

THE BRAY

the voice of the
GCDP
GREENVILLE COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The latest news and updates from the Greenville County Democratic Party



No balloons, no music, no hoopla. The Democratic National Convention in this – perhaps the most consequential year of our lives – will be a quiet affair with a small number in social-distanced and masked attendance. But it may also be the most personal and collaborative yet. Find out how you can lend your voice to the national conversation celebrating the presumed nomination of Joe Biden and the end to our long, national nightmare. **See Page 7.**

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Honoring John Lewis: Stay laser-focused on our goals

BY ELIAS "ELI" VALENTIN

CHAIR, GREENVILLE COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY



Experienced animal trainers take a stool with them when they step into a cage with a lion. Why a stool? It tames a lion better than anything, except maybe a tranquilizer gun. When the trainer holds the stool with the legs extended towards the lion's face, the animal tries to focus on all four legs and paralyzes himself.

The powerful lion becomes unable to display its full potential because of this distraction. A divided focus will always work against you. How can we, as a party, learn to cultivate the kind of focus needed to become a majority party in our County and across this State.

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Honoring John Lewis: Stay laser focused on our goal

Continued from Page One

We can learn to prioritize and concentrate. If we only focus on the priorities and lack the concentration, we will stay in a conversation mood, and results will be hot air wrapped in good intentions. If we concentrate and don't prioritize, we will gain excellence but no REAL progress. This isn't a new concept, but one we as a Party need to confront now.

One perfect example of someone who excelled at the duality of prioritizing and concentrating was the late Congressman **John Lewis**, who harnessed both and was able to accomplish great things throughout his life becoming a lion for us all.

His lifelong commitment to the Civil Rights Movement was made possible by his optimistic focus to see a socially just America. He found what he did well and never stopped. Lewis found the courage to never stop learning, growing, and sharing the importance of civil rights for all. His focus wasn't on the stool, which took many forms throughout his journey. Even though he faced bogus arrest, police brutality, physical beatings, and systematic racism among other things, he never lost sight of his goal.

The grace and elegance he did it with just made it that much sweeter for us all. His mission to create change through nonviolence is inspiring. Let this serve as a humble lesson for us all that there is another way to operate in this body politic and be a true success. His life's message contradicted majoring in the minors. But we as Democrats get caught in the small things keeping us in paralysis instead of marching forward with meaningful steps bringing us closer to our goals.

Congressman Lewis knew if he only concentrated on what wasn't working, it wouldn't gain the necessary traction and engagement needed to accelerate the movement. As Bruce Lee once stated, "a successful warrior is an average man with laser-like focus." Congressman Lewis was not average by any stretch of the imagination, but he was certainly someone who had sharp focus and through the gift of his life allowed many of us to have our own successful warrior stories.

This is the best gift John Lewis' legacy leaves behind for us. What will our success story look like this Fall.

NOW is the time to focus on November. Remember our strength is through unity, not looking at the stool or being pulled away by internal backbiting. Our focus must be laser-like because our country can not afford another four years of divisive behavior and rhetoric at ANY level of our government. I say we can't afford it because we all deserve better representation in our leaders from the County Council to the President of the United States and everything in between.

Starting today, let's promise ourselves to be more focused. Let's promise to make Congressman Lewis proud. Let's be the party that's focused on what can be, and let's work together to make it happen. November 3rd is closer than you think, let's not gaze at the stool and miss this moment.

All the best,
Eli

Calendar: Things we can do at home

This space is normally reserved for our calendar. But because so many events have been cancelled, this month we'll focus on things you can do from home on your own schedule.



CHARLESTON NINE SURVIVOR JOINS OUR BREAKFAST: Join the GCDP as we welcome a special speaker to our virtual breakfast. Rev. Sharon Risher, whose mother Ethel Lee Vance was murdered by Dylan Roof at Mother Emanuel Church in Charleston five years ago, will speak to us about gun violence, its toll on survivors and society, her journey, and what we can accomplish when we advocate together. Questions for Rev. Risher can be emailed in advance to gcdpcomms@greenvilledemocrats.com.

DETAILS

Date/Time: July 25, 9 a.m.

