

Benton County Dems' World



David Bernstein, Editor

Upcoming Events

In light of the current COVID-19 situation, we recommend you contact each organization prior to the meeting date to confirm it will take place as scheduled.

Mon., May 25 12:00 – 1:00 Meeting	Will Be Held Online BC Dems Luncheon – (4th Monday) Will be held online. Visit https://www.democraticpartybentoncounty.org/ for details.
Mon., June 8 6:00 PM Mimi's Cafe	Democratic Party of Benton County – (2nd Monday). Check the website for details.
Mon., June 15 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Mount Sequoyah Center	https://www.washcodemocrats.com/ Washington County Democrats - (3rd Monday)
Mon., June 22 12:00 – 1:00 Meeting	Will Be Held Online BC Dems' Luncheon

Let's Meet This Month!

Yes! We are going to meet this month.

Many of us have still not grown comfortable with not seeing each other at our regular meetings. Thanks to the great technologies that have become more available in order to overcome our "sheltering-in-place" phenomenon, we will have a meeting ONLINE this month.

We will gather in cyberspace using a conferencing program known as Zoom. You may have heard of it. It is a very simple, small piece of software we will use to come together next Monday.

If you want to be there with us on Monday, May 25th at noon, please send an RSVP to bentoncountyardems@gmail.com.

We look forward to seeing you there to hear our special speaker, Dan Whitfield, candidate for U.S. Senate.

This Month's Speaker

Dan Whitfield

Candidate for U.S. Senate

"I am running for The United States Senate in Arkansas as a progressive Independent. I believe a congressman should be a representative for his constituents. My congressional platform allows for a completely transparent, delegate, representative. It's time we have elected representatives that are by the people FOR the people."

"Our representatives have forgotten their role and the definition of the position. They need a refresher course in, *How to truly represent the people and not themselves or special interest groups*. I vow to fight tooth and nail, every day for our government to represent OUR interests, OUR liberties, OUR rights, OUR well being, not only those who can afford to give giant sums of money to our representatives."



For more information on Dan's campaign, go to <https://danwhitcongress.us/media>. There you can find links for his other interviews and videos.

The President's Memo

**Zoom at Noon: Our monthly meeting resumes ...
virtually**



The Benton County Democrats Executive Committee has been contacting many of you to see how you're coping during this pandemic. We're hoping you are keeping safe and well. We're also seeking your opinions on how we, as Democrats, can safely come together to discuss current issues and support our local candidates. We're delighted that many of you were interested in participating in our general meetings virtually! An invitation will be sent to you about how you can participate in our next Monday meeting on May 25 at noon. Instructions on how to join and participate on-line will also be sent. ([You can get a headstart by reading this article.](#))

Throughout this year, we anticipate holding virtual meetings where you'll have an opportunity to visit with a candidate and ask questions. We know the road toward controlling this pandemic requires political will and an abundance of testing, contact tracing, and effective treatment and prevention. So far, the ongoing fallout from this pandemic remains at a steady clip so we will rely on safer means to gather for the time being.

“No-Excuse Voting” in November

Health experts are warning of on-going pandemic spikes that will lead to a resurgence of COVID-19 infection.

- NBC News: [Unreleased White House report shows coronavirus rates spiking in heartland communities](#)
- New York Times: [Top Health Experts Paint Bleak Picture of Pandemic](#)

In light of this disconcerting trend, the Faulkner County Clerk declared on the 4th of May:

"In preparing for the 2020 General Election on November 3, 2020, I am attaching an application for an Absentee Ballot for anyone that feels it is a risk to their health to vote in person. Absentee voting is a simple way to cast your vote and make your voice heard.

I can receive your application by mail, fax, email, text, or through Facebook messenger. My staff and I are here everyday to serve the residents of Faulkner County and ready to assist you in setting up your request to receive an Absentee ballot for the November 3 election."

Why can't Benton County follow suit? Governor Asa Hutchinson has adopted no-excuse absentee voting for some primaries, but despite Democrats calling for that to be [expanded to the general election](#), no decision has been made there yet. Without a no-excuse voting measure, voters normally need a reason to request an absentee ballot, and it's not clear whether "I'm worried about the pandemic" will be a legal reason come November.

Now is the time to ensure counties are ready and willing to allow citizens to exercise their right to vote. The Benton County Clerk needs to hear from us that without “no-excuse voting” poll workers and voters unnecessarily risk exposure to contracting COVID-19 and thereby putting themselves and others at risk. Moreover, poll workers (and many voters) are at higher risk for serious coronavirus complications. Please reach out to our County Clerk, Governor Hutchinson, and Secretary of State John Thurston to express your concern.

