



Branch Newsletter

April-May, 2025

By the Communication, Press & Publicity Committee

Membership meeting: Thursday, April 24, 7 p.m., Ricketts Center

The Pottstown School District is underfunded by millions of dollars. At a recent school board meeting, members contemplated having to eliminate all four librarian positions, halve the number of elementary school counselors and not replace a retiring music teacher.

It was a painful discussion. But as superintendent Stephen Rodriquez said, “Do I like it? No. ... [But] there is no Mercedes to cut.”

An advocate for fair funding — Casey Deck, of the Penn Policy Center — will talk about what’s on the line and what to do about it at our April meeting. He’ll also talk about the charter school issue. PA Schools Work — PASW — is a coalition of 17 organizations representing educators, parents and community leaders. Their goal is to insure adequate and equitable funding for schools. Get ready to be wowed by compelling statistics and other information.



The meeting will be at 7 p.m. at the Ricketts Center, 358 Beech Street. If you can’t make the meeting in person, here’s a Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84995648174?pwd=QlAyaHZkWIJXZWk1T3FWcHNFVnJOQT09> Meeting ID:849 9564 8174 Passcode: 937480

See you

In June

The entire newsletter staff will be on spring break in May — imagine! — so our next newsletter will be sent in June. The May general membership meeting will be at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 22, at the Ricketts Center. For those who can’t make it, the Zoom link is the same as the one above.



WIN Committee members (from left) Paula Corson, chair Annette Kobb, Marlene Armato, Judith Memberg, Pam Bateson and Rev. Robin Bearden-Reed.

Women's History Month event

The branch's WIN Committee capped Women's History Month with a festive, inspiring and information-filled event.

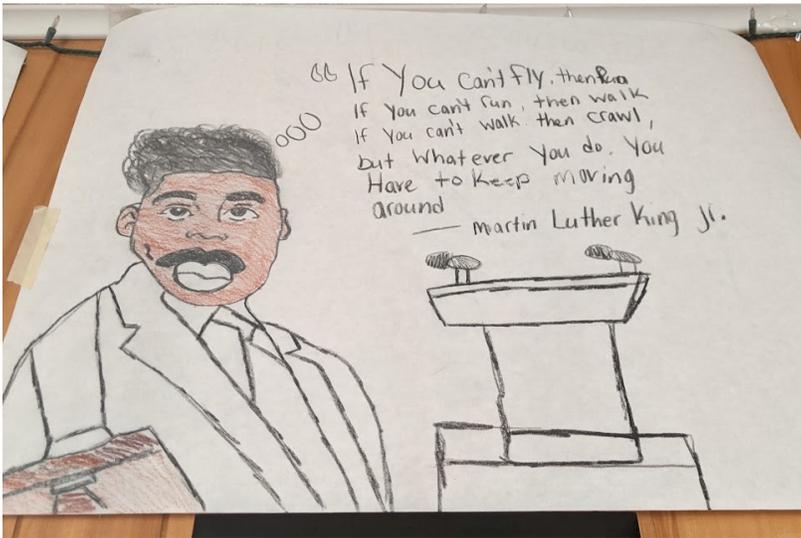
They honored three "sheroes" — Montgomery County Commissioner Jamilla Winder, funeral director Ervina Beauford and Hill School Head of School Kathleen Devaney.

Pottstown Mayor Stephanie Henrick and Mrs. Pennsylvania, April Jackson (at left), wowed everyone with their frank descriptions of difficulties they faced and how they overcame them. Numerous community organizations gave out information about what they do.



Pictured at right are (from left) Head of School Kathleen Devaney, branch President Johnny Corson, Mrs. Pennsylvania April Jackson and Joanne Washington of JWI Eden Experience.





MLK Art Competition

Rev. Robin Barrow hosted this year's youth art competition, which drew 47 entries, the most ever.

This year's theme was "The Dream is Still Alive." All the artwork was hung at Bethel AME Church, and winners were announced at an awards ceremony on April 22.

Marie Haigh of Pottstown Community Arts helped organize the competition.

Winners were:

High school: 1st, Elly.

Middle School: 1st, Brooke; 2nd, Aries, Aaliyah, and Jackie ; 3rd, Idris.

Elementary School: 1st, Ariel; 2nd, Cherish; 3rd, Laela; honorable mentions, Enaaya and Nurane.

Participating organizations included ACLAMO, the Ricketts Center, Rolling Hills, the YWCA, Pottstown Library and Pottstown School District.



Geraldine Brooks' *Horse* is the May book club pic

Segueing from our April nonfiction account about a slave who was the best distiller the world *never* knew — until now — we are delving into a novelized version of the enslaved groom who led a horse to record-setting victories in 1850. We'll meet at 6 p.m. Monday, May 12, at the Pottstown Library. As usual, they are reserving books for us.

