

Bridging the Community was held on Zoom on Wednesday, January 11, 2023 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm. This very productive meeting was attended by 38 community members.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 08, 2023 from 7:00pm to 8:30 pm at South Mill Mushrooms, 649 W South St, Kennett Square, PA 19348.

Minutes of *Bridging* meetings will be posted on the new web site, which is being constructed. 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. Please pass on to your contacts.

We observed a moment of silence to remember the embattled people of Ukraine.

Joan Holliday described **our living philosophy, reflected by our land's energy/spirit – peaceful, progressive, inclusivity.**

“Bridging” promotes this living philosophy for each and every day. Our vision is that every day Kennett Square will be a better place to grow up in and grow old in.

Marsha London stated that Kennett Square exemplified Gabriel Burn's quote, “A place is made up of its people.”

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---not focused on formal hierarchy

We discussed the last principle and talked about the importance of each person taking on a role that kept each actively involved in the community---no formal assignment; comes from our heart

Virtual HOST SITE:

Chad Thomas, Community Health Education Coordinator for Chester County Hospital was our host representative for the meeting, **Joan Holliday** mentioned that the hospital has expanded and recently has been cited as being one of the top hospitals for treating cardiovascular disease by the US News and World Report.

Chad Thomas told us that his program is offering free bimonthly Zoom-based virtual programs on nutrition, diabetes, and general wellness. From 6-7 pm tomorrow, there will be a presentation on Resolving to Live Healthier in the New Year.

On January 23, the topic will be Dieting in the New Year. Chester County Hospital is working with the Kennett Library to provide in-person training on suicide prevention programs.

Chester County Hospital recently provided Fit Kit Colorectal Cancer Screenings for Spanish speakers in New Garden. Beginning on February 2, the hospital will provide on-site blood pressure screenings at the Kennett YMCA from noon to 1:30 pm on the first Wednesday of each month. **Email:** chadthomas@penndmedicine.upenn.edu

Participants introduced themselves and provided information about a community resource, a need, or a new idea to pursue with others.

Stephanie Sullivan, the Kennett Area Community Service (KACS) Development Director, and **Kecia Crowl**, KACS Communications Director, stated that the Empty Bowls fundraiser will be held on 2/24/23. They stated that they need sponsors and participants for the event.

(www.KACSImpact.org/emptybowls). **Cheryl Miles**, KACS Community Housing Development Director, is working on providing affordable housing in the area. Several meeting participants mentioned the great need for affordable housing in the area. **Emails:** Kecia@KACSImpact.org; Stephanie@kacsimpact.org and Cherylm@KACSImpact.org

Cliff Kraft from the Orphan Grain Train told us that 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 Bridges were made with Friends Home and Girl Scouts.

Reverend Marvin Williams stated that there will be a free distribution of NEW clothing, ranging in size from Toddler to Adult, beginning at 10 am on Monday, January 16 at Second Baptist Church, 132 S Willow Street, Kennett Square. Distribution is free to everyone who comes. **Email:** drwilliams9812@gmail.com

Lori Holcombe, Membership Coordinator for the Kennett Area Senior Center, needs mental health resources for people who are depressed. Medicare doesn't cover mental health counseling, so there is a need for free or low-cost individual or group counseling for people on limited incomes. She also needs volunteers to assist with games, provide art instruction, and to help at the front desk. She noted that the senior center will provide digital literacy classes every Friday at 10:30 am for 6 weeks beginning on 1/20/23. **Email:** lholcombe@kennettseiorcenter.org

Christine McDonald from Kennett Friends Home, stated that the Home received a health and wellness grant. They need instructors to teach art and Spanish to the residents. Instructors would be paid from the grant. They also are welcoming volunteers to come play Scrabble or other games with residents. Marsha London told about her enjoyment in being a volunteer with the savvy seniors at Friends Home. **Email:** cmcdonald@fhkennett.org

Rob Newman, Longwood Rotary, stated that the Rotary is holding a GALA fundraiser on Saturday, March 11, at 6:30 pm at Longwood Gardens. Food will be provided and a 12-piece band will perform. Tickets are available at www.longwoodrotary.com

Reverend Annalie Korengel, Pastor of Unionville Presbyterian Church and a police chaplain, expressed concern about the lack of affordable housing in our area. **Email:** pastorannalie@gmail.com

Jan Michener, AHHAH, recently received a grant to expand the Imagination Library in Chester County. The Imagination Library donates one free new book to every child every month from birth until they are 5 years old to increase literacy. 3,500 children are now registered, and her goal is to register 10,000 children by the end of this year. If this is accomplished, the program may spread to other counties (Montgomery, etc). Please promote. Registration on the Kennett Library site or forms at the library. **Email:** jan@artsholdinghandsandhearts.com

Alexis Hart, Brandywine Red Clay Alliance (BRCA), mentioned that the Land Conservancy of Southern Chester County has merged with the Brandywine Red Clay Alliance. BRCA is offering 50%-100% scholarships for summer camps. Unfortunately, applications are only available in English. **Email:** ahart@brandywineredclay.org

Clark Davis, LCH, stated that LCH is offering free programs on Healthy Tips and Tricks. The first class, next week, will be on how to travel safely with medications. To RSVP, call LCH at: 610-444-7550. Because flu is surging, LCH will be offering flu and Covid vaccinations. **Email:** cdavis@lchservices.org; feedback@lchservices.org

Molly Hampson, Development Associate for Mighty Writers, suggested that potential volunteers visit their Toughkenamon location at 121 Willow St., Toughkenamon, PA 19374. Phone: 484-720-8644 or contact Sara Dickins Trillo/ED at: **Emails :** sdtrillo@mightywriters.org, or mhampson@mightywriters.org

Jessie Cocks, Playback Theatre encouraged everyone to come to MLK Day at 10 am in the Wellness Center at Lincoln University on Monday, 1/16/23. Brunch will be provided, and the keynote speaker will be Oliver St. Clair Franklin, a business leader, diplomat, activist, historian, and filmmaker. A gospel choir will also sing, and there will be a rehearsal for singers who wish to participate on Friday, 1/13 at 7 pm. Visit www.mlkcommunity.org to register. Jessie also mentioned that Kennett Friends has an open meeting for worship every Thursday at 7 pm to hold the world in the light of the need for peace. **Email:** jessiecocks@gmail.com

Jeanne Searer, Casa Guanajuato, stated that this group has outgrown its space and would like to purchase their own space with a floor suitable for dancing (not a concrete floor). They are inquiring if anyone has storage space right now that they could temporarily use. They would like to teach adults English while their children are learning to read in Spanish. They want to encourage cultural exchange in all areas. **Email:** jeannecrew491@hotmail.com

Joan Holliday mentioned that Bridging the Community will be the first meeting held in the auditorium in the new library, in May or July. **Email:** dochollisv@aol.com

Karen D'Agusto described Girl Scout activities. Girl Scout cookies will be available soon. Karen reported that recently the Girls Scouts collected 2,500 lbs of food for KACS at GIANT Food in 2 weekends. During the holidays, they collected presents for children of inmates at Chester County Prison. They also donated book bags, school supplies, hats, sheets, and blankets to Mighty Writers and donated a sewing machine and fabric to the library (the new library will apparently provide access to a sewing machine). Karen distributes Bridging minutes to 45 Girls Scout Leaders (with 500 girls in their troops) to provide them with ideas for service projects.

