

UNITY & COMMUNITY THE DEMOCRATIC CLUB

THE DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF HOT SPRINGS VILLAGE

Serving our community for more than 20 years, fighting disinformation and voting restrictions!



From the Pen of 'Nita Brown

I'm happy to let you know, that I'm now the Saline County representative to the Democrat Party of Arkansas (DPA) State Committee!

The Democratic Party of Saline County had a vacancy for a female representative to the State Committee - each county has four representatives, two males and two females. I've wanted this position for some time and am grateful to the members of the Dem Party of Saline County for electing me. So, I ran for this open position and was elected. Oh, and did I mention that I was unopposed...?

Some good news from Garland County, Donna Winchell and Tina

Pakis received the 2023 Woman of the year award from the Virginia Clinton Kelley Democratic Club. "Their unflagging work to get out the vote, recruit volunteers, work with Democratic candidates, and undying support for women running for office stood out." Cortney Warwick McKee ran for the State Senate District 6 in 2022 and I am pleased to announce that she will run again in 2024 for this same position. Her opponent will be the vile Matt McKee (no relation to Cortney). Hot Springs Village is in District 6 and we need to actively support Cortney's campaign.

Michelle Gates Roberts ran for House of Representatives District 84 in 2022 and I am very happy to announce that she will run in 2024 for the same office. Hot Springs Village is not in District 84, but surrounding areas are, and even though she doesn't directly sup-

(Continued on next page)

Josh Price warns about paper ballots at annual Fun'Raiser



If you've watched television lately, you've probably seen ads urging Arkansas to return to paper ballots for state and federal elections.

Josh Price, secretary of the Democratic Party of Arkansas and a former election commissioner, spoke at the May Fun'Raiser in Hot Springs Village and urged the audience to speak out against this change.

"Arkansas switched to using voting tabulating machines to make the election process MORE safe, secure, speedy, and efficient," Josh said. "Going back to hand-counted paper ballots is truly a step backwards."

My recommendation is for counties to continue to use the current voting machine.

continue to use the current voting machines. As a compromise (maybe in

(Continued on page 7)

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Annual Fun'raiser is a success!



















President's Message (continued from page 1)

port the Village, Michelle attends all of our events and if elected will keep a close eye on Village issues. We supported Michelle in 2022 and we need to support her campaign again in 2024.

More exciting news is the Democratic Party of Arkansas is finalizing their job description for the first field organizer, who they hope to hire by the end of July. They will be recruiting locally and nationally. Having this position filled will be a huge asset for our issues and our candidates in the next election.

Our board has voted to support CAPES (Citizens for Arkansas Public Education and Students). CAPES is a nonpartisan movement of teachers, parents, students, former students, and concerned citizens interested in preserving public education in Arkansas.

Dem Club member Rose Wise has agreed to be the Field Organizer for the Dem Club, and has an article about this initiative in this newsletter. You'll receive an invitation soon to a meeting we're hosting in July to give our members an opportunity to learn more about this issue. In the meantime, if you want to learn more about it, the website is www.arkcapes.com

In August we will have a presentation from VortexPAC, which Chris Jones co-founded. VortexPAC will recruit, train and support Democratic candidates to flip all four of Arkansas' U.S. congressional districts and build a grassroots movement to bring long-term political change to Arkansas. Invitations to this event will be going out in early August. For more information, go to .vortexpac.com/















Clock is ticking on LEARNS petition

By Rose Wise

The clock is ticking.

Citizens for Arkansas Public Education and Students (CAPES) has received final language approval and has less than six weeks under Arkansas law to secure 54,422 signatures of registered Arkansas voters on ITS veto referendum. This 6 percent of the votes in the last gubernatorial election will place the veto referendum on the ballot for voters to choose in 2024. Armed with knowledge about this bill we are sure that voters will be supportive of the overturn effort.

By now most of you know something about the Arkansas LEARNS bill, a 145-page omnibus law passed with undue haste by the Arkansas legislature in the recently completed session. It was rushed through without proper consideration with all Democrats and only six Republicans opposing it. Most of you will see how destructive it is to a state with high intergenerational poverty and an underfunded educational system.

For the vast majority of impoverished children, public education is the only way to break out and have a better life. While requiring a \$50,000 starting salary, the bill does not reward experienced teachers and actually removes their existing job protections and makes no provisions at all for other workers at our schools. The \$50,000 number came directly from a Democratic bill that failed to pass, and is the sugar to make the poison taste better.

