

Clinton County Democratic Party Newsletter



April 2025



Reflecting on Visibility, Reputation, and Character

By Kathie Elliott. Last month I wrote about how spring inspires gratitude, reflection, and hope. Today, I ask you to reflect on something a little more challenging, particularly actions that impact our visibility and reputation.

Visibility of CCDP and our growing membership is key to helping community members and potential candidates for office feel safe openly discussing their alignment with Democratic values. We have to lead the way by making sure we let others know we are Democrats and by remembering that our actions may inspire others to join, or avoid, us. Here's what you can do to positively increase CCDP's visibility:

- Attend one CCDP volunteer opportunity or event, or one public meeting (e.g. township, school board,

etc.)
a
month.

- Be
open
about
stating
you
are
a
Democrat
and
your
affiliation
with
CCDP
when
you
attend
a
rally
or
other
event.
- Help
CCDP
become
more
visible
by
asking
us
to
sponsor/co-
sponsor
events
and
activities
with
other
organizations.
Or,
see
what
is
on
CCDP's
action
“wish
list”
but

lacking
volunteers
and
help
launch
the
project.

In addition to visibility, we should be aware of how we are perceived within and beyond our membership. We're all living through difficult times and respond to uncertainty differently. We need to be aware of how we respond in these situations and manage our emotions so they don't reflect on CCDP as a whole. Keep in mind this quote by author Robert McKee:

"True character is revealed in the choices a human being makes under pressure - the greater the pressure, the deeper the revelation, the truer the choice to the character's essential nature."

Here's what we can do to help CCDP maintain a reputation for inclusion and wisdom:

- Remember
the
huge
diversity
of
thought
that
exists
within
and
across
political
parties
and
look
for
common
values
and
goals.
- Ask
questions
to
understand
someone's
point
of
view

or
actions.
People
are
complex,
and
we
all
carry
a
lifetime
of
experiences
that
influence
our
beliefs
and
choices.

- Be
aware
of
and
challenge
our
own
personal
biases
and
consider
how
experiences
and
outdated
assumptions
might
be
limiting
our
ability
to
fully
appreciate
different
points
of
view.
- Respect
where
others
are

in
their
journey.
So
what
if
they
use
single
serve
plastic
or
drive
a
low
mileage,
gas
vehicle.
Many
of
us
still
do.
When
we
judge,
we
make
people
feel
unwelcome.
If
they
can't
see
themselves
fitting
in
with
us,
they
won't
vote
for
our
candidates
or
our
policies.

CCDP is doing great work and we should celebrate that. We should also be

aware of how we can positively contribute to our visibility and reputation. What we are fighting for is critically important and we are glad to be on this journey working hand in hand with you!



Get Your Spring Banquet Tickets Today!

Tickets are on sale for the CCDP's 2025 Spring Banquet which will take place on Friday, May 2, at the Eagle Eye Golf and Banquet Center. We are excited to welcome our Keynote Speaker, Lieutenant Governor and Democratic Gubernatorial Candidate

Garlin Gilchrist! We are also pleased to announce that we will be joined by newly-elected Michigan Democratic Party Chair Curtis Hertel as well as several state and local elected officials. Most of all, we cannot wait to welcome you and know this will be an evening to come together as Democrats and look to the future.

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. with dinner following at 6:30 p.m. [Purchase your tickets via ActBlue](#). Please note that tickets will NOT be sold at the door. Can't make it to the event? You can donate in lieu of purchasing a ticket through the link, too!

You also will have the chance to further support CCDP at the event's very popular silent auction. Bid on many unique items generously donated by our members and local businesses and know your dollars will help grow our county party and support Democratic candidates at this most critical time. We hope to see you on May 2!



St. Johns Bond Proposal Vote Quickly Approaching

By Matthew Boak. The May 6 Special Election in St. Johns is quickly approaching. St. Johns Public Schools is asking the community to approve an *extension* (no increase!) of the current millage. Each of us can play a huge part in getting out the vote and letting family and friends in the district know how important it is to vote YES.

The [district's information-packed website](#) serves as a valuable resource to answer voter questions. You also can keep up with the latest developments by

“liking” the bond advocacy committee’s [Facebook page](#). Are you a St. Johns resident? [Request your yard sign](#) and show your support!

Our public schools and public education in general need our support now more than ever. Please take the time to vote YES, and ensure your family and friends in the district do the same!



House Democratic Women Introduce Equal Pay Package

By Tim Hughes. Members of the House Democratic Progressive Women’s Caucus have introduced a 10-bill legislative package designed to promote pay equity and fight gender-based wage discrimination in Michigan. The bills were introduced five days before the observance of Equal Pay Day, a symbolic day when women’s earnings catch up to men’s earnings from the previous year. According to statistics released last year by the U.S. Census Bureau, women in Michigan earned only 83% of the median salary paid to men.

“This package is rooted in the truth that every person, regardless of gender, deserves to be paid equally and fairly,” said state Rep. Erin Byrnes (D-Dearborn). “Many Michiganders are struggling to make ends meet and dealing with higher costs. Pay equity is one way to combat this economic issue.”

