

# Liberty Rising

## What's happening?

**Libertarian Party of Sonoma County**  
 May 5, 2010 – 7:00 P.M., Round Table  
 Pizza, 1003 Guerneville Rd., Santa Rosa.  
 Elections will be held to select  
 a Chair and Vice-Chair.



**Libertarian Party of Sonoma County**  
 June 2, 2010 – 7:00 P.M., Round Table  
 Pizza, 1003 Guerneville Rd., Santa Rosa.

**An Evening with the Skeptical Environmentalist – Bjorn Lomborg**  
 This 80-minute DVD will be shown at a  
 date, time, and place to be determined.

**Freedomfest 2010**  
 July 7-11, 2010 – Last year's event fea-  
 tured "over 100 speakers, 90 exhibitors,  
 and nearly 1700 attendees."  
[www.freedomfest.com](http://www.freedomfest.com)

**Bill of Rights Day**  
 December 15, 2010

## What's a Libertarian to do?

### Focus our efforts

While the opposition is fighting one hundred battles at once, Libertarians should focus their efforts on one battle at a time. Given that we are so outnumbered, such a strategy gives us the greatest chance of winning.

LP Sonoma will be asked at its next meeting to select one task to be done by all local libertarians in the following month. With a focused effort, be it phone calls, letters, or street protests, we will maximize our chance of success. And, it is this chance of success that should guide LP Sonoma in selecting the next battle.

Contact LP Sonoma with your ideas for such a focused effort.

## News break

### Tax Protest

A crowd of perhaps 400 gathered in Old Courthouse Square, Santa Rosa, to protest on April 15, 2010. One placard read, "Big Government isn't the solution, it's the problem." Another wondered "who is John Galt?" A third spoke against government theft saying "give me back my wallet." Finally along with six American flags there was a bright yellow Gadsden flag.

### Clinton derides rhetoric

Former President Bill Clinton is appalled at "angry anti-government rhetoric." He insists that the public not demonize public officials. So much for free speech.

Worse, he forgets that people have good reason to be angry. At Ruby Ridge government agents murdered Vicky Weaver while she was holding her baby in her arms. No one was punished. During his watch, the Branch Davidians were assaulted and dozens of innocent men, women, and children were killed. Innocents are still being killed by our government in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

There is hardly a single constitutional restriction on government power that is respected by most any president or congress. They don't hesitate to run trillion dollar deficits. They are unconcerned over our \$12 trillion official debt. They show no remorse over \$50 trillion in unfunded Social Security and Medicare benefits. That means we need to invest \$50 trillion now in order to generate the funds necessary to pay off those solemn obligations.

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## LP Sonoma

Acting-Chair James Oglesby  
Vice-Chair (vacant)  
Secretary Frank Ball  
Treasurer James Oglesby

Contact LP Sonoma, of course.

## Elections

The May meeting will start with the election of Chair and Vice-Chair. There will then be a quorum to conduct necessary business in preparation for the June 8 ballot measures.

Throw your hat in the ring and make your pitch to become LP Sonoma Chair or Vice-Chair - attend the May 5, 2010 meeting of LP Sonoma. Only members of the Libertarian Party of California may vote and/or serve.

## Opinion Piece in Press Democrat

An opinion piece on health care written by James Oglesby, Acting Chair and member of the Sonoma County Libertarian Central Committee, was carried in the March 6, 2010 edition of the Press Democrat. This may have been the first such opinion piece printed by the Press Democrat, possibly because Central Committee membership is a sworn public office.

## June 8 ballot measures

Measure C - Mark West Union school bonds.

Measure F - Russian River Fire Protection District parcel tax.

Measure E - Rohnert Park Sales Tax Increase.

## What's the answer?

Q: *What's up with the drug war in Mexico?*

A: *It is a replay of the American experience with prohibition, but with a much more profitable product that enables the drug lords to corrupt a government and wage a military-style war. Legalize such*

*drugs and both the corruption and war will go away.*

Q: *When should we recycle?*

A: *"Should" doesn't apply. In a free country people will recycle whenever they want to. It makes economic sense to recycle whenever the benefits exceed the costs. That's why Space Shuttle astronauts recycle their toilet water and earth-bound types don't. Remember, wasting money needlessly recycling means we don't have that money available to address serious environmental problems.*

## What do you know?

### Why is economic progress so slow in places like Haiti?

Economist Hernando de Soto estimates that 68% of urban and 97% of rural housing in Haiti lack clear legal title. Who in their right mind would invest in and improve such properties?

Similarly, in such nations entrepreneurs face a daunting challenge in starting a business. Between the bribes, the years which it takes to get dozens of permits, and the lack of property title, few are willing to take the risks necessary to establish and grow a business.

