



Gulf Coast Liberty

Defending liberty in southeast Texas in the Spirit of San Jacinto January/February 2004

LP: No Need for New Bond

Local Libertarians in the Clear Lake area have been active working to defeat a Clear Creek ISD Bond Election set for February 9. The campaign to defeat the \$264,000,000 bond issue has included a letter writing effort, email advocacy, personal contact and yard signs.

Bond sales under Texas law are for the purchase of new long-term assets, not maintenance of existing ones, Libertarians argue. The CCISD bond does not separate maintenance projects from new construction and uses "Orwellian newspeak" to redefine basic upkeep into bondable status.

Voters in the district's last bond election rightly rejected "property maintenance" as a valid use of bond funds and nixed the projects. However, CCISD has come back with the same wish list only is now describing fixing roofs and buying new HVAC units as "capital improvements."

If these bonds pass and three new schools are built there may not be enough money to run them, say Libertarians. The tax for maintenance and operations in CCISD is already at the highest rate allowed by state law.

"The public school system performs poorly and we should not feed it more of our money," says William McNicoll, an LP activist and State Board of Education District 7 candidate. "There are alternatives to the tax increase proposed by the CCISD Board."

According to data submitted to the Texas Education Agency, CCISD spends \$6,747 per pupil. Yet a recent report by the Cato Institute looked at the cost of private education in Houston and found that 90 private elemen-

tary schools in Houston charge less than \$5,000 in tuition and half of them less than \$4,325. Cato found seventeen private high schools in Houston charging \$5,000 or less in tuition, and a median cost for private secondary schools of \$6,150.

"Waste and inefficiency should not be rewarded with more money," William says. "The only way to impose discipline on or require efficiency of such an organization is to say no to tax increases."

The group's outreach to voters highlights several Libertarian solutions to the district's problems. Instead of building new schools to house increased numbers of students, Libertarians propose maximizing the use of existing buildings by moving to a year-round schedule rather than letting expensive buildings sit idle three months out of the year. Such a move would not increase the length of the school year, but would allow a school with the current capacity of 600 serve 800 students.

Another solution to overcrowding—rather than building new schools and raising taxes—is creating a special property tax exemption for parents who choose to withdraw or not enroll their school-age child in CCISD. An exemption of \$60,000 would save the parent/property owner \$1,044 in taxes while relieving the district of the need to spend \$6747. About \$1,073 of state and federal funding would presumably be withdrawn as well leaving the district with \$4,630.

This is a proposition where there are no losers, only winners, Libertarians say.

Conventions Next Month

March is an important month for the Libertarian Party.

The most important event for the LP occurs the evening of Tuesday, March 9. This is the Precinct Convention. Participating in this meeting is what makes you a Libertarian (the law calls it affiliation). The affiliation list generated by these local conventions is what we submit to the Secretary of State to show we are an active political party.

Anyone who wants to see this Party succeed needs to attend their precinct convention. Most counties will hold all precinct conventions at one location. In Harris County we are trying to combine precincts by State Representative District to cut down on the inconvenience of getting to the event. At press time we are still seeking individuals to host most districts. Contact Laura Coker-Garcia at Laura@Libertyworks.org or 281-997-8141 for information on hosting.

Locations for conventions to be held in Brazoria, Ft. Bend, Galveston, Harris, Jefferson, Montgomery and Orange Counties will be posted on the HCLP website at www.lptexas.org/harris as soon as they are confirmed. Any registered voter—who does not vote in the primary that day—is eligible to attend our precinct convention. By rule all attending are automatically designated delegates to the County Convention.

The County Conventions are held Saturday, March 13. The County Convention elects the County Chair and other officers who will run the lo-

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In the Mail

Laura & others,

I want to thank y'all/us for the empty slot next to U.S. Representative District 14—Ron Paul's district. I am deeply convinced this empty slot helps to advance the cause of liberty. Also, I am in communication with the Republican Liberty Caucus trying to make sure this genuinely kind/wise gesture on the part of the LP is duly noted, and appreciated by them as well. In pursuit of my role in the libertarian movement, I'm attempting to foster a cooperative environment among disparate libertarian factions.

