



## Branch Newsletter

# May 2023

By the  
Communication, Press & Publicity Committee

### **NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING:**

Our regular general membership meeting will be 7 p.m. Thursday, May 25, at the Ricketts Center, 658 Beech Street. We'll have two guest speakers. Jamiyah Miller, from the Maternity Care Coalition of Montgomery County, is also the program manager of [Montco Mamas](#). The group was formed to address the fact that the rate of mortality among African-American infants is triple that of white infants. Eileen Solomon, executive director of Community First Development Corp, will talk about the leadership program she organizes for Pottstown teens.

For those who can't make the meeting, we'll also have a Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84995648174?pwd=QlAyaHZkWIJXZWk1T3FWcHNFVnJlOQTO9>

Meeting ID: 849 9564 8174    Passcode: 937480

### **JUNETEENTH IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER!**

Marlene Hedgepeth, who organized last year's successful event, is hard at work, planning this year's celebration. It will be held Saturday, June 17, from 2 to 6 p.m., at the Ricketts Center. The jazz band, Hidden Treasure, will perform, and there will be a DJ. Expect food, health education, community programs and more. Plus face-painting for the youngsters. "It's going to be an awesome celebration," Marlene promises.

For everyone who needs a history reminder: Juneteenth, which became an official federal holiday in 2021, celebrates the end of slavery in America. President Abraham Lincoln announced the freedom of enslaved people with his Emancipation Proclamation on Sept. 22, 1862. But communications in that era were not what they are today. It wasn't until June 19, 1865, that Union Army General Gordon Granger came to Texas – the last state to officially have enslaved people – and demanded that the state's 250,000 slaves be set free.

## **SPEAK OUT: ADVOCATE FOR FAIR SCHOOL FUNDING**

POWER Interfaith, a strong advocate for fair and full funding for public schools, is planning an advocacy and action day in Harrisburg on Wednesday, June 7. Buses are leaving from various locations in SE Pennsylvania, including Pottstown, between 8 and 9 a.m. The event will begin at Grace United Methodist Church in Harrisburg, followed by a march to the capitol building. Advocacy visits are being arranged with lawmakers and their staffs. People must pre-register for the event [here](#).

## **GET READY TO MARCH ON JULY 4**

The branch is registered to participate in Pottstown's July 4 parade. Please come out in your yellow NAACP t-shirts – or your best July 4 finery – to march down High Street, from Adams to York. It begins at 10:15 a.m., but we'll assemble before that. Details to come. Afterward, we'll staff a table at the Street Fest, from 11:15 a.m. to 4 p.m.

By the way, it's still not too late to purchase – or sell -- tickets for the Rotary Club's Duck Race fundraiser. (The more the branch sells, the more we benefit.) If you'd like to sell some, or if you'd like to buy some, TEXT Annette Kobb at 484-366-1466 or email her at [annettek53@gmail.com](mailto:annettek53@gmail.com). Winners will be announced on July 4.

Here's a [news story](#) in the Mercury about the event. The official website is [www.pottstowngofourth.com](http://www.pottstowngofourth.com)

## **CANOE TRIP ANYONE?**

The Delaware Riverkeeper Network has contacted the branch, graciously proposing to partner with us to host a one-day canoeing expedition on the Schuylkill River, starting upstream of Pottstown and ending several hours later downtown. The event – mostly for underserved kids – will include learning about the ecology of the river plus a history lesson about the lives of Black and Brown people who have lived or worked along the river. Fred Stine, Community Action Coordinator for the Riverkeeper, is leading the effort. Stay tuned for more details!

## **WANNA SHOOT HOOPS LIKE A PRO?**

This summer, Coach Howard Brown is offering training sessions for middle and high school basketball players. Sessions start on June 13 and will be held in Pottstown, Royersford, Birdsboro and King of Prussia. Coach Brown is CEO of iBall United, a sports marketing and consulting company. He scored more than 1,000 points at Villanova University, is a former Pennsylvania Associated Press and Gatorade State Player of the Year, and a 13-year overseas pro. More information is available on his [website](#).

## **NAACP BOOK CLUB**

The next meeting of the branch's book club will be Monday, June 12, 6 p.m. at the Pottstown Library. The book we've selected is "The Color of Water," by James McBride -- a Black man's tribute to his white mother. The description of the book that spent two years on the New York Times bestseller list is [here](#). The library has reserved copies for us. If you'd like one, just tell the librarian at the desk that you'd like one of Kerry Pidcock-Lester's books.