

Our History

The Libertarian Party is the third largest political party in the United States. Millions of Americans have voted for Libertarian Party candidates in past elections throughout the country, despite the fact that many state

governments place roadblocks in our path to keep our candidates off the ballot and deprive voters of a real choice.

Libertarians believe the answer to America's political problems is the same commitment to freedom that earned America its greatness: a **free-market economy** and the abundance and prosperity it brings; a dedication to **civil liberties and personal freedom**; and a foreign policy of **non-intervention, peace, and free trade** as prescribed by America's founders.

What began with a small group of activists in Colorado has become America's third largest political party. We are proud of our heritage and the progress we have made since 1971. **And the best is yet to come!**

Historical Overview

1971 - The Libertarian Party is founded December 11, in the home of David Nolan. Disillusioned Republicans, Democrats and political newcomers hope to create an alternative to the old parties.

1972 - First national convention held in June in Denver, Colorado. John Hospers, a philosophy professor at the University of Southern California, is nominated as presidential candidate. Libertarian Party vice presidential candidate Tonie Nathan becomes the first woman in U.S. history to receive an electoral vote.

1976 - Presidential candidate Roger MacBride and running mate David Bergland gain ballot status in 32 states and receive over 170,000 votes. Newsweek magazine notes that Libertarians are gaining "unique appeal on both the left and right."

1978 - Ed Clark receives 5 percent of the vote in his race for governor of California. Dick Randolph of Alaska becomes the first elected Libertarian state legislator. Presidential nominating convention held in Los Angeles. Ed Clark and David Koch named presidential and vice presidential candidates. Permanent ballot status was achieved in California as more than 80,000 voters register Libertarian.

1980 - Ed Clark appears on the ballot in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, and earns almost 1 million votes. His campaign runs extensive national television ads and offers many Americans their first look at what the Libertarian Party has to offer. At the same time, Dick Randolph is re-elected to the Alaska state legislature. Ken Fanning is also elected to the Alaska legislature.

1982 - Louisiana congressional candidate James Agnew receives 23 percent of the vote. Alaska gubernatorial candidate Dick Randolph receives 15 percent of the vote. Arizona gubernatorial candidate Sam Steiger receives 5 percent of the vote.

1984 - On the ballot in 39 states, David Bergland and Jim Lewis come in third in the race for president for the first time in party history. Andre Marrou becomes the third Libertarian elected to the Alaska legislature. Eleven other Libertarians are elected nationwide.

1986 - 200 candidates across the U.S. receive 2.9 million votes. Ray Cullen, candidate for California Treasurer, gets 570,000 votes, the largest ever for a third-party candidate in that state.

1987 - Libertarians sweep the city council race in Big Water, Utah, winning every seat. Former Texas Rep. Ron Paul resigns from the GOP and joins the Libertarian Party. Seattle convention nominates Ron Paul for president and Andre Marrou for vice president.

1988 - Ron Paul, on the ballot in 46 states and the District of Columbia, comes in third for the U.S. presidency. He receives more than 430,000 votes - almost twice the total of any other third party candidate.

1990 - Approximately 2 million people vote for the LP candidates. Elections Day is "Double Digit Day," as many LP candidates for the Congress and state house draw percentages in the teens, '20s and '30s. New Mexico state legislature candidate Illa Mae Bolton gets 31 percent of the vote, and California congressional candidate Joe Shea receives 27 percent.

1991 - New Hampshire state legislators Cal Warburton and Finlay Rothhaus resign from the Republican Party and join the Libertarian Party. Chicago nominating convention names Andre Marrou and Nancy Lord as its presidential and vice presidential nominees, respectively.

1992 - In the New Hampshire primary, Andre Marrou beats incumbent President George Bush in Dixville Notch, the first town to vote in the nation. In the general election, four Libertarian state legislators are elected in New Hampshire. In addition to the re-election of Warburton and Rothhaus, Don Gorman and Andy Borsa are elected. Once again, the party's presidential ticket is on the ballot in 50 states and the District of Columbia.

1993 - LP National Director Stuart Reges testifies before Congress, endorsing legislation to make it easier for third party candidates to appear in presidential debates. In "off-year" elections, 15 Libertarians win public office. Mariam Luce is appointed to the New Hampshire State Liquor Commission, and Bonnie Flickinger is elected Mayor of Moreno Valley, Calif.

1994 - More than 40 Libertarians are elected or appointed, setting a record, and LP activists participate in the successful effort to stop President Clinton's takeover of the nation's health care system. In November, more than 650 Libertarian candidates run for office, and more than 2.2 million people vote Libertarian.

1995 - Membership and voter registrations soar to record levels. The LP moves its national headquarters into the prestigious Watergate Office Building, which the Wall Street Journal dubs "a sign of the times" of the party's growing stature. In November, three more Libertarians are elected to city councils; Bruce Van Buren (Avondale Estates, Georgia), Dewayne Methaney (Auburn, Georgia), and Doug Carsten (Brighton, Colorado).

1996 - The Libertarian Party becomes the first third party in U.S. history to earn ballot status in all 50 states two presidential elections in a row. The presidential nominating convention in Washington, DC, chooses best-selling author Harry Browne, who goes on to win nearly 486,000 votes - the second-best showing in party history. LP candidates for statewide and federal office alone win 5.4 million votes, and seven Libertarians are elected or re-elected.

