



T H E N E W J E R S E Y  
**LIBERTARIAN**

SEPTEMBER

1991

Resolution

**New Jersey Libertarian Party**

*approved at the July 6, 1991 meeting*

**Resolved**, That the State Chairman shall appoint a Librarian.

2. That the Librarian shall (a) provide safekeeping for books, audio tapes, video tapes, etc. owned by or lent to the NJLP for use by the library, (b) prepare a list of acquisitions, to be revised at least annually, and make such a list available to the members and to the County Committees, and (c) devise and publish the procedures whereby NJLP members may borrow acquisitions.

3. That the purchase of any acquisitions for the library shall not be authorized unless there be a duly appointed Librarian performing all the required duties as specified in paragraph 2, above.

*Our new librarian is Emerson Ellett. Contributions of books & tapes can be sent to him at 1308 Spruce Ave., Ocean, NJ 07712. Send a SASE for a current list of what's available. To borrow from our library, send Emerson \$2.00 postage & a mailing label. Excess postage will be sent to the Treasurer.*

**Assemblyman honors SMAL request**

*by John Paff*

Assemblyman John S. Penn (R-16) has written to state law enforcement officials asking them to comment on a change in New Jersey's forfeiture law advocated by the NJLP. The NJLP seeks a statutory change that would give owners of property confiscated by the government the same constitutional protections that criminal defendants enjoy.

In his August 7th letters to the New Jersey Prosecutors Association and Assistant

Attorney General Ronald Susswein, Penn quotes the language supported by the NJLP (see The New Jersey Libertarian, August edition, page 3) and closes his letters with the following statement: "If you do oppose the inclusion of this language I would be interested in hearing what your objections are to it."

Penn wrote his letters at the request of the Somerset Middlesex Area Libertarians. SMAL hopes that the responses to Penn's letters will support the statutory amendment sought by the NJLP.

## COUNTY ORGANIZATIONS

	<u>State Committee Representatives</u>	<u>County Chairs</u>	
Bergen/Passaic		Lee Altman	201/488-0953
Camden/Gloucester	John Hill	John Hill	609/468-9571
Hudson County	Larry Eden		201/795-0173
Hunterdon County	Joe Kerr*	Don Meinshausen	201/659-6786
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			908/583-8721
Morris/Essex	George Foster	Helen Radder	908/938-2784
			201/763-3476
Somerset/Middlesex	John Paff	Jonathan Shanoian	201/694-0664
			908/873-1251
Warren County	Jim Agnew*	Howard Schoen	908/572-0207
		Jim Agnew	908/475-4845

### NJLP STEERING COMMITTEE

State Chair:	Dan Karlan	(home)201/444-2846 (office)201/818-8900
Vice-Chair:	Jerry Zeldin	609/783-4306
Secretary:	Len Flynn	908/591-1328
Treasurer:	Louis Stefanelli	201/751-8675
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	Lee Altman	201/488-0953
	Spencer Layman	908/583-2816
	Don Hinkle	201/377-2176

### COORDINATORS

Operation Politically Homeless (OPH):	Laura Stewart	908/264-4492
State Development:	Sam Edelston	908/906-0766
Ocean County Development:	Betty Florentine	908/477-8496

NJLP PHONE: 908/781-6171

\* Members in this county interested in being the State Representative, please contact State Chair, Dan Karlan.

### N.J. LIBERTARIAN

Letters to the editor, articles, and commentary are welcome. Send to the Editor:

Claudia Montelione  
P.O. Box 913  
Matawan, NJ 07747  
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## Corrections Department seeks rule to protect merchants

by John Paff

William H. Fauver, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Corrections, has proposed a rule that would require the name of the prison to appear on the face of all outgoing envelopes mailed by inmates.

Commissioner Fauver says that the rule is necessary because "a number of merchants and other persons have been victimized by inmates who write to them to solicit funds or to order merchandise for which no payment is made. This has occurred because the recipient of the correspondence order has been unaware that the sender is a correctional facility inmate. By marking each envelope with the name of the correctional facility, it is hoped that such fraudulent activities will be deterred."

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## State Seeks to License Software Designers

by John Paff

If passed into law, Assembly Bill 4414, sponsored by Assemblywoman Kalik (D-7) and Assemblyman Casey (D-7), would require licensure of all software designers. It would also create a new state bureaucracy--the State Board of Software Designers consisting of nine members appointed by the Governor.

According to the bill "The Legislature finds and declares that the public interest requires the regulation of the practice of software designing and the establishment of clear licensure standards for software designers, and that the welfare of the citizens of this State will be protected by identifying to the public those individuals who are qualified and legally authorized to practice software designing."

The bill passed the Assembly on June 27, 1991 by a vote of 41

Readers who support or oppose Commissioner Fauver's proposal should mail their suggestions to Elaine W. Ballai --- Regulatory Officer, Department of Corrections, CN 863, Trenton, NJ 08625. Suggestions should reference Proposal No. PRN-1991-423 and are due by September 18, 1991.

Upon receipt of a timely suggestion, the Commissioner is required by law to publish a summary of the suggestion and his response to it in the **New Jersey Register**. His response must, by law, state his reason for accepting or rejecting the suggestion.

