.

“I’m finding that about a quarter of the people who I’ve gotten to take the quiz are scoring in the Libertarian sector,” said Gary Brown, an activist from Vienna. “Some suspected it before they took the quiz, but many are taken completely by surprise,” he added.

Gary staffed the booth for three hours Saturday afternoon, and thinks he administered the test to over 300 people in that short time. “It was not unusual for me to have all five clipboards going at once,” said Gary.

Quiz takers scoring in the Libertarian sector were engaged in friendly discussion and given introductory leaflets printed by the Libertarian Party describing what Libertarian politics is all about.

One young man, apparently in his late teens, took the quiz and scored near the top of the Libertarian sector. He was not surprised at all. “A lot of my friends are Libertarian,” he said. “There are a lot of young people who believe that government is getting out of control,” he added.

This year’s booth was organized by Scott Wakeman, chairman of the Booth Committee. “We administered literally hundreds of quizzes,” said Scott. “And we got quite a few good, solid Libertarians.”

The event ran three days spanning June 7th, 8th, and 9th requiring the booth to be staffed a total of 24 hours. The Libertarian Party of Fairfax would like to thank all activists who participated, including Fred Childress, Marianne Volpe, Michael Glatter, Dana Johansen, Chuck Eby, Scott and Charlotte McPherson, Gary Brown, Noelle Stettner, Ron Crickenberger, Nat Howard, Anne and Scott Wakeman, Seth Allen, Garry Myers, Mat Thexton, and Robert McBride.



Five clipboards at once!

CONSTITUTION

Libertarian Party of Virginia
Formed In Convention, December 15, 1974

ARTICLE I NAME OF THE PARTY AND AFFILIATION

SECTION 1. The name of this organization shall be "The Libertarian Party of Virginia" (hereinafter referred to as "the Party").

SECTION 2. The Party shall be affiliated with the National Libertarian Party and shall adhere to that organization's "Statement of Principles" adopted in Convention of the Party in June 1974 and amended henceforth; the text of said statement shall become a part of this Constitution as Article X.

ARTICLE II MEMBERSHIP IN THE PARTY

The Libertarian Party of Virginia participates in the Unified Membership Program of the Libertarian National Committee. Except as provided for in Article VII, any person who is currently and has been a contributing member of the National Libertarian Party for at least thirty (30) days and who resides in Virginia is a member of the Libertarian Party of Virginia.

ARTICLE III OFFICERS; ELECTIONS; DUTIES; VACANCIES

SECTION 1. The officers of the Party shall be a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer.

SECTION 2. The officers of the Party shall be elected by a majority vote of the delegates to the Regular State Convention; or, in the case of a vacancy in any office, as elsewhere provided in this Constitution. The officers shall serve from the closing of the Convention at which they are elected until the closing of the following Regular State Convention, except as elsewhere provided in this Constitution. Officers of the party shall be paid members in good standing; and no person who is currently serving as an officer of another political party may serve as an officer of the LPVA.

SECTION 3. The Chairman's duties shall include, but not be limited to, acting as primary spokesman for the Party, chairing meetings of the State Central Committee and all Party conventions, and appointing, with the consent of the State Central Committee, an Executive Director, Legal Advisor, and all coordinators of standing and ad hoc committees. The Chairman shall also perform such other duties as may be assigned by the State Central Committee.

SECTION 4. The Vice Chairman shall chair meetings of the State Central Committee and all Party conventions in the absence of the Chairman. Should the office of Chairman become vacant for any reason, the Vice Chairman shall assume the Chair. The Vice Chairman shall also carry out such other duties as may be assigned by the State Central Committee.

SECTION 5. The Secretary shall take and distribute minutes of all State Central Committee meetings and of all Party conventions. In addition, the Secretary shall be responsible for official Party correspondence as required and for insuring the accuracy and completeness of all Party membership and mailing lists. The Secretary shall also carry out such other duties as may be assigned by the State Central Committee. The Secretary's nonvoting responsibilities shall continue beyond the Convention at which his replacement is elected for such duration as determined by the SCC solely in order to complete and present the Minutes of the Convention, the revised Constitution and Bylaws, and the revised Platform of the Libertarian Party of Virginia.

