
THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS

♦ District Leaders: Curtis Arluck, Paula Diamond Román ♦ President: Joe Nunley ♦

January General Meeting: CLUB ELECTIONS

Elections of Club Officers and Steering Committee Members

~ details inside ~

and

OPEN DISCUSSION

What's on your mind as we head into this new year? With a new City Council and City Administration, redistricting still to be sorted out, local, statewide and federal elections looming, the Democratic agenda stalled in Congress, and voting rights in the balance – and, oh yes, *the pandemic* – what do you think the Club should be focusing on? Come speak your mind!

Please join us on Zoom

Thursday, January 20 at 7:30pm.

Register here: bit.ly/broadwaydems-monthly-meeting

for more information: DistrictLeaders@BroadwayDemocrats.org

THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS

◆ District Leaders: Curtis Arluck, Paula Diamond Román ◆ President: Joe Nunley ◆

Volume 47, Issue 1

January 2022

January 20, 7:30pm via Zoom:

Club Elections & Open Discussion

Register here: bit.ly/broadwaydems-monthly-meeting

President's Corner

Joe Nunley

America's Antidemocratic Senate

The inability of the Senate to pass the Build Back Better Act feels like a punch to the solar plexus. It just knocks the breath out of me and fills me with emotion. It hurts—not as much as the election of 2016, but significantly.

It just seems so wrong to thwart the hopes and desires and ignore the needs of the vast majority of Americans who do support what is in this bill.

And if I feel terribly about it, just imagine how Representatives Adriano Espaillat and Jerrold Nadler, our current representatives in congress, must be feeling. I have particular empathy for Representative Pramila Jayapal, the Chair of the Progressive Caucus, whose assurances from President Biden were not realized because promises he received from Senators Manchin and Sinema were broken.

“The Squad”—Representatives Ayanna Pressley, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Cori Bush, Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib—worked particularly hard on this bill and those who did were right to not vote for the Infrastructure Bill unless it was combined with the Build Back Better Act, as Speaker Pelosi initially agreed to, because it was the best strategy to get this passed by the Senate.

The person who must hurt the most is President Biden. This was his agenda. He wanted to lift up the quality of life for the American people in a transformative way. 81 million people, the most in U.S. history, voted for Joe Biden and their collective will was sabotaged.

Then the second blow came. It felt like a baseball bat had been swung into my back. The John Lewis

Voting Rights Act was defeated and the Freedom to Vote Act we were told required 60 votes because Senator Manchin refused to support any changes to the filibuster.

Senator Manchin says that he believes that a voting bill should have bi-partisan support. So he wrote a more moderate bill (still a good one) and has received no Republican support. He doesn't get it. For years Republicans and Democrats voted every year to extend the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Once the Supreme Court gutted the Act everything changed. Voter suppression became the *raison d'être* of the Republican Party. The Party was trending toward authoritarianism with McConnell's total obstruction of Obama, but with Trump's influence the current group prefers autocracy, displaying an open disdain for multi-racial democracy and even welcoming Nazis and white supremacists into the fold.

Our democracy is structurally flawed. We have been living under minority rule for our entire history. The idea that states have to have equal power in the Senate has thwarted the will of the people time and time again. The overwhelming majority of Americans want background checks for purchasing guns and free and fair elections but we can't get these things passed and it goes on and on with issue after issue.

Congress's upper house is malapportioned to give less-populous states like Wyoming exactly as many Senators as large states like California, even though California has 68 times as many people as Wyoming. We have 20 states with 20 Republican senators whose total population is not as large as the county of Los Angeles. The Senate is split 50-50 but the Democratic half represents 41,549,808 more people than the Republican half, according to a study based on the last census.

The implications of this malapportionment are breathtaking. Among other things, Justices Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett were all nominated by a President who lost the popular vote and confirmed by a bloc of Senators who represent less than half of the country. If the United States chose its leaders in free and fair elections, none of these individuals would be serving on the Supreme Court and it is likely that Democratic nominees would have a majority on the Court.

Most of our citizens have been disenfranchised since the beginning of our nation. Women did not achieve the vote until 1920. We became a multi-racial democracy only in 1965. (As an example, in 1964 only 6% of Black people in Mississippi were able to vote. In 1969 58% of Black people in Mississippi voted.) Fifteen years later Ronald Reagan was elected to disband that.

This is why the United States is the only rich country in the world that does not provide paid parental leave upon the birth of a child. We are the only country in the developed world that does not provide free health care for every single one of its citizens.

