huntington county democratic party PRESENTS:

*the blue news*

Volume 3/ Issue 1 February 9, 2021

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| upcoming events:  Feb 13, 8:30 am Wells Co Monthly Meeting  Feb 16 6:00 pm INDEMS Project Rebuild Candidate Call  Feb 24: Deadline for Intent for candidacy HCDP party  March 1, 6:30 PM HCDP Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82859943955?pwd=bkhSV01kUjlzV1MvZk9mY1pzVkNpZz09>  March 1-31, Food Pantry Drive  March 6, County Reorg vote  March 8, LWV FW Mo. Mtg Zoom |
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## **NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION JANUARY 18 EVENT**

The HCDP collected hundreds of pounds of items that were distributed to the local Humane Society and Helping Paws. Both organizations were overwhelmed by your generosity and convey their heartfelt Thank You to everyone who donated.

# HCDP DEMOCRAT OF THE YEAR AWARD:

The Democrat of the Year award has been ordered and will be presented at our April in-person (Covid Permitting) meeting. Stay tuned for this exciting award presentation!

**HCDP REORGANIZATION MEETING SET FOR MARCH 6**

As required by the Indiana Democratic Party (INDEMS) By-Laws, the reorganization meeting must be held no later than March 6 at noon. We will be completing our ballot process and emailing those ballots to all Precinct Committee members by the required date of February 19, 2021. Due to Covid restrictions, we will be conducting this vote by email. All ballots MUST be returned no later than 10:00 A.M. on March 6. At this time, there is only 1 candidate per position of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. If there are no more candidates, and these seats are uncontested, the vote will be quick, and results will be known immediately.

If you are interested in running for Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary or Treasurer, please send an email of “Intent for Candidacy” to Christine at [huntingtondemchair@gmail.com](mailto:huntingtondemchair@gmail.com). The deadline for your intent is February 24, 2021. To date, the candidates are: Chair; Christine Bohm, Vice Chair; Brian Humphries, Secretary; Orion McCormack, Treasurer; Bill Oswalt.

Even if the seats are uncontested, we MUST have a quorum of voting members participate in this vote. There are now a total of 39 voting members, therefore, at minimum, we must have 20 voters in order to conduct this reorganization. If you are a precinct committee member, your vote is required.

“For there is always light. If only we are brave enough to see it. If only we are brave enough to be it”, Amanda Gorman.

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# DUE TO COVID-19 CASES WE ARE STILL VIRTUAL

*Logo, company name

Description automatically generated*We have suspended all in-person meetings of the HCDP in February and March 2021. Please click the link on the Upcoming events to join a virtual Zoom meeting. You do NOT need to download the app, but it does make it a bit easier. You can join the meeting via video or just through your phone. The work of the party continues even in a pandemic. Zoom link is in the “upcoming events”section on Page 1.

A picture containing bench, ground, orange, park

Description automatically generated**SAVE YOUR PLASTIC LIDS PLEASE!**

We are collecting lids to have them turned into a Buddy Bench. Please read the article below for the details. We are extremely excited about this project! UPDATE: We have already gathered 10 moving boxes of lids. PLEASE continue to collect them. The Bohm house can be a storage area until we have enough to get our first bench. <https://www.scearthconnection.org/bottle-caps-to-benches/>

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWEST PRECINCT COMMITTEE MEMBERS!**

Carmen Oswalt, Tina Stouder, Shannon Zuercher, Brian Zuercher, Melanie Thornsberry, Christoffer Penny, Andy Krieg, Anne Malone, Jean Hayden, Stephanie Martz, Jessica Brown, Tommi Tucker, Bill Johnson, Cathy Johnson, Ben Pulver, Randy Bellamy, Steve Miller, Jenny Miller, Kevin Rice, Lori Rice, Sarah Beaver and Amber Mellinger. I am beyond thrilled at our full slate of PC’s. Thank you for stepping up and helping us represent all of Huntington County

# PRECINCT COMMITTEE MEMBER HIATUS UNTIL MARCH 7. WE STILL NEED PC’S IN HUNTINGTON 11, 11a, 12, JEFFERSON, SALAMONIE 1 (WARREN), SALMONIE 2 (WARREN) AND WAYNE

Contact Us

Huntington County Democratic Party

2915 E 630 N, Huntington, IN 46750  
260-786-0701 (Christine Bohm, Chair)

[huntingtondemchair@gmail.com](mailto:huntingtondemchair@gmail.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/HuntingtonDemocraticParty>

