

Region 6 Report – August 19-20, 2017

Kansas City LNC Meeting

Submitted August 16, 2016 by David Pratt Demarest, LNC Region 6 Representative

FREEDOM, Nothing More, Nothing Less

1 SUMMARY

The big news in Region 6 is the continued rapid growth on all fronts and the changing of the guard with new leadership in Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. We welcome the new leadership and have great expectations for their contributions as they pursue ambitious candidate slates.

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. LB34 was unanimously approved on final reading and passed into law without the Governor's signature. This will allow Nebraskans to focus on Laura's reelection bid, an aggressive voter registration campaign, an ambitious fund-raising program and an expanded slate of grassroots candidates in 2018.

Illinois is focused on the ballot access campaign that requires 25,000 signatures and is hoping for LNC financial support for their above and beyond ballot access efforts.

South Dakota held a successful state convention in July and will be working with LP officials to accomplish their goal of joining Region 6 in time for the 2018 New Orleans national LP convention in New Orleans.

Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin are going all out with their candidate recruiting, training and support programs.

2 ILLINOIS

Lex Green
Chair LPILLINOIS
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Because we are in-between elections in Illinois, the activity is all happening behind the scenes. The ranks of our Precinct Committeemen is growing weekly and new chapters are being added monthly. Chapters around the state are preparing for special elections so we can elect regional representatives to our new State Central Committee. The State Organizing Committee and its Board of Directors are all working together on our diverse missions and we are moving the state party into levels of effectiveness that we not seen in decades.

But there are some less than stellar things happening as well. For every new chapter, we are finding another dwindling or closing due to a lack of local leadership. We have gained and lost Chapter Development Directors several times and that puts our chapter support on hold during each transition. Plus we are losing our Legislative Director, Ron Shultis, to a Free Market think tank in another state.

We are making great progress on planning for our 2018 convention, which will feature nominations for our statewide offices. We are hoping LNC Chair Nick Sarwark will be our keynote speaker. We already have three candidates for Governor and they are actively campaigning around the state. We also have candidates for Secretary of State and Comptroller, with a lot of interest in the Treasurer and Attorney General spots.

We have a Ballot Access Shootout fundraiser planned at a Bloomington, IL shooting range and a gun has been donated for a raffle. The helps us lay the groundwork for our 2018 ballot access drive which will occur next March 27 through June 25. We must have 25,000 valid signatures to be on the ballot. We are hoping the LNC will help us financially with that effort. Recruiting for other candidates show promise until they find out how many signatures they need, and very few continue after that.

3 IOWA

James Schneider
LPIA Chair
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- Over the last quarter we have fielded two candidates in special elections for the state legislature. Both seats were in very rural areas where registered Libertarians were less than 1% of registered voters. Election results were less than desirable with neither candidate getting above 5% in 4-way races.
- In both races, we nominated candidates via special nominating conventions which is now permissible with our status as a Major party. In the second race, held on August 8th, the GOP attempted to block our candidate from appearing on the ballot. They sent people to our nominating convention with hidden cameras, and filed an objection with the Secretary of State's office, stating we did not follow procedures. A hearing was held in front of a panel of the Secretary of State, Attorney General, and State Auditor. We were privileged to have our lawyer in attendance and our candidate remained on the ballot with a unanimous vote by the panel.
- With our major party status, we will now be involved in the June 2018 primary election. We currently have 14 announced candidates that will be participating in the primary with over 50 that have given verbal commitments to run. Most notably is two candidates running for Governor, which we will need 2% in the general election to maintain party status.
- The state fair has a straw poll every year. The Secretary of State's offices has included our Gubernatorial candidates in the poll. In a field of 12 candidates across all parties and including independents, Jake porter is polling at 4%.
- Lastly, we are having outreach events every weekend across the state that have been very well received. We had a Pride Fest booth in one of the larger cities that had well over 1,000 people stop to visit with us in one day. We had 8 volunteers working the booth, and had people in line to talk with us.

4 MINNESOTA

Chris Holbrook
Chair LPMN

I was elected to Chair the Libertarian Party of Minnesota on April 29 and have just passed the 100-day mark. The work load for me and new Executive Director Matt Kowalski has been overwhelming. Here is a recap of what we and your LPMN party have been doing so far:

- Moved to a new physical office location (bigger space, less cost)
- Lost our IT department and services, to which we are finally almost done repairing and upgrading regarding our database, emails, website, and media
- Held 15 LPMN, affiliate, and candidate recruitment meetings, roughly half have had double digit participation levels (I have attended 12 of them)
- Manned LPMN information and recruitment booths at 4 major festivals (I participated in 2 of them) generating approximately 100 new contacts
- We have increased our marketing and messaging presence, with Facebook and Twitter 'chiefs', letters from the Chair, press release statements, this newsletter, and new prominently branded booth displays
- We have raised over \$10,000 in contributions to the LPMN

This is what is on our radar going forward into the next 100 days:

- State Fair marathon
- Finish IT upgrades and remediate website woes
- Rebuild inactive CD affiliates
- Begin serious 2018 candidate discussions and recruitment efforts
- Raise over \$10,000.

