Saugerties Democratic Committee Newsletter

March 2022

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| **Politics and Elections Because That’s What We Do** |
| **Ballot Petitioning: What’s That About?**New York election laws were created in the late 1800s in an attempt to democratize who gets on the ballot. To protect against party leaders determining candidates, New York created a petitioning process where a candidate must get signatures from 5% of enrolled voters of the political party in the unit covered by the office—state, county, town, district, etc.--with a few exceptions. (Statewide candidates who receive at least 25% of support at the NY State party convention and State Supreme Court Justice candidates do not need signatures.) For Saugerties Democrats, candidates for Congress, NY State Senate and Assembly, County Sheriff, Judicial Delegates, State Democratic Committee members and [Town Democratic Committee](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1C8YET1z_LJRFqL2Q2dYl_zpzRXdSkMqB/view) members or their volunteers will be collecting signatures through March 24. If more than one candidate is running for a position (as is the case in NY Assembly District 103), an enrolled voter can only sign one of those petitions. It is up to the candidates to make sure that only eligible voters sign their petitions. **And the Nominee Is**The guessing game is over. President Biden nominated [Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson](https://www.scotusblog.com/2022/02/profile-of-a-potential-nominee-ketanji-brown-jackson/) to be the 116th Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, replacing [Justice Stephen Breyer](https://www.oyez.org/justices/stephen_g_breyer). While some Republicans have labeled this historic nomination as proof that Biden is controlled by the “radical Left,” the confirmation process is [expected to be less contentious than past hearings](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/us/politics/ketanji-brown-jackson-republicans.html?unlocked_article_code=AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACEIPuomT1JKd6J17Vw1cRCfTTMQmqxCdw_PIxftm3iWka3DPDmwfiPkORJCH_0bRZKF4INg-wz2dRt4EOqUoW_o3zOZUPFdqTUyyr4OZkpAEKCwzssSzQmYyldrrbIwPzAXLPCO_Ofstg_q2pQ6HOzy9RvGOhXBwI15lvZJgc1q13XRYxLPPEeR3xtB_2_8iAs0uQmsBMzKY_KW9U2UIM9iHbR3Z4wI3SrsZDWmVxYjAnupGJAZCClvGT2d94nI8775cOdARNaX8LH0waZa0wOVRWiEzctDfV9BmTJPUlr5qrbfMtReGrcG0zPg8H61U16jWkV6VHpgL4aADPWVC6h1HDQ&smid=url-share). **Medicare Alert**Quietly the privatization of Medicare, the government program that provides health care for seniors and people with disabilities, is taking hold. Or that’s what health care advocates, such as [Physicians for a National Health Program, and some lawmakers](https://pnhp.org/news/the-biggest-threat-to-medicare-youve-never-even-heard-of/) are saying. Direct Contracting, a pilot program to take over traditional Medicare, has been rolled out in many states. Most seniors are enrolled in traditional Medicare where they can freely choose their doctors and hospitals rather than Medicare Advantage, a managed care version run by commercial insurance and for-profit companies. If Direct Contracting or its iterations are implemented, people with traditional Medicare would automatically be enrolled in the program without their consent. Local activists are pushing back on investor-owned, profit-making entities running traditional Medicare and [have written](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1JxkQ1q4MBYJhliBTZjJ9Oz4rbCN1fdsMYyhxqmQYlAg/edit) to Xavier Becerra, the Health and Human Services Secretary, and are planning a demonstration on March 19. As a result of the calls to end Direct Contracting, the U.S. Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services [have made modifications and changed the name](https://homehealthcarenews.com/2022/02/cms-announces-changes-to-direct-contracting-for-2023-unveils-the-aco-reach-model/) to Accountable Care Organization “REACH” model. Activists say this change is cosmetic and it still is the road to Medicare privatization.  In the words of Rachel Maddow, “Watch this space.” |

