



Free New York

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The Official Newsletter of the Libertarian Party of New York

July 2025



Ed Clark 1930-2025

The Libertarian Party of New York mourns the passing of Edward Emerson “Ed” Clark, the LPNY founding chair and a trailblazer for the modern liberty movement. Clark, who passed away on June 19, 2025,

at the age of 95, leaves behind a legacy as one of the most influential early figures in the party’s history.

Clark’s journey with the Libertarian movement began in 1971,

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when he left the Republican Party in response to President Richard Nixon’s wage and price controls, a moment that galvanized many who would go on to shape the Libertarian Party. When the New York Free Libertarian Party was organized in 1972, Clark was the first State Chair, helping lay the groundwork for what would become one of the party’s most enduring affiliates.

After his time in New York, Clark moved west, where he continued to shape the Libertarian Party on a national scale. He was elected Vice-Chair of the Libertarian National Committee in 1972 and later served as State Chair of the Libertarian Party of California. In 1978, he made headlines running for Governor of California, earning 377,960 votes—5.46% of the vote—a record for a Libertarian gubernatorial candidate that still stands. Two years later, Clark carried the party’s banner as its 1980 presidential nominee alongside running mate David Koch, earning over 920,000 votes

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nationwide and cementing the Libertarian Party's status as a credible national force.

Beyond his campaigns, Clark will be remembered for his calm, professional demeanor and his ability to communicate libertarian principles to new audiences, often describing libertarianism as "low-tax

liberalism" to reach voters across the spectrum. His 1980 campaign sparked the creation of Students for Clark groups nationwide, inspired countless activists, and brought libertarian ideas—tax reduction, deregulation, civil liberties, and nonintervention abroad—into the national conversation.

Ed Clark's pioneering efforts as the founding Chair of the Libertarian

Party of New York and his groundbreaking national campaigns helped shape the trajectory of the party. We honor his contributions and his role in giving our party, in New York and across the country, a strong foundation to build upon.

LPNY UPDATES - JULY 2025

by **Andrew Kolstee**
LPNY Secretary

Here are the latest updates in the Libertarian Party of New York.

2025 Candidates

We have at least two candidates on the ballot this year, Matthew Morgan, running for New York City Council. In Syracuse, the Onondaga County Libertarian Party has cross-endorsed Thomas Babilon for Mayor, who is running on the Republican line.

The Liberty Test Podcast

New episodes of the LPNY's podcast, *The Liberty Test*, continue to be released regularly. The podcast just released its 15th episode, enti-

tled "Permit Purgatory" featuring Libertarian and Republican candidate for Mayor of Syracuse, Thomas Babilon. Watch and subscribe on YouTube!

New York State Fair

The New York State Fair rejected our application for a table, and so we will no longer need volunteers for this.

Ballot Access Bills

There are still no updates on the Senate bill (S01870) or Assembly bill (A02724), which would reduce the thresholds for independent and third-party ballot access. Both remain in committee and did not move forward in this last session. Please contact your State Senator

and Assemblymember to express your support for these critical reforms.

Fall In-Person Event

The Executive Committee is finalizing details for an October in-person event in Rochester. The full announcement will be sent in early August. If you have recommendations or would like to assist in planning, please reach out to us at info@lpny.org.

2026 National Convention

We are still gathering names of those interested in serving as Delegates to the 2026 Libertarian National Convention in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Send to info@lpny.org.

MATTHEW MORGAN WINS SPOT ON BALLOT

by Christopher Skelly
Communications Director
Brooklyn Chair

Brooklyn, NY -- The Kings County Supreme Court ordered that Matthew Morgan of the Brooklyn Libertarian Party, and the Libertarian candidate for New York City Council District 39, be placed back on the ballot this week. Morgan was removed from the ballot by the Board of Elections in the City of New York in June due to a cover sheet error. Honorary Judge Lawrence Knipel found that the Board of Elections had erred in its decision to remove Morgan from the ballot for his defective cover sheet, and that he had shown substantial compliance with state election laws and had made no errors worthy of disqualification. Matthew Morgan will therefore be on the ballot for the November 4,

2025 General Election. He was previously on the ballot for the 2021 General Election, running for the same position against the same candidates. Morgan is campaigning on the same issues now as he was then: building more housing, abolishing zoning, saving small businesses, reforming the police department, removing ICE, and promoting a more environmentally friendly, pedestrian-oriented, and alternative transportation-focused city.

When he is not campaigning, Morgan has spent the past half-decade in various leadership roles in service organizations such as Rotary International, as well as in local mutual aid and immigrant outreach groups.

