

The Anderson County Democratic Women's Club News

September 2025

The Blue Army Training Day

Saturday, September 27th 10:00 am -2:30 pm

IBEW Local 270 (138 N Lincoln Cir, Oak Ridge, TN 37830)

This is going to be a **BIG** year getting ready for the 2026 election. There will be at least 50 local open positions, such as:

Mayors: Anderson County, Norris, Oliver Springs, Rocky Top

Anderson County Commissioners: 16 seats total from all county districts

City Council Seats: Clinton (3 positions), Norris (5 seats), Oak Ridge (4 seats), Rocky Top (2 seats), Oliver Springs (3 seats)

Board of Education Seats: Anderson County (4 seats), Clinton (2 seats), Oak Ridge (3 seats)

Plus: Anderson County Trustee, Sheriff, Circuit Court Clerk, County Clerk, Register of Deeds, Road Superintendent, and more. There will also be appointed county and Oak Ridge Advisory Boards and Commissions seats.

For each of the elected positions there is the candidate AND a team of people supporting the candidate. Those support people need training also! The key positions are **Treasurer** – an important to stay square with the Election Commission. A **Campaign Manager** to help with strategy, managing engagements, managing the budget, organizing volunteers, and pouring through data. There are also key positions with the social media manager, the data analyst, the volunteer coordinator, and others. That's a lot of people – most of whom have not done this before.

Let's change that!

Saturday the 27th is about getting some **basic information and making contacts** with those who have done this before.

Gloria Johnson will share what she's learned about campaigns with us over lunch (provided). In the afternoon we'll learn that being the candidate is not as scary as it seems – and some even call it fun! You will hear directly from those who are in elected positions or ran during the last election.

This isn't theoretical – you will hear from those with first-hand knowledge about what they learned, where they got help, and how to get started. We believe having a well-prepared Democrat running for every open seat in the 2026 election is possible when we all pull together and help one another.

To ensure we order enough lunches, RSVP to: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/blue-army-training-day-tickets-1646846294599?aff=oddtcreator>

Future ACDWC Events

Saturday October 11th 2025 – The Tennessee Federation of Democratic Women’s Fall Board Meeting. This is a virtual meeting and all TFDW members are invited to join the call. Watch your inbox for your invitation to this important meeting.

Friday October 17th 2025 – 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.

Other Events

Friday October 10th 2025 – The Roane Democrats (District 4) are hosting Sam McKenzie, TN State Legislative Representative District 15, at the Tri-County African American Cultural Museum. 6:00 – 8:00 pm. 1069 Tri-County Blvd. Oliver Springs.

Upcoming Public Meetings:

Oak Ridge: View meeting schedules and agendas for [Oak Ridge](#)

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

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: View meeting schedules and agendas for [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, location rotates between the four libraries (Sept 11th Rocky Top Public Library; Oct 9th Briceville Public Library; Nov 13th Clinton Public Library; Jan 8th Norris Community Library)

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

Club Updates

The Club is looking for women to sponsor for EMERGE training. If you can imagine yourself running for an office in 2026, 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.

August Meeting Summary

Immigration and Project 2025

with Lissie Meza Beehan and Michael Beehan

7-25-2025 at the Clinton Community Center

Lissie Meza Beehan, a native of Merida, Mexico, served as the district translator for the Oak Ridge Schools for an impressive 11 years. During her tenure, she welcomed immigrant families to Oak Ridge and provided them with essential resources. In 2024, Lissie earned her master's degree in education and is currently teaching fourth grade.

Michael Beehan, an attorney affiliated with Fox, Farley, Willis & Burnette, holds a degree from Lincoln Memorial University-Duncan School of Law. Notably, he served as the president of the Immigration Law Society during his studies. Additionally, Michael volunteered at legal clinics at Centro Hispano in Knoxville, where his proficiency in Spanish enabled him to assist attorneys in providing legal counsel.



