

APPENDIX

FREEDOMWORKS GRASSROOTS ACTIVISM TOOLKIT

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MANY OF YOU MAY BE new to the political process. You have probably never considered yourself to be a community organizer. But in the last couple of years,



Scenes from the September 12, 2009, March on Washington. *Photos by Michael Beck*

thousands of Americans have become true leaders in their communities, organizing protests and town hall meetings, lobbying their state and federal legislators, and leading get-out-the-vote efforts for limited-government candidates in elections.

No one is born an expert organizer, but we can all learn from one another by sharing best practices and pitfalls to avoid. In the next few pages you will learn the basics necessary to become an effective advocate for limited government. We will describe how to organize a protest, be effective in town hall meetings, interact with the media, utilize online tools, hold events, raise money, recruit members to your group, and other essential information.

Remember that we are following the tradition of the original American community organizers, the Sons of Liberty. These grassroots Americans helped lead a campaign to build public support for the American Revolution, and were the brains behind the original Boston Tea Party in December 1773. As they understood so well, it does not take a majority to prevail, but rather an



irate, tireless minority keen to set brush fires of freedom in the minds of men.

We hope that you will find this guide useful to you and your local group. There is also an online resource for those who want to learn more at www.freedomworks.org/manual.

I. THE CHAPTER CONCEPT

THE CHAPTER CONCEPT is designed to achieve the goal and mission of FreedomWorks: lower taxes, less government, and more freedom. Therefore, it is important that you know and use these methods when building your club.

The chapter concept allows activists to function in small groups so they can easily relate to one another. It promotes a sense of unity and motivates members to take action in the political system. We have state chapters, county chapters, and town chapters

all across the country. You can become a part of this network of activists by creating your own chapter and networking with others in your county and state.

ACTIVIST SPOTLIGHT: BEN TESSLER

On April 15, 2009, Washington, D.C., real estate agent Ben Tessler attended his first Tea Party rally. “I was shocked to see nine or ten people I knew,” he recalled. “These are normal people who feel as anxious as I do for the country. All felt helpless and at the same time, all felt a great need to be there at that rally just to be doing something.”

Ben went home feeling revitalized. He forged deeper relationships with his friends he saw at the rally. He also began building a contact list and pushing the limited government and fiscal responsibility message whenever and however he could. Although it seemed like more and more people were picking up on the message, he wasn’t sure exactly how to bring things to the next level.

At a July 4 gathering, Ben met Brendan Steinhauser of Freedom-Works. “Brendan and I exchanged contact information and kept in touch. When I found out about the 9/12 march on Washington, I volunteered to do anything I could to help. I had to be involved and not let someone else fight my battle. There is nothing more important than fighting for family, country, and faith. They are all tied together.”

Fired up for the march, Ben went back to work on his e-mail list. He and his friends began to send out articles and video clips to those on their contact lists. As the messages were forwarded and became viral, Ben’s list continued to grow.

“Our local group positioned itself as a kind of a first responder,” he said. “We put ads in local papers, wrote letters to the editor, and tacked flyers on the community boards at coffee shops and pizza parlors. We put

signs on major streets and hung banners on overpasses and busy intersections.”

What began as an experiment for Ben had become a passion, consuming his time, and growing in directions he never imagined. “I could sense great momentum building up to the march. Citizens were waking up, feeling the same sense of urgency I felt. The mood was changing. There were more of us than anyone realized.”

CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

Mission Statement

Each chapter should have a clear mission statement consisting of one or two sentences that succinctly explain the explicit goals of the group and how they will be accomplished. The mission statement provides an important roadmap for sustained effectiveness months and years into the future. When issues arise, it’s often helpful to refer back to the mission statement to decide on a path to take.

A smoothly operating chapter has structure. Each chapter should have a chapter leader, communications director, legislative liaison, membership director, and social director. It is recommended that these positions be delegated to reliable individuals in each chapter. However, if the chapter is small, multiple duties can be delegated to a few individuals.

Chapter Leader

The volunteer chapter leader will be responsible for the operation and conduct of the chapter’s members. Fund-raising will also be the responsibility of the chapter leader. This person is the public face of

the organization and should possess excellent personal relationships, leadership, and organizational skills. Often this person is referred to as the chapter chairman or president of the chapter.

Communications Director

The press officer should be responsible for internal and external communications. Press releases, editorials, and letters to the editor are examples of external communications. E-mails and correspondences that remain in the chapter are considered internal communications. This person should maintain the chapter's Web site or blog. Also, the communications director should try to link the chapter's Web site with other local blogs and think of ways to increase traffic to the Web site or blog. This person would also manage the group's Twitter feed, Facebook outreach, Ning network community, and other online networks.

Legislative Liaison

The legislative liaison should have strong knowledge about the local, state, and national political environments and processes. It will be his or her job to keep track of legislative issues, provide updates to the group, build relationships with legislative champions, and set up activities like lobbying visits, phone call and e-mail campaigns, and other campaign activities. The legislative liaison should know what bills are being introduced, who the cosponsors are, and whether to support or oppose the bills. This chapter officer is critical when it comes to making an impact on the public policy process.

Membership Director

The membership director will maintain membership lists and ensure that all members are receiving the proper materials. Furthermore, the coordinator will work with our grassroots manager to access the FreedomWorks database for membership data. This chap-

ter officer is in charge of recruiting and retaining members for the local chapter. It is his or her job to look for opportunities to greatly expand the membership list through creative efforts and good old-fashioned peer-to-peer recruiting. It is important for a group to continuously grow over time in order for it to remain a political force in the community.

Social Director

The social director's job is to make sure that the chapter is having fun while getting work done. This person will plan events that build a sense of community in the group: think about things like movie nights, soirees, parties, and other fun social events. It's important that the members of the chapter enjoy what they are doing, as well as feel like they are making a real difference in the public policy debates.

RUNNING A CHAPTER MEETING

Once the chapter's leadership is in place and organized, the next step is to host a chapter meeting. Chapter meetings should be held on a regular basis. They should also inform and motivate members to take action. Chapter meetings should be simple, short, and informative.

The purpose of a chapter meeting is to make sure that everyone knows about upcoming events and campaigns. But meetings are also a great place to invite special speakers or to screen a film. Meetings should be held regularly so that it becomes a part of the members' ordinary lives. If there are times when the group cannot meet due to timing, weather, or other reasons, consider hosting a conference call for everyone. Many groups have used conference

calls to great effect, and you can feel free to utilize FreedomWorks' conference call system.

The success of a political event or meeting will hinge on the people within the organization planning the event. A dedicated core group of people is critical to the success of a meeting. These people are typically recruited through networking and from prior meetings, events, and projects. The best people are the ones who exhibit a strong desire to work to implement our ideas and policies. They will tend to be the true believers who are excited and impassioned by the opportunity to help advance our agenda.

—RICK REISS, TEMECULA, CALIFORNIA

Chapter meetings should typically last no longer than an hour or so. People lead busy lives and you don't want them to stop paying attention and leave early. Cover as much as you can and then leave them wanting more from the next meeting. Be sure to have someone run the meeting who is good at moving things forward. Try to save most of the debating and rhetorical questions for the very end of the meeting. You need to stay focused and get things done before you can open the floor up to banter, which is something that will happen. Manage your meeting effectively and stick to your schedule. Your members will thank you for it.

2. NETWORKING AND BUILDING COALITIONS

IF YOUR CHAPTER IS going to succeed, networking must be practiced at the local and state levels. Networking with other organi-

zations allows your chapter to focus on what it does best, which is to mobilize citizens to take action in the political process. Other organizations will be able to assist you by providing information, resources, and people who may become members of your group.

Building coalitions is essential to leading a successful chapter. As a chapter leader you can become a member of other groups that have similar values. Coalition-building provides another means of recruiting people to your group and spreading the message in your local community. One trend that is gaining momentum is the creation of federations of limited government groups at the state level. For example, local groups have opened up the lines of communication with one another, and local leaders talk regularly on conference calls and via Google groups to stay in touch about projects everyone is working on. This model has worked with great success in many places and should be replicated around the country. No one person or group needs to be in charge. The purpose of the federation is merely to keep the lines of communication open and to allow for greater cooperation between like-minded groups.

While I have e-mail contact with most of the Tea Party leadership throughout the Bay Area, each group is wholly autonomous. In areas where there is great distance this makes sense, but in smaller geographic clusters, coalitions and larger protests should at least be one more tool in the Tea Party toolbox. Larger protests offer many advantages that scattered, smaller, local rallies cannot: precious resources can be streamlined, larger numbers in one place attract concentrated media attention, and the message of the day can be delivered with greater effectiveness. This kind

of coalition should never take away from local groups acting autonomously in their own best interests, but occasional collaboration would indeed add impact. Our group has undertaken several novel steps in recent months to foster cooperation and increase exposure among Bay Area conservatives, groups, and candidates.

—SALLY ZELIKOVSKY, SAN FRANCISCO,
CALIFORNIA

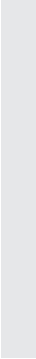
When building coalitions remember that all groups can keep their own identities and leadership while at the same time staying in touch with the other groups around the state. There should ideally be a meeting in every county in America where limited government activists can come together to share ideas, collaborate on projects, and network with one another. The location of these coalition meetings could change from town to town within each county, to make sure that every group has a chance to host one.

3. HOW TO ORGANIZE A TEA PARTY PROTEST

PICK A LOCATION, DATE, AND TIME IN YOUR TOWN.

