



Branch Newsletter

October, 2025

By the Communication, Press & Publicity Committee

Membership meeting: Thursday, Oct. 23, 7 p.m., Ricketts Center

Sgt. Stephen L. Hatfield, a 26-year veteran of the Pottstown Police Department and head of the Special Operations Unit, will talk about community policing at our Oct. 23 meeting. Hatfield grew up in the borough and graduated from Pottstown High School. He said his close ties to the town, "give me a different perspective from other people." The five-member special operations group is responsible for policing community events and conducting programs in schools. The group members also have general patrol duties. Sgt. Hatfield said he will be glad to take any questions. In the photo, Hatfield is showing his 2022 Officer of the Year award.

If you can't make the meeting in person, here's a Zoom link:

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



Change in meeting dates

Our regular meeting dates this year for the general membership would fall on Thanksgiving and Christmas. So we have changed the dates. We will meet on Thursdays, Nov. 20, and Dec. 18, at 7 p.m. at the Ricketts Center, 658 Beech Street.

We need a treasurer

Our current assistant treasurer is stepping down at the end of this month, after years of service to the Pottstown NAACP. If you are interested in the job, please email pottstownnaacp.2288@gmail.com, and you'll be connected to someone who can give more details about the position.

SNAP cuts criticized

Branch President Johnny Corson helped connect people at a recent information event about cuts to SNAP — for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program — which was targeted in President Trump’s “Big Beautiful Bill.”

The event was held at the Cluster of Religious Communities food pantry. Speakers included U.S. Rep. Madeleine Dean, state Rep. Joe Ciresi and State Sen. Art Haywood, who said the cuts would put pressure on the charity network. “Charity provides one meal for every nine provided by SNAP,” Haywood said. “The charity network cannot fill that gap.”



Corson, shown in the photo above with Sen. Haywood, noted that “Black households have higher rates of food insecurity and rely on SNAP for food assistance at higher rates than white households, due to systemic economic inequality.”

He said the cuts would “worsen food insecurity, increase poverty, increase health and education inequities, and lead to poor nutrition, higher medical costs, increased stress and food deserts.”



Farewell to a dear friend

We are sad to announce that Asmar Price, owner of the Next Level Barber Shop, has passed away. Many knew him as the guy who cut their hair and groomed their beards. We knew him as the guy who helped us give out books as part of our Road to Reading program.

After Vice President Larry Cohen made the connection — Asmar was a passionate believer in education — we

took him a box of 50 books on Jan. 26, 2024. Every month or so after that, he’d call and say, “The kids love the books! I need more books!”

We recently consulted our records and realized that he had given out 857 books. He was truly a reading champion. We will miss him greatly.

We honored him with a proclamation last winter. He is pictured above with Paula Corson, Annette Kobb, Johnny Corson, Larry Cohen and Bob Bauers.

Budget cuts

and you

The branch co-hosted a town hall on Oct 15 to discuss the impacts and timelines due to the federal budget cuts and the stalled passage of the PA state budget.

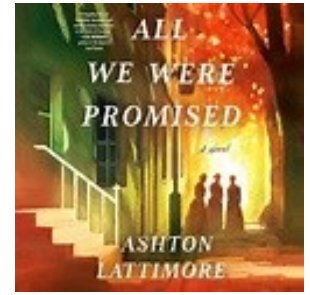
Other hosts were State Reps Joe Ciresi and Paul Friel.

Their staffs were available to provide people with information on state government-related programs and services.



Book club's Nov. author: Ashton Lattimore

The library was closed on our October meeting date, so we will discuss Ashton Lattimore's *All We Were Promised* on Monday, Nov. 10, at 6 p.m. The story is set in pre-Civil War Philadelphia, where two women conspire to help an enslaved girl escape. As usual, the library is reserving copies for us.



The Rev. Garrison Lockley, former Chair of the branch's Religious Affairs Committee, returned to his old church on Oct. 12 for Friends and Family Day. He is now Pastor of Bethel AMEC in Bryn Mawr, and the Rev. Robin Barrow is the Pastor in Pottstown.

The event honored Sister Shirley Martin and Brother Carl Glover.

Pictured here are Johnny Corson; Pastor Lockley; Shirley Martin's sister, Janice Corum; Bobby Watson; Annette Kobb; Pastor Barrow

At Bethel AMEC, Friends and Family Day, plus a homecoming



and the Rev. Alen Harris, of the First Baptist Church of Birdsboro.



A reminder about WIN events

There's still time to participate in two events sponsored by the branch's WIN (Women in the NAACP) Committee. One is Bosco's "Friends Helping Friends" event on Wednesday, Oct. 22. A pass gives you 25 percent off purchases, in the store or online. They cost \$5, all of which goes directly to WIN, which among other things, uses funds to support the Salvation Army family shelter in Pottstown. To purchase a pass, email WIN Committee Chair Annette Kobb at annettek53@gmail.com.

WIN is also seeking donations of new or slightly used twin blankets and new pillows for the shelter.