

## 1999 officers elected

**New and experienced officers alike elected at the Libertarian Party of San Mateo County's Annual Meeting in January**  
by Robert Giedt

On January 20, 10 members in good standing of the Libertarian Party of San Mateo County were elected or reelected to their positions in the county's Executive Committee. Returning officers elected were Steve Marsland (Chair), Lacy Nelson (Vice Chair), Christopher Schmidt (Secretary), Margret Schmidt (Treasurer), Robert Giedt (Newsletter Chair/Editor), Barbara Less (Activities Chair) and Ann Turner (Database Chair).

We also filled three other key positions with newcomers to the LPSM: J.R. Prohaska (Membership Chair), Jack Hickey (Publicity Chair), and Frank Adam (Campaigns Chair). The three members of the Judicial Committee were also elected (J.R. Prohaska, Christopher Schmidt and Sam Severs). Finally, we selected our representatives to the State Convention later this month. Details and mini-bios of these officers will be published in future issues of the *San Mateo Libertarian*.



*Standing: Lacy Nelson, Steve Marsland, J.R. Prohaska, Jack Hickey, Barbara Less  
Seated: Sam Severs, Christopher Schmidt, Robert Giedt*

The region is still on the lookout for a Fundraising Chair, so if you have the desire and enthusiasm, by all means step forward! The Fundraising Chair is responsible for coordinating money-raising activities and is also in charge of recruiting and training people to assist in these duties.

## Ideals not decibels

**How to explain your libertarian beliefs to others without sounding like a raving zealot**  
by Robert Giedt

We've all been in this situation before. You're at an office function, dinner party or hanging out at a bar with friends when the subject of politics comes up. If you mention you're a Libertarian, the crowd gives you a blank look, a sidelong stare or perhaps a scowl of utter disdain. Here's the dilemma. How do you project your libertarian views without coming across as an anarchist, crackpot or worse? Read on, the answer is fairly simple.

We all have at least one major reason we became Libertarians. For some, it's the strict adherence to the tenets of the U.S. Constitution, to other people it may be how we object to the wasteful way our government spends our money. For me, it's the freedom of individual liberty and personal responsibility--that no person or government has the right to tell me what I can't do if what I'm doing doesn't cause anyone harm. Find your libertarian belief and think it through. Visualize all the things in the government that could be changed if your ideals were made reality. You don't have to memorize the entire Libertarian platform to be an effective promoter of liberty, you just need to strong in your convictions.

Here are a few tips when engaging in political discussions that will make you seem less "frightening" to non-libertarians (many of which are repeated in Harry Browne's ["New Year's Resolutions"](#)).

**Speak clearly and calmly.** Nothing inflames a person more than someone spouting political beliefs at high speed and even higher volume. State your case in a calm voice and in a rational matter. Even if they're being loud themselves, a levelheaded person speaking calmly will usually defuse a potential situation.

**Don't try to force your political beliefs down someone's throat** --if your reasons are sound, they'll sell themselves. Unless people are in church, folks don't like being preached to. If the subject isn't about politics, don't jump on the political bandwagon. This is perhaps the hardest point to follow, since we'd all like to recruit new members to our philosophy.

**Show that their arguments are your points as well.** Many people have libertarians ideals within them, they're just fully aware of them. If they're in the NRA, mention that libertarians are completely for the "right to bear arms." If they're pro-choice, mention that most libertarians respect a woman's right to choose. If they complain about their taxes, bring up the Libertarian's position on paying for your own goods and services. Don't make them feel foolish, just show that libertarians aren't as "fringe" as people misconceive them to be.

**Think your statements through before answering,** there's no need to jump into a conversation blindly. Check the demeanor of the parties involved in the conversation, weigh your words carefully and put forth a clear libertarian statement. Odds are that someone in the group will agree with you. And never, never get into an argument--it'll only hurt your cause and the cause of liberty.

Even these few tips can help make your next libertarian discussion a successful one. Remember, if we come across as rational, intelligent thinkers, we're more likely to gain new allies and achieve political gains.

## "Guns, cars and red meat"

Letter to the Editor of the [San Jose Mercury News](#)--January 24, 1999

I read your specious editorial assertion that firearm manufacturers had helped create a "public health menace" and must "face up" to it (Opinion, Jan. 22). If your argument is valid, then it must apply in other similar situations. When will you make the same assertions about automobile and airplane manufacturers? How about the producers of red meat or alcohol? These products also create a public

health menace, using your logic.

I know, I know, cars and planes are safety-regulated by the government and all you want is the same type of oversight of firearms. We regulate how fast people can drive then let General Motors sell the Corvette which can go twice the legal speed limit. I am confident that GM advises Corvette buyers to obey all speed laws, but I guess we should force GM to "face up" each time a driver of one of their products causes harm to another.

We can ban the domestic production of "junk cars" that have no useful purpose but to go fast. We can rope the cattle and dairy industries to pay for all the health problems their products create. How about the beer and liquor producers? Oh, the possibilities seem endless.

We can eliminate all self-determination and personal responsibility. Everything we do must be the fault of someone else; it's just a matter of assigning the blame to the person with the deepest pocket.

