

# San Mateo Libertarian

Volume VI, Number 11 Editor: Christopher VA Schmidt November/December 1996

## Triumph at the Polls! C.V.A. Schmidt

This was a great month to be a libertarian in California--the initiative process has given the freedom philosophy an outlet even as we are effectively frozen out of the legislatures by the inherent dynamics of the "two-party system."

After several elections in which we were preoccupied with opposing bad measures, we (and our allies of convenience) were able to put 3 propositions on the ballot and go on to see all three pass--putting big-government authoritarians on the defensive for a change!

Although leaders of the Republican Party initially supported the *California Civil Rights Initiative*, in the end only Libertarians seemed to be willing to stand up for it publicly; at least in our local races. Because they automatically oppose anything associated with the Republicans, Democrat politicians found themselves in the interesting position of trying to make racial and sex discrimination chic: unselfconsciously resurrecting every 'go-slow' argument used to defend the most offensive racial discrimination programs of the past. When nervous Republican politicians started to backpedal, it became clear who was committed to ending discrimination as a matter of principle (Libertarians) and who had been supporting CCRI as a populist campaign strategy (Republicans).

Although the big guns of both big parties nationally were opposed to the *Medical Marijuana* proposition, it passed anyway--winning 64% of the vote in San Mateo County. This came to pass despite the state's raiding the Yes-on-215 headquarters and jailing workers in a strategy of intimidation which backfired badly.

Finally, the *Voter Approval for Local Taxes* initiative passed (albeit with a slim majority) despite bi-partisan opposition by big-government politicians.

If only the voters who joined us at the polls would stop voting for the politicians who made these initiatives necessary!

**On 8 of the 12 propositions on which the Libertarian Party of San Mateo County took a position, the majority of the state's voters cast their ballots in agreement.**

## Meeting Notes Rich Acuff

The October business meeting was well attended and busy. One piece of good news is that Kate O'Brien has been made Chair of the Menlo Park Arts Commission. The bad news is that the commitment involved in this new position is forcing Kate to step down as our regional Chair. Fortunately for us, Mary Steiner, who has been doing yeoman's duty herself as both Vice Chair and Treasurer was willing to take on the duties. By unanimous vote, Mary was named Chair and Kate was made Vice Chair. Mary has also announced her willingness to serve as Chair for next year, too. Way to go Mary!

Mike Moloney took ample advantage of the pre-election focus on political issues. He spoke in many forums, including a debate on Prop 209 at Skyline College, at Notre Dame, at San Raphael High School, and at a League of Women Voter's Town Meeting in San Mateo. Mike also gave an interview to Milt Steinberg of the San Mateo Weekly. We don't know when it's likely to be published, but it's always a good idea to get to know the press.

Our candidates were also busy. Chris Inama, Joe Dehn, and Christopher Schmidt have all been spotted or heard on KQED radio (88.5 FM) and on televised candidate panels on local community access channels.

Delmas Gault discussed his experience at the anti-SMOG-Check-II rally in Sacramento. He noted there were three to four thousand people there, and a lot of Libertarian Party activities. Delmas has also been busy on the streets. He has handed out Harry Browne brochures in his neighborhood and got our proposition recommendations broadcast on his local cable access channel.

Also on the move, Irvin C. has passed out 300 copies of the [World's Smallest Political Quiz](#) in his neighborhood.

The Libertarian Party is coming up on its *25th anniversary!* A *Pot-Luck Party* will be held Wednesday December 18, at the office of Amy Guthrie, D.D.S., in Palo Alto, from 7:30pm to 9:00pm. (See the map on the back page.)

