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My Turn

Liberal vs. Libertarian

.....Pit Warren

We have an overabundance of whitetail deer in our state and this produced a bountiful harvest for the hunters in 1999. The trapping issue is being revisited on Beacon Hill because of the overpopulation of beavers in various areas. These issues have brought the animal rights arguments back into the public eye and the media for debate. This debate provides insight into some political philosophies, specifically the difference between liberals and libertarians.

Some animal rights activists are vegetarians, not that there's anything wrong with that. However, some vegetarians are quick to condemn those of us who consume meat. Human beings are an omnivorous species. This doesn't mean that vegetarians are not human but they often consider themselves to be more highly evolved than the majority. Most of us tolerate this intolerance as long as it doesn't effect our day-to-day lives.

Most animal rights activists consume meat (as well as milk, eggs, etc.) and wear goods made of leather, wool or even fur. They believe farming is civilized yet they are quick to condemn hunting as barbaric. These are the people I have a problem with. As a general rule, these people are aligned with the liberal majority in this state. They give human characteristics to animals, much like a Disney cartoon.

As a country boy, I had the experience of slaughtering cattle as well as killing deer for food. If we raise the animals to a near-human level, we can compare the "lifestyles" of both. Beef cattle are born into captivity; they are branded, vaccinated, wormed, tagged, and castrated. They live a couple years of imprisonment and are killed. The average deer in the wild lives a life of total freedom from birth to death and

(Continued on page 2)

Gorman May Run!

Informed sources indicate that it is an increasing possibility that Donald Gorman, dean of American elected Libertarians and two-time elected Libertarian member of the New Hampshire State House of Representatives, will take the plunge and announce a Presidential campaign in the near future.

Gorman has a solid record offered by no other Libertarian Presidential candidate: Other candidates have run for office before. Don has been elected, not once or twice but many times, to a variety of state and local offices. Gorman, a staunch supported of the whole Bill of Rights, is very well known nationally. His campaign, if announced, will center on using the LP Presidential campaign to generate support for local candidates and organizations.

Wilcox Will Run!

PVLA Member Alan Wilcox has announced that he will run for State Representative in the Second Hampden District, which includes Monson, Hampden, the Longmeadows, and part of Springfield. In 1996, Republican Mary Rogeness run unopposed for this seat, but got only 74% of the total vote. Way to go, Al! Stand Up for Liberty!

Worcester Libertarians Organize!

After years of discussion, Worcester County Libertarians are getting together! The first meeting of the Worcester County Libertarian Association was conducted at Kings Buffet, Grove Street Worcester, in early December.

The Next meeting of the Worcester County Libertarian Association is Sunday, January 23, 2000 at Tweed's Restaurant, Grove Street, Worcester at 6PM. All libertarian-minded residents of Worcester County are welcome to attend. WCLA Organizer Kevin Haskell plans to have a meeting divided between libertarian ideas, practical politics, and a good time. Full dinners at Tweed's run \$10-15 per person.

Our Web Pages

<http://www.wmlp.org>
<http://www.cmlc.org>

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Chapter 7

Campaigns and Campaigning

I repeat the theme of Chapter 4:

*The Purpose of a Political Party is
 *to Advance Its Agenda,
 *to Run Candidates and Win Elections, and
 to Use Electoral Victory to Put Its Program into Effect.

This chapter asks and answers:

- *Why should we run people for office?
- *How many people should we run? Why?
- *What offices should they run for?
- *How do we build a stronger Libertarian Party by running lots of candidates?
- *What sort of races might our candidates run?

Why Should We Run People for Office?

A Libertarian Party group can do many things. BUT: If you are Party group and not a group of party-goers, your group must do one thing. ***If you are a Party group***

The Pioneer Valley Libertarian Association is Massachusetts' oldest local Libertarian organization, with regular meetings since 1995. The PVLA and its sister Central Massachusetts Liberty Coalition work to advance freedom across Massachusetts' 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Congressional Districts, stretching from Williamstown to Dartmouth. Read about the PVLA and CMLC at <http://www.wmlp.org> and <http://www.cmlc.org>.

