

# Region 6 Report – April 21-22, 2018

## Denver LNC Meeting

Submitted April 18, 2018 by David Pratt Demarest, LNC Region 6 Representative with contributions by Sean O'Toole, LNC Region 6 Alternate

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

## 1 SUMMARY

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The big news in Region 6 is a number of ambitious candidate slates and new officer boards in most Region 6 affiliates.

The Illinois state convention was held on March 2-3, with guest speaker Nicholas Sarwark. Illinois is focused on their ballot access campaign led by Krysta Walker.

Iowa will participate in primaries for the first time in 2018. Jake Porter and Marco Battaglia, two stalwart Libertarians, are running for Governor and holding a series of town halls and debates across the state.

Nebraska Libertarian State Senator Laura Ebke's is in the final stages of preparing for the May 15<sup>th</sup> primary leading up to her critical 2018 reelection campaign. Apollo Pazel is bringing a team of libertarian activists to assist Senator Ebke, Jeremy Jensen, and Laura's campaign team prior to the primary.

Kudos to those who braved the elements in South Dakota, Minnesota, and Wisconsin and contributed to successful state conventions over the April 14-15 weekend despite a severe out-of-season blizzard in the Northern Plains.

North Dakota has cleaned up their bylaws. Roland Riemers is running for Secretary of State to maintain major party status.

Missouri is going all out with their candidate recruiting, training and support programs.

## 2 ILLINOIS

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Lex Green  
Chair LPILLINOIS  
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The Libertarian Party of Illinois convention was held on March 2-3, with guest speaker Nicholas Sarwark. A full slate of candidates for statewide executive offices was chosen at that time, with hotly contested races for the Governor and Lieutenant Governor spots. All their campaigns have been coordinating for maximum public exposure. They are experiencing unprecedented levels of media interest in print, radio and television.

At the convention, we selected our delegates to the National Convention in New Orleans. For the first time in years, the primary delegation was filled to the 40-member capacity. We are looking at potential alternate delegates.

The Ballot Access drive has kicked off after excellent planning by seasoned Ballot Access Director Krysta Walker. Krysta has organized a committee of volunteers. All of them have teams in place. Snowstorms and freezing weather have hampered the first weeks of the drive but have not discouraged volunteers and contractors from obtaining signatures. Although we are below what we expect our weekly average to be, we are still ahead of previous drives. We have again hired a fund raiser. The donations are coming in even faster than in 2016.

Counties will have had their conventions by the time the LNC meeting convenes, and new officers and State Central Committeemen will have been elected. Bennett Morris of Bloomington, who is running unopposed, will become the new Chair. Bennett works for State Farm Insurance and has a master's degree in Business Administration. Bennett has a proven track record at the county level by tripling attendance and activism in the McLean County chapter after taking over.

The Board of Directors, a group of unpaid volunteers, is effectively transforming the state party from a small number of overworked leaders into a unified team where everyone works independently toward a common goal. By incorporating Precinct Committeemen in growing numbers into our organization, we can leverage the individual talents of more members. As a result, the party is expanding in numbers and popularity.

### 3 IOWA

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Joseph Howe  
LPIA Chair  
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Looking forward to building on our past successes, here is what is going on in Iowa:

2018 has been a year of change for the Libertarian Party of Iowa (LPIA). We held our first statewide caucus on February 5th across fifteen regional sites throughout the state. The caucus process led to the official organization of twenty-two county parties under major party rules, our first county level conventions and an elected delegation to our state/district convention held on March 23-24th.

The state convention also elected a new State Central Committee, with several district members that moved to statewide officer roles in addition to new members that joined the committee. The prior committee served half a term and vacated their seats due to the caucus to convention cycle for major parties in Iowa which runs on even numbered years.

We have our first ever primary election on June 5th with a contested gubernatorial race between Jake Porter and Marco Battaglia. Building on their campaign successes, both candidates participated in multiple forums and debates, including other major party candidates. In addition to our two gubernatorial candidates, we have a dozen other candidates on the LPIA primary ballot.

