

Let Freedom Ring!

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Your Editor on Real Issues
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'Zero Dues' Shows Severe Failure

Let Freedom Ring Zero Dues Shows Severe Failure, LPMA State Committee Meets, LNC Finances Continue Poor, Gordon Named LP Communications Director...1, Practical Stands on Real Issues...4
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LPMA State Committee Meets; State Convention Set

The Libertarian Party of Massachusetts State Committee met June 3, 2006 in Waltham, MA. Party Bylaws were changed to permit the State Committee to appoint National Convention delegates, if no state convention were held in time. The State Committee appointed Rob Power of Cambridge and George Phillies of Worcester as the party's delegates to the 2006 National Convention. Additional openings are available.

George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net was appointed to organize a 2006 Party State Convention. The earliest practicable date under the Party By-Laws is September; Saturdays September 10 and 23 are the tentative days. A site to be chosen must be usable for fundraising, widely accessible, reasonably centrally located, and able to accommodate 40-80 attendees.

Gordon Named LP Communications Director

Steve Gordon of Alabama, who participated actively in leadership roles in the Russo 2004 and Badnarik 2004 Presidential campaigns, has been appointed Communications Director of the Libertarian Party. He is tasked with publicizing the party, securing interviews, and with the party's publications. Gordon teaches campaign management in the Libertarian Leadership School and is Associate Chair of the LP of Alabama. Gordon participates vigorously in the Freedom Ballot Access 527 organization, and co-edits Hammer of Truth, hammeroftruth.com, the libertarian national blog. LP News Editor Daniel Cloud will be resigning after the National Convention (he has already moved from Washington) and Gordon will have a role in his replacement.

Member-Donors Down 1/3 New Non-Member Donors Vanish

Let Freedom Ring!'s sources on the Libertarian National Committee reveal that National Party 'active' membership (people who signed the oath and donated in the past year) and 'active' donors (people who did not sign the oath but donated in the past year) are both in a precipitous state of decline. From April 2005 to April 2006, active membership fell from 20 236 to 13 620, a fall of 1/3. Over the same period, the count of active donors fell from 2233 to 1402.

The graph on page 2 shows the total number of active members and donors over the past year and a half. The number of members in April 2005 was 50% larger than the number in April 2006. Critical readers may well propose, that we see a Summer 2005 drop related to the announced \$50 dues

