

LIBERTARIAN PENN

Newsletter Of The Libertarian Party of Pennsylvania

MARCH - APRIL 1981

1981 Convention Inspires LPP

More than 90 people attended the 1981 annual convention of the Libertarian Party of Pennsylvania in Monroeville on March 7th and 8th, thus making it the largest and most successful LPP convention yet. What made it important, though, was not the numbers attending but the inspiration that all received from meeting many new Libertarians who are enthusiastic and dedicated. While some long-time Libertarians felt that many would be disheartened from the failure to receive more than 1,000,000 votes for Ed Clark nationwide or from falling only 9,500 votes short of permanent ballot status in Pennsylvania, this was rarely the case. The feeling that prevailed was that the Libertarian Party had done an admirable job in reaching millions and millions of people for the first time with a Libertarian message. While many chose to continue supporting the major parties, it seems that respect for — and a certain acceptance of — our ideals has been achieved. Two days in Convention has served to convince us all that further growth is possible through continued grass-root organizing, campaigning, and publicity.

The Convention began with a two-hour discussion of future strategy for the LPP. Eric O'Keefe, new national director of the Libertarian Party, reviewed the progress achieved in 1980 and laid out the kinds of activities the Party will engage in in the future: more aid to state parties in the form of field coordinators, literature, seminars and workshops for candidates and campaign managers. The LPP State Chair, Dave Walter, reviewed the successes of the LPP in 1980 — running 19 candidates, achieving more than 35,000 votes for Dick Fuerle, our candidate for State Attorney General, building a cadre of activists in all areas of the state — and outlined the future course of the LPP. Reading from two tracts prepared by LPP members, Walter initiated the discussion on who the LPP should appeal to in order to grow stronger and more rapidly in the future in order to become a third party with clout while remaining true to libertarian principles.

The first strategy was that proposed by Russ Moon, the Allegheny County chairman; he suggested that free-market conservatives would be the easiest group to appeal to as President Reagan will soon be disappointing them by not going far enough in restoring free enterprise, cutting taxes, and chopping down big government. Moon argued that liberals will never respond to Libertarian ideas because they are basically opposed to our anti-elitist ideals which allow no interference in the peaceful affairs of others. Arguing an opposite strategy was Jorge Amador, of the Bucks County group, who feels that Libertarians should direct their appeals to the liberals in the future. He believes that the free market types will go along with Reagan and the Republicans because their rhetoric, if not their actions, will continue to be free enterprise oriented. He also sees conservatives as too wedded to the concept of the U.S. as world's policeman from the Soviets. He felt that liberals would be receptive to Libertarianism because we offer a way out (free market economics and civil liberties) for the poor who have suffered under the Government-Big Business-Big Labor ruling class. The rise of the "Moral Majority" and the disarray of the Democrats should cause many sincere, compassionate, and individualistic liberals to turn to the Libertarian Party as the only alternative, Amador suggested.

Everyone who wanted to had an opportunity to speak out; many did and the quality of the discussion was top-notch. One national Party leader present could not believe that there had been no advance notice or planning for this discussion and termed it "of a higher quality than the strategy discussion held by the National Executive Committee at their December meeting in New Orleans". Supporters of both strategies spoke up, as did those who felt neither strategy should be pursued if it meant "watering down" or obscuring Libertarian principles in order to "win votes". While a consensus eluded the gathering, the preponderant opinion seemed to be that the LP should

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Candidates for 1981

While many State parties chose to use 1981 as a year of building without candidates, Pennsylvania decided that running local candidates was one of the best ways to build up grass-roots organizations so that the major petitioning effort in 1982 will be easier. In addition to going into 1982 with a larger locally-organized Party, the LPP will be going in with more trained candidates, too, since many of those who have said they will enter the 1981 municipal elections are making their first try.

Candidates this year will be running in local races where petition for independent candidates may be as low as 25 signatures. The list below is subject to change, of course, and it is the LPP leadership's hope that many more local candidates will emerge before the petitioning deadline in late May. Those who wish to "throw their hat in the ring" should contact the State Chairman so that Board endorsements can be made and petition information sent you.

