

Minutes from 2022 Meetings

March 9, 2022

May 11, 2022

July 13, 2022

September 14, 2022

November 9, 2022

Bridging the Community was held on March 09, 2022 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm at the Kennett Area Senior Center, 427 S. Walnut St., Kennett Square, PA 19348. This is our 141st meeting with 16 dedicated attendees joining to keep building community in-person on a cold, rainy night.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, May, 11 2022 at 7pm. Location TBA

Minutes of *Bridging* meetings are posted on the web site: www.bridgingthecommunity.wordpress.com or there will be a copy of the minutes at the Kennett Library. *Bridging the Community* meetings are held at different sites every time---to provide exposure to all segments of the community.

Jeanne Searer led us in a Moment of Silence to honor all those who are suffering from the war in Ukraine and the turmoil in the world. Prayers for peace.

Joan Holliday shared the Bridging's Framework and Jeanne Searer shared Guiding Principles. Email: dochollisv@aol.com & jeannecrew491@hotmail.com

The overall context is our living philosophy, reflected by our land's energy/spirit - *peaceful, progressive, inclusivity*. "Bridging" promotes this living philosophy for each and every day.

Vision: Kennett Square: Every day a better place to grow up in and grow old in

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We will value each person's contribution; each has a role to play--not focused on hierarchy

Deb Parrish (Kennett Area Senior Center Program Coordinator) told us that the final inspections of the kitchen and room renovations are taking place this month. There will be a Grand Opening in April. They also have a golf outing fundraiser coming up. She hopes to develop an interesting, diverse program for seniors and is requesting Program ideas from the community. She will promote inter-generational events and welcoming community groups to hold events at the site. The large room can be rented for showers, weddings and other outside events. Email: dparrish@kennettseiorcenter.org

Jeanne Searer and Joan Holliday facilitated the meeting and asked attendees to share what they needed or what they brought to the community, as well as any new ideas.

Mary Michael (Avon grove Elementary PTA) told us that she is hosting a multicultural event on Friday, April 29, 2022 from 6:00 to 8:00pm at Penn London Elementary School, 257 State Rd, West Grove, PA 19390. She is looking for volunteers and persons interested in providing a display and activity for elementary school children and their families to experience specific cultures. Email: marymic@gmail.com

Neyeli Avalos (MCHC) told us that she is a parent educator, who goes to homes and helps parents work with their pre-school children to become ready for kindergarten. They conduct a Kindergarten Readiness Camp in the summer. They have families throughout Southern Chester County and Chester County. They take referrals. Email: navalos@cccmchc.org

Esmeralda Carrillo (Parent Coordinator for The Garage Community and Youth Center in Avondale) told us that they recruit students from 6th through 12th grades. They provide after school tutoring, mentoring and preparation for college. They also put on programs for the students. They hope to be opening their new site in the old Avondale fire department building in April. They welcome volunteers. Email: esmeralda.carrillo@garageyouthcenter.org

Beverly Bach (Community) told us about the project that Laura Florence from the library wants to start. It is called "Meadowitos"—a project to establish pollinator pathways in Kennett Square. In areas around town where there are pockets of blight, she will transform them into areas of thriving wildlife by planting resilient native plants to create micro-meadows that will attract pollinators. She is looking for volunteers to help her with this project. Laura's email is: Lauraflorence@gmail.com and Beverly's email is: beverlyb123@verizon.net

Cheryl Miles (Good Samaritan Services) told us that she is the Chief Program Officer of Housing Support Services. Today, Good Samaritan received a signed letter of agreement from His Mission to provide Good Samaritan services at 342 S. Birch Street, Kennett Square, PA. This means that by early summer, homeless men will be served. They will keep the focus that His Mission had, which is serving homeless men. They also will have a case manager on site.

Cheryl also is a member of the Racial and Cultural Equity group. They are looking at ways to promote positive images of black men. They have a photography display of 20 black men from different walks of life and ages. They are looking for a place to display them.

Cheryl is a member of Black Women of Chester County in Action. They are looking for a COVID vaccination site that serves the black community. Email: cheryl@goodsamservices.org

Lori Holcombe (Kennett Area Senior Center) told us that she took the Train the Trainer RSVP Volunteers training for digital literacy. She plans to practice what she learned with neighbors at the Villages at Penn Ridge. She will be a trainer for seniors one-on-one or in classes once the members return to the Center. Email: lholcombe@kennettseiorcenter.org

Joan Holliday (Digital Divide Coalition) told the group that the Broadband assessment is currently being conducted throughout SCC. Letters have been sent to leaders in the community to promote to their clients filling out a survey that identifies where the problems may be in receiving adequate internet in their homes and businesses. Soon there will be website links on the Oxford Library and the Kennett Library for any resident to complete the survey online. The goal is to receive thousands of responses to develop a complete map. Email: dochollisv@aol.com

Amanda Blevins (LCH Health Services Community Engagement) told us that LCH is promoting the message that community members need to catch up with their yearly physicals

and check-ups. They take Medicaid, Medicare, medical insurances and fee for service on a sliding scale fee. Email: ablevins@lchservices.org

Ruth Rochester (Community) told the group that she attended LCH Health Services today for her annual check-up and got a good report.

Emma Garner (CCMCHC) told us that they are starting a new initiative called parent mentor. They have a part-time job opening for this role. The person will help recruit new clients and help fill medical insurance forms for children. They may speak Spanish and/or English and know how to use a computer. They will receive training. Email: egarner@ccmchc.org

Jeanne Searer (Community) told us that the Kennett Area Senior Center is looking for a receptionist from 9am to 2pm for \$15/hour. They also need a cook for 25 hours/week.

