



Lapeer County Democratic Party Newsletter

March 2025

Volume 5, Number 44

In This Issue

- Information about LCDP and other news.

Interesting web pages

<https://www.secure.actblue.com>

You can make political contributions to LCDP

<https://www.michigandems.com>

Home to Michigan Democratic Party

Contact Us

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Find us & follow us at:

www.lapeercountymocrats.com (web page)

<http://www.facebook.com/lapeerdem>

Lapeer Dems meet the fourth Thursday of the month at 6pm (potluck then meeting) in the Lincoln Room at the Center Building, Lapeer.

Lapeer Democratic Party News:

Monthly Meetings:

March County Committee meeting is 03/13/25 at 6:30pm. The meeting is held at our office in Lyric Mall, Lapeer. Open to members. The

March General meeting is 03/27/25

and is held at 6pm in the Lincoln Room, Lapeer Center building. Bring a dish to pass for the pot luck supper prior to the meeting. General meetings are open to all.



Upcoming Social and Fundraising Events for Lapeer County Democratic Party

Social Events (Mark your calendar):

8/9/25 Dems Annual Picnic at the home of M. Monson.

Fundraising Events (Mark your calendar):

April 24, 2025 Spaghetti Dinner in Lincoln Room of the Lapeer Center Building

July 24-26, 2025 Biennial Yard Sale in North Branch

Attend a Township, City, Village or County meeting – Find out What Your Politicians Are Doing

Meetings are listed on our website:

lapeercountymocrats.com. Once on the website go to “Get Involved” and then “Attend a local meeting.”

To the General Membership of the Lapeer County Democratic Party,



It is with a heavy heart that I announce my resignation as Chairperson of the Lapeer County Democratic Party. Serving in this role has been an honor and a privilege, and I am deeply grateful for the support and dedication of each and every one of you.

As we move forward, I am reminded of the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.: "If you can't fly, then run. If you can't run, then walk. If you can't walk, then crawl. But whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward." I feel these words capture the spirit of resilience and determination that has always been at the core of our party's mission within our community.

In these challenging times, we are witnessing significant political events that underscore the importance of our fight for equality. From the ongoing decisions and actions from the current federal administration about healthcare access and economic stability to the urgent need for climate action, it is clear that our work is far from over. The recent political landscape has highlighted the disparities that exist within our society, and it is our duty to address these inequalities head-on.

Locally, we have seen actions from the County Commission and township governance that represent overreach and threaten the principles of democracy. The recent attempts at book banning are a stark reminder of the importance of our fight for freedom of expression and the right to access diverse perspectives. These actions not only undermine our community's values but also set a dangerous precedent for censorship and control.

Equality is not just a lofty ideal. Equality is a fundamental human right that affects every aspect of our lives. It reduces poverty, leads to healthier communities, extends life expectancy, and reduces violence within our community and society as a whole. As we continue to advocate for justice and equality, we must remember that our efforts have a profound impact on the lives of those who are most vulnerable.

I am confident that the Lapeer County Democratic Party will continue to thrive and make significant strides in promoting equality, justice, and progress for all. I encourage you all to remain steadfast in your commitment to our shared values and to support one another as we navigate the challenges ahead.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Chairperson. I look forward to seeing the continued success of our party and the positive impact it will have on our community.

Democratically yours,
Anissa J. Buffin

***** It is time to wish a fond farewell to Bill and Karen Rykhus who are soon to leave for their new home in Ohio. They have been invaluable members of the party for many years. Lapeer Dems wish them much happiness in their future endeavors!! Thank you both for all your time and efforts to make our party great.***

Recap of the Michigan Democratic Party State Convention of Spring 2025

By Alex Diedrich

For those of us that made it to the convention, it was a long day at the Renaissance Center in Detroit. We started off a little rocky, as credentialing lines for attendees made Cedar Point lines look short. Representatives for both Curtis Hertel and Al Williams were running around furiously to collect enough petition signatures to get on the

ballot for the afternoon. I attended the Progressive Caucus to start the morning, with many of our elected representatives speaking to a packed room building up great energy. I only just got to meet the Grassroots Caucus before I had to join the credentialing lines.