"I believe that my experience and



expertise working in the private sector and within numerous service organizations have uniquely qualified me to be the strongest candidate in this race. I know the neighborhood, I know the neighbors, I know the struggles, and I know how we can improve the district and improve the city. I look forward to sharing those ideas and solutions in the coming months leading up to the election."

THE LIBERTY TEST FEATURES THOMAS BABILON

by Daniel Castello
LPNY Vice-Chair
Onondaga County Vice-Chair

Discover how Syracuse's entertainment permit crisis unveils the hidden gears of municipal control. Join special guest Thomas Babi-

lon, former city insider and current mayoral candidate, on the latest episode of *The Liberty Test* as he exposes the bureaucratic maze choking local music venues. Learn why these permits aren't about safety or revenue—they're about power.

Tune in for a revealing discussion on government overreach and the path to true freedom.

MONROE LP AT ROCHESTER PRIDE FEST



See pages 6-7 for county reports.

Don't see your county listed?

**We are looking for Libertarians
to organize new County Affiliates!**

Contact us for more details!

affiliates@lpny.org

HELP US GET A02724 AND S01870 PASSED

These bills, if passed would lower the ballot access thresholds back to the previous standards: the number of votes needed to get ballot access to 50,000 (from 130,000 or 2%), and lower the petition signature requirement for a statewide office to 15,000 (from 45,000).

Contact your representatives in the New York State Legislature and ask them to these bills!

Contact Legislative Affairs Director Rich Purtell at rpurtell@lpny.org to get involved with pushing these bills.

COUNTY AFFILIATE NEWS

BRONX

CONTACT:

Kim Antonio,
Acting County Chair

CHAUTAUQUA

NEXT MEETING:

Tues., Aug. 12, 2025 @ 7:00 PM
on Zoom
(second Tuesdays)

CONTACT:

Andrew Kolstee, Chair
akolstee@lpny.org

LEARN MORE:

www.chautauquaLP.org
fb.com/chautauquaLP

CHEMUNG

CONTACT:

Nick Grasso, Chair
ngrass89@yahoo.com

LEARN MORE:

lpchemung.org

COLUMBIA

NEXT MEETING:

Wed., Aug. 20, 2025 @ 7 PM
Google Meet
(third Wednesdays)

CONTACT:

Scott Hoskins, Chair
scottdhoskins@gmail.com

DUTCHESS

NEXT MEETING:

Sat., Aug. 16, 2025 @ 5 PM
Village Restaurant
& Pancake Factory
1540 Route 44, Pleasant Valley
(3rd Saturdays)

CONTACT:

Robert Cocomello, Chair
Catrina Rocco, Vice-Chair
info@dutchesscountylp.org

LEARN MORE:

dutchesscountylp.org

ERIE

CONTACT:

Duane Whitmer, Chair
chairman@eriecountylp.org

KINGS (BROOKLYN)

NEXT MEETING:

Tues., Aug. 19, 2025 at 3 PM
@ Fourth Avenue Pub
76 4th Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11217
(3rd Tuesdays)

CONTACT:

Christopher Skelly, Chair
cskelly@lpny.org

MADISON

CONTACT:

Mark Braiman, Chair
mbraiman@lpny.org

MONROE

NEXT MEETING:

Thurs., Aug. 7, 2025 @ 7 PM
(first Thursdays)
Contact us for the link.

CONTACT:

Steve Becker, Chair
drsbecker@aol.com

LEARN MORE:

monroecountylp.org
Ask about the Google Group
and social meetings

NASSAU

NEXT MEETING:

Thurs., Aug. 14, 2025 at 7 PM
@ Landmark Diner
(2nd Thursdays)

CONTACT:

Jon Gunther,
Executive Committee Chair
jonguntherlibertarian@gmail.com

CONTACT:

Blay Tarnoff,
County Committee Chair
LPNY@eblay.com

NEW YORK (MANHATTAN)

MONTHLY SOCIAL

Wed., Aug. 13, 2025 at 7-9 PM
@ PubKey Bar
85 Washington Pl.
New York, NY 10011
(second Wednesdays)

CONTACT:

Chance Haywood, Chair
chaywood@lpny.org

ONEIDA

CONTACT:

Keith Redhead, Chair
kredhead@lpny.org

ONONDAGA

NEXT MEETING:

Wed., Aug. 20, 2025 at 6:30 PM
Liverpool Public Library
(3rd Wednesdays)

CONTACT:

Rachel Becker, Chair
reb4128@rit.edu
onondagacountytp@gmail.com

ONTARIO

CONTACT:

**Nathan Dingey,
Acting County Chair**

ORANGE

NEXT MEETING:

Held 4th Thursdays. Location
varies. Contact us for details.