Keith Smithyman (Community) told us that he works as a Shop Teacher at Innovative Academy in Painters Crossing. He has a crew of students who are learning basic carpentry and they would be willing to do some work for residents that need this kind of support. They have a van they could travel to the home. They also build sets for their plays and they are always looking for donations of lumber and theatre set material. Email: keithsmithyman@gmail.com

Joan Holliday for Alexa Hart (Brandywine Red Clay Alliance) told us that they still have scholarships for Summer Camp. She encourages the agencies to approach families with this wonderful opportunity which is outdoors in the summer and provides education about nature. They also need volunteers for a Clean-Up Day on Saturday, March 26, 2022 from 8am to noon at Anson B Nixon Park and other locations. Email: ahart@brandywineredclay.org

Esther Rochester (Community) told us that she is working as a bus aide for the KCSID and that she was given a treat today when one of the children came on the bus and said, "I love you!" Email: erochester24@gmail.com

Pastor Annalie Korengel (Unionville Presbyterian Church) told us that she is attending the meeting to learn ways that the Kennett Rotary and her church could help out. She is the Police Chaplain for SCC police forces. Email: lorgusfamily@verizon.net

Message from Sara Dickens Trillo (Casa Guanajuato) told us that Cinco de Mayo will be held at old Genesis building on Saturday, May 7th. She is looking for volunteers and sponsors. They really want to pull this off and need this as a fundraiser to support their many multicultural events. Email: sdtrillo@mightywriters.org

Thanks to Dave Haradon for sending out the email invitations!

The group then mingled and "bridged." Following are the "bridges" that were shared:

- Emma Garner "bridged" with Amanda Blevins and Melody Caulfield about the presentations that they are partnering with on bringing greater understanding of the Guatemalan culture.

- Melody Caulfield “bridged” with Mary Michael about having a table at the Multi-Cultural event on April 7th
- Lori Holcombe and Deb Parrish “bridged” with Beverly Bach about ways to help Laura Florence with the Meadowitos.
- Joan Holliday “bridged” with Cheryl Miles about checking out Whitehall in Oxford as a site for providing vaccinations. She also offered to speak to Larry Bosley at The Market at Liberty Place about displaying the black men photographs.
- Keith Smithyman “bridged” with Cheryl Miles about the black man’s image and his experiences at City Gate. They agreed to meet to talk in more detail. He also “bridged” with Joan Holliday who suggested talking to KATS about set designs they may be discarding.
- Cheryl Miles “bridged” with Mary Michael about Black Women of Chester County in Action providing a table at the multi-cultural event on April 7th.
- Deb Parrish “bridged” with Annalie Korengel about setting up a presentation by the police in May. They could attend the luncheon and speak on Safety. They also could bring Search and Rescue dogs for another presentation.
- Esmeralda Carrillo “bridged” with Jean Searer around Casa Guanajuato’s upcoming events.

The meeting ended at 8:30pm with several staying to complete conversations.

Bridging the Community was held on May 11, 2022 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm at Bethel A. M. E. Church, 300 East Linden Street, Kennett Square, PA 19348. This is our 142nd meeting with 22 intentional attendees joining to help build community in-person.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 13 2022 at Good Samaritan, 342 E. Birch St., Kennett Square, PA 19348. 6:00 for a community picnic and 7:00pm for the meeting. Please bring a healthy dish to share.

Minutes of *Bridging* meetings are posted on the web site: www.bridgingthecommunity.wordpress.com or there will be a copy of the minutes at the Kennett Library. *Bridging the Community* meetings are held at different sites every time---to provide exposure to all segments of the community.

Joan Holliday shared the Bridging's Framework and **Jeanne Searer** shared Guiding Principles. Email: dochollisv@aol.com & jeannecrew491@hotmail.com

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Rev Lileth Baugh led us in a prayer as we were honoring the process at this church site.

Rev. Baugh told us that Bethel A. M. E. stands for African Methodist Episcopal. The very first A.M.E. church started in Philadelphia. The Bethel church building is 128 years old, built in 1899 and was renovated in 1973. Bethel A. M.E. is open to the community for worship and has the intention of helping persons and the community heal. Email: baughlil72@gmail.com

Joan Holliday and Jeanne Searer facilitated the meeting and asked attendees to share what they needed or what they brought to the community, as well as any new ideas.

Carol Vidal (Program Manager for Wings for Success) told us that they have clothing for women and help them with job readiness. They are located in the New Garden Shopping Center. They like partnering with local agencies to reach women who need this support. Email: Carol@wingsforsuccess.org

Rev. Tony Tilford (Interim Pastor, Kennett First Baptist Church) told us that he is happy to be serving in this capacity. Pastor Dan Nicewonger is now Elder of Outreach. He also is a Trauma Grief Counselor with Hope and Help network. Email: ttilford55@yahoo.com

Nate Hoffer (Good Samaritan Services) told us that His Mission has donated the house and the property to Good Sam to carry on the legacy of Margaret Valentine. He has been in conversation for over two years and has gained the trust of Tina and Bobbie, who believe that Good Samaritan will honor the history of His Mission and carry on services to homeless men. They will have two staff on site with one live-in staff member. They will have emergency housing for 60 days and a resident will move into transitional housing on site for up to a year if needed. The hope is to be open by July 2022. Bridging is invited to the site for their annual picnic on July 13, 2022. Email: nate@goodsamservices.org

Deborah Parrish (Program Coordinator at Kennett Area Senior Center) told us that they had a soft opening a month ago. They now are actively recruiting members. Deborah made a “bridge” at the March Bridging meeting with Annalee Korengel, Chaplain for the Law Officers. She along with two Chiefs came to the Center this week and spoke about Elder safety.