Benton County Clerk

Betsy Harrell
215 East Central
Bentonville, AR 72712
Phone: 479-271-1013
Fax: 479-271-1019
Email: bentonclerk@arkansasclerks.com

John Thurston, Secretary of State

Arkansas Secretary of State
State Capitol, Suite 256
500 Woodlane Street
Little Rock, AR 72201
Phone: 501-682-5070
Toll-free outside the Little Rock area: (800) 482-1127
Email: electionsemail@sos.arkansas.gov

Governor Asa Hutchinson

State Capitol Room 250

500 Woodlane Ave.

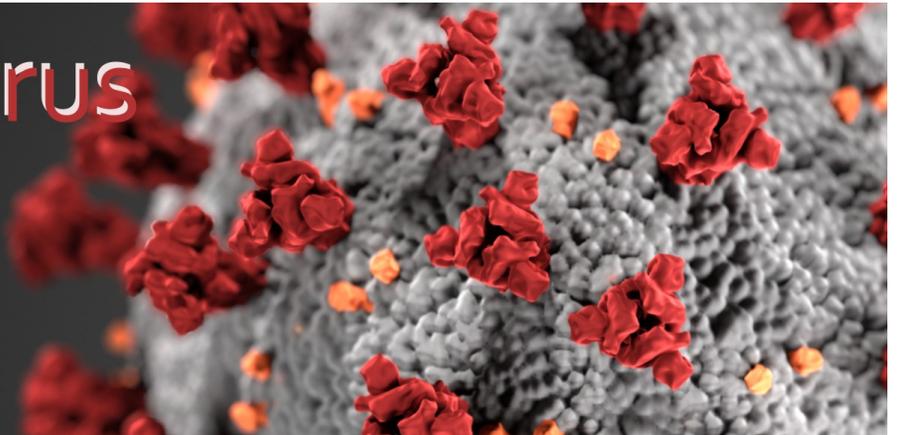
Little Rock, AR 72201

Phone: (501) 682-2345

Email: <https://governor.arkansas.gov/online-services/contact-us/>



Coronavirus Support Resources



Interview with Dr. Anthony Fauci

[Read More](#)

Democratic Party of Arkansas' COVID-19 FAQ & Services Guide

[Read More](#)

Community through COVID Guide

[Read More](#)

Comprehensive List of Food Pantries in Benton County

[Read More](#)

CARES Act Guide for Small Businesses

[Read More](#)

Make your own mask, make them for those on the front line

[Read More](#)

Do you know...

... of a member who is sick or in need of our assistance? Please forward requests or information to our corresponding secretary at dao.bcdems@gmail.com .

Today's Labor Movement Commentary by Walter Hinojosa, Vice President

The peak of maximum membership in unions as a part of the US workforce was in the middle of the last century. The vast majority of union workers belonged to what is thought of as traditional unions: carpenters, plumbers, electricians, autoworkers, bricklayers, among others. They were workers employed by private companies. Since those halcyon days, unions have changed dramatically two important ways. First, the rapid decline in the percentage of union members. Second, the types of workers unions represent.

While there still are unionized electricians, plumbers, and sheet metal workers. However, today most union members work for public entities. They are now teachers -- I am a proud retired member of the American Federation of Teachers -- government employees, police officers, firefighters, and healthcare providers. One group that is unionizing fast in our area is nurses, especially those working at our regional VA hospital in Fayetteville.

Today we find COVID-19 spinning up to pandemic proportions and our union members are on the frontline for fighting its spread. When you have a recalcitrant federal government pretending all is well this has been disastrous for union members. The health of our public employees will continue to be seriously compromised until those at the highest level of our federal government start moving every mountain necessary to insure the frontline workers have the equipment and protective gear necessary to wage this war.



The Trump Administration continues jeopardizing our union members, as well as all of the people of this nation. For example, by not providing sufficient testing, our frontline union sisters and brothers are left vulnerable to exposure to the deadly virus. Likewise, by not providing sufficient masks and PPE's, etc., our frontline workers' risks become magnified exponentially. Declaring "mission accomplished" while the body count continues to rise is dreadfully wrong. Pointing the finger at past presidencies or at other countries is unconscionably evil.

Yet, beloveds, that is where we are today.

Your Signature is Needed

To end gerrymandering in Arkansas, we need to collect enough petition signatures to get on the ballot this November. [Read more and sign here.](#)

Will Hutchinson Make Voting Safe?

