

# Clinton County Democratic Party Newsletter



December 2025



## Wrapping up 2025 with Sights Set on 2026

*By Kathie Elliott.* In our final newsletter of 2025, we wish you joy and peace this holiday season. There is so much beyond our control, but our ability to see the good in others, and opportunities

to contribute to the causes that mean the most to us, can be a continuous source of hope. This season also invites us to be grateful for what we have. In the spirit of gratitude and hope, we want to review some of the highlights of this past year, and preview the year ahead. We will also be releasing our 2025 Annual Report to members soon which will include additional accomplishments, trends, and metrics.

We close out the year with approximately 175 members, something we should all be proud of. Members work with CCDP leadership to guide our direction and help bring our goals and aspirations to fruition. Some CCDP “firsts” this year include: Paczki and Politics, Pints and Politics, two Common Read discussions, passing two resolutions, launching our hospitality committee, designing and ordering merchandise, and holding drawings for Penelope PAC fundraiser tickets, books, and merchandise. We also expanded on and increased participation in some of our previous focus areas: Pride events and parades, Coffee and Conversation gatherings, candidate visits, and social media, including leaving Twitter and joining Bluesky.

On the administrative side, we renewed our office lease, set up recurring Saturday hours, purchased access to CiviCRM for us to better record our finances, metrics, and volunteer engagement, and added new members to our

leadership team. Amid the exceptionally fearful and discouraging months of this presidency, many of our accomplishments in 2025 may have flown under the radar. We pushed forward with slow, steady, focused determination to purposefully build a stronger county party that serves Clinton County communities and residents. That is meaningful and deserves to be celebrated!

In 2026, we will continue to grow the party and improve the member experience with this same mindful approach. We will be adding many opportunities for members to serve on a committee or special project. We will continue to expand our outreach to the community and seek ways to build bridges where it may seem hard to find common ground. We encourage members to balance the activities of maintaining and growing our party with actions that encourage all of us to be agile, vocal, and visible in support of candidates and ballot initiatives and in holding our local, state, and federal officials accountable to their oaths of office. We hope you are ready to enter 2026 in solidarity with us. We are much stronger when we work together!



## MDP/CCDP Announcements and Updates

*By Kathie Elliott.* 2026 promises to bring many highly anticipated updates to the Michigan Democratic Party membership process, including direct access to update your membership record and printable MDP membership cards. **When you become an MDP member**, you automatically become a CCDP member as well. There is even a free membership option available. Join or renew your party membership to be part of a vibrant community of Clinton County change agents!

As a CCDP member, you become eligible for volunteer opportunities, early notifications of events and meetings, and access to member-only materials.

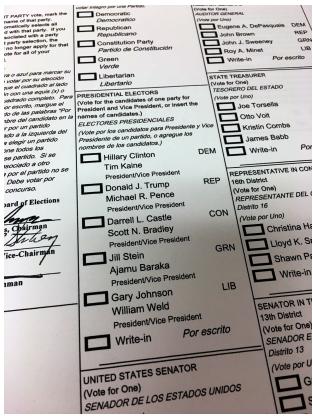
These include:

- \* Voting privileges at meetings and conventions
- \* Ability to lead/join committees; lead/plan events
- \* Ability to serve as a CCDP liaison in local events
- \* Monthly meeting virtual attendance option
- \* Special member-only drawings
- \* Early notification of merchandise sales
- \* Early notification of limited fundraiser tickets
- \* Meeting minutes
- \* Special updates
- \* Complete upcoming event list

\* Member resource document

Also, members with Facebook accounts can be added to CCDP's Member Hub, a private group in Facebook where members can plan for events and ride-sharing, or share items of interest. If you are a member with a Facebook account and haven't been added to our Member Hub, please [email us](#) to gain access to this private group.

Finally, in 2026, our virtual meeting option will move from Zoom to Google Meet. This [short video](#) will help you become familiar with Google Meet if you haven't used it before.



## Potential Michigan Ballot Proposals

By Melany Mack. To date, there are nine proposed ballot initiatives that have been brought forth by various constituencies to be placed on the ballot in 2026, with two more proposals under consideration by the Board of Canvassers. To better understand what is going to be on the ballot, CCDP is offering factual summaries in our newsletters. In the [November newsletter](#), we covered Citizens for Local Choice, Invest in MI Kids, and Michiganders for Money Out of Politics. In the [October newsletter](#), we covered Americans for Citizens Voting and AxMITax. In the new year, we will offer a bit of analysis on some which may be helpful and harmful.

### Protect Voters' Rights

Constitutional amendment to require individuals to verify United States citizenship during voter registration; require photo ID for in-person voters; allow voters without photo ID or citizenship verification to vote by presenting ID or verifying citizenship within six days after election; provide free photo ID and proof of citizenship to hardship applicants; require driver's license, state-ID, partial social security numbers, or photo ID when applying for and voting by absentee ballot; require secretary of state to verify citizenship during voter registration, verify citizenship of registered voters, remove individuals from voter rolls that fail to verify citizenship, and report annually on citizenship verifications.

