

# THE DEMOCRATIC RURAL CONFERENCE OF NEW YORK STATE

Bulletin #28

January 2016

## Message from the DRC Chair

Dear DRC Family,

The Board of Directors held its final meeting for 2015 in December with an emphasis on looking forward.

2016 is our DRC's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: 'Twenty Years And Growing'. Remembering those formative days, when our creation arose from a state of political orphan hood, I think we can say that our counties are better acknowledged and respected by both elected officials and Democrats across the state.

We started planning for our April 15,16 Conference dedicated to the re-election of our outspoken and effective Senator, Chuck Schumer; adding to Democrats in our New York Congressional delegation; taking back the NY State Senate; and adding to our numbers in the State Assembly. And, of course, we will be working hard to elect the next President of the United States. In regards to the Presidency, we are planning a Presidential Forum at lunch time on Saturday April 16th, as you can see from the TENTATIVE program described later.

You will also see two important resolutions addressed to relevant State officials, regarding



[www.nysdrc.org](http://www.nysdrc.org)

Visit and join our Facebook page at

**Democratic Rural Conference of  
New York State**



Save the Date April 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>  
2016 DRC Conference

The Desmond Albany

660 Albany Shaker Rd.

Albany, NY 12211

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voter participation and upstate infrastructure, which were passed at the Board meeting.

As we gear up to the challenges of 2016, I look to all of you for your engagement in the struggle to elect our candidates who put people, not corporations first. It is a glorious struggle, often frustrating but always essential.

Thank you for your commitment.

*Irene*

## WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO?

The new organizing software program, Neon CRM Z2 Systems, is up and running and will greatly improve the DRC's ability to communicate, collect dues, sign up safely for our annual spring conference and connect with our membership on the issues of rural Democrats. Please see links and instructions below on page 5.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Audit / Finance - Mark Alquist

Mark Alquist reported a balance of \$7835.81 **Reminder: Pay your 2016 dues by sending \$10.00 payable to the DRC c/o Mark H. Alquist, 4046 Wayne Street Williamson, NY 14589.**

### By-Laws Committee

The Board unanimously approved changes to the bylaws that reflect a Board of Directors (as opposed to an executive board) and a quorum of eight (instead of six) needed at Board meetings. John Hurley asked for the committee to investigate the intent/existence of standing committees. The Full Membership will need to approve this in April.

### Conference Committee – Jane Dodds

The DRC 2016 Conference is scheduled for April 15-16, 2016 at the Desmond Hotel in Albany. Our working agenda includes: Issues Update, State Assembly races, Congressional Campaign Panel and Networking, DRC Elections, Presidential Campaign Forum.

We encourage DRC members to sign on to the Neon system, see later, to facilitate communication as we develop our meeting agenda. We anticipate robust attendance, both DRC members and other active Democrats, as we celebrate the successes of our statewide elected officials, and continue our work to elect more Democrats!

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## DRC 2016 CONVENTION AGENDA UNITING FOR VICTORY IN 2016 '20 Years and Growing' APRIL 15-16, The Desmond, Albany NY

Friday Afternoon, April 15, 2016

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| 2:00 – 6:00 PM  | Convention Registration and Credentialing  |
| 3:00 – 4:00     | 20 YEARS AND GROWING! Celebration of DRC 20 <sup>th</sup> year                                       |
| 4:00 – 5:00     | the Status of Organized Labor in the US Today<br>Speaker: Mario Cilento, President, New York AFL-CIO |
| 5:00 – 6:00     | NY STATE SENATE Networking by Senate District  |
| 6:00 – 7:00 PM  | OPENING RECEPTION  |
| 7:00 – 9:00 PM  | DINNER with New York's Democrats<br>Speakers   |
| 9:00 – 10:00 PM | DESSERT Reception with Attorney General Eric Schneiderman  |
| 10:00           | Young Democrats Nightcap with Karaoke & DJ   |

