TCDC NEWSLETTER
TOMPKINS COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE

-dash-

January, 2022

Welcome to the January edition of -dash-, the Tompkins County Democratic Committee Newsletter. Our Newsletter's name, -dash-, refers to our intention to provide you with a "dash of substance" every month, from up to date information, election news, summary of the Tompkins Weekly Democratic View, notes from the National Committee and more.

Looking forward to 2022, stay tuned for these important "to do's" for the Tompkins County Democrats: TCDC Executive Meeting, TCDC Member's Meeting, dues notices will be sent, outreach to our donors, lots of social media, and NYS redistricting news.

TCDC Democratic Calendar

January 15, 2022 9:30 Virtual Martin Luther King Breakfast sponsored by The Greater Ithaca Activities Center https://events.visitithaca.com/event/greater_ithaca_activities_centers_event
January 17, 2022 Martin Luther King Day
January 17, 2022 Dues Notice Release via Mailchimp
January 23, 2022 3pm Nominating Caucus for the Village of Trumansburg Mayor, Fire Hall of Trumansburg Fire Dept, 74 Main Street and Route 96
January 24, 2022 7pm Town of Danby Democratic Meeting via zoom
January 26, 2022 8pm Town of Caroline Democratic Meeting via zoom
January 27, 2022 TCDC Members Meeting via zoom, TBA, zoom invite coming
February 3, 2022 7pm Town of Ulysses Democratic Meeting via zoom
February 10, 2022 Town of Ithaca Democratic Meeting, 7 to 9 pm via zoom

The next edition of -dash- will be published during the first week of February.

If you have something notable to share or important dates for our calendar, please send to renateferroTCDC@gmail.com.

Photo Credit: R. Ferro,

Happy New Year!

Wishing all of our TCDC members, volunteers, and elected officials a Happy 2022. The Executive Committee is looking forward to so many new opportunities this upcoming year. Get ready for a super exciting fundraising campaign with new events planned. It is time to mobilize our base as we enter the 2022 election. Our candidates will need our help in electing them to office. Look out for voter registration initiatives, volunteer opportunities and so much more that our mission intends for us to accomplish together as Democrats unite.

Chair's Message

submitted by Stacey Dimas, Interim Chair, TCDC

Hello Tompkins County Democrats,

Happy New Year and welcome to 2022! I hope you all had a peaceful and safe holiday.

Our hearts are heavy mourning the loss of our friend and former Chair, Jim Gustafson. Jim's last words to me were "Continue the mission. I trust you to lead the committee through this change."

In that spirit, it is critical that we work together to carry on Jim's legacy of service and his steadfast commitment to upholding our strong democratic values. Our committee is strong and we are fortunate to serve in one of our state's Democratic strongholds.

Over the last few weeks, key committee members have been working tirelessly to revamp our internal systems. We will have a robust social media presence and implement new fundraising ideas including a Peter Stein Memorial Internship Program and a Jim Gustafson Memorial Golf Tournament, while still continuing our Wine and Cheese and Summer BBQ events. We are exploring tools that will help us learn about issues that affect Tompkins County residents to craft messaging and education.

Struggle has always been part of our democratic journey. Today is no different. We must persevere to ensure future generations thrive and enjoy a cool glass of water on a warm summer evening. We must keep moving forward even when we are tired, even when we think we can't give anymore. We must strive to reach for our democratic ideals.

In the coming years, our community will be facing severe weather change, pandemics, supply shortages, social justice issues, and many future unknowns. We must be prepared. Our government is reactive; it responds to what the people demand. We must stand with our ideals. We are surrounded by fear and despair. We must dig deep to keep the fire of democracy burning.

This year we are calling on all Democrats to share the weight of this responsibility. We need you. We never stopped needing you. We have individuals from our community that hear the call to become a public servant. They may not come from money or have the right connections, but that is why we are here. To ring true that no matter where you come from and no matter your background, the Democratic party is here to help you serve.

We will need volunteers to knock on doors, stuff envelopes, develop signs, text, call, and set up virtual meet and greets. Most importantly, we must give democratic candidates the tools to succeed. We need you to invest in us, so we can invest in democracy. Whether it is your time or your money, we need you! We need Democrats to support every aspect of democracy. If you have time to volunteer, sign up at tcdcvolunteers@gmail.com. If you don't have time, consider donating to the TCDC (https://tcdemocrats.org/tc-democrats/donate/). If you can't do either, we need your vote more than we need anything else.

