



# Gulf Coast Liberty

Defending liberty in southeast Texas in the Spirit of San Jacinto

July 2003

## Perry Vetos Ballot Access

On May 28 the Texas Legislature unanimously passed HB 1274, a bill that would remove the requirement that petition circulators read a long, complicated sentence to every potential signer. On June 20 Republican Governor Rick Perry vetoed it.

The sentence, which is printed on the top of each petition sheet, takes about 20 seconds to read aloud. Each petitioner must swear under penalty of perjury that he or she has read the following to everyone they ask to sign:

"I know that the purpose of this petition is to entitle the Libertarian Party to have its nominees placed on the ballot in the general election for state and county officers. I have not voted in a primary election or participated in a convention of another party during this voting year, and I understand that I become ineligible to do so by signing this petition. I understand that signing more than one petition to entitle a party to have its nominees placed on the general election ballot in the same election is prohibited."

Richard Winger, editor of Ballot Access News calls the statement requirement a "major impediment to successful petitioning."

"Governor Rick Perry is only the 2nd Governor in the past 50 years to veto liberalizing ballot access bills. The first was John Ashcroft, when he was Governor of Missouri. He vetoed liberalizing ballot access bills both in 1991 and 1992. The Missouri reform finally became law in 1993 after Ashcroft wasn't Governor anymore," Winger reports.

"The sentence itself is misleading," says HCLP activist Laura

Coker-Garcia, "we can't collect signatures until after the primary and only from people who didn't vote in it—but we have to read this warning that makes them think they are losing the right to vote—when actually the primary is already over so they've already chosen themselves not to participate."

"We already have a tough task to get the required number of signatures—this scare tactic just makes it even tougher. We're going to need all the help we can get," says HCLP Chair Anthony Garcia. "Even with all the volunteer help, I expect that we're going to have to go beyond that and hire paid petitioners."

In the 75 days following the March primary the Libertarian Party of Texas must collect 45,540 valid signatures to put candidates on the ballot for the 2004 General Election. To ensure success about double that—or 90,000 raw signatures—will need to be collected.

HCLP is building a volunteer database to help organize for ballot access petitioning—we need individuals to host precinct conventions, to call LP members to remind them to attend conventions, to print or to pay for the printing of petition sheets, to notarize or pay for notary fees, to collect signatures, to house out-of-town petitioners, to verify voter numbers and of course to be candidates for office.

If you can help in any of these roles—or have any ideas or suggestions to improve our chances of meeting the signature demand—please let us know by emailing [Laura@LibertyWorks.org](mailto:Laura@LibertyWorks.org), or calling HQ at 713-271-1776.

## Conference Notes

The State Libertarian Conference in San Antonio June 28 drew the attention of the San Antonio Express-News and the attendance of more than 50 LP activists.

The Express-News ran a story June 29 quoting LP presidential hopefuls Michael Badnarik and Gary Nolan and former New Mexico Governor Gary Johnson—all speakers at the conference.

While the goals of building awareness of the party and motivating activists were upheld, conference chair Kevin Hagan said fundraising was not as expected and the conference lost \$2,600.

The next statewide event will be the Convention to be held in College Station, June 2004.

## Special Election

Elections were held June 19 in Montgomery County due to the recent resignation of Chair Tim Dove and Treasurer Judy Dove and the departure of Secretary Gil Guillory for work in Iraq.

Ron Hard has been elected Chair to head the newly revamped County Executive Committee. Ross Stevenson is Vice Chair; Don Richards, Secretary; and Gary King, Treasurer.

The election was conducted under Article IX: Vacancy and Succession provision of the Rules of the Libertarian Party of Montgomery County, Texas (Bylaws).

Any questions? Please contact Don Richards 1-281-292-8940 or [mrbear@main.com](mailto:mrbear@main.com).



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## In the Mail

To the Editor:

I congratulate the U.S. Supreme Court on its decision to strike down Texas' sodomy law. As a gay man and a Libertarian, I support the Court's decision that there is a right to privacy within one's home. While most people assume they are free to do what they wish while in their own residences as long as they don't hurt anyone else, the government often does not make that same assumption.