Link to Join: <https://bit.ly/july-breakfast>

USE YOUR TOOLS FOR JAIME HARRISON: Things may be opening up but canvassing for candidates may still be a ways away. Not to worry, you can reach out to voters in support of Jaime Harrison through text and phone banking at home. Timicia Grant, the Upstate organizer for the coordinated campaign topped by Harrison, invites you to join a **text bank launched specifically for the Upstate**. You don't need any special tools, just a browser on your computer or tablet, and a phone.

STAY ON TOP OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Live stream Greenville County Council meetings on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month @ 6 PM. **Click here for the calendar and a link to view the meetings.** Live stream Greenville City Council meetings on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month @5:30 PM. **Click here for the calendar of events and links to join the meeting.**

EXPAND YOUR POLITICAL AND POLICY HORIZONS

If you are a Democratic woman interested in running for office, **check out the online info and candidate training sessions available from Emerge SC.**

Find out more about **WREN Women's Rights and Empowerment Network** and how you can get involved.

Discover the **SC Progressive Network**, a coalition of organizations and individual activists across our state working for social and economic justice.

Learn more about environmental policy from the experts at the **SC Conservation Coalition.**

SAVE THE DATE: August 13

JFK signed the Equal Pay Act in 1963, 57 years later we are still striving to achieve it. On August 13, the GCDP will present a panel discussion on this issue as we recognize Black Women's Equal Pay Day – the day in 2020 when a Black Woman in the US reaches parity with what a white man made in 2019. Watch social media and our website for more details as they are available.



DID YOU MISS BAKARI SELLERS WITH DWGC?: Watch the replay and catch up on Bakari's analysis of politics and policy. **Watch here.**

Are you in?

SCDP voter protection unit recruiting poll watchers, workers for November

By Philisea Matthews

Voter Protection Organizer, SCDP

Poll Watchers are crucial to the success of the South Carolina Democratic Party Voter Protection Unit. Poll Watchers serve as the eyes and ears of the Voter Protection Unit on Election Day and report directly to the Voter Protection Organizer if there are issues. Poll watchers are allowed to stand within their assigned precincts and observe the opening and closing of precincts, voter registration list and balloting count.

Several candidates from the June 9th primary know the importance of volunteer poll watchers as candidates and races were missing from ballots across counties. Dr. Jermaine Johnson and Rhodes Bailey were both informed by poll watchers at assigned precincts that their names and/or races were missing when early morning voters tried to cast their ballots.

Poll watchers are certified by their candidates during the primary and by the state Party during the General Election. The certification is a credentialing letter and badge that allows the Poll Manager to know which candidate or party you represent, so the correct ballot count can be announced at the closing.

As a result of issues from Primary Day, the Voter Protection Unit intends to recruit 750 poll watchers for Election Day, Nov. 3. To recruit additional watchers, we will host text banks and phone banks to reach our goal!

With the growing concern of COVID-19, we are focused on recruiting millennials and generation Z to become official poll workers for the State Election Commission. Poll Workers are paid by the South Carolina Election Commission for their work which includes opening and closing precincts,



checking voter registration lists and much more. For those who are interested in volunteering for the Voter Protection Unit, these are the official requirements to become a poll watchers:

- Age 17 years or older
- Registered Voter in South Carolina
- Registered within their voting county
- Must have cell phone and internet access
- Trainings begin in October

The General Election determines the future of generations and we have the resources to help #ElectMoreDems, but we need your help to identify voter suppression. Sign up to volunteer with the Voter Protection Unit today because literally OUR future depends on it!

Bookmark our candidate listings page

Educated and empowered voters make smart decisions and lend their talents and time to helping the candidates of their choice to success in November. The GCDP has a **web page listing all the candidates who are running this year with links to connect you to their campaigns and social media sites.**

We are adding information about volunteer opportunities and virtual events candidates are participating in, as we become aware of them.

All information was provided by the candidates or their campaigns and this page is continually being updated as more information is received. **Watch video from our April Virtual Breakfast** where candidates introduced themselves and their campaigns.

