

Chemung County Democratic Committee

In each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone.

Elmira Small Ball Inaugural Celebration!



Inaugural Celebration at the home of Kaye Newbury and Nick Borrelli

40 people gathered at the Elmira Small Ball which was hosted by Kaye Newbury and Nick Borrelli at their 935 W. Water St. home.

Kaye has been involved in the committee for quite a while and chairs its fundraising committee, said the idea for the event came to her when she was returning with Cindy Emmer from an earlier reception for U.S. Rep Eric Massa, D-Corning, after he took the oath of office in Washington, D.C.

"I said, 'Why don't we just have a ' **Small Ball** ' in Elmira, and we can celebrate and do a fundraiser as well.' So that's what this is

about," she said, noting it would have been great to be in Washington for the inauguration festivities Tuesday. "But since we're not, this is also a good place to be," she said.

Jazz by pianist and singer Cookie Coogan and Hugh Douglass on guitar sparkled in the background among bubbling voices while the image of the new president glimmered on a large television screen nearby.

"It was a great opportunity to celebrate as well as get friends together," said Nick Borrelli. "It's a fundraiser

only because it's a great opportunity to collect some money for the Democratic Party, but this is more of a celebration than anything else."

The house is big and his wife loves to entertain, he said. "Because it's such a joyful day, we've got a collection of a lot of different people from a lot of different places, people from work, people from France, people from all over the world."

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Dates to remember:

- March 10, 2009 Executive Committee Meeting 7pm-Sheet Metal Workers Hall
- March 27, 2009 Voter Registration Drive—10am—6pm Arnot Mall—Volunteers Needed—Please Call Cindy Emmer at 733-2844
- April 14, 2009 Executive Committee Meeting 7pm Sheet Metal Workers Hall
- April 17 & 18, 2009 Democratic Rural Committee Conference at Gideon Putman hotel in Saratoga Springs
- May 12, 2009 Executive Committee Meeting 7pm Sheet Metal Workers Hall

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Member Highlight—Fred Morgan

Very early in my childhood, I remember my father tuning our radio to listen to the evening news. I'm sure my interest in history and politics grew from that routine. Also, I recall him telling me that his mother's first cousin was married to Vice-President William Almon Wheeler, President Hayes' running mate. We occasionally visited my grandparents' grave sites which were about 20 yards from the Wheeler monument.

My father was a tanner and worked under his father who was superintendent of the Malone Tannery. The Great Depression forced the owners of the tannery to close their business thus leaving my father unemployed. As a result, my parents decided to move their family to Watkins Glen where my mother's brother



secured a job for my father in the local salt works. My mother was a strong person with many friends and interests. Being a strident Republican, she became involved in village politics. She circulated petitions, delivered party campaign materials, posted signs and worked hard on Election Day to get out the vote. The fruits of her labors included meeting party candidates and securing favorable references for friends and family for employment. She had contact with men like Sterling Cole and even Governor Thomas E. Dewey. Two of my brothers were given employment in the state park. My father was a temporary deputy sheriff.

To read Fred's entire biography and view his photo gallery, go to our website at www.chemungdems.com

Budgeting in Tough Economic Times by John Tonello

It's certainly no secret that the U.S. economy is in free fall and federal, state and local governments are facing a host of challenges just to pay for the most fundamental services. The same is true in the City of Elmira, but we just unanimously approved a budget that I believe addresses those challenges without shifting the burden to property tax payers.

First, the challenges. The City of Elmira receives about \$4.5 million in state aid each year as part of state revenue sharing. The money comes from state income tax revenue and other sources and is given to cities to help offset the costs imposed on them by state mandates and other requirements. Due to the state's \$13 billion deficit, Elmira and other cities will not see an increase in this funding in 2009. We remain at 2008 levels, which due to long-standing cuts leave us at revenue equal to what the City received in 1992.

This year, too, we're expecting at least a 2 percent drop in sales tax revenue, an amount of revenue equal to about \$225,000. In Chemung County, all local municipalities share in all sales tax collected. That is, if you buy a shirt at the Arnot Mall, the City gets a piece of the sales tax. Despite a relatively strong retail sector in the county, however, no one is expecting

2009 to beat 2008, so we factored in less sale tax revenue.

As you no doubt know, the City has entered into a variety of shared service agreements with the county and other local municipalities. These are mutually beneficial agreements that range from 911 call-center sharing to sharing a highway supervisor. Late last year, however, Chemung County ended a long-standing agreement with the City whereby they contract with the City for sewer maintenance. The sudden end of this agreement (and the more than \$400,000 revenue to the City) led the City to make staff cuts, delay some investments, and work out new agreements with the school district on school safety officers.

Finally, though there is much talk about federal stimulus money, the City of Elmira and other city governments are not in line to get any direct federal aid. Unlike the schools, which received millions in immediate relief (more than \$3.4 million in the Elmira School District alone), the City could not budget a single dollar. Depending on how New York State allocates its \$25 billion from the stimulus windfall, cities could see some unanticipated revenue, but that's not likely. We have, however, submitted more than \$23 million in road and infrastruc-

ture projects, projects already planned and in the pipe, that are our best bets for stimulus funding.