We must reform and expand the Supreme Court. We must call for a constitutional convention to change the horrific flaws in the structure of the Senate. We must get rid of the electoral college in presidential elections and we must pass The Voting Rights Act. As Winston Churchill once said, "The only cure for the ills of democracy, is more democracy."



**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)



District Leader's Reports

Curtis Arluck

This is my first article written on our new laptop. Hopefully the new year and the new technology will bring (even?) greater insights.

Traditionally, the January column is devoted to the upcoming elections. Dan Cohen's article (below) ably discusses this, but the short answer is, "we don't know." We know that the electorate will be voting, and the club will be endorsing, for U.S. Senate, Governor, Lt. Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, Congress, State Senate, State Assembly, State Committee, Judicial Convention Delegates, and probably, Surrogate Judge, Civil Court Judge, and Democratic County Committee. But neither the legislative districts nor the dates for petitioning and the primary election itself have been set, so we don't know much yet. We *think* the Broadway Democrats will endorse in February, though possibly later than the usual second Thursday, February 11th. But we just don't know for sure.

One aspect of this election cycle is clear. Last year, virtually every office we endorsed for had no incumbent. This year, virtually every office has an incumbent—and they're all great. I am honored to endorse for re-election Chuck Schumer, Kathy Hochul, Brian Benjamin, Tish James, Tom DiNapoli, Jerry Nadler, Adriano Espaillat, Robert Jackson, Cordell Cleare, Danny O'Donnell, Dan Cohen and Lynn Thomas.

Last week was the first anniversary of Donald Trump and his mob's attempts to overthrow our democracy. Rallies, vigils and commemorations were held all over the country. I attended the vigil at Verdi Square. I was going to try in this column to come to grips with all this. But President Biden at the voting rights rally held today in Atlanta said it best:

That's why we're here today: to stand against the forces in America that value power over principle, forces that attempted a coup, a coup against the legally expressed will of the American people by sowing doubt, inventing charges of fraud and seeking to steal the 2020 election from the people.

Much of what we do in 2022 will help determine whether these forces of darkness prevail. We must all make sure that they don't.



Paula Diamond Román

It's that time of year when, ordinarily, the only positive thing I can hold on to is that the days are getting a couple of minutes longer every day. However, today, President Joe Biden addressed a group of predominantly African-American college students on the campus of Morehouse College. He referenced the work that the late John Lewis did to establish voting rights in the '60s and '70s and demanded that these young people not have to do all that work over again.

"I've been having these quiet conversations with members of Congress for the last two months," he said, banging his hand on the lectern for emphasis. "I'm tired of being quiet."

President Joe Biden's call for changing U.S. Senate rules to pass voting rights legislation brought a little extra sunshine into this January day.

In the meantime, as Curtis mentioned, the new-and-improved bipartisan New York State Independent Redistricting Commission hasn't produced new districts for the upcoming state and federal elections yet. In addition, it seems there will be some COVID-response modifications to how many petition signatures are needed and how long the cycle will last. Because of this, the Broadway Democrats, like many Manhattan Democratic clubs, will have to "go with the flow" on the timing of endorsements.

However, we can start planning candidate forums for state-wide offices. We're working with other clubs on putting together a forum for candidates for Governor and Lt. Governor (although, currently, there's only one candidate for Lt. Governor). The races for Attorney General, Comptroller, and Kirsten Gillibrand's U.S. Senate seat are so far looking quiet. (Judicial Convention Delegates/Alternates, Surrogate Judge, Civil Court Judge(s) also don't depend on the districts.) Once we have districts, we'll start inviting candidates to forums for Congress, State Senate, State Assembly, and State Committee. Basically, we're asking you to stay tuned and wait for more information.

The Democratic County Committee is also up in the air. Two or three county committee members are elected every two years for each election district (one or two blocks). Petition signatures need to be collected from residents of that specific E.D. so candidates need to approach their neighbors in their building or on their street corners. This is no problem in ordinary times but can be challenging during a pandemic, so county committee elections were suspended last year. Assuming that we have county

committee elections this year, we are looking for local registered Democrats who are interested in getting a little more involved. If you're interested or if you want to work on candidate forums for the upcoming elections, please contact Curtis and me at districtleaders@broadwaydemocrats.org.



