

Salisbury Democratic Town Committee

Newsletter

April 2024

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WE ARE ON OUR OWN

All of us have cheered on the prosecutors in the various legal cases that have piled up against Donald Trump. We had hoped that one or more of these cases would result in convictions that would cripple his ability to run for president. It is now clear that none of the cases with the potential to stop Trump's bid for a second term -- all of which appear very strong -- will progress quickly enough through the courts to do the trick. For better or worse, our legal system affords all defendants due process, and Donald Trump has taken advantage of the procedural delays that he's allowed. Donald Trump will be on the ballot and not yet a convicted felon on November 5. This reality means that we have to win at the ballot box, and we need to win decisively in order to send a message that MAGA can never have a role governing our country.

Fortunately, we can win -- if we do the work. As we've noted in previous newsletters, Democrats have been winning in competitive races at the state, local, and national levels. But it's not by chance. As we've seen in election after election, Democrats win when ordinary people like us show up to do the necessary but often-unglamorous grassroots work to activate voters.

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Can you help us? The Salisbury Democratic Town Committee is looking for someone willing to volunteer a few hours a month to help us upgrade our use of social media. If you are comfortable with Facebook, Instagram, and other social media tools, we would love to talk. Please see our *Help Wanted* listing near the bottom of this newsletter.

With best wishes for a beautiful April.

As always,
Your faithful editor

VOTE TOMORROW!

If you missed early voting, tomorrow (April 2) is the final day to vote in the Presidential Preference Primary Election. Voting takes place at Town Hall from 6am-8pm. And, yes, it really does matter if we vote, even if this is “just” a primary. Please get out and show that we support President Biden. If you’re not registered, you can still register and vote tomorrow. For more information, call the Salisbury Town Clerk at (860) 435-5182.



LET'S GET JUSTIN POTTER OVER THE TOP

Justin Potter is the announced Democratic candidate for state senate from our district (30th). A native of the Northwest Corner, he is young and energetic, and has a strong commitment to affordable housing, public education, and a healthy environment. He's ready for the challenge of flipping this seat from red to blue. But he needs our help right now. To qualify for state campaign financing, Justin needs to raise a total of \$17,000 from 300 individuals in the district. The good news is that any donation of \$5 or more counts toward Justin's fundraising requirement and you don't need to be a registered voter in CT. If you own a property in District 30, your donation will count toward the required 300 donations. Spouses can make separate donations. Justin reports that he is about halfway to the goal, so let's get him the rest of the way there. Visit [Justin's website](#) to learn more about him and donate.

GETTING IT DONE: CT DEMS IMPLEMENTING MEDICAL DEBT RELIEF

Our Democratic-led General Assembly has been working with Governor Lamont on a major initiative to cancel medical debt for many CT families – a move that several progressive states are making. In CT, his relief would help lift the cloud of crippling medical debt for an estimated 250,000 residents. The program would provide relief to residents whose medical debt is at least 5% of their annual income and would apply to residents whose household income is up to 400% of the federal poverty line – approximately \$60,000 for a single person or \$120,000 for a family of four. Funding for the program has been incorporated into the existing state budget, and federal funds are being used to cover the cost. There will be no increase to state taxes to pay for medical debt relief. With more than one in 10 CT residents having medical debt in collections, Democrats are providing relief for hundreds of thousands of Nutmeggers, especially those in lower-income households. [Read more](#) about how CT and other progressive states are introducing medical debt relief programs.

SALISBURY DTC ELECTS OFFICERS AND CONVENTION DELEGATES

At its most recent meeting on March 19, the SDTC elected the following officers: Al Ginouves (chair), Lee Greenhouse (vice-chair), Pam Kelley (treasurer), and Sophia deBoer (secretary). The SDTC thanks Barrett Prinz for his previous service as vice-chair.

At a meeting on March 26, the STDC confirmed the following nominees as delegates to the state and district conventions in April and May where Democratic candidates will be nominated:

- State Party Convention and the Convention to elect 30th State Senate District Central Committee members: Albert Ginouves, Roberta Willis, Amy Lake, Bill Riiska;
- US 5th Congressional District Convention: Lee deBoer, Sophia deBoer, Pam Kelley, Lee Greenhouse;
- State Assembly 64th District Convention: Pam Kelley, Kathy Voldstad, Charlie

Kelley, Joanne Hayhurst;

- State Senate, 30th District Convention: Albert Ginouves, Jane Kellner, Charlie Kelley, Barbara Friedman.

