

# Franklin County Commissioner Fred Hardy remembered for work ethic

[DONNA PERRY](#), Staff Writer

The late Franklin County Commissioner Fred Hardy of New Sharon, center, is seen in this 2014 photo shaking the hand of Franklin County Detective Kenneth Charles when he was named the 2013 Deputy of the Year and Deputy of the Quarter. Hardy, who died on Saturday at a Portland hospital after being ill for several weeks, was flanked by Commissioners Gary McGrane, left, of Jay, and Clyde Barker, right, of Strong.



**NEW SHARON** — A longtime Franklin County commissioner was remembered Monday as a dedicated public servant who was frugal with taxpayers' money and had a strong work ethic. Fred Hardy was also a staunch supporter of getting the county jail back under county control.

85, of New Sharon, died Saturday at Maine Medical Center in Portland. He had been ill for several weeks.

Hardy was a county commissioner serving District 2 for about 22 years, county Clerk Julie Magoon said Monday.

"I truly enjoyed working with Fred over the past 18-plus years," she said. "Fred worked nonstop for his district and also the whole county, serving on numerous committees and boards. There was hardly a day when Fred wasn't on the road, with (his wife) Ruby of course, attending a meeting or a public hearing. Fred had a great sense of humor and wit, and always had a story to tell . . . which usually led to another story. He was just a great person and friend. All of us here at the county are going to miss him. It just won't seem the same at our commissioners' meeting tomorrow without him."

Hardy was very active in many organizations and boards within the county, Maine and beyond.

He was a retired dairy farmer and had served as a supervisor for a local shoe manufacturer, according to his biography on the Greater Franklin Development Corp. website. Hardy was a founding director of the corporation.

"We will miss him greatly," Alison Hagerstrom, executive director of the corporation, said. "He was a strong advocate for GFDC. When I accepted the executive director's position for GFDC, I was advised not to underestimate Fred's leadership . . . I never have."

Hardy had also served as a New Sharon selectman, member of the Planning Board and on the Franklin County Budget Advisory Committee when he was a selectman.

“I was very saddened to hear of Fred’s passing,” Farmington Town Manager Richard Davis said. “He was a dedicated public servant who always worked in the best interests of his constituents. I served on the Greater Franklin Development Corporation Board with Fred, and I know firsthand how conscientious he was. He will be greatly missed.”

“My deepest condolences to Ruby and his family,” County Sheriff Scott Nichols Sr. said. “Simply put: I will miss Fred Hardy. I have the deepest respect for Fred. Regarding his position as a county commissioner, he never minced his words. You always knew where he stood and what he thought.

“Fred was a wonderful resource for me,” Nichols said. “His institutional knowledge of county operations was invaluable during my first few years as sheriff. Fred was a close ally during our battles with the state Board of Corrections and was someone I could confide in at any time.”

Nichols said he remembers the day, earlier this year, when he told Hardy that the Board of Corrections had agreed to allow the county jail to reopen and be fully operational. The jail had been a 72-hour holding facility since 2009 and was returned to a full-time jail in April.

“He was as giddy as one could get over the phone,” Nichols said. “On our rides to and from (Board of Corrections) meetings in Augusta, I remember Fred telling me stories of his youth as a farmer, working at different farms in Maine as far back as the 1940s, and the rigors of farm life back then.”

He brought that same work ethic as a board member of the Commissioner's Office, Nichols said.

“When Fred was hospitalized I would visit him there and keep him updated on all that was going on at the jail because he truly cared,” he said. “Other than being in a hospital room, you would never have known he was ill because he still was as quickwitted as ever, and always ready to talk about politics regardless of whether it was a local, state or national event. Franklin County has lost a true public servant and whoever replaces him will have large shoes to fill.”

Sen. Thomas Saviello, R-Wilton, said he has known Hardy for nearly 20 years.

“Fred was a friend,” he said. “He was an advocate for Franklin County. He was critical in (bringing) the county jail back to county control. He will be missed.”

# Franklin County Commissioner Hardy recalled as outspoken advocate

With 22 years of service as county commissioner, Fred Hardy, who died July 4, was known for his frugal spending and community work in the Farmington area.

BY **DOUGLAS MCINTIRE**, STAFF WRITER

NEW SHARON — Following his death on the Fourth of July, longtime Franklin County Commissioner Fred Hardy has been remembered by family and friends as an “all around good man” who cared deeply for his constituents.

Hardy, 85, died at Maine Medical Center in Portland after a long illness. A retired dairy farmer, he served as a county commissioner, representing District 2, for 22 years.



Franklin County Commissioners Fred Hardy, seen during a meeting on Sept. 25, 2013, died on July 4. He was 85. *Staff file photo by David Leaming*

Hardy, a New Sharon selectman, Planning Board member, Franklin Water and Soil Conservation District board member and one of the founders of the Greater Franklin Development Corp., was a man who was always fully dedicated to whatever organization he belonged, according to Franklin County Register of Deeds Susan Black.

Black said she worked in the Farmington Superior Court building as long as Hardy, and while she said the two may not have always agreed on commission issues, “you always knew where he stood and he didn’t waver from that.”

Also in the office, Marlene Bradley agreed, saying Hardy was the kind of man who didn’t let disagreement get in the way of friendship. “Even if he didn’t agree with you, he would still come in and joke with you,” she said.

“I think he really cared about the county. I think he cared about people’s tax dollars and where they went to,” Black said.

According to [his obituary](#), Hardy was born in Waterville in 1930 and graduated from Wilton Academy in 1948. A funeral is scheduled for Saturday at Trinity United Methodist Church in Farmington.

