

Clinton County Democratic Party Newsletter



January 2025

"Do your little bit of good where you are; it is those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world." - Desmond Tutu



Be the Change

By Kathie Elliott. Welcome to a new year. We hope you have had the time, space, and support you needed the last two months to process the heartbreaking election results. Yes, there were critical wins, and we held our ground in some important races, but most of us find it hard to see the upside when the results of the presidential race seem to call into question all that we believe

is good and admirable about this beautiful and complex nation. Remember, that we have each other - our ideological family - to lean on as we continue to bring ourselves through the disappointment to a place that we can re-engage, trust, and hope again.

CCDP remains a vibrant, and committed community, and we have much structural and organizational work to do this year. But, more importantly, we want to spend time building community; asking our friends and family who voted for Republicans to tell us their story; and sincerely listening to their underlying concerns and fears in a way that creates greater understanding and empathy. At the end of 2025 when we turn our attention to critical 2026 races, I don't want us to feel like we're "ready for battle." We don't need or want to live that way. I want us to feel like we're "ready to reap" the harvest of a year spent thoughtfully, deliberately sowing the seeds of knowledge, wisdom, community, security, and prosperity in Clinton County. Will you join us?

When you begin each day, consider the seeds you sow. That choice will impact your day and that of those around you. Please create a habit around reading up on CCDP volunteer opportunities and events, join us when you can, and maybe bring a friend. Your presence, even for an hour or two each month, will give your ideological family strength and comfort as we continue to “be the change we wish to see.”



How the Michigan Democratic Party Aligns with CCDP Operations

By Kathie Elliott. Because we have so many new members who jumped right into helping with the elections and may not understand the infrastructure of

the Michigan Democratic Party, AND because Clinton County members attending the State MDP Convention in February will be voting on several key officer positions, we want you to know a little more about how the county party fits into the larger state Democratic Party operations.

Our county party is organized under and through the MDP. As such, we are required to observe their rules and bylaws with regard to county operations. This includes certain obligations related to transparency, reporting, officer and committee structures, etc. We are also required to hold special meetings (conventions) regularly, generally a few weeks in advance of a state convention or other state-level action. This February, we have two important conventions: our local county convention on February 8 and the State Convention in Detroit on February 22. At the State Convention, we will vote for a new MDP Chair, new Chairs and Vice Chairs of Congressional Districts, and delegates and alternates to the State Central Committee. The leadership we elect will have an important impact on CCDP, so it's important that we are educated and that we participate. You can read the Call to Convention by **clicking here**.

What your next steps should be:

- * Join or renew your MDP membership by Jan 23! See the story below for more information.
- * Attend the February 6 membership meeting. We will be sharing feedback and information about how the current MDP structure impacts the work of CCDP.
- * Join us February 8, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon, for the County Convention at the Bath Library.
- * Place a hold on your calendar for the full day of February 22 for the State Convention. More information about participation guidelines, carpooling, etc., will be available soon.
- * View the first MDP Chair Candidate **panel discussion** to become acquainted

with the candidates.



Not A Member? Join by January 23 and Help Grow CCDP's Numbers Before the State Convention!

By Rob Mack. The Clinton County Democratic Party now has 151 members through the Michigan Democratic Party. That's an increase of 93 over the

58 memberships we had at this time last year. While in previous post-election years, we've seen a drop, it's vitally important that we maintain and continue to grow our membership numbers. So let's reverse the trend and keep our numbers high!

Why is this important? It is only through party memberships that we have the power to support policies that are important to us by voting on party platforms. It also aligns us to others at the state and county level with similar ideologies. As Clinton County Dems, we connect citizens to their government and elected officials. Membership facilitates voter mobilization and helps to identify and elect candidates who share our values.

The 2025 MDP State Convention will be held on Saturday, February 22, at the Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center, 400 Renaissance Dr W, Detroit. A person must be a member of the Michigan Democratic Party for at least thirty (30) days prior to the convention (January 23, 2025) to vote on party issues. Use your voice for the future of our county, state, and nation by continuing your membership in CCDP/MDP. Join CCDP/MDP by **clicking here**. Please **contact me** to check your membership status or if you have any questions.