But the worst feature of this bill is the voucher program which allows students to take \$7,500 out of the local school district to attend private for-profit, religious or home schools. It will primarily benefit students whose parents have resources for private transportation as well as the sophistication to use the bureaucracy. Private schools are not required to provide for transportation, special needs programming or nutritional support through lunch and breakfast and after school feeding programs. And unlike public schools, these private and religious schools can pick and choose the students they wish to educate.

It doesn't take a crystal ball to see that if LEARNs is enacted we can expect larger classes, resegregationation of our schools, rural school closures and consolidation of schools in wide geographic areas as money is taken out of local public schools. Entire rural communities will be threatened as families move away to avoid lengthy bus rides for their children. Some school districts that are threatened will be seeking tax millage increases, which if enacted, will shift more costs to sen-



Rose Wise rcollects signatures on the CAPES petition at the Juneteenth celebration in Hot Springs.

iors and other low income property owners creating additional stress on these communities.

The Democratic Club of Hot Springs Village can be an important participant in this effort to pass this nonpartisan Veto of the LEARNS Bill. We will be seeking both volunteers and signers. Our tentative plan is to provide training and pick-up and delivery of petitions. You can help by first checking your voter registration and registering in Arkansas if you haven't already.

Contact Rose Wise at pensacolarose@gmail.com or 573-529-8849 if you are interested in volunteering. Watch for our petition and if you haven't signed by July 10 call and we will arrange to bring the petition to you or meet you at a public location. Watch your social media for updates and programming related to our efforts. Democrats can once again make a huge difference in the future of Arkansas!

Winchell, Pakis are VCK's Women of the Year

Donna Winchell, who serves on the Dem Club Board of Directors, and Tina Pakis received the 2023 Woman of the Year award at the VCK Democratic Women's Beans & Cornbread event in March.

The Woman of the Year is presented annually by the Board of Directors to a woman who has made a significant contribution to the mission and goals of the organization, to support and help elect democratic candidates, to encourage

and support Democratic women running for office, to seek truth and justice in government, and to increase diversity and inter-cultural understanding in our community.

For the first time, two incredibly deserving women were selected: Tina and Donna. Their unflagging work to get out the vote, recruit volunteers, work for Democratic candidates, and undying support for women running for office stood out.

Upcoming Events

Get educated on LEARNS/CAPES

So what is LEARNS and what is the Citizens for Arkansas Public Education and Students (CAPES) doing to help save public education in Arkansas? The HSV Dem Club and the HSV Liberal Ladies are holding a special educational session to arm you with the facts about this key issue and what you can do to help. The speaker is CAPES Executive Director Steve Grappe.

The event is July 13, 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. at the Ponce de Leon Center (next to Woodlands Auditorium), 1101 DeSoto Blvd. Beverages and appetizers will be served. RSPV to nancybaum02@gmail.com

Chris Jones will bring VORTEX to HSV on Aug. 24

Dr. Chris Jones, 2022 candidate for governor, is bringing his Vortex PAC campaign to Hot Springs Village in August in an event sponsored by the HSV Dems and the HSV Liberal Ladies

Watch your email for more information about this event. Vortex' goal is to flip all four of Arkansas' congressional districts and build a grassroots movement to bring long-term political change to Arkansas. It seeks to recruit, train and support Democratic candidates in all four of the congressional districts.

Blueplate luncheon is July 18

Arnie Holtberg, who published a thoughtful guest editorial on the topic of gun violence in the Sunday Democrat-Gazette last month, will lead the discussion on that topic at our next Blue Plate Luncheon on July 18, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Diamante Clubhouse in the private Diamond Room.

Arnie is an educator and member of the POA governmental Affairs Committee - come and join him to share your ideas on the subject.

Reservations for the event will be accepted from the first 25 guests to respond. The \$15 lunch will be a choice of a small spinach/strawberry/feta salad with a roll, or two minicroissant chicken salad sandwiches with chips. Tea or coffee are \$2 extra. The price includes tax and tip; bring cash or a check made out to Jane Browning.

This luncheon fills up quickly, so make your reservations now by emailing browning.jane54@gmail.com.



Watch for quarterly meeting email

Watch your email for news about our July 28 quarterly meeting! We promise a guest speaker, fun, games, food and entertainment!

Don't miss it!

