

Clinton County Democratic Party Newsletter



July 2025



Channel Courage for Today Through the Legacy of Our Founders

By Kathie Elliott. In 1976, my father, a veteran and local photojournalist, took me to take pictures

of a local resident's garage door for a story. Not just any garage door, this had been painted to look like an original 1776 U.S. flag in celebration of our nation's bicentennial. Since then, I've felt connected by that moment and the stories from the veterans in my family, to the beautiful, checkered, tragic, and redemptive history of those brave citizens and allies who founded the great experiment that had lasted 200 years.

For many years, I've eagerly waited for all the pomp and revelry that our 250th birthday would bring. But today, our democracy is being significantly tested and we can't assume that we will get to that 250 year milestone. Without serious and continuous intervention from everyday citizens and residents, our elected and appointed officials may cede our democracy to Trump and his allies. Were the 49.8% of voters who elected this President asking him to destroy the very foundations of our more perfect union? I pray that's not the case. But if it is, then we, the other 49.2% of the population, better stop worrying about upsetting our loved ones and neighbors when we put out signs, protest government overreach, or defend basic human rights. We don't have the luxury of viewing this crisis from where we stand safely today on the backs of those who fought to establish this country, including those who died, those irreparably injured or harmed, those we wrongly displaced, enslaved, detained, judged, or marginalized. We need to meet this crisis with the courage required 250 years ago. To do anything less would be the greatest display of ingratitude and

irresponsibility imaginable.

I realize this may be a tough message to hear. Many of you are answering the call in every way that you can. You're putting your signs out, attending meetings, talking to neighbors, contacting your officials, and attending protests. Thank you, thank you! If you haven't found your best way to engage yet, I implore you to reach out to us, or attend an event to see how you can join the "revolution" of 2025. If you have an idea of what you could do, and are fearful how others will respond, please consider what we stand to lose, and how much weight you can lift off the shoulders of others by joining the fight with us. We need your help!



Keep Membership Momentum Going Strong!

We've been so impressed that CCDP's membership numbers have remained high this year, an indication of how much we all care about each other and the communities where we reside. Many of you joined us last summer leading up to the 2024 elections, and

those memberships are now coming up for renewal. Not a member yet? Now is the perfect time to join! Please visit [MDP's website](#) to renew or join, and don't forget that there is a free membership option! Questions about membership?

[Contact us!](#)



Gov. Whitmer Calls For “Doing Hard Things” in Education and Infrastructure

By Tim Hughes. Delivering the keynote address at the 2025 Mackinac Policy Conference, Governor Gretchen Whitmer focused on top priorities for the year: tackling the state's literacy crisis and finalizing a roads deal. In her speech to the conference, Whitmer said that Michigan citizens are frustrated with increasing polarization in political debate that leads to

people listening to the loudest or angriest voice in the room. “Michiganders deserve better,” she said. She pointed to success in winning federal support for Selfridge Air Force Base as an example of successful bi-partisan action. “This move protects 30,000 jobs, 5,000 military families, and \$850 million of statewide

commerce,” she said. “Saving Selfridge was a Team Michigan effort.”

At the top of her 2025 agenda, Whitmer set a goal of giving every child access to a high-quality public education from pre-kindergarten through the postsecondary level. Whitmer signed commonsense legislation last year to use proven science of reading strategies, like phonics, to enhance reading skills. These new laws also require schools to test for dyslexia so they can identify students who need extra help early.

Next on Whitmer’s to-do list is to deliver a sustainable, long-term solution for local and state roads so people can get to work and drive their kids to school without breaking an axle. She pointed to her Rebuilding Michigan Plan, which has fixed our most economically important highways and bridges, as a first step. She called on the legislature to work with her to take the next step and fix local roads, which have been underfunded for decades.



A Look Back at Pride Month

By Shelby Neathammer. The LGBTQIA2S community has always existed. Laws aimed at reducing this community’s visibility and erasing its existence meant decades of hiding. The Stonewall Uprising in 1969

was a boiling point in response to violence and discrimination when law enforcement raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay gathering space in New York. Patrons of Stonewall, later joined by other community members, fought back against the police for several days, refusing to be subjected to this humiliation and oppression.

On the first anniversary of the uprising, a march was held in remembrance and as a continued representation of the desire to exist openly. Pride Month was officially established by President Bill Clinton in 1999, and President Barack Obama formally designated Stonewall as a national monument in 2016. The goals of these designations were to raise awareness of the violence that continues to occur to this community while advocating for laws that create protections. It is a violence that continues today, with lawmakers across the nation attempting to pass 597 anti-LGBT+ bills this year alone.

Pride as a countermovement presents an opportunity to demonstrate that loving oneself and celebrating love for a community is a powerful act of resistance. In rural areas such as Clinton County, these events are an opportunity to let LGBT+ members know they are not alone and they are welcome. According to St. Johns Call-In Coalition steering committee member and board member Tess

Miller, "It's important to recognize that these communities are not just in big cities." Tess reported that many LGBT+ community members leave the area once they become adults, in part because they do not feel they can be accepted. For these members, these events can be a point of hometown pride and healing. Miller noted, "If we want to draw more people to our beautiful city, we need to do the things that make people want to be here; division and hate never do that."

