

THE BRAY

The latest news and updates from the Greenville County Democratic Party



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Believe it: We can do anything

BY KATE FRANCH



My fellow Democrats,
It's March and filing for the 2018 November election has begun! The big blue wave is gathering force – Democrats are organizing in precincts, gathering at conventions across the state, and revving up for campaign season. I hope you feel the buzz of anticipation and excitement.

A rousing GCDP County Convention kicked off the month. Several hundred delegates, alternates, engaged voters, candidates, SCDP staff, and visitors convened at the Fuller Normal Industrial Institute to

Chair's message (continued)

Continued from previous page

conduct various aspects of party business.

We elected party leadership for the 2018-2020 term, adopted resolutions compiled from those submitted during precinct reorganization (report available at greenvilledemocrats.com), heard from prospective Democratic candidates, elected our delegates and alternates to the SCDP State Convention, and announced the 2017 Funderburk-Montague Volunteer of the Year (Jalen Elrod). **See the story on Page 7.**

We extend sincere gratitude to Steve Price for providing a lively invocation and Pastor Sean Dogan for deftly challenging us during his keynote address to focus on addressing the wide range of disparities that comprise Greenville County. Thank you as well to the Honorable Lillian Brock Flemming and former GCDP Chair Eric Graben for conducting the proceedings as temporary and permanent convention president.

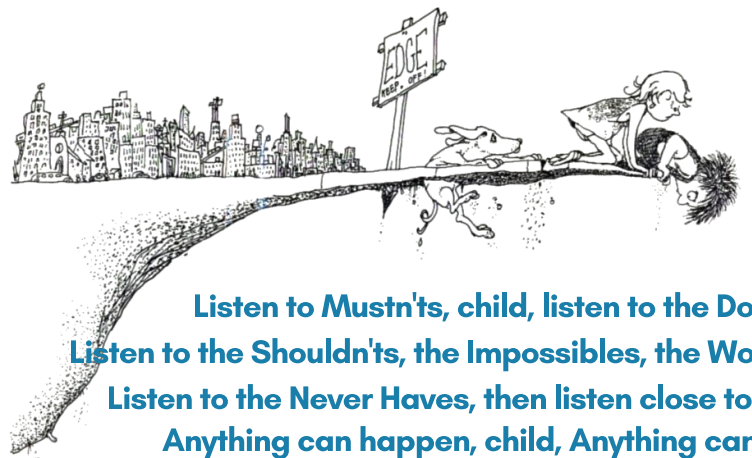
Although we are shifting attention to preparing for the 2018 mid-term, 2019, and 2020 elections, I do want to acknowledge our outgoing officers. Dexter Reaves and Grady Patterson have provided invaluable support as vice chairs and insightful commitment to establishing the strong foundation on which the GCDP will build for the future. Both have graciously agreed to continue to chair the Candidate Development and Core Messaging strategic unit committees respectively. Ingrid Erwin steps down after serving

several terms as our State Executive Committeewoman and on the SCDP Executive Council. No one writes a more thorough committee report than Ingrid! She also astutely participated in development of the strategic plan. Please extend your appreciation to each for their significant contributions when you next see them.

The next big event on the calendar is the SCDP Dem Weekend on April 20-21 at the Columbia Convention Center, 1101 Lincoln St., Columbia, 29201. Events are open to the public, but only delegates or alternates can vote. I hope you'll plan to attend!

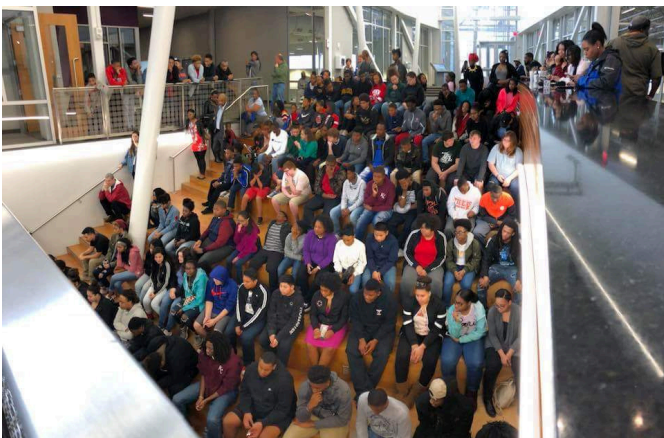
Then it's all eyes on November.

I had the pleasure of closing the convention with what will be my anthem this year, the poem "Listen to the Mustn'ts" by Shel Silverstein:



Let's make **anything** happen!

