



Marion County Democrats

February 2026 Newsletter

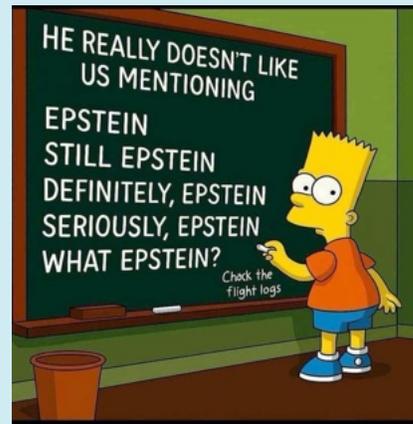
MCDCC Chair Special Election!

Prior to last month's general membership meeting, our Marion Dems Chair Paige Barton resigned. We are grateful for her service to her Party and are glad that she will continue working on Salem's city council and mayoral races for our great Democratic candidates. At this month's meeting, we will have a special election to fill the position for the remainder of the term through November. First Vice-Chair Nathan Soltz has been the Acting Chair for the last month and is not seeking the permanent position. One candidate filed to run: **Angelo Arredondo**, currently the Chair of the Candidate Support Committee. Filing has closed, but nominations are still allowed from the floor.

February's General Membership Meeting will begin at 6pm on Thursday, February 19, and will also include endorsement votes for our incumbent legislators and candidates for county commission. Those who wish to attend via Zoom can [register for the meeting here](#).

Please note the earlier start time of 6:00 with no speak-out to accommodate the agenda, which also includes endorsements for our legislative and county commission seats.

Memes of the Month!



Oregon Democrats in the News

Wyden, Merkley introduce bill to bar ICE and CBP facial recognition use

Earlier on Friday, February 6, both Oregon Senators announced they have introduced the “ICE Out of Our Faces Act.” The bill would ban Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) from using and deploying facial recognition technology and other biometric systems.

The bill is led by Sens. Merkley and Wyden, Senator Edward Markey (D-Ma.) and U.S. Representative Pramila Jayapal (WA-07).

“For years, I’ve been ringing the alarm bells about the dangers of a national surveillance state built on facial recognition technology. Now, we’re seeing Trump’s lawless federal agents deploy this technology on our streets across the nation as he tries to tighten his authoritarian grip,” said Merkley.

Read more here: [Bar ICE and CBP facial recognition use](#)

Oregon was 'next' target for immigration enforcement, NBC News reports

Oregon was in the Trump administration's crosshairs for a large-scale immigration enforcement operation like the one currently unfolding in Minnesota, according to an [NBC News report](#) published Jan. 28.

“This is the whole point of ICE existing in these cities, and Minnesota is not going to be the last state that ICE goes to. Oregon was next. We were not done. We need to keep going,” an unnamed former White House official told NBC News.

At the Capitol, Oregon Democrats are preparing to introduce several bills related to enforcement in the state. Gov. Tina Kotek has signaled her support for the agenda. She and First Lady Aimee Kotek Wilson hosted a roundtable on Jan. 25 with legislators and community leaders to discuss the impact of immigration activity in Oregon.

Read more and watch Kotek remarks here: [Oregon was next](#)

Oregon lawmakers propose criminal penalties for alarming, threatening public officials

As threats of violence against public officials continue to rise nationwide, Oregon lawmakers want clear criminal penalties for those who attempt to intimidate a public official or their family.

Lawmakers on Monday heard testimony on [Senate Bill 1530](#) and [Senate Bill 1516](#), sponsored by the Senate Judiciary Committee, which would make threatening a public official, including a candidate for public office, a crime of aggravated harassment. That would be the least severe category of a felony, carrying potential sentences of up to five years in prison and a \$125,000 fine. The latter piece of legislation includes the provision in a broader public safety legislative package which also empowers magistrate judges to make pretrial release decisions.

Read more here: [Penalties for threatening public officials](#)

Voting / Elections News

Who’s running for office in Oregon in 2026?

In November, Oregon voters will elect a U.S. senator, six members of Congress, governor, labor commissioner, 15 state senators and 60 state representatives, as well as hundreds of local officeholders.

Read more here: [Oregon Candidates in 2026](#)

Primary election information from Marion Co. Clerk: [May 19, 2026 Primary Election](#)

Fascism Watch



IN THE 1940s, Norwegians made and wore red pointed hats with a tassel as a form of visual protest against Nazi occupation of their country. Within two years, the Nazis made these protest hats illegal and punishable by law to wear, make, or distribute.

Text reposted from needle and skein



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[A red hat becomes a quiet form of protest in Minnesota : NPR](#)

A Norwegian hat was used to protest the Nazi occupation of Norway in the 1940s... The hats were called "nisselue," which roughly translates to Santa hat.