Our announced candidates at this time are:

George Meyer for Traffic Court Judge in Phila. (this race will be run only if other candidates are found to run for other offices in the city); Hans Schroeder for Township Supervisor in Buckingham Twp.; Wade Lehman for City Council in York; Bill Synder for local office in the West Chester area; Janice Lehman for an office in York; John Ewbank for Civil Judge in Bucks County; Debbie Williams for Sharon Hill Borough Council; Dave Walter for Warminster Twp. Auditor; Ed Mastascasa for an office in the Lewisburg area; and Russ Moon for Mayor of Pittsburgh. York County LP expects to have several more candidates as does the Allegheny County group. Other Libertarians considering a candidacy are Sharon Plottel in Erie (along with several others), Bob Holdsworth in Chester County, Bill Barshinger in Dallastown, and Margarethe Kemner in Lock Haven.

Convention Delegates Chosen:

Pennsylvania will be entitled to at least 17 delegates to the 1981 National Convention to be held in Denver, Col. from August 26th to 30th. This convention, the Libertarian Party's tenth anniversary and in the city where a handful of Libertarian activists met to begin the Party, is a business convention rather than a nominating one. The National Platform will be amended, new officers and National Committee members elected, the Constitution and By-Laws amended, and other business handled. The Colorado Party is planning special events, seminars, workshops, dinners, breakfasts, etc. almost beyond number and just about every Libertarian luminary will be there to participate.

The LPP delegation will be the largest ever, benefitting our rise to 10th place in LP membership strength (237 national members). At the recent State Convention, the LPP elected as delegates only those who were positive they would be attending. With those sixteen, plus first Alternate Don Ernsberger, and with eight or ten others "probably" attending, our delegation will be complete.

Those elected delegates were: John Ewbank, Ralph Mullinger, Denny Fink, Bruce Bishkin, Hans Schroder, George Meyer, Tim McDermott, Frank Bubb, Dave Walter, Barbara Karkutt, David Hoffman, Bill Lewis, Linda Doppleb, Paul Wolfgang, Joe Sabatina, and Charles Rakowski. Others who may attend include Bill Snyder, Toni Black, Ron Bachner, Lee Anne Poynter, Dick Fuerle, Geoff Steinberg, and Wade and Janice Lehman.

Delegation chairman will be Dave Walter. If your name is not on this list, and you intend to attend the Denver convention, please contact Dave so that your name can be put on the Alternate Delegate list to be submitted to the Credentials Committee.

NEWS ITEMS

A newspaper column is now being written by Frank Bubb for the *NEWS OF DELAWARE COUNTY*. Frank, who is Vice Chair of the LPP and was our candidate for State Treasurer last year, hopes to syndicate the column to other newspapers in the State this year. The column, which presents the Libertarian alternative to all manner of issues, will help spread the Libertarian message between campaigns. If you know of any newspapers that would/might carry his column, please get in touch with Frank.

Who says that "Letters to the Editor" don't get printed or are more trouble than they are worth? State Chair Dave Walter recently spent about half an hour writing two letters, both of which, he reports, were printed. His letter to the *DAILY INTELLIGENCER* concerned improving minority unemployment by eliminating minimum wage laws, and his letter to the *PHILADELPHIA BULLETIN* argued that the U.S. should stay out of the developing conflict in El Salvador. Walt Karwicki of York, and Flip Ferrera of Villanova are two other prolific letter writers who meet with frequent success in Pennsylvania. Why not take a half hour each month to write a letter to one of the papers in your area commenting on some editorial or news item and presenting the libertarian view?

The newly active Philadelphia County group sponsored an "Appreciation Banquet" for Ed Clark on February 27th when he was in Philadelphia on business. The dinner, held at the Holiday Inn in center city, attracted over seventy people and raised more than \$600 to offset campaign debts. Clark's visit was covered by Channel 6 on the evening news. Clark admitted that there were some things that were done that were mistakes but, on the whole, felt that the 1980 campaign was on target and quite productive.

Beginning next month, *LIBERTARIAN PENN* will carry reports from each of the Regional Representatives concerning club activity and organizational growth in their areas.

