

# The Anderson County Democratic Women's Club News

June 2026

## ***ACDWC Candidate Forum***

### **201 Café and Wine Bar**

(201 Jackson Square, Oak Ridge, TN 37830)

**Monday - June 29<sup>th</sup> 2026 - 5:30pm**

Anderson County Democratic Women's Club will be lobbing hard-ball questions at local candidates. This should be a good opportunity to test the candidates' mettle! Karen George will be the moderator, so you know there will be a good dose of humor in the mix. If you have a question you want a candidate to address, send your question and the target candidate to [ac-democratic-women@outlook.com](mailto:ac-democratic-women@outlook.com).

## ***Get Involved! This Week's Opportunities***

Between now and November we will be letting you know about ways to help our local candidates in the upcoming week. This week...

**Ebony Capshaw: Fundraiser** - Sunday June 7<sup>th</sup> at Cancun (118 S Illinois Ave, Oak Ridge, TN 37830). Come have dinner (choice of 3 meals), a relaxed evening amongst friends, AND support Ebony in her fight for an Anderson County Commission District 6 seat. Tickets \$35 at:

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/tacofundraiser2026>

**Anne Backus: Canvassing** every Saturday 10:45-1:00. Meet at the First Presbyterian Church, 1051 Oak Ridge Turnpike.

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### **Other Events**

**June 9<sup>th</sup> – Anne Backus vs. Kelly McCampbell!** Hear from the Democratic candidates running for the State House District 33 office. Roane State Community College Rm 107 Goff Building. 5:30 doors – 6:00 debate. [RSVP required](#).

**June 12<sup>th</sup> – Meet U.S. Senate Candidate Maria Brewer 6:00-8:00pm at Millborne Bakery** (1968 Oak Ridge Turnpike Oak Ridge, TN 37830). [RSVP](#) Maria is one of the 4 Democratic candidates running for this office in the August 6<sup>th</sup> primary.

**August 18<sup>th</sup> – The 2026 Annual Febb Burn Banquet.** Celebrate the woman who ensured the “Perfect 36” state and secured our place at the ballot box. [Tickets](#)

#### **Upcoming Public Meetings:**

**Oak Ridge:** View meeting schedules and agendas for [Oak Ridge](#)

**City Council Regular Meeting**, 7 pm 2nd Monday of month, Municipal Building Courtroom

**Municipal Planning Commission**, 5:30 pm 3rd Thursday of month, Oak Ridge Municipal Courtroom

**Traffic Safety Advisory Board**, 7 pm 3rd Monday of month, Central Services Complex Conf Room

**Disability Advisory Board**, 11 am 3rd Monday of Month, Senior Center

**Land Bank Board of Directors**, 8:30 am 3rd Tuesday of month, Municipal Building Courtroom.

**Recreation and Parks Advisory Board**, 7 pm 2nd Thursday of month, Conference Center.

**Board of Education**, 5 pm 4th Monday of month, Board Room - School Admin Bldg (304 New York Ave.) <https://www.orn.edu/central-office/board-of-education/members-schedule/>

**Anderson County:** View meeting schedules and agendas for [Anderson County](#).

**Anderson County Operations Committee**, 6:00 pm 2nd Monday of month, Anderson County Courthouse Rm 312

**Anderson County Commission Meeting**, 6:30 pm Monday June 15<sup>th</sup>, Anderson County Courthouse Rm 312. (100 North Main Street, Clinton, TN 37716).

**Anderson County Election Commission**, 4:00 pm Monday June 22<sup>nd</sup> Anderson County Courthouse Rm 118A.

**Anderson County Library Board**, 5:30 pm Thursday June 11<sup>th</sup> at Anderson County Courthouse Rm 312.

**Anderson County Animal Advisory Board**, 4:00 pm Tuesday June 23<sup>rd</sup>, Anderson County Courthouse Rm 118A. (100 North Main Street, Clinton, TN 37716).

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#### **Club Updates**

**Voter Registrations:** Now is the time to make sure you’re registered for the August election. You can check your registration by contacting the Anderson County Election Commission or verifying your data via the state website <https://tnmap.tn.gov/voterlookup>.

#### **Make a Difference:**

It is not too soon to start thinking about becoming a club leader in 2027. To learn more about the positions, please contact Tiffany Malone.