Twitter: @HuntingtonCoun1

Donation Link:

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/huntingtoncounty>

If you would like to represent the above mentioned Precincts, please contact Christine for an appointment to the position after the required “pause” after March 7. We are also in need of Vice PC’s in Huntington 1A, 2A, 3, 4, 5A, 6A, 7, 7A, 8, 10, 11, 11A, 12, 12A, Clear Creek 1 & 2, Dallas 1, Jackson 1, Jackson 4, Jefferson, Lancaster, Rock Creek, Salamonie 1 & 2, Warren (Bippus) and Wayne. A Vice PC helps the PC in contacting our Democrat voters. They work as a team to make sure all of our voters are aware of our party and who represents them.

**2021 YEARLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMPLETE**

Brian Humphries, Vice Chair and Christine Bohm, Chair have completed and published on our facebook pages the yearly meeting schedule, community outreach programs and some of the fund-raising ideas. If you have any suggestions, please contact Christine at the above email, or Brian at [huntingtondemvc@gmail.com](mailto:huntingtondemvc@gmail.com).

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF DEMOCRATIC WOMEN & FW LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS**

Please consider joining these amazing groups! <https://www.nfdw.com/membership> <https://lwvfw.org/>

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**LETTER TO THE EDITOR WRITERS NEEDED (ONGOING)**

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Description automatically generated*A letter to the editor (LTE) is a good source of providing the entire community with an opposing point of view. We need people who would like to write LTE’s and submit them to the local papers. Each LTE should be no more than 500 words, will need to have your name and city published. If you are an excellent writer, but are concerned with publishing under your name, please reach out to us and we will find a “volunteer” who will submit your letter under their own name. Please remember to use polite language, good grammar, and most importantly, get to the point. You can submit your LTE to The Tab at [tabnewsroom@comcast.net](mailto:tabnewsroom@comcast.net) and to the Herald Press at [hpnews@h-ponline.com](mailto:hpnews@h-ponline.com).

**LOCAL COMMITTEES’ AND BOARDS**

Thank you to everyone who has applied to be on the numerous Boards and Committees within the County. The Central Committee has not heard of anyone who applied being appointed. If you applied, please follow up with the County Commissioners.

**HCDP WOMEN’S COUNCIL IS OFFICIALLY FORMED**

The HCDP Women’s Council’s purpose is to promote women’s issues and celebrate the accomplishments of Outstanding Women throughout our community. We will be hosting a yearly Awards dinner in which 5 different areas of accomplishment will be recognized and to provide 2, $500 scholarships to local High School Seniors. This will be designed to be a NON-PARTISAN event. Congratulations and THANK YOU to the Dem Women who have stepped up to lead this initiative!

Lori Rice, Chair; Roxanna Lucas Murray, Vice Chair; Pamela Beckford, Treasurer; Erika Bruce, Amber Mellinger, Cynthia Wehr, Stephanie Tipton Martz, Joyce Bentz, Mary Ellen Neuenschwander, Sara Beaver. We have 1 open spot on the appointed council. Please contact Christine or Lori if you are interested in being an appointed member. We still need one of the appointed members to act as Secretary. All women of HCDP can be general members. Sorry guys, this one is for the members who identify as women only.

A copy of the By-Laws is available to anyone who is interested. Email Christine for your copy.

**SUBCOMMITTEE’S STILL BEING FORMED:**

As we continue to grow and reinvent our party, we would like to form a few additional committees to help lighten the burden for the Central Committee. We are looking for volunteers for an event planning committee, a fund-raising committee to be headed by Deputy Chair of Fund-raising, Mary Ellen Neuenschwander, and a candidate training and support committee. Briefly, we envision the committees to help in the following areas:

Event planning: parades, fireworks displays, candidate meet and greets, special monthly meetings, Blue Gala event, and other things of this sort.

Fund-raising: help plan and execute plans for different fund-raising opportunties. An example would be a baked potato sale, community garage sale, raffle ticketed events, etc. This is a wide-open field that we can have a lot of fun planning and hosting.

Candidate training and support: this could include helping candidates prepare for debates, helping craft messages that appeal to different demographics of the voting community, helping organize canvassing events, and other things necessary to insure a successful campaign.

If you are interested in volunteering for any of these committees, please reach out to Christine.