The afternoon is when the work really gets started. Just after the lunch break, our Lapeer delegation joined the rest of Congressional District 9 to elect a new Congressional District executive committee, committee members, and our delegates to the Michigan State Central Committee. Those lists should be published soon, but I would like to congratulate Jeanette Bradshaw and Clint St. Mosley as our Chair and Vice-Chair of Congressional District 9. Lapeer will be well represented with Lisa Hile, Daniel Howe, and myself, Alexander Diedrich, as at-large members of the committee.

Late in the day, we made our way to the ballroom for the showmanship section of the day. The convention general assembly kicked off by saying goodbye to Lavora Barnes as the outgoing chair. The resolutions presented to the convention were deferred to the standing state central committee by voice vote. We then had a parade of Democratic elected officials speaking out against the actions of the current administration and encouraging all of us to action.

By the time the general assembly had kicked off, Al Williams conceded his race for the chair. In a now uncontested vote by affirmation, Curtis Hertel is the new Chair of the Michigan Democratic Party, joined by Portia Roberson and Dr. Shahin Hassan as first and second Vice-Chair, respectively. Congratulations to all of them, and I hope to find they all work as hard as this moment requires.

****Lapeer Dems have lost a Long time Member****

Gale Crooks of Columbiaville suddenly passed away 02/20/25 (b. 09/24/46). Gale was a long time member of the Lapeer Democratic Party, was Secretary for the Party and a member of the County Board of Canvassers. He believed strongly in social justice and community service and was founder of the Lapeer County Equal Rights Alliance. Prior to moving back to Lapeer he was a RN Supervisor and educator at Kaiser Permanente Hospital System in California. He was cremated per his wishes and there will be no service.

Far-Right Conservatives Take Control of Lapeer District Library Board

By Susan Hough



In a blow to the First Amendment and our Freedom to Read, local far-right conservatives took control of the Lapeer District Board at the February 20th meeting. Although two seats on the board remain vacant, Lapeer Township's appointment of book challenger Peggy Brotzke to join John DeAngelis, Kari Kohlman, Bill Marquardt and Perry Vale on the board gave the conservatives the three person majority that allowed them to take control of the board.

Over 50 citizens were present in the audience, including two authors who traveled from Ann Arbor to offer their support. Many Lapeer Dems spoke during the public comment period regarding concern that our library board will defy the constitution and engage in the process of restricting or removing books from our library. They also spoke in support of the good work our library director and staff does in service to the public.

The board met in closed session to discuss a performance evaluation for Director Danielle Brigati, and upon their return, the director was no longer present in the meeting. No explanation was offered for her absence. Elections for board officers were held. The nomination of Bill Marquardt to continue as chair received no support, and the conservatives nominated and elected Kari Kohlman as Chair, John DeAngelis was elected

Vice-chair, and Peggy Brotzke as Secretary. Marquardt's nomination of Perry Vale for Treasurer received no support. The conservative board members attempted to change the bylaws at the table to allow for a combined Secretary/Treasurer position, but their attempt was rebuffed by Marquardt and the attorney. With no further nominations for Treasurer, Perry Vale continues as Treasurer.

Peggy Brotzke seems to have come to the board with her own version of Project 2025. She took the lead in several discussions, and asked for the current material selection policy. This leads many to believe the far-right coalition plans to rewrite the policy to remove decision making regarding material selection out of the hands of our library professionals and place it in the hands of the board. Brotzke also tried to deflect questions about her motivation to serve on the board by offering assurances that neither she nor other board members plan to "ban" books. Brotzke stated she only wants to protect children who don't have "a responsible adult to guide them" from viewing "sexually explicit" material. Despite her words to the contrary, Peggy Brotzke has previously challenged (unsuccessfully) books with LGBTQ+ themes asking for them to be restricted from general circulation. Book restrictions are considered an unconstitutional limit on the right to receive information. Unfortunately Carol Brown of Mayfield Township who has yet to be seated is just as bad.