We suggest Main Street at an intersection with lots of traffic.

TELL YOUR FRIENDS, FAMILY, COWORKERS, AND everyone else you know about the protest. Build an RSVP e-mail list so that you can provide quick updates if something changes. You should also create a Facebook group so that the group members can communicate with one another.



MAKE FIVE TO TEN SIGNS WITH LEGIBLE SLOGANS that send a clear message to the public and the media. Write in big letters.

CALL YOUR LOCAL TALK-RADIO HOSTS AND ASK them to announce the location, date, and time on the air for a few days leading up to the protest. Send a letter to the editor of your local newspaper announcing the protest. E-mail the bloggers in your area and ask them to post a notice about the protest.

WRITE A PRESS RELEASE AND E-MAIL, MAIL, AND fax copies to the local TV stations, radio stations, bloggers, and newspapers. Call the reporters who cover local events or politics and leave messages on their voice mail.

ON THE DAY OF YOUR PROTEST, SHOW UP WITH your group; be loud, visible, and happy; and engage the public. Wave your signs, make lots of noise, and move around to get attention. If reporters interview you, give them some good sound bites for their stories. Stay on message and keep your answers short and coherent.

BRING SIGN-IN SHEETS TO CAPTURE THE NAMES, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers of those who attend the protest and/or say that they support what you are doing. You will then have a big list of people who can plan the next, much bigger and louder event. Also, bring handouts with one page of quick facts about why you are protesting in the first place.

ADD YOUR PHOTOS, VIDEOS, AND AN AFTER-ACTION report to your Facebook group, and send this material to the bloggers and reporters whom you originally contacted. Ask them to post the photos, story, and video.

THANK EVERYONE WHO ATTENDED VIA E-MAIL AND phone, and set up a meeting to plan your next event. Now you have a list of people in your community who can help make the next protest huge. Encourage everyone to commit to bring at least one friend to the next protest.

ORGANIZE A CARPOOL AND GO FIND A FRIEND IN your neighboring town or county and help them organize a protest there. You and your people are now veterans and should be able to keep the momentum going around your area.

ACTIVIST SPOTLIGHT: BILLIE TUCKER

“Where are our leaders? Where are those who are responsible?” asks Billie Tucker, an entrepreneur from Jacksonville, Florida. It’s a question she has pondered the past two years.

“I came to the realization that no one in Washington, not the president, not the treasury secretary, not the candidates for president, and certainly no one in Congress had any clue what was going on or what to do. I trust these guys to mind the store and when the store is on fire, they didn’t even know where to find a garden hose. As a parent, it reminded me of how children behave when they don’t understand something: They make it up.”

Billie happened to have her TV on CNBC during Rick Santelli’s rant.

“He said what I was thinking!” she recalls.

Later that day, a friend called and asked Billie if she would be interested in helping plan a Tea Party event. Less than twenty-four hours later, more than seventy-five activists gathered for the first Jacksonville Tea Party.

What began as a small list of phone numbers later became the First Coast Tea Party, one of the largest and most active groups in the country. At the tax day protest in Jacksonville on April 15, the unlikely leader had a close look at what she helped create. “Crowd estimates told us that 5,000 people showed up that day,” she said. “It was hard to take in, especially as we saw ourselves on news reports across the country.”

Over the summer the First Coast Tea Party also chose to focus on congressional town halls. Intimidated by the prospect of active, well-informed attendees at live events, several Jacksonville area representatives opted for virtual meetings that connected voters by phone.

“We decided we would hold live town halls whether a congressman was there or not,” Billie said. “We taped their pictures to empty chairs on-stage. It did a good job of reflecting how we felt about communicating to Congress—talking to an empty chair.”

4. TRADITIONAL MEDIA

THERE ARE TWO TYPES of media coverage: earned and paid media. Earned media is free exposure for your organization. It is when the media shows up at an event and covers it or publishes your opinion. The content of earned media is up to the reporter and is difficult to control. Earned media is more credible and—best of all—it’s free.

Paid media, on the other hand, costs money. Paid media will

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Paid media, on the other hand, costs money. Paid media will

say what you want and be designed according to your budget. Paid media includes newspaper ads, radio ads, TV ads, online ads, and other types of marketing efforts.

Our simple rule of thumb at FreedomWorks is that you should try to get earned media first and only use paid media as a last resort. If you do your job and find creative ways to get attention for your group, you shouldn't have to use very much paid media, thus saving yourself a lot of money. Following are some tricks of the trade when trying to get mentioned in the media.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor provide citizens with the opportunity to comment on articles and editorials appearing in their local newspapers. Studies show that people read the letters section of newspapers more than they read the editorials by journalists.

Moreover, letters to the editor are widely read by community leaders and lawmakers to gauge public sentiment about current events. Here are some helpful guidelines to follow when crafting your letter to the editor:

Write legibly. Include your name, address, and telephone number. Papers often call to verify authorship. Newspapers generally will not print anonymous letters.

Address your letters to the "Letters Editor" or "Dear Editor."

Be brief and specific. Letters should never exceed one page. State the purpose of your letter in the opening paragraph and stick to that topic. If your letter pertains to a specific article or editorial, identify it accordingly. Try to keep your letter under two hundred words. Always adhere to the paper's guidelines, which should be clearly stated on the editorial page.

Write nothing but the truth. Do not include false information or dubious sources in your letter. Mentioning studies and statistics in your letter will enhance its effect, but don't overdo it. Your message can become lost in a sea of figures.

Write about current issues. Stick to debates going on right now. Respond promptly to tax-increase stories and editorials. Write in support of pending tax cuts or against pending tax increases.

Look at published letters in the paper you are submitting to; they will usually have a format you should follow.

Don't become discouraged if your letter is not published. Most publications receive more letters than they can print and will often print one letter as a representative of others. Most important, keep trying. Unpublished letters are still read by the editors and can help them determine which topics should receive more attention.

OP-EDS

Editorials appear in most newspapers and are vehicles by which citizens can make extensive comments on articles and policies. Like letters to the editor, editorials are placed on the editorial page. They are commonly referred to as op-eds because they sometimes appear on the opposite page from the newspaper's editorial. They often have the ability to reach a large audience. When writing an op-ed, be sure to keep your piece concise and include specific information. The average length of an op-ed should be between four hundred and nine hundred words. Check with your local paper concerning length requirements.

Your op-ed should be timely, concise, and to the point. Make sure that you drive home one or two main messages in the piece. Organize it well and make the strongest case for your point of view. Utilize every word to the fullest and don't waste time with ad hominem attacks or other distractions. Get right to the point and flesh out your arguments.

When arranging the publication of an op-ed piece, a phone call to the editor can be helpful. Leaders of organized groups often have a much better chance of getting an editorial published in the local newspaper than the average person. Some local newspapers have cut back dramatically on the acceptance and publication of guest op-eds. But there are plenty of opportunities to submit editorials online. Generally, you will have a much better chance of publishing a letter to the editor than an op-ed, but this shouldn't discourage you from submitting one when it can help you in the battle of ideas.

RADIO AND TELEVISION TALK SHOWS

Calling the talk shows in your area is a great way to help get your message across to thousands of listeners for free. Call your local radio and television stations and ask if they have open forums—talk shows where callers can discuss any subject with the host. If so, try to get on the air to make short, concise, positive statements about limited government. If there is currently a bill making its way through the legislative process, the host may keep the topic on the air for several minutes. If not, then at least you can take comfort in knowing that your brief statement in support of our position was heard by the station's listeners.

You can also call talk shows and ask the producer if there are any scheduled shows coming up that will discuss our issues. If one is scheduled, try to get a representative booked to appear on the show. Be sure to monitor your local radio and television stations and participate in these shows and alert fellow volunteers so they may do so as well.

Most communities have a local radio station. In this case the smaller, the better. Small stations do community announcements as a public service, so send them the information. If they have a local talk show, reach out to the host. Do not attach signs to poles or place them in public rights of way. You want to maintain a positive image. When people begin to contact you (and they will), enlist their help and get their e-mail address. E-mail them a copy of the flyer and ask them to call their friends. You can use window chalk (liquid) on your car windows. I have a trailer I use every day and a big sign that goes on the back about a month prior to an event.

—ROBIN STUBLEN, PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA

FreedomWorks often has opportunities to book activists who we work with on national media outlets like Fox News, MSNBC, CNN, PBS, and the broadcast networks. If you prove to be an effective media voice for limited government, we will be happy to include you in future opportunities. Producers are always looking for good spokespeople who can go on the air live. This is a great opportunity for those of you who want a chance to do something like this. A number of FreedomWorks activists have appeared on national radio and television shows, and some have even been profiled by outlets like CNN and Fox News.

BUILDING MEDIA CONTACTS

You will find contact information for television, radio stations, and newspapers across the country on a national and local level online. It is highly recommended that you build a media list of your own for your group. Keep this information handy, as you'll want to refer to it when you're ready to mail your letters, place your telephone calls, or send e-mail.

Every local leader should have a big list of the reporters and producers who have covered local, state, and national politics. Many reporters are assigned to covering political events in the city or state in which you live. Get to know them personally and communicate with them often. They need you as a source just as much as you need them to write a fair piece about your group and your events. As frustrating as the mainstream media can be, there are good reporters and producers who are honest, objective, and looking for the true story. Work with these folks and you can help shape the narrative about our movement. I'd suggest offering to

take your local beat reporters out to lunch or for coffee to get to know them. You'd be surprised at how few people actually do this, which is a major missed opportunity. Good journalists will take you up on your offer because they need to know their subjects very well in order to cover them correctly.

