



The LibPENN

The Official Newsletter of the
Libertarian Party of Pennsylvania

The Libertarian Penn

July 2009

Upcoming Events:

Montgomery Co. LP

July 1st, 7:30pm
Philadelphia Inquire Bldg

LPPA Board Meeting

July 18th, 12 pm
Ted's - Dauphin County

Clarion Co. LP

July 6th, 5:30pm
BJ's Eatery

Cumberland Co. LP

July 13th, 7pm
Market Cross Pub

Lancaster Co. LP

August 18th, 7pm
The Symposium

Allegheny Co. LP

July 15th, 7pm
Ritter's Diner

York Co. LP

July 27th, 7pm
First Cap. Dispensing. Co.

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Lancaster County Libertarian Party Gets Organized

By Roy Minnet and Tim Boots
LPPA members - Lancaster County

Having been without a functioning organization for several years, the LP of Lancaster County is scheduled to boot up with its first meeting on August 18th. Lancaster County Libertarian activist Tim Boots, working with the Dauphin County Libertarian Committee will do a postcard mailing announcing the meeting to the 1,520 registered LP members in the county.

Funds are being provided by the DCLP and a matching grant from LPPA. The LPLC will meet at 6:00pm on the third Tuesday evening of each month at The Symposium Restaurant, 125 South Centerville Road, Lancaster, PA 17603.

"It's always uplifting to interact with other Libertarians, but I hope the LPLC can be much more useful than just being enjoyable," said Boots. "Our priority will be to *actively* recruit new members and to become a force in Lancaster politics, eventually running our own candidates."

Lancaster will join neighboring York, Cumberland and Dauphin counties, all of which are currently organized. Registered Libertarians will have resources and a support arm right in their backyard to run candidates, organized public policy events and actively engage in political forums.

Anyone who is planning to attend or would like to help with Lancaster County should advise Tim at meltimjas@verizon.net.

My First Party Convention

By Edward Clifford
Eastern Vice-Chair - LPPA

I could not believe what I was doing. In a conference room in Clarion, PA, I rose to speak my mind on the Pennsylvania Libertarian Party's platform. Specifically, the topic was when human life begins. As with all political platforms, this was a delicate subject and I spoke to the point that the party must have flexibility for candidates to make choices about that topic. Ultimately, we agreed to remain silent on when life begins and adopted the plank about keeping government out of abortion education or funding.

I, as most people, followed politics from the benches and never participated much. I voted in elections, attended a few local meetings of elected politicians, and generally formed my own opinions about the surrounding environment. I never was active in any party functions other than registering. With all the change in direction within the spheres of government and politics, I decided now would prove an excellent opportunity to participate in a formative capacity with the Libertarian Party.

I always subscribed to the Libertarian philosophy, but never participated. I attended the Pennsylvania Libertarian Party convention over the weekend of May 1st through 3rd.

(Cont. on Pg. 2)



**Something
to say? Send
Letters to the
LPPA, send in
an article for
the LibPENN
or visit the
forum at
www.lppa.org**



My First Party Convention (Cont.)

This was my first foray into the realm of party politics at a leadership capacity. I traveled to there with a man I had met only 6 months previous, Ken Krawchuck. I was vaguely familiar with the name and he later reminded me that he was the 1998 and 2002 candidate for Governor. Over the past 6 months Ken and I, along with others, discussed views with regard to government, the Libertarian party, and the erosion and infringement of rights.

The convention was an excellent experience. From the dynamic gathering in the hospitality suite, courtesy of the Montgomery County Libertarian Party to the wondrous and intelligent exchange in forming the Party Platform, I was amazed by everyone the entire weekend. The idea of having options other than the seemingly ubiquitous “major” parties and my ability for active participation reinvigorates me with respect to being an American and in the United States of America.

I was surrounded by people who don't want their lives managed by government. They don't need arbitrary laws infringing and governing their property. They wanted to be free and to be left alone. Far too much in our world, the tendrils of government officials, so called “leaders,” dictate what is and what is not right, mostly sacrificing individual property along the way. And here, individuals, with individual rights, stand in direct opposition to the status quo. I am reminded of a thought with respect to leadership: “A leader does not always do what is popular, but does do what is always right.” The people in that conference room represented true leadership. Those people stand for the principles of liberty.

Keep Them on Top

By John Parks
LPPA Member - Pittsburgh

The problem with Pennsylvania politics is not who votes, but who runs. If our friends in Harrisburg want more people to vote, then move Election Day to the second Saturday of the month, and extend the time to 9pm. This would allow many more qualified voters to vote, and given the Saturday date, long lines would be avoided as there would be no pre- or post-work rush at polling locations.

Real voter reform would be for our Legislators to support the Voters Choice Act and allow Third Parties the opportunity to compete in elections. What real change in state government will we see if we have a 100% turnout for the lesser of two evils? I would argue, none. The corruption will continue, the good ‘ol boy and girl network will continue to rule, and real reform for the citizens of Pennsylvania will never happen.

