Saugerties Democratic Committee Newsletter

February 2022

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| **Politics and Elections Because That’s What We Do** |
| **Midterms: Upending the Prognosticators**If you listen to political pundits, Democrats are predicted to lose both the House and Senate in the midterms. Currently, the polls for the [House](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/congress-generic-ballot-polls/) don’t look good. And generally, the party in the White House loses seats during midterms. Remember George W. Bush’s midterm analysis of the Republicans taking [“a thumping”](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-elections-bush/bush-admits-republicans-took-a-thumping-idUSN0747831720061108) or Barack Obama’s assessment in 2014 that he took “[a shellacking](https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=131046118)”? Despite the dire warnings, Democrats can change the narrative and[maintain their majorities](https://wapo.st/3u6kVqP). New York can take the lead. We in Ulster County have a crucial role to play in delivering our county and state to help preserve the Democratic majorities. Please sign up [here](https://saugertiesdemocrats.org/we-need-you-in-22) to volunteer for this election cycle. **Voting Rights Bills and the Filibuster**The voting rights bills went down when Democratic senators Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema joined Republicans in opposing a special carveout of the filibuster to pass the bills. While angry Democrats [ponder primarying them](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/jan/29/james-carville-democrats-sinema-joe-manchin-senate), the Democratic Party needs Manchin and Sinema to maintain its slim majority. Though the bills didn’t pass, we cannot give up on voting rights. President Biden can fully implement his [March executive order](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/03/07/executive-order-on-promoting-access-to-voting/), which calls on all federal government agencies to help citizens register and vote, and make Election Day a federal holiday. Congress can reintroduce the bills in altered forms. And advocates have begun [challenging voter suppression laws](https://www.naacpldf.org/naacp-publications/ldf-blog/important-facts-about-ldfs-lawsuit-challenging-georgias-voter-suppression-bill/) in court. There’s a role for us, too. We can focus our time, money, and energy on crucial elections in [Georgia](https://www.warnock.senate.gov/), [Florida](https://valdemings.com/home/), [Arizona](https://markkelly.com/) and [Wisconsin](https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/lissandravilla/ron-johnson-democrats-trump-midterms-senate-2022). Write postcards; make phone calls. Vote early and head to these states to help get out the vote. Future newsletters will include specific actions to fight back against voter suppression. **Supreme Court Comes A-Courting**SCOTUS Justice Stephen Breyer will retire at the end of the 2021-22 term. President Biden pledges to nominate the first Black female justice. The guessing game of who will be the nominee begins. California Supreme Court Justice Leandra Kruger and D.C. Court Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson are considered [frontrunners](https://www.scotusblog.com/2022/01/how-biden-will-choose-the-next-supreme-court-nominee/), while South Carolina Rep. Jim Clyburn is pushing for U.S. District Judge [J. Michelle Childs](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/26/us/politics/j-michelle-childs.html?unlocked_article_code=AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACEIPuomT1JKd6J17Vw1cRCfTTMQmqxCdw_PIxftm3iWka3DMDmwciPkORJCH_0bRZKF4INl22jWQRNJFNLJqT_xzyuNEeUxxTg3i6r21pKM4GQRn44SiQjFxmJvXQbEz9TKtYGSyc-pxleD67krYbn3tWabbzSUhdwp6psc2JV373nJYwP3FAfc1joclpYopA5p6QTkKZyOY7bK_W1glZoLwPlyL4RI2WupZRTjQgdSejrkBewlVAljFJ2httSd-sJgPfYNKY9usakIoa8H8gr4OC2Z3LY_PBJc5Q4Tclb0Coqc5nyd_Z1HKpxtg7oGmd4Rg&smid=url-share). Despite this opportunity to add a younger liberal justice, SCOTUS will remain a 6-3 conservative body, underscoring once again that elections have consequences and Democrats need to keep their eyes on the prize. The president says he will name his nominee by the end of February. **First They Came for the Masks; Then They Came for the Books***Maus*. *The Bluest Eye*. *The Handmaid’s Tale*. *Beloved*. *To Kill a Mockingbird*. *The Hate U Give*. All books; all banned—somewhere in the U.S. Right-wing groups are using schools to reignite the culture wars and are lining up school board candidates to enforce their divisive agenda. School board elections matter. Do you believe schools should foster critical thinking skills, diversity, intellectual and emotional growth, and be inclusive? You might be a great school board member. Perhaps you should [run for school board](https://www.nyssba.org/member-services/running-for-the-school-board/). Elections are May 17! |

