
Libertarian Strategy Gazette

Volume 2 Number 9

Now on the web at www.cmlc.org/pubs.htm

September 2002

Libertarian Party State Chairs Conference Summary Report

February 23-24, 2002; Nashville, Tennessee

Written and Supplied to Libertarian Strategy Gazette by
Bob Sullentrup (Missouri).

Reviewed and Enhanced by Jacqueline Bartels
(Washington), Sara Chambers (Alaska), Richard Pearl
(Tennessee)

Part Four

In telemarketing?—Make phone calls on behalf of a candidate or Party

Enjoy meeting new people?—Ask shop owners to place candidates' flyers or posters in store windows

Some states do not allow people to hold two jobs—Not only does that help prevent burnout, but brings more people in.

Bob Sullentrup of MO mentioned that its "Job Jar" is reported as a part of the Executive Committee's meeting minutes, which are always produced and distributed within three days of the meeting, has attracted new volunteers. The volunteers range from simple tasks like making table decorations for the state convention to a new newsletter editor, database coordinator and campus coordinator.

Candidate burnout?—Throw them a big party, an appreciation dinner. Put apparent failed efforts in perspective -- 22,000 people thought our Libertarian candidate could govern this state.

Finally, don't forget: Less thinking, more drinking.

How can we protect affiliate parties from external takeover?

By law, the Libertarian Party cannot turn away individuals who seek to join the party. The problem might arise if the members of another third party flood a state's convention with delegates. By this means the Libertarian Party might find itself running Pat Buchanan for some office on its ballot in some state.

One safeguard is to have a provision in your state's by-laws that members must be involved with the party for at least 30 days.

Another safeguard is to provide in the by-laws a delegate

[State Chairs Meeting] (Continued on page 5)

Alternative Pledge of Allegiance

From Mary Lou Seymour:

I'm a flag collector as well as a big fan of flag flying, and every year I look forward eagerly to the various occasions when flag fans display their banner of choice at their home. There's July 4, Memorial Day, Confederate Memorial Day, Patriots Day, and, of course, June 14, Flag Day. (Well, actually, I fly flags for other occasions too, including "when I feel like it," but the "flag days" are kinda special -- other folks fly flags then too, not just us "flag nuts.")

Flag Day was first celebrated in 1877, the centennial of the U.S. flag's existence. After that many citizens and organizations advocated the adoption of a national day of commemoration for the U.S. flag. It was not until 1949 that President Harry Truman designated legislation making Flag Day a day of national observance.

In a Joint Resolution on June 9, 1966, the Congress requested that the President issue annually a proclamation designating the week in which June 14 occurs as National Flag Week and calling upon citizens of the United States to display the flag during that week.

I've been thinking a lot about the flag this year. Due to 9/11, and to our glorious leaders advising us to show our "patriotism" by flying the flag and shopping, the thought of just flying the Stars and Stripes on Flag Day this year has left me cold. I was going to protest by the time-honored method of "voting with my feet" and not flying a flag at all this June 14, but an article by Strike the Root's Don Hull -- "The True Flag of Freedom" -- set me thinking ...

In my flag collection, I have the three most familiar "Colonial Rattlesnake Flags:" the Gadsden Flag (the familiar yellow one with curled rattler and the "Don't Tread on Me" slogan), Culpepper (the white one with curled snake and Liberty or Death slogan as well as DTOM), and the First Navy Jack (striking snake). This year, for Flag Day, I'm going to fly one of my Rattlesnake Flags ... the "true flag of freedom." Or maybe all three. And I'd like to propose, as this week's action, that we all do the same. Fly the flag of FREEDOM this year on June 14!

If you don't have, and can't acquire, an alternative flag, another way of registering your feelings is to copy an old sea tradition: a flag flown upside down is the international symbol for "ship in distress." If you only have the Stars and Stripes, invert them.

[Editorial] (Continued on page 2)

But wait ... there's more.

On June 20, 1985, the Ninety-Ninth Congress passed and President Reagan signed Public Law 99-54 recognizing the PAUSE FOR THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE as part of National Flag Day activities. The National Flag Day Foundation says "No matter where you are on Flag Day June 14th at 7:00 p.m. please stand and face an American Flag and say just thirty one words -- The Pledge of Allegiance." Well, it just so happens that Aaron Zelman and Claire Wolfe (of Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership) have written a marvelous NEW pledge ... the Freedom Pledge. Here it is ...

