



Riderwood Dems

RIDERWOOD DEMOCRATIC CLUB NEWSLETTER April, 2026

No Kings Day March 28

On Saturday, March 28, 2026, hundreds of Riderwood residents participated in **No Kings Day** demonstrations throughout the metropolitan area to protest the policies and actions of the Trump administration. These are photos from the event at Powder Mill Road and Beltsville Drive and elsewhere:



President's Corner

Democrats continue to win in unexpected places and by unexpected margins in special elections in 2026. Due to the increasing unpopularity of the Trump war and Trump agenda, taking the US Senate, as well as taking back the House of Representatives, has become a greater possibility. Turning out our supporters will be even more essential than in other election years. Although parts of the coalition that elected Trump in 2024 have become disillusioned with him, many are also fearful of being victimized when voting or are not convinced that the Democrats can fix all the trouble we are in both at home and around the world. This is where we can help by participating in election activities at every level of government. The 2026 midterm election is truly the most consequential of our lifetimes. Watch this space as well as the **What You Can Do Committee** reports for details about how you can participate. We will also have election volunteer signups and signups to join our newly formed committees at every membership meeting. We can do this!

At our last meeting, the new board approved standing committees and we are now recruiting interested members to join one or more of the club's committees. Although the Political Action Committee is likely to be the busiest in this election year, the other committees, with the exception of the Governance Committee, welcome new members as well. Here are the 2026 committees that we invite you to join:

- The **Membership Committee** recruits and encourages ongoing membership in the Democratic Club of Riderwood through various activities including the club's participation in Riderwood events throughout the year and outreach to new members. Patric O'Brien, patricobrien46@gmail.com or (614) 981-6372 is the chair of the Membership Committee.
- The **Program Committee** schedules speakers, candidate forums, and expert panels for presentations at the club's monthly membership meetings. They organize the logistics and publicize program productions. Thea Fine, editted@gmail.com or (410) 493-2025 is the chair of the Program Committee.
- The **Communications and Publicity Committee** produces the monthly Newsletter and maintains the Club's webpage on the Riderwood Life website.

They may create posters, handouts or press releases as-needed. Jill Shindelman, Jill.Shindelman@gmail.com or (301) 273-2358, is the chair of this committee.

- The **Political Action Committee** strategizes and organizes club members' active participation in legislative advocacy, election campaigns, and the political education of our membership. The Committee may need to have two or more subcommittees such as: legislative advocacy; election campaigning including postcard-writing, meet and greet receptions and election day events; and **What You Can Do** reports. Lee Finney is the chair of the Political Action Committee.
- The **Environmental Issues Committee** engages and collaborates with other environmental groups and educates the membership and the board about environmental concerns locally and nationally. Anne Riley, shrinkear@gmail.com or (301) 502-9565, is the chair of the Environmental Issues Committee
- The **Executive Committee** of the club's officers will serve as the Governance Committee to maintain the Bylaws, legal documents, and minutes of meetings; maintain communication with Riderwood administration and community service organizations; and appoint an annual Nominating Committee to nominate board members and officers.

To join one or more of our committees, you can sign up at any membership meeting or reach out directly to the committee chairs listed above. You can also email me directly at leefinney43@gmail.com and I will forward your information to the appropriate committee chairs.

I look forward to working with each of you to protect our democracy in the year ahead.

– **Lee Finney, President**

April 15 Democratic Club Meeting to feature a forum for candidates for Montgomery County Executive

As part of the Democratic Club's focus on providing our members information on the candidates and issues in the 2026 elections, we will be holding a forum with the five individuals running in the Democratic primary for the office of Montgomery County Executive. The forum will be the feature of our usual monthly meeting, to be held at 2:00 PM on Wednesday, April 15, in

the Encore Theater. The primary election itself is scheduled for Tuesday, June 23.

Marc Elrich, the current County Executive, is prohibited by term limits for running again. The five candidates for this position and their websites are:

- Mithun Banerjee mithunbanerjee.com
- District 1 Councilmember Andrew Friedson andrewfriedson.com
- At-Large Councilmember Evan Glass evanglass.com
- Peter James ccaway.net
- At-Large Councilmember William Jawando willjawando.com

The forum will be moderated by Josh Kurtz, who was the Founding Editor of the Maryland Matters newsletter. He is currently co-founder and co-moderator of the podcast Maryland Now.

