

Michigan Libertarian

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January/February 2002

Ballot Status Almost

by Nancy O'Brien

On January 15, 2002, LPM chair Ghazey Aleck contacted the Bureau of Elections and was informed that approximately 28,000 of the 46,258 signatures we turned in last fall have thus far been certified. And, they are still looking at only the third of the four boxes full of petitions that we submitted.

30,272 valid signatures are required for the LPM to regain ballot status.

The reason the process is taking so long is that only one person at the Bureau of Elections, Amy Shell, is checking all of the signatures.

And as our Berkley city councilman Fred Collins discovered, Ms. Shell is a very conscientious worker.

Councilman Collins gathered hundreds of signatures in the petition drive. Consequently, he signed dozens of petitions as the circulator – using his rather unique signature. (For those who may not be aware of it, Fred con- *(cont'd on pg. 3)*)



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Bradley Appointed to Council

Source: *LP News Online*

An LPM member has been appointed to the city council in South Haven, Michigan -- making him the fifth Libertarian city councilman in the state.

On January 7, Bill Bradley was selected by the council to fill the position on the seven-member board. Each city council member serves a two-year term.

Bradley, who was chosen over three other contenders after an incumbent councilman vacated his seat to become the city mayor, said he is looking forward to the challenge of serving.

"I've been a critic of certain council activities in the past, and it's always easier to be a critic on the sidelines than an actual player in the game," he said. "But I'm glad to have an opportunity to try and move the council in a more libertarian direction."

The 70-year-old Bradley

was in competition with a former city council member, a retired city employee, and a local businessman for the seat.

"I think I was chosen because I've been active in local politics for a while now, so I am fairly well-known in the area," he said. "And my libertarian beliefs seemed to go over well with most of the council members."



Bill Bradley, newly appointed to South Haven City Council.

Although he has some ideas for privatizing local government services, Bradley said he will try to settle into the seat before proposing any major changes to the non-partisan board.

"Changes are going to have to be gradual," he said. "But I can certainly nudge other council members toward fiscal responsibility."

Bradley joins Fred Collins (Berkley), Andy LeCureaux (Hazel Park), Martin Howrylak (Troy,) and Mark Owen (Owosso) on the list of Libertarians currently serving on a city council in Michigan.

Bradley, who also serves as chair of the Van Buren County LP, ran for South Haven mayor in 1997. Although unsuccessful, he received 40% of the vote.

He ran an "educational" Libertarian campaign for State Representative in 1998, and for U.S. Congress in 2000.

South Haven has a population of just over 5,000.

Oakland Libertarians Blitz the Press

by Keith Wesselmann

"Having three elected city councilmen has its advantages," claims LP of Oakland County chair, Chris Pellerito. "For a Libertarian to win office, he has to be better at everything than his counterparts - this is true whether the Libertarian is in Oakland county or some place else."

So the recent blitz of press coverage (sometimes using the "L" word, sometimes not), came as no surprise to Pellerito or the other Libertarians in Oakland County.

It started on December 13, 2001 when the Daily Tribune provided coverage of the living wage ordinance in Hazel Park. Councilman Andy LeCureaux, following in the footsteps of Congressman Ron Paul, was the lone dissenting vote.

"I'm all for everyone getting a decent wage, but I have a problem because they claim it won't cost the city any money," he said. "If that's so, why not make it \$15 or \$20 an hour? I don't buy it," LeCureaux told the press.

Mayor Ben Colley isn't surprised by LeCureaux's opposition.

"He's a Libertarian, so what do you expect?" Colley said. "I respect that, but the Libertarian agenda is for less government," the paper noted.

Berkley

Veteran Councilman Fred Collins continued the trend in Berkley when he stopped the drug warriors in their tracks, as noted in the *Detroit Free Press* on January 2, 2002.

In Berkley, Councilman Fred Collins told colleagues: "I think anyone who uses drugs is foolhardy. But if *(cont'd on pg. 3)*

Hazel Park

Volume 31, Issue 1

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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.

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Message from the Chair

I find myself now writing to you as the new chair of the Libertarian Party of Michigan. My elevation from vice-chair to chair comes after the resignation of your chairman Michael Corliss.

At the time of his resignation, Mike's wife Karin had a dramatic decline in her health. As such, Mike found it necessary to step aside so that he could be there for Karin and for his children. A few days later, on January 11th, Karin passed away.

Karin's passing is a deep and abiding loss for Mike and his children. Karin was a long time Libertarian Party activist and friend of all libertarians. For all of us in the Libertarian Party, her absence will be felt for a long time.



Karin Corliss, 1959-2002

The Libertarian Party of Michigan has been very lucky to have the unquestionable loyalty and support of both Mike and Karin. It is times like this that forces one to reflect about what really matters and about what we should be thankful for; and with Karin's passing, I want to express appreciation in the strongest sense possible for the support Mike and Karin gave to this party.

We all should also give thanks for the progress the Libertarian Party of Michigan has made with the help of all activists, like Mike and Karin, who have toiled so diligently to bring us to where we are today. As I surveyed the position of the party, I found some striking achievements.

Though the two major parties of Michigan have enacted ballot access laws designed to keep third political parties off the ballot, we have never allowed them to kick us off the ballot and get away with it.

Michigan Libertarians are successfully advancing on local office getting elected to city councils and school boards around the state.

Lots of candidates are lining up for election 2002 to deliver the most effective political message ever--that libertarianism works. Libertarianism works because it is about being fair and free--an all American ideal.

Our headquarters is being organized for the coming election. The party officers' responsibilities have been realigned to respond more effectively to membership and party needs. The *Michigan Libertarian*, our party newsletter, has a new and improved look.

So while each of us, including myself, have at some point wondered about the future of the Libertarian Party, I can tell you that the future is bright indeed. As we continue to grow stronger as a political party, there will be healthy disagreements and contentious political debates. But, remember, after the dust settles, there is no better place to be than in the Libertarian Party. This is our strength. We are libertarians first!

Ghazey Aleck

Oakland Libertarians Blitz the Press

(cont'd from pg. 1) the voters want to legalize marijuana, just as they once legalized alcohol consumption, it should be their decision, not ours."

His influence spilled over into neighboring Huntington Woods where the council also refused to vote on a resolution opposing marijuana legalization for either recreational and medicinal use.

This is forcing the coalition to regroup and devise a new strategy.

Troy

Two years ago, Troy was afflicted with a city council that had no respect for the people they were supposed to represent. They had become so arrogant that they voted themselves an extravagant new benefit — a lifetime pension plan that would pay them more once they were out of office than when they were in office!

Martin Howrylak campaigned on that issue and won a seat on the Troy City Council. The council was forced to repeal the pension plan, and Martin faced an extremely hostile council for the next year — votes of 6 to 1 were the rule, not the exception.

The following year showed a change for the better, as incumbents were voted out and more like-minded candidates voted in, with Libertarian David Eisenbacher narrowly missing election. The votes started coming out 4 to 3.

