Saugerties Democratic Committee Newsletter

March 2023

|  |
| --- |
| **Politics and Elections Because That’s What We Do** |
| **Ulster County Dems Endorsements**  The Ulster County Democratic Committee (UCDC) met on Wednesday, Feb. 22, to endorse its 2023 slate for County Executive, District Attorney, and County Legislators. The UCDC endorsements affecting Saugerties are Jen Metzger for County Executive, Emmanuel “Manny” Nneji for DA (*see below*), Aaron Levine for Legislative District 1, Joe Maloney for Legislative District 2, and Keith Gurgui for Legislative District 3.    **Emmanuel “Manny” Nneji: Experience and Commitment to Justice**  Our District Attorney candidate will be facing a GOP candidate who is touting his “nonpartisan” status. Yet, the only candidate who has worked with both parties is Manny Nneji. Manny was hired by Michael Kavanagh, Sr. (Rep), recruited by then Attorney General Andrew Cuomo (Dem) as Assistant NYS Attorney General, lured back to the Ulster County DA Office by Holley Carnright (Rep). And unlike his opponent who bailed when a Democrat was elected, Manny remained in the DA Office under Dave Clegg. Assistant DAs across NY State were leaving in droves after the new [discovery](https://dictionary.law.com/default.aspx?selected=530) law, but Manny rolled up his sleeves and did the work. He is committed to public safety and equal justice despite the challenges.    The local media has failed to put the few high-profile cases that were dismissed into context, making it seem as if this is an Ulster County phenomenon rather than a statewide issue. Rensselaer County District Attorney Mary Pat Donnelly recently explained that discovery previously applied only to cases that went to trial (4% of cases in her county) but now it applies to 100% of cases. Hence, District Attorney Offices have experienced a mass exodus of Assistant DAs who not only saw the Herculean efforts needed to meet the new requirement but also were aware that many cases would be dismissed because of their inability to respond in a timely manner. NYS data show that the Ulster County District Attorney’s Office has had more success bringing cases to trial than the statewide average, and only slightly less than the previous Ulster County DA’s Office, which wasn’t facing the new discovery law or the closing of courts because of Covid.  Context is important. Our local press must do better.    **Molinaro Watch**  Marc Molinaro continues to show his true colors—bright red MAGA, not a trace of purple moderate. He voted with all but three Republicans to [remove Representative Ilhan Omar](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/house-republicans-omar-stupid-vote-b2275332.html) from the Committee on Foreign Affairs but [has not condemned](https://indivisible.org/resource/tell-your-gop-house-representative-publicly-condemn-marjorie-taylor-greene-calling?akid=86745.2974582.vPSt3R&rd=1&t=5&utm_medium=_20230227&utm_source=email) Marjorie Taylor Greene for her call for a “[national divorce](https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/marjorie-taylor-greene-refuses-back-national-divorce-proposal/story?id=97390020)” between red and blue states. Additionally, he joined Republicans in voting to end the national emergency concerning Covid, which President Biden had already announced would end on May 11. Prematurely rescinding the national emergency would end the flexibility to waive or modify Medicare, Medicaid, [CHIP](https://www.medicaid.gov/chip/index.html), and private insurance to address the pandemic. Molinaro continues to rubberstamp all proposed GOP legislation. He has yet to schedule an Ulster County town hall meeting. We’re waiting. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Monthly Meeting News** |
| **February SDC Meetings\***  SDC had two meetings in February—a special endorsement meeting on Feb. 15 and the regular monthly meeting. On Feb. 15, the committee endorsed Fred Costello for Town Supervisor, Leeanne Thornton and Mike Ivino for Town Board, and Jill Zarcone for Tax Collector. An endorsement for Town Justice was deferred until the Feb. 28 meeting. At the Feb. 28 meeting, the committee voted to have a secret ballot, which would close on Thursday, March 2. SDC will announce whether it endorsed a Town Justice candidate on March 3.    \*For a copy of the full minutes, please email [saugertiesdemocraticcommittee@gmail.com](mailto:saugertiesdemocraticcommittee@gmail.com) or check [saugertiesdemocrats.org](https://saugertiesdemocrats.org/). Meeting schedule for 2023: 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** |
| **Help Needed in Wisconsin**  Wisconsin, the land of dairy farms, cheese and polkas—and the most important election you’ve never heard of. On April 4, Wisconsin voters will determine the future of democracy by preserving either the conservative court majority or creating a progressive majority. This has national consequences for the 2024 election and crucial statewide issues from abortion to voting rights. Want to help elect Janet Protasiewicz as the next Wisconsin Supreme Court justice? Contact Indivisible’s postcard campaign coordinator at [jerrywoodstock@yahoo.com](mailto:jerrywoodstock@yahoo.com)    **Student Debt Forgiveness and the Supreme Court**  On February 28, the Supreme Court heard two cases brought by six Republican-leaning states and a conservative advocacy group, challenging President Biden’s student loan forgiveness. Biden’s program allows economically disadvantaged borrowers to apply for up to $20,000 in federal student loan debt forgiveness and those earning up to $125,000 to qualify for as much as $10,000 in debt relief. As *Mother Jones* reports, [Justice Sonia Sotomayor cut through the legal mumbo jumbo](https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2023/02/sonia-sotomayor-student-debt-cancellation-supreme-court-scotus/) to explain that these cases ignore the vast advantages of generational wealth and the inability to repay of borrowers without rich friends or families “to bail them out after the pandemic.” The court, giving signs it will sink the program, is expected to decide in June. Stay tuned.    **NY19 Organizing Summit**  Thinking ahead to 2024, Congressional District NY19 activists met on Sunday, February 19, in Oneonta to coordinate efforts to flip our district back to blue. Several Saugertisians attended including SDC’s Bill Barr and Kathy Gordon. They reported lots of energy, various actions on the horizon, and that Josh Riley was there and still engaged. For more information contact Bill at  wdbarr@hotmail.com or Kathy at [kcg12477@gmail.com](mailto:kcg12477@gmail.com) |