Celebrating an American Hero

By Melany Mack. The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., born on January 15, 1929, is the only non-president to have a national holiday dedicated in his honor. The Martin Luther King Jr. Day federal holiday

is observed annually on the third Monday in January. It became a federal holiday on November 2, 1983, when President Ronald Reagan signed the King Holiday Bill into law. It took another 17 years before all 50 states recognized the federal holiday. An adherent of nonviolence and an ordained Baptist minister, Dr. King led the Montgomery Bus Boycott which resulted in integration of the city's bus lines and led to a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that racial segregation in

transportation was unconstitutional.

He formed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957 and began lecturing nationwide urging active nonviolence to achieve civil rights for Black Americans. Dr. King was one of the key organizers of the March for Jobs and Freedom in August 1963 which drew over a quarter-million people to the national mall. Partly due to the March on Washington, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act in 1964 and the Voting Rights Act in 1965. Dr. King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. He was tragically assassinated on April 4, 1968. His legacy lives on, an inspiration and a clarion call for social justice, nonviolence, and peace. Several local events are planned to celebrate the Martin Luther King, Jr. federal holiday:

- Sunday,
January
19,
3:00
p.m.,
Fairchild
Theater,
542
Auditorium
Rd.,
East
Lansing:
*Jazz:
Spirituals,
Prayer,
and
Protest
Concert*
featuring
MSU
Jazz
Orchestras
and
other
special
guests.
Free,
but
**tickets
required.**
- Monday,
January
20,
11:00
a.m.,
Lansing

Center,
333
E.
Michigan
Ave.,
Lansing:
*40th
Annual
MLK
Jr.
Commission
Day
of
Celebration*
featuring
Dr.
Bernard
Lafayette
Jr.
as
the
keynote
speaker.
**Purchase
tickets
here.**

- Monday,
January
20,
12:00
noon,
Beaumont
Tower,
375
W.
Circle
Dr.,
East
Lansing:
*Carillon
Recital*
to
celebrate
freedom
and
justice
with
melodies
honoring
Rev.
Dr.
King's

legacy.
Free
and
no
tickets
required.

Ironically and very sadly, the inauguration of Donald Trump as the 47th president will occur on the same day. These words from Dr. King's Nobel Prize acceptance speech could not ring more true on this occasion: "I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right temporarily defeated is stronger than evil triumphant."



Lame Duck Session Wrap Up: What Passed and What Was Left Behind

By Tim Hughes. The lame duck session of the Michigan legislature began with a bang and ended with a whimper. The Michigan Senate was very

productive, passing dozens of bills that had previously been passed by the House. The House, however, was less active, as the Republican caucus walked off the job, refusing to attend session until Democrats agreed to weaken statutes that raise the state's minimum wage and provide paid sick leave to Michigan workers.

With the Republicans refusing to go to work, that left 56 House Democrats to attend to business. With 56 members needed for a quorum and passage of bills, it was imperative that all Democrats attend session and vote in a block to conduct business and pass bills. That didn't happen. Chief among the non-attending Democrats was Detroit State Rep. Karen Whitsett, who hid out in the House Republican Leader's office and refused to attend session or vote. Left without a quorum and the ability to vote, the House eventually adjourned, leaving behind dozens of Senate passed bills that died at the end of the year.

In a marathon 29-hour session, the Michigan Senate approved a number of significant House-passed bills that went to the Governor to be signed into law. The legislative lame duck achievements included the first hike in unemployment benefits in 21 years, expanding the definition of hate crimes to include sexual orientation, gender identity and age, establishment of a School Safety and Mental Health Commission, gun safety bills that require the destruction of weapons purchased in gun buyback programs, a ban on guns at election polls, maternal and infant mortality prevention bills, financial increases in state energy assistance programs and defeat of attempts to weaken minimum wage and

paid sick leave laws.

Bills that were passed in the Senate but did not see action in the House included ethics reform for public officials, charter school transparency legislation, polluter pay legislation, bills to extend the period of time when a sexual assault survivor could sue for damages and legislation to enhance police conduct transparency. For more information on the legislation that passed and did not pass in the lame duck session, visit **CCDP's blog page**.