SECTION 6. The Treasurer of the Party shall establish and maintain all Party bank accounts and manage all Party investments, collect and disburse Party funds at the direction of the State Central Committee, keep records and receipts for all such transactions, and prepare and file any Party financial reports required under Virginia and federal law. The Treasurer shall also prepare and distribute a written financial report at each meeting of the State Central Committee and at all Party conventions, and shall perform such other duties of a fiduciary nature as the State Central Committee may assign.

SECTION 7. Any officer of the Party may be removed from office upon a vote of two thirds (2/3) of the entire membership of the State Central Committee. All members of the State Central Committee must be given written notice at least seven days in advance of a meeting that such a motion will be presented.

SECTION 8. Any vacancy in an elected Party office, except that of Chairman, may be filled by majority vote of the entire membership of the State Central Committee. Notice of such vacancy must be provided in writing to all members of the State Central Committee at least seven (7) days in advance of a meeting at which any such vote is to be taken.

ARTICLE IV ORGANIZATION OF THE PARTY

SECTION 1. The policy making and administrative authority of the Party shall be vested in a State Central Committee.

- A. Voting members of the State Central Committee shall be the officers of the Party elected by the preceding Regular Convention, or their successors, and the Chairman of the Party in each Congressional District of the Commonwealth. Any member of the State Central Committee may proxy his or her vote to any member of the Party, provided that such proxy is in writing, dated, and signed. No person may cast more than one vote. Persons holding more than one voting State Central Committee position shall be entitled to one vote only.
- B. Meetings of the State Central Committee shall be held at least four (4) times in each calendar year. Additional meetings may be called by the Chairman at his or her discretion. Notice of all State Central Committee meetings shall be given in writing to all State Central Committee members at least seven (7) days in advance. Meetings of the State Central Committee shall be open to all members of the Party.
- C. The powers of the State Central Committee shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - 1) the authorization of the appropriation and expenditure of Party funds with the approval of two thirds majority;
 - 2) the appointment, by two thirds majority, of an Interim Congressional District Chairman where such chairmanship is vacant and no district organization exists, but wherein such district there are at least ten members of the Party; such Interim District Chairman to serve as a voting member of the State Central Committee until a District Convention is held and a permanent District Chairman is elected;
 - 3) removal, by a two thirds (2/3) vote of the entire membership of the State Central Committee, of the Party's endorsement of any candidate for statewide office and, in announcement, delineation of the reasons therefor. The candidate in question and the State Central Committee must be notified of the proposal at least seven (7) days in advance of the meeting;

- 4) discharge of all other responsibilities and duties as herein further provided, those duties inherent in any such organization, and those duties and responsibilities provided for in the Bylaws of the Party;
- 5) adoption and amendment of Bylaws to this Constitution by a two thirds (2/3) majority.

D. A quorum to conduct business at any meeting of the State Central Committee shall be a majority of its voting members or their proxies.

SECTION 2. There shall be a Party District Committee in and for each Congressional District of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The District Committee shall be responsible for the selection and support of a Candidate for the US House of Representatives.

- A. All members of the Party residing within a given Congressional District shall be eligible for participation in the affairs of the Party in that District.
- B. Whenever ten (10) or more Party members in a district which lacks a District Committee shall so request in writing, the Party Chairman shall call a District convention. The business of the District convention shall include election of District officers and may include the adoption of District Committee Bylaws. All Party members known to reside within a District shall be notified by the Party Secretary of such convention at least fourteen (14) days in advance in writing. Only District residents who are members of the Party shall be eligible to vote at such conventions.

ARTICLE V CONVENTIONS OF THE PARTY

SECTION 1. The Party shall be empowered to hold Regular, Special, and General State Conventions.

