

Belmont, local socialism and you

Questionable government programs in our area

by Warren Gibson

Governments at all levels are, on balance, monstrosly harmful to society, with their wars, taxes, regulations, etc. Nobody reading this newsletter needs to be convinced of that.

On balance. But all of us benefit in the short run from some government program or other. For example, an Open Space District "owns" the hill across from my Belmont house and maintains it in a natural state. This enhances my lifestyle and my property value. Thanks, taxpayers. Another example: taxes pay more than half the cost of my daily ride on Caltrain. Next time you're stuck in a jam on 101, console yourself by remembering that some of your tax dollars allow me to relax and read the paper on the way to work.

A tough question for us Libertarians is whether we would be willing to give up our favorite government programs. A November ballot measure in Belmont would authorize the city to develop a plan for acquiring vacant land near my house for preservation as open space. I would benefit enormously from such a program. My vote? A reluctant no. It's not a proper government function. I'm trying to buy one of my lots adjacent to my house and would support private acquisition of other open space by an organization like the Nature Preserve.

What about Caltrain subsidies? Yes, they should be stopped, but hey, you guys on 101 aren't paying your way either. Sell 101 to a private owner who would charge tolls high enough to balance rush-hour supply of and demand for space on the road. This should divert enough travellers to Caltrain to make the line profitable to a private owner.

How about you? What's your favorite government subsidy? Are you willing to give it up? Do you think it could be operated successfully by a business or charitable organization? Send it off to our newsletter editor!

San Mateo helps Marin Libertarians form new region

by Steve Marsland

Dr. Michael Edelstein of Marin convened a group of seven Marin Libertarians on Sunday, September 21 at the Dipsea Cafe in Sausalito to form the Marin County Region of the California Libertarian Party. Jon Petersen, Secretary of the Santa Clara County Libertarian Party, a California State LP officer and Libertarian candidate for State Treasurer, helped guide the meeting, appointing Tammy Austin as acting Chair of the Marin County Region.

Steve Marsland, Public Relations Director of the Libertarian Party of San Mateo County, also attended the meeting. Steve was invited because of his long e-mail correspondence with Dr. Edelstein. He helped give advice about how a smaller county organization could get going, and how to set priorities. Steve brought a sample copy of the recently drafted San Mateo County LP constitution and bylaws as examples for the Marin organization. The group agreed the first things the Marin County region should do are to elect officers and to establish an appropriate newsletter. There may be some synergy if county organizations work together in the publication of their newsletters. Steve agreed to forward a copy of our newsletter to Tammy.

Several of the attendees were quite willing to serve as officers to assist Tammy, so the Marin organization is off to a good start. For example, Dr. Edelstein, who is well known for his book *The Three Minute Therapy*, expressed willingness to serve as Membership Chair.

Those who want to offer best wishes, assistance or advice to Tammy can contact her at P.O. Box 10671, San Rafael, CA 94912, voicemail 415/331-1500 x139. We look forward to ongoing relations with the Marin organization.

Mike Moloney '98 campaign update

by Bernie Jackson

In the July issue of this newsletter, I wrote an article announcing Mike Moloney's campaign for Congress. Since then, I volunteered to be his campaign manager. I cautioned him that I have no experience. "Neither do I," he answered, grinning. I knew right away: whatever happens, this campaign will be a blast.

So far, our chief asset (besides the inherent Rightness of Libertarian principles) has been Mike's adventurous spirit. Most of us would be a little too shy to walk along El Camino waving a sign with our name on it, hoping to interest total strangers in politics. But since June, Mike has been doing exactly that. "Fifteen thousand people saw me this weekend, Bernie!" he told me one morning on the phone (he has counted an average of 200 cars per fifteen minutes). You might think drivers on El Camino are too preoccupied to notice, but you'd be wrong. They happily wave to him, honk their horns, and even pull over to talk, saying "I see you everywhere!" I'd say this beats direct mail. Try to imagine 15,000 envelopes.

We are just beginning to get into the print media. The Libertarian Party newsletters ran our campaign announcements in July and August. In the mainstream, we have gotten a little bit of attention from the *San Mateo Times*. Back in June, a gossip columnist spied Mike waving his sign at a local festival. On August 18, the *Times* printed a letter to the editor from Mike criticizing the infamous tobacco settlement. We're not aware of any other coverage yet, so please let me know if you see Mike's name in your paper.

Mike's campaign now too has a Web site at <http://www.moloney98.org>. Please visit the site to read our San Mateo press release, the tobacco letter, and to see action photos of Mike. Other exciting features are in the works. I could use your help promoting the site, too. If you are a Web surfer, please search for "Moloney for Congress" on your favorite search engine or directory. Send me e-mail saying where you searched and whether or not you found our site. If you read a newsgroup that you think would welcome our announcements, please let me know; I can send you something to post. If you have a Web site, please consider adding a link to our URL above. And, of course, tell all your friends to visit the site and vote for Mike!

To reach Mike's campaign, call 415/715-5419, or send e-mail to Mike at mike@moloney98.org or Bernie at bernie@moloney98.org.

Film showing: *Waco: The Rules of Engagement*

The critically acclaimed film *Waco: The Rules of Engagement* will be shown in Santa Cruz and San Francisco later this month. More information can be found at their Web site: <http://www.waco93.com>.

Santa Cruz: October 9/16, Nickelodeon Theater, 210 Lincoln Street, 408/426-7500

San Francisco: October 15, The Red Vic Movie House, 1727 Haight Street, 415/668-3994

September meeting notes

by Bernie Jackson

Margret had e-mailed me her monthly Treasurer's Report along with some comments on the new constitution and bylaws, and I distributed printouts of it at the meeting.

