Clinton County Democratic Party Newsletter



Thank you to our DeWitt Ox Roast parade volunteers who handed out over 90 yard signs during the parade!

September 2026

"Enough is enough. We need a different kind of leadership." - William Lawrence, MI-7 Candidate for Congress

Let's Make September Count

By Kathie Elliott. Welcome to September and the early signs of fall. We have our candidates (see endorsement list below), signs, postcards, and a reprieve from the blistering summer weather. This means it’s time to step up our efforts

to get out the vote both for our candidates and important local issues. We need to remind people of the power of our vote and that the failure to vote doesn't show up as merely "one less" for our preferred candidate or issue. Our failure to vote multiples the impact of every vote on the other side.

Elections have changed and we no longer have up to a three-month runway between the primary and general. Believe it or not, absentee ballots begin to go out on September 24, so we have fewer than three weeks before voters start to ink their choices onto ballots and less than two months before all votes are cast. For CCDP and all Michigan Democrats, Labor Day marks more than a day to honor the sacrifices and achievements of workers past and present; it is the start of an intense sprint to November 3.

This year, all eyes are on the U.S. Senate race in Michigan and our very own 7th Congressional District race, both critical for Democrats in Washington, DC to stop this administration and styme the ambitions of the Republicans who blindly fall in lock step. Clinton County Democrats must help deliver these seats for there to be any reasonable hope of stopping or slowing down the clear and deliberate dismantling of our constitution, our system of checks and balances, and common decency.

The United States has become an international pariah, an unpredictable and dangerous country led by pathologically volatile self-interested individuals who view every single decision put before them in terms of how they can leverage it to line their own pockets. They continue to do this because our institutions are infected with cowardly individuals unwilling to stop them and because there is a willful ignorance among voters who are unable to see the that walls of their cages are closing in with every lie they believe and repeat, with every hateful action they revel in, and with every vote they cast against their own interests.

We who are clear-eyed need to choose how we spend our days between now and Nov 3, knowing that for every one vote we cast, there are two votes out there working to cancel it out. Not sure where to begin? Start by checking out CCDP's upcoming activities listed in this newsletter and the resources shared below about making your voting plan. Then, look for ways to invite your friends, family, and neighbors to vote for the candidates and ballot issues that will have the greatest positive impact on their lives. It's no surprise that those candidates are Democrats. Got those sleeves rolled up? Let's get to work!



Postcards Arriving Soon!

By Kathie Elliott. CCDP has ordered 5,000 postcards to mail to local Democrats and Independents encouraging votes for our Democratic candidates up and down the ballot. Watch email and social media for announcements as to when they will arrive. You can stop in during office hours to complete them, host a postcard party at your home, or be our on-site host for a postcard party in the office outside of normal hours. Also, we will gladly accept in-kind donations of postcard stamps (Currently $65 per roll of 100) for our upcoming postcard writing. **Contact us** with any questions.



So Many September Opportunities, Join Us!

By Ann McCulloch. There is so much happening this month as we count the days until the November 3 election. We hope to see you at September office hours where you can drop in and grab a yard sign to support our great candidates on the ballot. There is also still time to purchase tickets for this Saturday's **Fall Festival** which begins at 11:00 a.m. at the Phillips Orchards & Cider Mill's Orchard Market, 1174 West Gratiot County Line Road, St. Johns. We will be joined by local elected officials and candidates, and will save time for apple picking in the orchard!

CCDP is also bringing back Coffee and Conversation this month! We will meet at the office on September 14 at 2:00 p.m. Bring your favorite coffee or tea and we will provide a light bite. There will also be postcards to send to help get Democrats to the polls. Up for one more parade? CCDP will be walking in the Maple Rapids Lamplighter Festival Parade on September 19. **Email us** to RSVP, and we will share additional information on parade timing and meet-up location. Rumor has it there may be pizza involved afterwards!

Lastly, we have two dates this month for our environmental cleanups. On September 20, join us for our Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup at 8:30 a.m., 7585 W. Grand River Avenue, Lansing. And on September 27 at 10:00 a.m., we will be doing our Carpool Lot Cleanup at 5900 S. Williams Road, St. Johns. Once that lot is cleaned, we will move south to the carpool lot located at 2377 E. Round Lake Road, DeWitt. Trash bags and safety vests will be provided for both

events, but volunteers must bring their own gloves and water. **RSVP here** for the cleanups. Many hands will make for quicker work!



A Plan to Vote Can Make All the Difference

By Sue Barrick. Whether you are out canvassing or simply talking with your family and friends, striking up conversation about voting plans should be a top priority in these critical weeks leading up to the November 3 midterm election. Each of us can help one another (and ourselves) visualize the steps necessary to vote and solve obstacles that might stand in our way.

