

Report on the state LP convention

Notes and observations from a first-time delegate
by Steve Marsland

Having made arrangements a year ago with my wife that I could attend the Libertarian Party of California convention even though it was on Valentine's Day weekend, I was very much looking forward to my first convention. I felt honored to represent San Mateo County, and we had selected a full set of delegates who would be attending with me. Also, the convention offered the prospect of an exciting election race, since Mark Hinkle, the present chair, was being challenged by a strong slate headed by Jon Petersen.

The convention promised to be particularly exciting because both Mark Hinkle and Marv Rudin (who was a supporter of the Jon Petersen slate) had called me asking if I would run for state Executive Committee on their slate. Since I felt that the direction of professionalism of Mark Hinkle's team was a good move, and also felt that Jon Petersen and Marv Rudin had a good point when they stressed the need for closer relations between regions and the state organization, I indicated to both groups that I considered myself friendly to both groups but not aligned with either one. I hoped that if elected as an At-Large Representative, I could help the good ideas of both groups become part of our future direction as a party. I indicated to both groups that I was willing to accept indications of support from either group.



I looked in on the efforts of the By-Laws committee and the Platform committee on Friday afternoon and found they were working hard. It seemed that many points being raised were quite picayune, though people considered them all and worked with good focus to resolve them. I was very impressed with Ted Brown's willingness to lead the Platform committee quite effectively. It is not easy to lead a large group and Ted provided everyone the opportunity to give their thoughts while keeping the group on track. Ted has a long and effective history as a Libertarian volunteer and most recently worked to assure that we had as many candidates in the field as possible for the 1998 elections, coordinating candidate recruitment for the state of California.

The main business sessions were conducted with a lot of care and attention to *Robert's Rules of Order*. There were many people there knowledgeable about the rules and I must say I learned quite a bit about how a large group can work together effectively using such protocols. During the main business session leading up to the election, I handed out my flyers, biography, and a copy of my 1998 Assembly campaign brochure to each delegate. I also learned that both slates (Mark Hinkle's and Jon Petersen's) had included me as a recommended At-Large Rep for the state party's Executive Committee. This made it very likely that I would be elected.

The election for chair was pretty exciting, taking an hour and a half because of some difficulties in matching the votes with registered delegates, and Mark Hinkle won by a narrow margin over Jon Petersen. Although I nominated Jon for Northern Vice Chair immediately after his defeat (he had served well as Northern Vice Chair over the past two years) he indicated that he was going to serve the party in another capacity that he was going to work out with Mark Hinkle.

The quality of the candidates was good for the rest of the offices, but because of the time taken up in electing the chair the speeches were reduced for some offices and eliminated for others. I was not able to make a speech, much to my regret. Still, when the votes were counted for At-Large Rep, I was stunned to learn that I had received more votes than any other candidate. I took this as an endorsement of the principle of teamwork and integrating all views into the leadership of the party in California.

Tammy Austin and Jeffrey Sommer, both of whom I know personally, each went down to defeat in their bids for Secretary and Northern Vice Chair, respectively, although Tammy's race was very close. Tammy was an excellent At-Large Rep last year and serves as chair in Marin. Jeffrey is chair of the East Bay Region. Sandi Webb was elected secretary, and Rodney Austin from Fresno as Northern Vice Chair. Both are very capable.

Following the election there was an immediate meeting of the new state Executive Committee. I was able to make some contributions toward keeping the meeting focused and on time. I also was able to bring up the *Reality Growth Plan*, which had been the platform of the Jon Petersen slate, for consideration by the new Executive Committee and to chair a small subgroup to consider what aspects of this platform could be integrated into the state party's future direction. I was also nominated to serve on the 5-member Operations Committee, which directs the day-to-day operations of the state party between Executive Committee meetings. In the subsequent voting, I was elected by the Executive Committee to be an Operations Committee member.

I am still absorbing how to perform all these new roles effectively, and am learning fast how to help the state party as well as our local efforts here in San Mateo. I think it is a tribute to our local region that, thanks to all the work we have done over the past few years, we are being recognized as a dynamic and effective region within the state. And the views of the San Mateo County region are now represented and listened to at the state level.