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| **Monthly Meeting News** |
| **February SDC Meetings (Two for the Price of One)**\*The Saugerties Democratic Committee met on Monday, February 7, for a special session and again on Tuesday, February 22, for its regular monthly meeting. Both via Zoom.   The special session was called to meet the Ulster County Democratic Committee deadline for submitting a [slate of committee candidates](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1C8YET1z_LJRFqL2Q2dYl_zpzRXdSkMqB/view) to serve from 2022-24. The committee also endorsed [Michelle Hinchey](https://www.nysenate.gov/senators/michelle-hinchey) for re-election to the NYS Senate.  [Sarahana Shrestha](https://sarahanaforassembly.com/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)*, who is challenging NYS Assemblymember*[Kevin Cahill](https://cahillforassembly.org/)*, spoke to the committee. Cahill, the Assembly District 103 incumbent, represents all of Ulster County except Saugerties. Based on the 2020 census, Saugerties will move from our current NY Assembly District 102 to District 103.* *The jampacked February 22 meeting included the election of Lanny Walter as first vice chair of the committee. Additionally, Fred Costello and Mike Ivino gave an update on cannabis in Saugerties and the Winston Farm proposal.*\*For a copy of the full minutes, please email saugertiesdemocraticcommittee@gmail.com or check [saugertiesdemocrats.org](https://saugertiesdemocrats.org/).  The 2022 SDC monthly meeting are 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 news from **Ukraine** changes rapidly and how this story ends is unknown. What we do know in the words of longtime diplomat Aaron David Miller, “So far, Biden has done a masterful job of leading and maintaining both E.U. and NATO unity.” We also know that the former president and his sycophants on Fox have been vocal cheerleaders for Putin and are being [used as a propaganda tool](https://www.grid.news/story/global/2022/02/24/donald-trump-and-tucker-carlson-are-all-over-russian-state-media/?fbclid=IwAR2O-ZG4Y7mFHeFR-z4zN05Tv0qYD05Gibhg_RqQaN-XC3RMaG0QFbKL5jA) in Russia. Interested in supporting Ukraine?  [Here](https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/ways-to-help-ukraine-conflict/) is a list of ways to help. To learn more about the history of Ukraine, watch this short [video](https://www.cbsnews.com/video/ukraine-long-a-victim-of-russian-oppression/#x). Closer to home, the **Marlboro School District** School Board in Milton, NY voted to ban two books, [Dear Martin](https://socialjusticebooks.org/dear-martin/) and [The Poet X](https://www.nationalbook.org/books/the-poet-x/), without any formal [discussion](https://www.timeshudsonvalley.com/stories/marlboro-bans-two-books-from-high-school%2C37170). The blowback from the community motivated the Board president to issue a [statement](https://www.marlboroschools.org/article/668775) on the process and a pledge to have an open discussion at the next Board meeting. This is a stark reminder of the importance of school board elections, which will take place on May 17. As censorship increases in schools and libraries and attempts to restrict accurate history gain momentum, we urge concerned citizens to [run for the school board](https://www.nyssba.org/member-services/running-for-the-school-board/). You don’t have to be a parent or have a school-age child to be invested in our children and equitable public education. The Saugerties Democratic Committee has a new and improved [**website**](https://saugertiesdemocrats.org/) with essential community and voter information at your fingertips. Please bookmark us on your web browser for easy reference and check it regularly for news, events and updates to our community calendar (*see below*). |