Privatize, deregulate, and un-tax, that's the Libertarian prescription for real reform.

## Comics

### 3/25 The Press Democrat

Senator Pat Wiggins has had her duties cut back in light of her undisclosed illness. She will only work in her Sacramento or district offices except "on an as-needed bases." None of which prevents her from drawing her full salary and benefits. The ruling class takes care of themselves first. Always. Regardless of who or how many they trample in the process.

### 3/28 The Press Democrat

"Rohnert Park's expensive employee retirement plans stand out as a major strain on the city's finances." Their public safety officers enjoy a salary and benefit package estimated at \$145,500 versus non-sworn employees whose package is \$83,600. So sad.

### 3/29 The Press Democrat

Sonoma County students entering the CSU system are severely handicapped. About 28% require remedial math and 32% remedial English. Imagine a private school bragging on those stats!

### 3/30 The Press Democrat

Thanks to Obamacare sex discrimination is no longer permitted in the pricing of health insurance. If such discrimination were actually occurring competing companies would quickly pick up new policy holders. In fact, such pricing differences tend to be for valid reasons, such as the costs and complications of pregnancy. Apparently, men will be required to pay insurance premiums that effectively cover the cost of medical treatment for pregnancy.

*"In a moral society, your fear of freedom cannot require my forfeiture of liberty."*

Vantage Vigilance Valor

### 4/2 The Press Democrat

"Supervisor Zane seeks smoking ban at county parks." Of course she does, even though more people will die from strokes reading her inane comments than will die from second hand smoke in county parks.

### 4/2 The Press Democrat

Insisting that the American people are too stupid to consider fuel economy when purchasing a vehicle, the Obama administration has mandated a fleet fuel efficiency of 35.5 mpg by 2016.

More fuel efficiency generally means lighter in weight, or less safe. Many will unnecessarily die. Also, better gas mileage means cheaper operating costs which means people will drive more, consuming more fuel. Many will opt for a larger vehicle in order to improve their safety, moving their gas mileage back down towards what it was before the new mandate.

## Directory

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[www.LPSonoma.org](http://www.LPSonoma.org)

Libertarian Party of California  
[www.LPC.org](http://www.LPC.org)

Ludwig von Mises Institute  
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[www.LewRockwell.com](http://www.LewRockwell.com)

Cato Institute  
[www.cato.org](http://www.cato.org)

Foundation for Economic Education  
[www.fee.org](http://www.fee.org)

### 4/2 The Press Democrat

India has undertaken a yearlong census as part of a plan to issue identity cards to all citizens. "Most Indians welcome the ID cards, saying they will reduce the need for multiple identification papers and make it easier to receive government benefits and services." Of course, nothing like easy government benefits to energize your work day.

### 4/4 The Press Democrat

Tens of millions in student fees have been put to questionable use by the California State University system. Of course. We try not to waste our own money. It is much more sensible to waste other people's money.

### 4/6 The Press Democrat

"In sparsely populated and low-income areas" the federal government subsidizes twenty phone lines at a cost of \$13,000 per line per year. Any sensible person who

wants phone service will live where there is phone service. Once the choice is made to do otherwise, that choice includes no phone service. Must be too complex for a congressman to figure out.

### 4/8 The Press Democrat

California has such a generous workers compensation program that NFL players who played in but one game in California are eligible to receive benefits. That's what happens when politicians run anything that someone else pays for. There is no need for common sense. No need to balance costs and benefits. Just ride the taxpayers' back to glory.

### 4/8 The Press Democrat

"A U.S. military video was released this week showing the indiscriminate targeting and killing of civilians in Baghdad." Among the dead were "two Reuter's employees." That incident took place in 2007. Currently, drones are being extensively used in Afghanistan to kill suspected terrorists and anyone else in the vicinity. The true face of government is on display for those willing to look.

*"If there were no privileges to sell, there would be no privileges to buy."*

*Sheldon Richman, Reason Magazine*

### 4/11 The Press Democrat

With the "success" of last year's 'Cash for Clunkers,' states are now offering similar programs for appliances. In both cases most of the money is going to people who would have purchased anyway. Additionally, valuable goods (first cars and now appliances) were turned into scrap, denying low-income purchasers the opportunity to improve their lives. The route to prosperity does not lie through the destruction of previously manufactured goods.

### 4/11 The Press Democrat

A bill has been introduced in Sacramento "to cap fees for college students." How refresh-

ing that the politicians are attacking government institutions with the same strangling regulations usually reserved for private businesses.

### 4/14 The Press Democrat

Jon Nilsen of Windsor is upset that Exxon paid no taxes to "Uncle Sam." In conclusion he said, "Thank you, right wing. Thank you conservatives. Your corporatocracy at work. The free-market cult at work. Tax 'burden,' my Aunt Fanny."

