

Michigan Libertarian

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*** Outreach Issue ***

March/April 2002

Ballot Status Finally!!!

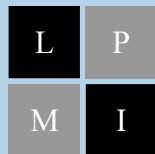
by Nancy O'Brien

In late January, the Bureau of Elections finally finished counting enough of the signatures submitted by the LPM to restore our ballot access, recommending that the Libertarian Party of Michigan again be certified as a ballot-qualified political party. All that remained was for the Board of State Canvassers to meet and make it official.

On March 11, 2002, the Board of State Canvassers met and unanimously approved the certification of the LPM, finally bringing to a conclusion an effort that has taken us over a year to accomplish.

When our "Top-of-ticket" candidate failed to garner enough votes to retain our ballot status in the November 2000 election, the LPM immediately began planning the campaign to get it back. Fundraising letters were sent out and a committee formed to lay out a plan of action. The petition was prepared and printed and a launch date was planned - the LPM convention on May 5, 2001.

The six months of petitioning finally paid off. To everybody who helped and contributed, THANK YOU!



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7 Reasons to Join the LP NOW!

by Greg Dirasian

People who are interested in the Libertarian Party are usually a bit more pragmatic than most. They tend to be rational, rather than emotional. When we suggest joining the Libertarian Party, they are naturally inclined to ask: "What's in it for me?"

This is not to say that they are uncaring people. However, they are fundamentally principled people. They are, for instance, both sensitive and sensible enough to appreciate the fact that taxes take food out from the mouths of hardworking families. This is something that others either fail to recognize or else conveniently ignore.

So, if you're considering the Libertarian alternative, what is in it for you? What do you get for your \$25 investment? Here are seven

reasons to join the Libertarian Party:

1. You Pay Too Much in Taxes

Carla Howell, the Libertarian candidate for governor in Massachusetts, started a petition drive to ask voters in her state if they would like to abolish the state income tax. It doesn't take much imagination

to come up with a lengthy list of tax-consuming, special interests that will conspire to defeat that proposal. It is unlikely to actually pass. But what is also inevitable is that finally the Republicans, who love to pose as small government champions at election time, will be forced to either support the proposal or else admit that they don't really believe in less taxes.

Right here in Michigan we have elected LP members to public office who fight the tax battle every day. When Martin Howrylak won a seat on the Troy city council two years ago, there was a proposal on the table to build a civic center complex at a cost of \$218 million dollars. Not only has Howrylak helped stall the effort, today the proposal is down to \$72.6 million dollars - one (cont'd on pg. 3)



*Carla Howell, Martin Howrylak,
Mark Owen, and Tim Beck*

Top-of-Ticket Rule Headed for History

by Fred Collins

The much despised, so-called "Top-of-Ticket" rule that ties a political party's entire ballot status to the success or failure of whichever of its candidates appears highest up on the ballot appears to be headed for the historical archives of Michigan election law.

The standard, unique to Michigan, has cost the LPM its ballot status several times since the party was founded three decades ago, most recently in 2000 — each time taking a substantial amount of money and effort away from outreach and party-building merely to

regain the opportunity to field candidates in the next partisan election.

Although there had been libertarian-friendly legislators previously (such as former LP member Greg Kaza who served three terms as a Republican state rep), conspiracy-minded LPM members always reacted to any suggestion that we try to get the law changed with the resigned pessimism you'd expect from those with a siege mentality. It would be a hopeless waste of time. Why should Republicans and Democrats even care, let alone actually do anything to help us?

But when newly-elected, Lib-

ertarian-friendly Leon Drolet (R-Clinton Township) attended the LPM convention a year ago, Tim O'Brien, our executive director at the time, approached the legislator about introducing an election law reform bill to eliminate the problematic "Top-of-Ticket" standard — and with it our vulnerability to "Wasted Vote" syndrome.

Drolet agreed. And a few weeks later Tim, Bill Shotey, Barb Goushaw and I met in Lansing to come up with a specific proposal.

What emerged from that meeting was a plan to (cont'd on pg. 5)

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Only electronic format will be accepted. Acceptable formats are plain text, Word97, WordPerfect 6.X/5.X, RTE, HTML, Pagemaker 6.5. Any other formats, please ask first.

Deadline: The next deadline for submission of articles and advertising is May 1, 2002.

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Message from the Chair

Having become chair of the Libertarian Party of Michigan in January 2002, I am pleased to report that everything is going quite well. In fact, things are really popping!

I have been on WOOD radio in Grand Rapids and the markscottshow.com out of the Detroit area. I was interviewed by the Mt.Pleasant Morning Sun and the Midland Daily Times. And, I am presently being scheduled to appear on a couple of other radio stations as we head into our convention.

I have visited five different affiliates in my first 6 weeks. I am scheduled to go to several others before the convention. I have been to the headquarters about once a week for a variety of reasons. And, my first meeting as chair resulted in a 5 month membership drive that should increase our size dramatically.

I recently went to Nashville, Tennessee and attended the national chairs conference. And, I was at our Leadership Conference on March 9th giving the welcome and later giving a presentation on candidate paperwork to the many candidates lining up to run for office.

With the help of a mail house, I was able to get our first fundraising letter of the new year out on time and save the party money in the process; and I will be sending out the second on time as well. I was also pleased to be able to get out a news release about once a week (including one that commented on Engler's last State of the State address) and to see the Libertarian Party mentioned in countless newspapers around the state.

This covers the highlights of some of my work in my short time as chair but I could go on and on about the work actually being done. In my opinion, the Libertarian Party of Michigan is in a class of its own that presents some unique challenges that need to be met.

On the one hand, the LPM is clearly not as big as the two major parties. On the other hand, we are quite big in our own right. In fact, the LPM is a very big third party and as a result, we are doing things the other third parties only wish they could do. As we continue to grow and become a serious political force in Michigan, the leadership of this party must be on a constant vigil to see that new and unforeseen challenges are met.

Ghazey Aleck

Editor's Note: Special Thanks

Special thanks to Tim O'Brien for help with editing and reviewing of the newsletter. Tim reviews and edits almost all of my articles. He also reviews every word in the newsletter and makes suggestions on grammar punctuation, and capitalization. He makes suggestions for stories and columns and is my sounding board on many story ideas.

Special thanks to Fred Collins who is not only a good friend, but a reliable contributor to the newsletter, and also a sounding board for many of my story ideas.

Laying out these articles in the newsletter is a very time-consuming task. If I have to write every word as well as edit and review, it becomes overwhelming. Tim and Fred have made this daunting task much easier.

7 Reasons to Join the LP NOW!

(cont'd from pg. 1) third the original price tag! And Councilman Howrylak is still fighting.

Only Libertarians are truly working to reduce taxes. Is that worth \$25 to you?

2. Your Property is Over-regulated

Last year, Libertarians in Shiawassee county organized a referendum and led the battle to repeal a historic district ordinance enacted by the Owosso city council — and they won! Homeowners can now continue to repair their own homes without first having to seek permission from city government. They won't be forced to keep drafty windows simply because some local bureaucrat thinks they are quaint and "historic."

And Libertarians around the state watched and learned from their Shiawassee county compatriots. Now others are taking up the battle to repeal historic district ordinances in their own communities. [Editor's note: for more on this whole subject see "Historic Principles over Government 'Historic Districts'" by Mark Owen on page 15].

Only Libertarians truly believe in the concept of private property rights. Is it worth \$25 to you to protect your home?

3. Your Life is Over-regulated

LP member and Detroit resident Tim Beck is currently involved in an effort to make enforcement of marijuana prohibition against those with a medical need the city's lowest law enforcement priority. Tim formed the *Detroit Coalition for Compassionate Care*, a diverse group of civic leaders who share the belief that sick people should not be prosecuted for using the best available medicine. He has already spent more than \$8,000 of his own money to fund the petition drive that got the issue on the ballot.

Only Libertarians believe that you own your body and that your healthcare decisions are yours — and yours alone — to make. Is it worth \$25 to you to be free to choose the medical treatment you prefer for yourself?

4. Your Business is Over-regulated

That's why the LPM Lobbying Committee joined forces with some Libertarian-friendly legislators and fought Governor Engler's e-commerce tax. We used our SpeakOutMichigan web site to let legislators know that their constituents opposed this new tax on the Internet. Together we were able to keep the bill bottled

up in committee.

Although the pro-tax forces came back a few months later and passed a renamed version through a different committee, the US Congress (surprisingly) later voted to keep the Internet tax-free.

Libertarians led the grassroots effort in this battle to stop the e-tax. Wouldn't it be nice if next time the taxaholics try something like this, we are so big, so visible, and so well organized, that even their sneaky, back-door shell games no longer work?

Whether you own an Internet company or work for an auto company that is regulated by health, safety, and environmental laws, Libertarians recognize that it affects YOUR bottom line.

Only Libertarians believe that businesses — the only source of jobs and wealth — must be run by YOU, who have a vested interest in success. Is it worth \$25 to you to protect your business (or your employer) from being burdened out of existence?

5. Stand Up and Be Counted

The best way to reform the major parties is to vote Libertarian. And the best way to send them a message — every day — that you demand responsibility and accountability is to become a Libertarian Party member.

