Region 6 Report - April 15-16, 2017 Pittsburgh LNC Meeting

Submitted April 13, 2016 by David Pratt Demarest, LNC Region 6 Representative

***FREEDOM, Nothing More, Nothing Less***

# Summary

The big news in Region 6 is ballot access progress in Iowa and Nebraska.

The Iowa state convention in Johnston on March 25th featured an award to Chair Keith Laube and the Libertarian Party of Iowa to celebrate their major party status officially achieved on March 1, 2017. Iowa Libertarians, led by newly elected Chair James Schneider, Executive Director Jake Porter and a dynamic slate of officers, district coordinators and committee members, will participate in primaries for the first time in 2018.

Nebraska Senator Laura Ebke, the highest ranking Libertarian public official in the nation, introduced her priority bill to add a 10,000-registered-voter threshold as an additional means of maintaining major party status. Unanimous committee and first reading votes have paved the way for Laura’s bill to become law pending expected success on the second reading vote. This will allow Nebraskans to focus on Laura’s reelection bid and an expanded slate of grassroots candidates in 2018.

Congratulations to Illinois on a successful 2017 state convention highlighted by Larry Sharpe’s keynote speech and election of several new officers.

Minnesota will reelect all executive committee members at their state convention on April 29th.

Wisconsin will hold an exciting convention and retreat on April 21st featuring Nick Sarwark as keynote speaker.

North Dakota has elected Marty Riske as chair and a new slate of officers.

Laura Ebke will be the keynote speaker at the LPSOUTHDAKOTA state convention on July 22nd in Sioux Falls.

Missouri continues to inspire us with a passionate expression of core Libertarian values.

# Illinois

Lex Green

Chair LPILLINOIS

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Although new memberships haven’t kept pace with 2016, we are still seeing high numbers of people joining the party. County chapters have been developing in counties where there has been no activity before, so we are taking steps to support the growth there. We are also focusing on more robust support of existing chapters. Volunteerism remains at its highest level ever, with 22 of our 32 positions on our Board of Directors filled.

The annual convention took place on April 7th and 8th, with Larry Sharpe present as our keynote speaker. Larry’s presence went well beyond the role of speaker as he held impromptu sessions with dozens of interested attendees. Attendance was better than it had been in recent memory, with 90 attendees, and even more guests. During the business meeting a bylaws revision was passed that sets the stage for a larger grassroots activism base. A new Board of Directors manual was also put in place that solidifies the direction and purpose of our volunteer activities. We also elected a representative for the national Platform Committee and an alternate.

We invited candidates for the 2018 November election to speak at the convention as well. We had three declared candidates for Governor, one for Secretary of State and one for Controller give speeches. The early campaigning by quality candidates gives us hope for more effective campaigns and greater acceptance of our message of hope for the citizens of Illinois.

The April 4th elections were a big boost for the Libertarian Party. We elected 6 new Libertarians to local office and 4 more got re-elected. There are four others previously elected that remain in office.

# Iowa

James Schneider

LPIA Chair

**Iowa Achieves Official Major Party Status on March 1, 2017**

 The Libertarian Party of Iowa’s first quarter primarily consisted of filing paperwork with the Secretary of State’s office to become a recognized major party and working with corresponding state offices to make sure we will comply with election law.  We were warmly welcomed by all offices we met with and made invaluable contacts.

 Our state convention was held on March 25th.  It was one of our highest attended conventions with 70 people in attendance.  The business portion of the meeting went smoothly considering we had a significant overhaul of our Constitution and Bylaws to comply with our new party status.  We will now be participating in our state’s primary elections, which changed the way we select candidates and our timelines.  We saw significant turnover on our state leadership team.  9 of the 12 positions saw a change with either an existing leader moving up, or from new people from the last cycle looking to take on more responsibility.  The new leadership team will have an increased focus on candidate support and training, as well as boosting registered voters to take advantage of the primary election.

