

Chatham County Democratic Party Weekly News Digest January 15, 2024

Upcoming CCDP-Sponsored Events

Manns Chapel Precinct Canvass, January 27, 1 - 3:30 p.m.

This will be a door-to-door canvass in Briar Chapel, designed to increase voter turnout in the upcoming primary election (early voting starts on February 15th). We will also be inviting folks to join our volunteer team.

We will meet at 1 p.m. on Saturday, January 27th, in Briar Chapel at the intersection of Tobacco Farm Way and Grovewood Lane. We will go out in teams of 2 or 3 and canvass for a couple of hours. Each team will be assigned around 30 doors to canvass.

To sign up, go to: [Manns Chapel Precinct Canvass](#)

Training Options

You're invited to sign up for any of these upcoming training sessions:

January 19, January 26, February 9 & February 27, 2:30 - 3 p.m., [Volunteer Orientation](#) @Zoom

January 23, January 30, February 6 & February 13, 1:30 - 3:30, [Training - Join Our Office Crew](#) @Zoom

January 26, 2 - 2:30 p.m., [Events Team Orientation](#) @Zoom

January 27, February 10 & February 24, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., [Training - Introduction to Voter Registration & Voter Education](#), CCDP Community Engagement Center (CEC), 628 East Street, Pittsboro

February 13 & February 27, 1:30 - 3 p.m. [Training - Staffing Tent Events](#), CCDP Community Engagement Center (CEC), 628 East Street, Pittsboro

Event Hosts are needed for those trainings held at the CEC. To sign up, go to: [CEC Event Host](#) .

###

Other Upcoming Events

January 15, 2-3:30 p.m., Redistricting Roundtable, sponsored by the NC Counts Coalition (Virtual Event)

During our time together we will have conversation and brainstorm the work ahead for the year, we will touch base on our Independent Redistricting Commission work, and we will hear from attorneys regarding the pending redistricting litigation in our state.

Join us via Zoom at:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYoduGrrj4oE9M0Bpnrls0_ofkiZnouT8XN](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYoduGrrj4oE9M0Bpnrls0_ofkiZnouT8XN)

January 16, 2 - 4 p.m., Board of Elections Regular Meeting, Board of Elections Office, 984 Thompson St, Suite D, Pittsboro

The board meeting will be open to the public at the Board of Elections office and online via GoToMeeting. Meeting access information will be available to citizens prior to each meeting and available at the meeting.

For a calendar of meeting dates and other important election-related dates, [click here](#). To see meeting minutes, [click here](#).

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://meet.goto.com/164880357>

You can also dial in using your phone.

Access Code: 164-880-357

United States: +1 (872) 240-3412

January 22, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m., Community Climate Conversation, Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center, Pittsboro

The Central Pines Regional Council (CPRC) was awarded a \$1 million Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) by EPA to develop the climate action plan for our region. Once complete, our local governments will be able to apply for \$4.6 billion in competitive funding, authorized by the Inflation Reduction Act, to implement projects and actions included in the climate plan. There will be a **Community Climate Conversation** on Monday, January 22, 2024, 4:30 - 7:30 p.m. at the Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center in Pittsboro.

For more information and to register, visit:

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/040997706fb448eb8acddf1a69402a2f/>

January 23, 7-8:15 p.m., Ferrington Democratic Club Meeting (Virtual Event)

The first Fearington Democratic Club meeting of this very important election year for our country is *This Is What Democracy Looks Like*.

Congresswoman **Valerie Foushee** will join us for the first segment of this meeting by Zoom. She was this area's representative in the NC House and then the NC Senate. In 2022 she was elected to Congress for the district that includes Chapel Hill, Durham, and points north – but not Chatham. Redistricting for 2024 again put the northeastern part of Chatham County in her district. We are delighted to (re)introduce her to our community, in the hope and belief that she will defeat her 2024 Republican challenger in November and once again represent our area beginning in 2025.

