

# **LNC Region 2 Report**

(Arizona, California, Hawaii)

for the meeting of  
21-22 September 2002

*Joe Dehn and George Squyres*

## **Arizona**

*(George Squyres)*

### **Campaigns:**

Arizona's governor's race will have a contested Libertarian Primary, between Barry Hess and Gary Fallon. Three debates were held in Tucson, Phoenix and Flagstaff. Hess had been working on obtaining Arizona's Clean Elections public financing, but either did not qualify, or qualified by decided against accepting. There is dispute over which actually is the case. Fallon ran as a non-CE candidate. State level offices such as Attorney General, Secretary of State and Superintendent of Public Instruction also have candidates.

All eight U.S. Congressional District races have candidates, three with contested primaries. Unfortunately at least two of those contests include one candidate who is a carpetbagger, both of them socialists.

State Senate and House races have significant numbers of candidates, though many offices are without candidates. Five candidates in state House elections have qualified for public funding, and may receive up to \$27K through both primary and general elections. It is expected that significant portions of the funding will be used for voter registration.

### **Ballot Access:**

Arizona continues to enjoy statewide ballot status. Ongoing voter registration drives should continue this situation for the near future. There is a problem, currently in litigation, where some counties are not being allowed ballot status unless they qualify as a separate process, despite portions of the state election code and legal rulings by other counties. The result is that some counties are allowed to elect Precinct Captains at the primary, while others are not, negatively affecting the voting rights of many Arizona Libertarians at the state convention upcoming. A hearing was held in Cochise County at which AZLP did not prevail due to a problem with the Cochise plaintiff. The case is currently under appeal in state court.

Organization of the outer counties continues moving along well. A regional newsletter is being sent to the northern counties.

### **Open Primary Law:**

Arizona Libertarian Party successfully challenged the state's open primary law, a Tucson judge finding the process especially egregious, given that party officers (Precinct Captains) could be elected in the primary by non party members. The order was stayed by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals where the case is currently awaiting appeal. The prospects of the AZLP prevailing are good, as the Ninth Circuit has already thrown out a California open primary law that was not as problematic as Arizona's.

## **California**

*(Joe Dehn)*

### **I. Campaigns**

#### **A. Partisan Offices**

There are Libertarians on the ballot for 101 positions (no change). None of the candidates for statewide office are running especially visible campaigns. Maad Abu-Ghazalah, running for U.S. Representative District 12, seems to be running the most active campaign for a district office.

#### **B. Non-Partisan Offices**

The "Operation Breakthrough 2.0" did not generate as many candidates as initially hoped. Due to delays in the process of checking with candidates and counties, there is not yet an exact count, but it appears that the number of Libertarians running for non-partisan office this fall will be around 180. This is a little less than in 2000.

Approximately \$40K was raised in the form of loans from members/contributors and spent on the recruiting effort, with other members/contributors making pledges on a per-winner basis to pay back the loans. The expectation was that several candidates would win by default, because of there being only as many (or fewer) candidates as spots available for a position, and then more would win on Election Day either through luck or effort. Something like \$2K/winner in such pledges were made, but so far we only know of one candidate who has won by default. We won't know if there are others until we complete the county-by-county checking, and of course we won't know how many won on Election Day until November.

On a brighter note, the one person who did win so far has given California its first case of Libertarian majority control of a government agency -- the Guadalupe-Coyote Resource Conservation District. This year's winner Carle Hylkema will be joining Gilbert Carroll and Gary Molle, who were elected in 2000, on this 5-member board.

#### **C. Ballot Measures**

The LPC has taken a position against four statewide propositions, but is not putting any significant resources into these campaigns.

Some regional organizations are actively involved with local ballot measures.

### **II. Ballot Access**

Despite the low level of activity of our statewide candidates, there is still a reasonable chance that one or more of them will receive the 2% needed to maintain our ballot status on the basis of votes.

If not, we should still be OK on the basis of registrations, unless the turnout in this election (used as the divisor in the calculation for the next cycle) is especially high. At worst, we will need to do a registration drive during 2003 to make up any shortfall. For a graph of LP registration levels in California, in relation to this requirement, see:

<http://www.ca.lp.org/lpc-hist-regvot.html>

I am not aware of any activity relating to the bill, described in my last report, to have small parties select nominees by convention.

### **III. Convention**

The contract has been signed for the 2003 convention to be held in Ontario (San Bernardino County) over the Presidents Day weekend. The conventions in odd-numbered years elect state party officers for a two-year term.

### **IV. Membership**

Paid membership continues to drop in California along with most of the rest of the country. It is now lower than at any point since California joined the UMP.

### **V. Office/Staff**

The current Executive Director will be leaving shortly. With the part-time assistant having left a few months ago (and not yet replaced), this puts the LPC in a position where the whole question of paid staff and what they should be doing is likely to be debated again. This question is, inevitably, tied up with the question of finances, which are not in very good shape. The office staffing situation has also led to problems in other areas, such as a missed issue of the newsletter and a backlog in accounting work, with volunteers having to step in to do various tasks. The Chair is proposing the hiring of an "Executive Director / Sales Manager" whose compensation would be largely in the form of commissions. It is likely that other Executive Committee members have different ideas. I will be able to provide much more information about this situation in Chicago, as the state EC meeting is 14 September.

## **Hawaii**

*(George Squyres)*

### **Campaigns:**

The Governor's campaign has a contested primary, though one candidate appears to be a carpetbagger from an outer island who is using the party name and the contest as a venue for his own issues. The other candidate has the support of the state affiliate's rank and file, though the state party is maintaining an appropriate official position of neutrality. The latter candidate will spend an expected \$10K, the most ever spent in a Libertarian governor's race in Hawaii.

The House 2<sup>nd</sup> District race is also contested. Two candidates, Jeff Mallan and Lehr Duquesne are running a congenial contest in the first contested Libertarian Primary in a House race in Hawaii's history.

### **Ballot Access:**

The LP of Hawaii has achieved ballot access for the next ten years. This is a result of getting sufficient petition signatures three years in a row, which in Hawaii qualifies a party for ballot access for a period of 10 years. This electoral condition was put into law by the LP of Hawaii some years back, but a further change in the law was achieved by activist Tracy Ryan. That change lowered the number of signatures required for access from 1% (8,000) to .1% (800). The requirement was met and the LP of Hawaii will now be spending its resources on campaigning rather than qualifying.