

Fracestown Democratic Committee



“Providing a forum for like minded residents to come together about issues important to them at the local, state, and national levels.”

Sue Jonas, Chair, 547-3432
(suejonas@hotmail.com)

Marcy Tripp, Vice Chair, 547-2548
(marcytripp@hotmail.com)

Ted Graham, Secretary, 547-2548
(graham.ted@gmail.com)

Jim Bosman, Treasurer, 547-8945
(jimbosman@me.com)

NH State Representatives

- Carol Roberts, D4 - Dem
(carolrose.roberts@gmail.com)
- Kermit Williams, D4 - Dem
(kermit.williams@gmail.com)
- Dick McNamara, D38 - Dem
(richard.McNamara@leg.state.nh.us)
- John Valera, D38 - Rep
(john.Valera@leg.state.nh.us)

NH State Senator

- Ruth Ward, D8 - Rep
(ruthward@myfairpoint.net)

Executive Councilor

- David Wheeler, D5 - Rep
(david.Wheeler@nh.gov)

FDC QUARTERLY

Summer 2017



FROM THE CHAIR

It has been encouraging over the past six months to see an increase in FDC membership, coupled with a surge in Democratic activity, in response to evolving issues and proposed legislation in both Concord, NH, and Washington, DC.

We are highly energized, but the Republicans control Concord and Washington, so until that changes, we will be in an uphill battle every day, up to the 2018 elections. Our active FDC membership must motivate all of us to stay engaged.

Under the able leadership of Judy Badot, our new FDC Issues Team has tracked and kept us informed about key issues and bills in Concord, and alerted us when our opposition or support was needed. In addition to making phone calls and sending letters to members of our state's Education Committee, several Francetown residents attended the Committee's hearings, where they registered their support of full time kindergarten, and their opposition to SB193, the school voucher bill. We were pleased to be part of the effort that resulted in the approval of statewide kindergarten, and prevented the voucher bill from being brought to a vote in the Republican dominated House and Senate.

With a Republican Governor, and an overwhelming Republican majority on the Executive Council and serving in the Senate and the House, our efforts to persuade through facts, reason, and appeals for compassion, were often squashed by Republicans.

We circulated petitions, sent letters, and a few of us also traveled to the State House to attend hearings and to speak out against SB66. The bill bestows “personhood” upon a fetus, and opens the door to future legislation limiting reproductive rights. Unfortunately, the bill was passed.

The Republicans pushed through a state budget that provides generous corporate tax cuts, but denies adequate funding to fight the opiate epidemic, to support our university system, to make statewide kindergarten a reality, to provide mental health services, and to give aid to the developmentally disabled.

Surely, New Hampshire can do better for the families that live here. If we desire change, we must start working TODAY to replace Republican office holders in 2018 with more progressive candidates responsive to the needs of those who need help, actually comprising a majority of our state’s residents. The recently passed SB3 will be used to suppress voting rights and handicap our Democratic candidates. New Hampshire’s gerrymandered state district lines already make it difficult for Democratic candidates to win elections for state office. We are a Purple state, trending Blue; our candidates seem to fare better in Congressional races where the lines have less effect. Many Democrats are hoping that the Supreme Court will order a

correction of gerrymandered districts when it hears the case from Wisconsin in the fall.

The FDC will meet the challenge of building a solid base of support in Franconia, starting now. Presently, there are 263 registered Democrats and 424 Undeclared/Independent voters registered in Franconia. We’ll need all hands on deck to undertake the time consuming process of making contact and beginning a dialogue with every Undeclared voter. In 2016 we were able to identify, and bring into our tent over 100 Independents to vote for Democratic national and state candidates. There is a great deal of outreach work to do before November 2018, if we are to bring an even larger portion of Undeclared voters into our base. Please contact me if you would like to help.

We plan to hold a Forum with a high profile guest speaker this fall, to draw attention to the FDC and to attract new supporters. You will be invited to small gatherings held in the homes of several FDC members, where we can introduce ourselves to new residents in our community, and encourage them to participate in some of our Committee’s activities.

Over the next six months, we will be focusing on national issues, especially Health Care. Our Issues Team will keep you informed on how you can help to defend the ACA.

