

# True Blue Reader

Newsletter for the Richland County Democratic Party, May 18

## Letter from the Chair

Spring is traditionally a time for rebirth, which has certainly been the case at RCDP over the past few months. We began our RCDP relaunch by initiating a countywide Voter Registration Drive (profiled below). Our efforts to register voters at the March for Our Lives Rally earned a brief mention in the New York Times! We recently capped off our relaunch with our new website: [richlandscdems.com](http://richlandscdems.com). The new website, like our party, focuses on you: the Democratic voters of Richland County. The website will help us to reach more people for our organizing work, so I hope you will check it out and share with your friends. Finally, we are beginning the second stage of our Get-Out-The-Vote planning, where we begin contacting voters. If you haven't been involved, please consider signing up on the new website!

Matt Kisner

## Voter Registration Underway

Volunteers are the heart of any true grassroots organizational effort, and the Richland County Democratic Party is no different.

"Our focus is old-fashioned face-to-face conversations with voters in our county," said RCDP's Voter Registration Coordinator Kim Ford.

Ford's ever-growing volunteer cadre is helping the organization run voter registration tables at events all over Richland County – and she needs even more as the events get more numerous. One cannot vote without being properly registered, so Ford's mission is to ask event coordinators for permission to set up tables, chairs and tents at big and small events so that anyone attending has the option of getting on the voter rolls and participating in elections.

Wherever there might be unregistered voters the group will be happy to help get them registered. Ford's group goes to festivals, senior centers, Goodwill training classes, Richland County Parks and Recreation events, Vocational Rehabilitation offices, rallies, churches, senior centers and apartment complexes. "We recently registered about 100 people at the 'March for Our Lives' event in March and we registered eligible high school seniors at Richland District 1 schools," Ford said. "Face-to-face interactions make the difference in any grassroots effort. We want to make it possible for eligible citizens to vote."

Besides doing the actual registrations at events, Ford says there are dozens of other ways interested volunteers can help according to their talents, interests and schedule demands.

"If you prefer, you can contribute by making phone calls, passing out flyers, knocking on doors, talking to your neighbors, putting packets together, or doing some data entry," she said.

"Whatever skill set you prefer, we can use your help."

Prospective volunteers may contact Ford at [KimFord283@gmail.com](mailto:KimFord283@gmail.com).

By Claire DeLune

## Legislator Spotlight: Jim Manning, County Council

Local input on local problems makes sense to Jim Manning, which is why he ran for County Council District 8 in 2008.

"I ran on one major issue: Decker Boulevard improvement," he said. "It had been a core issue mentioned by the Republican incumbent I ran against in his campaign four years earlier, but had not been addressed in a measurable way during his time on the council. I made it a main point of my candidacy and since I've been in office thanks to the hard work and dedication of many, three derelict buildings have been demolished and new building has taken place; but perhaps most impactful improvement is the relocation of the Magistrate's Central Court and Richland County Region II Sheriff's Office there, and the crime rate has dropped."

"One of the ways county councils are effective is to work locally on national or global issues," Manning said. "The Richland County Council has purview over the Conservation Commission, so the power of 11 people on the RCC makes it likely that the importance of action on key issues such as the Gills Creek Watershed will move forward effectively because it is easier to work with 11 members, as are on the RCC, than at the state or national legislative

bodies.”

Since that time many other issues have gotten through that work at the local level to impact the global concerns we share.

“We just had a ribbon-cutting for the reopening of the Hampton-Preston Mansion, which provides the city nearly four acres of greenspace,” Manning said. “The impact of that on the city is tremendous, and everything we can do to slow climate change matters. If other counties make progress as we have in Richland County, our combined impact makes a difference globally.

Manning believes strongly in two things that contribute to good governance. He believes council members should attend meetings throughout their term - even when not up for reelection. He often attends official and unofficial meetings throughout the county so he can hear firsthand what the people want. Getting good representatives is not solely up to the candidates. Manning says voters must research candidates thoroughly.

“Not everyone who registers to run as a Democrat votes as one,” Manning said. “Voters cannot judge effectively from a mailer or the information a candidate puts on a website. People should personally question candidates’ stances.

However, it is necessary to discuss issues over which the office in question actually has purview,” he said. “It doesn’t help constituents to know my stance on education policy, retirement pay issues or concerns that fall under the Recreation Commission because council does not have purview over those areas. But if a voter has concerns over how hospitality dollars are meted out, zoning and building issues such as urban sprawl or development, then it is imperative that voters inquire about my stance and let me know theirs.”

By Claire DeLune

## Recent and Upcoming Events

### **Democratic Primary Candidate Forum, Wards 8 & 9 (Near Benedict College and Allen University)**

Tuesday, May 22, 6-8pm

Friendship Baptist Church, 1237 House Street, Columbia

Moderated by Don Frierson.

### **Democratic Primary Candidate Forum, Blythewood**

Thursday, May 24, 6:30-8:30pm

Blythewood Academy, 501 Main Street, Blythewood

### **Democratic Primary Candidate Forum, Fairlawn**

Saturday, May 26, 10am-noon

Meadowlake Park Gymnasium

### **Democratic Primary**

Tuesday, June 12

## True Blue Members

Thanks to our True Blue Members, who have committed to monthly giving to help build a strong, local party.

**Sky Level** (\$1-24/mo): Shelley E. Adams, Samuel Baker, Scott Barnes, Steven J. Bates, Adair Ford Boroughs, Barbara Bowers, Lorenzo Breedlove, Ramona Brown, Peter Chametzky, Brian Chen, Joanne Coble, Johnnie Cordero, Michael F. Drennan, Rebecca Drennan, William Fick, Beverly Diane Frierson, Connie Ginsberg, Ed Greenleaf, Nina Grey, J. Henri Harper, James C. Harrison, Jr., Celillus Hinds, Tootsie Holland, Michele E. Hutchinson, Matthew J. Kisner, Kyle Lacio, Cary Lafaye, William E. McCullough, Jr., Valerie Moore, Marilyn Curtain Phillips, Esther Richey, Carol T. Roberts, Alexandria B. Skinner, Laura Smith, Deyaska Spencer, Peg A. Thompson, Scott Thorpe

**Navy Level** (\$25-99/mo): Deborah Breedlove, Ernest W. Cromartie II, Carol K. Fowler, Gere B. Fulton, Ron A. Hagell, Carol O. Hammond, Elizabeth E. Mandell, David Lee Miller, Patricia Mohr, Riley Morse, Tiffany M. Rushton, Sherri Simmons, Eve Stacey, Dorothy H. Tudor, Dr. Harriet G. Williams

**Cobalt Level** (\$100/mo or more): Vannie Williams Jr.