

Balloon Juice is an online community created by John Cole in January 2002, so we are about to turn twenty!

While initially a one-man show, the blog expanded and now has a dozen people who write for the blog. We have a number of experts in a range of fields, with everything from politics to health insurance to political action to military and international relations on the front page, but every one of our authors brings something unique that helps make Balloon Juice what it has become. As do our commenters! We are at 6 million comments, and counting.

What we have at Balloon Juice is pretty unique in the online world, so it's tough to describe in just a paragraph or two.

The talk on Balloon Juice focuses on politics, pets and animal rescue, gardening, pop culture and more, but what it really does is serve as a meeting point for interesting, like-minded people to talk, argue, share, and in the past few years, cope! *And we take action on issues that matter.* We pride ourselves on being a real community — we get to know each other, help one other, and serve as a (mostly) friendly refuge in an often ugly world.

Balloon Juice gets about 89,000 unique sets of eyeballs every month, and all of our blog posts are automatically posted to the blog owner's twitter account, which has 13k followers. So we have some reach.

We collectively raised about 1.7 million dollars for the 2020 election cycle, through our own Balloon Juice ActBlue thermometers. About \$900,000 of that went to Georgia for Nov 2020 and the runoff.

That number is probably closer to \$2 million when we take into account the Balloon Juice folks who first donated through our Balloon Juice ActBlue thermometers, but then preferred to give follow-up donations by clicking a link in the fundraising emails from the various campaigns and organizations.

You could think of our community as an exceptionally engaged, well-informed, politically-active, high-information donor base.

In the 2020 cycle, most of our donations went directly to campaigns, the major exceptions being 50k donated to state parties (NC, TX, WI, PA KS) and a total of 80k to organizing groups (Four Directions, Fair Fight, and America Votes, GA).

Going forward, we will still be giving to various candidates, but in 2021 our focus is on boots-on-the-ground / grassroots organizations.

We are excited about this new direction for our fundraising. In May 2021 we raised enough money for *Voces de la Frontera* to hire their first field organizer. In November 2021, we focused our fundraising on *Four Directions*, and we are responsible for raising \$165,000 to organize the Native vote in Arizona and Wisconsin. The Native vote in Michigan is next, starting after the holidays.