

## Medical marijuana distribution plan under fire

Steve Kubby speaks out against restrictive San Mateo plan

by Arthur Sobey

Medical marijuana pioneer Steve Kubby spoke in praise of the efforts of San Mateo Supervisor Mike Nevin, but had some strong cautions to offer based on his personal experience with medical marijuana. Kubby, who played a key role in the Prop. 215 campaign said, "those unfamiliar with growing, preparing, and using marijuana must not be allowed to control the distribution system that will be set up to fully implement the provisions of Prop. 215."

"As a 23-year survivor of cancer, who is alive today because of medical marijuana, I can tell you that a government-run system like this might please law enforcement and government officials, but this plan will endanger patients," explained Kubby. "Talk to medical marijuana patients and they will tell you that they prefer to go to private clubs, where they can meet others like themselves, and share a fellowship with other patients who understand them, support them, and help them to get well again."

San Mateo County Supervisor Mike Nevin, a streetwise ex-police detective who advocates distributing contraband marijuana to the sick, is on a dead serious mission of mercy; creating the first government run medicinal marijuana dispensary in the United States. "I'm trying to find a compassionate way of getting this drug, that is now legal, to the sick and dying people who need it," said Nevin, the board president who served 27 years as a San Francisco police inspector.

*[Editor's note: One reason Nevin proposes a government plan is to thwart a proposed cannabis club in unincorporated Redwood City that the county has been recently stalling.]*

"At first glance this sounds like an excellent idea," said Kubby, "but it only reflects the ignorance of even those who have the best intentions. Nevin's assertion that "County pharmacists would assure the quality of marijuana," is incredibly naive. Pharmacists have zero training in recognizing, using and grading marijuana that may well have pesticides, mold, miticides, fungicides or other dangerous contaminants. Besides," asked Kubby, "does getting your medicine from drug busts sound like good medicine to you?"

Kubby, the Libertarian candidate for Governor, said there are other problems with the plan. "The proposed government-run ID card system is an unacceptable intrusion into the private medical affairs of those whose doctors recommend they use this miracle medicine. Patient can already get photo ID cards by joining local cannabis clubs."

"Everyone wants to make policy for implementing Prop. 215, but no one is speaking to the patients. It is time to stop playing politics with people's lives, and start providing for their medical needs instead," said Kubby.

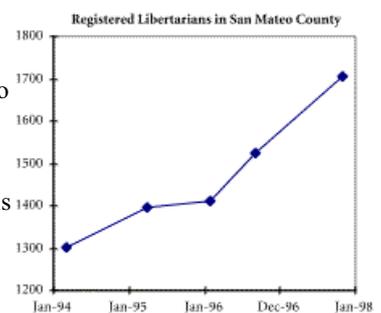
## San Mateo LP Caucus will be held in December

by Christopher Schmidt

The Libertarian Party of San Mateo County will be holding a caucus at December's regular meeting to select nominees for the 1998 legislative races. This meeting will be held **Wednesday, December 17** at 7:30pm at the Prime Time Athletic Club, 1730 Rollins Road in Burlingame.

If you want to take advantage of opportunities for public speaking available only to candidates, now is the time to step forward! Even if you are just interested in conducting a "paper campaign" to make sure there is a Libertarian choice in every race, there are a few opportunities for that kind of participation as well. During the meeting, we will also vote on more proposed bylaws changes.

**Note:** Elections for officers in the Libertarian Party of San Mateo County will be held at our January meeting--the third Wednesday of that month.



## Feds creating smog on the information superhighway

by Frank Minishak

Do we really need the government to spend \$35 million (of our money) to help fund President Clinton's promised "Next Generation Internet"--a network 1,000 times faster than what we have currently? Of course not. But just to get the facts, I posed this question to a free-market economist. Here's the reply I received from Dr. Don Alexander, Associate Professor of Economics, at Western Michigan University:

"During the 1960s, the Department of Defense constructed a network linking defense contractors and university scientists which became the original backbone of the Internet. Their intention, of course, was not to create the Internet that we know today. This is just one instance where the law of unintended consequences worked in our favor.

"In the 1980s, the National Science Foundation funded a venture which linked several regional computing centers with several regional networks, and Internet use expanded dramatically. However, it wasn't until IBM and MCI made significant investments in the infrastructure, along with the fact that fiber optic backbones had been laid by the private, for-profit, long-distance carriers that Internet use literally exploded.

"In 1990, Merit, IBM, and MCI created a not-for-profit corporation with the goal of promoting commercial use of the Internet because NSF would no longer fund the maintenance of the system. Since then we have witnessed the emergence of many competitive access providers, several major firms that have developed browser software to surf the Internet, and growth in commercial activity via the Internet.

"The question that your message raises is: do we need government to intervene to make the necessary upgrades to the existing infrastructure or will private firms make them? I believe that private concerns will make the necessary upgrades. Indeed, I mentioned that there has been sufficient fiber-optic capacity already created by the long distance carriers to handle the anticipated growth in traffic.