Kate



220 students attend STEM camp and screening of Black Panther

Greenville Young Democrats joined with sponsor 96.3 The Block to host a special event during Black History month in February. On President's Day (Feb. 19th) a school holiday, more than 220 students, from more than 15 community centers and youth organizations around Greenville County took part in a STEM camp at Greenville Tech's Center for Manufacturing and Innovation and wrapped up their day at the Regal Cinema for a showing of the movie Black Panther.

Calendar of Events

March

27

Resist Greenville Meet & Greet
Los Amigos, 2009 E. Main St, Easley
Info on Facebook at goo.gl/srDWQK

28

Furman High Noon Lecture
"How Emerging Adults Construct the
Relationship Between Religion &
Science" - Upcountry History Museum

29

GCDP Executive Committee meeting,
5:30, Hughes Main Library.
Precinct Office Training, 6:45 PM, Hughes
Main Library

30

Candidate primary filing ends at Noon.
If you are considering running for any
state or local offices contact GCDP,
864-232-5531

07

GHS Community Health Summit
10 am- 2:30 pm
TD Convention Center. More info: goo.gl/MkSArF

07

Candidate & Campaign Training
10 am- 2:00 pm
Berea Branch Library, 111 N. Highway 25 Bypass, Greenville
29617. Contact Michelle Macrina, 864-978-2470

09

WREN Summit
Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center
For more info: <https://goo.gl/lbmt8M>

09

DWGC Lunch Meeting
Speaker: Democratic candidate for governor,
Marguerite Willis
12:15 pm- West End Community Center
RSVP: 864-232-5531

14

DWGC Monthly Coffee Meet Up
9 am- Grateful Brew
501 S. Pleasantburg Drive

20

SCDP Convention Weekend in Columbia.
For information: scdp.org

28

GCDP Breakfast Meeting, 8:30 a.m.
Upstate Circle of Friends
Speaker: Doug Dent, Greenville County
Redevelopment Authority

April

04

Young Democrats April Meeting
6-7:30 pm at GCDP HQ
1300-J E. Washington St, Greenville 29607

County schools support licensing DACA students

In late February, the Greenville County School Board approved a resolution calling on the South Carolina Legislature to rescind a 2008 law that prohibits Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students from receiving professional licenses. Since 2012, DACA has helped more than 7,000 students in South Carolina advance their education. But these same students are prevented from obtaining state professional and vocational licenses for more than 40 occupations including cosmetology, welding, and nursing.

State Representative Neal Collins (R- Pickens) filed H4435 at the end of 2017. It would allow DACA recipients to receive in-state tuition, occupational licensing, and lottery scholarships if they meet qualifications. The bill has picked up a handful of sponsors and is currently in the House Judiciary Committee. For information on its status: <https://goo.gl/9YMcLe>.

Tastings on the Town

One hundred guests attended the GCDP fundraiser “Tastings on the Town” at Artisan Traders in the Village of the West End. The evening featured appetizers from Chef Daniel Lopez and Black Sheep Catering and assorted desserts homemade by local Democrats. Golden Brown and Delicious also provided their signature gourmet donuts for the occasion. Guests sampled a variety of specialty wines as well as craft beer from Growler Haus as they mingled and listened to West End String Band.

In keeping with the “tasting” theme, award-winning chef, Karen Palladino Curtis, offered her common-sense approach to wine and food pairing. The evening also included an inspirational oral history of the Democratic Party in South Carolina by Carlyle Steele, updates on the exciting work of Young Dems by Courtney Thomas, and a presentation from Steve Price on Democratic Circle Dinners, a newly launched project to build our Democratic community and raise money to support the work of the GCDP.



<http://ruthtoddphotographyllc.shootproof.com/>

The newly formed fundraising committee extends a special thank you to Tastings on the Town hosts, sponsors, and guests whose generous support helped make the evening a big success. Committee members Jane Davis, Kate Franch, Anita LeBold, Steve Price, Regina Waldrep, and Corey Urbina are already planning future fun events for the GCDP family. Anyone interested in joining the committee should contact Corey Urbina at c_urbina@charter.net, 202-236-7939.