Data from the 2008 Presidential Election found that 4.1% more people voted when they formed a voting plan vs. those who did not. The increase in voting went up to 9.1% for single eligible voter households. Given the stakes and narrow margins expected in this year's midterm, voting plans should be a prominent part of our own thinking as well as every interaction with supporters from now until November. Conversations should include questions like these:

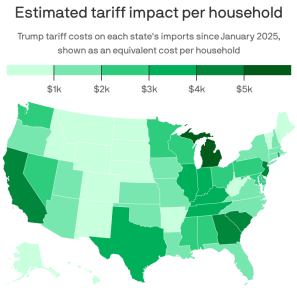
- How are you voting - absentee or in person?
- If voting absentee, are you submitting by mail or dropping off at you polling site or clerk's office?
- If voting in person, will you vote early or at the polls on November 3?
- Do you need a ride to drop off your ballot or get to the polls?
- Do you need to request time off from work or find childcare?
- Do you have all the documents needed to vote?

An extra moment to verify voter registration information can also be time well spent. Michiganders can **check voter status** and **register or update voter information** if necessary. Note that October 19 is the last day to register online for the November 3 midterm. Election day voter registration is allowed, but not encouraged.

Voting from home works well with busy schedules. Through October 13, you can request a no-excuses-needed absentee ballot **online** or with a **paper form** to return to your city or township clerk. *While guidance suggests that completed absentee ballots should be mailed by October 20, we strongly encourage individuals to mail ballots well before that date. If at all possible, it is best for ballots to be hand delivered to the city or township clerk's office or placed in their designated drop box.* The deadline for voting by absentee ballot in person at the city or township clerk's office is November 2 at 4:00 p.m.

Statewide in-person early voting takes place October 24 - November 1. Early polling locations can be **found here**. Michigan does not require voter ID, but voters will need to verify their identity. The easiest way is to bring their driver's license, state ID card, passport, or military or student ID when voting, otherwise they will be required to fill out and sign an affidavit attesting to their identity.

Let's all do our part to make sure we are taking the necessary steps and planning ahead so our votes count on November 3!



Tariffs Will Hit Home for Michigan Families

By Monica Goble. Sometimes we tune out the latest upsetting news from Washington, understandably focused on getting by day-to-day. Here in Michigan, however, **Trump's tariffs** and trade wars are hitting our households and businesses especially hard. It's clear the Republican Party has been complicit in the Trump administration's actions, abandoning Congressional oversight and demanding strict loyalty to him. So what can we do? Simply put, we can cast our vote this November to replace those elected officials who have acted as complicit rubber-stamps.

Michigan Democratic Party Chair Curtis Hertel **addressed this issue** as Vice President J.D. Vance visited Michigan in late August, stating that "Michigan is being hit harder by Trumps tariffs than any other state. Yet Mike Rogers, John James, and Michael Bouchard Jr. are choosing to stand by Trump and Vance without saying a word. These Republicans have made their choice: they're rubber-stamping Trump's toxic agenda, including his reckless war in Iran, his healthcare cuts, and his latest trade war with Canada, no matter the cost to Michigan families."

You can certainly say the same for our Congressman, Tom Barrett. Chair Hertel continued to say that Michigan Republicans "are focused on advancing Trump's agenda, even while it spikes costs and throws our economy into chaos—and Michiganders will remember their complicity when they vote them down this November." This is why every vote matters in this important midterm election!

St. Johns Schools Bond Proposal: What You Need to Know



By Shelby Neathammer. On the November 3 ballot, voters in the St. Johns Public Schools district will be asked to approve a $40 million bond proposal which seeks to maintain the current 7 mill tax rate that has been in effect for over 30 years. If approved, this ballot proposal would provide St. Johns Public Schools with needed safety and security investments, infrastructure repairs and replacements, and classroom upgrades to school buildings that were built as long ago as the late 1950s. The district listened to the community by reducing the amount sought by this bond by nearly 60% compared to bonds that failed in 2024 and 2025. This reduction was done after undertaking a district-wide survey, hosting stakeholder roundtables, and conducting facility/finance workshops throughout 2025 and 2026.

The State of Michigan provides little to no financial assistance to districts for infrastructure and capital needs, which was brought to light by a 2025 ***Detroit News*** article, which found over $22 billion in needed repairs for districts across the state. And, school districts must maintain buildings just like a homeowner would tend to their house. Repairs are needed on a regular basis and complete replacements of various kinds are required after the useful life of machinery runs its course. Our schools are busy places that face a lot of wear and tear, which districts often don't have funding for after compensating staff, paying for curriculum, and keeping up with yearly operational expenses. This leaves districts to look to their communities for support when it comes to larger needs.