Stay in touch!

visit us at

<http://www.broadwaydemocrats.org>

or

join us on Facebook at

facebook.com/groups/BroadwayDemocrats/



Vice President's Report

Richard A. Siegel

My day job is Director of Social Work at Metropolitan Hospital, one of 11 public hospitals in the NYC Health and Hospitals System. We have been working in-person since the initial COVID surge in March 2020. I am writing to state some real facts about COVID.

Covid is a very real and serious disease. Since March of 2020 over **800,000** Americans have died. This is much more serious than the flu. In the worst flu season, 52,000 Americans died. That number has been as low as 12,000 in a mild flu season. Those numbers show clearly that COVID is much worse than the flu.

The vast majority of people now hospitalized with COVID have not been vaccinated. The vast majority of people dying from COVID are not vaccinated. In every state, the vast majority of those hospitalized, in ICUs, and those dying are not vaccinated.

Things are so bad in Colorado that, starting yesterday, they are instituting CRISIS STANDARDS OF CARE. That means there are not enough medical resources to effectively treat everyone in need. As a result, care will be overtly RATIONED. Some patients who meet specific criteria will get aggressive care – ICU beds, ventilators, and dialysis. Others will simply receive comfort care until they die.

Rationing, at best, prioritizes those individuals who have the **best chance to survive until discharge**. However, it could prioritize the young over the old, the healthy over the developmentally

disabled, the rich over the poor, or those deemed more valuable to society over those that are not.

Many of us in healthcare chose the profession because we wanted to care for people. We have done that very well since March 2020. However, we are exhausted. We are traumatized. We are frustrated. I cringe every time the PA system in the hospital turns on, I think, "Please don't call another code." Many want to say (but will not say), "if you choose not to get vaccinated, please don't come to us for care when you get sick."

Individuals have the right to make choices. However, we all also have a responsibility to the community. We all have an obligation to each other – to our older relatives and to our young children. They are most at risk. As Star Trek's Mr. Spock famously stated, the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few – or the one.

Vaccines are not 100% effective or 100% risk free. That is true of the polio vaccine, the measles vaccine and all others. However, vaccines dramatically reduce the chance of contracting a disease, having serious illness if you do, having serious impairments or dying. The risks of any vaccine are tiny compared to the ravages of any illness.

Please don't listen to the vaccine deniers. They will sound very earnest and convincing. However, they are talking about things that are not factual. They will highlight one unfortunate event, and ignore that millions upon millions have, in fact, benefitted from vaccines.



State Committeeman Report

Daniel Marks Cohen

Without question, 2021 was an eventful political year – the end of the Trump administration, the attempted coup on January 6, the incoming Joe Biden administration, history being made with the first woman Vice President in Kamala Harris, who is also the first VP of biracial Black and Asian descent. COVID waxes and wanes and now waxes again. The resignation of Governor Andrew Cuomo, leading to elevation the first woman Governor of New York in Kathy Hochul, and the selection of our former State Senator Brian Benjamin as Lt. Governor, and then we closed out the year with the election of the second Black Mayor in the City's history in Eric Adams. Any these items would be a major event, all of them together is overwhelming.

Yet time and politics march on – five members of the NYS Assembly in Manhattan have announced their departure. Some have been elected to new offices, such as Carmen De La Rosa in the 72nd AD in Washington Heights being elected to the City Council vacated by the term-limited Ydanis Rodriguez. Some have been appointed to other offices, in the case of East Harlem's Robert Rodriguez in the 68th AD becoming NYS Secretary of State. Others felt it was time to move on – after 50 years Dick Gottfried called it quits in Chelsea/Midtown's 75th AD, and Dan Quart in the East Side's 73rd AD felt the same (albeit with a shorter decade-long tenure in office). Lastly, with ambition calling, Yuh-Line Niou from Chinatown/Lower East Side in the 65th AD decided the time was right to challenge Brian Kavanagh in the 26th State Senate district.

Special elections for the 68th and 72nd ADs will be likely in January, and February, respectively. Niou in the 65th, Quart in the 73rd and Gottfried in the 75th are all leaving at the end of their terms, so the upcoming June primaries will likely decide their successors (although that East Side seat is tricky with a larger share of Republicans than anywhere else in Manhattan). The impact of all this turnover on Danny O'Donnell in the 69th AD is relatively minor, except that Gottfried's departure in the 75th means that the adjacent 67th AD represented by Linda Rosenthal sandwiched between Gottfried the south and O'Donnell to the north now has some flexibility.