"What's been happening in Minneapolis has been so egregious and awful and so destructive to our community," knitting shop owner Gilah Mashaal said of federal agents' use of aggressive tactics.

"It was just collective exhaustion," said Paul Neary, a shop employee. "Minnesotans — we're not going to say the big thing, but we often know what the big thing is just by looking at each other."

Neary created the pattern that has now become the well-known "Melt the ICE" hat, a red beanie-shaped cap topped with a braided tassel.

The red hat has become a movement in the crafting community, popping [up on social media](#) and [reaching other countries](#). Now, red yarn is sold out in knitting shops across Minneapolis, Neary said.

Link to article: [Red Hat Protest](#)

**BUILD OUR COMMUNITY
BUILD OUR POWER**

UPCOMING EVENTS



Meet & Greet
with Ward 2 City Councilor
Linda Nishioka
Hosted by
Linda Garland

**Saturday,
Feb 21st
1 - 3pm**

**Offbeat
Coffee**

**LINDA
NISHIOKA**
SALEM CITY COUNCIL WARD 2

**Cast Your Vote
for
Micki**



Join Micki Varney, along with special guest Sen. Deb Patterson, plus friends and neighbors, for a family-friendly re-election campaign kick-off event.

Please RSVP to Lori Feagan at lorifeagan@gmail.com

Checkpoint 221
1233 Riverbend Rd NW, Salem, OR
Sunday, February 22nd, 3-5pm
Enjoy light refreshments and great conversations.
No-host beverages and food truck fare are available.



Strong Voice. Smart Solutions.

Micki Varney

Campaign Kickoff

**Sunday, Feb. 22nd 3-5pm
at Checkpoint 221
1233 Riverbend Road NW**

Join **City Councilor Micki Varney** and special guest **State Senator Deb Patterson** as we kick off Micki's campaign for re-election as our **Ward 8 Salem City Councilor**.

To learn more about Micki's experience, priorities, and commitment to Salem, visit <https://www.votevarney.com/>

Please email your RSVP by Friday Feb. 20th to lorifeagan@gmail.com



ACTION ITEM: Support trans youth, submit testimony online using the QR code!

Gender affirming care for youth often looks like care that is used for cis youth on a regular basis, and trying to deny it to trans youth is wrong.



Join us this Saturday...

Every Saturday there is an ongoing protest by local activists, against the current authoritarian take-over.

All peaceful, non-violent protesters are welcome.
at Center and Summer, from noon-2:00pm.

Save the date - March 28!

The next **NO KINGS** Day is coming up!





Committees are ordered based on their next scheduled meeting or event. This is one of the best ways to get involved in our party!

- **Membership Committee, Next Meeting, Thursday, February 19, 2026 at 5 PM**
Chair: Gwen Carr, Membership@mariondemocrats.org

- **Monthly General Membership Meeting, Thursday, February 19, 2026 at 6 PM**
On the agenda is the special election to complete the term as Chair. As of yesterday's filing deadline, there is one candidate: Angelo Arredondo, currently the Candidate Committee Chair. Candidates may also declare from the floor.

Please note the earlier start time of 6:00 with no speak-out to accommodate the agenda, which also includes endorsements for our legislative and county commission seats.

Register to Attend Virtually

Here: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZclc-qqrD0oHd1be1HQPe5y07MFnF_Wupkn

All Democrats are Welcome!

- **Fundraising Committee - Next Meeting Tuesday, February 23, 2026 at 6:30 PM**
Location: Zoom - Register Here
Chairperson: Mary Nikas, Fundraising@mariondemocrats.org

The Marion County fundraising committee adds the "Fun" to Fundraising!

Like to throw Parties?

Have an idea for a Fundraiser?

Join us to share your ideas!

- **Neighborhood Leader Committee, Next Meeting Wednesday, February 25, 2026 at 7 PM (coordinators)**
Location: Zoom - Register Here
Chair: Michael Johnson, nlp@mariondemocrats.org
2nd Wednesday at 6:30 PM

Our Neighborhood Leader Committee is responsible for our voter outreach program. Join us and find out how to get involved in your neighborhood to get out the vote!

- **Rules Committee - Next Meeting Monday, March 2, 2026 at 7 PM**
Location: Zoom - Register Here
Chairperson: Victor Dodier, Rules@mariondemocrats.org
1st Monday at 7 PM

Our Rules Committee is responsible for review of our bylaws and standing rules.
Join us!

- **Legislative Committee - Next Meeting Tuesday, March 3, 2026, 6:30 PM**

Chairperson: Marcia Kelley, Legislative@mariondemocrats.org

1st Tuesday at 6:30 PM

The Legislative Committee tracks bills of interest and keeps the membership informed. If you like to engage on legislation of interest, this is the committee for you.

During an active session, the committee meets twice a month: every 1st and 3rd Tuesday. For more information and zoom link, contact chairperson.

