

Libertarian Strategy Gazette

Volume 5 Number 11

November 2005

On the web at <http://cmlc.org/strategygazette.htm>

Letters on Libertarian Strategy Running Candidates for Office

The purposes of a political party are:

- To Advance its Agenda via Political Action.
- To run Candidates for Office and Win Elections.
- To Use Electoral Victory to
Put Its Program into Effect.

What sort of candidates can we run for office? I'm going to identify four levels of candidate commitment: The paper candidate. The minimum-commitment candidate. The serious candidate. The running-to-win candidate

The paper candidate has the effort made to put himself on the ballot. He may do no more than agree that his name can be used by the party. He then disappears from public view. He raises no money, does no campaigning, and ends as a statistic on election day.

The minimum-commitment candidate gets on the ballot. She answers candidate questionnaires, appears at debates, and answers questions from the press, so that she is never seen by the public as "missing-in-action". However, her campaign raises no money and does no advertising.

The serious candidate brings into operation -- within the limitation of budget -- all of the tools of a political campaign. He advertises, has lawn signs and a web site, mobilizes available volunteers, runs phone banks and a get-out-the-vote drive. The candidate may or may not win, but defeat will not be due to lack of effort.

"Running-to-win" differs from "serious" in that the candidate not only is making a maximum effort to win the election, but also has objective substantial reasons for supposing that her victory is likely. There are two obvious reasons for supposing that victory is likely: 1) The candidate is an incumbent defending a friendly district. 2) Objective polling data shows opponents with majority-negatives while the candidate has strong name recognition, majority-positives, and leads among likely voters.

Note that "ability to spend money" is not listed. If you don't believe me, ask any staffer on President Forbes' re-election campaign committee how Forbes beat President Perot in '96.

Note also that many winning candidates did not make it to the "running-to-win" level. Some were serious candidates who overcame adversity. Some were minimum-commitment candidates prepared to accept victory and running in uncontested races.

Not everyone is prepared to make a maximum effort, to sacrifice friends and family for months on end, in order to be

[Run for Office!] (Continued on page 8)

Stand Up for Liberty!

Chapter Five

Activities For Every Libertarian Political Group

The strategy that will take us to political victory is Local Organization. Local activism and local groups will be the centerpiece of our final success in enacting the Libertarian agenda. In putting local organizations at the forefront of the Local Organization strategy, I am not saying that we should only have local organizations. That would be silly. National, state, and special-interest groups all have well-defined, mission-critical roles within the Local Organization Strategy.

Some actions should be performed by every Libertarian party organization, national, state, and local. Other activities are especially appropriate at one of these levels. Within this Chapter, I'll consider things that we should all be doing.

Our ultimate objective is political victory. To get to victory, we must develop a large voter base and strong party organization, so that we can elect and re-elect huge numbers of Libertarians to political office. On the road toward these objectives, we have intermediate goals:

- * Build a Party that grows because people want to join it. This strategy works for the Congressional Republicans, and it will work for us. People spontaneously join an active party that offers product quality, not a party of glitz, hype, and spin.

- * Foster activism. The Libertarian Party persuades people to Stand Up for Liberty! and donate their time and energy.

- * Develop Local Organization and local activity. We must greatly increase the number of local and special-interest groups.

- * Greatly increase the number of elected Libertarians. "Elected libertarians" are office-holders who do libertarian deeds and tell the public and the press that they are Libertarians, no matter the party line on their ballot.

ACTIVITIES FOR EVERY LEVEL

This chapter presents activities that should be performed by Libertarian political groups at every level, from the national to the block committee. I'll talk about Developing the Voter Base, Incitement, Information Management, Outreach, The Importance of Keeping Promises, and Fund-Raising. I'll even mention some activities that every group should avoid. Each group performs these activities in different ways, but every activity discussed below is important to Libertarians working anywhere in our party structure.

DEVELOPING THE VOTER BASE

A fundamental objective of every Libertarian party organization

[Activites for Party Groups] (Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1) [Activities for Every Party Group]
 is to develop a strong Libertarian voter base. Until a strong voter base is obtained, political victory will not happen. The path to a strong voter base is Local Organization.