Email: kdagusto@aol.com

Esther Rochester shared that KCSD needs bus drivers. **Email:** erochester24@gmail.com

Kecia Crowl shared that the Kennett Area Theatrical Society (KATS) is performing The Magic Lamp A Ladd in Trouble on 1/20 and 1/21. This is a big production, and they need teen volunteers to help backstage. **Email:** kecia@kacsonline.net

Dave Haradon shared that the Rotary is raffling off 2 playoff tickets to the Philadelphia Eagles as a fund raiser. Raffle tickets can be obtained at <https://eaglesplayoff.charityraffles.org>. **Email:** daveharadon@gmail.com

Rob Newman shared that the Longwood Rotary will be holding their annual Gala on March 11, 2023 at 6:30pm Longwood Gardens. Check out the website for information and tickets: <https://www.longwoodrotary.com/events/calendar> **Email:** captain_newman@usafa-grads.com

Nolan Morris said that he focuses on getting people out in nature to forage, find herbs, get clay for pottery, etc, as individuals or in groups. Contact him if you would like for him to give a free consultation. **Email:** morrisnj1010@gmail.com

Paula Rosas, Executive Director of After the Bell, bridged with Nolan, saying that she would like to offer an After the Bell program like his to the middle schoolers. After the Bell resumes 1/24 and goes to 3/2. She needs volunteers Tuesday-Thursday from 3 to 5 pm. After the Bell offers many exciting programs, such as 4H veterinary science, cooking, and engineering. She invited all of us to visit and check out the programs they offer. **Email:** executivedirector@afterthebell.org Bob George volunteers with the Running Club at AFTB.

Joan Holliday needs volunteers for the Juneteenth Celebration at Anson B. Nixon Park on a Saturday, June 17, 2023. This event will celebrate the end of slavery in the United States (many slaves were not freed by the Emancipation Proclamation). Offerings will include free food, music, and poetry. Another event celebrating Juneteenth will be held at the Kennett Flash.

Email: dochollisv@aol.com

David Nottal mentioned that a local soap maker is making soap in the colors of the Ukrainian flag and selling them at the Farmer's Market in solidarity with those suffering in the Russian/Ukraine war. **Email:** barbdave1@msn.com

Beverly Bach has sewing patterns for girls which she will be glad to donate. They are expensive, and she doesn't want to throw them away. Email: beverlyb123@verizon.net

David Haradon needs volunteers for the Memorial Day Parade. It's a big effort and a lot of volunteers are needed. **Email:** daveharadon@gmail.com

Message from the Digital Equity Coalition: **Currently, the PA Broadband Authority is working on having adequate digital maps. The Coalition is asking for your attention and support in providing us with critical information regarding your home or business address. You can check out the maps and challenge the information if you believe it is incorrect. Go to: <https://dced.pa.gov/programs-funding/broadband-in-pennsylvania/fcc-national-broadband-map/>**

The meeting ended with good wishes sent to each other. Tom Hoehle, past facilitator of Bridging spoke about the value of the Bridging process and working together as a whole. All were encouraged to get the information out from the Bridging meeting and "bridge."

Thanks to Beverly Bach for taking the minutes and completing them by 9am Friday morning!
Thanks to David Haradon for sending out the Bridging invitations and for managing the technology.

Bridging the Community was held on Wednesday, March 8, 2023 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm at South Mill Champs, 649 W. South Street, Kennett Square, PA 19348. This is our 147th meeting with 27 spirited attendees joining to help build community in person.

- **The next bi-monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 10 2023 from 7:00pm to 8:30 pm at Mighty Writers, 121 Willow St., Toughkenamon, PA 19374.** We anticipate having the meeting on July 12 (which is normally the picnic) in the auditorium of the new Kennett Library! We will have a brown bag dinner on the library patio before the meeting in the auditorium from 6-7pm.

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

Today is International Women's Day. We observed a minute of silence to honor and appreciate the important women in our lives and in the world.

The overall concept 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 will be a better place to grow up and grow old.

Guiding Principles:

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

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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

Joan Holliday (dochollisv@aol.com) and **Jeanne Searer** (jeannecrew491@hotmail.com) facilitated the meeting.

The group reflected on the framework and principles with the following comments:

I think it is important that “we come from the heart---it all starts there.” “I am thinking about process. It means we are not “programmed” and allowing the meeting to create something new every time.” “I am looking at peaceful, progressive, inclusivity---always need to be accepting and inclusive of new residents in the community.” “Working for community means everyone has a role to play and has a feeling of belonging.”

Emily Bettencourt (ebettencourt@southmill.com) provided background about South Mill Champs, the site where we were meeting.

The company has 1,200 employees and includes 5 local mushroom farms. A new state of the art mushroom harvesting house recently opened in Oxford. The company offers many benefits to employees. It cooperates with many local nonprofits, such as Wings for Success, LCH, and CCIU, which offers English as a Second Language (ESL.) Emily is teaching digital literacy courses for their employees. Because they are in Kennett Square, some employees are able to walk to work.

Jim Sharrock (sharrockjg@gmail.com) teaches ESL at South Mill Champs. Because South Mill Champs is located in Kennett Square, it is very convenient for people. Most of Jim's students are Level 2 (intermediate learners), but some are Level 1 (most challenged learners) and Level 3 (students who just need to practice conversation). He stated that half of the ESL students are South Mill Champs employees, and half are not. They are open to community member enrollment.

Mark Tursi (markt@goodsamservicescenter.org) from Good Samaritan Services, announced that renovations have been completed at their facility at 342 Birch St, Kennett Square, PA 19348. The facility provides housing for men in the Kennett Square community. They will have an open house on April 13, 5:30-7:30 pm. The ribbon cutting ceremony starts at 5:30. Community members are invited to tour the facility. Housewarming gifts to help stock their shelves are greatly appreciated. They include laundry baskets, blankets, pillows, sheets, etc. Contact Mark about other needed items, and please RSVP to Mark by April 10 if you plan to attend. Parking is available on the lot next to the property.

Myra Castillo (Mayrac@cciu.org) Program Director at Migrant Education. They are located next to the Technical High School in Jennersville and the agency itself works with 5 school districts and Philadelphia. They provide a transitional program for migrant students and families, partnering with LCH to provide healthcare. They work with children from infants to age 21 and provide ESL training to teenagers who don't attend school because they work to support their families. They always need volunteers.

Kate Wickersham (kwickersham@lchservices.org), LCH Health and Community Services, stated that LCH provides primary healthcare in Kennett and Oxford, and pediatric care in West Grove. They partner with many nonprofits to provide services to the community. **Kate stressed that while Medicaid was automatically renewed during the pandemic, it will no longer be automatically renewed after April 1. Those needing help filling out the Medicaid forms should contact LCH.** In their newsletter, LCH also is soliciting suggestions to name their new mascot.

Carol Lowe, (ed@familypromisescc.org) Executive Director of Family Promise stated that Family Promise is not a shelter but a program that keeps families together who are experiencing homelessness and provides meals, shelter, resources, and mentorship to help them get back on their feet. A Social Worker works with the families to help them move forward. They need bilingual volunteers to assist with their work.

Paola Rosas (afterthebell@kcsd.org) Executive Director After the Bell told us that ATB is a free program for middle school students, and she needs volunteers to work with them. Sessions run three times a year, Tuesday through Thursdays, in six-week sessions.