Despite all these challenges, the City's 2009 \$28.6 million budget increases spending just 1.5 percent. That's well below inflation and well below the increasing contractual costs of union employees (management staff received no raises and council members have neither asked for nor received pay increases since I first took office in 2006). City Manager John Burin and his staff have done a good job of putting together a budget that raises taxes about \$2 a month for the average home owner while more than doubling investment in roads to \$8.5 million, funding a fully staffed police force, maintaining youth programming, and protecting our fledgling surplus.

Our challenges are sure to continue, but I'm confident that City staff and the council are on the right course in these troubling times.

Democratic Rural Conference - April 17 & 18, 2009

On April 17 and 18th, the Democratic Rural Conference will be holding its annual conference at the Gideon Putman Hotel in Saratoga Springs. The DRC is a coalition of County Chairs and State Committee members from the 46 most rural counties in NYS.

This year's conference theme is Winning Rural Campaigns. It's recommended for individuals who are thinking of running for office, and even those already in office. Much of the training will be provided by "Democracy for America". In addition, this is an opportunity to mingle with rural democrats from across New York State. All state wide elected officials have been in-

vited, including our new senator, and most are expected to be present

Cindy Emmer, along with our other State Committee Member Jim Twombly, will be attending with the Elmira College Democrats. Hope you can join us! It really is fun, as well as informative!

For conference and registration details go the DRC website. www.nysdrc.org.



2008 New York State Democratic Rural Conference

Chairperson's Corner

Welcome to the Chemung County Democratic Committee's occasional newsletter. We want to keep our Committee members and supporters up to date on what's happening with your Democratic party locally.

This year, we are so fortunate to have such Democratic stars working for us such as President Obama, Congressman Eric Massa, US Senators Schumer and Gillibrand and Governor Paterson.

As President Obama has indicated, the work of party and community building has just begun. His election is a beginning, not an end to what needs to be done locally. On that note, 2009 will bring elections on all of Chemung County's Town Boards. There will also be a competitive race for city court judge in Elmira.

We are also looking to do other community service projects. We are planning on conducting voter registration drives throughout the County and possibly a forum on an issue of community interest.

We are always open to new ideas and additional committee members, so please contact me at cindy.emmer@yahoo.com or call me at 733-2844. We are also always in need of donations to cover operating ex-

penses and our local campaigns. Whatever you can contribute will be greatly appreciated. Donations can be made on line at www.chemungdems.com or by forwarding a check to Marie Butcher 1208 W. Water St, 14905.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank 2nd Vice-Chair Julie Patros for volunteering to put this newsletter together.



"As President Obama has indicated, the work of party and community building has begun. His election is a beginning, not an end to what needs to be done locally."

Chemung County Democratic Committee

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Julie Patros—2nd Vice Chair

Jim Hare—Elmira City Chair

Bob Butcher—Towns Chair

Rita Luke— Recording Secretary

Marie Butcher—Treasurer

Christine Harkness—Assistant Treasurer

Mary O'Dell—Corresponding Secretary



Mission:

The Chemung County Democratic Committee's mission is to recruit and/or support qualified, ethical candidates for all elective offices representing, but not limited to Chemung County. The committee will strengthen the community by connecting citizens to the political process through voter outreach and education. This committee strives to be open, inclusive, and accessible to all individuals who share the Democratic foundational beliefs.

Vision:

We strive to establish a strong platform, which assists our committee to develop and align our values, beliefs and goals to the Democratic Party ideals. The Chemung County Democratic Committee will recruit and elect candidates who listen to, respond, and serve our citizens and our community.

Values:

-The Chemung County Democratic Committee is accountable to the communities it serves.

-The Chemung County Democratic Committee sustains its mission through responsible fund raising and fiscal management.

-The Chemung County Democratic Committee encourages open dialogue that promotes involvement in the democratic process.



CCDC Tidbits and Bits

Chemung County Democratic Committee

The CCDC are looking for people who may be interested becoming a Notary Public. This would greatly assist the committee when during our petition drives. If your interested, please call Cindy at 733-2844.

Voter Registration Drive at the Arnot Mall March 27th from 10am to 6pm. Volunteers are needed! If your interested please call Cindy Emmer at 733-2844 to sign up.

Mayor seeks men and women for city boards

Elmira Mayor John Tonello is seeking individuals interested in serving on the Planning Commission, the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Historic Preservation Commission. Occasional openings occur through natural attrition, and several openings are currently available.

The Planning and Zoning boards meet once a month. Planning meets at 6 p.m. the first Thursday; ZBA meets at 6 p.m. the first Tuesday. Historic Preservation meets at 6 p.m. the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month. Meetings tend to last an hour or less. Board members are paid \$25 for each meeting.

Complete details are available on the City's Web site, www.cityofelmira.net/offices/boards.html. Please send a letter of interest to mayor@cityofelmira.net and complete an application (available at the bottom of the above Web page).

