

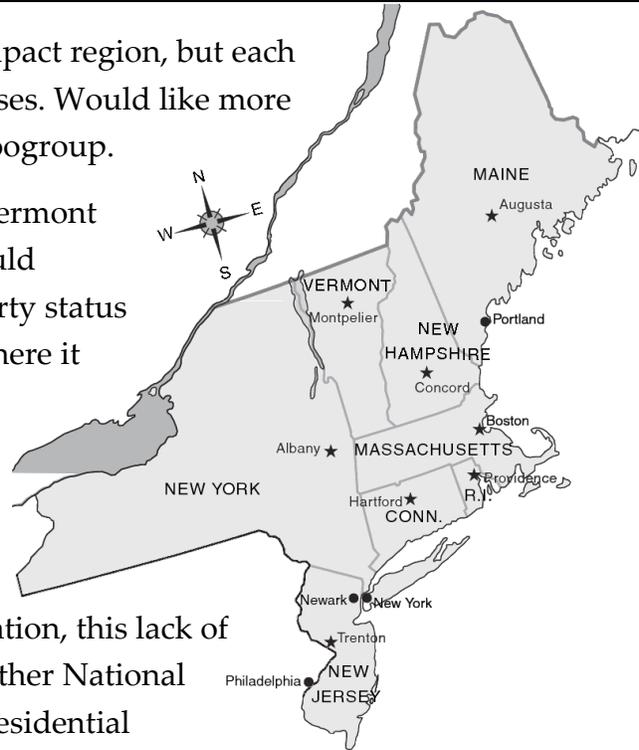
# Region 8 Report

This is the most geographically compact region, but each state has very different politics and processes. Would like more members to subscribe to the *LP\_8new* yahoo group.

Heading into 2014 elections, only Vermont had reliable ballot access. Petitioning would either be eliminated or become easier if party status were obtained, except in Massachusetts where it would become more difficult.

Coming out of the election, there were no changes to statewide ballot access despite some early positive news.

Given the timing of the 2016 convention, this lack of ballot access will require resources from either National or the presidential campaign to put our presidential nominee on the ballot in some of the states.



We got a lot of snow. A lot. That made doing much of anything that didn't involve shoveling difficult. There are preliminary talks of a regional event, location will be determined by which states want to participate.

Recent events of interest:

- » Start of Maine voter registration drive
- » New Hampshire convention – March 7, Manchester
- » NH Liberty Forum – March 5–8, Manchester
- » New Jersey convention – March 21, Hightstown

Upcoming events:

- » New York convention – April 25, Rochester
- » Seacoast Freedom Summit – April TBA, Seabrook
- » PorcFest – June 21–28, Lancaster, NH



## Holding Steady

The LPCT currently has two elected officials. All races in Connecticut are partisan.

## Future Growth

The LPCT is engaged in a major fundraising effort with the hope of raising seed money to hire a part-time employee. We have sent letters to 1,500 people. In January, we will launch an email fundraiser for the purpose of funding the 2015 local races—the goal is to raise enough money to place all endorsed candidates on the ballot with paid petitioners, and to provide all candidates with a website, professional photograph and brochure.

## Ballot Access

The Libertarian Party of Connecticut, in conjunction with the Green Party and Our America Initiative, is engaged in ongoing efforts to lobby the state legislature for better ballot access laws and the inclusion of all registration-qualified parties on the voter registration form. Volunteers are needed for this effort, please contact Joshua Katz to help.

## Volunteer Opportunities

We are currently encouraging members and interested people to attend local meetings and consider running in this year's municipal elections.

There are current vacancies on the Bylaws Committee and the Outreach Committee. Activists are also needed to participate in planning efforts for the 2015 municipal elections. We are also seeking candidates for local office in 2015.

The legislative session began on February 7. Volunteers are needed to check the list of bills on a weekly basis and report any of particular interest to Libertarians.

Another way to become a Libertarian public official is by seeking appointment to a local board or commission. Many towns have vacancies on several boards. If you find a vacancy in your town you are interested in, please contact Joshua Katz to seek a partisan endorsement.

## Appearances

LPCT Chairman Joshua Katz spoke at the Alt Expo breakout during the *NH Liberty Forum* about Health Care Autonomy. He outlined his and his family's experience dealing with government rules and regulations.





## **Social Media**

The LPME Facebook page has more than 980 likes, a 50%+ improvement since last year.

## **Voter Registration Drive**

Maine LP submitted a letter of intent to form a political party and it has been accepted by the Secretary of State of Maine. However official notification went out in January. Although this is only a small step it is a significant milestone with the current mood of the state. I am cautiously optimistic for the LPME in 2015.

