

Region 5 North Report

This is the most geographically compact region, but each state has different politics, especially in odd years. The second half of the year has been quieter than the first. We are still searching for a new Alternate Rep.

Some affiliates are showing less activity, others have renewed activism and more social functions, some engaged in charitable work. Maine and Rhode Island have bounced up from a recent lull.

There are always opportunities, the challenge is having the resources (time, money, people) to apply to capitalize on them. We are all small affiliates and are frugal with our resources.

New Jersey had state-level elections that did not garner the attention of the VA races, but we can find some bright spots from the results in the Garden State. Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont had local elections, mostly non-partisan. We have some highlights from those as well.

A goal for 2013 was more coordination and communication between the seven affiliates. More could have been done, but each affiliate had its own challenges to face before working with another. I did what I could to stay involved in more discussions. Would like more members to subscribe to our LP_5N yahoogroup.

Carla Howell ran a *Who's Driving* training at the end of July in Massachusetts.

The *Freedom & Unity Festival* was in August in Vermont.

The LPCT and LPMA had state conventions in October.

November 2nd was *Keenvention*, featuring many libertarian and anarchist speakers and panels, including practical politics like legislative activism.

For the spring of 2014, the major regional event will be the *New Hampshire Liberty Forum* hosted by the FSP, February 20-23. It's reaching the size of the LP national convention. The LPNH is considering holding their nominating convention there.

The NJLP convention is March 29th. The LPRI is planning a convention for April 5th. Maine is planning one for the spring.

Half the affiliates have set some ambitious goals for next year, detailed within.





Outreach

Our Facebook group has become a busy hub of activity, with member conversations and updates from party officers occurring almost daily. It has become our main online presence.

There is a strong effort underway to form a college Libertarians group at UConn.

Convention

Our annual convention was on October 19th. Featured speakers were: George Phillies; Andrew Schneider, ACLU-CT executive director; and Scott Wilson, president of CT Citizens Defense League. Carol McMahon was re-elected as Chair, Dan Reale as Vice Chair. Our secretary is Joshua Katz, and Joann Roeter is our treasurer. The *2013 Walter Gengarelly Jr Award* recipient is Bradley Manning.

Walter was a very active member and officer in the LPCT. He ran as a candidate since 1980. Sadly, we lost Walter during his last congressional run, in October 2010. Two weeks before he died, he was ready to campaign from the hospital. He said "One half dead Libertarian is better than a Republican or a Democrat." Our fine, proud and principled institution is built upon people like Walter who never quit, even in the darkest days. It was people like Walter that kept the party going for all these years so that, one day, it could be our time. <http://www.lpct.org/the-walter-gengarelly-jr-award/>

Campaigns & Elections

We made real effort to recruit candidates to run at the top of the ticket in municipal races. Bill Russell collected enough signatures to on the ballot for Mayor of Norwich in the spring. We formed the Libertarian Norwich Town Committee on May 16th.

We ran 9 candidates in municipal elections. Seven ran on the Libertarian line, one ran on the Republican line and one ran on the Democrat line.

Joshua Katz won for Westbrook Planning Board! The Republicans knew he was a Libertarian when they invited him to run on their line. Due to a recent change in CT election laws he was unable to run on both the Republican and Libertarian lines.

Sean Foley won for Burlington Finance Committee! He ran on the Democrat line.

So I'm happy, we ran 9 candidates and 2 won!

Plan for The Future

LPCT is working with LP National and the ACLU to overturn some of the more onerous provisions in state ballot access laws. These include restrictions on who can and cannot petition and the recent restrictions regarding running on multiple lines.

Looking toward 2014, we'll be kicking off election season early with a goal of having enough signatures for all of our candidates to be on the ballot by May. This will enable them to spend the summer and fall earning votes. For races in which we have ballot access, Dan Reale is committed to run for Congress and we are recruiting for Comptroller. We don't have ballot access for Governor but will definitely run a candidate. Doing well in this race (1%) gives us party status for the next election, and should permanently solve our ballot access issues.



Current Activity

Organizing the “LP Maine Political Method”. This is the creation of a new method that is politically neutral to form alliances with Tea Party, Ron Paul groups, and others. Create effective libertarian action in cooperation with other groups.

We've had a few county organizing meetings. Somerset county is the best organized.

Charles Frohman is calling, looking for help with Our America Initiative.

The LPME facebook page has more than 630 likes, up from 500 in June.

Our twitter feed, @LP_Maine, got really active in November, with frequent tweets with news, updates and links to commentary.

Delegates to the national Libertarian Convention will be selected at our state convention this spring. To attend as a delegate, you must be a current member of the LP.

Our State Committee has launched a plan to update and upgrade party website to aid recruitment and outreach. Actively fund-raising for both.

James Oaksun, former LP Treasurer, had a special editorial printed in the Portland Press Herald on October 5, “Deadlock offers Washington teachable moment on federal spending”.

