

# Clinton County Democratic Party Newsletter



February 2025

*"I'm no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I'm changing the things I cannot accept." - Angela Davis*



## One of Many, Many Become One

*By Kathie Elliott.* In the above reference to the Serenity Prayer, Angela Davis calls us to view the unacceptable differently. There is a time and a place to accept, and a time and place to reject. The key is that we have "the wisdom to know the difference." It's wisdom that tells us when to set boundaries, when to step away from social media, when our bodies and spirits can give

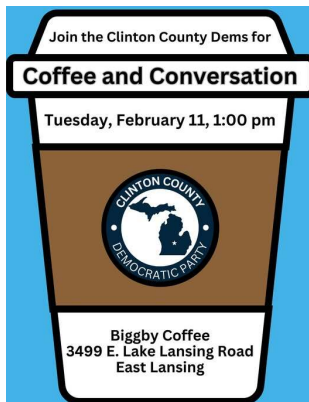
100%, and when we only have 30% in the tank. If we don't listen, we will be forced to rest, often at the most inopportune times.

Because the assaults on our democracy are emerging just when we try to catch our breath, we should be proactively taking care of ourselves. We don't know when the next sleepless night will be, or when our families will have to fend for themselves because we had to go to a rally. We must be strategic with our time and resources, so we can be responsive with our minds and bodies.

Individually, there are things we can do to be ready to respond. Physically: consume healthy foods, stay hydrated, get good sleep, spend time in the sun when you can. Emotionally and spiritually: avoid toxic people and situations. Find and spend time with people who make you feel safe and energized. Declutter the spaces around you so you have peaceful spaces to retreat to. Remind yourself what you are grateful for and how you have overcome

challenges in your past. Spend time in nature, spend time in solitude, spend time with any higher source that you identify with.

We also need to remember that we are not individually taking on all the injustice of this administration. We can't act as though we are all armies of one. CCDP keeps growing; we now have 180 members, with another 500 people on our mailing list who we hope will mobilize with us. If everyone who hasn't yet could follow us on social media, attend our events, and participate in our calls to action, we can begin to speak with a louder voice and in a more connected way. When some of us are unavailable, others can step in; and nothing gets missed. At the county level, we need everyone to see themselves as one of many, and that many must begin to coalesce into one. This is our next step, and I know we are up for the challenge.



## Coffee & Conversation This Tuesday!

We look forward to seeing you for CCDP's Coffee & Conversation on **Tuesday, February 11, at 1:00 p.m.** at Biggby Coffee, 3499 East Lake Lansing Road in East Lansing. We are eager to hear what is on your mind and how you feel we can be most effective as a county party. Bring your ideas and your enthusiasm!



## County and State Convention Updates

*By Kathie Elliott.* If you are new to CCDP, you may be wondering what our county convention and the upcoming state convention mean to us locally. The upcoming Michigan Democratic Party Spring Convention will be held on February 22 and is important as eligible attending members will be selecting our state party, and congressional party leadership. Before state conventions, counties hold mandatory conventions during which we review resolutions we want the state party to consider and elect delegates to serve on our behalf on state convention committees.

We held the Clinton County Convention on February 8 with attendance of over 20 members - a great turn out! If you are reading our emails, our events document, or social media, you have access to information about the

convention. We are hoping to send a large contingent from Clinton County because it's easy for smaller, rural counties to be overlooked and underestimated if few of their members attend the convention. As a county Democratic unit organized under the Michigan Democratic Party, we should receive service, support, and resources from the MDP and from 7th Congressional District. We should have regular opportunities to network and collaborate with our 7th District sister counties (Shiawassee, Livingston, Ingham, and Eaton). The MDP needs to create user-friendly and timely volunteer training, update their systems, and create better in-person and virtual service response teams. Especially in election years, counties, state candidates, the MDP, and national candidate campaigns should be working closely together to provide robust and synchronized campaign activities and resources. In this last election cycle, Clinton County had to design and print our own Harris signs; we weren't always informed when campaigns were spending time in our county, and, for some campaigns, we struggled to identify a single point of contact.