### Rank MI Vote

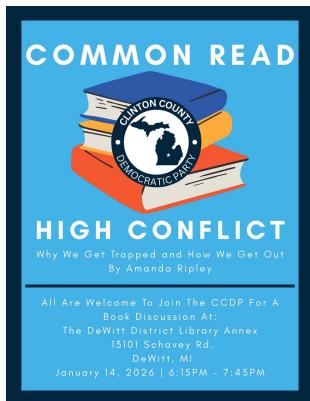
Constitutional amendment to require ranked-choice voting (RCV) for federal offices, Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General and Secretary of State, allowing voters to numerically rank candidates by voter preference

starting in 2029; count votes in rounds, eliminating lowest-ranked candidate and reallocating their votes to remaining ranked candidates until candidate with most final-round votes is declared the winner; allow voters to rank at least 4 more candidates than positions to be nominated/elected unless insufficient number of candidates; authorize local jurisdiction to adopt use of RCV in local elections; move August primary to June or earlier in even year elections; require legislative funding and implementing legislation.

### **Voters to Stop Pay Cuts**

A petition for a referendum election to repeal Public Act 1 of 2025 which reduced the minimum wage for Michigan tipped workers, established a new schedule for increasing the state minimum wage, and changed the way future inflation adjustments for minimum wage increases will occur.

See the status of all current statewide petitions and read the full text of each on the [Board of Canvassers website](#).



### **January's Common Read Selection: High Conflict by Amanda Ripley**

[RSVP here](#) to join us on January 14 at 6:15 p.m. at the DeWitt District Library Annex for CCDP's next Common Read featuring a discussion on *High Conflict: Why We Get Trapped and How We Get Out* by noted journalist Amanda Ripley. We are excited to open the event to all in the community and to help us have a good estimate of attendance, RSVPs are

required. Simon and Shuster summarizes the book's premise this way: "High conflict is what happens when discord distills into a good-versus-evil kind of feud, the kind with an us and a them. In this state, the brain behaves differently...eventually, we can start to mimic the behavior of our adversaries, harming what we hold most dear...people do escape high conflict. Individuals—even entire communities—can short-circuit the feedback loops of outrage and blame, if they want to." The author even uses a true story featuring people from a nearby Michigan town as an illustration, making the book especially interesting and relevant. It promises to be a lively and informative discussion. Light refreshments will be served. We hope to see you there!

### **First Pints & Politics a Success!**

*By Shelby Neathammer.* CCDP held its inaugural



Pints & Politics event at Jimmy's Pub last month in response to many members who suggested an evening event as an additional way to connect after work hours. We listened! A group of about 15 met for drinks and appetizers with the goal of coming together in a casual way to discuss or, at times, vent about our current political climate.

During the two-hour event, we met a new member who is excited to jump in and help where possible. We reconnected with long-term members who do not always get a chance to join us at our monthly meetings. We all got to know one another better, opening new ways to engage with other Democrats and deepening our understanding of Clinton County culture. Some members came together towards the end to create an impromptu group to attend a local play that evening, a beautiful way to support the arts. Other conversations took on a more curious tone as we discussed strategic planning for our local elections in 2026.

All of these conversations serve as a reminder of the critical concept of “kitchen table” conversations as a form of civic engagement. Our nation has a long history of using casual settings as the foundation for meaningful work. The founding fathers often gathered for a pint at the Green Dragon Tavern in Boston, where conversations led to plans for the revolution. While our future Pints and Politics conversations may not lead to such revolutionary action, we are in a time that demands the extraordinary from us all, and who knows what could come from seemingly ordinary conversations when mixed with the right people and timely passion.

If you have suggestions for our next event location, or if you would like to provide feedback on our first event, please [contact us](#).



## A Heartfelt Thank You

*By Kathie Elliott.* CCDP is committed to addressing the environmental, social, intellectual, and everyday needs of the community. This year, when SNAP benefits were threatened, our members and allies immediately stepped in to help address food insecurity

in Clinton County. Within hours of the first call for donations, generous and caring community members started delivering food, hygiene products, pet food, and cleaning supplies to our office. We estimate that in just three hours that first weekend we collected products and cash donations of up to \$1,000 in value. In

the weeks since, we estimate another \$1,000 or more in donations and products. PLUS, our membership voted in both November and December to make \$500 donations (\$1,000 total) to the Greater Lansing Food Bank, earmarked for Clinton County Families. As we continue to accept donations through the end of the year, we are humbled at how generous everyone has been. Thank you for your ongoing support and care for those in our community who are struggling.



## Upcoming Events

**January 8 - CCDP Membership Meeting:** Clinton County Courthouse, Garden Level, 100 East State Street, St. Johns. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m. with the meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m.

**January 14 - CCDP Common Read:** DeWitt District Library Annex, 13101 Schavey Road, DeWitt, 6:15 - 7:45 p.m. [RSVP here](#).

**January 18 - Secretary of State Candidate Forum:** Virtual, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m., [register online](#).

**February 5 - CCDP Membership Meeting:** DeWitt City Hall, 414 East Main Street, DeWitt. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m. with the meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m.



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