

Liberty for America

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Your Editor expects that issues will in the future be less frequent. I have another project. I am working on an analysis of the Johnson 2012 campaign, which spent most of its money of staff salaries and still owes well over a million dollars to various people. Now, there are sources that claim that those reports are not reflective of reality, and that they had one intent or another. All I can say on this point is that filing false or misleading financial reports...a claim for which there seems to be no evidence, only whispers...is using fraud for political purposes, an action entirely contrary to basic Libertarian principles.

I emphasize that I have seen no credible evidence for claims that the Johnson 2012 reports are anything but honest. However, a claim that the reports were deceptive is a claim that the situation is even worse than expected, because it is a claim that Johnson supports the use of fraud for political purposes.

In the rest of this issue, we have a view of the known 2016 Presidential candidates, a consideration of what past campaigns have done for the party, notes on the dismal condition of our national party, and a section from Jake Porter's forthcoming book *Gold State Plan*.

First, **the 2016 Presidential Candidates**

I begin by commenting that so far as I know they are all nice people and good Libertarians. However:

Darryl Perry of New Hampshire only accepts campaign donations in the form of bitcoins and in the form of historic coins made of gold and silver. This restrictive fundraising plan corresponds to Perry's general political position: He is a radical. It also means his campaign will have almost no money.

LNC member Marc Feldman has a different take on campaign finance restrictions: He will not accept donations that are larger than \$5. It is a radical idea. It also means his campaign will have almost no money.

Cecil Ince has spoken up on the Confederate flag issue in terms that seem to imply that he is a Confederate apologist. Perhaps he is not, but that is how he came across to me.

JoyWaymire--Miss Joy--is a nice person, but when she ran in 2012 her campaign was not very visible. I do not have the sense that she will improve, but might be wrong.

Steve Kerbel is making a serious and legitimate effort to set up a campaign, or so my sources say. However, he seems to have no record of activism, so his familiarity with ballot access and nominating convention issues may be a bit limited.

In addition to these people, there is the question of whether or not Gary Johnson will run. His one campaign did well in 2012, but it was less effective at building the party. Many Libertarians view his hypothetical running mate, Judge Gray, as having been too supportive of some police tactics. I have received contradictory reports as to whether or not he will run again. Expect an announcement in October or so.

You may correctly infer that I view the Presidential candidate field for 2016 as being extremely weak. I do not off hand have a solution.

What Past Presidential Campaigns Did for Our Party

I dug up the national party membership numbers going back well into the past. They numbers are listed below. The membership numbers are listed for the end of the indicated year, except 2015, where the indicated number is the end of June 2015.

You will see that 1992 brought in a lot of people, 1996 brought in a lot of people, 2000 lost ground, 2004 brought in 873 people, 2008 brought in 1177 people, and 2012 brought in 281 people. Remember that the Presidential campaign is not everything in terms of member recruitment, but it can help. To the extent that we credit the Presidential campaign for increasing our membership (or not), Barr was more effective than Badnarik or Johnson at bringing in people, but all of them were more effective than the second Browne campaign.

For 2009 and after, I list three columns. The second column counts people who signed the oath and sent us some money during the year (or are life members), while the third column lists “sustaining members” as defined in the Bylaws. 2006 is an anomaly.

Year-Number of members at the end of the year

1989 – 8211
1990 – 9130
1991 – 9162
1992 – 11416
1993 – 9539
1994 – 10641
1995 – 13658
1996 – 21580
1997 – 23345
1998 – 30007
1999 – 33007 <- - All time high
2000 – 32922
2001 – 27731
2002 – 22871
2003 – 19410

2004 – 20283
2005 – 15575
2006 – 11014
2007 – 14181
2008 – 15358
2009 – 14076 – 14096
2010 – 14077 – 14309
2011 – 13468 – 13589
2012 – 13749 – 13824
2013 – 13670 – 13869
2014 – 12053 – 12526
2015 – 11640 – 11723 (June)

And for those of you who want the month by month numbers in an election year, here are the month by month numbers for 2004, 2008, and 2012

2004 — 19084 18826 19276 19107 19306 19834 ** 19982 19747 19830 19913 19929
20283

2008 — 14171 13908 13809 13579 13820 ** 14121 14581 14970 15378 16099 16079
15358

2012 – 13492 13538 13406 13179 12923 ** 12870 12960 13361 13788 14070 14182
13749

The asterisk indicates the mid-year mark. So, looking at the month-by-month numbers, between the nomination and the end of the year Badnarik brought in under 500 members, Barr brought in 1530 more members, and Johnson brought in a bit over 800 new members.