It is worth noting that one exception was Curtis Hertel's campaign, which worked in lock-step with us, spent at least one day a week in Clinton County, and kept us apprised of ways we could work together. On February 22 at the state convention, we have a chance to elect Curtis Hertel as our next MDP Chair. If he runs the state party, and surrounds himself with the same caliber team he had during his campaign, we may witness an MDP that is able to better support us here in Clinton County. Every eligible and properly verified MDP/CCDP member will have a chance to vote on their preferred candidates to lead the MDP and the 7th Congressional District leadership. Please plan to attend, listen to the candidates, and cast your vote for those you feel are most able to support the work of the CCDP.



## **Celebrating Black History**

*By Shelby Neathammer.* In 2025 especially, Black History Month needs amplifying. We highlight Black history to showcase the countless contributions of Black Americans to our country

and how these contributions are woven into the very fabric of what truly makes this country great. Black history also challenges us to view U.S. history through the lens of racial oppression and acknowledge that this oppression still exists. As Maya Angelou said, "Won't it be wonderful when Black history and Native American history and Jewish history and all of U.S. history is taught from one book. Just U.S. history."

We have a duty to continue to name this history, even when our current administration would try to erase it. It is only by accepting the reality of a complete history that all too necessary change can occur. In honor of Black History Month, **click here** for some events happening in Michigan and tips on celebrating and observing this special month. As a reminder, allyship is not just in what we learn but also in our actions. As we all attempt to diversify our spending, consider downloading **this guide** of Black businesses to support year-round. If you receive information from Black social media content creators, please remember to cite them as the source and consider making a monthly contribution to support their work.

Finally, as we hang onto hope, we can always draw strength from the eternally intuitive Audre Lorde, “tomorrow belongs to those of us who conceive of it as belonging to everyone; who lend the best of ourselves to it, and with joy.”



## **New State Legislative Session Brings Changes; GOP Speaker Holds Nine Bills Hostage**

*By Tim Hughes.* The Democratic trifecta is gone.

Republican control of the State House has changed the political dynamics of the legislature. A look at the new Committee Chairs shows the philosophical changes that accompany the shift in political control. Rep. Angela Witwer, D-Delta Township, who steered education budgets to invest in school safety, student literacy and mental health infrastructure, is no longer Chair of the House Appropriations Committee. In her place is State Rep. Ann Bollin, R-Brighton Twp., who favors cuts in job creation programs and a Republican road proposal based on imaginary funding sources. Former Democratic Rep. Jim Haadsma, who lost his re-election bid, previously chaired the House Labor Committee that passed landmark legislation repealing the so-called right-to-work law and restoring prevailing wage in construction. His replacement is Rep. Nancy DeBoer, R-Holland, who will Chair the Education and Workforce Committee, where labor legislation is expected to be referred. DeBoer ran as a conservative Republican and was endorsed by the Michigan Chamber of Commerce and other business groups.

The change in House leadership has already imperiled nine bills passed by the House and Senate last session, which, among other things, would lower health care costs for teachers and first responders and improve retirement benefits for correction officers. Those bills were to be enrolled for presentation to the Governor for her signature. Newly elected House Speaker Matt Hall, R-Richland

Twp., has refused to send the bills to the Governor. Senate Majority Leader Winnie Brinks, D-Grand Rapids, is taking Hall to court to force him to send the bills to the Governor.

“The Michigan Constitution makes it abundantly clear: every bill passed by the legislature is required to be presented to the governor — and no one — especially an elected public servant in legislative leadership — is above the law,” said Brinks. “Republican Speaker Matt Hall’s gamesmanship is not just disrespectful to the sanctity of our constitution — it’s an outright disservice to the residents of Michigan, the very people he was elected to represent.”



