

Biden Delivers For Working Families Where GOP Failed

The North Carolina Democratic Party sent the following press release on January 2023:

Today marks two years since President Biden was sworn into office. Since then, under his leadership, Democrats have delivered time and again for working families — a stark contrast with how Republicans led when they were in power. “What a difference two years makes. President Biden, Governor Cooper, and Democrats brought us out of the pandemic, lowered costs, helped create jobs, and always put working families over special interests. Democrats’ leadership couldn’t draw a starker contrast with how Trump and a GOP-controlled Congress used their power in 2017 and 2018: passing tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans and big corporations and caving to special interests like Big Pharma,” said NCDP Chair Bobbie Richardson.

As a reminder, in 2017-2018, Republicans put special interests first and left working families behind:

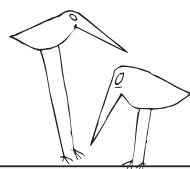
- Gave Tax Giveaways to the Ultra-Wealthy and Big Corporations
- Offshored American Jobs: Created new incentives for corporations to ship American jobs overseas.
- Attacked Americans’ Health Care: Repeatedly voted to gut the Affordable Care Act to kick tens of millions Americans off their health care and end protections for as many as 133 million Americans with preexisting conditions.
- Failed to Deliver on Lowering Prescription Drug Prices and Infrastructure
- Ungovernable chaos: Shut down the government twice because of basic inability to govern.
- Appointed Anti-Choice, Anti-Worker Judges: Appointed the right-wing Supreme Court majority that paved the way for Republicans to criminalize abortion and has ruled with big corporations over workers.
- Stood with NRA Over Reducing Gun Violence: Sided with the gun lobby and manufacturers by revoking commonsense gun safety protections.
- Eroded America’s standing on the world stage: Cozied up to authoritarian leaders, weakened relationships with NATO allies, and withdrew from the International Paris Climate Agreement to stand with big polluters.

Meanwhile, in the first two years, the Biden-Harris Administration and Democrats delivered results with an economic agenda that is on the side of workers. Here’s a sample:

- Record Job Growth: Strongest two years for job growth on record, unemployment matching 50-year low, annual inflation has come down for the past six months in a row, and a record number of Americans have health insurance.
- Lowering Costs for Families: Inflation Reduction Law to lower prescription drug costs, lower health care premiums and

energy costs, take historic climate action, and force wealthy corporations to pay their fair share — all while reducing the deficit.

- Fixing Our Nation’s Infrastructure: Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is rebuilding roads and bridges, providing clean drinking water, and expanding access to high-speed internet.
- Making More in America: More companies are reinvesting in American manufacturing — creating 750,000 good-paying jobs, with an historic \$300 billion in investments in new factories.
- Improving Health Care for Veterans: Passed the PACT Act to strengthen benefits for veterans and their families exposed to toxic burn pits.
- Reducing Gun Violence: Passed the first significant gun safety law in nearly 30 years.
- Providing Historic Student Loan Relief: Providing student debt relief to those who need it most.
- Appointing Historic Court Nominees: Appointed Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson as the first Black woman on the Supreme Court, along with a record number of diverse federal judges in his first two years.
- Rebuilding the Global Coalition: Restored our standing on the world stage, and led our allies to support Ukraine and democracy worldwide, making the world a safer and steadier place.



Book Reviews

And There Was Light: Abraham Lincoln and the American Struggle by Jon Meacham. From a review on the Barnes & Noble website: “Charting how and why Lincoln confronted secession, threats to democracy and the tragedy of slavery to expand the possibilities of America, this book is unlike any previous Lincoln biography.” The book is available at the Randolph County Public Library.

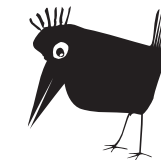
Share a Review or an Opinion

Send your review/opinion piece to: rcdp.newsletter@gmail.com. There is a 50 word limit for reviews, and a 300 word limit for opinions. We will publish as many as space allows. Please be aware that articles will be edited if necessary for space and clarity. Thank you.

Randolph County
Democratic Party

RanDem News

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2023, Issue No. 24



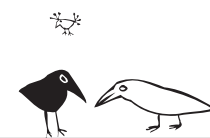
Newly (Barely) Elected Speaker and His Concessions

by Diane Hubbard, Chair, Randolph County Democratic Party

Democrats in Congress have been working hard to make life better for middle- and working-class Americans. They have passed legislation to improve our infrastructure, reduce inflation and drug prices, give help to veterans suffering from the effects of toxic burn pits, and signed the most significant gun safety legislation in 30 years. And we all know that if our government made any sense at all, Rep. Hakeem Jeffries would be the Speaker of the House right now.

What have Republicans done since finally electing Kevin McCarthy, who will probably be the weakest Speaker of the House in recent memory? They immediately cut funding for the IRS to hire more employees for various positions. They’ve also signaled that they want to investigate the Biden family for whatever fever dream Tucker Carlson rants about on any given evening. They want to cut Social Security and Medicare, even in the wake of what has proven to be a very popular increase in benefits by the Biden Administration.