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**BLUE ACRES**

Greetings from the Acres. How many of you have sat and watched IU, Purdue, or Notre Dame games, and saw commercial after commercial for Farm Bureau insurance? Drop the insurance, pardon the pun, let’s talk about Indiana Farm Bureau the Co-Op. What is a Co-Op? A cooperative, “…strives to realize the economic, cultural and social needs of the organization's members and its surrounding community. Cooperatives often have a strong commitment to their community and a focus on strengthening the community they exist in or serve.” In short grassroots advocacy and legislative influence for its members. REMC, *Rural Electric Member Cooperative*is another example.

A few issues that directly affects the entire county, both rural and urban, public education funding and property taxes. Indiana Farm Bureau advocates for full funding for public schools K-12, <https://www.infarmbureau.org/public-policy/local-issues>  Why is this significant, property tax legislation, [https://www.infarmbureau.org/public-policy/state-issues](https://www.infarmbureau.org/public-policy/state-issues%20%20#2)  which directly funds public schools.  These Co-ops are under Board leadership. It is especially important we know who those members are. I for one have always thrown away the ballots for Board members for REMC. I will not do that again. None of us should. If you are a member of these two co-ops, know your Board, they speak for you.

Recently, Senator Andy Zay authored SB51, STATEHOUSE (Dec. 17, 2020) —"which would allow Indiana schools to claim federal Medicaid reimbursements for providing Individualized Education Program (IEP) services and special education services,” according to Indiana Senate Republicans web page. This legislation may look like a solution, look again. This bill appears to be using Medicaid to fund teacher raises. Medicaid funding for public schools is mandated by the federal government through IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) that already pays for special services, not teacher pay. This type of money manipulation is important in that it is property tax dollars that pay for items such as teacher pay. The Holcomb administration, with Sen. Zay’s and Rep. Dan Leonard’s support, is handing 100,000,000.00 to voucher schools. That is property tax money that could and should be used to pay public school teachers. Who gets hit the hardest by property taxes?  Landowners in general, but rural/agriculture landowners carry the heaviest burden. Thankfully, we have Indiana Farm Bureau to help in the fight to stop, or at least interfere with CHOICE and put the funding back where it belongs, in taxpayer funded public education. Next time you get a ballot, take the time to vote for those who you feel will support your grass roots issues. I certainly will.

With it being February, Black History Month, I would be remiss to not mention Black farmers and issues they are faced with beyond regular AG issues. According to The Guardian, “The number of black farmers in America peaked in 1920, when there were [949,889](http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/AgCensusImages/1920/Farm_Statistics_By_Color_and_Tenure.pdf). Today, of the country’s 3.4 million total farmers, only1.3%, or 45,508, are black, according to [new figures](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Highlights/2019/2017Census_Farm_Producers.pdf) from the US Department of Agriculture released this month. They own a mere 0.52% of America’s farmland. By comparison, 95% of US farmers are white.” The Guardian tells the story of John Boyd, a black farmer from Virginia who has faced racism and persecution as a black farmer in a white farmer’s world. I encourage you to read his story; <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/apr/29/why-have-americas-black-farmers-disappeared>.

In support of black farmers, Senators Cory Booker, Elizabeth Warren, and Kristine Gillibrand sponsored the Justice for Black Farmers Act, <https://www.booker.senate.gov/news/press/-booker-warren-gillibrand-announce-comprehensive-bill-to-address-the-history-of-discrimination-in-federal-agricultural-policy> Nov. 19, 2020. This legislation is designed to”… reform the US Dept. of Agriculture and create a land grant program to encourage a new generation of black farmers.” According to Sen. Booker, "Overtly discriminatory and unjust federal policy has robbed Black families in the United States of the ability to build and pass on intergenerational wealth,” said Senator Booker. “When it comes to farming and agriculture, we know that there is a direct connection between discriminatory policies within the USDA and the enormous land loss we have seen among Black farmers over the past century. The Justice for Black Farmers Act will work to correct this historic injustice by addressing and correcting USDA discrimination and taking bold steps to restore the land that has been lost in order to empower a new generation of Black farmers to succeed and thrive.”

As history has shown, black American farmers are an even bigger minority, within a minority. This legislation is a step forward, perhaps a reparation, towards a diverse agricultural community open to black America and all minorities. Contact our representatives, they are used to hearing from us by now. Let them know black farmers are important to furthering agriculture.