The January 23 Club meeting also features the two unopposed candidates for the two open seats on the Chatham Co. Board of Commissioners, incumbent **Karen Howard** and newcomer (to that Board) **Amanda Robertson**. Also joining us are four incumbent District Court Judges running unopposed for reelection. They are **Joal Broun, Samantha Cabe, Sherri Murrell, and Hathaway Pendergrass**.

The meeting will be live streamed on Zoom and recorded for later viewing on the Club website ([Home \(fearingtondems.org\)](https://www.fearingtondems.org)). Click [here](#) to request the link to register for Zoom (by 5 p.m. of the day of the event, please, and sooner is better).

###

News and Events Sponsored by Red, Wine & Blue

Hello, Troublemakers, and Happy New Year!

As you know, 2024 is going to be a big year. With elections for offices all the way from school board up to the President of the United States, we all have a role to play in making sure our friends and family are registered to vote, informed on the issues and candidates, and ready to make their voices heard in the March primaries and in November!

That's why we're going to be using our *Rally Your Squad* tool all year long! If just 2500 of the 20,000 women in our network here in North Carolina commit to making sure 12 of their friends and family get out to vote, we can have a HUGE impact on elections this year, starting today. You can get started at [this link](#).

January is all about finding your people. Our actions this month will have you checking out the awesome "Brainstorm" feature in the Rally tool, and making sure those people know there are primaries coming up in March (early voting starts February 15th). [Check it out](#), and dive in! And of course, you can always reach out to any of us if you have questions or need help.

But Rally isn't the only thing we have going on this month. We'll be having a virtual NC Rally the Primaries Salon January 31st (more info coming soon!). We'll also be starting up a new cohort of our popular TroubleMaven Academy in February. And we have a Rapid Response team that we alert to events and advocacy opportunities as they arise. [Click here](#) to sign up!

We can't wait to work with you all this year!
Janice D. Robinson,
NC Program Director, Red, Wine & Blue

Upcoming Red, Wine & Blue Events

January 16, 7:30 p.m., The Legacy of Matthew Shepard and the Fight for LGBTQ+ Rights

In 1998, Matthew Shepard was killed in Wyoming solely because he was gay. Award-winning author Leslea Newman will join us to discuss her new book "Always Matt: A Tribute to Matthew Shepard" and discuss his legacy and the progress that has been made since his tragic death.

[Sign up.](#)

January 17, 7:30 p.m., Banned Book Club: The Kite Runner

Join us as we read The Kite Runner. The unforgettable, heartbreaking story of the unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father's servant, caught in the tragic sweep of history, The Kite Runner set in Afghanistan at a tense and crucial moment of change and destruction. A powerful story of friendship, it is also about the power of reading, the price of betrayal, and the possibility of redemption; and an exploration of the power of fathers over sons—their love, their sacrifices, their lies.

Sign up [here](#).

January 18, 7:30 p.m., Troublemaker Training: Handling Tough Topics Like a Pro

Want a little help having effective and persuasive conversations? We got you! Join us to hear from Jess McIntosh, a communication strategist, CNN commentator and former host of Signal Boost. She can help you with tips and advice on what to say (and what not to say) and how to connect with others.

[Sign up.](#)

###

News from the North Carolina Democratic Party

North Carolina Democratic Party Welcomes Vice President Harris to North Carolina

Ahead of Vice President Harris' visit to Charlotte to meet with educators, counselors, parents, gun safety advocates, and local leaders to announce new funding from the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act that will help schools across the state, North Carolina Democratic Party Chair Anderson Clayton released the following statement:

"I'm thrilled to welcome Vice President Harris to the Tar Heel State. The VP's visit to North Carolina is not only important in addressing the gun violence epidemic but also showcases that North Carolina is the key battleground state of 2024. The gun violence epidemic has impacted communities across our country and North Carolina has unfortunately experienced the fear, helplessness, and long-term impacts that comes with it. This Administration has fought hard to ensure that they are providing the resources and tools that our schools desperately need in the face of this growing public safety crisis. I'm proud that I got my start in national politics on Vice President Kamala Harris' presidential campaign, and I see today the same vision and drive she has to make our country a better place. North Carolina Democrats are proud to be in this fight with the Biden Administration to deliver results to hardworking folks across our state and to help them win North Carolina in this election."