Focus on the candidates

Over the next several months, the GCDP is offering all our local candidates a chance to talk directly to you about their reasons for running, policies, and objectives. This month, we invited candidates for State House Districts 23, 25, 28, and 35. August: State Senate districts 5, 6, 7, and 12; September: County Council districts 20, 22, 24, and county sheriff. And in October, the federal races: CD-3, CD-4, and US Senate. For ways to contact any of our candidates, check out our website. All information is provided by the candidates or their campaigns.

Ty Washington, candidate for SC-Dist. 28

Ty Washington has called South Carolina home for nearly three decades, but grew up in Flint, MI. He distinctly remembers the harder side of Flint after a change in his family: winters were blistering-cold, and often, the only source of heat was from the open oven in the kitchen. At a wobbly table stained with store-brand soft drinks, Ty and his siblings ate their meals, did their homework, and watched their mother launch her dream to become a respiratory therapist. After she earned her degree, she dared to dream of a better future for her children, and moved her family to Taylors, SC. Their new neighbors in South Carolina welcomed them with hospitality and taught them the value of community. They helped Ty and his family overcome hardship through support. A supportive community allows its members to have the courage to try, to risk, to fail, and to learn. Fundamentally, a supportive community allows others to create.

Ty wants to create a better District 28 and a brighter South Carolina by bringing the ideals of the Democratic Party to the legislature. For too long, his constituents have been left without a progressive voice in Columbia. For too long, they have gone without a steward of their faith in the Statehouse. Ty will support the interests of southern Greenville County by standing up for them in the capital city. Ty will bring justice for all to 28.

Justice for all means that everyone has equal access to economic opportunity. Ty knows that honest work provides a sense of pride, and that education is a great mobilizer for prosperity. Ty will steward economic opportunity by improving access to broadband internet and clean water, promoting workforce development, transforming transportation and education, and offering the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to all functioning



members of society through criminal justice and re-entry reform.

Ty earned his college degree while working his way through school, serving others in the hospitality industry. Today, in his career in tech and sales, Ty leverages his background in service to drive performance by utilizing various strategies to engage clients, focus on identifying needs, present value-adding solutions, and build relationships through a consultative approach. He will apply those same lessons and skills on behalf of his district, and in collaboration with his fellow legislators.

Ty graduated from Riverside High School, and received his BA in Philosophy from the College of Charleston. In Charleston, Ty founded the Lowcountry Up is Good and helped build Charleston's first "tiny home" to provide shelter to homeless and disabled veterans. In his free time, he loves spending time with family, is an active member of the NAACP, a mentor with Soteria Community Development Corporation, a volunteer with Sew.Some.Good.Greenville and the Seneca Treehouse Project.

His campaign website is www.washingtonforsc.com. Follow him on Instagram and Facebook at @washingtonforsc.

Leaders Matter

Emerge's Virtual Salon Series highlights leadership

Emerge is a unique national political organization that is focused on recruiting, training and providing a powerful network for Democratic women in politics.

The logo for EMERGE, featuring the word in a bold, teal, sans-serif font, enclosed within a thin teal rectangular border.

Since 2002, EmERGE has offered a premier, in-depth

training program that provides aspiring women leaders with the tools and expertise to win elected office. The organization has trained more than 4,000 Democratic women to run and 690 alumnae serve in elected office today.

Local EmERGE grads include Amanda McDougald Scott, candidate for Greenville County Council, and Kim Nelson, candidate for Congress (CD-4).

This spring, EmERGE launched a virtual salon series featuring topical discussions led by EmERGE alumnae and other national leaders.

Upcoming topics and hosts include:

- The road to the Senate with EmERGE alum and Speaker of the Maine State House Sara Gideon.
- A conversation with Senator Cory Booker moderated by EmERGE president A'shanti F. Gholar.
- Making history with former presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg, moderated by California Lt. Gov. Eleni Kounalakis.

The salon series is a benefit for the EmERGE Leadership Circle, individual tickets for each salon are available for purchase to non-Leadership Circle members at \$100. Replays of past events can be viewed at no cost. The salon series is scheduled to run through November.