In a May 7 post in the Arkansas Times, an article titled "Another question for the governor: Will he move to make voting safer in November? UPDATE" author Max Brantley gives us an update on this important question. [You can read it here.](#)

Remember These? They Are Important.

Surely everybody remembers our blue bowls at our meetings. They are there for a reason.



First, to remind you that our group's function is as a Political Action Committee (PAC). This means we raise money for local democratic candidates to provide financial support to their campaigns. And, of course, we give the exposure and a platform to share their message at our monthly meetings.

Just because we are not having regular meetings in person does not mean we can stop putting money in the Blue Bowls. Consider how much money you have saved by not eating out these past two months and then contribute that amount to our [Virtual Blue Bowl](#).

And did I mention renewing your membership?!

Your annual membership dues are what actually keep our organization running so that we can fundraise and bring you wonderful speakers. Believe it or not, more than 70% of our members have NOT renewed their membership. A quick click is all it takes to get both of us back on track. Here's a way to determine your renewal date.

If you do not remember the last time you paid your dues... your membership is up for renewal. You can do that right here. [Renew Now!](#)

Thank you for all you do for our group, those running for local office, state-level offices, and at the national level.

Meetings Using Zoom and the Internet

By Joel Ewing, BCDems Social Media Chair

We plan to hold the May BCDems noon meeting over the Internet using the Zoom application. The Zoom application allows a host-participant to schedule and conducts a virtual meeting over the Internet with up to 100 total participants. It is possible to hold interactive meetings or give presentations with audience participation, with live audio and video and other media as part of the presentation. For the best virtual meeting experience, it is suggested that participants use devices having a camera and microphone (built-in or external) so participants can see each other and speak to the group as at a real meeting; but one doesn't need a camera or microphone to "attend" a meeting and just view and listen. Even without a microphone, making comments or asking questions is still possible using typed chat messages.

If you want to participate using zoom from a desktop computer because of the larger display, but it lacks a microphone, you can use a 2nd device to serve as your microphone: A meeting can be set up to allow attending using a dial-in phone connection for audio only; or you can use a smartphone or pad with the Zoom app installed for both camera and mic support, while still using a desktop for its larger display. Just be aware

each device you have connected to the meeting counts as a participant, which could be an issue if the number of participants approaches the 100 limit.

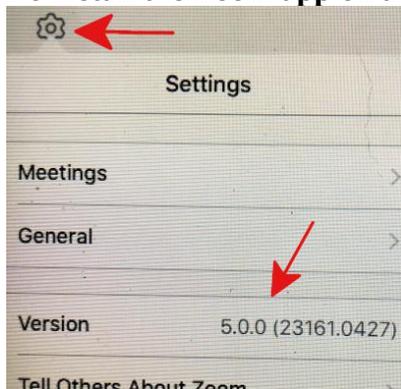
Depending on your mic and speaker setup, there could be issues with feedback or a distracting echo effect. The easiest way to eliminate that possibility is to use a headset with built-in mic. Other possibilities if you encounter a feedback problem are to turn down your speaker volume before un-muting your mic. Except for meetings with a very small number of participants, participants should generally leave mics muted when you do not have the floor. For larger groups, the host may either control when mics may be used, or possibly restrict usage to host and co-hosts.

Zoom does have the ability to share some specific application window or a device desktop display with all participants, but that capability is typically limited to host and co-host participants.

Getting Prepared

The Zoom application is free and supported on many different platforms. You first need to get the Zoom application installed on whatever device(s) you plan to use to participate. If you already installed Zoom at some point in the past, check to be sure you are at the current update level, which should be 5.0 or later. A number of important updates came out in April and May 2020 to address various security and usability issues.

To install the Zoom app on an iPad or an iPhone, go to the App Store and search for Zoom. The App you want is to **Zoom Cloud Meetings**. Get the app if it is not already installed. If it is already installed, you can check the version level by opening the App, selecting the "settings" gearwheel, and checking the version value to see if it is 5.0 or later.



To install Zoom on Windows, search for "zoom". If it is already installed this will find "Start Zoom App". If Zoom is not already installed, the search will probably have found a "Download Windows -Zoom" web site at <https://zoom.us> (if not, explicitly search for "zoom download"). Visit that site to download and install Zoom. You will need to tell the browser it is OK to run

the Zoom installer and tell Windows "Yes" to allow the installer to modify your system. If nothing seems to be happening, look for a flashing shield on the taskbar showing there is a window waiting on a response to proceed with the install. On Windows, if a newer version of Zoom becomes available you will be invited to update when the Zoom app is started.

