

High schoolers consider politics from new angle

By Kenneth Partridge
Staff Reporter

Speaking last week at a meeting of Greenwich High School's "Democrats, Republicans and Everything in Between" club, Greenwich congressional hopeful Phil Maymin gave students a primer on Libertarian theory.

For the club, which includes members with a variety of political leanings, it was a chance to discuss hot-button issues with someone outside the two-party system.

"It's common to say 'left' and 'right,'" said Mr. Maymin, who, along with Democrat Diane Farrell, is challenging incumbent Rep. Christopher Shays for

Connecticut's 4th District seat in the United States House of Representatives. "That's not really the whole picture."

He said Libertarians such as himself aren't centrists, as some people wrongly believe, but rather occupy a space "above" the traditional right-left political spectrum, favoring both economic and social liberties.

"The whole point of government is to secure your freedoms," Mr. Maymin said, explaining that his party is against the government using tax money for anything not directly related to security.

He applied this principle to a number of current-events issues, answering questions from students on Iran, disaster relief and international conflicts, among others.

Junior Ryan Fazio questioned Maymin on how to deal with Iran's nuclear ambitions, taking some issue with the candidate's reluctance to use pre-emptive military action, even as the Middle Eastern nation continues to fund terrorism around the world.

Mr. Maymin said the number of deaths caused by terrorism over the last several decades has been relatively small, and that an invasion of Iran should occur only if the country develops the capability to launch an attack



Phil Maymin, Libertarian candidate for Congress, addressed teens at a political club meeting last week.

— Kenneth Partridge photo

against the United States.

"[Terrorism deaths are] always unfortunate deaths, but that doesn't necessarily justify sending hundreds of thousands of troops," Mr. Maymin said.

He said he doesn't support economic sanctions, either, since free trade can be a way of keeping nations from going to war with each other.

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even going to the country and taking direct action to stop the bloodshed.

He likened aid money sent by the American government to "theft," since it's taken from taxpayers and redistributed without consent.

"There is no morality there," he said.

After the meeting, Ryan said he found Mr. Maymin's presentation informative, even if his own

Democrat Ned Lamont.

He said since the group has such a diverse membership, it's more about the act of intelligently debating issues than pressing anyone to defend their personal beliefs.

"It's really a good mix," he said. "We have people representing every idea in the club."

Co-president Zach Sims agreed. A moderate Democrat, he says left-leaning students don't

GREENWICH POST
22 West Putnam Ave., Suite 18
Greenwich, CT 06830

USPS #022-574
Published weekly
Periodicals Postage Rates Paid
at Greenwich, CT 06830.

Postmaster: Please send
address changes to
Greenwich Post, 22 West
Putnam Ave.,
Greenwich, CT 06830.

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He said he doesn't support
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ing nations from going to war
with each other.

“Why are we not worried about
Canada?” he asked. “Because we
have so many cultural and eco-
nomic ties with them.”

Turning to how the govern-
ment should handle disasters like
Hurricane Katrina, Mr. Maymin
said he's against the idea of tak-
ing money from taxpayers in one
state and giving it to victims in
another.

He said people should have
freedom to donate money if they
wish, and that there are plenty
of nonprofit organizations able
to provide the kind of services
the government bumbled in New
Orleans.

“Private organizations are effi-
cient,” he said. “Government
doesn't have anything; it takes
from everyone else.”

He used a similar argument
for situations such as the current
genocide in Darfur. He said that
if people feel a moral obligation
to help, they should. Nothing is
stopping them writing checks or

even going to the country and
taking direct action to stop the
bloodshed.

He likened aid money sent
by the American government to
“theft,” since it's taken from tax-
payers and redistributed without
consent.

“There is no morality there,”
he said.

After the meeting, Ryan said
he found Mr. Maymin's presenta-
tion informative, even if his own
views differ slightly.

“I agree with most of the things
he said,” said Ryan, who identi-
fies with Libertarian ideals yet
labels himself an “objectivist.”
“It's refreshing to see a candidate
who believes in freedom inextric-
ably.”

Junior Eftyichis Gregos, co-
president of the club, which was
founded last year, said he asked
Mr. Maymin to speak precisely
because he wanted students to
hear an unfamiliar political view-
point.

“There are a lot of kids that are
politically illiterate out there,”
he said.

Eftyichis, a self-professed
moderate Republican unhappy
with some of his party's recent
dealings, said the club has also
extended speaking invitations
to Mr. Shays and Ms. Farrell,
as well as Sen. Joe Lieberman
and his challenger, Greenwich

Democrat Ned Lamont.

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such a diverse membership, it's
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“It's really a good mix,” he
said. “We have people represent-
ing every idea in the club.”

Co-president Zach Sims
agreed. A moderate Democrat, he
says left-leaning students don't
run the show, as some might
expect.

Democrats and
Republicans continue to polarize
the country.

“A lot of his views on the inter-
national crisis are very poignant,”
Xander said. “I think there needs
to be a middle ground somewhere
between the points of view of the
two parties we have now.”

“I think America is primed
for a third-party candidate,” he
added. “I think this guy has a
chance.”

Eftyichis said he also sees the
benefits of bringing more parties
into the fray.

“America wasn't founded on
a two-party system,” he said.
“That's why it's great to get
someone like Mr. Maymin.”

He said he simply wants his
classmates to graduate from GHS
with a basic understanding of
politics, especially since many
could one day find themselves in
positions of power.

“These people are, in a sense,
going to be the next generation
of economists and business lead-
ers,” he said. “You can't have
people with that much money not
knowing how things work.”

Greenwich Library group heading to Old Lyme

The Friends of the Greenwich Library invite those interested
on a trip to the Florence Griswold Museum in the heart of Old
Lyme, Wednesday, Nov. 1.

The group will visit the newly restored Griswold House and
the gallery's renowned collection of American Impressionists,
as well as the Lyme Academy of Fine Arts and the Cooley
Gallery.

Lunch will be at the Bee and Thistle Inn. The cost is \$65 for
Friends and \$75 for nonmembers.

The bus will leave the rear parking lot of the Greenwich
Library at 9 a.m. and return at approximately 5:30.

Reservations may be made by calling 622-7938.

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Co-president Zach Sims agreed. A moderate Democrat, he says left-leaning students don't

"I really don't see us as an overpowering group in the club," he said.

Zach said the club was founded as a way to get kids more involved in politics. Next week, it will sponsor a "rock the vote" campaign, during which volunteers will hand out campaign literature and distribute voter-registration forms to students older than 18.

"This is probably one of the most important midterm elections of our time," Eftychis said.

Club member Xander Fraum said Mr. Maymin's stance has some attractive elements, particularly as Democrats and Republicans continue to polarize the country.

"A lot of his views on the international crisis are very poignant," Xander said. "I think there needs to be a middle ground somewhere between the points of view of the two parties we have now."

"I think America is primed for a third-party candidate," he added. "I think this guy has a chance."

Eftychis said he also sees the benefits of bringing more parties into the fray.

"America wasn't founded on a two-party system," he said. "That's why it's great to get someone like Mr. Maymin."

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