*Ed Hawkins, Belmont*

## Our government, the Mafia

Letter to the Editor of the *San Mateo Libertarian*

To other complaints about the Placer Co. action [arresting Steve Kubby and his wife for growing their own, doctor-prescribed, medical marijuana], I would add the observation that it is pro-Organized Crime. If the Kubbys had bought their marijuana monthly from the Mafia they would face relatively minor charges. By charging marijuana patients who grow their own with major felonies, the D.A. supports the Mafia with the kind of "muscle" they only wish they could buy.

How much is the Sheriff's policy worth to the Mafia? According to Lt. Mike Allen of the North Tahoe Task Force, the Kubby's medicine had a "street value" estimated at \$420,000. I don't know how much money the average dope dealer, mule, or Mafia soldier earns, but apparently Placer County wants to provide full employment for 10 or 20 more criminals this year, by preventing marijuana users from growing their own.

What kind of government adopts a policy indistinguishable from a Capone-style market protection racket? It is the height of irony (or insult) that the D.A. has charged the Kubbys with Conspiracy, when the underlying law was intended to fight the Mafia--not protect it by persecuting small growers.

Sincerely,  
Christopher Schmidt

*If found to be protected by Prop. 215, does Placer Co. plan to pay Kubby \$420,000 for the ruined crop?!*

## A Libertarian's New Year's resolutions

by Harry Browne

1. I resolve to *sell* liberty by appealing to the self-interest of each prospect, rather than *preaching* to people and expecting them to suddenly adopt my ideas of right and wrong.
2. I resolve to keep from being drawn into arguments or debates. My purpose is to inspire people to want liberty--not to prove that they're wrong.
3. I resolve to *listen* when people tell me of their wants and needs, so I can help them see how a free society will satisfy those needs.
4. I resolve to identify myself, when appropriate, with the social goals someone may seek--a cleaner environment, more help for the poor, a less divisive society--and try to show him that those goals can never be achieved by government, but will be well served in a free society.
5. I resolve to be compassionate and respectful of the beliefs and needs that lead people to seek government help. I don't have to approve of their subsidies or policies--but if I don't acknowledge their needs, I have no hope of helping them find a better way to solve their problems.
6. No matter what the issue, I resolve to keep returning to the central point: how much better off the individual will be in a free society.
7. I resolve to acknowledge my good fortune in having been born an American. Any plan for improvement must begin with a recognition of the good things we have. To speak only of America's defects will make me a tiresome crank.
8. I resolve to focus on the ways America could be so much better with a very small government--not to dwell on all the wrongs that exist today.
9. I resolve to cleanse myself of hate, resentment, and bitterness. Such things steal time and attention from the work that must be done.
10. I resolve to speak, dress, and act in a respectable manner. I may be the first Libertarian someone has encountered, and it's important that he get a good first impression. No one will hear the message if the messenger is unattractive.
11. I resolve to remind myself that someone's "stupid" opinion may be an opinion I once held. *If I can grow, why can't I help him grow?*
12. I resolve not to raise my voice in any discussion. In a shouting match, no one wins, no one changes his mind, and no one will be inspired to join our quest for a free society.
13. I resolve not to adopt the tactics of Republicans and Democrats. They use character assassination, evasions, and intimidation because they have no real benefits to offer Americans. We, on the other hand, are offering to set people free--and so we can win simply by focusing on the better life our proposals will bring.
14. I resolve to be civil to my opponents and treat them with respect. However anyone chooses to treat me, it's important that I be a

better person than my enemies.

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## **January meeting notes**

by **Christopher Schmidt**

The following are some highlights from the Annual meeting last month:

The officers in the masthead were elected or reelected unanimously. Newcomers to the executive committee are Frank Adam (Campaign Chair), J.R. Prohaska (Membership Chair), and Jack Hickey (Publicity Chair). The Fundraising Chair remains empty and awaits a fresh volunteer.

Sam Severs, J.R., and Christopher Schmidt were elected to the Judicial Committee.

Lacy Nelson, Sam, J.R., Jack, and Chair Steve Marsland (ex officio) were designated our region's delegates to the LPC state convention this month, and Jack was named to the convention's Platform Committee.

Margret Schmidt was thanked for her effort preparing an annual cash-flow summary, which was presented as the basis for sketching out the coming fiscal year.

Steve circulated copies of another region's growth idea list for future consideration.

Jack sketched out an idea for utilizing the web to monitor and combat illegal political actions on the part of school officials. The details of this plan are outlined on his [Web site](#).

Sam sketched out an idea for creating e-mail lists devoted to each of our local legislators; profiling and critically discussing their acts in office.

These impromptu presentations were in response to the question, posed for future meetings, "In what areas should we focus our limited resources in the coming year?"

Facing uncertain availability of the dining room (and parking) at Chef Peking, we may experiment with different meeting locations in coming months. Call Chair Steve Marsland with any suggestions or offer of meeting space. Thanks!

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

Wednesday, February 17

Chef Peking ([Directions to Chef Peking](#))

515 Veterans Boulevard, Redwood City

Dinner (optional) and discussion: 6:00--7:15pm in the reserved dining room

Business meeting: 7:15--8:30pm in the reserved dining room.

Agenda: Location(s) for future meeting, continued discussion of the San Diego fundraising proposal and other business as necessary.