

Clinton County Democratic Party Newsletter



April 2026

"Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature — the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter." - Rachel Carson

April CCDP Volunteer Opportunities

Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup

- Sunday, April 12 starting at 8:30am at 7585 W Grand River Hwy, Watertown Twp, MI 48906.
- MDOT reflective safety vests and trash bags will be provided. Attendees are responsible for bringing their own gloves, water for hydration, and dress for the weather.

Tree Wrapping with the Clinton Conservation District

- April 14 and 15 from 9am-noon and 1-4pm each day at Peck Hall at the Clinton County Fairgrounds.
- Volunteers can show up whenever they are able and can stay for as long or as little as they are able.

Carpool Lot Cleanup

- Saturday, April 18 starting at 10am at the carpool lot located at 5900 S. Williams Rd., St. Johns, MI 48879.
- Once this lot is cleaned, we will move south to the Round Lake Road carpool lot, located at 2377 E. Round Lake Rd, DeWitt, MI 48820.
- Trash bags will be provided. Attendees are responsible for bringing their own gloves, water for hydration, and dress for the weather.

Clinton County Parks Cleanup

- Saturday, April 25 at 10am. Meet at the Clinton Lakes County Park parking lot at 4665 N Dewitt Rd.
- Trash bags will be provided. Attendees are responsible for bringing their own gloves, water for hydration, and dress for the weather.

Please email vicechair@clintoncodems.org if you are able to help out with any of these opportunities!



Spring Planting

By Kathie Elliott. Whether you've nurtured a garden, family, career or business, you know that results aren't guaranteed, and it can be years or decades before you see the fruits of your labor. There are times when your dreams and goals elude you and new goals emerge to replace them. Every season brings opportunities to plant and to harvest, which means persistence, commitment, vision, and hope are always in season. In an election year, spring is an especially important season to both plant and harvest. CCDP is excited to be ramping up new programs, precinct delegate recruitment, a fabulous Spring Banquet and Silent Auction, and much more! We're also increasing engagement at our events, growing partnerships, and raising membership numbers. Thank you all!

As we know, this election cycle is critical; not just at home, but across the globe, and becoming more so every hour. Through our passionate members and partnerships with like-minded organizations and community members, we see you showing up every day with persistence, commitment, vision, and hope. And, we are committed to creating a variety of opportunities to live your values, defend democracy, and build a community that gives you a safe space to rest and recover when the news of the day just seems too challenging to handle alone.

If you are an active member, we can't thank you enough for your support. If you are less active, a new member, or haven't yet joined, we hope as you get to know more about CCDP through this newsletter, our social media, and our events, that you choose to spend time with us soon and often. When we try to face these desperate and mind-numbing times alone, the world we live in can feel overwhelming. CCDP strives to create places and opportunities for you to feel powerful, safe, and supported. We plant these modest goals today so that with persistence, commitment, vision, and hope, we can harvest safety, peace, kindness and community in Clinton County and across the globe.



Tim Hughes Covers State Budget, Hostage Legislation Case, and Gas Prices in *Under the Dome*

CCDP is grateful for the continued contributions of local Democratic insider Tim Hughes. His latest *Under the Dome* piece covers what we need to know about the state's budget, the current hostage legislation case before the Michigan Supreme Court, and a proposed Executive Order from Governor Whitmer aimed at lowering gas prices. You can find Tim's latest *Under the Dome* [on our website](#). Please be sure to share it with your colleagues, friends and neighbors!



Are You a Good Neighbor? You'd Make a Great Precinct Delegate!

By Kathie Elliott. Looking for a good entry point for greater involvement that will make a difference in this year's critical election? Consider serving as a Precinct Delegate! We are looking for people to step up to be on the ballot for the August primary as many Democratic spaces on the ballot often go unfilled. Let's change that! Email Precinct Delegate Committee Chairs, [Kathie Elliott](#) or [Theresa Kidd](#) for more information. This is a position with a great deal of flexibility and you do not have to go door to door or be an extrovert to make an excellent PD. We're looking for compassionate, fair, and grounded people who care about their neighbors. If you're a good neighbor, you would be a great PD! Current Precinct Delegates please note that you are asked to complete and return your re-election materials as soon as possible, but no later than **May 5 at**

4:00 p.m.



There's Still Time to RSVP for Pints and Politics on April 15

By Shelby Neathammer. As we look ahead to a busy year of canvassing, phone banking, and calling in others to the fight to save our democracy, CCDP recognizes the need to provide scaffolding for these tough conversations. If you are feeling nervous and want an opportunity to practice the art of looping others into conversation, please join CCDP for our second Pints & Politics on April 15 at 5:30 p.m. at Phillip's Cider Bar, 3000 Vine Street, in Lansing. If you have joined us for our common read events, you may recognize our source material from the books, *I Never Thought of It That Way* by Monica Guzman and *High Conflict* by Amanda Ripley. It is not necessary to read the books beforehand; we will provide relevant material.