It would be great if more people voted. It would be better still if more people were allowed to run for office by removing the ballot access barriers imposed on third party and independent candidates for statewide office. We want change. Give us choices and allow us to vote for it.



State Chair Michael “Mik”
Robertson calling the 2009
State Convention to Order



Western Vice-Chair Berlie
Etzel and Cumberland Co.
Chair Ron Goodman

Ideas for Marketing Libertarianism

By Patrick Rieker, Psy.D.
LPPA Member, Dauphin County

I believe it essential that Libertarians do all that they can to educate the public, enhance the legitimacy of the party in the eyes of our fellow citizens, and attempt to increase both Libertarian voter registration as well as membership in the party. Part of this process involves marketing the party in any way you can. In fact, there are many ways to advertise the Libertarian philosophy and party without a major expenditure. Some of the things I have been doing that are meeting with some success include the following:

* I have written letters to a State Senator voicing my support for several of his initiatives which coincided with Libertarian positions. I have also written to the president of the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry to suggest that this organization include Libertarian candidates as invited guests to their events (and pointing out that the Libertarian party is more a friend of business than Democrats or Republicans). In writing such letters, I don't let people in important positions forget that there is a Libertarian Party and that we are invested. As an aside, the return letter from the office of the Senator was from one of his senior aides, who made it a point to inform me that he was sympathetic to the Libertarian cause.

* I display a Libertarian bumper sticker on my car that gets noticed by friends, family, coworkers, neighbors, and whoever is behind me in traffic or walks past my car in a parking lot. The bumper sticker is magnetic so as not to cause any damage or hassle. I also wear Libertarian t-shirts in public and especially when I go to the gym to work out. Both of these items are available through the national Libertarian Party website, and both have generated interest among people I encounter, many of whom have approached me to ask questions, express support, get more information, etc.

* I took out four co-workers and bought them lunch, under the condition that they agree to hear me out with a brief presentation on the Libertarian Party. At the end of my "presentation," my co-workers actually applauded me and all four said they were much more sympathetic to Libertarianism as a result (whereas prior to this, none of them had ever given serious thought to Libertarian ideas or the Libertarian Party). I know for a fact that several of these co-workers cast ballots for Libertarians during the last election.

* I get others to visit websites of the state and national parties, as well as Cato, International Society for Individual Liberty, Freedomfest, The Reason Foundation, The Institute for Justice, etc.

* I never shy away from injecting, if and when appropriate, into any conversation I am having with anyone that I am a Libertarian and/or presenting the Libertarian position on issues and identifying it as such.

* I often hand out a Libertarian Party "introductory packet" of literature to anyone who seems interested and have sent copies to family members.

It is possible to make a significant contribution to one of the Libertarian Party's primary goals: increased visibility and recognition. Each of us can help out with this goal and once you get started, it's often gratifying to see people's positive response when they understand more about the Libertarian Party. Once I had some pages from my Libertarian Party introductory packet that didn't print out well, so I threw them into my scrap paper pile at work. The other week, I just happened to have used the back of one to jot a quick note to a coworker. A few days later she stopped me in the hallway and said she had by chance read the stuff on the reverse side of the note, showed it to her husband, and informed me that they think they are both Libertarians!

What to do with the Pennsylvania Turnpike

By Ron Goodman
*LPPA Membership and
Cumberland County Chair*

In the discussion about what to do with the Pennsylvania Turnpike I would like to offer another alternative. Make Route 76 just another "free" road. Roads are what I call a "physical monopoly" as it is highly unlikely that you are going to have ten different road suppliers build and maintain ten or even two roads to your house.

As a result of the "physical monopoly" the whole theory of market competition goes out the window. As a businessman, I can guarantee you that monopoly situations lead to customers overpaying for a good or service. My concern about privatizing roads is that the unstated reason companies are willing to fork over a big lease payment is that they know they can make above-average profits from sheer monopoly power.

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What to do with the Pennsylvania Turnpike (Cont.)

While I don't have anything against above-average profit for private business, I do have a problem with government-sponsored monopolies, and I believe leasing the PA Turnpike fits into this category.

As a business traveler living in Pennsylvania for 48 years, it's my opinion that the PA Turnpike road is in no better condition and in some cases worse condition than the other major highways I drive. Pennsylvania has thousands of miles of roads that seem to function fairly well so I am curious about why we had to have a whole separate government agency and bureaucracy for Route 76. I really didn't see anything special about this road that warranted hundreds of tollbooth gate-keepers (or their automated brethren EZ Pass lanes) to collect taxes.

From a business and libertarian standpoint, if we concede that the maintenance and ownership of roads is a legitimate public function (I know several libertarians differ with this opinion) then our goal should be to provide that service at as low a cost as possible while maintaining safety and reliability. To that end I think we have an excellent opportunity to cut government waste and lower the ultimate cost by eliminating duplication of effort.

