

THE BRAY

the voice of the

GCDP

GREENVILLE COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The latest news and updates from the Greenville County Democratic Party



Sarai Bautista prepares to register voters through the Vote in Style initiative.

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You can help protect the vote in November

BY KATE FRANCH



Dear Democrats,

Is my vote safe? That's one of the critical questions being asked today. Not only are we in constant discussion about whether Democratic candidates will garner the votes needed to bring change to the State House and Congress, we are also becoming acutely aware of the vulnerability of the voting system in South Carolina. In a national study, the Center for American Progress evaluated the security of election management and equipment in all 50 states. It gave South Carolina a D. <https://ampr.gs/2P5NxK5>

Protect the vote (continued)

Our voting machines are old and have an extremely high risk of failure and of being hacked. In addition, without the capacity to generate a paper trail there is no backup of the votes we cast electronically. A July report from the Committee on House Administration determined that "It is nearly impossible to determine if paperless voting machines have been hacked and if vote tallies have been altered." In other words, the audit system for protecting and validating the very instrument that enables, and is supposed to ensure, democracy "by the people" is severely impaired.

South Carolina received \$6 million from a recent congressional allocation earmarked for upgrading voting systems across the nation. Our state legislature allocated \$4 million to refresh the current system in advance of the November election and a recurring \$4 million to apply toward eventual replacement. The price tag for replacing the system, however, is estimated to be close to \$54 million – an illustration of yet another way in which South Carolina lags far behind almost every other state. (<http://bit.ly/2vRd15G>) For more information about this topic see pages 4 and 6.

What can we do? As always, we must let our elected representatives know that upgrading our system is of the highest priority. But the midterm election takes place in three months and changes won't be in place by then. Consider helping to protect the vote in one of these ways:

Be a Greenville County poll worker with direct impact at the actual "point of contact." Conway Belangia, director of voter registration and elections, wants to hire 500 additional poll workers for November 6 to improve efficiency and security. Any registered voter from Greenville, Anderson, Laurens, Pickens, or Spartanburg County may apply and a mandatory 3-hour training is required for this paid position. Find more information here: greenvillecounty.org/VoterRegistration/pdf/application_pollworker.pdf.

High school students may also apply to work the polls. A paid position that requires training, they must be able and willing to work the entire 6 am to 8 pm day.

Information and the application can be found here:
greenvillecounty.org/VoterRegistration/pdf/student_pollworker.pdf

Be a GCDP poll watcher. Be part of the party's effort to protect the voting process, monitor activity, and maximize Democratic voter turnout at a local precinct polling site on Election Day. Extensive training is provided to receive the credential required to represent the GCDP. Contact Headquarters for more information and to sign up. With 151 precincts to cover, we need you.

Work on a campaign to elect Democrats to office. Ultimately the problem must be addressed through the legislative process, so we must put more Democrats in office to champion this cause. The program for the GCDP's August monthly breakfast meeting is a candidate volunteer fair where you can sign up to volunteer for one of our Greenville County candidates. Drop by Upstate Circle of Friends (29 Ridgeway Drive, 29605) on Saturday, August 25, between 8:30 and 11:00 am for a bite to eat and to learn about the great folks running to address the real issues facing our state and country. Be an active part of creating the change we need and seek. [More info on page 8.]

The Blue Wave is ours to make . . . join with the GCDP and help fulfil the opportunity!

In solidarity,

Kate

Calendar of Events

August

25 GCDP Candidate Volunteer Fair/August Breakfast Meeting. 8:30-11 AM at Upstate Circle of Friends, 29 Ridgeway Dr., Greenville 29605.

30 Drinking Liberally, 6 PM at Velo Fellow, 1 Augusta St., Greenville.

27 Tariffs and The Impact on the 4th District, a Brandon Brown town hall. 6-8 PM at the Taylors Library, 316 West Main St.

30 Tariffs and The Impact on the 4th District, a Brandon Brown town hall. 6-8 PM at the Travelers Rest Library, 17 Center St.