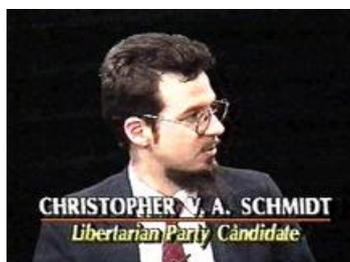
	Proposition	--All California Voters--					--San Mateo County Voters--				
		Yes	%	No	%	Abs.	Yes	%	No	%	Abs.
204	Water Project Bonds	5,575,100	59.8	3,278,928	35.1	5.1	155,966	68.8	55,928	24.7	6.5
205	Jail Construction Bonds	3,546,206	38.0	5,176,942	55.5	6.5	93,461	41.3	114,616	50.6	8.2
206	Veterans' Real Estate Bonds	4,621,391	49.5	3,994,760	42.8	7.6	117,089	51.7	87,497	38.6	9.7
207	Attorney Fee Regulation	2,954,060	31.7	5,707,870	61.2	7.1	73,594	32.5	132,453	58.5	9.1
208	Campaign Finance Limits	5,271,015	56.5	3,350,726	35.9	7.6	141,559	62.5	64,557	28.5	9.0
209	California Civil Rights Initiative	4,848,207	52.0	4,077,165	43.7	4.3	104,967	46.3	110,859	48.9	4.7
210	Minimum Wage Increase	5,498,833	58.9	3,426,565	36.7	4.3	147,805	65.2	66,121	29.2	5.6

211	Securities Litigation; Fee Regulation	2,227,569	23.9	6,471,606	69.4	6.7	49,065	21.7	160,386	70.8	7.5
212	Campaign Finance Limits	4,186,201	44.9	4,346,230	46.6	8.5	110,553	48.8	92,061	40.6	10.6
213	Litigation by Drunk, Uninsured	6,704,216	71.9	2,046,460	21.9	6.2	152,722	67.4	56,128	24.8	7.8
214	HMO Regulation	3,593,132	38.5	4,951,289	53.1	8.4	91,963	40.6	112,359	49.6	9.8
215	Medical Marijuana	4,984,286	53.4	3,963,743	42.5	4.1	144,229	63.7	71,959	31.8	4.6
216	HMO Regulation, Taxation	3,272,239	35.1	5,169,752	55.4	9.5	83,487	36.9	118,688	52.4	10.8
217	Income Tax Increase; Redistribution	4,233,380	45.4	4,357,127	46.7	7.9	104,914	46.3	101,487	44.8	8.9
218	Voter Approval for Local Taxes	4,794,375	51.4	3,706,103	39.7	8.9	106,308	46.9	97,023	42.8	10.2

## Election Commentary C.V.A. Schmidt

The following are my comments on various election items:

- **Water Project Bonds:** Although this bond measure for Sacramento water projects passed, it's clear that the electorate didn't know what they were voting on. Whereas almost 70% of San Mateo County voters [ill-advisedly] voted yes, less than 60% of Sacramento County voters (the presumed beneficiaries) did likewise.
- **Jail Construction Bonds:** It's hard to believe that the same voters who elected to put the state deeper in debt to fund Sacramento water projects rejected the Jail Construction bonds by such a wide margin! All right! Maybe two years after passing the "Three Strikes You're Out" proposition, they find themselves no safer; a little poorer, a little wiser, and a little more cynical about the influence of the prison industry on state legislators.
- **Veterans' Real Estate Bonds:** Although this bond measure passed, the margin was small and, if you study the table on page 1, you'll note that only a minority actually voted yes.
- **This year, the Secretary of State of California and the County of San Mateo went beyond reporting vote counts on their respective web sites and provided interpretive "percentage comparisons" which misleadingly added abstainers' votes (over 10% in some cases) to the 'yes' and 'no' percentages. For example, only 49.5% of the state's voters voted yes on Prop 206, but the State and news media reported 53.7%-implying a majority when only a plurality voted that way.**
- **Similarly, in San Mateo County, only 48.9% voted against Prop 209, but the County Clerk and the San Mateo County Times misleadingly reported 51%.**
- **Common Cause Campaign Finance Limits:** Although I am sure the voters had only good intentions, this measure will effectively limit the ability of small party candidates to raise money and campaign. The big parties have front groups like the Democrat Party's "Emily's List" (which circumvents PAC contribution limits), but small parties dare not run the risk of obliteration by FEC fines. These regulations create a "chilling" effect so strong that I "voluntarily" limited my campaign to under \$1000 to avoid eligibility for the big fines. What can we do in the future? We have to keep on building a strong party that is capable of coping with the paperwork. Donations to the state and national party organizations make this possible. Locally your volunteer time and early money for direct-mail circulation of candidates' petitions made it possible for us to put our candidates on the ballot. Thank you! We took advantage of a lot of outreach opportunities that were possible only because we were on the ballot. I hope we can count on your help in the future as we work to make our party grow!
- **HMO Regulations:** These measures were handily defeated. I think it is safe to conclude that this reflects hostility to government involvement in health care, so I think the sentiment expressed bodes good for our future.
- **Sequoia High School District Bonds:** We were completely blind-sided by this \$45 million measure and failed to muster opposition. The lesson is clear: EVERY ONE OF US must keep an ear to the ground, lest we miss another opportunity to put anti-bond arguments on our local ballots. We've done it in the past and defeated similar bonds, and we need to do it in the future. If you read about any local bond measures on the horizon, please send e-mail to our officers. What we really should have is a volunteer to check in with the county on a systematic basis, that this may never happen again. Our present volunteers are completely busy. YOU could make the difference! (The county officials are very friendly, by the way, and are not hostile to inquiries.)