SECTION 2. Regular State Conventions shall be held at least forty five (45) days, but not more than four (4) months, prior to the biennial Convention of the National Libertarian Party. They shall be called by the State Central Committee in accordance with the Laws of Virginia and the Constitution and Bylaws of the National Libertarian Party. At least thirty days prior to the date of such convention, the Party Secretary shall mail to all members, a notice of such convention. Business for a Regular State Convention shall include the election of Party officers, and may include changes in the Party Constitution, election of delegates to regional or national Libertarian Party conventions, passage of resolutions, adoption of a Party platform, and nomination of, or endorsement of, candidates for statewide offices.

SECTION 3. Special State Conventions may be called by the State Central Committee at any time in accordance with the Laws of Virginia and the Constitution and Bylaws of the National Libertarian Party. At least twenty one days prior to the date of such Special State Convention, the Party (Secretary) shall mail to all members, a notice of such convention. Business for a Special State Convention may include the election of Party officers where vacancies have occurred, changes to the Party Constitution, or such special matter or matters as defined by the State Central Committee in its call and publication of an agenda for said Special State Convention.

SECTION 4. One fifth of the members of the Party, not exceeding 200, carried on the then current list of members maintained by the Party's Secretary named in a petition submitted to the State Central Committee, may call a General State Convention at a time specified in the petition by notifying the State Central Committee of such intention. Upon such notification, the State Central Committee shall notify all members of the Party in writing at least twenty one days prior to the date of the General State Convention. The business, location, and agenda of a General State Convention shall be specified by a spokesman for those submitting the petition and the State Central Committee shall so inform the membership of the Party of the business and location of the Convention. The Party Secretary shall provide for mailing services within 30 days to solicit petition signatures. The spokesman shall bear all initial costs including mailings and accommodations, but shall be reimbursed by the State Central Committee if approved by two thirds of the General State Convention.

SECTION 5. District Conventions shall be held at least once every two years and at least thirty days prior to the Regular State Convention. The business of such District Conventions may include, but is not limited to, the election of District officers, election of other District Committee officials as may be necessary, nomination or endorsement of candidates for the United States House of Representatives, adoption of a District platform, and the conduct of any other business as may properly come before such conventions. Requirements for the conduct of District Conventions may be further defined in the Bylaws of the Party.

SECTION 6. Local conventions may be held in order to further the growth of the Party. Requirements for the conduct of Local Conventions may be further defined in the Bylaws of the Party.

ARTICLE VI ENDORSEMENTS BY THE PARTY

The Party, its District and Local Committees, shall be empowered to nominate, support, endorse, contribute to, or otherwise assist candidates for public office. Such powers may be applied to candidates of other parties or independent candidates provided 1) they certify in writing that they do not believe in or advocate the initiation of force as a means of achieving political or social goals and 2) that the National, State, District, or Local Libertarian Party organization does not have a candidate for such public office.

ARTICLE VII EXPULSION FROM THE PARTY

Any member of the Party may be expelled from the Party for cause; procedures for the expulsion from the Party under this Article shall be provided for in the Bylaws of the Party.

ARTICLE VIII LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY GUIDELINES FOR THE PARTY

SECTION 1. The Party shall be guided by the provisions of the "Virginia Election Laws as Amended to April 5th, 1974" and such subsequent amendments to said laws as may, from time to time, be enacted.

SECTION 2. In areas not specifically enumerated by this Constitution, nor in the law referred to in Section 1 of this Article, nor in the Bylaws of the Party, the Party and all its bodies shall be governed by a current, SCC approved, copy of "Robert's Rules of Order".

SECTION 3. The State Central Committee shall adopt and amend Bylaws to this Constitution by a two thirds majority vote.

ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

This Constitution may be amended at any Regular State Convention of the Party by a two thirds vote. This Constitution may be amended at any Special or General State Convention of the Party by a two thirds vote, provided that at least 1/15 of the state Party membership have registered at the Convention.

ARTICLE X STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES OF THE NATIONAL LIBERTARIAN PARTY, ADOPTED IN CONVENTION, JUNE 1974.