To maintain our party status, we will need to receive 2% at top of ticket in every general election.  Finding quality candidates to run for Governor in 2018 is our highest priority for candidate recruitment.  At this time, we have one candidate that has stated he will be running and is putting together a team.  He received 4% in his race for US Senate last year, and is confident he could get us over the 2% to maintain party status.  He plans on making a formal announcement within the next two months.  We also have a former GOP state legislator that has stated “I am inclined to run as a Libertarian”.  She has been one of the GOP’s biggest critics in the state and is a regular on many popular conservative talk radio stations.  She has a following of her own, and would significantly boost our registration numbers in a contested primary situation.  We are also close to locking in another longtime party member who is a Professor at one of the major universities.  Aside from top ticket candidates, we have verbal commitments from 43 people to run for state legislative offices in 2018. We will be doing district analysis on these potential candidates and will attempt to divert resources and volunteers into areas where we have the best chances of winning or making a significant impact.

#  Minnesota

Chris Dock

Chair LPMN

The biggest thing we have going right now in the Libertarian Party of Minnesota is preparations for our State Convention on April 29. Here is a link to our convention information:

<https://www.lpmn.org/2017-lpmn-state-convention/>

All our Executive Committee positions are up for re-election this year. We have moved from one-year to two-year terms. It should be an exciting business session for us this year!

LPMN is interested in attending and participating as speakers in the upcoming super-regional New Year’s weekend Roads to Liberty Un-Convention in Omaha and look forward to hearing more details in the coming months.

# Missouri

Bill Slantz

Chair LPMO

LPMO report provided courtesy of Sean O’Toole, LNC Region 6 Alternate:

Quoting the inspiring LPMO statement of principle from their December, 2016 report:

“We, the members of the Libertarian Party, challenge the cult of the omnipotent state and defend the rights of the individual.

We hold that all individuals have the right to exercise sole dominion over their own lives, and have the right to live in whatever manner they choose, so long as they do not forcibly interfere with the equal right of others to live in whatever manner they choose.

Governments throughout history have regularly operated on the opposite principle, that the State has the right to dispose of the lives of individuals and the fruits of their labor. Even within the United States, all political parties other than our own grant to government the right to regulate the lives of individuals and seize the fruits of their labor without their consent.

We, on the contrary, deny the right of any government to do these things, and hold that where governments exist, they must not violate the rights of any individual: namely, (1) the right to life--accordingly we support the prohibition of the initiation of physical force against others; (2) the right to liberty of speech and action--accordingly we oppose all attempts by government to abridge the freedom of speech and press, as well as government censorship in any form; and (3) the right to property--accordingly we oppose all government interference with private property, such as confiscation, nationalization, and eminent domain, and support the prohibition of robbery, trespass, fraud, and misrepresentation.

Since governments, when instituted, must not violate individual rights, we oppose all interference by government in the areas of voluntary and contractual relations among individuals. People should not be forced to sacrifice their lives and property for the benefit of others. They should be left free by government to deal with one another as free traders; and the resultant economic system, the only one compatible with the protection of individual rights, is the free market.”

# Nebraska

Scott Zimmerman
Chair LPNE

State Senator Laura Ebke, the highest ranking Libertarian public official in the nation, introduced LB34 as her priority bill to add a 10,000-registered-voter threshold as an additional means of maintaining major party status. LB34 has advanced from committee on a 6 to 0 vote. The 30 to 0 vote on first reading paved the way for LB34 to become law pending a favorable vote on second reading. This will allow the LPNE to refocus on three ambitious goals. First, get Laura reelected in 2018. Second, maintain and add to our registered voter count of 12,000 that that just passed 1% of total registered voters. Third, build a challenging slate of grassroots Libertarian candidates in 2018.

District 1, led by Michael Knebel, District 1 Coordinator, is celebrating the formation of seven new county affiliates. Lancaster County voted in a new chair and vice-chair. Sarpy and Douglas counties have taken the lead on the outreach with a fun and successful Habitat for Humanity event. We have held multiple family events and game nights, as well as candidate recruitment activities. Nathan Porrata, Sarpy County Chair, has been appointed as Volunteer Coordinator for the LPNE and is busy organizing more communication for all county leadership.

District 2, with Joe Hedlund as District 2 Coordinator, has created a new but very active Douglas County affiliate (DCLP). After just two preliminary meetings, we elected a dynamic board. Joe Hawk was elected Chair is doing a tremendous job. Also elected were Vice-Chair Alaric Daily, Secretary Maggie Austgen, Treasurer Nick Heesch and Outreach Director Caleb Reuting.

