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Riderwood Dems

RIDERWOOD DEMOCRATIC CLUB NEWSLETTER

November, 2026

President's Corner

The most important election of our lifetimes is now upon us. If you have not yet voted, please be sure to do so on Election Day, Tuesday, November 3, between 7 AM and 8 PM. If you live in Montgomery County, you vote in Maryland Hall in the Terrace level of Montgomery Station. If you live in Prince George's County, you vote in the Wellness Center. Then join us that evening to celebrate the Blue Wave at the Election Night Watch Party in the Montgomery Station Classroom between 7-11 PM.

This has been a busy month for the Democratic Club, beginning when our own Thea Fine was awarded the Precinct Leader of the Year Award at the Annual Gala of the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee (MCDCC).



At the Gala. *From left: Matt Post, MCDCC Vice-Chair Luckett, Thea Fine, Delegate Bernice Mireku-North, MCDCC Chair Marco Rivera-Oven, and Senator Craig Zucker. (Photo by John Szabo)*

Even though it was a cool, gray day, many of us participated in the NO KINGS Vote Early Rally sponsored by Beltsville United on the sidewalk on Powder Mill Road. (See Page 5 for photos).

The highlight of the month was the visit by our Governor, Wes Moore, on October 22, when he spoke to a full house in the Encore Theater (see article below). Thanks to all those who helped make these events possible.

Meanwhile, we completed our postcard project, writing and mailing 13,000 Get Out the Vote postcards to voters in battleground states who don't usually vote in midterm elections. Special thanks for organizing this effort go to the four neighborhood coordinators, as well as the postcard writers and stamp donors who made this happen. In addition, I believe many of you have been canvassing, making phone calls and engaging in other campaign activities we have suggested in our What You Can Do Reports.

By this time next month, we hope to turn our attention to all the things that need to be fixed to hold Trump accountable: end the Iran War; find a constructive agenda to combat inflation and to help people who are suffering financial hardship; halt the tariffs; support full health care access and a woman's right to choose; stop punishing immigrants; reclaim our history and culture, and restore our reputation in the world. It looks like we will be staying busy!.

– Lee Finney, President

Democratic Club Welcomes Governor Wes Moore to Riderwood on October 22

Declaring "Eleven days and a wake-up," Maryland Governor Wes Moore electrified a packed house in the Encore Theater for a special meeting of the Riderwood Democratic Club on October 22. Mr. Moore, who is running for re-election, said that "no one had anticipated the past few years." He went on to enumerate the

harms that the Trump administration has inflicted on our state and the country as a whole, and then continued by describing the advances our state has made in the past few years in spite of all of them.

Thirty-one thousand Federal Government employees living in Maryland were fired. This is three times the number in Virginia who lost their Government jobs. Nevertheless, the unemployment rate in Maryland is 3.9 percent, compared with the national average of 4.2 percent in September.

The rate of violent crime in Maryland is at a 50-year low, "and we did this without the help of the National Guard!"

The Moore administration has "stood up and fought for our people." The Governor has made over 11,000 trips across the state during his four-year tenure, more than any of his predecessors.

After ending his prepared remarks, Mr. Moore answered questions that had previously been submitted by Riderwood residents. The questions were read by Karen Finney, a political commentator for CNN and daughter of Riderwood resident and Democratic Club President Lee Finney.



Karen Finney and Governor Wes Moore in Encore

The first question dealt with dynamic pricing in grocery stores, where the stores track spending habits of customers and adjust prices (usually upward) at checkout based on the purchase history of each customer. Mr. Moore responded that Maryland has become the first state to pass a law making this practice illegal, and other states, including New York, Virginia, and Iowa, are planning to follow suit.

The next question was "What are you doing to make sure our elections are safe?" Mr. Moore, who is the chairman of the National Governors Association, said that state governors, attorneys general, and secretaries of state are all working together to ensure all voters that their vote will be counted, processed, and heard.

The final question referred to Question 3 on the Maryland ballot state-wide, which proposes a change to the state constitution to allow redrawing of Congressional district boundaries. (The state constitution currently provides criteria for drawing state legislative districts but not Congressional districts.) Mr. Moore pointed out that several states, notably North Carolina and Texas, have redrawn their Congressional district boundaries to favor the election of Republican candidates. (This process is familiarly known as gerrymandering.)