There are people who say that the answer for our party is to run a real radical, and people will flock to her colors. Readers may reasonably say that while Badnarik was a radical, he was a Constitutionalist radical, not a Libertarian radical, and his knowledge of the Constitution had some deficiencies. The guy who did best, Barr, was clearly not a radical.

LNC Continues to Stagnate

Stagnate? That's being somewhat optimistic. However:

National Membership (active with membership) at the end of June is down to 11640, relative to 14136 a year ago. Donating nonmembers are down to 546 from 1146 a year ago. The drop from last month is quite small, primarily because the number of people whose membership lapsed was small. Unfortunately the number of new donating members also continues to be small, under 300 for the last three months. There are several counts of active members, notably the "Bylaws-Defined Sustaining Member", the count of which is very slightly different than the count of Active Members.

LNC Income for May was quite low. Indeed, the May receipts were about as low as any I can off-hand remember.

May receipts were \$70,107.65.

May expenditures were \$90,110.23

End of May cash on hand was \$41,566.

On the bright side, matters could be worse. Wes Benedict forwarded the outcomes for the other two third parties:

Green Party revenue:

2012: 255,249.92

2013: 123,621.19

2014: 99,392.27

Constitution Party revenue:

2012: 177,517.80

2013: 85,542.77

2014: 85,115.39

The sensible comment from National Secretary Mattson, who is at least paying attention to the situation, is "Given our pitiful financial state,..." Mattson also pointed out that the LCN 2015 budget set aside no money for 2016 ballot access costs, a precaution that has been taken in some past years. Mattson circulated a spreadsheet of estimated 2016 ballot access costs. The Massachusetts Presidential Ballot Access estimate looks to be low by 20 or 50%.

State	Valid Sigs	LNC Actual Expenditure	Expected Expenditure	Cost Per Sig
DC	4,600		\$15,000	\$3.26
SD	6,936		\$20,000	\$2.88
OK	24,712		\$65,000	\$2.63
NH	3,000		\$15,000	\$5.00
AR	10,000	\$26,000		
CT	7,500		\$25,000	\$3.33
PA	25,000		\$70,000	\$2.80
IL	25,000		\$66,500	\$2.66
MA	10,000		\$25,000	\$2.50
KY	5,000		\$15,000	\$3.00
AL	5,000		\$15,000	\$3.00
RI	1,000		\$2,500	\$2.50
NY	15,000		\$30,000	\$2.00
IA	1,500		\$0	\$0.00
ME	5,000		\$0	\$0.00

MN	2,000	\$0	\$0.00
NJ	800	\$0	\$0.00
TN	275	\$0	\$0.00
VA	5,000	\$0	\$0.00
WA	1,000	\$0	\$0.00
OH	-----pending litigation-----		

Mattson sent to the State Chairs some entirely sensible clarifications: “To clarify a bit, the expenditures on my spreadsheet are only what the LNC expects it will have to spend. It does not show any expenditures the state affiliate will be expected to make in addition to the LNC expenditures. The cost per signature is only the cost to the LNC per valid signature, not total expenditures (by both the LNC and the affiliate) divided by raw signature counts.

This is not an all-inclusive picture of the petition drives, how many raw signatures will be collected, or the total of all funds that will be spent. The limited purpose of this data subset was for the LNC to think about the best uses of our strained resources. If we don't have enough funds to do them all, which ones give us the biggest bang for our buck?

In the rest of my original email message sent with the spreadsheet, I also mentioned that we need to insist that state affiliates contribute their fair share to the efforts.”

The LNC has passed a motion, sending money to Oklahoma for petitioning, the motion reading: “Motion: Increase the Ballot Access Expense line item by \$65,000, from \$57,500 to \$122,500, contingent on the LNC receiving cash receipts, that are earmarked for a 2015 Libertarian Party of Oklahoma petition drive, of at least \$60,000, and cash receipts (net of associated fundraising costs) of at least \$55,000.” The motion passed 8 (Craig, Feldman, Hagan, Hayes, Johnson, Katz, Kirkland, Lark, McLendon, O'Toole, Redpath, Sarwark) to 4 (Goldstein, Mattson, Olsen, Wiener).

The most important point on the above is, as observed by Sherlock Holmes, the dog that did not bark. Robert Kraus has faithfully been turning out membership and financial reports, month after month, showing the progress decline in party income and membership. And the response of the LNC, other than the Mattson quote above, has largely been...crickets.