ATTENTION YOUNG DEMOCRATS IN LITCHFIELD COUNTY

Your voice matters! Join the Greater Litchfield County Young Democrats and be part of a dynamic community committed to positive change. Whether you're passionate about social justice, environmental issues, or economic equality, there's a place for you. Get involved in local politics and advocacy efforts, volunteer for causes and candidates that matter to you, learn about important issues facing our region and country and make a real impact on the future of our community! Help shape the future you believe in. For more information, email nwctyd@gmail.com or call (518) 354-9179.



UPCOMING EVENTS

April 5 at 7:30pm: "The Bill of Obligations: The Ten Habits of Good Citizens" with Richard Haass. Presented by the Salisbury Forum at Hotchkiss School. Richard Haass is a veteran diplomat and respected scholar of international relations as well as is president emeritus of the Council on Foreign Relations. He is also senior counselor with Centerview Partners, an international investment banking advisory firm. He previously served in the State Department under Presidents George W. Bush and Ronald Reagan, at the White House under George H.W. Bush, and at the Pentagon under Jimmy Carter. More information is at [Salisbury Forum](#).

April 8 from 1-3pm: "Messaging Mondays" with the Sharon Democratic Town Committee (DTC) at The Edward, 19 West Main Street in Sharon. The Sharon DTC is hosting twice-a-month gatherings to write letters and postcards to voters in CT and other states. This is a special solar eclipse event (eclipse-gazing glasses provided!). We are writing to registered Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents in Nevada who are infrequent voters asking them to support the re-election of Democratic Senator Jacky Rosen. For more information or to sign up, [click here](#) or call (860) 364-0362.

April 16 at 7pm: Salisbury Democratic Town Committee. This regular monthly SDTC meeting will be held at Town Hall and via Zoom. The SDTC is committed to promoting good government and democratic principles at every level of our civic life. The SDTC recruits candidates for local elective and appointed offices and supports the most qualified Democrats to run in municipal, state, and national elections. Meetings are usually on the third Tuesday of every month. Contact [Al Ginouves](#) to receive a copy of the agenda and the link to the meeting.

April 29 from 5:30-7:30pm: "Messaging Mondays" with the Sharon Democratic Town Committee (DTC) at The Edward, 19 West Main Street in Sharon. The Sharon DTC is hosting twice-a-month gatherings to write letters and postcards to voters. This session will focus on writing postcards to infrequent Democratic voters in CT's 5th Congressional District to support the re-election of our fabulous congresswoman, Jahana Hayes. For more information or to sign up, [click here](#) or call (860) 364-0362.

May 18 from 5- 6:30pm: Ari Melber at the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, Great Barrington. Melber will deliver the 2023 Mona Sherman Memorial lecture for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) of Berkshire Community College. Melber is an Emmy Award-winning journalist, MSNBC news anchor, writer, and attorney. He anchors The Beat with Ari Melber on MSNBC, serves as the network's chief legal correspondent, and is a legal analyst for NBC News. He has written the forward for the January 6 Report, which will be available for purchase and signing at the Mahaiwe. Priority registration opens only

for OLLI members on April 11 at 9am online and by phone. Registration opens to Mahaiwe members on April 24 at noon, and to the public, if any seats remain, on May 1 at noon. General admission. More information at <https://berkshireolli.org/event-5590796>

July 20 from 5:30-7:30pm: SAVE THE DATE. Garden Party Fundraiser for the Sharon Democratic Town Committee (DTC) at the gardens of Lynden Miller in Sharon. Look for more information in an upcoming newsletter.

THINGS YOU CAN SHOULD DO NOW

Imagine waking up next November 6, the day after Election Day. What do you want the headlines to say? You can shape those headlines... or you can just read them. Now is the time to roll up your sleeves. It won't take a superhuman effort. If everyone does just a little work, we will get the results we need. There are plenty of ways to do your part -- through door-knocking, phonebanking, textbanking, writing postcards, writing letters to the editor or other activities. Technology like Zoom makes it easy to join a campaign and work remotely. Or join local initiatives here in our community. Please also consider donating whatever you can now. Given our long elections cycles, early donations are especially helpful because they enable grassroots organizations to hire field workers as soon as possible.