These states have done this without the input of voters, and the result has been to increase the number of Republican members in the U.S. Congress. Putting this question on the Maryland ballot gives voters the option simply to decide whether the Maryland constitution should be amended to allow gerrymandering in this state.

Mr. Moore supports this amendment, and encouraged everyone to vote for it and also support him in the general election. He concluded by saying "Vote Wes and vote Yes!".

– Jill Shindelman, Newsletter Editor

Congressman Raskin to Join Us on November 30

What could possibly top a visit by Governor Moore to Riderwood this past month? Well, we can announce officially that Maryland Representative Jamie Raskin is returning to Riderwood's Encore Theater on Monday, November 30, 2026, at 1:00 PM. In the absence of an emergency warranting a mass response by Democrats nationwide, this also will be the final Club meeting of 2026.

While we cannot say for certain in advance of the election, we do expect that Democrats will take charge of the House of Representatives, and perhaps the Senate, too, in January. Thus, after being sworn in on January 3, our own Congressman Raskin will assume the gavel of the powerful and critical House Judiciary Committee. And that means that an expert in Constitutional law will be driving how the House works to restore the rule of law overturned by the Trump Administration.

We hope to hear from him about how, under Democratic control, the House will work to hold the Trump administration accountable for usurping Congress' constitutional powers to set appropriations, to declare war, and to impose tariffs. We also hope to hear how, committees such as the Judiciary Committee will conduct hearings and investigations of the graft and

corruption that have been a signature of the Trump Administration from the White House to Cabinet members, and family surrounding the President.

Above all, we hope to hear how, step by step, Representative Raskin and his Democratic colleagues in the House and Senate will move us past this frightening inflection point in our history, and take us forward to a renewed sense of who we are as a nation and a people, both at home and abroad.

We anticipate an exciting event with an always insightful and dynamic speaker and leader.

Due to what we know will be heavy demand for a seat at the Encore Theater, this session again will be a ticketed event (with the usual fire-code-limited seating for rollators and wheelchairs). The event will be live-streamed on Riderwood TV, and an ASL interpreter will be on-site.

Tickets (one per person) will be available to paid-up Democratic Club members ONLY on Wednesday, November 18, from 4:00 to 7:00 PM In the Town Center lobby.

Any remaining tickets will be available to residents at large on Thursday, November 19, from 4:00 to 6:00 PM in each clubhouse lobby. If we are sold out, Club members may add their names and phone numbers to a waiting list, should seats become available at the last minute. Be prepared for a possible text message. If you even think you might stay home and watch the live feed, please don't take a ticket! We know many more people will want to see and hear Representative Raskin in person than we have seats in Encore. As with other ticketed events, residents using rollators and wheelchairs are encouraged to enter Encore between 12:00 and 12:30 PM, with tickets in hand. Regular ticketholders will wait upstairs and in line to begin entry around 12:30.

Let's fill Encore for Representative Raskin and give him a rousing Democratic-forward welcome.

– Thea Fine, Program Chair

Change in Membership Renewal Date

The Democratic Club of Riderwood voted to change our fiscal year, which is currently from July 1 through June 30 of each year. The new dates will coincide with the calendar year, and membership will be from January 1 through December 31 of each year. We will send a renewal reminder to our yearly membership.

If you wish to send in your renewal (or join as a new member) this year between November 1 and December 31, it will be credited toward a full-year 2027 membership. We will follow this pattern in subsequent years. If you would like to renew early, just complete a membership form (see page 6 for a copy) and include your check for an individual yearly membership of $10 or a lifetime membership of $100.

We are looking forward to a very busy next couple of years, and hope you will join us as we work toward a democratic future for all of us.

– Trudy Downs, Treasurer

Ira Shapiro Discusses the book *Betrayed* at October 14 Meeting

The well-attended October 14 general meeting of the Riderwood Democratic Club featured a discussion of the new book ***Betrayed: America Didn't Vote for This,*** which discusses the excesses and just plain heinousness of the first sixteen months of the second Trump administration.

