

Vander Ploeg wants to privatize Oregon

David Thorn

Oregon Daily Emerald

Although the Libertarian Party has not enjoyed much success in Oregon politics, the party consistently puts its candidates on the ballot.

The latest addition to the list of Libertarian darkhorses is Dan Vander Ploeg, a technical editor for Atlas Telecom in Portland with no prior government experience.

Vander Ploeg admits that he doesn't have much hope of defeating his well-financed major-party opponents. But that doesn't mean he isn't optimistic.

"No, I'm not gonna win," said Vander Ploeg, "but I think we're going to have a very respectable showing, the best Libertarians have ever received in this state."

Vander Ploeg's appeal stems from his adherence to a platform of Libertarian values, including the legalization of drug use and other "consensual" crimes, the privatization of all but a few government services and drastic tax cuts.

His campaign addresses the same problems as those of the other three candidates on the ballot: education funding, crime, health care, tax relief. But it is in the solutions that Vander Ploeg's platform really differs.

By dramatically reducing taxes — Vander Ploeg proposes a 50 percent cut in the state income tax, for instance — people would have more money to spend on the programs they think are valuable. The main areas that would



VANDER PLOEG

remain under government control would be public safety and education, both mandated by the Oregon Constitution.

Private charities could replace welfare and other entitlement programs, Vander Ploeg said, if people had more money left over after taxes to support those charities.

"There is every reason to believe charity would thrive in a free society," Vander Ploeg said. But, he said, "Charity with tax money is both immoral and inefficient."

Vander Ploeg's campaign also focuses on education funding. The solution to funding the state's public education system isn't more money, Vander Ploeg said — it's fewer students.

He said the government should begin a program of school choice, issuing \$4,000 vouchers that could be applied to tuition at private schools. Because the state currently spends \$6,800 per student, the vouchers would result in a substantial savings for the government.

Those children who remained in public school would be able to attend the school of their parents' choosing, forcing schools to compete for students and improve in the process.

Higher education ought to be privatized, Van-

der Ploeg said.

"I think you'd get a better deal for less money if it was privately funded," he said.

Because individuals would pay much lower taxes under the Libertarian plan, they would be able to save for their children to go to college, thereby eliminating the need for the state to subsidize tuition as it does now.

The crime issue, which has also been played out heavily this election season, is another major component of Vander Ploeg's campaign.

In keeping with the Libertarian ideal of freedom from government interference — "What you do in the privacy of your home is your own business," Vander Ploeg says — the candidate supports an end to the War on Drugs.

"The murder rate doubled during [alcohol] Prohibition," Vander Ploeg said, adding that violent crime rates since the beginning of the War on Drugs have risen similarly.

Government attempts to prevent drug use have inflated the price of those drugs, forcing users to steal and commit other crimes to support their addictions.

Legalizing drugs, then, would "cut crime in half, leave room in our jails for violent criminals, [and] free the police to return to protecting you and your property," Vander Ploeg said.

The problem of health care costs could be remedied through deregulation, Vander Ploeg said, eliminating licensing and what he called the "monopoly" enjoyed by the American Medical Association.

Conservative funds unique PACs

SALEM(AP) — Regardless of whether you think they're clever, you can't help but notice the lengthy names of some of the committees paying for radio campaign ads this election season.

Nearly all are the work of Loren Parks, a reclusive Aloha businessman who has funneled hundreds of thousands of dollars to his favorite causes through the Conservative PAC.

For example, the "Either Vote or Watch 'Em Go Up Committee" supports Measure 5, which would require voter approval for tax and fee increases. The Conservative PAC spent \$70,000 on ads for the proposal.

The "Let's Shine a Little Light and See if They Scamper Committee" got \$110,000 from Parks to pay for ads attacking John Kitzhaber, the Democratic candidate for governor. One of those ads calls Kitzhaber "Barbara Roberts with a moustache."

Parks' PAC gave \$78,655 to the "Maybe if the Politicians Didn't Give Themselves Pay Raises Committee," which supports three crime-related measures.

Parks, who owns a medical supply company, does not give interviews.

It's not Parks but Gresham activist Greg Clapper, treasurer of several of Parks' committees, who is behind the group. "Why Don't You Busybodies Butt Out and Allow Us to Make Our Own Decisions?" That committee supports Measure 16, to allow physicians to prescribe lethal doses of drugs to terminally ill patients who request them. It spent \$150,000 from Oregon Right to Die, the committee supporting the measure.

Parks does back the committee that gets the award for the longest name: "We Pay for All of Ours, We Pay for All of Yours, Is it Too Much to Ask For You to Pay a Little of Yours? Committee."

Timber, medical industries put up big bucks for campaigns

Ben Moebius

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In this year's gubernatorial race, timber and medical industries are speaking up by digging deep to finance Republican candidate Denny Smith and Democratic candidate John Kitzhaber.