The LPTX-membership's willingness to stand aside from Ron's district is an extremely valuable event that I can point to as I make the case that the LP's sentiment is to put our ultimate objective and goal, restoring constitutional government in America, above petty Party differences.

From the bottom of my heart, I thank LPTX members for doing this; recognizing this action is really not officially sponsored by LP Leadership, but is rather collectively sponsored by the LP membership. Sponsored, in a sense, by "We the People" ... no joke.

Guy McLendon

An Open Letter to Mayor Bill White:

A Houston ordinance allows City employees to seize property without just cause, proper notice, a hearing,, a jury trial, a warrant, a court order and without allowing the accused an appeal.

Article XIII of Houston Buildings and Neighborhood Protection Ordinance, Sections 10-531 thru 10-533 deprives those accused of due process. It eliminates the Municipal Courts and replaces it with an "Alter-

native Procedure for Administrative Hearing." This is allowed by law, providing the process follows rules established by State Statute.

However, the City procedure doesn't follow the State's requirements. The deviations result in violations of the United States Constitution. Some of the obvious differences between the City ordinance and the State statute are:

A) The City doesn't properly notify the accused of a violation. The notice doesn't specify a hearing date and doesn't tell the accused what action or fine is imposed for conviction.

B) A hearing must be requested in writing. Failure to request a hearing or a response by the accused that is lost in the mail or misplaced by the City results in seizure.

C) Jury trials aren't allowed and there's no provision for an appeal.

D) A City employee's opinion is all that is required for the accused to have property seized and taken by city contractor. Contractors may sell the vehicle's parts for profit without compensating the owner. Contents of seized vehicles, which are unrelated to the alleged violation, are also taken.

E) Accused are fined \$200 for administration fees designed to pay for the City's towing costs. Yet, junk yards in the area are willing to tow vehicles for free or to pay for the vehicles.

Hundreds of people who have had their property confiscated deserve restitution and those in charge deserve punishment. I ask that you ask the Attorney General to determine if the City practice meets the requirements of State Statute. This conclusion will help determine what, if any, further action is justified. Will you honor my request?

Spence Kerrigan

Robert F. Lockhart— Certified Public Accountant

P.O. Box 1398 Pasadena, Texas 77501 **713-475-0092**

Please support your local Libertarian Party!

Here is my best donation: _____ \$15 _____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ Other
(Make checks payable to Harris County Libertarian Party)

Occupation _____ Employer _____ Email _____

Phone _____ County _____ Precinct # _____

Federal law requires political committees to report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of \$200 in a calendar year. Texas Ethics Commission requires political committees to report this information for donations of at least \$50.

Attend March Conventions *from page 1*

cal party for the next two years. The Libertarian Party nominees for local offices and district races that are entirely within the county are selected at this convention. All races—even with only one filer—are opposed, because the LP allows the nomination of "none of the above." Finally, County Conventions will select delegates to the State Convention to be held in College Station in June.

At this time two counties in our area—Fort Bend and Orange—are without Libertarian Party Chairs. Kevin Foto of Fort Bend resigned his position December 28 citing "various financial and personal family matters." David Constant of Orange County moved out of state earlier this year. In order to reorganize these counties we need an individual from each willing to be appointed temporary County Chair who can post notice of the Precinct and County Conventions that can then meet to elect a new Chair. Please contact Laura (as above) if you are able

to volunteer.

The Chair for Brazoria County is George Harper. Contact George at gharper@sat.net or 979-964-3693.

The Chair for Galveston County is Randall Waibel. Contact Randy at 281-224-4098.

The elected Chair for Harris County is Anthony Garcia. Anthony is running for Railroad Commissioner and will be stepping down in favor of Jeff Daiell our current Vice-Chair. However, contact Laura (as above) for convention information.

The elected Chair for Jefferson County is Dean Tucker. Dean is running for U.S. Representative and will be stepping down in favor of Alan Lee. For convention information by email contact Dean at revdeantucker@aol.com or call Alan at 409-839-8795.

The Chair for Montgomery County is Ron Hard. Ron can be contacted at ronhard54@msn.com or 281-363-9211.