Update and Continued Call to Action: Clinton County Commission Meeting Time

By Ann McCulloch. You may remember that CCDP shared an Action Alert encouraging county residents to urge the County Commission to move its monthly meeting times from the morning to the evening and provide a virtual option for

those that cannot attend in person, shifts that would bring the Commission in line with neighboring counties and offer a greater chance for county residents to attend meetings and provide enhanced transparency. While the measure to change the meeting time did not pass at its January 2 meeting, the Commission did promise to look into virtual options. Given that morning meetings would not allow those who work to attend, we urge you to remain in contact with the Commissioners on this important matter so the Commission understands the need for open meetings that all residents have the opportunity to attend. Please send your email in support of evening meetings to the **Clinton County Clerk**.



Building Our Community Resources

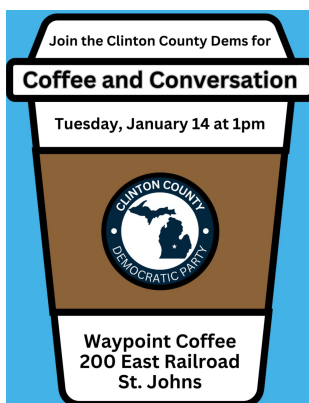
By Shelby Neathammer. After the election, I was approached about my thoughts on a series to offer to our members. After some discussion, we decided to provide a space for members to come

together about the impact of post-election times. Our first two sessions, led by Kathie Elliot and myself, focused on navigating tough conversations with politically opposite family members through the holidays. While these topics have a mental health component, these conversations are not a replacement for therapy. Although my expertise is in the mental health field, and each session is

prepared with compiled resources, I have also learned so much from all of you. Through these discussions, I have met members, connected more with members I already know, and learned strategies others have found useful in fueling connections in politically strained relationships.

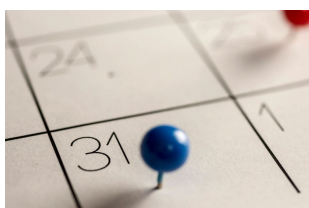
Based on the needs we have heard from fellow Clinton County Democrats, we added three additional themed sessions around balancing money and values, battling winter blues, and navigating change. Now more than ever, we see the need to create community engagement to give space for our collective grief about this place in history. Community is not a passive act or only when perfectly convenient; it is a form of active participation and can raise awareness of the strength drawn from numbers. According to an article entitled "The Anti-Social Century" by Derek Thompson in *The Atlantic*, America's sense of community is lacking, and the consequences are more people feeling isolated and the dehumanizing of others. Some of this comes from a lack of available community spaces, so through this series, we hope to offer some space to build authentic connections.

Join us for our next members' session on Tuesday, January 14, from 6:30-8:00 p.m. when we'll focus on financial stress from the holidays, anticipated political actions, and making purchasing decisions when a vendor or business values doesn't match your own. Please **RSVP here**. If you have topics you would like to see, please **email me** or let CCDP leadership know!



Coffee & Conversation Resumes January 14!

We look forward to seeing you in the new year as CCDP's Coffee & Conversation makes its return post-holidays. Join us on January 14 at 1:00 p.m. at Waypoint Coffee, 200 East Railroad Street, St. Johns. 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!



Upcoming Events

January 23 - MDP Membership Deadline: Become a member or renew membership to be able to vote in the 2025 Spring Convention.

February 6 - CCDP Membership Meeting: Clinton

County Courthouse, St. Johns, 100 E. State Street. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m. with the meeting beginning at 7 p.m.

February 8 - CCDP County Convention: Time and location TBD.

February 9 - Indivisible Monthly Meeting: East Lansing Public Library, 2 p.m., **RSVP here.**

February 11 - Self and Community Care Series for CCDP Members, 6:30 p.m., Zoom. We'll focus on Seasonal Affective Disorder and keeping your mood up when the winter blues strike. Registration Required, **click here.**

February 22 - 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.



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