I did on the State Chairs list get a response from Bill Redpath, who is an LNC member and a State Chair. He asked what the point of my report on LNC finances was. I suppose if LNC Executive Committee members do not see the point of paying attention to LNC finances, then it should not be surprising that the rest of the LNC will also not find these numbers interesting. Redpath also blamed part of our financial issues on the LNC's 2008 ballot access expenses in Massachusetts. Readers may see the connection between spending then and fund raising nearly a decade later. I certainly do not.

I suppose silence is better than debates as to whether or not Starchild should be addressed as “Mister Starchild”, as we heard in a previous term.

And now a section from Jake Porter's forthcoming book *Gold State Plan*. Jake worked on my 2008 Presidential nominating campaign, doing a fine job, and has run for statewide office in Iowa. Copyright on the following material is owned by Jake Porter.

The Successes and Failures of the Barr Campaign:

By Jake Porter

Originally Written May 1, 2009

Shortly after the Bob Barr 2008 Presidential campaign ended, I received many questions regarding both the successes and failures of the campaign. After all, I was an early opponent of Bob Barr, I was in Kansas City, Missouri when Bob announced his exploratory committee, and I was in Denver when he finally won the nomination. In fact, Bob received my delegate vote every round after George Phillies was defeated. In my humble opinion, Bob Barr is a very good man and he had the best intentions of the Libertarian Party in mind when running. In this article, I will try to present both the successes and failures of the campaign in a non-confrontational or condemning manner.

A day after Bob won the nomination, I phoned someone involved with the campaign to volunteer and had to leave a message on their voicemail. Unfortunately, I never heard back from this person. After I flew back from Denver, I e-mailed a campaign staffer asking to volunteer. Remember, I was not asking for a paying job. Attached was my resume, which includes managing campaigns and other large groups as well as being elected Regional Alternate on the Libertarian National Committee, and while I am very young, my political experience is nothing to be completely scoffed at. This time, I was informed it would be put at the top of the to-do list. Once again, I never heard anything back in response to volunteering. A week or so later, I was informed that Mike Ferguson was named my Regional Coordinator for the Barr campaign. Mike is a very competent political campaigner who has been elected to public office. I e-mailed Mike and within hours received a phone call from him. In my experience with volunteers, many would have given up after the first or second attempt to try to volunteer.

Around the middle of July, I was named Iowa Coordinator for the campaign. This allowed me to see firsthand both the successes and failures of the Barr campaign. It is my hope that by releasing this article, in the future, we can improve upon our successes and not repeat the failures. It is not, nor has it ever been, my intention to attack anyone for trying an idea that didn't work. As the quote that I have posted on my desk by Theodore Roosevelt goes, "The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error or shortcoming."

Success and Failures:

Advertising: In 2004, I actually remember seeing a couple of the Michael Badnarik television ads on CNN Headline News. In 2008, I saw and heard no Bob Barr advertisements. The video ad of 2008, in my opinion, was less visually appealing than the 2004 television ad I had seen of Michael Badnarik. I have no idea if the Barr campaign used any television or radio advertising either nationwide or statewide. I know they had a couple of radio ads produced and at

least one ad that could have been used on television, but I have no evidence that they ever ran. If they did, there was certainly not much of an attempt to promote the fact that they were running.

Many times the fact that you are running ads is worth more in media attention than the advertisements themselves. Additionally, I asked to fundraise in Iowa for our own advertising. All my polling and sources strongly indicated to me that Obama was going to win Iowa by a large vote total and there was only about a three percent chance of McCain winning, according to the betting odds.

It looked to be almost a certainty that Iowa was not going to be swing state and Bob had the potential to do very well in Iowa if we would just have some ability to promote the campaign using traditional media and use public relations to promote our advertising campaign. After all, Bob was born in Iowa City. The local media would love to discuss that piece of information.

After I was given a green light on the Iowa advertising plan and spent a lot of my time pursuing rates and plans, I was told we could not fundraise through the Barr campaign for our own advertising. Talk about a clear violation of the 1:10:100 rule. Those of you who have worked with me know that I rarely get angry and am usually exceptionally calm. After I was told this, I was livid and strongly considered telling the national staff what they could do. Fortunately, our Iowa supporters and volunteers never found out about the decision of the national campaign staff.

