



# Gulf Coast Liberty

Defending liberty in southeast Texas in the Spirit of San Jacinto

January 2003

## Local Party Earns \$6,401 in 2002, Spends \$9,800

With an income last year of \$6,401 and expenses of \$9,800 it would seem that the Harris County LP is in trouble. But we're not. With just about \$700 in the bank, we're not in the best of shape, but we don't owe anything either.

In previous non-election years the HCLP Executive Committee had been putting money away for election-year expenses. It made sense to spend as much as we had in 2002—when ballot access was in question and we had more than 170 candidates on the ballot statewide.

However, with the loss of ballot access we are now in the position of having to fund what could be an expensive petition drive. Fundraising and your generosity this year to continue our outreach and our growth while saving for the next election cycle's costs is going to be very important.

More than half of 2002 income—\$3,678—came from individual donors. Another \$718 was from the State Party's County Share program, which was discontinued just before the elections. A final \$2,000 came from the State Party in late October to purchase television ads.

Without the State Party's ad money the total would be in line with income from 1998 and 1999 (\$4,136 and \$4,221 respectively). However, the overall total is better than last year's \$5,544. The best recent year for HCLP income was the Presidential election year 2000 when \$9,282 was donated locally.

The biggest expense HCLP made this year was \$5,000 for television advertising. This purchased 55

showings of our 60 second battered voter ad on Time Warner Cable channels just prior to the election. The ad ran on CNN, BET, ENT, MNBC, Scifi, Tech, Toon, and VH1.

The second major expense totaling \$3,736—was for the printing, mailing, and bulk rate permit for Gulf Coast Liberty. Other expenses included \$265 for the convention, \$78 for the Post Office box, \$132 for the bank account, \$47 for outreach literature, \$105 in office supplies (envelopes and tape) and \$155 in miscellaneous onetime expenses such as parade fees and booth rentals.

The HCLP phone line was again donated by John Kormylo. The website is maintained by Chair Anthony Garcia and is hosted on the State Party's site at no cost to us locally.

HCLP currently has about \$700 in the bank. Plans for a fundraising letter are in the works.

Despite losing ballot access the year was a good one in terms of the number of candidates we were able to put forward and the quality and activity of their campaigns. In fact, 28 local Libertarians were on the ballot. Most of these individuals ran active campaigns—blockwalking, putting up signs, speaking to groups and even garnering some media attention.

One Texan Libertarian was elected in 2002. Mark Wilson running



Outreach activists Marie Angell, Bil Abbot, & Monica Granger

in the May 4 election won a seat on the St. Paul City Council. Mark was later voted Mayor Pro Tem.

HCLP also showed a marked increase in activism and outreach this year. Operation Politically Homeless booths were held at the Westheimer Street Festival, the Junior Statesman Conference for high school students, a homeschooling conference, and a number of times at the University of Houston.

Many groups hosted Libertarian representatives and candidates as speakers. Student activism at UH increased dramatically with a group led by Monica Granger meeting weekly to organize outreach and candidate opportunities. A group at Bellaire High School were also active participants in Guy McLendon's campaign for US Rep. 25.

Overall, the local Party showed growth. With your support we should be able to continue this growth with more outreach, continue our communication with you through our newsletter and start the process of ensuring our candidates a chance in 2004.



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## Ballot Access Bill

Scott Placek, Williamson County LP Chair, and Rock Howard, of the Travis County LP, have drafted a ballot access reform bill that Rock is now lobbying members of the legislature to sponsor.

The bill would improve ballot access in Texas by making several changes to the state election law. First, the bill would reduce the petitioning requirements to get on the ballot from one percent of the votes in the most recent Governor's race to one half of one percent. Second, it would allow any registered voter to sign a ballot access petition without requiring affiliation with that party. Third, it would lower the requirement for retaining ballot status from five percent in a statewide race to two percent.

"The median threshold for ballot retention in the 50 states is 2%. The current 5% threshold is one of the strictest in the country," Rock says. The 75 day window to get signatures and the affiliation rule are also very restrictive.