Jim Gustafson, A Legacy to Celebrate: "All hands-on deck… Mobilize...Let's Get To Work"

Jim Gustafson Chair of TCDC 2019 to 2021

submitted by Renate Ferro for the *Democratic View* published in the **Tompkins Weekly**, January 2022

Jim Gustafson, A Legacy to Celebrate: “All hands-on deck…mobilize…Let’s Get to Work”

It is with the heaviest of hearts that we learned of Jim Gustafson’s death on December 21st, 2021. We appreciated Jim within the Tompkins County Democratic Committee as a gentle soul with a very endearing sense of humor who knew how to cut through nonsense. His legacy as the Chair of the Tompkins County Democratic Committee centers around his dedication to grassroots politics, the cultivation of a diverse set of active voices even through the challenge of the Covid pandemic, and his commitment to labor issues.

Jim Gustafson was elected as interim Chair of the Tompkins County Democratic Committee on February 25th, 2019, to finish a partial term. In June of 2019, Jim was elected to a regular two-year term. Strongly leading our committee through the difficult days of COVID, Jim’s tenure as Chair was extended by a NYS Democratic Committee mandate through September 2022. Jim sadly resigned because of ill health in early December, 2021.

Jim’s commitment to Democratic politics is also reflected in the work he did in Tompkins County as the Chair of the Dryden Democrats. During Jim’s tenure as Chair he helped to lead a successful statewide effort to ban hydrofracking. Additionally, Jim was the county representative for both the Mobilize Presidential Campaign for Biden in 2020 and Barack Obama’s presidential campaign. He co-chaired Tracy Mitrano’s congressional campaign spearheading phone banks and other organizational activities. During his membership on the TCDC, he served on the Issues Committee and the Political Action Committee.

Jim was a staunch believer in the successful outcomes of organized grassroots Democratic politics: knocking on doors, speaking to residents about their views, identifying and registering unregistered voters, making phone calls or texts on behalf of candidates, poll watching, and so much more that goes into the successful election of strong Democratic leaders. In his numerous messages during meetings, monthly Chair’s letters and even a video chat to volunteers on his porch during summer, the messaging was the same: mobilize the constituency.

Jim's legacy also included the mission to diversify our committee. Not only did he encourage Democrats of color but also those from diverse backgrounds to become involved by joining the community. Under his leadership, the TCDC conducted a series of diversity initiatives and events in the summer of 2020. In the words of Acting TCDC Chair Stacey Dimas, "…As a leader and a friend, he encouraged, inspired, and believed in our power to work together to fight for a stronger democracy. For women of color like myself entering politics can be challenging but Jim welcomed me and helped me to grow and find my place as a party leader here in Tompkins County. Jim was true to his belief in lifting up people of color like and making sure we have a seat at the table…"

Jim was also dedicated to labor and worker's rights. After Jim retired from a career in sales, Board of Elections Commissioner, Steve Dewitt, asked Jim to work part-time for Tompkins County. From 2012 to 2016, Jim served as the Democratic Senior Voting Machine Technician for the Board of Elections. He was diligent and hardworking and was committed to making sure that any equipment to be deployed in elections was set up correctly and to accurately count every vote. Dewitt appreciates Jim as "certainly one of the best people I have ever had the pleasure to know and work with."

Jim Gustafson's legacy will remain clear as we move through the important election cycle of 2022. "All hands-on deck…mobilize…Let's Get to Work."

Biography: Renate Ferro has been a TCDC member since 1995. She is the former Vice-Chair of the TCDC, former Chair of the Caroline Democratic Committee, and currently Director of TCDC Communications. .

Electing a successor to chair the TCDC,

submitted by TCDC Elections Committee Joel Gagnon, Chair

When Jim Gustafson resigned as Chair of the Tompkins County Democratic Committee, due to health reasons, the planning for a special election to select his successor was set in motion. Few among us anticipated that his death would follow so swiftly upon his resignation, compounding our sense of loss. Jim will be greatly missed and we are tremendously thankful for the countless hours he volunteered chairing our committee, directing campaigns and so much more. We can honor his service by carefully considering who among the willing is best suited to continue the legacy of leadership excellence.

This communication sets forth the process developed by the Elections Committee to elect a successor TCDC Chair (who will serve until the next organizational meeting of TCDC, most likely in September 2022).
The Tompkins County Democratic Committee bylaws indicate that this special election will be held just like the regular election of officers and it is scheduled to happen during our next TCDC meeting on 1/27/22. First, there is a period in which those interested in serving can express interest. That period was announced in three e-blasts via Mailchimp. and has now ended.

Our meeting will be held on the 27th of January via zoom. Information and links will be distributed soon. Of course, nominations from the floor will be accepted.

This is an important election year, with the 2022 midterms looming and the possibility of multiple competitive primaries in June. That means that there is a lot for the TCDC Chair to do, and getting the leadership in place

early on is very desirable. The Election Committee wants to ensure that the election process is not rushed, but neither do we want to extend it unnecessarily.