The Pioneer Valley Libertarian Association meets monthly at Bickfords Family Restaurant, Old Boston Road, Springfield. Bickfords serves dinner, breakfast, and a full range of desserts. Meetings start at 7PM, with a working meeting at 8PM.

The Worcester County Libertarian Association meets Sunday January 23 at Tweed's Restaurant, Grove Street, Worcester, at 6PM. Bring a friend. WCLA organizers include Kevin Haskell, City Council candidate Jerry Horton, and PVLA Chair George Phillies.

The PVLA and CMLC web sites are hosted by Excell.net (<http://www.excell.net>) a locally-owned, locally operated internet service provider offering solutions to people and businesses in the Pioneer Valley. Why not patronize a fellow Libertarian? See www.excell.net for excellent internet service.



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 c/o George Phillies
 87-6 Park Avenue
 Worcester MA 01605

First Class Mail

stands a better than even chance of living a long, healthy and peaceful life. Granted, there is a risk of being killed by humans or cars, but the chances pale in comparison to the 100% offered to domestic livestock.

Liberals identify with the cattle. They both prefer the security of the fences, the shelter of the barns and the safety of the herd. They also like the idea of never having to make difficult decisions. They are willing to turn their entire lives over to the farmer (or government) to eliminate fear. The total dependence, helplessness and ignorance of a cow must seem like utopia to the liberal majority. At the same time, the risk of murder that deer experience every year for a few weeks seems too terrible to imagine.

Libertarians identify with the deer. We are free spirits. The quality of life that is gained by avoiding slavery more than offsets the risk of an untimely death. We would rather use our wits and take care of our own than give up our children to a seemingly benevolent caretaker. Unrestricted by heavy-handed control and artificial boundaries, we see liberty as the best of all possible worlds. Likewise, the futile and meaningless life of a cow is something that we would rather not have to experience.

So, when a liberal tells you how cruel and barbaric hunting is and how the civilized act of farming precludes the need for it, just smile to yourself. You know that the freedom of the deer and the rights of the hunter hold much more value than the structured, repetitive and controlled life of the farm

Libertarian News

The possible Libertarian Presidential campaign of 1996 candidate Harry Browne has apparently hit additional snags, with campaign rollout now postponed until mid-February. Browne is reported to have offered the Vice-Presidential nod to a Professor Eberling of Hillsdale College, who declined the nomination. The Browne campaign has yet to file with the Federal Elections Commission, as is legally required of Federal Campaign Committees that have raised more than \$5000 and been in existence for a significant period of time.

Petitions for Massachusetts campaigns will be available in a few weeks. At the present time, Libertarian U.S. Senate candidate Carla Howell faces only two potential candidates, Democratic incumbent Teddy Kennedy and U.S. Taxpayers candidate Philip Lawler. So far as I can determine, it is unclear whether or not Plymouth County Attorney General Sullivan is going to run for U.S. Senate as a Republican.

De facto support for the Local Organization strategy is blossoming across the United States, with state parties from Washington to New Hampshire planning to emulate the Vermont LP success, in which more than half of all LPVT members actually ran for some office, thereby electing Neil Randall to the state legislature.

Stand Up for Liberty!

2

We continue to bring you sections from George Phillies' new book "*Stand Up for Liberty!*" Continuing from last issue where I discuss things that the national party should do....

The Presidential candidate is the nominee of the national party. The National Committee has the resources, the information, and in some cases the legal standing needed to ensure 50-state ballot access. It is entirely appropriate for the LNC to ensure that our candidate is on the ballot everywhere. Alternatively, the Party could entrust 50-state ballot access to independent groups, but there is a history of financial questions associated with a few elements of this approach. When the Libertarian Party matures, the need for national activity to obtain ballot access will fade.

*** **Bolster State and Local Organizations.** The National Party is responsible for being aware of what its state affiliates and independent allies are doing. If difficulties arise within a state organization, the national party should notice and take appropriate action. Most often the appropriate action is to tell the state's activists what the problem is, and letting them handle their own challenges. You might think that local people would notice the difficulties they are wading through, but sometimes people do not recognize their own weaknesses. Sometimes a problem has been solved before, and passing along the solution that worked will save much time and energy. Furthermore, the National Party does have funds of its own. One way to strengthen the Party as a whole is to identify weaker state groups that have enough good activists, and give those activists the material support needed to create a stronger state party.