Bring a friend and donations of peanut butter, jelly, and sunscreen. We are collecting these items, in partnership with the Basic Needs Center in St. Johns, to help kids over the summer break.. Each donated item is equivalent to a raffle ticket for a \$50 Phillips gift certificate. **RSVPs are required** as space is limited! Can't make the event, but want to help with a donation? Please see the collection boxes in CCDP's office (105 W.Railroad St., St. Johns), which will be available until Saturday, May 9, or email **Shelby Neathammer** with the subject line "Donation Drive" to coordinate pickup.



Don't Miss CCDP's Spring Banquet Featuring AG Dana Nessel

By Matthew Boak. Tickets are flying off the metaphorical shelves for this year's CCDP Spring Banquet, which will be taking place on the evening of Friday, May 1, at the Eagle Eye Golf and Banquet Center in Bath. Join us for a night of great speakers, delicious food, enticing silent auction items, and camaraderie with CCDP members, friends, and allies. Tickets can be purchased [through ActBlue](#). Please note that tickets must be purchased in advance and will not be available at the door. We are excited to be joined by our Keynote Speaker, Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel, who has been on the front lines protecting Michigan from the disastrous policies of the Trump administration, as well as holding them accountable through every legal avenue. We will also be joined by our Democratic State Legislators.

The Spring Banquet Silent Auction is one of our strongest fundraisers, with donations used to help support CCDP activities, especially critical in this election year. If you've been thinking about donating an item for the auction, now is the time! Please reach out to [Evelyn Quiroga-Klein](#) for more information.



County Convention Wrap Up; State Convention Preview

We had a great turnout at the CCDP County Convention on March 21, with 21 experienced and first-time county convention-goers present to discuss our two convention committee nominations and a handful of important resolutions. Thank you to Ann and Josh for accepting the party's nomination to the state convention boards! CCDP passed the following resolutions: *A Resolution To Propose The Conversion Of The Ojibway Correctional Facility Into A State Psychiatric Hospital*, and *A Resolution To Address Statewide Transportation Services for Older Michiganders*. We were also delighted to hold a drawing for two tickets to the Penelope PAC March 23rd fundraiser. Congrats to members Faith and Josh for being able to attend this wonderful event on behalf of the CCDP, and thanks to Representative Tsernoglou for donating the tickets.

Are you planning to attend the State Convention on April 19th at Huntington Place in Detroit? This is shaping up to be one of the biggest conventions in MDP history! See [MDP's website](#) for complete details of the event, including a full agenda. The better prepared you are, the more you will enjoy it. Here are a few notes and highlights:

- Credentialing begins at 7:00 a.m. for those attending Sunday only, the official convention day. Guests attending Saturday meetings or events may credential Saturday.
- Many buses will

be
arriving
around
9:00
a.m.,
so
guests
driving
themselves
may
want
to
get
through
credentialing
before
the
rush.

- Bring
credit
or
debit
cards
to
pay
for
parking
and
lunch,
as
most
vendors
do
not
accept
cash.

- The
afternoon
Congressional
District
Meetings
begin
at
1:00
p.m.,
so
if
you
do
not
plan

to
attend
the
morning
caucus
meetings,
be
in
the
7th
Congressional
Meeting
location
before
1:00
p.m.
to
find
seating.

- The official convention begins at 3pm and should conclude around 6pm.
- Please wear your CCDP or other Democratic gear!



Honoring a "Mother" of Nature

By Shelby Neathammer. Dr. Jane Goodall was a well-known advocate for protecting Mother Earth and honoring all creatures that call earth

home through her extraordinary longitudinal research on wild chimpanzees in Tanzania. In the Netflix interview, *Famous Last Words: Dr. Jane Goodall*, recorded in 2025, six months before Dr. Goodall passed away, she shares her honest thoughts and messages of hope. In a captivating hour-long interview, we also see the humorous and very human side of the legendary icon.

She highlighted incredible perseverance in the face of real danger and the life-saving power of honoring nature. While she notes several threats to her lifelong work, including our current presidential administration, she also notes that there is no other option but to fight. As the good doctor said, “I want you to understand that we are part of the natural world. And even today, when the planet is dark, there still is hope. Don’t lose hope. If you lose hope, you become apathetic and do nothing. And if you want to save what is still beautiful in this world — if you want to save the planet for the future generations, your grandchildren, their grandchildren— then think about the actions you take each day.”

