

Republicans Independents Democrats United

Meeting Notes

February 25, 2026 – 7:00PM

Eaton Youth Center

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO Republicans Independents Democrats United! FOR DEMOCRACY!!! We celebrated!!!

Our **Mission** as Republicans, Independents, and Democrats is to Empower individuals, Educate communities, and Energize a movement for truth, accountability, and integrity in our government. We seek to rise above partisanship to defend the values that strengthen our nation because real change starts when informed voices take united action.

Welcome - Jon Smith and Bev Brubaker

Bev indicated that there was a request for nametags, so next time we will provide them for people who wish to wear them. AND the Website is LIVE – very special thanks to Nick Wilson!

Jean noted corrections to Announcements: The next meeting will be March 25 (inadvertently omitted) and the John Kulewicz event will be from 6PM – 7PM-ish.

Introduction of Committee of Six

Bev Brubaker and Jon Smith – co-conveners

Janet Crelin – treasurer

Jean Bussell – secretary

Harold Bussell – email coordinator

Kathy Stevens – at-large – absent due to family obligations

Presentation of the Mission Statement – Lalah Kline

Treasurer's Report + Materials available – Janet Crelin

Extraordinary expenses this month have included nearly \$400 for two years registration of our web site domain plus increase in Eaton Youth Center rent from \$25 to \$40 per use (negotiated to below the new rate of \$70 thanks to Janet and Bev!) and now secured for the remainder of 2026 meetings. Plus, we ordered more postcards that usual for hand distribution as well as mail distribution. So please be generous in your donations today!

RIDUnited postcards are here. Be sure to mail to your Independents' list and distribute to your friends. Follow Heather Cox Richardson, historian who writes a daily column as a part of educating her doctoral students – and lots of us – on current politics with an historical perspective. Her email column is available without a fee, but you also can follow her on SubStack.

Announcements

March 28 No Kings Protest! We will gather from 11AM – Noon at the William Bruce Park on the southwest corner of Main and Barron in downtown Eaton. We have plenty of posters, but you are welcome to bring your own if you prefer. We will notify the Eaton Police Department of our plans. We will register the event with 50501. Other nearby protests will be from noon to 1PM in Greenville and Oxford.

Reports

Letters to the Editor by Citizens for Common Sense – Bev is the Preble County representative for this Darke County based group. Its goal is to generate rationale and thoughtful conversation about topics of critical interest to many who hold different opinions on those topics. The most recent letter published in the Register Herald was submitted by a Darke County resident on the topic of due process. The latest letter is on the topic of property taxes. Steve Brown volunteered to sign and submit it to the RH.

Lessons for us from Pete Buttigieg’s Presentation at Earlham College – Jean, Harold, and Bev reported on the three basic themes of the presentation: Hope and change; Communications strategies; and 2026/2028 elections strategies. A summary is attached to these notes.

Presentation

The Ills of Trump – Why we are here! – Jon Smith compiled a list of “ills” from the Front Lines newsletter. A summary is attached to these notes. Themes: (1) Retirees like us are ok, but our grandchildren will feel the wrath of the viciousness of the MAGA which is fact is the point of much of their effort. (2) Taking traditional values and government interpretation of those values and setting them on fire: Elimination of thousands of government jobs via DOGE and then having to rehire some to keep government working such as in Social Security); Elimination of funding for research and science thus endangering the lives of citizens through loss of scientific findings; Hiring vaccine skeptics and resulting in increases in diseases commonly under control across the globe becoming common again; Supporting totalitarian governments and making the same moves they make, especially moves to enrich the first family and its cronies all over the globe.

Open Discussion – All

Especially Jon’s presentation stimulated an extensive group conversation. Topics included recommendations to visit the Holocaust Auschwitz Exhibit at the Cincinnati Museum Center in the former Union Terminal Railroad Station; the Jamelle Boule article about concentration camps in the United States – Harold will send out to email list; the Springfield preparations and community care for the Haitian residents who are facing Trump’s deportation fury; the decline in international students at universities across the country (for example, at University of Dayton the number of full-paying international students dropped from 300 to 16 in January 2026 resulting in a \$12 million loss to the university); major reductions in international tourists visiting the United States and resulting loss of revenue to communities.

Other great items announced included: Suggestions that we procure pocket-size copies of the US Constitution to distribute; we may be able to include a QR code for the Constitution on the next post cards! Ohio District 40 State Representative’s race will feature a Republican primary between J. Todd Smith and Rodney Creech and a Democratic write-in candidate named Tim Hornbaker from northwest Preble County; once Tim succeeds as a write-in candidate, he will be on the ballot for the November election. (Details will follow.) Bev’s red hat is the newest expression of resistance to Nazism as was done by the red hat ladies of Norway in resistance during World War II. George Takei has a children’s book about his years interred in the American Japanese concentration camps; it is called “My Lost Freedom: A Japanese American World War II Story,” published in April 2024. Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro has a new book “Where We Keep the Light: Stories from the Life of Service” which shares his Jewish heritage and how it informs his work. Similarly, Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear’s new book titled “Go and Do Likewise: How We Heal a Broken Country,” describes his faith-based political approaches. And Timothy D. Snyder’s “On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century” is now available in a Graphic Edition.

Final Remarks and Adjourn – Jon Smith and Bev Brubaker

Be sure to see attached notes!

Take care of yourself!