Politicians hope and pray that by the next election you will have forgotten about their past dirty deeds. Having Libertarian candidates on the ballot forces them to defend their records! They are watching our electoral successes and watching our membership numbers climb. When we reach critical mass, the major parties will be in for a boatload of trouble.

Only Libertarians believe that you should be free to live your life as you choose. Is it worth \$25 to you to make the arrogant politicians, who think otherwise, sweat?

6. Meet People Who Share Your Views

I have many non-Libertarian friends. But I can't honestly discuss politics or philosophy with them. They just don't think rationally. If they don't like the facts, they just dismiss them. The truth is, they get so defensive that I no longer even bring up the subject. But, when I go to a Libertarian event, I feel that I can finally be myself and discuss the news of the day with

caring, thoughtful people.

Only Libertarians truly believe in freedom and responsibility. Is it worth \$25 to you to belong to a group that shares your deepest values?

7. Get this Nifty Newsletter

Get the *Michigan Libertarian* newsletter 6 times a year (as well as the national *LP News* monthly newsletter — which is pretty good, too). These newsletters are the best sources for finding out about the latest attacks on your rights, and what Libertarians are doing about them.

Only Libertarians will report the news the government would rather you didn't hear about. Is it worth \$25 to you to know what broadcaster Paul Harvey likes to call "the rest of the story"?

Any one of these seven reasons alone is worth far more than \$25. But you can get all these benefits by joining the Libertarian Party today. Simply fill out the form on the back of this newsletter, and mail it to the address shown. You'll get an entire year's worth of protecting your rights, staying informed, and having fun with people who share your views.

Now, that's a bargain!

Wayne County LP Hosts Benefit for Detroit Medical Marijuana

by Tim O'Brien

The LP of Wayne County will be hosting a wine tasting to raise funds for their support of the medical marijuana initiative in Detroit.

The event will be held on Saturday, April 13 from 7:00pm to 10:00pm at the Detroit Gaelic League (Irish-American Club). The donation for this event is \$35 and includes hors d'oeuvres.

For more information, contact Tim O'Brien at: 313-562-5778 or email him at: tobrien321@comcast.net.

St. Clair Shores Libertarian Makes a Statement in Front of Macomb County Court House

by Erin Stahl

Erin Stahl, a St. Clair Shores Citizen, wears a prisoner outfit while making payments on the portion of her property taxes that are delinquent. Ms. Stahl has gone through all the proper steps to dispute the unfair taxes, she is now faced with forfeiture proceedings on March 1st, and her court date with the Tax Tribunal is April 18th. Ms. Stahl states, "My requests are very simple. 1) I want my day in court **BEFORE** the forfeiture proceedings and 2) I want the State, County, and City to play by the rules set for them in the Constitution."

"The government won't admit to being wrong or being unfair so I had no choice but to be outrageous and wear the prisoner outfit complete with shackles and ball and chain while paying the portion of the delinquent taxes." "On Wednesday, a lot of people thought I was nuts dressed up in the prisoner outfit. But after they heard my story, I received a lot of support and of course we laughed a lot about the outfit. I'll be back Thursday the 21st and Friday the 22nd [of February] to pay the rest of my taxes. I will then wait patiently until my court date" Ms. Stahl mentioned.

Ms. Stahl short-paid a portion of her 2000 property tax because her taxes were unfairly assessed. Instead of the increase being a maximum 5% as stated in the Michigan State Constitution, her house assessment increased by 10% in 2000 and 12% in 2001. The blight condi-



Erin Stahl dressed in prison garb to protest disputed property taxes

tions next door also decreases the value on the house. "If the State can tack on 20% for scenic value to my friend's house, then I can subtract 20% for un-scenic value" stated Ms. Stahl. Ms. Stahl will be back Thursday, and Friday from 12:30-2:30pm to pay a portion of the delinquent taxes each day.

She'll stop and chat in front of the Macomb County Court building before pro-

ceeding to the Treasurer's office. You cannot miss her--she's the one wearing the black and white striped prisoner outfit with the words on the back Prisoner of Macomb County's unlawful Property Tax System". "It's funny that when I tell people, ' I'm trying to play by the rules, why can't the government?' they always grin and say good luck, in a sarcastic tone" Ms. Stahl said.

Barnes Announces Run for LPM Vice Chair

by Diane Barnes

I would like to announce my run for Vice Chair of the LPM.

The State Party has grappled with a number of difficult issues in the past year. It is essential now to move ahead with plans to improve membership and support our affiliates. These will be the top two priorities for me next year. More members and strong affiliates make for good candidates and activists.

As a hard-working party member, I have been involved in every aspect of party organizing and activism. I've run for office several times,

I am the current chair of Macomb County and I have organized numerous successful special events. I have served on the state Committee for two years.

My broad experience and my sincere desire to work together to put the party first will be a valuable asset to the growth of our party. I am enthusiastic about the coming year of transformation, tolerance and electing more Libertarians to office!

I appreciate your support in the past and at the convention in May.

Redistricting

Please note that maps indicating new districts for US Congress, state house, and state senate are available online at:

<http://www.state.mi.us/census2000/legdist.htm>

Contact your county clerk for maps of your county's new commissioner districts. This is important information for candidates and potential candidates.

[Editor's note: Thanks to Tom Jones for reminding us about this issue.]

Top-of-Ticket Rule Headed for History

(cont'd from pg. 1) simply change the election law definition of "principal candidate" from the current "candidate whose name appears closest to the top of the ballot" to "whichever candidate gets the most votes."

On October 16, 2001, Rep. Drolet (with Rep. Robert Gosselin signed on as a cosponsor) introduced what became HB 5237 to make the change we sought. The bill was referred to the Redistricting and Elections committee.

Now the LPM lobbying committee really went to work.

Thanks to some "power lunches" arranged by Bill Shotey and hosted by an LPM benefactor (who wishes to remain anonymous), we were able to win over both the chair, Bruce Patterson (R-Canton) and the vice chair, Andrew Richner (R-Grosse Pte. Park) of the Redistricting and Elections committee that would be holding hearings on our bill.

Meanwhile, Rep. Drolet was working behind the scenes to convince his fellow Republi-

cans that it would be in everyone's best interests to stop forcing minor parties to constantly requalify for a position on the ballot.

On January 31, 2002, the house committee had a hearing on HB 5237. Testimony was taken from representatives of the Green, Reform, Constitution and Libertarian parties.

I spoke on behalf of the LP, using talking points provided by Tim O'Brien that gave four basic reasons why the committee should support HB 5237:

- **Accuracy.** Vote results for a minor party's "Top-of-ticket" candidate do not reflect its true base of support

- **Fairness.** Given the prospects for actual election in our "two party system," the most important value added by minor parties is in bringing a different perspective to policy debates. Under the current system the only options for minor parties to protect their ballot status — either running a celebrity or else not running anyone at all in the highest profile races — undercuts their very reason for being.

- **Efficiency.** There are significant costs involved in petitioning to restore ballot status — first, for the minor party that can ill-afford this diversion of its already much more limited resources, but also for the Bureau of Elections that must check petitions that the Board of State Canvassers must certify to restore ballot position.

- **Practicality.** Denied their own place on the ballot, Greens and Libertarians and Reformers inevitably end up participating in major party primaries — a circumstance that is neither desired nor in the best interests of either the major or the minor parties.

It seemed that these were not only the right arguments to make, but also the right order to make them in. The entire committee was pretty much nodding along amiably — until I got to that last point. Then a look of awareness came over them all that said this was a factor — one that was in their own self-interest — that had never even occurred to them.

Committee vice chair Richner (one of the votes we had counted in the "Yes" column) had left the meeting, so chairman Patterson astutely delayed the vote by postponing further consideration for two weeks at which time he wanted to hear from the Bureau of Elections on potential cost savings, as well as from the League of Women Voters about their views of the pro-

posal.

The following weekend the LWV held a meeting at which they considered and endorsed HB 5237, offering to testify in favor of it at the next Redistricting and Elections committee hearing. The Secretary of State's office anticipated that there would be some recertification expense savings, but took no official position on the bill.

When I showed up for the committee hearing two weeks later I found the room packed with people — most of them college age. But the reason had nothing to do with our bill. The big turnout was to oppose another bill introduced by Rep. William O'Neil (D-Allen Park) to allow individual cities to secede from the Wayne County Community College district.

Fortunately, chairman Patterson adjourned the hearing on O'Neil's proposal until after the close of the day's house session and again took up our bill. But it was, apparently, already a "done deal." No more testimony was taken from any of us. HB 5237 was recommended by the Redistricting and Elections committee on a vote of 7-0-1 (Richner absent, Quarles abstaining) and sent on to the house floor.

On March 6, HB 5237 was passed unanimously by the full house on a vote of 103 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 excused, 3 not voting. The bill was given immediate effect and it was then referred to the state senate for their consideration.

Our lobbying committee has already begun the groundwork for getting our bill through the senate.

The effort to amend Michigan election law that up until a year ago was considered by most of the members of the LPM to be so unlikely to win approval by the legislature that it would be a complete waste of time to even try has now been written, introduced and passed through the state house of representatives. Unanimously. By both the committee that held the hearings on it and by the full house.

Of course, ending the onerous "Top-of-ticket" rule isn't the law yet. We still need to get our bill through the senate and get the governor's signature. But the momentum is clearly on our side.

