



Liberty News

April 2001

a publication of the Libertarian Party of Boulder County

You Don't Own That!

By Ralph Shnelvar

On the Colorado LP chat list (LPCOchat@listbot.com) I wrote:

My wife and I like to watch HGTV (Home and Garden TV). I remember one poor couple who went up against some local architectural board that had the power to approve or deny applications based on the board's sense of aesthetics.

These poor people kept submitting and resubmitting plans to the board which the board kept turning down. What caught my wife's and my ear was the fact that this particular board didn't have to give any reason or explanation as to why the plans were being rejected. It was a case of "We don't like what you submitted and until you read our minds we won't approve anything that you do." These poor people spent four years trying to get their plans approved. Eventually the plans were approved. Then they started work on the house and discovered structural problems that would prevent them from using the plans as submitted. The whole process had to start over again.

Carol Hill of Leadville replied:

Talk about horror stories! Isn't it amazing what people will endure? When I was on P&Z, and now as Chair of the Board of Adjustment (BOA), one of the things that has always bothered me is the humiliating spectacle (at least it is to me) of people groveling before a few of their "fellow" citizens to get permission to do what they want with what they own.

In L. Neil Smith's 1980 novel, *The Probability Broach*, Mr. Smith calls the Libertarian Party of a parallel universe "the Propertarian Party." Smith understood that one has no rights if one has no right to property.

Whatever you might think of Mr. Smith's writing ability or his politics, he appears to have placed his finger on an underdeveloped message of Libertarian protest: *You don't own that.*

Think about what ails this country and I think you will see a common thread.

I want to smoke marijuana. *Whether you are sick or not, you do not own your own body.*

I want to paint my home green. *Sorry, you do not own your own house.*

I'd like to purchase electricity. *Sorry, the electric utility can not sell that electricity to the highest bidder because the price is capped.*

I want to home-school my child: *Sorry, your child is not your property.*

I want to bequeath my gun to my brother. *Sorry, you must register the transfer.*

I'd like to use my car as a taxicab so that I can get people to and from bus stops. *Sorry, you must have a special-and impossible to obtain-license to do that.*

(Continued on page 2...)

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You Don't Own That (Continued from page 1)

I'd like to sue my HMO. *Sorry, you are not free to make legally binding contracts.*

I'd like to walk my dog in the rain. *Caution, you are not the pet's owner. You are the pet's caregiver.*

I want to die with dignity. *Sorry, you must live in horrible pain. The State has a compelling interest in seeing you suffer.*

This issue of property rights goes beyond the notions of taxation. It goes to the heart of property rights:

Not needing permission from someone else to use the property you own in the way that you want to use it.

Why is it that the American people have given the politicians so much power over our lives? What compensating benefit have they received?

Just what, exactly, do we own?

Are we all like Ghandi? He owned his own glasses. How long before I will not even own my own glasses?

Is it the case that Americans have so much but own so little? How has it come to pass that California has the temerity to tell merchants that they cannot keep their lights on when they pay for the electricity. Oh, of course! The merchants and the electricity vendors don't own the electricity; the state has a compelling interest in the electricity that people use.

Look around your home and ask if there is anything that you own that you are free to use in the way you wish.

Do you think you own your oven? I know I don't. In Boulder it is illegal to have two kitchens in one house. I could not legally buy, install, and keep two ovens in two different rooms. My right to use and own the

implements with which I cook my food is regulated to the point of absurdity by the police powers of the City of Boulder.

I am sure that you can come up with your own outrageous examples.

Asleep or awake, working or eating, indoors or out of doors, in the bath or in bed - no escape. Nothing was your own except the few cubic centimeters inside your skull.

-- George Orwell's 1984

As Carol Hill said, "Isn't it amazing what people will endure?"

Perhaps we can teach people that they do not have to endure these indignities.

Is it my imagination or is this constant chafing, this constant constriction of property rights causing people to be angrier and angrier? How much more will the State squeeze before the people say, "We can no longer breathe!"

Can we tap into this discontent and build a successful political party?

Global Warming

By Ron Bain

I spoke to the Boulder Kiwanis on Monday morning about global warming, presenting a free market environmentalist perspective. My talk was reasonably informative and interesting, and seemed to hold the interest of about 25 mostly older guys. I tried to use their experience by asking if they remembered more severe weather extremes from their childhood.

I now have about three ready-made speeches to deliver to any groups that wants to suffer my presence. The topics are: "Libertarianism and Science Fiction", "The Constitution and Biological Autonomy: Do We Own Our Own Bodies?" and "If You Can't Stand the Heat..."

I have a tight schedule, but I'm willing to deliver any of these three speeches to any community groups y'all might belong to. Respond to ron@i2i.org or (303) 443-9179.