Try to focus on building not only the list of media contacts but also the quality of the list. This will go a long way toward making you a more effective communicator through newspapers, radio, and television. We can and should get our message out on traditional media outlets. To throw up our hands because of media bias would be foolish and counterproductive.

ACTIVIST SPOTLIGHT: BOB MACGUFFIE

Bob McGuffie was on a ski trip in New England when he heard Rick Santelli's rant. By then, he had been organizing protests and connecting activists for some time and was prepared for the tsunami of activism unleashed by the instantly famous outburst. A native of Queens, New York, Bob is blunt and unapologetic about his views.

He is a cofounder of the political action group Right Principles (www.rightprinciples.com), a clearinghouse for economic and constitutional research and a gathering place for activists. As hits and e-mails to the Web site grew during the TARP fiasco, Bob realized he was at the center of something special. Technology was empowering individuals across the country to connect with one another, share ideas, and plan events.

After the April 2009 tea parties, Bob and his fellow Connecticut activists decided to focus on town hall meetings with members of Congress. "I thought we ought to go down and challenge them," Bob said. "Representative Jim Himes had a town hall coming up—on my wedding anniversary

of all days—but I wanted to start pushing back on all the happy talk. I ended up challenging him on the national debt and on the cost of the stimulus.”

Excited about the potential for similar results around the country, Bob penned a memo called “Rocking the Town Halls.” The message was straightforward: get your network together and come armed with facts; spread out across the hall and get to the microphone; challenge the political talking points. The memo was read by thousands of activists who used it to organize participation in town halls and challenge lawmakers.

Bob’s growing network of supporters combined first-time activists with veterans from a wide variety of existing organizations. A July barbecue cookout boasted representatives from no fewer than twenty-three distinct groups including Libertarians, Glenn Beck–inspired 9/12ers, second amendment defenders, and more. “We are a loose coalition united around the principles of small government,” Bob says of the political kaleidoscope in Connecticut. “We knew we would be strong if we worked together. We’re all travelers in the same movement, so we informally established the Connecticut Grassroots Alliance.”

Bob points out that the network represents Connecticut. “We have both urban and rural, rich and poor. We’re your neighbors and represent all the backgrounds that make up Connecticut. There is a myth that small government conservatism is only popular in the American south. Well, I’ve got a network here in New England that dispels that myth.”

5. SOCIAL MEDIA

THERE HAS BEEN MUCH written about Obama’s online campaign leading up to the 2008 presidential election. The greatest strength of his campaign was that he was able to meet people where

they were through social media. People may or may not log on to Web sites daily, or even weekly—but they're sure to check their Facebook and Twitter accounts on a daily basis.

The online world can be immensely intimidating to someone who is just figuring out social media. There is a constant influx of information and content, and organizing and making sense of it all seems overwhelming. The trick is harnessing all of that information and using it to engage other activists. It has helped the Tea Party movement grow and connect in new ways, creating a large, powerful, and sustainable movement. The power of these tools is undeniable, and using them may not be quite as difficult as you think.

NING

Ning is a site that allows users to create their own social networks. Leading up to the 9/12 Taxpayer March on Washington, D.C., FreedomWorks created our own network to help people connect and coordinate. Local groups were started, people were able to connect and arrange transportation and share stories. A Ning network is very effective for organizations with members across the country. Smart Girl Politics began as a Ning network, and the site still serves as a hub, with members blogging, posting photos, joining their state groups, and sharing events.

If you feel that a Ning network would benefit your group, you can go to ning.com and create your network. Or join FreedomWorks' Ning community at teaparty.freedomworks.org. This fast-growing network has quickly become an organizational hub where you can join your state group, plan and post events, network, and discuss important issues with others near you.

FACEBOOK

Facebook is the most widely used social media platform. It's incredibly user-friendly and easy to learn. Here's a step-by-step walk-through to getting started. Be sure to join us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/freedomworks.

STEP 1: Signing Up and Creating Your Profile

Getting started on Facebook is free and takes about five minutes. You just go to Facebook.com and enter your name, e-mail address, sex, and birth date and click SIGN UP! Use your real name. It's tempting to use the name of an organization or group—but that is what the Pages are for. Your profile should be about you.

A big concern for many people new to Facebook is privacy. This is a valid concern—after all, it is the Internet. Nothing is “private.” Facebook, however, has privacy settings that you should take full advantage of. The safest way to approach online privacy, however, is to simply not post things you're not comfortable sharing. You have the ability to hide your age, location, and networks. Don't want people to know where you work? Don't post it.

STEP 2: Connecting with Others

When you sign up, Facebook will prompt you to search for people by e-mail. Here you can enter in your e-mail login information, through Gmail, Yahoo, or whatever e-mail service you use. It will search by e-mail for people you know who are already on Facebook, and you can automatically add them as friends. Of course the search isn't perfect. It will miss people. You can search by name and e-mail address to find your friends, classmates, neighbors, coworkers, and family members.

There are several ways you can approach your Facebook account. Most people will only add and accept requests from people they know. This is the safest route, because really, who wants strangers to have access to pictures of their kids? However, as an activist, there can be a much broader use for Facebook. The other approach would be to accept other people who want to network with you—maybe a grassroots leader from a nearby city or even across the country. Share information and help promote one another’s events to your own networks. The more, the merrier!

STEP 3: Using Fan Pages

This is really useful if you have an organization or group you’d like to promote. There are several benefits to Facebook fan pages, not the least of which is that there is no cap on the number of people who can “like” your page. A basic profile has a limit of five thousand “friends” . . . which is plenty if you’re using Facebook to communicate with family and friends. However, you may want your reach to be much broader.

The easiest way to grow your group’s page is by inviting your friends and having your friends invite their friends. Have a bit of a budget? Buy a Facebook ad! Facebook ads are relatively inexpensive and can also be incredibly effective since they can geo-target your audience. You can choose to have your ads show up only to people in your city, state, or region.

TWITTER

Twitter is slightly more intimidating for many. Some just plain don’t get it. There is an incredible amount of information out there, and a

lot of it may very well be a waste of your time. However, it is also important to embrace the power of the medium and make it work for you.

Twitter served as an incredible catalyst in planning and organizing the beginnings of the Tea Party movement. It connected leaders from across the country and launched several grassroots organizations. Our Twitter handle is @freedomworks.

STEP 1: Getting Started

All you need to provide is your name and e-mail address. It's a five-minute (if that) sign-up process. Suggestion: Use a real photo for your avatar, unless you are an organization. If you use a logo or cartoon, generally people assume you're (1) spam, unsolicited communication, or (2) a troll, one who signs up only to insult and pick fights. If you're concerned about identity, you can use something that will make people laugh.

Your bio is extremely important on Twitter. It's the only thing that people will have to figure out who you are, and you only have 160 characters to do it. Start with something basic. List which organization you're with (if there is one) or what you're passionate about. At FreedomWorks, we simply list our tagline—Lower Taxes, Less Government, More Freedom. Just six words, but it gives people a clear picture of what we're working for and what our mission is.

STEP 2: Who Do I Follow? And How Do I Get People to Listen?

The best way to figure out who to follow is to go to people you admire and follow the people who they're following. Pick an active Twitter personality you are familiar with and pay attention to who they are following. Watch who they are replying to and follow them. In addition to following individuals, pay attention to

the lists they create. Many have created lists of people they follow, which are all linked on the right-hand side of their profile page.

How do you reply to someone? Simply put an @ before their name. For example, if you would like to bring something to the attention of the FreedomWorks account handler, you would start your tweet with @FreedomWorks, and the tweet would be directed to us.

Retweeting is also important. When someone says something interesting and you want to share it, simply use the retweet feature and it will be sent back out to those following you, preceded by an RT and the name of the person who composed the tweet.

The best way to get people to notice you, however, is to engage them in conversation. If they follow you and are interesting, follow them back. This opens the line of communication. Twitter is about dialogue—it is a conversation starter. To use it to its potential, you need to listen as much (or more) than you speak.

STEP 3: Third-Party Applications

One of the best features of Twitter is that it's completely integrated into your phone and computer. The Web version is always available, but by downloading desktop applications, you can create groups, manage multiple accounts, and organize your Twitter feed.

Here are some of the most popular desktop applications:

- TweetDeck
- Splitweet
- Hootsuite
- Seesmic
- Twirl

Twitter can also be managed via phone. BlackBerry and iPhone both have great Twitter apps.

BLACKBERRY

Ubertwitter
Twitterberry
TinyTwitter

IPHONE

TweetDeck
Hootsuite
Echofon

Don't have a smartphone? You can link your phone to your Twitter account and update via text.

To get the full effect of Twitter, keep it at your fingertips. It's incredibly effective to cover rallies or any other event. Send photos from the middle of a crowd and keep people informed!

The biggest asset of Twitter is communication and information sharing. This can go viral with a click. To be effective, be consistent and be engaging. People want new information.

THE BLOGOSPHERE

STEP I: Starting Your Blog

Blogs are a huge component of the online news world. Today's bloggers are investigative reporters, digging up dirt, and pointing out political trends. Bloggers are shaping the conversation and are a critical part of the political narrative.

The lines have been blurred between blogger and journalist—bloggers *are* the new media.