“It is unconscionable that pay gaps for women, and especially women of color, continue to persist in workplaces across Michigan,” said state Rep. Helena Scott (D-Detroit). “Every person deserves to be valued for their work, and Michigan will only grow stronger by paying every worker fairly.”

Legislation in the package attempts to decrease pay inequities by increasing salary transparency between employers and their prospective employees; requiring employers to obtain fair wage certification; prohibiting the awarding of state contracts to a person who does not have fair wage certification; prohibiting employers from discouraging employees from discussing their wages; giving employees the tools to fight back against wage discrimination, including the ability to anonymously report through the Civil Rights Division; and strengthening financial penalties for wage discrimination under the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act.

HB 4289-4297 were referred to the [House Committee on Economic Competitiveness](#). HB 4288 requires the state to use one or more objective and merit-based factors when hiring, including the applicant's relevant education or

work experience. It has been referred to the [House Committee on Government Operations](#).



Area Parks: Clinton County's Best-Kept Secret!

By Melany Mack. When we think of parks, beautiful green spaces or water features and pleasant thoughts of opportunities for recreation are usually top of mind.

Less often thought about, but arguably as important, is the role of parks in enhancing our quality of life, contributing to the economic vitality of our communities, and attracting new residents to the county. Indeed, parks and open spaces contribute to our physical, mental, and social well-being.

The [Parks and Green Space Commission](#) (PGSC), whose mission is to “acquire, develop and maintain a vibrant county park system that improves the quality of life in Clinton County” recently updated its 5-Year Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plan. It contains lots of useful information, including a recreation inventory of local parks and detailed demographic information about the county. The Commission sought community input during the process of updating the plan using an online survey and public, open-house style meetings. Responses revealed that parks are our county’s best kept secret! Nearly 65% of respondents who had not visited a park in the prior year indicated that lack of information was the primary reason.

Clinton County has three county parks, Motz (opened in 2010), Clinton Lakes (opened in 2014), and Clinton Trails (acquired in 2023 and in the initial phases of development). Together, the parks offer myriad opportunities for hiking, boating, fishing, picnicking, swimming, and enjoying nature. In addition, Latoff Landing, a one-acre site purchased by the county in 2005, offers access to the Maple River for kayaking, fishing, and birdwatching, or observing nature. The PGSC and the Board of Commissioners are committed to improving universal access at all of these public spaces, and *no fees are required to access any of them*.

The PGSC is redoubling its efforts to better advertise the county parks in response to community input which clearly showed lack of information as the primary reason residents do not visit them. The commission is also actively reaching out to other entities in the county, including businesses, health care organizations, and libraries, to collaborate on events that could be hosted at the parks. Watch for information in CCDP’s regular announcements about upcoming events.



CCDP Welcomes Your Blog Submissions!

We've been enjoying the many blog submissions shared by CCDP members over the last couple of months! If you haven't read the latest, don't miss

Shelby Neathammer's perspective on how our personal spending can better reflect our Democratic values. If you've been noodling something in the news, or have a perspective you would like to share, consider submitting a blog post.

Contact **Ann McCulloch** for more information.

CLINTON COUNTY DEMOCRATS ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY CLEANUP

Saturday, April 12
8:30 a.m. - approximately noon
Meet at 7585 W. Grand River
Highway, Watertown Township,
MI 48906


Safety vests and trash bags will be provided. Participants are responsible for bringing gloves, water, etc.
Please RSVP to vicechair@clintoncodems.org



Join the Clinton County Dems for

Coffee and Conversation

Tuesday, April 22 at 1:00 pm



Waypoint Coffee Co.
200 E. Railroad Street
St. Johns

Join Us for Coffee & Conversation

We look forward to seeing you for CCDP's Coffee & Conversation on **Tuesday, April 22, at 1:00 p.m.** at Waypoint Coffee, 200 East Railroad Street in St. Johns. We are eager to hear what is on your mind and how you think we can be most effective as a county party. Bring your ideas and your enthusiasm!



Upcoming Events

April 12 - Second Saturday New Member Meet and Greet: Taking place from 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at CCDP's office, 105 West Railroad Street, St. Johns.

April 13 - Indivisible Monthly Meeting: Taking place at 2:00 p.m., 5509 South Pennsylvania Avenue, Lansing. [RSVP and sign up to receive notifications.](#)

April 22 - Coffee and Conversation: Taking place at 1:00 p.m. at Waypoint Coffee, 200 East Railroad Street, St. Johns.

April 22 - Town Hall (Invited - U.S. Rep. Tom Barrett): Taking place at 6:00 p.m., Lansing Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Union, 5405 South Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard, Lansing.

April 26 - CCDP County Parks Cleanup: Taking place at 10:00 a.m., Clinton Lakes County Park parking lot, 4665 North Dewitt Road, St Johns. Bring gloves, water, and dress for the weather. Questions? Email [Matthew Boak](#).

April 26 - People for Public Education Rally: Taking place from 12:00 noon - 2:00 p.m., Michigan State Capitol.

May 1 - CCDP Membership Meeting: Social time at 6:30 p.m. with 7:00 p.m. meeting start, Clinton County Courthouse, 100 East State Street, St. Johns.



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