Good News!

On November 5, voters in Portland voted to legalize marijuana! A local ballot initiative that would make the possession of up to 2.5 ounces of marijuana legal for adults 21 and older passed with 67% of the vote. Portland is the first East Coast city to legalize marijuana for adults. Supporters say they will build on Portland's vote with a statewide legalization effort in the next two years. Marijuana is still legal only for medical use under state law. Portland's ordinance does not set up any legal way to obtain marijuana.

The Future

State convention still in planning stages.

Continue to build organizational structure and concentrate on fundraising.

We are wholly inadequate for fundraising, it is our number one goal.



General Activity and Outreach

We hold monthly meetups in the Boston area and we have five regional meetups established. Our Facebook (1100 Likes!) and Twitter presence grows with regular postings. The newsletter includes items of general interest and practical aspects of Libertarianism.

As predicted by many Libertarians, the Obama Administration has jacked up its attack on the Second Amendment. Several Libertarians have responded by spending more time meeting with 2A groups, helping to get their programs and activities rolling. Standout protests, legislative hearings, discussion forums, and rallies have been well attended by our activists.

We redesigned our membership / recruitment flier.

We had a lot of interest from people at the Boston Pride festival.

Carla Howell ran a successful *Who's Driving* event near Boston. We ran several rounds with good feedback and questions. Everyone thought it was a great learning tool. People who played a second time showed great improvement. Socializing continued for more than an hour afterward (and some more in the parking lot).

Libertarians are gathering signatures on an Initiative (officially known as "Petition C") to repeal the automatic inflation adjusted increases of the state gasoline tax that was enacted this summer. All details and reasons for it are at www.TankTheGasTax.org.

The LPMA attended the Boston Freedom Rally, a.k.a. Hempfest, on September 14th. We had an excellent turnout who took the WSPQ and found themselves in the Libertarian section. Very few here identify as a conservative, and thus are propelled by mainstream media and the fear of 3rd party candidates to elect Democrats repeatedly. We Libertarians are here to break that cycle of voting for the lesser of two evils by presenting candidates who have new and exciting ideas and are willing to challenge the status quo of the Democrat-run state.

If anyone would like to partner or cross-advertise events, email us partners@lpmass.org

Elections

Due to resignations, promotions and deaths, there will be special elections for some legislative seats. We are recruiting for the 9th Norfolk district. We may have a candidate for Congress in Framingham to fill Ed Markey's old seat. We already have 6 candidates for 2014.

Locally, Robert Walsh ran for City Councilor At-Large in Lynn. He finished 5th, just short of the 4th place needed to be elected. He had finished 6th in the 2011 election. He will consider running again in 2015.

Convention

Our state convention was on October 20th. New officers: David Blau (Chair), Peter Bougioukos (Secretary), Bob Clark (Treasurer), Cris Crawford (Archivist), Dan Fishman (Political Facilitator, Technology), Dick Martin, Natalya Orlando (External Relations), George Phillies (Membership, Newsletter), Ken van Tassell (Operations).

We set a goal to run more LP candidates for state rep than the GOP currently has seats.



Another Loss

Another member passed away in September: Robert Kingsbury. Bob ran for Congress in 2008 and also ran for state rep a few times. Bob was a World War II veteran, serving as a scout in Patton's army. Age did not slow him down, he was out collecting petitions every year, ran his own business and worked part-time to stay busy. At 80 he still fit into his uniform. I recall a conversation we had about his military service. Even after seeing combat in WWII, when the Korean Conflict broke out, he re-upped. Amazed by this revelation, I asked him why. He said "War is the worst thing you can do to a person. I wanted to make sure all those new guys had someone who knew what to expect and could lead them through it." Read a nice tribute at <http://tinyurl.com/BobKingsbury>

Social Networks and Website

Our social networks continue to grow, our Facebook Group has 439 members, our Page has 277 Likes, and we have more than 810 Twitter followers as we close 2013. Twitter has been our most active network, with new followers and re-tweets every day. Our website backlog has grown, we need a new webmaster to take on several pending digital projects.

General Activity

We've had good contact with a new YAL chapter, and will be working with them on upcoming projects and creating internships.

Pro-liberty activity abounds across the state, Libertarians have been involved in much of it, from rejecting Common Core, lots of First Amendment activism, fighting against militarizing local police, fighting Medicaid expansion, and more. The *Shire Sharing* private Thanksgiving food drive for refugees continues to grow, feeding nearly 400 families this year. This could be a project for every affiliate, as I reminded the state chairs again this year.

Looking at all the election law bills to find something to support. We were promised two ballot access reform bills. There will be a slew of other bills to help and to fight.

There is a special election for Executive Council, we need a candidate by Dec 2nd.