Amy questions should be forwarded to the other two members of the Election (Liz Hartman - lizhartman@gmail.com and Jen Lyons - jenniferlyo@gmail.com).

Joel Gagnon, Election Committee Chair
joelpgagnon@hotmail.com
607 227-4440

Description of Duties of the Chair of the Tompkins County Democratic Committee

1. As listed in the TCDC Bylaws:
The County Chairperson in addition to the duties conferred by law, shall coordinate all campaigns in the County for Federal, State, County, Town, Village and City offices and exercise any other powers and duties assigned by the County Committee. The County Chairperson presides at all meetings and possesses the general powers of the presiding officer.

2. As provided by Irene Stein before she stepped down in 2018:
- must be a registered Democrat in Tompkins County
- coordinates all campaigns in Tompkins County
- sets dates, agenda for County Committee meetings
- presides over Exec and County Committee meetings
- appoints and advises committees
- provides orientation for town and ward chairs as well as for committee members
- provides advice to members and candidates

In addition the County Chair directly or indirectly through delegation to others
- raises funds and communicates to members and the general public
- calls attention to important issues
- seeks candidates
- provides campaign training
- conducts voter registration
- organizes petition drives, field activities and get out the vote operations
- works with Issues Committee to better inform members and the general public
- is a non-voting member of the New York State Democratic Committee
- is a member of the Democratic Rural Conference

Looking Ahead Post-Covid: What Would a Democratic Headquarters Look Like

We live in difficult times. What will the Election Cycle of 2022 bring with it? The Executive Committee thought it might be interesting to think about this possibility positively and reach out to the membership and volunteers. Do you own or know of a vacant space that might be conducive to a future Democratic Headquarters? A space that is

accessible and visible is essential. Perhaps one that can provide workers or candidates ample space for grassroots outreach. If you do please contact Cynthia Mannino at <cynthiam.tcdc@gmail.com>

Membership Dues for 2022

submitted by Lori Gardner, Treasurer
All TCDC members: Dues information will be sent soon via Mail chimp e-blast. Please watch out for incoming information about dues contributions and the Victory Club Fund. Looking forward to a successful dues campaign in 2022!

National Democratic Committee Training Opportunities

Did you know that the National Democratic Committee has a training program. Whether you want to run for office, work on a campaign, or drive progressive values through local leadership, the National Democratic Committee is just a website away to provide the tools and training you need to be successful. Information is available 24/7 and all for free.
https://traindemocrats.org

Svante Myrick Steps Down as Ithaca Mayor

submitted by Ed Swayze, Ithaca City Chair

On Wednesday, January 5th, in his 10th annual state of the city address, Ithaca Mayor Svante Myrick announced that he will resign his office in a month. Myrick, is Ithaca's 44th and longest serving mayor, its youngest Mayor, and first Black Mayor. He finishes a chapter in a life that bodes well to show even more pioneering successes. Although he will continue living in his beloved Ithaca, Mayor Myrick will become the executive director of People for the American Way (PFAW), a liberal think-tank and nationwide organization Myrick has worked with since 2017 as Director of Youth Leadership Programs.

In an open letter Mayor Myrick described his experience as Mayor:
"I have spent my entire adult life serving the City of Ithaca - and I've given all of my effort to the largest challenges we face. Those of you who have so lovingly supported me, even when we haven't agreed on every issue, I cannot thank you enough. The proudest moments of my life were when I could deliver for you, and the darkest moments of my life is when I failed you. So often I've stumbled and I've failed, and I hope you will recognize that those failures are of the mind and the will - not a failure of desire.But on the whole I am proud of what we've accomplished, and how far we've moved the City forward."

City Fifth Ward Alderperson Laura Lewis will become acting mayor on Feb. 7, 2022. Alderperson Ducson Nguyen will serve as alternate acting mayor.
Time is short for possible candidates to consider campaigning for Mayor. The primary is in late June. Mayor Myrick's legacy leaves large important shoes to fill, but never has the City of Ithaca needed strong and thoughtful leadership more.

The Ithaca City Democratic Committee offers heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to our beloved mayor, and all best wishes and support as Svante takes his talents to a broader platform.

Interactive Redistricting Maps

You may be interested in looking at the interactive redistricting maps that the League of Women Voters have featured on their website. Redistricting will be a contentious topic over the next month or so. Stay tuned.

https://lwvny.org/redistricting-2021-people-powered-fair-maps-nys/

TCDC Town and City Ward Reports

1st Ward as reported by John Johnson, Chair
A key commitment of the 1st Ward for the 2022 is to increase diversity of its membership. Primarily, this will involve reaching out to residents in West Village and Cayuga Gardens apartments. As of the moment we do not have a date for our next committee meeting

3rd Ward as reported by Ann Sullivan, Chair
The City of Ithaca Third Ward Democratic Committee has experienced changes over the last few months. After a long period of service, Tessa Rudan has resigned as Ward chair. Ann Sullivan (annh.sullivan@gmail.com) will now be filling Tessa's very large shoes. We thank Tessa for her exemplary service. The Ward's chief goal is to expand our membership. We will be meeting sometime the last week in January. We also thank Donna Fleming, who just retired as alderperson for our ward and congratulate Jeffrey Barken who took office on January 5th.

