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| **Politics and Elections Because That’s What We Do** |
| **Next Up**  As the calendar flips to 2022, the upcoming election season begins with some uncertainty. What is certain, Saugerties voters can cast a ballot in the Ulster County Sheriff race. But with the NY State Senate and Assembly and US Congressional maps yet to be drawn, we are left to wonder what those districts will look like and who will be the candidates. Had [89 more New Yorkers filled out their 2020 census](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/26/nyregion/new-york-census-congress.html?unlocked_article_code=AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACEIPuonUktbfqohkTFUZBSbTTMIqoRyBg7_JzaN5l3jkL22eRDBZ0v9QCI-G9F3AfrElZ8c2237TYu59B4IVZa44yP5DbQsqQhO0o5CAldMMenVkpNm9BSY80smTGO1mqGavZzfoJqIglLfjsx7XPWm8UKTPwDZ2clYe1Jhjd1qt330IxL6UUbImn4kjgopyQ8xyVjwCZyGVv_L3CBsYO96ObRvU7gVeSPgOEHiI3obas-RcBV0UXVHWT3p_4nI-6MdfOb4XP6X_LR0nfKnukGg-j1JhX1Rs4gf3cGUfF1k&smid=url-share), New York would have kept all its Congressional seats. Instead, we lost one representative and now must wait to see what our district will look like.  The final redistricting map is unknown; however, upcoming deadlines should resolve who our Congressional and NY State candidates will be. January 15 is the deadline for the redistricting committee to submit its map to the NY State legislature and February 28 is the last day for the commission to submit a final map, if the legislature rejects the initial offering. With April 4th the date for candidates to begin filing for their congressional runs, the map should be set by then, with an emphasis on should. Stay tuned.  **Speaking of Voting**  A look back at the 2021 election showed turnout to be abysmal. Overall, just 37% of Ulster County’s registered voters went to the polls, with Marbletown and Olive having the highest turnout, both at 52%. In this “off-year” election, 40% of registered Democrats voted compared to 44% of registered Republicans. Democratic voter turnout was a higher percentage than Republicans in Olive, Rochester, Rosendale and Woodstock. Fortunately, the Democratic electorate is much larger (45% to Republicans’ 27%), allowing Democrats to increase their majority in the Ulster County legislature, including adding Aaron Levine (Legislative District 1) and Joe Maloney (Legislative District 2). The main lesson is that Democrats need to take an active role in our democracy. Had Saugerties Democrats gone to the polls in large numbers, our Town Board would have added two committed Democrats who believe in science, transparency and smart development. We must do better.  Looking forward, the [League of Women Voters](https://www.lwv.org/voting-rights/fighting-voter-suppression), the [NAACP](https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/585957-naacp-head-pushes-senators-wh-for-action-on-voting-rights), [faith leaders](https://www.cnn.com/2021/12/23/politics/faith-leaders-voting-rights-letter-biden/index.html), political scientists and other [champions of democracy](https://www.pfaw.org/press-releases/voting-rights-groups-announce-major-drive-to-push-thousands-to-call-the-white-house-to-pass-federal-voting-rights-legislation/) continue to call on Congress to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and The Freedom to Vote Act. The family of Martin Luther King, Jr. is calling for [“no celebration” of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day](https://www.cnn.com/2021/12/15/politics/mlk-day-voting-rights-legislation/index.html) without the passage of these two crucial bills.  Our task for a more representative democracy is three-fold: 1) [vote in every election](https://elections.ulstercountyny.gov/) from school board to president; 2) help the [SDC](https://saugertiesdemocrats.org/) get out the vote for local, county, state and national elections; and 3) learn more about what you can do to get these crucial bills passed by connecting with the [groups on the frontline of voting rights.](https://reclaimtheamericandream.org/organizations-vote/) In the [words of Vice President Kamala Harris](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/full-transcript-vice-president-kamala-harris-face-the-nation-12-26-2021/), voting rights may not seem like an urgent matter, but it is. |

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| **Monthly Meeting News** |