ICYMI: Editorial: Lt. Gov. Robinson Needs to Answer Questions of Campaign Finance Irregularities

"Mark Robinson, now a candidate for governor, owes it to the state's voters to clear up these very serious concerns and questions. It would be one thing if these issues were an exception. But for Robinson, financial irregularities seem to be too much the norm in his campaigns and even his life."

[According to a new WRAL Op-Ed](#), Mark Robinson has been "through three bankruptcies (1998, 1999 and 2003) and, according to court records, seven years of unpaid federal income taxes. He's even faced eviction from his home, after he failed to make payments."

From a review of Robinson's 2020 campaign finance reports, Robinson's campaign may, among several concerns listed, have:

- Used campaign cash to pay off personal loans;
- Improperly Accepted anonymous donations in excess of the allowable limits
- Accepted contributions from forbidden business sources;
- Accepted individual contributions in excess of the allowable limits;

- Accepted donations from out-of-state political action committees not authorized to be involved in North Carolina elections;
- Failed to disclose required donor identification information;
- Included discrepancies between total income from detailed contribution listing pages and that listed on the summary page.

“Mark Robinson can’t even keep his own house in order and now he expects North Carolinians to entrust him as our state’s CEO,” said NCDP Chair Anderson Clayton. “This paper trail of mishandlings and financial irregularities gives voters across North Carolina yet another example of how dangerous his Governorship would be. We cannot afford to have Mark Robinson anywhere near the Governor’s office.”

###

Let Senator Thom Tillis Know Your Opinions!

Please take a minute to fill out and submit the following survey about current events and issues and make your voice heard. We want him to hear from Democrats!

[Survey \(senate.gov\)](https://senate.gov/survey)

###

News from Neighbors on Call

NC Policy Update, January 8, 2023

Governance

- [The top stories of 2023 at the North Carolina legislature: The GOP enacts new voting laws and abortion restrictions and agrees to Medicaid expansion](#) -- Lynn Bonner, NC Newline
- [A series of laws went into effect on January 1](#). These included a set of changes to elections law (see more below in Voting Rights), an increase in registration fees for electric vehicles, regulations governing advertising for substance use disorder treatment, age verification for pornographic websites, and a longer waiting time for teens between getting a learner’s permit and a provisional driver’s license.

Fair Representation

- [On December 19 the North Carolina NAACP, Common Cause, and eight black voters filed a suit challenging newly drawn congressional and state](#)

[legislative maps as racially discriminatory](#). The lawsuit would not impact districts in the 2024 election, but would potentially force new maps to be drawn for 2026 elections. Republicans in the state legislature responsible for drawing the maps claim that they used partisan data but no racial data in drawing the maps, but advocates say that the maps selectively target Black communities.

- [On Thursday the Wake County Board of Elections issued a decision in favor of NC Sen. Lisa Grafstein, whose move to her newly redrawn district had been challenged by a Republican opponent](#). The Board ruled that Grafstein had met the requirement to live in her new district for a year prior to Election Day. While the Board did not address the issue of whether Grafstein is still eligible to serve the remainder of her term in the district she currently serves, Republican leaders of the NCGA have not said they would try to remove her from office.