Thanks for this progress is owed to a number of people, most especially to those intrepid Libertarians who had the same reaction to the "It can't be done" crowd as Wilbur and Orville Wright did to their critics almost a century ago:

Ogemaw Libertarians



Former LPM secretary and LP of Oakland County member, Lorna Tate, has moved to West Branch in Ogemaw County.

Lorna is looking to contact other Libertarians in the area to see if there is sufficient interest to form a local affiliate. She is especially interested in contacting Libertarians from the neighboring counties of Iosco and Roscommon.

If you are interested, please contact Lorna at: 989-343-0445 or email her at: ArdentNorth@aol.com

Interested persons should note that Lorna was one of the driving forces in Oakland County for a long time and success is sure to follow her wherever she goes. Don't miss this opportunity to form a winning affiliate.

Asset Forfeiture Laws

by Leonard Schwartz

A candidate should stress two or three issues. One of the issues I used in 2000 was asset forfeiture laws. Below is a revised version of an essay from my website. Feel free to use this material for your website and speeches.

Michigan's asset forfeiture laws allow the government to seize your property without even accusing you of committing a crime. For example:

1. If the police find marijuana or other illegal drugs in your car, they can confiscate your car. The amount of drugs doesn't matter. How the drugs got into your car doesn't matter. Maybe the drugs fell out of the pocket of a parking attendant or an auto mechanic. It doesn't even matter whether you knew that there were drugs in your car. If the police find any illegal drugs in your car, they can confiscate your car.

Furthermore, the police don't even need to find any illegal drugs. All they need is one person who claims that he saw illegal drugs in your car.

2. If anyone gambled in your home, the government can seize all the contents of your home and padlock your home for one year. The amount of gambling doesn't matter. Maybe it

was only a \$1 bet on the Super Bowl or a penny-ante game of poker. It doesn't matter whether you gambled. It doesn't matter whether you gave consent. It doesn't even matter whether you knew anyone gambled. All that matters is that someone gambled inside your home. The government can seize all the contents of your home and padlock your home for one year.

3. If someone sold or gave away illegal drugs in your home, the government can seize all the contents of your home and padlock your home for one year. The amount of drugs doesn't matter. It doesn't matter whether you gave consent. It doesn't even matter whether you knew about the illegal drugs. All that matters is that someone sold or gave away illegal drugs inside your home. The government can seize all the contents of your home and padlock your home for one year.

4. If two persons who were not married to each other had an assignation (a lovers' meeting) in your home, the government can seize all the contents of your home and padlock your home for one year. It doesn't matter whether the lovers had sexual intercourse. It doesn't matter whether you gave consent. It doesn't even matter whether you knew of the meeting. All that matters is that two persons who were not mar-

ried to each other had a lovers' meeting in your home. The government can seize all the contents of your home and padlock your home for one year.

Do you like these laws that allow the government to seize your property without even accusing you of committing a crime?

[Speech version: If you like these laws, please raise your hand. If you consider these laws outrageous, please raise your hand.]

The Libertarian Party is the only political party that wants to repeal federal and state laws that allow the government to seize property without convicting the owner of committing a crime.

If you consider these laws outrageous, why vote for Democrats or Republicans, who support these laws? Why not vote for Libertarians, who want to repeal these laws?

If you vote for Democrats or Republicans whose policies you detest, why should anyone respect you and why should you respect yourself?

Do yourself a favor. Vote straight Libertarian.

Do your friends a favor. Vote straight Libertarian.

Do your country a favor. Vote straight Libertarian.

Corruption in the Criminal Law System

by Leonard Schwartz

A candidate should stress two or three issues. One of the issues I used in 2000 was corruption in the criminal law system. Below is a revised version of an essay from my website. I used a shorter version for speeches. I always got a favorable response. Feel free to use this material for your website and speeches.

Suppose that the attorney general sent the following letter to every police officer:

"Dear Police Officer:

"Some persons claim that when cops find illegal drugs, they sometimes don't turn in all the drugs. Instead, they keep some of it for their personal use, or to sell it, or to frame people for violating drug laws.

"Some persons claim that when cops find an unregistered pistol, they sometimes do not turn it in. Instead, they keep it to use as a 'throw-down' gun, or to sell it, or to frame someone for violating gun control laws.

"Some persons claim that some cops steal money and other property from suspects and crime scenes.

"Some persons claim that some cops commit extortion and accept bribes.

"Some persons claim that some cops commit perjury, solicit perjury, intimidate defense witnesses, and conceal exculpatory evidence.

"And many persons claim that many cops follow the code of silence and do not report crimes committed by other cops.

"I don't know the extent of police corruption. But I have a proposal that might reveal it.

"I offer amnesty to all police officers. You will not have to spend even one day in jail. But there are certain conditions:

"1. You must reveal all crimes punishable by jail time that you have committed.

"2. You must break the code of silence and reveal all crimes punishable by jail time that you know, or have probable cause to believe, were committed by other police officers.

"3. You can no longer be an employee of any federal, state, or local government agency.

"Signed, Attorney General."

This proposal raises the issue of what percentage of police officers have committed crimes punishable by jail time?

By the way: There are many types of victimless conduct that are punishable by imprisonment. For example, if you use vulgar or insulting language in the presence or hearing of any woman or child, you could go to jail for 90 days. If you and a friend bet money on any sports event or play cards for money, you could go to jail for one year. And if you and your spouse did what President Clinton and Monica Lewinski did, you could go to jail for 15 years.

So what percentage of police officers in Michigan do you think have committed crimes punishable by jail time?

Less than 20%, 20 - 40%, 40 - 60%, 60 - 80%, more than 80%?

[Speech version: If *(con'd on next page)*

(cont'd from prev. page) you think that less than 20% of the cops have committed crimes punishable by jail time, please raise your hand. 20 - 40%. 40 - 60%. 60 - 80%. And if you think that at least 80% of the cops have committed crimes punishable by jail time, please raise your hand.]

[When I gave that speech, few persons thought that it was less than 60%.]

Although there is widespread, systematic, and institutionalized corruption in law enforcement agencies, I am not against the police. Instead, I pity the police. They became police officers because they thought that the police exist to serve and protect people. They soon learn that the Democrats and Republicans give this low priority. The police spend most of their time arresting persons for victimless conduct and raising revenues through speed traps and forfeiture laws that allow the government to seize property without convicting the owner of committing a crime.

I have talked to many police officers. Most don't like doing what the Democrats and Republicans order them to do. Most cops would rather serve and protect people.

I am not against the police. I am against the Democrats and Republicans. They are responsible for the widespread, systematic, and institutionalized corruption in law enforcement agencies. I am against their laws that imprison per-

sons for victimless conduct. I am against their asset forfeiture laws that allow the government to seize property without convicting the owner of committing a crime. And I am against their gun control laws that limit your ability to defend yourself from robbers, rapists, and other violent criminals.

Before you vote, ask yourself the following questions: If the persons who enforce the laws are themselves criminals, why should anyone respect the criminal law system? If the politicians who make the laws and who have authority to investigate police agencies refuse to make any changes that significantly reduce the problem of corruption, why should anyone respect the political system?

Perhaps you don't mind that there is widespread, systematic, and institutionalized corruption in law enforcement agencies. But if you consider the corruption outrageous, why vote for Democrats or Republicans? Why not vote for Libertarians? The Libertarian Party is the only party that has a practical program for reducing corruption.

Many persons say that voting Libertarian is a waste of one's vote, because the Libertarians have no chance of getting elected. The truth is that voting Libertarian is never a waste of one's vote.

If you vote for Democrats or Republicans because you consider them the lesser of two evils,

you are voting for evil. Why would any decent person vote for evil?

If you vote for Democrats or Republicans, you are telling them that you like what they are doing and please keep doing more of the same. What could be a bigger waste of your vote?

If you vote for Democrats or Republicans, who are responsible for the corruption, why should anyone respect you and why should you respect yourself?

By voting Libertarian you will feel good because you will tell the Democrats and Republicans that you don't like what they do.

Therefore, voting Libertarian is never a waste of one's vote, even if Libertarians aren't elected.

But Libertarians can be elected. Libertarians have been elected to city councils in Berkley, Hazel Park, Owosso, and Troy and to several school boards.

Send the Democrats and Republicans a clear message that many persons prefer Libertarian policies: Tell your friends that you will vote straight Libertarian. Tell them why and ask them to vote Libertarian.

Do yourself a favor. Vote straight Libertarian.

Do your friends a favor. Vote straight Libertarian.

Do your country a favor. Vote straight Libertarian.

Parade Float Makes the Rounds Two St. Patrick's Day Parades in 2 Days

by Ghazey Aleck

Last Summer, the Clare-Gladwin Libertarian Party constructed a parade float for use in their many parades. It got used first at the Farwell Labor Day Parade and got a big reception from a very large turnout.

On March 16th, the float was used again in the City of Clare at their annual Irish Festival Parade, only this time shamrocks were added to the decorations. But this was not the only Irish Day Parade it would make.

The very next



day on March 17th, Bay City held its St. Patrick's Day Parade. Tri-Cities Libertarian Party borrowed the float and entered it there as well. Between the two parades, it is

estimated that 50,000 people saw the float. Working together makes a difference!

Do You Oppose the Initiation of Force?