Republicans often talk about "limiting government." The Republicans in the last Legislative session had no problem forcing the state further into peoples' lives if it advanced the party's social and moral agenda. Women now have to wait 24 hours before terminating a pregnancy, while having to review all sorts of dubious and medically questionable state propaganda. Children will now have to sit through a thinly disguised state-mandated prayer at the beginning of their school day. The Legislature took time away from all sorts of other pressing problems to declare that marriage is solely between a woman and a man.

The so-called "homosexual agenda" (which consists primarily of conservative desires like wanting to get married and be able to serve openly in the military) has nothing on the Republican Party moral agenda. While the Republicans hypocritically claim to be for limiting the scope of government, it has been under their watch that the federal budget deficit has ballooned faster than any time in American history. My advice to a voter who is looking for a candidate who will consistently support getting the government out of your bedroom, your checkbook and your life: Vote Libertarian.

Robert Hansen

*Robert sent this letter to the Austin American-Statesman, Austin Chronicle, San Antonio Express-News, NY Times, LP News, the Texas Triangle, and the Houston Voice.*

John Jay said: "It seems obvious to common sense that the people of...[Britain] should be but one nation, ... they were for ages divided into three, and that those three were almost constantly embroiled in quarrels and wars with one another. Notwithstanding their true interest with respect to the continental nations was really the same, yet ... their mutual jealousies were perpetually kept inflamed, and for a long series of years they were far more inconvenient and troublesome than they were useful and assisting to each other."

Union in purpose is more productive than bickering over differences—which are insignificant when faced with a larger, more dangerous foe. Should we who desire liberty continue to divide ourselves? Jay's lesson is that we can focus on our enemies when we are not making enemies of our friends.

We can find many people who are discontented with government involvement in their lives and who do not wish the initiation of force in the so-called "patriot groups." Yet, they are not party members. Some don't even know we exist.

We have allies if our goal is the creation of a voting block dedicated to reduction of government to constitutional levels. We need to identify them, find common ground, bring them into the libertarian fold, get them to run for office, and to fund our candidates.

Our message must be concise and tailored so that an average person can see we support them. We need to tailor our message to a large voiceless sector of our population—small businessmen. We need to set aside purist libertarian ideals and work to incrementally change government into something for the people—using whatever like-minded allies we can secure, who will agree with us to refrain from the use of force.

We must be inclusive. We must sell the liberty of knowing that

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the laws are few and understandable and that we are able to put money in the bank and have it remain there past the next paycheck. This can be sold and should be sold to everyone we know.

We should reach out to patriot groups, because they have the same goal that we do— freedom from government intrusion. We should not let our differences be the focus of our discussions. Our focus should be solely about how we can work together to make the dreams of all a reality.

It's time we put aside minor ideological differences that divide us and look to the prize of liberty for all. When we once again have control of our servants we can work out what it is that is in our best interests as individuals.

Jesus Christ said "A house divided against itself shall not stand." It's time to become a formidable force and to recognize who is our enemy and who are our allies. It's time to open house, to be inclusive, to reach those whose goals are like, if not identical to, ours. It's time to confound the true enemy of the people, our servants that would be kings.

Royce Mitchell, Jr.

## Thanks Donors!

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

Marie Angell  
J.P. Friedman  
Scott Peterson  
John Willis

## Activist Report

On Monday, June 30th, Jeff Daiell presented his speech, "Left and Right Versus Liberty: How Both "Wings" Threaten Our Freedom" to two more classes at Wharton County Junior College. Jeff details how both the left and right have pushed for a concentration of political power in the executive branch of the Federal Government.

If you can arrange a speaking engagement contact Jeff at [JeffDaiell@yahoo.com](mailto:JeffDaiell@yahoo.com) or 713-777-1776.

## Freedom Wins!

Local Libertarians joined a variety of groups on June 26 to rally at Houston's City Hall to celebrate the U.S. Supreme Court decision finally striking down the Texas Sodomy Law on the basis that they violate American's Constitutional right to privacy. Libertarians joined rallies in other Texas cities as well.

"While not all Libertarians condone the homosexual sex that was at issue in the case—the idea of the police breaking into anyone's home and arresting the inhabitants for their purely personal sexual proclivities is outrageous. The death of this law increases our freedom and is as such a cause to celebrate," said Laura Coker-Garcia.