During the final public comment period, Oxford Library Director Brian Cloutier spoke forcefully about the actions this board appears ready to undertake, and stated that he is "lawyered up" and ready to challenge them should book restrictions or removals take place.

This is the time for all freedom loving citizens of Lapeer to get involved in the fight to preserve our right to read and receive information of our choosing at our district library. Stayed tuned to the newsletter, our social media pages and our website for ways to get involved. Attend our Lapeer Dems meetings for updates and be present during Lapeer District Library Board meetings.

"Bottom line, a person can decide that they do not want to read a particular book and that they do not want their child to read a particular book, but they cannot decide that that an entire community cannot read a particular book." –Lapeer Dem. Amy Conger

These links will take you to recordings of the February 20th Library board meeting:

Part 1: [YouTube.com/watch?v=tWO8f249yQ0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tWO8f249yQ0)

Part 2: [YouTube.com/watch?v=2uAY8FGt64g&t=1141s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2uAY8FGt64g&t=1141s)

Michigan Will Elect a New Governor on November 3, 2026: Candidate Profiles

By Dante M. Pirouz, PhD

There are currently 5 candidates running to become Michigan's next Governor to be elected in November 2026. Here is a rundown on each candidate currently in the race:

1. Jocelyn Benson (D)
 - a. Jocelyn Benson is Michigan's current Secretary of State, and she entered the race in January 2025. Benson has been praised for improving the customer service and efficiency at the Secretary of State's offices including opening over 100 self-service stations, adding services online and launching mobile services for ease of service. Her focus for running is on improving education opportunities in Michigan.
2. Chris Swanson (D)
 - a. Chris Swanson is currently Genesee County's Sheriff, and he gained nationwide attention when he joined Black Lives Matters protestors to march in Flint. He helped to create the Genesee Human Oppression Strike Team (GHOST) to fight human trafficking and sexual assault and

Inmate Growth Naturally and Intentionally Through Education (IGNITE) which teaches inmates math and reading to help them find employment once released.

3. Mike Duggan (I)
 - a. Mike Duggan is the Mayor of Detroit and entered the race as an Independent. The former Democrat turned Independent is credited with implementing positive changes in the city of Detroit including leading the city out of bankruptcy, lowering violent crime, and increasing Detroit's population for the first time since the 1950s.
4. Aric Nesbitt (R)
 - a. Aric Nesbitt is the Michigan Senate Republican Leader and an avid Trump supporter. His campaign slogan is "Make Michigan Great Once Again" and claims that his conservative focus will help families and workers.
5. Anthony Hudson (R)
 - a. Anthony Hudson is a Genesee County truck driver who became a Michigander 13-years ago. He proposes eliminating property and state income taxes, the Michigan Department of Transportation, renewable energy mandates and annual auto registration.

LCDP 2025 Garage Sale "Save Your Stuff"

Jim and Heidi Waid of North Branch will be hosting the Dems garage sale this year, during the month of July. I am one that believes less is more. This is a great time of the year to declutter our homes, garages/barns, and find things that we no longer enjoy, or use. As the saying goes "One man's trash is another man's treasure"! Donated items can be dropped off starting May 1st, by appointment only. (Watch for more announcements) We will not be accepting any electronics, chemicals, books, or clothing. This decluttering will not only help you declutter your home, but it will help the Democrats to raise money for our future battles, and it allows someone else to get what they need/want at a reduced price. It sounds like a win, win situation to me! I look forward to seeing all of your treasures.

Record those meetings!

By Karen Braschayko

As we attend township and village meetings, I encourage you to take the simple but invaluable step of recording them. Under Michigan's Open Meetings Act, we the people are free to record public meetings in audio and video. The public is also free to broadcast the meetings via livestream or by posting a recording later. Having a video record of the meeting can be the most useful tool. Being able to show others that a public official threw papers on the floor or acted in a menacing way can change the tide of an argument or aid in reporting it. Video also allows you to show that a trustee voted for a family member or didn't abstain when they had a financial interest, which is not uncommon in these parts, and you may only figure out the connections later.