I ran for Congress in support of the Libertarian Party's plan to run candidates in a majority of districts and as an opportunity to reach out to interest groups through their candidate surveys, and as practice for future campaigns.

I had not planned to make any personal appearances, but after deciding that I'm at least as personable as Bob Dole (!) I did half a dozen. The still photos in this issue are digitized from the televised candidate panels sponsored by the League of Women Voters.

Congress, 12th District		Vote	%
Dem.	Lantos	137,217	71.9
Rep.	Jenkins	44,899	23.6
Lib.	Schmidt	5,619	2.9
N.Law	Borg	3,221	1.6

Roughly two dozen interest groups submitted surveys, and I answered a dozen, which I selected by virtue of their potential for outreach and potential for expression of what makes libertarians different. I failed to answer some because they were just too long, or the deadlines too short or the wording of the questions didn't permit meaningful answers. Although the groups claimed to send their materials to thousands, I received postcards of encouragement only from members of the National Right to Work Committee.

I put some of the surveys on my campaign web site. It was linked to by half a dozen election information sites (Vote Smart, Smart Voter, Attaboy, City Search, etc.), but I can't judge readership. Some linkers estimated that my site should have received 2000 visits, but only one visitor wrote to me. ...He did say he liked what he saw!

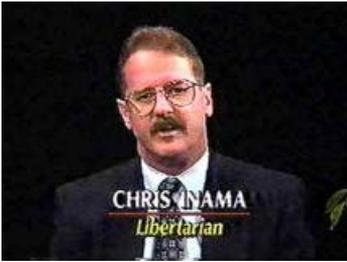
In the end, I received at least 5,619 votes-not bad for a district with only 1150 registered Libertarians!

I would like to thank everyone who circulated my petitions, talked up my candidacy, and, of course, voted!



Joe Dehn turned in the best performance of our candidates in the televised candidate panels. His panel was also broadcast on Cable Coöp, but only because he made it happen.

In future campaigns it would be nice to have someone specialize in managing the media. Any volunteers? If we had known anyone with professional video equipment, we could have taken advantage of a free time offer on KQED television. Next time, 'fess up!



Chris Inama made the most public appearances of any of our local candidates. He is also our most experienced candidate, having represented the LP in several previous contests.

Jon Matonis was our most successful local candidate. Maybe it was because his was the only 3-way race...maybe because he was the only coast-side candidate...but maybe because he had the best-looking web site!

State-wide, our congressional candidates garnered a total of 196,929 votes: the third-highest total for all parties. That would be enough votes to elect 1 or 2 congressmen if we weren't distributed so evenly throughout the state. Proportional Representation may be in our future some day, though. The California Constitution Revision Commission even recommended it in one report. And Rep. Cynthia McKinney has introduced legislation in the House to bar the federal government from challenging states that adopt PR. Keep your fingers crossed...