Be a billboard backer

Our billboard is seen by thousands of motorists on Hwy 7 - 24/7, 365 days a year and sends a strong message about HSV Democrats - we are here and we're serious about saving democracy. Your donations will

make it possible to reach our \$2,000 goal.



We're hoping to raise enough money to not only keep our billboard in its prime location, but also to update our billboard message geared to-

ward the 2024 election year.

You can help our club make a difference! Donations are very much appreciated - you can make a one-time donation or a recurring donation by visiting our website: hsvdemocrats.com

Don't let this:



Become this:



Saline Library still under fire

The Saline County Library is still under censorship fire after the Saline County Quorum Court approved the first of three readings of a proposed amendment to take away the library board's authority to hire and fire staff, instead giving it to the county judge.

The judge would also be given the power over the library budget and would review any changes to rules, policies and procedures.

Three readings are required before an amendment can be approved and the court is expected to approve the amendment as early as next month.

The move is part of a quorum court majority to enforce censorship in the library and most likely fire Saline Library Director Patty Hector who declined to honor their resolution asking librarians to put some books out of young readers' reach.

The five-members Library Board is appointed by the sitting county judge to 5-year terms. The quorum court members approved the appointment of Jamie Clemmer to replace Caroline Robinson, who resigned last month before her term ended.

Protesters turned out en mass at the meeting.





















photos by **Cindy Rowland Bowden**



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Paper Ballots (continued from page 1)

smaller counties), counties can opt to hand count the paper ballots in the event of a run-off for their peace of mind.

Josh talked about the disadvantages of using hand-counted paper ballots. "It's like going to a store and paying for something in cash and being given a hand-written paper receipt for your transaction. If you lose that receipt, that's it. You have no other record of your transaction, and if there is a problem with the item you purchased, it's just your word against the word of the business owner."

Contrary to what the right-wing supporters of paper ballots claim, the change will not make voting more secure. Humans

VOTE!

Be responsible!

VOTE

can't read or change bar codes, Price said, but they CAN easily change or add marks to a handcounted paper ballot. This makes hand-counted paper ballots much more prone to fraud. In addition, most poll workers are not cybersecurity experts or

In addition, most poll workers are not cybersecurity experts or computer hackers "If you leave these folks alone and unattended with voting machines, they will not know how to 'hack into' the machines to change the results. However, ANYONE with a pen can change a mark on a hand-counted paper ballot with ease."

More facts provided by Price on

the issue of paper ballots vs. voter tabulators:

A lot of folks at the Capitol have been asking me about the accuracy, efficiency, and security of hand-counted paper ballots. Here are some quick talking points I've come up with.

Paper ballots are MORE prone to election fraud.

- Poll workers or election officials are technically able to change the voter's mark on the ballot. They cannot change the mark made by the machine.
- Paper ballots can be lost or destroyed. Without a digital record or scan of the ballot as a backup, those votes are just gone.

Paper ballots are MORE prone to human error.

- Imagine a bank teller counting \$10,000 in one-dollar bills compared to a money counting machine doing it.
- The teller may make a mistake or maybe even pocket a few bills. The machine won't.
- Question: If you were a business owner depositing a large sum of cash into your bank account, would you feel more comfortable with a bank teller or a bill machine counting it?

Paper ballots will take MUCH longer to count.

This is especially true in larger counties like Washington,

Benton, and Pulaski (with 267,000 registered voters).

• The candidates and the public will have to wait days (if not weeks) for the official results, unless more poll workers are hired to count the ballots, which then means an increased election budget from the county and SOS.

The current voter tabulators utilize paper ballots AND have TRIPLE protection.

- Currently, when someone votes, they insert a blank paper ballot (with a barcode on the side) into the voting machine.
- After they are finished voting, the machine prints their selections onto the ballot and returns it to the voter.
 - The voter can visually inspect the paper ballot to make sure their selections are correct before they insert it into the vote tabulator.
 - When the vote tabulator accepts the paper ballot, it records the voter's selections AND also makes a photocopy scan of the paper ballot which it saves as a JPG, then the paper ballot falls into the locked box below the machine.
 - Right now, there are THREE security checkpoints where your vote is being recorded:
 - 1) the scan of your selections on your paper ballot (digital record)
 - 2) the saved photocopy of your paper ballot (JPG image)
- 3) the physical ballot itself (in the locked box)
- If any irregularities are found during the vote tabulation process, these three records can be checked against each other for accuracy to determine where the problem occurred.
- If we move to hand-counted paper ballots, then that is just ONE level of security -- the paper ballot itself. There will be no digital record and no photocopy scan of the ballot to check if an irregularity occurs

Undervotes

- An undervote is when a voter leaves a certain race blank (the voter doesn't vote for any candidate). Undervotes are fairly common.
- When an undervote occurs on a hand-counted paper ballot, what is stopping a dishonest poll worker or election commissioner from simply marking the box for one of the candidates to give them extra votes? They didn't change the voter's mark, but just added a new mark to a blank section of the ballot, so no one would be the wiser.