Michael provided an overview of Project 2025 and immigration, including a discussion of the intricacies of immigration into the United States. This encompassed the various visa types, the process of obtaining a green card for permanent residency, and the associated costs. Furthermore, Michael presented a timeline illustrating the duration of the immigration process, highlighting the backlog in the U.S. system that spans nearly three decades for certain applications. Notably, the United States is 24 years behind Mexico in terms of immigration processing, which consequently limits the annual number of individuals eligible for each category.

Approximately 14 million immigrants are currently in the United States. This figure encompasses six million individuals who are protected from deportation, including asylum seekers, crime victims, disaster victims, and recipients of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. Another eight million are unprotected and could be subject to deportation.

Project 2025 (a comprehensive conservative blueprint for change created by the Heritage Foundation) has now reached more than 50% of its goals to change government and society. The Project has specifically established criteria for immigration. It will accomplish this by curtailing refugee admissions, increasing ICE personnel and funding, and authorizing the use of tents and substandard facilities for detention. ICE now has the authority to

enter churches, schools, and the courts to detain individuals. One of their unfulfilled objectives is to end the “standard of care” that is currently required for children being detained.

The impact of these policies on the immigrant community is profound. Families are being separated, and there is virtually no legal support or due process. Consequently, there are fewer avenues for protection. With the expansion of enforcement, individuals are intimidated and live in fear. The presence of ICE erodes trust in local law enforcement. Civic participation doesn’t occur when there is constant fear of being arrested for no cause. And other day-to-day needs are pushed aside, such as seeking medical care or attending a child’s school play, when doing so may result in detention. Consequently, the immigrant community lives in the shadows out of fear.

Lissie described the fear that immigrant children are facing and the effects that fear is having on their school life. Absenteeism is now common within immigrant families, as parents fear going near schools and children fear leaving their parents – perhaps for the last time. She helped us imagine the heartache of sending a child off to school in the morning knowing that a simple fender-bender on the way to work might be the last time the parent sees their children. Although Lissie is a US citizen, she also experiences fear of being detained simply due to her appearance.

To further compound the problems, the Trump government is seeking a new, out of cycle, census. The issue is that immigrants would likely be reluctant to identify themselves through participation in the census; consequently, under-reporting the immigrant population which, in turn, would cause skewed statistical representation in policy and funding. With the withdrawal of government funding, services in schools disappear and there are fewer services available for non-English speakers.

What resources are available in Anderson County? There is some legal help for families fearing deportation and this might include establishing power of attorney and custody decisions for minor children. There are wallet cards available that describe an immigrant’s rights through organizations such as the United Farm Workers. https://www.ufwfoundation.org/free_red_cards.

Although Anderson County Sheriff and the Oak Ridge Police Department do not have a contract directly with ICE, if someone comes into their custody for any reason (e.g., DUI, heavily tinted windows, domestic disputes, etc.) they are required to let ICE know. ICE then puts an “immigration hold” on the person, essentially keeping them detained locally until they can be transported to Louisiana. The Sheriff and the Oak Ridge Police can be called on directly to assist in ICE arrests via traffic and crowd control.

The ICE detainees from this region are held in Louisiana; however, the court is in Memphis. While in county custody they can seek legal help, although once taken into ICE custody the legal situation becomes much more complicated. To start with, there are no public defenders in the ICE system, there is no right to counsel in immigration court, and pro-bono immigration lawyers are few, overworked, and actively discouraged by the current administration. There is a serious loss of legal safety nets once an individual is lost in the ICE system.

The only solution is to reform our immigration system, and we will consequently reform our population problems as well. We also need to bring immigrants back to the Democratic Party. Immigrants are, by and large, from religious and conservative cultures (as reflected in the 2024 bias toward Trump) and in 2026 need to see that the Party stands for values they also hold.

Article courtesy of Lynne Walford

Contact the ACDWC

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Scholarship and EMERGE Liaison: Ebony Capshaw ebonymcapshaw@hotmail.com

Hospitality: Open position

Club Website: acdwc.org