Wisconsin Democrats (WisDems) – Wisconsin is a key swing state that Joe Biden narrowly won in 2020. The WisDems have been gradually turning back the GOP tide in the state and are looking for volunteers for a variety of activities for this summer's state elections leading to the fall Presidential and Senatorial elections. Join in WisDems' weekly virtual phonebanks on Thursdays from 6-8pm. Sign up [here](#).

All in for North Carolina (AINC) – This New England-based group is working *remotely* to help Democrats win elections in North Carolina. Joe Biden lost here to Trump in 2020 by the smallest margin in any state, but the influx of young progressive voters, especially in Mecklenburg County where Charlotte is located), makes NC a state that Democrats can win. Join AINC every-other Sunday night for phonebanks from 6-8pm to recruit volunteers for the Mecklenburg County Democratic Party's initiatives. For more information and to sign up [click here](#).

Saving Democracy – A foundational belief of this local grassroots group is that taking action is the antidote to the anxiety generated by following the political news these days. Saving Democracy makes it easy for everyone to take action while enjoying the company of others who care deeply about preserving rights and freedoms for all in our country. The group meets at the White Hart in Salisbury on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 2-4pm to write postcards in support of Democrats in races across the country. All are welcome! For more information, contact savingdemocracyct@gmail.com.

The States Project – The States Project focuses on winning governing majorities in the states by making state legislative campaigns more effective and better-funded. Majorities at the state level are the key to preserving voting rights and other important rights. Using data, the States Project selects states and races where investments can be effective in strategic wins. The good news is that a typical state races costs just a fraction of a US Senate race. [Learn more](#) and consider donating. Regardless of where you live, you are invited to join the Saving Democracy giving circle. Contact [Kathy Voldstad](#) for more information.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Companies Paid Top Executives More Than They Paid in Taxes. In his recent State of the Union address, President Biden declared it is time for big businesses to “finally pay their fair share.” A new study supports his contention by finding that top executives at some of America’s largest companies have received more in pay than their companies paid in federal taxes. According to the new report from Americans for Tax Fairness and

the Institute for Policy Studies, senior executives at 35 different firms – from Tesla to T-Mobile – received compensation worth more than the net tax payments of their respective employers between 2018 and 2022, even though all the companies had generated billions of dollars in profit over the same period. [Read more](#) in *The Guardian*.

New Research Shows Lawmakers Are Out of Touch With Labor Force. Less than 2% of lawmakers on Capitol Hill held blue-collar jobs before they were elected. That percentage drops even further among the nearly 7,300 state legislators across all 50 states, with only 81 of those legislators having been previously employed in working-class jobs, according to researchers at Duke University and Loyola University Chicago. These findings are stunning and suggest a stark disparity between the labor force and the elected leaders who represent them, given that approximately 50% of the US labor force is made up of blue-collar jobs. Read more about the [research](#).

No, Immigrants Aren't More Likely to Commit Crimes. Former President Donald Trump and others recently seized on the arrest of an undocumented man in a high-profile murder in Georgia to support assertions that many migrants are dangerous and "coming from prisons." To the contrary, research shows that immigrants actually commit fewer crimes than people born in the US. From 2012-2022, undocumented immigrants had a homicide conviction rate 14% below native-born Americans. Immigrants had a 62% lower homicide rate and undocumented immigrants had a 41% lower total criminal conviction rate than native-born Americans, according to an [analysis by the Cato Institute](#), a libertarian think tank. These findings are supported by [research](#) done by Michael Light, a sociology professor at the University of Wisconsin. "We looked at homicides, sexual assaults, violent crimes, property crimes, traffic and drug violations and what we find across the board is that the undocumented tend to have lower rates of crimes with all of these types of offenses," Light said. [Read more](#) in *USA TODAY*.