1997 - Another record-setting “off year” election for the party, with 39 Libertarians elected to office in November - including four city council winners: Fred Collins (Berkley, Michigan); Ron Wittig (New Meadows, Idaho); Bob DeBrosse (Picqua, Ohio); and John Gearheart (Palous, Washington).

1998 - African-American civil rights leader Roy Innis and talk radio powerhouse Art Bell join the party. In California, Art Oliver becomes Mayor of Bellflower, while in Georgia, Dewayne Methaney is elevated to acting Mayor of Auburn. In November, the party sets a new record by running 853 candidates in 44 states. Neil Randall wins election as a state representative in Vermont. In all, 19 LP candidates are elected.

1999 - The party breaks new ground in political activism with its Internet-based campaign against the FDIC’s proposed “Know Your Customer” bank-spying regulation. After being flooded by 250,000 complaints, the FDIC withdraws the plan. The International Biographical Center in England names party founder David Nolan one of the “2,000 Outstanding Intellectuals of the 20th Century.” Fourteen Libertarians are elected locally.

2000 - The Anaheim, California, convention again nominates Harry Browne for president and Art Olivier for vice president. They head a ticket of 1,436 LP candidates; including 256 candidates for U.S. House - the first time in 80 years a third party has contested a majority of Congressional seats. Those Libertarian U.S. House candidates get over 1.7 million votes. The LP presidential ticket gets 382,892 votes, and 34 Libertarians are elected.

2001 - In November, the party runs about 300 candidates - a record slate in an “off-year” election - and a record 76 Libertarians are elected. A study in Ballot Access News reports that the LP is the most successful third party in 50 years, based on the “best” vote totals of candidates for U.S. Senate and governor. The number of Libertarians holding office, including appointed offices, nears 500.

2002 - The party runs 1,642 candidates for office, the largest slate of third-party candidates since before World War II. More than 3.4 million Americans cast at least one Libertarian vote on Election Day. The LP also makes history when its U.S. House candidates receive over 1 million votes for the second time - a feat achieved previously only by the Democrats and Republicans.

2003 - In the “off-year” election, 46 Libertarians are elected to local office. In Michigan, three incumbent LP candidates are re-elected in a “clean sweep” of city council races: Mark Owen in Owosso; Andy LeCureaux in Hazel Park; and Bill Bradley in South Haven. As the year ends, the party has nearly 600 officeholders (including appointed offices), which is more than all other third parties combined.

2004 - The Libertarian Party nominates Michael Badnarik for president at the national convention in Atlanta. In November, the presidential ticket gets 397,367 votes. American voters are able to vote for Badnarik in 48 states, which leads all other third parties. Libertarians running for U.S. House receive over 1,053,000 votes.

2005 - The LP offers the American people an Iraq Exit Strategy. The party passes a Zero Dues Plan to focus on electing Libertarians to office.

2006 - At the Portland national convention the LP votes to consolidate its platform, reducing the number of planks from 61 to 15 in order to reach out to new voters. The Libertarian Leadership School is launched. Libertarians running for U.S. House receive over 650,000 votes.

2007 - In the "off-year" election, 19 of 98 candidates are elected or re-elected to public office. Former congressman Bob Barr starts serving on the LNC.

2008 - The LP nominates former congressman Bob Barr for president at the national convention in Denver. The presidential ticket gets 523,686 votes in November. 50 Libertarians are elected or re-elected to public office. Two Libertarian candidates in Texas and Georgia each receive over one million votes. Libertarians running for U.S. House receive over 1,078,000 votes, breaking the congressional million-vote threshold for the fourth time.

2009 - Throughout the year, 48 Libertarians are elected or re-elected to public office. In Indianapolis, Councilmember Ed Coleman officially switches his affiliation to Libertarian. By the end of the year, there are 146 Libertarians holding elected offices.

2010 - Over 800 Libertarian candidates run for office in November. Libertarians running for U.S. House receive over 1,073,000 votes. Pamela Brown, running for California Lieutenant Governor against both a Republican and a Democrat, receives 574,640 votes. 38 Libertarians are elected or re-elected to public office, and by the end of the year there are 154 Libertarians holding elected office.

2012 - We filled the halls with our guest speaker Tom DiLorenzo, a Research Fellow at The Independent Institute, Professor of Economics at Loyola College in Maryland, Senior Fellow of the Ludwig von Mises Institute, and author of numerous books like, "The Real Lincoln".

2014 - On November 9, 2014, the Libertarian Party of Palm Beach County (LP Palm Beach) drafted a resolution to defy a Fort Lauderdale ordinance which stated one needed the city's permission in order to feed the homeless. The Libertarian Party of Palm Beach County sent \$500 to the Adrian Willie campaign for Florida Governor.

2015 - The Libertarian Party of Palm Beach County raised \$1169.67 for Love Thy Neighbor charity, the charity that was feeding the poor in defiance of the Fort Lauderdale ordinance. Many members of the Libertarian parties of Broward and Palm Beach counties assisted in feeding the poor in defiance of the Fort Lauderdale ordinance.

2016 - The Libertarian party of Palm Beach County helped hosted the Libertarian Party of Florida State Convention held here in Palm Beach County, April 8 through April 10. We also conducted various sign waving events to promote the candidacy of Governor Gary Johnson, U.S. presidential candidate running on the Libertarian Party ticket.