September

01 Democratic Women Coffee Meet Up - Simpsonville, 9 AM at Panera Bread, 375 Harrison Bridge Rd., Simpsonville.

08 Greenville Democrats Care Planning Meeting, 3 PM at GCDP Headquarters, 1300-J East Washington St.

11 Tariffs and The Impact on the 4th District, a Brandon Brown town hall. 6-8 PM at the Berea Library, 111 North Highway 25 Bypass

15 Greenville Democratic Women Coffee Meetup - Greenville, 9 AM at West End Coffee Shoppe, 1021 S. Main St., Greenville

25 Tariffs and The Impact on the 4th District, a Brandon Brown town hall. 6-8 PM at the Augusta Road Library, 100 Lydia St.

05 Young Democrats of Greenville monthly meeting, 6 PM at GCDP HQ, 1300-J East Washington St.

10 Democratic Women of Greenville County monthly meeting and dinner. 5:30 PM at West End Community Center 404 Vardry St. Greenville

14 Precinct Officer Lunch noon-1 PM. For location or other information contact casstyson@gmail.com

22 GCDP September Breakfast, 8:30 a.m. at Upstate Circle of Friends, 29 Ridgeway Dr., Greenville 29605

Save the date

October 6:
SCDP Issues Conference
Details TBA

Are new paper-backed voting machines in our future?

Not so fast

BY JAKE ERWIN

VOTER PROTECTION CHAIR, SOUTH CAROLINA DEMOCRATIC PARTY

For many Americans, election integrity is a major concern. Given what has been learned about Russia's attempted manipulation of our voting process (not to mention the blatant social engineering carried out to the benefit of our current president), it is easy to imagine a nightmare scenario in which our electoral process is hijacked by those with bad intentions.

Safeguarding Our Elections

The Solution to Vulnerabilities in Election Security

Our Elections Are Vulnerable



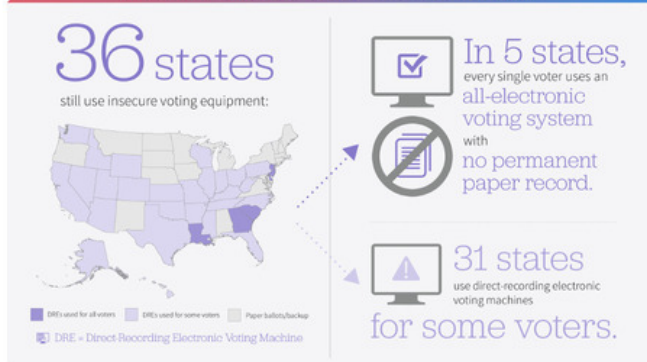
Despite the anxiety-inducing scenario, it is important to note that there have been few, if any, documented occurrences of votes being changed by outside actors physically manipulating machines or the networks that support them.

According to a Wall Street Journal report, there were nearly 150,000 attempts to penetrate South Carolina's voter-registration system on election day in 2016. After this onslaught, the South Carolina Election Commission had the state's National Guard cybersecurity team, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and a private cybersecurity firm all do assessments of our electoral systems' vulnerability to cyber attack.

There were only four devices used by the Election Commission that were reported to present potential vulnerabilities. The voting machines themselves are not connected to a network, and are theoretically safe from what is traditionally thought of as hacking: a shadowy figure dressed in black, their face lit only by the blue glow of the monitor as lines of codes fly by on the screen.