Please help us help you. This is your party. As a volunteer, I am working 20-30 hours a week and need help. I need help in our Political Department with candidate discussions and vetting. We need help in our IT Department. We need help in our Communications Department. We need folks to build affiliates and run for office. And we need more donations to fund the tools to do these things. Please get more involved. Contact any of us in the EC anytime to find out what needs to be done. Then pick something and do it. Please and thank you and live free.

5 MISSOURI

Bill Slantz
Chair LPMO

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

The Missouri LP held its annual convention on July 22nd in Jefferson City, MO. Approximately 50 attendees enjoyed presentations by Bill Redpath, Will Coley, and libertarian author Aya Katz. Several new members of the party were in attendance and many have volunteered to serve on the state committee.

Plans are to hold our 2018 convention at the same venue on February 24, 2018 as a nominating convention for statewide races on the 2018 schedule.

The Missouri State Fair is underway (August 10 - 20). The State Fair is traditionally one of our largest outreach events in Missouri. Early reports indicate great interest in the party from fair-goers.

6 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 was approved unanimously on final reading and passed into law without the Governor's signature.

With the passing of LB34, the LPNE has been able to focus 100% of our efforts in supporting Libertarian candidates. The top priority is getting Laura Ebke Re-elected in 2018. Our second priority is to aggressively grow our registered voter count of 12,000 that (just passed 1% of total registered voters). Our third and fourth priorities are to establish a robust fund-raising program and build a challenging slate of grassroots Libertarian candidates in 2018.

The number of LPNE county affiliates has increased from just one in April of last year to 11 today, an inspiring 11-fold increase. The county parties have held several successful events, including a tremendous rally at the state capitol in Lincoln featuring Mike Knebel and Laura Ebke among other top-notch speakers. Libertarian voter registration numbers continue to soar.

The LPNE will maintain its focus on the "re-register" campaign and has adopted "Give Your Independence a Name" motto for this project that has been well received. We continue to add support at each event by leveraging technology that allows individuals to re-register on site and to make donations electronically.

District 1, centered on Lincoln in Lancaster County, is led by Michael Knebel, District Coordinator. The Lancaster County LP will man the Big Red Welcome booth at the University of Nebraska Lincoln. The event is held the last week in August with a focus on welcoming new students but is open to all students. Nearly 100 advocacy groups and vendors have booths at the event that typically draws 10,000 students. Experience has shown that the World's Smallest Political Quiz works wonders to attract potential Libertarians to our booth. This year's LPNE booth will feature a #ReRegister banner and handout materials package provided courtesy of the LNC Affiliate Support Committee chaired by Daniel Hayes, LNC At Large Representative.

District 2 is centered on Omaha and led by Joe Hedlund, District Coordinator. The Douglas County LP led by Chair Joe Hawk and Sarpy County LP led by Nathan Porata, continue to aggressively grow their programs.

District 3 Coordinator Ben Backus, Gering City Council member elected as a Libertarian, continues his astute management of Nebraska's third district that encompasses 76 of Nebraska 93 counties.

7 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.

8 SOUTH DAKOTA

Aaron Alyward
LPSD Chair

Information provided by Sean Metz, LPSD West River At Large, and James Schneider, LPIA Chair.

LPSD held a successful state convention Saturday, July 22 at Monk's House of Ale Repute in Sioux Falls, SD:

- Laura Ebke was the featured speaker. Senator Ebke represents the 32nd District of Nebraska as a registered Libertarian. Other distinguished speakers included James Schneider, LPIA Chair, and Elizabeth Dahl, Crystal Minnesota City Council member.
- The convention was live-streamed for those who were unable to attend and questions were answered via social media.

Minnehaha County LP participated 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. LPSD is targeting joining Region 6 in time for the 2018 New Orleans national LP convention in New Orleans over July 4th week and is working with LP officials to make that happen.

9 WISCONSIN

Phillip Anderson
Acting Chair LPWI
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The Libertarian Party of Wisconsin has increased in membership by approximately 20% in the last 4 months, as well as added 3 new county affiliates. LPWI has adopted NationBuilder as its web and IT platform, and has embarked on an ambitious fundraising program.

LPWI's goal is to have at least 30 candidates on the ballot for state and local elections in 2018. So far, we have 3 officially declared State Assembly candidates, 2 city council candidates, 2 county board candidates, with many others still arrange their personal and professional affairs before jumping into campaigns. As State Chair, I am running our Candidates and Campaigns Committee, and while this is not yet official, I will be running for Governor, with our current treasurer and former Johnson/Weld campaign coordinator Patrick Baird running for Lt. Governor.

LPWI will be participating in the Great Midwest Marijuana Harvest Fest in September, featuring the biggest booth at the event, and plenty of LP swag to distribute. LPWI has also already planned our 2018 Convention, which will take place at a conference center on the Capitol Square, April 13-15, 2018. National speakers have already committed, and will be announced once contracts are finalized.

Check out our new website at LPWI.org, and join us next April. I challenge my fellow District 6 Chairs to throw a better convention than LPWI will. Please send us invitations, as we will be sending you all invitations to ours.