[For a complete schedule of upcoming events, registration, or to view the past salons visit the EmERGE #LeadersMatter site.](#)

WREN breaks down the good, bad of high court rulings



First the court gave us a victory on LGBTQ employment rights and DACA. Then a flurry of cases targeting abortion. The 5-4 ruling that struck down a Louisiana law requiring a women's clinic performing abortions to have admitting privileges in a hospital within 30 miles away, seemed to be a win as well. The WREN analysis notes: "The right to abortion is not real if you cannot access care." In South Carolina, they note, 93 percent of counties, where 71 percent of all residents live, had no clinics providing abortions.

The next two cases were more revealing. In a 7-2 decision, the court shielded religious institutions from discrimination claims in the hiring or firing of staff members who are deemed to have a religious component to their work. That, WREN says, puts the more than 300,000 lay teachers and possibly nurses in Catholic hospitals in religious schools at risk.

Finally, the court, in another 7-2 decision, put tens of thousands of women's access to birth control at risk by ruling that employers with religious objections do not have to provide it. WREN points out that birth control is often prescribed for management of health conditions like "endometriosis and fibroids that are more common among Black and Brown people."

[Read the full analysis of these court decisions and what they can mean to South Carolinians on WREN's website.](#)

2020 Democratic National Convention

Without being there, this will be a personal, collaborative experience

The balloons, the music, the fanfare, speeches, confetti, and the palpable excitement could come through the TV set. Most of us have never been to a national Democratic convention, but we have felt the enthusiasm they generated. So how can we have a convention when even delegates are encouraged not to attend?

The DNC says: 'Yes, we can!' Not only can we have one, but maybe in some ways, it can be better. The national committee is calling this a "Convention Across America.." In building in collaborative pieces, they've also opened up elements of the convention that most of us never see.



We don't usually get to see the Platform Committee as it works through the drafting of our 2020 guiding principles. **But not only can you watch it (allow 3+ hours!),** you can comment on it.

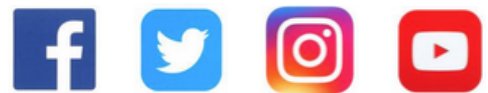
Throughout the **convention website**, there are places where you can add your voice to tell your story, share your comments on our presumptive nominee, Joe Biden, tell your story of aspiration, or share what makes you proud to be a Democrat.

It's all part of a digital engagement campaign that encourages Democrats to add their voices and opinions to the conversation.



Don't worry if you aren't tech savvy. The party has partnered with Countable and made it pretty easy to record and upload your comments using whatever device is in front of you - phone, tablet, or computer. **Visit stories.demconvention.com** to see what they're doing.

You can also contribute and follow along on social media.



Click on an icon to view.

The Democratic National Convention
is Aug 17-20
More info:
www.demconvention.com

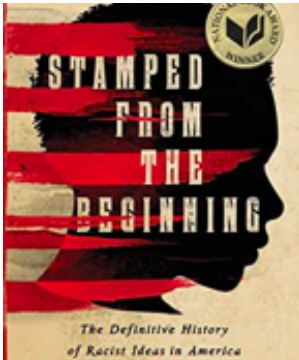
What about the 2020 state convention?

With Covid raging across the state, the 2020 convention was fully virtual. State delegates voted by phone or internet on resolutions and national delegates. But there were several important speakers including Rep. James Clyburn, Senate candidate Jaime Harrison, and congressional candidates including Kim Nelson. **The replay of the convention can be viewed on the SCDP Facebook page.**



Reading recs for the times

Our summer of protests for racial equality and re-evaluation of policing has set many on a path of reflection. That may be uncomfortable for many of us as we confront unintended biases. Self-exploration is never easy so we asked candidate for county sheriff, **Paul Guy**, and community activist and organizer, **Timicia Grant**, to help us out by recommending reading. Here are a few of those suggestions. Book descriptions from Amazon.com.



Stamped from the Beginning

By Ibram X. Kendi

In this deeply researched and fast-moving narrative, Kendi chronicles the entire story of anti-Black racist ideas and their staggering power over the course of American history.

Recommended by **Paul Guy**, candidate for Greenville County Sheriff, who says: "If I were teaching a cross-cultural class, I would start off with this book. Great narratives."



Everything But the Burden

By Greg Tate

Twelve essays bring together voices from music, popular culture, the literary world, and the media speaking about how from Brooklyn to the Badlands white people are co-opting black styles of music, dance, dress, and slang. The essayists examine how whites seem to be taking on "everything but the burden"– from fetishizing black athletes to spinning the ghetto lifestyle into a glamorous commodity.