Ballot Access: The state organizations must be strengthened in order to decrease the time and effort required to gather signatures. In 2012, ballot access must improve. Ballot access is one area in which the party is doing worse compared to previous years. In 2004, the Libertarian Presidential nominee was on the ballot in 48 states plus Washington D.C. In 2008, we were only on the ballot in 45 states and not Washington D.C.

There definitely needed to be better coordination with the Libertarian Party on ballot access. There also needed to be quick decisive decisions made as to what states we were going to target and what states we were going to give up on. I remember that Mike Ferguson was going to drive up to Des Moines, Iowa where the Libertarian Party of Iowa was holding an Executive Committee meeting. At the last minute, he called and told me that he was going to have to go to West Virginia to petition and mentioned sending Vice-Presidential candidate Root in. Instead of flying in Wayne, I had Mike set up a conference call with Wayne, and Mike was kind enough to record a video. If we would have started West Virginia earlier we could have possibly got on the ballot. If we had stuck with the decision not to go to West Virginia we would have saved a lot of volunteer and financial resources. Another example was the Louisiana ballot access. Bob should have been on the ballot in Louisiana and I am informed that he likely would have been, with better coordination.

The attempt by the Barr campaign to kick John McCain and Barack Obama off the Texas ballot generated great publicity and allowed the American people to view the hypocrisy of ballot access laws. In fact, this was discussed on a radio station, not talk radio, I was listening to.

Communications: The Barr campaign had a very good idea. They allowed the state coordinators to call in on a weekly conference call to discuss strategy. They also allowed us to use the conference call to call our county coordinators in our states. This allowed us to share ideas and communicate more effectively with each other.

Materials: Another bad thing about announcing late is that the campaign does not have things like brochures ready. It wasn't until July that I got the brochures to hand out. It was also suggested that we would be charged by the campaign for obtaining the campaign materials to distribute; however, the campaign did send me materials to distribute at no cost to me personally. Unfortunately, volunteers were forced to buy their own yard signs. I hated to tell supporters that I would give them bumper stickers, but I had no yard signs for them.

I caught a lot of hell over the fact that "Libertarian" was not mentioned on many of the campaign materials. There was a legitimate reason for that. It is easier to convince someone to vote for you if they don't feel excluded by party names. The thing that concerned me was that there was no volunteer form to fill out and send in on the brochures.

Media: In 2004, I saw Gary Nolan on Fox News and heard that Michael Badnarik won the nomination on the morning radio news break, and listened to Michael on Mancow. The Gary Nolan interview was my first introduction to the Libertarian Party. Compare this with 2008. In 2008, I heard Bob Barr being mentioned shortly before he announced his exploratory campaign, immediately after he announced, during the radio news breaks numerous times, then saw Bob in the news papers numerous times, and even on the front page of Yahoo a few times. In fact, my cousin even told me, "I saw your candidate Matt Barr on T.V. the other day." Well, at least he got the last name correct. I also received a call from a family member informing me that they watched Bob on Glenn Beck. In 2004, nobody I talked to had heard of Michael Badnarik. The massive increase in media attention was by far the biggest success of the Barr campaign and something we should strive for in future campaigns.

Reason Debates: In 2004, Libertarian Party Presidential candidate Michael Badnarik was arrested while trying to debate President Bush and Senator Kerry. Congressman Barr did not go that far; however, he did debate Senator McCain and President Obama live on Reason.com's website. The technology needs to be improved upon. It would have been better if Bob could have paused live television to respond instead of just talking over them, and the video stream did go down temporarily, but this was a great strategy. I hope the 2012 campaign improves upon the technology and decides to allow for debate like Bob did if the candidate is not invited to the official debates.

The Barr campaign also did a superb job of taking advantage of the massive government bailouts of financial institutions.

Professionalism: The Barr campaign almost perfected professional looking logos, videos, materials, and website design. This was a huge benefit to the campaign. There were a couple of times when I had to shake my head. For example, the press release regarding the death of Senator Jesse Helms, which caused one major supporter (who helped convince me to give my delegate vote to Barr) to, at least temporarily, withdraw his volunteer support of the campaign

and possibly his monetary support. Another time was when supporters were asked to call talk radio shows and promote the campaign. Someone posted the following comment on Last Free Voice in response: “We’re getting reports now from that big jet crash out at the airport. Dozens are feared dead. I have on the line a caller who is at the scene. Tell me, caller, what do you see?”

“It’s terrible, Kent! Bodies and plane wreckage everywhere. That’s a great issue to discuss, but let me tell you about a real choice in the race for the presidency, Bob Barr.”