The book, which is available from Amazon and also in audio format from Audible.com, is a collection of articles by members of the Common Sense Coalition. Ira Shapiro, one of the members of the Coalition, edited the book. He came to Riderwood for our October 14 meeting, where he joined Mamie Kresses, one of the book's contributors, and Thea Fine, the Democratic Club's program chair, to talk about the events chronicled in the book.

Mr. Shapiro pointed out that the Coalition took its name from Common Sense, the pamphlet written by Thomas Paine in 1776 which advocated that the United States declare independence from England. He noted that the pamphlet cost two shillings at the time, which was the equivalent of about 24 cents. Accounting for inflation, what could be bought for 24 cents in 1776 would cost more than nine dollars today. "So," he added, "at $7.99, our book is a more cost-effective purchase."

The conversation continued with a discussion of the key points in the book, including the administration's approach to health care, immigration, affordability, climate change, and the role of America in the world. The Riderwood Democratic Club plans to cover many of these individual topics in our general meetings throughout 2027.

Opinion: Comments on the Environment

AIR POLLUTION

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is the fourth largest killer in the US! You would never know it from living at Riderwood. There are many residents here with a wide variety of respiratory diseases such as asthma, COPD, emphysema, RSV, chronic bronchitis, ARDS, pneumonia, etc. It is only obvious when you are wearing oxygen in public. I only use it at night. With COPD you eventually die from it or with it. A number of my friends here have reportedly died of pneumonia. One only finds out about this by rumor.

Our main problem is that we are only three blocks from I-95. Worse than that is the number of staff, students, aides and contractors who sit in their cars for extended periods with their motors on, no matter how nice the weather, looking at their screens.

Riderwood cooks and heats our water by natural gas which exposes us to various levels of methane. That is especially true for those of us near the TNC Bistro, where the night time gas leaks, reported and unreported, have been numerous for a couple of years. Dr. Claudia Smith, a resident, has given several lectures about indoor air pollution, including fragrances.

The WaPo warns of several studies that indicate that the risk of dementia, brain atrophy and Parkinsons increases in proportion to the amount of air pollution. (I check the EPA AirNow app a couple of times a week for our outdoor air quality.) Drought increases the likelihood of dust storms and wildfire air pollution. Diesel exhaust and dust contain heavy metals, while wood smoke does not. BEWARE OF THE AIR!

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THE EPA IS BEING DESTROYED

We occasionally get bits of good news about solar and the like, but I was mostly unaware of the recent methodical dismantling of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)! The administrator, Lee Zeldin, is very cleverly keeping hidden in the background of this administration. Yet he is singlehandedly destroying the hard-earned protective laws and policies of the EPA with such stealth that few Americans realize how destructive he has been. It is estimated that it could take years or even decades to undo his damage. The Sierra Club says he is turning it into a shield for polluting industries to go full speed ahead. That repeal could result in billions more tons of planet-warming emissions. Our environmental watchdog now defends big polluters. After Zeldin took office, he said he would drive “a dagger straight into the heart of the climate change religion.” We need to be vigilant to everything he is doing as he does not seek publicity for his destructiveness.

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WEST VIRGINIA POLITICS!

The Republican governor of WV, Patrick Morrisey, got in front of the citizen data center revolution by getting HB 2014 passed. It is a law that effectively prevents WV counties and cities from opposing data centers based on ”horticultural, noise, viewshed, lighting, development or land use ordinances, restrictions, limitations, or approvals.” It also takes away the ability of West Virginians to pass resolutions or ordinances to prohibit the building of data centers and also boosts coal production. The people living near the Mt. Stormcoal-fired power plant in eastern WV are not happy, and “no data center” signs are everywhere. They are against another planned power plant and the plan to build huge data centers, gas turbines, and a possible nuclear power plant to go with their existing 132 wind turbines. All of this planned noise, light and air pollution is only 23 miles from Deep Creek Lake, MD.

The population in that WV area only comprises three small towns. Will they be able to fight off these plans? We’ll hope they can find a way.