When the Troy Eccentric came out with their article, "Keep your eye on these folks in '02," (January 3, 2002) Libertarians were well positioned. Regarding Councilman Martin Howrylak, they said:

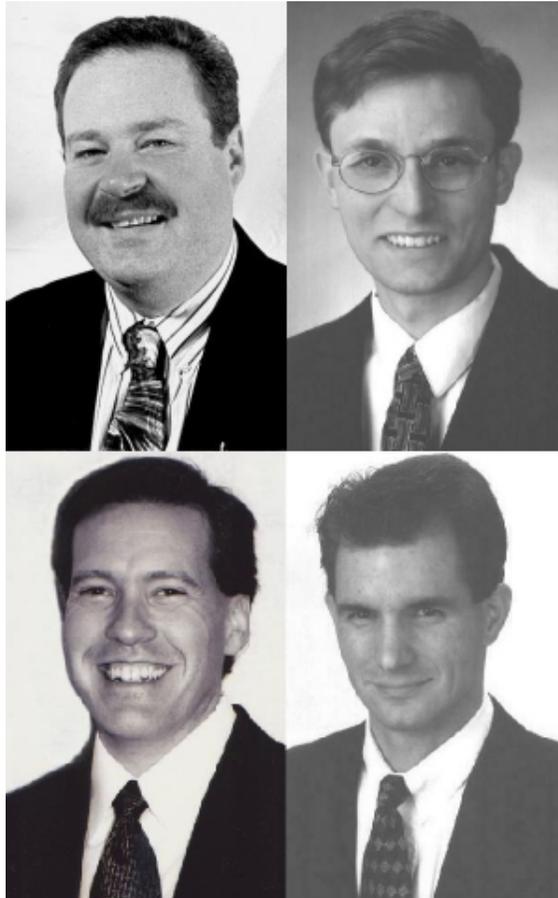
From fringe candidate to power broker in less than two years is a pretty remarkable journey. Howrylak has had such an education since his election in April 2000, one wonders why he's going to graduate school. Students should come and study him.

And regarding candidate David Eisenbacher, they said:

If one thing was learned last year, it was that it takes money to get elected to Troy City Council.

The top vote-getter among the losing city-council candidates last year, young Mr. Eisenbacher has wasted no time declaring his intention of running again this year. With financial backing from fellow Libertarians, he promises to make an interesting race of what could have been a snooze with two incumbents running for re-election and no open seats.

Of the 9 people that the Troy Eccentric picked to write about, 2 of them were Libertarian.



Councilman Fred Collins (top-left), Councilman Martin Howrylak (top-right), Councilman Andy LeCureaux (bottom-left), and candidate David Eisenbacher (bottom-right).

Hazel Park

Not to be outdone, Councilman LeCureaux went for a repeat performance. As reported in the January 9, 2002 issue of the Daily Tribune:

Councilman Andy LeCureaux suggested members forsake their pay for attending regular council meetings to set the tone for upcoming talks aimed at slashing 2001-02 budget spending.

LeCureaux suggested the cut in council pay is justified because council members have asked city administrators to cut their budgets by 6 percent to balance the current budget.

"I think we can do this," said LeCureaux whose suggestion was supported by Councilman Michael Webb. The entire council supported it.

"Our elected Libertarians are making changes and bringing us credibility. I used to shudder when the press labeled one of my candidates 'Libertarian', knowing that it was the kiss of death," said campaign manager Greg Dirasian. "Today, it has come to mean 'advocate of common sense.' What a difference two years can make."

Or, as a recent letter to the editor stated in response to Councilman LeCureaux's vote on the living wage, "I don't know what a Libertarian is, but if it means honest city government, I'm all for it."

Ballot Status Almost

(cont'd from pg. 1) sider himself to be among those few whose celebrity makes them identifiable by no more than a given name — like "Ike" or "Madonna.")

When Collins stopped by his city hall in December the clerk informed him that they had received a call from the Bureau of Elections, questioning his signature. The clerk assured the Bureau that it really was Collins' signature without even bothering to wait for a fax of it.

The Bureau of Elections official was slightly annoyed at having the request for confirmation seemingly being given short shrift. How could the clerk be certain that the signature was valid without ever even looking at it?

The clerk responded, "First, he is a councilman here. Second, we know he is a Libertarian. Third, people question his signature all the time because he just signs his name 'Fred.' And fourth... he was in here asking all of us to sign that petition."

Amly thanked the clerk and hung up.

Detroiters to Vote on Medical Marijuana

by Padraic Gresham

DETROIT. Thanks to Wayne County LP member Tim Beck the residents of Detroit will have the opportunity this summer to vote on medical marijuana.

Beck formed the Detroit Coalition for Compassionate Care last year to collect the 6,141 valid signatures of Detroit voters needed to put the issue on the ballot at the next election. Most of the signatures were gathered by professionals working at the polls on election day last November — one way to insure a high validity rate. Beck paid most of the expense out of his own pocket.

The carefully drafted proposal would not actually make legal the possession of marijuana for medical purposes. “The city charter specifically precludes voters from adopting any ordinance that would be contrary to state or federal law,” Beck observed.

So, following a precedent set recently in Mendocino County, CA, the ordinance instead makes enforcement of marijuana prohibition laws against medical users the city’s lowest law enforcement priority. It also cuts funding for prosecutions under such circumstances from the city budget.

“Patients would have to establish a medical need,” Beck continued, “by securing the recommendation of a doctor or other qualified medical practitioner.”

And, of course, this ordinance will do nothing to stop law enforcement officers from Wayne County, the state of Michigan or the federal government from arresting and prosecuting medical marijuana users in Detroit. “But as a practical matter,” the Coalition chair noted, “prosecution of simple possession of small quantities of marijuana has always fallen to local authorities. So this ordinance should make the discreet medical marijuana user much less vulnerable to prosecution in Detroit.”

The next election is the August primary — where Detroit is expected to be the key battleground for the Democratic Party’s gubernatorial nomination. One of the three main contenders in that race, US Congressman David Bonior (D-Mount Clemens), has already endorsed the proposal. The other two, former governor James Blanchard and current attorney

general Jennifer Granholm, have yet to publicly take a position. But, given the controversial nature of the issue on the same ballot, the press will undoubtedly push for Blanchard and Granholm to also make official statements either for or against the measure.

It is possible under the initiative procedure for the Detroit city council to spare the other politicians the heat and the voters the trouble by adopting the ordinance themselves by February 7 (within 30 days of certification by the city clerk).



Tim Beck formed the Detroit Coalition for Compassionate Care

“I’m not holding my breath waiting for [Detroit city council president] Maryann Mahaffey and friends to write a new chapter in Profiles in Courage,” quipped Beck’s fellow Wayne County member Tim O’Brien who has

been working closely with him on the issue. “What’s in it for them?” he asked. “They have their own political ambitions.”

And unelected city bureaucrats seem to be doing everything they can to derail the issue. The legal department sent the Coalition a letter stating that it was their opinion that the council does not have the authority to set priorities within city departments or to proscribe particular budget expenditures and that, therefore, neither do voters.

“I’m not sure which of those is the more ridiculous claim,” answers Coalition chair Beck, noting that the inclusion of a “severability clause” in the proposal means that opponents would have to prevail on both. “In any case I can find nothing in the law that makes getting the approval of the city’s legal department a step in the ballot initiative process.”

