

CMLC Liberator

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Peterson has House Fire

CMLC Editor Ken Peterson has had a house fire. He escaped uninjured, and was able to throw his computer equipment out of the window in front of him. His house was seriously damaged. The computer disks containing the CMLC Liberator material were soaked with water and ashes. Ken is preparing the next issue of Liberty Central; however, I have taken over preparing this one issue of the CMLC Liberator. I do not pretend to be a master of the graphical arts. As a result, this issue will be heavy on words, but short on pictures.

CMLC Web Pages Are Up and Running

With George Phillies as Web master the CMLC Web pages are now up and running. The pages are located at <http://www.pobox.com/~cmlc>, which is an address forwarder to a remote site. We are at present receiving five or so hits per day on the site; one of the articles has already created a significant stir in the larger Massachusetts political community. If you go to the site, worked through the information pages to the Massachusetts Strategy pages, and read the article "Putting the Elephant to Sleep", you will be reading an article that substantially upset or alarmed the Western Massachusetts Republican leadership. I will reprint it elsewhere in this issue of CMLC Liberator. If you would like to make your own contributions to these pages, please stand your material to George Phillies at his email address: phillies@wpi.edu.

In This Issue

Besides the bad news given above, I have several interesting articles for you for the current issue. We are supposed to be an organization, not a newsletter; as promised last summer some of us finally together enough to produce a draft Constitution. That Constitution appears below. We also have three articles, namely the notorious Putting the Elephant to Sleep, an article Run Lots of Candidates on why a Liberty movement needs to persuade many Libertarians and others to run for political office, and a warning from yours truly that the hour is very late to get involved in the 1998 state elections. It may appear that the elections are a long time from now, so long from now that they are hard to think about. However, be warned! If you want to run for office, or to encourage others to do the same, we are in the last month or so in which this will be practical. If you wait until Summer, it will be too late to get pro-Liberty candidates

Putting the Elephant to Sleep

I propose a fundamental strategic approach for pro-liberty candidates over the next several election cycles. My basic theme is that the American electoral system tends to favor the political outcome that there exist at most two major parties. Here in Massachusetts, those rules are equally happy to give the current outcome, namely that in Massachusetts we have one major party. In other states, the one major party has a different name, though rather similar policies.

I propose to use these rules to give us a political situation in which the Commonwealth again has two major parties, us and the Democrats. In order to do this, we must prune some deadwood, electorally speaking, so that there is enough room for two parties to flourish.

What of the Republicans? It is not that we hate the elephant. In Massachusetts, the elephant is a family pet, old, tired, and sick, no longer able to perform its family responsibilities. It lies by the fire, too weak to rise, needing a family member to feed and clean it while it suffers. While there are a range of opinions on how to treat a family pet in its dying days, the Republican elephant deserves to be put mercifully to sleep, and its pro-liberty members brought into a pro-liberty party.

The time has come to put the elephant out of its misery. The Republican Party controls but 7 of 40 Senate seats, fewer than three dozen State Representative seats, not a single seat on the Executive Council, and not a single Federal office. It controls a few of the statewide constitutional offices, but only because the Democratic Party ran extremely weak candidates last time. To allow the great beast to slumber a little deeper, it is primarily necessary to run plausible candidates in those 7 State Senate and three dozen State Representative districts, as well as in those other legislative seats in which a Republican candidate might plausibly challenge. Our candidates then need to emphasize issues that divide the Republican Party internally. With their vote split, the Republicans can be reduced to a half-dozen seats in the Great and General Court, at which point their last traces of credibility will vanish.

In the Federal level, life is even simpler. The Massachusetts Congressional delegation is composed entirely of Democrats. At the Federal level, the Massachusetts Libertarian Party is therefore ready to proceed to the next phase, by

running serious candidates for Federal office: Senate and House. There is no need to displace congressional Republicans, because such persons do not exist. Instead, the Massachusetts Libertarian party only needs to find plausible candidates for Federal office and sell them to the electorate.

Any Republican attempt to re-enter the state's Federal delegation runs into the fundamental difficulty that core Republicans stands: e.g., criminalization of abortion, defense welfare, Internet censorship, farm and industrial welfare, labor and gay-bashing, and green-bashing, are not very salable to the people of Massachusetts. Curiously, it just so happens that these are issues on which Republicans and Libertarians do not agree. The other hand, Libertarian stands in favor of low taxes, small government, the whole Bill of Rights, the Right to Keep and Bear arms, and free-trade, and against government regulation, affirmative action, the war on drugs, and government intrusion into private lives make it very easy for Libertarian candidate to distinguish herself or himself from any Democratic or Reform candidate in the race.