According to Black, Hardy stayed active across the hall in the commissioner’s office right up until his hospitalization, adding she knows there were times he wasn’t feeling well, “but he was committed to that position and he did it right up until he couldn’t.”

Describing Hardy as very much a gentleman, Black found kinship with him, as the two were both farmers — a quality she said helped instill the old-generation frugality she said Hardy was known for. She said Hardy’s distaste for non-essential spending made for some tough decisions when his conservative ways put him in a spot with the commissioners.

Black said Hardy always supported the community and helped out with the pig roast at Wilton’s annual Blueberry Festival from start to finish.

Farmington Town Manager Richard Davis also remembered Hardy as a dedicated leader.

“Fred was a really good man — a dedicated public servant who was always looking out for the welfare of his constituents,” Davis said.

“He loved to chat about issues and never held back on expressing his views. You always knew where Fred stood on matters of public policy. He was completely honest. I really enjoyed serving on various boards with Fred, and I will miss him greatly.”

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## Frederick W. Hardy (1930 – 2015)

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Posted by [Administrator](#) • July 6, 2015 •

NEW SHARON - Frederick W. Hardy passed away at Maine Medical Center in Portland on July 4, 2015, surrounded by his loving family.

Fred Hardy



He was born in Waterville on Feb. 13, 1930, to Joseph W. Hardy, Jr. and Clara "Mabel" (Hobbs) Noonan. He was educated in the schools of Farmington and Wilton, graduating from Wilton Academy, Class of 1948. He was raised on his grandfather's farm on Perham Hill in Farmington and later moved to a small farm purchased by his father in East Wilton. He was also employed at the Smith farm in East Wilton all through high school.

He was married to Phyllis Chase of Dixfield from July of 1949 until she passed away in April of 2001. In 1960, they purchased a farm in New Sharon on the Perham Hill Road (now Weeks Mills Road), where they raised four children, Tamara, Earl, Lloyd, and Joyce.

In 1960, Fred was employed at Farmington Shoe Company as a production worker and five years later was promoted to foreman. He was employed there for 17 years while he and his family established a herd of registered Holsteins. In 1977 he left Farmington Shoe to manage his dairy farm full time. A lifetime goal had been achieved! Fred continued in the dairy industry until 1992 when he sold the cows to his eldest son, Earl. In August 2007 he married Ruby Tracy.

Fred had served, and was still active on many boards and committees. He was past president and the current treasurer for the Maine Dairy Industry Association; a former executive board member of the Franklin County Extension Association; a past president and secretary of Franklin County Chapter of National Farmers of America; a past secretary of Maine Milk Producers, Inc.; an executive member of the Maine Association of Conservation Districts and a member of the Board of Directors of Franklin County Farm Bureau.

In 1994, he was appointed by Gov. John McKernan to represent Maine on the Northeast Dairy Compact. In 1998 he was re-appointed by Gov. Angus King and served until the compact expired in 2001. In January of 2004, he was awarded the Commissioner's Distinguished Service Award from the Maine Department of Agriculture Commissioner Robert Spear. At the time of his death he was also a board member of Northstar Ambulance and an executive board member of Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments (AVCOG).

His civil service included 4 years on the New Sharon Planning Board (Chair 1990); 4 years as selectman/assessor of New Sharon and 4 years representing New Sharon on the Franklin County Budget Committee. From 1992 until present, Fred served as the District 2 Franklin County Commissioner. He was also a member of the Farmington Rotary Club at the time of his passing.

Fred was predeceased by his parents; a younger sister, Geneva, and his first wife, Phyllis. He was also predeceased by a brother, Gordon Fletcher, and sisters, Marjorie (Jean) Essman, and Ruth Hall.

He is survived by his loving wife, Ruby; children, Tammy Damren, Earl Hardy, Lloyd Hardy and his wife, April, and Joyce McCaslin and her husband, Michael; brothers, Clarence Hardy, William Hardy and wife Lona, Douglas Fletcher, Rev. James Fletcher and wife, Paula, and sister, Barbara Linnell; grandchildren, Conrad Shaw, Jeremy Damren and partner, Thomas Stinson, Scott Damren and wife Kate, Jennifer Hawkins and husband David, Jessica Roberts and husband David, Melissa

Karkos and husband Jon, Kimberly DiDonna and husband Nicholas, Frederick L. Hardy, Amber McCaslin and partner Jordan McAdams, and Karen Badger and husband Jamin; 12 great-grandchildren, as well as several cousins, nieces and nephews. Fred's extended family includes children Diana Bell and husband Michael, Doni Gaffar and husband Arthur, Deborah Tracy and husband Seth, Daryl Schramm and husband George, Scott Tracy and Bia, and Judy Tracy; 10 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

We all will miss his sense of humor, and quick witted retorts as he was a master storyteller and truly loved to make people laugh. Fred enjoyed playing cards with friends, reading the newspaper from cover to cover, watching Red Sox and Patriots games.

Visiting hours will be held from 6 - 8 p.m. on Friday, July 10 at Trinity United Methodist Church, 612 Farmington Falls Rd (Route 2), Farmington. Funeral services will be held at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, July 11 at the church, with interment following at 2 p.m. at Fairview Cemetery in Farmington.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Fred's memory to Foster Career and Technical Education Center, c/o Agricultural Program Scholarships, 129 Seamon Road, Farmington ME 04938 or the Maine Antique Tractor Club c/o Harriet Spencer, 35 North Shore Drive, Smithfield ME 04978. Arrangements are under the direction of Adams-McFarlane Funeral & Cremation Service 108 Court St. Farmington. Condolences may be sent for the family at [www.adamsmcfarlane.com](http://www.adamsmcfarlane.com).