He never made it clear why he deserved a share of Exxon's profits. He never explained his use of "cult" to describe free market advocates. Of course not. He is entitled. Those entitled just take and take and take.

Nilsen is correct to complain about "corporatocracy," which is politicians giving favors to corporations. Keeping your own money is not a favor. Nilsen seems to favor kleptocracy – use the government to take what you can from whom you can.

### 4/15 The Press Democrat

An Associated Press story trumpets how the proposed climate law would help the poor. It seems that poor neighborhoods are often the site of heavy polluters.

Assuming that such neighborhoods were cleaned up, it does not follow that the poor would be helped. Wouldn't a more attractive neighborhood attract higher income renters and home owners? Why live in Stockton and commute to San Francisco when you could bid up the price of housing in a newly cleaned-up neighborhood?

### 4/15 The Press Democrat

The headline says it all, "Golden Gate Bridge may ax toll-takers." The district is studying replacing 35 employees with electronic collections. Of course. Contrary to the assertions of Supervisor Shirley Zane and countless other politicians, wage rates absolutely do affect the quantity of labor that will be employed.

### 4/15 The Press Democrat

In a letter, David R. Ford of Sonoma proposes legalizing marijuana and taxing it at \$100 per ounce. Apparently Adler wants his free government services paid for by marijuana

users. The libertarian view is to decriminalize marijuana and leave it un-taxed.

### **4/15 *The Press Democrat***

In a letter, Robert Adler of Santa Rosa claims that the government “provides goods and services that the free market is incapable of providing, or provides in a way most of us find unacceptable.”

Adler suggests that the alternative to the Santa Rosa Police Department is Blackwater, Inc., forgetting that Blackwater thrives in shady government work, not in the free market. He worries about air and water pollution, forgetting that it was government that “owned” and controlled those polluted rivers (like the Cuyahoga) and polluted skies (Los Angeles before the Clean Air Act).

Worst of all, Adler seems clueless to the simple fact that government likes to play both sides. Government “works” by subsidizing farmers to keep food prices high, and then “works” some more providing food stamps so that low-income families can afford that high-priced food. Government subsidizes home ownership while restricting the construction of new homes.

### **4/17 *The Press Democrat***

An environmental crusader who got grief for saying “It’s the government’s job to take care of us,” has clarified her comments. According to the *Contra Costa Times*, “she says, ‘I think we need government. All these corporations have shown they can’t be relied upon to do the right thing . . . the government should make (using toxins) illegal.’”

First, everything is toxic in large enough of a dose. Making everything illegal is rather silly. Second, corporations always “do the right thing” for themselves. In a free market they have to bargain with consumers and property owners and reach mutually acceptable agreements. Thus, in a free market, the “right thing” will be done for all parties.

### **4/18 *The Press Democrat***

Surprise, surprise, “Despite funding boost, nursing homes cut back.” So, once again we

learn that people aren’t robots. In response to government regulations people continue trying to act in their own best interest. The government plan was to provide more money so that nursing homes could provide better care. Instead, many of the homes pocketed the money and cut back on care (why look a gift horse in the mouth).

Not understanding human nature, as explained in basic economics, politicians ceaselessly mandate remedies that don’t work, and that usually make problems worse. Of course.

### **4/18 *The Press Democrat***

In a redux of the above, a story from the Washington Post warns, “Health insurers weigh options.” And, “Analysts say companies will work rules to their advantage.” Of course, who would be foolish enough not to work the rules to their advantage? Who is so blind that they don’t know that is how the game is played? Regulators, of course.

### **4/19 *The Press Democrat***

In a letter, Ted Crowell of Healdsburg takes offense at a previous comparison of government to parasites. He reports that in many neighborhoods in England old houses have placards indicating which private fire department they had contracted with for fire protection. It is supposed to horrify us that said departments only responded to fires in homes with the right placard. Well, centuries ago in England private fire departments had no means to collect from a homeowner who did not subscribe to their service. But that was centuries ago. Today most any private fire department would happily respond and bill the non-subscriber for services rendered. At worst, homeowners and renters insurance would include a clause to cover the costs of whichever private fire department provided the service.

## **Media silence**

### **Local Ponzi scheme**

The scandal involving a Healdsburg investment advisor has received repeated coverage in *The Press Democrat*. Their lack of coverage on the federal Social Security and Medicare Ponzi schemes speaks volumes.

### **Supreme Court analysis**

In a story from the *Los Angeles Times* on April 10, 2010, justices are evaluated based upon whether they are left, right, or independent. It would be much more useful to evaluate them how close their rulings are in conformance with the Constitution. Surely the justices who ruled that the non-commercial use of wheat that did not cross state lines was interstate commerce were trampling the Constitution.

