

Falmouth, Cape Cod, MA



The Falmouth Democratic Monthly Newsletter: **June 15, 2016**

Megan English Braga, Chair of the FDTC, called the meeting together. She noted that many members had just come from the Vigil for Orlando on the town green organized by No Place for Hate.

Megan announced that **Thelma Goldstein**, our beloved long time member and mentor to all, had died and that a memorial service would be planned. She hopes members will share memories of **Thelma**. These memories can be emailed to **Megan** (address below) and she will share them with the family by putting together a book of these memories. She and **Lloyd Beckett**, retiring

Treasurer, noted that contributions can be made to the **Thelma Goldstein Scholarship Fund** for Falmouth High School graduating seniors showing interest in civic involvement. This year's winner of a \$750 scholarship was graduating senior, **Katerina Bresko**. The fund currently shows a balance of \$670 and was dear to **Thelma's** heart. Contributions can be sent in **Thelma's** name to: Box 312, Falmouth, MA, 02541.

Lloyd Beckett, retiring Treasurer, noted that our current account balance is \$7,060.32. Since **Lloyd**



Vigil for Orlando

wants to retire and spend more time in FL, a motion was made and seconded to accept his resignation. There was a nomination to nominate **David Barrat** to be an elected member. It was seconded and passed, and another motion to appoint him as Treasurer was also seconded and passed. **David Barrat** will be our new Treasurer. Megan thanked Lloyd as an unsung hero and presented him a book from the FDTC in thanks for his years of service.



Megan English Braga and Lloyd Beckett

Matt Patrick and Zelda McGregor announced two events for **Matt's** campaign for State Representative. The first is "A Pint with a Point," Tuesday, June 21 from 4-6 p.m. at Liam Maguire's Tavern in Falmouth. The second is "Taco Tuesday" on June 28th from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Pocasset Community Club, 314 Barlows Landing Road in Pocasset. RSVP to Zelda@electmattpatrick.org.

Our speaker was **Kathleen Glueck**, President of the Grandmothers Against Gun Violence (GAG). Although her talk was planned some time ago, it was ironic that it came in the same week as the Orlando shootings. **Kathleen's** grandson survived the Sandy Hook Shootings in CT. in 2013. She and her husband realized that they had not done anything previously about the issue of gun violence in our country so after that traumatic event which strongly affected her family, she resolved to get busy and take action. So she joined a group, Grandmothers Against Gun Violence, which had been started by



Kathleen Glueck at Vigil

Linda Alhart after the Sandy Hook tragedy.

The group is now a 501C3 group which has a mission to create a country free from gun violence with goals of working for: instituting background checks systems with mental health history included, enforcing state gun laws, raising public awareness of gun violence, and declaring gun trafficking a federal crime.

Kathleen drew attention to an important aspect of the gun violence issue which is the need to study the concept of “Brain Health.” One father of a Sandy Hook victim, **Dr.**

Jeremy Richmond, left his job to create a foundation, **The Avielle Foundation**, named after his daughter who was killed, to study and inform the public about the issues of brain health, especially those in young people with developing brains. Last year GAG and the Masters Program in Criminal Justice at Curry College held a large conference at Curry College at which **Dr. Richmond** spoke to address this issue. If a gun is put in the mixture of depression and tendency to violence, you can get an explosive situation. This is especially true in a younger brain which has not developed fully.

GAG creates and signs petitions, observes court cases involving gun use, attends protests and vigils, supports brain health literacy, supports effective public policy, including meeting with public officials, and works with and supports other like-minded organizations. **The group meets on the first Monday of the month at 10:30 at the Mashpee Public Library and has a vigil the 14th of every month at the**

Hyannis Rotary from 11:30 to 12:30. You can find their web page by googling, “Grandmothers Against Gun Violence of Cape Cod” and you can find them by the search on Facebook.