Christine McDonald (cmcdonald21@gmail.com) Executive Director of Friends Home is looking for volunteers to help with classes for residents. She would like to offer art classes. She also needs someone to provide companionship to one resident, a young disabled woman, who is lonely and would like to talk with someone closer to her own age. Residents are also interested in volunteering themselves, either in the community or at the Friends Home.

Kecia Crowl (kecia@KACSimfact.org) from Kennett Area Community Services plans to hold a Fair Housing Day on April 11, highlighting the lack of affordable housing in our community. She needs a space, possibly a gym or a cafeteria, to hold this event. The Kennett Senior Center was mentioned as a possible venue. Please contact Kecia.

Debra Parish (dparrish@kennettseiorcenter.org) Program Director of the Kennett Area Senior Center told us that they provide a hot lunch every day. She encouraged us to publicize the availability of this wonderful facility to people who are lonely. A Healthy Grieving program (grief need not be recent and can be for lost pets, loss of a relationship or job, as well as the death of a loved one) is provided on Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:45 pm to 1:30 pm. They need volunteers to engage elders with activities between 9 am and 3 pm.

Chris Anderson (chris.anderson@foxroach.com) Realtor with Berkshire Hathaway stated that she is always available to help people moving to our area. She also is willing to discuss the housing market with you, even if you are not currently selling.

Jeanne Searer (jeannecrew491@hotmail.com) member of Casa Guanajuato told us that they are attempting to become a real local nonprofit with a Board of Directors, and is looking for potential board members. The group's goal is to promote the different Hispanic cultures in our area. To become a member of Casa Guanajuato, visit www.facebook.com/CasaGuanajuatoKS or call (484) 757-8654. Casa Guanajuato is having a Gala Dinner celebrating their 20th year in the Red Clay Room, 423 Dalmation St, Kennett Square on May 19, 7 pm to 10 pm. Cost is \$65 (Venmo: @Casa-Guanajuato, Cash App: \$CasaGKennett), and Latin music and entertainment will be provided.

Casa Guanajuato is also holding a Youth Cultural Contest on Saturday, April 22, 2023, 2 pm to 8 pm, at the Youth Garage Center in Avondale. Young people are encouraged to showcase their talents; the winner will be the Youth Cultural Leader during the Hispanic Heritage Month event. For information, contact Mayra Castillo (302) 252-1896, Martha Castillo (302) 268-4463, or Maricela Ayllon (610) 818-7678. **Applications must be submitted before March 31.** Casa Guanajuato is also holding a fundraiser, selling 1-day tickets to Hershey Park. **Tickets must be purchased by March 31.**

Laura Florence (lauraflorence@gmail.com) Collection Development and Volunteer Coordinator stated that the new library is expected to open in late June. Those wanting to visit before the opening should contact the library Director, Chris Manna, for a virtual or in-person tour. The new library will offer an auditorium, maker spaces, a children's library, spaces for recording, etc. Laura is also involved in developing pollinator gardens around Kennett Square. Those wishing to volunteer should contact Laura. She is also involved with an effort to plant shade trees through the Philadelphia Horticultural Society and with the Emerging Abundance Farming Collective at Spar Hill Farm.

Joan Holliday (dochollisv@aol.com) the Kennett Community Grocer told us that it will be a grocery store owned by members and will provide locally grown vegetables, products and crafts. They are trying to find a site in town.

Keith Smithyman (keithsmithyman@gmail.com) has a collector car (Barracuda), which he is attempting to restore. He needs a garage to work on the car and will share the proceeds from the sale of the car to the person who provides the garage.

Rev. Dr. Marvin T Williams (DrWilliams9812@gmail.com), pastor of Second Baptist Church in Kennett Square, mentioned that everyone is welcome to the 10 am service on Sunday. He has been a Bridging attendee since its beginning 25 years ago.

Jim Mercante (vjmercante@gmail.com) and **Joan Holliday** are addressing the problem of digital inequities in Chester County. They urged us to email them with the locations of dead spots (businesses and home and street locations that do not have digital access). They are trying to build coalitions to address digital connectivity, affordability for devices, and services and digital literacy. Jim stated that we all must have equal access to the internet if we are to reach our full potential. He feels it is a social justice issue.

Kris Smith (artwaves@hotmail.com) told us that Pet Supplies Plus is having a fund raiser (end of March-April) for the pets of Ukraine. A QR code for donations will be available in the store.

Molly Hampson (mhampson@mightywriters.org) from Mighty Writers told us that they are celebrating their 1-year anniversary by having an Open house at 121 Willow St. Toughkenamon, PA 19374 on 5/18. Everyone is welcome.

Leticia Cruz (Leticia.Cruz@youngmomscommunity.com) Case Manager at Young Moms said that they provide a Club Night with programs on different topics for young moms in Oxford on the first Thursday of the month between 5:30 pm and 7:30 pm. Volunteers are needed to drive the Moms to and from the meetings and to provide childcare. **Young Moms is also having a silent auction and fundraiser at Willowdale Chapel, 675 Unionville Rd, Kennett Square, PA 19348 this Saturday, March 11, at 10:30 am. Tickets are \$35. Go to their Facebook page to bid on their Silent Auction.**

Lynn Cohen (Lynn.Cohen@redcross.org) stated that the Red Cross needs volunteers in various capacities. Please contact her.

The group then mingled and following are the reported bridges that were made:

- **Liliana Guzman** (Lguzman@ccmchc.org), **Paola Rosas** (afterthebell@kcsd.org), and **Laura Florence** (lauraflorence@gmail.com) bridged about the need for mental health services for the older Hispanic community and ways to have them become members at the KASC. They also bridged with **Debra Parrish** (dparrish@kennettseiorcenter.org) about the possibility of having a Latin night at KASC.
- **Jeanne Searer** (jeannecrew491@hotmail.com) “bridged” with **Debra Parish** and **Laura Florence** to explore ways that Casa Guanajuato members could come to the Senior Center and to the library to engage in cultural activities and customs.
- **Laura Florence** (lauraflorence@gmail.com) bridged with **Paola Rosas** (afterthebell@kcsd.org) about the possibility of getting middle schoolers involved in the pollinator garden (Meadowitos) project.
- **Christine McDonald** “bridged” with **Paola Rosas** about After the Bell middle school students coming to visit the residents at Friends Home.
- **Paola Rosas** “bridged” with Laurie Florence about presenting to the AFB middle school students about plants, trees and sustainable gardens.
- **Rev. Dr. Marvin T. Williams** ((DrWilliams9812@gmail.com) is offering 2nd Baptist Church as the venue for a Bridging meeting in the future.
- **Mark Tursi** (markt@goodsamservicescenter.org) “bridged” with Carole Lowe and will make referrals to Family Promise when he receives a call about a homeless family. He also passed out his flyer about the Open House and made connections with other services.
- **Joan Holliday** “bridged” with Carol Lowe and passed around her plastic house bank and solicited funds for Family Promise. These plastic house banks will be around town, so add some change to help subsidize a family for a week when the house is full.
- **Carol Lowe** “bridged” with Laurie Florence around the effort to plant shade trees through the Philadelphia Horticultural Society and Joan Holliday with the plastic house bank with attendee’s contributions.
- **Jeanne Searer** “bridged” with many attendees with Casa Guanajuato flyers.
- **Jim Sharrock** “bridged” with Mayra Castillo about migrant ed parents attending the ESL classes at South Mill and Liliana Guzman around ESL and citizenship classes.