A message for Christians and all people of faith

by Greg Dirasian

Almost everyone will immediately answer this question: "Yes, of course." Many Christians and other people of faith will go a step further and add that they even oppose retaliation, believing they should "turn the other cheek." But when it comes to actual practice, are our politics in harmony with our religious professions?

As both a Christian and a Libertarian, I have often wondered how any Christian can be anything but a Libertarian. Of all the political philosophies in the world, only Libertarianism is in harmony with Christianity (and for that matter, most of the other major religions).

We Libertarians derive nearly all of our positions from one, simple premise, succinctly expressed in the pledge we sign when joining the Libertarian Party:

I hereby certify that I do not believe in or advocate the initiation of force as a means of achieving social or political goals.

The only reason I can find that all Christians are not already Libertarians is that they have been hoodwinked by leaders (both religious and political) into looking at only one side of the equation. They focus entirely on the good to be accomplished while ignoring the methods that are being advocated to achieve the goals.

A couple of examples will illustrate the point.

Welfare. The charitable impulse towards our fellow man is a laudable, not to mention Christian, thing. Nobody wants to deny aid to the unfortunate. And on that premise our society has created the welfare state — food stamps, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, the whole multitude of programs that are meant to keep the poor from begging in the streets.

But, where does the money come from to fund these programs? This is the half of the equation that nearly everyone prefers to ignore. The unvarnished fact of the matter is that our government forcibly extracts the funds from our neighbors in the form of taxes. People simply seem not to recognize that when they support these programs they are necessarily supporting the initiation of force against their neighbors!

I don't see any ends-justify-the-means exception to the Biblical injunction "Thou shalt not steal."

This observation inevitably leads to the question: "Well then, how do we take care of the

poor?" But this concern is also founded on a faulty assumption. Every bit of evidence indicates that Americans are among the most generous people on earth. This is our greatest strength and, misapplied, our greatest weakness. Prior to President Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society" in the mid-1960s, the poor (who, it should be remembered, we will always have with us) were taken care of by voluntary efforts within their own communities. Charitable organizations like churches and the Salvation Army did most of it. And, they did a better job. There were both fewer poor people and more opportunities for people to work their way up out of poverty.

Okay, welfare reform is a relatively easy sell to Christians. How about a tougher issue?

Drugs. (And, other consensual crimes such as prostitution and gambling). There is little question that the drug addict is a pathetic creature, and the drug culture a blight on our society. Drive-by shootings, robbery, and crack-babies are just some of the more horrific problems. Libertarians are no different than anyone else in wanting to end these problems. The difference is that Libertarians recognize that most of these very problems are a direct result of attempting to solve them not by care and compassion but by brute force.

It has been conservatively estimated that the price of drugs is inflated by 17,000% over the cost of production. This incredible difference between price and value is the direct result of the fact that drugs are illegal. The almost unbelievable markup essentially represents nothing more than the risk of running a black market operation. Compare a regular business in the licit market. When profit margins begin to approach 20%, competition inevitably enters and drives down the price because 20% is considered a high profit margin in a legal business. Someone will be willing to provide the same goods for less.

There is, for example, no inherent reason why marijuana should cost any more than tobacco. As a matter of fact, the price should logically be lower because marijuana is a hardier plant than tobacco, growing with less care in a wider range of climates.

But a 17,000% profit margin is so large that unscrupulous people will quite literally kill to control the market. The drive-by shootings

we hear about in the news are essentially nothing more than business disputes in a market with incredible profits and no access to the courts (the normal systems of dispute resolution in the legitimate market).

Meanwhile, addicts are forced into criminal activity such as auto theft or robbery to pay for their bizarrely expensive habits. Several years ago the US Surgeon General stated that nicotine was as addictive as heroin. Yet, how many cigarette addicts steal to pay for their habit? The difference is not in the addictive nature of the substance. It is in the price of the commodity.

Obviously, drugs are dangerous and unhealthy (ironically, none more so than the legal pair — alcohol and tobacco). And this is, of course, a complex subject, about which entire books have been written. Still, it is useful to set aside the prejudices and the propaganda and start to look at the distinction between problems caused by drug use and those caused by drug prohibition.

Getting back to the point at hand, what should be the Christian attitude towards the drug addict? Should the Christian demand that the drug addict be imprisoned? Or should a Christian try to help the addict overcome his problem? I have experience helping a friend overcome addiction. And I know for a fact that he would not have benefited from going to jail. (Incidentally, he is now recovered, owns a home, works, and has two children.)

There is not the slightest hint that Jesus ever even implied that people could be coerced into salvation. To the contrary, he repeatedly emphasized that being saved had to be a personal choice that came from within. So how can those who profess to be Christians advocate the so-called "War on Drugs"?

I truly believe that Christians are called upon to renounce the initiation of force and help those who are less fortunate overcome their problems — not through government coercion, but through involvement in their church and community, with love and respect for their neighbors.

This is also what my libertarian beliefs demand. I hope you can join me in this pursuit of peace and harmony and good will towards men.

It's not always easy, but it is always right.

LPM State Convention

May 17-19, 2002



Elias Israel (left) and Geoff Neale (right) are two of the candidates running for national chair of the Libertarian Party. Find out more about their vision for the future of the LP at Saturday's lunch.

Mr. Israel is Chairman of the Libertarian Party of Massachusetts. Find out more about him at his web site: www.EliasIsrael.org



Mr. Neale is Chairman of the Libertarian Party of Texas. Find out more about him at his web site: www.GeoffreyNeale.com



Matt Pryor, Mayor of Troy will welcome us at the Friday evening welcoming party. Although not a Libertarian, Mayor Pryor endorsed David Eisenbacher in his run for Troy city council and shares many of our views.

Visit his web site at:
www.mattpryor.org

LP of Wayne County member, Tim Beck will deliver the keynote address Saturday morning. Mr. Beck spent his own money to get a medical marijunana initiative on the ballot in Detroit. He then formed a coalition to help promote.



No Boring Speakers

After a day of meetings and seminars, this year's banquet will be an evening of fun. Bring your dancing shoes or just enjoy the music.

(Brief comments by a prominent LPM member will precede the music).

George Getz, the national LP's press secretary has experience spanning media and politics. He was assistant Commentary Page Editor for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and even served as a fund-raiser for the National Republican Senatorial Committee. His speech at our Sunday Brunch will be, "Write and wrong: How to get more (and better) media."



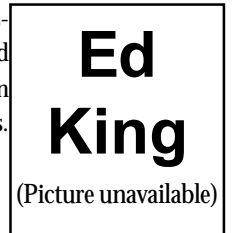
Dave Collver and Lloyd Sherman on the Andy LeCureaux campaign in Hazel Park.

Mark Owen and the Owosso campaign team on "Issue Petitions"



Ed King, a professional lobbyist, will lead a breakout session on lobbying municipalities.

Fred Collins, moderating an elected officials panel.



Event	by 5	5/1 - 5	At the door
Friday Reception	\$25	\$30	\$35
Saturday Breakfast	\$15	\$20	\$25
Saturday Lunch Buffet	\$25	\$30	\$35
Saturday Banquet	\$35	\$45	\$50
Sunday Brunch	\$25	\$35	\$40
Registration Packet	\$20	\$30	\$40
<i>If purchased separately</i>		\$145	\$190
Complete Package		\$120	\$150
<i>Savings</i>		\$25	\$40

Please circle your selections in the list to the left. If more than one reservation is being made, then put the quantity in the space to the left of the amount.

Fill out the reverse side of the form, and mail to:

LPM Convention
619 E. 9 Mile Rd.
Hazel Park, Michigan 48030

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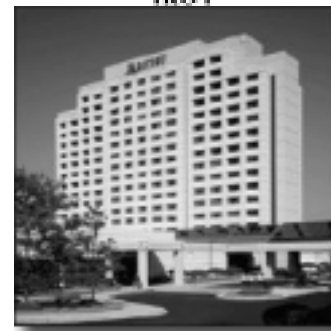
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LPM State Convention

May 17-19, 2002

DETROIT
Marriott
TROY



*Enjoy the LPM Convention
in beautiful Troy, Michigan*

*Enjoy the amenities of the
exquisite Marriott hotel*

*Enjoy shopping at
upscale Somerset Mall*

The hotel has given us an excellent rate on rooms for this event, \$85/night (the normal rate is \$189).

Please make your reservations early to ensure receiving the group rate.

No Boring Speakers Banquet

After a day of meetings and seminars, this year's banquet will be an evening of fun. Bring your dancing shoes or just enjoy the music.

(Brief comments by a prominent LPM member will precede the music).



Hospitality Suite

Too many meetings? Come to the hospitality suite for a little break. Hosted by the Libertarian Party of Oakland County, the hospitality suite will feature continuous play of Libertarian movies, a steady flow of light hors d'oeuvres and liquid refreshments, and lively conversation with fellow conventioners.