Saturday Morning, April 16, 2016

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| 7:30 – 9:00 AM   | Convention Registration and Credentials   |
| 8:00 - 9:00 AM   | BREAKFAST with Comptroller Tom DiNapoli   |
| 9:00 – 9:30 AM   | DRC Business Meeting and DRC Board Elections  |
| 10:00 – 11:00 AM | DEMOCRATS ARE IN THE HOUSE<br>Congressman Paul Tonko NY 20 <sup>th</sup> ,<br>Panel Discussion: Issues and Candidates<br>DRC Congressional Districts 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27 |
| 11:30 – 12:30 PM | Networking by Congressional Districts   |
| 12:30 PM         | LUNCHEON sponsored by NY Pipe Trades Association  |
| 1:00 PM          | PRESIDENTIAL FORUM  |
| 2:30 PM          | Board Wrap-up meeting, new Board Members please plan to attend!   |

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## Program Book – Joyce Melfi

The program book generates much needed revenue for the DRC every year. It also puts a spotlight on each county committee's uniqueness in the fabric of rural NY State. Our goal is always to find additional ads to place in the book. If each county can bring in one outside ad, besides the county committee ads, the revenue will expand exponentially. The ad rate card will be reaching your inbox in the next week. Please help us make this goal by reaching out to your supportive businesses, unions and political connections to place an ad. Get your county committee ads in early. The book is very labor intensive and the earlier we have those ads, the better off we are to meet our deadlines.

## Issues Committee – John Hurley

The Issues Committee put forward an infrastructure resolution which was approved. Please see the infrastructure resolution attachment. John also presented the following to the board for comment and as possible additional topics to investigate.

- Impact of oil transport trains / new pipelines on rural communities
- Role of IDA's (Industrial Development Authorities) in economic development in rural counties. Are they engines of economic development or thinly disguised fundraising organizations for the GOP?
- Continued discussions about equitable funding for education, especially rural districts

## Communications Committee – Judith Hunter

Judith is working on a revision to the web site and the Facebook page. She is also working on a set of user guidelines for the Facebook page.

## Political Committee – Mark Alquist

Mark Alquist led a discussion about various aspects of early voting, universal absentee voting, and universal registration and presented a resolution which was approved by the Board. Please see the voting resolution attachment.

## Neon Chrome - An Update on the NEON Membership Database - Jason Clark

Several months ago, in an email, I announced that the DRC Board of Directors had unanimously agreed to purchase a cloud-based software package that would allow us to better manage our membership database and serve the needs of our members more efficiently. The software program, also known as NEON, is now fully functional and members of the Board are being trained on how to use its many functions. To date, I have uploaded email, telephone and mailing contact information for more than 750 'members' into the system. The list includes all known voting

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members, honorary members, associate members, former members and previous conference attendees. We are working to expand the list so that, as an organization, we can communicate more effectively with rural Democrats throughout the state.

What does this mean to you? A couple of things...

First, in the coming months, we will be using the NEON system as our new platform to register members for our annual conference. Among its many virtues, the system should make the process easier for everyone involved and it will allow us to better manage our attendance records.

Second, if you received this newsletter via email, then you almost certainly have a member page that has already been uploaded. If you would like to see it (and hopefully add additional information to it), please go to the DRC website, [www.nysdrc.org](http://www.nysdrc.org). You will see a "DRC Membership" tab on the right side of the page. When you click that tab you will be taken directly to the NEON login page. The screen will ask you for a user name and password. I have used a standard format for all of the accounts that I have created so far.

Everyone's initial password has been set as 'NYSDR123a'. Capitalization is very important when entering this password. Your user name is your first and last names input with capitalization as such: FirstLast. In other words, if your name is 'Michael Smith' then your user name should be Michael Smith. If, however, you have used an abbreviated name, such as 'Mike', on State Committee rosters or conference registrations in the past then your user name may have been set up as MikeSmith; it all depends on the data that we have been given in the past. If this applies to you and you try one and it doesn't work then try the other one.

If you have any problems logging in, please email me at [jasonclark2001@msn.com](mailto:jasonclark2001@msn.com). I will then reply with your exact login information. As always, if you have any questions, feel free to also call me at 617-312-8594.

## DRC Board Services

### Speakers Bureau

The following DRC members are available as speakers at DRC County Events: Irene Stein, Bill Wood, Judith Hunter, Jason Clark.

### Mentoring Services

The DRC Executive Committee has many experienced County Chairs. We are available to mentor and provide support to new County Chairs.

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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