



Liberty News

December 2000

a publication of the Libertarian Party of Boulder County

On Becoming a Major Party

Strategy, Tactics, and Logistics

by Ralph Shnelvar

First, I would like to thank Steve Funk for the yeoman work that he has done in getting these newsletters out. Having been the editor of a newsletter, I know just how hard it is to do. Steve, we will miss you. We wish you great fortune in your new surroundings.

This article is a broad-brush overview of topics I will cover in more detail in the future.

Strategy:

Although I am not privy to National's long-term strategy for making the Libertarian Party a major political force, what little does filter down and the results of the last election demonstrate to me that a different strategy may be called for.

It seems like we keep saying the same things that the voters do not wish to hear and do not respond to: Specifically, "You are wasting your vote if you vote for the lesser of two evils." In any other context this would be categorized as obsessive-compulsive behavior:

This message, along with several other messages that we scream, are what David Baker calls "losers."

Let's look at this particular loser. The voters know damn well that the Republicans and Democrats are very

similar. They also know that on particular issues of importance to the voters that there are big differences. To name the obvious few: Abortion and gun control.

In this election most libertarian-leaning Americans had the uncomfortable choice between an abortion-rights-protecting free-spending anti-gun liberal and a pro-gun anti-abortion-rights less-free-spending right-wing conservative.

For most Libertarians the choice was relatively obvious. Harry Browne. But even for many died-in-the-wool Libertarians, the choice was difficult. For those of us who feel that gun rights are the backbone of the Bill of Rights, the choice was particularly difficult if you lived in a state where Bush's win was not certain.

The upshot of all of this is that a strategy based on "Vote for us because we are not the lesser of two evils" is a loser. We need a more compelling message. We need more compelling messages.

I would argue that we abandon the "Lesser of two evils" argument altogether. It is counterproductive and makes

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Libertarian Party of Boulder County k PMB #427 k 2525 Arapahoe Ave., E4
Boulder, CO k (303) 665-2150 k www.lpboulder.com

On Becoming a Major Party *(continued from page 1...)*

us look like ingenuous zealots. We must face reality and proceed from there.

So what messages can and should we promote? What's important to the voters?

We know that the following are issues important to the voters:

- k Environment (What the Greens have cornered)
- k Gun control (really, violence control and perceived safety)
- k Abortion
- k Education (They want better free education.)

As far as I can tell, in terms of the soccer mom, each one of these issues for us is either an out-and-out loser or, at best, neutral (which makes it a loser).

Tactics:

In the 2000 election we ran many candidates; most of them "line holders."

These tactics seem to have had a net benefit to the party along with some significant costs.

The benefits appear to be that we got (very little) extra exposure in the press.

The negatives are that we developed some powerful enemies because we appear to have cost some of our former (Republican, libertarian leaning) "friends" their elections. We also have the negative that some of the candidates that we were running did not seem to be true libertarians or Libertarians.

Worse, there appears to be evidence that when the press contacted some of our line holders, the line holders did not respond with completed surveys or even pictures of themselves.

Another tactic we used was to pour a lot of resources into individual campaigns. The campaign that comes to mind (because I spent a lot of my time on it) is Dr. Glazer's campaign.

Quotable...

"Nothing except a battle lost can be half so melancholy as a battle won."

-- *Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington (1815)*

Although she did well garnering 7% of the vote, it is not clear to me that we learned anything from her campaign. One of the things we did not learn is: What the hell works in motivating a voter to vote for a Libertarian?

I will not criticize Dr. Glazer's campaign. Joe Johnson & Co. performed miracles. But many more miracles were needed in order to win that seat for Dr. Glazer. The next section deals with one of the major things that was lacking in that (and all) campaigns.

Logistics:

Napoleon's insight that "An army marches on its belly" and the aphorism that "While they speak of strategy and tactics, I speak of logistics" shows that while we can have the best strategy and tactics (which we don't) we have nearly no logistical abilities.

