



THE NEW YORK STATE DEMOCRATIC RURAL CONFERENCE



DRC Spring Conference 2012

The Annual Spring Conference of the Democratic Rural Conference was held on April 27 and 28 in Corning, NY and by any measurement was a resounding success.

Over 270 attendees from all over New York State spent the weekend listening to outstanding speakers, participated in workshops and panel discussions that focused on making participants from our rural and small counties a more effective and potent political force.

The importance of this annual event was reinforced by the attendance and participation of such political notables as Senators Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, Lt. Gov. Bob Duffy, Comptroller Tom DiNapoli, Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, NYS Senate Minority Leader John Sampson, Members of Congress Brian Higgins, Kathy Hochul and Assemblywoman Addie Russell, as well as numerous local Democratic office holders.

An excellent training session on using Social Media in Political Campaigns was held Friday afternoon and on Saturday morning participants could hear directly from Members of Congress Brian Higgins and Kathy Hochul at a panel discussion, "Democrats in the House". This was followed by breakout sessions that involved the candidate or their representative from most of the congressional districts represented by DRC members.

On Saturday morning, the membership elected Don Ackerman-Parliamentarian for a one year term. In addition, Cindy Lockrow, Joyce Melfi, Joe Pickreign, Dawn Rivers, and Ted Young were re-elected to 2 year terms as Board Members.

If all of this was not enough there was plenty of time to socialize with all of the aforementioned notables as well with their fellow DRC members and friends from throughout the state.

Next year's Conference is tentatively planned for late April, 2013 in Saratoga Springs. Be certain not to miss it.

Pictures of this year's Conference are at the end of this Bulletin.



THE NEW YORK STATE DEMOCRATIC RURAL CONFERENCE



DRC - The last 5 Months

2012 has been a very busy 5 months. In addition to the Spring Conference, the Board's Issues Committee has been very active.

- The Executive Board of the DRC Conference on January 28, 2012 passed a resolution urging Governor Andrew Cuomo, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos and Senator David Valesky to support and work to change the funding formula so that 73% of the 2012 school district budget increase goes to low-wealth and high poverty districts. In addition, The Executive Board of the DRC also supported the New York State Board of Regents in their call for reform of the school funding formula so that 73% of the 2012-13 school aid increases prioritize low-wealth and high poverty school districts.
- The Executive Board of the DRC Conference on April 9, 2012 passed a resolution urging Governor Andrew Cuomo, Lt. Governor Robert Duffy, Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos, Senate Minority Leader John Sampson, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Assembly Majority Leader Ron Canestrari, Assembly Minority Leader Brian Kolb, Chair of the Senate Committee on Energy and Transportation, George Maziarz, and Chair of the Assembly Committee on Energy Kevin Cahill to support the Energy Highway electric power upgrade proposal. In solidarity with the New York State IBEW Utility Workers, the DRC believes the Energy Highway will provide economic development opportunities to the stressed Upstate economy as well as providing benefit to Southeastern New York.
- The DRC General Membership at our 5-23-12 meeting passed a resolution urging Governor Andrew Cuomo, Majority Leader Dean Skelos, Senate Minority Leader John Sampson, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Assembly Majority Leader Ron Canestrari, Assembly Minority Leader Brian Kolb, Chair of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, Mark Grisanti, Chair of the Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee, Robert Sweeney to support home rule and disclosure of all chemicals used in the process of horizontal fracking. More specifically the resolution urges the passage of Assembly and Senate bills A.8557/S.5830, which allows local governments to enact or enforce certain laws and ordinances relating to oil, gas and solution mining, and A6426-2011, which relates to the regulation of the drilling of natural gas resources, prohibits natural gas drilling near watersheds, requires disclosure of hydraulic materials, provides protection of other environmental resources, requires permits for water withdrawals of more than five thousand gallons per day, and requires inspections and annual audits. In addition, the Democratic Rural Conference of the State of New York recommended and requested the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to specifically address the concerns identified by the comprehensive scientific study that was prepared by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection as well as the deficiencies identified in the Joint Legal Memorandum on the Revised Draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement submitted on behalf of Catskill Mountainkeeper, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Earthjustice, The Natural Resources Defense Council, Riverkeeper and the Sierra Club.



THE NEW YORK STATE DEMOCRATIC RURAL CONFERENCE



DRC - The last 5 Months (Continued)

- The DRC General Membership at our 5-23-12 meeting passed a resolution urging Governor Andrew Cuomo, Lt. Gov. Robert Duffy, Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos, Senate Minority Leader John Sampson, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Assembly Majority Leader Ron Canestrari, and Assembly Minority Leader Brian Kolb **to strongly support our sisters and brothers in the labor movement** who stand on the front lines of the struggle to improve standards of living for all of our state's and nation's residents.
- The issues committee also received a request from a DRC Member asking that the DRC support a resolution regarding the Citizen's United Supreme Court decision. After careful review, the Issues Committee recommended to the Board that the DRC should not adopt the suggested resolution on *Citizens United*. However, we have also recommended that the Board adopt a resolution requesting that the Reform Caucus add Citizens United to their agenda, which should result in a similar resolution being brought before the whole of the State Committee for a vote. The Issues Committee recognizes that the issue is one of critical importance. However, we were concerned about whether it is an appropriate issue for the DRC to address. For one thing, *Citizens United* is much larger than the DRC; it really is an issue that should be addressed (very loudly) by *all* New York Democrats, via the State Committee. In addition, the Issues Committee felt that the DRC should be careful about diffusing its focus from the issues that are specific to New York's rural counties. Democratic elected officials from non-rural counties have come to rely on the DRC for good counsel on those unique issues. If we begin to look just like the State Committee or the Reform Caucus, we will lose our hard won opportunity to bring attention to our unique perspective and exert a rural influence on the party and on our elected officials.
- The Issues Committee is comprised of the following individuals: Dawn Rivers, Chair; Sue Montgomery Corey; Bob Reynolds; Judith Hunter; Diane Louis, Mark Bellardini, Rose Aulino, Richard Mackay and John Hurley. Please feel free to contact us regarding issues that you feel are broad based rural issues relevant to New York's rural counties.