Why do we need a voter base? Every political party faces three groups of voters. Your voter base is the people who will support your party no matter what. People in the middle can be persuaded to vote for you. Some people will never vote for your party. The first group is your voter base. The last group is the other guy's voter base. In one election, money only changes the votes of the people in the middle. However, money also sets the theme and tone that persuades people to drift towards your between from one election to the next.

These groups are soft at the edges. With two strong, well-supported candidates, the middle shrinks way down. Between Carter and Reagan, the Anderson and Clark campaigns only had a few percent of the electorate to work with. A really weak candidate, a Bob Dole or a Walter Mondale, still holds 30% or 40% of the electorate. Reform Party Governor Jesse Ventura faced two extremely weak opponents and took full advantage of Minnesota election laws to register new Reform Party voters. Ventura captured an extremely wide middle, brought many new voters with him, and in winning only captured a modest fraction of the vote.

Advertising takes the Party beyond its base vote to capture uncommitted voters. Only voters not committed to a party are moved by advertising for a single candidate. A great success of Libertarian advertising (he still lost) was Jon Coon's State Representative campaign, which spent \$160,000 -- twice what the Democrat spent -- to capture 16% of the vote to the Democrat's 68%. That's a Libertarian capturing the complete middle, every vote accessible to advertising, against a strong (incumbent) opponent. The Republican also captured 16% of the vote, while spending not a penny, purely on the strength of having run in the district before. That 16% is the Republican voter base that will stay loyal to its party in a heavily Democratic district.

Note a basic principle: Dollars per vote formulas refer to the margin. Applying dollars per vote formulas to the entire voting population is mystic nonsense. Your Democratic opponent may have spent \$10 a vote, but that was primarily to capture the last 5 or 10% of his voters. Your Democratic opponent got 40% or so of the total vote simply because he was a Democrat.

The Coon campaign demonstrates what every competent political strategist recognizes: Building a solid voter base is mandatory for political victory. Our voter base is the people who Vote Libertarian! simply because there is a Libertarian on the ballot. Without a large, solid Libertarian voter base, regular victories will be few and far between. The Libertarian Party must gain a large voter base before it wins consistently. You can't buy a voter base. You can earn one. The Libertarian Party will earn a voter base when it:
 *consistently runs good candidates at every level,

- * markets candidates as product, not just personality,
- *gives its candidates solid support in every town, ward, and precinct,
- * sells to the electorate the Libertarian view *on issues voters care about*, and
- * delivers excellent performance whenever and wherever elected.

In no more than 28 states representing about half the country, development of a voter base will be reflected by increases in how many voters have registered Libertarian. (22 states do not register by party; "Libertarian" is not available in all of the 28.) Registering Libertarian is a sign that someone has joined our voter base. Persuading people to register Libertarian -- as opposed to welcoming people who choose to register as Libertarians -- is basically meaningless except in states that link ballot status to the number of registered Libertarian voters. Persuading people to register Libertarian does not cause them to vote Libertarian. To paraphrase the tuna, we need people who vote Libertarian, not people who have Libertarian voter registration.

How do local, state, and national Libertarian organizations build the voter base the Libertarian party needs? How do we create the tools we need to assemble our voter base and campaign organizations? At the moment, the key process is

INCITEMENT

Incitement is the art of persuading people to do things that they had not planned on doing. Incitement is persuading people to organize, run for office, carry petitions, handle a campaign treasury, and stuff envelopes.

Why do we need to incite people? Except for the highest offices, people usually do not offer themselves as candidates. They run because they were asked to run, perhaps by being told they would do a better job than the incumbent. Other major parties view candidate recruitment as a major task. There are people who appeared to be prospective Democratic Senate candidates who have had the President of the United States himself telephone them, asking them to run. At the state level, people have run for State Representative because the Governor or Speaker of the State House called and asked them to run.

The Libertarian Party doesn't have a President to do calling. Yet. We do have national, state, and local Party groups. We have people with titles, people who have promised to spend their time helping the party. All these people should view candidate recruitment --- incitement to run --- as one of their most important duties.

