

# The Anderson County Democratic Women's Club News

July 2025

## ***Robin Graham on The Nitty Gritty of Recycling*** **Monday, July 28th 5:30-7:00 pm**

Clinton Community Center (101 S Hicks St, Clinton, TN 37716)

Robin Graham is currently the Chairperson of the Oak Ridge City Environmental Quality Advisory Board (EQAB), which she was appointed to in January 2023. In late 2024, EQAB decided to look into recycling in Oak Ridge, and is now working to increase recycling. Her talk will cover recycling effectiveness in the town of Oak Ridge, and recycling in general.

Robin has her doctorate in Forest Ecosystem Science from Oregon State University. She worked at ORNL in the Environmental Sciences Division as a scientist and a manager for many years, and then at Argonne National Lab outside of Chicago – retiring from ANL in 2019. In 2022, Robin and her husband, Jack Graham, moved back to Oak Ridge. Robin raised two daughters who are now living in Washington D.C. and Madison WI. She is also on the Oak Ridge League of Women Voters Board and is President of the Oak Ridge Chorus.



**Salads and pot-luck supper:** Enjoy a variety of salads provided by the ACDWC Board – your pot-luck breads and desserts will round out the meal. Come for dinner at 5:30 and enjoy the camaraderie. The program begins at 6:00pm.

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### **Future ACDWC Events**

**August 25<sup>th</sup> 2025** – Immigration and [Project 2025](#)'s immigration chapter. Clinton Community Center.

**Stay Tuned!** The club is planning a day-long class this fall to teach potential candidates, campaign managers, treasurers, and key volunteers the basics of those roles and the nuts & bolts of running a campaign. We believe having a well prepared and supported Democrat running for every open seat in the 2026 election is possible. See next month's newsletter for details.

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**Mark Your Calendars!** On October 17th we will be hosting an evening with Derek Black, the author of Schoolhouse Burning. He will talk with us about how the full-scale assault on public education threatens not just public education but American democracy itself. Stay tuned for reservation details.

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### **Other Events**

#### **Anderson County Commission:**

**Make your values known at this week's important Nominating Committee Meeting** - Thursday July 10<sup>th</sup> 5:00-6:00pm Rm 312 in the Anderson County Courthouse

The Nominating Committee will be looking at the Commission's pick for their delegate to the Anderson County Library Board. A rumored front-runner for the position is Anthony Allen (6th District Commissioner), who is in league with Mom's For Liberty, a Christian Nationalist extremist group set on banning books. Please attend the meeting to oppose this nomination.

**Upcoming Public Meetings:** View meeting schedules for [Oak Ridge](#) and [Anderson County](#).

Please check the website for Oak Ridge meetings as some locations might be different due to on-going construction at the Municipal Building complex.

#### **Oak Ridge:**

City Council Regular Meeting, 7 pm 2nd Monday of month, Municipal Building Courtroom

Municipal Planning Commission, 5:30 pm 3rd Thursday of month, Oak Ridge Municipal Courtroom

Traffic Safety Advisory Board, 7 pm 3rd Monday of month, Central Services Complex Conf Room

Disability Advisory Board, 11 am 3rd Monday of Month, Senior Center

Land Bank Board of Directors, 8:30 am 3rd Tuesday of month, Municipal Building Courtroom

Recreation and Parks Advisory Board, 7 pm 2nd Thursday of month, Civic Center Social Room

Board of Education, 5 pm 4th Monday of month, Board Room - School Admin Bldg (304 New York Ave.) <https://www.ortn.edu/central-office/board-of-education/members-schedule/>

#### **Anderson County:**

Anderson County Commission Meeting, 6:30 pm 3rd Monday of month, Anderson County Courthouse Rm 312

Anderson County Library Board, 5:30 pm 2nd Thursday of month, Clinton Public Library

Anderson County Operations Committee, 6:00 pm 2nd Monday of month, Anderson County Courthouse Rm 312

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### **Club Updates**

The club's focus this year will be identifying women who have the passion to run for the 2026 open positions, and then helping those women run a successful campaign. The open positions will be:

- Anderson County Mayor, Norris Mayor, Oliver Springs Mayor, Rocky Top Mayor
- Anderson County Commission (16 seats total)
- Clinton City Council (3 positions), Norris (5 seats), Oak Ridge (4 seats), Rocky Top (2 seats), Oliver Springs (3 seats)
- Anderson County Board of Education (4 seats), Clinton (2 seats), Oak Ridge (3 seats)

- Anderson County Trustee, Sheriff, Circuit Court Clerk, County Clerk, Register of Deeds, Road Superintendent

If you can imagine yourself in any of these positions, EMERGE training can help you get there. There are EMERGE training sessions coming up, both with the national and the state organizations, that will teach you how to clarify your message, ask for money to fund the campaign, and manage the nuts & bolts of running a campaign.

