



DonkeyTalk



NEXT UNITED DEMOCRATS GENERAL MEETING:

Wednesday, April 9 at 6 pm at the Washington County Free Library, 100 S. Potomac St., Hagerstown. Doors open at 5:45.

March 15 rally, Veterans Park, Smithsburg, MD.

How Will We Serve?

It is 2025 and the UDWC is moving to embrace all of the wonderful ways in which we can fight back against the tyranny that the GOP has brought us. The current round of demonstrations organized by various partner groups and us have given the community a sense that we are ready to fight and to serve.

How will we serve? How will you serve? For all who care about what is happening nationally, we can only protest at this point. But locally we hold significant cards. We have seen a rise of caring and want to grow that into the 2026 elections. On the ballot in the fall of 2026, will be all five seats on the Board of County Commissioners. This is the group that has chosen to starve the budgets of the Board of Education and the Commission on Aging yearly.

We need to start right now to recruit and train candidates for these five offices and the three/four? Seats that will be open on the School Board. This is not too early to get our ducks and our candidates in a row. It will give us time to work with them (You, I'm talking to You). We need to offer a candidate for each open seat.

By fall of this year a candidate should have a plan, a platform preview, a campaign committee and a budget. You do not need to register until the deadline, but you should be ready to spend many of your weekends the spring, summer and fall of 2026 out with door knocking. It is all about visibility. There are nine incorporated towns in the county and each has need to work with the County Commissioners and the school system.

Local governments do not operate in a vacuum, but that is what many have faced these last several rounds.

You have joined UDWC, and maybe NAACP, Indivisible, and other organizations that care about services to our citizens. Begin thinking about the next step...public office. Attend the BOE or the County Comm meetings. They both have staff from whom you can request specific information you many want.

And, UDWC will be ready to do some coaching. We will likely have some locations set for your campaign committee to hold meetings. WE NEED YOU. OUR COUNTY NEEDS YOU.

Former county commissioner Linda Irvin-Craig.

MARCH 12 Meeting

By Dale Ruby

It was standing room only at our March meeting at the library. What a welcome sight. The majority of our members were present, and the crowd included 10 guests.

As well as the usual matters of prior meeting minutes and finance report approvals, elections were held. The results were: Colleen Clark President, Tom Ruff Vice President, Lorraine Blades Treasurer, Board Members David Clark, Tom Ruff, Nancy Evans, and Alina Chester.

It seemed to me that the recent protests had drawn some new attention to our group. I'm sure the atrocious actions of Trump/Musk had a lot to do with the recent enthusiasm as well.

Some of the guests' questions indicated the shortcoming of our use of Facebook as our primary outreach approach.

Nancy Evans spoke about changing meeting times at the Board of Education. Dave Williams spoke about changes by the County Commissioners re. citizen comment. It seems that both these moves may be to limit public input.

My comments about our Newsletter Committee prompted two individuals to volunteer to take over for Kate Millers role. Kate intends to work for Washington County Indivisible, a non-political group who has formed a local chapter. The new Newsletter managers are Amy and Todd Groesbeck.

Something very encouraging is that 2 growing non-partisan groups Invisible and the local NAACP branch 703B have goals well aligned with ours. Our intrepid warriors at ACLU have filed over 130 lawsuits against the actions of the Trump crew.

A Note From Taj Smith

On January 25th, the Washington County Diversity and Inclusion Committee presented their annual recommendations to the Washington County Commissioners. This meeting also included the acceptance of the Black History Month proclamation. However, in a concerning development, Commissioner Barr announced a strict enforcement of the three-minute rule for public comments and limiting total public comment time to just 10 minutes. As a result, despite the presence of approximately 10 people were unable to voice concerns during this meeting. It was disheartening to see that all speakers chosen were familiar to

the commissioners, one of which was a Commissioner Harvey's wife, and all appeared to be white.

At the March 4th commissioners meeting, while everyone was allowed to speak, a significant change was announced: public comments will now occur before meetings at 8 AM and will not be broadcast. The Commissioners voted to maintain this structure for the next 60 days. This decision undermines transparency and accountability, as it prevents the community from being informed about important issues discussed. Scheduling comments at this early hour conflicts with school

drop-off times, limiting participation for many families.