The **New Jersey Register** is published twice a month and contains all proposals and adoptions of state agency rules. It is available in many libraries. Readers interested in learning more about administrative procedure may contact the author at 908/873-1251.

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to 32. The voting record is set forth below. Democrats are shown in CAPS. Cosponsors are shown in *italics*.

Yeas: BAER, BATTEN, BRYANT, BUSH, CASEY, CHARLES, CIMINO, COHEN, DEVERIN, DORIA, DOYLE, DUCH, FORD, GILL, Heck, HUDAK, IMPREVEDUTO, JACOBSON, KALIK, KENNY, KRONICK, MARSELLA, MATTISON, MAZUR, MCENROE, MCGREEVEY, MULLEN, NAPLES, OTLOWSKI, PASCRELL, PATERO, PELLY, ROBERTS, ROMANO, SCERNI, SCHWARTZ, SMITH R., SPADORO, VILLAPIANO, WATSON AND ZANGARI. (40 Democrats and 1 Republican)

Nays: Albohn, Arnone, Catania, Colburn, Collins, Connors, Cooper, DeCroce, Farragher, Felice, Franks, Frelinghuysen, Garrett, Haytaian, Kamin, Kavanaugh, Kyrillos, Lance, LoBiondo, Martin, Ogden, Penn, Rocco, Roma, Rooney, Russo, Shinn, Smith J., Solomon, Stuhltrager, Vandervalk, Zecker (0 Democrats and 32 Republicans)

Not Voting: ADUBATO, BROWN,

continued on p.4

Crecco, Hardwick, Kelly, MECCA,  
Moran (3 Democrats and 4  
Republicans)

Any reader wishing to know the current status of the bill can call 800/792-8630. Just ask for "the status on A-4414". A 'free' copy of the bill can be ordered by calling the same number, or by faxing a request to 609/394-2543.

As of August 6 1991, the bill was in the Senate Labor,

Industry and Professions Committee which is chaired by Senator Raymond J. Lesniak (D-20). Those opposed to the bill are invited to call or write to both Chairman Lesniak and their own Senator and voice their opposition. Lesniak can be reached at 24-52 Rahway Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ 07202. His telephone number is 908/353-7722 and his FAX number is 908/353-2174.



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## A Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

As a Software Designer of some 10 years, I have some strong opinions on A-4414 (the Software Designers Licensing Act) and would like to take this opportunity to tell you why I think this is such a poor bill.

This legislation presupposes that "money grubbing" business men can not be trusted to provide a good deal to their clients, and will abuse them severely unless the state steps in, and combined with the wisdom of academia, prevents those who are ill qualified from selling their services to the "unsuspecting" public. This is an insult to every self-made business man in the state of New Jersey. In the 10 plus years that I have been in business, NEVER have I had the occasion to coerce my clients to do business with me. All have entered into contracts of their own free will, aware that I was not the only provider of the service available, and able to request references, as well as judge from past performance what they think the likelihood of my success would be. When first I started this business, had this legislation been in effect, I simply would not have been able to do it. I have great sympathy for those who find themselves in the same position today.

The creation of software is still very much an artistic effort, there are as many ways to create software as there are software designers. While much of what we do is technical, a large part of the job is knowing how to interpret the request of a client, and provide him not only with what he asked for but to anticipate what he himself could not. This is not something taught in a school, in fact the schools have been lagging behind actual progress in software design for quite a while now. Academia has no understanding of what it is like to create software against a deadline, or in a competitive market, and is ill qualified to set standards which could be used to measure competence. In fact I doubt seriously that anyone could do so, given the wide variety of programming styles, and the size of the debate as to what is the best operating system, language, tools practices, etcetera. Imagine if you would a board of licensure for artists, composed mainly of CUBISTS, sitting in judgement on Leonardo's MONA LISA. Would they send poor Leo back to school because he had no appreciation of the "proper" way to paint a picture? This is what we are about to do to the software community. Worse, still is the fact that the unsuspecting public will be inclined to believe that they have little to worry about, in doing business with a "licensed" Software Designer, the false sense of security that this engenders is far too damaging to be allowed. The best way to select a Software Designer is STILL to get his references, and the new legislation will not change that fact. This legislation does not even address the primary way in which a consumer usually gets burned, and that is by doing business with someone who is unscrupulous. I cannot count the number of unscrupulous "licensed" professionals I have met in my career.

The legislature is quite prepared to go ahead with this foolish plan anyway, primarily I think, because they believe that it will generate revenue, and will affect a small enough sector of the population, that little opposition will be met.

They could not be more wrong. First, any costs of this program will simply be passed on to the consumer, if it costs me more to operate, it is my clients who will end up bearing the burden. If fees are large enough to cover the states operating expenses (doubtful at best) then this will be a large burden passed to the consumer indeed. If not then we will have another budget item which will have to be funded out of the general tax revenues.

