



Lone Star Liberty

The Official Monthly Newsletter of the Libertarian Party of Texas

April 2006

Contested Races Boost Conventions' Attendance

Many LP Conventions, particularly District Conventions, showed marked increases in attendance from previous years this election cycle. This may reflect growing support for the LP in Texas.

The record number of candidates and the numbers of contested races may have led to increased participation as candidates drew their supporters to the conventions.

"About 35 people attended combined District Conventions for the Gulf Coast counties of Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, and Harris and I think most of them came to cast their votes in the contested U.S. Representative District 22 race," said Convention Chair Laura Coker-Garcia. "The last time Harris had a contested race was in 2002 for the 9th Congressional District and we only had about half as many delegates for that one."

In 2004, 141 individuals affiliated with the Party through the convention process. With just nine of the

52 counties that scheduled conventions this cycle reporting to date we already have more than 160 affiliates.

The U.S. Representative District 22 race was won by Bob Smither of Friendswood. Bob has been involved with the Party since its early days and has served many roles for the Party, currently as administrator for our website. Bob is well known in the community and even nationally as the founder, with his wife Gay, of the Laura Recovery Center. The nonprofit center helps search for missing children and is an advocate for laws to keep children safe.



Others winning contested

races for the LP nomination for Congress include: Mike Idrogo for U.S. Representative District 20; Rich Haas for U.S. Representative District 26; and John B. Hawley for U.S. Representative District 32.

Winners in contested State Representative races include: Bradley Moore for District 34; Yvonne Schick for District 47; Benjamin Westfried for District 66; Robert R. Virasin for District 70; Helen Rhine for District 89; Leslie Herman for District 94; Carlos M. Garcia for District 97; Jeffrey S. Joyner for District 101; Edward C. Cormack for District 114; Jo Ann Thabet for District 120; Sally Baynton for District 122; Jeffrey C. Blunt for District 125; and Matthew Kolar for District 144.

U.S. Representative District 14 Convention delegates failed to nominate a Libertarian candidate for the office currently held by Ron Paul of Surfside. Ron is a former LP Presidential candidate.

Harris County Convention delegates chose none of the above in five races rather than nominate candidates who were unknown. Montgomery County delegates selected NOTA for U.S. Representative District 8 for the same reason. A Fort Bend and Harris County District Convention chose not to nominate a candidate for State Senator District 13, who was not present, after hearing reports from the former and current Harris County Chairs.

Fifteen candidates for statewide races, including a contested race for U.S. Senate will be decided at the June 10, State Convention.



Ray Dittmar, Linda Giardina, and Kevin Hagan at District Conventions.



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Hooking Up with Libertarians

Attending a party meeting is the best way to meet other Libertarians, however, Libertarians in Texas keep in touch in a variety of ways.

The two most popular ways are through forums and yahoo groups.

The State Party hosts a forum on the www.lptexas.org website that has places to make announcements; discuss Libertarians tactics, philosophy, or the latest news; or ask questions. The forum is open to everyone and is moderated by Williamson County Chair Brian Bracamonte.

Travis, Fort Bend and Williamson Counties also have forums devoted to local activity. You can find them at www.austinliberty.org; www.fortbendlp.org; and www.txwclp.org respectively.

Many county parties have yahoogroups. Most have open auto-

mated subscription to join. To do this you send a message to the the name of the group, type a dash, and then the word "subscribe" followed by @yahoogroups.com. Some of the more populated groups are "CollinLPActivist", "LPTX-Denton", "HCLP" (Houston area), "TCLPActive" (Austin) "ETL" (East Texas Libertarians), and "LP_MC" (Montgomery County). Current candidates and campaign managers (only) can join "lptx-candidates", which is moderated by Grant Rostig.

The grandfather of all the online discussion groups is LPTexas, which is unmoderated and open. Content and posting frequency varies widely. Those wanting to subscribe should contact Bob Smither at bob@smither.com for directions.