News from the Democratic Party of Arkansas

DPA officials meet with loyal Van Buren County Dems

By Grant Tenille

Earlier this month, Vice
Chair of Counties Dustin
Parsons and I drove to Clinton to visit with some of
the most loyal Democrats
in Arkansas. For decades,
on the first Monday of
each month, at the Western Sizzlin' in Clinton, the
Van Buren County Democrats have gathered to
raise money for the community and organize
Democratic voters. I met a
couple of longtime Justices

Grant Tenille, chair of the Democratic Party of Arkansas visits with the Van Buren County Democrats at the Western Sizzlin' in Clinton. The group meets every month on the first Monday to raise money for the community and organize Democratic voters.

of the Peace and the former County Judge responsible for improving Highway 65.

Each person I spoke to said the same thing: There's something stirring, a sense that momentum is shifting, presenting Democrats with a new opportunity to change Arkansas's political landscape.

When Treasurer Goldi Gaines and I visited Russellville earlier this week (pictured above), it was more of the same. The Democratic Party of Pope County is organizing, preparing to capitalize as Arkansans grow weary of Governor Sanders's callous disregard for Arkansas and her people. With each passing day, her "me first" agenda and ceaseless pandering to the MAGA crowd remind Arkansans that we are just a stepping stone for an ambitious and impatient political operator.

Dustin has made it his mission to expand the impact of our county parties. Just last night he traveled four hours roundtrip to Johnson County for their monthly meeting. He's also making sure they know their state party has their back and continues to see growth. Goldi shows up

at the party headquarters every week to raise more money to finance our operations. At her urging, several new Finance Council members have signed up to make investments in your party. (You can join them here.)

The national party is also paying close attention to our work right now. And they continue to be impressed at what we are building.

Vice Chair Jannie Cotton and Finance Director Christina Mullinax are in Minneapolis at the Democratic National Committee securing more national investment and expanding our network. The growth in our monthly donor program has everyone at the meeting talking. Since December we have seen our Heart of the Party membership grow by more than 300, including over 75 just this month, which is one for each of our state's 75 counties.

I'm here in Little Rock with Dustin, Goldi, and staff preparing for our next State Committee and planning for the 2024 election, as filing is just under six months away. It doesn't end.

Diversity, equity, inclusion? Oh, my!!

If you're a secret fan of Chic-fil-A, the chicken sandwich chain conservatives once loved for its vocal opposition to same-sex marriage, we've got



good news. You may be able to eat there guilt-free!

The Atlanta-based company recently announced it has hired

an executive in charge of diversity, equity, and inclusion, which set off an avalanche of pearl-clutching tweets and a boycott by conservatives, crying that the company has "gone woke." The chain was once the darling of the right-wing set, inspiring endorsements from Sarah Palin and others.

Year Post-Dobbs

By Christina Mullinax

DPA Finance Director

(Printed in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette on Friday Jun 23 used by permission)

Reproductive justice: a world "where all people have the social, political and economic power and resources to make healthy decisions about our gender, bodies, sexuality and families for ourselves and our communities."

This beautiful vision of reproductive justice inspired me to



organize rallies in Arkansas from 2010 to 2020 and to be a paid organizer for Planned Parenthood from March 2012 to June 2019.

I remember that Tuesday in February 2013, standing in the Capitol rotunda on our first lobby day and crying tears of joy when I heard that Gov. Mike Beebe had vetoed the 20-week abortion ban. Abor-

tion was then available through the 25th week of pregnancy, the widely accepted point of viability by mainstream science and medical experts.

One year ago this week, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade in the Dobbs v. Jackson decision, triggering a law totally banning abortion in our state.

Pregnant people in Arkansas now must make other arrangements to terminate a pregnancy. Their options include travel to Kansas where voters overwhelmingly protected the right to safe and legal abortion, travel farther to other safe and legal states, or self-manage their termination with mifepristone and misoprostol--a safe but not so legal (in Arkansas) pill regimen.