Maine is still digging out of winter but we do plan on beginning our ballot registration drive in April. The plan is to get 5000 people to register as Libertarians so we can get official party status.

We have until December 2015 to register 5,000 Maine residents to be on the 2016 ballot. We will need an additional 5,000 for a total of 10,000 to maintain party status. With the help of Scott Kohlhaas we will have the necessary funds to accomplish the short term goal of 5000 if not the entire 10,000. If successful Maine will not require any funds for ballot access on the next nor any other election cycle.

A small set back is that we will not have Libertarian printed on the registration cards since we are a "qualifying party". So we will have to check the other box and write in Libertarian. But once we are a qualified party, we'll have our own line in the cards.

## **Our Other Initiatives**

I am also planning on petitioning for rank choice voting and a state wide marijuana initiative simultaneously. No details yet on these.

## **Legislative Efforts**

On the legislative side we have teamed up with the green party to support LD507 which will open the primary petitioning requirement to unenrolled, making it easier for third party candidates to run for office.



## General Activity

The Massachusetts State Committee is experiencing changes in membership. Libertarian Don Graham has been added to the State Committee and appointed as the IT Facilitator. The State Web pages have had some exotic difficulties and are being relocated.

We have a lot of local candidates who have at least some libertarian leanings, including some very-long-time members running for local office. Most local offices in Massachusetts are non-partisan, so many voters will not see obvious signs of our party.

So soon as state web pages are completely re-established, we will be launching a fund drive to support in-state political activity, and a targeted electronic fund drive to raise money for 2016 Presidential ballot access.

## Political Strategy

Party Chair George Phillipis posted an analysis of the four political strategies used by the various parties in MA, with the attendant costs for each for the smaller parties. Our strategy is to build up a serious base across Massachusetts, run candidates for offices where petitioning can be handled in a effective way, and actually become a major party as opposed to having the Secretary of the Commonwealth give us a shiny badge that on the front says "major party" but has printed on the back side "please ignore the anvil we have just chained around your neck". With that strategy, we are recruiting more and more candidates for local and higher office. We are advancing to set up local organizations of libertarians, people who all know each other and know for whole they are willing to work. More important, local organizations are people who will ask each other to run for office and promise to support the candidates when they do run.

## Vote Nolympics! Vote Libertarian!

Eminent domain for private gain is the mark of the beast that our federal government has been turned into a proprietary tool of the corporate plutocratic interests who see the purpose of government as to rewrite the rules in their personal favor. Thus, during the financial crisis of the Great Recession, individuals in deep debt because of home mortgages were left to their fates. Banks with deep debt because of irresponsible and incompetent management were given vast bailouts so that they would stay in active business.

Now we see a future public pain of eminent domain being brought to Massachusetts, not for private gain but for circus entertainment for the world's billionaires. Almost every modern Olympics has devastated local property, and left taxpayers with a bill in the billions.

Hopefully the good thrifty Yankee people of Massachusetts will realize that Olympic looting for private entertainment is unacceptable. The Olympic Games should be shipped permanently back to where it came from, beautiful Mediterranean Greece. Reusing the same facilities will be vastly cheaper. Besides, the people of Greece, having been looted by German bankers, could really use the money.



## **Lawsuit**

With the NHCLU we are suing the state in Federal court over the latest change to the law to make life harder for third party and independent candidates. This one wiped out 2/3 of the time we have to complete a party-wide petition with no corresponding reduction in the number of signatures, effectively making the task impossible. We found a very favorable precedent from Rhode Island for nearly the same situation. The case was featured at the annual *Bill of Rights* dinner in October. We've gotten some favorable press about it.

The state made a motion to dismiss. It was denied. We're in discovery now. Our thanks to the staff at LPHQ for providing needed records. Our answers to the state's interrogatories are due April 1<sup>st</sup>, followed by depositions in mid-April, with briefs for summary judgement on April 17<sup>th</sup>. We expect a decision by June. Our lead attorney, Gilles Bissonette of the NHCLU, has done a great job for us. It has taken up a lot of our time and energy.

## **Convention**

After logistics and a hectic work schedule, our convention got pushed to March 7<sup>th</sup>. We tried to have it as part of Liberty Forum but they were not accomodating so had to find our own space. The main business was electing new officers and deciding on a plan for the next year. The officers elected are: Rich Tomasso as Chair, Daryl Perry as Vice Chair, Tom Kershaw as Treasurer, Brian Chabot as Membership Director, and John Babiarz as Judicial Committee Chair. We approved several updates to our party bylaws and constitution. We will have another regular convention near the end of the year. Our next board meeting is April 6<sup>th</sup>.