Obviously, I am not in favor of creating a new bureaucracy for any reason, but I truly resent being treated as though I am a "money grubber", for having the guts to strike out on my own and try to provide the best living I can for my family. Why should I pay the state a license fee for the privilege of busting my butt every day. Why should I agree to spending MY valuable time studying for tests, in which I must figure out what wrong answer academia NOW thinks represents the "proper" way to my job?

This legislation is unnecessary, but worse it is evil for it limits competition, maligns business men, and creates yet another useless bureaucracy. I cannot express my distaste for this kind of legislation strongly enough. If the legislature wishes to alienate themselves from the business community, they couldn't have picked a better way to accomplish it.

Sincerely,

Michael V. Pierone  
President, Micro Design Systems  
1 Butternut Road  
Vernon, NJ 07462

# Bernie Laufgas "Rides" Again!

by Don Jamison

Bernie is an "outlaw" to almost anyone connected with law enforcement or government. He plays particular havoc with politicians and law enforcement officials on local, state and federal levels whenever they ruffle his feathers. In particular he has the attention of the government of the Barnegat township committee, planning board, zoning board, board of education and the police department, with his battle against officials there. I have little doubt that any one in that town does not know his name. NOW he most certainly has the attention of the state of New Jersey officials.

Mr. Laufgas, being a self-styled, self-taught, pro-se litigant, is suing New Jersey for 250 million dollars in a class action law suit against the state Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV), the department of insurance, also including the Office of the Attorney General, regarding the point system used by the state for motor vehicle offenses. (Pursuant NJSA 39:5-30.6, assessment of points is a judicial function - points are given only by the judge, not the DMV).

In 1982 the legislature amended the state Motor Vehicle Code, changing the system from a regulation to a statute, authorizing that only a judge has the power to assess points on a driver's license, NOT the (DMV). Statute 39:5-30.6 states the only time the DMV can assess points is when the violation occurs out of state.

The ongoing battle found its way to the Superior Court, Chancery Division in Trenton on Jul 25, 91 where the trouble for the state of New Jersey begins.

Upon presenting his case, through his attorney Mr. Izzo (of Camden), to the court that he had never been assessed points by a judge, Mr. Laufgas maintains that he does not have any points on his license. The state says he has 17 points (assessed by DMV). Presumably, Judge Levy had not taken the time to read the brief filed by Mr. Laufgas before the court convened and offered argument that there was no case. After some argument the judge started reading the statute and the legislative intent, then did a double (and a triple) take. Then, deciding he was boxed in, it seems he decided to dump the problem in the lap of the defendant, Deputy Attorney General, Ms. Egar. Ms. Egar repeatedly, "respectfully disagreed with, first the language of the statute, and then with the legislative intent". The judge repeatedly informed Ms. Egar that statute 39:5-30.6 gave the authority to assess points only to the judge and not DMV. However, she consistently argued, "Your honor I respectfully disagree." And the judge consistently responded, "How do you bypass the language in the statute and/or legislative intent"? Again and again Ms. Egar states, "I respectfully disagree".

Laufgas later states: "She should be disbarred for her simple stupid statement, it didn't make sense. A dozen times she respectfully disagreed with the judge when the judge told her what the statute said".

This was a feeble attempt to cover herself (although she had to know she had no ground to stand on). She then complained that she didn't get a copy of the brief, filed by Mr. Laufgas. Apparently the law clerk never gave a copy of the brief to Ms. Egar.

Under the guise of not having a copy of the brief and what ever else the court could think of, the action was put off until Aug

LOU SERAFINI: Who Is This Guy and Why Should NJLP Members Care?

A preamble from Dan Karlan, NJLP Chair

During the spring of 1990, I received a somewhat distressed call from a Mr. Lou Serafini of Ringwood. He rambled on a bit about excessive property taxes, the oppressive nature of the local government, and the futility of trying to work with Republican and Democratic politicians. He wondered if the NJLP could help and offered to host a meeting with concerned neighbors.

From my perspective, here was a chance to jump-start local Libertarian activism in a place where we had no organization. I readily agreed and invited Lou Stefanelli, NJLP Treasurer and then-candidate for Senate, to ride shotgun.

On the night of the meeting, Lou and I arrived, met our host and hostess, and greeted the guests as they trickled in. After some preliminary chit-chat, we started our presentation. Lou began with an overview of Libertarian principles and illustrated their application. I followed with a description of the LP and how affiliation with us might be advantageous to the group.

From there the discussion took on a life of its own, touching on all kinds of issues. It was lively, sometimes heated, but always polite. Everyone enjoyed the debate, whether they agreed with us or not, and felt they had learned something.

As the evening wore on and I realized we would not close the sale, I changed the emphasis slightly. Rather than trying to sell them on the

For decades, municipal bonds have been an attractive way for investors to earn income free from Federal taxes, and often from state and local taxes as well. And the recent tax law changes left municipal bonds as one of the few ways that investors can still generate tax-free income. Which makes it all the more important for you to know about the added benefits of MBIA-insured municipal bonds.