Kathleen Glueck answering questions

Questions from the audience:

1. Question about additional actions by GAG? In addition to the monthly meetings and the vigil, GAG monitors gun cases in courts when guns are used; testifies at State Hearings having to do with guns; finds speakers for education. Since 60% of gun deaths are suicides, the group has worked with NAMI

(National Alliance on Mental Illness). They have developed a Speaker's Bureau and worked with Sheriffs on restorative justice issues. On Sept. 27, there will be a local concert as part of the Concert Across America to raise awareness about gun violence. Details will be available at a later date and GAG will sponsor.

2. Question about Gun Buy Back Programs: many of our guns often come in from Maine and Vermont so the buy back program, being a local one, does not always have a big effect. But a good point is made. **Massachusetts and Hawaii have the best gun laws in the country.**
3. Question about whether we can reinstate the assault weapon ban: there are 65 organizations around the country working on this issue. Since this Monday Congress did not pass any of the proposed gun bills, an assault weapon ban looks unlikely. This in spite of the fact that the nation had such a ban until 2004 when Congress did not renew that ban.
4. Question about background checks: the real problem is Mom and Pop stores and gun shows and also the lack of requirement for any inventory to be reported so guns can be labeled as "stolen" with no record of sale.
5. Question about smart technology: this is a developing technology which allows only the gun owner to fire the gun. Not adopted widely yet at all. There is a program called Project Child Safe which gives out free gun locks. GAG has asked police offices to advocate that gun owners get these locks.
6. Question about organizations which stand in the way of creating gun regulations: The National Shooting Sports Association(NSSF) spends more money working to prevent gun regulations than the NRA does.
7. Question about ban on research on gun safety as a public health issue. Currently there is such a ban. It should be lifted.
8. Question on gun bill proposals before Congress: The most conservative proposal, which requires only a 72 hour wait period for a background check for those on the no fly list, did not pass this week. The objection from the Democrats was that this period is much too short to find information on the buyer.
9. An audience member made a proposal to grade the candidates for public office on their support of gun regulations just as the NRA grades them for their stand on gun regulations.
10. Final question on the 501C3 status of GAG: this prevents advocating for any political candidate, so is it a good thing? The group began as a living room gathering and continues to be a place for those who prefer to work step by step on the issue rather than using confrontation. This approach is a continuing topic of discussion within the group. The question is how to be most effective, and some feel confrontation does not work.

Personal note: I am a member of GAG and strongly urge anyone interested to attend a meeting and do research on line on this group. It has a valuable place in the overall picture of working toward a less violent society. Meeting times and monthly vigil time noted earlier in this newsletter.

Submitted by **Kirstin Moritz**, Newsletter Editor; Photos by **Martha Gillis**, FDTC photographer

Calendar:

July 20: Monthly meeting of FDTC at the Gus Canty Center at 7 p.m. Speaker from The Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

August 17: Annual picnic at Dillingham Place with time to be announced.

Please bring food contributions for the Falmouth Service Center.

FDTC Officers:

Chair: **Megan English Braga** at 508-540-3434 Ext. 4 and attymeb@gmail.com

Vice Chair: **Scott Simenas** at 508-540-3490 and scott_simenas@comcast.net

Treasurer: **David Barrat** at 508-392-9914 and dbarrat5@gmail.com

Secretary: **Lou Turner** at 508-540-3263 and lnturn5557@comcast.net

Newsletter Editor: **Kirstin Moritz** at 508-540-8528 and kmoritz@verizon.net

Affirmative Action/Outreach Advisor: **Hugh Gregory** at 508-548-4696 and moohu38@yahoo.com

Annual membership Fiscal Year: April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017

Name: Address:

Precinct:

Email Address:

Phone:

Elected Committee Member: \$25 a year

Associate Member: \$15 a year

Newsletter by U.S. Mail is \$10 extra a year

Total Donation: Please mail to FDTC, PO Box 312, Falmouth, MA 02541