



Branch Newsletter

October 2022

By the
Communication, Press & Publicity Committee

NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING:

Candidates in three regional races will take questions and outline their positions at our general membership meeting at the Ricketts Center this Thursday, Oct. 27. A meet-and-greet will begin at 6:30 p.m., the membership meeting at 7.

Committed as of Sunday are Jill Dennin and Tracy Pennycuick, who are running for the state senate seat being vacated by Bob Mensch; Joe Ciresi the incumbent state representative, who is being challenged by Tom Neafcy; and Christian Nascimento, who is trying to unseat Congresswoman Madeleine Dean. A staff person from Ms. Dean's office will represent her. The public is invited.

For those who can't make it, we'll also have a Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84995648174?pwd=QlAyaHZkWIJXZWk1T3FWcHNFVnJlOQ09>

Meeting ID: 849 9564 8174 Passcode: 937480

A RAMP FOR LAMONI



Lamoni Green is usually smiling anyway. People who see her motoring toward them in her wheelchair call out, “Hey Lamoni!” But when the young woman, who has cerebral palsy, needed to get from her house to her driveway, someone had to carry her and wrestle her chair down the hill. Now, thanks to a community outpouring, she has a ramp.

On Sept. 24, a team of workers from Branch Life Church, headed by Pastor Josh Park, showed up. Elverson Supply Co. discounted the supplies. By the end of the day, it was finished. Lamoni happily posed on it for the cameras. Smiling.

Some area business people, the police department and a member of the NAACP also donated to the project – enough so that there will be some leftover for Lamoni for the holidays. Lamoni and her mother, Tanya Johnson, plan to come to Thursday’s meeting, and we’ll cheer her on again.

GUN VIOLENCE

We continue to be saddened and alarmed by gun violence. President Johnny Corson has recently attended three meetings about the subject and spoke on a panel at one of them. He also attended the YWCA’s Week Without Violence block party on Saturday. Everywhere, community leaders are wondering, “What can we do?” And they are pledging to work on it.

MENTORING PROGRAM AT POTTSTOWN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL?

After meetings last spring with Pottstown School District officials, State Police Lt. William Slaton (he heads the Heritage Affairs Section) and members of the NAACP, Lt. Slaton offered to set up a mentoring program. The district responded enthusiastically. But so far, no green light. We encourage the district to move forward.

BOYERTOWN HIGH SCHOOL – NO PLACE FOR HATE?

We’re still waiting to hear back from the Boyertown Area School District about whether the high school’s No Place for Hate status – given by the Antidefamation League – has lapsed. The ADL told us it had. They said the district did not follow through on a requirement to hold three anti-hate events. When we met with the district DATE, officials said that their status had not lapsed. They promised to sort it out with the ADL and get back to us. So far, they have not.

ACTIVE SHOOTER TRAINING FOR AREA RELIGIOUS LEADERS

The Religious Affairs Committee hosted a session on Oct. 22 at Bethel AME Church to teach religious leaders how to respond in the tragic event that there is an active shooter in their place of worship. Committee Chair Rev. Garrison Lockley said the idea was prompted by several incidents at houses of worship nationally – at Mother Emanuel in Charleston, at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, in Texas, in California...

As Rev. Lockley thought about it, he said, “God, I know we can do something,” so he did. “We need to be prepared in our places of worship.” He reported afterward that the training was invaluable, although he hopes to never have to use it.

Pottstown Police Lt. Steve Morrissey, who conducted the training, told the 15 people who attended that their first response should be to run. Find an exit and leave. If you can’t do that, hide. And if the shooter is coming directly at you, fight. Fight with whatever object you have – a shoe, a pen, whatever. He also spoke about the value of simply engaging with a church newcomer who appears agitated or nervous. Engage the person. Welcome them. As if they are okay. Ask if they need help. Those simple acts of kindness may deter a potential shooter.

THEY ASKED; YOU GAVE

We’re delighted that 30 people came out to a Red Cross blood drive the branch hosted in partnership with the Ricketts Center. And at least two of the donors were people whose blood could be used for people with Sickle Cell Disease. The condition affects primarily African Americans. There is no cure, but to treat it, many need blood transfusions throughout their lives. The blood needs to be as close a match as possible, so the blood from other African Americans is best.

A huge thank-you to all who participated. Our next blood drive is Dec. 6 at the Center. To make an appointment, go to: www.redcrossblood.org and follow the prompts to find our drive, or call 1-800-RED CROSS.

WIN KEEPS ON KEEPIN’ ON

As usual, members of the branch’s WIN (Women in the NAACP) Committee, led by chair Annette Kobb, are out and about, doing good deeds. They were at the YWCA’s block party at the start of its Week Without Violence. They’re participating in numerous Halloween events – the YMCA, the Ricketts Center, Heart of God Family Worship Center – to give the kiddies a good time and keep them safe. They continue to support the Salvation Army, and every week they help at the Mission First dinner for those in need.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Planning has already begun for a MLK Day event, to be held Monday, Jan. 16, at Mt. Olive Baptist Church. Stay tuned!