Oddly, Libertarian Presidential candidate Harry Browne fared better than all but one previous LP candidate, but more poorly than any of our congressional candidates. This skew has been consistent in past elections as well, and I am at a loss to figure out why, especially since the Presidential race has usually been decided long before polls close here. I think Perot's poor showing, compared to 1992, supports Browne's theory of the importance of the debates.

In a press release, Browne said several positive things had been accomplished by his campaign:

"We have opened the door this year," he said. "Finally this year, people are recognizing that there is a Libertarian alternative. We have doubled the party's membership in just the past two years. And thanks to this campaign, everyone in politics and the media knows who we are and what we stand for.

"There is nothing wrong with our message or the way we're promoting it. We simply need to have it heard by more people between now and the next election. The American people are looking for solutions that don't involve more government, don't involve more tax money, and don't involve more violations of the Bill of Rights," he said.

Browne, on the central lesson he said he learned from the campaign:

"We have to build a party that is so big that in 2000, they can't keep us out of the debates," he said. "We can create the circumstances that will make it possible for us to be in the thick of things in 2000."

To accomplish that goal, Browne said he would "speak out for the party wherever possible-appearing on talk radio, television, and in print-letting people know there is hope for America."

Libertarian Party National Director Perry Willis said the party is taking immediate steps to prepare for 2000.

"For the next four years, we plan to spend the bulk of our resources on membership recruitment -- which is a change from the past, when we've had to spend most of our money on ballot access," he said. "This election is a wake-up call: We need to do better, we need to be bigger. Let's start today."

## Ron Paul Elected to Congress C.V.A. Schmidt

In Texas, sometime Libertarian Presidential candidate Ron Paul was elected to Congress as a Republican, despite having been opposed by the national Republican establishment, who had backed a liberal in the primary.

Congress, 14th District		Vote	%
Dem.	Eshoo	135,810	65.0
Rep.	Brink	64,653	31.0
Lib.	Dehn	3,191	1.5
N.Law	Wells	1,981	0.9
P.&F.	Thompson	3,358	1.6
State Senate, 11th Dist.			
Dem.	Sher	161,618	58.2
Rep.	Shannon	105,992	38.1
Lib.	Matonis	10,339	3.7
Assembly, 21st District			
Dem.	Lempert	83,637	61.2
Rep.	Lalotis	46,898	34.3
Lib.	Inama	2,778	2.0
N.Law	Whitehurst	3,503	2.5

Addressing family, friends, volunteers and supporters, Dr. Ron Paul, MD, of Surfside said he was honored by the confidence placed in him by the 14th Congressional District's voters, who voted Tuesday for Paul as their representative in the US House.

"Tonight I have been given a great honor by the people of the 14th District and I will do exactly what I have done in the past: vote to cut taxes, reduce the size of the government, uphold the Constitution, and represent the district-regardless of political pressure," said Paul, a former Congressman. "The voters have spoken loud and clear: they want lower taxes, less regulation and more freedom. And that is exactly what I intend to deliver."

Paul said his top priority in Congress will be to address the tax issue.

"From the moment I am sworn in, I will fight to lower taxes across-the-board for all Americans, and push for a fairer, flatter tax system. I will also work to abolish the IRS, the Department of Education, the Department of Commerce and all other agencies not specifically authorized by the US Constitution."

## Presidential Debate at Stanford N. Brown

Stanford's 3rd-Party Presidential Debate on October 23 was definitely worth attending.

They invited all candidates qualified on the ballot in 20 or more states. Perot declined. Howard Phillips of the Taxpayer's Party, John Hagelin of the Natural Law Party, and Harry Browne of the Libertarian Party accepted.

Harry Browne did an entertaining job of concisely and concretely delivering the Libertarian message that "Government doesn't work." He, politely and constructively, used examples and scenarios from statements of the other candidates and provided the Libertarian viewpoint on those examples and scenarios.