Michigan ACLU executive director Kary Moss has already offered to take the question of providing legal representation for the Coalition to her organization’s review committee — should it actually become necessary to seek a Writ of Mandamus to compel the city clerk to put the question on the ballot.

Meanwhile, the Wayne County LP is going ahead with plans to organize a spring fundraiser in hopes of building the largest possible advertising war chest to support the issue. “We were looking for a project anyway,” said affiliate chair Heather Pauli. “And I can’t think of a better one than taking a weapon out of the government’s hands in their hysterical War on Drugs,” she concluded.

This space reserved for news from your affiliate

If you don't see any news in this issue from your part of the state, it is because *Michigan Libertarian* didn't know about it. You don't have to write a complete story, just send an email that something is going on and we will call the right people and put the story together ourselves!

Email news to: newsletter@lpnich.org

HB5237: End the Top-of-Ticket Rule

by Leonard Schwartz

A political party loses its ballot status, under current Michigan law, if its top-of-ticket candidate (the one whose name appears nearest the top of the ballot) gets less than one percent of the votes cast for the successful candidate for secretary of state.

The Libertarian Party of Michigan had nine statewide candidates in 2000. All but one of them got more than enough votes for LPM to retain its ballot status. Unfortunate the one candidate who failed to get enough votes was our top-of-ticket candidate — our candidate for president.

To regain ballot status, LPM had to conduct a petition drive, which was time-consuming and expensive. It used up resources that we would rather use to get our message across.

House Bill 5237 would make it easier for small political parties to stay on the ballot. It would allow a party to retain its ballot status if any of its statewide candidates got at least one percent of the votes cast for the successful can-

didate for secretary of state.

Please ask your state senator and representative to support House Bill 5237.

SpeakOutMichigan provides an easy way



for you to send e-mail to them. It provides a prewritten letter, to which you can add personal comments. Type in your zip code and SpeakOutMichigan will determine who your

state legislators are and send them the letter. It takes only a minute or two.

Please include your street address. This will clearly indicate that you live in their district. Legislators are mainly concerned with the opinions of their constituents.

SpeakOutMichigan also provides an easy way for you to send e-mail to your friends so that you can ask them to contact their state legislators, as well. Again there is a prewritten letter, which you can edit.

SpeakOutMichigan is sponsored by the Libertarian Party of Michigan. Either go to www.lpmich.org and click SpeakOutMichigan or go to www.SpeakOutMichigan.org.

A better way to lobby for HB 5237 is to send snail mail letters to your legislators. They probably consider constituents who take the time and money to send snail mail more concerned than those who use e-mail. You can copy the prewritten letter from SpeakOutMichigan and paste it into a snail mail letter.



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The Prison Priorities Project

by Padraic Gresham

Former LPM executive director Tim O'Brien has organized a legally recognized ballot question committee called the Prison Priorities Project. The purpose of the committee is to move the criminal justice system in Michigan in a more libertarian direction via the initiative process. Diane Szabla has signed on as treasurer, and Leonard Schwartz as legal counsel. Both served in those same capacities on the Ballot Access Restoration Committee. Bill Shotey has also joined to do fund-raising.

"The one Libertarian idea that virtually no one disagrees with, regardless of their political affiliation, is that the primary function of government is to protect its citizens from force and fraud," O'Brien noted. "The problem is the 20th century notion that it is also possible to use the force of government to protect people from themselves," he added.

"Undoubtedly the most universal Libertarian dream is to get the run-amuck law enforcement genie back into that 18th century bottle called the U.S. Constitution," O'Brien continued. "If we can just accomplish that goal, I'm sure all of us could then have a much more leisurely conversation about whether or not we want to turn the roads and the water supply system over to the private sector," he added with a grin.

And there is one thing further in this regard that draws near unanimous agreement among Libertarians: the single most dangerous instance of defining the merely self-destructive as criminal is drug prohibition.

Numerous, detailed books have been written on all the negative consequences of the so-called "War on Drugs." Among others, our long cherished constitutional protections, ostensibly guaranteed under the Bill of Rights, have been all but destroyed. Our neighborhoods have been turned into free-fire zones and our children recruited (ironically, precisely because of their legal status as juveniles) into the black market by organized crime. The incredible sums of money involved have corrupted law enforcement. And the entire criminal justice system has been inundated, clogged and all but overwhelmed in this futile attempt to use government to protect people from the consequences of their own vices — a purpose our founders never envisioned and for which our systems were never designed.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKING

In 1994 Governor Engler convinced Michigan voters to drastically alter the way public education is funded by substituting a 50% increase in the state sales tax for reliance upon local property taxes. This centralizing scheme was sold to voters as a way to get property tax relief while simultaneously helping to level funding among school districts. Times were good. And "Big Jawn" Engler convinced voters that, like in that mythical, little, bucolic town of Lake Wobegone where *all* the kids are above average, this was a tax shift where *everyone* would be a winner.

But retail sales are very sensitive to the vagaries of the economy. They are inevitably the

"Undoubtedly the most universal Libertarian dream is to get the run-amuck law enforcement genie back into that 18th century bottle called the U.S. Constitution."

first casualty of a recession. Since the tax shift made education funding nearly half of the state budget, the drop in sales tax revenue caused by the current recession has left our state with an estimated \$1 billion shortfall in next year's budget. In addition the 1978 Headlee Tax Limitation amendment has effectively precluded raising some other tax to offset the loss.

For old party politicians even proposing to merely slow the growth of education expenditures is dangerous to long-term ambitions. Advocating actual reductions would be political suicide. Left with no other option, officials are now scrambling to find other places to cut.

There will never be a better opportunity for opponents of the 'nanny state' to get everyone reconsidering the wisdom of devoting a substantial portion of our scarce law enforcement resources to the ill-conceived, ill-fated 'Noble Experiment' redux of drug prohibition. "For years the politicians' answer has been to simply spend more money to build more prisons. With that evasion now untenable we can finally compel them to choose," O'Brien observed. "Do they think it is more important to lock up pot smokers... or armed robbers?"

HARMONIC CONVERGENCE

Coincidentally, a California-based national

organization called Campaign for New Drug Policies just launched a petition drive in Michigan to amend our state constitution by changing the emphasis in our approach to the problem of substance abuse from the criminal justice to the healthcare system.

In broad terms the proposal would mandate medical treatment rather than incarceration for both first and second offense simple possession. It would also create a commission to revise sentencing guidelines for other drug crimes such as manufacturing and trafficking, as well as subsequent possession offenses. The new sentencing guidelines could (but would not be required to) be applied retroactively to those already incarcerated. This would free up prison space to be used for protecting us from murderers, rapists and other predators — while simultaneously relieving some of the pressure on the overstrained state budget.

The Campaign for New Drug Policies organization has a good track record in sponsoring drug law reform initiatives, having succeeded in 17 of 19 efforts — including a 2000 campaign that amended the California constitution in the same way now being proposed here in Michigan. Anticipated annual savings to California taxpayers: \$150 million.