1981 CONVENTION

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continue to appeal to everyone who believes in the principle of non-coercion, no matter what their current "label" may be. It was pointed out that many more "libertarians" are still out there to be discovered, and that they believe in what we large L Libertarians have already discovered. Another important point made was that individual candidates will emphasize the portions of the libertarian philosophy they are most drawn to and comfortable with. For example, a white middle-class businessman Libertarian candidate from a rural area shouldn't dwell on urban drug problems during his campaign if that is of no interest to himself or his constituents.

Frank Bubb summed up the two hour discussion by observing that "principles and not raw vote totals" are the proper goal for any Libertarian political movement. (Bubb's thoughts on the matter will appear as an article in the next issue of *LIBERTARIAN PENN.*)

After a break for lunch, the Convention reassembled to hear a panel discussion on the effects of State intervention in education. The three panelists were: Bill Karayer, a Libertarian who served six years on the Upper St. Clair school board; Carol Low, a Libertarian who ran a private religious school for a number of years; and Don Ernsberger, a Libertarian who teaches in a government high school. The panelists described the power that the State has over the parents and the children who seek an education, how that power has evolved until powerful teacher's lobbies and special interests have taken responsibility for education out of the hands of parents and placed it with bureaucrats, and how Libertarians can begin to liberate education by having it serve the consumers instead of the providers. While local school boards have some powers to restore freedom to the educational system, it became clear that Libertarian efforts to improve the situation have to be taken on the State and Federal levels. Educational freedom is becoming a larger issue every year and Libertarian candidates for State Legislature and U.S. Congress are going to have to address the growing revolt against Government Education with reasonable and responsible Libertarian solutions.

Next on the agenda was a talk by David Bergland, of Costa Mesa, Cal., the current National Chairman of the Libertarian Party. Mr. Bergland is concerned over the lack of minority involvement in the Libertarian Party in spite of the fact that our principals should be attracting the down-trodden minorities that need to get Big Brother government off their backs. His California experience is that blacks, Hispanics, and others are very receptive to the Libertarian message once they get over their fears that the LP is just another "white man's Party," like the Democrats and Republicans, that pays lip service to minority rights but continue to use the government to better whites at the expense of everyone else. Bergland discussed the minority outreach program that his Concepts of Liberty has put together. Their undertakings include: education of Libertarians about minority problems and effective communication with minorities, education of minority people about Libertarian solutions, recruitment of minority activists into the LP, and supervision and coordination of activities between Libertarians and minority people.

Tax limitation efforts in Pennsylvania were described by Dr. Jim Ference, a Johnstown dentist who led the fight to have a tax limitation measure passed by the Penna. Legislature. While the measure was not successful, Dr. Ference believes that there is still considerable sentiment for tax cuts and that citizens will back a well-organized and effective drive. The Libertarian Party of Pennsylvania is one of those organizations which can keep up the pressure and build a movement for eventual passage of Initiative and Referendum which will make Prop. 13 type efforts possible in Pennsylvania.

Dr. Pat Gallagher, a member of the State Board of the A.C.L.U. discussed the State of civil liberties in Pennsylvania. He believes that there is very little

interference with civil liberties in our State, as compared to others. The continual assault on the freedom of the press is one area that bears watching, he said, and welcomed the support of groups such as the LPP on the side of civil liberties. In answering a questioner, Gallagher pointed out that A.C.L.U. is made up of individuals with diverse views on other issues. While he, personally, feels that it is time for the A.C.L.U. to start taking on some economic liberties issues, the organization still avoids this.

A final seminar had to be scrubbed when the Pittsburgh Association Against Rape representative failed to show up to discuss "Rape and Justice in Pennsylvania". No notice or apology was ever offered, so this group apparently believes it needs no more friends in its efforts to seek justice for rape victims.

Before the banquet, a cocktail party allowed for more informal and convivial conversation as attendees socialized to the background music of the "John Galt Trio".