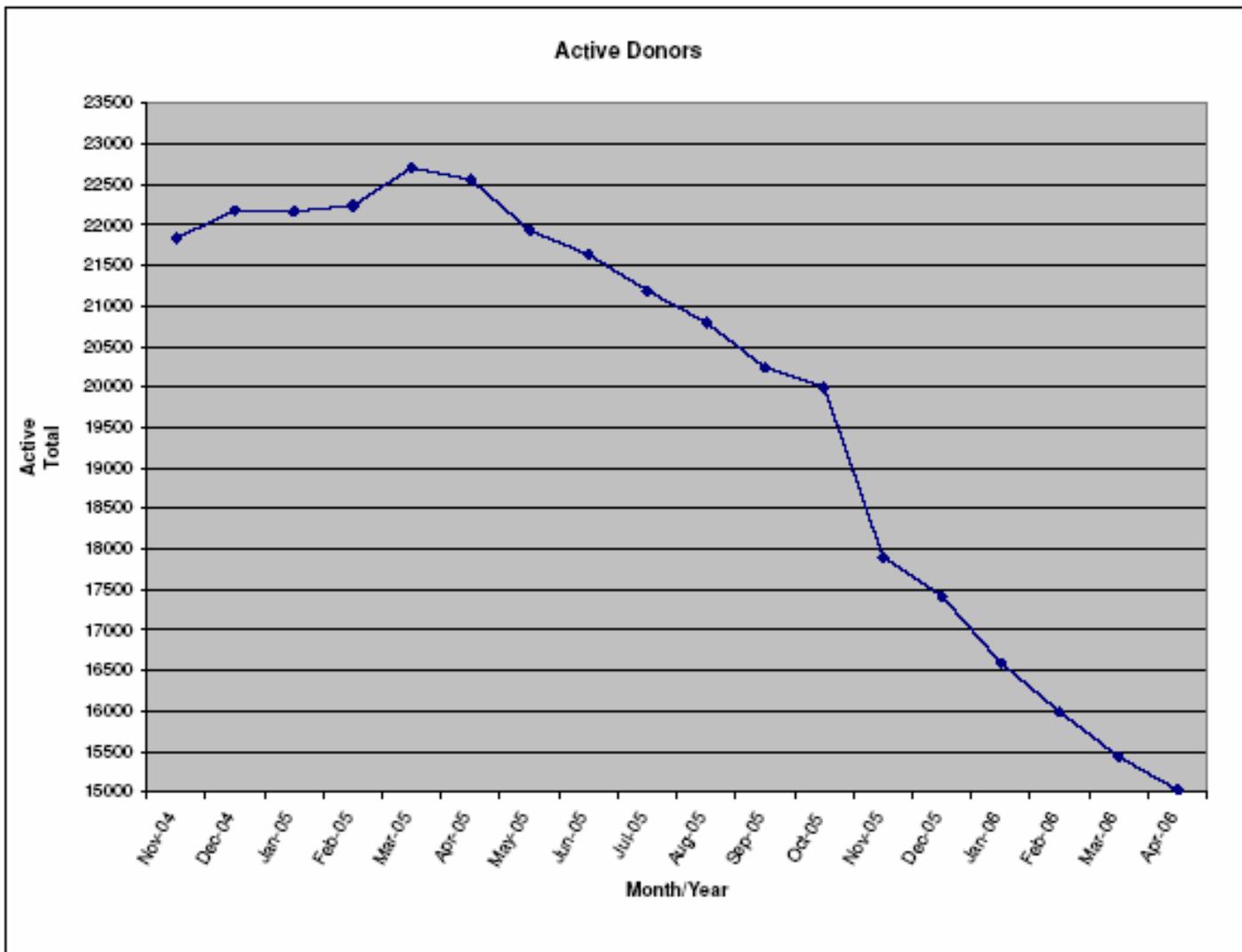
[Zero Dues] (Continued on page 2)

LNC Finances Continue Poor

To make a long story short, in April the LNC had \$106000 of income, and brought its debt down by \$18000. April income had a 1.2M\$ annual rate, worse than many recent years.

Month	Income	Net	Cash	Debt
November	76	-35	-17	66
December	81	3	-14	110
January	93	25	11	140
February	97	-3	8	138
March	150	-4	4	128
April	106	0	4	110

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(Continued from page 1) [Zero Dues]

that never went into effect and the LNC "Iraq Evacuation Strategy" and a very rapid fall beginning when news of the zero dues proposal began to register on the membership. If the current rate of decline of party membership were to be extended to the future, by the anticipated Summer 2008 National Convention the National party would have almost no remaining mem-

bers except life members who joined in the past.

Readers will recall that the people who paid dues were the people made a minimal commitment to our party. That minimal commitment was the foot in the door to get them involved in politics. These vanished members were the people who were worth asking to become community activists, campaign volunteers, and candidates. We have lost a third of our volunteer force. It is highly likely that many of the remaining members have resigned in their minds, so that they may continue to receive LP news, but they have disassociated themselves from our party. A plausible extrapolation to six months forward, a year after zero dues, is that we will have fewer than 10,000 true members even minimally committed to the Libertarian Party. [LPMA StateComm members will see I am borrowing liberally from the wise remarks of Michael Cloud at a recent meeting.]

One of the major rationales advanced for the 'Zero Dues' proposal was that it would free the National and various State Parties to raise money from people who would not choose to sign the membership oath. Huge numbers of Americans have registered as 'Libertarian' in the half of the United States that has voter registration by party, and a similar number of our supporters likely exist in the other half of the United States. These

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Libertarian National Committee
"Donor" Totals - Apr-06