As a Party, we need to focus first on developing our ability to put people "on the ground" when we need them. We need commitment in terms of both time and money. We need to do this now so that some future candidate will know what resources are available.

As a concrete example, about a week before the election Joe Johnson asked me to do phone calls to the 16,000 registered voters in Dr. Glazer's district. Being sane, I refused. But I did investigate what it would cost to purchase a computer with the hardware and software to do automatic telephone calling.

Cost: About \$3000.

We didn't have the money; or the time even if we had the money.

Logistics is not fun. It means getting on the phone and raising money. It means phone trees and fund raisers and bowl-a-thons and anything else that will help increase the resources that we will need to get our message out.

Our political philosophy (strategy) is important. The messages we send out (tactics) are important. But both are irrelevant if they cannot be delivered (logistics).

If we are ever to become a major party then we had better pay a great deal more attention to actually finding ways to deliver the message.

We can view our fight as a political war. Our two great enemies hold nearly all the advantages. We need to focus on logistics so that we can both survive and live to fight another day.

From the Chairman

by Lorene Van Buren

In this season of recuperation from election season fatigue, I'd like to challenge you to not only think of new ways to present our political beliefs in a positive way but to communicate the ideas you have to someone on the Board. Don't be shy your ideas are as good as anyone else's, and maybe better! If you're becoming frustrated with a political party which looks and acts more like a philosophical debating society, then please be part of the solution.

We have had some success persuading people to take a second look at us by our presence at the gun shows. Where else can/should we be?

When I asked that question of an attendee at the Crossroads of the West show in Aurora, the response was down on 16th Street Mall. Well, the 16th Street Mall is a little out of our way geographically, but the Pearl Street Mall isn't, nor is a commons area at CU (presuming they have one?). What about computer trade shows? Can someone in the computer industry answer that one for me? Where else? How do we reach the educators of the nation's children, not to communicate our ideas to them, but to persuade them to take a long hard look at the ideas we are communicating?

And while we are thinking of places to be, what should we be saying when we're there? Let's think up some market solutions to be presenting to people. Be different! Instead of saying to them "Hey, I'm going to take away your governmental protectionism!" what if we say "Hey, look what I'd like to give you!"

To get you started on this one, can we offer the good teachers out there a chance to teach the way they believe their subjects should be taught instead of the way the government says they have to teach them? Or maybe offer the good teachers a chance at more competitive pay if they were judged according to their ability to teach the children to think instead of paying them based upon some governmental payment schedule. What teacher is going to admit he/she isn't a good teacher and is afraid of working in a competitive market? Or am I on the wrong track here??

Id like to generate some discussion on these points letters to the Chairman are as appropriate as letters to the Editor - which we would like to see more of.

And please join me in thanking Steve Funk for his contributions as Newsletter Editor this past year; he has informed us he is moving out of the Boulder area.

From the Editor

by Stephen V. Funk

Regrettably, the December *Liberty News* will be my last as Newsletter Editor of the LPBC. I will be moving on to greener, colder, cow-grazed pastures in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where I have accepted a new job opportunity.

Thanks to all who have given me best wishes and many kind words regarding my work on the newsletter. Thanks especially to Tom Parker -- without his borrowed computer and software, and his willingness to take on the monthly printing and mailing duties, I could never have completed an issue.

It has been a pleasure to be part of the Boulder County Libertarian Party, which accomplishes much despite limited time, resources, and political adversity.

It was also an unforgettable experience being a delegate for the Libertarian Party of Colorado at the National Convention in July. It was an honor representing our state and a thrill to participate in this exciting convention.

Thanks to all who have contributed articles over the past year, helping me maintain and sometimes exceed the high level of content and professionalism we should expect in our newsletter. The quality of our newsletter can never be greater than the sum of its parts... please continue to help the next editor by regularly submitting quality material for publication.

I can say from experience that the newsletter responsibility is an enjoyable, valuable contribution to the LPBC without being overly time-consuming. If you are interested in becoming Newsletter Editor in the year 2001 and beyond, please contact Tom Parker at (303) 665-2150 or attend the LPBC Board Meeting on Thursday, December 14 at La Estrellita in Boulder.