*** **Produce Activist Training and Support Material.** All across America, individual activists need to know how to solicit signatures, get out the vote, design trifolds, and help Libertarian friends Make Liberty Happen! by becoming activists themselves. Training and demonstrations using traditional (seminars, parallel sessions at conventions) and advanced technical (distance learning, video tapes, internet radio, web pages, streaming video) means can satisfy this need. Either the National Committee or its national competitors could usefully serve the Libertarian Party by developing and distributing more training materials beyond those that already exist using a range of media.

Activities That the National Party Can Support But Not Perform

*** **Libertarian Congressional PAC.** The Libertarian Party has a declared intent of contesting a majority of all Congressional seats. I'll explain in Chapter Chapter 7 why this is a good idea. In 1998, only two dozen of our campaigns filed with the FEC. A half-dozen of our U.S. House candidates raised \$10,000 or so each. The rest raised almost

Liberty Tree PAC

Liberty Tree, The Small-Government Low-Taxes Political Action Committee, has been organized by PVLA and CMLC members, with PVLA Libertarian Party member (and long-time former Holyoke Republican Committee Chair) Sally Howes as PAC chair, and PVLA/CMLC Chair George Phillies as Treasurer.

Liberty Tree is now set up and running, with its own checking account and ability to take donations. Remember, you can legally contribute up to \$100 per year to Liberty Tree, the Small-Government, Low-Taxes PAC.

Liberty Tree, an organization legally independent of the PVLA and the CMLC, exists to support pro-liberty candidates for non-Federal office. We have already had \$300 in contributions, and more are expected. Jerry Horton's near-miss loss (page 8) shows how a few dollars could have gone a long way to advance liberty here in Massachusetts. A candidate who gets 44% of the vote against an incumbent in a low-expenditure race probably could have won if the investment had been there.

A full-district mailing or two, more support for volunteers, or a larger phone bank might have been enough to turn the tide in favor of a pro-Liberty candidate.

Donations may be sent to Professor George Phillies, 87-6 Park Avenue, Worcester MA 01605. Please make checks payable to Liberty Tree PAC.

Contributions are legally limited to \$100 per person per calendar year. Please include your name, address, occupation, and employer along with your donation.

Be A Secret Agent For Liberty

Why don't *you*, yes, *YOU*, do something for the Libertarian Movement? Why not take 30 seconds to *Stand Up for Liberty!* right here in the Commonwealth.

Be a Secret Agent for Liberty! gives you a way to do that! Our new recruitment—advertising program doesn't ask you to get conspicuous. It doesn't ask you to get in a political argument. All we are asking you to do is to take the enclosed trifold, find a thumbtack, and at a convenient moment put the trifold up on a bulletin board someplace.

The enclosed trifold has our address and contact data. Put it out where people will see it: a library bulletin board, the coffee room at work,... Anyone who is ready to take another step for Liberty will find our address and contact information herein. Through the PVLA/CMLC secret agent program, you can do your bit for Liberty without risking personal confrontation.

Recipe for Local Results

3

...by Hardy Macia <hardy@catamount.com>

I'd like to share what I'm doing in my area of Vermont and the process by which I've done it with the list.

Recipe for Local Results

1. Come up with an idea.
2. Find others who agree with your idea and want to help.
3. Implement the idea.
4. Market the idea.
5. Show others your idea is working and incite them to try it in their area.

Here's how I'm making the above 5 steps work in Grand Isle town and the county. Hopefully, the results will encourage you to follow/copy what I've done in your hometown.

1. Come up with an idea

I thought having a town email list would be a good idea to allow more more people to know what's going on in town. I live on the south side of town and rarely go north where all of the gossip takes place. So, when I ran for Selectboard I made it an issue. Here is a snippet from my candidate profile that was printed in the local paper:

The Islander Feb 23, 1999

"...Future: I would like to see minutes of the selectboard and schoolboard meetings posted on a website or available via email. This would be a small step into keeping more people informed as to what is going on in town and allow for direct feedback by residents...."

2. Find others who agree with your idea and want to help

Marianne runs an Unofficial Grand Isle County website. I told her my idea and she liked it. She offered to give me space on her website. Finding others to help depends on the size of your project. I could have done the town email list myself, but as you bring in more people the faster the project grows.