"I pledge my honor to the Bill of Rights, our precious national treasure.

"As the Bill is a fortress against tyranny, I will battle all tyrants.

"As the Bill protects liberty, I will live free.

"As the Bill guards rights born within all humanity, I will defend the freedoms of future generations.

"With my life, my words, and my daily deeds, with a vision of what can be, I honor all of the Bill of Rights for all mankind."

Aaron and Claire say the Freedom Pledge is **not** supposed to "replace the Pledge of Allegiance."

Letter

Editor:

I was recently given a copy of your Libertarian Strategy Gazette and was disheartened to read the piece [GP: State Chairs Conference Summary Report] relating to the Libertarian Party of Oregon and how they supposedly handle bad activists.

The Mainstream Liberty Caucus which was profiled in the piece isn't all it pretends to be. I'm not going to deny that there are and have been bad activists outside of the MLC, but there are some inside it as well.

First off the central characters making up the officers of the MLC have been around for some time and they have had an opportunity to improve their PR skills. Without running through the litany of their actions I think it is important to point out that one of the organization's founders, Mr. Richard Burke, has supported Republican candidates at the expense of Libertarian candidates in the recent past and has the dubious distinction of trying to get a large number of LPO members ruled ineligible to participate in the 1996 convention. Mr. Burke now runs the LPO as its Executive Director.

Under the leadership of the MLC the LPO's membership

has gone from about 650, or 700 when it adopted the UMP to about 370 today. There are little, or no funds to help jumpstart candidates campaign. The last three business convention have been held far from the Portland area, which is the population center of the state. And attendance at each of these has steadily declined. It was 48 people at the last one. The nominating convention which was held in Portland last Saturday, July the 20th, had a turnout of 56 people with 32 casting votes for the gubernatorial candidate. Two votes were for NOTA and the others didn't vote. There are some 14,000 registered Libertarian voters in the State of Oregon. As the Chair of the largest county organization in the party and a non-MLC member I have had just two referrals for the 800 phone number in the past four years.

There are a lot of people who have been lead to believe that the MLC is doing the good work of getting the LPO out in front on the political field, both within and outside of the MLC, and there have been some things that have happened that are to the LPO's benefit, but in the end it is still a secret organization that collect the dues of non-MLC members through the national UMP program and uses them to the disadvantage of those people, which is quite possibly a misuse of those dues.

Openness is important to the political process, both nationally and within our own party and the MLC is not inclined to openness. The results have shown that the impact of that type of business is not conducive to building for the future. Thank you,
Michael Wilson
Chair, Libertarian Party of Multnomah County,
Portland, OR

Michael Wilson also forwards to us a recent press release from the Oregon LP candidate for Governor, saying in part Oregon LP Governor Thomas Cox wrote his fellow party members: "I hope my fellow Libertarians can see what I'm doing here -- this was never a conversation about the failed war on drugs, but an attempt by Mannix to toss me a tar baby called "drug legalization"." Cox followed with a rpress release whose theme was "Responding to accusations from the Kevin Mannix campaign for Governor that he is an "anarchist" who wants to "legalize heroin," Cox responded "As governor, I will veto any bill which legalizes drugs. Kevin is trying to take me off my message of better schools, more roads and lower taxes.".

Should the LNC Adopt the Carver Governance Model?

Starchild <sfdreamer@earthlink.net> writes:

I have one major question about the Carver Model of Governance. Exactly what current problem is it supposed to fix?

If the answer is that staff believe they are being microman-

aged by the LNC, and therefore the Executive Director should be set up to act as an intermediary or filter, I see little reason to support it. Why can't we trust the people we elect with direct oversight? If the top decision-makers in the LP are appointed or hired rather than elected, won't that take us one step farther away from being a grassroots organization?

Yours in liberty,

<<< Starchild >>>

His answer to his own question "What current problem is the Carver Governance Model designed to fix?" is that it would force the organization to codify what to focus on and what must not be done, and ensure that this is done dispassionately in advance rather than in the heat of the moment.