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#### **May Meeting Summary**

#### **May Meeting Summary: Voices of Democracy with Rep. Sam McKenzie**

5-28-2026 at the Tri-County African American Museum

We had the opportunity to meet our 2026 Helen Jernigan Memorial Scholarship winner, Chloe Smith. She told us some about her aspirations to become an author and/or illustrator or some aspect of healthcare as she

continues her education at Roane State. Chloe has overcome a number of challenges in her young life; however, her goal is to help others and make a positive mark on the world.

We then heard from local candidates about their priorities and plans for office. The candidates (and top points) were: Anne Backus (public education, reversing vouchers, and family economics); Derek Guy (strong schools, local businesses/workers, infrastructure); Marty May (libraries, education, property taxes); Allie Simpson (education, health, and environment); Jason Goodman (affordable healthcare, education, moderation); Sharon Bourgeois Capshaw (attracting residents, schools, and the county animal shelter); Anna Golladay (affordability, housing, healthcare, workers rights, and redistricting); Ebony Capshaw (quality jobs, infrastructure, schools, and public safety); David Miller (redistricting, schools, growing Democratic candidates, cracking the super-majority).



Sam McKenzie, State Representative for District 15, spoke about the Tennessee General Assembly legislative session. Although he “officially” represents District 15, Sam considers himself the Democratic representative for everyone in this area. He welcomes phone calls and personal emails.

Rick Scarborough is a bit of a disappointment – he did not vote for vouchers the 1<sup>st</sup> year in office but did cast a decisive vote in favor of expanding vouchers this year. In this voucher bill \$273,000 family income is considered “low-income” for voucher awards. Bill Lee seems intent on separating the haves and the have-nots via private school subsidies (aka vouchers). In the previous voucher bill only 3 counties were piloted, and the students had to take the TCAT exams just like the public-school students. He noted that the public-school students outperformed the private in test results. In the current bill there is no requirements for learning metrics – they should be present and comparable to public schools.

In immigration policy the Tennessee GOP looked for ways to be the most heavy-handed and mean-spirited. The GOP does not

have the American spirit in their hearts. McKenzie is for enforcing legal immigration, but the heavy-handed approach is not the way to do enforcement.

A careful reading of the recent Supreme Court decision regarding the Voting Rights Act shows that they allow politically driven gerrymandering – but not racially driven gerrymandering. McKenzie expressed his pride for people who showed up in Nashville to protest the Memphis gerrymandered redistricting. Tennessee is a very diverse state, with approximately 40% Democrats; however, that percentage is not reflected in the representation. In a level playing field, Memphis could swing the vote of the state. The GOP wants to redraw the state’s districts using data that is clearly racially based. The DNC is exploring legal remedy – the GOP knows they did wrong.

He cautioned that Memphis and Shelby County are bellwethers for what they want to impose on the rest of the state. For instance, “oversights” on the schools that prevent Memphis/Shelby County from even hiring and firing teachers without going through the oversight board.

Voting rights restoration is an issue in Tennessee. In many other states, when someone is eligible to have their voting rights reinstated it happens. In Tennessee the person still has to pay back 100% of the court costs and back child support before their rights are reinstated. A very steep hill to climb for those returning from incarceration.

LGBTQ issues, particularly not recognizing gay marriage was held last year – not something they really wanted to address. This year the bill was brought into the session and passed, although there were several Republican lawmakers who also opposed it. There are already lawsuits filed, and McKenzie believes the bill will not stand.

Medical cannabis for the state is a bill introduced by Rick Scarborough. Open cannabis is not likely in Tennessee; however, medical is possible as a good tool for doctors to prescribe. If it is declassified at the Federal level we should be declassifying it at the State level also.

Increasing turnout should be a key goal for all Democrats. We need to have good data, but also we need to look at our approach. Democrats tend to be very analytical and Republicans tend to act from emotion. We need to look long and hard at our approach. It feels to him that the momentum is shifting in Washington – we need to do everything we can to shift it here in Tennessee. We must want good schools, healthcare, a strong economy, and democracy more than the other side wants to eliminate them.

Sam McKenzie, a member of the Tennessee Black Caucus of State Legislators, served as chairman during the 113th General Assembly. Since 2020, he has represented District 15 in Knoxville and serves on the Education Committee, Health Committee, Government Operations Committee, and the House Ethics Committee. Prior to his current role, he served on the Knox County Commission from 2008 to 2016..

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### **Contact the ACDWC**

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**Club Website:** [acdwc.org](http://acdwc.org)