Bridging the Community was held on May 10, 2023 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm at **Mighty Writers, 121 Willow St., Toughkenamon, PA 19374**. This is our 148th meeting with 23 engaging community members joining to help build community in-person.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 12 2023 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm at the new Kennett Library, 216 E. State St, Kennett Square, PA 19348. Before the meeting from 6-7pm, we will have a brown bag dinner (each bring their own) on the Dennis Melton patio.

Minutes of *Bridging* meetings are posted on the website at: www.bridgingthecommunity.org 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 and Sara Dickins Trillo facilitated a dialogue on the Bridging framework and Guiding Principles. Email: dochollisv@aol.com & sdtrillo@mightywriters.org

- Coming from the heart spoke to many because that is when the work gets done, as well as taking on a role and joining with others to make a difference in the broader community.
- Appreciation of our living philosophy is needed more than ever with the divisions in our country.
- In working on potential, we share the vision then “bridge” with others who can bring it to life through action taken.
- This is a great meeting to learn of meaningful volunteer opportunities.

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

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 problem

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

Joan Holliday led us in a moment of silence in honor of the those suffering from the lack of food and adequate shelter.

Site: Sara Dickins Trillo told us that Thursday, May 18th will be the one-year anniversary of opening this site for Mighty Writers. Their core mission is helping students in elementary and middle school learn how to write and read in their language, as well as English. They are meeting many of the unmet needs in the Latino community. Mighty Writers has a “Mommy and Me” session once a week; Family Night with food; ESL for 14–17-year-old, who want to learn English and computer skills. They have a food pantry. Email: sdtrillo@mightywriters.org

Sara Dickins Trillo and Joan Holliday facilitated the meeting. They asked attendees to share what they needed or what they brought to the community, as well as any new ideas.

Monica Mata (LCH Program Coordinator) told us that they will be celebrating their 50th anniversary in October this year. They have health care services; prenatal care; social services; GED in Spanish, citizenship classes and behavioral health. They have Centers in Kennett, West Grove and Oxford. They are opening a new behavioral health office in West Grove. Email: mmatalopez@lchservices.org

Daniel Warihay (Community) told us that he did community service at The Garage Community and Youth Center and now is interested in learning more about the community. He thinks that Kennett should have a Skate Park for the youth. Anyone want to work with him on this new idea? Email: dwarihay97@gmail.com

Janet Zeis (Pottstown Tower Health Hospital Community Outreach) She is on the Steering Committee for Chester County ACEs Coalition. (Adverse Childhood Experiences) Go to the following web page to send a message to someone who has impacted your life in positive ways. Web site: www.ccacescoalition.com; janet.zeis@towerhealth.org

Brian Castillo (CCMCHC) told us that he makes home visits to young families and helps them with their parenting from birth to 5 years old. MCHC also helps with signing up for food stamps and medical benefits. Email: bdcastillo@ccmchc.org

Mary Hewes (ED Young Moms) told us that they help vulnerable first-time mothers with prenatal care; getting enrolled in education; parenting skills; job applications; Club Nights for life skills and socializing. All efforts are aimed at building a community and building self-sufficiency. They always need volunteers on Club Night and they also have a mentoring program. Email: mary.hewes@youngmomscommunity.com

Kevin Beck (CC Department of Emergency Services and Community Outreach Coordinator) told us that he wants to partner with more agencies and organizations in Southern Chester County. They are working on having a more active presence. They are open to doing educational trainings on Disaster Preparedness. Email: KBeck@chesco.org

Tiffany Varghese (Chadds Ford resident) told us that she wanted to check out some volunteer possibilities. Email: talktotiffany@msn.com

Nikki Laws (KCS D Communication Specialist) told us that she wants to find out services available to the students and stay connected with the community. Email: nlaws@kcsd.org

Omar Sanchez (Oxford Neighborhood Services) told us that he helps families with emergency rental assistance. He also announced the Community Fair that Mighty Writes will be having at New Garden Township Park on June 24th. They are looking for agencies to share their information at tables at the Fair. Email: os847479@gmail.com

Elisa Salinas (Oxford Neighborhood Services) told us that the agency has a food cupboard and they also help with possible evictions and sign clients up for subsidy programs. They also have a notary who will provide services free. Email: esalinas@oxfordnsc.org

Liliana Guzman (The Garage Community and Youth Center) told us that this is a new job for her. She previously worked at CCMCHC. She is looking for volunteer opportunities for youth 15-25 years for the summer. Email: Liliana.Guzman@garageyouthcenter.org

Dave Haradon (Longwood Rotary) told us about the Memorial Day parade taking place on Monday, May 29, 2023 from 10am to noon. They over 100 entries. He needs volunteers to help direct traffic and organize floats. He hopes to have 5 new volunteers sign-up tonight. Email: daveharadon@gmail.com

Esther Rochester (Community) told us about the Fundraiser that her son, Tyrone Rochester is participating. Tyrone will scale the tallest building in Kennett and rappel back down. He is raising funds for Camp Dreamcatcher, which provides a summer camp and other services for children with HIV or are children affected by HIV in their family. She has a container for contributions, small or large. Email: erochester24@gmail.com

Doris Rochester (Community) told us that she is going to the Kennett Area Senior Center every day. They will have a Yard Sale scheduled for **Saturday, June 10th from 8 a.m. until 3 p.m.** Come out early and “treasure hunt” to get the best selection and don’t forget to tell your friends. Contact Program Director: dparrish@kennettseiorcenter.org

Molly Hampson (Mighty Writers) told us that there is an Open House at this site on Thursday, 5/28/2023 from 5pm to 7pm. Everyone is invited to share in good food, music and community building. Email: mhampson@mightywriters.org

Mary Ann Piccard is making note cards for The Kennett Community Grocer. Mary Ann’s email: hobbyist2037@verizon.net

Joan Holliday asked the attendees to please consider joining the Kennett Community Grocer; a local grocer that will support local farms and local products. The members have ownership for life and influence in assuring the store has healthy foods. It will be a community gathering place where nutritional education will take place along with cooking demonstrations. In other words, a lively place. Please contact Edie Burkey to sign-up. Email: eburkey@comcast.net, Joan’s email: dochollisv@aol.com

Casa Guanajuato has a GALA Fundraiser on Friday, May 19th at the Red Clay Room. Tickets are \$65. Contact Jeanne Searer: jeannecrew491@hotmail.com

Juneteenth will be celebrated on Saturday, 6/17/2023 at Anson B Nixon Park with a Poetry Slam; Gospel Choir led by Leon Spencer at 1pm and food trucks. 2pm to 4pm there will be historic events happening at Friends Meeting. Sunday at The Flash! Check out the web site at: <https://www.culturechesco.org/juneteenth-kennett-square>

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

- Liliana Guzman “bridged” with Molly Hampson; Emily Bettencourt; Nikki Law; Kevin Beck and Joan Holliday about volunteer opportunities for students at The Garage Community and Youth Center.
- Esther Rochester “bridged” with Bob George; Janet Zeis; Brian Castillo and Nicky Laws and received \$70s of donation for Camp Dreamcatcher.
- David Haradon “bridged” with Bob George; Omar Sanchez; Brian Castillo; Dan Warihay and Esther Rochester to make is goal of 5 volunteers to sign up from this meeting.
- Joan Holliday “bridged” with Liliana Guzman about contacting the Senior Center about helping the seniors with yard work for youth volunteering. She also “bridged” with Molly Hampson who wanted contact information for Laura Florence with the gardening projects. Email: lauraflorence@gmail.com,
- Janet Zeis “bridged” with Omar Sanchez about the ACE mission and web site.
- Tiffany Varghese “bridged” with Mary Hewes with Young Moms and Sara Dickins Trillo with Mighty Writers for volunteer opportunities. Dave Haradon also suggested she consider joining the Longwood Rotary to join an active team of volunteers.
- Keith Smithyman (keithsmithyman@gmail.com) “bridged” with Mayra Castillo who may have an idea for a garage to do home repair. He also is looking for left-over building materials for projects that he works on with students.
- Nikki Law “bridged” with Monica Mata from LCH about the mental health services opening up in West Grove next to Jenner’s Pond.
- Mayra Castillo from Migrant Education (mayrac@cciu.org) “bridged” with Mighty Writers to use their site for one of their summer camp programs for men 17-22 years.