## **General and Future Activity**

We established a Platform Committee with the mission to propose a state-level platform for members to consider at our next general convention.

The legislative session started in January, with bills on everything from asset forfeiture, ballot access, cutting taxes, school funding and more. A sizeable bi-partisan liberty caucus is in the statehouse now, so we have lots of friendly legislators to work with. I expect we'll make the most progress on fiscal and regulatory issues for the coming session. The NH House passed simple marijuana decrim, and rejected REAL-ID again. A ballot access reform bill proposed by Max Abramson failed. An amendment to address the committee's concerns was proposed but none of the committee reps sponsored it. We'll try again next year.

A few interested candidates for 2016 have come forward.

Plans are in the works the next Seacoast Liberty Expo in April in Seabrook.

## **Social Networks and Website**

Coming out of convention we have a team ready to revamp the website! Our Facebook Group has 630 members, our Page has 350 Likes. We have 1112 Twitter followers @LPNH.



## Going to Youtube

Patrick McKnight recorded a video message on Youtube highlighting the success of the NJLP. Our vote totals are growing. While the D's and R's lost more than 1% of their registered voters, our numbers grew by more than 8% in 2014. We are the *only* growing party. That's for a reason, we're not career politicians, we're volunteer statesmen and stateswomen.

<http://youtu.be/4O6ondHhgdU> Check out our YouTube channel.

## Not Letting Winter Slow Us Down!

We hosted a holiday party on Dec 20<sup>th</sup> in Hamilton.

We are already recruiting for local candidates, our goal is to have a full slate and overwhelm the opposition with the message of liberty.

Our state convention was March 21<sup>st</sup> at Tavern on the Lake in Hightstown. We had a great lineup of speakers including: Hesham El-Meligy is co-founder of *Muslims for Liberty*, and James Babb, who has been called the most effective libertarian in the nation for jury rights.

## In Other News

We publish a quarterly newsletter and have regular updates to our website. We're involved in many efforts from watching local government to fighting corruption, eminent domain abuse, poor public works, mismanaged government projects and more.

Eminent Domain and property seizures are big news in the Garden State, we've made regular commentary on the matter, even taking a stand to protect a judge's home from being seized via a ballot measure by irate citizens.

Chairman Patrick McKnight was recently published in the *Times of Trenton* and *NJ.com*.



## Looking at The Party

We have 11 active chapters across the state.

## Queens Convention

Queens County convention was on January 10 in Jackson Heights. Dr. Tom Stevens was unanimously re-elected Chair. The membership also elected Thomas Adair Rossman to serve as Vice-Chair, Alden Link to serve as Secretary, Natale Corsi to serve as Treasurer, and John Clifton to serve as State Representative. Dr. Stevens was also re-elected to serve as Membership Director.

The Queens Libertarian Party ran and co-sponsored monthly events on the second Saturday throughout the year on many topics including Benedict Arnold, Grand Juries, and the Biblical Case For Libertarianism. Another major event was LPQC's Holiday Toy Drive spearheaded by Michelle Yaskel. Queens LP members donated 108 toys to QSAC (Quality Services For The Autism Community). The toys were hand-delivered to the children and a photo of the donation was taken for a News Release.

## Manhattan Convention

Manhattan LP convention was on January 24<sup>th</sup>. Great time was had by all at the spectacular Ukrainian East Village Restaurant. Thanks to our regional alternate rep. Josh Katz for making the trip from CT (and to Rich Tomasso for offering to do so from NH). Excellent slate of activists elected as officers for the upcoming year, two engaging speakers and of course perogis for peace! Onward to freedom in an un-free City.

## Time for a New Direction in New York

Sheldon Silver's career ends in disgrace, but the disgrace is not his alone. Every Democrat who voted for him for Speaker knew what was going on. How things are done in Albany is an open secret. Every Democratic Party elected official who was in a position to do something, and didn't, should resign immediately.

This is the face of not just the Democratic Party in New York State, but the entire political culture. Corruption is endemic and every single voter must now choose to be part of the problem or part of the solution.

## State Convention

Our state convention will be April 25<sup>th</sup> at the Rochester Airport Holiday Inn. It will be a full day event. Features speakers include Blair Horner, Director of the NY Public Interest Research Group, and LNC Vice-Chair Arvin Vorha. We'll also have party-building workshops.