She highlights that no matter how seemingly small the action, it all matters, especially if we meet the challenge of change with collective intentionality. Dr. Goodall recounts many stories about the importance of slowing down with nature and simply observing, gently pointing out how much entertainment can be gleaned from the smallest insects, if only we allow ourselves the opportunity. Consider downloading the Merlin Bird App for free through Cornell University, which will “listen” to birds around you and name the species, a lovely way to connect with nature in your backyard. For additional opportunities, **please join CCDP for our numerous events through April, including our office event at 105 W. Railroad Street in St. Johns on Earth Day, Wednesday, April 22**, where we will have yard signs to “plant” in your yard, seed packets, and other activities. Follow us on social media for more details on event timing.



Remembering Jackie Robinson on April 15

By Rob Mack. Jack Roosevelt Robinson was born on January 31, 1919, the son of a sharecropper and grandson of former slaves. After his parents divorced, Jackie moved with his mother to Pasadena, California, where he excelled in athletics in high school, junior college, and at UCLA where he earned letters in four sports. Jackie served in the US Army from 1942 to 1944 and was arrested and court-marshalled in 1944 for refusing to give up his seat on a segregated bus. Ultimately acquitted of the charges, he received an honorable discharge.

In 1945, Jackie began playing professional baseball in the Negro Leagues. Since the formation of major league baseball in the late 19th century, a gentlemen's agreement had kept teams strictly segregated. Branch Rickey, owner of the Brooklyn Dodgers, challenged that agreement in 1946 by signing a black player. He sought a skilled player who could help his team, but also one who would be able to play through the vicious racist reactions of other owners and players. Rickey selected Jackie Robinson, requiring him to be nonresponsive to the many racial slurs and provocations that were expected.

Jackie signed with Brooklyn's minor league affiliate on October 23, 1945, and made his major league debut on April 15, 1947, breaking the color barrier. He overcame years of racist hatred to become one of the most skillful, respected, and beloved players in the history of the game. Jackie retired from professional baseball after nine seasons and became the first African American inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962. He was a champion of civil rights throughout his life; indeed, his very presence on the diamond profoundly affirmed them. Jackie, an active member of the NAACP, was often a featured speaker at civil rights rallies, including the

famed March on Washington in 1963.

His signing paved the way into major league baseball for many of my childhood heroes like Willie Mays, Henry Aaron, Ernie Banks, and other great players from the Negro Leagues. Sadly, the stress and pressure of breaking the major league color barrier and becoming the first black player took a huge toll on his life, and Jackie Robinson died of a heart attack at the age of 53. He is honored on April 15, near the beginning of each major league baseball season, with every player wearing the number (42) he wore in his first appearance with the Brooklyn Dodgers. We can take many lessons from his brave example.



Explore the Joys of Nature

By Darrilyn Fraser. On March 25, I returned to one of my favorite local haunts, Clinton Lakes and Motz Parks. Waterfowl are migrating North, and I saw Canada Geese, Mute Swans, and several species of ducks. In particular, I enjoyed watching the Merganser duck flock diving in a wave-like motion to feed underwater. Whatever outdoor activities you most enjoy - birding, hiking, hunting, fishing, viewing wildflowers and other plants, kayaking, etc. - these wonderful experiences are only available because of the hard work of people dedicated to preserving natural environments.

In Clinton County, we are extraordinarily lucky to have a wonderful Parks & Greenspace Coordinator in Mr. Kyle Thornton, a commission chair, Chuck Nelson, who is an expert on forestry and park and recreation resources, and a dedicated P&G Commission that meets monthly. Natural environments are coordinated habitats with delicate balances up and down the food chain, so harm never occurs in isolation.

On this upcoming Earth Day, April 22, I encourage you to explore a greenspace using all of your senses (except maybe taste unless you REALLY know what is safely edible). And if you enjoy it, support it! No

amount of support is too small!

- Plant pollinator-friendly native plants and/or create a "No-Mow May" patch in your yard.
- Visit a new-to-you Clinton County park or greenspace, and remember to carry out anything you carry in.
- Introduce a child to nature.
- Volunteer to help a mobility-compromised person to enjoy an

outdoor
activity.

- Carry
a
plastic
grocery
bag
in
your
pocket
when
hiking
to
pick
up
that
carelessly
discarded
coffee
cup,
beer
can,
or
chip
bag.
- Participate
in
a
CCDP
Clean-
up
event.
- Attend
a
Parks
&
Greenspace
Commission
meeting.

As John Muir reminded us, "in every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks."



A Review of *Good Night, and Good Luck: Live from Broadway*

By Monica Goble. Some movies make us laugh and help us temporarily forget daily stresses, ill-conceived wars, and what's happening to our country. Others may remind us of current similarities to troubling eras in our nation's history. A new movie is in the latter category, harkening back and speaking to our times in a very real way. *Good Night, and Good Luck: Live from Broadway* stars George Clooney and is an exposé on U.S. Senator Joseph McCarthy's corrupt methods for rooting out supposed Communists in the 1950s, featuring archival footage from Edward R. Murrow's news broadcasts and from Senate hearings. [Head to CCDP's website](#) to read more about why this film adaptation is a must-watch and a warning for our current times.



