



Branch Newsletter

January, 2026

By the Communication, Press & Publicity Committee

General membership meeting on Thursday, Jan. 24

Laura Johnson, policy manager for State Rep. Paul Friel (D, 26) will speak at our regular meeting on Thursday, Jan. 24, at 7 pm. at the Ricketts Center, 658 Beech Street. Johnson said Friel is focused on three categories of issues — health care, the affordability and availability of housing, and “how do we save this democracy.” She’ll also answer questions.

The public is invited. For those who can’t make it, here’s a Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84995648174?pwd=QlAyaHZkWIJXZWk1T3FWcHNFVnJOQT09> Meeting ID:849 9564 8174 Passcode: 937480



Turkey time!

Several members of the branch were on hand to help serve 400 Thanksgiving dinners at the Ricketts Center on Nov. 24.

Six turkey-carving stations were set up in a classroom, and workers in the hallway sliced pies and dished out the veggies, potatoes and more. Here, Executive Committee member Bobby Watson and new branch member Julius Flynn help fill the containers.

Raise the minimum wage!



Branch President Johnny Corson recently joined State Rep. Joe Ciresi and state Sen. Art Haywood at a press conference calling on state lawmakers to raise the minimum wage. At the Dec. 31 event, they noted that Pennsylvania's minimum wage is currently frozen at the federal minimum of \$7.25 per hour, a rate unchanged since 2009. All surrounding states have higher rates. Ciresi and Haywood have co-sponsored legislation aimed at increasing it to \$15 per hour by 2027.

Corson said that the NAACP considers raising the wage "a fundamental step toward economic equality and racial justice in America. We feel this is a crucial civil rights issue to combat poverty and inequality. "

NAACP to host two events for seniors to help with health insurance

Are you a senior citizen who needs help with medical insurance?

Joanne Washington, chair of the branch's Health and Wellness Committee, has put together a forum to be held on two days at two locations in Pottstown.

The U.S. government has extended the Affordable Care Act until Jan. 31, so Washington -- who also is founder and CEO of the public benefit corporation, Joanne Washington Inc. -- wants to make sure seniors have information they need.

With the recent cuts at Pottstown

Hospital, Washington said, "and all the changes at the federal level, I felt like the community really didn't know what was going on. And we knew a lot of our seniors might need help signing up. We definitely don't want them to go without the health care they need."

Independent benefits specialist Karene Johnson will break down how insurance works, the best insurance options, and how it can benefit someone long-term.

"My goal is to ensure the community has a clear understanding of their coverage options and feels

supported throughout the sign-up process," she said. Computers will be set up to help people apply on the spot.

The events will be on Friday, Jan. 16, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Mission First, 414 East High Street, and on Friday, Jan. 23, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Ricketts Center, 658 Beech St. Light refreshments will be served.

Participants should bring ID, their Social Security number, their doctor's name, and income and household information.

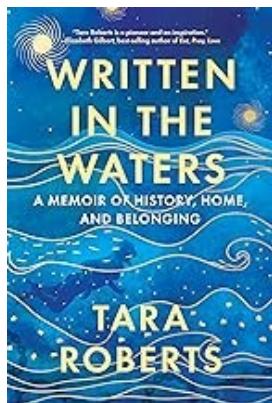
See flyer on next page.

They dove on the wrecks of slave ships

The branch's book club has selected *Written in the Waters: A Memoir of History, Home and Belonging*, by Tara Roberts, as the title to discuss in February.

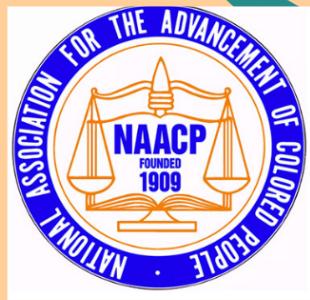
Roberts was captivated when she saw a photograph of the underwater archaeology group, Diving With a Purpose, which sought out the wrecks of slave ships. Roberts joined them, and this book is her moving memoir of exploration, as well as a personal reckoning as she explored her own family history and identity.

We will meet at 6 p.m. Feb. 9, at the Pottstown Library, which is holding books for us. Just ask at the desk.





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HEALTH AND WELLNESS
COMMITTEE

Presents...

THE HEALTHCARE FORUM

Featuring
Karene Johnson
Independent
Benefits Specialist



Friday, January 16th 11-2
Mission First
414 East High Street
Pottstown, PA 19464

Friday, January 23rd 11-2
Ricketts Center
658 Beech Street
Pottstown, PA 19464

Light Refreshments

On the spot online applications

Questions & Answers

Please bring:
ID, SS#, Dr.,
income &
household info



For information please call Joanne Washington at 8444462556