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LP/NJLP and our principles, I suggested that at least some of our positions on reduction of government might be applicable. I had three motives: first, if they tried them and they worked, the citizens of Ringwood would be that much freer -- after all, isn't more freedom the ultimate goal of our organization; second, IF that happened, maybe some of them would remember that it was the LP's ideas which worked, and would credit us with the gain; and third, if it DIDN'T work, maybe we could learn from mistakes made by others, and not have to make them ourselves.

I presented certain fundamental tactics with respect to putting the heat on the town council, and suggested the reasons why privatization might be attractive. With that shift in emphasis, the discussion continued with some enthusiasm. In fact, Lou and I stayed until after midnight, though for the last hour or so, only our host and hostess remained.

From the standpoint of immediate benefit to the NJLP, the evening was unprofitable. However, I felt that both Lou and I had gained some valuable experience at interacting with potential 'converts', and had also learned certain approaches that were less fruitful than others. And of course, there is always the possibility of the seeds we planted coming to some fruition.

I did not give any thought to further contact with Mr. Serafini, though the lines of communication were left open.

Some months later I received a call from Mr. Serafini. He informed me that not only had he taken me up on my 'challenge', but that he had actually accomplished some reduction in the immediate cost of local government. This was unexpected good news. I thought the members of the NJLP might benefit from his experience, so Don Hinkle was dispatched to get the following interview.

**Don:** Before we begin, I want to get on tape some of your concerns: you want it understood that, not only are you not a Libertarian, but you are a Republican [ed.note: after this interview, Serafini won the Republican nomination to town council in the primary]. You're granting the interview because we appreciate your being a "gadfly"; a good example of a citizen getting involved with his community and affecting change.

**Lou:** In my town of Ringwood, I didn't like the way things were going—our taxes are very high and I thought we had very little to show for it, so I started to go to town council meetings, and I didn't care for their policies one bit; they're a bunch of bureaucrats and they tried to build a bureaucracy.

**Don:** The town council is a bunch of bureaucrats?

**Lou:** Basically, yeah, you can almost say that in general about government, and that's why we have the tremendous [overlarge] government that we have. We happen to be one of the few countries in the world that is able to change a government without bloodshed in the streets, a wonderful thing. Not many countries can do that, but it requires people to take an interest and most people are very apathetic. A lot of us are paying 50 percent of the money we earn is being taken away from us in form of real estate taxes, state taxes, federal taxes, sales taxes, duties, etc., and I find it strange that people will allow someone to put a hand in their pocket and take half the money out and not really have a thing to say about it or even be interested!

**Don:** I suppose they don't realize there's any alternative.

**Lou:** Well, people are intimidated, apathetic and don't know as much about the government as they should, but we really should stand up and be heard.

**Don:** How big is Ringwood?

**Lou:** Ringwood has about 14,000 people.

**Don:** That's not a big town, and the city council are full-time?

**Lou:** No, they're part-time, elected officials. We elect 7 councilmen and

the council elects the mayor; however the council always hires a full-time borough manager. The borough manager is responsible for running the town and for doing what the town council wants, or they can fire him. So the town council is responsible to the people and borough manager is responsible to the council and mayor is chairman of the council....

**Don:** Your feeling was that the council were acting like they wanted to stay in office; and is there a conflict of interest in the way they are running it?

**Lou:** What's a conflict of interest? Anytime you do something to benefit yourself, using other people's money, that could be construed as conflict of interest. Our council members each get \$3,000 a year, the mayor gets \$4,000. They also get to attend a convention in Atlantic city every year, the town pays for their hotel room, they get meal money, for 3 days they get [about] \$450 bucks meal allowance, they get [about] \$800 bucks a year expense money with no accounting required, for phone calls, gasoline, I guess; they're also eligible for health insurance.

**Don:** Wow.

**Lou:** I found that Ringwood is one of the few towns that does this; any council member who wants to participate in the health insurance program can do so at no charge. They are unsalaried employees, not really employees, and I find this excessive, especially with escalating health insurance costs. But our tax rate in Ringwood is 2.5% on property, and in a town where we don't have sewers—it's a rural community—I find that very high. Now our buildings are in very bad repair, and last year the town council proposed a new municipal complex. They were going to float a bond issue for \$4.3 million. I and quite a few other people got upset because with the financial situation of our town, we don't think we can afford to build a new municipal complex. The old one, though very rundown, is not unsafe. At any event, five of us got together: two Demos, two Indies, and myself, a Republican. We got a petition signed and we were going to force them to put it on a referendum, but as soon as they saw the whites of our eyes, they withdrew their support, so we never actually had to activate the petition.

**Don:** How far had they gone? Did they get an architect?

**Lou:** They paid money to the auditor to do a financial analysis and a financial feasibility study and had an architect do preliminary drawings. Had it gone onto referendum and been rejected they would be prohibited for five years for reintroducing it, so they felt they were gonna lose and withdrew support.