3. Implement the idea

Because I was running the email lists for the VTLP it was easy for me to create a Grand Isle discussion list. So easy, in fact that all towns in Vermont now have a discussion list setup and ready to be used, but it will take your activism in your town for your town email list to get off the ground like the Grand Isle list.

One problem I've run into with implementing the

idea is getting the local agenda and minutes from the select board. Our town clerk is resisting the idea. She could email the minutes to me or the list (she's on it monitoring it) or she could make the minutes available via a floppy disk. To work around this some of the initial people who joined the email list offered to scan in the minutes and I've retyped several issues of the minutes. The idea is complete, but we've pushed the issue a little bit more with what I'll consider marketing.

4. Market the idea

The email list had a few members, but it needs many more to be successful. I had a three prong marketing strategy.

A. Word of mouth. The people on the list invite their friends and neighbors to join the list.

B. Letter to the editor or press release to the local paper. A new form of communication in town that brings neighbors together is news.

C. The Citizen Petition - guerilla marketing :).

i. Marianne and I worked together to create a petition and Marianne placed the petition in a couple of the local stores. The final wording we used for the petition is below. We collected 77 signatures. 39 of the signers wanted to be added to the email list which doubles the size of the email list. Marriane has placed herself on the agenda of the select board, planning commission, and school board and waiting to hear back from the DRB. She will present the petition to the various boards and we will rally a few supporters to join Marianne and myself at the meetings.

ii. Citizens circulating a petition is news. So, part two of the citizen petition was a press release that I wrote up and gave to Marianne to send to our local paper. It appeared in the paper yesterday and has generated interest in the Grand Isle list as well as a few of the surrounding towns.

Below is the press release sent to The Islander. Small papers love to have press releases written so they don't have to do anything to them and have them sound like someone did an interview. The only thing the editor changed was the title from "Grand Isle Citizens for Open Government" to "Citizens Want Grand Isle Town News on Internet". Which was a good choice because I like his title better.

5. Show others your idea is working and incite them to try it in their area:

See how easy it was? Writing down what I did I hope you will see how easy it is to move from idea to

action. It takes about 30 minutes to print up 5 copies of the petition with your town's local info, drop it off at your local store, and send the sample press release to your local paper. The basic idea is working in Grand Isle and I think it can work in every other town in Vermont and the USA. 4

6. Extra

On the face of it town email discussion lists aren't a libertarian idea so why am I doing it? Planning for the future! Everyone says the Libertarian Party is the internet party, but I rarely see the LP try to use the internet to their advantage. I always hear why isn't the LP doing more on the internet by all of the couch political analysts, but rarely do any of the idea makers take the initiative to make their idea reality.

a. What town email discussion lists do is gives citizens easy access to what's going on in town. Some things the town is doing they might like, but other things they will hate. If you are on the list you'll be able to identify possible libertarians and be able to form alliances with others in towns on special issues.

b. The message trailer can be set by the moderator of the email list. Some trailers have an advertisement for the LP "List run as a public service by the Vermont Libertarian Party <http://www.catamount.com/VTLP/>". This shows the LP taking an active roll in town politics in 251 towns around the state and this is done without having members in every town.

c. As more people get on the internet, currently 47% of Vermonters have internet access either through home or work, more people will turn to the internet for their news - especially if it more timely than the local paper that is only published once a week or bi-weekly. 100 people in Grand Isle is 10% of the town. These people are more likely to vote because they are interested in town issues. If you have direct access to 10% of the town at \$0 cost it makes a good campaign outlet. You need to be careful how you use it, but you can post your press releases to the town email list and you'll know they will be carried intact without editorializing.

7. Just Do It

If you need help rewriting the petition or press release email (hardy@catamount.com) or call me 372-9512. I'd like to see 20 town email lists active by spring of 2000.

- Hardy Macia

no money. Modest fundraising for party-ID cable and radio advertising and bumper stickers in places with local activists ready to distribute them would substantially boost results from this in-place effort. To raise and distribute this money we need a Libertarian Congressional PAC charged with raising funds and supporting Libertarian candidates.