Starting a blog is simple and free. Platforms like WordPress.com, MoveableType, and Blogger.com make it a point-and-click process. Just sign up, choose a catchy name and a template for your site, and you're free to start writing. Pick something you're interested in to write about. Maybe there's a particular candidate you want to support or a policy you're interested in covering. Find the information and start posting it.

STEP 2: Getting Your Blog Noticed

Linking is maybe the most important way to get your blog noticed. Has another blogger covered a story that you can add something to? Post a link to their piece, quote the relevant part, and then add your response. Some sites will display the links to people who have linked their story—they're called trackbacks and are also a way to drive traffic to your site.

SEO (search engine optimization) is important. Choose headlines that are descriptive, with words that people will use in their Google searches. For WordPress, there is also a plug-in that allows you to create a separate headline and description for the Google searches, creating more search engine traffic to your blog.

STEP 3: I Don't Have Time to Blog. Why Should I Care?

Blogging is time-consuming, and it isn't for everyone. There are, however, ways you can contribute to the conversation without maintaining your own site. At RedState, everyone can be a diarist. Have a story or some coverage of an event? Post it as a diary. Sometimes the editors will promote it to the front page.

Also, if you don't know how to get attention for an event or story, pass it on to a local blogger. Chances are, people who matter will read that person's site. An example would be a blogger we

know from Kansas. Now, he doesn't have the traffic of one of the major sites, but he has a feature that allows people to subscribe to his blog by e-mail. His subscribers include the mayor, every member of the city council, and the staffs of both. What this means is that when he voices concern or support for particular policies or initiatives, the people who can affect change are listening.

YOUTUBE

YouTube is an incredibly useful tool. Video has become the most powerful medium available in the online world. YouTube is a simple way to share any footage and television clips, or your own montages, slideshows, and so on, with the world.

You can start your own YouTube account for free. It's linked to your Google account, so the people in your contacts will show up as suggested subscriptions—subscribe! It creates a feed and you can keep up with new videos posted by your friends.

Upload original videos for your subscribers. Make sure to take them in the info area while you're uploading them so people will find them when they search for those terms. The title and description for the video are important—make them as clear as possible so more people will find your video when they search for a particular topic.

Even without making your own YouTube account, the platform is a great resource. You can link videos, share them on Facebook, Twitter, and your blog, and promote other videos if you think they are interesting and useful.

Many people use YouTube as an information resource, finding their news and doing research by wading through the videos. It's

second only to Google as a search engine. Having news clips, videos of candidate speeches and interviews, footage of events, and other media clips available can prove invaluable.

ACTIVIST SPOTLIGHT: C. L. BRYANT

Activism has always been a part of C. L. Bryant's life. He has long been a champion for civil rights, marching throughout the 1960s and 70s for freedoms many take for granted today. He has marched with Republicans, he has marched with Democrats, and on occasion he has marched alone. He is proud of what he has achieved. But as the years passed, he became disillusioned as many he worked with became more concerned with left-wing partisan politics than the movement.

"I found myself increasingly looking to conservatives," he said. "Racism is a collectivist concept and I believe we should all be judged individually by our character."

In his heart, C.L. is a proud American who believes our best days are still ahead of us if we stay true to our founding principles and committed to the values that made us strong. "My early activities were inspired by Frederick Douglass," he explains. "Douglass believed in equal opportunity, individual freedom, and liberty. We should strive to live up to his courageous example and fight for what we believe is right."

For C.L., the Santelli rant was a call to arms. He started hearing rumors about upcoming local tea parties and found an event coming up in Shreveport, so he decided to go and see for himself. The Tea Party movement had found a new member.

"The organizers thanked me and asked me if I'd like to say a few words," he explained. "After the confrontation, I was fired up." C.L. spoke again in Shreveport at a July 4 event and again his words were

inspiring to the Tea Party nation. Someone in the crowd videotaped the message and it was soon forwarded to activists across the country.

“I started to get questions from the press,” C.L. said. “They wanted to know why I would be involved with the movement.” The premise of the question insulted C.L. It was based on the assumption that an African American couldn’t possibly identify with a conservative, small government message.

Undaunted, C.L. started to attend more events. Brendan Steinhauser of FreedomWorks saw footage of his speeches and invited him to appear on the main stage at the 9/12 march on Washington.

“I said that Americans, regardless of race, gender, or circumstance, would not be ruled over. Our freedoms come from our Creator, not the government. I believe politics has become about walls of divisiveness to keep us separated. I wanted to invoke the spirit of Reagan to tear down these walls.”

6. LOBBYING ELECTED OFFICIALS

EVERYONE IS FAMILIAR WITH the slick, well-funded special interest lobbyists who constantly roam the halls of congressional office buildings in Washington, D.C., and your state capital. But in the eyes of elected officials, the most effective lobbyists are their constituents. Politicians are keenly aware of the fact that it is their constituents who hold the keys to their political futures. As a result, constituent concerns are of prime importance to politicians. The best way you can affect the outcome of legislation is to directly communicate your views to your lawmakers.

We believe that government goes to those who show up. If you aren’t the ones showing up in your lawmaker’s office, on the phone,

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and in the mailbox, those that are showing up are the entrenched special interest groups that don't necessarily have *your* best interests in mind. The simple act of making a visit to your local district office, or making a phone call can make a big difference. Most offices have a formula when it comes to constituent contact. For instance, one phone call equals another hundred people who feel the same way, so your voice is magnified many times over.

Effective grassroots lobbying can be done at the local, state, and national levels. The same general principles apply, and the following advice can be read in that context.

Remember, lawmakers work for you (and since the number-one concern of all politicians is to get reelected, be sure you communicate your concerns with your own elected officials first). To assist you, this section provides you with tips on effective communication strategies with your elected officials.

KNOWING YOUR LAWMAKER'S OFFICE

Whether local, state, or federal, the personnel of the offices of your elected officials are similar. Most legislators have a staff to assist him or her during his or her term in office. To be effective in communicating with these offices, it is useful to know the titles and principal functions of the staff. Commonly used titles include the following:

Administrative Assistant or Chief of Staff

This staff person reports directly to the member of Congress or state legislator. He or she usually has overall responsibility for evaluating the political outcome of various legislative proposals and constituent requests. This person is in charge of overall office

operations, including the assignment of work and the supervision of key staff. You should always attempt to speak to this person if you can't speak directly to the legislator. The next time you are in Washington, D.C., be sure to stop by your congressional and Senate offices and pick up business cards with contact information for key staff members, usually available at the reception desk.

Legislative Director or Legislative Assistant

The legislative director is usually the staff person who monitors the legislative schedule and makes recommendations regarding the pros and cons of particular issues. In some congressional offices there are several legislative assistants and responsibilities are assigned to staff with particular expertise in specific areas. For example, depending on the responsibilities and interests of the legislator, an office may include a different legislative assistant for health issues, environmental matters, taxes, and so on. If you can't get ahold of the administrative assistant or chief of staff, the legislative director or legislative assistants are your second most important points of contact with the legislator's office.

Press Secretary or Communications Director

The press secretary's responsibility is to build and maintain open and effective lines of communication between the legislator, his or her constituency, and the general public. The press secretary is expected to know the benefits, demands, and special requirements of both print and electronic media, and how to most effectively promote the legislator's views or position on specific issues. This person is often the most sensitive to bad PR or good PR, so keep that in mind when you are trying to get a public statement of some kind

from the lawmaker. Often a well-placed call to the press secretary will go a long way to making sure that the legislator faces bad PR if he or she goes against the wishes of his or her constituents.

Personal Secretary or Scheduler

The scheduler is usually responsible for allocating a legislator's time among the many demands that arise from congressional responsibilities, staff requirements, and constituent requests. The scheduler may also be responsible for making necessary travel arrangements, arranging speaking dates and visits to the district, and so on. If you are looking for dates and times of town hall meetings or if you would like to invite your legislator to speak at or attend one of your events, call his or her office and ask to speak to the scheduler. There is often a district or state scheduler as well for congress-people and senators.

Caseworker

The caseworker is the staff member usually assigned to help with constituent requests by preparing replies for the legislator's signature. The caseworker's responsibilities may also include helping resolve problems that constituents present in relation to federal agencies, such as Social Security and Medicare issues, veteran's benefits, passports, and so on. There are often several caseworkers in a congressional office.

Other Staff Titles

Other titles used in a congressional office may include executive assistant, legislative correspondent, executive secretary, office manager, and receptionist. The legislative correspondents, or LCs, usually are the ones who write responses to constituent letters and e-mails. If you can't reach the chief of staff, legislative director, or

legislative assistants, try to talk to an LC who works on the issue that you are concerned about.

GRASSROOTS LOBBYING TIPS

The most effective way to articulate your views to your elected officials and to affect the outcome of legislation is to sit down and speak with your legislators face-to-face (or with their key staff if they are not available). Usually, either one-on-one meetings or small groups is best. While these personal visits are extremely productive, they also require the most amount of planning. Here are some things to remember:

IF YOU ALREADY HAVE APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED with your lawmakers, be on time.

EXPLAIN HOW THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION WILL directly affect you. Use specific examples.

ALWAYS BE POLITE. YOU WILL NEVER CONVINC your lawmaker or their staff with rudeness, vulgarity, or threats. Even if you disagree with the position of your legislator, be courteous and calm. There will be other issues in the future and you'll want to be able to meet with the legislator again.