18 Month Comparison

	Nov-04	Dec-04	Jan-05	Feb-05	Mar-05	Apr-05	May-05	Jun-05	Jul-05	Aug-05	Sep-05	Oct-05	Nov-05	Dec-05	Jan-06	Feb-06	Mar-06	Apr-06
Active w-MEM	1929	20283	20299	20247	20337	20326	19755	19402	18936	18538	18082	17830	15896	15575	14795	14097	13664	13620
Active w/out MEM	1907	1894	1869	1993	2169	2233	2179	2232	2254	2255	2158	2165	2004	1838	1797	1890	1770	1403
Total	3836	22177	22168	22240	22706	22559	21934	21634	21190	20793	20240	19995	17900	17413	16592	15987	15434	15023
Percent Change	0.11%	1.56%	-0.04%	0.32%	2.10%	-0.05%	-2.77%	-1.37%	-2.05%	-1.87%	-2.66%	-1.21%	-10.48%	-2.72%	-4.71%	-3.05%	-3.46%	-2.66%
Lapsed MEM	618	533	626	583	1270	1334	1303	1607	1310	1338	1192	2114	2825	1696	970	801	1236	737
Lapses w/out MEM	52	106	124	66	129	159	137	272	165	175	105	151	207	125	97	206	239	439
Lapsed Total	670	664	750	649	1399	1513	1346	1879	1475	1513	1297	2306	3032	1821	1067	1007	1475	1176
Percent Change	-18.89%	-0.90%	12.96%	-13.47%	115.56%	8.15%	-11.10%	90.70%	-21.50%	2.58%	-14.28%	74.03%	30.80%	-30.94%	-41.41%	-5.62%	46.47%	-20.27%
New Donors w-MEM	348	341	162	129	174	167	242	319	201	187	169	167	135	175	111	231	132	102
New w/out MEM	0	2	44	134	163	22	60	152	98	88	8	26	5	3	3	4	0	0
New Total	348	343	206	263	337	189	302	471	299	275	177	193	140	178	114	235	132	102
Percent Change	-51.05%	-1.44%	-30.94%	27.67%	28.14%	-43.02%	59.79%	55.98%	-36.52%	-8.03%	-35.64%	9.04%	-27.46%	27.14%	-35.96%	106.14%	-43.83%	-22.73%
Renewed w-MEM	286	571	480	402	1386	976	395	935	643	753	567	1695	756	956	79	128	671	591
Renewed w/out MEM	61	91	55	56	142	201	23	173	89	88	0	132	41	63	53	295	119	72
Total Renewals	347	662	535	458	1528	1177	418	1108	732	841	567	1827	797	1019	132	423	790	663
Percent Change	109.04%	90.78%	-19.18%	-14.39%	233.62%	-22.97%	-64.49%	166.07%	-31.94%	14.89%	-32.58%	222.22%	-56.38%	27.85%	-87.05%	230.45%	86.76%	-16.08%

Last Year vs. This Year

	Apr-05	Apr-06
Active w-MEM	20326	13620
Active w/out MEM	2233	1403
Total Active	22559	15023
Percent Change		-33.41%
Lapsed	1513	1176
Percent Change		-22.27%
New Donors	189	102
Percent Change		-46.03%
Renewals	1177	663
Percent Change		-43.67%
Active Donors w-MEM =	13620	
Lapsed & Zero Dues MEM =	83820	
Total "MEM" w-Signed Certificate =	99440	
Member Signed Certificate = "MEM"		

Let Freedom Ring!

people outnumber the active party members by perhaps twenty-to-one. Even if they were less active contributors, by involving them as party donors party financial resources could be greatly increased. It is unclear to this newspaper why the National and State Parties could not have approached these registered Libertarians in years past. Indeed, in cases of which we are aware in which registered Libertarian voters were approached, response rates were very poor.

What has happened to the count of non-member donors under the Zero Dues regime? The answer is provided by the Table on Page Three, from one of our anonymous but totally authoritative sources. From April of last year to April of this year, the number of renewals fell from 1177 to 663, a 43% drop, while the number of new donors and new oath-taking members fell from 189 to 102, a fall of 46%. Of particular note is the number of new people who gave money but who have not signed the membership oath. For the past four months, the numbers of new non-member donors has been three, four, zero, and zero, respectively for a total of seven such people, while for the same period a year ago the numbers were 44, 134, 163, and 22, for a total fifty times larger. Not only has 'Zero Dues' not increased the ranks of non-member donors, but under Zero Dues the ranks of new non-member donors have vanished.