Please contact Ebony Capshaw, the club's EMERGE liaison, for more information about EMERGE.

**Make a Difference:**

The club needs help with meeting setup/cleanup. Please contact Ann Miller if you would like to pitch in on that monthly task.

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**June Meeting Summary**

**Sam McKenzie & The State of Tennessee's General Assembly**

6-23-2025 at The 201 Café and Wine Bar

The Anderson County Democratic Women's Club honored Sam McKenzie with a welcome address, where he provided an update on the recent Tennessee General Assembly legislative session. McKenzie, a member of the Tennessee Black Caucus of State Legislators, served as chairman during the 113th General Assembly. Since 2020, he has represented District 15 in Knoxville and serves on the Education Committee, Health Committee, Government Operations Committee, and the House Ethics Committee. Prior to his current role, he served on the Knox County Commission from 2008 to 2016.

In his opening remarks, McKenzie succinctly described the current state of the Tennessee Legislature as "a mess." Despite the challenges facing Nashville, he emphasized the importance of our voices being heard in the legislative process. McKenzie discussed several critical pieces of legislation and their potential impacts on Tennesseans. He also expressed his desire for an interactive audience engagement, inviting feedback and new ideas for legislation. McKenzie explicitly stated that if individuals or groups have suggestions for legislation, they should contact him for further discussion.

McKenzie underscored the detrimental consequences of our current weak government, which has resulted in the enactment of legislation that will leave an unfortunate legacy for Tennessee.

The Voucher system has been passed, and it will result in the erosion of our public school system. The ultimate cost of transferring public dollars to private schools will ultimately lead to bankruptcy. TCAT scores are still higher in public schools, aside from the fact that students with special needs will not receive accommodations in private schools, leaving the financial burden on the public sector.



Immigration Issues. It is a duty to educate a child. Removing children, kicking out children from school is simply mean and spiteful. Ice is acting like it is a part of the military, leading to even greater polarization. Immigration is a border and federal issue, and it should not be a part of the education of children.

Project 2025. This is a product of the Heritage Foundation that has invested time and money to have an impact on both the Federal and local levels. It is important to remember that "All politics is local," making it important for all of us to be active in each of our communities. The Democrats must be able to win locally, and that is up to us. Attacks on important aspects of our way of life today will be eroded or eliminated by the continued assault of this agenda.

On a positive note, some good things have been passed. Funding for the Scarboro Five has been approved. Senator Massey has legislation that can protect IVF and contraceptive use. It is important to remember our values and to continue to advocate for healthcare, good jobs with benefits, education, and strong neighborhoods.

At this point, the floor was opened up for questions from the audience. Discussion followed on some of the following issues:

Housing Crisis: Nothing effective is happening, and there is no investment in housing programs.

Iran Bombing: We do not need to send troops; this was done by Executive Order, which is no way to govern.

Obama's Iran Agreement: Trump ended it. We can do much more with negotiations that are more tactful and mindful.

Regarding local politics, Rep. McKenzie asserts that our current Representative is significantly superior to Ragan, and there is a possibility that McNally may withdraw from the race to secure that seat. He also mentioned Murfreesboro and Clarksboro as potential contenders. Memphis must support a single candidate. Additionally, there is an opportunity with the seat in Rutherford County.

The Democratic Party's brand is a cause for concern. To foster growth, it must adopt a "Bigger Tent Party" approach. Some rural counties may have limited exposure to Democratic values. While we are compassionate, it is crucial to acknowledge issues such as the "rich white/poor Black county divisions," which are detrimental to the state and can be exacerbated by legislation that allows these pockets to exist negatively.

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### **Contact the ACDWC**

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**Nominating:** Tiffany Malone [tiffanymalone09@gmail.com](mailto:tiffanymalone09@gmail.com)

**Scholarship and EMERGE Liaison:** Ebony Capshaw [ebonymcapshaw@hotmail.com](mailto:ebonymcapshaw@hotmail.com)

**Hospitality:** Open position

**Club Website:** [acdwc.org](http://acdwc.org)