PROBLEM FOR THE LEFT COAST

This Michigan petition must have the signatures of 302,711 registered voters to qualify for the November 2002 ballot. In addition these signatures must all be gathered within a 180-day period.

Since the California group has no direct connection to political organizations and interest groups here they must rely entirely upon hiring paid petitioners through local want ads in their attempt to get the proposal to the ballot.

Experience indicates that for a variety of reasons approximately one fourth of the petition signatures will not pass the Bureau of Elections validity check — some will be illegible, some will have addresses that don't match voter registration rolls, and so forth. Further, the validity rate of signatures gathered by paid contractors is significantly lower than for those gathered by volunteers motivated by a philosophical dedication to the cause. Relying entirely on paid petitioners will necessitate collecting more

than 400,000 gross signatures to insure a sufficient number of valid ones. The cold weather and early darkness of winter in Michigan create an additional obstacle.

The Campaign for New Drug Policies has never undertaken so ambitious a project under such challenging conditions.

THE FIRST STEP

The Libertarian Party of Michigan has about 2,000 current and recent members. There are a similar number of volunteers who worked on the Personal Responsibility Amendment petition drive last year that sought (but failed) to qualify another drug reform proposal for the Michigan ballot.

The active assistance of at least some portion of this 4,000-person force of political activists could surely be a tremendous adjunct to the paid petition drive. To put the potential value here into perspective consider that if each of those people collected 100 signatures, they would complete the drive... by themselves! While it is obviously unrealistic to expect that degree of participation, it underscores the importance of not ignoring this currently untapped resource. (It is worth noting that, though they came up short of their goal, PRA organizers last year collected more than 200,000 signatures – entirely by volunteers!)

While the Prison Priorities Project has been established as an ongoing committee with the ultimate purpose of returning all law enforcement exclusively to defending citizens against force and fraud, even a journey of 1,000 miles, it has been observed, begins with a first step.

“The biggest obstacle to advancing the Libertarian agenda via the initiative process has always been the enormity of the task,” O’Brien said. “The fact that a well-financed drug law reform organization has already chosen our state, drafted constitutional amendment language, printed petitions, and begun paying people to circulate them, gives us an unprecedented opportunity. If those of us here in Michigan who support the idea join the effort, together we stand an excellent chance of actually bypassing the posturing politicians and bringing the question directly to the voters.”

Mandatory medical treatment rather than incarceration is, of course, not the Libertarian ideal. But just moving substance abuse from the criminal justice to the healthcare system will be a great stride in the right direction in that it gets voters and taxpayers to recognize that vices are not crimes. “Purist Libertarians should recall that FDR didn’t start by proposing a full-blown

welfare state,” the Prison Priorities Project chair noted. “Neither should we expect to dismantle nearly a century of collectivist thinking in a single stroke.”

HOME FIELD ADVANTAGES

In addition to access to the resources and membership rolls of political activists here in Michigan, having a local presence also facilitates promoting the issue in the media with press releases, interviews and so forth. Plus, having a Michigan-based committee will pre-empt the “carpetbagger” red-herring — an attack already being leveled against the California-based Campaign for New Drug Policies which will surely only intensify as opponents cast around for emotional distractions from rational discussion.

Once as many Libertarian and PRA volunteers as possible have been recruited the effort will be expanded by approaching other groups sympathetic with the initiative’s goal such as the Michigan chapter of NORML, the Triangle Foundation, and even the Green Party. One lesson we should have learned from the old parties is that effective politics is the art of forming alliances with disparate groups where interests converge.

PHASE II

Combining volunteer efforts with paid petitioning will dramatically change the odds for getting the amendment to the November ballot – from long-shot to virtual sure thing. But the object here, of course, is not to collect signatures for its own sake, but to amend the Michigan constitution.

Organizers of previous initiatives have learned a bitter lesson that has not been lost on the P3 committee. It is not enough to simply get a proposal before the voters if all resources are consumed in the process. The Drug Warriors – who will bear none of the costs associated with bringing the reform issue to the ballot – will unleash their financial arsenal in a concentrated advertising blitz in hopes of dominating the media with their hysterical fear-mongering in the weeks leading up to election day.

But we need not go into the final battle unarmed. Because the Prison Priorities Project is legally organized as a ballot question committee far fewer restrictions and limitations apply than to either candidate or political action committees. A ballot question committee may accept contributions in any amount from almost any source. The only proscribed contributions are from foreign nationals and cash donations of more than \$20.

Any P3 funds remaining once the issue has qualified for the ballot will become available for promoting a “Yes” vote to the electorate. In addition, once the Bureau of Elections has certified the initiative, the committee can then serve as the vehicle for raising the funds needed for a fall advertising campaign – legally permitted to seek donations of *any* size from virtually *any* source, including corporations, foundations, labor unions, organizations, and individual contributors both small and large.

THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME

The Campaign for New Drug Policies began this petition drive in the belief that individuals who allow drug use to damage their lives and health have a medical and/or psychological problem. Defining them as criminals does nothing to help them, their families, or society as a whole.

The California group couldn’t have a chosen a better time to raise this issue here because, even setting all of the other consequences of prohibition aside, we can make a strong case to the electorate that in Michigan in 2002 we simply can no longer afford this use of our limited law enforcement resources.

However, the prospects for a California-based organization collecting more than 300,000 valid signatures in the dead of a Michigan winter — relying entirely on contractors and without any local support — are less than great.

We have an opportunity to build a supporting coalition — based right here in Michigan — of both those who are opposed to prohibition (either in principle or in practice) and those who simply believe that our limited law enforcement resources would be better utilized in protecting citizens from predators than in continuing this expensive and ultimately futile effort to protect them from themselves.

Expect to get a copy of the petition in the mail shortly from the new Prison Priorities Project committee. Use it to get as many signatures as you can. Send it back, along with a contribution if possible (corporate checks welcome!).

Then, next November, for the first time in Michigan history, you will have an opportunity to finally cast a vote to turn the tide in the War on Drugs — the misguided, destructive futility that has become the War on Taxpayers, the War on the Constitution, and the War on our American Heritage of Liberty.

For more information, call Tim O’Brien at: (313) 562-5778.

Steinport Elected Treasurer

by Greg Dirasian



Grand Rapids. Grand Rapids Board of Education members elected Libertarian Jeff Steinport as their new treasurer.

Steinport, elected to the board just last June, replaces Jerome Dixon who resigned due to legal problems. Steinport was elected to this post on January 4, less than 7 months after his election to the board itself.

Steinport was selected over the previous treasurer who wanted his old job back.

Board President, Brian Craig, said he nominated Steinport, 22, to be the new treasurer because he is a member of the Finance Committee and has proven to be a hard worker in his short time on the board. "I think it's time for the older board members to give way to the next generation," Craig declared.

Steinport will have his work cut out for him. Grand Rapids public (government) schools are plagued by a myriad of problems. And complicated by the January 8 announcement from the school Superintendent, Patricia Newby, she is resigning effective in June.

Newby has been a controversial figure since becoming Superintendent in 1997, at first proposing a bond issue to have several new schools built and then initiating a plan that proposed several of the schools.