We, the members of the Libertarian Party, challenge the cult of the omnipotent state and defend the rights of the individual. We hold that all individuals have the right to exercise sole dominion over their own lives, and have the right to live in whatever manner they choose, so long as they do not forcibly interfere with the equal right of others to live in whatever manner they choose. Governments throughout history have regularly operated on the opposite principle, that the State has the right to dispose of the lives of individuals and the fruits

of their labor. Even within the United States, all political parties other than our own grant to government the right to regulate the lives of individuals and seize the fruits of their labor without their consent.

We, on the contrary, deny the right of any government to do these things, and hold that where governments exist, they must not violate the rights of any individual: namely, (1) the right to life -- accordingly we support the prohibition of the initiation of physical force against others; (2) the right to liberty of speech and action -- accordingly we oppose all attempts by government to abridge the freedom of speech and press, as well as government censorship in any form; and (3) the right to property -- accordingly we oppose all government interference with private property, such as confiscation, nationalization, and eminent domain, and support the prohibition of robbery, trespass, fraud, and misrepresentation. Since governments, when instituted, must not violate individual rights, we oppose all interference by government in the areas of voluntary and contractual relations among individuals. People should not be forced to sacrifice their lives and property for the benefit of others. They should be left free by government to deal with one another as free traders; and the resultant economic system, the only one compatible with the protection of individual rights, is the free market.

ARTICLE XI ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION

This Constitution shall take effect upon adoption by a two thirds vote at the Convention of the Party on December 15th, 1974.

Stay Active and Up-to-date on LPVA Communications on an Ongoing Basis

by Dave Briggman (communications@lpva.com)

Several the election of Marianne Volpe as Chairman of our Party, Marianne has implemented many changes in the way that we as the LPVA conducts our communications — not only to our members, but also to the media.

First, the Chair directed me to assess our current channels of communications and to take what I considered to be “appropriate” actions to enhance and, if necessary, to secure certain forms of communications so that we would know exactly to whom our message and communications was being sent to. I therefore directed Chuck Eby, our Party’s webmaster, to migrate our three mailing lists — announce, forum and SCC — from the Yahoo Groups over to our own domain primarily to secure the SCC newsgroup because neither the Chairman nor I had any idea who the approximately 80 subscribers were or if they were even members of the LPVA.

Second, I enlisted a longtime friend, Steven Codraro, an award-winning graphic artist based near San diego, California, to create a logo to be used in all LPVA visual communications such as letterhead, fund raising letters and, of course, Virginia Liberty.

Third, we’ve redesigned Virginia Liberty, integrating our new logo with the new look of our publication and we hope to be able to increase the frequency to monthly with budgetary approval at the next SCC meeting.

I would encourage all of you to subscribe to all three of our new email lists, which is most easily done by accessing the following web page: <http://www.lpva.com/main/HTML/emailLists.asp>.

Our website, lpva.com also contains news and events that might not necessarily be placed into Virginia Liberty because of constraints on space and also keeps a current list of events occurring throughout Libertarian events at both the state and local level.

Let me emphasize that moving the lists off of Yahoo Groups was done to ensure that the LPVA had a unified “message” conduit and to provide a method whereby the LPVA SCC could feel secure that the SCC list was being used by current LPVA members and that posting rights to the list were reserved solely for current SCC members. We were unable to determine who was reading the former SCC list on Yahoo Groups because administrative rights of that list were controlled solely by the former Chairman.

We hope that this “first run” of the new Virginia Liberty containing so much to read with respect to the National Convention and the publishing of the latest revision to our LPVA Constitution has not been too “dry” a publication for you to get through. Changes will be made to it’s format in accordance with input from you, our membership. I freely invite your comments to be sent to me via email to communications@lpva.com.

Please submit content for the next
Virginia Liberty by August 15, 2002.

Submit articles by email to
communications@lpva.com.

‘Racist’ Dog, Continued from Page 8

That’s 35 years if you’re a dog.

Even more troubling is how the prosecutors, judges, police and elected officials who will execute the laws will define just what “hate” is. Most people know that hate is a strong aversion to someone or something based on who or what they are (kind of like calling for a police dog to be put to sleep when numerous “civilian” dogs bite children every day.)