***** Pro-Liberty Special Interest Groups.** When Democrats and Republicans run for office, they get support from hordes of special interest groups, each pretending to speak for an issue but in reality working for a political party. I am referring equally to the pro-choice group that endorses pro-life Democrats over pro-choice candidates of other parties and pro-Second Amendment action groups that endorse gun-grabbing Republicans over pro-Bill-of-Rights candidates of other parties. Those groups support us on the issues, but they are not our friends and are not on our side. We need to replace them with pro-Liberty interest groups that support Libertarians.

For political victory, the Libertarian movement needs its own special interest groups, groups that support Libertarian candidates and points of view. If the Microbrewery Trade Association routinely tilts Democratic, we should found a Samuel Adams Society and Brewers Club to lead members to Libertarian thinking. The National Party can't be too obvious about setting up special interest groups itself, not if those groups are to be credible. The National Party can find individual Libertarians with the right interests, incite them to create a Libertarian special interest group, and provide nurture and support to get the group off the ground. Special interest groups are so important that I devote Chapter 10 to them.

***** Take Back The Internet.** The wags say ``Libertarians rule the net.'' This is a bit of a stretch. The *.Libertarian news groups are ineffective, swamped with cross-posts, and riddled with trolls. There is a simple technical fix. The technical fix is a *moderated* newsgroup. The activity is intrinsically national. The National Committee could perform the newsgroup group creation action itself, and find (if need be, help fund) moderators, but the Libertarian National Committee is not credible itself as the moderator.

From the above list, The national party organization has well-defined roles to fill. From forming alliances with other parts of the Libertarian movement and Washington lobbying to taking back the Internet, a range of important tasks are appropriate to all the country's Libertarians working together. Some activities are expensive. For example, 50-state ballot access is reported to have cost \$400,000 for the 1996 campaign, and may cost a similar amount for the 2000 A.D. campaign. Subscription fulfillment and membership retention have a calculable marginal cost per member. Nonetheless, the National Party's budget must be kept proportionate to budgets of other parts of the Libertarian Party,

so that money remains available for the most important tasks of the Party, the tasks performed by state and local organizations.

Activities for the State Level

State groups have many appropriate activities that they should perform. State groups may run statewide candidates, and are certainly well-placed to publish newsletters. A state organization should support local groups and foster friendly competition between them.

A good state committee member spends his time traveling, telephoning, and using the net. He talks to people, finds people to develop local activism, and finds people who will run for office or work as campaign staff. *A good state committee develops resources to support local groups and candidates*, and develops expertise to advise local groups and help them develop their own people and resources.

A good state chair opens her conversation ``How can we help you?". A good state chair knows her people, identifies what her people need even when her people don't know themselves, and makes sure that her people get the support that will let them succeed at what they are doing. A poor state chair spends his time running for office, using the state party's resources, contacts, and activists devoted to supporting his personal campaign. A poor state chair opens his conversations with Party activists ``Here's how you are going to help me."

All but the smallest states can usefully publish two state newsletters: First, an activist newsletter targeting real and prospective Libertarian Party workers. The activist newsletter covers political action news, petitioning deadlines, and campaigning methods. It gives activists the information they need to be active effectively. The activist newsletter also supports healthy internal discussion on party policies. The activist newsletter is effectively used to promote healthy positive competition between different local groups. Who had the best election results? Who registered the most voters into our party? Who elected the most candidates to office? Challenging local groups to better their own records and the records set by their neighbors incites harder work by Libertarian activists.

The second newsletter, priced to the bare bones, targets prospective Libertarian voters and their friends. It covers Libertarian news and candidates to turn out the Libertarian voter base in their support. It writes about efforts of the duopoly parties to raise taxes and reduce freedom, presenting the news in a light that will motivate voters to Vote Libertarian! It encourages readers to take the first steps to activism, to support campaigns by displaying lawn signs and bumper stickers and contributing money. The voter-information newsletter is rationally run at the state level because: Most towns do not have enough political news to justify their own newsletter. Most people's interest in local politics stops short of the state line. Complications of

gathering news town by town grow exponentially beyond the single-state level. I'm not aware of a state party that publishes a voter's information newsletter separate from the activist newsletter. By my analysis, quarterly publication with selected dates should be sufficient.