Steinport has a golden opportunity to implement creative libertarian solutions and steady the roller-coaster ride that his predecessors made in the management of the district covering over 180,000 residents.

Eisenbacher Turns in Nominating Petitions

by Barbara Goushaw

Troy. David Eisenbacher announced that he will turn in his nominating petitions to City Hall on Friday, January 18, at 3:00pm. This is Eisenbacher's second run for Troy City Council, missing last year by less than 400 votes, finishing third out of 9 candidates, and beating incumbent John Stevens, despite being significantly outspent.

"We came so close last year," he said. "At the beginning of my campaign, I was pretty much unknown to the voters. But in just a few months, so many Troy residents responded to my message that I came within a few hundred votes of winning. This time we will make sure that everyone hears about me, and what I want to do for this city."

Eisenbacher's message is one of open, accountable city government. In fact, one of his core issues in the last campaign, that of televising work and special sessions of the council, has since been adopted by the council. "Even without winning the election, I was able to have an impact," he said. "But there is still so much more to be done."

Last week Eisenbacher mailed a letter to 3300 households that will be affected by the proposed wetlands ordinance to remind them

of the public meeting being held to discuss it. "I wanted to make sure that everyone who's property was involved knew there was a meeting," he said. His letter also advised residents where they could find the proposed ordinance on the web, and offered to bring them a printed copy if they didn't have web access. Over 350 people showed up at meeting, many attendees expressing their thanks to Eisenbacher for bringing it to their attention.

Eisenbacher will also campaign on the council's recent decision to place the highly controversial council pension on the April 1st ballot as a charter amendment prohibiting the council and commissioners from receiving a city paid pension. "It's time this issue was resolved once and for all," he declared. "I oppose a pension for the council, and I believe most of the voters do too. In this election people will have the opportunity to make sure the council hears them loud and clear, so I will talk about it at every opportunity. I want the voters to know that it's on the ballot too."

"The people of Troy deserve to know exactly what the council is doing and how it affects them. Keeping them informed is my first and most important campaign promise."



David and Heather Eisenbacher take one of our newest libertarians, Caleb David Eisenbacher, to the Troy city clerk's office as David turns in his nominating petitions.

Future of the LPM

by Fred Collins

The way to change the system is to change the system. Sounds simple, right? The way to change things that we don't like is to get in there and change them.

2001 was an amazing year. In April we came within a whisker of getting a second Libertarian elected to the Troy city council. Then in June Jeff Steinport was elected to the Grand Rapids School Board. Topping off the year in November we triumphed by getting Libertarians elected to both the Owosso and Hazel Park City Councils. Honorable mentions go to a very close race by Mr. Hodges in Harper Woods, and Erin Stahl winning her primary in St. Clair Shores. Both Erin and Craig should be able to do it next time, just as we hope to be successful with David Eisenbacher's second run in Troy this April.

This is how we make the changes. We get in the game and we play to win! Here in Oakland County, we have three city council members, and over time I have heard laments that "of course you can do it in Oakland you have the resources." So now I get to ask, "How do you explain Mr. Owen and Mr. Steinport?" These are two Libertarians who went out and got the job done, even though they live in affiliates that are small in membership numbers. Did they have help? Of course they did. Elections are hard work. In spite of the many years I have been doing it, I wouldn't tackle one by myself. The point is that it was *their* names on the ballot and *their* egos at risk. They prevailed. And our party is stronger, and our state a better place, because they did.

In fact I want to thank every person who has put it on the line for the party. Every time someone makes a good showing in an election it makes it just a little easier for the next person. The more letters and calls our state officials get, the easier it is for our lobbyists to convince them we are right. The more hands on the pallet the easier it is to lift the load.

To the people who fell a little short in '01, I say: Please try again! Your efforts were not in vain. If you need help, I will try to help you. And I hope that everyone who reads this will too. To those who have not yet stepped up I say: Please join us! It's not as hard as it looks from the outside. And it's a lot of fun. There are hundreds of jobs that need to be done and I know that you are good at some of them. A couple of hours of your time can go a long way.

We are on the verge of something great. If we all pull in the same direction, we can win. We can have a full time office where people can get information about us and our candidates from a real person. We can set up a support network, with people who have already done it helping those who are trying for the first time. We could even have a full time lobbyist in Lansing to watch the rascals.

Anything is possible, if we just try a little harder, go a little farther, stay true to our principles, and to each other.



KAY DIRASIAN



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Campaign Finance Information for LPM Affiliates

by Leonard Schwartz, LPM campaign finance law adviser

An LPM affiliate can (directly or indirectly) support its candidates in at least five ways:

1. It can encourage its members to contribute money directly to each candidate's campaign committee.
2. It can use its general fund for leaflets and ads encouraging persons to vote Libertarian without identifying any candidates.
3. It can encourage its members to create political committees that will help finance candidate campaigns.
4. It can create a separate local Libertarian Party campaign committee that will help finance candidate campaigns.
5. It can use one fund both for direct candidate support and for general purposes. This is the worst method. An affiliate should never use the same fund for direct candidate support and for general purposes. If it does, the entire fund becomes subject to Michigan's campaign finance law. If contributions exceed \$1000 a year, it must report all contributions and expenditures to the Bureau of Elections.

If your affiliate has been using the same fund for direct candidate support and for general purposes, I strongly suggest that it use the existing fund for candidate support and create a new general fund for general purposes. As long as the general fund does not finance candidate campaigns, it is exempt from Michigan's campaign finance law.

Even some large affiliates (like Oakland County) do not have local LP campaign committees. They rely on methods 1-3. If your affiliate wants a local LP campaign committee, here is how:

How to Start a Local LP Campaign Committee

1. Select a name for your campaign committee.

State law allows two types of local political party campaign committees: county committees and Congressional district committees. For a single county affiliate, choose a name like "Oakland County Libertarian Fund."

Multi-county affiliates can select one county for the name. For example, the Tri-Cities affiliate could choose the name "Saginaw County Libertarian Fund." Or the affiliate can select its Congressional district. For example, the Upper Peninsula affiliate could choose the name "District One Libertarian Fund." Two affiliates cannot choose the same name. Thus if the Upper Peninsula affiliate chooses the name "District One Libertarian Fund," the Traverse Bay affiliate could not choose the same name.

The name of your committee does not limit your campaigning. You can solicit contributions from all U.S. citizens even if they do not live in Michigan. And you can use the money to support any candidate in Michigan.

2. Select a treasurer.

The campaign committee treasurer also can be the general fund treasurer. The treasurer is liable for any errors made by the committee.

3. Contact:

Bureau of Elections,
208 North Capitol
Lansing MI 48933.
517-373-2540

Ask the Bureau to send you:

- a. Michigan Campaign Finance Political Party Committee Manual.
- b. Political Party Committee Campaign Statement Forms.
- c. Campaign Statement Instruction and Forms for Political Party Committees.

Make copies of the blank forms, fill in the copies, and make copies of the completed forms.