At the start of this month's meeting, we welcomed Barbara, a new prospective member. Unfortunately for Barbara, we spent all of the next two hours reviewing our new constitution and bylaws in great detail. I hope Barbara is reading this and will join us next time when we will resume our regular business and guest speaker presentations.

Discussion of constitution and bylaws

Steve Marsland, author of our new constitution and bylaws, opened the discussion by addressing whether or not we need a constitution. Some party members had suggested to him that all rules and provisions could be covered by a single document, the bylaws. This was partly for simplicity, but also to avoid any conflicts between the California Libertarian Party's constitution and ours, in which cases ours would be invalid. Steve pointed out that the Santa Clara party has been using its own constitution successfully, and our documents are closely modeled after theirs. In addition, since the constitution is more difficult to change than the bylaws, it gives us a way to protect more strongly the provisions which we feel are most important. We all agreed that these were good reasons to keep the constitution separate.

Before Steve began reading the bylaws, Mike Moloney wanted to review the new procedure for spending authorization, as currently given in the constitution and bylaws. Steve said that at least half of the Executive Committee must be present at any meeting where spending is considered, and a majority of those present must vote to approve any spending item.

Next, Steve read aloud the entire text of both documents, and after each section of each article, he paused for discussion. When he had finished the constitution, Mary Steiner suggested that our proposed changes at this meeting be incorporated into a new revision of these documents, and that at our October meeting we hold a simple yes/no vote to ratify them, without further discussion. Of course, if the next revision is not ratified, there will be more discussion after all. This was agreed upon by all present.

Below is a list of the changes proposed and the brief reason behind them. I have omitted all discussion that did not result in proposing a change to either document. *[To save newsletter space, only major changes have been discussed. Ed]*

Const. Art. IV: Change "Standing Committee" to "Operations Committee," because "Standing Committee" sounds dull and bureaucratic. Also propagate this change to the rest of both documents.

Const. Art. VII: We discussed the quorum for approving constitutional amendments and decided that there should be no quorum requirement (just $\frac{2}{3}$ of all those present provided proper notification was given). This does not require a change to the constitution, but it does require changing the bylaws.

Bylaws Art. II: In Sec. 2, specify that the Vice Chair shall preside at central committee meetings whenever the Chair is absent, and that if both the Chair and Vice Chair are absent, then they shall assure that someone else is designated to chair the meeting. In Sec. 5, the Treasurer shall act under the supervision and direction of the Executive Committee only, rather than "the Chair and the Executive Committee," since the Chair is a member of the Executive Committee.

Bylaws Art. III: In Sec. 5 and 6, change "eligible positions" to "members." This means the number of actual Executive Committee members not the number of eligible positions will be considered for purposes of quorum and voting.

Bylaws Art. IV: In Sec. 1, add that the Judicial Chair shall appoint an acting Judicial Chair for any Judicial Committee meeting at which the Judicial Chair will be absent. In Sec. 3, append, "by those requesting action" (only they can waive their right to a hearing within 14 days). In Sec. 5, similarly append, "by those requesting action."

Bylaws Art. VII: In Sec. 2, there will be no quorum requirement for central committee meetings (a "quorum" is whoever attends), but a simple majority of the Executive Committee must be present in order to vote on amendments to the bylaws or meeting rules. Amendments to the Constitution have no attendance requirement, but any amendment must receive a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote of those present. In Sec. 3, change "2 weeks notice" to "1 week notice," because it may not be practical to distribute the newsletter two weeks in advance of every meeting. Add Sec. 4 stating that the central committee's Annual Meeting will be held in January of each year, since the Const. Art. V Sec. 1 says that the bylaws will specify the meeting time.

Bylaws Art. VIII: In Sec. 2, add that the Treasurer will not act as an Executive Committee member for purposes of auditing the Treasurer's records and reports. In Sec. 7, change the amount by which an expense can exceed its budgeted amount from \$30 to 10% of the budgeted amount.

End of meeting and location of constitution/bylaws

This concluded the discussion, and we gave Steve a hearty round of applause for his work. Robert Giedt offered to upload the new revisions of the constitution and bylaws to our Web site (<http://www.california.com/~lpsm/>). These should be available as you read this. Hard copies can be obtained from Steve.

Next meeting:

Wednesday, October 15
Prime Time Athletic Club
1730 Rollins Road, Burlingame (between Broadway and Millbrae Avenue)
Informal chat: 6:30-7:30pm in the cafe
Speaker: 7:30-8:30pm in the multipurpose room
Business meeting: 8:30-9:00pm in the multipurpose room

Agenda:

[*Webmaster's note:* The Guest speaker is Jane Armstrong, State Chairman for ACTIV, the *Alliance of California Taxpayers and Involved Voters*, a nonprofit, non-partisan, all-volunteer, state-wide, activist association. This organization encourages individuals to take charge of their own lives and acknowledges that we're losing our freedom daily to bureaucrats who believe that we're not smart enough to decide what is good for ourselves.]

Approval vote on constitution/bylaws and discussion of Nov. ballot positions.

The front desk can direct you to either location. Come on by for either or both events!

Sponsors Sought!

Would you like to support the Party while reaching fellow Libertarians with your message? We need more advertisements to fund this monthly newsletter. Rates are \$5 per month, or \$50 per year. Send your business card size ad (or tiff/eps file) along with your check to:

Libertarian Party of San Mateo County, 853 Middlefield Road #4, Palo Alto, CA 94301

Questions? Call Margret Schmidt at 650/833-1300.

Don't have something to promote, but want to sponsor our efforts? Use the membership form on the back of this newsletter to send us a one-time donation, or sign up to send us a monthly pledge!