- **Communications Committee - Next Meeting Tuesday, March 10, 2026, 6 PM**

Location: Remote meetings will be conducted during the winter months. Contact the chairperson for a meeting link.

Chairperson: Dan Siskin, Communications@mariondemocrats.org

2nd Tuesday at 6 PM

The Communications Committee is responsible for this newsletter, website maintenance, social media sites, and external communications about our Marion County Democrats. Love social media? Join us and get plugged in!

- **Candidate Support Committee**

Contact Chairperson for next meeting date and location.

Chairperson: Angelo Arredondo, Candidates@mariondemocrats.org

The Candidate Support Committee recruits potential Democratic candidates for public office in Marion County. They review candidate qualifications and make recommendations to the Executive Committee, as well as supporting the recommended candidates through the election process. They also conduct voter registration drives.

- **Program Committee - Next Meetings:**

Book Club, Monday, March 16, 2026 at 10 AM

Program Committee, Tuesday, March 17, 2026 6:00 PM

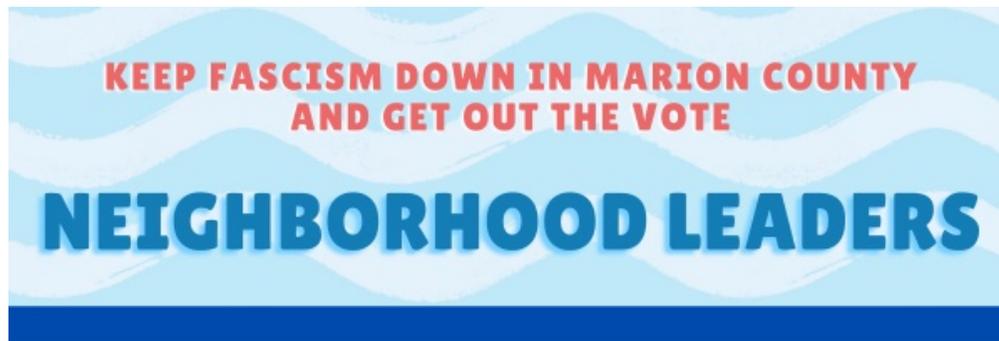
Location: Democrats Meeting Hall – 245 High St NE, Salem, OR 97301, USA

Contact: Programs Chairperson: Linda Jayne Garland, ily18keizer@gmail.com

The Program Committee is chaired by Linda Jayne Garland.

The MCDCC Program Committee creates programming for the Democratic Central Committee, like special guests and presentations, and plans other events as outreach to the community.

Join us on the 3rd Tuesday of each month



Be a Local Hero! Join Our Neighborhood Leader Program

Imagine making a 30% difference in voter turnout with just a few hours of your time!

That's exactly what you can do by joining 350 of your fellow Marion County Democrats as a Neighborhood Leader. This incredible voter engagement program is one of the most powerful in our state - and it's surprisingly simple to participate!

Here's how it works: You'll connect with Democratic households in your neighborhood as ballots arrive (starting April 30th), then follow up with gentle reminders before the May 20th Election Day.

What makes this special? It's personal, it builds community, and most importantly - **it really works!** Areas with Neighborhood Leaders consistently see turnout increases of 30% or more.

Your neighborhood needs your friendly face and passionate voice. Together, we can make Marion County's democratic voice stronger than ever!

[Sign Up Now](#)



SNAP Benefits Update:

SNAP benefits were restored on Nov 7 and EBT cards have been reloaded for SNAP recipients. See the [Marion Polk Food Share Statement on SNAP Benefits Disruption](#) for more information.

The MCDCC is still collecting food donations in our office to be distributed by the Food Share program. Visitors can drop off non-perishable food items (unexpired canned goods, pasta, rice, nut butters, and other shelf-stable items). If you are able to donate money, that is also welcomed and is needed in greater amounts at this time. Fresh produce and other perishable food items must often be purchased and the infrastructure for food collection and distribution must be supported. Visit the Marion Polk Food Share or your local food bank to give as you are able...

[Marion Polk Food Share](#)

[Keizer Community Food Bank](#)



Join the Marion County Democrats Family!

Did you know our organization runs entirely on people power? That's right - we're 100% volunteer-driven and don't receive funding from any outside organizations.

Your support makes everything possible! From championing local candidates to keeping our community hub thriving, your contribution directly powers our Democratic movement in Marion County.

Imagine what we could accomplish together if each registered Democrat in our community contributed just \$5 monthly. We could focus entirely on serving our candidates and community, without worrying about keeping the lights on!

Will you join our monthly supporter family today? Even a small recurring contribution creates a tremendous impact. Click the Donate Now button below to become a sustaining member - it takes just a minute but makes a lasting difference!

Thank you for being the heartbeat of our local Democratic movement. Your generosity truly means the world to us! ❤️

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