Please consider attending the upcoming Commissioners' meetings over the next 60 days to express opposition to this decision. Share a video of your comment or post it on your social media asking others to share and do the same. If you cannot be there in person, please reach out to the County Commissioners via email or phone. Your voice matters, and together we can advocate for a more inclusive and transparent government.

A Letter From April McClain Delaney

Good afternoon,

Maryland's firefighters and first responders keep our communities safe every day, and they deserve our utmost support. But last Friday afternoon, the Administration abruptly canceled all classes at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, leaving our first responder community in the lurch.

Tens of thousands of Firefighters and EMS providers attend the Academy's courses every year to train and learn best practices in fire and hazard safety. Shutting down the National Fire Academy jeopardizes the health and safety of our first responders and communities across America, and it does nothing to lower costs for Americans.

In response, I led a bipartisan, [bicameral letter](#) with Senator Chris Van Hollen and 64 of our Congressional colleagues calling on FEMA to reverse its decision and reinstate these trainings immediately; and, earlier this week, I spoke on the House floor in defense of the National Fire Academy and our first responders. With wildfires



and national disasters intensifying, now is not the time to cut resources for firefighters and EMS providers. [Click here to watch the video](#)

While I agree that our government should run more efficiently, jeopardizing our firefighters' personal safety and the well-being of our communities is never the answer.

If you have questions or concerns to share with me, please call my office at (301) 926-0300.

Warmest regards,

April McClain Delaney
Member of Congress

President's Message

Hello, all old members and especially our new members. As your newly elected president of this club, I want to thank all those who have encouraged and supported me to take on this monumental job. But I want to state from the very start that I cannot do it alone. That's right, I'm not an "I alone can do it" guy. I'm not even a guy, as my pronouns are She, Her. But that's okay too.

I have been an active member of the UDWC ever since the 2016 election. Remember that one!? Right after my mini nervous breakdown on November

7, 2016, I knew I had to do something and not just give up, so I started looking for local groups to get involved with. And what do you know, I found this club with like-minded Democrats that helped to keep me sane and also found many new friends as well. I am a lifelong Democrat (who is also guilty of voting Republican upon occasion; please forgive me father for my sins)

I look forward to working with all our members and welcome your ideas for keeping this group a thriving and active one long into the future. I realize that

being in charge of any organization can sometimes feel like "herding cats", but I have always loved cats and was raised with them, so I think we'll do just fine. If you have ideas, I welcome them. But just remember, if you bring me your ideas you will probably be asked to also take the lead in implementing them.

Colleen Clark

Leadership

Colleen Clark, President
Tom Ruhf, Vice President
Lorraine Blaydes, Treasurer
Mary McPherson, Secretary

Board of Directors

Linda Irvin Craig
David Clark
Arthur LaRue
Nancy Evans
Alina Chester
Randy Barber

On The Web

[United Democrats of Washington County, Md.](#)



Email us



Events

Next United Democrats General Meeting

Wednesday, April 9 at 6 pm at the Washington County Free Library, 100 S. Potomac St., Hagerstown. Doors open at 5:45.

County Commissioner Meetings

Find their meeting schedule [here](#).

Board of Education Meetings

Meetings are held twice per month. Generally, the Board holds a work session on the first Tuesday of the month at 1:00 pm and a business meeting on the third Tuesday of the month at 4:00 pm.

The schedule may vary at times; check the WCPS website for any changes. All meetings are held at the Center for Education Services, 10435 Downsview Pike in Hagerstown.

You can watch the Board of Education meetings live on the following platforms:

[WCPS Facebook page](#)

[WCPS YouTube page](#)

[WCPS website](#)

Channel 99 for Antietam Broadband cable subscribers

Hagerstown City Council Meetings

Council Chambers, City Hall 2nd floor. Find their meeting schedule [here](#).

Friday, April 25

2025 Western Maryland Democratic Summit

[Register HERE](#)