The timber industry is speaking the loudest. Timber executives, political action committees (PACs) and companies contributed \$333,827 to Smith's campaign, according to campaign finance records filed at the State Elections Division. This exceeds the \$286,000 raised by Republican candidate Dave Frohnmayer in the 1990 race for governor against Democratic candidate Barbara Roberts.

One out of every \$3 donated to Smith's campaign comes from some part of the timber industry, an index by the Coalition for Campaign Finance Reform reported.

Smith raised a total of \$1,454,892 as of Oct. 10, but the number should continue to rise before election day.

The largest contributor to Smith's campaign was Aaron Jones, a Eugene timber executive. He donated a total of \$87,292, with contributions from his Seneca Timber Co. and Seneca Sawmill Company. Jones did not respond to requests for an interview.

Doctors, pharmaceutical companies and hospitals put their voice behind Kitzhaber with industry totals at \$196,385.

Kitzhaber, a former emergency room doctor, is the author of the Oregon Health Care plan, which is expected to produce growth in the medical

PAC MONEY

Total raised by each candidate:

Smith:	\$1,454,892
Kitzhaber:	1,620,985

Top five contributors to each campaign:

SMITH

Seneca Sawmill and Timber —	\$61,720
Louisiana Pacific —	\$35,000
Tim Blixseth —	\$35,000
Aaron Jones —	\$25,572
R.R. Pamplin Corporation —	\$25,000

KITZHABER

Oregon Public Employment Union —	\$41,442
Oregon Education Association —	\$30,870
Democratic Governors Association —	\$25,000
Phil Knight —	\$25,000
Teamsters Union —	\$20,000

industry. Kitzhaber raised a total of \$1,620,985 for his campaign.

Campaign finance records show that Kitzhaber received more money from PACs and out-of-state contributors than Smith. Kitzhaber also received more individual contributions.

Kitzhaber's single largest contributor was the 20,000-member Oregon Public Employees Union (OPEU). The organization donated \$41,442 to his campaign.

Bentley Gilbert, a public relations representative for OPEU, said the union interviewed both

Kitzhaber and Smith and decided that Kitzhaber's answers more closely followed the organization's own goals. Questions covered issues of wages, hours, public employee pensions and health care. Gilbert said Kitzhaber's responses prompted the OPEU to make the donations. He said the union respected Smith's candor.

Although timber and medical industries have made large contributions to Smith's and Kitzhaber's campaigns, overall contributions are down considerably from past years. About \$3 million has been raised by Kitzhaber and Smith since their campaigns began last year.

In 1990, Barbara Roberts and Dave Frohnmayer raised a total of \$5 million. And in 1986, democrat Neil Goldschmidt and Republican Norma Paulus raised \$4.9 million, according to campaign finance reports.

David Buchanan, executive director of Oregon's Common Cause, said individuals and organizations could be contributing less because Kitzhaber has had a comfortable lead in the polls throughout the campaign.

"People donate more when they perceive that it is going to be a close race," Buchanan said. "In '88 Roberts pulled very close to Frohnmayer near the end and no one really knew who would win. This drove contributions up."

Buchanan said it would be hard to tell if the larger proportion of special interest money compared to total contributions would influence the candidates. He said most organizations donate money not to gain direct control over policy, but because they support the candidates own views.

Unrelated Robertses butt heads in race for commissioner

Robbie Reeves

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Two Robertses are running for the one position of Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor and Industries.

Incumbent Democrat Mary Wendy Roberts is running against Lane County Commissioner Jack Roberts, a Republican. The two are of no relation.

The Commissioner of the Bureau is responsible for enforcing state laws relating to employment and overseeing the state apprenticeship and training programs. The Commissioner serves for a four-year term.

Mary Wendy Roberts has served as Commissioner since 1978. She served as both a state representative and state senator prior to winning reelection as Commissioner.

Mary Wendy Roberts claims the Oregon Family Medical Leave Act of 1991 as a major accomplishment of her administration. The law guarantees up to 12 weeks of leave to employees who must care for a family member.

She also concentrates on the issues of women's rights in the workplace and efforts to eliminate discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Jack Roberts claims that the race centers on the issue of job creation in Oregon.

The Commissioner for the Bureau needs to be "a spokesman for jobs and economic opportunity" in Oregon, said Jack Roberts.

Jack Roberts said that he wanted to work to change what he described as the "regulatory ethic" at the Bureau. He said that instead of solely punishing businesses for legal violations, he wanted to work to "encourage and ensure compliance" with laws.

A priority of Jack Roberts would be to look to reorganize the Bureau to be more efficient, he said.

Jack Roberts said that he is looking to "better enforce civil rights laws." One way that he would do this would be to review the civil rights complaints and seek alternate methods of resolution for some in order to reduce the case-



ROBERTS



ROBERTS

load, adding that the Bureau cannot continue to manage the current caseload.

However, Mary Wendy Roberts claims said that her administration "cleaned up a seven-year backlog of civil rights cases."

Jack Roberts said that while he didn't like to characterize Mary Wendy Roberts, he believed that "after 16 years, it would be difficult to look at new ways" to run the Bureau.