Meet Gary Nolan

LP Presidential candidate Gary Nolan is barnstorming through Texas this month.

Gary, a former National talk show host, will be in Austin February 15, Arlington February 17, and Houston February 17. In each city the campaign is planning a "meet the candidate" reception.

Houston's event, organized by Laura Coker-Garcia, will be held at 7 p.m. at the Spaghetti Warehouse, 901 Commerce, downtown Houston. Light refreshments will be served including Italian meatballs, a spinach and artichoke dip, and antipasta. Tea, coffee, and soft drinks are also included. Alcohol will be available on a cash bar basis.

Advance tickets to the event will be \$15 and at the door will be \$20. Money raised from the event will benefit the candidate and the Texas Ballot Access effort. Contact Laura to get your tickets at laura@libertyworks.org or 281-997-8141.

Thanks Donors!

HCLP would like to thank the following recent donors:

Eleanor Culberson
Jack & Barbara McReynolds
Mark Pesl
Kristin Thompson
Charles Wiggins

"Security Mom"

According to the Houston Chronicle of December 17, Laura Coker-Garcia is just the sort of "security mom" the Democrats need to woo. The article which does say Laura is a homeschooling Libertarian was also mentioned on Rush Limbaugh's show that day. "It was somewhat misleading as to my positions," Laura reports.

Reminder

Delegates to the National Convention will be chosen at the February 21, SLEC meeting. The meeting will convene at 1 p.m. at the Cepeda Branch Library, 651 N. Pleasant Valley Rd., Austin. Those wanting to be delegates to the National Convention Memorial Day Weekend in Atlanta should attend.

Libertarian Party of Texas
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LP Presidential candidate visits
Houston Feb. 17!

Upcoming Local Libertarian Activities

Feb. 9 (Mon.) Last Day to Register to Vote to qualify to participate in the precinct conventions.

Feb. 11 (Wed.) Candidate's Personal Financial Statements due to Texas Ethics Commission. Required of most statewide and state district offices even if you do not accept donations or make expenditures. Visit www.ethics.state.tx.us/ for form and more information. Local county candidates for most races will need to file this same form with their County Clerk or Elections Administrator.

Feb. 14 (Second Sat.) 1 p.m. Second Saturday Libertarian Lunch at Star Pizza in the Heights. Contact Laura at Laura@Libertyworks.org or 281-997-8141.

Feb. 17 (Tues.) 7 p.m. Meet LP Presidential Candidate Gary Nolan. Reception at the Spaghetti Warehouse, 901 Commerce, downtown Houston. Light Italian appetizers, complimentary sodas, coffee or tea, cash bar. Tickets \$15 in advance or \$20 at the door. More information or RSVP to Laura at Laura@Libertyworks.org or 281-997-8141.

Feb. 17 (Third Tues.) 7 p.m. Brazoria County Meeting at Golden Corral, Hwy 288 Business, Angleton. Contact George Harper at Gharper@sat.net or 979-964-3693.

Feb. 17 (Third Tues.) 6:30 p.m. Jefferson County Meeting at the LogonC@fe, 3805 Calder Ave., in Beaumont. Contact Dean Tucker at revdeantucker@aol.com

or 409-838-2901.

Feb. 18 (Wed.) Gary Nolan campaign outreach at the University of Houston. Contact Monica at mgranger@sbcglobal.net

Feb. 19 (Third Thur.) 7 p.m. San Jacinto Supper Club at Top China Buffet, 3630 Spencer Hwy. in Pasadena. Contact Bob Lockhart at 713-475-0092.

Feb. 19 (Third 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 or 281-363-9211.

Feb. 21 (Sat.) 1-4:30 p.m. SLEC meeting in Austin. Cepeda Branch Library, 651 N. Pleasant Valley Road. Delegates to the LP National Convention in Atlanta, GA will be chosen at this meeting.

March 9 (Tues.) 7:30 p.m. Precinct Conventions. Contact your County Chair for time and location for precinct conventions.

March 10 (Wed.) LP Ballot Access Petition Drive begins.

March 13 (Sat.) County Conventions. Times and Locations will be announced in next month's newsletter. Contact your County Chair or visit www.lptexas.org for listing of County and District Convention information.