Town of Caroline submitted by Emily Adams,Chair
Happy New Year! Our next committee meeting will be Wed Jan 26, 8 pm via zoom.
Goals for 2022 include meeting with the three candidates for State Senate: Lea Webb, Leslie Danks-Burke, and Ammitai Worob. We also want to encourage all of our members to carry petitions for the upcoming season. We are committed to recruit new members to our committee especially those who represent our diverse community. We are dedicated to registering new voters in anticipation of registration deadlines. We will also be reviewing past voting data to identify left-leaning blanks in Caroline. And last but not least we look forward to planning a few outdoor fundraising activities for the spring and summer.

Town of Danby submitted by Pat Woodworth, Chair
The next meeting of the Danby Democratic committee is Monday, January 24th at 7:00pm by Zoom. All registered democrats in Danby are welcome to attend meetings. Membership on the committee is open to any registered Democrat in Danby.

After many months of hard work, Danby's revised zoning ordinance has been approved. The revised ordinance is available on the town's website (danby.ny.gov).

The local committee will be very interested in how we can help with state and national elections this year.

If anyone has questions, please contact Pat Woodworth, Danby committee chair, at woodwrth@ithaca.edu.

Town of Ithaca reported by Linda Hoffman, Chair
Opening the 2022 New Year an Ad Hoc Committee has begun to meet to develop discussion points for a "Brainstorming Session ~ Building Leadership for Future Candidates in the Town of Ithaca". Approaching this with the intent to finalize a plan of action as to implementation details, measuring impact with the engagement of voters as potential new members and candidates across the 12 Election Districts. We are looking to bring back "Family Fun Day" at Stewart Park this summer, hoping the pandemic will be at bay. Bringing families out to enjoy "free" carousel rides, face painting, games, popcorn, raffles with an opportunity to meet their local representatives, voter registration ~ to share questions and learn how to get involved. This event has been hosted by Democratic Committees of the Town and City of Ithaca. Stay tune for future updates.
Next TOIDC meeting is being held on Thursday, February 10th at 7 to 9 p.m. as a virtual meeting with a request to contact Linda Hoffmann if interested in attending linda.hoffmann@hotmail.com.

Posted on https://town.ithacademocrats.org
Facebook https://www.facebook.com/IthacaTownDems/

Town of Lansing as reported by former Chair, Ruth Goff
I have effectively resigned as Chair of LDC, since I am now the newly elected Town Board member. That being said, we are not having a meeting this month and we have no items, as yet, for this year's agenda, other than building our membership.

Town of Ulysses Submitted by Cynthia Mannino, Chair
Our next committee meeting is February 3rd @ 7pm

The Town of Ulysses Democratic Committee meets the 1st Thursday of every month via zoom at 7pm. All Democrats in the town are invited to join us. Those interested should contact chair Cynthia Mannino. Thank you to our Committee Officers: Krys Cail - Vice Chair; Carolyn Kreisel -Treasurer, and Carissa Parlato - Secretary.

Village of Trumansburg Caucus News:
The Ulysses Democratic Committee will hold a nominating caucus Sunday, January 23rd at 3:00 p.m. at the Fire Hall of Trumansburg Fire Dept., 74 W. Main Street, and Rte. 96.

The purpose of this caucus is for making nominations of candidates for Mayor (for a four year term) and for two (2) Trustees (for a four year term) in the Village of Trumansburg for the election to be held on March 15, 2022.

All registered Democrats residing in the Village of Trumansburg are eligible to participate and vote at the caucus. Any Trumansburg Village resident who is eligible to vote may compete for the nomination at the caucus by being nominated and seconded by individuals present and eligible to vote in the caucus. The in-person caucus will comply with COVID-19 measures recommended by the Tompkins County Health Department. All are welcome to attend.

GUEST SPEAKER
DR. LA JERNE TERRY CORNISH
INTERIM PRESIDENT, ITHACA COLLEGE
United Way
GIAC'S ANNUAL
MLK
BREAKFAST
SATURDAY, JAN. 15TH
9:30AM
"AN INDIVIDUAL HAS NOT STARTED LIVING UNTIL THEY CAN RISE ABOVE

TCDC
TOMPKINS COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE

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