Others have since demonstrated that Carver would in fact be a substantial transfer of authority from the LNC to the paid staff, and that Carver would not have prevented the Perry Willis fiasco (which was a violation of specific rules already in place) so I won't repeat those arguments.

But I would like to address your contention that this process would prevent spur-of-the-moment decision-making. I don't think that's so. You seem to assume that once the LNC adopts Carver, it will be able to step back and make dispassionate considerations in the knowledge that its general will has been clearly expressed and needs no further modification.

However conditions are constantly changing. As post-Carver LNC members saw how staff was interpreting its instructions from month to month, they would continually be desiring to modify these guidelines in order that they be interpreted in a manner most reflective of their own evolving priorities. The time-sensitive nature of many staff activities that would be governed by guidelines (convention planning, national campaign coordination, responses to current events, etc.) virtually ensures that many of these modifications would be made in the heat of the moment.

If you think otherwise, allow me to quote a statement that was made to me: "I believe that anyone who was in Indianapolis and witnessed the very positive and enthusiastic (LNC) membership knows that this is not likely."

Of course the fact that adopting more formal bureaucratic guidelines under Carver means that the process of giving new instructions to staff would be more complicated and difficult, thus the standing instructions would be less likely, at any given time, to reflect the wishes of LNC members than is true at present.

For these reasons, I am strongly inclined to oppose adopting

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the Carver Model.

<<< Starchild >>>

Electoral Activism Via Meeting Attendance

Joe Cobb writes:

I encourage Libertarians to attend school board and other district meetings. At least keep an eye on the meeting agendas. If you see a tax increase is being considered please go to the meeting. Let the board members know that there are people in the community who are against new taxes to make up for inadequate budgeting. The general rule is that one person who votes essentially represents three people who were too busy, and unworried, to vote.

One person who attends a public meeting represents three hundred people who were too busy, or unworried, to attend.

More importantly, one person who attends a meeting is like a potential electoral activist, who might actually work in a campaign against one of the elected officers who voted against him. Every elected official lives in fear of electoral activists. It is hard enough for someone running for election or re-election to get people to come out and help. Imagine how fearful is someone who seems dedicated to work actively against his or her re-election.

This is not any kind of commitment actually to work against the elected officer, but merely the "appearance" of an implied threat. This is great power! Use it!

Better Web Sites

Al MacIntyre wrote me:

Summary: Here are some urls that I found that I think useful to many other people.

Most web pages are hostile to people who have reading difficulties because most sighted people who design web sites

**Be yourname@4liberty.net
NOW ONLY \$17/MONTH
TO LIBERTARIANS**

www.excell.net

Providers of Internet Services

http://excell.net/excellnet_national-dialups.htm

Dialup in most states and Canada.

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do not give any consideration to the challenges faced by handicapped people accessing their web sites. But 1 in 20 people have red/green color blindness, seniors are flocking to the Internet, but older people eyesight has trouble with small print, and poor color contrast. 1 in 10 men have some kind of color blindness. Many web sites are designed for users on the latest PC technology, but many people have PCs from yesteryear whose capabilities basically mean that many web sites infer "We are hostile to any user who does not have technology as good as the people who created this web site."

<http://www.vischeck.com/vischeck/> shows people who do not have vision problems what our web sites look like to people who do have vision problems. <http://www.vischeck.com/examples/> shows how the world looks to people with different vision difficulties. If you know someone who is color blind, you might like to check out the links on what can be done to help them. <http://www.vischeck.com/faq/> overall site perspective.

Have you been using acronyms without knowing what they mean? Perhaps we need to add a Glossary of Terminology found on our web site? Check out acronymfinder.com ucc.ie/acronyms/acronymsearch.com

<http://diveintomark.org/archives/2002/06/25.html> who has a series on the needs of web site designers to make sites more accessible to people whose native language might not be English, who might have a vision problem, who might have one of the hand finger dexterity problems, who might have some other disability. You might want to start at the <http://diveintomark.org/archives/2002/06/10.html> beginning of Mark Pilgrim's series. He includes other topics important to web design such as making your site more friendly to search engines. There are lots of ideas there, such as helping people who might not be familiar with all the short cut command combinations for rapid navigation of web sites. He talks about that <http://diveintomark.org/archives/2002/06/28.html> - also be sure to check out the further reading at the bottom of each page.