## CCDP Drops X, Moves to Bluesky

At its February 6 meeting, CCDP members attending unanimously decided to leave Twitter/X. This decision was made with conviction. The party refuses to remain on a platform owned by Elon Musk, a man who has repeatedly used his influence to amplify hate speech, promote conspiracy theories, and undermine the very foundations of democracy. Continuing a presence on X would mean lending credibility and driving engagement to a space that promotes division and misinformation. CCDP is committed to fostering a community that upholds equity, inclusion, and truth. For these reasons, we are taking our conversation to **Bluesky**, @ClintonCountyDems.bsky.social, a platform that better aligns with our mission to nurture constructive dialogue and positive community engagement. This is not a temporary departure; we will not be returning to X.

CCDP will maintain its presence on Facebook and Instagram. While we deeply disagree with the actions of Mark Zuckerberg and Meta, particularly his pivot to the right, the abandonment of critical diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, and his support for policies that favor divisiveness, the public interface that these platforms provide remains invaluable. Facebook's community and group tools are especially accessible to many of our constituents who may be less computer savvy, making it a critical channel for staying connected and informed. We will continue to engage with our community where they are most comfortable, even as we reallocate our energy to platforms that more faithfully reflect our values.

CCDP invites all members and supporters to follow us on **Bluesky** and join us in building a future rooted in justice, equity, and democratic integrity. Together, we will ensure that our voices continue to be heard.



## February 5 Rally at the Capitol - A Resounding Success!

*By Melany Mack.* Many people received a flyer via text or saw a posting on social media about a rally planned for noon on February 5 at the state capitol building. It originated on Reddit by an entity called 50501, which stood for 50 Protests, 50 States, One Day. It was nearly impossible to find out any information about who was behind the group. But people were so eager for the opportunity to speak out against the horrific actions of Trump since his inauguration that many planned to attend.

Local activists, including Susan Skidmore, a fellow Clinton County Democrat, rapidly shifted into gear and began lining up speakers and organizing the rally. Despite having only several days to prepare, the event was a resounding success. Over 500 people showed up in the bitter cold, many of them with protest signs, and all of them united in strong opposition to the actions Donald Trump has taken since his inauguration, especially allowing Elon Musk to wreak havoc in many government agencies.

Newsweek ran a **short article** the day after the rally about the man who started the 50501 protests with just one call to action on Reddit. Our fellow Americans responded heartily, and a clear message of protest and outrage was sent from state capitols across the nation. We owe a debt of gratitude to Susan Skidmore and her fellow organizers for making the event in Lansing such a success. Thank you, Susan!



## CCDP's Blog Offers Information, Perspective

Have you caught up on CCDP's recent **blog posts**? Since the beginning of the year, we've posted contributions from Tim Hughes recapping December's lame duck state legislative session, Melany Mack calling out propaganda, and Tess Miller sharing perspective on diversity, equity, inclusion. Our **latest piece** is by Joe Davis, IBEW Sixth District International Representative, who shares his thoughts on African Americans in the labor movement, historically and personally. Thank you to our latest contributors! If you've been noodling something in the news, consider submitting a blog post. Contact **Ann McCulloch** for more information.



## Local Spotlight: St. Johns Call-In Coalition

*By Matt Boak.* Founded in 2020, the **St. Johns Call-In Coalition** was formed to celebrate differences, create relationships, empower disenfranchised groups, and foster diversity in an effort to create a more inclusive, safe, and healthy community in St. Johns and surrounding communities. Throughout the year, the Coalition creates opportunities for members of our community to come together, learn, and connect.

The Coalition's Upstanders series takes place throughout the year at local libraries where a special guest from the community reads a story to attending youth and discusses how they work to make our community happier, healthier, safer, and kinder for everyone. Following the story there is generally a group project and snack. This program is aimed at youth 4-12 years old, and attendees receive a free Upstanders t-shirt. Caregivers who bring children are invited to attend an adult coffee hour with free coffee and donuts.