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, Happy Holidays, Best Wishes, and thanks for reading.

Quotable...

"Seek not that things which happen should happen as you wish; but wish the things which happen to be as they are, and you will have a tranquil flow of life."

--Epictetus, "Encheiridion"

Boulder County Libertarian ELECTION RESULTS

LPBC MEMBERS WHO RAN

CANDIDATE	OFFICE	% OF TOTAL VOTE
Dave Baker	US House	2.0%
Chuck Wright	State Senate District 17	3.5%
W. Earl Allen	State House District 31	2.9%
Dwight Harding	State House District 12	20.3%
Wright Morgan	State House District 13	3.0%

NON-LPBC LIBERTARIANS WHO RAN IN BOULDER COUNTY

CANDIDATE	OFFICE	% OF TOTAL VOTE
Justin Van Wart	County Commissioner District 1	4.1%
Mark Nikkel	State Senate District 18	3.2%
Steve Lechner	State Senate District 23	3.6%
Glen Brink	State House District 11	10.7%
Jonathan Birge	State House District 14	4.1%

SOME RACES OF INTEREST OUTSIDE BOULDER COUNTY

CANDIDATE	OFFICE	% OF VOTE	NOTES
Harry Browne	President	0.4%	381,062 votes
Dr. Shawn Glazer	CO State House District 24	7.1%	
Carla Howell	US Senate in Massachusetts	12.0%	
Ron Paul (R)	US House in Texas	60.0%	Won re-election

*For complete, detailed election results for all 87 Colorado LP candidates,
visit our website: www.lpboulder.com/87-results.html*

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Every Monday, Noon:
 LPBC Weekly Lunch
 Hunan Garden
 949 Walnut, Boulder, CO

Thursday, December 14, 6:30 pm:
 LPBC Monthly Board Meeting
 La Estrellita Restaurant
 1718 Broadway, Boulder, CO

Friday, December 15, 5:00-10:00 pm:
 Bill of Rights Day
 Pulliam Community Building
 545 North Cleveland
 Loveland, CO
 Ž Sponsored by Tyranny Response Team

Saturday & Sunday, December 16 & 17:
 Tanner Gun Show
 Denver Merchandise Mart
 I-25 & 58th, Denver, CO
 Contact Chuck Wright:
 cawrigh@attglobal.net

Saturday & Sunday, December 30 & 31:
 Wasatch Gun Show
 Loveland, CO
 Contact Chuck Wright:
 cawrigh@attglobal.net

*For more info about all LPBC events,
 contact Lori Van Buren: (303) 442-9695
 or visit our website:
www.lpboulder.com*

The LIBERTARIAN PARTY:

How does it compare to America's other 3rd Parties?

	Libertarian Party	Reform Party	Green Party	Natural Law Party	Constitution Party
Total number of elected officials	170	7	72	0	1
Total number of candidates in 2000	1,420	151	244	165	<100
Number of U.S. House candidates in 2000	244	43	43	86	15
Amount of money raised in 1999	\$2.7 million	\$250,000	N/A	\$713,000	\$406,000
Registered voters in party's name	205,029	152,507	136,285	64,789	29,457
States with ballot status for president	50+DC	48-50	44+DC	38	41

November LPBC Board Meeting

Summary of Secretary's Minutes from the 11/9/00 Board Meeting

The minutes of the 10/12/00 board meeting were read and accepted.

Treasurer: Chuck Wright reported we have \$1034.71.

He made a presentation showing that the newsletter costs are more than the cost of a membership, and proposed several cost cutting and revenue enhancing options. A motion was approved to increase the cost of a 1-year membership from \$15 to \$16, and a 3-year membership from \$36 to \$45, effective 1/1/01.

A related motion was approved, that if you renew (or extend) your current membership before 1/1/01, it will be at the current rate rather than the new rate.

Membership: Tom Parker reported we are at an all-time high of 54 members.