Vices are simply the errors which a man makes in his search after his own happiness. Unlike crimes, they imply no malice towards others, and no interference with their persons or property.

- Lysander Spooner

From the Chairman

by Lorene Van Buren

I had a great experience last month! The "President's Day" holiday (the creation of which I *do not* approve) allowed me to attend a Boulder activist lunch, only the second I have been able to attend since changing jobs last October. I thought I had the wrong day, or the wrong place, because I did not recognize anyone at the table when I first entered the room. There, at "our" table sat a group of enthusiastic, talkative, polite young people! Soon after I arrived, a few of the "regulars" arrived and I realized I was in the right place after all. It was a great experience, and I encourage anyone who can to drop in from time to time. Where: Hunan Garden, 949 Walnut, Boulder. When: Mondays from noonish to 1:30ish.

Although I saw snow yesterday, spring is officially here and we have received information regarding participation in the **Boulder Creek Festival**. LPBC has participated in this event for approximately 10 years and it has been a good outreach forum for us. In order to participate again this year we need volunteers. Please notify a member of the Board immediately if you are interested in assisting with this project. Without someone to coordinate volunteers to "man the booth" this event will not happen for us this year. Don't be shy, speak up quickly!!

Looking to the future, it is not too early to be thinking about which Board position you would like to fill for the year beginning in July. I anticipate several vacancies so anyone interested in taking a more active hand might want to attend a meeting or two before the end of this year. The April meeting will be at La Estrellita in Boulder and May is tentatively scheduled for the Golden Corral in Longmont.

The natives are growing more restless. A group calling themselves "Friends of Freedom" recently began meeting in Fort Collins on Thursday evenings. Founding members include Libertarians, TRT members, Second Amendment Sisters, and others disenchanted with the current trend in government in the several states and in their federal government. I attended a meeting of this group at which the speaker was a member of a minority race who is with the Executive Security Unit of the Colorado State Patrol. His topic was weapons laws in Colorado and in the City and County of Denver. Other program topics include "Our Constitution", "Ham Radio", "What Really Happened at Waco", "We Can Have Better Health". For further information, call (970) 223-7502.

Tax Day Protest

By Chuck Wright

What one day of the year do you think people are more upset with their taxes than any other? Tax day of course.

The LPBC's annual tax day protest will be held on tax day which is Monday April 16th this year. The annual event will be held at the Boulder main Post Office located at 1905 15th St. which is on the corner of 15th St. and Walnut in Boulder. The LPBC will provide million dollar bills and pamphlets to hand out to last minute tax filers. We'll also provide a few Libertarian signs for people to carry. If you have an appropriate sign of your own, please bring it.

The very first Libertarian Party activist event I ever participated in was a tax day protest at a Ventura, California post office back in 1985. I remember being surprised by the positive response we received. It was exciting. People drove by and honked their horn in approval, gave us a thumbs up, or yelled a few words of encouragement. And every time I handed someone an LP pamphlet I knew I was planting the seeds of liberty.

Our protest will begin at 4:00 PM and continue until at least 8:00 PM. Please come by and join our protest as early as you wish and stay as long as you wish. If it's raining or snowing, the protest will be canceled. Contact Chuck Wright at 303-939-3946 or cawrigh@attglobal.net if you have questions.

It is not the business of government to make men virtuous or religious, or to preserve the fool from the consequences of his own folly. Government should be repressive no further than is necessary to secure liberty by protecting the equal right of each from aggression on the part of others, and the moment governmental prohibitions extend beyond this line they are in danger of defeating the very ends they are intended to serve.

- Henry George

March LPBC Board Meeting

Summary of Secretary's Minutes from the 3/8/01 Board Meeting

Present were Lori van Buren (Chair), Chuck Wright (Treasurer), Tom Parker (Membership Director) and Greg Woods (acting Secretary)

Treasurer's Report: Boulder Gun Show revenue was \$172.00 with \$127.74 in expenses. Due to membership fees that have to be reimbursed there was a net loss of \$78.74. Chuck reported an ending total balance of \$1251.13.

Membership Report: Tom reports that we now have an all time record of 61 paid members, and 9 trial members.

Chair Report: Lori is making an effort to network with other Libertarian organizations, such as a grassroots group in Ft. Collins, and the Second Amendment Sisters.

Old Business

- 1: Boulder Creek festival: We need to find a coordinator for this event. The board allocated up to \$150 to rent booth space.
- 2: Boulder Dialogs: This also needs a coordinator.