Editor's Choice Hot Links

For opinion, news, edification, training, and interesting events I recommend the following websites:

www.self-gov.org. Online home of the Advocates for Self Government. Good portal for anyone new to the movement. Resources, Operation Politically Homeless materials and other products.

www.isil.org. The International Society for Individual Liberty. Anyone who has not seen the animated "Philosophy of Liberty," needs to go there now!

www.libertarianstudies.org. Home of the Ludwig Von Mises Institute. Economics, need I say more?

www.fee.org. The Foundation for Economic Education. Another classic libertarian site.

www.thetaxfoundation.org. Huge amounts of information on taxes and the folks who publisize "Tax Freedom Day," each year.

www.ij.org. The libertarian answer to the ACLU, this is the home of the Institute for Justice. Their tag

line is "litigating for liberty." The Castle Coalition, Citizens fighting eminent domain abuse is one of their projects.

www.antiwar.com. Founded by Libertarians opposed to the initiation of force this huge, up-to-the-minute site still has many Libertarian contributors.

www.dpft.org. Home of the Drug Policy Forum of Texas. Add a visit to www.mpp.org, the Marijuana Policy Project, and you have all the information on drug issues you could want.

www.lewrockwell.com. Billed as "anti-state, anti-war, pro-market" this site is frequently referenced in Libertarian's emails. Good source of news and opinion.

www.texaspolicy.com. Texas' first pro-freedom think tank. Good source for issues and information for candidates.

These are my top 10. What are yours? Send your list to Laura@Libertyworks.org.

Around the State: A Round Up of Activist Activities

In County Conventions several longtime County Chairs were returned to office including: **Gordon Mobley** for Bell County and **Daniel Barker** for Parker. Many conventions elected individuals who had been serving as appointed Chairs including: **Tim Lebsack** for Dallas; **Kevin Tunstall** for Fort Bend; and **Dean Tucker** for Jefferson. Several counties elected new Chairs including: **Guy McLendon** for Harris; **Ross Stevenson** for Montgomery; **Fredrick Drew** for Cameron, and **Mark Goodman** for Burleson. A list of current County Chairs is on the website, but updates for many counties are still needed.

The Conventions gave many county organizations a promotional opportunity.

Lubbock Libertarians earned an Avalanche Journal front page article March 15, which has been one of four front pages the group has gotten over the years. The story mentioned an LP win in 2002, quoted Chair **Brad Clardy** on the influence of the LP even when elections are not won, listed the basic philosophy of the LP, named all the local candidates, gave the National website address, and quoted former Congressional candidate **Chip Peterson**.

Danny Sessums, Treasurer for the Fort Bend County LP, proves that promoting the LP in previously unsuccessfully organized counties is possible. Danny had an opinion column published March 9 on the Fort Bend Now online newsite. His column promoted the LP as a viable option in the County and announced the upcoming conventions. The column was reprinted March 13 in the Houston Community Newspapers. The Fort Bend Herald and Texas Coaster printed on report on the County Conventions on March 18. Fort Bend Now reported the results of elections for County Party officers March 23.

U.S. Representative District 22 candidate **Bob Smither** issued a

press release announcing his nomination. His release was carried in Guidry News online. An article on the race in the March 26 issue of the Galveston County News led with Bob's nomination and later referred to Democrat challenger Nick Lampson as someone who had "worked with Smither" on child safety legislation.

The Harris County LP sent a March 29 media release announcing our candidates and that "At it's March 18, 2006 County Convention, held on the third anniversary of the War in Iraq, the Harris County Libertarian Party passed a resolution honoring America's war dead while reiterating its opposition to the current war."

LP candidates were also mentioned in a March 14 New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung article on the race for State Representative District 73. This was a contested race for the LP between **Charles Ellis** and **Shannon McCracken**.

Past Harris County LP Chair **Jeff Daiell** ends almost all of his many emails with a request for speaking engagements and his calendar shows the effect. Jeff is scheduled to speak April 5 at a Drug Policy Forum Benefit in Houston, April 10 he addresses several American Government classes at Wharton Community College, April 22 he's speaking at a NORML benefit, May 4 he's before several different classes at Wharton, and May 16 he's speaking at the Bexar County LP monthly meeting.

Clyde Garland of Brazos County is our resident expert on event outreach. Fort Bend County activists have taken Clyde up on his offer to come out to newly organized counties with an Operation Politically Homeless booth if volunteers in those counties will help pay for space at an event and staff the booth. Clyde and Fort Bend County activists plan to have a booth at the Fort Bend County Fair in September.

In other news, Travis County's

Central Texas Transportation Committee Chair, **Steve Ravet**, was interviewed on Fox 7 News.