Enjoy the summer months, please talk to your friends and neighbors about joining the FDC, and remain hopeful that together we can envision and create a better tomorrow,

- Sue Jonas, FDC Chair

WHY I'M RUNNING FOR GOVERNOR



My parents were immigrants to this country and neither graduated from high school. Their work ethic was unmatched. They started small businesses. And they played by the rules. There were times of deep economic anxiety along the way — and they never stopped working. They are America.

Through their hard work, I was able to be the first in my family to go to college. I've had good jobs in the public and private sectors. I've been an auditor of state, county, and local governments, spent times with scores of New Hampshire businesses in my job at UNH, and had the honor of serving the City of Portsmouth as a councilor and mayor.

I've lived the American Dream here in New Hampshire, and it gives me the optimism and confidence that future working families can live it, too. But it's going to take leadership different from what we're getting in Concord or Washington right now.

Too many people think we have to choose: to help working people and their families or to focus on growing our economy. My experience shows me that the right priorities require us to do both.

We can make New Hampshire the best place in America to start and raise a family and the best place to start and grow a business. We will aspire to be the example of what America, at our best, can be.

That's why I'm running for Governor.

- Steve Marchand

1984 REDUX

George Orwell's 1984 has enjoyed a sudden resurgence in the last year. What is it about that disturbing, darkly satirical work that is capturing a large readership's attention? The novel presents in ugly detail the truths of a totalitarian regime, whose signal methods for exerting control of people are deceptive uses of language, prohibition of free speech, and quashing of the press.

It can't be surprising, right now, in the airy age of "alternative facts" and the attempted banishment of the free press to the doghouse of "fake news," and bold assertions of "climate change hoax" that there's an urgent interest in 1984, a novel which offers good matches for those contemporary distortions, as: "newspeak," "doublethink," "In Newspeak there is no word for 'science'," or a favorite slogan — "ignorance is strength."

When a journalist is forcibly removed by an armed officer because Secretary Price doesn't like the journalist's question, we need immediately and vocally to defend that journalist's freedom of speech and freedom of

press. When a woman laughs during Secretary Sessions' confirmation, is it really necessary to take legal action against her silly, inappropriately rude form of protest? Just as serious a case is Berkeley's university students' refusal even to hear Ann Coulter. She has a right to speak no matter how distasteful her views are to some. (What an irony it is that that same university's students who clamored successfully for the right to spout obscenities in public during the feverish 1960's clamor just as energetically to deny someone else's free speech.) Secretary DeVoss, too, deserves to be heard and then properly challenged rather than shouted down.

Our political leaders, in refusing to engage in serious debate and respectful argument with each other, bear a great deal of the responsibility for the general decline we now see in steadfast support of the Bill of Rights. They've set a terrible example.

We have a responsibility, and our responsibility is multi-faceted: we must proclaim that our Bill of Rights is the law of our land; we must call out "alternative facts" for the lies they are; we must defend and support the free press, which is charged with keeping us informed and the government honest; we must honor and encourage events like the marches for science; we must all educate our children, in whatever setting we meet them, about the meaning and the value of our Bill of Rights. A democracy lives and thrives only by the accurate knowledge, vigilance and active support of its citizens. We are those citizens.

- Heidi Dawidoff

WHO GETS HEALTHCARE?

Health inequality is a way of life in the United States. Differences in income, education, gender, race, or geography can determine whether people live in health or infirmity. Disparities in health itself, access to care and health insurance all contribute to health inequities, but at the root of the problem are unequal economic opportunities.

The 2010 Affordable Care Act (ACA) took significant steps to lessen health disparities. It required individuals above a certain income to have health insurance, and it expanded Medicaid to cover those who could not afford it. Unfortunately, the Supreme Court allowed states to opt out of the Medicaid expansion, which left millions of poor Americans ineligible. Despite that, the ACA helped reduce inequalities in access to health insurance and saved lives.

The ACA was intended to and does provide stability in health care and insurance coverage; but it isn't perfect. A country divided and endless partisan squabbling in Washington have prevented any serious cooperation to fix it. Meanwhile, the poor, elderly, and disabled have less preventative care and fewer social systems supporting their health.