When you are on a search engine, are you ever annoyed that there are like a million hits for the topic you looking for, and the site support for narrowing your search criteria is not intuitively obvious? In that case you probably would benefit from checking out the article today at <http://searchenginewatch.com/searchday/> because the focus is on <http://www.1do3.com/> combining the best features of search en-

gines, directories and portals to make a 'shortal', and on Specialty Search Engines <http://searchenginewatch.com/links/specialty.html>

Let Everyone Know You're Cheap And Easy

I have some advice for you (and any other LPer who owns a business and is contemplating a run for office):

Many years ago, in the southwestern suburbs of Dade County, Florida, there was a liquor-store owner named George Firestone. There was also an independent (at the time) area newspaper, which came out twice a week.

Firestone advertised his liquor store in every issue, and his name was featured prominently in the ad. Week after week, year after year, readers saw the name "George Firestone".

After the ad ran for several years, Firestone entered the Democratic primary for the State legislature. He won easily, since the name-recognition-building phase of a first campaign was already achieved by his liquor-store ads. He served several terms, and ended up Florida's Secretary of State. And: those ads were, of course, tax-deductible!

You have an advantage over him, if you are owner of a sandwich service - while many people don't drink liquor, everybody eats. You could advertise your company, with your name prominent in the ads, for the next few years (remember, they're tax-deductible), and, when you run for office, you will have the name recognition you need. As noted above, this applies to *any* LPer who owns a business. For Liberty,

Jeff Daiell c/o Individuals For Jeff Daiell, Suite 126, 15213 Southwest Freeway, Sugar Land, Texas 77478

Real Campaign Material ...You Can Actually Use

Before the National convention, I floated the idea of producing a CD-ROM for all of our candidates. The disk is now falling into place. Among the contents: The Don Gorman campaign school. web pages. A Liberty for All site sampler. The Central Massachusetts Liberty Coalition web site www.cmlc.org. The LPUS candidate brochure. The radio ads for my Congressional campaign. A set of TV ads, a training video on how not to recruit people, and a TV program. A good palm card. Bonnie Scott is preparing the CDROM master. There are over a thousand candidates this year. Copying and mailing the disks pushes the costs up to the range \$5000-\$10,000. The Liberty Congressional PAC--the only Libertarian Federal PAC in the United States--will handle the finances. Please send your check to 87-6 Park Avenue, Worcester, MA 01605. Multi-candidate PACs can receive contributions of up to \$5000. Contributions are not tax-deductible. Federal law requires us to ask you name, address, occupation, and employer.

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221 Bumstead Road, Monson MA 01057.

(Continued from page 1) [State Chairs Meeting]

system. In that case if a takeover is to occur, it must it happen over the entire state. For example, giving each congressional district one vote means that a total of nine votes would be cast in MO. Busloads of people from Kansas City would only be able to collectively cast one vote. St. Louis, Springfield, Cape Girardeau and Columbia could stave off a takeover initiative.

Should there be a national provision for the expulsion of members?

At this time, the debate on this issue persists. There was no resolution drafted at the state chair's meeting for introduction at the national convention in July.

Steve Dasbach noted that if an individual is not a state member, or has been expelled by a state, then that individual could still be a national member. There is no provision in place to do otherwise.

Some of the points raised in this discussion include

- A matter of honesty: a provision codifies and formalizes existing ways of expelling members
- A matter of integrity: a provision protects and projects the group identity
- Formality institutionalizes conflict
- Rules for expulsion may currently be unclear

Sean Hough of NC argued for no provision. A provision would institutionalize conflict. He preferred a case-by-case, state-by-state analysis and action.

It turns out that if a given state adopts Roberts Rules of Order in its by-laws, then it can use those provisions for expulsion. Read them.

What makes this particularly troublesome is expulsion is what sparked the Arizona troubles highlighted in the 2000 presidential election. Harry Browne was not the Libertarian candidate on the ballot in that state. Twelve members, including conference attendee and current AZ chair Peter Schmerl, were expelled. Why? "Without going into the unseemly details, because", according to Peter, "they (the expellers) did not agree with us".