Incitement is equally important to develop candidate staffs and to find more activists. A candidate without a staff is in a challenging position. Every Libertarian group could use more activist support. Persuading casual members to become more active in the party should be recognized as a mission for every activist. How do we incite people? Incitement is based on personal contact. Incitement demands active local and regional groups, so Libertarian activists can meet potential Libertarian activists and incite them: Move beyond passive membership and Stand Up for

Liberty!

How do we incite people to become active? You can preach all you want in the party newsletter about the merit of carrying signs, doing telephone banking, or stuffing envelopes. If you actually want someone to carry a sign, man a telephone, or stuff an envelope, there is no substitute for asking them personally. There is no substitute for putting them in a group in which everyone else announces that they will Stand Up For Liberty! and do some work.

Personal contact and group bonding are equally important at every level, not just the most local. On one hand, a national officer could telephone a state chair for the first time in the three years the state chair has been in office, and ask at the last possible moment if the state chair could possibly run a few more people for Congress. That's a very difficult request, from a person from whom the state chair has rarely heard and to whom the state chair owes no debts.

It is a very different situation if the national officer (i) had regularly talked with the state chair, (ii) had systematically persuaded state parties to unite in supporting a plan to run people for Congress, (iii) is suddenly in a predicament because a state party couldn't come through with promised candidates, and most important (iv) had previously given material support to the state party for the state's choice of projects, so that the state party is in the national officer's moral debt. In the first case, we have a phone call between near-strangers. In the second case, we have people who have worked together and done favors for each other, and now one of them needs one more favor. Extended personal contact and favor bonds open doors that would otherwise be closed.

What activities do we incite? A fundamental task of every group is to help activists organize, form local groups, and do better the things they are already doing. The National Party helps state organizations. State organizations are supposed to help local groups. Every group helps people run for office.

What can go wrong with incitement? Note I said "help", not "persuade". Preaching is cheap. Providing concrete support is challenging. You can preach at people until they print up stationary and call themselves a Town Committee. You can preach at people who have never been active, never held petitions, and never run for office, until finally they get active, take out petitions, and try to run for office.

However, if you don't tell your newly-found candidates and staffers what they need to do, supply them with contacts to local activists, and give them meaningful support, you've prepared them to fail. You've prepared them to throw up their hands in disgust and quit. And then, when someone competent finally comes along with a serious plan to get people to run and a serious plan to give them the support they need along the way, the competent person has a little problem. The guy who persuaded people to run and then abandoned them has burned out the pool of potential candidates.

Preaching at people to get active and then abandoning them, leaving them to shift for themselves, is unethical and unwise. On the other hand, helping people to become active is a good thing. I mentioned earlier the Operation Everywhere document, which presents the Membership Recruitment strategy. One of the document's very strong positive features is its appendices, which give detailed instructions for doing things. You might ask if some of those things ought to be high-priority tasks, but stylistically the document shows how to describe an task in incredible detail so that a politically-naive would-be activist can perform it.

Helping new candidates and staffers by giving expert advice is not simple. Part of expert knowledge is expertise in teaching. It is not enough to know how someone else can get on the ballot. You need to be able to tell to the candidate what the candidate needs to do, in words the candidate understands and remembers, so that the prospective candidate and her staff will do the right things and get her on the ballot.

Why do we need to incite voters? Choosing a political party is like getting married. Most people do it once or twice in their entire life. The most reliable predictor of a person's political allegiance is the allegiance of the parents. You get very few meaningful chances, perhaps none at all in their whole life, to persuade anyone to change parties and Make Liberty Happen! and Vote Libertarian! Every Party group at every level has the same obligation to keep the Party's name in front of the public. We need to make sure: When someone realizes the duopoly parties are not for her, she will find the Libertarian Party and join us in Standing Up for Liberty!

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Information is the lamp that leads us through the political darkness. Information is the construction material for sound strategy, good tactics, and solid victories. Information is the one good that becomes more valuable when it is shared. Chapter 14 considers information management: how to collect information, what to do with information, and how to get that information to everyone who might use it. Information management is a task for every Libertarian group.