Democratic Circle Dinners

Circle Dinners provide individuals with an opportunity to share a meal and some laughter and fun with fellow Dems and also raise money for GCDP. There is power in breaking bread together. As Alan Wolfet says, “food is symbolic of love when words are inadequate.” If you are ready to spread the love by hosting a Circle Dinner, all it takes is following these seven steps:

1. Invite a group of friends and acquaintances over. You decide on the number.
2. Provide the food and drinks. Options range from an elaborate sit down to a backyard cookout.
3. Start the get together with a few ice-breaker exercises (sample packet will be provided).
4. Share information about the GCDP (information will be provided).
5. Pass the hat and ask guests to give what they can.
6. Encourage your guests to host a Circle Dinner of their own.
7. Send money collected to the GCDP Treasurer. Pat yourself on the back for a job well done.

We need volunteers for this project to take flight. If you are interested in hosting a Circle Dinner, email Steve Price at Steve.Price53@gmail.com. Thanks for sharing the love and remember that a small group of committed folks can change the world.

Upstate gunsense org rallies at Statehouse

Carrying a unified message grounded in common sense and fueled by the Parkland, FL, shooting just days before, a group of women and men from the Upstate chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America joined hundreds of others from across South Carolina at the Statehouse for Advocacy Day.

The red-shirt clad members of Moms Demand Action were there to reach out to all the elected representatives for face-to-face discussions of legislation currently wending its way through the Statehouse as well as legislative priorities yet to be proposed.

The dual goal was protesting permitless carry (SB449) and advocating for HB516. HB516 would close the "Charleston Loophole" that enabled Dylan Roof to buy the gun he used to murder nine parishoners at Mother Emanuel Church in Charleston.

A rally on the Statehouse steps brought voices for gun advocacy together. Just days after the Parkland shootings and with a recent Code Red lockdown in their own school fresh in their memories, among the most moving were the voices of a teacher and students from Wando High School in Charleston.

Students Carly Knight and Eva Chillura are acutely aware of the the risks they face each day just going to school "Every day you go into school, something could happen," said Chillura, 15. "You kind of push it to the back of your mind."

After this month's school shooting in Parkland, FL, that threat has become



even more real. "I went in the day after, looked out every single window and said, 'Would I survive this fall or this jump, or what could be used as a weapon?'" said Knight, 18.

State Sen. Greg Gregory (R-Lancaster) who has cosponsored a bill with Democratic colleague Sen. Marlon Kimpson from Charleston, also addressed the crowd.

The Florida shooting followed a mass shooting in Las Vegas, sending a message "there is no safe place any longer," Gregory said. "Thinking and praying about mass shootings is not going to make them go away."

Gregory's bill, S. 516, would close the 'Charleston loophole'. It would expand the number of days a person must wait to buy a gun to five days from three while a background check is completed, giving authorities more time to determine whether a would-be buyer legally can purchase a gun.

Gregory said his proposal is "low-hanging fruit" that could help curb gun violence.

Fanning out to talk with individual legislators, the message was clear: #EnoughIsEnough and #ExpectUs back in November.

What can we all do now?

- Talk to your legislators about permitless carry. Despite the fact that 79 percent of South Carolina voters oppose it, it is now just one vote away from being on McMasters' desk. #WhylsThat
- Find out how candidates running for Statehouse stand on gun legislation. Let them know what you **do** want as well as what you **don't** want. Get involved with organizations like Moms Demand Action Upstate.
- #BeTheChange you want to see in the world.

Gunsense: The chasm between public interest and legislative effort

Despite the growing demand for sensible gun regulations from both Republicans and Democrats, gun owners and NRA members, South Carolina legislators continue to promote dangerously lenient bills. #WhyIsThat.

97 percent of US voters support background checks on all gun sales (including 97 percent of gun owners, and 97 percent of Republicans).

– Quinnipiac National Polling, Feb. 20, 2018

67 percent of voters say it is too easy to buy a gun in the U.S. today.

– Quinnipiac National Polling, Feb. 20, 2018

South Carolina has some of the least restrictive gun laws in the country.

– The Washington Post, updated Feb. 20, 2018

In the SC Statehouse, 50 bills related to gun laws – both more lenient and more restrictive – have been filed since 2017. None have passed. In the previous two-year session, 68 gun bills were filed; 3 passed.

– The Greenville News, Feb. 23, 2018

76 percent of South Carolina voters oppose permitless

carry – the right to carry a concealed handgun in public with neither a permit nor any safety training requirement.

– US Marketing Research, conducted Feb 19-20, 2018

Since Arizona enacted permitless carry bill, the number of gun-related aggravated assaults rose 44 percent.

– Arizona Department of Public Safety

Missouri became a permitless carry state in 2017. St.

Louis alone recorded a 23 percent increase in aggravated assaults with a gun in 2017 over 2016.