The state Party appropriately supports Statewide and Congressional campaigns, and focuses resources within the state on breakthrough opportunities. Statewide campaigns will vary from state to state. The Libertarian Party is still quite small. We do not have the masses of town committees, political consultants, elected officials, and activists that the Democratic and Republican parties have. Nonetheless, telling people who have volunteered to run for office that they should go run their own campaigns is an inept policy.

Statewide officers should not run everyone's campaigns for them. However, why should we have a statewide organization that sits back and does not support its own party's candidates? The Libertarian movement has better uses for its limited income than supporting a state organization that does not return the favor. If we are to run candidates for offices above the city/town level, it is the state organization that has the expertise in ballot access issues, the lists of donors and contacts across the state, and the statewide media contacts that will allow a serious campaign to take place. The state organization should recognize its responsibilities to support its party's people -- in a proportionate way -- in their runs for office. If a state party does not support -- in a proportionate and appropriate way -- candidates across the state, it is in need of replacement.

Except in the very smallest states, *a State Chair and State Committee are primarily facilitators*. The task of a facilitator is to contact Libertarian groups around the state, listen, offer advice, and provide support. Is that what your state committee is doing? Contact local groups around your state. Ask them pointblank how often they've had individual contact with a member of the state committee. Ask them pointblank how often the state organization has offered them advice. Ask them pointblank how often the state organization has supplied money or other resources for a campaign. The answers are an excellent measure of the quality of your state party's leadership.

Look at the other major parties. When is the last time a national chair of the Republican Party ran for office? Hint: Bill Miller, Vice President, Republican, 1964. A good state committee does not view itself as a prime source of major candidates. Of course, a weak state organization may not have a choice. There may not be enough Libertarians to do all mission-critical tasks. Some people may have to multi-task or leave key tasks undone. You may need to run state committee members for office because no one else is available, and you absolutely positively must run least a minimum-commitment candidate. You may need to ask a major candidate to help run the state party, because she will do it better than the alternatives. As has been said, if you

need something done quickly, give it to a busy person. A good state committee does not view itself as a prime source of major candidates. However, once state party officers run for office, there is a difficulty. The two roles of committeeman and candidate have a very real conflict of interest. State committees typically raise money. In many states, this money can legally be used to support political campaigning. Should that money go to the campaigns of the state committee members, or to the campaigns of other Libertarians around the state? State Committees typically do have lists of potential donors. Should those lists be shared with all candidates? Or are they held for the campaigns of state committee members? In the words of one of our nation's leading Libertarian activists: "You can tell the corrupt state organizations. They routinely run their own officers for high office when they had other choices." Running state committee members for office need not lead to ethical irregularities, but the temptation and the opportunity are strong.

Activities for Local Groups

In the end, it is our local groups that will give us victory.

*** ***The foundation of Libertarian Victory is Local Organization.*** Local Organization will identify and develop local Libertarian political figures, giving us credible quality candidates for higher office. Local organizations build the Libertarian movement in every county, every town, every ward and precinct, giving us the strength to nominate and elect candidates to political office. Money and issues are not enough; without strong local issues and local support we cannot win elections. Local Organization fosters local meetings and personal contacts, creating opportunities to activate Libertarian members. Activated members become the specialists and activists, the volunteers and staffers and candidates, who will give us a Libertarian Party that wins elections from coast to coast.

Most important, ***Local Organization leads to Local Victory.*** Local Victory lets our friends and neighbors meet us and see who we really are. Local Victory lets our fellow Americans see Libertarian politicians putting into effect successful Libertarian solutions to community problems. Local Victory prepares the foundation for later victories at higher levels.

The Libertarian movement will most surely win higher office via Local Organization and local electoral campaigns. When there are strong Libertarian party groups in every city and town across our Republic, higher political offices will fall into our hands. When we have widespread local success, we will have strong activist organizations and a large Libertarian voter base over large areas. Then, and only then, will higher offices fall into our grasp. Until we have strong activist groups and many regular voters, elections to higher office will be hard to win and difficult to re-

peat.