Recommended by **Timicia Grant**, public policy chairperson, National Council of Negro Women – Greenville.

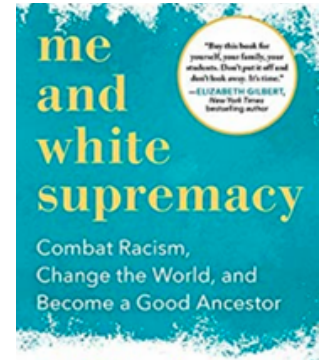


Ain't I a Woman

By Bell Hooks

A classic work of feminist scholarship, Ain't I a Woman has become a must-read for all those interested in the nature of black womanhood. Examining the impact of sexism on black women during slavery, the devaluation of black womanhood, black male sexism, racism among feminists, and the black woman's involvement with feminism, Hooks attempts to move us beyond racist and sexist assumptions. The result is nothing short of groundbreaking, giving this book a critical place on every feminist scholar's bookshelf.

Recommended by **Timicia Grant**, public policy chairperson, National Council of Negro Women – Greenville.



Me and White Supremacy

By Layla Saad

This eye-opening book challenges you to do the essential work of unpacking your biases, and helps white people take action and dismantle the privilege within themselves so that you can stop (often unconsciously) inflicting damage on people of color, and in turn, help other white people do better, too.

Walk step-by-step through the real work of:

- Examining your own white privilege.
- What allyship really means Anti-blackness, racial stereotypes, and cultural appropriation.
- Changing the way that you view and respond to race.

Recommended by **Paul Guy**, candidate for Greenville County Sheriff.

Other titles to consider (we ran out of space)

So You Want to Talk About Race, Ijeoma Oluo
Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria, Beverly Daniel Tatum
How to Be Less Stupid About Race, Crystal Fleming
Between the World and Me, Ta-Nehisi Coates
How to be an Anti-Racist, Ibram X. Kendi

This is the third month of our new feature: The Advocacy Challenge. The challenge, however, remains the same: Reach out to your state elected officials to [**demand mail-in voting for all in November.**](#)

Make the call. Write the letter. #EveryoneVotes

BY LAURA HAIGHT



THE ADVOCACY CHALLENGE

This is the same fight we've been fighting for months now. Those who have taken up the challenge and contacted their state reps have gotten vague promises of taking up the issue in September. That is very late – possibly too late – to prepare effectively for the Nov. 3 election

All our legislators need to feel a sense of urgency about extending mail-in voting and they need to feel our passion as well. They need to know their inaction on this will influence our votes. That is the one thing that has a chance of moving the needle.

Call or write your state representative and state senator and demand that the legislature take all steps necessary to authorize mail-in voting now while there is time to prepare.

Talking points:

1. The SC Election Commission has warned the governor and legislature that emergency changes must be made to our election process to ensure safe and secure elections. The commission urged that decisions be made as soon as possible so election officials can be ready.

2. As we've seen in elections this spring and summer, states are struggling to find poll workers during the pandemic, forcing a reducing of polling places. Fewer polling sites makes it harder for people to vote on Election Day, and will suppress the vote across political parties.

3. The pandemic continues to surge in South Carolina. We cannot guess what the situation will be on Election Day. We must not ask our citizens – regardless of party – to risk their health to exercise their right to vote.

The challenge: Contact both your state senator and representative ([**click here if you need to find out who they are and get contact information**](#)). Most likely you will speak to an aide. Make sure they take your name and address. Also get their name. Ask them if they are getting a lot of calls on the issue. They may or may not tell you. Tell us how you did. Post on social media with [**#AdvocacyChallengeEveryoneVotes**](#). We'll find you!

CALL YOUR REPS

More stimulus legislation will be debated in the House and Senate, including an important push to include funds for development of a national Vote-by-Mail program.