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| **February Community Happenings** |
| **March 2:***Water Keeps Time: History of the Esopus Creek* presented by Lifespring Saugerties @ 11:00 AM; [Register](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSelPZuBKXq7YxRYLLIOU5OBoVBZdwkIebZsfhD9Z9_G2ulNPQ/viewform) for Zoom link.**March 2:**Town Board meeting @6:30 PM; Saugerties Senior Center and [WebEx](https://townsaugerties.digitaltowpath.org:10234/content/Generic/View/294).**March 3 & 24:**Comprehensive Planning Committee meeting @ 6:30; Senior Center; contact leeanne.thornton@yahoo.com.**March 6:**Fire Dept. Ladies Auxiliary Penny Social @ noon, calling begins @ 1:30; Firehouse, 43 Partition St.**March 7:***Dreamworld*, an art show @ the Saugerties Library, will be held  through April 23.**March 7:**Village Board meeting @ 5:30 PM; Firehouse, 43 Partition St.**March 7:**Town Zoning Board @ 7:00 PM; WebEx (posted closer to meeting); [info](https://townsaugerties.digitaltowpath.org:10234/content/Generic/View/161).**March 8:**[International Women’s Day](https://www.internationalwomensday.com/). This year’s theme: Break the Bias.**March 8:**Saugerties School District Board of Education meeting @ 6:30 PM (meet Board @ 6:00 PM); Riccardi Elementary School or [virtual](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsSdTVRQGQevOSaBXScHv7w).**March 9:**Town Ethics Committee meeting @ 6:30 PM; Town Hall Conference Rm, 4 High St.**March 9:** Village Planning Board meeting @ 6:30 PM; Fire Dept., 43 Partition St.**March 10:**Saugerties Public Library Board of Trustees meeting @ 6:00 PM at the Library’s Community Room. Open to the public.**March 15:**[Village of Saugerties Elections](https://villagesaugerties.digitaltowpath.org:10064/content/Calendars/View/1/2022/3%3B/content/CalendarEntries/View/5843) from noon to 9:00 PM.**March 15:**American Legion Post 72’sSt. Patrick’s takeout dinner from 4:00-6:30 PM; 30 John Street; reserve a dinner at 845-706-8083, 845-246-9783, or kpendergast@hvc.rr.com.**March 17:** Climate Smart Task Force meeting @ 5:00 PM & Conservation Advisory Committee @ 6:00 PM via Zoom. To attend, email climatesmartsaugerties@gmail.com.**March 20:**Signs of Spring walk, Esopus Creek Conservancy @ 8:00 AM. [Register](https://www.esopuscreekconservancy.org/signs-of-spring.html) required.**March 20:** John Street Jam with Fred Gillen, Jr., Niall Connolly, Elizabeth Clarke & Dave Kearney @ 1:00 PM; Orpheum Theater.**March 20:**Saugerties Pro Musica presents Frisson chamber orchestra @ 3:00 PM at the Saugerties United Methodist Church. Free. Proof of full vaccine required for admission.**March 21**: Historic Preservation Committee meeting @ 5:30 PM via [Zoom](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9699878583).**March 21:**Village Board Meeting @ 5:30 PM at the Fire Dept., 43 Partition St.**March 22:**Town Parks/Recreation Advisory Committee meeting @ 6:30 PM. Contact: Terri Wood at 845-246-2800, x17.**March 22:** Village Zoning Board meeting @ 7:00 PM at Village Hall; 43 Partition St.**March 23:**Saugerties Memorial VFW Post 5034 meeting @ 7:00 PM at American Legion Post 72, 30 John St. Open to all veterans.**March 23:**Village Historic Review Board meeting @ 7:00 PM at Village Hall; 43 Partition St.**March 26:**Benefit [concert](https://www.shoutoutsaugerties.org/all-events/2022/3/26/concert-with-violinist-lara-st-john) by ShoutOut Saugerties by violinist Lara St. John @ 7:30 PM; Reformed Church of Saugerties, 173 Main St, [tickets](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/benefit-concert-with-violinist-lara-st-john-tickets-271035182527?fbclid=IwAR1wMlXupzlk0WN7EoZTrU8MrglxLHBx1Attzlu8W8KuNn9qdYfISYEfsdE).**March 30:**Saugerties [Chamber of Commerce](https://discoversaugerties.com/) @ 6:30 PM; info@discoversaugerties.com.**Ryan House** [Support Group Meeting Schedule](https://www.raisingawarenessrun.com/r-y-a-n-house-schedule/) at 19 Barclay Street, Saugerties (ongoing). |