4. Submit a Statement of Organization.
5. Get an IRS taxpayer identification number.

You cannot use the affiliate's general fund identification number. Call 1-800-829-3676 and ask for Form SS-4 or download this form from www.irs.gov.

6. After the Bureau of Elections and the IRS send you identification numbers, open a checking account.
7. Keep proper records of contributions and expenditures.
8. If contributions or expenditures exceed \$1000 in a year, file reports with the Bureau of Elections.

Note: If contributions to or expenditures on behalf of federal candidates collectively exceed \$1000 in a year, you must also register with the Federal Election Commission.

Free Web Hosting for LPM Candidates and LPM Affiliates

LPM member, Trevor Peck, is offering free web site hosting for any LP candidate (or affiliate) in Michigan.

He also offers a 50% discount on design, but notes that an order is not required to get the free hosting.

Trevor can be contacted at: trevor@pecktec.com

[Editor's note: Thank you, Trevor. We need more like you!]

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!

Collver Appointed to Hazel Park ZBA

by Keith Wesselmann

Hazel Park — On the heels of Andy LeCureaux's election to Hazel Park City Council, the council voted to appoint LeCureaux's campaign manager, Dave Collver, to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), term ending April 2003.

Collver, who is currently attending law school at the University of Detroit Mercy, ran an impressive campaign - impressive enough that the Hazel Park city council was willing to place him on a board that is almost as influential as the council itself.

The ZBA hears and votes on requests from residents and developers for zoning variances.

Collver's name is already being mentioned as a possible candidate for city council in 2003. "Dave is an intelligent young man who has his [act] together," said Assistant City Manager Ed Klobucher

Collver joins LeCureaux and Lloyd Sherman as the third Libertarian to hold public office in Hazel Park. Sherman currently sits on four boards: the Brownfield Authority, the Facilities and Infrastructure Citizens Advisory Board, the Fence Review Board, and the Charter and Code Committee.



Dave Collver

LPOC Elects New Officers

by Leonard Schwartz

The Libertarian Party of Oakland County changed its bylaws, converting its three at-large directors to functional directors.

The new officers are:

Chair: Fred Martin	Functional Directors
Vice-chair: Keith Wesselmann	Membership: Laurie Martin
Secretary: Nathan Allen	Fundraising: Jerry Kaufman
Treasurer: Dianne Szabla	Communications: Greg Dirasian

The shift from at-large directors to functional directors is intended to minimize two recurrent problems:

(1) Often there is important work that none of the at-large directors wants to do. They expect the chair to do the work or find volunteers to do it. Important work often is not done or is done poorly. Because the chair has too much responsibility, finding good persons to serve as chair often is difficult.

(2) Sometimes an at-large director is willing to do little or no work, but spends much time criticizing the persons who are volunteering. This discourages persons from volunteering.

At the next state party convention some members will propose a similar amendment to the state party bylaws. The tentative proposal will replace the current five at-large directors with the following seven functional directors: membership director, fundraising director, communications director, newsletter director, internet director, affiliate affairs director, and headquarters operations director.

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Party of 2002
Michigan * *



Leadership Conference

Grand Rapids ** Crowne Plaza
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- * **Learn the tools of success from winners!**
- * **Share your methods**
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More Information: Ben Steele
989-288-5616 or bsteeler1@tir.com



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More Information: Bill Gelineau
616-249-9735 or
freedomlover59@hotmail.com

What Is the Best Way to Promote Libertarianism?

by Leonard Schwartz

What is the best way for you to promote libertarianism? Should you lobby, petition, or demonstrate on behalf of specific issues? Should you be a candidate (or support candidates) for nonpartisan local office, partisan local office, or partisan state or federal office?

What is the best way for you to "challenge the cult of the omnipotent state and defend the rights of the individual"? ("Statement of Principles" in LP platform.)

Answering that question is a lot like answering the question, What type of exercise is best for you? Many fitness gurus preach running, hiking, weight lifting, biking, etc. Regardless of the theoretical advantages of different types of exercise, none will do you any good unless you do it. And most people won't do any exercise for very long unless they enjoy it. So the best type of exercise for you is whichever exercise you enjoy.

Likewise, many political gurus preach lobbying, petitioning, demonstrating, nonpartisan local campaigning, partisan local campaigning, or partisan state and federal campaigning. The gurus usually evaluate these methods using cost/benefit analysis. They usually define the benefits as winning an election, getting a large percentage of votes, getting a large number of votes, attracting new Libertarian members, eliminating bad government policies, or preventing proposed bad government policies.

Regardless of the theoretical advantages of each method, most Libertarians won't do it for very long unless they enjoy it.

The issues that are most important to most Libertarians are state and federal issues, such as:

1. ending civil asset forfeiture,
2. supporting the right to bear arms,
3. ending unreasonable searches and seizures, and
4. ending the war against natural herbal medicines, like marijuana.

Therefore, many Libertarians like to be (or support) candidates for partisan state or federal office. Although they know that they will get a small share of the votes, they aren't concerned with that measure of success. This is the best way to run on specifically libertarian issues. They consider this the best way to promote libertarianism and recruit new members.

Other Libertarians like to be (or support) candidates for nonpartisan local office. These elections avoid the "wasted-vote" problem and

are the easiest to win.

Candidates for local office rarely have distinctly libertarian issues. Sometimes they have no specific libertarian or non-libertarian issues criticizing incumbents. Fred Collins and Martin Howrylak won city council elections on utilitarian issues. Mark Owen won a city council election after a successful petition and referendum on a libertarian issue. Erin Stahl and Craig Hodges had no specific issues criticizing incumbents, and they lost their city council races. Only Andy LeCureaux won a city council election without a specific issue criticizing incumbents.

Some Libertarians prefer the middle ground of being (or supporting) candidates for partisan local office. This allows them to run as Libertarians. With limited campaign budgets, they can get a larger percentage of the vote than in races for state or federal office.

Many Libertarians believe that if Libertarian candidates get more votes than the difference between the Democratic and Republican

candidates, the major party candidates in future elections will try to attract Libertarian voters by adopting libertarian positions on the issues. Thus, libertarian positions will become mainstream positions.

Many Libertarians support lobbying, petitioning, and demonstrating on behalf of specific issues. These are more direct ways of eliminating existing bad government policies and preventing proposed bad policies from being adopted. Libertarians usually can form coalitions with non-Libertarian groups to achieve these goals. These methods avoid the "wasted-vote" problem of partisan elections. Furthermore, these usually are inexpensive ways of promoting libertarianism and the Libertarian Party. These methods are especially popular during non-election years.

Promoting libertarianism can be fun. Use whatever methods you consider enjoyable to achieve whatever measure of success you value.

Affiliate Committee News

by Ben Steele III

As the new chair of the LPM Affiliates Committee it is my intention to contact each affiliate and visit as many of you as I can in the next few months. I will be asking you to set aside a half hour in your meetings to allow me to address your members. I will be bringing news of LPM affiliate support programs and seeking input on the direction of the Libertarian Party in Michigan and ideas about how the state party can help our affiliates succeed.

I don't have to tell any of you that in 2002 you will carry the Libertarian Party on your shoulders as you recruit, train, and run candidates for local, state, and national offices. It is my intention to work to make the load as light and as rewarding to bear as possible. You ARE the Libertarian Party of Michigan!