– St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department

Permitless carry legislation has already been approved in the South Carolina House. The companion Senate bill, SB 449, is awaiting action. If approved provisions preventing visually impaired citizens and convicted criminals from legally carrying a concealed weapon will be eliminated.

– Moms Demand Action

Calling all volunteers: We want to get to know you better

If you are currently a volunteer with the GCDP, you are used to seeing emails from Nadia Land-Greene dotted with rows of American Flags and crammed with opportunities.



To each of you who has raised your hand and helped with phone banking for a candidate, attended an event, assisted with managing an event, or participated in your precinct elections, thank you.

And we'd like to get to know you better. You have seen some requests in Nadia's emails for you to go out and complete our volunteer form. We have rebuilt our volunteer interest form to include information on your specific interests, your skills, and your availability to help us better match your interests with the diverse needs we have.

We are expecting a really busy election season with, we hope, leaving no seat unopposed. And we have work to do to support legislation that matters to Democrats while doing all we can to block bills that we oppose. Knowing more about you can help us send you specific opportunities whether it's phone banking for a candidate, calling voters to encourage them to call legislators to support/oppose specific legislation, or helping get people to voter registration drives.

If you are a current volunteer, please take a moment to complete this form at www.greenvilledemocrats.com/volunteer and update your information. If you haven't volunteered yet, we hope you'll get involved. This will be a great year to be a Democrat, especially in South Carolina where you will part of changing the color of this state from red to purple to blue!

A blue wave is coming. Get on your board!

Democratic Party elects new Greenville County leadership

Kate Franch was elected to her second term as county chair at the Greenville County Democratic Party's biennial convention last week.

Joining Franch is an active leadership team "of native Greenvillians and transplants and spanning the age range and communities that define a Greenville County that consistently ranks as one of the most vibrant and appealing places to live in the country," notes Franch. "The officers elected at the convention continue the GCDP's tradition of reflecting the diversity of our Upstate home." Four of the officers are new to the leadership team.

Your 2018-2020 executive team

Chair
Kate Franch

First Vice Chair
Jalen Elrod

Second Vice Chair
Whitney Wright

Third Vice Chair
Tina Belge

State Executive Committeeman
Chris Shipman

State Executive Committeewoman
Katy Lentz

Alternate State Executive Committeewoman
Roxanne Cordonier

Alternate State Executive Committeeman
Cass Tyson

In addition to electing leadership, the assembled 141 delegates also voted on a slate of resolutions to be submitted to the South Carolina Democratic Party for consideration in the state platform. They ranged from investing in free technical college education to supporting common sense gun controls, favoring a single-payer healthcare system, supporting the development of alternative energy, and opposing any offshore drilling or mining.

The convention was also an opportunity for candidates for local, state, and federal offices to address the assembly of 250 Democrats.

Gubernatorial candidates Phil Noble, Rep. James Smith, and Marguerite Willis discussed their records and positions.

The convention also heard from **Melvin Whittenburg**, running for secretary of state; **Hosea Cleveland** and **Mary Geren**, running for Congress from the Third Congressional District; **Brandon Brown**, **JT Davis**, **Will Morin**, and **Lee Turner** for the Fourth Congressional District; **Rep. Chandra Dillard** (incumbent) for SC House District 23; **Helen Pendarvis** for SC House District 35; **Lucy Beam Hoffman** for SC House District 10; **Councilwoman Xanthene Norris** (incumbent) for Greenville County Council District 23; and **Jevarus Howard** for Greenville County Council District 19.

The new executive team takes office immediately and will serve a two-year term. "We look forward to working with the ever expanding number of Democrats in the Upstate to grow the party's reach and influence over the next two years," Franch added.

Gubernatorial voices from the convention

“We can do great things, but not with a broken government.”
Phil Noble”

“Paycheck fairness needs to happen in South Carolina.”
James Smith”

“Teachers are overworked and underpaid.”
Marguerite Willis”

PARTY LEADERSHIP

KATE FRANCH

Greenville County Chair

DEXTER L. REAVES

1st Vice Chair

GRADY PATTERSON

2nd Vice Chair

WHITNEY WRIGHT

3rd Vice Chair

GAYBRIEL GIBSON

Secretary

ANITA LEBOLD

Treasurer

INGRID ERWIN

State Executive Com. Delegate

CHRISTOPHER SHIPMAN

State Executive Com. Delegate

ROXANNE CORDONIER

State Executive Com. Alternate

MICHAEL MCCORD

State Executive Com. Alternate

JAKE ERWIN

Voter Protection Chair

LAURA HAIGHT

Communications Coordinator

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Thank you.

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