Resting up for 2014

Our main challenge is widespread burnout and lack of interest. The to-do list is pages long, and no one is jumping up to do any of it. We have a lot in the pipeline for 2014, but for 2013 most of us took a breather. We will be holding a state convention and nominating candidates for the 2014 general election in January or February, potentially in conjunction with the *NH Liberty Forum*. Town elections are in March, the filing period is in January.

I recruited some candidates for 2014 and am working on fundraising, including Bitcoin. The GOP and Dems are worried, we expect it to be an interesting year. Our goal is to complete petitioning by March so we can spend our time and money on campaigns, particularly for Governor and US Senate, our ballot access races (4%). The first draft of the plan is in review.



Membership

Our ranks have kept increasing since the 2012 election, we're now at a 7-year high! The number of registered Libertarians continues to climb. We've seen a 21.1% growth in the last year! We are 81% larger than the Green Party.

Activity, News and Events

We are resurrecting an old show we used to run on Cable Access. *Third Point of View – Next Generation*. The shows will be much shorter and geared for YouTube viewing.

NJ may have contradictory statutes concerning marijuana, there is an effort to nullify the criminal statute given the finding by NJ legislature that marijuana has medicinal benefits.

Party chair Jay Edgar hosted a general members meeting and Liberty Picnic on July 13th.

We had a general membership meeting on November 10th and a private concert featuring Jordan Page on November 15th.

Check our newsletter for great articles defending liberty and countering wrong history and bad propaganda of our elected officials. And highlighting bad actors in government.

Our convention is planned for March 29th at the Tavern on The Lake in Hightstown.

We are planning a Constitution Class in April featuring Michael Badnarik.

State Elections

We had 6 candidates running and maintained our minor party status.

- Ken Kaplan of Parsippany for NJ Governor
 - Ken got 11,821 votes (1%) in an eight way contest. He came in third. When Ken last ran in 2009 he only got 4,830 votes (0.2%), so a nice improvement.
- Don DeZarn of East Windsor for State Senate (14th District)
 - Don got 1,001 votes (1.6%) in a three way contest.
- Sean O'Connor and Steve Uccio of East Windsor for State Assembly (14th District)
 - Sean got 888 votes (0.75%). Steve got 772 votes (0.65%). This was a six way race with each voter choosing two candidates.
- Patrick McKnight of Hillsborough for State Assembly (16th District)
 - Patrick received 1,189 votes (1.1%). This was a five way race, choose two.

Private Charity vs Government

Steve Uccio and the NJLP are fund-raising to give *Heat for the Homeless!* In Lakewood, there is a community of 100 people who live in a wooded area called "Tent City". With nowhere else to go, they are not asking for any government assistance, they are supported by private charity to better themselves. The city has been harassing them. Lakewood passed an ordinance banning outdoor wood fires. One November morning, in 30 degree weather, the police came by and gave warnings never to use wood stoves again. We're collecting money for propane tanks, heaters and fuel. \$1000 will buy 10 propane tanks, 10 heaters, and enough fuel to last 1 month.

Rhode Island

www.LPRI.us



Party leaders have focused on social activities to bring the membership together and build their team. The call has already gone out for people to consider running for office in 2014.

Tony Jones was appointed to the Cove Management Advisory Commission of East Greenwich for a 3-year term starting July 1st. Beth Richardson currently serves on the Wastewater Commission in Charlestown.

We had a long discussion this fall about our priorities and goals for 2013/14, including communications and candidates. Finding better ways to reach members and the broader public is necessary if we are to grow. A few good candidates will be a vital goal for next year. Go for quality rather than quantity, recruit candidates who could really do the job of the four statewide offices (Gov, AG, SoS, Treas). Our current thinking is to use 2014 to build some real experience in campaigning. Focus on reaching as many voters as possible, refine the message, improve our political skills until they are well-honed. Use all this to build real campaigns for 2016.

There may be opportunities to push aside feckless Republican committees with an active Libertarian group as the “opposition” force in towns run by the Democrat machine.

LP Rhode Island is now on twitter @LPofRI. The website was recently updated.

Tony Jones hosted a Liberty Drinks meetup on Nov 1st. A networking night for liberty movement folks, Libertarians, voluntarists, anarcho-capitalists, etc. This was our first social event in years and 45 people showed up! We may do another over the holidays, and definitely in the early spring.

Planning is already underway for our state convention on April 5th.

Vermont

www.VTLP.org



The VTLP has been keeping busy with regular meetings and website updates with news, blogs and events.

Members are working on a legislative review system to facilitate activism at statehouse.

We participated in the *Freedom & Unity Festival*, August 16-18.

The Vermont LP held its town caucuses on September 18th. Currently working on forming enough town committees to be recognized as a minor party by the state.

The VTLP sent out press releases on the scandal around NSA spying on American citizens, and the partial government shutdown, pointing out we would not have been blocked from visiting national parks under a Libertarian administration.