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| **Monthly Meeting News** |
| **January SDC Meetings Highlights**\*The Saugerties Democratic Committee met on January 25 via Zoom. The meeting began with visits from elected officials, [Juan Figueroa](http://www.juanforulster.com/), [Michelle Hinchey](https://www.nysenate.gov/senators/michelle-hinchey/about) and [Kevin Cahill](https://nyassembly.gov/mem/Kevin-A-Cahill), who discussed their upcoming elections. Figueroa asked for the SDC’s endorsement and the committee delivered by unanimously endorsing him for re-election as sheriff. Additionally, Sakinah Irizarry provided an update on the Saugerties Central School District. The committee also voted to add Anna Markowitz as an SDC member representing Election District 14. The big news was the election of Nejla Liias as chair, replacing outgoing chair, Lanny Walter, who stepped down after seven years. While Lanny will remain on the committee, he said that he believed it was time to turn over leadership to a new generation of Democrats. The committee thanks him for his years of dedication and service as our leader. \*For a copy of the full minutes, please email saugertiesdemocraticcommittee@gmail.com or check [saugertiesdemocrats.org](https://saugertiesdemocrats.org/).  The 2022 SDC monthly meeting schedule is February 7 (special meeting), 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** |
| The **New York State Legislature** voted on new legislative and Congressional district maps after the 10-member Independent Redistricting Commission declined to submit new maps after its initial offerings were rejected. As reported in our past newsletters, the Democratic and Republican members of the commission couldn’t agree on the maps and instead submitted two sets of maps. With election deadlines fast approaching, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie promised to act quickly in approving the maps. On Sunday, Jan 30, the legislature released the Congressional maps, with Saugerties remaining in NY-19 with Rep. Antonio Delgado. We await the NYS legislative maps, which should be released imminently. Litigation is expected, with courts hopefully acting quickly. [**Ulster County Office of the Aging**](https://ulstercountyny.gov/aging) will provide [free tax preparation](https://villagesaugerties.digitaltowpath.org:10064/content/Generic/View/258) for any low-to-moderate income taxpayer, especially people over age 50, on Wednesdays at the [Saugerties Kiwanis Ice Arena](https://www.kiwanisicearena.com/), beginning on February 7 through April 6. This service is being offered throughout the county. Email your name, preferred location, date and time to UlsterTaxAide@gmail.com. What? Not a registered Democrat? Last day to change your party affiliation to vote in the June primary is **February 14**. Changes received after February 14 through seven days after the June Primary will be set aside and opened and entered in the voter's registration record. |

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| **February Community Happenings** |
| Check the Saugerties Democratic Committee [website](https://saugertiesdemocrats.org/) for updates on this local calendar. **February 7:**Last day to sign cannabis referendum petition (*see*[*SDC website*](https://saugertiesdemocrats.org/)). **February 7:**Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting @ 7:00 PM. Webex meeting (posted closer to meeting). Contact: 845-246-2800 x333 or kfreeman@saugerties.ny.us. **February 7:**Village Board Meeting @ 5:30 PM; Fire Dept., 43 Partition St. **February 8:**Saugerties School District Board of Education meeting @ 6:30 PM at the Riccardi Elementary School (meet the Board @ 6:00 PM).**February 8, 15, 22:** [Lighthouse TV23](http://www.saugertieslighthousetv.com/) *Diversity Minute* (10:00 AM-6:00 PM) with Dr. Rassheedah Watts on language, courage, awareness, inclusion and more. **February 9:** Village Planning Board meeting @ 6:30 PM; Fire Dept., 43 Partition St. **February 10:**Saugerties Public Library Board of Trustees meeting @ 6:00 PM at the Library’s Community Room. Open to the public. **February 17:**Climate Smart Task Force meeting @ 5:00 PM & Conservation Advisory Committee @ 6:00 PM via Zoom. To attend, email climatesmartsaugerties@gmail.com. **February 20**: Saugerties Pro Musica presents Bard faculty & student musicians @ 3:00 PM at the Saugerties United Methodist Church. Free. Proof of full vaccine required for admission. **February 20:**Pasta dinner to benefit Maranda Venneri-Newkirk and her family in her battle against cancer. Saugerties Elks Lodge, 3434 Route 32 North for pick-up only. $12. **February 21**: Historic Preservation Committee meeting @ 5:30 PM via [Zoom](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9699878583). **February 22:**Village Board Meeting @ 5:30 PM at the Fire Dept., 43 Partition St.**February 22:**Town Parks/Recreation Advisory Committee meeting @ 6:30 PM. Contact: Terri Wood at 845-246-2800, x17. **February 22:** Village Zoning Board meeting @ 7:00 PM at Village Hall; 43 Partition St. **February 23:**Saugerties Memorial VFW Post 5034 meeting @ 7:00 PM at American Legion Post 72, 30 John St. Open to all veterans. **February 23:**Village Historic Review Board meeting @ 7:00 PM at Village Hall; 43 Partition St. **Ryan House** [Support Group Meeting Schedule](https://www.raisingawarenessrun.com/r-y-a-n-house-schedule/) at 19 Barclay Street, Saugerties (ongoing). |