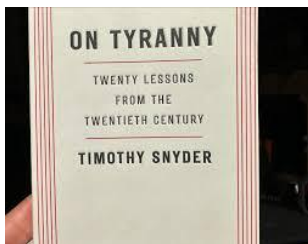
The LGBT+ community needs all the support it can get right now, which is why CCDP was proud to table at St. Johns Pride on June 21 and Lansing Pride on June 28 and promote DeWitt Pride on June 29. We will continue these efforts and encourage our members and friends to look for ways to get involved and show support. While Pride Month was a wonderful opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the community, learn about available resources, and humanize those often under attack, let's keep up our joyful resistance the whole year through!



Don't Miss July's Volunteer Opportunities

CCDP's next two big volunteer opportunities for the are our environmental cleanups, which are coming up soon! On Sunday, July 13, we will meet at 8:30 a.m. in Watertown Township for our sponsored highway cleanup. On July 19, we will meet at 10:00 to tackle

two local parking lots. Please see the events section below for location information. If you are able to make it to either cleanup, [please RSVP](#). Right now, we only have a few volunteers, and we need more to make the time go faster so we can beat the heat! These are great opportunities to get to know fellow Clinton County Dems while putting our collective efforts towards a common good. We'll see you out there!



Join Us July 15 to Discuss *On Tyranny* by Timothy Snyder

It's not too late to join CCDP members and friends on July 15 at 7:00 p.m. at CCDP's office, 105 West Railroad Street, in St. Johns for our second Common

Read book discussion, *On Tyranny* by Timothy Snyder, who begins the prologue of this timely and important book by stating that "history does not repeat, but it does instruct." In this short work, he draws on history to offer 20

practical strategies to protect democracy. His emphasis is on the importance of individual action and responsibility, something we all need to grapple with. The book's website describes it as a "call to arms and a guide to resistance, with invaluable ideas for how we can preserve our freedoms in the uncertain times ahead." [Please RSVP](#) so we know how many people to expect and can make plans for seating and refreshments. Thank you!



Remembering Max Calder

We are saddened to share that one of our staunchest Clinton County Democrats, Saint Johns High School graduate and DeWitt resident Max Calder, has passed away. [Read about](#) his fascinating life and the loved ones he leaves behind. We extend our deepest condolences to Max's family and friends.



Postcard Postage Increasing

Did you know that postage rates are increasing on July 13? First class forever stamps are increasing from \$.73 to \$.78 and postcard forever stamps are increasing from \$.56 to \$.62. In 2024, the CCDP mailed over 5000 postcards. With your many donations of postcard stamps (\$56 for a roll of 100), CCDP was able to send out mailings almost entirely with donated stamps. In 2026 we expect similar or expanded mailings. At the new rate, postcard mailings of 5,000 will cost \$3,100 in postage alone. If you would like to donate postcard stamps before the rate increase, we would gratefully accept them at our July meeting or during office hours. Thank you!



Order Your Fall Festival Tickets!

Join CCDP for its third annual Fall Harvest Festival fundraiser at Phillips Orchards & Cider Mill's Orchard Market, 1995 East Gratiot County Line Road, St. Johns, on Saturday, September 20, from 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. This will be a great opportunity to mix and mingle with Democratic elected officials, candidates, and community members, while enjoying delicious apple cider, donuts, and assorted snacks. A delicious treat and beverage are included with the cost of your ticket and hard cider will be available for purchase. [Get your tickets](#)

today for what promises to be a wonderful event!



Office Assistance Needed

MDP's Lansing office is seeking volunteers! Blue Brigade members have been helping to staff the MDP office. They are looking for additional support, and we asked Blue Brigade's Susan Anderson to answer some frequently asked questions about this volunteer opportunity.

- **What are the coverage needs?**

There are 3 shifts available Monday through Friday, 9:00

- 11:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m.

- 2:00 p.m., and 2:00 p.m.

- 4:30 p.m.

- **What do I need to do?**

Answer incoming calls and take messages.

- **Are any of the calls difficult or with angry constituents?**

We can't guarantee that all calls will be easy but most are.

- **Will I be trained how to answer incoming calls?**

Staff or another practiced volunteer will train you.

- **Will I have to greet walk-in traffic?**

There is virtually no

walk
in
traffic.

- **Will I be alone in the office?**

No, there is MDP staff in the building.

- **Who do I contact with additional questions, or to volunteer?**

Please contact [Susan Anderson](#).



Upcoming Events

July 10: CCDP Membership Meeting, Rotary Depot Pavilion, St. Johns. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m. with the meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m.

July 11: Free Spaghetti Dinner with the Queers

hosted by Crowded Table Coalition and SJ Call-In Coalition, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

[RSVP required](#).

July 12: CCDP Office Hours, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., 105 West Railroad Street, St. Johns.

July 13: CCDP Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup, 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon, 7585 West Grand River Avenue. Trash bags and safety vests will be provided, but bring gloves and water, [RSVP required](#).

July 15: CCDP Common Read, CCDP office, 105 West Railroad Street, St.

Johns, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. [RSVP required](#).

July 19: CCDP Office Hours, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., 105 West Railroad Street, St. Johns.

July 19: CCDP Carpool Lot Cleanup, 10:00 a.m. at 5900 South Williams Road, St. Johns. Once this lot is cleaned, we will move south to the carpool lot located at 2377 E. Round Lake Rd, DeWitt. [RSVP required](#).

July 26: CCDP Office Hours, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., 105 West Railroad Street, St. Johns.

August 7: CCDP Membership Meeting, DeWitt City Hall, 414 East Main Street. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m., with the meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m.

August 9: St. Johns Mint Festival Parade, 10:00 a.m. Stay tuned for more info regarding CCDP walking in this parade.

August 16: DeWitt Ox Roast Parade, 10:00 a.m. Stay tuned for more info regarding CCDP walking in this parade.



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