Those accustomed to no-choice rubber chicken banquet fare were pleasantly surprised to have a choice of one of three main entrees. After dining, everyone sat back for the main event — a keynote speech by Dr. Murray Rothbard, "Mr. Libertarian", on "Will Liberty Triumph?". Six or seven years ago, Dr. Rothbard was optimistic about the eventual success of the Libertarian movement. The disgust over the Vietnam War, Watergate, inflation, taxes, and government in general, coupled with the rapid growth of the movement, contributed to his optimism. In 1980, however, several things have combined to cause him to be less optimistic about the future of liberty. External to the LP, he sees these conditions as having contributed to his growing pessimism: the greater hawkishness of American opinion with Vietnam forgotten, the attempts by the Moral Majority to bring back theocracy, the projected crackdown on "subversive" groups, and the sputtering of the tax revolt. Rothbard also dwelt, at some length, on problems within the Libertarian Party that have made him more pessimistic: what he describes as a "sell-out" of Libertarian principles during the Clark campaign in order to secure a "quick victory" through more votes. Rothbard is a champion of the view that the LP must be a "Party of Principle", that LP must never advance short-term solutions as our final goal, and that votes matter less than convincing people that Libertarian principles result in a free and just society. Dr. Rothbard believes that the LP can be a "Party of Principle" and intends to be involved in the thick of things at the next National Convention with the "Coalition for a Principled Party". While some of his references went over the heads of newcomers to the LPP, several remarked that they were glad to see that the LP was not a monolithic structure where dissenting viewpoints were not able to be heard and debated.

A fund-raiser at the conclusion of the banquet added more than \$850 to the LPP treasury for vital special projects.

The business session convened on Sunday morning for the purpose of amending the Constitution and By-Laws, electing new officers, electing delegates to the Denver National Convention, and endorsing candidates for office in 1981.

The first order of business was to vote to allow all those present to vote for officers and in any other business that came before the convention. The Constitution and By-Laws were then amended to reflect the changes in organizational structure as recommended by the State Executive Board. Two Vice Chairmen, instead of one, are now officers, and there are seven Regional Representatives elected by their regional members, rather than only three.

Dave Walter was re-elected for another one-year term as State Chairman. The two Vice Chairmen for 1981 will be Frank Bubb (former State Treasurer) and Richard Caligiuri. Barbara Karkutt was re-elected State Secretary, and Bill Snyder will serve as State Treasurer. Regional Representatives were elected for five of the seven new regions: Geoff Steinberg, Bob Fink, Janice Lehman, Mike Chermack, and Ira Spivak. (See WHO'S WHO list in this issue for addresses.)

After endorsing candidates and electing delegates (see separate articles) the LPP decided that it would wait until after the April NatCom meeting to appoint its one representative to the 1981 Platform Committee. However, the Board can appoint someone from outside Pennsylvania only if 2/3 concur on the choice. It was also decided to have a State Platform drawn up in Pennsylvania in 1982 which will address the issues expected to be advanced by our candidate for Governor and candidates for State Legislature. The Board will decide how this Platform is to be drawn up and submitted for consideration at the next convention.

The Convention was adjourned around 1 p.m. and everyone dispersed for home convinced that the LPP was stronger and more prepared for a successful campaign than ever before. Next year's convention is scheduled to be held in the Eastern part of the State and it is hoped that, once again, records will be set for both attendance and enthusiasm.

Making Literature Tables Work

*This article originally appeared in the
Oregon Libertarian
by Burgess Laughlin*

Being an activist is like making a financial investment. To get the most mileage out of whatever political action you take, you have to consider the results you expect, the time-frame, and the price you must pay.

Literature tables are an investment that offers a small but steady return for a low price. Let's look at the mechanics of this investment.

The Layout

How you arrange your table, chairs, and literature is important. If possible, have one large sign or poster that, in effect, tells passersby "This is the Libertarian Party's table." The sign might be a Libertarian Party of Penna. banner. With such a sign, you'll have fewer people come to your table who disagree with Libertarian ideas. At the same time, the sign will reach a lot of people who wouldn't dream of actually stopping at a minor-party table. You will have made a small, but long-term political investment by exposing the Libertarian name to people who may never have seen it before.

Place the sign higher than the heads of the people standing in front of your table. When you set up your sign, take the wind into account and fix your sign securely.

Have at least one more chair than the table monitors will need. If you are deeply involved in conversation with a passerby, it would be useful to have a place for both of you to sit without blocking the table for other people. (If a large number of people are stopping by your table, you may not have time to talk to any of them at great length). Place your chairs far enough back from the table to give browsers a chance to look at the literature without feeling pressured.