## The Future

Properly reorganizing the LPRI is chairman Mike Rollin's very top priority. That started at our executive committee meeting on Dec 7<sup>th</sup>. Tony Jones set a new record for Libertarian Party candidates with his nearly 10,000 votes. Beyond that, Bob Healey, who called himself a libertarian during one of his debate appearances, got 22% of the vote. We thus do have an obvious libertarian base here in Rhode Island that is ready, and waiting for us to organize it.

## Does Secretary of State Know Petitioning Is A Right

Chairman Mike Rollins wrote a public letter to the RI SoS. In reads, in part:

I am writing to publicly ask Rhode Island Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea if she has ever read our United States Constitution? After all, in accordance with both Article VI, of our United States Constitution; and Article III, Section 3 of our Rhode Island State Constitution Secretary Gorbea recently swore an oath to support our United States Constitution, as an official pre-condition requirement of taking office. More specifically, I am writing to ask if Secretary Gorbea has ever read, and studied the First and Fourteenth Amendments?

My reason for publicly asking if Secretary Gorbea has ever actually read, and familiarized herself with our United States Constitution, which she is officially bound by oath to support, is that Secretary Gorbea has recently released an official "Transition Committee Report" calling for "a lobbying task force that will guide efforts to strengthen, simplify and clarify Rhode Island's lobbying laws and regulations." Let me say, for the public record, that as far as I personally am concerned all past, current, or future Rhode Island "lobbying laws" appear to be a blatant violation of our God given, and First Amendment guaranteed right "to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." I thus do wish to publicly ask Secretary Gorbea why she is publicly supporting having any Rhode Island lobbying laws, at all, in blatant violation of her official oath the support the First Amendment, and the rest of our Constitution?

Am I correct in my understanding of our current, blatantly unconstitutional, and thus totally bogus alleged "lobbying laws" here in Rhode Island that I personally may technically be in violation of said blatantly unconstitutional, and thus totally bogus alleged lobbying laws--merely by sending out this specific email message--even though nobody is paying me anything at all to send it?

Please do note that I personally am not currently a registered lobbyist, and I totally refuse to ever become one.

*"Under our Constitution, anonymous pamphleteering is not a pernicious, fraudulent practice, but an honorable tradition of advocacy and of dissent."* –SCOTUS (514 US 334)



## Win Some, Lose Some

The **Dan Feliciano** campaign was a huge success. Dan was the highest percentage Libertarian for governor campaign in the country at 4.38%. Sadly, Dan has decided to join the Republicans, likely he was wooed after coming in 2<sup>nd</sup> on a write-in campaign for their primary.

A political party is not one person. We nominated 15 candidates last year and will work to grow that total going forward. We have ten town committees and a good base of activity and volunteers to continue our growth. Dan's jump has been a cause of concern and some division but we've regrown from similar circumstances.

## Changes

Bonnie Scott was elected Vice-Chair after Dan's departure. Some new projects are underway, including making closer ties with the single-issue liberty groups in the state. Bonnie is also hard at work developing a legislative alert system.

## Vermont LP Joins Vermont Coalition to Regulate Marijuana

There is no good reason for marijuana to be banned for adult use, and we support the Vermont Coalition to Regulate Marijuana effort's to scale back the senseless, often racist, and counter-productive Drug War. At the *Magic Hat Mardi Gras parade* on February 28, Bonnie Scott worked with BTV Green and the Coalition to collect hundreds of signatures on postcards in favor of legalization, which will be delivered to state legislators by the Coalition.

## Vermont LP Opposes Expanding Background Checks for Gun Sales

Vermont firearm dealers currently conduct background checks on each person purchasing a firearm both in-store and at gun shows. Expanding the background check law will have no effect on stopping criminal purchases, because criminals don't obey laws.

## Burlington LP Nominates Loyal Ploof as Libertarian Candidate for Mayor

"Our taxes are too high, I want to make Burlington a more affordable for everyone, and will work to lower taxes by at least 1% in my first term. Shrinking the size of our government down is one of the first things I want to do: Removing the smoking ban, trespass ordinance, and the unconstitutional gun ban." stated Ploof.

After the vote, Channel 17 and WPTZ Channel 5 interviewed Loyal. Video and transcript is available at <http://shar.es/1b2Oiu>

Yard signs, donation links, yard signs, and other ways to help are at: [LoyalPloof.org](http://LoyalPloof.org). He's on twitter @LoyalPloof. More news at [www.BurlingtonLP.org](http://www.BurlingtonLP.org)