Voting Rights

- [A series of elections law changes went into effect January 1, though multiple groups are suing to stop them](#). In addition to a new Election Day deadline for receipt of mail-in ballots and increased leeway for partisan poll observers, the new law requires that same-day voter registrants subsequently receive a mailed notice of their registration, with an undeliverable notice causing the registration to be invalidated. The Democratic National Committee, North Carolina Democratic Party, and Voto Latino are among the plaintiffs challenging the law in multiple suits, with two suits specifically challenging the same-day registration provisions. [On December 28 a Federal District Court Judge ordered the parties to these two cases to try to reach a compromise](#), but [on Thursday they submitted a court filing stating that they could not do so](#).
- [On Tuesday the State Board of Elections approved a list of 10 counties that will be part of a pilot project to trial a signature-matching test for mail-in ballots](#). The pilot, which is required by a new law, will use software to test for mismatched signatures on mail-in ballots in Durham, Halifax, Bertie, Wilkes, Montgomery, Rowan, Jones, Pamlico, Henderson, and Cherokee counties. The counties were selected to represent a range of regions, median voting ages, and non-white voting populations.
- [On December 19 the North Carolina State Board of Elections voted 4-1 to dismiss a complaint seeking to bar Trump from the ballot based on the 14th Amendment](#). The complaint was filed by Brian Martin, a retired attorney in Stokes County, on the basis of Trump's actions on January 6, 2021. [Republican Speaker of the NC House Tim Moore also told reporters he hoped the NCGA would pass a law prohibiting the Board from disqualifying candidates](#).

Education Policy

- [Public education: A look back at the top stories of 2023 and what's on tap for 2024](#) – Greg Childress, NC Newswire
- [The North Carolina Supreme Court has scheduled a hearing on February 22 over the Leandro school funding case.](#) Republican leaders in the NCGA are challenging a trial judge's right to order that the plan be funded. The previous Democratic-majority NC Supreme Court ordered the state to pay for the plan in 2022.

Justice

- [On Tuesday NC Supreme Court Chief Justice Paul Newby removed Donna Stroud from her position as Chief Judge of the North Carolina Court of Appeals.](#) Stroud will remain a judge on the court, but the Chief Judge position will be taken by Chris Dillon, a judge with six fewer years of experience on the court. Stroud is a Republican like Newby but has previously drawn criticism from fellow Republican judges, including NC Supreme Court Justice Phil Berger, Jr.
- [On December 20 Governor Cooper announced pardons of four people who served felony convictions and have since gone on to productive careers. Cooper also commuted the sentence of a 35-year-old man who had been in prison since he was convicted of a felony at the age of 16,](#) following the recommendation of North Carolina's Juvenile Sentence Review Board. [Activists participating in a recent monthlong vigil outside the Governor's mansion had identified over 10,000 people as candidates for clemency, and a wide-ranging coalition has called for a commutation of the sentences of the 136 people on death row.](#)

Upcoming Neighbors on Call Event

January 18, 7:30 p.m. ("doors" open at 7 p.m. for optional social time), New Neighbors on the Block (Virtual Event)

Meet the NC General Assembly candidates who are new to NoC in 2024:

Evonne Hopkins (for HD 35, Wake)
 Safiyah Jackson (for HD 37, Wake)
 Bryan Cohn (for HD 32, Granville/Vance)
 Sen. Lisa Grafstein (SD 13, Wake)
 and moderator Dante Pittman (for HD 24, Wilson)

These are wonderful folks in MUST-WIN state legislative districts, and we can't wait for you to get to know them!

[Sign up.](#)

###

News from Democracy North Carolina

Happy MLK Day.

As we stare down what will be a historic election year, we are choosing hope, even as certain lawmakers try to reverse the work of Dr. King through blocking access to the ballot – putting us in a time machine to a backward and harmful place. We are also choosing action and intention at a time when the world wants us to choose complacency.

[Read this year's full MLK brochure here](#)

Our annual MLK resource lays out the different ways you can tap into our work in 2024, including:

- [Protect the Freedom to Vote](#). Join one of the nation's largest Election Protection programs, including volunteer Vote Protectors monitoring voting sites and a team of lawyers and experts answering a voter hotline.
- [Be an Advocate](#). Protest comes in many forms, including being part of a movement toward better policies and institutions. Becoming an Elections Advocate and learning how elections run in your community is a simple, impactful way to advocate better elections, fund accessible voting sites, and create greater transparency.
- [Vote](#). Time and again, elections show the power of a single vote. It's time to exercise that muscle in the 2024 Primary and General Elections (March 5 and November 5, 2024), a critical step toward shaping policies and leadership in our communities. Stay informed on elections, voting rules, and what's on your ballot at ncvoter.org.