St. Johns Public Schools has done an impressive job of putting together information for voters so they can learn exactly what is in the bond. All that information and more can be found at the **district's bond webpage**. You can also follow along with the Vote YES campaign both on **Facebook** and **Instagram**. **Request a yard sign** to publicly show your support. Lastly, if you feel called, you can make a donation to the campaign to help advocate for passage of the bond. You can **donate online** or checks can be made out to "Vote Yes for SJPS" and mailed to PO Box 233, St. Johns, MI, 48879.

Public education is public for a reason. It relies on each and every community member to contribute towards the kind of community they want to live in. Someone very likely contributed so that you could have a quality education. It's time to pay it forward to the next generation. Vote YES for SJPS!

School Board Races Deserve Close Attention



By Ann McCulloch. With so much at stake in the upcoming November elections, it is hard to stay on top of every race at every level. We should not lose sight of school board elections, however, as school boards make decisions that directly affect the education students in our communities receive. Links to school board webpages in Clinton County can be found **in this document** and the full listing of November 3 candidates in Clinton County (which includes school board races) can be **found here**.

School board races are nonpartisan, ideally to maintain impartiality and keep politics out the educational environment. However, some school boards have seen coordinated efforts to elect candidates that reflect a certain set of beliefs and races have become more competitive in recent years given the different challenges public education has faced since COVID. Campaigns have become more sophisticated, with some candidates employing social media, websites, yard signs, and even paid advertising to reach voters. It is important to keep in mind that lack of information about a candidate (i.e., a website or Facebook page) does not indicate how good board member they may be. If information about a candidate is not readily available, try to attend a candidate forum or reach out to a candidate directly to ask them about their views.

Additionally, current elected officials you know might valuable sources of information. If there are incumbents up for re-election, attend a local school board meeting, which can be a great way to assess how someone approaches board service. Reading publicly available minutes can help you understand how board members think. Given the important role that school boards play in shaping local education, we need to do our best to learn about local candidates and support those that support quality public education!





Upcoming Events

September 12 - Fall Festival Fundraiser: Phillips Orchards & Cider Mill's Orchard Market, 1174 West Gratiot County Line Road, St. Johns, 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Tickets **available here**.

September 14 - Coffee & Conversation: 2:00 - 3:00 p.m., CCDP office, 105 W. Railroad St., St. Johns.

September 19 - Maple Rapids Lamplighter Festival Parade: Step off is at 11:00 a.m. in downtown Maple Rapids. To walk with CCDP, **RSVP here**.

September 20 - 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**.

September 26 - Greater Lansing Food Bank Drive-Thru Food Distribution, St. Johns: Southpoint Mall, 1023 South Old US 27, St. Johns. Volunteers are welcome at 8:00 a.m. Distribution runs from 8:30 - 9:45 a.m. or until all food is distributed. If you or someone you know needs a little extra food, you do not need to show proof of need, nor do you need to reside in Clinton County. You can pick up food for up to five families.

September 27 - CCDP Carpool Lot Cleanup: 10:00 a.m., 5900 S. Williams Road, St. Johns. Once this lot is cleaned, we will move south to the carpool lot located at 2377 E. Round Lake Road, DeWitt. Trash bags and safety vests will be provided. Volunteers must bring their own gloves and water. **RSVP here**.
October 1 - CCDP Monthly Meeting: DeWitt City Hall, 414 E. Main Street, DeWitt. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m. with the meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m.
October 24 - Greater Lansing Food Bank Drive-Thru Food Distribution, St. Johns: Southpoint Mall, 1023 South Old US 27. Volunteers are welcome at 8:00 a.m. Distribution runs from 8:30 - 9:45 a.m. or until all food is distributed. If you or someone you know needs a little extra food, you do not need to show proof of need, nor do you need to reside in Clinton County. You can pick up food for up to five families.
November 5 - CCDP Monthly Meeting: County Courthouse, Commissioner's Room, 100 E. State Street, St. Johns. Social hour begins at 6:30 p.m. with the meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m.
November 11 - CCDP Pints and Politics: 6:00 p.m., location TBD.
November 15 - CCDP County Convention: CCDP Office, 105 W. Railroad St., St. Johns, time TBD.
December 3 - CCDP Monthly Meeting: DeWitt City Hall, 414 E. Main Street, DeWitt. Social hour begins at 6:30 p.m. with the meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m. This will be a year-end celebratory meeting with a light agenda.

Join CCDP/MDP or Renew Your CCDP/MDP Membership

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