Internal information management unites groups and their people. Openness and transparency permit a group to develop sound ideas and build membership confidence in how operations are conducted. There is nothing wrong with friends polishing and developing an idea before running it up the flagpole. Many people rely on first impressions, so improving a proposal privately until it makes a good first impression is just common sense. However, groups that never talk to themselves or their neighbors, that make decisions in secret for the sake of secrecy, and that try to hide every leadership dispute behind a mask of pretended unanimity are basically sick. Sick groups will never build a healthy Libertarian Party, so Libertarians should avoid supporting them. There are plenty of other parts of the Libertarian movement that will welcome your time and energy.

OUTREACH

Outreach, going to people who are not committed Libertarians and moving them in a Libertarian direction, is the core

activity for every Libertarian group. We're here to persuade other people to Vote Libertarian! time after time, not to reassure ourselves that it's OK for us to vote for ourselves. Running candidates for office is the most fundamental effective approach to outreach, but campaigning is linked to the election cycle: No election, no campaign.

Campaigns are discussed in Chapter 7. Political campaigns let us advertise libertarian positions to the body politic when they are likely to be listening. Campaigns let us do external outreach, going to people who are not Libertarian and convincing them that we are the political party they would prefer to support. Campaigns also let us do internal outreach. Through internal outreach, we go to Libertarians who vote but are not active in the party and persuade them to become activists.

Identifying and cultivating media contacts is something every Libertarian group should do. In practical terms, each group should focus on reporters and columnists whose work corresponds to the group's geographic range, including the closest major media markets.

Advertising is a fundamental process for outreach. Activist events, e.g., Libertarian speakers at supper clubs, are fine for reach people who have already become aware of the Libertarian movement. To reach people who have no inkling that they could choose to support the Libertarian movement, you need a method that puts our message onto media that they watch. This is advertising: Cable TV, radio, theater slides, and newspapers and magazines all put Libertarian ideas in front of people who would otherwise never hear about us.

It is especially important to reach people who are not already committed to one of the duopoly parties. Libertarian groups and campaigns may have different budgets and cover different geographic areas, but all share a common responsibility to advertise Libertarian ideas to the general public.

The Internet and other wired media: A large fraction of the populace does not use electronic mail or the World Wide Web. For contacting people and asking their support, EMail is no substitute for personal contact and telephone calls. Enough people -- especially young people who have not yet chosen a political party -- use the Web that a solid web presence is still critical to any serious political group. To reach activists who use EMail, for speed and price nothing competes with a private electronic mail list.

It is appropriate, and easier every day, for local, state, national, and special-interest groups to field their own web pages and EMail lists. Especially at the local level, one must always remember *Many People Do Not Use Electronic Mail*.

Many populist groups make effective use of telephone and fax trees. Almost everyone has a telephone, and lots of people can receive a fax. Phone trees are especially effective at the local level, where toll charges are avoided, though under modern conditions more and more people have toll free long distance service.

KEEPING PROMISES

Every Libertarian organization has certain nuts and bolts operations it absolutely must run correctly.

**Legal and Party By-Law obligations:* Many Libertarian groups, especially larger ones, have a Constitution and By-Laws. Many groups are subject to legal reporting requirements because they handle political money. Each group's officers are obliged to follow their Constitution and By-Laws and our country's laws.

**Membership fulfillment.* Many groups collect dues and promise a monthly newsletter. Nothing kills a dues-based membership club faster than a nominally regular newsletter that is always late. You can recruit all you want, but when your newsletter becomes irregular your renewals dry up and your membership dwindles. The National Committee must maintain membership records and publish LP News on time. State and local groups must do the same with their records and publications.

FUND-RAISING

Money is the lifeblood of politics. Main stream candidates spend half their time raising money. Fundraising is a necessity for every Libertarian group and every Libertarian campaign. Nonetheless, in the list of activities for all Libertarian organizations, I place fundraising last. Fundraising is important for most everything else we do, but fundraising is only a means, not an end in itself. Furthermore, because the Libertarian party differs from other major parties in opposing corporate and other welfare, we will never get the hundreds of millions in special interest moneys given to the duopoly by every group that wants to loot the Federal treasury. We have many places where we can beat the duopoly, but head to head fundraising is not one of them.