Time and again, we've seen change can happen when people – like you – show up. When we rise together, we can win. We will make sure all North Carolina voters have what they need to engage in their community, fight for a better democracy, and cast their ballot in 2024.

Join us.

Onward,

Cheryl Carter & Adrienne Kelly
Co-Executive Directors

###

News from NC Congresswoman Valerie Foushee

Today, we honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s life and legacy of service and dedication to fighting inequality and injustice. As we recommit to his long-standing mission, today is also a reminder of the work we've yet to accomplish.

Last year, we saw the most aggressive attempts by the Republican party to chip away at the voting rights Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. fought relentlessly for. This year, we face an uphill battle in protecting the Voting Rights Act from Republican attempts to dismantle non-discrimination clauses, impose harsh voter ID laws, and limit vote-by-mail.

Make no mistake: these Republican-led bills are further attempts to disenfranchise Black voters.

As Republicans ramp up their efforts to roll back voting rights, I don't plan on slowing down my efforts to protect them. I'm proud to have three critical voting rights bills in committee intended to fortify our voting rights.

Today and every day, we honor Martin Luther King Jr. by fighting against inequality, protecting our right to vote, and safeguarding our democracy.

Onward,

Valerie

###

News from NC Congressman Jeff Jackson, January 12, 2024

Revolt (again)

Also, new Speaker = old Speaker

You haven't heard from me for a few weeks because we were all sent home for the holidays, but now we're back. And we immediately hit a brick wall.

The big question is the budget. We were supposed to pass one last year, but we didn't. Instead, we narrowly avoided two government shutdowns by passing two temporary extensions. The first time we did it, the right-flank revolted and fired the Speaker. The second time, it was with the new Speaker. The right-flank didn't fire him, but they grumbled a lot. So, the Speaker promised not to do any more extensions. The next government shutdown is scheduled for one week from today - and we still don't have a budget.

BUT - just before we all came back to D.C. - the Speaker agreed to some major budget terms with the Senate. Most importantly, he agreed on the big budget number, or how much we're gonna spend. The right-flank was furious. They thought the number was too

high. So, they waited until we were all called to the House floor for our first procedural vote of the week. This is the vote that lays out the other votes we're going to take, and it's extremely rare that it fails. Decades can pass without this vote failing.

But the right-flank wanted to send a message, so as soon as the vote began, they started voting against it. Then I watched the Speaker march over to one of the leaders of the right-flank. They were about 30 feet away from me and the Speaker was trying to get this guy to call off the attack and save the vote.

We get five minutes for most votes. There's a big timer on the wall so we can all see how much time we have left. However, once the clock hits zero, the person presiding over the chamber - who is always an ally of the Speaker, because the Speaker picks them - can simply stand there and keep the vote open. Simply put, if they don't go bang with the gavel, the vote technically stays open.

And that's what was happening. I watched as the Speaker tried to coax the rebel leader to stand down and allow the vote to pass while the presiding member looked down from the podium and held the vote open.

It became pretty animated. The rebel leader waved his arms around a bunch. After about five minutes, the Speaker gave up, walked off the floor, the vote officially failed, and we all filed out and waited to hear what the heck was going to happen next.

The next day was one giant pressure campaign from the right-flank against the Speaker. They were in and out of his office, telling the press they might fire him, all kinds of stuff. At one point, one of them even told the press that the Speaker had decided to renege on his deal with the Senate on the budget - which forced the Speaker to come out of his office and basically tell the press, "No, I didn't say that."

No matter what happens with the actual terms of the budget, the Speaker is going to have to pass another extension. He's out of time. In order to do that, he's going to need a lot of votes from the minority party because so many members of the majority party will vote no. At that point, he'll be 1) passing an extension he said he wouldn't pass, and 2) relying on the minority party to get it done.

All of this is basically certain to happen - unless he would rather allow the government to shut down, which he very much does not want.

So, it's just a lot of pain for this guy in the short-term. His right-flank is going to go completely ballistic and we'll see if they actually try and fire him.