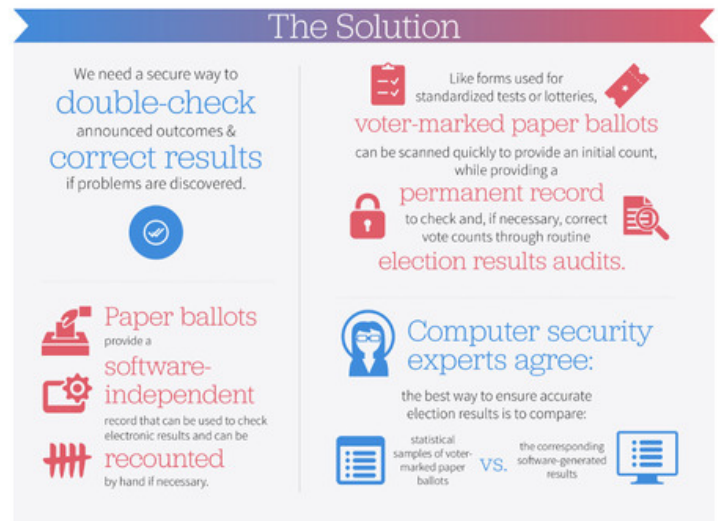
Last month, a lawsuit was filed in federal court claiming that South Carolina's voting machines are antiquated, unreliable, and vulnerable to the point of infringing upon our voting rights. The first run of these machines, now numbering over 13,000, were bought by the state in 2005 at a cost of \$34.5 million. The manufacturer claims that the machines have a functional lifespan of 15 years, but the lawsuit alleges that the machines have failed many times over the years. It should come as no surprise that the legal battle to force the state to replace the machines is being lead by Democrats. Former State Senator Phil Leventis, a Democrat from Lexington, is one of the named plaintiffs in the suit.

Which States Are Vulnerable?



infographics courtesy of www.verifiedvoting.com

The lawsuit is a longshot effort to ask the federal government to force the state to spend more money on improving election infrastructure. The South Carolina Election Commission requested \$20 million from the legislature in budget talks earlier this year, but ultimately was only given around \$4 million. An additional \$6 million in the form of a grant from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission helps, but still leaves our state far short of what would be necessary to ensure election integrity. The South Carolina Election Commission estimates that the cost to replace all of the voting machines in the state would be around \$50 million.



With all of this in the air, one cannot help but see the situation as quite grim. But Democrats should strive to handle this situation better than Republicans have when faced with their own ideas of electoral crisis. Many on the right rant and rave about voter fraud, and politicians like Kris Kobach of Kansas have made the idea that there are thousands of votes cast illegally by either non-citizens or imposters and therefore more restrictions on voting access are necessary their signature issues. Notwithstanding all that noise, all credible studies of the issue have shown that almost all allegations of fraud turn out to be baseless. There are virtually no documented cases of this kind of voter fraud. Let us instead turn away from hysteria, and seek intelligent and measured solutions.

One effective means of ensuring election integrity is for the State Legislature to step up and support the SC Election Commission with funding they have requested to upgrade our system and research safer alternatives. Democrats are generally more favorable to this plan, so the work GCDP is doing supporting our elected officials and seeking to elect new Democrats is crucial.

With the state of our current technology, the most effective route to a fair election is robust monitoring of voting locations. In South Carolina, each major political party is entitled to an observer in each polling location on election day. The South Carolina Democratic Party will be partnering with every county party to organize poll watchers with the goal of having every polling location in the state monitored, with rapid response in place for potential issues. Contact voterprotection@scdp.org if you are interested in participating in this effort, or just watch your email for more information from the GCDP.

SC voting machine vulnerabilities highlighted at LWV presentation

BY LAURA HAIGHT

Liz Howard, an attorney with the Brennan Center for Social Justice and former Deputy Commission for Elections in the state of Virginia, warned that election security in South Carolina is at significant risk.

Howard was speaking to a group of about 25 at an event organized by the League of Women Voters of Greenville County focused on cyber security and voting infrastructure. She noted that the [Center for American Progress](#) gave South Carolina a D ([ampr.gs/2Bib4of](#)) in a comprehensive nationwide study and analysis of election security. Howard also noted that the administrator password to the Ivotronic voting machines used exclusively in South Carolina (while other states have some of these machines in use, we are the only state that has this machine in every voting place) had been hacked and exposed on social media but white-hat hackers at Defcon last year.

Although that exposure puts hundreds of voting machines in a dozen states at risk, Howard could not offer assurance that [Election Systems and Software](#), the manufacturer of the equipment, ([bit.ly/2wbbmaG](#)) had taken the logical step to change that password. While the machines themselves are not connected to the Internet, the offices of the manufacturer almost certainly are. A major vulnerability could come from hacking the ES&S system and embedding malicious code into an upcoming firmware update that would be manually installed on all devices prior to the election.