It could be proposed that the drop in donors has not simply led to a corresponding fall in national party income. For the first four months of 2006, the LNC received \$446,000, while for 2005 and 2003 the LNC received \$526,000 and \$586,000 for the same time period. Thus, over the short term the decrease in donations has been less than the decrease in the amount of money being donated. In the first *three* months of 2002 the LNC received \$554,000, while in 1999 the party received \$888,721 in the first four months of the year. (The Presidential election years 2004 and 2000 are special cases, and 2001 data is unusable.) Recalling the 20% inflation since 1999, real income in 2006 has fallen to 40% of 1999 levels, which is about the same as the drop in membership over the same period. However, the observation that the fall in donors is mostly among small donors misses the point. The Party membership is not simply a collection of checkbooks that walk. The Party membership is our stock of *people, without whom there would be no party*. People who view party members simply as donors have missed the point of having a political party.

Letter to the Editor

George,

I've been getting your newsletter for several years now, and it is generally the only real LP news that I see.

I wish you well in your bid to become LP chair.

For more than a few years I have heard from others who promised, and promised, but somehow accomplished less, and bowed out after one term as chair.

On a few occasions California LNC member (and chair) Aaron Starr sent me links to LNC minutes. I still can't believe how dysfunctional a group the LNC appears to be.

From what I see, the LNC can plan and plan and do nothing, and then when it came to changing the LP dues, act without a plan, leaving the states to fend for themselves, and us "ordinary members" wondering what the real story or reasons were/are.

I don't think that I will be attending the national convention, but if I were, you'd have my vote.

I know that you don't depend on luck, and will actively campaign. I just hope that enough are tired of the status quo, and decide to vote for a change.

Jonathan Zwickel

Chair, LP Fresno, Ca. county

National Convention Speakers Set

Readers may recall that the short National Convention (only two days) worked because it would be essentially all business with only a few speakers listed. The speaker list has grown:

- * Former Congressman Bob Barr, who currently serves as the chairman of Patriots to Restore Checks and Balances and hosts a talk radio program
- * Andrew Neil, founding chairman of Sky TV, former publisher of The Scotsman, former editor of The Economist and former editor-in-chief of the Sunday Times
- * Krist Novoselic, founding member of the grunge rock band Nirvana, founder JAMPAC (Joint Artists and Music Promotions Political Action Committee), author of *Of Grunge and Government: Lets Fix This Broken Democracy*
- * Michael Badnarik, candidate for U.S. House of Representatives (TX-10) and the 2004 Libertarian presidential candidate
- * Judge John A. Buttrick, Maricopa County (Arizona) Superior Court Judge, 1994 Arizona gubernatorial candidate, 1998 Arizona House of Representatives candidate
- * Megan Dickson, an eighth-grade honors student who will speak about libertarianism
- * Patrick Dixon, city councilman, Lago Vista, Texas
- * Bill Lynn, Alderman, Davenport, Iowa
- * Tonie Nathan, former Libertarian Vice-Presidential candidate, and the first woman to receive an electoral vote in U.S. history
- * BetteRose Ryan, at-large LNC member
- * Rev. Anthony Williams, candidate for U.S. House of Representatives (IL-2)
- * Christopher J. Farrell, Chief Investigator for Judicial Watch, also serves on their Board of Directors
- * Greg Nojeim, associate director and chief legislative counsel for the ACLU (not yet confirmed)

- Sharon Harris, President of the Advocates for Self Government

Practical Stands on Real Issues

Where should the Libertarian Party go with its practical stands on real issues, on the Federal level? We note some possibilities:

- * **The War On Iraq** - The Libertarian message is simple. End the war! Bring our troops all the way home to America, as swiftly as possible consistent with their safety and practical logistical considerations. Stop meddling in the internal affairs of foreign countries. End Federal foreign aid. Our most effective foreign aid is the money you spend to buy foreign goods. It goes to productive workers and employers, not kleptocrat dictators. Support Americans giving charity to drought and disaster victims.
- * **Civil Liberties** - The Oath of Office of the President is to defend and protect the Constitution of the United States. When a President takes office, he should place his hand on one place: the Constitution and the Bill of Rights he is swearing to protect. When an Advisor tells the President "The Constitution is not a suicide pact" as a justification for his illegal deeds, he is committing sedition, urging that our government be overthrown. Those advisors should be fired.