There will be a Kennett Area Center Community Event on Saturday, May 21, 2022 from 10am to 3pm. It is an inter-generational affair.. There will be a piano concert; Rock & Roll Revival with the Act Players; Ingrid the Therapy Dog; and Balloon artistry by TBI. There will be Wood Fired Pizza and Michoacana & Sweet Cake Supplies. Email: dparrish@kennettseiorcenter.org

Lori Holcombe (Kennett Area Senior Center) told us that the Senior Center now has Medicare Assistance on Thursdays from 9am to noon. Lori took the Train the Trainer RSVP Volunteers training for digital literacy. She held the first class last evening at KASC and had 14 attendees. She is excited about passing on this knowledge to the seniors to help them have more connection with the community through the Internet. Email: lholcombe@kennettseiorcenter.org

Joan Holliday recognized Theresa Bass, who was in attendance, for her leadership on East Linden Street throughout the years. She pointed out how Bethel A.M.E church was the center for meetings and for the after school tutoring program; Study Buddies. She thanked Theresa for her service and for the difference she made on East Linden Street. Email: dochollisv@aol.com

Jim Mercante (Digital Divide Coalition) told the group that the Broadband assessment is currently being conducted. It has been difficult obtaining information about Internet services due to lack of understanding by the under-served about this world. A presentation will be made in June around the findings about SCC Broadband services with recommendations for solutions. The Digital Literacy effort is going well with RSVP Volunteers non-profit providing Train the Trainer classes for employees, who in turn will train their clients. If any group would like to be involved in this please contact Jim at: vjmercante@gmail.com or Joan Holliday; dochollisv@aol.com

Emily Bettencourt (South Mill Champs) told us that they are involved in the Train the Trainer classes and will be conducting a group class for their employees when finished. They also are teaching ESL classes in partnership with Migrant Education at their Toughkenamon office every Tuesday and Thursday from 6-8pm.

Clark Davis (LCH Health Services) told us that their current message (coming out of COVID) is to encourage everyone to get back to health and get back on track with wellness check-ups and

other chronic disease follow-up. They have family health clinics in Kennett and Oxford and Pediatrics, Dental and Women Health in West Grove. They also have Behavioral Health in all the Centers.

They will have their Amigos Dinner. Check out their social media page. Next year they will celebrate their 50th anniversary. Email: cdavis@lchservices.org

Pam Eppinger (Community) told us that she needs some help with resources around a friend, who is dealing with homelessness. She also has a 37 year old male friend, who is a handyman and would like to be recommended for jobs. Email: pam.eppinger119@gmail.com

Carin Bonifacino (Friends of Green Burial PA) told us about an organization that she has started. It involves burial without a concrete vault; burial without embalming; burial in a shroud or biodegradable casket; burial in a cemetery that is managed for wildlife and plant diversity; burial that creates no pollution or waste; a burial that gives back to the planet and allows the Earth to do what she does best---Recycle. To learn more, attend a Happy Hour Launch Party at Kennett Brewing company on Saturday, 5/14/2022 from 4:00pm to 7:00pm. Check out the web site at: www.GreenburialPA.org; Email: Info@friendsofGreenBurial.org Carin's Email: summersun83@verizon.net

Lilliana Guzman (CCMCHC) told us that their agency has taken the Train the Trainer classes for digital skills and have started training with 5 families and will continue this process. They will have a Vaccine Clinic on 7/14/2022 at the New Garden Township building. Their agency makes home visits to families with children under 5 years to teach parenting skills towards kindergarten readiness. They also have group parenting classes once a month. They always can use volunteers and supplies. Email: lguzman@ccmchc.org

Bob George (KACS Board Member) told us that the KACS Board has accepted the 3 acres of land on Cypress Street, at the edge of town from the Pia family. The hope is that they can have adequate space for KACS and provide space for other organizations to be located at the same site. Email: georgert@gmail.com

Anne Humes (Kendal) told us that she has been knitting sweaters for over 20 years for preschool children in SCC. There is a resident at Kendal, who is 103 years old who still knits scarves. There is a committee of residents who all knit together and also make mittens. Anne enjoys delivering these items in the fall to Tick Tock Early Learning Center to help keep children warm in the winter. She said that residents also have frequent collections for KACs.

Jeanne Searer (Casa Guanajuato) told us that everyone was so disappointed about canceling Cinco de Mayo due to torrential rains. The plan is to have a full event in September when all the acts and performances will go on. Email: jeannecrew491@hotmail.com

Ruth Rochester (Community) celebrated Mother's Day with 4 generations. She is proud of her family.

Esther Rochester (Community) told us that she is still working as a bus aide for the KCSD and loves her special kids. Email: erochester24@gmail.com

Thanks to Dave Haradon for sending out the email invitations!

