Saugerties Democratic Committee Newsletter

January 2023

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| **Politics and Elections Because That’s What We Do** |
| **2023: What’s on the Horizon**  As we brace ourselves for a Republican majority in the House, under the projected leadership of Rep. Kevin McCarthy and the influence of Reps. Marjorie Taylor Greene, Elise Stefanik, Jim Jordan and other extremists, we must turn to local elections to protect our democracy. The Ulster County district attorney, Ulster County legislators, and town board members will be on the ballot in 2023. It is not too early to pay attention to November elections and sign up to help elect strong progressive Democrats who will hold the line against the radical right.    **Hinchey Joins Other Progressive Dems to Say No to Hochul**  Our State Senator Michelle Hinchey joined 11 other [Democratic State Senators to oppose](https://www.cityandstateny.com/politics/2022/12/senate-judiciary-chair-says-prospects-are-dim-hochuls-chief-judge-pick/381358/) Governor Kathy Hochul’s nominee for chief judge of the New York Court of Appeals, Hector LaSalle. Their opposition is based on LaSalle’s conservative judicial record including rulings that undermined abortion rights and labor unions. While the lawmakers say they fully support the governor’s desire to appoint the first Latino to hold that position, they want a chief judge who is more aligned with New Yorkers’ values.    **Maps & More Maps**  As if we didn’t have enough with legislative maps, the courts have again stepped in to remind legislators about the law and fair representation. Supreme Court Justice Kevin Bryant tossed out the Ulster County legislative district maps after Democrats sued to have the maps comply with a state law passed last year. Republican Board of Elections Commissioner John Quigley had said he would not accept any lawfully redrawn map unless it was court-ordered, leading to the lawsuit. The independent committee, which had until January 3 to come up with a new map, finalized the legislative districts on December 29. Representatives in the new legislative districts will be on the ballot in November.    While the county maps seem to be settled, the NYS Assembly district map is in flux for the 2024 election.  Steuben County Judge Patrick McAlister invalidated the approved 2022 map but let it stand for the 2022 vote because the challenge was too close to the election. The New York State Redistricting Commission has released a [draft of its proposed 2024 NYS Assembly District map](https://www.cityandstateny.com/politics/2022/12/heres-newly-drawn-draft-map-assembly/380347/) and will have statewide [public hearings](https://www.nyirc.gov/meetings) on it. The final map is due by April 2023. After two years of wrangling over maps, one can only say, “Oy vey!”    **Broadband Map Challenge Deadline**  Ulster County Comptroller March Gallagher is urging county residents to look up their addresses on the [National Broadband Map](https://broadbandmap.fcc.gov/home), which was created by the Federal Communication Commission. If the information on the map is inaccurate, please [challenge the map](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kn39-FnwA9uwcm_Pask7tV7Tp8J7mHDKPpnw1y9JE2A/edit) by January 13. An accurate broadband map will help determine where funds will be invested for reliable broadband services. If you have questions, contact the Comptroller’s Office at 845-331-8774 or [CountyComptroller@co.ulster.ny.us](mailto:CountyComptroller@co.ulster.ny.us). |

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| **Monthly Meeting News** |
| **No December Meeting!**  There was no scheduled SDC meeting in December.    Meeting schedule for 2023: Jan 24, Feb 28, March 28, April 25, May 23, June 27, July 25, August 22, Sept 26, Oct 24, Nov 28. Meetings at Senior Center and Zoom. All welcome. |
| **News & Newsworthy** |
| **Positive Trends in Crime**  Despite the fearmongering by Republicans, 2022 was a good year with a downturn in violent crime. Murders in large cities [dropped](https://www.ahdatalytics.com/dashboards/ytd-murder-comparison/?campaign_id=9&emc=edit_nn_20221230&instance_id=81417&nl=the-morning&regi_id=91734135&segment_id=121135&te=1&user_id=a3ed92c1830dc529df2b89f49586dd5d) more than 5%. And gun deaths, injuries, and even mass shootings, [were down](https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/?campaign_id=9&emc=edit_nn_20221230&instance_id=81417&nl=the-morning&regi_id=91734135&segment_id=121135&te=1&user_id=a3ed92c1830dc529df2b89f49586dd5d). While much more needs to be done to curb violent crime, including addressing its root causes, media bias toward the sensational has warped our perception about safety. Unfortunately, negative stories draw a larger audience and [negative news evokes stronger reactions](https://www.psypost.org/2020/03/negative-news-evokes-stronger-psychophysiological-reactions-than-positive-news-56180).    **Positive Trends in Democracy**  This time last year, the world seemed on the verge of autocracy. With Russia amassing troops on the border of Ukraine, the strengthening of alliances between the repressive regimes of Russia, China and Iran, and rising antisemitism, white supremacy, anti-LGBTQ violence, and rightwing Supreme Court decisions, the fate of democracy seemed bleak.    Yet, as [Heather Cox Richardson points out](https://open.substack.com/pub/heathercoxrichardson/p/december-30-2022?r=4uv5r&utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=email), Ukraine has held off the Russian army, Democrats have passed legislation that supports women, workers, same-sex couples, expands health care, fights inflation, improves our infrastructure, and bolsters scientific research and US manufacturing. And in November, instead of the predicted midterm shellacking, Democrats not only held the Senate, they added another Democratic senator.  While Democrats did lose the House, Republicans have just a four-seat majority. However, we can be certain that that slim majority will do its best to block Biden and the Democrats at every turn, not to mention endless investigations.    We must continue to live by the maxim, democracy is not a spectator sport, and work tirelessly for a more just and perfect union.    **In Memoriam**  With profound grief, the Saugerties Democratic Committee announces the passing of Pam Ross, our beloved committee member and compassionate friend. Words cannot express how much Pam meant to our committee, the community and the world. She remained a champion of [justice, love and peace](https://www.seamonwilseyfuneralhome.com/obituary/Pamela-Ross?fbclid=IwAR3BwbGI5hvm-pUT1xiqEWWTmu72r6ZJhCfxTIvIkVWmOJ4zaW1dhKmvYfw) until the end. We extend our deepest condolences to her devoted husband, Bill Barr, and to all who love her. |