Joan Holliday announced that she is calling together a Core Team that will become the leadership team for Bridging. This is a succession plan made-up of individuals who will “own” the process and keep it going when the older generation is gone. Molly Hampson has agreed to be the Lead. Assuring that the meetings go on. More to come.

Joan profusely thanked Dan Nicewonger for the wonderful new dynamic interactive website at www.bridgingthecommunity.org If you would like to have your agency linked to bridging, please send me the information by this Friday, May 12, 2023. In future meetings we will be taking videos of participants who made some great “bridges.”
P.S. Dan did this as a special favor for Bridging. He is not in the business of developing websites for others.

Sara Trillo Dickins announced that she will be moving to El Paso, Texas, where her 96 year old father lives. She is happy for her experience in the Kennett area community and felt accepted and supported. She may start a Mighty Writers in Texas. We will miss you Sara!

Bridging the Community was held on July 12, 2023 from 6:45pm to 8:15pm **at the new Kennett Library**, This is our 149th meeting with 42 engaging community members joining to build community in the newest community space in town. From 5:45pm to 6:45pm the attendees toured the new library and enjoyed pizza in the children's library section.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 13, 2023 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm. Rev. Marvin T. Williams offered Second Baptist Church, 132 S Willow St., Kennett Square, PA as the meeting site.

Minutes of *Bridging* meetings are posted on the website at: www.bridgingthecommunity.org 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 welcomed the group and told them that a Core Team has been developed to carry on the Bridging process with its framework and principles. As this current team moves on, they will recruit another Core Team with the vision it will continue for many more years.

Tom Hoehle and Jeanne Searer facilitated a dialogue on the Bridging framework and Guiding Principles. Email: tomhoehle@yahoo.com & jeannecrew491@hotmail.com

Following reflections were given:

- I appreciate the Vision statement because I work with seniors and I do want to make “Kennett a better place every day for them.”
- Coming from the heart is where I like to start and think it's the best place to start.
- Keeping “bridging” a process means I can plant a seed and I may not see immediate results, but the seed is planted for growth.
- I relate to the idea that everyone can “take on a role” with no official job---young and old can make a difference.
- We have gone on so long because we have no infrastructure to bog us down and we are dynamic.
- Our philosophy of the land of being *peaceful, progressive and inclusive* leads us.

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

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 problem

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

Jeanne Searer led us in a moment of silence for those suffering from flooding and extreme heat.

Site: Laura Florence (Kennett Square Library) welcomed us to the new library and said it belongs to the people. Anyone may have a library card, even if they don't live in Chester County. Many programs are being planned; there are wonderful meeting spaces; plenty of computers to be checked out; Maker Spaces; Recording Studio and so much more. Call to inquire if you'd like to plan an event at the library. Phone: 610-444-2702. Email: lauraflorence@gmail.com

New Attendees Introduced themselves and made their requests or shared their offerings:

Penny Rhodes ((KHS) told us that she is looking for her Gold Project for Girl Scouts. She would like to work with seniors. Email: 205469@bluedemons.org

Annaleigh Rhodes (KHS) told us that she is looking for volunteer opportunities for her Gold Project for Girl Scouts. She would like to work with small children. Email: rhodeshomeappleid@gmail.com

Iris Wells (KHS) told us that she would like to work with middle school children. Email: Irissistablewells@gmail.com

Lisa Quiveors (Community) told us that she works as a Clinical Yoga Therapist. She is a MLK CommUNITY of Kennett Square Board member and is on the Chester County Community Foundation Inclusion Diversity Equity Accessibility Council. Email: graywyn@comcast.net

Kayla Harris (Senior at WCU) is interning with **Jan Michener from AHHAH**. They have applications for the Dollie Parton's Imagination Library www.imaginationlibrary.com. She encouraged us to invite families with children under five years old to subscribe and receive a free book every single month. So far, they have 6,000 Chester County residents signed-up and they have a goal of 7,000 by the end of August. Kayla is also conducting a program at the Youth Center in Coatesville for teen girls called "Step Up—Step Out." Email: KH9251046@wcupa.edu; Jan@artsholdinghandsandhearts.com

Rebecca Villanueva (Good Samaritan Services) told us that the homeless shelter on Birch Street that use to be His Mission is going well. She is Lead Resource Coordinator. She invites referrals and explains that they also do case management for residents who are facing homelessness. Email: rebeccav@goodsamservices.org

Elizabeth Milan (CCMCHC) told us that she is new at Maternal Child Health Consortium. She spoke about the home visits they make to help young families prepare their children for kindergarten. They also have Kindergarten Readiness classes every year in the summer. Email: emilan@ccmchc.org

Brian Castillo (CCMCHC) told us that he makes home visits to young families and helps them with their parenting from birth to 5 years old, as well. MCHC also helps with signing up for food stamps and medical benefits. Email: bdcastillo@ccmchc.org

Amadeo Gomez (CCMCHC) told us that he is a parent educator and does the work described by Elizabeth and Brian. They also are open to referrals. Email: gmmoz@ccmchc.org

Others were invited to share their needs or resources, as well as new ideas to find partners

Ann Humes (Kendal) said that she has been attending Bridging for the past 23 years. She describes attending as "addictive" and encourages others to become "addicted", as it is helping the community come together in a *peaceful, inclusive* manner. Ann is 95 years old and contributed the paper products for tonight's pizza social. Phone: 610-388-1199.