“...eliminate the entire Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission..”

The first thing I would do is eliminate the entire Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, visibly cutting government bureaucracy. We already have one government agency, PennDOT, managing all the other Pennsylvania roads, so having a separate agency with additional high paid self-important executives is completely redundant and a total waste of taxpayer or “tollpayer” money.

Next I would sell all the EZ Pass equipment and the Food and Gas rest areas to the highest bidder, using that money to fund work on the road itself. At the same time we could dramatically reduce the number of government workers by eliminating the toll workers. We already have ample tax collection mechanisms in place so we could reduce the cost of collecting tax revenue by again eliminating duplication of effort.

An immediate benefit of making the turnpike just another “free” road in Pennsylvania is that it would reduce congestion on other state roads from people like myself who try to avoid paying turnpike tolls. Because of the current high fees to ride the turnpike it is an underutilized asset, incentivizing people to add to the congestion problem by taking less efficient routes to their destination.

Eliminating fees on the turnpike would make Pennsylvania more business-friendly and help us function as the Keystone State. Getting goods from one location to another is an advantage we have due to our geographical location. Making the turnpike free would complement Pennsylvania's competitive advantage as a logistics and distribution hub.

By eliminating an entire duplicative government agency and getting hundreds of people off the government payroll we would be free to focus on what is really important: reducing construction, operation and maintenance costs of our roads while increasing safety and convenience. Once we have consolidated all the responsibility for roadwork with PennDOT we would be free to open things up to competitive bidding from private firms for almost all of their functions. This would allow for a second wave of government worker reduction putting more people to work in the private industry. Putting the construction and maintenance contracts out for public bid would ensure that we stay current with road technology while lowering the ultimate cost per mile of each road.

Whatever funds are needed to make up the shortfall in revenue from eliminating turnpike tolls could efficiently be made up through existing tax collection systems like the income, sales or gasoline tax.

Making the PA Turnpike just another road will eliminate duplicative government agencies and duplicative tax collection systems, making government smaller and more efficient while expanding the feeling of freedom from eliminating the hassle tax of tolls.

To discuss this matter further, please visit www.lppa.org/forum where a discussion will be started on this subject.

**Introducing \$5.00 LPPA Membership
for Full-Time Students**

Got something to say? Join the LibPENN Committee

Do you have something to say? Who am I kidding, we're Libertarians. So why not join the LibPENN, the LPPA Official Newsletter committee. There is minimal commitment and you can work from home on your own schedule. You basically write Libertarian articles that you feel other Libertarians in PA would enjoy reading, send them in and you're done. If you would like to help out, but not write an article, maybe serve as a proofreader or send in article suggestions to the committee.

What kind of articles are we looking for? Current events are always popular and even better if they are Pennsylvania-specific. You can submit one per month or one per year, it's your call. We suggest 1,000 words per article, but no submission will be turned down due to length. To get you started, all I need is a title of your masterpiece and a due date. Interested? Contact weneedjohngalt9@yahoo.com for more information.

Thank you for supporting the LPPA!!

The Libertarian Party of Pennsylvania Membership Form

Membership Options

- ◆ Full Membership / Renewal- \$15.00
- ◆ Associate Member - FREE (with valid e-mail)
- ◆ New Membership - \$15.00 (\$5.00 Full-Time Students)
- ◆ 1788 Society - \$12 / month or \$120 / year or more (includes full membership)

NOTE: Full membership includes LibPENN Newsletter and voting privileges at the state convention.

The Libertarian Party is the party of principal. To publically affirm what we believe - and to ensure that our party never strays from our principal - we ask our members to proudly sign this statement.

"I hereby certify that I do not believe in or advocate the initiation of force as a means of achieving political or social goals."

X _____
Signature (required)

Please consider an additional donation to help us grow.

General Fund: \$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other: _____

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Member Contact Information:

Name: _____ County: _____
Address: _____ Email: _____
Phone: _____

Mail form to: The LPPA 3915 Union Deposit Road, #223 Harrisburg, PA 17109

Visit www.lppa.org to join, renew or donate online



A Message From Our Chair

It is a great time to be Libertarian! More and more, people are coming to realize that the two old parties are leading our nation away from its founding principles. There are many people who are beginning to understand that individual liberty, personal responsibility, free markets, and limited government are what made us a great nation, and that we must return to these ideals if we are to address the problems we face.

The Libertarian Party maintains these fundamental American principles, and more people are coming to realize the LP presents the best hope for America's future. This is the change we can not only believe in, but we have seen these principles work in adverse economic conditions in the past. The fires of Liberty have been lit, and the flames are beginning to spread. As the two old parties start to crumble, more people are turning to the LP.

We have a lot of work ahead of us, and we will all need to join in to move our Party forward. Please consider volunteering in any capacity. Together we can put the political process on a heading toward freedom, peace, and prosperity!

For Liberty,
Michael "Mik" Robertson



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