The group then mingled and “bridged.” Following are the “bridges” that were shared:

- Lori Holcombe “bridged” with Pam Eppinger around the handyman referral, as she had just received a call at the Kennett Area Senior Center with the need.
- Pam Eppinger “bridged” with Nate Hoffer around resources for her friend who is homeless; She also “bridged” with Clark Davis around several resources that she needed from LCH and she “bridged” with Wings for Success about making a clothing donation.
- Carol Vidal “bridged” with Emily Bettencourt about having a “Ladies Night Out” at Wings for Success. Clothing, food and education all in one package.
- Deborah Parrish “bridged” with Anne Humes who will advertise about the Kennett Area Senior Center Community event at Kendal. She also “bridged” with her about starting another Book Club at the Center with Kendal residents.
She “bridged” with Clark Davis about possible medical services that could be brought to KASC. She “bridged” with Emily Bettencourt about providing a mushroom cooking demonstration at KASC.
- Lilliana Guzman “bridged” with Rev. Baugh about attending a Family Center Parenting Class. She also “bridged” with Joan Holliday about digital literacy classes and updates.
- Carin Bonifacino “bridged” with Nate Hoffer. She will have day-old bread delivered to Good Samaritan from Big Sky in Wilmington. She also “bridged” with Joan Holliday about an article she will write for the SCC Weeklies about Green Burials.
- Jim Mercante “bridged” with Nate Hoffer about the idea of holding digital literacy classes at Good Samaritan for residents. It may be helpful as they are applying for jobs, or looking for housing. He also “bridged” with Lori Holcomb and Emily Bettencourt about the need for transportation and child care when employees are attending digital literacy classes.
- Joan Holliday “bridged” with Nate Hoffer offering to teach a health class, take blood pressures or provide some health guidance at Good Samaritan.
- Jeanne Searer “bridged” with Carol Vidal and Lilliana Guzman about Casa Guanajuato and the need to continue to share the Mexican culture. She also “bridged” with Carol Vidal about hold a Bridging meeting at Wings for Success this fall.
- Bob George “bridged” with Nate Hoffer about the importance of having diversity on his Board.
- Pastor Tony Tilford “bridged” with Carin Bonifacino, Rev.Lileth Baugh and Clark Davis around Trauma Grief counseling. They will convene to talk about creating a Support Group.

The meeting ended at 8:30pm with many smiles and hugs passed around.

Bridging the Community was held on Wednesday, July 13, 2022 at 6pm for the annual Tom Hoehle Community Picnic, and 7:00pm to 8:30pm. This is our 143rd meeting with 24 hearty attendees joining to keep the spirit of community alive and well.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 14, 2022 from 7:00pm to 8:30 pm at Wings for Success, 345 Scarlett Rd, Kennett Square, PA 19348.

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Pastor Tony Tilford of First Baptist Church, Kennett Square, said grace before the picnic dinner, as this site has a Christian mission.

Jeanne Searer shared the Bridging Framework and the Guiding Principles. Email: jeannecrew491@hotmail.com

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Tom Hoehle facilitated the meeting and thanked Good Samaritan Services for hosting the event and for the wonderful healthy food everyone contributed to add to the grilled hot dogs and buns.

Sarah West from the Good Samaritan Services told us about their non-profit organization. They provide a full continuum of care to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. They offer Emergency Shelters, Residential Housing, and Housing Support Services across Lancaster and Chester Counties. They serve around 400 men, women, and children every year. They also offer many financial stability and personal development resources that holistically and effectively address the needs of participants who are enrolled in Good Sam. They have locations in Phoenixville, Coatesville, Ephrata, and Lancaster and now in Kennett. The Kennett location

needs upgrades, hopefully to be provided by services donated by contractors and engineers, before it can open. After opening (possibly within the next few months) it will serve homeless men and will continue to provide services after they are housed.

Email: sarahw@goodsamservices.org

Attendees Were Invited To:

1) Present a need 2) Provide information about a resource 3) Offer a new idea, or 4) Share a miraculous mushrooming of care story.

Kecia Crowl is a new employee at Kennett Area Community Services (KACS). She is Communication and Engagement Director. In the last month, she reported a 33% increase in food cupboard usage. Items needed by the food cupboard are listed on the KACS website: kacsonline.net. KACS will help organizations who wish to organize food drives. On Wednesday, July 20, 6-7:30 pm, the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania is conducting a Community Conversation about affordable housing at KACS, 136 W. Cedar St, Kennett Square 19348. Participants are asked to RSVP at (610) 925-3556. Participants will receive a \$25 gift card, as well as free food and drink. They will be asked to participate in recurring surveys after the meeting. **Email: kecia@kacsonline.net**

Emma Garner is an outreach coordinator with the Maternal and Child Health Consortium. They are conducting a back to school drive to collect school supplies for needy children. The goal is 500 backpacks filled with school supplies. **Email: egarner@ccmchc.org**

Lilieth Baugh is pastor of Bethel A.M.E. Church, 300 E. Linden Street., Kennett Square, PA..She is on the Board of Family Promise. **Email: baughlil72@gmail.com**

Robin Martin is president of The Oaks Ministry, a Christ-centered residential environment for women in need who don't have the responsibility of children. They provide transitional housing and financial counseling in a residential facility in Oxford, PA. There will be 3 openings on 8/1; women need not live in Oxford to apply. The goal is to help the women achieve financial stability. The Oaks Ministry has an opening for a mental health specialist. **Email: info@oxfordoaksministry.com**

Norma Diego, LCH Health and Community Services, needs volunteers to help with citizenship preparations. On July 26, 8:30-11:30 am, LCH is offering free health screenings at LCH's Oxford office. Walk-ins are available, but registration is preferred. To register, contact Clark at (610) 444-7550 x266 or cdavis@lchservices.org. **Email: ndiego@lchservices.org**.

Daniella Silva, Project One, works in HIV/AIDS management and does outreach on how to have conversations about sexuality and safe sex. **Email: dsilva@familyservice.us**.