– *Tony Hauser, Ph.D.*

Anthony Brown, Attorney General of Maryland, Speaks at March Meeting

At the Democratic Club’s March 18 meeting, we welcomed Maryland’s attorney general, Anthony Brown. He reminded us that he had visited Riderwood 20 years ago when he was running for Lieutenant Governor of Maryland on a ticket with Martin O’Malley. After serving three terms in Congress, Mr. Brown was elected to the Attorney General office in 2022. He oversees a large portion of the state government activities, and noted that 87% of his organization’s budget goes to payroll and benefits



Anthony Brown with Thea Fine (left) and Lee Finney (right). Photo by Paula Einaudi.

He began his remarks by noting that the rule of law in our democracy is being tested, but he has faith in the “third branch of government.” He

pointed out that the state Attorneys General are now on the front line of defending democracy, adding that he is working with groups of them to lobby Congress to take action on bills related to climate change, children’s safety, and to obtain a refund of tariffs paid by individuals and organizations in their states.

He added “that the only problem we have with elections in the United States is that not enough people vote.” He concluded by answering questions from members of the audience.

Opinion: Comments on the Environment

We were very excited that Michelle Garcia and her Prince George’s County Council staff set up and advertised a NO KINGS Demonstration within walking distance from Riderwood, at the Calverton Shopping Center in front of McDonald’s. We had great difficulty getting the word out to residents due to the various rules about politics at a non-profit institution. It was well organized with about 300 in attendance. I’d estimate that there were nearly 30 Riderwood residents braving the cold windy weather.

That’s the good news. The bad news is that the Bottle Bill legislation will probably not make it this year, in addition to a number of other environmental bills. All the more reason to get the vote at midterms.

We are anticipating a positive result about getting grant funds to join the **Senior Stewards Acting for the Environment** (SSAFE) organization. They have an incredible quarterly sustainability newsletter.

I’m pleased to report my belief that our Riderwood administrative staff have turned an important corner in becoming more open to considering sustainability issues. Most of them attended the meeting with SSAFE and seemed positive about it.

Last June I suggested to administration that it would be very helpful to those of us with low vision for them to change to the Atkinson Hyperlegible font, recommended by the Prevention of Blindness Society, when preparing slides for presentations to residents. While they did not do that they did begin using another font, which is an improvement but not quite as good.

They failed to let us know so they did not get credit for that very positive effort. Administration and the RAC now use the Aptos font, not ideal but an improvement. I want to suggest, where possible, that our 250 clubs also use Aptos.

Take a look at our Earth Month window at the TNC Craft Room and another at MST Craft Room by Earth Month Committee.

See you on Earth Day, April 22, in Maryland Hall!

– **E. Anne Riley, Co-chair, Democratic Environmental Committee**

News from the Gun Violence Prevention Group

The 2026 session of the Maryland General Assembly will end in a few days. We have a good chance to get an important bill across the finish line and onto the Governor’s desk. The Family and Law Enforcement Protection Act has passed the House of Delegates and is awaiting action in the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee. This bill will repair a significant gap in our state’s rules by requiring immediate surrender of firearms when a domestic violence protective order is sought, with specific details about how that will be done. Local law enforcement will

have custody of the firearms for as long as the protective order is in effect.

We need to get pressure on both the president of the state senate and the chair of the relevant senate committee to move this bill along. As soon as you read this, please reach out to your senator (Montgomery County – Craig Zucker, Prince George’s County – Jim Rosapepe) and ask them to do this: urge Senator Will Smith, chair of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, to get this bill (numbered SB 20) out of committee and onto the floor calendar. This needs to happen right away, or the bill will die. Although neither of these senators is a member of the committee, they can speak to Senator Smith and tell him it is crucial to move this bill.

– **Bob Tiller**

Important Dates

Date	Subject	Location	Time
Wednesday, April 15	General Meeting of the Riderwood Democratic Club, featuring presentations by candidates for Montgomery County Executive	Encore Theater	2:00 PM
Wednesday, April 22	Riderwood celebrates Earth Day	Maryland Hall	11:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Friday, April 17 and Thursday, April 30	Environmental Book Group discusses <i>The Lost Trees of Willow Avenue: A Story of Climate and Hope on One American Street</i> by Mike Tidwell. The book describes the impact of climate change on one block of his neighborhood in Takoma Park.	LSC Card Room	1:00 PM
	As part of our Earth Month celebration, the author will be here at Riderwood at 7:00 PM on April 30 in the Encore theater to discuss his book. We hope you will read the book and come to hear his talk!	Encore Theater	7:00 PM
Friday, May 1	Democratic Book Group discusses <i>Surviving Autocracy</i> by Masha Gessen	LSC Card Room	1:00 PM