

## **Candidates for Riderwood Democratic Club Board of Directors**

### ***Joanne M. Coen:***

For the last year, I have served on the program planning committee with Thea Fine and Nancy Oppenheimer. As someone who moved to Maryland almost 6 years ago, it has been very rewarding working with these two women who are so knowledgeable about the state and county politics. Prior to moving to Maryland, from Florida, I was involved with a League of Women Voters for 25 years both on the local and state levels. Non-partisanship was always important to me, but these last several years in Prince George's County, Maryland have made me abundantly aware of the necessity of participating in partisan politics. I hope to continue having the opportunity to be involved in program planning in 2026.

### ***Judith Dighe:***

Professionally, I have worked as a teacher, a specialist and for over 20 years an education coordinator for the pre-K and Head Start programs in Montgomery County public schools. During this time, I was also active in the Democratic political activities in my neighborhood association in Montgomery County where I live for approximately 60 years before moving to Riderwood. In January 2023 I was elected secretary of Riderwood Democratic Club and have served in the capacity ever since. My primary political interest is in electing Democrats to all levels of government. I have engaged in door-knocking, postcard writing, political demonstrations over many years. My primary interests/passions are the environment, Immigration policies and public education of children.

### ***Trudy Downs:***

I have been a member of the Democratic Club since 2005. I have served in various capacities throughout that time. Currently, I am the Treasurer and have held that post since April 2015. I also manage membership and our mailing list since April 2015 and maintain the Riderwood Democratic Club's webpage on [riderwoodlife.com](http://riderwoodlife.com).

### ***Thea Fine:***

I have spent the better part of my adult life involved in Democratic politics, beginning with stints as a Capitol Hill House and Senate staff member in the 1970s. While working on the Hill, my equally politically inclined husband, John Szabo, and I met at a meeting of the Capitol Hill Young Democrats! Once un-attached from Federal service, I became active in legislative advocacy with the Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club. Since coming to Riderwood, I have been engaged in the work of the Democratic Club, becoming a board member and chair of the Club's program committee four years ago. With these programs I have sought to bring a range of interesting, educational and thought-provoking monthly speakers to Riderwood, from political pundits and authors to federal, state and local politicians across Riderwood's two legislative districts. For the last 40+ weeks, Lee Finney and I have worked to keep Club members informed about "What You Can Do" to fight back in the face of the Trump administration's autocratic direction. If re-elected to the Board, I hope to continue in both roles with the Club and to continue in my tenure as Montgomery County Precinct Chair for State District 14.

### ***Lee Finney:***

I moved to Riderwood from Mendocino, California in August 2024 and sought out the Riderwood Village Democratic Club, having been an active leader in the Democratic club in California and in Annapolis where I lived from 2005 to 2019. During my time in Annapolis, I held numerous campaign and appointed positions, including campaign manager, field coordinator, redistricting, commissioner, municipal, advisory, commissioner, coordinated, campaign, manager, DNC delegate in 2016 campaign manager for longtime speaker of the Maryland General Assembly Mike Busch. In California, I ran successfully for elective office as chair of the Mendocino Coast Healthcare District that owned the local Adventist operated rural Hospital. In

California, I also organized volunteers to work on targeted national campaigns in 2020 and 2022. I developed activist skills in the 1960s and as a SEIU labor leader in the 1980s on issues of pay equity for women and people of color. My day jobs were as a Child Welfare Social Worker and as a labor negotiator and consultant for 15 years. I joined the Board of the Riderwood Village Democratic Club in December 2024 and, together with my writing partner Thea Fine, proposed to write and edit the weekly 'What You Can Do' report in response to the second election of Donald Trump. I look forward to helping the Club membership become active and taking back to US House and Senate in the upcoming midterm elections.

***Tony Hausner:***

My wife and I moved to Riderwood in October 2024. I have been a member of the Riderwood Democratic Club Board since January 2025. In that role, I organized attendance at two rallies: Labor Day and the second No Kings day on October 18, 2025. I have arranged for all Democratic candidates for Montgomery County Executive to participate in a candidates forum which will be held on April 15, 2026. I've been an active member of the Riderwood gun violence prevention group. I worked for 26 years for the US Centers for Medicare and Medicaid services. I have been active in federal, state and county politics since 1981. At the County level: I played a key role in fighting school segregation and building the new Blair high school with its magnet programs and helped to create a safe Silver Spring that led to the passage of several criminal justice programs.