Howard and the Brennan Center advocate for a system that relied more on paper ballots and optical scanners, as opposed to the digital touch-screens we currently use. Barring that, she recommended that we challenge election officials to prove they are following backup procedures that could be required in any situation – power failure, flooding, or hacking:

- Print enough emergency and provisional ballots so there are enough for 2-3 hours of peak voting.
- Plan for and drill on backup procedures for equipment failures.
- Train and drill poll workers on how to handle common problems that can occur with the Ivotronics. When do you do a reboot? When do you have to shut it down. Ensure recorded votes are retained before a controlled shutdown.
- Ensure electronic poll books are not connected to the internet (ever) and should be encrypted.
- Ensure all voting machines are fully patched immediately before the election.

She also urged we push legislators to support a hearing for a bill in Congress ([The Secure Voting Act](#)) that would require reporting of cyber incidents and mandate post election audits (which would require all states have some paper backup). [Sen. Lindsey Graham](#) is a co-sponsor of this bill ([bit.ly/2wbOnfs](#)).

Showcase your skills and join a campaign



If you've wanted to get involved with a Democratic candidate's campaign in this critical year but didn't know how to, this event is for you.

Skills matching and speed "dating" with candidates is what we'll be doing at our regular monthly meeting on August 25. You'll have an opportunity to meet and talk with all the candidates, while selecting those skills you want to offer. Candidates are looking for marketers, communicators and writers, graphic designers, volunteer coordinators, data analysts, phone bankers, and canvassers. Sound like you? Great! Then join us Saturday and help us get some great Dems elected.

The regular breakfast starts at 8:30 a.m., the Fair begins at 9. Location: Upstate Circle of Friends, 29 Ridgeway Dr., Greenville 29605.

Summer series explores impact of immigration policy

The Riley Institute at Furman and OLLI will host a summer series of programs entitled Straight Talk: Who Gets to be an American? Thursday evenings 6:30-8:30 PM beginning August 30 and concluding on September 13th in Shaw Hall, Younts Conference Center.



The programs will explore how immigration has become a wedge issue in the United States, stirring fear, racism and anger on both sides of the issue. Topics include current immigration enforcement policies and their impact, the effect of immigration on jobs and the economy, and what the changing demographics of the United States mean for our politics and elections.

Featured speakers:

- **Stephen Legomsky**, an advisor to both Democratic and Republican administrations, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, and several foreign governments on immigration and refugee policies.
- **Jessica Taylor**, a political reporter with NPR based in Washington, D.C., covering the 2018 midterm elections and breaking news out of the White House and Congress.
- Legendary pollsters **Peter Hart** and **Whit Ayres**. Hart founded Hart Research in 1971, and since 1989 has been the pollster for NBC News and The Wall Street Journal. His political clients have included leaders in the forefront of American politics over the past half century, from Hubert Humphrey and Jay Rockefeller, to Edward Kennedy and Bill Clinton. Ayres is a political consultant with over 30 years of experience in polling and survey research for high profile political campaigns and associations. His clients include U.S. Senators Marco Rubio, Lamar Alexander, Bob Corker, Lindsey Graham, and corporate clients including Boy Scouts of America, the Federalist Society, and the Pharmaceutical Care Management Association.

Summer series (continued)

Other speakers include: Furman economist Ken Peterson; The Honorable Neal Collins, member of the S.C. House of Representatives (R – Dist. 5, Pickens County); Dr. Akan Malici, Furman professor of politics and international affairs; Sheriff-Elect of Mecklenburg County Garry McFadden; Anthony Herrera, executive director for Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Furman; Basil Bacall, a Detroit hotelier from Iraq; and Julie Smithwick, executive director of PASOs.

The cost is \$15 per session, or \$35 for the series. Each session takes place from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. at the Younts Conference Center.

To learn more and or register for the series: <http://bit.ly/2P6Efxf>. For questions please call 864-294-2998.

And the Winner Is....