In January, the DCLP revised and approved their by-laws. Roberts Rules were implemented as the standard for all future meetings and Joe Hawk runs the meetings like clockwork. In February, we welcomed Heather Frederick as our Membership Director. The DCLP is setting up future events to promote to promote and expand their outreach.  In March, we welcomed Jeremy Frederick as our Communications Director. Jeremy introduced protocol to minimize trolls on our Facebook page and other Social Media outlets. In April the DCLP joined other Nebraska Libertarians in a Habitat for Humanity event to showcase our community volunteerism.

District 3 Coordinator Ben Backus, recently elected to the Gering City Council, held training sessions with on Nation Builder and that has resulted in higher utilization levels. Ben Backus and Michael have collaborated on producing a series of podcasts that has gained popularity with a large audience. Contributors include Dustin Hobbs, Cassie Loseke, Maggie Austgen, Adam Weinberg, Scott Zimmerman, Laura Ebke, Jared Hall, Zak Hookstra, and Drew Hepler.

# North Dakota

Marty Riske

Chair LPNORTHDAKOTA

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North Dakota information was provided by Roland Riemers, Immediate Past Region 6 Representative:

On April 8th, North Dakota held a statewide meeting in Bismarck to elect new officers. Eric Olsen temporarily filled the gap after Tony Mangnall retired as chair. Marty Risky, a former chair, was elected as our new state chair. A full set of state officers was elected and immediately discussed plans for the 2018 election as well as updates to our state bylaws. The new leadership is highly computer-literate. A new set of bylaws was introduced that that we would be willing to share with other states that want to update their bylaws.

North Dakota is pushing national membership, and contributing another $10 for state membership. Confederation did not work to well for our founders, as independent states running amok does not a country make.

Roland Riemers was appointed by Marty as the state representative to the LNC and was also appointed as a non-voting member of the executive committee to facilitate information flow between state and national. To the best of Roland’s knowledge, this is the first time a state party has delegated that responsibility to ensure state and national communication.

North Dakota has also started a search for statewide candidates for 2018, as well focusing on legislative districts with high Libertarian vote tallies. Districts are going to beat the bushes for strong Libertarian legislative candidates. An offer was made to help finance the cost of one of our young members to attend the next national convention so that ND can encourage young people to get involved in the state Libertarian Party.

# *South Dakota*

Sean Metz

LPSOUTHDAKOTA West River At Large

LPSD State Convention will be Saturday, July 22 at 7:00 PM CT at Monk's House of Ale Repute in Sioux Falls, SD:

* Laura Ebke will be the featured speaker. Senator Ebke represents the 32nd District of Nebraska as a registered Libertarian.
* The convention will be live-streamed for those who are unable to attend. Questions will also be answered via social media.

Minnehaha County LP will participate in the 2017 Big Sioux River Greenway Cleanup event on Saturday, April 22 to spruce up the community park.

Kudos to South Dakota on their continuing their rebuilding effort and statewide county affiliate creation campaign. We look forward to reporting more details on South Dakota’s rebuilding progress as they become available.

# *Wisconsin*

Phillip Anderson

Acting Chair LPWI

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The Libertarian Party of Wisconsin achieved record vote totals in 2016 including new standards for U.S. Senate and Congress plus a State Assembly candidate who surpassed 30%!

County affiliates are up from 4 to 10, with more than 15 currently being formed. The Dane County affiliate that includes Madison has over 40 members and continues to grow and thrive. The 2016 election cycle helped LPWI build membership and inspired many to join local affiliates and run for office.

Our state convention is April 21-23 in the city of Tomahawk. Nick Sarwark will be the keynote speaker. Marquette University Professor of Economics Joseph Daniels will also speak as well as popular radio show host Glenn Klein. Speakers and party members will lead workshops on how to form and grow local affiliates, run for office, and make the best use of social media and other modern technology outreach tools.

LPWI continues to grow, thrive, spread liberty across the state, and help Wisconsin’s citizens recognize and fight the growing scourge of coercive government!

Taxation is Theft!