"Furthermore, regional networks, access providers, and phone companies, etc. are constantly making upgrades to their systems to meet the consumers demand for faster and better connections to the Internet. I anticipate that as commercial activity continues to grow, private firms will make the necessary investments to the system to facilitate this growth. Nonetheless, since some of the regional networks (e.g., Merit) are groups of universities that are not privately supported, some of the upgrades will come at the taxpayers' expense.

"One more thought regarding the creation of 'Internet 2.' Much of the lobbying that you are seeing from colleges, research universities, and private companies is probably more a matter of corporate welfare (special-interests are hoping that others will subsidize their investments) than real need."

If you need answers to economic questions like these in order to defend your libertarian positions. I encourage you to check out The Mackinac Center for Public Policy, Michigan's free-market policy institute, at <http://www.mackinac.org>. Their free "Ask the Economist" service is available here.

## November meeting notes

by Christopher Schmidt

At November's meeting, we voted on several revisions to the bylaws and enjoyed a thought-provoking lecture by guest speaker Sharon Presley. An announcement of her speech in the *San Mateo Times* (thanks to a press release by Steve) drew three guests! More discussion of party business followed the main presentation.

### Constitution and bylaws revisions

Due to time limitations, we dealt with only 7 of 14 proposed revisions to the constitution and bylaws and agreed to defer the rest until the December meeting on the 17th.

Three proposals that changed the organizational structural of the documents and language were adopted unanimously 10-0-0.

A clause of the constitution that prohibited simultaneous service on the executive and judicial committees was repealed 10-0-0.

A section of the bylaws that complicated operation outside San Mateo County was repealed 10-0-0.

A proposal to change the treatment of vacant positions was discussed. We agreed on a concept for a revised version of the proposal to be voted on at December's meeting.

Although we voted 5-4-1 to adopt a constitutional prohibition on endorsement of non-Libertarian candidates for office, the motion failed to receive the  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote necessary and thus failed.

### Notes on November's speaker, Sharon Presley

For me, Sharon Presley's talk "How to Avoid Being Manipulated, Bamboozled, and Seduced by Experts and Authorities" changed the way I will think about political problems from now on!

### Social psychology

Central to her theme was a view of human nature informed by a classic experiment in social psychology (conducted by Stanley Milgram at Yale) which she described at length (*my summary*):

Student volunteers, who were told they were conducting a learning experiment, were instructed to apply a sequence of increasing electrical "shocks" to subjects who answered questions wrongly. The switches at the top end of the scale (nominally 450V) were labeled as dangerous. In the basic version of the experiment, 65% of the volunteers were willing to flip all the switches, despite (pretended) increasing expressions of pain by the subjects.



Sharon Presley - Frank Minishak - Steve Marsland

The results did not correlate with any demographic characteristic of the students (except, weakly, that of intended profession). Two dozen

variations of the experiment were conducted and the surprise result was that situational factors affected people's behavior far more than any personal factor. For example, only 30% of the volunteers went "all the way" if they had to personally touch the subject--ostensibly to check the electrical contacts--prior to applying the shock; but over 92% went "all the way" when their involvement was limited to instructing a third person to apply the shocks. If volunteers were permitted to observe others "bailing out early" or "going all the way," compliance went down or up accordingly. And so on.

*[Correction: Subjects in the Milgram experiment were not students. They were people from the New Haven community. --S.P.]*

#### Impressions

For me, the implications are revolutionary:

1. Watch out how situational factors affect your ability to act according to your moral and rational beliefs. This is one of the main lessons of the talk: "How to Avoid Being Manipulated, Bamboozled, and Seduced by Experts and Authorities"
2. Be aware of how situational factors affect others. They may be as moral and rational as you, but situational factors affect us all.
3. It is probably a waste of time to analyze abuse by authorities as malevolence. Rather, proposals to address abuse should be those that create the situations in which people are most free to act rationally and to follow their moral compasses.

#### Conclusion

I've been able to relate only one small part of Sharon Presley's talk above. Many of her talks and those she sponsors in Berkeley are available for sale in print and on audio tape from **Resources for Independent Thinking** at: <http://www.well.com/user/rit/>

#### Next meeting of the LP of San Mateo County:

Wednesday, December 17

Prime Time Athletic Club

1730 Rollins Road, Burlingame (between Broadway and Millbrae Avenue)

Informal chat/dinner: 6:30-7:30pm in the cafe

Business meeting: 7:30-9:00pm in the multipurpose room. Agenda: Approval vote on bylaws/constitution revisions and caucus for 1998 legislative races.

## Last Call for Entertainment Books!

It's time to wrap up our yearly fundraiser, but there is still time to purchase one of these great books filled with two-for-one coupons for restaurants, attractions and events. The San Francisco/San Mateo County, San Jose/Santa Clara County and Greater East Bay books are each only \$40. Call Margret at 650/833-1300 for information about other counties and their book prices.

Your check payable to "Libertarian Party" must be received by December 17. Mail to Libertarian Party, 853 Middlefield Rd #4, Palo Alto, CA 94301-2919 and specify which edition you want, and where you'd like it shipped.