A Recent Raffle Shows the GCDP is Gaining New Supporters Everyday

The GCDP Fundraising Committee received nearly \$800 in donations in less than 18 days. More than 70 people donated and had their names entered into a raffle for a \$120 gift certificate to a local luxurious spa. The lucky winner was announced at the Democratic Women of Greenville County (DWGC) dinner on Monday, August 13th. Senator Karl Allen attended and drew the winning ticket. The lucky winner is Libby Young of North Greenville. Congratulations, Libby!

A special thanks to Libby and all those who participated in the raffle or donated to the Party this month. The GCDP relies entirely on local donations. We receive no state or national financial support. Our staff is 100% volunteer. All donations help cover the cost of outreach, advertising, and technologies that connects us to voters, helps support our candidates, and puts critical information in the hands of Greenville County new comers and Independents in our precincts.

Visit our [website](http://greenvilledemocrats.com) to learn more about what the GCDP is doing to help make a difference (greenvilledemocrats.com). Click on Contributions (<https://greenvilledemocrats.com/contribute/>) to donate. Remember, when you choose Make this Donation Every Month, or regularly, you are helping us plan and invest in our strategy to win at the polls in November and in 2020. Thank you for your support. You make the greatest difference to the GCDP.

LeBold Joins Soteria Board of Directors

GCDP's treasurer Anita LeBold has joined the Board of Directors of Soteria CDC. Soteria is a local non profit committed to empowering and assisting individuals who have served their prison terms and are ready to re-enter society. <https://soteriacdc.org> The non-profit's focus is on jobs, shelter, training, and support. She will serve a two-year term beginning in September.

Local non-profits are always in need of new board members. If you have a particular passion that you feel called to get involved in, please consider sharing your time, treasure, and talents with organizations that help those in need in our community.

Meet Cass Tyson

Cass Tyson is the GCDP's alternate representative to the state executive committee. He's also the leader behind the GCDP's effort to grow our precinct leadership and activism. This is the third in a series of articles to get to know more about the party leaders and key volunteers.



Q. Give us some basic bio stuff: what you do (work wise), are you a native Southern gentleman or a Yankee carpetbagger, etc...

Although my family is from Texas and Arkansas (I was born in Ft. Smith AR), my parents relocated to Maryland when I was 4 and settled in Baltimore when I was 9, so that's where I grew up. I lived there most of my life, with brief stints in Ohio, New Hampshire, and Northern Virginia. I moved my family to Greenville almost nine years ago. So yes, I'm another Yankee carpetbagger.

I have two older sisters, my mother passed away 12 years ago, my father remarried and they now live in Frederick, MD. I've been married to Cate Tyson for coming up on 15 years, and we have 2 kids: Max is 13 and Josie is 11.

I went to the University of Baltimore, where I earned a BA in English, with a concentration in professional writing, and then an MA at the same school, in publications design, an intensive program that emphasized writing and graphic design equally, and threw in a healthy dose of publications management as well. It prepared me for virtually any job at a newspaper or magazine – and I later had several. This was before the Internet, of course. I graduated in 1990. After years of making a less than living wage in publishing, I went into technical services and sales. After years of selling internet access and website related services, I “semi-retired” and went into freelance consulting and content development.

Since last year I've been a field interviewer for a national study on drug use and mental health. Basically my job is to knock on previously selected doors and interview people about their use or non-use of alcohol, tobacco, legal and illegal drugs, and their mental health. I help collect extremely important data used by local, state, and national authorities to make budget and policy decisions that affect everyone. It's important work, but the biggest downside is the work is best done during weekends and evenings -- prime political action time.

Q. Have you always been politically active?

No, in fact I was intentionally NON-politically active almost my entire life. My parents were activists when I was young, and to me that simply meant they were never home or, when they were home, they were always on the phone. They always had signs to make or meetings to attend or conventions to prepare for or travel to. I'm sure they accomplished great things, but it soured me on politics. I swore I would never put my kids through that! Ironically, here I am putting my kids through the same hell, to a degree. LOL!