We will be reconvening our state/district convention on June 9th to nominate our Lt. Governor candidate and fill any ballot vacancies at the U.S Congressional and state level. Jules Ofenbakh, a West Des Moines Attorney, will seek nomination for Secretary of State at the convention. Multiple candidates have expressed interest in running for congressional nominations.

At the state level we are assisting county parties in organizing post-primary county level conventions to fill ballot vacancies at the state house, senate and county levels. Major party status affords us the ability to easily place candidates after the primary. We intend on taking full advantage of this rule.

## 4 MINNESOTA

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Chris Holbrook  
Chair LPMN

The Libertarian Party of Minnesota (LPMN) conducted its annual state convention on Saturday April 14 in Maple Grove, a northwest suburb in the Minneapolis metro area. Maple Grove received 22" of snow over April 13-15. We had a figurative and literal liberty blizzard.

With the worst April snow storm ever recorded in the Twin Cities, half of the prepaid attendees and half of the speakers could not make it at the last minute. However, we trudged on with the half who did, and it was one of the greatest times we've ever had. We efficiently took care of party business in the morning by electing our 2018 leadership, judicial committee, national delegates, as well as bylaw changes and candidate nominations.

Most of the educational local speakers in the early afternoon did brave the storm to be with us and got rewarded with extra time and lively discussion. They included a Minnesota House Representative, a Ranked Choice Voting Director, a Crypto Currency Club President from the University of Minnesota, a direct pay clinic doctor (who is an LPMN member), a radio host (who is an LPMN member), and a legendary local activist who has been President of Twin Cities C.U.A.P.B. for 20 years (Communities United Against Police Brutality).

With the keynotes getting stranded at airports and all attendees stranded in our hotel, the party after started early and lasted until early in the morning. Our new LPMN family was formed and we are all excited for our 2018 and beyond.

In addition to the convention, since the last report, we approved a new Congressional District affiliate and have four other affiliates conducting start up meet ups. Over the winter three different local gun shows had LPMN outreach booths present. Our social media team has remained active and innovative by growing our Facebook page to over 8000 followers. We have just started trying our hand on Twitter and Instagram.

While the updates so far may sound good, the most exciting thing we have done recently is run in the special election in Minnesota House District 54. This special election was announced by Governor Mark Dayton in very late November. We searched for and discovered a candidate in December who became a member to run as a Libertarian, a state correctional facility nurse from Hastings. We then were allowed a three-day window to collect 500 signatures for ballot access. The days given were a Mon-Wed in mid-January. In the dark and cold we gathered our troops and also garnered 600 signatures! It was the first winter special election filing by petition the S.O.S. said they have ever seen.

The subsequent race was quick and ineffective, with the election taking place three weeks after on February 12. We developed a soft partnership with a nearly identical situation in the LP of Florida, but the entire experience was priceless learning. We

tried innovative new tools and focused efforts unlike any before. Supporters were rewarded by the effort. While we only received 2% of the vote, we doubled our first quarter donations compared to last year and had 10 new members join in that stretch.

Going forward we have more nominees on the horizon and will probably end up with 5-10 official candidates for the fall. With limited resources and a small petition window of May 22 to June 5, we have chosen to target the smaller statewide races and state house races that are under radar for many people. We need 5% in a state-wide race to gain 'major party' status in Minnesota (unlimited ballot access). That could happen in a seemingly overlooked state auditor or attorney general race, but it will never happen here in either of the two well-funded US Senate races, nor in US Congress races that will see a record infusion of DFL and GOP cash into Minnesota. We will be ready for such races in the future.

## 5 MISSOURI

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Bill Slantz  
Chair LPMO

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

We held our state convention on February 24. LNC Vice-Chair Arvin Vohra was our keynote speaker and was well received.

This was our first "nominating convention" where we determined who we wanted to represent the party for state-wide offices in the August Primary.

Japheth Campbell of Springfield is our US Senate candidate. Sean O'Toole is our State Auditor candidate.

With filing now closed, the Libertarian Party of Missouri has 29 candidates for races including US Senate, State Auditor, US Congress, State Senate, and State Representative. All state-wide slots have been filled as have all eight Congressional slots. Two Congressional primaries will be contested.