**Don:** They lost that one.

**Lou:** They threw their hands up in political disgust and formed a Citizens Advisory Committee, and invited citizens to apply. They picked seven. Being a civil engineer by education, and certainly an active resident, I applied and I think they were forced to pick me. I wound up being chairman, and now we're in the process of making our report to the council and they don't like the preliminary findings they're hearing, because they want us to say, "we should build a new municipal complex," but in no way do we feel this is feasible, because the finances aren't there. Our town has this debt, excluding water utility and board of education, of approximately \$6.5 million, which constitutes .78% of our town's assets. So the borough auditor, speaking to our committee, told us that although legally a town is allowed to have a debt of 3.5 percent, his firm didn't recommend a town like ours ever go into debt more than 1 percent. One percent of our assets would allow us to have a debt of approximately \$8.3 million, so the most we could spend for new construction and stay within that figure would be \$1,800,000; no way we could afford the whole complex for \$4-5 million.

**Don:** So you got an expert on your side.

**Lou:** I think all the facts and figures are on our side, no matter where they come from. We could build a building now and as time goes by, build another. Our debt is being reduced at the rate of \$400,000 a year. However, last year they bonded to buy equipment—trucks, for \$500,000—so we slipped another \$100,000 in debt. This year they're proposing a \$600,000 bond order, so \$200,000 more in debt. This council seems hellbent on spending money with no regard to what's fiscally prudent.

**Don:** What are the main issues that you need to participate in?

**Lou:** For me the main issues are the finances. They take in a tremendous amount of money and what do they do with it? I don't think they spend it wisely.

**Don:** Do you do research?

**Lou:** It's tough to be a gadfly because they [the council] have the power. You go in there and ask questions and they say they don't know the answer and then you never get the answer. Almost everything in borough hall is public information unless its personal (if someone has a garnish on his salary, you're not entitled to that), but it's like pulling teeth; it's extremely difficult to be a gadfly, really all you can do is make them know that someone is watching and they should at least look over their shoulders before they plunge forward. I'm not the only one who takes an interest; we have quite a few people who go to council meetings.

**Don:** Do these others agree with you? Is there any consensus?

**Lou:** I have a lot of support; why are our taxes higher than...? I don't know of any town in New Jersey with a higher tax rate than ours!

**Don:** I don't know our's.

**Lou:** You see what you're saying? What is your tax rate? How do you know whether your government is doing a good, fair or poor job? The tax rate is a report card. If your tax rate is high but you get exceptional services, that might be okay... but our taxes are above average and services are below. We have the police, and a volunteer fire department; the municipality picks up garbage and plows the streets. The Ringwood school system is kindergarten through 8th, and then regional high school, to which the town makes a contribution.

**Don:** Have you looked at those educational costs? Are they out of line?

**Lou:** I don't throw rocks at the Board of Education because cost per student is in keeping with other towns. I personally believe that, second to maintaining law and order, education is the most important thing we

can do, so I have no reason to throw rocks at this time. Plus I don't consider myself an expert or even knowledgeable about Board of Education affairs, but as a businessman I understand business and running a town is business, whether painting borough hall or shopping around for a good garbage collection contractor or paving streets or managing the department of public works—that's business and it should be run the same way as any private enterprise would, with the exception that private enterprise has more freedom and isn't accountable to anybody.

**Don:** Are these issues you've brought up to council?

**Lou:** Repeatedly.

**Don:** You feel the taxes are too expensive for the services you're getting?

**Lou:** Definitely.

**Don:** What are the expenses for? Salaries?

**Lou:** Across the board. We have two big trucks with snowplows on the front and sanders on the back, but these are not truck bodies, they are strictly sanders or plows. So these vehicles don't leave the borough garage in spring, summer or fall; they have no function other than to plow or sand streets; yet we pay insurance on these 12 months a year, when there's no reason to take them out of the garage.

**Don:** So you've brought that up?

**Lou:** I haven't brought this up because I just learned about it. An individual has the good sense to do this, why not the town?

**Don:** Isn't that the borough manager's job? Is his salary proportional to overall expense?

**Lou:** About \$50,000 a year, fairly low-cost; he used to be the tax collector. When we adopted this form of government, he was found to be unqualified to be borough manager, so they hired another. He quit a few years later, and lo and behold they made this gent borough manager; he didn't go to any school, didn't take any courses, now he was qualified all of a sudden.

**Don:** How do members of council treat you when they see you stand up to say something?

**Lou:** Basically, they play the role, please stand up state your name (because its recorded), state your address and say what's on your mind. I always try to make it constructive, I try not to stand up and say, "you people are doing a lousy job"; I try to come up with specific things that I see that don't appear to be done right in my eyes and I ask for an explanation, or I ask, "why can't we do it this way?" Invariably they just give lip service to the suggestion and they proceed their own sweet way.

**Don:** Do you ever get any byplay from the council? "Oh here he is again."

**Lou:** Oh sure. One night a lady in the audience wanted to know why her taxes were so high and after she finished, I raised my hand and said, "I don't believe she got correct answer. The reason our taxes are so high is because we pay almost a million a year in debt service and what do we have to show for it? A lot of mistakes have been made that citizens are paying for." Well, one councilman said, "you come here every week and try to make us look foolish. Well, you're the one looks foolish." I said, "well that's your opinion. In my opinion you look foolish and if you want to say we look foolish, you're right because we elected you people."

**Don:** So you feel that the city council is not responsive to your suggestions.

**Lou:** I would say they are not.

**Don:** Have you ever had anything work out fairly well? Where you brought something up and they say "that's not a bad idea?"