Kevin Beck (CC Department of Emergency Services and Community Outreach Coordinator) told us that he wants to partner with more agencies and organizations in Southern Chester County. They are working on having a more active presence. They are open to doing educational trainings on Disaster Preparedness. Email: KBeck@chesco.org

Pastor Marvin T Williams (2nd Baptist Church) said he has been pastor of his church for 32 years. The church has been there since 1891. He invites the community to their Sunday service starting at 10am. He says, “It won’t go on too long.” He just attended a family reunion and someone in the family has traced their ancestors to 1871. Email: drwilliams9812@gmail.com

Mayra Castillo (Migrant Education) told us that she is now Program Coordinator for Migrant Ed serving new families from Guatemala, Mexico and Venezuela. They serve children from Pre-K to 22 years old. They are funded by the Department of Education. They need help with school supplies; diapers; used children’s books; toiletries; clothing and other essentials. Please make donations. They have a 6 week summer education program, as well as working with the schools during the year. Email: mayrac@cciu.org

Luis Benites (Community Realtor) said he was attending Bridging to learn about what is going on in the area. He moved to Kennett when he was 10 years old and cares about the community. Email: luisbenites@kw.com

Kate Wickersham (LCH Health and Community Services) stated that LCH provides primary healthcare in Kennett and Oxford and West Grove. They also have, prenatal, pediatric, dental and social services. They partner with many nonprofits to provide services to the community. They served over 900 clients last year. They are celebrating their 50 anniversary and will have a celebration on August 10, 2023 from 3-7pm at the new Kennett Library. There will be tables with community partners; BP screenings; activities for children; and food. Please attend or sign-up for a table. Email: kwickersham@lchservices.org

Jessie Cocks (Community) told us that Playback Theatre will take place at Kennett Friends Meeting, 125 W Sickie St, Kennett Square, PA on Saturday, 7/29/2023 from 7-8:30pm. \$10 charge and if unable to pay, make a small donation. For more info contact: Andreamj09@gmail.com. Jessie’s email: jessiecocks@gmail.com

Jan Michener (AHHAH) told us that there will be a book club at the Kennett Library that she will conduct with 2, 3 and 4 year old’s and then use the Maker Space. Families are welcome. She also is leading a free Yoga Qigong class. Check out the library web site.

Keith Smithyman (Innovate Academy with labor from City Gate Mission) still needs a car-port or garage to conduct car repair work until freezing weather. Please contact Keith at: Ksmith@innovateacademy.com Phone: 610-496-1525.

Jeanne Searer (Casa Guanajuato) told us that Hispanic Heritage month celebration will take place on Saturday, September 16, 2023 starting at 1pm until close of Anson B Nixon Park. Looking for vendors, artisans and food trucks. Email: jeannecrew491@hotmail.com

Dan Nicewonger (Spiritual Formation Catalyst) encouraged us to go to the new Bridging website. It is interactive. There will be videos of persons who have attended Bridging talking about why it is meaningful to attend a bridging meeting and about “bridges” that were made. He invites anyone that would like their organization to have a link on the web site, email him. Dan also has a podcast called, “A Place in the Conversation.” He is looking for persons to interview. He hopes to provide a platform for established or organizations to tell their story and persons who are not know to the broader community to tell their personal story. Email: dnicewonger@gmail.com

Christine McDonald (ED Friends Homes) told us that they are looking for volunteers to visit with residents; share art or music; play games in order to develop a social connection. They also are looking for opportunities for the residents to give back to the community. Bring projects that the residents can help---preparing letters to mail; sorting items; storytelling etc. Email: cmcdonald@fhkennett.org

Jim Mercante (Community Volunteer) told us that he and Joan Holliday are still advocating for digital equity in the County because they believe it needs to become essential like electricity to participate in life. They are now called the Chester County Digital Alliance and working with CCIU, CCEDC and SCC Chamber of commerce. At this time, the PA Digital Equity Authority is conducting a survey that is needed to identify where the greatest need is in Chester County around Internet connectivity. Please be so kind to fill out the survey on line or make a paper copy for residents that don't have internet connectivity or internet. https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PA_BCDA. Digital literacy classes are also being offered for Chester County residents through RSVP non-profit. Please contact Jim or Joan about signing up to take Train the Trainer classes and you can help others. Email: vjmercante@gmail.com

Joan Holliday (Community) invited everyone to attend the Kennett Inter-generational Coffee Klatch every Thursday from 10-11:30am at The Market at Liberty Place, 148 W. State St., Kennett Square. It is a way to stay connected with what is happening in town and to meet community residents. She welcomed Carolee Kiernan, Mary Ann Piccard, Laura Gonzalez, Jeanne Searer and Carol McLachlan to Bridging. They are regular attendees of the Klatch. Email: dochollisv@aol.com Joan encouraged attendees to go to the Bridges Out of Poverty training at Young Moms Community, 111 Marshall Street, Kennett on Wednesday, 7/19/2023 from 9:30am to 1pm. Helps community members share the same framework around caring for the poor.

Laura Gonzalez (Community-Anthropologist) is volunteering to help the Kennett Area Senior Center to find ways to bring more Senior Latinos to the Center. She is looking for a current group that supports caregivers. Anyone have any information or ideas of how to bring one to the Center? Email: ganzlzl@gmail.com

Karen D'Agusto (Kennett Area Girl Scouts Administrator) told us that she distributes Bridging minutes to 45 Girl Scout Leaders totally 500 girls in their troops. This helps provide ideas for service projects. Girls are working on their Bronze, Silver and Gold awards. Always feel free to email Karen with ideas. Email: kdagusto@aol.com

Kecia Crowl (KACS) told us that KACS is in need of more donated food. This time of the year food drives are not as frequent. Please consider conducting a drive in your neighborhood, church or organization. She also announced the fundraiser Better Than Bacon at The Flash on August 24th at 7pm for \$20. VIP Dinner with a Side of Bacon at 5:30pm at LaVerona's for \$75. Sign-up for the event and Email: Kecia@kacsimpact.org

The group then mingled and “bridged” and made the following bridges.

Penny Rhodes “bridged” with Christine McDonald and is proposing to work on her Girl Scouts Gold award with Friends Home and an elementary school to have senior residents help students who need help with reading.

Annie Rhodes “bridged” with Dan Nicewonger and will learn how to post minutes for Bridging, as well as video tape interviews. She also “bridged” with Joan Holliday who learned she would like to have her Girl Scouts project be with young children. Joan suggested Tick Tock Early Learning Center and will make the connection with the ED and also JAM Daycare at First Baptist Church.

Iris Wells “bridged” with Joan Holliday around After the Bell volunteering because she is interested in doing her Girl Scout project with middle schoolers. She also “bridged” with Dan Nicewonger in helping with the Bridging web site.

Mayra Castillo “bridged” with Jan Michener around receiving used books donation. She also “bridged” with the Girl Scouts about conducting a clothing and diaper drive and with Rebecca Villanova about services for someone from Migrant Education needing case management for housing.

Karen D’Agusto “bridged” with Rebecca Villanova from Good Samaritan Services for projects and badges for the Girl Scouts. She also “bridged” with Kevin Beck about badges with EMS.

Jessie Cocks handed out many flyers about Playback Theatre.

Kayla Harris “bridged” with Lilliana Guzman about putting on the program “Step Up—Step out” for The Garage Community and Youth Centers.

Kate Wickersham “bridged” with Chad Thomas from Chester County Hospital about collaborating and partnering around health education.

Pastor Dan “bridged” with students for web site design and interviewed Ann Humes; Jessie Cocks and Penny Rhodes tonight for the Bridging web site

Laura Gonzalez “bridged” with Karen Martin, who is working on the project of setting up events that will attract Senior Latino residents.

Tom Hoehle “bridged” with Kate Wickersham, who is mentoring her to facilitate the Bridging meetings.

The group adjourned at 8:15pm and some went on to The Market at Liberty Place to celebrate its 10th year anniversary.

Bridging the Community was held on September 13, 2023 from 7:00 to 8:30pm at Second Baptist Church, 132 S. Willow St, Kennett Square, PA. This is our 150th meeting with 28 eager community members joining to build community.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 08, 2023 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm at The Garage Community and Youth Center, 115 S. Union St, Kennett Square, PA 19348.

Minutes of *Bridging* meetings are posted on the website at: www.bridgingthecommunity.org 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 welcomed the group and told them that a Core Team has been developed to carry on the Bridging process with its framework and principles. As this current team moves on, they will recruit another Core Team with the vision it will continue for many more years.