Meet Cass (continued)

Q. Describe how you got involved in politics, what made you want to do more than vote?

I started paying attention to politics when they impeached Bill Clinton, because I thought that was truly a witch hunt, unlike what we see today. Because of that, I think, my focus has always been on DC, because national and international politics fascinate me, while local and state stuff seem arcane and hopelessly confusing.

But it wasn't until Bernie Sanders announced he was running for president that I decided to get personally involved. I had been listening to Bernie for years, since his time in the House. I was familiar with his policy positions and knew they were 95 percent in line with mine. I got really excited about the prospect of a President Sanders, so I volunteered for his campaign early and did everything I could to find votes for him in Greenville.

Alas, many more South Carolinians were with Hillary Clinton, so that was that. While I wasn't the least surprised Hillary beat Bernie, I was shell-shocked when Trump beat Hillary. I was one of millions of Americans who knew Hillary couldn't possibly lose and Trump couldn't possibly win, so when they did, I was motivated to jump back into the fray. I decided to focus on the Democratic Party this time around, and not so much on individual candidates. I am of the mind that every single Republican must be run out of office, and I'm 100 percent certain the only way to remove a Republican is to replace them with a Democrat. So that's my mission.

Q. Despite the challenges to our democracy, still large numbers of Democrats don't vote. Why do you think that is?

I think the basic problem in the U.S. is top vs bottom, not left vs right or Democrat vs Republican. Occupy Wall Street got it right, the 99 percent stuff. Bernie's message that we need to tax wealth and support the disadvantaged resonated with LOTS of people. The top tenth of 1 percent, the folks with concentrated wealth and power, do whatever they want, whenever they want, with and/or to whomever they want. They get their cronies elected or installed in government, then get laws passed that further benefit themselves and their rich friends, then they get to do even more of what they want, which basically means to make even more money and amass ever more power...and then do it all over again.

The reason so few people vote is they understand in their gut that the system is rigged, even if they don't understand how or why it got that way, or how to unrig it. They understand the rich get what they want, and the rest of us live with what's left. People instinctively know that their one measly vote won't make much difference in the long run, that they're not going to get what they need simply by voting, so they shrug their shoulders and say, "Why bother?"

The difference between the two parties, to my mind, is that Democrats "punch up," working to protect the little guy against the machine, while the Republicans "punch down," blaming society's ills on immigrants, gays, and of course, minorities and the poor, while doing everything they can to protect the interests of the rich, the powerful, and the corporations.

People probably don't vote because they hear lots of right wing talking points that are well-designed to divide us, instigate conflict, create frustration, and eventually, they simply stop caring. If those diverse, down-trodden communities heard better messaging from progressive Democrats, they might come to understand Dems are the ones working to make a difference in their lives, and frankly, in everyone's lives. Democrats truly work "For the people," like our 2018 slogan says. Maybe if more people got that message, they would be more motivated to vote for Democrats.

Meet Cass (continued)

Q. You are leading the precinct leadership project, designed to develop more grassroots political units at the community level. How's it going?

Let's refer to it as the Precinct Development Committee from now on. We tried out a few different terms over the past year, but that's the one I think best describes what we're doing.

And it's going pretty well, I would say. Our first win was getting a record number of people out to the January reorganization meetings, and we have more Democratic precinct officers now than anyone can remember. We have held a few training classes, have been creating support materials and resources, and have a lot more in the works.

Our focus now is on educating them on how to spread the Democrats' message, find and recruit volunteers, and put them to work canvassing and phone banking. To that end we created clusters of precincts, organized roughly by County Council district, and named a leader for each cluster. Cluster Leaders are preparing to hold multi-precinct meetings where people from 10 to 15 precincts can work together, get to know one another, support each other, and so on. I think this concept is really taking off, because I'm seeing a number of people really stepping up and getting involved. It's quite gratifying, to be honest!

Q. What's been the biggest surprise you've seen in working with precinct leaders?

Well, I started this with no expectations, so I can't really say I've had any surprises. When I first started, I had no idea how the county party worked, how precincts work, or any of that. I had no idea how many precincts we had, how many precinct officers we had, how many volunteers or party staff we had, or what kind of resources were available. I've been learning as I go, and let me tell you, I've learned a LOT!