The National Libertarian Party in particular has a concern about due process in this matter. If a state asks for National to uphold an expulsion, National quite understandably wants due process requirements in place and not be forced to agree with the expulsion request. The due process requirement might have saved the twelve expelled Arizonans.

Fundraising

Eli Israel stated MA's conventions were one day. Shorter conventions such as this are better because those who are

successful and who have the resources are typically short on time. MA is a geographically small state, which shortens travel time.

MA slotted their best speaker for the evening banquet who was then followed by their best fundraiser. Eli says if you manage the emotional energy of the day and have projects that are worth funding, then you can expect to raise \$80-\$100 per person.

With 100 people at the convention, \$8-10k should be attainable. MA had 257 attendees at its last convention in a state double MO's size with 900 members.

"Butts in the seats" is the best accelerator for raising funds. MA advertises in gun publications, and sends post cards to likely attendees. It phones past attendees. MA also advertises in LP News to attract Libertarians from neighboring states.

MA prices its convention from \$70 (early bird) to \$85 or \$90 pre-registered to \$110 for walk-ins. "Politics is an inferior good" – you raise the price, demand goes **up**; lower price, demand goes **down**. Just like whiskey where the higher price conveys the appearance of higher quality.

MA had charged \$40 in the past. But higher fees allowed better speakers and that boosted attendance.

A couple days before the banquet, MA called major donors, explaining what they were going to do and pitched them what they'd pitch at banquet. They asked for their support, and got \$26,000 from major donors.

Then, a letter went out after the convention, stating "your friends donated \$350 for the convention, (e.g., \$95 convention admittance fee, plus a room for two nights, plus donations). Won't you donate \$350?" Many folks will write out the check on the spot for that amount. In some sense they got off cheap – it did not cost them a weekend.

The convention venue is great for fundraising because those who are unsure of how much to give will give higher amounts when they are among friends.

Capitalize on excitement and camaraderie, not shame and guilt. Trade value for value. Let them buy freedom and fuel party activity. Never be ashamed to ask for money. Reframe it. Tell people we offer a bigger, stronger, better LP, and find people who want to "buy" that. MA offers "ROI," return on investment. Remind them to look at the candidates, the affiliates, and the media coverage their donations have engendered.

Let them see that others are giving. Hold the pledge cards in the air. Theatrics are important. A sketch of the collection mechanics follows.

When you do the rounds (note plural):

1) Initial round: have donors hold up their donation envelopes so everybody can see a number of people donating. Well-dressed volunteers scurry out and collect the envelopes. Add it up as quickly as possible.

2) Bring in a big sheet – 7 people – to hold up numbers showing the dollar amounts

3) This inspires people to give more & numbers go up again

4) Outsiders notice too – jaws drop to see Libertarians raising \$50k

Avoid thinking zero-sum. The size of the pie is not fixed. Donations to states and counties increase along with donations to national.

And always thank the donors, before, after and during. Write thank you notes to donors, and for bigger givers stage parties and get-togethers.

The \$20 bill 'trick' is to collect an extra amount by asking people to pony up an additional cash donation of \$20 to generate another \$X.

In 1994 Indiana started its pledge program in order to fund the Executive Director position. Sara Chambers, Brad Klopfenstein, Mark Rutherford were some of the primary initiators. Indiana was not afraid to take even \$10/month, figuring that amount to rise down the road.

At the moment, Indiana's pledges amount to \$1900/month from 60 donors in a state with 550 members.

Every participant gets a 'trinket' – a pin with the state flag behind "94." They also get their own reception at the state convention, and special newsletter called the "1994 Society" for the year Indiana gained ballot access without petitioning. The newsletter is a compendium of articles and letters to the editor, as opposed to the standard news, candidate spots and features of a standard 'working' newsletter.

Certain employers will provide payroll deduction. And banks will debit checking accounts. Cash pledges that require writing monthly checks have petered out after a couple months and are no longer accepted by the LPIN.