Church Site: Reverend Marvin T. Williams led us in a prayer. He told us that he has been at Kennett 2nd Baptist Church since 1991. The church dates back to 1891. The church burnt down in 1994 and was rebuilt in 1995. They have a small but mighty congregation that meets every Sunday at 10am. All are invited to attend services. He hopes to bring back the Mother's Day and Soup Community events this next year. outreach. Email: drwilliams9812@gmail.com

Kate Wickersham and Jeanne Searer facilitated a dialogue on the Bridging framework and Guiding Principles. Email: kwickersham@lchservices.org & jeannecrew491@hotmail.com

Following reflections were given:

- We need each other and need to work together.
- I have grown up in Kennett and am getting old in Kennett so the Vision Statement works for me.
- We each have something to offer the community.
- I have seen our community live the philosophy of peaceful, progressive and inclusive and I hope we continue.

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.

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

New Attendees Introduced themselves and made their requests or shared their offerings:

Margo Woodham (Good Samaritan Community Engagement) told us that Good Samaritan on Birch St. Kennett Square is for men experiencing homelessness. They have a 60 day program and a Transition Program for 6 months. Email: MargoW@goodsamservices.org

Rebecca Villanueva (Good Samaritan Services) told us that she is Lead Resource Coordinator at the Kennett location. They are in need of toiletries, clothing and help with meals.

Email: rebeccav@goodsamservices.org

Grace Pfeiffer (Community) told us that this is her first time to Bridging. She is on the Kennett Senior Center Board and hopes to encourage membership and adding Hispanic seniors. She also is promoting the Kennett Square Heritage Center and encourages everyone to visit and learn about Kennett's history from the Lenape Indians to present. They are open on week-ends from 12:30 to 4:00pm. They will have a haunted house on the Third Thursday. Email: gracepfeifer54@gmail.com

Susan Dunn Lisuzzo (Community) told us that she had worked for a non-profit for 20 years and is looking for ways to volunteer and help migrant community. Email: sdunn.lisuzzo@gmail.com

Lucia Castro (Migrant Education) told us that she recently joined Migrant Ed and previously had worked at Headstart. She helps recruit families, offers services of tutoring and school enrollment; referrals to Social Services; provides donated clothing and shoes for migrants. Email: Luciac@cciu.org

Elia Flores (Migrant Education) told us that gift cards to Walmart for school clothing, especially socks and underwear is also needed for migrant children that they serve. Email: eliasf@cciu.org

Megan Anderson (YoungMoms) told us that their mission is to inspire and equip young moms to build thriving futures for themselves and their families. They need volunteers for transportation to medical appointments, WIC and also to the monthly Club nights. They have a fundraiser at the Acadian Wine Company in West Grove on October 12th from 7:00-9:00pm. Email: meganruthanderson@gmail.com

Natalie Santiago (Kennett Trails Alliance) They connect the Kennett Community to its natural beauty while promoting health, safety, a respect for the environment and a sense of community, through multiple projects and initiatives, including the creation of the Kennett Greenway, a 10-12 loop through Kennett.

Kennett BikeFest Giveaway on Sunday, September 17th, 2023 from 12-6pm at The Creamery, 401 Birch St., Kennett Square, PA. Bring a bike that day and it will be refurbished for adult & youth. Safety helmets also given away. Email: nsantiagovazquez@ksqroots.com

Sophia Suto (CCMCHC) told us that they have a Healthy Start Program with home visits to prenatal, postpartum clients and they also make home visits to young families to prepare their children for kindergarten. Email: ssuto@ccmchc.org

Itzamara Sanchez (CCMCHC) told us that she helps families sign up for benefits---WIC; SNAP; LIHEAP and others. They are open to referrals and work with other agencies to help with registrations. Email: isanchez@ccmchc.org

Others were invited to share their needs or resources, as well as new ideas to find partners

Tom Hoehle (Community) told us that he has attended for many years and served as a facilitator. He came back to see some friends and appreciates the "bridging" process. Email: tomhoehle@yahoo.com

Liliana Guzman (The Garage Community and Youth Center) told us that they welcome volunteers to with the youth as tutors, mentors or on projects. They always welcome a prepared meal for 20, as they provide a dinner every evening. She is happy that they will be hosting Bridging in November.

Email: liliana.guzman@garageyouthcenter.org

Mayra Castillo (Migrant Education Supervisor) told us about the Hispanic Heritage Month to be celebrated on Saturday, 9/16/2023 from noon to 6pm at Anson B Nixon Park. She said that Casa Guanajuato have celebrated their 20th anniversary. They started supporting Cinco de Mayo and now are focusing on Independence Day for several Hispanic countries instead. They will have Día de Los Muertos at the Kennett Library on Friday eve, 11/4/2023 and all day on Saturday, 11/5/2023. Email: mayrac@cciu.org

Jeanne Searer (Casa Guanajuato) showed us the corn husk flowers that she is holding workshops to make. They need many for decorating the library for November 4-5th. Contact her if you can help! Email: jeannecrew491@hotmail.com

Lou Florence (Kennett Library) told us that they have applications for the Dollie Parton's Imagination Library www.imaginationlibrary.com. She encouraged us to invite families with children under five years old to subscribe and receive a free book every single month. She also encouraged the community to plan on hosting events and meetings at the library and make it a vibrant community space. Email: lflorence@ccls.org

Joan Holliday (Chester County Digital Alliance) told us that there is still a group working on helping our community have adequate Internet connectivity and digital literacy. CCDA hosted an event on 9/8/2023 as part of a research project around the issues we need to address in providing the best digital help. The library was our meeting space and it worked beautifully. The library will be a great partner around digital literacy efforts along with RSVP digital training. Email: dochollisv@aol.com

Cheryl Miles (KACS) told us that the food cupboard always needs food donations, so continue to help with food drives. In her role as Community Housing Development Director, her responsibility is to create, implement and oversee the KAC's Housing Initiative Program. Their purpose is to increase the inventory of affordable housing rentals or low-income working SCC families. They plan to increase the housing inventory through housing donations, property acquisition/rehabilitation, and eventually land development.

- Their Gingerbread House Context will be on Saturday, 11/4/2023 from noon to 4:00pm at Penn Township Municipal Bldg. This event is open to the public. More information to come.
- Registrations for the new Getting Ahead Class are now being accepted. The next Bridges Out of Poverty Training will be 12/01/2023 at the Kennett Library. Registration will be available soon. Email: cherylm@kacsimpact.org

Penny Rhodes ((KHS) told us that she is looking for her Gold Project for Girl Scouts. She would like to work with seniors. Email: 205469@bluedemons.org

Iris Wells (KHS) told us that she is gathering ideas for projects for herself and other Girl Scouts. Email: Irissistablewells@gmail.com

Keith Smithyman (Innovate Academy with labor from City Gate Mission) still needs a car-port or garage to conduct car repair work until freezing weather. Please contact Keith at: Ksmith@innovateacademy.com Phone: 610-496-1525.

Kate Wickersham (LCH) told us about the transportation survey that TMACC is asking us to complete. She stresses the importance of getting this out to residents especially affected by no transportation. If they can't answer all the questions, please give the basic public transportation

information—who, what, where and how. Survey links are below:

English <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8Q6Z3ZG>

Spanish: : https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8Q6Z3ZG?lang=es_MX

The group then mingled and “bridged” and made the following bridges.

