

# C'VILLE DEMS

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## News and Updates from the Cville Dems (2/2/2023)

### 2 easy ways you can support Cville Dems today:

- Forward this to friends who aren't politically engaged but might want to know what the Cville Dems do and stand for
- Like/Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Mastodon](#), and [Instagram](#) (and like some of our posts!)

### Mark Your Calendars!

- **2/06** Charlottesville City Council public hearing on City Council applicants (see below)
- **2/11** [Rescheduled Date] 5-8pm free movie "Repairing the World" (see below)
- **2/16** [Rescheduled Date] Rally supporting Swords into Plowshares (see below)
- **2/27** Executive Committee Meeting



### Legislative Seats to be Filled (and people who want to fill them)

#### State Senate District 11:

- Delegate Sally Hudson ([sallyforvirginia.com](http://sallyforvirginia.com))
- Sen. Creigh Deeds ([senatordeeds.com](http://senatordeeds.com))

## House of Delegates District 54 (Sally's current seat):

- Dave Norris ([cvilledave@gmail.com](mailto:cvilledave@gmail.com))
- Dashad Cooper ([cooperfordelegate@gmail.com](mailto:cooperfordelegate@gmail.com))
- Katrina Callsen ([katrina@katrinacallsen.com](mailto:katrina@katrinacallsen.com))
- David Brown ([dbrowndc@gmail.com](mailto:dbrowndc@gmail.com))
- Bellamy Brown ([uvab2001@yahoo.com](mailto:uvab2001@yahoo.com))

As a matter of policy, the Cville Dems can't take sides in primaries. We'll continue to cover these races through June, and our next issue will describe the process we'll be following to do so in an even-handed way.

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There are also 20 applicants for Sena Magill's former seat on Charlottesville City Council; their names and application questionnaires available on the [City Council page](#) (see also this [Daily Progress](#) article with short profile information).



There's no election for this opening, the current City Council members will choose one of the applicants. A public community input session will take place this Monday Feb. 6th; you can go to City Council's [meeting page](#) if you want to sign up to get a seat at the live meeting, to get a link to watch virtually, or to register to participate or speak. On Feb. 21st, at a closed session, the Council members will vote to choose who will serve out Sena's term.

Here's the alphabetical list of the applicants:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Kate Bennis<br>* Alex Bryant<br>Michael Cusano<br>Philip B. d'Oronzio<br>Donald J. Dunham III<br>* Kathy Galvin<br>Margaret Elaine Gardiner<br>James Louis Guidry Sr.<br>Sam Gulland<br>John Edward Hall | * Lisa D. Larson-Torres<br>Carla J. Manno<br>Sarah Moniz<br>* Natalie Oschrin<br>Rosia Parker<br>* Leah Puryear<br>John Santoski<br>Maynard Sipe<br>* Kristin Szakos<br>Christopher Charles Valtin |
|--|--|

NOTE: right after this newsletter was mailed out, someone (thanks Ellen!) contacted me to say that six finalists have been chosen... I've asterisked those names.



members to do something concrete... contact people, show up, make a donation, whatever feels best to you.]

## Action Item: Gun Violence

We'd like to honor the memory of Eldridge "Skeete" Smith, a longtime valued member of our community who was lost

to gun violence last Saturday night.

- Juandiego Wade: "I was hurt to the core when I heard that my dear young brother, Eldridge, went home to the Lord. He was part of our fraternity's mentoring program for almost 10 years. Big L was like a son to me. We did countless trips, mission assignments, tours together over the years. He was a phenomenal athlete and friend. I will work with a heavy heart to address gun violence in our community."
- Wes Bellamy: "Rest in power to my brother, body guard, and overall just great guy Eldridge Smith....Gun violence is taking our brothers out in ways that are unimaginable. We owe it to our people, our children, our families, and ourselves to think twice before we act."

Mr. Smith was an active member of the B.U.C.K. Squad, a local grassroots organization that's working hard to reduce this very violence in our community.

Consider contributing to a fund being set up for the benefit of Mr. Smith's family (details not yet set), [making a contribution now](#) to the B.U.C.K. Squad itself, boosting them on social media ([Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)), or volunteering a few hours to assist them or other gun violence prevention groups in their valuable work.

<https://www.instagram.com/bucksquad911>

## Responding to White Supremacy (Free Movie Screening)



A free screening of *Repairing the World: Stories from the Tree of Life*, a documentary on Pittsburgh's response to a white supremacist mass shooting at a

synagogue (with some photos and discussion of hate group connections to Charlottesville's A12) will be shown on Saturday, February 11, 5-8pm, at Mt. Zion First African Baptist, 105 Lankford Ave. Light refreshments will be served.

After the screening, there will be discussion about how we can respond to hate of all kinds here in Charlottesville. The movie's trailer is at <https://repairingtheworldfilm.org/>

The Charlottesville Clergy Collective, Mt. Zion First African Baptist Church, Congregation Beth Israel, and the movie's producer, [Not In Our Town](#), are sponsoring the showing.

To attend the free showing sign up [here](#). Note: the film was initially announced for February 4.



## **Court Support (RESCHEDULED) for Swords into Plowshares**

The Jefferson School  
African American  
Heritage Center

(JSAAHC) continues to be harassed by Confederate-sympathizing plaintiffs suing it to try to further delay the Swords into Plowshares repurposing of the Lee statue into inclusive art (a project already approved by City Council). Please join us on Thursday **February 16th** (had been 2/1) at **Charlottesville Circuit Court, 315 E. High Street** to show our support for the project as the case finally comes to trial:

- **9:00am** rally in front of the courthouse, for the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, and for Dr. Andrea Douglas.
- **9:30am** for the beginning of the actual court proceeding (stay and show your support by attending if you can!)

## **Another VA Special Election: Jennifer McClellan on Feb 21st**

If Jennifer wins this election, she would become the first Black woman to represent Virginia in Congress (taking the late Rep. Donald McEachin's 4th Congressional District seat).



To find out more, and to support her (!), check out her [website](#) and her



## Dues are Due

Treasurer Jason Vandever reminds us that 2023 dues (kept at the same affordable \$15 rate for many years) can be paid via [Act Blue](#) or by mailing a check payable to Cville Dems to PO Box 916, Cville 22902. If you're already set up in Act Blue for a monthly donation, that recurring donation covers you and you needn't do anything (convenient!).

## Help Wanted: Party Co-Chair

We have an opening for a party co-chair! Good people skills (we always have bridges that need building!) and good organizational skills are two very desirable qualities. If you or someone you know might be a good candidate, please let us know by emailing John McLaren at [cvilledemschair@gmail.com](mailto:cvilledemschair@gmail.com)



## Volunteer Profile: Kristin Clarens

Kristin grew up in a Detroit community with lots of recently arrived refugees, and from a young age she knew she wanted to be a human rights lawyer... and that's exactly what she did, getting degrees from Northwestern and the University of Michigan (and meeting at UM her UVA grad husband Andres Clarens, now a professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering here). The couple moved to Charlottesville in 2007, although Kristin worked for a DC firm until 2019. Her current job is pro-bono coordinator at Legal Aid Justice Center, arranging with local attorneys to provide free legal advice for clients who couldn't otherwise afford it.



In addition to her LAJC work, Kristin's community focus translates to many additional hours working on other projects:

- With several other professionals from the area, Kristin founded Project Adelante, a project focusing on providing multidisciplinary support for families affected by US immigration policies at the Mexican border, and has coordinated multiple groups of Charlottesvilleans doing volunteer work in California, Texas, and Arizona.
- Pre-pandemic, she worked for the Children's Immigration Law Academy (CILA) where she supported children in detention facilities in the Rio Grande Valley.
- Miscellaneous other projects, large and small, here in Charlottesville to support vulnerable community members (e.g. family volunteer work, food and emergency support for low-income residents during the pandemic).

Another long-standing interest of hers is voter protection. She first did VoPro in Chicago in 2002, and since then she's also made international trips as an election monitor to Cambodia (one of that country's first, there was almost no election technology or infrastructure at the time) and Vietnam.

She's been a fixture of election security work in the City, and particularly at her Key Rec precinct, since 2007, and now her work lasts year-round. Along with other voter protection volunteers in Charlottesville and Albemarle, she works proactively building relationships with our extremely knowledgeable city officials and poll workers and other stakeholders to help make sure that our elections go smoothly. And they generally have gone really smoothly in recent years, though the huge embrace by college students and other young voters this past November of same-day voter registration showed how important it is to have voter protection volunteers—although everyone was thrilled by the massive turnout, it was important to have extra support for this new process.

Outside of work, which includes teaching Border Policy and Politics at the Law School, she stays very busy with family (she and Andres have three young children, all born in Charlottesville, the oldest of whom is now working in Richmond every Sunday as a House of Delegates page!) and going on adventures both near and far.

*Note: Bekah Saxon, Jeremy Jones, and Kristin are spearheading 2023 Voter Protection efforts; if you might want to help with voter protection, or just want more information, please contact Bekah: [bekah.saxon@gmail.com](mailto:bekah.saxon@gmail.com)*

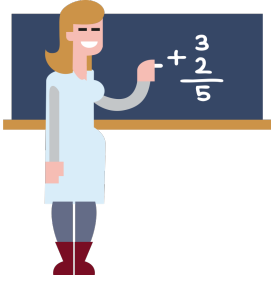
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## **Preaching BEYOND the Choir**

(Why electing Dems matters!)

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"The Department of Education acknowledged



Monday it had made an error that resulted in an overestimation of basic aid for local school divisions by a total of \$201 million after the adoption of the two-year budget last June....“This administration dropped the ball, and it could not have come at a worse time... This has a real impact on students... Our children are recovering from COVID-19

learning loss, our schools are crumbling, and we have staffing shortages across the commonwealth...Not only that, but they've known this for a month, we didn't learn about it until just yesterday, and there's no plan to fix it.' (Del. Suhas Subramanyam, D-Loudoun).  
*Daily Progress, 2/1/23*

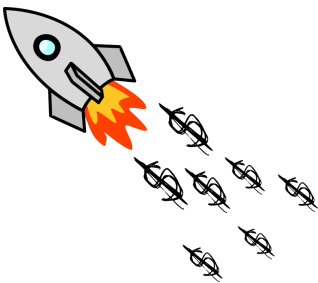
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"A House of Delegates panel on Thursday evening voted down a proposed ban on assault-style weapons, signaling likely defeat for a Democratic priority. A House Public Safety subcommittee voted 6-4 along party lines to recommend defeat of House Bill 2240, sponsored by Del. Dan. Helmer, D-Fairfax. Helmer said in a Twitter post: 'Gun

violence is the #1 cause of death for our children and Republicans have proposed 0 solutions to end this reality.'" *Daily Progress, 1/30/23*

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"A House GOP proposal to repeal all federal income taxes—including levies on corporations and the rich—and replace them with a whopping 30% national sales tax is drawing increasingly vocal backlash from economists, tax policy experts, and Democratic lawmakers who say the plan is yet another Republican ploy to reward the

wealthy at everyone else's expense." [The article's headline calls it "One of the Most Regressive Proposals in a Generation"]

*CommonDreams, 1/26/23*

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**BLACK  
LIVES  
MATTER**

"The College Board Strips Down Its A.P. Curriculum for African American Studies — After criticism from Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida, the official course looks different: No more critical race theory, and the study of contemporary topics — like Black Lives Matter — is optional." *New York Times, 2/1/23*

[Note: the [Associated Press article](#) the Daily Progress ran focused on the growing popularity of African-American Studies AP courses nationwide.]

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"Like many rural sections in our nation, southern and Southwest Virginia face severe economic challenges. Higher unemployment and greater poverty than the rest of the state have generated

frequent pledges by Virginia governors to invest in the regions with "game changing projects" to create new jobs at higher wages. But when Ford Motor Co. came knocking on the commonwealth's door with a venture that would do just that, a plan to create 2,500 new jobs and generate \$3.5 billion by building a battery plant for electric vehicles in the heart of the region, it was rebuffed by a governor whose gaze seems increasingly focused on the White House and his chief Republican rival for his party's nomination, Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida. In the process, Gov. Glenn Youngkin is eschewing a decades-long tradition of bipartisan efforts to create jobs and spur economic growth." David Toscano Op/Ed, [The Roanoke Times](#), 1/29/23

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Gov. Youngkin continues to push for Virginia's withdrawal from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) via his 2022 Executive Order with the grossly

misleading name "Protecting Ratepayers from the Rising Cost of Living Due to the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative" (give us a break!!). The State is again taking public comments now through March 31st at [Townhall.virginia.gov](https://Townhall.virginia.gov)

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## The General Assembly is in Session

A lot is happening between now and February 27th! Good ways to follow developments:



- watch the House and Senate floor and committee livestreams through the links on the [General Assembly website](#).
- read the great reporting on the legislature's work done by Nathan Alderman and the Albemarle Dems, e.g. see their weekly update [yesterday](#) detailing Dem's wins on allowing Charlottesville and Albemarle to set our own property tax rates, protecting abortion rights and trans kids, and even some gun safety improvements (on the other hand, Republicans pushed through measures making it easier to censor and harass school libraries and killed more comprehensive gun safety measures).



[And to understand how Virginia's legislative system works, check out the Albemarle Dems' great 9-pager [What Do Your Elected Officials Actually Vote For?](#), aka LIS 101.]

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## Partner Organizations

Our friends the [UVA Dems](#), [Albemarle Dems](#), [Greene County Dems](#), [Nelson County Dems](#), and (the new!) [Charlottesville Area Young Democrats](#) are doing good things too, check them out!

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### Charlottesville Democratic Party ("Cville Dems")

<https://cvilledems.org>

PO Box 916, Charlottesville, VA 22902

Contact us: [cvilledemschair@gmail.com](mailto:cvilledemschair@gmail.com)

Add me to the [mailing list](#)

**Thank you for your support!**

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