Emily Bettencourt, South Mill Mushroom Farm, said that the farm has job openings for both skilled and unskilled workers. They offer ESL training and digital literacy training for workers,

and the South Mill site is within walking distance of Kennett Square. They also have openings at a new mushroom farm in Oxford. **Email: bettn5@verizon.net.**

Jim Mercante stated that the survey assessing which communities have insufficient cell towers and lack internet connectivity should be released within the next month. Jim stated that this is a social justice issue, with today's dependency on connectivity. Jim is looking for volunteers to participate in the digital skills initiative. He wants to take advantage of the availability of \$50 billion that the government plans to spend on improving internet connectivity. **Email: vjmercante@gmail.com.**

Chad Thomas, Penn Medicine, stated that in October The Chester County Hospital is offering free breast cancer screenings for women at least 40 years of age. Screenings will take place at Penn Medicine Southern Chester County, 455 Woodview Rd, West Grove, PA 19390. He needs volunteers to recruit women to participate. On Juneteenth, Penn Medicine offered colorectal cancer screening in Coatesville. The Chester County Hospital also offers free virtual wellness classes. Classes of potential interest include a mental health awareness program in Spanish on Tuesday, July 26, 6-7:00 pm, a suicide prevention program on Wednesday, August 3, 5:30-7:30 pm, and a presentation on exercise and physical activity for health aging on Tuesday, August 16, 6-7:00 pm. Registration is required for these classes; to register, call (610) 738-2300, Email CCHWellness@pennmedicine.upenn.edu or visit ChesterCountyHospital.org/Wellness on the internet. **Email: chadthomas@pennmedicine.upenn.edu**

Claudia Turner, Education Coordinator for PathStone, reported staff shortages, especially in staff caring for infants. Please contact her. **Email: cturner@pathstone.org.**

The group then mingled and "bridged." Following are bridges that were shared:

- Tom Hoehle bridged with Sarah West about her role at Good Samaritan.
- Jim Mercante bridged with Cheryl Miles (**Email: cherylm@goodsamservices.org**) about digital training classes and partnering with Good Samaritan.
- Jim Mercante bridged with Tony Tilford (**Email: ttilford55@yahoo.com**) and Lilieth Baugh about grant writing for mental health conditions.
- Jim Mercante bridged with Kecia Crowl and Emily Bettencourt about digital training
- Chad Thomas bridged with Cheryl Miles about infant mortality
- Lilieth Baugh bridged with Cheryl Miles about Good Samaritan services.
- Pastors Tony Tilford and Lileth Baugh, who met at the last Bridging meeting have developed an outline and contents for a Trauma workshop. They also have met with

Clarke Davis from LCH and Carin Bonifacino as resources. They will be writing grants to secure funding for the project.

- Participants shared flyers for follow-up.

Bridging the Community was held on September 14, 2022 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm at Wings for Success, 345 Scarlet Rd, Kennett Square, PA 19348. This is our 144th. meeting with 28 caring attendees joining to help build community in-person.

**The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 09, 2022 from 7 to 8:30 PM at Kennett Area Seniors Center, 427 S. Walnut St. Kennett Square, Pa 19348
Tel (610-444-4819)**

There will be a copy of the minutes at the Kennett Library. We are working on a new web site. *Bridging the Community* meetings have been held at different sites every time---to provide exposure to all segments of the community.

Joan Holliday told us that two weeks ago, she invited 12 long-time Bridging the Community members to a Zoom meeting to discuss the future of Bridging. Following are some changes that will take place:

- 1) We will extend our Vision from Kennett Square to the Kennett Area.
- 2) We will have participants share the framework and principles, instead of a presentation by facilitators.
- 3) We will ask at the meeting for a volunteer to host the next meeting. When the library is complete, we will hold some meetings there. In January, we will have a Zoom meeting.
- 4) We will recruit a group of facilitators and minute takers to help with meeting and develop a Core Group that is invested in the Bridging meeting process, so it lives on when current actors are gone.
- 5) To keep the process progressing, we each will personally spread the word and invite someone new to the meetings. Lots of new people in the community since Bridging started 24 years ago.
- 6) We will ask a person to take on the role to extend the invitation to new organizations before each meeting to broaden the kinds of organizations attending.
- 7) We will develop a new web site for minutes.

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Instead of Joan and Jeanne telling us (reminding us) what the framework, vision and guiding principles are, they asked all of us what we understand and feel about them.

**People in the back participated saying:
“We participate by living this philosophy every single day.”**

Anne Humes from Kendal said: “Working FOR the Community”

Many of us agreed that we attend this bimonthly meeting moved from the love of our hearts and not looking for individual benefits.

Someone appreciated that we don't have any infrastructure for our community process. We show up after an email invitation or an invitation from someone. It was pointed out that writing up the minutes has infrastructure and it would be good to be shared. Laura Gonzalez graciously accepted doing the minutes for this meeting.

Others highlighted the fact that there is not a hierarchy, that we believe we are ONE and that all of us are equally important.

Another pointed out that we take our living philosophy from our land---driving throughout the countryside, one experiences the peaceful, progressive, inclusivity of the terrain and foliage.

Joan Holliday and Jeanne Searer facilitated the meeting and asked attendees to share what they needed or what they brought to the community, as well as any new ideas and proposals.