The court's decision kills sodomy laws in 13 states: Alabama, Florida, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, Utah and Virginia.

## Presidential News

The race for the LP Presidential nomination is heating up with a recent debate with Michael Badnarik and Gary Nolan airing on CSPAN's Road to the Whitehouse. Both candidates were scheduled to be at the Texas State Conference last month and both are actively on the road.

Gary Nolan's campaign reports their website has been completely redesigned. You can reach it at [www.garynolan.com/forfriends.shtml](http://www.garynolan.com/forfriends.shtml) They ask "if you like what you see, please use the new "Tell a friend" feature to recommend the site to friends, family, and co-workers. It's a great way to help Gary's campaign."

Texas' own Michael Badnarik can be found online at [www.badnarik.org](http://www.badnarik.org). Michael had a fundraiser on June 29 in San Antonio and a birthday celebration and fundraiser on August 1st.

Cumulative results of the LP straw poll show Ron Paul leading the pack of contenders with 826 votes. Ron is not an announced candidate, but as in years past there is an active campaign to draft him. See [www.paul2004.com](http://www.paul2004.com). Coming in second was announced candidate Gary with 401 votes, then L. Neil Smith, who again has an active draft committee, at 353 votes. See [Smith2004.freesevers.com](http://Smith2004.freesevers.com). Michael was polling in fourth with 251 votes.

To cast your vote visit [//cass.molp.org/polls.htm](http://cass.molp.org/polls.htm). You may vote once each month.

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## Libertarian Activities July 2003

**July 4 (Fri.) Independence Day.** Promote freedom — Wear your LP t-shirt, read the Declaration of Independence, refer someone to the LP website ([www.lp.org](http://www.lp.org) or [www.lptexas.org/harris](http://www.lptexas.org/harris)).

**July 6 (Sun.) Harris County Meeting** at 9614 Oregon Circle (off Corporate Drive.) For starting time or information contact John at 713-271-1776.

**July 8 (Tues.) 7 p.m. Brazoria County Meeting** at Golden Corral, Hwy 388 Business, Angleton. Contact George Harper at [Gharper@sat.net](mailto:Gharper@sat.net) or 979-964-3693.

**July 12 (Sat.) 12:30 p.m. Second Saturday Libertarian Lunch**, at Star Pizza, 2111 Norfolk St. off Sheppard Drive in Montrose. Contact Laura at [Laura@Libertyworks.org](mailto:Laura@Libertyworks.org) or 281-997-8141 for information.

**July 17 (Thur.) 7 p.m. San Jacinto Supper Club** at Top China Buffet, 3630 Spencer Hwy. in Pasadena. Contact Bob Lockhart at 713-475-0092.

**July 17 (Thur.) 7 p.m. Montgomery County Meeting** at the South County Community Center, 2235 Lake Robbins Drive, The Woodlands. Contact Ron Hard at [ronhard54@msn.com](mailto:ronhard54@msn.com) or 281-363-9211.

**Aug. 12 (Tues.) 7 p.m. Brazoria County Meeting** at Golden Corral, Hwy 388 Business, Angleton. Contact George Harper at [Gharper@sat.net](mailto:Gharper@sat.net) or 979-964-3693.

**Aug. 14 (Thur.) Final voter registration** day before the September elections.

**Aug. 19 (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](mailto:che_prof@hotmail.com) or 409-860-4499.

**Aug. 21 (Thurs.) 7 p.m. San Jacinto Supper Club** at Top China Buffet, 3630 Spencer Hwy. in Pasadena. Contact Bob Lockhart 713-475-0092.

**Aug. 21 (Thurs.) 7 p.m. Montgomery County Meeting** at the South County Community Center, 2235 Lake Robbins Drive, The Woodlands. Contact Ron Hard at [ronhard54@msn.com](mailto:ronhard54@msn.com) or 281-363-9211.

**Aug. 21 (Thur.) Filing opens** for place on General Election Ballot for local political subdivisions.

**Aug. 28 (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](mailto:Paul.Morris@directvinternet.com).

**Sept. 13 (Sat.) Elections.** Twenty-two Constitutional Amendments will be on the ballot.

**Sept. 17-Sept. 23 Constitution Week.** Outreach events—Contact [guy@mclendon.net](mailto:guy@mclendon.net) for information.