Sen. Lindsey Graham

202-224-5972 (DC)
864-250-1417 (Upstate)



Sen. Tim Scott

(202) 224-6121 (DC)
(864) 233-5366 (Upstate)



Rep. Jeff Duncan (SC-3)

(202) 225-5301 (DC)
(864) 224-7401 (Anderson)



Rep. Wm. Timmons (SC-4)

(202) 225-6030 (DC)
(864) 241-0175 (Greenville)



Technology a key to success for students

Online learning requires computers and broadband access for everyone

By Sharon Garrett

Second Vice Chair, GCDP

As a high school English teacher, I have noticed that students do not like to read. They really do not want to write an essay. Some high school students write very poorly. They do not write a complete thought or a sentence. The definition of a sentence is a subject and a predicate and it expresses a complete thought.

Here's an example: Paul ran through the field. This sentence expresses a complete thought. Many students are more concerned with listening to music on their cellphones or watching videos on YouTube. Telling them to study for a test is like something from the dark ages. As educators, we are sometimes told to not give a lot of homework. Students have football, softball, basketball, track, soccer, cheerleading, volleyball, and band practice.

These extra-curricular activities are wonderful but academics come first and foremost. Most students are not being challenged on a daily basis. They learn the tricks to pass a test – learning the bare minimum. Now a grade of 60 is just barely passing. What are we telling our youth? That the minimum amount of effort is enough to succeed in the world today? That is not a value that students should want to achieve.

The United States is falling behind in technology-driven countries like Japan, India, China, Singapore, Germany, to name a few. Most of these children are very poor but they have the desire to learn something new. They want to be part of the next greatest technological advancement.

The students in Greenville County still want to achieve but, a vast majority are OK with just getting by. We need to make laptops available to all students in grades 3-12 in Greenville County.

In kindergarten through second grade, we need to make sure students have Chromebooks and laptops that focus on phonics, reading, introducing Spanish words daily, basic math, and all shapes and colors.

Then we need to make sure there is broadband access in

all areas of the county for the students. This will ensure that every student has access to a quality education. But remember, reading is still fundamental and if you do not know how to read you will be left behind. Mastering reading is still the biggest hurdle for students and it starts in the classroom and at home.

So, there is an opportunity for partnerships with Greenville County and Dell or Hewlett Packard to acquire laptops for every student. There is also Verizon and AT&T for broadband access in all parts of the county. Let's not forget that students need books to read at home so publishers like Random House, Macmillan Publishing, HarperCollins, Scholastic, Inc. and Penguin Putnam can supply books for the students. These companies have excelled in their various fields and they know what it takes to have a top-notch employee.

Therefore, they should jump at the chance to help all students in Greenville County excel academically and help to close the inequality gap that exists in education in grades K4-12. The executives at these companies should realize that the public relations is far greater than their bottom line, especially now that the world is reminding us that All Lives Matter and especially black and brown lives matter.

Tell Glenda

County School Trustee wants to hear from you

Are you struggling with the question of whether or not to send your child to school this year? Or to continue distance learning?

Glenda Morrison Fair is a member of the Greenville County school system's Board of Trustees. As the school system tries to identify not

just solutions but all the issues and concerns that must be addressed, Glenda is talking to parents and educators.

She invites you to call or email her at:

Phone: (816) 529-3579

Email: gsmf7782@gmail.com



**HELP FAMILIES
IMPACTED BY COVID-19**

FOOD & SUPPLIES DONATION DRIVE

Please bring new, unexpired, wrapped non-perishable foods and beverages, as well as toiletries and cleaning supplies.

- Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Allen Temple AME Church Saturday Soup Kitchens: 104 Green Avenue, 29601
- Monday through Friday, 8:30 to 10 a.m; 12:30 to 3 p.m. at Project HOST Soup Kitchens: 525 Academy Street, 29601
- Monday through Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Relentless Church: 635 Haywood Road, 29607
- Monday and Wednesday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Harvest Hope Food Bank: 2818 White Horse Road, 29611

Sponsored by the Greenville County Democratic Party, the Democratic Black Caucus of SC, Greenville Chapter, Jevarus Howard for State House District 19, and Kim Nelson for CD-4.

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We welcome your one-time or recurring donations on our website.



The GCDP office is open once again.
Hours are M-F, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Call us at 864-232-5531 or email
headquarters@greenvilledemocrats.com

Donate Now

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