It is possible to install Zoom on Chromebook, android, and Mac platforms. Hopefully the process is equally clear from the App store for those mobile devices or from the zoom.us web site.

For Linux systems, the Zoom download web site will recognize your system is Linux, but you will need to know enough about your Linux system to know which of the Linux variants of Zoom to download.

Using Zoom

The Zoom application is free to download and use and does not even require creating a Zoom account if you are just going to use it to participate in meetings that someone else has created. If you want to create your own meetings for actual use or just to experiment, then you do need to create a Zoom account, but a free account may suffice. You only need a paid account only if you need to host a meeting longer than 40 minutes or need some special features.

Every meeting by default is identified by a Meeting ID and a password (meetings without a password are vulnerable to attack). If you know the Meeting ID and password, you can manually open the Zoom application, select "Join a Meeting", and supply those values when requested – but that is the hard way to join. The easy way to join a meeting is to receive an email from the host with a meeting URL. When it is time for the meeting, click on the meeting URL, which causes your browser to open the site and try to download a file, which causes the Zoom application to automatically open and be supplied with the correct Meeting ID and password. **EASY!**

When joining a meeting, by default, you will enter into a "waiting room" until the host or a co-host admits you to the actual meeting. The first time you use Zoom you will probably be asked to supply a name to identify yourself during meetings. This should be a name that will be recognizable to your host and to other members of the group (like your actual first/last name).

If all you want to do is just view and listen to the meeting, that's really all you have to know. You don't even have to know how to Leave the meeting (although the "Leave" button should be fairly obvious), because the host can kick everyone out when the meeting terminates.

If you want to participate in the meeting, then you need to learn a little more: how to use the chat feature, or to raise/lower your "virtual" hand and un-mute and later re-mute your mic when called to speak. If you join the meeting with video, you probably also want to learn how to turn web-cam live video off and on, should you need to get up and leave for a while. "Participants" will toggle a scrollable list of all current meeting participants ("Raise Hand/Lower Hand" may be on this window). "Chat" will show a scrollable list of chat messages. and allow entering a new chat message. Meeting controls appear in the Zoom meeting window on Windows 10 and Linux when the cursor is moved near the bottom of the window, with mic and video controls on the bottom left. On the iPhone and iPad, those controls are arranged differently and appear at the top of the app window. "Gallery View" will show a page-able display of the video feeds from all participants (25-49 per page). The default "Speaker View" will show the live video of the currently-speaking participant, or a shared display from the host or a co-host.

If you need to host or co-host a meeting, there are all sorts of other things you need to know about sharing media, enabling what participants can or cannot do, etc. There are many on-line videos and other aids for hosts to consult.

Zoom Courtesy Tips

REMEMBER:

- When your live video is enabled **all** participants can see you and your background; When your live audio is un-muted **all** participants hear you and all noises in your room.
- **Keep your mic muted when you do not have the floor.** Open mics that are not being used can still introduce room noise and echo effects from speakers. In groups above a very modest size, it may be necessary to request the floor by raising a virtual hand and let the host co-ordinate who has the floor to avoid people talking over each other. When planning to use your mic, please make sure your home/office/cell phone has been turned off, silenced, or moved to another room.
- Turn off your video if you temporarily "leave" the meeting. Someone else could enter the room and have no idea they are on live video.
- Avoid having "busy" items such as moving ceiling fans in your video.
- Check yourself onscreen to make sure everyone can see your entire face (not the ceiling or no forehead or chin, etc.)

- While you can send chat messages to a single participant rather than all participants, be aware that these messages are only private during the meeting: all chat messages are logged where they may be viewed after the meeting.

General Meeting Minutes

NO GENERAL MEETING WAS HELD IN APRIL

Treasurer's Summary

April 2020

by Timothy Boyer, Treasurer



Beginning Balance: \$4,450.32

INCOME:

Dues \$49.12

Bean Dinner Ticket

Blue Bowls \$19.12

Total Income: \$68.24

Ending Balance: \$4,518.56

EXPENSES:

Campaign Contributions

Postage

Printing

Total Expenses: \$0

2020 Benton County Dems Officers & Committee Chairs

Position	Name
President	Julia K. Bailey
Vice-President	Walter Hinojosa
Treasurer	Tim Boyer
Recording Secretary	Deb Ostay
Past President	Eunice Van Tuyl
Membership Chair	David Bernstein
Social Media Chair	Joel Ewing
Newsletter / Publicity Chair	David Bernstein
Corresponding Secretary	Deb Ostay
Reservations Chair	Betty Cauldwell
Publicity Chair	Catherine Deeley