The chilling effects of the hate crime culture are already all too apparent. As the Cato Institute’s Tim Lynch pointed out in testimony to the U.S. Senate in 1999, when a group of New York storeowners attacked a burglar who broke into their store, New York City Mayor David Dinkins accused the law-abiding victims of the break-in of committing a hate crime, based simply on the fact the thief happened to be black and the storeowners happened to be white.

Not only does hate crimes legislation put people on trial for the color their skin, prosecuting a hate crime would require a substantial invasion of privacy for the accused. Police, with warrants in hand, will confiscate what an accused individual reads, what books he owns, what sites he visits on the Internet, and friends and coworkers will be interrogated and hauled into court -- all so that someone can be put in prison for having politically incorrect thoughts.

Considering that nearly all crime is committed by a criminal who didn’t like the victim, hate crimes will be strictly limited to harassing people with views in the minority, or when throwing someone in prison for what they think could win a local district attorney another term or higher appointment.

So are we going to imprison those whose actions, thoughts, speech and lifestyle doesn’t march in lockstep with those held by government officials? If poor Dolpho’s mistake is any lesson, accidentally committing a politically incorrect error could win you a date with a steel needle.

When an accidental bite by an animal of subhuman intelligence can be called a hate crime and nearly incites a lynch mob, it’s become all too clear that so-called hate crimes legislation is actually meant to make politically correct hatred of the politically incorrect the law of the land. If we’re going to start executing animals because the person they accidentally bit had a government-protected skin shade, it’s become all too clear that justice has gone to the dogs.

Donny Ferguson is a Falls Church resident and is a writer for the Libertarian Party of Virginia.



Editorial Comment

'Racist' dog has hate crimes crowd howling

By Donny Ferguson

In McKees Rocks, Pa., being a bigot is punishable by the death penalty. That is, if you're a dog.

Borough Councilwoman Wanda Jones Dixon claims the city's lone police dog, Dolpho, is a racist and should be put to sleep. It's unclear if Dolpho is being ethnically profiled because he is a German shepherd.

The controversy dogging the city stems from an incident early this month in which Officer Schawn Barger of the city's K-9 unit wrestled with a suspect he was attempting to arrest and a quick-release button on his belt was activated, accidentally opening a door to the K-9 wagon. Dolpho, seeing his partner was in trouble, bit a 9-year-old boy who was standing too close.

Unfortunately for the dog, which can't see colors, the boy was black.

Dixon, in an ironically Pavlovian response, seized the opportunity to turn the simple mistake into a self-serving political event and accused the dog of being a bigot and a racist. The boy's mother went to so far as to make racism a capital crime and demanded the politically incorrect pooch be put to sleep.

Growing up in East Texas, I heard a lot of "good ol' boys" claim they trained their dogs to bark at blacks. While it's a common practice for workers in that area to keep dogs in the beds of their pickups to guard tool chests and equipment from theft, every "trained" dog I ever saw seemed to hate pretty much anyone who got too close to the truck. Born and raised in an area that still has an all-white high school, I have yet to see a dog trained to attack only people with certain shades of skin.

Professional dog trainers agree, saying dogs cannot distinguish and act based on racial differences. They can, however, sense fear, which may be to blame for instances in which people have been accidentally nipped by police dogs.

So if a naturally colorblind dog acting upon his instinct to stop anyone from getting too close to his struggling partner can be accused of a hate crime, is anyone safe? Not as long as there are political gains to be made from making the accusation.

That's the problem with making politically incorrect thoughts a federal crime. Hate crimes laws give the politically powerful the ability to fine, harass, intimidate and even imprison those whose speech and thoughts don't comply within their narrowly defined worldview.

And make no mistake about it; hate crimes laws make it a crime to have views or opinions not approved by the government. While a simple assault may warrant a five year prison sentence, a "hate crime" of assault could draw 10 years. That's five years for assaulting someone, and another five years in prison because the government didn't like what you were thinking about.

See 'Racist' Dog, Continued on Page 7

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