Q. Where do you envision the precincts in Greenville being in 2020? Will precinct activation be a real factor in that election?

I hope to continue actively organizing precincts after the midterms, through 2019 and into 2020, so that when the 2020 precinct reorganization comes around, we'll be much better prepared than we've been in years past. I hope to see record-setting attendance, get at least one precinct officer elected to office in every single one of our 151 precincts, and be ready to immediately roll out training and whatever support they could possibly need.

My dream is to have an army of volunteers throughout the county, in every precinct if not every neighborhood, well-connected and well-prepared to hit the ground running to help candidates in the 2020 primaries, and to have a significant impact on the outcome of those races.

Q. Tell us something you think we should know that I didn't ask you about.

I'm terrible with names! I'm pretty good at remembering faces and relationships and past interactions, but names are my downfall. I'm working on this, and have improved in recent months. But if we meet once or twice and then the next time you see me I don't call you by your name, like "Hi, John!," it's more than likely because I simply can't recall it. Please accept my apologies in advance, and just say, "Hi, it's me, John, remember?" to help me out. This is why I could never be a politician myself, and will always be a behind-the-scenes helper.

Many ways to register and register others

Voter registration is the backbone of our democracy and there are efforts going on across the Upstate, from non-partisan programs such as [cove.vote](#) and the county League of Women Voters, to GCDP registration events. Regardless of your political point of view, getting registered is critical.

Cove.vote is a one stop website for voter registration volunteers. You can sign up for training and get updates on voter registration efforts all across Greenville County. Just pick the dates and times that work best for you and your schedule.

The site is home to Community Voters Empowerment (COVE), a non-partisan organization committed to increasing voter participation in Greenville County and across the Upstate.

This year's election is likely to be decided by voters who didn't vote in the 2016 election. Your vote doesn't just matter; your vote is critical.

So you'll see a lot of voter registration events going on. Last weekend, the Greenville County Young Democrats held the first of what are to be a series of voter registration drives focused on beauty salons and barbershops across the county.

Twelve volunteers set up at eight shops and registered 40 new voters. Somewhere along the way, they had a block party too!

If your business or organization is interested in having a voter registration event, contact COVE, the League of Women Voters. Both will organize non-partisan registration events.



The last day to register before the November 6 election is October 7. There are a couple of good reasons to check your registration now, while there's still time:

- If you haven't voted since you registered.
- If you submitted a change of address since the last time you voted.
- If you registered at the DMV.

To check your registration online, go to www.scvotes.org.

Throughout history, it has been the inaction of those who could have acted, the indifference of those who should have known better, the silence of the voice of justice when it mattered most, that has made it possible for evil to triumph.

**-Haile Selassie
regent of Ethiopia (1892-1975)**

Legislative Update

BY ERICA EDMONDSON

The early close of the legislative session this year – May 10th instead of early June – had many concerned that a shorter session would accomplish less. Nonetheless, there were several successes during the latest session. Strongly supported by the Women’s Rights and Empowerment Network, the South Carolina Pregnancy Accommodations Act passed both houses and was signed into law in May with strong bipartisan support. According to [The State](#), “South Carolina has made history by becoming the first Southern state to pass a law that supports the dignity, rights and freedom of women and growing families by preventing discrimination against pregnant workers.”

The bill ensures pregnant women and new mothers “have access to reasonable workplace accommodations” such as allowing more frequent bathroom or food breaks, permitting coworkers to assist with heavy lifting, providing a stool to sit on rather than standing for hours at a time. Since women make up so much of the workforce, this could make a huge impact.

Another important piece of legislation introduced was H. 3809, a bill requiring “insurance plans to cover a 12-month supply of prescribed self-administered contraceptives – such as the ring, the patch and oral contraceptives – at one time” ([WREN article 2](#)). Supporters of this bill came from both sides of the aisle and included Kit Spires, Neal Collins, James Smith and Dr. Robert Ridgeway. This would be a big win for women by making birth control significantly more accessible, limiting the number of unintended pregnancies, and in turn limiting the number of abortions. It’s a win-win. By the end of the legislative session, this bill had passed the House and was referred to the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee.

