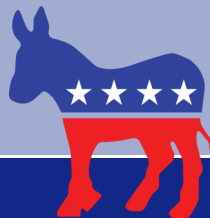


Donkey Talk



United Democrats of Washington County

washcodemsmd.org

facebook.com/udwcmd

February 2025



Hagerstown represents! A crowd of around 200 people showed up on short notice in the blistering wind to demonstrate on Not My President's Day, Monday, Feb. 17.

UDWC Gears Up For The Year Ahead

In the wake of the election, we are looking to become a more active presence in the community. This is a time when we may be able to bring disenchanted citizens under our umbrella, and offer more involvement for our members. To this end **we have formed five new committees, and all UDWC members are encouraged to join one or more committees.**

Three of the committees will follow and report back on the doings of the newly-elected Board of Education, County Commissioners, and City Council. **It's important that we keep track of them, especially the now MAGA-dominated BOE.** We have also established Newsletter and Youth Outreach committees. If you're interested in joining, contact a committee chair at our next meeting or send an email to udwcmd@gmail.com

The election of officers and members of the Board of Directors will be held on March 12 during the regular monthly club meeting. Nominations to date are:

President – Colleen Clark

Vice President – Tom Ruhf

Treasurer – Lorraine Blaydes

Board of Directors – David Clark, Tom Ruhf, Alina Chester

Continued Page 2

Local Indivisible Chapter Forming

The Washington County chapter of **Indivisible.org** was founded this month and is rapidly moving ahead to oppose Trump Administration policies.

The non-partisan activist organization will be having its first general meeting on March 1, but is already planning direct actions to put pressure on elected officials and resist unconstitutional and authoritarian actions of the Trump Administration.

Continued Page 2

UDWC Outgoing President's Message



Paul Pittman

Greetings Democrats,

The United Democrats of Washington County have played a pivotal part in keeping the Democratic Party alive here in Washington County. Over the years a handful of members have held the club together through good times and bad.

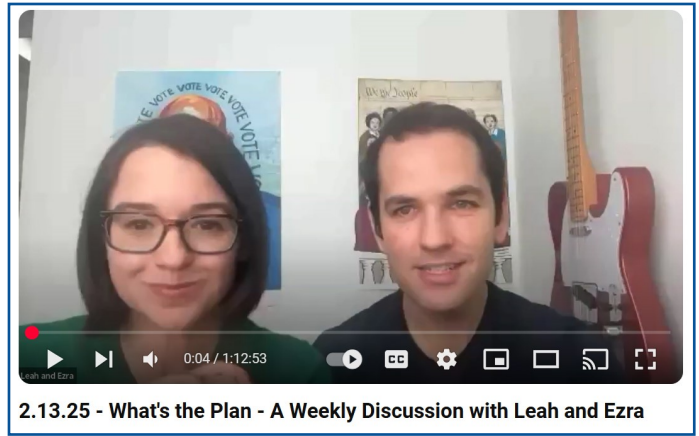
I had not been active in the club, due to professional and personal obligations, for a number of years until three or four years ago when I joined and was asked to serve on the Board of Directors. After retiring as the Executive Director of Head Start of Washington County, I also successfully ran for the Democratic Central Committee along with some other dedicated Democrats to rejuvenate the Central Committee and make it more visible and open to party activists.

Continued Page 2

DID YOU KNOW: Our new Senator, Angela Alsobrooks, has begun a very informative weekly email newsletter for her constituents, to keep us caught up on Congressional goings-on. You can sign up for it on her website, www.alsobrooks.senate.gov



Angela Alsobrooks
UNITED STATES SENATOR FOR MARYLAND



Don't Miss This Great Zoom Webinar

Leah and Ezra are former Congressional aides and co-founders of Indivisible. They have started a weekly live Zoom webinar on Thursday afternoons, offering a very insightful discussion of what tactics do and don't work as far as influencing our representatives on the Hill, as well as discussing overall strategies of the Left going forward. [Click here to watch their Feb. 13 webinar on YouTube.](#)

Sign up [here](#) to get a weekly email with the zoom link for the live webinar, and a follow-up email with a link to the YouTube recording.

Outgoing President's Message continued

Although newer members were elected to the Central Committee, there was still a great divide between that group and the UDWC, based on past history. Due to the illness and retirement of UDWC President Pam Faulkner, I was asked by the Board of Directors to assume the Presidency, since I had run for the office a few months earlier. I agreed to do so, as I hoped it would bring the UDWC and the Central Committee closer together. My goal was to heal some wounds, with all of us working together to promote the national, state and local party.

For a while I thought we were on our way by jointly combining our efforts. The UDWC supported the Central Committee's dinner, picnic and campaign efforts. We jointly held a successful picnic with local and state candidate representatives and we briefly did a joint newsletter. During the last election we assisted in recruiting campaign volunteers, registering voters, and manning polling places at early voting and on Election Day.