FOLLOW UP YOUR VISIT WITH A LETTER. REGARD-less of how your meeting goes, send a letter to your legislator or the staff person you met thanking him or her for their time and reiterating the points you dis-

cussed. This gesture will help the cause and pave the way for future meetings.

In my role as legislative liaison for North Carolina FreedomWorks, I monitor the North Carolina General Assembly. When issues of interest to our more than forty thousand activists arise, I e-mail a copy of the proposed legislation and a FreedomWorks analysis. Activists visit legislators in their home districts, attend committee meetings to speak for or against the proposal (often filling every chair in a committee room), go door to door at the legislature speaking with legislators, send letters and e-mails, and make telephone calls. North Carolina FreedomWorks activists are known for virtually shutting down the e-mail and voice mail systems at the North Carolina General Assembly. But it takes coordinated efforts to make an impact in this way. That's why I think that it's important that other groups have legislative liaisons as well.

—KATHY HARTKOPF, HILLSBOROUGH,
NORTH CAROLINA

WRITING YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

If you haven't communicated with an elected official before, and you want to get started, the simplest thing you can do is utilize the results-oriented method of letter writing. A letter is an easy way for you to let lawmakers know your views as a voting constituent on specific issues, encourage them to vote your way, and let them know you'll watch how they vote on a particular issue and keep that vote in mind when it comes time for their reelection.

Try to keep your letter short and to the point, with just enough facts and figures to further enhance your statement. Never lie or make a statement you can't back up with evidence. Always let your lawmakers know how a specific issue will affect you; make sure they understand that you live and vote in their district or state, and therefore, what affects you may affect other constituents as well.

Always use the letterhead of your local group and identify yourself as the chapter leader when writing your elected officials. Handwritten letters are best in the age of e-mail and faxes. A handwritten letter will stick out, and usually legislative offices require their staff to send a response to all handwritten letters. One tactic that FreedomWorks has used to great effect is delivering handwritten letters to congressional district offices. Your group can collect letters from friends, families, and colleagues and schedule a time to hand-deliver them to your congressman's district office. This is a great activity for your organization to do in order to communicate your views to elected officials.

Here are the four important things to remember when writing your letters:

HOW TO ADDRESS YOUR REPRESENTATIVE: Address your letters to "The Honorable _____," and begin the letter "Dear Senator" or "Dear Representative." If writing to a committee chairman or Speaker of the House, address them as "Mr. Chairman" / "Madam Chairwoman" or "Mr. Speaker" / "Madam Speaker."

BE BRIEF, SPECIFIC, AND COURTEOUS: Ideally, letters shouldn't exceed one page, and the purpose of

your letter should be stated clearly in the first paragraph. If your letter pertains to specific legislation, identify it accordingly. To make sure your letter is as productive as possible, always be courteous, even if you disagree with the lawmaker's position.

ASK THEM TO RESPOND: Always ask for a response of some kind to your letter. You'll want a hardcopy of your legislator's positions on these issues for future reference and to document his or her positions.

WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK FREEDOMWORKS: Remember that the resources of the FreedomWorks national office are at your disposal. The grassroots team always stands ready to assist you. If you need ideas on what to write, or even if you have problems locating the mailing address, contact FreedomWorks and we will be happy to assist you.

FAXING

Nearly all state legislators and U.S. senators and representatives have public fax numbers, but we are always available to assist you in acquiring a fax number that you cannot find. Faxing allows you to send a full, letter-length message to your lawmaker in a matter of minutes. When preparing a fax message to a lawmaker, follow the same basic guidelines used when mailing a letter via regular mail. You also want to make sure your fax number is clearly visible, in case your legislator wishes to respond to you via fax.

Be sure to call the office and follow up on your faxed letter. Make sure that the office received it and ask for a written response from your lawmaker. Group leaders should coordinate campaigns to fax dozens of letters to lawmakers right before a critical vote. This can be a very effective tactic in the days leading up to a vote on an important issue that you care about. These minicampaigns should also be employed when coverage of the issue picks up in the media or when there are committee meetings about the bill that you are concerned with.

E-MAIL

E-mail allows you to communicate with your legislators in the quickest and easiest manner. Unfortunately, because of the incredible volume of e-mail legislators on the state and federal levels receive, the impact of an individual e-mail as opposed to an individual letter is limited. This does not mean that e-mailing your elected officials is useless as a lobbying tactic. It just takes large amounts of e-mail on an issue to catch the legislator's attention.

Large e-mail campaigns that generate short, simple messages at a critical time (such as right before a vote or election) can have a huge impact and make great activities for your chapter. Alternatively, try to gain access to the e-mail addresses of the legislative staff. Your e-mail will more likely be read and recorded if you are in direct contact with them. Again, follow the basic guidelines for a written letter when you send an e-mail message.

ACTIVIST SPOTLIGHT:

DEBBIE DOOLEY AND JENNY BETH MARTIN

Back in the 1980s, Debbie Dooley was proud to vote for Reagan. It's been a long time since the Atlanta native has felt the same pride in the voter's booth. Over the years, Debbie had become equally disgusted with both parties. But two things changed to draw her back into the process: the birth of her grandson and the bailouts following the housing crisis.

The only problem was that she had no idea how to hold an event and did not know if she could find anyone else to join her. "I contacted FreedomWorks and found out about a conference call for folks looking to host tea parties across the nation. I got a chance to meet folks on that call who felt the same way I did—even a few in Atlanta."

One of the other participants was Jenny Beth Martin from Atlanta. The two connected and got to work.

Jenny Beth had always been politically active and was a veteran of the fight against big government. But the recession was taking a toll on the family and affected her ability to take part. Still struggling to get by, Jenny Beth eventually got involved with Smart Girl Politics, a national network of conservative women. Soon after, she encountered Debbie Dooley on the FreedomWorks call. The next day, Debbie secured a demonstration permit. In less than a week, a Tea Party was scheduled in Atlanta for February 27, 2009.

On the day of the event, rain poured on the statehouse steps. They had no stage, no sound system. They used a nearby statue as a podium. Despite all the challenges, more than 300 citizens arrived to proclaim their opposition to the reckless government spending.

Debbie and Jenny Beth threw themselves into the cause and became more involved with FreedomWorks and the growing Tea Party patriots group. In addition to a full-time job, Debbie estimated she was spending thirty hours a week on the cause. "I didn't even have time for TV anymore,"

she said with a laugh. “Aside from watching University of Alabama football games, of course. We have to have some priorities in life.”


PHONE CALLS

As bills move through the legislative process, you will find there simply isn't enough time to write your legislators immediately before a key vote on a certain issue. When you need to get in touch with your legislator immediately to let him or her know of your support for lower taxes, less government, and more freedom, your telephone calls become the most effective means of communicating your views. During the months-long debate over Obamacare, FreedomWorks members placed hundreds of thousands of phone calls to lawmakers in Washington and around the country. The phone lines were so busy during some days that the Capitol switchboard was giving everyone busy signals. When that happens, we encourage our members to start calling local, district offices.

Here are four things to remember when calling your elected officials:

IDENTIFY YOURSELF AS A CONSTITUENT: As someone who lives and votes in the district or state, your phone calls carry the most weight. Calls to representatives outside your district or state are helpful as well, but be sure to contact your legislators first. Encourage your friends and fellow activists to call after you have placed yours.

STATE YOUR POINT QUICKLY AND CLEARLY: Be sure to limit your telephone call to one subject, and be brief and specific. Your phone call should last only a few



minutes. Let your legislator know why you're calling, giving a specific bill number if possible. As with any communication with your elected officials, remember to always be courteous.

REQUEST THAT YOUR LEGISLATOR FOLLOW UP WITH A LETTER: Be sure to give your name and home address and request that your legislator follow up with a letter. You took the time to call, so ask your legislator to take the time to respond. Be sure to get the name of the person you talked to. Remember that the chief of staff, legislative director, and legislative assistants are the people who you should ask for when you call.

IDENTIFY YOURSELF AS THE LEADER OF YOUR LOCAL GROUP: Over time this will begin to resonate with the offices of elected officials as you build relationships with them. As your group grows in strength and gains credibility, the fact that you are calling on behalf of your group will mean much more. Organized activists make a much bigger impact working together than they do working alone. And your legislators know this, which is why you should remember to mention that you are involved with a local group.

PERSONAL MEETINGS

By far the most effective way to articulate your views to your elected officials and to affect the outcome of legislation is to sit down and speak with your lawmakers (or if they are not available,

key staff) either one-on-one or in a small group accompanied by the other key leaders within your group. While these personal visits are extremely productive, they also require the most amount of planning to ensure success.

During the Obamacare debate, FreedomWorks activists made district office visits a key part of our strategy. Never before had so many people shown up in these local offices around the country. The staff was forced to pay attention to the groups and put the Washington offices on alert that constituents were outraged about the various health care takeover bills being debated in Congress.

Here are six things to remember when planning a personal visit with the office of your elected officials:

SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT: Elected officials have extremely busy schedules. To ensure that you will have time allotted for you to speak directly with your legislator, call in advance to set up an appointment. If you call enough in advance, speaking to your elected official directly should not be a problem. However, if he or she is not available due to a scheduling conflict or a last-minute problem, it is still worth your time to meet with the staff person who handles the issue that you want to discuss. Be persistent and follow up with all requests so that you can lock in a specific time, date, and place for a meeting. Be on time.