Some will argue that the Republican Party restrains the Democrats from unwise deeds. However, when Bill Weld appeared to have a veto-sustaining majority in one house of the state legislature, he did nothing with it, preferring to cut deals with the other party. Now the Republicans can't sustain a Governor's veto in either house of the state legislature. Can you tell the difference? In fact, in 1996 the Republicans scarcely ran candidates for more than a third of the 200 seats. There are seven Republicans in the State Senate, and those 7 Republicans are less useful than the tits on a male bulldog. They're purely decorative. Even on as fundamental an issue as gun control, last year it was the Democratic Party that provided the votes and legislators needed to save the Second Amendment.

The question is simple. Are there enough pro-liberty candidates in Massachusetts who are willing to **Stand Up for Liberty!** and run in the necessary seats? I have already committed myself to run. What you do is up to you.

I remind you, though, of one basic principle. Libertarians and many others piously profess not to believe in a free lunch. When it comes to the ballot box, though, these pious professions sink to inaudibility. All too many Libertarians believe that there is a free lunch at the ballot box. All too many Libertarians believe that they need to do nothing but show up and vote on election day, and that magically there will be Libertarian candidates on the ballot, awaiting their votes.

Well, there are no truly free lunches. In particular, there are no free lunches at the ballot box! If you want candidates for whom you can vote, you have the responsibility of going out and doing the work needed to put them in place, so that

come November you can vote for them.

Public Reaction to this column: One of the Western Massachusetts Republican Webpage keepers found this article, and wrote his members "I suggest everyone read this [the above] page and see what the Libertarians are planning to do in Mass in 98..." He supplied the URL. A second Republican wrote "RIGHT", and it is so important we should read it here, so you don't have to "Link" anywhere". He then reposted the entire column.

1998 is perhaps a trifle optimistic for successfully effectuating the full proposal, in my humble opinion, though it

Run Lots of Candidates

So how *does* a political party establish itself in the eyes of the voters? I give an answer here, based on the Pennsylvania experience and numbers appropriate for the Massachusetts Libertarian movement: Run Lots of Candidates!

It worked in Pennsylvania! So reports Libertarian Penn, newsletter of the Pennsylvania Libertarian Party. Last year, the Pennsylvania Libertarian Party ran 62 candidates for partisan political office. Most of these were relatively minor offices, but they were offices. 25 of the 62 candidates for office were elected. This gives Pennsylvania 25 of the 215 Libertarians now holding office in the United States. In many cases, Party candidates did far better than implied by the number of registered Libertarians in their district. The Berks County Treasurer candidate, supported by 1112 registered Libertarians, received five times that number of votes. Adams County Jury Commissioner candidate Kurt Natter, supported by only 136 registered Libertarians, got 13.6% of the vote.

This increase in elected Libertarians in Pennsylvania has been mirrored by an increase in the number of registered Libertarian voters in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania now has almost 19,000 registered Libertarians, an increase of 15% in just six months. In the past three years, starting immediately after the 1994 Senate election, the number of registered Libertarians in Pennsylvania has increased almost five fold. The same tactic can be put to work in Massachusetts, except the opportunities for Libertarian gain are far larger in Massachusetts than in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania has a functioning two-party system; in most races, a Libertarian candidate must run both against a Republican and against a Democratic candidate. In Philadelphia Libertarian Leon Williams did this, getting 14% of the vote for City District Attorney.

In Massachusetts, life is much simpler for Libertarian candidates. Massachusetts has one fully-functional political party, the Democratic Party. In the previous state-wide state elec-

tions, of the eight Governor's Council races, the Republicans challenged in one. Of the 200 races for the Great and General Court, the State Senate and State House, the Republicans challenged in slightly more than 80 races. The

Conservative, Libertarian, and Independent candidates challenged in a few more. Next year, it is by no means clear that the Republicans will be able to field a full slate of six statewide candidates: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of the Commonwealth, Auditor General, and State Treasurer.

In addition to these officers, Massachusetts presently has 10 Congressmen. The Republicans do not always challenge every Democrat; several Democratic Congressmen have regularly gone unchallenged. At the Congressional level, the Republican Party has marginal chances of carrying two or three districts, namely the first, third, and perhaps the sixth. Across Massachusetts, Libertarian Congressional candidates have significant chances of running only against a Democrat for Congress.