Fundraising is only good if the money is spent effectively. A group that makes spectacular promises and ties up a large part of the money available for Libertarian projects in a year might score a breakthrough. That group for sure makes it harder for all other Libertarians to fund the incremental gains needed to reach a broad-front victory.

A single Libertarian group that perpetually ties up a large part of the movement's available donations had for sure better be spending that money to strengthen the Libertarian movement as a whole. A group that locks down the bulk of Libertarian political spending had better not be spending that money primarily to pay staffers and raid the membership and donor lists of other parts of the Libertarian movement, as opposed to using it to advance the Party toward victory. The Libertarian movement is not a public relief project for political consultants. Shuffling members between Libertarian groups leaves the movement no stronger than it was before the members were shuffled. The Libertarian movement cannot afford a parasite that sucks the movement's life blood and leaves the movement weaker rather than stronger when it finishes feeding. Libertarians should insist that Libertarian money is well spent, and close their checkbooks to groups that waste it.

WHAT TO AVOID

A new political party is much like a start-up firm. Someone and a couple of partners have found a product, solved their financial issues, and are going to go into business. All too often, start up firms go under because they make standard mistakes, mistakes that a knowing entrepreneur would instantly avoid. The mistakes are made by people who've worked in a company, perhaps several companies, but never really understood how their companies worked.

Working on limited capital, unsuccessful firms rent an office, hire a secretary to answer the phone, get some furniture, and hire a senior manager or executive officer to run the office. The question that is never asked is "what is the value added from this decision? Why can't we work in the garage, answer our own phone, and get the furniture from sale or the Salvation Army?" All too soon, the startup is out of cash and out of business.

The political equivalent is very similar. There is a temptation to rent an office, furnish it, and give the party its own paid Executive Director, without asking what value is added. That's a cash sink, not necessarily a good decision.

The rational alternative as the party grows is to recognize that there are certain sorts of clerical work that could be done by staff or contractor instead of volunteers. Instead of collating and folding the newsletter, applying stamps and mailing labels, and sending the new issue on its way, the newsletter printer masters, a computer disk, and money go to a professional mailing house. The editor edits. The printer professionally sends the issues.

Eventually, you need clerical support to handle renewals, donations, and mailing of information packets. You start hiring staff who will have value added -- these are clerical staffers. The party chair, unpaid, speaks with each of them once a week or so, standard business practice. If you want people to be reliable and show initiative, you pay accordingly.

Eventually, the staff grows to the point that the party chair cannot keep track of them all. Now you need an office manager, not to be the party brain trust, but to keep the most routine of the multi-person tasks going. In the end, you have so many office managers that the party chair can't handle all of them. Now, finally, with an operation of 40 or 80 people and an operation in the five or ten million a year range, you actually do need an executive director and a professional financial officer, and have the resources to hire them. No libertarian political group has ever been in this position.

The difference between hiring because it sounds prestigious and hiring because the employees add value should be instantly apparent.

SUMMARY

This Chapter has discussed activities that are equally important for any Libertarian group, whether national, state, or local. I've talked about Developing the Voter Base, Incite-

ment, Information Management, Outreach, The Importance of Keeping Promises, and Fund-Raising. I also discussed some potential errors. The next chapter discusses tasks that are specifically appropriate at a single political level, and considers ethically-libertarian linkages between such groups.

**Tim Crowley's
Libertarian Campaign Plans
Campaign Staff**

It's never a good idea for the candidate to be his or her own campaign manager, or treasurer. The functions are very different, and the candidate's highest and best use is to be the candidate, rather than to be forced to make decisions about where to speak, what colors to use in the brochure, how to raise money, or how much to pay for a headquarters.

Of course, the ultimate decision in any dispute will be the candidate's, and there's no reason for the candidate not to participate in important decisions so long as they're not taking time away from campaigning. But he or she should feel equally free not to participate in campaign affairs, because there's already a trustworthy campaign manager and staff in place doing their jobs.