*** **Campaigns are won and lost at the local level.** In the words of the Virginia Libertarian Party, ``let us accept the proposition that every precinct in which a Libertarian resides shall have a precinct captain''. Getting those precinct captains requires a great deal of meeting and telephoning and cajoling. It requires regular contact, so that no precinct captain feels that she is working entirely alone. Getting good precinct captains equally requires a great deal of teaching, so that every precinct captain has some idea of what she is to do.

It is local activists who erect lawn signs, distribute bumper stickers, go door to door dropping leaflets, run phone banks, and stage car pools to get out the vote. Philadelphia activists have demonstrated how well this approach works; in a three way race, the Libertarian candidate carried the precincts in which the Libertarian Party ran full bore political campaigns. Local activists running for local, nominally non-partisan or weakly partisan office are more easily elected than are candidates for higher office. These local victories let our friends and neighbors see how Libertarians behave as elected officials, and how sound Libertarian ideas will improve government, cut taxes, and increase freedom. Local victories will build the solid Libertarian voter base that we need for future elections.

*** **Local organizations give personal contact.** The Libertarian Supper club, meeting monthly to hear a Libertarian speaker, is a prime location for current activists to meet prospective activists. A prospective activist is someone who supports Libertarian principles but does not yet work to put those principles into practice. He may very well have heard the principle There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch, but he doesn't believe it, because his behavior shows that he expects a ballot filled with Libertarian candidates to appear at every election, even though he has done nothing to get those candidates on the ballot. A prospective activist is someone who can perhaps be incited into activism. Libertarian supper clubs that do nothing except meet every month and talk about liberty don't do much to build a stronger Libertarian Party. Precisely the same Supper club, attended regularly by activists using the meeting to identify and incite prospective activists, becomes the recruiting station of the army of freedom.

*** **Elected Libertarians in local office build a strong voter base.** Wales, Massachusetts has for some years had an active Libertarian in town government. He has been so successful that he was actively encouraged to move up from Town Finance Committee to Selectman. He makes no secret that he is a Libertarian, and that his contributions are a reflection of his Libertarian philosophy. In 1998, Libertarians running for statewide office got vote percentages in Wales that were several times higher than vote percentages in nearby towns. Similarly, in Washington County, Indiana, Libertarian candidates won partisan office

in three-way races, and provided an updraft to the Party's statewide candidates. People who got 2-3% of the vote across the state got 12-15% of the vote in Washington County. 7

In short, local organizations are the people who actually do politics. They run candidates, build the party, and enlarge our voter base. The activities of local organizations are the sole foundation on which we can build electoral success. State and national organizations have important, specific roles in supporting local organizations, in running candidates for higher office, and in creating the environment in which Libertarian candidates regularly win office.

Relationships between Local, State, and National Groups

Most Libertarians know for a fact that that a strong socialist central government will always be much less efficient than the invisible hand of the market and the collected wisdom of millions of human beings, each of whom is as smart as any government bureaucrat. The fundamental principle is that ``strong effective central government'' is an oxymoron. This principle applies equally to national governments and to the Libertarian movement. Just as socialist democratic centralism would be a wasteful and inefficient way to run the nation's steel industry, so also Libertarian democratic centralism is a wasteful and inefficient way to run the Libertarian movement.

The market provides the invisible hand that guides men and women toward right decisions. The invisible hand is as efficient in the marketplace of ideas as in any other marketplace. A local organization may choose to sell itself to the marketplace by providing services. This is the free market case. A local organization could also choose to operate as a franchisee of a national organization. This is the Libertarian democratic centralism case. As shown in Chapter 3, the free market approach of the Local Organization strategy is the best strategy for our Libertarian Party.

There is obviously no way that Libertarian democratic centralism can be as effective for the Libertarian Party as polite competition between Libertarian groups. We can use the market to identify the best ideas, but first we must allow the marketplace of ideas to function within our party. If we run state and local groups as dependent subsidiaries of national and state groups, the growth of those groups will inexorably be strangled by a central party bureaucracy. Local and state groups will compete with the national bureaucracy for the same resources, with the central bureaucracy writing the rules for dividing the pie. A political central bureaucracy is like a government central bureaucracy. No matter how much money and how many resources you feed a central bureaucracy, the bureaucracy has only one response: ``More!''

We now advance to Chapter 7