Numerically, a Libertarian candidate in a two candidate race should be able to get between 14% and one third of the total vote, depending on the race, the local voters, and the perceived importance of the office to the voters, even without running a serious full-power campaign. In principle, **there is therefore a huge opportunity for the Massachusetts Libertarian Party.** If the Libertarian Party were able to field a full slate of partisan candidates for state office, namely the six state constitutional officers, a Senator, 10 Congressmen, 8 candidates for Governor's Council, and close to the allowable 200 candidates for the Great and General Court, **it is marginally numerically possible for the Libertarian Party to outpoll the Republican Party in Massachusetts.** No "third" party has outpolled one of the two major parties on an all-office count in a very long time, perhaps not since the Republicans were emerging as the new "second" party in the 1850s.

Admittedly, beating a political party that only has 13 % of the Registered Voters is not an overwhelming achievement. The Democrats do this every two years. However, this would be a unique achievement for the Libertarian party in the United States, because we would have established that we are in some sense the Second Party in at least one state. Given the socially-conservative stance of the national Republican party, which wants to criminalize abortion, censor the Internet, and make it impossible for citizens to have truly private telephone or EMail conversations – all positions repugnant to most residents of Massachusetts – it would not be at all surprising if Massachusetts were the first state in the Union to turn its back on one of the two major parties. (If we were in Utah, I would be making the same argument, but I would be talking about outpolling the

Democrats.) It would certainly establish that the Libertarian Party is capable of competing to some extent successfully with the other major parties.

Also, it might be possible to use this momentum to elect at least a few state legislators. Even a single Libertarian State Senator and a single Libertarian State Representative would be more effective than the current Republican delegations in the state house.

A true full slate is not an objective that the Massachusetts Libertarian Party is likely to reach this year. Counting the U. S. Senator, one would need to run 225 candidates, who would between them need 74000* signatures to get on the ballots. In the 1996 election the Party actually got 2 candidates on the ballot. This year, it may or may not get up to 20 candidates on the ballot. One might, however, imagine the Party reaching this objective in 2002 or 2006.

Running all these candidates is merely a step toward an end. **The end is to become the majority party, control-**

Constitution of the Central Massachusetts Liberty Coalition

Lest there be any doubt, this is a proposal for a Draft document, not anything final. This Constitution guarantees a democratic structure in which the full membership, not only those people who can travel to a convention on some date, get to vote. It also makes clear that the CMLC is an independent organization, not part of some other group.

I. Name and Purpose

A. The name of this organization shall be the Central Massachusetts Liberty Coalition (CMLC for short). The purpose of the CMLC is to advance the cause of liberty by

- (1) educating people on liberty issues,
- (2) educating people on political techniques, and
- (3) encouraging people to Stand Up for Liberty! by running for office, by helping friends and neighbors run for office, and by organizing or supporting referenda.

B. The CMLC does not endorse candidates or make campaign donations. Members of the CMLC who wish to perform such actions are encouraged to organize themselves as Political Action Committees in accord with Federal and State Law.

II. Officers and Executive Committee

A. The CMLC shall have a Chair, a Treasurer, and an Editor.

- 1) The duty of the Chair is to represent the CMLC to the press and the public, to chair any meetings of the Executive Committee, and to perform such other appropriate duties as are needful to advancing the CMLC's purpose.
- 2) The duty of the Treasurer is to receive funds, to maintain the books of the CMLC, and to make regular financial reports to the Executive Committee and Membership.

3) The duty of the Editor is to edit and publish the CMLC Liberator and Liberty Central on a regular basis.

B. The Executive Committee is the governing body of the Coalition.

1. The Executive Committee consists of the Chair, Treasurer, Editor, and such additional persons as may be elected by the membership. The additional persons are jointly referred to as Elected Members.

2. The Executive Committee sets dues and fees, approves the expenditure of funds, and takes such other actions as are appropriate to the purposes of the Coalition. It may by 2/3 vote remove an Officer or Executive Board member for non-performance of duties or for actions damaging to the purposes of the Coalition.

3. The membership may elect additional persons to the Executive Committee. Before the vote is taken, candidates for Elected Membership must agree to serve, and must agree to contribute their efforts and resources to CMLC activities on a substantial scale.

4. The Executive Committee meets at the call of the Chair, or by petition of a majority of the active Officers and Elected Members. The petition sets the place and time of the meeting; at least one week's notice of meetings must be given unless there is unanimous consent of the active Executive Committee members for a shorter time. An Executive Committee member is active if he or she has attended two of its most recent three meetings.

III. Committees

A. The Officers and Executive Committee may establish committees as needed to perform CMLC functions. Officers establish ad hoc committees of fixed lifetime and limited purpose; standing committees of unlimited lifetime are established by the Executive Committee.

B. The purpose of a committee is to do useful work without requiring everyone to get together. No committee shall continue to exist if it is not actively performing a useful function.