Miscellaneous

- Random thoughts on why a large donor or corporate PAC would want to donate to the Missouri Libertarian Party, or other state party, assuming via a legal mechanism:

1. The Demoblicans ganged up on the tobacco companies. We stand as a political release valve

2. We won't abuse them, castigate them or regulate them
3. We will stay out of their way and let them prosper
4. But what value would we produce? What would we do with their money? (Have an answer)

- The Washington state LP has formed a nonpartisan PAC to work closely with the LP on revocation of asset forfeiture laws. This is an effective way to introduce community leaders to the LP's views without committing them at first to a particular political ideology.

How we can determine how much to ask for?

About 10% of what they give to the Demoblican Parties, since we have 10% of their sustaining members.

- Joe Dehn, LNC Representative, compiled a useful list of websites for Libertarian Party information:

General website www.lp.org
LP archive site archive.lp.org
LPUS Library www.dehnbase.org/lpus/library/

LNC Meeting Summaries www.dehnbase.org/lpus/library/meetings.html

LNC Official Minutes archive.lp.org/lnc/

LNC Audio Recordings www.dehnbase.org/mav.cgi

Strategic Planning [www.dehnbase.org/lpus/library/spt /](http://www.dehnbase.org/lpus/library/spt/)

- Mark Nelson noted that the LNC strategic planning meetings produced many good ideas for what we might do, but few facts about what actually works. This spawned the decision to turn some of the work over to professionals to improve the branding of the Libertarian Party.
- Mark Nelson also reported the LNC is establishing expectations for improved state and affiliate activities. This takes the form of a checklist which includes (green tab of the binder):
 - o My state has a written strategic plan for the next 1-2 year period
 - o My state builds an annual budget and manages revenues and expense according to it
 - o My state has an official web site
 - o The web site can accept donations
 - o The web site lists Libertarian candidates
 - o The web site presents Libertarian news and opinion
 - o My state has a newsletter published ____ times per year
 - o My state has a toll-free number
 - o My state tracks state legislation and lobbies on it
 - o My state maintains e-mail lists for activists and an-

nouncements

- o My state government treats the state LP as a recognized party, legally on a par with the Democrats and Republicans
- o My state has anti-takeover provisions in its Bylaws and/or charter'
- o My state performs new member prospecting on an on-going basis
- o My state contacts new inquiries and asks them to join
- o My state contacts lapsed or lapsing members to ask them to renew
- o My state can put candidates including President and VP on the ballot without external assistance.

Errors and Omissions

These are the notes as I took them at the Nashville Libertarian Party State Chairs conference, embellished for readability and submitted to others for review. If you spot an omission, a lack of emphasis, or other error, contact me at:

Bob Sullentrup 140 Hunters Ridge St. Charles, MO 63301-0427
rwsully@charter.net 636-946-3227

Attendees

Alabama	Mark Bodenhausen Chair
Alaska	Sara Chambers Representative
Arizona	Peter Schmerl Chair
Arkansas	Robert Reed Vice Chair
Arkansas	Gerhard Langguth Chair
California	Joe Dehn Representative
Colorado	Bette Rose Ryan Representative
Connecticut	Lenny Rasch and wife Linda Chair
DC	Kat DeBurgh Chair
Florida	Frank Longo Chair
Georgia	Helmut Forren Chair
Georgia	Mark Mosley ED
Idaho	Ryan Davidson Chair
Idaho	Ted Dunlap ED
Illinois	Austin Hough Chair
Indiana	Mark Rutherford Chair
Indiana	Brad Klopfenstein ED
Iowa	Mark Nelson Chair
Kansas	Steven Rosile Chair
Kentucky	Donna Mancini Chair
Maine	Fred Staples ED
Maryland	Nick Sarwark Chair
Massachusetts	Eli Israel Chair
Massachusetts	Kamal Jain ED
Michigan	Ghazey Aleck Chair
Missouri	Bob Sullentrup Chair
Missouri	Greg Tlapek ED
Montana	Mike Fellows Chair
Nebraska	Jerry Kosch Chair
Nevada	Brendan Trainor Chair
New Hampshire	Don Gorman Representative
New Jersey	Emerson Ellett Chair
North Carolina	Barbara Howe Chair
North Carolina	Sean Haugh ED
North Dakota	Marty Riske Chair
Ohio	Jeff Zweber Chair
Ohio	Matt Terry ED
Oregon	Mitch Shults Chair