TURN OVER FOR IMPORTANT DATES AND OTHER INFORMATION

Future meetings schedule – all at the Eaton Youth Center:

- March 25 at 1PM
- April 22 at 7 PM
- May 27 at 1 PM
- June 24 at 7 PM
- July 22 at 1 PM
- August 26 at 7 PM
- September 23 at 1 PM
- October 28 at 7 PM
- November 11 at 1 PM (second Wednesday, not fourth because of holiday)
- December 16 at 7 PM (third Wednesday, not fourth because of holiday)

Other dates of interest:

March 20 (revised date)– John Kulewicz, Democratic Candidate for Ohio Attorney General – Meet and Greet – TGIF at 6:00PM – 7:PM-ish at the Eaton Youth Center

March 28 – 11AM to Noon – No Kings Protest at southwest corner of Main and Barron in Eaton

Other locations include:

Noon – 2PM – Oxford

Noon – 2PM – Hamilton

Noon – 1PM – Greenville

Other items of interest:

As seen on Facebook as posted by the mother of a thirteen-year-old boy in Perth, Australia about the ICE protestors:

“They should call themselves LAVA (Local And Very Angry) because LAVA melts ICE!”

For Your Convenience, contact information for our state and federal representatives:

State Representative Rodney Creech – District 40. 77 South High Street. 12th Floor Columbus, OH 43215. Phone. (614) 466-2960.

State Senator Stephen A. Huffman – District 5. State Senate Building, 1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor 040. Columbus OH 43215. (614)466-6247

U. S. Congressman Warren Davidson – District 8. 2113 Rayburn HOB. Washington, DC 20515. Phone: (202) 225-6205.

U. S. Senator Bernie Moreno - 2113 Rayburn HOB. Washington, DC 20515. Phone: (202) 225-6205.

U. S. Senator John Husted - 304 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510 Phone: (202)224-3353

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Instagram at **rid_united**

TikTok at **@rid.united**

Join the Email list at RIDUnited@yahoo.com

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Notes from an Evening with Pete Buttigieg 2-18-2026 at Earlham College

Compiled by Jean Bussell with assistance from Bev Brubaker and Harold Bussell

First theme:

1 – “Hope is the consequence of action, not the cause.”

2 – “Trust that things can get better and work toward it, even if we can’t yet envision what the future will look like.” Go forward into a new and more perfect union. In other words, the future need not look like the past. It can be better!

3 – Continuing the theme for the future, remember that past generations fought wars, survived the Great Depression, the 1960’s counterculture and wars, and more. And each generation afterwards built their worlds on that basis and created a different path for the next generation.

Second theme:

1 – Listen.

2 – Especially in rural areas like Indiana (South Bend where he was mayor) and western Ohio, where we have Republican friends and want to keep them: Listen. Don’t say “they vote against their own interests” because “they” don’t see it that way.

3 – Address the attacks on our positions (for example on trans people’s rights) and then pivot to values: for example, fairness, dignity, equality, and respect for each person. In other words, don’t avoid the issue, but try to convert it to a shared values base, including those proclaimed in the Bill of Rights as basis for American thoughts and behavior.

Third theme:

1 – Don’t let perceived or actual victories in 2026 delay planning for a unified agenda by Democrats for 2028, especially since there are likely to be many primaries that may fray our agenda.

2 – Remember most Americans work for corporations or small businesses, and we must address their needs as well as the needs of Americans who are union members.

3 – Television advertising is not enough; what works with young people especially but also increasingly for other people is social media of all types.

4 – It’s the economy, stupid! Always!

Notes from the Front Lines – 2/25/2026

Compiled by Jon Smith for RIDU

Trump signs executive orders bent on destroying the federal government as we know it.

DOGE created in the name of efficiency was about eliminating anyone from the federal workforce who wasn't loyal to Trump.

He laid off or fired people in agencies without understanding the overall needs of the agencies (for example IRS and Social Security) and eventually had to bring them back to work.

He reduced to size of the foreign aid infrastructure, eliminating programs that saved lives of Africans infected with HIV.

He pressured Universities to eliminate research studies and grants because they had anything "DEI" in them. He threatened various Universities to cut off federal funding if they didn't adopt rules perceived as being too "left leaning."

He, with the help of his Republican legislature, nominated unqualified MAGA loyalists to his cabinet which created:

A Justice Department that would do as he wanted rather than work for justice for the American people. This allowed him to go after his political enemies.

He nominated a vaccine skeptic to the Department of Health and eliminated the US roles in International Health organizations.

His budget director is an advocate of Project 2025 and has worked to implement many of its provisions.

His Defense Department head is a former talk show host that served in the National Guard and has a "Macho" viewpoint of how an army should be but has no experience in running the organization.

He and his Republican colleagues past the Big Beautiful Bill which gave tax cuts to the top 10% while cutting millions from Medicaid and other programs that have helped low-income people, and eliminating the ACA subsidies throwing millions of middle-income Americans out of the health-care system.

He sent the National Guard into Democratic cities on the pretext of solving a crime problem that didn't exist. He has pursued immigrants, documented and undocumented, with the cruelty of the Gestapo in order to force them rather than use the normal due process system.

He has alienated former allies with threats, tariffs, and other forms of intimidation. His Tariff policies have weakened the economy while allowing him to claim that he is bringing jobs back to this Country.

He applauded Putin while castigating Zelinsky for a war that Putin started.

And then he has used his office to advantage the Trump Corporations to reap billions at the expense of taxpayers.

And these items are “just” the “highlights!”