PREPARE QUESTIONS AHEAD OF TIME: Have specific questions in mind dealing with your legislator's point of view or stance on an issue. Make sure you get an answer. If you asked your question clearly and directly, you should receive a clear and direct answer.

If your legislator sidesteps the issue or does not answer your question, calmly repeat it.

EXPLAIN HOW THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION WILL DIRECTLY AFFECT YOU: Use specific examples to show your lawmaker how issues affect you and the freedom of our country. If the proposed measure cuts taxes, limits government, or otherwise benefits the consumer, specifically cite examples to support this position. If you are a business owner, mention the effects the bill will have on your business and your workers. If you are a teacher, cite your experience in education and explain how the proposed bill would affect what you do. Personal anecdotes are often the most remembered and most powerful forms of communication. Sometimes the legislator will even quote you on the House or Senate floor when giving a speech about the issue.

AGAIN, ALWAYS BE POLITE: Nothing is more detrimental to a visit with a lawmaker or his or her staff than rudeness, vulgarity, or threats. Even if you disagree with the position of your legislator, be courteous, keep calm, and do not become overagitated. Also, be sure to dress professionally to convey the seriousness of your visit.

LEAVE A LEGISLATOR “LEAVE-BEHIND” AND YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION WITH YOUR LAWMAKER OR STAFF: A legislator “leave-behind” can be a short summary of the issue with key points, or as simple as a letter or petition. This will ensure that your lawmakers remember the issues you discussed.

FOLLOW UP YOUR VISIT WITH A LETTER: Regardless of how your meeting goes, send a letter to your legislator or the staff person you met with thanking him or her for their time and reiterating the points you discussed. This gesture will help your case and pave the way for future meetings. Part of becoming an effective advocate for limited government is building good relationships with legislative staff members. If you have a history of good meetings, even though your legislator may not agree with you, you will likely have more access to your representatives or senators than the average person. This makes your voice, and that of your group, much louder and more influential.

ATTEND TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Elected officials often host town hall meetings in their districts to showcase their achievements and solicit feedback from their constituents. Such meetings are a prime opportunity for you to ask your lawmakers to state their position on an agenda of lower taxes, less government, and more freedom, on the record and in an open and public forum. Town hall meetings are held throughout the year, especially during congressional recesses. FreedomWorks has always encouraged our members to attend town hall meetings during the Presidents' Day Recess, Easter Recess, Memorial Day Recess, Independence Day Recess, August Recess, and so on. The town hall forums became much more popular in August 2009 when thousands of Americans attended town halls and effectively slowed down the Obamacare bill by providing an overwhelming opposition to the proposals before Congress. One of the investi-

gators of the town hall protests of 2009 was Connecticut activist Bob MacGuffie, who wrote a now infamous memo called “Rocking the Town Halls.” Bob’s memo was picked up by leftist media outlets and caused many leftists in politics and the media to go apoplectic, accusing regular Americans of being “thugs,” “un-American,” and “evil-mongers.” Bob’s memo, however, did not preach thuggery but rather a very good tactical guide for taxpayers to make their voices heard.

Here are some things to remember about town hall meetings:

GET ON THE INVITATION LIST TO ATTEND THE MEETINGS: Bring as many members of your group who can attend. Write your lawmakers and explain that you are a local activist leader. Ask to be put on the invitation list for their town meetings and ask to bring members of your chapter. If they do not have such a list, ask for information on the next meeting. When you receive word that a town hall meeting is scheduled, be sure to make plans to attend, and share this information with the members of your chapter through e-mail, Facebook, group meetings, or other forms of communication.

Often, especially after August 2009, some cowardly congresspeople and senators will not make their town hall meetings public or will not do town halls at all. This is an opportunity for your group to wage a brief public relations campaign to convince the legislator to hold open forums for his or her constituents. We encourage groups to write letters to the editors of local newspapers and call local talk-radio stations, asking why the legislator refuses to either hold town halls or refuses to make the details public. One thing FreedomWorks activists

have done in the past is to organize a town hall meeting of their own and then invite the legislator to come. If he or she refuses or ignores the invitation, the group should have a table, empty chair, microphone, and name plate for the legislator. Then invite the press to attend the town hall meeting and fill the room with a hundred constituents. Let the press report the headline, CONGRESSMAN X A NO-SHOW FOR TOWN HALL MEETING, CONSTITUENTS OUTRAGED. Then you can turn up the heat and follow up the news stories with more letters to the editor from other constituents who are disappointed that the legislator is not even listening to what the people have to say.

PREPARE QUESTIONS AHEAD OF TIME: If your legislator does hold town hall meetings, be sure to prepare ahead of time. Have specific questions in mind. Ask for your legislator's position on a specific bill or issue that you care about. Make sure to get an answer from him or her. And use your phone or video camera to record the answer so that you can post it on YouTube, Facebook, and your blog. There is no better way to hold politicians accountable for statements they make than to record them and post them online.

GET AN ANSWER: Make sure you are the first one to the microphone and that your group members are close behind. Often the first few questions in the town hall will define the entire event. Ask your question clearly and directly and expect a direct answer. If your legislator sidesteps or doesn't answer your question, calmly repeat it. For example, "Do you support funda-

mental tax reform or maintaining the status quo?” Be prepared for spin but always have some other folks ready to ask the same question a different way, in order to get a real answer on an issue. Your group should also applaud if the congressman gives an answer that they like, or shake their heads and say no if the congressman says something that they disagree with. Be polite but firm. Be respectful, but don’t be afraid to be animated and passionate.

FOLLOW UP WITH A LETTER: Whether you had the opportunity to ask your question or not, follow up with a letter to your legislator. Let him or her know you attended their last town hall meeting. Ask your question in your letter if you didn’t have an opportunity to do so at the meeting. This letter will ensure your lawmakers take you and your views seriously, and will allow for you to obtain a written response addressing your concerns.

One final note about town hall meetings: FreedomWorks always encourages a multipronged effort when it comes to these now more high-profile events. Have one team of activists stand outside the town hall meeting and hold up signs with questions or statements that make your points. This will help to set the tone of the town hall meeting inside and will give the media something to report on that includes your messages. It will make a powerful narrative if the people attending the town hall and the media both see protesters outside and concerned citizens inside the meeting with similar messages.

Limited government activists did this well during many of the town hall meetings across the country, and this model should be

replicated even more as we continue to battle against big government in America.

7. RECRUITING

HOWEVER YOU DECIDE TO spend most of your recruiting efforts, the key is to just do it. The important thing is that you steadily increase your membership numbers until you reach critical mass and even beyond that. If your community has a thousand people in it, and a certain percentage seem to lean toward fiscal conservatism, set an ambitious, multiyear goal to sign up whatever percentage that is. There are lots of opportunities to recruit new members to your cause, some of them mundane and others fun. It is hard work, but it will pay dividends when all of your efforts are that much bigger and better because you have a true enemy of limited government activists with you on local, state, and national battles.

ACTIVIST SPOTLIGHT: DIANA REIHMER

When the housing market crashed, so did the value of the Diana Reihmer's Philadelphia home. Unable to sell and unwilling to risk retirement on their quickly devaluing assets, the Reihmer's dreams of taking it easy were put on hold. "That's the way it is," Diana said. "You make your plans and life happens. We cut our budget and I went back to work. That was my bail-out plan."

Meanwhile, politicians in Washington were bailing out companies and rewarding people who had made bad investments in homes and mortgage-backed securities. The contrast between her experience and the soft landings for Citigroup, GM, and AIG were galling.

Diana decided she needed to get involved. “My main motivation was to educate my fellow citizens on our constitutional roots. If a society wants to remain free, they need to hold their elected officials accountable and we as a nation were not doing a good job of that.”

Diana started a Facebook page and connected with other concerned Philadelphians. She soon applied for a permit and planned a Tea Party. “More than five hundred people stood in the wind and the rain, just down the road from the birthplace of the constitution,” Diana recalled. The Philadelphia tea party was off and running.

“I’m often asked what I mean when I say we need to take our country back,” Diana said. “My answer is no to a time, but to a commitment to constitutional principles. Take it back to an ethos of entrepreneurship, self-reliance, and community.”

As Diana reflects back on the 9/12 Taxpayer March on Washington, she speaks with emotion. “We met the most amazing people. Heading to Washington, I connected with new friends from across the country. As we arrived in Washington, someone thanked me for helping her find her voice—that this movement has allowed her to get out and express herself. It was overwhelming.”

For a couple of good books that will help you understand recruiting people and marketing your group and its events, check out *Dedication and Leadership* by Douglas Hyde and *The Conservative Revolution: How to Win the Battle for College Campuses* by Brendan Steinhauser. When recruiting new members, be sure to get their name, e-mail address, cell phone number, and home address. The more information you have, the easier it will be to keep in touch with them and figure out how best to mobilize them in your community. Build a database to store all of your group contact

information, and invest in a service that allows you to send mass e-mails. Also, make sure that FreedomWorks has their information so that we can stay directly in touch with them on all of our local, state, and national campaigns.

EVENTS

Events are a great way to tell people about your group and recruit them. Holding small and simple events or participating in another organization's event are excellent opportunities to recruit additional members. There are a lot of great event ideas out there, but here are just a few: movie night, book clubs, book signings, teach-ins, cocktail parties, general meetings, special issue meetings, candle-light vigils, protests, guest speakers, conferences, conventions, grassroots leadership training seminars, virtual events, and so on.