One way that we plan to help you succeed is to make sure that candidate recruitment, training, and paperwork is done as efficiently as possible. These tasks will be the focus of attention at our 2002 Winter Leadership Conference on March 9. I hope that everyone who plans to take a role, however small, in this year's elections

will attend this conference.

The Leadership Conference will be held at the Crowne Plaza in downtown Grand Rapids (5700 28th St. SE). The event will run from 9:30am until 4pm There will be an optional buffet lunch available for \$10. A full schedule of events is not yet available. You will receive a flyer with more details soon.

The 2002 Winter Leadership Conference will be hosted by the Libertarian Party of West Michigan. The West Michigan Liberty Banquet will be held in the same facility on the same day, from 5 pm until approximately 9 pm.

I am looking forward to touching base with my old friends in the months ahead, and to meeting those of you whom I have not yet met. If you have any questions or ideas regarding the relationship of the state party to your local party, please contact me at 989-288-5616 or bstele1@tir.com.

If there is no local Libertarian Party in your neighborhood, and you are interested in starting one, please contact me. I will ensure that you get all the help you need to get a productive local party off the ground.

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

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 P.M. at headquarters.

Present were: Committee - Mike Corliss, Ghazey Aleck, Keith Edwards, Trafton Jean, Diane Barnes, Greg Dirasian, Leonard Schwartz and Ben Steele III. Others - Marnie Edwards, Fred Collins, Bill Gelineau, Tom Jones, David Raaflaub, Steve Townsend, Lloyd Sherman, and (later) Jay Gillotte.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as corrected. The name of Leonard Schwartz was not typed consistently.

Mike Corliss reported that the resignation of Tim O'Brien as Executive Director was received and accepted.

Ben Bachrach will resign as Database Manager in order to replace Mark Heil as Webmaster. Corliss will seek a new Database Manager. Greg Dirasian advised that there is a bug in Nidus. Tom Quinn will represent the LPM in the Ruley Estate matter. Mike Corliss and Ghazey Aleck reported on the Dec. 1 meeting with the other minor parties on the subject of ballot access. Broader changes were suggested there than are in our current lobbying effort. They will meet again on Jan. 12. They will not act until a decision is reached on our Bill 5237.

Fred Collins reported on plans for the 2002 State Convention to be held at Troy Marriott, May 17-19. There will be breakout sessions for training local candidates. The timing of such sessions was questioned as interfering with business. Keith Edwards moved that the LEC recommend to the Bylaws Committee that the bylaws be changed to consider bylaws only in odd-numbered years, except that the Convention may waive this rule by a two-thirds vote. This is designed to lighten the agenda in election years. Seconded by Leonard Schwartz and passed 6-1.

Jay Gillotte of Presort Services solicited our business on doing mailings. It is the third largest mailing house in Michigan with a free lance writer on staff. Operates in Lansing and Grand Rapids. He suggested personalized fundraising letters. He is an LPM member and would make only a modest profit. Mike Corliss will write a draft of the next fundraising letter and try Pre-

sort.

Ghazey Aleck reported that there have been inquiries from Delta and Gratiot Counties regarding affiliate status. The Delta group seems like a good prospect to him.

Keith Edwards expressed concern over the appearance of the headquarters. Mike Corliss will head a clean-up and reorganization on Sunday, December 9.

Leonard Schwartz moved to accept the report of the Language Committee and the motions contained therein. Seconded by Ben Steele III and passed unanimously.

Diane Barnes moved to abolish the position of Executive Director, which is now vacant. Seconded by Keith Edwards. A motion to table failed 3-4. Motion failed 4-4.

Fred Collins addressed the Committee on the subject of unity and civility.

Greg Dirasian moved that the At-large Directors each take on one of the following functions: Membership, Fundraising, Newsletter, Public Relations, and Internet

Directors. Seconded by Ben Steele III. Keith Edwards, as Parliamentarian ruled that this was in effect a change in the bylaws, which can only be done by the Convention. Chair Corliss agreed. The motion was reworded to a request for the Chair to ask the At-Large Directors to volunteer. It was argued that this limits the search for such volunteers, that the Directors might individually prefer other tasks and that this was intimidating. Motion passed 4-3.

Chair Corliss raised the question of filling the Committee vacancy caused by the resignation of Nancy O'Brien. Ben Steele III moved that the vacancy not be filled. Seconded by Diane Barnes. Passed 6-1

There was a discussion of strengthening

the Affiliates Committee. Ghazey Aleck (who had left the meeting by then) has been contacting possible new affiliates, but no one was helping the existing ones where needed. Ben Steele III volunteered to head the committee if Aleck had no objection. Lloyd Sherman also volunteered. Chair Corliss will contact Aleck to see if it would be acceptable to the latter for Ben to head the committee.

There have been no developments on the Jon Coon lawsuit on ballot access. Ghazey Aleck is to expedite this.

Leonard Schwartz reported that there are no further developments on the IRS 527 lawsuit filed by the Republicans.

Diane Barnes submitted a bid by Libertarians of Macomb County to host the 2002 Liberty Fest Awards Banquet. Chair Corliss will check with other affiliates to see if there are any other bids.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 P.M.
Respectfully submitted,
Keith Edwards, Secretary



Hudler Announces Run for LPM Chair

by Fred Collins

In the December issue of *The Washtenaw Libertarian* James Hudler announced that he will run for LPM Executive Committee. In late-breaking news, Mr. Hudler has stated that the specific office he will seek is chair of the Libertarian Party of Michigan at the LPM's 2002 convention in Troy.

"I think that my experience and history with the LPM will permit me to bring some stability to the committee," Hudler said in a recent phone interview.

Mr. Hudler has been an active member of the Party since 1972. Besides being one of the founding members of the LPM, he has run for public office four times, and served on the LEC FIVE times as Chair.

Upcoming Events

February 5, 2002 - 6:30 PM

Monthly Meeting - LP of Wayne County
Optional dinner starts at 6:30pm
Meeting with program starts at 7:45pm
All are welcome to attend.
Business: Nominations of new officers.
Location: City Tavern
14316 Michigan Ave
Dearborn - between Greenfield and Schaffer
Contact: Heather Pauli Phone: (313) 538-8208 E-mail: heatherpauli@hotmail.com

February 5, 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

February 11, 2002 - 7:00 PM

Clare-Gladwin Libertarian Party Meeting, issues to be discussed is candidate recruitment, Spring fundraiser and framing local issues. Refreshments provided.
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

February 12, 2002 - 7:30 PM

LP of Oakland County Executive Committee Meeting. All dues-paying members are welcome. Business begins at 7:30pm.
Location: LPM Headquarters, 619 East Nine Mile in Hazel Park, just east of I-75.
Contact: Greg Dirasian Phone: (248) 417-2217 E-mail: greg@lpocmi.org

