

Andrea Millen Rich

October 26, 2018

It has been hard to find the words to express my sense of loss upon the passing of Andrea Millen Rich, one of the sweetest, most glamorous, and toughest champions of liberty I have ever had the privilege to know. Fortunately, the Cato Institute has produced a beautiful short video in which many of her good friends pay tribute to her achievements, explaining why they benefited so much from their relationships with her.

For many years Andrea was the proprietor of Laissez Faire Books. She also played an important role in the early years of the Libertarian Party, among other things helping to develop the excellent Clark for President television ads in 1980.



And I will certainly never forget Andrea's help when I faced prison for refusing to register for the draft, in my early twenties. She was there in my corner — bringing me to New York to speak.

Many in the video tribute speak glowingly of Andrea's wisdom, candor (or "crankiness"), generosity, and ability to bring people together.

Tom Palmer observes that the lives of people all over the world "have been shaped in a positive way by Andrea. I think she was, globally, one of most important libertarian leaders of the last hundred years."

Jim Powell, David Boaz, Ed Crane, Chris Edwards and

Ian Vásquez discuss the role of Laissez Faire Books — with tough negotiator Andrea at the helm — in getting great libertarian books into the hands of people who would have had ready access to them in no other way. The situation has changed, now, in this age of the Internet and Amazon. But in the 1980s and 1990s, Laissez Faire Books — and the enthusiastic and illuminating way its wares were promoted by editors like Roy Childs and Jim Powell — was a lifeline for many friends of liberty.

Sandy Gelfond, Chris Hocker, Anita Anderson and others remember what a loving team Howie and Andrea Rich always were. They had met while working in the Libertarian Party in the early 70s and soon married. "Howie and Andrea always seemed like a perfect, perfect pair," says Peter Goettler, "and seemed to have such a close and happy partnership. It's inspiring to the rest of us."

I can testify to that, having had the honor of working with Howie Rich for most of my adult life — as can my sister, Kathleen Jacob Wikstrom, who wore more than one hat at Laissez Faire Books and worked closely with Andrea for many years. And I will certainly never forget Andrea's help when I faced prison for refusing to register for the draft, in my early twenties. She was there in my corner — bringing me to New York to speak.

During my lifetime, I have been lucky to know many inspiring people fighting for our freedom. Andrea Millen Rich will long inspire.

This is Common Sense. Thank you, Andrea.