“Excuse me?”

“You know, Bob Barr, the Libertarian candidate for President. His website Bob Barr 2008 dot—” “I’m being told by my producers that was a crank caller. Let’s go to Mr. Baba Boeey on line 2...” Source: <http://lastfreevoice.wordpress.com/2008/08/06/60-seconds-for-bob-how-to-defraud-call-screener-and-pissoff-talk-radio-hosts/#comments>

Qualifications to run: No one person ever suggested to me that Bob was not qualified to run for President. In fact, some people even told me they believed he had more legislative experience than President Obama had.

Racism: During the 2008 Ron Paul Presidential campaign, Ron Paul refused to return money donated by a member of the White Nationalist Community, Stormfront. This, along with the newsletters, in my opinion, did great harm to the Paul campaign. When an endorsement of Bob Barr was posted on a separatist website, Barr campaign manager Russ Verney released the following statement: “The Barr campaign is not going to be a vehicle for every fringe and hate group to promote itself. We do not want and will not accept the support of haters. Anyone with love in their heart for our country and for every resident of our country regardless of race, religion, nationality or sexual orientation is welcome with open arms.” “Tell the haters I said don’t let the door hit you on the backside on your way out!” Source: <http://www.reason.com/blog/show/126790.html>

I believe the reply posted by Mr. Verney above kept the campaign on message.

Swing-State Strategy: One strategy that it appears both the 2004 campaign of Michael Badnarik and the 2008 campaign of Bob Barr used was targeting swing states. In my opinion, it didn’t work either time, and when you target swing states you might get more media attention; however, voters who think they can decide the outcome of the election don’t end up voting for a third party candidate. In the future, I would like to see the Libertarian candidate target safe states in order to try and increase their vote totals that way.

Volunteer Support: In my opinion, one of the biggest factors that harmed the Barr campaign was the fact that Bob announced so late that he did not have time to develop a campaign structure similar to ones I assisted with, like National Mobilization Facilitator and later on, as Chief of Staff for the Phillies campaign. With the Phillies campaign, we had coordinators in a little over twenty of the states, one in D.C., and I had plans to name the rest shortly after the convention ended. Running for President takes a lot of planning and when a candidate decides impulsively at the last minute that they don’t have the time to put together a staff and fix any

problems before the general election. This should be a lesson to the future Libertarian Party delegates about nominating candidates who have not had time to build their campaign organizations.

In November, at the end of the campaign, it appears the Barr campaign was about where the Phillies campaign was at in May, in regards to the number of state coordinators.

As Iowa coordinator, you would likely think I would have had access to the Iowa volunteer lists. I did not. In order to contact the Iowa volunteers I had to write an e-mail and send it to my regional coordinator, and he had to send it to someone on the national staff to actually send out. Sometimes it would take almost a week of fighting to get an e-mail blast sent out. I really did like the e-mail blast idea. In fact, it made my job of getting talking points out very effective; however, I think in hindsight it should have been just a small part of the volunteer contact strategy.

Perhaps the biggest failure, in my opinion, was immediately following the campaign. The day after the election, I wrote an e-mail to be sent out to all the Iowa supporters thanking them and asking them to get involved with the Libertarian Party of Iowa. It never went out. No state pages on website: One thing we learned in 2008 was the ability to use the Internet for more than just porn and eBay; it can be used to promote campaign events. I first started seeing this when I was working with the Phillies Presidential campaign. Our MySpace coordinator was posting events to the Phillies MySpace calendar. People started showing up to events because they saw it on our MySpace profile. That is why we started the process of state pages during the Phillies campaign. After the nomination we would be ready to promote news and events in every state.

During the Barr campaign, it would have been great to set up state pages to inform supporters about events that were happening and to distribute news like polling numbers, door-to-door efforts, and petition deadlines.

Wayne Root It has been suggested to me that the second biggest failure, behind the swing-state strategy, in the Barr campaign is that they did not properly utilize the media skills and abilities of Vice-Presidential candidate Wayne Root by trying to get Wayne on more talk radio programs.

The article wouldn't be complete without mentioning some of my own personal mistakes in the campaign. I predicted we could get a coordinator in all five of Iowa's Congressional Districts. We only finished with three. I also believed I could get around two percent of the vote with the limited resources I had. While we received a higher percentage and more votes than any Libertarian Presidential candidate since Ed Clark in 1980, we did not come anywhere close to getting the two percent I believed we could receive. I also failed in my project to get Bob to Iowa.