The Coalition helped to organize the very first Pride Fest in downtown St. Johns in 2021, and has continued to put on the event each year. CCDP tabled at Pride Fest last year, and plans to make an appearance again this year. Initial planning for **Pride Fest 2025** is already underway.

The Coalition also creates a Third Place at Clinton County RESA on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of each month, which is a space that gives LGBTQ+ youth ages 13-18 the opportunity to further explore themselves and their identities, and connect and engage with others, in a supportive and understanding place. Third Place is also a space for parents and friends of LGBTQ+ youth to join as well to meet others and connect.

The SJ Call-In Coalition is on **Facebook**, so give them a follow. Individuals wishing to get involved can **apply here**.



## Join Us for CCDP's First Common Read!

We are excited to announce that CCDP's first Common Read will be Heather Cox Richardson's *Democracy Awakening: Notes on the State of*

*America.* We'll meet on Wednesday, March 19 from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. at the CCDP office in St. Johns, 105 W. Railroad Street. Many of us have been reading Heather's daily, detailed synopses of current events which are grounded in fact and history. This is a chance to dive into one of her seminal works and talk about implications at the local, state, and national levels. Pick up a copy of the book at your favorite independent bookstore and **RSVP today!**



## Upcoming Events

**February 11 - Coffee and Conversation:** Taking place at 1:00 p.m. at the Biggby Coffee located 3499 E. Lake Lansing Road.

**February 12 - Community Conversation with Senator Sam Singh:** Taking place at the Corunna Community District Library from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. More information can be **found here**.

**February 15 - Resistance Summit (virtual):** Join a coalition of Michigan activist organizations and help organize our state's resistance to the Trump/Musk takeover of America. End Gun Violence Michigan is leading the organizing effort. Taking place from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. **RSVP here**.

**February 17 - Voters Not Politicians Anti-Corruption Policy Discussion:** Taking place virtually from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. **RSVP here**.

**February 22 - MDP 2025 Spring State Convention:** Held at Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center, starting at 9:00 a.m. The official convention will convene at 3:00 p.m.

**February 26 - Governor Whitmer's State of the State Address:** The time of this event has not yet been announced. The event will be streamed live on YouTube and Facebook. Links to the streaming options can be **found here**.

**February 27 - Virtual Coffee and Conversation with Senator Sam Singh:** Taking place from 8:00 - 9:00 a.m. **RSVP here** to receive a link.

**March 1 - Paczki and Politics:** Join us for paczkis and conversation at the CCDP office from 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Paczkis will be provided!

**March 6 - CCDP Membership Meeting:** The March membership meeting will take place at the Clinton County Courthouse in St. Johns, 100 E. State Street. Social hour begins at 6:30 p.m., with the meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m.

**March 8 - CCDP Second Saturday New Member Meet and Greet** Taking place from 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at the CCDP office in downtown St. Johns, 105 W. Railroad Street.

**March 9 - Indivisible Monthly Meeting:** Taking place at the East Lansing Public Library at 2:00 p.m. **RSVP here**.

**March 10 - Community Conversation with Senator Sam Singh:** Taking place at the Bath Township Library, 14051 Webster Road, from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. More

information can be **found here**.

**March 15 - Rep. Emily Dievendorf Legislative Coffee Hour.** Held at the DeWitt District Library, 13101 Schavey Road, #9008, DeWitt, from 12:00 noon - 2:00 p.m.

**March 19 - CCDP Common Read Experience:** Taking place at the CCDP Office in downtown St. Johns from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Join our Communications and Public Outreach Committee as we discuss Democracy Awakening: Notes on the State of America, by author Heather Cox Richardson. **RSVP here.**

**March 20 - Virtual Coffee and Conversation with Senator Sam Singh:** Taking place from 8:00 - 9:00 a.m. A link will be sent upon RSVP. **Sign up here.**



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