Individual roles in the campaign should be divided up by function, and should include the Campaign Manager, the Media Coordinator, the Headquarters Manager, a Volunteer Coordinator, the Research Director, the Ballot Drive Coordinator, etc., etc.

Remember, these are functions, not necessarily separate and distinct people. You may not have enough volunteers to staff such positions. In a very small campaign, for example, the Campaign Manager may agree to take on all of the other roles as well. But it is important to outline each function which needs to be performed in your campaign, and to assign responsibility for performing them.

How do you get people to take responsibility for certain functions? First, of course, you have to ask them to -- but there's more to it than that. Most volunteers, even the most eager, are inexperienced or uncertain about what you need.

Your job is to give each one the tools needed to get the job done, and that means a specific job description and an estimate of the time needed. For example, you could approach a potential Media Coordinator and ask, "Will you be the Media Coordinator for the campaign?" and leave it at that.

Or you could say, "I'd like you to be my Media Coordinator. I'd like to send out two news releases per week, hold three news conferences, and appear on five talk shows. I figure this will take about ten hours per week - will you do that?"

Obviously, the second approach makes it much easier for the prospective Media Coordinator to accept because you've given him, in two short sentences, a specific idea of what you need. The first approach doesn't give any idea at all.

A campaign in which all the roles are clearly defined and assigned, and in which everyone concerned knows what he or she is expected to do, is a far smoother campaign than one in which everyone is spending half their time just figuring out what they're supposed to be doing - and ending up leaving the important decisions to the candidate.

Getting People Involved

Much of the foregoing assumes that the candidate already has a respectable number of people willing to be involved in the campaign in some way.

But what if you don't? What if your campaign is a "pioneer" effort, where you seem to be virtually the only active Libertarian in your area, and where your main goal is simply to build up the size and abilities of the Libertarian Party? Or, what if all the familiar faces in the party -- the "old timers" -- think it's great that you're running and might even give you a check, but say they're "too busy" or are "too burned out" to really do anything?

Unless you're determined to do absolutely everything yourself -- which won't build the party and won't work very well, either -- you must find a way to involve new people in your campaign.

The most important tool you have to do this is a mailing list of members, contributors, and interested people which your state party has compiled over the years.

Take a look at the list. Chances are you won't recognize a lot of the names, and in many cases it won't be because they're people who don't want to do anything. Most Libertarian Party mailing lists are full of people who have never been contacted personally and have never been asked to get involved.

A reasonably high percentage of them can become active in your campaign if you're willing to put in some initial hard work (which will be easier than to try to activate old-timers who don't have any time to give you). From the total list, cull the names of those who live near your city. Don't worry if they're members or merely inquiries.

Now carefully plan an event. Typically, this is a "Campaign Kick-Off" or similar affair. Take the names on the mailing list from your area and send them an attractive invitation to the event, then plan to follow up by telephone.

Remember, you're not looking for scores and scores of people. Chances are you'd settle for 5 or 10 good new activists.

So if your net list contains 100 names, be pleased if 20 agree to show up and half of them agree to work for you. Later, you can call those who couldn't attend, to see if they're interested in another event or project

Hold the event preferably in a convenient semi-public place, such as a small room in a large hotel. Make the room small enough so that if only 20 people show up, they won't feel lost in a giant cavern. Have a planned program for the event, perhaps a Libertarian film, plus three or four speakers, including the candidate, who will speak for 5 or 10 minutes apiece.

Have wine and cheese, or cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. If you charge admission at all, make it nominal, no more than \$5.00. Have a sign-in sheet at the door for the names, addresses, and phone numbers of the people who show up. And be sure to have a "volunteer form" distributed to whomever shows up which will allow them to volunteer for your campaign.

You have a specific message to convey at this event: To introduce and talk about the Libertarian Party, to show how your campaign fits into the purpose of the party, and to demonstrate a concrete accomplishment that your campaign will achieve if it has help. Then you must directly and specifically ask for the help of the people in attendance.

Keep in mind that most people become active for psychological reasons - they want to become part of an effort to accomplish something good and worthwhile. That's the appeal you have to make at this event.