Reservations: 800-228-9290

Schedule of Events

Friday

6:00pm to Finish - Platform Committee Meeting
6:00pm to Finish - Bylaws Committee Meeting
5:30pm to 7:30pm - Registration and LP info table
7:00pm to midnight - Welcome party, karaoke, welcome by Troy Mayor Matt Pryor

Saturday (cont'd)

3:00pm to 4:00pm - LPM Committee Reports
4:00pm to 5:00pm - Exec Comm elections
6:00pm to 7:30pm - Cocktail reception
7:30pm to Midnight - Banquet: No Boring Speakers

Saturday

8:30am to 2:00pm, 5:00pm to 6:00pm - Registration
9:00am to 10:00am - Continental Breakfast
9:00am to 9:30am - Welcome and Keynote by Tim Beck
9:30am to 10:15am - Bylaws discussion
10:15am to 11:00am - Platform discussion
11:00am to Noon - Nominate candidates
Noon - 2:00pm - Lunch with national chair candidates
2:00pm to 3:00pm - Carryover business

Breakout Sessions

9:30am to 10:30am - Hazel Park Campaign Team
11:00am to Noon - Owosso Campaign Team
2:00pm to 3:00pm - Elected Officials Panel
3:00pm to 4:00pm - Lobbying Municipalities - Ed King

Sunday

9:00am to 11:30am - Brunch with George Getz
Noon - Hotel checkout
Noon to End - First meeting of new LEC (meet in hospitality suite)

.....
Mail to: LPM Convention, 619 E. 9 Mile Rd., Hazel Park, MI 48030

Name: -----

Address: -----

City: ----- *State:* ____ *ZIP:* -----

Phone: -----

Amount: \$ -----

Email: -----

Pay by Visa or Mastercard:

Card No: _____

Exp. Date: ____/____

Signature: _____

Please show your selections on the reverse side of this form.

Are You a Closet Libertarian?

An open letter to former members and potential new members of the Libertarian Party

Dear Friend,

I was talking with some Libertarians from other states recently and comparing notes. It turns out we share a common dilemma — closet Libertarians. According to our database, some of our members are already public officials elected to partisan offices. But under the banner of one of the major parties. These are actual, card-carrying Libertarian Party members! One look at their voting record and you know it, despite the other party label.

The first thing I wanted to do was shout it from the rooftops. Or, at least, start writing a few press releases or news articles about them.

But, they have asked us not to go public with the information. They fear that they will alienate the members of the party that got them elected, and then become ineffective. They're also afraid of losing the financial support of their major party donors, making it that much harder to get reelected.

These are valid, practical concerns. And, besides, as a Libertarian, I respect their **right to privacy**.

You'd never know it from reading the newspapers, but the truth of the matter is that we are getting more and more people elected every day. Unfortunately, some of the Libertarians who do get elected continue to hide their true identity from the voting public because the Libertarian Party continues to be a small, obscure, "fringe" political party.

I look forward eagerly to the day when the LP is big enough that these people can "come out of the closet" without fear of reprisals.

That's why we need your help.

I want to make this party so big, so well known, so "mainstream," that these people can talk about their (formerly secret) Libertarian affiliation. And still get reelected.

Then I want some of our other candidates to ride into office on their coattails.

What will it take to do that?

Credibility. That's really the last piece of the puzzle.

We've known all along that the Libertarian ideas of limited government, coupled with personal and economic freedom and responsibility are the right answers. We were just a bit naïve about how to communicate those ideas effectively.

In recent years we have acquired a lot more political savvy and experience in running – and winning – elections.

Plus, we have candidates whose commitment and dedication are beyond question. I know of one, for instance, who spent \$6,000 of his own money — and won! I know of another who spent \$3,200 out of his own pocket – and missed election by less than 400 votes (and is already planning to run again).

These people are not rich. They are just average, hardworking, middle-class folks like you and me. But they know that it is going to take some sacrifice to restore our liberties. Their commitment to freedom is admirable – not to mention personally expensive. And on top of all they already do, they also continue to pay their \$25/year to keep their LP memberships current.

Now, I'm not going to ask you to take several months out of your life to run for public office. Nor am I going to ask you to spend \$6,000, or even \$3,200, of your own money to do it.

What I am going to ask you to do today is to please simply join or renew your membership in the Libertarian Party. Please fill out the membership application on the back of this newsletter and mail it in.

If enough of us do only that, we may convince some of our elected public officials to come out of the closet!

Greg Dirasian

Can You Believe...

Less than 500 votes for a partisan victory? Trevor Peck, Libertarian for Lake County Commissioner

Believe it or not, Lake County, one of the smallest counties in Michigan, just added two new commission districts, which lowers the threshold for Libertarian Victory!

In a two way race, Trevor will need less than 500 votes to become a partisan Libertarian officeholder!

★ Why Trevor can win

Much of Lake County is already Libertarian. They **will** vote for the candidate who stands for what they believe in.

★ How Trevor can win

Along with yard signs, direct mail and lit drops, a major part of Trevor's campaign plan is to personally talk to *every* registered voter in the district... *twice!*



TREVOR PECK

Looking to the Future!

Libertarian
- for -
Lake County
Commissioner

WWW.TREVORPECK.ORG

★ Why you should care

The first step toward a Libertarian society is to get Libertarians elected to local offices. The time to take that step is now.

An ancient Chinese proverb says that the best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago. The second best time is now.

When we look back on this election year in 2022, twenty years from now, let's find that we planted this tree of liberty at the **best** time.

With your help, we can be looking to the future - and with your help, we *can* achieve liberty in our lifetime!

"You have my admiration and respect."

- Rick Dutkiewicz
Chair, Libertarians of
Allegan County

"I am... proud of being a part of an organization that attracts people like Trevor Peck."

- Michael Corliss

"Words will never convey the appreciation I have for all your hard work."

- Ghazey Aleck

Paid for by the Committee
to Elect Trevor Peck

BE A PART OF THIS INCREDIBLE LIBERTARIAN OPPORTUNITY!

NAME		CREDIT CARD #	
ADDRESS		SIGNATURE	
CITY	STATE	ZIP	EXPIRATION
PHONE		OCCUPATION	
EMAIL		EMPLOYER	

Donate to: Committee to Elect Trevor Peck, 6305 S. Branch Rd. Branch, MI 49402
For more information or to donate online visit: www.trevorpeck.org

Townsend To Run For County Commissioner

by Ghazey Aleck

Stephen M. Townsend has announced that he will be a libertarian candidate for Midland County Commissioner in 2002. His campaign is presently underway, and it has already raised almost half of the funds budgeted for winning the race.



Townsend is the Tri-Cities Libertarian Party chairman and the president of the Liberty Leadership Council, a Michigan Libertarian PAC. He is a lifelong resident of Midland County and studied

Economics and Business Management at Northwoods University in Midland. He has been employed at Dow Corning in Midland

for the last 10 years.

Townsend has been active in his community. During past 10 years, he has been actively involved in teaching youth in Boy Scouts of America serving as a Scoutmaster. He has served as the Vice-President of the Tittabawassee Chapter of the North Country Trail Association, and he is a member of the Poseyville United Methodist Church, serving as a member of the church leadership team.

Townsend will be running in an open district that has no incumbent. For the past 2 1/2 years, he has been attending all Midland County meetings and meetings in the townships that are in his district which include Midland Township, Mt. Haley Township and Ingersol Township.

"I decided to run for county commissioner because I feel I have the background necessary

to understand the needs of the residents of Midland County. Local government is about protecting an expected way of life and we can do that by promoting prosperity, by working to reduce taxes and eliminating unnecessary regulations. County government must make it easier for people to work and live--not harder," according to Townsend.

This will be a campaign to watch for 2002. Townsend has an experienced and knowledgeable campaign manager and a strong committee of loyal volunteers. They will be doing everything possible to get the first libertarian ever elected in Midland County. If you wish to make a contribution to the Townsend campaign, send it to Friends of Stephen M. Townsend, 2330 E. Gordonville Road, Midland, MI 48640.

Adams Announces Candidacy for County Commission

by Ghazey Aleck

Wendy Adams recently announced that she will be a libertarian candidate for district 2 commissioner in Clare County. She announced her candidacy just before St. Patrick's Day and appeared in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Clare, Michigan.



Michigan.

Wendy Adams is one of the founding members of the Clare-Gladwin Libertarian Party. She has been very active in supporting local party activities having participated in parades, the Clare County Fair Booth, organizing the annual Clare-Gladwin

LP Freedom Banquet and county wide lit drops. Adams has been to a number of libertarian meetings and events around the state. She has authored a number of letters to the editor, and she is also a member of the Liberty Leadership Council.

For the past 6 years, Adams has been employed as an office manager/legal assistant. She has been active in community events having been a supporter of numerous youth projects. She is married, has three children and resides in Farwell, Michigan.

Adams will be running in a district that has a very elderly republican opponent. No democratic opposition is expected. Her district encompasses two townships: Surrey Township and

part of Lincoln Township.

Wendy Adams decided to run for commissioner because Clare County needs a new voice in local politics. "I want to finally give each and every person in my district a voice on the board of commissioners. It is time that someone advances an agenda for all of the people instead of just some of the people. Once elected, I will be a strong voice for giving many areas occupied by government back to the people."

The Adams campaign will be running to win in 2002. She has an experienced campaign team and is another race to watch this year. If you wish to contribute or help in her campaign efforts, contact Friends of Wendy Adams, 2306 W. Ludington Drive, Farwell, Michigan 48622.