***Bruce McConachie:***

I am a teacher, writer, performer, and play director. I am a former college professor. I taught and led programs at William and Mary and the University of Pittsburgh. As a historian of popular entertainment, I have written several books that investigate the politics of past plays and films. My most recent book, for Ethics Press, critiques Hollywood movies that report to portray climate change disasters. I am the artistic director of the Riderwood Readers Theater, which has already produced several plays with a liberal political agenda. I am also active in the Sierra Club, participating in their lobby efforts in Annapolis over the last three years. I have performed educational skits at Riderwood and could explore the possibilities of political satire and upcoming club presentations.

***Patric Mary O'Brien***

My husband, Greg, and I moved to Riderwood from Ohio, to be near our youngest grandchildren, about six years ago. My background is as a public health nurse, a pediatric nurse, and as an assistant county prosecutor. My major emphasis during the time I have been on the Board of the Riderwood Democratic Club has been to increase the participation of the Members in the activities of the Club. I hope to continue to promote the involvement of the community in all levels of political action.

***Nancy Oppenheim:***

I have served on the Board of the Riderwood Democratic Club for the past two years. I have taken a special interest in the governing of Prince George's County, and understanding the ballot questions. I currently serve on the program committee of the Board.

***E. Anne Riley, Ph.D.***

I have been on our Democratic Club Board as Chair of the environmental committee for most of my 10 years here. I do environmental lobbying in Annapolis. I am presently working on getting more Latino's elected to the county Council of Prince George's County. I started the Environmental Book Club and I am co-chair of the Resident Supporting Sustainability Movie group. Eight years ago, I began trying to get the Riderwood food scraps compost process approved to keep methane out of landfills. I am on the recycling committee, the Earth Day committee, grounds committee, staff/residence sustainability and the ECO-R groups. I am willing to continue on the Board.

***Bea Rodgers:***

Bea Rodgers made significant contributions to Maryland residents with disabilities throughout a career spanning more than half a century. In 1995 she was appointed by the Governor as Director of the Maryland Office for Individuals with Disabilities and in 2022 was made a Member of the Women's Hall of Fame of the Maryland Commission of Women. Bea has been active in the Democratic Club Riderwood since she moved to Riderwood and has served as President of the Board for the last two years. Most of her career prior to the work with the Governor's office was with Prince George's County and she has many connections with the current political incumbents in the County.

***John Scott:***

I was raised on my family's farm near Pocahontas, in Northwest Iowa, subsequently attending college and then law school at the University of Iowa. I initially practiced law with the Department of Justice, in its Civil Rights Division, in lawsuits seeking the desegregation of racially segregated public schools, and subsequently as a prosecutor in cases charging persons with depriving citizens of their civil rights. I met and married Louisa during that time. We moved to Iowa, where I was elected to the Iowa State Senate for a term of four years, during which I was particularly involved in legislation involving resource conservation. Resigning at the term end, I joined the Iowa Attorney General's office for six years, defending the state against civil litigation brought against it. Louisa and I then moved to Shaker Heights, a suburb of Cleveland, where Louisa had been raised. I joined a law firm there where I defended physicians, and other healthcare providers, against allegations of malpractice until my retirement in November 2023 when Louisa and I moved to Riderwood, near our daughter and her family. Louisa and I also have a son and a combination of five glorious grandchildren.

***Jill Shindelman:***

I have been a member of the Riderwood Democratic Club since 2018. I compile, edit, and produce the monthly Democratic Club newsletter. I hope to do this until December 2026, after the midterms.

***Sarajane Siegfriedt:***

I am new to Riderwood, but not to the Democratic Party. I became a precinct officer in 2003 and door-knocked my precinct until I moved from Seattle. I served on the 46th district board from 2004 to 2018, as the first female representative to King County Democrats. I served as platform chair and organized our annual advocacy day visit to Olympia from 2014 to 2018. I served on the State Central Committee. I worked as a lobbyist for substance abuse treatment programs, and for public campaign financing. In 2014 I ran for the legislature, coming in second to another Democratic woman. I am interested in helping with advocacy as I learn more about the local political landscape.

***John Szabo:***

I have been a resident of Riderwood and an active member of the Riderwood Democratic Club for over 4 1/2 years. I am a lifelong Democrat and have supported Democratic candidates even before I was eligible to vote with such activities as canvassing, voter registration, and writing postcards. I ran as a Democrat for a county judgeship. I am originally from Indiana, but have been a resident of Washington DC for most of my life. I graduated from Georgetown University and George Washington University law school and served as an attorney for over four decades with the federal government and various agencies and Congress, specializing in ethics and the conduct for government employees and Members of Congress. I teach a course on professional responsibility and ethics for attorneys at George Washington University law school. I have chaired the ethics panel for the Howard County Board of Education.