To restate in the form of a checklist:

- 1) arrange for a suitable meeting place;
- 2) prepare a simple, informative, attractive invitation and mail it to your list (roughly three weeks before the event);
- 3) call the entire list and ask them to attend (roughly two weeks before the event);
- 4) call the people who have agreed to attend and remind them of the event (roughly the week before);
- 5) maintain the schedule and purpose of the event by making it brief, enjoyable, interesting, and directed toward the goal of developing new activists.

Doing this is going to cost you something in terms of time and money; renting the room, furnishing the refreshments, mailing the invitations, making the calls. You'll probably be able to enlist the physical or financial aid of one or two of the old-timers. If you're truly unable to handle such an event as this, the key thing is to establish personal contact with the people on your mailing list and to ask them to get involved.

If all you can do is get on the phone and ask people to come to an envelope-stuffing party, that's better than not making the effort at all.

One last point about old and new activists: Once you've recruited a few new faces to help you, some of the old-timers who were previously "too busy" will miraculously find that they have some time and will get reinvolved. And, as for new activists, never get bogged down in worrying about whether or not they're "real" libertarians. A lot of them won't be.

But remember that most Libertarians developed their political beliefs through exposure to other Libertarians. So let the new people get active and involved, and they'll find that their understanding of libertarianism gets progressively stronger by interacting with you and your campaign.

Fundraising

Almost no one likes asking for money. When candidates decide to run for office, their vision is on the glamour aspect,

making speeches, ripping the opponent to shreds in debates, and cutting TV commercials. But money is what wins elections. While financial underdogs do occasionally pull off upsets, money is the single most dominating factor in the vast majority of campaigns. In virtually every race that Libertarians have won, they have outspent their opponents.

Money gives you communication with the voters. Time spent on fundraising will enable you to reach more voters more often than the same amount of time spent in other methods of campaigning. Fifty to sixty percent of the campaigns and the candidate's time should be spent raising money. Unlike scheduling and other detail work, fundraising is not something left up to a manager or committee. The candidate must be involved in a major way. After all, that's who the people are supporting.

Contributors are more likely to give money to a good person with a good idea than they are to a good idea alone. Candidates must have enough belief in themselves to ask for financial demonstrations of personal support, and in the Libertarian philosophy to ask people to make generous investments in their own personal freedom. You are not begging for a handout. If you can't ask for money to advance what you believe in, does it mean you don't really believe that Liberty is worth supporting?

The only real impediment to your raising the money you need is overcoming the fear of personal embarrassment. But it's extremely difficult to offend a person by asking him or her for money.

This is not to say that the people you ask will necessarily say yes, but in virtually all cases, the worst they will do is say no. A surprisingly high percentage will say yes if asked and asked correctly.

Fundraising, like sales, is essentially a numbers game. Ask a certain number of people to contribute, and a certain percentage will say yes and the remainder will say no ("I'll think about it" or "Maybe later" qualify as "no" answers).

Therefore, the ideal way to raise money successfully is not to worry about people who have already said no, but to concentrate on finding others who will say yes.

Why People Donate

People give money, in descending order, for shared relationships, fear of pain, or shared values.

Your shared relationship donor list should include, in roughly descending order, relatives, friends, business associates, your Christmas card list, neighbors, members of organizations you are active in, candidates you have contributed to, your high school and college classmates, owners of stores you patronize, and everyone you have written a check to in the last several years. In other words, you are going to ask everyone you know or have known. For these people you will stress the relationship, not the philosophy, in your pitch to solicit dollars.

Fear is a wonderful motivator. Al Capone is rumored to have said, "You can get a lot more with a kind word and a gun, than you

can with a kind word alone." If you can make potential donors feel a gun is pointed at them to take away their property, reproductive, gun or other rights, and that their life and the future of humanity depend on their making a contribution now, you will have donations. If this sounds like overkill, think for a moment about how much money TV preachers take in and why.

Letting people know that you share and are actively promoting their values will also translate into funds.

