



Branch Newsletter

August 2022

By the
Communication, Press & Publicity Committee

NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING: We're in person again! We'll meet at the Ricketts Center at 7 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 25. A representative of the YWCA Tri-County will visit to tell us about their Foster Grandparent Program, where adults who are 55 or older volunteer to work one-on-one with students. Paul Winterbottom, the fitness guru at the Ricketts Center, also will give a brief talk. This is part of a WIN health initiative. For those who can't make it, we'll also have a Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84995648174?pwd=QlAyaHZkWIJXZWk1T3FWcHNFVnJOQT09>

Meeting ID: 849 9564 8174 Passcode: 937480

IMPORTANT COMMUNITY MEETING ABOUT THE HALE STREET EXPLOSION

President Johnny Corson and other branch members have been working to organize a community meeting to address the Hale Street explosion, including an update on the investigation and resources for those traumatized by the event. It will be held Thursday, Sept. 8 at 6 p.m. at the YMCA, 724 N. Adams Street. Details are still being worked out, so stay tuned.

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

The branch recently filed a Freedom of Information request with the Borough of Pottstown, seeking all records that would shed light on how the borough came to the decision to cite two

High Street churches for their efforts in helping the homeless. They were First Episcopal Church and First Methodist Church's Mission First. (Those citations have been rescinded, by the way, following a public outcry.) The requested information includes the identities of those who complained about the churches; what those complaints asserted; internal discussions leading to the citations; legal advice given to the borough on the matter; and the identities of those who made the final decision.

GUN VIOLENCE PROTECTION

The branch is working with the Pottstown YMCA to have a meeting with Community Leaders on Gun Violence Prevention to be held at the Pottstown Complex (The YMCA) at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 21. More details to come.

FRIENDS HELPING FRIENDS

The branch's WIN (Women in the NAACP) Committee is participating in the annual fundraiser hosted by Boscov's, reports committee chair Annette Kobb. Tickets are \$5, and 100% of it goes to the nonprofit that sells them. If you have a ticket, you get a 25 percent discount at Boscov's from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m on Oct 19.

One of WIN's main, regular activities is to make monthly donations of various necessities to the Salvation Army.

SAVE A LIFE; GIVE BLOOD

The branch, in partnership with the American Red Cross and the Ricketts Center, is holding blood drives from 2 to 7 p.m. on Oct. 13 and Dec. 6 at the Center. One of the many reasons we're so keen on the drives is that we're acutely aware of the need for blood from African American donors to help combat Sickle Cell Disease. Many of those who have the disease need regular blood transfusions throughout their lives. The disease affects mostly African Americans, and they need blood from people who are as closely matched, genetically, to them as possible. To make an appointment, go to: www.redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Yes, you can get involved! Before COVID, the branch hosted a monthly book club at the Pottstown Library. We held vigorous discussions about all kinds of issues that our reading prompted. Some of our previous titles included "Just Mercy" by Bryan Stevenson and "Waking

Up White” by Debbie Irving. Each month, the members of the club voted on the book they wanted to read for the next month. We want to restart the club, and we need someone to take charge. The main duty is coordinating with the library to set up a regular time and letting everyone know about it.

CHURCH SAFETY TRAINING

Given the number of attacks in recent years on places of worship, Rev. Garrison Lockley said the Religious Affairs Committee is planning to coordinate a safety training program for churches, synagogues and other sites. Stay tuned for details.

AN INVITATION FROM THE TRI-COUNTY ACTIVE ADULT CENTER

Want to join an exercise class, play pool, learn Spanish?

Brian Parkes, executive director of the TriCounty Active Adult Center, hopes to see you. He’s extending an invitation specifically to members of minority communities.

“When I took a look at our numbers, I realized we’re not serving communities of color in the proportion that we should be,” he said recently. “And we’d like to. We’re here to serve everyone, and we want to do our best to make everyone feel welcome.”

Those exercise classes are for people of all abilities. The center also has lots of social and recreational programs – everything from card games to origami classes. About half the programs are free. The others generally cost \$2 a session.

Free lunches are cooked on site.

The center is open to anyone over the age of 50, from anywhere in the region. Membership is not required, but those who join – for \$25 per year – are eligible for additional benefits, and the fee helps support the center.

Stop by for a tour of the center at 288 Moser Rd. in Pottstown weekdays from 8am to 3pm, call 610-323-5009, or learn more at www.tricountyaac.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

On Tuesday, Sept 20, President Johnny Corson will be speaking to the **Phoenixville Diversity in Action** committee. The meeting, which begins at 7 p.m., will be via Zoom. We don’t have a link yet, so keep an eye on their site: <https://diaphoenixville.org>

On Saturday, Sept. 17, the **CCLU (Centro Cultural Latinos Unidos) Latin Festival** will be held from 2 to 6 p.m. at Riverfront Park. Expect Latin dancing, Latin food and more. The branch will have a table there.

On Monday, Sept. 12, a **fundraiser for Beacon of Hope** will be held at J.J. Rattigan Brewing Company. It will be a trivia night, from 6 to 9 p.m. Beacon of Hope is working to provide a year-round emergency shelter and other services for people experiencing homelessness.