Remember, some people would rather talk than read, but

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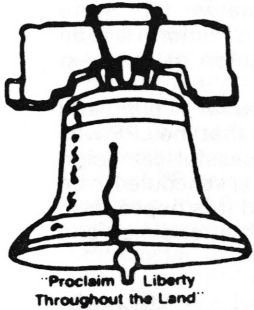
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others are browsers who prefer selecting brochures without your help. Avoid overdosing browsers. When I scan political tables at rallies, fairs, or wherever, I feel overwhelmed if there are too many items crowded together. About half of the people approaching your table want to take something away for later reading. The other half want guidance. . . they are looking for a discussion of a particular issue or they simply want to talk rather than read.

If you're selling any of the literature— and if you want to avoid misunderstandings — be sure to clearly mark the prices.

Because Libertarianism is so new and so radical, try to have general information handy to you in one section when people ask, "What does the Libertarian Party stand for?"

Don't forget to have a sign-up sheet for people who want more information.

Table-Side Manners

Above all, be pleasant, relaxed and noncombative. Very few people who stop by are looking for conflict. Most are either randomly browsing or following a lead they picked up somewhere ("I signed your ballot petition and I saw an article in the paper about . . .")

When people approach, give them time and space. Most feel at least a little uncomfortable and unsure. Give them time to browse and then ask, "Can I help you?" or "If you have any questions about the Libertarian Party, I'd be glad to answer them." If you can't answer a question, admit it and say "I'm not sure; could I have your name and address so I can let you know later?"

Think of the people approaching your table as "clients"

— you *are* trying to sell them something — and tailor your words accordingly.

If you're at an anti-draft rally, for example, you can assume that your client opposes the draft and comes from a leftist background. Take advantage of those assumptions. Point out a general Libertarian principle that the client is likely to agree to ("Libertarians oppose government intervention in our lives") and then a specific one you probably share with the client (" . . . for example, we are totally opposed to the draft in whatever form it takes.") If the client is wearing an anti-war "Potsmoke not Gunsmoke" button, you will be more effective talking about decriminalization of victimless crimes than about abolishing the Antitrust Division of the Justice Department. As Gary Chipman (LPO member-at-large) has pointed out, people interested in, but ignorant of Libertarianism are like fish brought up from the dark ocean depths . . . They explode if you bring them up too fast.

Perspective

A realistic goal for literature tables is *exposure*, not conversion. You stand little chance of turning around anyone's life-long accumulation of political values. People do change their minds, but step by step. Your literature table may be one of those steps.

One of the big thrills of working such a table is invariably finding several libertarians who've been looking for you, or who didn't realize there was a Party espousing their ideas. Get them into your local group as fast as you can because there is nothing worse than letting their enthusiasm fade through non-contact.

WHO'S WHO IN THE LPP

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Secretary: Barbara Karkutt, Box 942, Easton, Pa. 18042 215—252-1684

Treasurer: William Snyder, 823 Falcon Lane, West Chester, Pa. 19380 215—436-8693

Southeastern Regional Coordinator: Geoff Steinberg, 1131 S. 46th St., Phila., Pa. 19143 215—387-6952

Northeastern Regional Coordinator: Michael Chermack, 1038 8th Ave., Berwick, Pa. 18603 717—759-8255

Southeast Central Regional Coordinator: Janice Lehman, 736 McKenzie St., York, Pa. 17403 717—843-3691

Northcentral Regional Coordinator: Ira Spivak, 606 Market St., Lewisburg, Pa. 17837

Southwest Regional Coordinator: Bob Fink, 306 Fifth Ave., Carnegie Pa. 15106 412—276-7509

Southwest Central and Northwest: to be announced

Campus Coordinator: Le Anne Poynter, 425 N. Pine St., Lancaster, Pa. 17601

Finance Committee Director: Joe Sabatina, 1126 Englewood St., Phila., Pa. 19111

Internal Education Director: George Meyer, 516 S. 13th St., Phila., Pa. 19107

Outreach and Speakers Bureau: Frank Bubb

Research Committee: to be announced

Contact your local coordinator about setting up a County organizational meeting. County Chairs have been named in these counties: Lehigh, Bucks, Monroe, Erie, Phila., Delaware, Montgomery, Chester, York, Cumberland, Allegheny.