**Lou:** No they mostly take a negative attitude.



At a budget meeting a friend of mine noticed their phone bill is \$36,000 a year, so he went to borough hall and spent a couple hours reviewing their phone bill, and wrote a 3-page letter to the borough manager, pointing out errors in the system and he made a bunch of suggestions; they just let it die. At end of the year I pursued it, I said, "my friend inquired about your phone bill, what's been done?" The manager said, "I made my report to the council." Well, we never heard about it, so I asked for a copy of the report. This was in December. I got the report mid-January and the report was dated August 1. In it, he refuted all the claims and all the accusations about bad policy, but at the end he said there is one item we're working on and that's to change our alarm system from a dedicated line system to a digital dialing system, which could save maybe \$5,000 a year. But so far it hasn't been done.

Another thing, they constantly let work out without getting three bidders. And in a lot of cases you should get five. For example, they had some support for this municipal complex and when they withdrew, one lady called POSHA to come in, said the building is unsafe. Public OSHA came in and did a study and found asbestos on pipes in the basement; so the manager wanted to pay \$5,800 to have a study done on the asbestos. In the meantime he closed off the basement. No one was allowed to go down. I stood up and said, "why pay \$5800 for someone to do a study? Let's get contractors in here and have them give us a proposal." Nothing was done; when the Citizens Advisory Committee was formed, that was the first thing I did.

In the meantime, they went to Atlantic City, and one councilman came back with a big report from the state on asbestos removal and gave it to the borough manager. Two months later, on the Citizens Advisory Committee, I asked the borough manager for the report. He said he had lost it, so the possible benefit of \$2,000 to send them to that convention was lost! I called Trenton and got another report. In the report is a list of every licensed asbestos removal contractor in the state. I talked to the department of public works head and said I was going to get proposals on removing the asbestos. He asked if he could do it, so I gave him a copy of the report. He got three bids: \$15,000, \$8,000, and one was \$5,000. So for less than the cost of a study we can have asbestos taken out, removed, everything. No businessman in his right mind would do that. We have a lot of councilmen whose wives or in-laws work for the town.

**Don:** How many employees do you have?

**Lou:** Well, when the borough manager was asked he didn't know; somewhere around 110. He couldn't even estimate. Granted the number changes every day and it's not unreasonable not to know whether he has 103 or 127, but he should know whether there are 10, 50, or 100. He was lost for an answer, so he sat there and went through the payroll records and counted them, while we were waiting.

**Don:** Is Ringwood fairly well to do? Does it have lots of commuters?

**Lou:** It's not in the same category as Morristown and Mendham, but the average per capita income is fairly high, one of the highest in Passaic county.

**Don:** Are these city council members all one party?

**Lou:** Yeah, we have seven Republicans, and I am a Republican and belong to the Republican club and we have heated arguments there.

**Don:** Do you write letters to editors?

**Lou:** No, but I've been published because several people called and interviewed me for articles in local papers. Certainly when I spoke out against borough hall, I was publicized for that, and when I make good points at council meetings, my name gets in the paper.

**Don:** How long have you been doing this?

**Lou:** About a year. In a year I've attended more council meetings than any councilman.

**Don:** What made you get off your duff and start doing this?

**Lou:** When our town was valued at only 17% of true value, so a \$300,000 home was on the books for \$50,000—but our tax rate in those days was 13%, so a lot of us thought the reason our taxes are so high is

our town hasn't been revalued in so long that a lot of people are undervalued. Well, after three attempts, the council decided to hire a fulltime assessor to do a revaluation. The guy got halfway through and he died. More unfortunately, nobody could make heads or tails out of his records, so that revaluation was thrown out. Then they hired an assessment firm to come in and revalue the town. This firm did the whole revaluation, got paid for part of it and there were so many people up in arms that every time they had a meeting, it was a packed house; and there were many inconsistencies, even gross errors—people were being charged for four bedrooms, and they only had two; people being charged for a fireplace, they didn't have any; so many mistakes they threw the whole revaluation out. So we have a third company come in and they did the revaluation and it's approximately correct... and when we got our tax last July, everybody was sick because our tax rate on 100% of value was still 2.5%.

**Don:** Why is that wrong?

**Lou:** It's very high; we can find no town in New Jersey with a tax rate that high.

**Don:** Who are your friends? Are they all Republicans?

**Lou:** Republicans, independents; Democrats; we can't stand the way this town is being run. We all go to town meetings and we support each other; politics makes strange bedfellows.

**Don:** How many of you are there?

**Lou:** Half a dozen. These are different guys, who do different jobs in regular life, united by a feeling that the town council is doing a lousy job. But most people can't be bothered and I can understand why—I'm a businessman and have my own business, and trying to beat them down on taxes isn't profitable, I could spend a few more hours on my own business and come out ahead, but you get to the point where you feel you can't sit still, so I've taken this cause on.

**Don:** Do you get a good response from public?

**Lou:** Except for people from the inner circle, involved in politics, I've had overwhelming support; people write letters to the editor praising me, "thank God we got guys like Mr. Serafini there to tell these people what they're doing."