Podcast Recommendation: What Class Are You.....? Much of our politics revolves around our individual and collective feelings about class. So we were delighted to stumble upon a podcast series of intimate interviews about class-related topics with ordinary people conducted by Erica Heilman as part of her *Rumble Strip* podcast. This growing set of short interviews with is frank and reveals how people of different classes see their lives and expectations, and those of people that they perceive to be in other classes. These interviews are just 10-12 minutes each, but are both captivating and educational. Listen and you may learn something about "others" and perhaps about yourself. This is bite-sized listening for those short trips to the store. Click to [listen to the series](#).

STOP GUN VIOLENCE YARD SIGNS

The ground has thawed, so it's a great time to begin putting out yard signs. To start, Kathy Voldstad has a supply of the classic bright orange lawn signs that say STOP GUN VIOLENCE. Please email [Kathy Voldstad](#) if you would like one -- or more! They are \$10 each.

SALISBURY FAMILY SERVICES SENDS CHILDREN TO CAMP

Salisbury Family Services, a local non-profit organization serving residents of the Town of Salisbury, will provide scholarships to summer camp for the children of qualifying families. Assistance is given for sleepaway and day camps, special needs camps, and arts and sports camps. Contact: Patrice McGrath at 860-435-5187 for information or to apply.



GOOD THINGS ARE HAPPENING

Our monthly sampling of good news comes, as it often does, from a longer list provided

by Jessica Craven in her Substack newsletter, [Chop Wood, Carry Water](#). While we engage in what often seems like the grinding work of making positive change, let's remember that we have much encourage us.

- Businessman Mark Cuban said he would back Biden over Trump in a general election matchup even if the president “was being given last rites.”
- Pharma giant Boehringer Ingelheim, one of four major inhaler makers, will lower the price of its inhalers from \$525 to \$35 a month for most patients. This move, which could help millions, comes after massive public pressure and a federal lawsuit. Also, a judge struck down AstraZeneca’s challenge to the US government’s Medicare drug price negotiations. (Boehringer Ingelheim’s US headquarters are in CT.)
- France became the first country in the world to explicitly enshrine abortion rights in its constitution.
- Drug manufacturer Perrigo announced that Opill, a daily hormonal birth control pill, will be on shelves at retailers nationwide in the coming weeks and is available now for pre-order online at select online retailers.
- The Department of Education has issued new guidance promoting high school voter registration. Of the 4 million Americans graduating from high school this spring, less than a third are registered to vote, according to [research](#) from the Civics Center, a non-partisan group.
- The US Food and Drug Administration announced that certain kinds of grease-proofing “forever” chemicals called per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (aka PFAS), will no longer be used in food packaging in the US.
- In a landmark ruling, Bangladesh’s High Court has suspended all licenses for the adoption of critically endangered wild elephants, meaning they can no longer be legally taken into captivity or exploited.
- Last year, climate technology investment reached a total of \$239 billion, a record-breaking figure that’s 38% greater than the 2022 total, according to a new Clean Investment Monitor [report](#) that tracks actual investment.
- A new satellite, MethaneSAT, was launched last month to track climate-heating methane emissions from oil and gas companies around the world.
- Salmon were documented spawning in McKay Creek near Pendleton, OR, for the first time in 30 years. And a team at the New England Aquarium confirmed that they spotted a gray whale — a species believed to have been extinct in the Atlantic Ocean for more than two centuries—off the coast of Massachusetts last week.

HELP WANTED

The Salisbury Town Committee is working hard to get out our messages about democracy and good government. We are looking for a volunteer who can help up our game with social media. If you have skills with social media, such as Instagram and Facebook, and want to make a difference, please contact us at salsdemsnews@gmail.com or call Lee Greenhouse directly at (917) 701-5739.

SHARE YOUR NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please send us any news or announcements that you would like us to share with our community. We publish on the first of each month, so please send us any submissions at least one week earlier. Please submit to the editor at salsdemsnews@gmail.com.

HONK IF YOU LIKE THIS NEWSLETTER

Just kidding, but you really can help us reach more people and have more impact. Please forward this newsletter to your friends and let them know that they are free to join our mailing list, regardless of where they live. We are delighted to have readers from anywhere -- Salisbury, the Northwest Corner, or elsewhere in the world.

[Join our mailing list](#)

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