Lewis to Run for Kentwood Board of Ed

by Bill Gelineau

Libertarian Party of West Michigan Treasurer Jamie Lewis has announced his candidacy for a seat on the Kentwood Board of Education. This will be his second attempt for a spot on the seven member suburban Grand Rapids school board. Jamie lost a four way race for one seat in 2001.

This year looks very promising for a win. There are two seats up for election this year and only one incumbent will be seeking another

term. Jamie has two children in the district and has been working hard to get himself known in the district. If he wins he will be the second LPWM member to serve on a school board. Former LPWM Chair Jeff Stienport won a seat on the Grand Rapids school board last year.

Jamie favors privatizing some of the schools' services and directing money away from non-educational expenses. He also hopes to bring an alternate viewpoint to the board. "I've been to almost every school board meeting in the past

two years" says Jamie, "and I have never seen a dissenting vote on ANY issue!"

Jamie plans a high profile run this year and says, "With what I learned last year in both my race and Jeff's I know I'll be successful."

Residents of all Michigan school districts go to the polls Monday, June 10, to elect their school board members.

If you would like to help get ANOTHER LP member elected, contact Jamie Lewis at jkl620@yahoo.com or (616) 281-9329.

Future of the LPM - "The Party of Principle"

by Fred Collins



Our motto, our credo, our claim to fame - "The Party of Principle." To compromise one's principles, for us, is the ultimate betrayal of who we are and what we believe.

The most common trap I have observed Libertarian activists fall into, is to tell oneself that they are standing on principle, when what they are actually standing on is ego. Thus, as I have watched Libertarians in verbal warfare with one another, I have come to realize that the point they are arguing is almost always who is right, not what is right.

I am not claiming to be immune from these phenomena. It is excruciatingly easy to see and identify this trap when I am observing it in others, and almost impossible to recognize it when I am in the middle of it. As a result, I have fallen into this trap on many occasions, as have those who are close to me. But having recognized it, I can only do my best not to let it happen again. To make an honest attempt to see it in myself while it is happening, take a step back, and check my premises.

Time after time in the last ten years, I have seen solid Libertarian activists disappear, never to be heard from again because of arguments over points so minor that only the combatants understand them - and it always seems to be a "matter of principle."

Thus our greatest strength as a party - our principles, becomes our greatest weakness as well. Because to compromise our principles - like by saying "I was wrong, and I apologize" feels like an internal betrayal of "the self." But until each and every one of us recognizes the difference between principle and ego, we are doomed to continue to have this type of intra-party conflict.

As we move forward towards our ultimate goal of freedom in our lifetime, our party will only prosper and increase our numbers if each of us can put aside insults to the ego, and remember that each of us is pulling the wagon of liberty. The hill is steep, and the harness needs many strong backs to pull it. If someone is willing to volunteer to put themselves into the tracks beside me, and help to pull that wagon, then they should have my gratitude, and my tolerance. And yours.

Bloom Appointed in Troy

by Martin Howrylak

On February 4, the Troy City Council unanimously appointed LPM member Jerry Bloom to the city's Charter Revision Commission.

A long-time member of both the LPM and the LP of Oakland County, Jerry also worked very hard on the LPM's ballot access petition drive with 1,110 signatures to his credit, ranking him fifth in the state. In addition, he also worked in the office, writing the software that generated the weekly petition drive reports for tracking our progress and generating the budget reports for the committee.

As a systems analyst for Daimler-Chrysler corporation, Jerry is very familiar with computers, and has used his skills to help the LPM on

numerous occasions.

But don't be deceived by his quiet and gentle demeanor, Jerry is no ordinary computer geek. Well grounded in libertarian philosophy and municipal politics, the city of Troy will benefit greatly from his appointment to the Charter Commission.

"I look forward to serving the residents of Troy and making certain that small-government views are represented on the commission," Bloom noted.

Congratulations Jerry!



Hitch to Run for At-Large

by Paul Hitch

My name is Paul Hitch. Some of you know me as the Chairperson of the Libertarian Lapeer/Genesee County Affiliate. I intend to run for a seat as one of the LPM's five at-large directors.

Who I Am

As a Gulf War Veteran of the U.S. Air Force, I volunteered to serve my country before it became fashionable to be "Patriotic". My five years of active military duty also includes service in the Michigan Air National Guard, where I attained the rank of Staff Sergeant, and received an Honorable Discharge.

I have been married to my wife, Lisa, for almost thirteen years, and we have a four-year old daughter named Melissa. Our family also includes two dogs, four cats, and five ducks.

My Qualifications

My education includes a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Resource Development from Oakland University, where I specialized in Training and Development. I also received a minor in Management, and a concentration in Labor Studies. In addition, I received an Associate of Applied Science degree in Personnel Administration from the Community College of the Air Force. I attended graduate school at the University of Southern Mississippi, where I studied Criminal Justice.

My professional career includes over fifteen years of experience working in both the private and public sectors. I have worked as a Personnel Management Analyst for the Michigan Department of Labor, where I performed Occupational Analysis. I also have extensive experience in Technical Recruitment and Human Resource Management. Currently I am the Founder and Principal owner of Camelot Staffing Solutions, L.L.C.

What I Did Last Year

In addition to my responsibilities as Chairperson of the Lapeer/Genesee County Affiliate, I attended the State Libertarian Convention and Leadership Conference, and took an active role in acquiring signatures for the Ballot Access Restoration Petition. I also planned and participated in the success of several Libertarian information booths at various fairs and festivals.

What I Will Do This Year

I plan to run for a seat on the Lapeer School Board of Directors in June of 2002. I believe that political activism begins in the local community, and plan to lead by example. If elected to the Michigan Libertarian Executive Committee, I believe that I can help improve our party as we continue to fight for freedom and liberty!

Historic Principles over Government “Historic Districts”

by Mark Owen



When buildings get to be of a certain age, they often take on historic significance. But is it necessary for that significance to overshadow the time-honored principles of limited government, individual liberty, and private property rights? That was the question recently put to voters in Owosso, Mich.—and those voters resoundingly chose America’s historic founding principles over an ill-considered city plan to regulate private homes of historic significance.

In December 2000, the Owosso City Council passed the “Oliver Street Historic District and Environs” ordinance by a 6-1 vote. The stated goals of the ordinance included safeguarding the heritage of the city and strengthening the local economy—lofty but superficial language that almost anyone could support. Where the rubber hit the road was in how these things were to be done—that is, whether through voluntary means or through heavy-handed government coercion. Residents soon discovered it was to be the latter.

The ordinance granted a government “historic district commission” regulatory power over any work plans that would alter the appearance of any private home within the boundaries of the district. The fine print read, “A permit shall be obtained before any work affecting the exterior appearance of a resource is performed within a historic district.” Exactly what kind of exte-

rior work would be permissible quickly became a point of much confusion, if not contention. What parts of a house were made of or looked like a century ago, when many of the historic homes were originally built, is not always verifiable. Since what is historically acceptable is largely subjective, there is plenty of room for differing and arbitrary interpretations. Could drafty, outdated windows be replaced with newer, more energy efficient ones? It depended on which city official exasperated homeowners asked.

To ensure the ordinance passed, supporters used clever propaganda to make it appear that there was broad public approval of the plan. Before the council vote, proponents mailed postcards to households that were within the proposed district, instructing residents to mail the card *only* if they were in favor of the proposal. Apparently understanding the bureaucratic hassle the ordinance would create, the city also quietly exempted from the proposed rules one of its own properties that would fall within the district.

The more they learned about the new ordinance, the more local residents became angry. “We own the property, pay the taxes on it, and incur the expense of keeping it up,” said former councilman Burton Fox. “Why should it suddenly be up to a committee to determine what changes we may or may not make to our homes?” The thought of the city forcing homeowners to pay to dismantle unapproved changes and pay the cost of meeting approved ones only fueled the resentment.

The city floated the idea of a property tax credit to entice residents into accepting the dis-

trict. Michigan law allows a credit to partially offset the additional cost of maintaining a home to historic district commission standards. But not every home in the district was eligible, and getting the credit was fraught with red tape. Many homeowners publicly stated that they did not want any part of the tax credit with all its accompanying strings. It wasn’t “free money from the state” as proponents argued, and it seemed to many to be an inefficient incentive for preservation.

Preservation of historic buildings need not be accomplished by coercive government programs; in fact, historic district-based approaches can unintentionally have *opposite* effect. As reported by the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, commissioners in the city of Midland have made the permitting process there so onerous that one citizen gave up trying to fix her historic home’s leaky roof, saying, “I will let my house fall down before I deal with those people again.”

On Aug. 14, 2001, Owosso residents voted to repeal the eight-month-old historic district ordinance by a margin of 70-30 percent. In doing so, they sent coercive preservationists a powerful message: We don’t need the cops to preserve historic landmarks. Perhaps, as suggested by the Mackinac Center, it’s time for the Legislature to take another look at the laws that authorize coercive historic districts in the first place.

(Mark D. Owen led the LP of Shiawassee County in the effort to repeal Owosso’s historic district ordinance and in November 2001 was elected to the Owosso City Council.)

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Aleck Announces Run for LPM Chair

by Ghazey Aleck



I want to let all of you know that I will be running for Chair of the LPM at the next convention.

Some of you are aware that the State Party went through some growing pains this past year but that seems to be behind us now. Change is always hard, but as long as we put our party first, we will always come through it successfully. I am looking forward to an exciting election year.