State Senate District 18 Candidate **Roy Wright** announced a new website at <http://roy.wright.org>. Roy says suggestions are welcome. The Democrat who won his party's primary has chosen not to accept his party's nomination and will not be replaced leaving Roy in a two-way race.

State Chair and elected officeholder **Patrick Dixon** testified in a March 23 public hearing for the Secretary of State's Election Division on the subject of Diebold voting machines. Pat reiterated our stance that electronic voting machines have a verifiable paper trail. He also expressed concern about security and privacy issues with the machines.

National Convention

The 2006 Libertarian National Convention will be held the weekend of July 1 in Portland, Oregon. Texas is allocated 100 delegates for this event who will elect the next National Party Chair, officers, and Committee. Delegates will also make changes to the Party's platform and Bylaws.

Aside from this very important business attending the National Convention is a great social activity. A variety of packages starting as low as \$89 for delegates are available.

Information on the hotel, the agenda, FAQs for delegates, and registration are available at www.lpconvention.org.

Anyone wishing to represent Texas as a delegate needs to contact State Secretary Laura Coker-Garcia. Laura will present the names of all who are interested to the State Committee for approval by June 1, 2006. SLECT will make the final decision on delegates as by Texas Election Code our State Convention occurs after this deadline. EMail Laura@Libertyworks.org if you are interested.

Yes, I Want to See Libertarians Elected in Texas!

Name : _____ Address: _____ City _____
Zip _____

Phone (evenings): _____ Phone (day): _____ Email: _____
Occupation: _____ Employer: _____

- _____ I can distribute Libertarian Party outreach materials.
_____ I can hold or attend a meeting in my county.
_____ I can design or host a website for a candidate or county party.
_____ I am interested in being an appointed County Chair.

_____ Enclosed is a **one-time contribution** to help reach our goals.
_____ **Monthly Pledge** (please bill my credit card on a monthly basis.)

Print this form and mail
to:
Libertarian Party
P.O. Box 41059
Austin, TX 78704

Amount: _____ \$1,000 _____ \$250 _____ \$100 _____ \$50 _____ \$30 _____ \$10 _____ Other

Please enclose check or money order made payable to the Libertarian Party of Texas. (No corporate checks.)
Or provide the following information to authorize billing to your credit card.

Name on card: _____ Signature: _____
Visa _____ Mastercard _____ American Express _____ Discover _____
Account number: _____ Expiration: (mm/yy) _____

Federal law requires political committees to report the name, mailing address, and occupation and name of employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of \$200 in a calendar year. The Libertarian Party of Texas also submits finance reports to the Texas Ethics Commission.

Events of Interest to Texas Libertarians

April 1 (Sat.) Noon, "School Choice in Texas Public Schools," speech at Young Conservatives of Texas Annual Convention, Radisson Hotel, 1981 North Central Expressway, Richardson.

April 4 (Tues.) 7 p.m. Travis County LP Meeting, Mekong River Restaurant, 215 E. 6th Street, Austin. Contact Wesliberty@aol.com.

April 8-9 (Sat.-Sun.) Badnarik for US Rep. 10 Campaign Outreach at Bluebonnet Festival, FM 1155, Chappell Hill. Event is free, fee for parking.

April 18 (Tues.) 7 p.m. Bexar County LP Meeting, Unlimited Thought Bookstore, 5525 Blanco, Suite 107, San Antonio. Contact David Alter at Davy_doodle_@hotmail.com

April 21 (Sat.) Texas Taxpayer Summit, Stephen F. Austin Hotel, 701 Congress Ave., Austin. Sponsored by Americans for Prosperity. See www.americansfor

prosperity.org/ for information.

May 13 (Sat.) Election Day for non-partisan local political subdivisions.

May 16 (Tues.) 7 p.m. Bexar County LP Meeting, Unlimited Thought Bookstore, 5525 Blanco, Suite 107, San Antonio. Speaker will be former Harris County Chair Jeff Daiell on "How Both Left and Right Threaten Liberty." Contact David at Davy_doodle_@hotmail.com.

June 10 (Sat.) Libertarian Party State Convention. Time and location to be determined. Election of Party officers, and District Representatives for the Executive Committee, consideration of rules and changes to the Platform, nominations for statewide offices.

July 1-2 (Sat.-Sun.) Libertarian National Convention, Portland, Oregon. Delegate packages start at \$89. Visit www.LPConvention.org for information.