



Branch Newsletter

May 2022

By the Communication, Press & Publicity Committee

NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING: We are continuing to hold meetings via Zoom because of the pandemic. (We thought it would be over by now, too! But alas not.) The next meeting will be at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 26. Due to a conflict last month, the presentation on fair funding for schools was rescheduled to this month. Our speaker will be Pottstown School Board member Laura Johnson, who also is a member of the branch, a mom of three, and co-founder of Pennsylvanians for Fair Funding.

Each Pottstown student is shortchanged \$3,700 a year. Johnson's group is inviting people to participate in an advocacy project in support of the governor's budget, which would bring an additional \$8-9 million to Pottstown schools annually. She'll talk for 10 minutes and then answer questions.

Here's the link for the Zoom meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84995648174?pwd=QlAyaHZkWIJXZWk1T3FWcHNFVnJQQT09>

Meeting ID: 849 9564 8174

Passcode: 937480

A SPECIAL BIRTHDAY



Branch President Johnny Corson and Executive Committee members Paula Corson and Bobby Watson attended a special birthday party last week. Pottstown trail-blazer Mrs. Harriet E. Smith turned 101.

“We celebrate this African-American mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and caregiver. Her sphere of influence continues in her family and beyond,” read a proclamation from the branch, written by the Rev. Garrison Lockley, chair of the Religious Affairs Committee.

“Today, we celebrate this an extraordinary woman Mrs. Harriet Smith who lived through so much social change in this country and in the world. She has seen and survived the Great Depression, War World II, Jim Crow, Civil Rights Movement, 9/11, and has witnessed the first

African-American, Barack Obama, become the 44th President of these United States of America and the first African-American and woman become the 49th Vice President, Kamala Harris.”

Mrs. Harris is a health care professional who worked at Pottstown Memorial Hospital for 25 years. She worships at Mt. Herman Missionary Baptist Church in Pottstown.

She gave as the reason that she has lived so long: “God is not done with me yet.” Her advice to others: ““Don’t sweat the small stuff and be kind to one another. Live your life based on the Bible’s teaching and love one another.”

Pictured at the party with Mrs. Smith are (from left) Paula Corson, Johnny Corson, Pottstown Mayor Stephanie Henrick and Bobby Watson.

COMMUNITY ACTION

Several branch members plan to attend the meeting of the Pottstown Neighborhood Partnership Wednesday, May 25, at 4 p.m. The Zoom meeting will provide an update on this year's projects, including National Night Out and the Play Streets program. The group also will be reviewing ideas for funding in 2022-2023. Applications are due at the end of May.

BRANCH TO SPONSOR BLOOD DRIVES

Dates have been set! The branch will partner with the American Red Cross and the Ricketts Center to host blood drives on Oct. 13 and Dec. 6 at the Center. As you may remember, we hosted drive last fall and it went really well. Ever since the pandemic, blood has been in short supply. Blood donations are of special value to the Black community because of sickle cell disease, which affects mostly Black people. It can cause debilitating pain, joint and tissue damage, plus strokes. There is no cure, but among the treatments: blood transfusions from Black donors. Many patients need them throughout their lives.

To schedule a donation and save a life, go to www.RedCrossBlood.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

SUNDAY, JUNE 19, JUNETEENTH: Branch member Merlene Hedgepeth is leading an effort to have a spectacular event to mark the day in 1865 when Union soldiers arrived in Texas to announce the end of slavery. Stay tuned.

JULY 4, DUCK RACE: The Executive Committee has approved the branch's involvement in the Rotary Club's annual July 4 Duck Race. Branch members will be selling tickets, and we'll get some of the proceeds.