We've also noticed that our surlier local officials tend to behave better when they know they're being broadcast. They manage to be more thorough in their explanations and procedures, too. Many of our townships and villages no longer add to the minutes what members of the public spoke about. When they leave these public comment topics off the record, they can try to claim they didn't know that there was a safety issue at an intersection or that dirt bikers were tearing up the local park -- when a member of the public has in fact pointed that out.

Even if you only have the ability to record audio, do so! This can easily be made into a video and posted online later on as well. Audio recordings take up little space on your device. If you have a smartphone, you already have the tool you need. I find that the voice memo app on my iPhone is perfect for these recordings, and the files are simple to transfer and share. I place my phone on a table, chair, or on top of my bag for the best microphone access.

I also use my iPhone to livestream the meetings on Facebook. There are much better cameras out there, but a smartphone can do an adequate job. I bought a cellphone tripod for less than \$20, and that was all I needed. I record both audio and video of the meetings, just in case my cell connection glitches and I miss a few seconds. I simply use my old cell phone for audio and my new cell phone for livestreaming, but there are many inexpensive recorders out there too.

When I get home, in about 15 minutes I can download the meeting video from Facebook and then upload it onto YouTube. Having it on YouTube not only keeps the videos organized and easy to access from anywhere, I can share them with anyone, people can subscribe, and a surprising number of locals have found them on their own. It costs nothing to make a YouTube channel, and it's easier than you think. You could also livestream directly onto YouTube. Mayfield Township and Metamora Township have Facebook groups for concerned citizens, and these have helped us get the word out about local shenanigans and calls for action.

Once you build a library of these videos, you can watch last month's meeting and remember exactly what officials talked about. You can watch last year's meeting and catch them using the same pointless arguments to avoid scheduling the annual meeting for residents (looking at you, Mayfield!). Some of our recordings have even been used in court cases – it really is a valuable way to capture and share what goes on in our community.

The Lapeer Democratic Party Needs Your Participation

The Lapeer Dems are making plans for 2025. To help elect Democrats in Michigan and get the word out about what MI Dems are doing, we need everyone to volunteer to help on a committee. Here is a list of committees you can join:

- Political Action
- Social events/Outreach
- Membership
- Bylaws
- Fundraising
- Communications (newsletter, Facebook and Social Media)

If everyone adds their talents and time to the party we can do great things. If you have not already volunteered, please contact our Chair, Alex, at apdiedrich@gmail.com. Thanks for supporting your party.

News about the newsletter

This newsletter is published monthly and is available by email to all members. **All members are encouraged to submit articles and information to the newsletter.** Submissions for the newsletter should be 800 words or less and need to be sent by email to the editors by the 18th of each month.

Send submission to the editors:

Anita Harrand at aharr76@hotmail.com

Alex Diedrich at apdiedrich@gmail.com

Lapeer County Democratic Party needs your financial support.

Annual dues renewal is December for the year 2025. If you want to mail your membership please send to: Lapeer County Democratic Party, PO Box 185, Lapeer MI 48446.

Here are other ways to pay your LCDP dues:

1. Pay at Act Blue: <http://www.secure.actblue.com>
2. You can visit our Facebook page: <http://www.Facebook.com/LapeerDems>
3. You can visit our website: [Lapeer County Democratic Party](#) Locate the “Get Involved” button.
4. You can fill out the attached form and mail with a check to the LCDP office:

Name _____

Home Address _____

Street City State Zip _____

E-mail Address _____

Home Phone &/or Mobile Phone _____

Renewal membership____ New membership _____

Membership types: _____ Student (\$10)

_____ Grassroots Supporter (\$20) _____ Lapeer Activist (\$50) _____ Lapeer Leader (\$100)

_____ Additional Contribution

_____ Total Amount of Your Check

_____ Check here if you wish to become a member by way of an “in-kind” contribution. We will contact you.

Thank you for joining us to ensure everyone has an opportunity to achieve the American dream, be paid a living wage, have basic health care, get a quality education without going into massive debt, and live in a clean/safe/justice-oriented world.