Americans have an inconsistent history of providing health care assistance to poor and disadvantaged people. When economic times have been good, we have expanded the groups of low-income people who are eligible for help. When the costs of providing care increased rapidly, we pay providers less or make it more difficult for eligible people to enroll. Until we adopt a national system of health insurance so everyone – regardless of income – obtains a

minimum set of medical services, we remain a country that provides good health care only to those who can afford it.

- Jim Bosman



"He was doing well at first, but then he started drifting in and out of health coverage."

WHOM CAN YOU VOTE FOR?

As residents of Francestown we have several important opportunities to exercise our right to vote. Let's focus on our state representative government - the House (400 seats), the Senate (24 seats) and the Executive Council (5 seats).

In 2010 the Republican/Tea Party landslide returned the House and Senate to majority Republican control. This empowered Republicans to control redistricting after the 2010 decennial census.

House District 4 - We now vote with Lyndeborough, Wilton and Greenville to elect two representatives, currently two Democrats, Kermit Williams and Carol Roberts, both of Wilton. It takes around 2500 votes to be victorious. In the past election the Democrat edged the Republican candidates by a mere 50 votes, so clearly your vote has an impact.

House District 38 - We also vote for two additional representatives in this new district comprised of ten towns - Antrim, Bennington, Francestown, Greenfield, Greenville, Hancock, Hillsborough, Lyndeborough, Wilton and Windsor.

We are currently represented by Democrat Richard McNamara of Hillsborough and Republican John Valera of Windsor. Running in District 38 is a challenge for a newcomer. Success requires capturing a vote count double that in District 4; its geographical size with lots of ground to cover gives the edge to a seasoned, better known candidate.

Senate District 8 - Francestown votes with 24 towns including New London, Hillsborough and Sunapee, the three largest towns. In 2016, Republican Ruth Ward defeated first time Democratic candidate, John Garvey by a margin of 1,861 votes.

Executive Council - Francestown citizens can vote to fill one of the five seats on the Executive Council, which in New Hampshire is a very important and influential body approving gubernatorial nominations to executive positions and reviewing and deciding budgetary matters. Each district represents about a quarter of a million residents.

In 2016 Republican David Wheeler, the incumbent was reelected. Wheeler has been running for the Council since 2000 when he first won. He lost in 2006 but reemerged in the Tea Party rout in 2010, only to lose again in 2012. We are again hopeful that Dan Weeks with our support and encouragement will take on Wheeler once again.

Our votes are precious. They are our opportunity to infuse into our community and government the values that guide how we think and behave and deal with and treat others. The next election will be the most important one in our lives. Let's make it happen, together!

- Ron Cheney

FROM THE FDC ISSUES COMMITTEE

At our first meeting on March 28th, the Committee, first called for a letter campaign to protest SB193, the school voucher bill. We demonstrated to protest the appointment of Frank Edelblut as Chairman of the NH Board of Education. Several members attended the confirmation hearing before the Executive Council in Concord. We stood with other protestors outside the Capitol Building and brought our signs into the hearing room. Edelblut was confirmed but the exercise gave us our first skirmish... a valuable experience!

Since it was our inaugural meeting, and late in the legislative calendar, we voted to choose two other issues that were up for a vote in the Senate which we could track, follow, and challenge.

They were:

- SB236 –making the Medicaid expansion law permanent. This bill was tabled in the senate.
- SB66 – including a fetus in the definition of “another” for purposes of certain criminal offenses. This bill was passed and adopted w/ Amendment.

In subsequent meetings we decided to focus on state issues for the first six months of the legislative year; to watch and track bills that are of concern, and, for the balance of the year, to watch for national issues that call for action. Various Committee members are following healthcare, infrastructure, and state and city actions regarding the Paris Climate Agreement.

- Judy Badot

Join FDC!

2017 Membership Dues - Individual: \$15 or Family: \$25

Send Name, Address, Phone, Email, and Check to:
FDC, 243 Journeys End Rd, Francetown, NH 03043

Like us on Facebook! Francetown Democratic Committee