Outreach/Dialogue: Larry Gibes reported that we had 14 people for Dave Sanderson's speech. Now that the election is over, we will be taking several months off in our outreach program. The Tyranny Response Team is planning a Bill of Rights Day in Loveland on Friday, 12/15.

Chairman: Lori VanBuren worked as an election judge at the polls. She had many gripes about the process.

Old Business: None

New Business: There was a discussion about the proposed post-election debriefing. It is set for 12/2/00 at 3 pm.

The next board meeting will be Thursday 12/14 at 6:30 pm at La Estrellita in Boulder

Libertarian Online Guide

f National Libertarian Party
f www.lp.org

f Colorado Libertarian Party
f www.lpcolorado.org

f Boulder County Libertarian Party
f www.lpboulder.com

f Advocates for Self-Government
f www.self-gov.org

f Cato Institute
f www.cato.org

f Laissez Faire Books
f www.laissezfaire.org

f Libertarian TV Schedule
f www.missliberty.com

Membership Report

Membership Director Tom Parker reports that as of November 9, 2000 we are at an all-time high of 54 members (49 "Voting" plus 5 "Contributing"). We also have 17 "3-month Trial" members.

Liberty News

Published monthly by the Libertarian Party of Boulder County. Subscription is included in LPBC membership, which is \$15 per year (membership form, page 7). Send all newsletter contributions, correspondence, and advertising inquiries to Stephen Funk at: stephenvfunk@yahoo.com
or: 6822 Countryside Lane #290, Niwot, CO 80503

Editor: Stephen V. Funk
Contributors: Steve Funk, Tom Parker, Ralph Shnelvar, Lorene Van Buren

New Monday Lunch Location!

by Tom Parker

Since Healthy Habits restaurant shut down back in July, we've been scrambling to find a new home for our Monday "Activist" lunches. After a thorough scouring of the County and numerous "test meals", we have finally found a new home that is up to our high standards.

Our new restaurant is none other than Hunan Garden in Boulder. Hunan Garden is a Chinese restaurant that features a delicious lunch buffet, including soup and dessert for just \$5.95 (soft drinks are \$1.25 extra, with free refills).

We gather in their semi-private area -- go up the stairs and turn left -- and the service is very friendly (ask Ralph about how fast they can clean up a spilled Egg Drop soup).

If you're driving, you can park at the garage a block east on Walnut and have your ticket validated at the restaurant.

So, come give our new lunch place a try:

**LPBC Activist Lunch
Mondays at Noon
Hunan Garden
949 Walnut, Boulder, CO**

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 \$36

___ 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!*

Libertarian Party Directory

Libertarian Party of Boulder County

www.lpboulder.com

Lorene Van Buren, Chair
P.O. Box 108
Lyons, CO 80540
(303)823-9695 (h)
LyonsLori@juno.com

Stephen V. Funk, Newsletter Editor
6822 Countryside Lane #290
Niwot, CO 80503
(303)652-8614 (h)
stephenvfunk@yahoo.com

Tom Parker,
Membership Director & Webmaster
829 Welsh Court
Louisville, CO 80027
(303)665-2150
tparker24@earthlink.net

M. Bruce Waters, Secretary
4500 19th St #309
Boulder, CO 80304
(303)440-0938 (h) / (303)442-5640 (w)
bruce1@quik.com

Chuck Wright, Treasurer
cawrigh@attglobal.net

Ron Bain, Publicity Director
2715 Iris Ave. #4
Boulder, CO 80304
(303)444-4537 (h) / (303)443-9179 (w)
rez2word@aol.com

Libertarian Party of Colorado

www.lpcolorado.org

BetteRose Smith, Chair
(303)837-9393
betterose@aol.com

Libertarian Party of the United States

www.lp.org

1-800-ELECT-US

Libertarian Party of Boulder County

PMB #427

2525 Arapahoe Ave., E4

Boulder, CO 80302

(303) 665-2150

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LIBERTY NEWS

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