I cackled with glee during the first couple of days of the vote for Speaker. I must admit, watching Kevin make umpteen



concessions to the “Freedom Caucus” for the privilege of becoming the Weaker Speaker was pretty fun. For all his apologetics for the Capitol insurrectionists and the Instigator of the coup attempt, he deserves to squirm.

Poor Kevin had to beg, borrow, and steal to just barely get past the post. In a bribe to the 20 or so swamp creatures gumming up the works, he offered up committee chairmanships, created a strategy to hold the debt ceiling hostage, and froze spending at 2022 levels. The biggest concession, however, came in the form of a resolution to allow any single member to make a motion to declare the Office of Speaker vacant. Republicans do love to stage coups, and this just makes it easier to kick Kevin out and to gridlock Congress for the next two years. Kevin helped create this swamp monster and now he can’t control it.

I am usually reluctant to bring religion into our discussion of politics, as we are a big tent party and not everyone is a believer. But I can’t help but think of this passage from the Bible, Mark 8:36 “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

What indeed, Kevin?

Precincts! Come Have Breakfast and Get Organized

The universe craves order and unorganized precincts do not spark joy. It’s time once again for us to get our ducks in a row and organize our Randolph County voting precincts. This year we’re going to try something a little different.

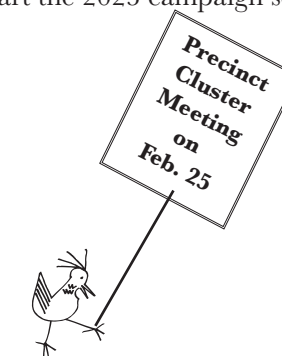
We’ll be holding one large precinct cluster meeting and breakfast potluck on Saturday, February 25, 2023, at 9:30 am at the George Washington Carver Community Enrichment Center (GWCCEC), 950 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Asheboro.

Please bring a breakfast item to share and bring your Democratic friends. We need at least **FIVE** people from each precinct to attend in order to call it organized. We hope everyone will consider attending. Elections are won and lost at the precinct level. We know for a fact that the more one-to-one

engagement you have with voters, the more likely they are to turn out to vote. You can help us get your neighbors motivated to vote for Democrats and change the face of our county.

Please mark your calendars and join us on **February 25** for your meeting. We will elect precinct officers, discuss resolutions to put forward at the county convention, and have good food and fellowship as we start the 2023 campaign season.

See you then!



Efforts of Parents, Teachers, Principals and Staff Keep Asheboro City Schools Moving Forward

by Todd Dulaney, candidate for Asheboro City School's Board of Education in the 2023 election

Believe it or not, state and national education news headlines don't scare me. Do they worry me? Sure. Florida has more or less outlawed African American studies in high schools. Communities across the country are banning books. The Leandro school funding case keeps dragging on. And the scare tactics and boogymen the GOP trotted out for the last school board election — Critical Race Theory, aka CRT-BS — seems to be morphing into “woke indoctrination” for the coming election. Scary stuff.

But here in Asheboro, thanks to the efforts of parents, teachers, principals, and staff, the reality is that the Asheboro City Schools have stayed relatively above the fray when it comes to that nonsense — so far.

I am a frequent member of the audience at ACS Board of Education meetings. Since the mask mandate has lapsed, there have been no throngs of out-of-town protestors railing against “woke agendas” or calling for books to be banned. In fact, most meetings I'm one of only a few “civilians” left at the end. During those meetings, I have heard lengthy presentations on everything from peer mentoring at the elementary level to the next chapter for the Zoo School (which is an amazing asset for the district and community, by the way).

While the District was drafting its 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, there were interesting discussions about “equity,” with long-time board member Gwen Williams (who is a treasure in our community) doing her best to explain to fellow school board members what exactly it is, and what it is now, and why it's so important. In the end, staff were able to keep several mentions of “equity” in the document that passed 7-2.

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HQ is currently open. Call for hours.

(Paid for by the Randolph County Democratic Executive Committee and not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee. c2022)

And there also have been surprising nuggets within presentations that seem to fly under the woke radar of the most extreme right-leaning board members. Such as ...

There are more than 103,000 books in the district with 2,684 having been added in just the past year. What makes me happy, however, is that the district is focusing on diversity in building media collections. For instance, South Asheboro Middle School has an “inclusivity corner” showcasing books that portray characters and authors from different backgrounds and cultures. And Donna Lee Loflin Elementary has a virtual library site for students and a diversity site for teachers where they can browse African American, Hispanic, Native American, and Disability titles, as well as titles that specifically promote diversity.

And while Florida may be preventing high school students from learning about the contributions of Black people on American society, students at AHS will soon be able to take AP African American Studies, which will “explore the vital contributions and experiences of African Americans” in the areas of literature, the arts and humanities, political science, geography, and science.