At the cornerstone of what I hope to see

accomplished in the coming year is a transformation within the party where we become:

- 1) inclusive as a party by showing tolerance to dissent and opening the process up for participation by anyone who is sincere
- 2) engage in full and fair disclosure on all party matters by all officers and committees and
- 3) encourage everyone to always put their party first (we will all win some and lose some along the way but put your party first by sticking with it).

As to political activities, I will be advancing plans to substantially increase our membership (in fact this is already underway), and I will

be offering ways to mass market (or massively publicize the LPM and the ideals of libertarianism).

It is my opinion that we should work hard to get people elected to partisan offices starting at the local level first where we can already compete and move our way up incrementally. Lastly, I think there is a place for everyone in this party, the philosophers and the politicians, and that neither should set up a circumstance that works to exclude the other.

I would appreciate your support in May, thank-you.

Heroes

by Nancy O'Brien, Chair
Ballot Access Restoration Committee

Did you know that despite being confined to a wheelchair due to a rare and life-threatening illness, Greg Stempfle still managed to get up out of his sickbed and collect 10 signatures to help the LPM regain its ballot status?

Did you know that even while fighting for her very life last year (tragically, a battle she ultimately lost early this year), Karin Corliss nevertheless worked in the HQ doing signature validity checks against our "Qualified Voter File" database? She even came into the HQ a couple of times — between trips to Chicago for special chemotherapy treatments — to train others how to do the job! Not to mention the fact that she also collected 8 signatures herself.

Did you know that although she was in hospitals and then a nursing home in the final months before she passed away, Joanne Karpinski, too weak to go out and petition herself, sent a check for \$200 to the Ballot Access Restoration Committee so we could hire a professional gatherer in her place?

You would have no way of knowing that during the bleakest days of the ballot drive, when it looked like the fallout from the 9/11 attack would derail the national LP's commitment of financial support to our drive, one dedicated LPM member (who wanted to remain anonymous) called me and offered to lend BARC \$10,000 out of his own bank account.

These are the true heroes of the Libertarian Party of Michigan.

They understood that our effort to regain our ballot status was the single most important thing the LPM had to do last year. They understood that our success or failure in that effort would determine not just some particular issue (such as changing concealed carry laws or stopping an Internet tax or making medical marijuana available) but whether or not we would continue to even BE a genuine political party in order to fight these battles!

And they weren't the only ones who sacrificed for the cause. There were numerous members across the state who gave up nights, weekends and holidays to petition. Members who stood out in the summer heat and autumn cold to collect signatures. Members who dug deep into their savings to give us the money we needed

to hire petitioners. Members who did both!

We had some members — Al Titran and Leonard Schwartz are two who come immediately to mind — who never went anywhere for six months without a clipboard.

We owe these activists and contributors an enormous debt. And as the grateful chair of the BARC effort, I intend to see that they get at least some small portion of the recognition they deserve.

At this year's state convention in Troy, I will be posting a list on the wall in the plenary room of every candidate seeking a position on the LPM executive committee. That list will include their names and their contribution to our ballot restoration drive — in dollars, and/or signatures. I will add the names of candidates who accept nominations from the convention floor.

Furthermore, I will make myself available throughout the weekend to any delegate who wishes to know in greater detail what kind of support any candidate for party leadership con-

tributed to keeping us alive as a legally-recognized, ballot-qualified, political party.

While support for our ballot restoration is, of course, not the only factor delegates should consider in choosing our party leadership, I believe it is a vital indicator of dedication to our cause and to our organization. I will be urging all voting delegates to support for party leadership positions those activists who supported our party in the time of her greatest need. I sincerely hope that my fellow party members will attend the convention and do the same.



The photo above is of Wayne County LP member, Greg Stempfle, petitioning at the Pontiac Arts, Beats and Eats festival last September.

James Hudler for LPM Chair

- ⇒ Promote party unity
- ⇒ Increase membership by 20% or more
- ⇒ Choose and support a statewide candidate to be a standard bearer for the party
- ⇒ Increase number of affiliates by at least two
- ⇒ Retain a party office with a paid state director
- ⇒ Expand state legislature lobbying effort



Hudler - for a Winning Team

Paid advertisement

LPM Committee Meeting Minutes

These minutes have not yet been approved by the Committee. It is possible that there will be additions or corrections at the next Committee meeting. If so, they will be published here

LPM Committee Meeting Minutes of February 3, 2002

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ghazey Aleck at 1:02 P.M. at Headquarters.

Present were: Committee; Ghazey Aleck, Keith Edwards, Trafton Jean, Diane Barnes, Greg Dirasian, Leonard Schwartz and Ben Steele III. Others; Marnie Edwards, Ben Bachrach, Bill Gelineau, Emily Salvette, Stacy Van Oast, Steve Townsend, Jim Miller, James Hudler, Art Gulick, Craig Yope, Gary Bora, Jerry Bloom, David Raaflaub, Tom Jones, Elisabeth Larsen, Dennis Gargin and Bruce Hoepner.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report was given by Trafton Jean and approved as submitted.

Emily Salvette submitted the final version of the Business Plan produced by her and Stacy Van Oast. It was moved by Diane Barnes that there be a special meeting to discuss the Business Plan. Seconded by Keith Edwards and passed 4-2 with one abstention. Keith Edwards moved to thank Salvette and Van Oast for all the hard work that went into the report. Seconded by Leonard Schwartz and passed 7-0

Nothing new has developed on the Stuart Ruler Estate.

The Leadership Conference will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids on March 9. It is hosted by the Libertarian Party of West Michigan in connection with their annual Liberty Banquet. Lunch will be available for \$10. There will be workshop help for candidates including paperwork, use of voter data, practical campaigning and growing membership. LPWM will share 20% of their profit with the LPM. Please pre-register. Lunch is \$10

Libertarians of Macomb County was the only bidder for the Defender of Liberty Banquet (Liberty Fest.) Keith Edwards moved that LMC be awarded the event. Seconded by Ben Steele. Passed 6-1. The date is Saturday, November 9. It was confirmed that the standard practice for this event is that the host affiliate gets all income from ticket sales, donations, book sales, etc. The state party gets the money from the fundraising part of the event. The state party pays for the first mailing and the affiliate pays all

other costs including any subsequent mailings.

Greg Dirasian gave the Convention report. It will be held May 17-19 at the Troy Marriott. The total package is \$110. No speakers have been set as yet. Candidates for National Chair are expected to appear. It was confirmed as standard practice that the host affiliate receives the income from the Friday night party and the LPM receives the rest.

Greg Diasian moved, on behalf of David Raaflaub and Tom Jones that: The Convention Committee requests permission of the LPM Committee to run a trial internet broadcast with non-binding online voting provided that it: 1- does not interfere with the flow of the Convention; 2- does not cost more money; 3- does not

require more work on the part of the Convention Committee; 4- and permission to cancel trial if it becomes too intrusive. Seconded by Ben Steele. Passed 7-0

Ben Steele announced he was ordering prizes for the affiliates contest.

New Business:



Diane Barnes was nominated to fill the vacancy for Vice Chair created by the accession to Chair by Ghazey Aleck after the resignation of Mike Corliss. Ben Bachrach was nominated but declined. It was pointed out that the Party has restricted Vice Chair candidates to be current members of the Committee when filling that vacancy in the past on the theory that no one should be heir to the chair who was not elected to the Committee by the Convention. No other nominations were made. Barnes was elected 5-2.

Election was held to fill the two at-large vacancies caused by resignations. Four nominations were made. Ben Bachrach received 7 votes, Bill Gelineau 5, Jerry Bloom 1, and David Raaflaub 1. Bachrach and Gelineau were elected.

Membership drive was discussed. Chair Aleck has written a proposal to increase membership. It was moved by Bill Gelineau to accept the target suggested by Ben Bachrach to gain 400 members by July 4 and appoint a committee to find other methods beyond those proposed in the Aleck report. Seconded by Diane Barnes. Passed 7-0

Ghazey Aleck reported that a complaint was filed by Greg Dirasian against Keith Edwards for an article written by Edwards in the *Macomb Liberty* regarding the *Michigan Libertarian*. Aleck outlined four possible courses of action. Diane Barnes moved that the complaint be summarily dismissed. Seconded by Bill Gelineau. Motion to dismiss passed 6-1, with Dirasian and Edwards abstaining.

Bill Gelineau has been appointed Bylaws Chair and Dick Jozwiak Platform Chair for the Convention.

Keith Edwards is taking names of LPM members who wish to be nominated for the position of delegate to the National Convention. Our delegation has 61 spots.

The meeting of third parties will be held March 2 at HQ.

Respectfully submitted,
Keith Edwards, Secretary

National Convention Delegate Count

The national LP has just published the numbers for representation to the 2002 LP National Convention. Michigan has been allocated 61 delegates. 43 due to our membership total on 12/31/01, and 18 due to Michigan's presentational vote total in the 2000 election.

The convention will be in Indianapolis this year, a mere 2.5 hour drive from the Michigan border. This is a rare opportunity to participate in a national convention close to home. Because of our large delegation, Michigan gets seated near the front and most of our people usually get on TV at least once.

This is one more reason to come to the LPM convention in Troy and volunteer to be one of our 61 delegates!