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| **January Community Happenings** |
| **Note: Local government calendars were last updated on Dec. 31. Please check for additional meetings and events, which may be missing as we go to print.**  **Jan 1:** New Year’s Day  **Jan 1:** Last day of Kwanzaa  **Jan 2:** Federal holiday—government offices and schools closed  **Jan 2:** UC Executive-elect Jen Metzger Swearing-in Ceremony; Rosendale Theater; [register](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/swearing-in-ceremony-of-jen-metzger-as-ulster-county-executive-tickets-490552364327?emci=534a28ed-817d-ed11-9d7a-000d3a9eb913&emdi=6925919b-857d-ed11-9d7a-000d3a9eb913&ceid=4647384) required; 1:00 PM  **Jan 3:** Village Board Meeting; Fire Dept., 43 Partition St.; 5:30 PM  **Jan 4, 11, 18, 25:** Pickleball at Donlon Auditorium; 43 Partition St., noon to 2:00 PM  **Jan 4:** Lifespring Adult Learning Program; “Olana: Art, Ecology, and the Native Forest;” (Zoom [registration by Jan 2](http://bit.ly/lifespring_010423)); 11:00 AM-12:30 PM  **Jan 4:** Town Planning Board; Saugerties Senior Center; email [bbertorelli@saugertiesny.gov](mailto:bbertorelli@saugertiesny.gov); 7:30 PM  **Jan 7:** NY Senator Michelle Hinchey Swearing-in Ceremony; Orpheum Theater; [registration](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/swearing-in-ceremony-of-jen-metzger-as-ulster-county-executive-tickets-490552364327?emci=534a28ed-817d-ed11-9d7a-000d3a9eb913&emdi=6925919b-857d-ed11-9d7a-000d3a9eb913&ceid=4647384) required; 1:00 PM  **Jan 10:** Saugerties [Board of Education](https://www.saugerties.k12.ny.us/our-district/board-of-education) Meeting; Riccardi Elementary School; 6:00 PM  **Jan 11:** Town Ethics Committee Meeting; Building Dept Conference Rm; 4 High St.; 7:00 PM  **Jan 12:** Town Zoning Board Meeting; Saugerties Senior Center; email [kfreeman@saugerties.ny.us](mailto:kfreeman@saugerties.ny.us); 7:00 PM  **Jan 12:** Saugerties Library Board of Trustees meeting; 91 Washington Ave; 6:00 PM  **Jan 12:** TV23 Committee Meeting; Conference Rm; 4 High St; 7:00 PM  **Jan 16:** Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday—government offices and schools closed  **Jan 17:** Village Board Meeting; Fire Dept., 43 Partition St.; 5:30 PM  **Jan 17:** Town Planning Board Meeting; (agenda so far--Terramor, Cohen-Gambio request); Saugerties Senior Ctr; 7:30 PM  **Jan 18:** Public Hearing on TV Agreement between Town of Saugerties and Spectrum Northeast; (copy of the agreement is available for public inspection during normal business hours at the Town of Saugerties Town Clerk’s Office, 4 High Street); Saugerties Senior Center, 6:00 PM  **Jan 24:** Village Zoning Board Meeting; Village Hall, 43 Partition St.; 7:00 PM  **Jan 25**: Village Historic Review Board meeting; Village Hall, 43 Partition St.; 7:00 PM  **Jan 30:** Call for Artists; Altered Books @ the library; Saugerties Library; artists or artist teams invited to create temporary art installations from books or papers from discarded books; interested? Contact Jennifer Russell at [director@saugertiespubliclibrary.org](mailto:director@saugertiespubliclibrary.org); deadline Jan 30  **Ryan House** [Support Group Meeting Schedule](https://www.raisingawarenessrun.com/r-y-a-n-house-schedule/) at 19 Barclay Street, Saugerties (ongoing) |