The 67th can now be expected to expand south into the 75th due the lack of an incumbent to resist changes, and that potentially reduces the impact of redistricting on the 69th AD which itself is boxed in to the north by the 70th (Dickens) and 71st (Taylor) ADs, two incumbents that are unlikely to tolerate much change. Population changes in Manhattan means that the 69th will still likely change a small amount, but probably remain similar to its current district configuration. Should the 69th still need to adjust it now might stretch into Rodriguez's 68th AD to the east, which like Gottfried's 75th, no longer has a long-term incumbent.

With the Independent Redistricting Commission deadlocked between the two sides, as I mentioned late last year, the plans will be tossed aside and the NYS legislature will redraw the lines. As it is completely controlled by Democrats the eventual new lines will protect Democrats and incumbents and impact the districts of Republicans and retiring legislators. Like many of you, I testified at the IRC about the state and federal district lines which was not for naught even if the IRC is moot, as the

response from voters and stakeholders still provides the legislature guidance in its maps. The City maps will not be available until later this year when the City undertakes its own redrawing process.

I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge my own effort – and with the support of many of you – in my bid for the 7th City Council seat in the 2021 June Democratic primary last year. I placed fourth out of 12. That would be in the top third, which while it was insufficient to win, was a respectable showing. In the meantime, I am turning back to my passion for affordable housing – currently I am consulting for several nonprofits and a startup, and looking at where in the affordable housing world would be a good fit. I'll keep you posted.



Club Elections

Please join us to elect club officers and twelve Steering Committee members. Nominees are listed in this newsletter, and additional nominations may be made from the floor.

Nominees for Club Offices

The following people have been nominated to be the 2022 Broadway Democrats officers:

President: Joe Nunley
Vice President: Richard Siegel
Recording Secretary: Laura Mandel
Corresponding Secretary: Meika Mustrangi
Treasurer: Dan Zweig

12-Member Steering Committee

Pat Almonrode	David Isaacson
Susan Crawford	Noah Kaufman
Allison Downing	Mary Peppito
Liam Elkind	Luis Roman
Peter Flom	Angela Rooks
John George	Barbara Trelstad

To vote in Club Elections you must have attended at least one of the previous nine meetings and you must be current on your dues (seniors \$10; \$25 all others). Vote in person or by proxy.

In these days of COVID where all our meetings are virtual, paying your dues and voting in club elections are both 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 below. Also keep in mind:

- The January 20 meeting is your **last chance** to establish eligibility to vote in the all-important

February 11 endorsement meeting. If you have not attended a club meeting since February 2020 (our last in-person meeting, in which we endorsed for Congress and the NY State Legislature), you won't be eligible to vote at the February meeting.

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

We look forward to "seeing" you January 20 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 2022 races;
- You must have attended at least one of the previous nine monthly public meetings; and
- You must be up to date with your dues.

Dues are \$25 (\$10 for seniors), and may be paid on our website online with a credit card using PayPal at www.broadwaydemocrats.org/pay-your-annual-dues.html or by check mailed to Broadway Democrats, P.O. Box 1099 Cathedral Station, New York, NY 10025. When you pay your dues, please include your email address and telephone number. If you have questions about your eligibility or your dues status, please contact District Leaders Paula Diamond Román and 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. If you won't be able to vote electronically, contact Paula and Curtis at districtleaders@broadwaydemocrats.org to make arrangements for a paper ballot.



We Want To Hear What *You* Have To Say!



Email submissions to the editor (in MS Word, please) at palmonrode@gmail.com.

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

Send to: The Broadway Democrats, P.O. Box 1099, Cathedral Station, New York, NY 10025

Special Interests: _____

E-mail: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____ (title, honorifics, and pronouns optional)

To join the Broadway Democrats, please fill out the form below and mail with your check (made out to "Broadway Democrats") to the address at the bottom. Welcome!

In order to vote in club elections (endorsements, elections of officers, judicial convention, amendments), you must be an eligible, voting member of the Broadway Democrats. You must have attended at least one of the previous nine monthly public meetings and you must pay your dues. Dues partially defray the costs of presenting forums and putting out this newsletter. Dues are \$25; senior dues are \$10.

Membership

The Broadway Democrats Newsletter

January 2022

FIRST
CLASS

P.O. Box 1099
Cathedral Station
New York, NY 10025

Assemblymember: Daniel O'Donnell
District Leaders:
 Curtis Arluck,
 Paula Diamond Román
President: Joe Nunley
Newsletter Editor: Pat Almonrode

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED