
THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS

♦ District Leaders: Curtis Arluck, Paula Diamond Román ♦ President: Amy Porter ♦

January General Meeting:

Local and Club Elections, and City Council Dist. 7 Presentations

online, via Zoom

- Vote for *Club Officers and Steering Committee*
- Vote for *Democratic District Leaders and Judicial Convention Delegates and Alternates*
- Hear from candidates for *City Council, District 7* on why we should endorse them at our Feb. 11 Meeting

Thursday, January 21

Meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. sharp!

*please register in advance
at*

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMtd-6oqToqHtB3kdlzzM_Y9S3s8ulgaXMc

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District Leader's Report

Curtis Arluck

Of Elections Great and Small

On January 20, Joe Biden and Kamala Harris will take the oath of office, having survived the illegal and violent efforts of Trump and his insurrectionists to destroy our democracy.

The next day, Broadway Democrats will elect new officers and Steering Committee, and I will seek your support for another term as your (Male) Democratic District Leader. Under normal circumstances, I think I could write an inspiring piece, consistent with the title of this one, combining the world's hope for the new government with the Broadway Democrats' and my own dreams of how we can be part of the movement that elected it. But these are not normal times. The moral evil of Trump, and the physical evil of some of his supporters, are unparalleled in my lifetime. We came very close to losing our democracy, and were it not for unlikely heroes like Brad Raffensberger and those Bush and Trump-appointed judges, we would have.

Even harder to fathom than the hatred and glorifying of violence of Trump and some of his supporters are the twisted—diseased is a better word—mental processes of many of them. For most issues of the day, there is at least a basis, however wrong-headed, for conservative positions. Spending more money on the military or the police, cutting taxes for the rich, come to mind. But not Trump's lies about the election being stolen. Saying this is no different than saying $2 + 2 = 5$. "Stolen" means fraud and cheating, not mere irregularities. There simply was no significant voter fraud, nor did the inevitable irregularities favor Biden. Most of Trump's court filings did not even allege voter fraud. That's because, since there was no widespread fraud, and therefore no evidence of it, if the Trump lawyers had alleged it in court they could have been disbarred or jailed.

Trump and his lying cohorts only alleged fraud outside the courtroom, in squalid settings like Four Seasons Total Landscaping, where they had an almost zombie-like audience who would lap up everything they said. Confronted with actual facts, the advocates melted away. Most of the Trump court

filings were of the "Pennsylvania violated its own laws by expanding people's rights to vote by mail" variety. These were morally reprehensible, and were also laughed out of court, but they did not allege widespread fraud. Only Trump himself did this, with his shrieks, and his insurrectionist supporters, with their weapons. (The Ted Cruzes and Josh Hawleys of the world split the difference. They didn't actually say millions of people voted fraudulently, merely illegally, because of the "illegal" state voting rules, the ones passed by Republican legislators and election officials. But they cynically played to the hopes and fears of the worst elements of Trump's base, selling them a bill of goods that they knew was false. They deserve all the censure that is coming their way.)

What should be a time of celebration for Joe and Kamala and the good people who elected them will be only partially so. There will be the fear that the Trump insurrectionists will strike again. Traditionally, most of an incoming President's Cabinet is confirmed within a few days of the Inauguration; now many will have to wait because of the Impeachment Trial. We won't just get the traditional uplifting words reminiscent of Lincoln, FDR, Kennedy and Obama, there will also be the sordid split-screen of Trump

But let me split-screen back to that other Inauguration. I have worked with Broadway Democrats for my entire adult life, and loved almost every minute of it. With our team old and new, and with our founders Franz Leichter and Ed Sullivan still hale and hearty, we are ready to face the challenges that await us. Well done, Amy. Welcome aboard, Heather. It's been a great ride, Paula. See you on the Zoom screen, and soon, we hope, on the streets of our community.



District Leader's Report

Paula Diamond Román

I have a confession to make. Four years ago, just around this time, I turned to my husband and made an outlandish suggestion. Filled with fear and anxiety about what the incoming president was going to do to our country, I suggested that all the Liberals and Progressives and gun control activists

needed to go to Sear's or Kmart or wherever and arm ourselves. Then, we should all surround the White House and tell President Barack Obama that he couldn't leave, he had to stay president and keep us safe. (I hadn't quite figured out what to do about Marine One.) My husband chuckled but I was only 93.7% joking.

However, people don't do that. People accept the results of elections, even when they really cared about their candidate. I believe my first presidential election with the club was one of the Clinton terms. My first presidential loss though was 2000 with the hanging chads and Pat Buchanan getting a bunch of votes from old Jews and the Supreme Court ultimately ruling on the election, and Al Gore gracefully accepting defeat. Four years later somehow hurt more because we had experienced a G.W. Bush term and we really believed Kerry would win. Another four years later, I didn't have the same conviction we would win but we took back the White House, electing a brilliant, caring diplomat as president. Nothing, however, prepared me for 2016 and the election of a man without knowledge, experience, or morals and, yet, in the end, I restrained the urge to arm myself

On Wednesday, the outgoing president of the United States refused to accept the outcome of the election and refused to accept that the majority of the country thought he had done a terrible job. He spent days stirring up his fanatics about fake "voter fraud" and went judge shopping to find one of his appointees to support it. On the day itself, he spoke to his insurrectionists, urged them on to the Capitol, and watched on TV while they broke windows, stole both personal and historical possessions, urinated and defecated on the seat of our federal government, and led to the death of five people, so far. He prefaced this by ignoring credible intelligence of what they planned to do so that he didn't have to provide appropriate protection for those working at the Capitol, including members of his own party and his own vice-president, which might interfere with his seditious supporters' actions. He followed up by telling his traitorous troops that he loved them and they were very special to him.

I worry that he and his failed "revolutionaries" won't be dealt with to the full extent of the law but, so far, it seems as if the Congress and the appropriate branches of law enforcement are pursuing justice. News and social media are finally taking seriously the threat he presents. We need to keep an eye on them to make sure that this is taken care of and we will.

We also need to find a way to move forward. It's a new presidency for the country, new vaccines for

Covid-19, new respect and support for Black Lives Matter, and a new year for the Broadway Democrats, including new officers and lots of candidates for local elections. We're even going to have a new way of voting with Ranked Choice Voting.

I have another confession. I'm not always sure that I can do it. I don't always know that I can stop wincing every time the news is turned on. (Sometimes, it's even hard to watch the flock of TV shows made after George Floyd's death and during the pandemic that talk about this.) I sometimes feel fragile and anxious thinking about the on-going deaths from COVID, listening to discussions about how badly BLM protestors were treated in comparison to the insurrectionists on Wednesday, or watching the news show more coverage of bits and pieces we didn't see originally. Then, I remind myself that on the Tuesday before this failed "revolution," we co-sponsored a District Attorney Candidates forum attended by over three-hundred people who care about what happens to fair, safe and equitable law enforcement in this city. This was followed by the magnificent and historic victories in Georgia made possible by the brave and imaginative people of Georgia with the help of Go Blue 2020 members and Democratic activists across the country; maybe people stomped through the Senate carrying the Confederate flag, but Georgia still elected a Jew and a Black man and took back the Senate for the Democrats.

We have some tough times ahead, waiting for enough distribution of the vaccines to make us all safe and dealing with unemployment and budget demands. We also have a chance to elect new leaders we're just getting to know and to elevate old leaders that we've worked with before. This is an exciting year; I'm looking forward to the work ahead of us and to working with all of you to get it done.

If you're interested in joining the Broadway Democrats' Racial Justice Committee or in discussing my article, email your comments to valleygirl109@rocketmail.com.



President's Corner

Amy Porter

Members and friends,

I have been honored to serve as the President of the Broadway Democrats during this tumultuous year and critical time in American democracy. Before we could even celebrate our wins in Georgia, we witnessed the recent horrifying assault on our

State Capitol and now hear of continuing threats of violence. These threats are occurring while COVID cases continue to surge to dangerous highs throughout the country. The toxic nightmare of this current administration is not yet over. We are counting the days till Joe Biden and Kamala Harris can be safely sworn in as our President and Vice President.

As I prepare to step down from my position, I am remembering all that the Broadway Democrats has accomplished this past year.

Our new website debuted and has been constantly growing and developing. We organized and held wonderful debate watch parties with West Harlem Democrats and Three Parks Independent Democrats at different restaurants in our neighborhood, as well as a virtual Zoom debate watch party with West Side Democrats.

Although we missed the events we would normally have held in person, Broadway Democrats swiftly adapted to Zoom gatherings. After our city had become the center of the world's pandemic, I was glad to connect and speak with many members by phone. Since April, we have held all our forums by Zoom and have been delighted to see and speak with so many of our representatives who ordinarily were unable to come to our in-person events. In these Zoom forums, we discussed Racial Justice and Budget Justice, were updated about COVID in our city and neighborhood, and kept connected with each other during this time of social isolation. A terrific new monthly book club was created where we could discuss issues more deeply. We partnered with the New York City Census and Danny O'Donnell's office and campaigned on Zoom for Jerry Nadler and Adriano Espaillat.

During the warmer months when the city started to open, Broadway Democrats moved outside and joined in rallies and demonstrations to support Black Lives Matter. We held outdoor tabling during the primary and before the presidential election. Every night on a corner in our neighborhood, a group of us would meet in support of Black Lives Matter.

Our Go Blue Committee partnered with many other organizations, including Swing Left, as we made calls and wrote letters for Democrats in our local area and across the country. Throughout this election year, we joined with Biden for New York to make calls all over the United States. The November election results and those in Georgia showed that our calls and letters actually made a difference.

Along with Village Independent Democrats, we invited a host of other clubs to join us as we ran a hugely successful Uptown Downtown Democratic

Unity fundraiser for the Biden Harris ticket and four Democratic Senate races, featuring representatives and wonderful entertainers from all over our city. With the associations we have made since that event, we co-hosted a day-long event with other Democratic clubs making calls for Biden and Harris and just most recently co-hosted with Uptown Community Club and Westside Democrats a candidate forum for Manhattan District Attorney.

I was thrilled to be president and to participate in all our club's events this last year and will miss the Steering Committee. But I hope to remain an active member of Broadway Democrats.

As I step down, I am very pleased that one of our new, young Steering Committee members, Heather Ducharme, is running for President. Heather has been an enormous help to the club and me this past year. Both from the work she did for Broadway Democrats last year and her own professional career, she understands and has experience with all the officer positions on and important functions of our Steering Committee. She and her running mate for Vice President, Joe Nunley, will build from Broadway Democrat's important work in 2020 into 2021 as we listen to, endorse and campaign for local New York City candidates.



Broadway Democrats Book Club – Next Meeting January 26

Heather Ducharme

On Tuesday, January 26, the Broadway Democrats book club will be discussing *How Democracies Die* by Stephen Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt. Drawing from various global examples and extensive researchers, the authors make the case that our democracy is in danger. They argue that, "Democracy no longer ends with a bang – in a revolution or military coup – but with a whimper: the slow, steady weakening of critical institutions, such as the judiciary and the press, and the gradual erosion of long-standing political norms." ([Goodreads Description](#)).

We hope you can join us. **The meeting will begin promptly at 7:00 pm.** You are welcome to join even if you have not finished reading the book or haven't even picked it up yet. If you have any questions, feel free to email Heather Ducharme at heatherducharme15@gmail.com.



COVID Vaccine

Richard A. Siegel

As a healthcare provider in “hot zones” of my hospital, I have received both doses of the vaccine. Fortunately, there were no side effects from either shot. Most of my colleagues have experienced some minor effects for a day or so—arm pain, some malaise, headache, etc. Most of us who have gotten the shots are relieved that we are now much more protected from this illness that has killed so many people.

There has been a lot of concern about the number of staff that are (thus far) not getting vaccinated. People are concerned that people in the community might not choose to be vaccinated. Some think it is a question of education. Some think it is a question of distrust, citing Henrietta Lacks, institutional racism in healthcare, and Tuskegee. Each of these concerns must be taken very seriously. Many well-meaning people are struggling to figure out how to best address these concerns.

I am not smart enough to have many answers. My social work training teaches me that each community is unique. To answer these questions, we need to go into as many communities as possible and ask people their thoughts about taking or not taking the vaccine. We need to seek out the formal and informal leaders in each community and ask them how best to address the concerns of their friends and neighbors.

But first, we need to make sure that all who want it have a way to obtain it in a convenient manner. There also needs to be full transparency about any major side effects experienced by anyone anywhere.

One thing remains clear – I have seen too many people get very sick and too many people die from COVID. I know too many people who have lingering effects months after they were treated for this infection. Please do everything you can to avoid catching this virus. Please consider getting the vaccine as soon as it is available.



Disclaimer: unless otherwise indicated, items herein reflect the views of their authors only. They are published as a part of our club's commitment to the free and open exchange of ideas on topics of interest, but their publication should not be construed as an endorsement by the editor, the Steering Committee, or the Broadway Democrats club.

Nominees for Club Offices

The following people have been nominated to be the 2021 Broadway Democrats officers:

President: Heather Ducharme
Vice President: Joe Nunley
Secretary: Richard Siegel
Corresponding Secretary: Bob Liff
Treasurer: Dan Zweig

Nominations for Officers and the 12-member Steering Committee will also be accepted at our next meeting (see below).



HELP THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS GROW!

*Pass this newsletter on to a friend
or a new neighbor*

DUES: SENIORS \$10/yr, ALL OTHERS \$25/yr

SEND TO: **BROADWAY DEMOCRATS**
P.O. BOX 1099 CATHEDRAL STATION
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10025
or join online at

[http://www.broadwaydemocrats.org/
sign-up-to-join-the-club.html](http://www.broadwaydemocrats.org/sign-up-to-join-the-club.html)



January General Meeting – Endorsements and Club Elections

Thursday, January 21, is the first of two very important Broadway Democrats meetings which will determine our club's future for the next year and our city's for the next four years.

At our January 21 meeting, we will elect our 2021 **Club Officers and Steering Committee**, and endorse for **69th AD Part C Male and Female District Leaders**, and **69th AD Judicial Convention Delegates and Alternates**. We will also hear from the candidates for **City Council in the 7th District**.

To recap our candidate forums, we have already heard from the candidates for **Public Advocate, Comptroller, City Council (District 6)**, and we joined with other clubs to present the candidates for **Manhattan District Attorney**. We expect soon to be getting you details about a forum to be held January 23 for the candidates for **Mayor**. At our **February 11** meeting, we will hear from the **Manhattan Borough President** candidates, and endorse for **all public offices from Mayor down to City Council**.

In these days of COVID where all our meetings are virtual, paying your dues and voting in club elections are both much more complicated than they used to be. The good news is **you can now pay your dues online**. Details on how to do this are described below. Also keep in mind:

1) The January 21 meeting is your *last chance* to establish eligibility to vote in the all-important February 11 meeting. If you have not attended, in person or by Zoom, a club meeting held between February 2020 – our last in-person meeting, in which we endorsed for Congress and NY State Legislature – and January 2021, you're not eligible to vote at the February endorsement meeting.

2) We expect that the voting in January will be much simpler than the voting in February, because there is no ranked choice voting in January, and we will need to prepare ballots only if there are contested races.

3) At both meetings, you will be able to participate by phone, even if you can't use the Zoom video features.

Here's how to pay your dues and how to vote. We look forward to "seeing" you January 21 and February 11!



Eligibility to Vote in Club Elections

To vote in club elections (endorsements, elections of officers, judicial convention delegates, amendments), you must be an eligible, voting member of the Broadway Democrats.

- You must live in the 69th Assembly District, or an area that used to be in the 69th AD before redistricting;
- You can't have voted in any other club for the 2021 races;
- You must have attended at least one of the previous nine monthly public meetings; and
- You must be up to date with your membership dues.

Dues are \$25 (\$10 for seniors). Dues can be paid by check mailed to Luis Román, c/o Broadway Democrats, 120 West 109th Street #3E, New York, NY 10025 OR paid through PayPal using your account or your credit card on our website. Click on <http://www.broadwaydemocrats.org/pay-your-annual-dues.html>. When you pay your dues, please include your email address and telephone number.

Things have been confusing in our new virtual world. If you're unclear whether you've attended one

of the previous nine monthly public meetings or any of the other rules, please feel free to contact District Leaders Paula Diamond Román & Curtis Arluck at districtleaders@broadwaydemocrats.org

Balloting Procedures

This year we'll be conducting the vote electronically. We'll be sending out further instructions closer to the vote. In the meantime, if you're unavailable to vote electronically, contact District Leaders Paula Diamond Román and Curtis Arluck at districtleaders@broadwaydemocrats.org to make arrangements for a paper ballot.



We want to hear what *you* have to say! Please email submissions to bdemsnewsletter@gmail.com (in MS Word format if possible, please).

Please note that we will consider all submissions, but we reserve the exclusive and final right to determine what to publish.