February 13, 2002 - 6:30 PM

Libertarians of Macomb County monthly meeting. Drinks and dinner at 6:30 PM, business begins at 7:00 PM.
Location: Miles World Restaurant, 17689 Masonic, Fraser, MI 48026, 810-415-4500.
Contact: Diane Barnes Phone: (810) 774-1625 E-mail: dbarnes98@aol.com

February 23, 2002 - 6:00 PM

The Tri-City Libertarian Party is proud to

announce its first annual Freedom Dinner! This event is for anyone interested in preserving liberty and our Constitutional freedoms.
John Grether has accepted our invitation to speak at the event. His topic will be "From Terrorism to Tyranny".
Mr. Grether is a professor at Northwood University and an academic with the Midland Mackinaw Center for Public policy.
The dinner will be held on February 23, 2002, at The Paddock, which is located at 1013 North Henry St. in Bay City.
6:00 Social Hour
7:00 Dinner
Tickets are now available at a cost of \$20.00 per person. Admission will be by ticket only — no sales at the door. For reservations, please contact Stephen M. Townsend at (989) 631-4853 or Rae Jozwiak at (989) 922-5226. As always you can e-mail president@makingfreedomring.com or jozie@mail.com
Location: This year's event will be held on February 23, 2002 at The Paddock on 1013 North Henry St. in Bay City.
Contact: Stephen M. Townsend Phone: (989) 631-4853 E-mail: president@makingfreedomring.com

February 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

March 5, 2002 - 6:30 PM

Monthly Meeting - LP of Wayne County
Optional dinner starts at 6:30pm
Meeting with program starts at 7:45pm
All are welcome to attend.
Business: Election of New Officers
Location: City Tavern
14316 Michigan Ave
Dearborn - between Greenfield and Schaffer
Contact: Heather Pauli Phone: (313) 538-8208 E-mail: heatherpauli@hotmail.com

March 5, 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

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Contact: Diane Barnes Phone: (810) 774-1625 E-mail: dbarnes98@aol.com

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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 - 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

For more events, visit:

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

Slow News Day

A Message from the Editor



by Greg Dirasian

By now, you have probably noticed that there have been substantial changes in the newsletter. Many people have sent out compliments and almost all have asked, "Who is doing the newsletter now?" So, I'd like to take a few lines to introduce myself and tell you about some of the changes — not all of which are visible.

I wanted to do this in an earlier issue, but we had so much good news to report that I chose to defer my own message. We have experienced the usual drop off in activity after the November election and during the holiday season, so there is not a lot of news to report right now, leaving room for me to squeeze in this message. In short, it was "a slow news day."

First, a little about me. My name is Greg Dirasian. I have been an LP member since 1995, and an LPM member since moving back to Michigan in 1998. I was elected to the LPM executive committee last year. I am a graduate of the University of Michigan where I majored in computer science and minored in literature (yes, I know a little about writing and a little about desktop publishing). Upon being elected to the ExCom, I volunteered and was appointed to chair a newsletter committee — bringing my writing, computer and organizing abilities to the task.

Second, you may be wondering why my name has not been listed as editor until this issue. That was a conscious decision. I wanted the first few issues to reflect that the newsletter is a cooperative effort from many members.

I got involved in the newsletter because there were five changes that I wanted to see made.

1. Important news included when articles were delivered
2. Important news was reported on - even when it had to be actively tracked down
3. Presentation (color & graphics) improved by using the latest technology
4. Back issues archived on our web site for future reference
5. Development and production become an open process - including the opportunity for all ExCom members to review each issue prior to publication

Someday in the future, I hope we will be able to include multimedia in the online version of the newsletter - including sound and/or video clips of our lobbyists testifying before committees of the legislature in Lansing.

You may have noticed that there seems to be a disproportionate amount of news about Oakland county activities included. While I am more than happy to boast about the accomplishments of my own affiliate, this probably has more to do with the fact that I am aware of what my affiliate is doing.

Let me assure you, I get positively giddy when I hear news from around the state. But people seem reluctant to tell me about their accomplishments.

When I got the email that Bill Bradley was appointed to the South Haven City Council, I was on the phone telling everybody, "We got another one!" And, I knew I had my headline story for this issue. When Jeff Steinport was elected treasurer of the Grand Rapids Board of Education, just 7 months after winning election to the board itself, I was once again on the phone telling everybody that our folks are the best!

I am also very big on pictures. If your affiliate has an event, take a picture and send it to me. Stories with photos are always more interesting than those without. We all want to see Libertarians in action.

AND, when you send your news, email it to:

newsletter@lpmich.org

Please do not email it to my personal email address. Newsletter@lpmich.org is a special email account. It will automatically forward the email to me AND copy it to a special, separate, dedicated location. If you send your email to me only, there is a good chance that when I sit down to put the newsletter together, I will have forgotten about it. I get about 50 to 70 emails per day, so after a month or more your newsletter story could literally have been thousands of e-mails ago.

You should also feel free to email any questions or comments that you may have to the same email address: newsletter@lpmich.org. Your feedback is VERY important.

I hope you like the improvements we have made to the Michigan Libertarian.



Mark Carney
State Farm Insurance
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Holly, MI 48442-1685

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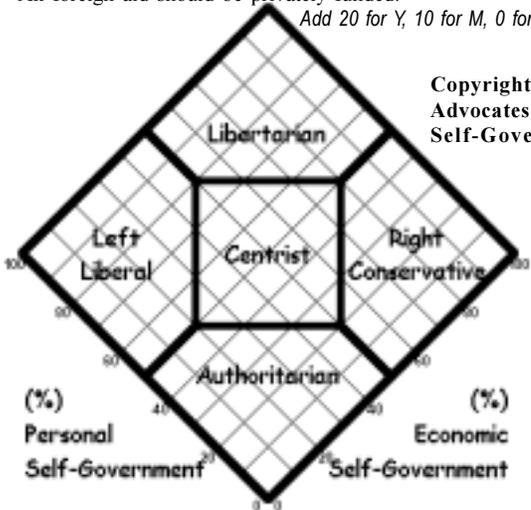
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World's Smallest Political Quiz

Personal Issues	Y	M	N
Military service should be voluntary. (No draft)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Govt. should not control radio, TV, the press or the Internet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Repeal regulations on sex for consenting adults	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Drug laws do more harm than good. Repeal them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Let peaceful people cross borders freely.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<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	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People are better off with free trade than with tariffs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minimum wage laws cause unemployment. Repeal them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
End taxes. Pay for services with user fees.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All foreign aid should be privately funded.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Add 20 for Y, 10 for M, 0 for N</i>			



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Take the **WORLD'S SMALLEST POLITICAL QUIZ**. Then, use the Self-Government Compass to find your political position. Mark **Y** when you agree with a statement, **M** for Maybe, Sometimes, or Need-More-Information, or mark **N** for No.

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

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Phone: _____

\$25 Michigan & National

\$35 Tri-Level (County, Michigan & National)

Occasionally we make our list available to other groups that wish to offer products or services to our members. Check here to be EXCLUDED from additional mailings.

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

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(Signature required for national membership)

Please charge this to my credit card (Visa or Mastercard only):

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Signature: _____

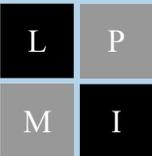
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