Carol Vidal (Program Manager for Wings for Success) told us that they have clothing for women and help them with job readiness. They are located in the New Garden Shopping Center at 345 Scarlett Rd Kennett Square, PA 19348. They like partnering with local agencies to reach women who need this support. Their main need are volunteers, bilingual volunteers. Email: Carol@wingsforsuccess.org

Dawn Greco (Oaks Ministry in Oxford PA) came to Bridging for the first time and told us that they help women in need, women who are out of prison or out of shelters, who are 18 years and older. They need volunteers and donations and have an opening for a full-time house manager, who also could be needing help herself. Email: info@oxfordoaksministry.com Visit their website <https://oxfordoaksministry.com>

Mary Hughes (Young Moms) helps vulnerable young mothers. They have now 45 young moms in need of help, specially English and bilingual volunteers who can help with translations, transportation and mentoring. They also have a monthly meeting when Young Moms have a meal and a life skills education. They need help with volunteer groups preparing meals and with providing childcare during the meeting. They work 50% in Oxford and 50% here in Kennett Square, PA. Please contact her: mary.hewes@youngmomscommunity.com

Dora Navarro from Migrant Education introduced **Elia Flores** who also works with her at Migrant Ed. They need volunteers, translators. Contact them at Doran@cciu.org and eliaf@cciu.org

Murphy McArdle (The Garage Community and Youth Center) in Avondale said they need all the help we can offer. Especially bilingual tutors. You may help even if English speaker. Her email is murphy.mcardle@garageyouthcenter.org

Cassandra McDonald (JAM Daycare) told us that they provide child care at the site at First Baptist Church, State St, Kennett and always are open to referrals. When she was in attendance, we celebrated **3 generations of women Bridging the Community**—Cassandra, her mother Esther Rochester and her grandmother, Ruth Rochester. Cassandra attended Bridging as a youth. Email: cassandra.jamcdc@gmail.com

Anne Humes intervened to say that also men need help in our community. His Mission (Today's Good Samaritan) is a group of people WHO HELP MEN in need and they need jeans, working clothes, underwear, shoes, working boots, food, and toilet paper. Address: 342 Birch Street Kennett Square, PA 19348 Tel (610) 444 2559.

Karen D'Agusto (Girls Scouts) announced that girls can register for free until tomorrow September 15th, 2022. After tomorrow, registration is \$25 per year for girls ages 5 to 17 years old. She brought the magazine and invited everyone to visit SPARK. Karen's email kdagusto@aol.com

Jeanne Searer (Casa Guanajuato) shared that today started the Hispanic Heritage Month, and that we will celebrate it big at Nixon Park. It will include the traditional Mexican Independence Day but also people originally from Guatemala and Venezuela will share their Independence Day, their food and culture. This will take place at Anson B Nixon Park in Kennett Square, PA on Saturday, September 17th from 1 to 7 PM. jeannecrew491@hotmail.com

Deb Parrish (Kennett Area Senior Center Program Coordinator) said they are offering many classes like Silver Sneakers, lunch, many programs. To become a member, you pay \$35 dollars per year. You have access to the YMCA and get discounts in stores. KASC always needs donations and volunteers to make presentations. dparrish@kennettseniorcenter.org

Melinda Jefferson, Emma Garner and Alondra Sanchez from MCHC make home visits to young families with children under 5 years of age, preparing them for school and helping parents with parenting skills. To make a referral contact Cecilia Arce at: carce@ccmchc.org

Dan Nicewonger is now Elder of Outreach/Spiritual Formation Catalyst. He is a retired Pastor from First Baptist Church of Kennett Square. He and his wife Nancy have a non-profit-- [A Place in the Conversation](#). This organization is committed to "Helping people discover a place in the conversation that allows them to be heard, listen to others, and grow as individuals and community." He will inform the community of events. Email: dnicewonger@gmail.com

Joan Holliday recognized Theresa Bass, who was in attendance for her leadership on East Linden Street throughout the years. She pointed out how Bethel A.M.E church was the center for meetings and for the after school tutoring program; Study Buddies. She thanked Theresa for her service and for the difference she made on East Linden Street.

Study Buddies has now moved to the Kennett High School and Theresa will be helping. Email: dochollisv@aol.com

Edie Burkey (Kennett Community Grocer) invited us to become members of this unique cooperative The plan is to open by 2024. To become a lifetime member is \$309 online or \$29 dollars per month. Email: eburkey@comcast.net

Clark Davis (LCH Health Services) told us that they have family health clinics in Kennett and Oxford and Pediatrics, Dental and Women Health in West Grove. He distributed flyers and shared about the help with domestic violence, overdose, and a safe place to talk about difficult issues. They have Behavioral Health in all the Centers. Email: cdavis@lchservices.org

Claudia Turner (Path Stone) brought us flyers, explained what they do to help Migrant children and their parents in terms of education, child care, food, and other resources for children with special needs. Email: cturner@pathstone.org, Call (610) 925 5600

Anne Humes (Kendal) told us that she has been knitting sweaters for over 20 years for preschool children in SCC. There is a resident at Kendal, who is 103 years old who still knits scarves. There is a committee of residents who all knit together and also make mittens. Anne enjoys delivering these items in the fall to Path Stone and Tick Tock Early Learning Center to help keep children warm in the winter. She said that residents also have frequent collections for KACs.

Esther Rochester (Community) told us that she is still working as a bus aide for the KCSD and loves her special kids. Email: erochester24@gmail.com

Cliff Kraft (Manager of Mid Atlantic Branch, Orphan Grain Train) was unable to attend because of an illness. This organization collects clothing, medical equipment---crutches, canes, walkers, wheel chairs and bicycles which are distributed domestically or internationally. They operate out of the Dansko Warehouse, Federal Blvd, Jennersville, PA. They are there 10am to 2:30pm and 2nd and 4th Saturdays of every month from 9am to 1:30pm. They need donations and volunteers to help sort and pack clothing. Phone: 610-420-0380; Email: kraftcm1@verizon.net

The group then mingled and “bridged.” Following are the “bridges” that were shared:

- Joan Holliday bridged with Mary Hewes and will take her on an actual tour of the non-profits that Young Moms partners with. She also bridged with Murphy McArdle about bringing youth from The Garage at the next Bridging meeting.
- Cassandra McDonald bridged with Keith Smithyman, who is neighbor to her JAM. They exchanged information. Email: keithsmithyman@gmail.com
- Jeanne Searer bridged with Edie Berkey and is now a member of Kennett Community Grocer.
- Karen D’Agusto bridged with Emily Bettercourt and Dawn Greico from Oak Street Ministries and with Deb Parrish for the Kennett Area Senior for projects for the Girl Scouts.
- Deb Parrish said that at the last Bridging meeting she heard of a need for an air conditioner. In the interim was able to “bridge” the need with a donated air conditioner.