– E. Anne Riley, Co-Chair, Democratic Environmental Committee

Your Club Needs You

The Democratic Club of Riderwood Village is looking for members to fill important positions. Our needs include:

- People who would like to join the Board of Directors;
- People interested in Legislative Advocacy to help set priorities for the coming year;
- People willing to help with the membership desk at Monthly meetings;
- People who would enjoy being hospitality ambassadors at Club functions.

If you would like to follow up on any of these or get more information, send an email to patricobrien46@gmail.com or call me at 614-981-6372.

– Patric O’Brien, Vice-President

Riderwood Residents Support *No Kings Day*

Many Riderwood residents joined the October 17 **No Kings Day** protest on Powder Mill Road. Democratic Club President Lee Finney is shown at left below, and Tony and Toba Hausner are in the photo at the right.





Let's Watch the Blue Wave Roll In on Election Night

The Riderwood Democratic Club invites you to a Watch Party on Election Night, November 3, 2026, from 7 – 11 PM in the Montgomery Station Classroom. We will have MSNOW streaming on the big screen as the returns come in. Please bring a snack or dessert to share – we will provide Prosecco and non-alcoholic drinks plus plates, cups and napkins. Wear your favorite political campaign tee shirt. We should have much to celebrate!

– Lee Finney, President

Important Dates

Date	Subject	Location	Time
Tuesday, November 3	**Election Day!** Be sure to vote in person or put your mail-in ballot in the correct on-campus drop box	Maryland Hall (Montgomery Co.) Wellness Center (P.G. County)	7:00 AM - 8:00 PM
Friday, November 6	Democratic Book Group discusses ***A Fool's Errand: Creating the National Museum of African American History and Culture in the Age of Bush, Obama, and Trump*** by Lonnie Bunch	LSC Card Room	1:00 PM
Friday, November 20	Environmental Book Group discusses ***An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us*** by Ed Yong	LSC Card Room	1:00 PM
Monday, November 30	General Meeting of the Riderwood Democratic Club featuring **Congressman Jamie Raskin**	Encore Theater, LSC	1:00 PM
Friday, December 4	Democratic Book Group discusses ***Tyranny of the Minority: Why American Democracy Reached the Breaking Point,*** by Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt.	LSC Card Room	1:00 PM
Friday, December 18	Environmental Book Group discusses ***Salt: A World History*** by Mark Kurlansky	LSC Card Room	1:00 PM

Note: There will **not** be a Democratic Club general meeting in December. The next general meeting will be on Wednesday, January 13, 2027.

RIDERWOOD DEMOCRATIC CLUB
MEMBERSHIP DUES: 2026-2027

The purpose of the Riderwood Democratic Club is to further the policies and goals of the Democratic Party at all levels and to work for and support the election of Democratic candidates.

Specifically, the club seeks to:

- Elect Democratic Party candidates at all levels of government who support the platforms of the national, state and local Democratic parties;
- Persuade the public and elected officials to implement the party's agenda;
- Educate and inform members through monthly meetings and the newsletter,
- Discuss issues of interest to the membership.

Membership is open to all Riderwood Village residents. Our membership year is the calendar year, January 1 through December 31. Dues paid on or after November 1 of the current year will apply through December 31 of the following year.

Annual membership dues are $10 per person. Additional contributions are gladly accepted. **You may also obtain a Lifetime Membership for $100.** Your membership dues help meet Club operating expenses, such as the newsletter and costs associated with the monthly meetings, and enable the Club to support the election of local Democrats.

Please make your check payable to Riderwood Democratic Club, and send it with this completed form by campus mail to Democratic Club, c/o Trudy Downs, MS621, Lakeside Commons. Please do not send cash.

Questions/problems – Contact Patric O'Brien, 614-981-6372, patricobrien46@gmail.com

Please PRINT CLEARLY:

Date: _____ Apartment Number _____

Name: _____

Telephone: ____(_____)_____

Email address: _____

Amount enclosed: $10 annual membership ☐ $100 lifetime membership ☐

How do you want the Riderwood Democratic Club newsletter delivered?

_____Please send it to me by email*

OR

_____ Please place a paper copy of the newsletter in my cubby

* Email delivery saves paper, reduces printing costs and minimizes the work of our cubby stuffers. You may then print out your own copy if you wish.

Thank you for supporting the Riderwood Democratic Club!