New Speaker = Old Speaker

It should be noted that, at this point, the new Speaker is acting the exact same way as the old Speaker. No daylight that I can see between these two guys. The new Speaker talked tough in order to get the job, but upon getting it promptly saw that he's got one of

the smallest majorities in the history of the House of Representatives and that imposes certain mathematical realities on what can and cannot pass. Which is to say, he went from campaign mode to governance mode, and sure enough, that's been a painful transition.

Best,
Jeff

###

Selected News and Opinion Stories

Assembly NC: [A Trump Test in the Piedmont](#)

Cardinal & Pine: [America's ultra rich have \\$8.5 trillion in untaxed income thanks to this loophole](#)

Cardinal & Pine: [How 7 North Carolina Republicans helped set the stage for Jan. 6](#)

Cardinal & Pine: [NC underfunds mental health. It hits trans kids the hardest.](#)

Cardinal & Pine: [Martin Luther King, Jr. Visited NC Often. Here are 5 Times to Remember.](#)

Carolina Public Press: [Elections investigation into NC Lt. Gov. Robinson 3 years old](#)

Chatham News + Record: [Chatham County is booming says 'State of the County' report](#)

CNN: [Former President Donald Trump says he hopes any economic crash would happen before he could serve a possible second term](#)

Daily Beast: [North Carolina Gubernatorial Frontrunner Mark Robinson Had Secret Meeting With Ginni Thomas After Jan. 6](#)

Hopium Chronicles: [Another Measure Finds Prices Falling, 2024 Optimism, Republicans Side With Russia and Iran, Liz Cheney on GOP's Future](#)

Hopium Chronicles: [As 2024 Voting Begins, Democrats Should Be Optimistic About What We Can Do Together This Year](#)

Hopium Chronicles: [On Lawrence Last Night, Trump Is A Truly Terrible Candidate, ACA Signups Break Records, Hunter Blowtorches House Rs](#)

Hopium Chronicles: [My Interview with Tom Keen, "Four More Years," Why We Must Fund Ukraine](#)

Hopium Chronicles: [Good Polls in NH/PA, Trump Is A Terrible Candidate, Inflation Ticks Up A Bit, VA's First Black Speaker](#)

Hopium Chronicles: [Democrats Honor Dr. King, Republicans Rally Behind a White Supremacist](#)

Lucid: ["Swatting" is a Sign of Declining Democracy and Illuminates Pathologies of US Society](#)

NC Health News: [Too few resources to meet demand for substance use disorder treatment in NC prisons](#)

NC Health News: [NC pharmacists step up to provide contraception services](#)

NC Newsline: [Attorneys argue over Senate redistricting maps](#)

NC Newsline: [Did Mark Robinson break the law during his 2020 campaign?](#)

NPR: [What are primaries and caucuses?](#)

NPR: [A new student loan forgiveness policy is starting sooner than expected](#)

NY Times: [Democrats Fret That Biden's Power Players Are Not at His Campaign Base](#)

NY Times (may require subscription): [How College-Educated Republicans Learned to Love Trump Again](#)

NY Times (may require subscription): [Opinion | Joe Biden Puts Donald Trump In His Place](#)

NY Times (may require subscription): [Opinion | Imagine if Trump Loses](#)

NY Times: [Opinion | Trumpism Is Devouring the Evangelical Movement](#)

NY Times (may require subscription): [Opinion | Joe Biden Is Trying to Jolt Us Out of Learned Helplessness About Trump](#)

NY Times: [Opinion | Biden's Appeal to Black Voters Needs an Overhaul](#)

NY Times (may require subscription): [December Inflation Report: Price Increases Tick Higher, but Show Moderation](#)

Washington Post (may require subscription): [Opinion | What six words can teach us all about race and identity in America](#)

Washington Post (may require subscription): [Opinion | Jack Smith has even more evidence](#)

WNCT: [NC to receive \\$12M for mental health resources in schools, VP Harris says](#)

WRAL: [Editorial: Lt. Gov. Robinson needs to answer questions of campaign finance irregularities](#)

WRAL: [Rockingham elections officials ordered to re-hear challenge over GOP House candidate](#)