**Don:** Does the local government seem to make provision for people like you to be effective in council or do they claim to be tied up with existing red tape?

**Lou:** In my opinion they have their own little fiefdom and want to keep it. Best as I can figure out, no councilman puts more into the pot than he takes out. He has his \$3,000 a year salary and expenses and all that. It offsets his property taxes and in several cases more than offsets it; and in a lot of cases this a very significant part of their life, a big thing, to be a

continued on p.10



town councilman. They're very defensive, very protective of their little group. They don't want to see the boat rock, but they seem more intent on maintaining the status quo than they are on improving things.

**Don:** So you're thinking of mounting a challenge in the election

**Lou:** The process has crossed my mind; keep options open but although I'm a devout Republican, I believe in the two-party system and with seven Republicans on the council, they can have a caucus and decide all the town's business in the basement of someone's home behind closed doors and then the regular meeting becomes a formality. There's one councilman who doesn't go along with them, so it's very common to see votes of 6 to 1, and for political reasons you sometimes see 5-2, but the six stick together and occasionally one of them will cast a dissenting vote but they all know it'll go through; they only need four votes. Voting on the salary ordinance is funny. Last year the mayor abstained because his wife works for the municipality; another councilman's wife works for the municipality so he abstained. That only leaves 4 guys; one of them was absent, so the vote was 3-1. They couldn't pass the salary ordinance. It was defeated, so they reintroduced the same salary ordinance with a different number. I protested. I said, "not even under the guise of looking into why this was defeated, you go ahead and propose it again. You're gonna keep on proposing the same salary ordinance until these [absent] guys show up and then it's gonna go through". Sure enough, ten minutes later they had the vote, 1-2-3-4 it went through, so it's a big fix.

**Don:** I bet the citizens are glad you're pointing this out.

**Lou:** The next election is November. Four councilmembers are up for reelection. This year for the municipal part of the budget, the tax rate went down six points, to .06%, but that will be offset by a county increase and a board of education increase so they project a tax rate still at 2.5% next year, but that's not a victory, it's a political ploy.

**Don:** When you point out the high tax rate do they ever make a direct reply?

**Lou:** They never answer any questions. You badger them. But you know that badgering doesn't work. They just sidestep all issues; occasionally they get bad press and powers-that-be from the county get on their backs a little—in politics everybody's a puppet and the guy one step up pulls their strings and somebody's pulling his and it goes up the line that way.

Our Democratic party in Ringwood isn't very strong, I keep telling them to get stronger, make a real bid. Hopefully this year they'll put together a real challenge, I'd like to see a real two-party system.

I've never met a libertarian I didn't like and if I wanted to have a club of philosophical discussion I couldn't think of a better group to have around than a bunch of libertarians. I wish our council would approach things like Tom Jefferson did—the least governed are the best; and don't do something for somebody that they can do for themselves; you do them a disservice. I would like to see less government. When work has to be done, have private enterprise do it, to patch the potholes, not get a batch of guys on payroll. We have a lot of guys and a lot of equipment. You see a little construction company with some guys and two trucks and a backhoe and they do big business. The department of public works has 5 backhoes and 20 trucks and they do one-half the work; our dept of public works has a bad rep for having one guy working and three guys watching.

**Don:** Do you ask, why don't we contract these services out?

**Lou:** There are lots of little things... At Christmas they go buy a tree, put it on the car and get it home. Then when Christmas is over, they put it on curb and the town picks it up. If you can get it home why can't you take it to town dump and let them chip it? We could save a significant amount of money. If we want to cut taxes we have to give up little things like this, it's not gonna hurt anybody.

**Don:** But, there's a number of your people nipping at these guys' flanks but they don't seem very responsive.

**Lou:** They dropped the \$4.3 million bond issue for town hall. We shook them up on that one, and now we're getting together and making them fix up borough hall, paint it. I went out and got prices and proposals, one guy

## CALENDAR

**NOTE:** Candidate Fundraiser Picnic at Turkey Swamp Park has been cancelled.

9/7 - State Committee Meeting at the Karlan residence in Cranbury, 2PM sharp! Call 201/444-2846 for directions.

9/17 - Libertarians of Monmouth County (LMC) meet 7:30PM at the Morganville First Aid Bldg., Tennent Rd., across from the Flynns'. Bernard Lufgas will be the speaker (see p.5). Call 908/591-1328 for directions.

9/29 - Mercer County Libertarians meet at Robert McCready's home, 6:30PM, 105 Dayton St., bet. Broad & Lalor Sts., Trenton. BBQ available; bring your own meat. Call 609/393-6781 for info.

Morris-Essex Libertarians meet the last Tuesday of the month at Jonathan Shanoian's, 86 Beaverbrook Rd., Lincoln Park at 8PM. Call 201/694-0664 for details.

Somerset/Middlesex Area Libertarians (SMAL) meet the 4th Mon./month at the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 1640 Amwell Rd., Somerset at 7:30PM. Call Howard Schoen 908/572-0207 for info.