Now I would like to turn to future editions. We have seen a huge need for urban farming techniques in recent history. Allow me to introduce Scottie Thornsberry, BA-UF (Blue Acres-Urban Farms) Scottie is going to keep us up on current legislation, ordinances, techniques, tips etc. about establishing farms within city limits. I look forward to learning along with the rest of you. Scottie’s knowledge will begin flowing in our March newsletter. Thank You Scottie.

Well folks, until next month, see ya around the farm.

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**DISTRICT REORGANIZATION:**

As with the County level org, the District is also conducting the required Re-organization on March 13. Current Chair Misti Meehan is not seeking re-election at this point. To date, 2 people have put their names in for this position. Christine Bohm, Huntington County Democratic Party Chairwoman and Lauro Zuniga, appointed Chair Indiana Young Democrats of CD3. If additional candidates arise, we will provide this information to you. The Chairs and Vice Chairs of the county parties are those who will cast their ballots for this position.

**STATE PARTY REORGANIZATION:**

The Indiana Democratic Party reorganizatoin meeting is scheduled for March 27. As of this date, only one person has officially declared their candidacy for the Chair of INDEMS. Trish Whitcomb announced she will seek to lead the state party. Formerly the president of the Indiana Federation of Democratic Women, she previously ran former State Superintendent of Public Instruction Glenda’s Ritz’s successful 2012 campaign.

Whitcomb, the daughter of former Indiana Republican Gov. Edgar Whitcomb, also served as executive director of the Indiana Retired Teachers Association.

In a statement, she said providing more support – with money – to county- and caucus-level Democrats and building stronger relationships with community groups will be a key focus.

Meanwhile, the only other candidate who had formally declared a run for state chair, former Rep. Karlee Macer, announced she is dropping out. In a [Facebook post](https://www.facebook.com/karleeforindiana/posts/4269000453126616), the Indianapolis Democrat said, “a family medical emergency has taken precedence.”

Only District Chairs, Vice Chairs and State Caucus members vote on the State Chair. Currently, the State Caucus’s are: College Dems, African American Dems, Latino Dems, Stonewall Dems, Young Dems, and Labor.

A group of people posing for a photo

Description automatically generated**OUR STATE, OUR NATION AND OUR PARTY SUFFERED A LOSS THIS WEEK:**

With the death of former Indiana First Lady, Susan Bayh, our World seems a bit more empty. Evan Bayh’s Twitter page summed it up best: “Susan was a model of courage and resilience in the face of overwhelming adversity," the statement said. "Throughout her 2-year, eight-month battle with cancer, she never once complained or expressed self-pity. Despite a multitude of hardships, she continued to display her exuberances, happiness, and love for others. Her fortitude was truly unbelievable and example for us all." May she be at peace and her family be surrounded in prayer.

**FIRST CANDIDATE FOR CD-3 TO TAKE ON BANKS HAS FORMALLY ANNOUNCED:**

John Stephens, Fort Wayne resident and former resident of Colorado, has formally kicked off his campaign for CD-3 against Jim “the Boogeyman” Banks in 2022. John brings with him a vast knowledge of the inner workings of campaigns and the vision to lead Indiana’s 3rd district forward. Mr. Stephens campaign staff held the announcement at the UAW Hall Local 2209 on Saturday, Feb 6th in a socially distanced, yet well attended event. To learn more about Mr. Stephens and his platform, you may visit his website [at https://www.stephensforcongress.com/](https://www.stephensforcongress.com/). As more candidates announce, we will bring that information to you as they provide it to us. We will not be endorsing anyone as an organization until after the Primaries in May, 2022. However, in full disclosure, Thomas Bohm, husband of HCDP Chair, Christine, is the Treasurer for this campaign.

**FEB & MARCH COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS:**

Our Feb. Cards to Seniors project is off to an outstanding start! We only have about 200 more cards to send and we will have reach all the Senior Democrats in our County. Our March program is a Food Pantry collection. Please contact Christine to donate.

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**OUR LATEST ADDITION TO OUR “BLUE NEWS” FORMAT: ‘THE BOOK WORM”!**

A large stack of books

Description automatically generated with low confidenceIf you are an avid reader, or come across a book you just love, feel free to send your recommendation to Christine to include in this list. We are thrilled that Pamela Beckford has given us this list. Pamela is an avid reader and we thank her for this contribution to our party!