## Aid to Rural Parties

Members of the Travis County LP in Austin met recently to devise plans to help organize 10 nearby counties that are currently dormant. The group including Rick McGinniss, Michael Badnarik, and Rock Howard hope to spend time and money to set up meetings and publicize outreach events in an effort to provide a catalyst for rural action.

"We are more likely to win elections in rural areas first since there are many more rural areas and the campaigns there are less expensive. Some-

times finding a willing person who can competently fill the office is most of what it takes to win. Furthermore, the very fact that members from urban areas might take an active interest in nearby rural campaigns gives the latter a potential unfair advantage" that may create a level playing field," said Rock Howard.

## Homework is a Crime

Perhaps in an irrational effort to instill responsibility in children by blaming their parents—or maybe just because they can—a Galena Park middle school last month issued criminal citations to the parents of 48 students who wouldn't do their homework.

The parents were charged with a misdemeanor violation of the truancy law and had to appear in Mike Parrott's Justice of the Peace Court. They faced an up to \$185 fine. Luckily the JP didn't hand out any fines to this first group, but he promises to do so in the future, according to a Dec. 12 the Washington Post article.

Kids who skip their homework are truant, argues the school, if they fail to attend an after-school detention—although they call it a "program for habitual homework offenders." The Texas education code does allow for selective mandatory attendance after normal school hours. Many of the parents reported that the school did not tell them their child needed to stay. The school said they gave the kids a letter.

Since Texas school districts are their own separate taxing entities, they have powers similar to a county or city government and thus they can issue criminal citations, says the Washington Post.

**Robert F. Lockhart**

**Certified Public Accountant**

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# To build a Bigger, Better Libertarian Party—Give!

Here is my best donation: \_\_\_\_\_\$25\_\_\_\_\_ \$50\_\_\_\_\_ \$75\_\_\_\_\_ \$100\_\_\_\_\_ Other

Occupation\_\_\_\_\_

Tired of missing all the really cool activist opportunities? Send us your email and we'll let you in on all the details: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Thanks!

The Harris County Libertarian Party would like to thank the following recent donors:

A.B. Benson  
Donald Burger  
Betty Bradley  
David Hutzelman  
Jeremy Davis  
Patrick Kelly  
William McNicoll  
Robert Mize  
Stephen Turman  
William Rodgers  
J.P. Friedman  
Kathleen Chudleigh

## Quotable

According to students at the University of Texas, the debate between the two "third party" candidates for Governor brought "more salient issues to the forefront than either of the glossy, corporate-owned "major-party" candidates could ever hope to."

"The opinions and messages expressed by Daiell and Mahujan, though sometimes on completely opposite ends of the political spectrum, were undoubtedly more pure and ideologically based than those espoused by Perry and Sanchez."

"Third-party candidates are not bought in order to shape policy - they base their platforms on ideals of how a government and society should be constructed and run, much as the Founding Fathers did."  
Editorial, Daily Texan, Oct. 14, 2002.

## LP in the Media

LP activist Dan Weiner is becoming a go-to-guy for local media with two appearances in the last days of December!

Dan was invited to speak about Libertarian politics on KPFT radio's "Queer Voices" show Dec. 23.

"We discussed the basic ideas, especially the Non-Agression Pledge," said Dan. "I stated that we don't believe in "gay rights" as such, but are such total consistent defenders of individual rights that we end up on the good side of gay issues simply because those concepts (right to sex with whom you want, right to marry whom you want etc.) are baked into the very nature of what we believe in."

Dan was also quoted for a Dec. 29 article in the Houston Chronicle about the number of concealed carry permits in Houston suburbs.

The League City zipcode in Galveston County has the most permits for concealed carry in the state. The local towns of Alvin, Cypress, Friendswood, Deer Park, Sugar Land, Baytown, Pearland and La Porte aren't far behind. The Chronicle reports that Galveston, Montgomery and Brazoria counties have the most licensed gun holders per capita among Texas' most populous counties.