I want to thank everyone who has worked to support my efforts on behalf of freedom. It was only because our group of local officers is so strong that I was even able to consider running for At-Large Rep. I also received support and encouragement from the officers and party members within our county. I will do my best to make our state party as effective and dynamic as our local region has become. Thank you all.

New LPSM e-mail mailing lists

Three lists formed: discussion, announcements and inquiries
by Robert Giedt

Yes, you've heard this one before, but this time it's for real! We've formed three new mailing lists designed exclusively for members of the Libertarian Party of San Mateo County. Simply send an e-mail message to the following address(es) to join:

lpsm_announce-subscribe@listbot.com

This low-traffic moderated list is used to inform members of upcoming events, meeting locations and other important information. Subscribers to this list shouldn't receive any more than 34 pieces of mail a month.

lpsm_discuss-subscribe@listbot.com

This open list is for LPSM members to discuss libertarian philosophies, news items or anything else relating to libertarianism on a county- or statewide level. Fairly light traffic for now, but could expand with more subscribers.

lpsm_inquiry@listbot.com

This final list is for anyone seeking information about the Libertarian Party or the Libertarian Party of San Mateo County. Officers subscribing to the list will field inquiries from the public. (Officers may sign up by sending a note to lpsm_inquiry-subscribe@listbot.com)

Join a list or two today!

Proposal to change the LP of California's Statement of Principles

by Jack Hickey

The following was a proposal submitted by Jack Hickey (our region's Platform Committee representative) to the Libertarian Party of California's state convention in February. The existing (1998) text resides at <http://www.ca.lp.org/platform/>

We hold that legitimate governments exist to protect the rights of any individual; namely 1) the right to life, 2) the right to liberty of speech and action, and 3) the right to property, and therefore oppose all interference by government in areas of voluntary and contractual relations among individuals.

We acknowledge that the Constitution of the United States, while not perfect, serves; first, to limit government jurisdiction over citizens of the States, and second, to limit jurisdiction of the government of the United States over the individual States.

We assert that the phrase "promote the general welfare" contained in the Preamble was not intended to "provide welfare" in the form that pervades our government systems.

Rights define the boundaries of legitimate human conduct. Only to the extent that such boundaries are recognized and respected can conflict between people be avoided and a just civilization achieved.

We seek a libertarian society where people exercise choice, and, enjoy the fruits or suffer the consequences of such choice.

February meeting notes

by Christopher Schmidt

The following are some highlights from the February meeting:

LP of California state convention

During dinner most of the conversation concerned the LP of California's state convention held in San José the previous weekend. Experiences were generally positive and the speaker lineup was well spoken of. Jack has written up his reactions to some of the business sessions on his [Web site](#).

California primary and call for candidates

Chair Steve Marsland advised us that California is holding its primary extraordinarily early (March 7, 2000) this election cycle, requiring us to collect signatures in October 1999 to put candidates on the November 7, 2000 ballot. There are also many local offices up for election in November 1999. Campaigns Chair [Frank Adam](#) would like to hear from you if you are interested in running for any office in either election.

Member outreach proposal

Membership Chair J.R. Prohaska spoke briefly on the subject of outreach--generally, and to registered Libertarians (to encourage them to become more active dues-paying members).

We also reviewed the question of when it may be appropriate to telephone members and prospects. (Some appreciate it--some hate it--and some couples in our database don't even agree on the subject! We try to keep track of people who hate it, but we use so many data sources that some slip-ups occur, and we all regret it when that happens.)

J.R. proposed two mailings to all registered Libertarians in 1999 and presented a written summary of specific outreach ideas.

LPSM press release makes the news!

Publicity Chair Jack Hickey reported unprecedented success with an electronic press release reporting our January officer elections. At least three papers picked it up, and at least two ran the photo!

Voice mail research

Lacy presented some research on the cost of offering a voice mail phone number for public inquiries, but no decision was made, pending inquiry into the cost of phone book advertising.

Next meeting of the LP of San Mateo County:

Wednesday, March 17 - **New Location!**

Hobee's Restaurant ([Directions to Hobee's](#))

1111 Shoreway Road, Belmont; just off Ralston, on the bay side of Highway 101

Dinner (optional) and discussion: 6:00--7:30pm in the reserved dining room

Business meeting: 7:30--8:45pm in the dining room alcove.