Women's History Month Drive - Thank You

By Shelby Neathammer. March was Women's History Month and International Women's Day was on March 7. As we decided how to honor and support women here in Clinton County, we took note of rising costs and decided to run a donation drive in partnership with the Basic Needs Center in St. Johns. Through this partnership, we learned which items are most needed and most costly for their budget, such as lotion, hand soap, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, and menstrual products.

While food donations are important, we wanted to highlight essential items that are often unintentionally overlooked, and also assist the Basic Needs Center in procuring them. We collected several boxes of items and will make the donations boxes in the CCDP office, 105 W. Railroad Street, St. Johns, available until **Saturday, April 11, at 11:30 a.m.** CCDP will post pictures and estimated totals on social media after that date, keep a look out! We are grateful for how our CCDP community continues to demonstrate care for those in need. Thank you! Our goal is to keep the support going throughout the year. Watch for additional opportunities coming in the next couple of months.

CCDP Turned Out for No Kings

By Shelby Neathammer. CCDP was well represented at the St. Johns" No Kings" demonstration on March 28th. Candidate for U.S. House Will Lawrence and his campaign stopped by to join the group and rally energy before heading to prepare for the Lansing demonstration. We saw several of our members and allies out with signs, with an initial headcount of approximately 70-80 people. Following the St. Johns rally, several also headed down to join the crowds in Lansing where an estimated crowd of 2,000 gathered to protest the current administration and its policies. Some signs highlighted the serious nature of what we are collectively experiencing, and others were tongue-in-cheek, calling out the "circus" that our administration has become. We want to give a special shout out to the CCDP members who worked behind the scenes to support these two events. Your work made a difference and we are grateful!

These types of gatherings are a peaceful way to show anger about the circus of injustices and provide catharsis through communal hope, energizing us all. While we had several supportive honks from passing cars in St. Johns, unfortunately, we saw numerous folks drive by with gestures that were less supportive. However, by demonstrating the best of our values, they were met with cheers that demonstrated how love can overpower hate. As important as demonstrations are, please use this energy to empower and fuel your corner of this fight in big and small ways every day. We have work to do!



Upcoming Events

April 12 - CCDP Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup: 8:30 a.m. 7585 W. Grand River Avenue, Lansing. Trash bags and safety vests will be provided. Volunteers must bring their own gloves and water. [RSVP here.](#)

April 14-15 - Tree Wrapping with the Clinton Conservation District. 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon and 1:00 - 4:00 p.m., Peck Hall, Clinton County Fairgrounds. Volunteers can come during those hours and stay any length of time to assist.

April 15 - CCDP Pints and Politics: Phillips Cider Bar, 3000 Vine Street, Lansing, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. [RSVP here.](#)

April 17 - Virtual Coffee Hour with State Senator Sam Singh: 8:00 a.m. [More information.](#)

April 17 - Community Conversation with Representative Penelope Tsernoglou: 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m., Briggs District Library, 108 E. Railroad Street, St. Johns.

April 18 - CCDP Carpool Lot Cleanup: 10:00 a.m., 5900 S. Williams Road, St. Johns. When this lot is cleaned, we will move south to the

carpool lot at 2377 E. Round Lake Rd, DeWitt. [RSVP here](#).

April 19 - Michigan Democratic Party State Endorsement

Convention: Huntington Place Convention Center, 1 Washington Boulevard, Detroit. Credentialing begins at 7:00 a.m. [More information](#).

April 21 - Filing Deadline for Major Party Candidates for

August 4 Primary: Filing must take place no later than 4:00 p.m.

April 22 - Earth Day Celebration at CCDP Office: 105 W. Railroad Street, St. Johns, time TBD.

April 25 - Clinton County Parks Cleanup: 10:00 a.m., Clinton Lakes County Park parking lot, 4665 N. Dewitt Rd. Trash bags will be provided. Attendees are responsible for bringing their own gloves and water. [RSVP here](#).

April 27 - Community Conversation with Senator Sam Singh:

Briggs District Library, 108 E. Railroad Street, St. Johns, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. [More information](#).

May 1 - CCDP Spring Banquet Eagle Eye Golf and Banquet Center, 15500 Chandler Rd, Bath Twp. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. with dinner following at 6:30 p.m. [Purchase tickets here](#). Tickets will NOT be available at the door.

May 5 - Filing Deadline for Precinct Delegates for August 4

Primary: Filing must take place no later than 4:00 p.m.

May 7 - CCDP Monthly Meeting: Clinton County Courthouse, Commissioner's Room, 100 E. State Street, St. Johns. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m., with the meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m.

**Join CCDP/MDP or Renew Your CCDP/MDP
Membership**



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