Oregon	Richard Burke ED
South Carolina	Chuck Williams Chair
South Dakota	Nathan Barton Chair
Tennessee	Richard Pearl Chair
Texas	Geoffrey Neale Chair
Utah	Gene Linder Chair
Vermont	Hardy Macia Representative
Virginia	Rance Edwards Representative
Washington	John Mills Chair
Washington	Jacqueline Bartels ED
West Virginia	Richard Kerr Chair
Wyoming	Dennis Brossman and wife Marie Chair
Plus Others:	
Washington	Jesse Brocksmith King County Chair
Washington	Brien Bartels
Tennessee	Deryl Martin

Errors in Direct Mail

California Libertarian Activist Richard Ryder has circulated, and now obtained for *Libertarian Strategy Gazette's* use, the following wonderful article on direct mail. With thanks to Richard Ryder, we present

The 12 Most Common Direct Mail Mistakes... And How to Avoid Them

Successful direct mail doesn't depend on fancy, four-color design or "creative" copy.
by Robert W. Bly

Summary:

- Mistake No. 1: Ignoring the most important factor in direct mail success--the mailing list
- Mistake No. 2: Not testing.
- Mistake No. 3: Not using a letter in your mailing package.
- Mistake No. 4: Features vs. Benefits.
- Mistake No. 5: Not having an offer.
- Mistake No. 6: Superficial copy.
- Mistake No. 7: Saving the best for last.
- Mistake No. 8: Poor follow-up.
- Mistake No. 9: The magic words.
- Mistake No. 10: Starting with the product - not the prospect.
- Mistake No. 11: Failing to appeal to all five senses.
- Mistake No. 12: Creating and reviewing direct mail by committee.

Mistake No. 1: Ignoring the most important factor in direct mail success.

Do you know what the most important part of your direct mail campaign is? It's not the copy. It's not the art work. It's not even the format or when you mail. It is the mailing list.

A great mailing package, with superior copy and scintillating design, might pull double the response of a poorly conceived mailing. But the best list can pull a response 10 times more than the worst list for the identical mailing piece.

The most common direct-mail mistake is not spending enough time and effort up-front, when you select - and then test - the right lists.

Remember: In direct marketing, a mailing list is not just a way of reaching your market. It is the market.

The best list available to you is your "house" list - a list of customers and prospects who previously bought from you or responded to your ads, public relations campaign, or other mailings.

Typically, your house list will pull double the response of an outside list. Yet, only 50% of business marketers I've surveyed capture and use customer and prospect names for mailing purposes.

When renting outside lists, get your ad agency or list broker involved in the early stages. The mailing piece should not be written and designed until after the right lists have been identified and selected.

Mistake No. 2: Not testing.

Big consumer mailers test all the time. Publishers Clearinghouse tests just about everything...even (I hear) the slant of the indicia on the outer envelope.

To Be Continued

Stand Up for Liberty!

George Phillies exciting new book of Libertarian Party strategy is now available as an ebook in multiple formats from Third Millenium Publishing, <http://3mpub.com>.

Grassroots Libertarians

dedicated to fixing the Libertarian Party from the bottom up. Now on the web at www.grassroots-libertarians.org.
Our Message: "Just Be Active! Run for Office! Campaign! Help!"

Pioneer Valley Libertarian Association

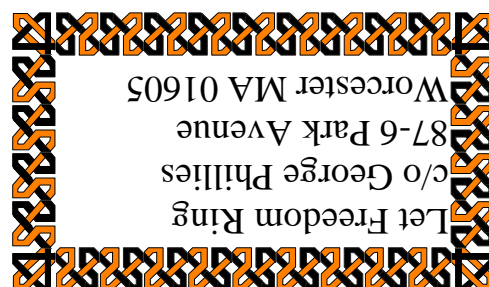
Massachusetts' oldest local Libertarian group, with regular meetings since 1995. We meet the second Wednesday of every month at Bickford's Family Restaurant, Old Boston and Pasco Roads, Springfield.

Our Web Pages

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