The article then got into the issue of race and ethnicity and pegged gun-owners as racist Anglo males. Perhaps for fairness, the reporter then added Dan who promotes gun ownership in the GLBT community. Dan's

quote ended the story:

"A lot of gay groups are anti-weapons," said Dan Weiner, head of the Houston gun group Pink Pistols. "But that's one reason people think we're such easy victims. We're supposed to be good little boys and girls and just run away. For those of us tired of being victims, that is not at all true. We have to arm ourselves."

## Penn & Teller Show

Penn Jillette, Libertarian activist and CATO fellow, and half of the comedic magic duo Penn & Teller has a new television series premiering on Showtime Jan. 24 at 10 p.m. The half hour series is called Penn & Teller: Bullshit!

The 13 episode series promises to be controversial—Showtime describes it as an "aggressive, irreverent expose of taboo topics." In the series Penn & Teller set out to prove that "many of the institutions that society holds dear are bogus and designed to profit from the desperate and trusting public." But this isn't 20/20 so interviews and undercover segments will be mixed with elements of Penn & Teller's non-traditional comedy routines.

While the duo will examine such obvious things as TV psychics and ouija boards they also will look at second-hand smoke, global warming, and bottled water. Penn & Teller's brand of comedy activism is not for everyone—but for clever, outrageous comedy this series is a winner.

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## Libertarian Activities January 2003

**Jan. 14 (Tues.) 7 p.m. Brazoria County Meeting** at Golden Corral, Hwy 388 Business, Angleton. Contact George Harper at Gharper@computron.net or 979-964-3693.

**Jan. 21 (Tues.) 6:30 p.m. Jefferson County Meeting** at the LogonC@fe, 3805 Calder Ave., in Beaumont. Contact John Gossage at che\_prof@hotmail.com or 409-860-4499.

**Jan. 16 (Thurs.) 7 p.m. San Jacinto Supper Club** at Golden Corral at 4021 Spencer Highway in Pasadena. Contact Bob Lockhart 713-475-0092.

**Jan. 16 (Thurs.) 7 p.m. Montgomery County Meeting** at the South County Community Center, 2235 Lake Robbins Drive, The Woodlands. Contact Ron Hard at ellyhard@email.msn.com or 281-363-9211.

**Jan. 23 (Thur.) 7 p.m. Clear Lake Libertarian Caucus Supper Club** at Fuddrucker's Restaurant on Nasa Rd 1. Contact Paul 281-280-8660 or Paul.Morris@directvinternet.com to confirm.

**Jan. 24 (Fri.) 10 p.m. Penn & Teller Bullshit! premieres on Showtime.** See page 3 for details.

**Feb. 1 (Sat.) 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Election Day:** Local political subdivisions holding special elections.

**Feb. 1 (Sat.) 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Constitution Class by Michael Badnarik.** This 8 hour class held at the University of Houston will look at the Constitution, rights and privileges, universal commercial code, etc. Participants receive a pocket copy of the Constitution and a 67 page handout. Advance registration is required. Cost is 7 ounces in silver (approx. \$50); \$20 per person for students, also only in silver. For information and to register contact 512-799-8200 or [www.badnarik.com](http://www.badnarik.com). A sample two hour introduction is available in audio online at [www.familyguardian.tzo.com/publishedAuthors/Indiv/Badnarik/Badnarik.htm](http://www.familyguardian.tzo.com/publishedAuthors/Indiv/Badnarik/Badnarik.htm).

**Feb. 2 (Sun.) 2 p.m. Harris County Meeting** at 9614 Oregano Circle (off Corporate Drive.) Contact John at elfsoft@mindspring or 713-271-1776.

**Feb. 8 & 9 (Sat.-Sun.) Counterattack 2003;** Six tracks of workshops for Second Amendment activists at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Addison (North Dallas). For information visit [www.northbridgetraining.com/home](http://www.northbridgetraining.com/home) or email [davidr@northbridgetraining.com](mailto:davidr@northbridgetraining.com) or call 214-707-1004.

**Feb. 17 (Mon.) Filing opens for candidates** for offices on the ballot on May 3. Election is for Mayors, City Councils, School, Hospital, and Water Districts. In most cases filing ends March 19.