Communications

- The Communications team is focusing on greater awareness of the DRC and its members and counties through more effective use of social media. If you have a particularly interesting candidate and/or office holder the rest of us around the state would and should hear about, then let us know. Also, if your local committee has an interesting project or campaign strategy you would like to share with us, send it and we will post some of them on the DRC Facebook page. Send items to me at bdonack@yahoo.com.

Thanks - Don Ackerman - Communications Chairperson



THE NEW YORK STATE DEMOCRATIC RURAL CONFERENCE



DRC - The next 7 months

The next 7 months will continue to be busy for the DRC and all of our members. The November election will be priority number one for all of us but the DRC Board has a number of issues that we will be addressing in the coming months.

1. Prior to January, we will have to adjust the DRC vote distribution within Counties based on the new redistricting plan. All DRC Counties are entitled to 10 votes per county but the distribution of those weighted votes within each County depends on the number of Assembly Districts that each County has. The redistricting changes the formula within a number of our 47 counties. We will be communicating with all of you on this issue as we approach the end of the year. Between now and January 1, 2013 nothing changes.
2. Preliminary work will begin toward the end of the year on the 2013 Spring Conference in Saratoga. Next year will be a year of local elections. We will offer campaign training and would very much like to hear your suggestions as to which topics you would like to be covered.

Message from the Chair

NEW YORK MOVING FORWARD THE OBAMA/CUOMO TEAM

The DRC is well-poised for Victory in November. Our State Senate and Assembly candidates are in true accord with New Yorkers, be it the increase in the minimum wage, tax reform, fair taxation, same sex marriage and more.. The Republicans continue on their agenda of favoring those who need their help the least with the biggest breaks they can provide.

A similar story plays out at the national level. President Obama has brought us back from the abyss with policies that saved our automobile industry, retained and created jobs. He is supporting the regulation we need to prevent the kind of failure of regulation that brought us into an economic mess. He knows we must move forward.

Working together, the DRC, NYSDCC, and our amazing Governor can only win in November.

MOVING FORWARD,

Irene



THE NEW YORK STATE DEMOCRATIC RURAL CONFERENCE



THE DRC CONTACT INFO, ETC....

Web page: www.nysdrc.org

To subscribe to our list serve go to: NYSDemocraticRuralConference-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

To Post a Message on the List serve go to : NYSDemocraticRuralConference@yahoogroups.com

Meet on Facebook at www.facebook.com/pages/Democratic-Rural-Conference-of-New-York-State/162050418621

Or e-mail us at:

Irene Stein, Chair ---

Dan McCandless, Vice Chair ---

Cindy Emmer, Treasurer ---

Phil Jones, Secretary ---

Don Ackerman, Parliamentarian ---

Doris Kirsch, Asst. Secretary ---

Dawn Rivers, Issues Committee Chair ---

Dan McCandless, By-Laws Committee Chair ---

Tom Poelker, Political Committee Chair ---

Jane Dodds, Conference Chair ---

Mark Bellardini, Labor Committee Chair

Ted Young, Board Member----

Bob Reynolds, Board Member ---

Cindy Lockrow, Board Member ----

Joe Pickreign, Board Member -----

Joyce Melfi, Board Member -----

Ian Brody, Web Master ---

iws2iws2@gmail.com

danmcc44@earthlink.net;

cindy.emmer@yahoo.com

phildem@rochester.rr.com

Bdonack@aol.com;

wdkirsch@gmail.com;

me@dawnisme.com

danmcc44@earthlink.net

tpoelker@aol.com

jmdodds@aol.com

bellar@earthlink.net

tyoung28@rochester.rr.com

hobnkaren@live.com

lockrow@hotmail.com

jp11@roadrunner.com

babbmelfi@juno.com

ian.brody@ianbrody.com;

DRC Board Services...

SPEAKERS Bureau:

The following DRC Executive Committee Members are available as speakers at DRC County events:

Irene Stein, Cindy Emmer, Tom Poelker or Phil Jones.

Mentoring Services: The DRC Executive Committee has many experienced County Chairs. As such, we are available to mentor and provide support to new County Chairs.

DUES

Dues are \$10 for 2012, checks are payable to the DRC and should be sent to Cindy Emmer, 858 Davis St., Elmira, NY 14901.

If you are not getting correspondence from the DRC, be sure to share your e-mail address with phildem@rochester.rr.com



THE NEW YORK STATE DEMOCRATIC RURAL CONFERENCE



2012 DRC MEMBERSHIP FORM

Note: Dues are due January of each year

NAME _____

ADDRESS: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL _____

PHONE: _____

COUNTY: _____

TITLE: COUNTY CHAIR _____

STATE COMMITTEE MEMBER _____

OTHER (FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS) _____

Please enclose a check made out to DRC in the amount of \$10 per person and mail to Cindy Emmer 858 Davis St Elmira, NY 14901