| **December Special SDC Meetings Highlights**\*  The Saugerties Democratic Committee met in a special session on December 14 via Zoom. The Executive Committee presented a comprehensive plan to rally voters and improve election turnout. The three-pronged approach will look to grow the party, engage the voters, and monitor the ways to successfully reach constituents.  Jess Wisneski, the Co-Director of Citizen Action NY and Working Families Party (WFP) representative, attended the meeting and explained the WFP endorsement process. Underscoring that the WFP never wants to be a spoiler, she recommended that the SDC endorse candidates earlier so it can better coordinate with WFP.  The SDC agreed to add a community calendar of events to the newsletters (*see below*).  \*For a copy of the full minutes, please email [saugertiesdemocraticcommittee@gmail.com](mailto:saugertiesdemocraticcommittee@gmail.com) or check [saugertiesdemocrats.org](file:///C:\Users\Christine\Documents\Democratic%20Committee\saugertiesdemocrats.org).  The 2022 SDC monthly meeting schedule is January 25, February 22, March 22, April 26, May 24, June 28, July 26, August 23, September 27, October 25, and November 2. All welcome! |
| **News and Newsworthy** |
| On **January 6 at 3:00 PM**, [ProPublica](https://www.propublica.org) will present **The Insurrection: One Year Later**, a panel of experts who will discuss last year’s invasion of the Capitol to stop the certification of the election of Joe Biden, the potential vulnerabilities in the 2022 election and what it means for our democracy. Register [here](https://www.propublica.org/events/the-insurrection-one-year-later?fbclid=IwAR2EfRz3eg3rfQOllr5UXWU0Aw7FdQrBp2GxlC-ZZOk4A1EeWTeWzrHn1Ew) for this free event.  The [**Campaign to Re-elect Sheriff Juan Figueroa**](https://www.juanforulster.com/) will officially launch on **Thursday, January 13, at 11:00 AM.** Initially planned as an in-person event in front of the Ulster County Courthouse, it has been changed to a virtual event because of the spike in Covid. Joining the sheriff are [NY Senator Michelle Hinchey](https://www.nysenate.gov/senators/michelle-hinchey), [Steven Kelley](https://erhny.org/member/steven-l-kelley-fache/), CEO/President of Ellenville Hospital, and the Reverend Evelyn Clarke. All are welcomed to attend. Register [here](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUlceCgrT8uHNbd07lyvoK5qwqQNbEu_KpI).  The Nation gave an end-of-the-year shout out to people and organizations that “fought the good fight in 2021.” The list included champions for the environment, equality, abortion rights and more. Agree with [the honor roll](https://www.thenation.com/article/society/2022-honor-roll/) or not, it’s an impressive list.  **“There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they’re falling in.”** [Desmond Tutu](https://www.npr.org/2021/12/26/1047748076/desmond-tutu-dead-remembrance) **(Oct. 7, 1931-Dec. 26, 2021)** |

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| **January Community Happenings** |
| Saugerties Democratic Committee has added a community calendar to its newsletter. Please check the Saugerties Democratic Committee [website](https://saugertiesdemocrats.org/) regularly for updates. Send suggested listings to [chdinsmore@gmail.com](mailto:chdinsmore@gmail.com).  **January 1:** Swearing-in ceremony of newly elected officials @ 10:00 AM in Town Hall.  **January 5:**  Town Board Organizational Meeting @ 7:00 PM at Senior Center or via [Webex](https://townsaugerties.digitaltowpath.org:10234/content/Generic/View/294).  **January 6:** Saugerties Zoning Board of Appeals meeting @ 7:00 PM. Webex meeting (posted closer to meeting). Contact: 845-246-2800 x333 or [kfreeman@saugerties.ny.us](mailto:kfreeman@saugerties.ny.us).  **January 8:** Esopus Creek Conservancy’s Annual Esopus Bend Bird Count @ 7:30 AM. Preregistration required: [info@esopuscreekconservancy.org](mailto:info@esopuscreekconservancy.org).  **January 11:** Saugerties School District Board of Education meeting @ 6:30 PM at the Riccardi Elementary School (meet the Board @ 6:00 PM).  **January 12:** Online Saugerties Writers Club from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. (*See Saugerties Library Events* [*Calendar*](http://saugertiespubliclibrary.org/events-calendar/)*.*)  **January 12:** Saugerties Village Planning Board meeting @ 6:30 PM at the Fire Department (Hooks) Room, 43 Partition Street.  **January 13:** Saugerties Public Library Board of Trustees meeting @ 6:00 PM at the Library’s Community Room. Open to the public.  **January 18:** Town Planning Board Public hearing @ 7:30 PM. Webex meeting. Contact: 845-246-2800 Ext. 358 or [bbertorelli@saugertiesny.gov](mailto:bbertorelli@saugertiesny.gov).  **January 23**: Saugerties Pro Musica presents pianist Liana Paniyeva in concert @ 3:00 PM at the Saugerties United Methodist Church. Free. Proof of full vaccine regime required for admission.  **January 26**: Online Saugerties Writers Club from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. (*See Saugerties Library Events* [*Calendar*](http://saugertiespubliclibrary.org/events-calendar/).)  **Ryan House** [Support Group Meeting Schedule](https://www.raisingawarenessrun.com/r-y-a-n-house-schedule/) at 19 Barclay Street, Saugerties (ongoing). |