IV. Elections

A. All Officers and Executive Committee Members shall be elected on a yearly basis by the entire membership via a mail ballot. All members may vote. Only members may be elected to office.

B. The date of elections shall be announced in the CMLC Liberator at least two months in advance. The announcement shall include a call for nominations for each Office and for Elected Membership. The Editor will determine which nominees are willing to serve if elected. A ballot listing all persons willing to serve for each office shall be mailed to all

members together with the campaign and position statements from the nominees. The number of Elected Members to be elected shall be set by the Executive Committee in advance of the election, but shall in no case be fewer than three.

C. Ballots are counted by the Executive Committee. In the event that elections become contentious, the Executive Committee shall arrange for an external auditor or uniformly trusted person to receive and count the votes. All ballots shall afterwards be available for inspection by any member at reasonable hours and with reasonable notice.

D. Officers are elected by plurality vote. The ballot for the Elected Members shall specify that each member may vote for up to as many candidates as may be elected. Candidates for Named Office, unless they decline, are automatically also candidates to become an Elected Member of the Executive Committee. The persons receiving the most votes for Elected Member, who are not first elected to a named Office, are elected to the Executive Committee as the Elected Members. Ties are resolved by coin flip or other mutually agreeable means.

V. Members.

There shall be three categories of members, namely Members, Subscribing Members, and Subscribers.

A) Members are persons who have paid the membership dues fixed by the Executive Board, live in Massachusetts in Congressional Districts 1, 2, 3, or elsewhere in or West of the line of towns running Blackstone to Boxborough to Tyngsborough, inclusive, and who by submitting their dues have agreed to uphold the cause of liberty and the purposes of the Coalition. The geographical membership requirement may be reset by the Executive Committee to correspond to changes in legislative districting. Members may vote and hold CMLC Office.

B) Subscribing Members are persons who agree to uphold the cause of liberty and the purposes of the Coalition, and who have paid the membership dues fixed by the Executive Board, but who do not live in the areas specified in Section A of this Article. Subscribing Members do not vote or hold CMLC Office.

C) Subscribers are persons who have paid the fee set by the Executive Board in order to subscribe to Liberty Central. Subscribers do not vote or hold CMLC Office.

VI. Amendments

A) Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed to the Membership by 2/3 vote of the Executive Committee or by petition signed by at least 3% of the Members, including at least 3 Members.

Time is Running Out!

It's 1998! It's election year again! This November, do you want to see a full slate of pro-Liberty candidates on the ballot? Or do you want 1998 to be a repeat of 1996, in which the Libertarian Party had three State Representative candidates on the ballot, and failed to gain ballot access for its United States Senate candidate? We can continue to drift, or we can make 1998 a year in which pro-Liberty politics in Massachusetts makes a drastic change for the better.

This change will not happen by itself. If you want this change to occur, you are going to need to Stand Up for Liberty! and help to make the change occur. The decision is yours. Remember, most people run for political office because someone asked them to. Most people get on the ballot not because they are Ross Perot and can throw millions of dollars at paid petitioners, but because they and their close friends did the hard work needed to collect petitions, file forms, and raise money for a political campaign. However, political candidates don't just happen. In pro-Liberty politics, we see candidates emerging from the woodwork to run for office because they were part of a local group, and some point everyone looked around the table and said, "well, someone has to run or we aren't really a political organization." And at last someone realized that they were being asked to run, and Stood Up for Liberty.

You don't need a huge amount of money to run. In Massachusetts, State Representative districts are sufficiently small that a determined candidate can walk the width and breadth of his or her district, meeting and shaking hands with the constituents.

The last grains of sand are drifting towards the middle of the hour glass. Even as I write, the last few months in which is marginally possible to launch a campaign for state office in Massachusetts are running out. If you want to run for statewide office, you really needed to start last November. If you want to run for the State Legislature, or persuade someone else to run for the State Legislature, there is still time to act. However, there is no longer time to stand around and hope that someone else will find you your candidate and put that candidate on the ballot.

If you want 1998 to be exactly like 1996, in which there were almost no chances to vote for a pro-Liberty candidate, **then sit back and do nothing**. Everything else will be taken care of for you. Of course, it will be done Republicans and the Democrats doing the taking care of, and you'll get to pay for your decision through your pocket book and through your diminishing freedoms

for the next two years, but everything will be taken care of.

If you want 1998 to be different from 1996, then it's time to do something about it!