Single-issue organizations are where many of your long term donors will come from. This type of appeal does stress philosophy, but in an active, demonstrable way. If you can combine all three motivators, you have a sure bet

Other Key Points

An integral part of your fundraising program is a "Thank You" mechanism. Every contributor, no matter how small, should receive a thank-you note as soon as possible. If the number of contributors is too large, prepare a form thank-you letter (sign it personally) to be sent to small contributors, but maintain a personal response for large ones.

The most likely contributors are those who have already given, and the higher the original contribution, the higher the next one is likely to be. If you can show your prospect that his contribution has already made a significant difference, it is relatively easy to ask for another: "Your \$100 really helped get us on the ballot. Now that we're on, we need to open a headquarters and start the campaign. Would you be willing to double your earlier contribution?"

Always ask for specific amounts of money, and don't be afraid to shoot high. A good place to start is with your estimate of 3% of the person's income. If you know a prospect has already given \$50, chances are he's likely to be able to give \$100, so ask him for it. If he can't he'll tell you, but he won't be offended. Conversely, if you don't ask for a specific amount, the prospect will never give as much as he can afford; he'll give the least possible amount. Publicly recognize your contributors whenever possible. If your campaign has a newsletter, run a list of contributors. Read off the names of your contributors at events. It's not necessary to mention the amounts, although it's not bad to do so with generous contributors so long as you have their permission in advance.

Use specific expenses which need to be paid for: "We need money for the campaign" is far less persuasive than "We need \$400 for brochures" or "We need \$1000 for yard signs." Make contributors feel that they have made the difference in purchasing key items or services: "Your \$25 contribution will buy us one radio ad on WZYX." Donors prefer to contribute toward visible action items, such as TV ads, or to file a lawsuit fighting discrimination against an LP candidate. Asking for money for overhead items such as a headquarters or phone bill is less "sexy" and is usually a mistake.

To Be Continued

(Continued from page 1) [Run for Office]

elected. Many Libertarians are able to lend their good names to the party, to Stand Up for Liberty! by occupying a place on the ballot, but don't have the money or time or contacts to make more of a run for office. Candidates who talk to reporters and appear at debates are making a significant positive contribution to our party.

Nonetheless, The only way we can forward our cause as a political party is to run people for office. Some candidates will bring the Libertarian word to the public. Other candidates will win election and serve in office, thereby showing voters how the Libertarian program of small government, low taxes, and the whole Bill of Rights benefits every voter personally.

Someday, there will be a Libertarian candidate for every election across the United States, and every single one of them will be a serious candidate, generally in a position to run to win. That day is not here yet. Until then, we make do with the candidates that we have, and incite all our fellow Libertarians to run for election.

How many candidates do we run? In my opinion, there is only one possible answer to this question: We run as many candidates as we can over the long term. That's not quite "run as many candidates as we can": Let's not burn out our activists, so they aren't there for the next election. Let's not run people who will seriously embarrass the party. Let's be sure that the candidates who have a reasonable shot at winning can do the job when elected. However, it's pretty close: Without wrecking ourselves up for the long term, we should be running as many candidates as we can.

There are people who will say we shouldn't run minimum-activity candidates, the people who answer questionnaires and talk to the press, but do no campaigning. They don't want to run candidates who get 5% of the vote or 3% of the media coverage. They don't want us to run candidates who make the Libertarian party look like a paper tiger.'

To those people I say: When we run no candidate, we'll get not 5% or 0.5% but no percent at all of the total vote. When we run no candidate, we'll get not 30 percent or 3 percent but no percent of the vote, or worse. In 1996, Massachusetts Libertarians finally ran no candidates for "Party State Committee", a Massachusetts elective office, and were mocked for their failure by one of the major Massachusetts newspapers.

We should run all the serious candidates that we can. Through the Local Organization strategy, we should work to get those candidates the staffs and fundraising channels that will let them win their elections. But if we can't find a serious candidate, or don't have the staffers, volunteers, and funds to give a volunteer a serious campaign, we should to the maximum extent possible run minimum-commitment candidates for as many offices as possible.

The candidates that our Local Organizations develop and support will bring us to the Libertarian future of freedom, prosperity, and peace.

...George Phillies

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