- Bob George bridged with Dan Nicewonger about his non-profit for everyone having a voice. He said “we need to stop this mess with people who don’t talk to each other because political or religious views.” We should break down those barriers”!
- Claudia Turner bridged with “lots of people” with her flyers about openings for child care and preschool at Path Stone.
- Laura Gonzalez bridged with Carol from Wings for Success and Elia Flores from Migrant Ed about Dora Navarro’s 25 years of mentoring and convinced Dora to start writing a book about her legacy. We will start in October. The title can be La Abuela de Migrant Ed from 1996 to the present.”
- Edie Berkey bridged with Carol Vidal and told her about her daughter, who will volunteer at Wings for Success. She is bi-lingual.

The meeting ended at 8:30pm with many smiles and hugs passed around.

Bridging the Community was held on November 09, 2022 from 7:00pm to 8:pm at Kennett Area Seniors Center, 427 S. Walnut St., Kennett Square, PA 19348. This is our 145th. meeting with 28 spirited attendees joining to help build community in-person.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 11, 2023 from 7:00 to 8:30 PM by Zoom. You will receive an email reminder and the Zoom link from David Haradon daveharadon@gmail.com Please pass on the Zoom link to new neighbors.

There will be a copy of the minutes at the Kennett Library. We are working on a new web site. *Bridging the Community* meetings have been held at different sites every time---to provide exposure to all segments of the community. Old web site is not active.

Joan Holliday told us that in September, 2022, she invited 12 long-time Bridging the Community members to a Zoom meeting to discuss the future of Bridging. Following are some changes that will take place:

- 1) We will extend our Vision from Kennett Square to the Kennett Area.
- 2) We will have participants share the framework and principles, instead of a presentation by facilitators.
- 3) We will ask at the meeting for a volunteer to host the next meeting. When the library is complete, we will hold some meetings there. In January, we will have our Zoom meeting.
- 4) We will recruit a group of facilitators and minute takers to help with meeting and develop a Core Group that is invested in the Bridging meeting process, so it lives on when current actors are gone.
- 5) To keep the process progressing, we each will personally spread the word and invite someone new to the meetings. Lots of new people in the community since Bridging started 24 years ago.
- 6) We will ask a person to take on the role to extend the invitation to new organizations before each meeting to broaden the kinds of organizations attending.
- 7) We will develop a new web site for minutes.

The overall context is our living philosophy, reflected by our land's energy/spirit - *peaceful, progressive, inclusivity*. “Bridging” promotes this living philosophy for each and every day.

Vision: Kennett Square area: Every day a better place to grow up and grow old

Guiding Principles:

We will come from the heart---not an obligation

We will work for community---not personal agendas

We will focus on the potential side---not the issue side

We will keep it a process---not a program with infrastructure

We will value each person’s contribution; each has a role to play--not focused on hierarchy.

Deb Parrish and Jeanne Searer facilitated the meeting and asked attendees to share first what brought them here today, and later, what they brought to the community, as well as any new ideas and proposals. Emails: dparrish@kennettseiorcenter.org , jeannecrew491@hotmail.com

In response to the Guiding Principles: People participated by saying that we are here because we want to know more about our community and we want to share what we are doing. We are moved from the heart, and we love the fact that this is a process, always different, changing, with new people attending and bringing new ways to help each other.

Debra Parrish, Program Coordinator at the Kennett Senior Center welcomed the attendees, and asked all of us to take a moment of silence. She explained what the Senior Center is and does. They offer multiple programs for anyone 50 years and older. Deb invited us to bring or invite others to try their events, food, classes and many other cultural, social, and healthy activities. For only 35 dollars per year, you can become a member. Visit their website www.kennettSeniorcenter.org or write her dparrish@kennettSeniorcenter.org

Yajara Nunez from Young Moms told us about the programs they offer to educate and help young moms 21 years old and younger. They are always in need of bilingual and English speaking volunteers to help these young women, especially as mentors and to give them rides to doctor's appointment and help on Club night. Yajara.nunez@youngmomscommunity.com and the Volunteer Coordinator is courtney.taylor@youngmomscommunity.com

Lynn Cohen from the Red Cross is also in need of volunteers. They train the volunteers and gave us examples of what the volunteers do to save lives. lynn.cohen@redcross.org

Betsy Bryant from Friends Home in Kennett is looking for volunteers, especially to teach art and language classes in Spanish or French. They have about 60 residents. bbryant@fhkennett.org

Brian Castillo from Maternal and Child Health Consortium is a parent educator serving about 20 families in the Avondale area. Totally the agency serves 150 families. They help families in need of health insurance, SNAP benefits and/or cash assistance. bdcastillo@ccmchc.org (610) 470 3780. Call Margarita Castillo for Family Benefits Program at 610 344 5370 Ext 103

Edgardo Barrios from AT&T store on Kirkwood Hwy said he is happy to help anyone get set-up with a cell phone and they have special discounts for persons in the military. eddiebarrios410@gmail.com and cell ph # 484 790 1314