## 6 NEBRASKA

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Scott Zimmerman  
Chair LPNE

Additional information provided by Matt Maly, newly elected Chair of the Libertarian Party of Douglas County (DCLP):

“All hands on deck” for Laura Ebke. We are looking for more volunteers to assist those who have made countless calls, completed hundreds of hand-written postcards, and joined forces in many literature drops and canvassing efforts, among many other campaign support activities.

Our State Convention will be held in Lincoln on May 5th. Senator Ebke will be our keynote speaker. New board members will be elected as well as delegates to the national convention in New Orleans. We expect a lively business meeting with many new county affiliates and the participation of elected county delegates for the first time.

Our Bylaws committee has made excellent progress in recent months and will present a report that discusses changes to the bylaws. We will look for bylaws proposals from the floor.

We are considering hiring an Executive Director and have four impressive candidates for the position to be selected after the state convention and the new board has been seated.

We are also considering several proposals, including a membership program and additional subcommittees to cover fund-raising, platform, and candidate recruitment, training, and support.

## 7 NORTH DAKOTA

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Steven Potter  
LPNORTHDAKOTA Chair

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

In a recent statewide meeting we finally trashed our ancient bylaws and adopted new bylaws better in line of how we operate. We also elected a new set of state officers. For this election we had an absence of people willing to run for statewide office. We need to get 5% of the November vote for SOS or we lose our ballot status.

I decided to run for this office again, having received 5.3% of the vote 4 years ago. I expect no problem getting the needed 5% again this year, and in fact got 23% of the vote for State Auditor two years ago. The state party endorsed several state legislative candidates and is working to build up party strength and numbers in the next two years.

The SOS race may turn into a spotlight contest this year when the Republican incumbent of 25 years recently lost his party's endorsement and is now out of the race. That leaves an experienced statewide Libertarian candidate that is running against two young old party candidates with no statewide experience.

I will be closely watching my June primary vote. If I get a significant increase in my previous primary vote, then I will run a serious campaign. If about the same, I will work to maintain my 5%+ in the November election.

Another race of interest this year is the open seat for our sole congressman. It appears that half the state is running or plans to run. One of the contesting Republican candidates is also about as Libertarian as you can get. In any case, unofficial support of candidates is likely to swing some of these statewide elections.

## 8 *SOUTH DAKOTA*

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Aaron Alyward  
LPSOUTHDAKOTA Chair

The Libertarian and Constitution Parties won a huge victory in court. The South Dakota legislature then passed an emergency bill (HB 1286), which now allows us to nominate any legislative seat, U.S. House, U.S. Senate, and Governor, by member vote at convention.

Because of this, we have 5 legislative candidates, one County Commissioner and one U.S. House candidate as of now. Due to our main convention getting some horrible weather, we may hold another convention within the next couple of months to possibly nominate more candidates. We have until August to do so.

We are now at 1,707 registered Libertarians in South Dakota, and we're the **ONLY** party in South Dakota that has added registered voters in the last year. The Republican, Democrat, Constitution, and Independent voter groups have all lost voters within the last year.

We now have two county parties in the state. Hopefully more to come!

## 9 WISCONSIN

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Phillip Anderson  
LPWI Chair  
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The Libertarian Party of Wisconsin State Convention was held in Madison on Saturday, April 14th. Speakers included Larry Sharpe, Kevin Fortune of Liberty America, and Jeffrey Tucker. Despite the terrible weather, attendance was good.

During the afternoon, the convention recessed to attend a gun rally at the Wisconsin State Capitol building, at which our State Chair and gubernatorial candidate Phil Anderson spoke.

At convention LPWI passed several changes to its platform, nominated and elected a full delegation to the Libertarian Party Convention in New Orleans, and endorsed the following candidates for statewide office: Phil Anderson for Governor, Patrick Baird for Lieutenant Governor, and Tyler Danke for Secretary of State.

Also, at convention, LPWI raffled off a Bushmaster rifle, artwork created by LPWI member Brian Defferding, and various other items.

In election news, Brian Defferding was elected to Winnebago County Board. LPWI is currently fielding 14 candidates for office in fall elections, with a few more still making up their minds.

LPWI looks forward to attending the National Convention with a full delegation. Hope to see you all there!