New Business

- 1: Tax Day Protest: Chuck will coordinate this. He has plenty of fake million dollar bills to hand out.
- 2: The May meeting will be held at the Golden Corral in Longmont, and rotate board meetings between Boulder, Louisville, and Longmont.
- 3: Membership Fees were increased in November to cover newsletter losses, but now newsletter costs have dropped. Membership fees were lowered to \$15 for one year, or \$42 for three years, and those who paid the higher price will be reimbursed
- 4: Louisville Home Rule: Being pushed by City Council, because it would give them the power to levy a hotel room tax (and other taxes of course too). Chuck moved that the LPBC pass a resolution officially opposing this. Greg seconds, but wonders if we really understand all of the issues involved. The motion is deadlocked 1-1 (Tom abstains). Rather than cast a vote to break the tie, Lori decided to table this until the April board meeting.

Government is Women's Enemy

by Sharon Presley & Lynn Kinsky

Excerpts from the article found at <http://www.alf.org/papers/gwe1.html>. [This is an excellent article to get women thinking about libertarianism. LVB]

I ask no favors for my self. I surrender not to our claim to equality. All I ask of our brethren is that they will take their feet off our necks, and permit us to stand upright on the ground which God has designed us to occupy. – Sarah Grimké, Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Women; Boston, 1838.

.....
Unfortunately, inconsistency has crept into the modern women's movement. While rejecting patriarchal attitudes and dominating ways of interacting on a personal level, some parts of the women's movement will too often ask for government favors and hand-outs such as free child-care centers or free abortions. Yet turning to the government just changes the sort of oppression women face, not the fact. Instead of being overburdened as mothers or wives we become overburdened as taxpayers since child-care workers, doctors, etc., have to be paid by someone unless they are to be enslaved also! Turning to the government to solve our problems just replaces oppression by patriarchy we know – father, husband, boss – with oppression by patriarchy we don't know – the hordes of legislators and bureaucrats who are increasingly prying into every nook and cranny of our lives!

But there is a non-authoritarian alternative
Libertarianism.

The essence of libertarianism is the belief that all social interactions should be voluntary, that no one has the right to rule another, that individuals have the right to live their lives in any manner they see fit as long as they don't initiate force or fraud against others.

..... **Child Care Centers**

The issue of child-care centers is a prime example of why government is an enemy, not a friend, of women. Government regulations have created the child care crises! Zoning laws, unnecessary and pointless "health and safety" restrictions, required licensing

Continued on page 5...

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Every Monday, Noon:
LPBC Weekly Lunch
Hunan Garden
949 Walnut St.
Boulder, CO
303-442-2772

Thursday, April 12 6:30pm:
LPBC Board Meeting
La Estrellita
1718 Broadway
Boulder, CO
303-939-8822

Monday, April 16, 4pm and on:
Tax Day Protest
Boulder Post Office
1905 15th St.
Boulder, CO
Chuck Wright: 303-939-3946

Friday - Sunday, April 20-22
LP Booth
Starfest
Holiday Inn DIA Convention Center
I-70 & Chambers Rd.
Ralph Shnelvar: 303-546-6125

Saturday - Sunday, April 28-29
LP Booth
Tanner Gun Show
Denver Merchandise Mart
Denver, CO
Elizabeth Bennet 303-604-9153(H)
or 303-669-9111(C)

*For more info about all LPBC events,
contact Lori Van Buren: 970-278-1158
or visit our website:
www.lpboulder.com*

Government is Women's Enemy

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that is difficult to obtain – all combine to assure that people will not be able to get together to provide low-cost child care on their own.

Then when government sees the lack of child-care facilities (caused by government restrictions), it steps in to fill the void with stolen money at costs far in excess of what perfectly adequate private child care could be provided for. Typically a large portion of the cost of child-care centers goes to line the pockets of the bureaucratic administrators or to pay rent on unnecessarily expensive buildings – as scandals in New York City have shown so well. But parents don't need these bureaucrats and expensive buildings to provide loving care for children.



Worse yet, after forcing parents and children into the role of charity cases, the government is also in a position to control the development of children just as it does in the public schools. Government officials intend that these "child development centers" (as they like to call child-care centers) will be places where young children can be psychologically conditioned to what the administrators think are healthier attitudes.

Do you trust government officials to intervene in the lives and minds of your children?

On both a moral and a practical level, women are far better off without government "solutions".

Liberty News

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Letters to the Editor

What is Newsworthy?

Joe Johnson wrote this article published in the Rocky Mountain News on 03/18/01:

Why didn't 19-year-old's killing of four in California rate front page, too?

As a nation, we mourn the loss of two children at the hands of a classmate who, searching for some attention, shot and killed them. The *News* was quick to respond with "Again" as its headline the next day. Yet, as a Libertarian, I am compelled to look further and thus mourn again.

On Feb. 26, a 19-year-old student at the University of California at Santa Barbara plowed his car -- traveling at 60 miles an hour -- into a crowd of college students in Isla Vista, killing four and critically injuring one. This didn't make the front page of the *News*, and we need to ask ourselves why. Had the police found a gun in the glove box of the car, it might have been "real" news. Makes you wonder just what it is that the *News* is selling -- news or a political agenda. Apparently, killing with a car doesn't sell papers. Our children are crying out, and all we can do is talk politics.

