

# THE DEMOCRATIC RURAL CONFERENCE OF NEW YORK STATE

Bulletin #30

January 2017

## Message from the DRC Chair

Dear Members,

Well, the 2016 election was certainly a sad surprise! I am happy to report that many of our County Committees have stopped mourning and are putting their minds together with plans to organize and promote the Democratic agenda, beginning with electoral victories in our 2017 local races.

Our current Congressional representatives in rural counties, mostly Republicans, need to be publicly held accountable. We must hold their feet to the fire. Our goal is to keep up the pressure so that the results translate into more Democrats elected to Congress in 2018. This takes organization, follow through and persistence. It takes resisting the unacceptable and making our voices heard.

We hope to offer regional training for our DRC Counties this year to help with that and to help with all our efforts.

We thank you for your stalwart work during a very difficult time. We are on the front lines and it is up to all of us to help in the effort to turn this around. We can and we will.

I wish you all a very Happy New Year!

*Irene*



[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 21<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>  
2017 DRC Conference

Downtown Syracuse Marriott

Syracuse, NY

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## WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO?

The DRC Board met on September 19<sup>th</sup> at the NY State Democratic Committee's Fall Meeting in Buffalo. Regretfully Jane Dodds retired her position on the State Committee and her position as Vice Chair of the DRC. While Jane will no longer be a Board Member, she will continue to Chair the Conference Committee where she works tirelessly organizing our annual DRC Conference. We owe much gratitude to Jane for her extensive service as a Board Member and most recently as Vice-Chair. Judith Hunter was voted in as our new Vice Chair and the Board also elected Kevin Neary, Diane Lechner and Mitchell Ford to fill three Board vacancies. Peter Bujanow has been appointed to Chair the Political Committee.

The DRC Board met recently via Conference Call on December 10, 2016. The Board discussed the upcoming schedule of events for our annual Conference in Syracuse, with an emphasis on a Labor forum and preliminary plans to host a State Constitutional Convention forum with an introduction of the topic for those members who may not be aware of this.

## Agreements, Focused Discussions and General News

1. DRC Training Survey is in your inbox. Please fill out survey before the end of January.
2. We hope to hold a Silent Auction at the DRC. This will be a great addition to our Conference.
3. Scheduling for events at the April Conference is well underway and it is shaping up to be an exciting event.
4. Please see attached letter from Program Book Committee with instructions for your 2017 Program Book ad. New email for Program Book is; [DRCProgramBook@gmail.com](mailto:DRCProgramBook@gmail.com)

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Audit / Finance - Mark Alquist

Mark Alquist reported a balance of \$9780.78

### **Get an early jump and send your 2017 dues in to Mark --**

\$10.00 payable to the DRC c/o Mark H. Alquist, 4046 Wayne Street Williamson, NY 14589.

### Issues Committee – John Hurley

After a Conference call last week, the Issues Committee is working on a draft resolution to be put up for a vote calling on the IDC Democratic coalition to join the NYS Senate Democrats to form a functioning Democratic Majority to enact public education, agricultural and economic policies that will benefit all New Yorkers.

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## Conference Committee – Jane Dodds

The planning for the 2017 Conference schedule is well underway with preliminary plans to feature a Constitutional Convention Forum on Friday afternoon with basic facts about process and procedures followed by two speakers expressing views both in support and opposition of the Convention. We will also be hoping to be featuring a Labor Speaker and a forum on Social Media. We are excited about the beautifully restored, historic Hotel Syracuse as the venue this year. It is with great anticipation that the Board has agreed to hold a 'Silent Auction' at this year's event. The plan is for County Committees to donate baskets that reflect their area's local products, artwork, wine, cheese, etc. This silent auction will also serve to showcase the diversity of each of our DRC Counties. Tom DiNapoli will again sponsor our breakfast and we are grateful for his continued support.

Look for the Convention details, registration form, etc. in your inbox soon.

## Program Book – Joyce Melfi Cwiklinski

It is time to begin planning and creating our 2017 Conference Program Book. I, along with my team of Jeanne Crane and Lorie Longhany, will be reaching out to all DRC County Chairs over the next few weeks via email and snail mail to make sure that we have communicated with each and every County. Again, we ask all of you to do your part to bring in ads from your regions. The program book is one of our most profitable fund raising vehicles and we must all do our part to make it successful. Attached with this bulletin you will find a letter and an ad rate card. Please note, we have created a gmail account just for the book. This is to streamline all of the many correspondences and to help better organize our endeavor. Email us at [DRCProgramBook@gmail.com](mailto:DRCProgramBook@gmail.com)

## Political Committee – Peter Bujanow

**Regional Training Needs Assessment:** In early January of this year, the DRC Political Committee developed and initiated a survey of Democratic Rural Conference Members and Associates to better understand and assess the training needs of our members, rural county leaders and candidates. The survey was electronically distributed using DRC's NEON membership system. Responses are due by the end of January and results with a proposed action plan will be presented for discussion at the next scheduled DRC Board meeting. If you have any questions regarding the survey please contact Peter Bujanow at [Pbujanow@gmail.com](mailto:Pbujanow@gmail.com).

## Communications Committee – Judith Hunter

Our new logo is under construction. This logo will consist of an interactive map of the state with all 47 rural counties highlighted. This shows the powerful footprint that the DRC encompasses geographically across NY State. Stay tuned for a rollout of the exciting new branding. The DRC Facebook page (like us @Democratic Rural Conference of New York State) continues to grow. With the inauguration of Donald Trump there has never been a greater moment for the membership of the DRC to stay informed and be ready for a rapid response to any assaults on our

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ideals. Most of our members have Republican representation in their respected Congressional Districts. Please send me your articles when news breaks pertaining to your Representatives at the Federal and State level. Please email your articles to [Judith.hunter@gmail.com](mailto:Judith.hunter@gmail.com)

DRC Chair Irene Stein visited several counties recently and spoke at events: she appeared on our behalf in Tioga, Otsego, Schuyler, Greene and Sullivan Counties She and several members of the Board serve as a Speakers Bureau for the DRC; please know that we would be pleased to come to Democratic events in DRC counties too say a few words about the DRC and to rally rural Democrats.

## 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

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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