Fund-raisers such as bake sales or potluck dinners are excellent recruitment events that will not only help you raise money for your chapter but will also attract new people who will want to get involved in your group. Also, spreading the word about your chapter's rallies, precinct walks, and lobbying trips are great ways to keep your chapter active and attract new volunteers. An organization must be active to keep the interest of its members and to show its value in belonging. Some organizations remain stagnant after elections, and this is a big mistake. Your group should be active every week of the year, with a different focus as you go along. You don't want to keep doing the exact same things, so change it up, be open to new ideas, and add some fun and creativity to the mix.

Participating in another organization's event can take on many forms. It may involve being on a panel, attending a meeting or conference, or providing information at a booth. Always re-

member to take recruitment materials with you wherever you go. In addition to information about your group and your issues, you also should have sign-up sheets, and be sure someone is there to answer questions. Conferences are a great opportunity to network with other activists from across the country, share ideas, see your favorite speakers, and get political training from experts. You should encourage your group to attend when it can, and if there isn't a state convention of some kind already, consider starting one. FreedomWorks is working with its coalition allies in the movement to organize conventions of like-minded groups in various states. These conventions are open to members of the political parties, but the focus is on policy and ideas, not parties. If there isn't already a convention of this kind in your state, get in touch with us and we will help advise you on putting one together.

GROUP MEETINGS

While the main reason for holding group meetings is to keep the group informed and engaged, they also have value as a recruitment device. As group meetings become regular community “happenings” that are open to the public, more people will begin attending. Try to run short, efficient meetings, and stick to your agenda. Offer food and beverages, hand out literature for educational purposes, and focus on welcoming new attendees. Consider having guest speakers from time to time, and be sure to introduce your group members to all the resources the liberty movement has to offer.

LOCAL ISSUE BATTLES

Local issue battles can often act as the building blocks of recruitment. Many FreedomWorks activists got their start with us by fighting a local tax hike or fighting for spending controls at the local level. Our North Carolina chapter has done amazing work fighting for property rights. In spring 2009, Roy Loflin and Kathy Hartkopf launched the Orange Candy Tax Revolt with only a few yard signs and a small meeting. Within weeks more than 1,000 people were showing up to learn how to challenge tax hikes, and the revolt quickly swept to other counties around the state. These local issue battles are often the most important, have a better chance of success, and motivate the most people to join your group and take action. Local battles can do wonders for recruitment purposes, in addition to winning policy battles. Utilize grassroots petitions, both online and hardcopy, to sign up as many people as possible who share your values and sentiments. Then, you will have a big, local army ready to mobilize at the next city council meeting or county commissioners meeting.

We started relying heavily on sending out e-mail alerts to our contacts about legislation and local politics. For anyone doing this, I recommend keeping the e-mails as professional, fact-filled, and concise as possible. Also, be sure to send them out as sparingly as you can afford so that contacts will not be turned off and consider you a spammer. We had two special elections during the spring and early summer of 2009. Through e-mail we informed our contacts of ways to meet candidates and get involved in the political process. We sent

out candidate questionnaires and shared the answers with our contacts and posted them on our Web site.

—CHRISTIE CARDEN, HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

THE INTERNET

Similar to the FreedomWorks Web site, your chapter's Web site can be an excellent recruitment tool. Be sure to keep the content on your site fresh and current. Also, make sure the contact information for your chapter (such as e-mail address, street address, and phone number) is prominently displayed and accurate. The more interesting and informative your Web site is, the more traffic you will get. This will help you develop an online interest in your chapter and find new volunteers. Be sure to take advantage of the boom in online social media and start a local Facebook group or Ning network. You can also organize on a state level by using teaparty.freedomworks.org. Twitter allows you to post information that is seen by everyone following you. If you build a big following on twitter.com, you will be able to share information with a huge number of people. Many people use a smartphone nowadays and have Twitter and Facebook applications. This is the wave of the future, and all liberty-loving activists should employ these new tools to organize, market their events, and spread the message of liberty.

MEMBERSHIP BROCHURES

For us, this is the FreedomWorks trifold membership brochure and a postage-paid envelope. It is FreedomWorks' stand-alone recruitment piece. Our volunteer chapter leaders receive copies,

and if someone wants to find out more about FreedomWorks, this is what we give to them. The membership brochure provides quick and concise explanations of what FreedomWorks is doing and why we are effective. By getting someone to sign up using the insert, you will accomplish not only the recruitment goal discussed in this section, but you will be well on your way to achieving your fund-raising goals.

PERSONAL CONTACT

Of all the recruitment tactics, FreedomWorks recognizes the personal touch as the most important. When you are selling your local group, what you do, and your effectiveness, don't forget that you play a huge role in whether the person you approach ultimately decides to get involved. Someone is much more likely to join your group and become an active member after having a conversation with you. You might meet potential recruits at the grocery store, your kids' school, church, the post office, a community center, your university, or any other number of places. You should see yourself as a revolutionary missionary for liberty, and see everyone you meet as a potential recruit for the cause of liberty.

What do you say when you mention your group and the person seems receptive to knowing more? You should attest to your group's effectiveness, explain personal experiences, and answer questions. This works much better than simply reading an informational brochure or telling someone to browse the Web site. These other tools are good leave-behinds that can be in more places than you can, but they are no substitute for personal contact. You can bet that of the volunteers you recruit, the best, hardest-working, and most valuable will be the ones you talk to in a personal, one-on-one manner.

FELLOW MEMBER RECRUITMENT

Your best volunteers will act as key recruiters who will help spread the word and lend credibility to your local group. Getting information out about your chapter through word of mouth is effective because of the aforementioned personal touch. Be sure to remind your top officers and chapter members that they have a critical role to play as recruiters for the chapter. It is advisable to set some ambitious goals and then hold one another accountable.

When it comes to recruiting people for your group, there is no simple, all-encompassing set of guidelines. The results all differ depending on individual circumstances. But it is often helpful to see real examples and consider how it has worked in the past.

Group leaders should apply whatever methods seem to work the best in their location.

By concentrating on activism while not being too overbearing in our communication with the folks who have joined us over the last twelve months, we have grown our membership from two friends who were worried about the direction of our country to an organization that now has enough leverage to participate in national events, as well as make changes within the local GOP. This year, for the first time ever in our district, we are having an open primary, a congressional race where the people will once again have a direct say in who will represent them.

—ANA PUIG, BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

8. RETAINING ACTIVISTS

RETAINING THE VOLUNTEERS WHO will become actively involved with your group goes hand-in-hand with recruiting them. Signing people for FreedomWorks and getting them involved with your chapter is great, but if their involvement goes no further than their initial excitement over FreedomWorks, they are less of an asset to your chapter. Retaining volunteers from battle to battle will truly build and strengthen your chapter and FreedomWorks. This section outlines some of the best ways to retain your chapter's volunteers and keep them active in the fight for lower taxes, less government, and more freedom.

CALLS TO ACTION

What FreedomWorks calls a “call to action” is probably the most important component to retaining your chapter's volunteers. This is an action related to a FreedomWorks campaign that gives people something productive to do. It can take the form of a petition, a letter to an elected official, or calling people to get them to attend a rally.

Calls to action keep the members of your chapter engaged and retain them as FreedomWorks volunteers. National issues such as taxes and federal spending will have calls to action sent from the national FreedomWorks office. However, if you feel your chapter needs more to do or there is a specific local issue that you want to work on, let us know. We can help you brainstorm and come up with a variety of useful activities for your chapter and provide the materials and policy expertise to make them successful.

Now everything we do is posted on our Facebook page as well as our Twitter feed. So you can keep informed on the latest call to action there as well. The key is to help us make our calls to action go viral, reaching millions of people in a very short time.

ACTIVIST SPOTLIGHT: RYAN HECKER

When the housing market collapsed, Ryan Hecker was living in Houston, Texas, with his wife and baby. A Harvard-trained lawyer, Hecker has always been a fiscal conservative. Like so many others, he had grown disillusioned with the Republican party in recent years.

“Where was the commitment to big ideas?” he said. “Reagan would not have been content to piddle around with tax credits and deductions. He inspired a new generation of young people to take the big issues head on, not tinker at the edges.”

Ryan remembered reading about the Contract with America in 1994. In high school at the time, he thought it was big and bold. The contract showed commitment to good governance and restraint in government growth. But as the years passed, he realized it came from the top down and was doomed to eventual compromise by career politicians.

So he thought about what he could do to bring back good governance and economic conservatism. “What if we the citizens come up with a contract from America and gave it to the politicians?” he wondered. It was an exciting idea, but how could just one person get that idea out?

After his chance encounter at a rally on February 27, Ryan became a member of the Houston Tea Party Society. Persuaded that he was part of something bigger than he had ever imagined, he decided he was going to try and make a go of his idea for a “Contract from America.” With a few thousand dollars out of his own pocket, Ryan began to build a Web site to

collect ideas from activists. The ideas would be voted on and the top ten would form the contract. It would be a bottom-up, grassroots effort that would lay out the people's priorities. If a legislator wanted to be on the side of the people, they would have an opportunity to embrace a document created by the people.

With little fanfare, Ryan launched his idea on September 4, 2009, to be a place for the policy ideas of a movement.