Bipartisan Tax Cut

Joe Johnson submitted this letter to the RMN, the Denver Post, and the Boulder Weekly

Bipartisan tax cut

Over the past month there has been much ado about cutting taxes. The Republicans favor a tax cut which would most benefit the industrial class (currently those paying the highest taxes). The argument being that this would give a boost to our economy by creating jobs and lowering prices - an economically sound idea. The Democrats favor a tax cut which would favor the middle income working class, arguing that helping these families will give a boost to the economy by allowing an increase in consumer spending - very valid point. I question only why we need to choose, pitting Americans against Americans. The Libertarians favor doing both of these things, by cutting the taxes that we all pay, and reducing the government waste which has been used to justify the taxes in the first place. Sound like a true "bipartisan" solution to you? Find out more: www.LP.org or 1-800-ELECT-US.

Drug Paraphernalia

Chuck Wright submitted this to the Boulder Weekly.

Editor:

I read your interesting article "Head shop crackdown: DEA hits local yokels" (BW March 1-7, 2001) where you quoted Nashville-based head shop attorney Robert Vaughan as saying, "Stores that have bonges are screwed. They can't win. The Supreme Court upheld its so-called objective standard in *US v. Pipes and Things* in 1994, and now categories of items are per se illegal." After reading what Mr. Vaughan said, I began wondering if the legal situation was really as bleak as Mr. Vaughan implied. So I began an inquiry into what the Supreme Court actually decided in this case.

It took a little effort to look up the case on FindLaw.com because the case name cited is not correct. The actual case is *POSTERS 'N' THINGS, LTD., ET AL., PETITIONERS v. UNITED STATES* No. 92-903 1994.

In this case, the court decided that the Federal Mail Order Drug Paraphernalia Control Act isn't vague and the petitioner's conviction of using an interstate conveyance as part of a scheme to sell drug paraphernalia was upheld.

The key thing to note about this case is that the head shop wasn't screwed because it was selling bonges. It was screwed because it engaged in interstate conveyance of bonges. It was the interstate conveyance that opened the door to the Feds. Had the case not involved interstate conveyance, the petitioners may have been able to challenge on a 10th Amendment basis.

The drug paraphernalia laws are not compatible with a free society because it's impossible for the government to keep pipes and other drug paraphernalia away from the public without turning the country into a police state.

If you agree that drug paraphernalia laws should be repealed, join the Libertarian Party. For information go to <http://www.lpboulder.com/> or call 1-800-ELECT-US.

More letters to the editor on page 7...

Government Controlled Health Care

Dave Baker submitted the following to the Daily Camera on March 26, 2001.

The Camera's March 25 editorial about health care is correct in exposing the failings of a socialist Medicare system, but wrong in touting Mark Udall's effort at "pushing legislation aimed at correcting some of the worst flaws in the Medicare system." This perpetual revision should suggest to The Camera and even casual observers that this Medicare dog won't hunt.

Bereft with fraud, this medical system borrowed from geniuses like Hitler and Stalin is now revealing symptoms of end-stage disease. Producers are leaving the field, or, as the Camera reported in a separate article, doctors are refusing to accept Medicare patients. With rules and prices set in Washington, just as they are in Havana, why are we surprised?

Recent events have only bolstered the Libertarian case for government failure in such critical domains.

High schools, where parents and students are denied choice, become toxic stews that spawn predictable violence. Why are we surprised?

California, the utopia of government solution, fixes utility prices from Sacramento and then rages indignantly as rolling blackouts become routine. When producers are suppressed, why are we surprised?

Libertarians will not soon be elected, in part because campaign finance laws militate against any challengers, but they can take solace in the accumulating evidence that government causes more problems than it fixes. As more light is shed, more will awake. Meanwhile, will socialists, whether of Democratic, Republican, or Green stripe, be happy when all producers go on strike? And little remains to loot?

David Baker
Libertarian candidate for Congress, Colorado's
Second District, 2000

Join the Libertarian Party of Boulder County!

Choose one of these options:

Combo Package: Join the LPBC, LP-CO, and LP-US for only \$40

Join the LPBC for THREE FULL YEARS for only \$42

Join the LPBC for the small annual fee of \$15

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Day Phone: _____ Eve Phone: _____

Email address: _____

If you wish to be a voting member, please sign and date the following pledge:

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

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Choose a membership plan above and enclose a check or money order payable to the LPBC for the amount listed. Send to: LPBC, PMB #427, 2525 Arapahoe Ave., E4, Boulder, CO 80302. *Thank you for your support!*

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