John Hagelin is a good speaker whose message is that of preventing problems and cultivating potential-some kind of 'Naturopathy meets JAMA/NEJM and goes into politics' approach. Compelling, but not absolutely convincing.

The fact that John once worked at SLAC was well received by the [primarily Stanford?] audience. John conducted himself well and was the last one left around to chat with the audience.

I was disappointed by the Natural Law Party position on drug legalization. When your position begins 'The Libertarians are right: drug legalization will cause drug crime to go down, but . . .' I think you have sabotaged your own position pretty effectively. He proceeded to recite the standard claims about how Marijuana (supposedly) damages/interferes with brain function.

Last night I confirmed that John Hagelin's position on gun control is also the official policy of the Natural Law Party on gun control. They support gun control. They are fully in favor of the 1994 "Assault Weapon Ban", and don't think there are any problems at all with same. (I hadn't known any of this until October 17 on a KQED broadcast of an NPR taping of Hagelin speaking at the Cleveland City Club). Last night I brought it up personally with Hagelin after the debate. (I pointed out what gun owners did to the Congress/Senate in November of 1994 and twice encouraged him to switch sides. Well, I'm trying!).

Howard Phillips, the Taxpayer's Party candidate, gave a (mostly) reasonable sounding exposition of the Ultra-Bible-Thumping apparently Christian Coalition position. His position calling for the death penalty for [most?] crimes clearly shocked the audience. His comment along the lines of 'the Serpent in the Garden of Eden was the first to advocate the Libertarian philosophy' was well received by Harry and will undoubtedly go over famously with libertarian snake owners across the country. (As my wife later pointed out to me, the metaphor is actually very deep, and impressively rich.)

Howard explained his position that this country was founded on the notion that God-not man; not government-is both the judge of good and evil and the source of sovereign law. He treated an interesting notion that there are three parties in world politics, the "government party" who believe the governments are sovereign, the "libertarian party" who believe that people are sovereign, and then there are those who believe that God is the sovereign.

Howard was not in his element, but he appears to have pulled no punches and cut no corners in delivering his message to an audience that didn't like it. Refreshing! Being primarily composed of Libertarians, Bible Illiterates, College Students, Pro-pot, and Pro-privacy types most (immediate) audience members undoubtedly are not on Howard's list of preferred conversants. Probably knowing that his performance will receive significant C-SPAN exposure tipped the scales.

The bright side is that, in a statement I recently found, Howard announces himself to be 100% pro-gun. And, regardless of his motives, it was very nice to hear a sincere and considered presentation from a candidate who disagrees with me on almost every point. C-SPAN or not, it took guts for that man to walk into that hall.

In summary, the program was polite, entertaining, contained interesting content, and the candidates appeared sincere and thoughtful in what they said. All of this was a joyous respite from the pap spewed forth by the big media puppets and their big-eared mascot from a planet which shares its name with the great state of Texas.

*Editor's note: The forgoing is an abridged version of a private email message, reproduced with permission, but edited for publication without the author's participation.*

## Officer Elections C.V.A.Schmidt

The *election of our local officers* will take place at our next meeting, which will be held at Dr. Amy Guthrie's offices on *Wednesday, January 15, 1997*, at 7:30pm. Attendance would help us meet quorum...but we're likely to elect the same officers who would continue to serve in the absence of a quorum...

## **Entertainment '97 Books for Sale C.V.A.Schmidt**

We have some *Entertainment*® '97 books of discount coupons for sale, but we started late this year. If you want one, please send a \$40 check made out to "Libertarian Party" to 911 Fulton Street, Redwood City, CA, 94061-1724, and include your phone number and an address where the book can be delivered. Please try to get your order to us by December 15. You can call Margret Schmidt's voice mail at (415) 833-1300 with questions or to make special arrangements. Books will be available at the Anniversary Party on the 18th, too.

Each book sold puts \$8 into our treasury. If you eat out much at all, you'll even *do well by doing good*.