The UDWC sponsored forums for candidates for Hagerstown Mayor, Council, and the Board of Education. We had one of the few speakers promoting the ballot initiative for reproductive freedom in Maryland. We held a Rally for Democracy in Boonsboro prior to the presidential election.

It has been an exciting year, and the UDWC has worked to keep the electorate informed. However, there is so much more to do! Last month we started to look at what direction the club should go in and how to go about that. **The bottom line is we need to recruit new and younger members and utilize the latest tools via social media etc. to reach voters of all age groups.**

In the early fall, I announced that I would not be a candidate for re-election. Due to some personal and medical issues, I can no longer give all that is needed to handle the responsibilities of being the club president. I will soon be 76 and although that makes me almost old enough to run for President of the United States, it is time for me to step aside and give others the opportunity to bring their skills and ideas to the clubs' leadership. The club needs to look at different ways to attract like-minded residents who share our values and concerns. We must continue to educate Washington County voters on national, state and especially local issues and actions.

A special thank you to the current elected officers of the club and the membership at large for your continued support and for putting up with my sense of humor. May we all survive the next four years and never be afraid of telling the truth, resisting the temptation to just go along, and to working everyday to continue our Democracy!

Victory always,

Paul Pittman

Local Indivisible Chapter continued

Membership of the organization stands at roughly 50 individuals, and its ranks are rapidly growing as people seek concrete ways to push back against what is largely understood as a political coup in progress.

For more information or to join, please write: washingtoncountyindivisible@gmail.com

UDWC Gears Up Continued

Nominations remain open until March 13.

Here is a [link to our bylaws](#), which explain the responsibilities of each officer.

The next UDWC meeting is March 12, at the Washington County Free Library, with doors opening at 5:45 and meeting beginning at 6 pm.

Other events

Visit the Maryland Democrats website at mddems.org/events to find events happening around the state.

The WCDCC book club meets on February 27 at the Washington County Free Library. They will be discussing *Such A Fun Age* by Keily Reid.

Bookmark us at
washcodemsmd.org

Federal Fear in the Workplace

From a local Federal Employee
who wishes to remain anonymous

The layoffs have begun. People who have dedicated themselves to public service, who work for Americans to have clean water, safe food, medicines that work and to care for veterans, are being fired. Not for any reason other than one unelected person has crowned himself the decider. Others support this by talking about “waste” and “fraud” but provide no evidence to support any actions.

The effects are already starting to show, but when there is no one working at Veterans Affairs, no teams at the CDC watching for the next pandemic, no one at the passport or social security office, no one to screen planes at the airport and no one to defend our elections from foreign interference, maybe then more will see what we lose from destroying “the government”.



votevets.org/doge-tipline

Hagerstown City Council Update

By Arthur LaRue

There's discussion of an 'anti-camping' ordinance, which would affect the unhoused (homeless) residents of Hagerstown. The idea was briefly discussed in December but no further action yet – but it's coming.

“Save Locomotive 202” effort: to keep this train engine in City Park, a group is proposing to form a 501(c)3 nonprofit to raise money for restoration & preservation. Facebook page: facebook.com/save.locomotive.202

On the agenda for the Tuesday, Feb. 25 7 pm. meeting is a change to fishing in Pangborn Park. They are probably going to ban fishing due to lots debris, including hooks and line which are a hazard to waterfowl and potentially dangerous for people from accidental 'hooks' of a child. (this is only one of two places to fish in the city, and the only accessible fishing place.) As far as I know, this is the only item of interest to be voted on this month.

The Council has work sessions (usually no voting) the first three Tuesdays of the month from 4 - 7 pm. Regular meetings are 7 pm the fourth Tuesday. There does not seem to be much discussion at this meeting, rather approving issues that were discussed in the work sessions.

You can see the agendas and some supporting documents at: www.hagerstownmd.org/92/Mayor-City-Council As of now, current minutes are not available online.

There is a new website, <https://citizenportal.ai>, which has video of the meeting and AI generated summaries of what is said. You can click on a particular line of the summary and the appropriate part of the video comes up. It looks like this should be available for school board, but not, so far, county commissioners.

Washington County Commission Update

By Dave Williams

County Commissioner Wayne Keefer (Republican) will resign on February 21, 2025. This is the replacement process based on the best information I've been able to find:

State law requires the governor to nominate a Republican replacement selected by the party's central committee. The Republican Central Committee is now advertising for Republican applicants. According to the Chairperson's statement in the Herald-Mail, they aim to complete the process by the end of the legislative session. The selected name is sent to the Governor, who forwards it to the Senate Executive Nominations Committee for review, possible interviews, and a recommendation to the full Senate for a confirmation vote.

If the name isn't forwarded in enough time before the legislative session ends, the nominee becomes a recess appointment and starts serving. The State Senate will still need to vote on the nomination in the next session.

Once the Central Committee announces its selection, communications for and against may be sent to the Governor and Senate Executive Nominations Committee members. The Executive Nominations Committee consists of 19 members. Washington County Senator Mike McKay is one of the four Republican members.