Luis Benites from Keller Williams said he is now in the real estate business helping families to buy/sell houses and to get loans. He is fluent in English and Spanish. luisbenites@kw.com

Jan Michener from AHHAH shared all the things she does in multiple places but specifically brought flyers about the Dollie Parton's Imagination Library www.imaginationlibrary.com. She invited us to invite families with children under five years old to subscribe and receive for free one book every single month. 484 883 2367

Amanda Blevins the Community Engagement Manager at LCH informed us that they are offering mental health programs in English and Spanish for youth 13 to 17 years old and 18 to 24

years old in Jennersville, their Center located in West Grove, PA. ablevins@LCHservices.org - www.LCHCommunityhealth.org

Tony Tilford from the First Baptist Church with the Healthy Grieving Network is offering a one-time seminar on “Becoming a Healthy Griever for Life” at the Kennett Area Senior Center. Thursday December 8th at 12:45 PM; 610 812 8911 Email: ttilford55@yahoo.com
Also visit www.kennettseiorcenter.org or call 610-444-4819

Carin Bonifacino is inviting us to the Death Café, a safe and relaxed space to gather with people to discuss topics related to death and dying. Every second Monday of the month at 6:30 PM at the Grieco Funeral Home office located on 405 West Street in Kennett Square, PA. The next two meeting will be on November 14th and December 12th. Registration is not required but appreciated deathcafe@griecofunerals.com Carin’s email: info@RevCarin.com 610-998-5164

Joan Holliday said that Keith Smithyman is requesting the community to help find a local garage space for the Restoration Ministry, who repairs cars for the less fortunate. Email: keithsmithyman@gmail.com

Ann Humes from Kendal told us that she has 22 years coming to Bridging the Community and will celebrate her 95th Birthday next week. She is involved with at least 7 agencies and helps in many ways these organizations by coordinating her friends at Kendal, collecting clothes, teaching ESL classes, weaving scarfs, sweaters, hats. She came 22 years ago and didn’t know anything about our community but coming to Bridging every two months she became aware of all the needs and how to help serve those needs.

Emily Bettencourt from South Mill said they just opened a new place in Oxford, PA and are offering many 200 new jobs. Email: ebettencourt@southmill.com 408 968 9908

Dora Navarro from Migrant Education introduced **Elia Flores** who also works with her at Migrant Ed. They need volunteers, translators. Contact them at Doran@cciu.org and eliaf@cciu.org

Chad Thomas from Chester County Hospital said that they are offering Mental Health Programs for women, for patients with diabetes 1 and 2, medication counseling for moms to be Monday through Thursday from 6 to 7 PM.

On Thursday November 10 at 6 PM the class is on Tips on how to be your Best-Emotional Self during Pregnancy and Beyond Registration is required 610 738 2300

CCHWellness@pennmedicine.upenn.edu www.ChesterCountyHospital.org/Wellness
Chad.Thomas@upenn.edu or chad.thomas@pennmedicine.upenn.edu

Joan Holliday said that she and Jim Mercante are still working on Digital Equity in SCC, which includes implementing the assessment for Internet connectivity and computer literacy. If you would like to get involved contact Joan at: dochollisv@aol.com

Alejandra Colin, Bilingual Program Coordinator at Home of the Sparrow said they offer services for single women, who are threatened with homelessness.

acolin@homeofthesparrow.org www.homeofthesparrow.org

Laura Florence from the Kennett Library said the plan is to open the new library by May 2023. They are building many new programs like the pollinator gardens that we already see at the library are also at the YMCA and Anson B Nixon Park. Their dream is to create and expand more programs about environmental literacy. lflorence@ccls.org 484 868 3715

Marvin T. Williams from Second Baptist Church said they are working to organize more programs like free homemade soup for the community. They will be welcoming the whole community. drwilliams9812@gmail.com, 610 505 2324

The group then mingled and “bridged.” Following are some of the “bridges” that were shared:

- Deborah Parrish bridged with Betsy Bryant from Friends Home, Edie Burkey from the Kennett Community Grocer and Alina from Home of the Sparrow
- Joan Holliday bridged with Elia Flores and Dorelva Navarro from Migrant Ed and the ESL classes at the Library for sixteen Guatemala 18 to 22 years old. She also bridged with Carin Bonifacino and Death Café and Luis Benites around agencies he needs to contact for his budget planning.
- Laura Florence bridged with Lynn Cohen from the Red Cross and explained some programs about environmental preparedness that have been developed and are spreading all over the area. She is very much interested in developing many more programs to build resilience among children, youth and the elderly of our communities.
- Edie Burkey said she was so very much inspired and grateful for all the potential powerhouses we are building in this community. Edie is the Executive Director of The Kennett Community Grocer project. They are still recruiting members and believes it will be one of the powerhouses in Kennett area. To learn more: eburkey@comcast.net
- Jeanne Searer bridged with Jan Michener, with Laura Gonzalez, LCH and MCHC representatives and highlighted the potential of the Living History program at KASC. Jeannecrew491@hotmail.com
- Laura Florence also said that the new library will have a space professionally equipped to have recordings, presentations, podcasts, life histories etc.
- Yajayra Nunez bridged with Laura Gonzalez (www.doctoralaura.com ganzlzl@gmail.com) to start planning how to teach meditation and other empowering techniques to help YoungMoms reduce their high levels of stress and feel happier. She also bridged with Joan Holliday with books that relate the mushroom growing process.

The meeting ended at 8:30 pm with many smiles and sharing pictures of family and loved ones.