CONTACT:

Juan Ayala, Chair
livefree@juanrayala.com

PUTNAM

NEXT MEETING:

Thurs., Aug. 14, 2025 at 7 PM
at McCarthy's
374 Route 52, Carmel, NY 10512
(2nd Thursdays)

CONTACT:

Bill O'Donnell, Chair
billod10704@gmail.com

QUEENS

NEXT MEETING:

Sat., Aug. 9, 2025 at 12:00 PM
Stamatis Greek
and Mediterranean Restaurant
29-09 23rd Ave., Astoria

CONTACT:

John Clifton, Chair
mrjclifton@yahoo.com

RENSSELAER

NEXT MEETING:

Wed., Aug. 6, 2025 at 6:30 PM
Alexis Diner, North Greenbush
(1st Wednesdays)

CONTACT:

**Jennifer O'Connor,
Acting County Chair**
joconnor@lpny.org

RICHMOND (STATEN ISLAND)

NEXT MEETING:

Thurs., Aug. 21, 2025 @ 7 PM
@ Coffee and Collectibles
(3rd Thursdays)

CONTACT:

**Susan Overeem Cummings,
Chair**
susanovereem@gmail.com

SARATOGA

CONTACT:

Naz Garabedien, Chair
nazareth.garabedian
@lawsonproducts.com

SCHOHARIE

CONTACT:

**Mason Hovack,
Acting County Chair**

SUFFOLK

NEXT MEETING:

Thurs., Aug. 28, 2025 at 6:30 PM
Panera Bread, Deer Park
(4th Thursdays)

CONTACT:

Robert Schuon, Chair
rschuon@mindspring.com

ULSTER

NEXT MEETING:

Mon., Aug. 11, 2025 at 6:30 PM
Hickory BBQ, Kingston, NY
(second Mondays)

CONTACT:

Sam Kniffen, Chair
samkniffen01@gmail.com

LEARN MORE:

www.UlsterLP.org

WAYNE

MONTHLY SOCIAL:

Sat., Aug. 23, 2025 at 10 AM
Yellow Mills Diner
2534 NY-31, Palmyra, NY 14522
(last Saturdays)

CONTACT:

Jim Dayton, Chair
jdayton@lpny.org

LEARN MORE:

lpwaynecounty.org

WESTCHESTER

CONTACT:

**Rajib Maitra
Acting County Chair**
rajib.maitra1@gmail.com

LPNY DIRECTORY

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	COMMITTEE CHAIRS
<p>Duane Whitmer Chair Daniel Castello Vice Chair Andrew Kolstee Secretary Chance Haywood Treasurer Christopher Skelly Communications Director Mark Axinn Fundraising Director Justin Carman IT Director Richard Purtell Legislative Affairs Director Pietro Geraci Outreach Director Paul Grindle Political Director Catrina Rocco Volunteer Director</p>	<p>Daniel Castello Platform Committee Chair Andrew Kolstee Rules Committee Chair Daniel Castello Strategic Planning Committee Chair</p>
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<p>Mark Axinn (JD1) Morry Davis (JD1) Paul Grindle (JD2) Gary Popkin (JD2) Evan Lebrecht (JD3) Justin Carman (JD3) <i>Vacant</i> (JD4) <i>Vacant</i> (JD4) <i>Vacant</i> (JD4) Daniel Castello (JD5) James Fitch (JD5) E. Rose Leatherman (JD5) Mark Braiman (JD6) Charles Dorgan (JD6) Samuel Hordeski (JD6) Steven Becker (JD7) Justin Pelletier (JD7) Sean Phelan (JD7) James Ziobro (JD7) Maura Botsford (JD8)</p>	<p>Andrew Kolstee (JD8) Wendi Szabo (JD8) Duane Whitmer (JD8) <i>Vacant</i> (JD8) Pietro Geraci (JD9) Catrina Rocco (JD9) William Schmidt (JD9) Jeffrey Denecke (JD10) Jonathan Gunther (JD10) Vincent O'Neill (JD10) Christian Padgett (JD10) Robert Schuon (JD10) Blay Tarnoff (JD10) Francisco Olvera (JD11) Irwin Mark Weinblatt (JD11) <i>Vacant</i> (JD12) Susan Overeem-Cummings (JD13) Chance Haywood (ex-officio) Richard Purtell (ex-officio) Christopher Skelly (ex-officio)</p>
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