Nat'l Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) holds regular monthly meetings. Call 201/968-8226 for details.



gave a bid of \$20,000 to paint, I got another bid for \$10,000; both very qualified people. If they had just hired the first guy, they'd be out ten grand.

**Don:** Sounds like your accomplishing something.

**Lou:** I think so. As a businessman I could do my own thing and earn more, but instead of watching TV on Tuesday night I go to the town council.

**Don:** You're getting in there and scrapping to make local government more responsive and it encourages me.

**Lou:** You've got to have intestinal fortitude and have the facts, not just a gut feeling, and if it is, say so, don't try to be an expert. If you see something that doesn't look right you have every right to speak up and if the political body you're talking to is responsible they'll answer your question. If they had answered my questions properly in the beginning I might have gone away but their belligerent attitude just made me more determined. It's our government and if we want to take it back we can.

22, 91. This decision has been farther postponed until Sept. 12, 91. (Ms. Egar went on vacation shortly after this hearing)!!

Having been in court many times, Mr. Laufgas claims a 95 percent win rate. Mr. Laufgas says that if he is successful in this lawsuit that "this is my Christmas present to the people of New Jersey".

Any one that has had points assessed by DMV since 1983 should be encouraged that:

All surcharges will be removed and moneys will be refunded by DMV.

All restoration fees will be refunded.

All points will be removed from driving record, but not the conviction.

If your driving privileges have been suspended or revoked they will be restored.

The insurance companies will have to pay back all charges due to points.

Your driving record will be cleaned of points once again, but not the conviction.

Anyone interested in getting involved in the lawsuit and saving yourself many dollars and clearing your record can contact Bernard Laufgas at (609) 698-1029.

*Bernie will be the guest speaker at the LMC meeting on 9/17 (see Calendar).*

## NEW JERSEY LIBERTARIAN PARTY MEMBERSHIP FORM

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NJLP Bylaws require that members either live or work in New Jersey.

### NJLP DUES:

All memberships except Household include subscription to "New Jersey Libertarian". Premium membership categories provide needed funds for outreach and other educational activities.

- |                          |       |                     |                          |      |                         |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> | \$300 | Lifetime Sustaining | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$35 | Supporting              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | \$200 | Lifetime            | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$15 | Basic                   |
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\* For other members in the same household as a primary member. Applies to all categories except student. No newsletter.

\$15 "N.J. Libertarian" subscription only.  \$20 Nat'l Party dues (1 year)

Please remove my name if and when the NJLP list is rented to other organizations.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Additional contribution to NJLP (Thank you!)

"I hereby certify that I do not believe in or advocate the initiation of force as a means of achieving political or social goals."

X \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Signature indicating acceptance of above statement is required for membership.)

Make checks payable and return to: NJLP, P.O. Box 56, Tennent, NJ 07763

# The true cost of Florio's 'reforms'

It seems our governor Mr. Florio has made himself the laughingstock of Texas. The fact that nobody can figure out whether he is a verb or a noun doesn't surprise me because no one has figured out anything about this guy except that he only knows how to spend our money (by the train load).

Commerce Commissioner George Zoffinger claims that this year's rebate checks will pump \$1.3 billion of consumer spending into the state's economy and that it will create 23,000 jobs.

Let's imagine that the amount sent back as a rebate had never been confiscated from the people in the first place. Besides what the government skimmed off in the handling of, collecting, playing with, and sending the checks back, let's see what else it cost us:

Handling the scam.....	Imagine!
The number of man-hours spent collecting, playing with, and refunding the checks .....	Imagine!
Number of sleepless nights devising this devious scheme.....	Too many!
Erotic kicks.....	Plenty!
24.8 cents x 2.4 million checks, for postage.....	\$681,600.00
.01 cents x 2.4 million cards with checks (printing) .....	\$24,000.00
Total.....	\$705,600.00

Besides — Without the ramming through of the \$2.8 billion tax increase — I wonder if a lot more than 23,000 jobs would have been saved in the first place? And how many businesses would not have been devastated to

the point where they had to severely cut back or, like many, just go out of business. This comes down to a lot of jobs. Unemployment in New Jersey went from the neighborhood of 5 per cent to 7 per cent (not counting the people whose benefits have run out and are no longer counted on the unemployment roles). The 1980 census says there are 7.4 million people in New Jersey. With the 2 per cent increase of unemployment that means that some 148,000 people in New Jersey who have been put out of work during this recession based on these figures alone.

By fooling around with our money, selling the stretch of I-95, driving people and businesses out of New Jersey, and whatever else doesn't come to mind at the present, the governor has managed to lower our credit rating from AAA to wherever it may stand now. This means additional interest costs to the taxpayers on all future loans.

It is no wonder that Florio is so hell-bent on confiscating our weapons. I would be plenty scared too if I were him.

Governor Florio, since you know that you can never get re-elected in this state, you could show the people that you do have a little decency about you and not try to ruin the state and the people in it before you leave. You can do us a favor and take the money-grubbing, Constitution-subverting politicians that have been in collusion with you when you leave.

*Don Jamison  
Freehold*

New Jersey Libertarian Party  
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