Upcoming Events

March 24, 2002 - 1:00 PM

The LPM Organizational Plan Work Session, will be held at LPM Headquarters on Sunday, March 24, starting at 1:00 pm. Those interested in participating, please download the plan (www.lpmich.org/orgplan/), read it, and bring a copy with you to the meeting. Emily and Stacy will facilitate and lead the discussion. We'll start by explaining the plan and its finer points, and then we will facilitate the work (any motions) that result. This is intended to be exactly what it's called--A Work Session. So anyone prepared to roll up their sleeves and get to work is welcome!

Location: LPM HQ, 619 E Nine Mile Rd, Hazel Park MI 48030

Contact: Emily Salvette Phone: (734) 668-2607 E-mail: salvette@ameritech.net

March 27, 2002 - 6:30 PM

LP of Oakland County General Membership Meeting. Public welcome. Meet for dinner at 6:30pm, business begins at 7:30pm

Location: Sila's Restaurant, 4033 W. 12 Mile Rd, Berkley. Sila's is 2 blocks west of Greenfield on Twelve Mile Road.

Contact: Greg Dirasian Phone: (248) 417-2217 E-mail: greg@lpocmi.org

April 2, 2002 - 6:30 PM

Monthly Meeting of the Libertarian Party of Wayne County. Guest Speaker: David Eisenbacher. Business: Open nominations for candidates for public office.

Location: City Tavern 14316 Michigan Ave. Dearborn between Greenfield and Schaefer Meetings are free and open to the public.

Contact: Greg Stempfle Phone: (313) 565-4407 E-mail: stempfle@hotmail.com

April 2, 2002 - 7:00 PM

Hillsdale / Branch Libertarians Monthly Meeting

Location: Fillmore's for Steaks, US-12 in Jonesville, 2 blks west of M-99--in the restaurant, not the bar.

Contact: James Parker Phone: (517) 439-2460 E-mail: jamesp@hillsdale.epcorp.com

April 7, 2002 - 1:00 PM

LPM Committee Meeting. This will be the last regularly scheduled business meeting before the convention.

Location: Libertarian Party of Michigan Headquarters

Contact: Ghazey Aleck Phone: (989) 386-2699 E-mail: aleckfamily@voyager.net

April 8, 2002 - 7:00 PM

Clare-Gladwin Libertarian Party Meeting. Candidate caucus will be the primary business of this meeting for lining up and approval of candidates. Candidate paperwork to be completed as well. Refreshments supplied.

Location: Grant Township Hall, 1 mile west of Jay's Sporting Goods on Surrey Road.

Contact: Ghazey Aleck Phone: (989) 386-2699 E-mail: aleckfamily@voyager.net

April 9, 2002 - 7:30 PM

LP of Oakland County Executive Committee Meeting. All dues-paying members are welcome. Business begins at 7:30pm.

Location: CJ's Brewing Co, 8115 Richardson Rd, Commerce Township, MI 48390

Contact: Fred Martin Phone: (248) 738-9099 E-mail: chair@lpocmi.org

April 24, 2002 - 6:30 PM

LP of Oakland County General Membership Meeting. Public welcome. Meet for dinner at 6:30pm, business begins at 7:30pm

Location: Sila's Restaurant, 4033 W. 12 Mile Rd, Berkley. Sila's is 2 blocks west of Greenfield on Twelve Mile Road.

Contact: Fred Martin Phone: (248) 738-9099 E-mail: chair@lpocmi.org

May 7, 2002 - 6:30 PM

Monthly Meeting of the Libertarian Party of Wayne County. Meetings are free and open to the public. Dinner starts at 6:30pm. Program starts at 7:45.

Location: City Tavern, 14316 Michigan Ave., Dearborn between Greenfield and Schaefer

Contact: Greg Stempfle Phone: (313) 565-4407 E-mail: stempfle@hotmail.com

May 14, 2002 - 7:30 PM

LP of Oakland County Executive Committee Meeting. All dues-paying members are welcome. Business begins at 7:30pm.

Location: CJ's Brewing Co, 8115 Richardson Rd, Commerce Township, MI 48390

Contact: Fred Martin Phone: (248) 738-9099 E-mail: chair@lpocmi.org

May 17-19, 2002

LPM Annual Convention, May 17-19, 2002. Real World Politics See display ad on pages 9 and 10.

Location: Troy Marriott Hotel, 200 W. Big Beaver Rd., Troy, Michigan.

Contact: Greg Dirasian Phone: (248) 592-9731 E-mail: greg@newsnetpipeline.com

May 22, 2002 - 6:30 PM

LP of Oakland County General Membership Meeting. Public welcome. Meet for dinner at 6:30pm, business begins at 7:30pm

Location: Sila's Restaurant, 4033 W. 12 Mile Rd, Berkley. Sila's is 2 blocks west of Greenfield on Twelve Mile Road.

Contact: Fred Martin Phone: (248) 738-9099 E-mail: chair@lpocmi.org

June 4, 2002 - 6:30 PM

Monthly Meeting of the Libertarian Party of Wayne County. Meetings are free and open to the public. Dinner starts at 6:30pm. Program starts at 7:45.

Location: City Tavern, 14316 Michigan Ave., Dearborn, between Greenfield and Schaefer

Contact: Greg Stempfle Phone: (313) 565-4407 E-mail: stempfle@hotmail.com

For more events, visit:

<http://www.lpmich.org/calendar.htm>

Legislation Watch

Here is a list of some bills of Libertarian interest that are currently under consideration in the Michigan Legislature.

HB 5237 - Eases ballot access for minor parties.

The Libertarian Party has been working hard to get this bill passed. On March 6, it passed the house 103-0. It now moves on to the senate. You can help by visiting www.SpeakOutMichigan.org and sending a message to your legislators urging them to support this bill.

HB 5185 - Recall Restriction Bill

A bill tightening recall provisions for locally-elected officials cleared its first hurdle on February 21, though its sponsor still suggests the better option to deal with a rash of recalls or threats is a constitutional amendment allowing recalls only for official misconduct.

HB 5240 - Wiretapping and Anti-Terror Bill

State and local law enforcement would for the first time be able to use wiretapping under bills approved February 26 by a House committee.

HB 4635/4636 - Paternity Fraud Relief Bills

Passed in the House (102 to 0) on July 11, 2001, to accommodate the use of new genetic testing technology to allow nonbiological fathers recourse when they discover that they are paying child support for children who are not their biological offspring.

HB 5157 - Withdraw from Community College Taxing District

Would allow the withdrawal of a school district, city, village, or township from a community college taxing district by a majority vote of the electors.

HB 5593 Anti-SLAPP Bill

Authorizes triple damages, or legal costs and fees up to \$5000, whichever is greater, that may be paid by plaintiffs to defendants in strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP suits) if the suit's primary purpose is to harass or prevent the defendant's participation in the process of government.

HB 4028 - Bill to Expand Eminent Domain (Already Passed)

Permits municipalities to more easily use their power of eminent domain to condemn and take real property from an owner if the municipality determines that the property is "blighted" according to one or more broadly defined conditions. The municipality could then transfer the property to a private developer.

Special thanks to LPM member Tom Jones for bringing some of these to our attention and to Jack McHugh of the Mackinac Center for Public Policy and their web site: www.MichiganVotes.org for providing some of the descriptions. For more information on any of these (or other) bills, visit www.MichiganVotes.org.



KAY DIRASIAN



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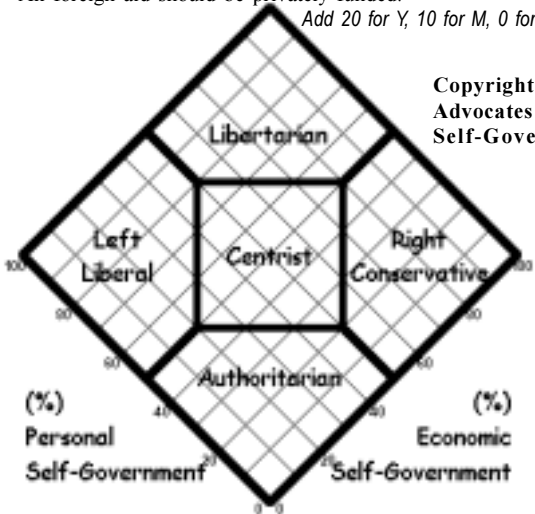
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World's Smallest Political Quiz

Personal Issues	Y	M	N
Military service should be voluntary. (No draft)			
Govt. should not control radio, TV, the press or the Internet			
Repeal regulations on sex for consenting adults			
Drug laws do more harm than good. Repeal them.			
Let peaceful people cross borders freely.			
<i>Add 20 for Y, 10 for M, 0 for N</i>			

Economic Issues	Y	M	N
Businesses and farms should operate without govt subsidies			
People are better off with free trade than with tariffs.			
Minimum wage laws cause unemployment. Repeal them.			
End taxes. Pay for services with user fees.			
All foreign aid should be privately funded.			
<i>Add 20 for Y, 10 for M, 0 for N</i>			



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If you score Libertarian, we invite you to join the Libertarian Party.

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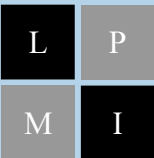
My check or money order (payable to LPM) is enclosed.

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