## **My \$0.02**

April 27, 2010

The Windsor Times

Editor,

Your recent editorial, “Poisoned trust,” disparaged libertarianism, so I’ve taken keyboard in hand to offer a counterpoint. The libertarian view is grounded in the reality of human nature, which is nicely detailed in the economics textbooks used in our colleges and universities. In contrast, the activist government you laud is marked by endless meetings that few but the greedy attend. At the last council meeting did even one-tenth of one percent of the public attend? It is no wonder that special interests rule.

Please remember, that at the conclusion of such meetings someone usually gets their dreams kicked to the curb while someone else gets to do the kicking. That is the antithesis of libertarianism which is based on mutual cooperation.

You suggest that a libertarian approach would leave our roadsides smothered in litter. Yet, the floors in Walmart are clean. In true libertarian

fashion, Walmart and its customers reach a mutually satisfactory agreement on their selling/shopping experience. In contrast, Sonoma County holds us hostage to whatever level of litter and potholes it decides, all the while collecting property, gas, and sales taxes that we can do little to avoid.

Competing private libraries, fire departments, and schools all face cutthroat competition from government services, effectively blocking customers from reaching mutually agreeable private arrangements. Government deficits and debt grows. Public employee unions extract extravagant wage and benefit packages, not by bargaining with their customers, but by bargaining with politicians who happily agree to pay too much. Note that the Healdsburg police chief is retiring at age 53 to a life of leisure with 90% of her salary.

Finally, the libertarian answer to the “greed and corruption on Wall Street at Goldman Sachs and Lehman Brothers,” is to allow the market place to work. Firms that make bad decisions will collapse, while those that make good decisions will prosper. Customers wanting a risky investment promising high rates of return will make their bets, while customers seeking safer investments will make theirs. No one will be forced by politicians to bail out those who made bad decisions.

Indeed, what a peaceful and prosperous place we will have when no one is forced by politicians to “invest” in Ponzi schemes, even if they are run by the government. When no Toyota owners are forced to invest in General Motors. When no happy car owners are forced to invest in not-so-SMART trains. When no parent is forced to first support her local government school before she can reach a mutually beneficial agreement with a private school.

Sincerely,  
James R. Oglesby

**This is the opinion section. Send in your two cents worth, just keep it short. Longer opinion pieces are welcome. Very long articles will be considered for publication on a \$20/page fee basis (you pay to cover**

the additional printing and postage costs).

## Your Econ Guru

### Runaway Toyotas and coal mine disasters

There are several reasons to defend Toyota and Massey Energy. First, there is yet no indication that the death and injury rates from Toyota cars and Massey Energy mines are out of the ordinary.

Secondly, anyone who walks along a roadway or drives a car without a crash helmet is in no position to complain about the risks taken by the drivers of Toyota cars and Massey Energy coal miners. What is important in either case is the voluntary nature of the transactions.

Faced with 100% certainty of death, no coal miner would venture below ground. If offering a 100% safe work place, no company would pay generous wages and benefits to their employees. Car manufacturers will offer cars that are both safe enough and profitable enough. Consumers will purchase cars that are both affordable enough and safe enough for their needs. The same will happen in the coal industry. Everyone wins, willingly shouldering a level of risk that warrant the costs involved.

Government regulations interfere in this process, forcing safety to undesirable levels (sometimes below that desired, most often above that desired).

As usual, privatize, de-regulate, and un-tax.

### Disgrace in government

At age 53 Healdsburg Police Chief Susan Jones is retiring to “spend time writing a novel and playing the saxophone.” She will receive 90% of her \$150,000+ salary, likely collecting such an overly generous pension for longer than her 31-year law enforcement career. Of course she will. The political elite always take care of their own, especially those protected by a powerful union.

The April Disgrace in government award goes to the City of Healdsburg,

and the California legislature for this abominable retirement plan. It should be noted that an independent audit recently revealed that the State of California has \$500 billion in unfunded pension liabilities. What a disgrace!

The bulk of the blame goes to the politicians who steadfastly refuse to learn that people try to take care of themselves. In logical response to a retirement package that is based on their last year’s earning, public employees shift overtime to those in their last year, artificially inflating those final year wages, resulting in an overly generous retirement benefit.

Shortly after the 90% rule went into effect a decade ago, the top brass in the California Highway Patrol began retiring with their 90% pensions. Somehow, pushing paperwork was so stressful that many of these retirees claimed they were disabled and got half their benefits tax free. They have an even more nefarious plan in San Diego. Public employees can start withdrawing their pensions before they retire, and those withdrawals in the last year are counted as part of their last year’s wages, giving them a huge boost in their retirement pension.

**This newsletter registered 9.5 on the Flesch-Kincaid grade level scale, with 3681 words.**