What a long way from reason we are now.

The movement to legalize abortion was led by faith leaders who cared about the women they saw dying in their congregations from botched abortions that led to sepsis. They quickly saw that keeping abortion illegal only made it lethal.

Far from being a simple issue of the innocuous sounding "Pro-Life" versus the flippant sounding "Pro-Choice," the decision of if and when to parent has always been a deeply personal one. Outcomes of pregnancy aren't always a perfectly healthy and fully formed child. One in four pregnancies end in natural termination or miscarriage.

Each pregnancy is different, and unless you've carried a fetus in your womb, you cannot know the enormous physical and emotional toll that it takes. These are complicated decisions, and we really should trust individuals to know what is best.

I led weekly phone banks across Arkansas to identify likely supporters and was struck by how many people in conservative areas told me they felt the decision on abortion should be left up to the woman. People everywhere have unique and nuanced opinions on abortion and most--over 70 percent, as it turns out--want abortion to remain safe and legal.

I worked with hundreds of passionate volunteers, many of whom were older and recalled the horrors of illegal abortion. One woman told me she had watched as an old woman (she called her "a witch") laid her mother out on their kitchen table for a procedure.

One woman, a former Catholic nun, had been a hospital nurse in California and witnessed Tijuana Tuesdays when women who had been to Tijuana for abortions returned home and, finding themselves in sepsis, sought help in the ER. Some lived and some didn't.

In 2019, our state Legislature, now overrun by conservative extremists, passed nine reproductive health-care restrictions. I was heartbroken and overwhelmed with feelings of ineffectiveness as a Planned Parenthood organizer. I decided to switch my efforts to working to elect more Democrats and have been on staff at the Democratic Party of Arkansas since July 2019.

I have not regretted it one day and have continually been inspired by the brave women and men elected as Democrats in our state Legislature.

That brutal 2019 legislative session that spurred me to work for the Democratic Party of Arkansas was surpassed by dozens of new bans and restrictions in 2021 and 2023. In fact, there have been more than 50 reproductive health restrictions and bans enacted in the past 12 years by our state legislators.

Can you name another medical procedure that has had this many restrictions imposed?

Friends, only Democrats continue to fight for bodily autonomy at our state Capitol. This year they sponsored commonsense bills that failed to receive the votes to pass. These were:

- Rep. Deborah Ferguson's constitutional amendment to enshrine reproductive freedom
- Rep. Nicole Clowney's bill to add exceptions for fetal abnormalities
- Rep. Ashley Hudson's rape and incest exception
- Rep. Denise Garner's clear framework for danger to a mother's life

Democrats lead valiantly to protect women's health and save lives but they need our help. Let's support them, and elect more of them so one day we can restore reason to our state's laws and policies.

The promise of reproductive justice is possible if we envision it together and put our time and treasure into electing more leaders who envision it too.

Democratic Party of Arkansas Finance Director Christina Mullinax is the 2023 recipient of the Planned Parenthood Great Plains "Persistent Spirit" award.



To sustain our Party, we need you to commit to being a monthly donor. Arkansas Democrats have to come together to work to protect our incumbent legislators, bust the supermajority of Republicans, and build the party.



Become a Friend of the Party

For \$50 - \$124+ become a friend of the party, and get a thank you note from our Chair, a DPA bumper sticker, an annual thank you call from a DPA officer, a Heart of the Party lapel pin, a DPA magnet, and a personal thank you call from the Chair when you donate.



Build the Party

Donate to help build the party.

For \$25 - \$49 a month, you'll get a thank you note from our Chair, a DPA bumper sticker, a DPA magnet, and an annual thank you call from a DPA officer.



Build the Bench

Donate \$10 - \$24 monthly to help us build the bench. Invest and expect a thank you note from a party leader, a DPA bumper sticker, and a DPA magnet.



Build Back Better

Donate \$5 - \$9 to help us build back our party better.

Sustain our party, get a thank you note from the chair, a DPA bumper sticker, and build for the future.

For more information, contact Sarah Lindsey Harrison at Sarah@ArkDems.org or 501-374-2361.





Democratic Club of Hot Springs Village Membership Form

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*Lifetime and Century Club Memberships are listed in the quarterly Newsletter.

* All memberships are for one year and have a recurring annual fees (*with the exception of a Lifetime Membership).

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P. O. Box 8693, Hot Springs Village, AR 71910

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE ON JANUARY OF EACH YEAR