Maybe at some point, we could have a Zoom or a quick discussion on these books.

Bagman by Rachel Maddow and Michael Yarvitz

A scandal in the Nixon White House that wasn't about Watergate or Nixon? Written in an easy-to-read style, Bagman dives deep into the crimes and downfall of Spiro T. Agnew, Nixon's VP. Details that many of us had either not known or forgotten about.

Johnny Got His Gun by Dalton Trumbo

Originally published in 1939 this became a classic anti-war book that carried over to the Vietnam era. Told from the perspective of a wounded soldier trying to escape his own mind with a first-person account of the horrors of the wounded in war.

The Soul of America, the Battle for our Better Angels by Jon Meacham

Meacham highlights the partisanship in many eras by discussing several presidents from Grant to FDR to Teddy Roosevelt to Johnson, Truman and more, as well as highlights of the Birch Society and the McCarthy (Joe, not Kevin) era. History always shows us what we can learn from it, so we do not make the same mistakes over and over.

**EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNTIES (NO COST):**

**Platform Safety for Women in Government**

Join us to learn more about how Facebook is committed to **making our platform a safe place for women in government**.  We will be providing attendees with safety tips, instructions on how to report abusive content on the platform and new tools to combat online bullying. During the trainings we will cover:

* Comment management tools
* Safety tips and tools built for government officials and political candidates.
* Features to protect women against online bullying.
* Our #SheLeads guide which aims to equip women leaders with the tools they need to use Facebook effectively and safely during campaigns.

[**Session details and signup links here.**](https://fbwomensafetyseries.splashthat.com/)

**Black History Month Trainings**

As Black History Month is upon us, we are excited to announce [a series of virtual workshops](http://pgblackhistorymonth.splashthat.com/) for social media professionals to provide tools and resources to drive racial justice online and offline. This programming will feature key activists, state and local policymakers, and organizations working at the forefront of racial justice.

**Workshops include:**

* Driving Racial Justice Online and Offline: A Conversation with Black Elected Officials
* Introduction to Instagram Guides
* Building a Digital Campaign on Facebook
* Using Instagram to Drive Racial Justice in your Community.
* Electing More Black Women to Public Office

[**Session details and signup links here.**](https://pgblackhistorymonth.splashthat.com/)

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**THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIR:**

*It has been a busy January and start to February.*  *I am so happy to see our local Democrats stepping up and getting involved not only with our local party and initiatives, but with our community in general. If I attempted to include all of the good works, volunteer opportunities, links to trainings, and scheduled events, this newsletter would be 20 pages long. Look for ways you can be involved at whatever level you are able. Only have an extra hour per week? Attend an online training and learn something new. Tired of being in the house? Mask up and volunteer at one of the, literally, hundreds of opportunities to help. Thinking of running because you are tired of who currently represents you? Reach out to Christine or Brian and we can start the conversation and help you with next steps. Want to stay in the background and still make a difference? We need recurring pledges for our party.*

*I want to take this moment, publicly, to THANK each and every one who stepped up to fill Precinct Committee seats. You see, with a full roster of PC’s, all of our Democrat residents in our County now have a voice. They have representation with the party. Their concerns will no longer fall upon deaf ears. You made and will continue to make a difference!*

*As was announced in this newsletter, I have sent in my “Intent for Candidacy” for the Chair of the 3rd District. Some of you may have concerns that I may abandon you. That my attention will be elsewhere and HCDP will again be ignored. I am running to make sure that never happens again. If we can get all 12 counties within the 3rd district to work TOGETHER, to push in the SAME direction, with a UNIFIED message, we will be unstoppable. Those of us in the HCDP family know what it takes to turn things around. We know that with hard work, a hope for the future, and a positive outlook, we can make a difference. It’s time for us to step into the District and help make those changes. UNITY is my platform.*

*When I was elected Chair in July, our party was, let’s face it, abysmal. In just 7 ½ months, we have gained a lot of attention within the District and the State. Our membership is growing, our participation in events is expanding at rates I never could have imagined, and our voice is growing stronger and louder. We have 22 months before the next election; almost 3 times as long as we have been moving forward. Can you simply imagine what we can accomplish in the next 2 years?! I have hope. I write this with a smile on my face. We CAN do this because we MUST do this!*

*As always, it is an honor to be your Chair, but most importantly, to call you friends,*

*Christine*