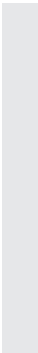
FOLLOW UP, FOLLOW UP, FOLLOW UP

The more you meet with your members, call them, e-mail them, or write them, the more active they will be. For instance, you may meet someone who is interested in your group at a gathering in your community. Make sure to get their contact information and call them in a couple of days to see if they have any questions or if they want to help out with your chapter's latest event.

Any time you receive a contribution for your local FreedomWorks group, make sure you send it to the national office as soon as possible so that we can process it and send your donor a thank-you letter. In addition, FreedomWorks encourages personalized thank-you notes and calls from you. Similar to recruiting, personal contact is critical to retaining people, especially when it comes to donors.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Making sure your chapter always has something to do helps you to be more effective. It is also one of the best ways to retain your



membership and keep them interested and active. While you will constantly be supported by the FreedomWorks national office, always try to focus on local issues as well; examples include petition drives, precinct walks, rallies, and special lobbying visits to the state capital. You will have the greatest success if the members of your chapter view your planned activities as important and a good use of their time.

Planned events also help reinforce the importance of your local group and retain the volunteers you have recruited. Although they often take more time, planning, and expense, events get more attention and can be fun. The FreedomWorks office can also make a policy expert available to speak at one of your chapter meetings or other events. One of the most requested things we do is teach grassroots leadership training seminars around the country. These popular sessions will teach your volunteers how to increase their effectiveness by learning and applying the strategies and tactics of community organizing that have worked for centuries.

NATIONAL RETENTION PROGRAM

While nothing supersedes the importance of the personal relationships that you maintain, know that FreedomWorks has a national retention program that you can depend on to help you retain your chapter members. This program includes products, activities, and services offered by FreedomWorks to keep the volunteers in your chapter engaged.

Depending on the level of involvement of your chapter members, they will receive various materials and have the opportunity

to participate in events throughout the year. Some of these include:

Reports and updates about what FreedomWorks is doing and what is going on in their state and in Washington, D.C.

FreedomWorks policy papers

Invitations to special FreedomWorks events

The opportunity to participate in strategy calls

A variety of different calls to action including petition drives, get-out-the-vote efforts, and contact-your-legislator campaigns

When it comes to retention, nothing can replace the volunteer group leader as the consistent, on-the-ground presence for your chapter. However, the national retention program should complement your efforts to keep your volunteers engaged and ready for the next fight.

9. FUND-RAISING

ONE OF THE HARDEST tasks that you will encounter as a group leader will be the role you play as a fund-raiser for your chapter. The tireless energy needed to fuel your grassroots efforts will get you far, but you will need money. Many of the various activities

and events that your chapter will engage in require funding in addition to planning and hard work for them to be successful.

The national FreedomWorks office will assist you in covering costs where we can, but raising money specifically for your chapter will further enhance and expand its scope of activities and events. As a result, FreedomWorks offers the following tips to help get you started toward successfully raising funds for your chapter.

HAVE A FUND-RAISING GOAL

Working with the FreedomWorks national office, establish a realistic fund-raising goal and physically outline how you plan to get there in the form of a brief fund-raising plan. Periodically, discuss your plan during your conversations with the FreedomWorks' national office. FreedomWorks can help you figure out what is working with your plan and what needs to be adjusted.

CREATE LISTS

As you get started looking at who you think would be likely donors to your chapter, start to create lists. Begin with those people you know and create a list of friends, family, church members, business acquaintances, members of service clubs, and so on, who know you. Draw from sources such as Christmas card lists, Rolodexes, and address books. Upon doing this, create two categories, ideological- and issue-based, and classify your prospective donors as one or the other. Your ideological list will comprise the donors who will give because they understand FreedomWorks and our mission, what our

long-term goals are, and why it is important for your chapter to succeed. Issue-based donors will most likely be businesses that have a stake in the issue that you are working on at the time. After you have created your lists, you can then begin to form a plan of attack.

MAIL OUTREACH

Fund-raising through the mail can be a great revenue source, but it is also very tricky. The components that make fund-raising through the mail successful are generally involved, expensive, and based on volume, so you will probably not be using this tactic as a primary source of fund-raising for your chapter. But you should still be on the lookout for issues that have wide-reaching impact and could make a good fund-raising letter. In some instances, the FreedomWorks national office could be able to put a budget together to help you mail on such an issue. In addition, lists that include donors to other organizations and/or campaigns are key to acquire in the event that a mailing opportunity arises.

ACTIVIST SPOTLIGHT: TOM GAITENS

To Tom Gaitens, the Constitution is more than just a document; it is the spirit of the nation. “I don’t understand someone who spends years as an academic to become a ‘constitutional scholar.’ The document is four pages, just read the thing and you understand exactly what the founders laid out for this nation.”

During the TARP debate, Tom was busy organizing demonstrations outside both Republican and Democrat offices. “The politicians were desperate to do something, even though what they were doing was the wrong

thing. Without a second thought, they will spend a trillion dollars of other people's money if it gives them the political cover of 'doing something.' The immediate impact of the stimulus bill was to make Congress feel better about their reelection prospects. That's a hell of a price tag for making 435 congressmen feel better. I wonder if they are so careless with their own money."

Tom organized an activist training session in Tampa at the end of January 2009. He focused on how President Obama used grassroots tactics to win caucus states and beat Hillary Clinton's political machine. Tom talked about the importance of holding both Democrats and Republicans accountable at all levels of government. One of the people in the audience was Mary Rakovich.

"TARP was the spark and the stimulus package was the gasoline," Tom explained. "When Santelli went on his rant, we were ready. For people like me working to get activists involved in the process, it all came together. I feel like this is a second American Revolution. We're ready to rediscover the importance of personal and economic freedom and not a moment too late."

TELEPHONE CAMPAIGNS

This is the primary tool you will use to reach out to the people on the lists you have created. Depending on those you are calling and how well you know them, you might feel more comfortable at first just talking about your group, how you have taken on the responsibility of a group leader and created a chapter in the area, and what you are trying to accomplish. Then you can ask the prospective donor if he or she would like to set up a meeting to talk more about how they can help and get involved. During that

meeting make your fund-raising pitch or ask the person to join your advisory committee. Make sure before your meeting that you make use of the fund-raising experts in FreedomWorks' national office. They can help you better prepare for the meeting and work out your "pitch" to the prospective donor.

DEVELOP AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In many of the states that FreedomWorks has been actively involved on the ground, the advisory committee approach to fund-raising has proven quite effective. An advisory committee consists of a group of people (including members of the business community, prominent individuals, and other active persons) within the community whose responsibility it is either to give themselves or to solicit gifts for your chapter, generally in person. Make a list of the individuals you feel would be good candidates for your chapter's advisory committee and the possible chairs and cochairs. When you approach prospective members, be sure to stress the importance of your chapter and its work, but also be specific about what you expect from them. You have a goal, and the members of your advisory committee should be committed to helping you reach it.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Included here are all breakfasts, lunches, dinners, barbecues, wine and cheese receptions, birthday parties, house parties, raffles, and other functions that can help you raise money for your group. In your fund-raising plan think about the kinds of events that you want to have throughout the year, how many you want (or think





From the stage at the Washington, D.C., Tax Day Tea Party on April 15, 2010. *Photo by Terry Kibbe*

you will need), and when you want to have them and then draw up a quick time line or calendar. This will discipline you into making sure that these events are held.

Remember that these events are different from others your chapter will engage in because the primary goal is fund-raising, not impacting policy or drawing a crowd. Keep your costs as low as possible; no higher than 20 percent of the amount you hope to raise. It is key to use your imagination and not your checkbook to make these events memorable; examples abound in our various state chapters of successful low-cost fund-raisers. In North Carolina, selling tickets to rocking chair raffles, hot dog dinners, and

pancake breakfasts have all yielded positive results. In Alabama, a series of barbecues raised money, captured media attention, and promoted the chapter within the state. In all cases, the events first attracted people and raised funds because they were centered around specific issues, but had additional value because participants got to know FreedomWorks and became familiar with the local group.

ONLINE FUND-RAISING

The wave of the future in fund-raising for grassroots groups is online donations. Online donations can be in the form of e-mail solicitations that direct people to our Web site, “money bombs” to raise a lot of money in the same day, a static donation button on our Web site, and fund-raising campaigns for a specific event or effort. FreedomWorks has had the most success by asking for various amounts of money that appeal to a broad cross section of society. We will ask for as little as \$5 and as much as \$5,000 online. The key is to convince potential supporters that we are fighting hard for the liberty movement and that their money will be well spent and not wasted.

If you plan to help us raise money online or raise money directly for your local group, the same rules and best practices apply. And utilizing online tools for fund-raising is one of the easiest, quickest ways to support your efforts. A group that does not take online donations is missing the boat and should immediately open up a PayPal account to start accepting funds.

We have a Web site and made an agreement with our Web page designer and host to provide their services at no cost in

exchange for our promotion of their companies. To date, their services are easily valued at over \$5,000. We also have a similar agreement with a flag supplier, who donates a small portion of his sales to our organization. We do have a line of T-shirts, bumper stickers, and other assorted patriotic items that are available for purchase.

I have personally asked family, friends, and all in attendance at any of our events or speaking engagements to donate what they can. This has amounted to approximately \$3,000. It is explained to them that we are willing and able to fight this fight, but it is the funding that enables us to do so. Some of our donations have come in denominations as small as \$5 and some as much as a few hundred. We have even had a congressman make a donation to the cause. Most people cite the tight economy as their reason for not donating or for donating so little.

—GREG FETTIG, HOOSIER PATRIOTS