The Conservation Voters of South Carolina use a Legislative Scorecard to detail which legislators voted on issues most important to conservation efforts. Sorting the scorecard to show 2017 – 2018 scores from highest to lowest for the House showed some interesting results. James Smith, Representative for District 72 and current candidate for governor, had the winning score. He had 16 stars, one for each bill he sponsored to protect our air, land, water, or energy. He received a lifetime score of 101 percent and a 2017-18 score of 125 percent. His running mate, Mandy Powers Norrell, also scored high on this list with a 112 percent for 2017-18 and a lifetime score of 92 percent. Great news for South Carolina Democrats!

Representing Greenville on the House side was Chandra Dillard, representative of District 23, who received a lifetime score of 97 percent and 108 percent for 2017-18. Similarly, running the same search for the Senate showed Senator Karl Allen, District 7, with a high lifetime score of 95 percent and 83 percent for 2017-18. ([CVSC Scorecard](#)) Yeah, THAT Greenville!

The session ended with a last-minute surprise. “[The Senate voted to put a question on the November ballot about letting the governor appoint the superintendent of education.](#)” This could be a game-changer by giving the governor more direct impact on public education in the state. Worth watching how this plays into the gubernatorial race.

New Marketplace Helps Dems Support Dems

Do you own a business in the Upstate?

As part of our effort to build a vibrant community of Democrats in the Upstate, *The Bray* will add a new feature in September. “The Democratic Marketplace” will showcase business listings so Democratic customers can find a service provider or retailer that also aligns with their social and political leanings.

All things considered, we believe most Dems would just as soon patronize other Dems.

This is not a free service; you will purchase the listing. But the benefits are twofold. You will get directly into the hands of Democrats who want to support other Democrats. Additionally, you will support the GCDP’s efforts to ensure a strong two-party system by working tirelessly to get Democrats elected and to educate, empower, engage the community in the political process and its policy impact.

The cost of the ad is a fraction of what you would pay with any online site or targeted social media. And we guarantee the eyes on your ad are geographically positioned and predisposed to support your business.

In addition to your appearances in *The Bray*, we’ll run your ad simultaneously on a Democratic Marketplace page on the GCDP website: www.greenvilledemocrats.com/marketplace. Periodically, we’ll promote that marketplace to our readers on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. So there will be lots of opportunities for your ad to be seen.

We are keeping it simple. Because of the listing format, you don’t need any artist to design your ad. You give us 25 words and your logo and that’s it.

Pricing is simple too. \$50 per appearance with discounts for 6-month (\$285 for six months) and 12-month (\$480 for the year)schedules. All ads must be paid in advance, including those for 6 and 12 months, via a credit card form on our website.

What’s the process?

To place an ad, fill out the Democratic Marketplace Order Form (greenvilledemocrats.com/marketplace-order). Once we have received your information, you’ll receive an email with a link to make your online credit card payment via our secure website.

Deadlines for each month will be posted on the Marketplace webpage. Orders received after the deadline or where payment is not fulfilled prior to the deadline will be pushed to the next month.

We think this is an exciting opportunity to reach an audience that is looking to work with you, while helping the party at the same time. We hope you’ll think so too.

For more information, please contact us at brayads@greenvilledemocrats.com.

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July Contributors

Thanks to our recent contributors: Marian Blackwell, Kinard Johnson, Leslie Johnson, Jennifer Knox, Anita LeBold, Diane Legget, Frances Moore, Xanthene Norris, Mike and Vera Stang.

Contributing to the Greenville County Democratic Party has never been easier. Click this link to make a one-time or recurring contribution <https://greenvilledemocrats.com/contribute/>

If you have any questions about online donations, please contact Anita LeBold at 864.325.8540. Many thanks to our treasurer, Anita LeBold, and our communications coordinator, Laura Haight, for our ability to accept recurring online donations.

Thank you.

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