We have just had a dramatic demonstration of what happens when too many people sit back and do nothing. A Promise to Keep tried to put a tax cut initiative on the ballot. They may have succeeded, but only by the slimmest of margins, and only at huge and unnecessary expense. If they had had another 5,000 signatures, even Tax Everything Again, Man! and More (tax)Tain't Adequate would have seen that they had lost this round, and let the initiative onto the ballot. Those signatures were not there. The tax cut initiative gone onto the ballot by a tiny margin, a margin so small that massive litigation will be undertaken by both sides to keep the initiative on the ballot or get the initiative off the ballot. If people hadn't sat back and done nothing, if they had gone out and collected signatures or if they had given their money to hire paid petitioners, those signatures would have been there.

Do you want another close call, or no call at all? If there is a pro Liberty candidate running in your area, it's time to stand up and support her without waiting any longer. If there is no pro-Liberty candidate running in your area, it is time to stand up and do something about it! That doesn't mean you have to run for office your self. Instead, you can ask George Phillies (508-754-1859; voice mail) for a list of the Libertarians and pro-Liberty people living in your town or area. Phone them up, or sentd them all a note, inviting them to get together in a local restaurant or meeting hall. There is strength and courage in numbers. Even if no one was individually willing to run for office, when you get together someone may gain the strength from your support and agree to run.

Besides, there are indications of that the Libertarian Party in Massachusetts wants to run people for statewide office: governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, state auditor, secretary of the Commonwealth, or state treasurer. These people-- I speak from practical experience as the Party's former candidate for United States Senator-- are starting their races very, very late, and will need all the help they can get if they are to get on the ballot this November. Now, I am on the record as urging that Massachusetts Libertarians should not run statewide candidates this year. However if people do decide to run, then we should as a group support them in their quest for a ballot access.

Only by standing together can

Late breaking news!

We have confirmed that Libertarian Pit Warren of Chicopee has filed to run for the State Senate against Senator Melconian. Warren is supported by the Pioneer Valley Libertarian Association, which meets regularly in Wilbraham, Massachusetts.

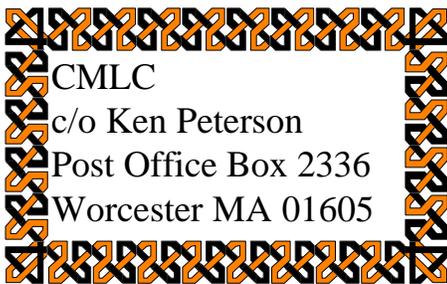
We are able to confirm that CMLC founder George Phillies has filed with Federal Election Commission, and will be running for the United States Congress against Congressman James McGovern. In order to file, Phillies was required to raise from one legal source or another \$5,000 toward his campaign. Drawing on his extensive experience at running a statewide campaign in Massachusetts in 1996, Phillies has made what he believes to be adequate arrangements to ensure that this time he will be on the ballot in November. Phillies expects to make large-scale use of volunteer petitioner plus a staff of professional support in order to gather the approximately 2500 signatures that he will require for ballot access. If funds permit, Phillies intends to run a substantial radio and press campaign in support of his candidacy.

We have heard reports that the Libertarian Association of Massachusetts is now getting together to organize a slate of statewide candidates for this fall. At last report, there is definitely a candidate for the post of State Auditor, a volunteer who is prepared to run for Attorney General, and a few other people who could perhaps be persuaded to run for statewide office. We have heard rumors from reliable sources that the Republican Party of Massachusetts is in serious straits, and is not at this time certain that it will be able

to run a full slate of candidates for statewide office in the fall. If the Republicans did not run a candidate for, for example, State Auditor, then the Libertarian, Reform, Conservative, and Natural Law Parties would all almost certainly be able to qualify for major party status in the year 2000.

(Of course, as I have regularly pointed out, under the ballot access laws of the Commonwealth, gaining major party status is not necessarily an advantage to the party that gains it. For a small major party, it is probably more difficult to run candidates for office than it would be if the party in question did not have major party status. A political party in this circumstance would be well advised to consider establishing a separate party designation, under which it could run candidates who would be unable to get on the ballot while running under the name of the small major party. For example, Libertarians running in Cambridge, Massachusetts while the Libertarian party had major party status would have found it far easier to get on the ballot if they had run under some by-line such as Liberty Coalition. Parties planning on using this mechanism must give careful attention to be Massachusetts General Laws pertaining to elections, since persons who are members of a major party cannot run as independents in a simple minded way.)

The CMLC Liberator is published monthly by the Central Massachusetts Liberty Coalition, an independent pro-freedom political-educational organization dedicated to low taxes, small government, and the whole Bill of Rights. To join the CMLC, send a check for \$ 15, payable to the CMLC, to George Phillies, 87-6 Park Avenue, Worcester MA 01605; 508-754-1859. (Expect Ken Peterson to be back on the air in another month or two.)



First Class Mail