Hopefully, the District continues on this progressive path and the only headlines that come out of Asheboro in the future are about how inclusive our schools are and what an equitable education our students receive.

CALENDAR

(Meetings will be conducted in person unless otherwise noted or announced.)

February 4, 2023, Saturday, 9:30 am: Monthly Breakfast and Executive Committee Meeting at Democratic HQ, 114 Sunset Ave., Asheboro. All Democrats and like-minded unaffiliateds are welcome! Bring a breakfast item to share.

February 11, 2023, Saturday: Winter SEC Meeting, will be held virtually on Zoom. No time scheduled yet. SEC members should watch their email for update.

February 25, 2023, Saturday, 9:30 am: Breakfast Precinct Cluster Meeting at George Washington Carver Community Enrichment Center, 950 MLK Blvd., Asheboro. **ALL RANDOLPH VOTING PRECINCTS.** Bring a breakfast item to share and your Democratic friends to help us get organized for the 2023-2025 election cycle.

March 15: April/May Newsletter deadline

April 15, 2023, Saturday: County Conventions, venue TBA

May 20, 2023, Saturday: Congressional District Conventions, venue TBA

Check our Facebook page ([facebook.com/RandolphCountyDemocraticParty](https://www.facebook.com/RandolphCountyDemocraticParty)) and website ([randolphcountydems.org](https://www.randolphcountydems.org)) often for information and updates. We have many opportunities to make a difference in Randolph County in the coming months.

Separation of Church and State

by Susie Scott

Recently I gave a presentation on the separation of church and state. While I was researching the topic, I ran across a book that explained a lot about what we've been seeing lately on a national, state, and even local level. And it answers the questions so many of us have been asking about how certain (thankfully not most) churches could support candidates who embrace white nationalism and a doctrine of fear and intolerance. The book, *The Flag and the Cross: White Christian Nationalism and the Threat to American Democracy* was written by Philip S. Gorski and Samuel L. Perry. If you'd like to read it, we have a copy available for checkout at our headquarters.

But first, let's start with the basics. The separation of church and state is guaranteed in the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. The beginning of the Amendment states, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” This statement has two effects. The first part guarantees that no state religion will be established for our nation. The second guarantees that everyone is free to practice the religion of their choice or they may choose not to practice any religion at all.

The authors of *The Flag and the Cross* discussed the history of the separation of church and state in our nation. They also discussed their findings from surveys they conducted which explored the relationship between the belief that religion should be part of our government and the escalating white nationalist movement which led to the January 6, 2022 attack on our Capitol and still poses a threat to our democracy. What they found in their survey was that white people who felt strongly that religion should be part of the government also felt strongly that their race experienced much more discrimination than any other race. Those same people tend to distrust experts and government agencies. They believe that they have a special relationship with God which favors them over any other people, and that white protestant men are ordained to be in control.

These beliefs are rooted in deep historical myths that can be traced back to the Puritans, and they form the basis of white nationalism. The authors found that white nationalism rises when any of the following occur:

- periods of mass immigration
- wars
- civil/human rights movements

There are many more revelations from this book than I could possibly list here. You can discover them yourself by reading the book or watching one of the authors' many interviews on YouTube.

In our county, at least two churches have been promoting Republican candidates as well as using their pulpit to attack Democratic office holders, public education, and government agencies in general.

While researching the separation of church and state, I also learned that some faith-based organizations are also concerned about the dangers of merging religion and government. The Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty (BJC) is a national faith-based organization founded in 1936 to preserve religious liberty. They advocate for separation of church and state, and have taken a stand against Christian nationalism. They also support keeping partisan politics out of churches and keeping the Johnson Amendment which currently prohibits 501(c)(3) non-profits from endorsing political candidates. You can find them online at <https://bjconline.org/>.

So what does all of this have to do with North Carolina and Randolph County? The intrusions of religion on government and politics in churches have been growing over the past few years as the Republican Party has merged with certain evangelist churches. In our county, at least two churches have been promoting Republican candidates as well as using their pulpit to attack Democratic office holders, public education, and government agencies in general. They have hosted political operatives and candidates like Charlie Kirk and Mark Robinson who oppose civil rights and push the white nationalist agenda.

Bills have been introduced in our state legislature to further the white nationalist agenda. From 2021 through 2022, the Democratic party had enough votes to sustain the Governor's veto of bills that threatened public health, unfairly targeted marginalized groups, and gave political appointees more authority over our education system. But the results of the 2022 election threaten that balance. Republicans now have enough members in the State Senate to override the Governor's vetoes. Democrats in the State House avoided a super majority by one seat, so everyone has to be present to sustain a veto. Moreover, new temporary rules have been set by the House majority party which allow a vote to be called at any time on any bill (not just vetoed bills) without prior notice to legislative members or the public. This means individual House Democrats may not be able to take a sick day, take time off to handle work or family emergencies, or even leave for a bathroom break. If they do, we can expect bills to become law which threaten democratic and equitable practices within our state.