- Kate Wickersham and Rev. Marvin T. Williams learned through conversation that Rev Williams went to grade school with her father-in-law in West Chester.
- Grace Pfeiffer learned that Kate Wickersham was married to one of the in-laws in her family. Grace “bridged” with Megan Anderson about donations to Young Moms and with Margo Woodham about donating toiletries to Good Samaritan men’s homeless shelter. She also “bridged” with Mayra Castillo about meeting to discuss ways to encourage seniors from the Hispanic community to attend the Senior Center.
- Penny Rhodes and Iris Wells “bridged” with Good Samaritan about volunteering at the shelter and “bridged” with Lucia Castro and Mayra Castillo about running a clothing drive for Migrant Ed. They also “bridged” with Lou Florence about decorating a clothing donation container to be kept at the Kennett Library for needs in the community.
- Cathy Brison “bridged” with Liliana Guzman about providing a meal for the Garage youth.
- Natalie Santiago “bridged” with Jeanne Searers; Megan Anderson, Beverly Bach and Girl Scouts about the Kennett Bike Fest. She handed out many flyers with information.
- Kat Wickersham “bridged” with Grace Pfeiffer about Senator Kane’s office helping a person, Grace knows that needed help with his disability checks.
- Cheryl Miles “bridged” with Esther Rochester about being on a KACS Advisory Board. She also “bridged” with Susan Dunn Lisuzzo about taking the “Bridges Out of Poverty” training.
- Mary Ann Piccard “bridged” with Lou Florence about conducting a knitting and/or crocheting class at the Kennett Library.
- Joan Holliday “bridged” with Lou Florence, who gave more information about the outside mural of the library, which cannot be painted until the cement wall has cured, which may be about a year’s time. Harriet Tubman will be featured on this mural along with other Kennett history. A photo of the previous mural on the barber shop will be framed and hung in the library.
- Tom Hoehle “bridged” with Esther Rochester about signing up for her GED at the library.
- Mayra Castillo and Jeanne Searer “bridged” with most attendees with information about Hispanic Heritage event on 9/16/2023.

Bridging the Community was held on November 08, 2023 from 7:00 to 8:30pm at The Garage Community and Youth center, 115 S. Unions St, Kennett Square, PA 19348. This is our 151st meeting with 32 eager community members joining to build community.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 10, 2023 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm by Zoom. Link will be sent out one week before the meeting.

Minutes of *Bridging* meetings are posted on the website at: www.bridgingthecommunity.org or there will be a copy of the minutes at the Kennett Library in the Board Room on the left on the bottom shelf next to the door. *Bridging the Community* meetings are held at different sites every time---to provide exposure to all segments of the community.

Tom Hoehle, Jeanne Searer and Liliana Guzman welcomed the group and introduced Molly Hampson as the new secretary. It was Bridging the Community's first meeting being facilitated in both Spanish and English languages.

The Garage Youth Center Site: Tom first led us in a moment of silence for peace in the world with all that is going on. After the moment of silence Liliana told us about The Garage Youth Center. The center opened in 2001 and is open Monday - Thursday from 3-6pm. The mission is to empower youth to pursue their potential academically, relationally, and spiritually. Just implemented this year is the Teen Outreach Program providing resources for teens to become leaders. They always are in need of volunteers. Anyone is welcome to come to the Kennett surrounding area. There also is a Garage Community Youth Center in West Grove. Email: liliana.guzman@garageyouthcenter.org

Tom Hoehle, Jeanne Searer and Liliana Guzman facilitated a dialogue on the Bridging framework and Guiding Principles. Email: tomhoehle@yahoo.com, jeannecrew491@hotmail.com & liliana.gozman@garageyouthcenter.org

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

New Attendees Introduced themselves and made their requests or shared their offerings:

Sofia Soto - CCMCHC- Community Health Worker - Landenberg, Coatesville and West Chester Event coming up on November 29th (WC), December 7th (Landenberg) and December 14th (Coatesville) offering Immigration Consultation. Email: ssoto@ccmchc.org

Nick Everhart – Place in the Conversation – They are dedicated to transformation by conversation. A place where people can feel safe and learn from others. One of the tools is their podcast (have done 20 so far). They would love to have people participate, open to anyone to join! Email:

nickeverhart@verizon.net

Isabel Atanacio – Community. She is looking for an ESL Mentor and she and a friend have a House Cleaning Service. Please reach out if you need services. Email: isabelatanacio1782@icloud.com; Email for Cleaning Services: Teresaflores858@gmail.com

Laura Alverese - Community. She is attending the meeting to learn more about the community and her daughter also attends The Garage. Email: alvareslaura18@gmail.com

Barb Daugherty – Board Member of Good Neighbors Home Repair – She told us about how this organization does repairs for low income homeowners at no cost. Email: barbdaugh@aol.com

Megan Kooistra - Good Samaritans event coordinator – She wanted to hear about the group/learn more. Email: MeganK@goodsamservices.org

Rebecca Villanueva - Good Samaritan Services Lead Resource Guide—She is inviting us in March for Bridging to see the inside of the Homeless Shelter for men at 342 E. Birch St., Kennett. They are also looking for mentors. Email: rebeccav@goodsamservices.org

Others were invited to share their needs or resources, as well as new ideas to find partners

Carin Bonifacio - Death Conversation Kennett Square for Grieco Funeral Home -They offer free events in the community - Monday 11/13 Death Conversations Kennett Square Presents: Five Wishes Advanced Directive Workshop. 6:30-8pm at 405 W. State St, Kennett Square, PA. Presentation and help with filling out a copy of Five Wishes form. RSVP to deathconvos@griecofunerals.com .

December 11th - event at the Kennett Area Senior Center from 6:30-7:30pm to honor those we lost, have a service where people can be together and celebrate/be together. Email: info@revcarin.com
Email: shapeofloveservices@gmail.com

Kathy Hrenko - lived here in Kennett for 25 years – She is an art therapist and has worked for many non-profits. She also is a member of the Longwood Rotary Club. Email: khrenko@comcast.net

Brett Dolente - Member of the League Women's Voters – She wants to promote voting. Vote411.org (voters' guide in Spanish or English). Email: brettdolente@gmail.com

Janet Zeis - KACS - Holding a Toy Drive (NEW toys) ages 2-11. Drop Off at 136 West Cedar Street Kennett Square PA. She also is asking us to attend Bridges out of Poverty workshop on December 1st from 9-12 for a hybrid workshop (in person and zoom). Email: Janet@kacsimpact.org

Christine McDonald - Friends Home (come and visit) and Board Member of Kennett Area Senior Center – She is looking for board members. Looking to take the Senior Center into the future with new board members. Email: cmcdonald@fhkennett.org

Joan Holliday -Community--She spoke about the Day of the Dead/Dia de los Muertos event at the library - wonderful event - hats off to everyone, over 900 people attended Friday and Saturday, standing room only at final events and a lot of first time people at the library. Join us Thursday Mornings for Kennett Community Intergenerational Coffee Klatch at 10:30AM every week upstairs at the Library. Open to men and women! There will be caroling at the streets of Kennett on Friday December 8th. Meet at Leddy's at the corner of Broad and State Streets at 6pm - will do one song in Spanish and all the rest in English.

There will be an Inter-Faith Thanksgiving Service on Sunday, November 19th at 7pm at Unionville Presbyterian Church, 815 Wollaston Rd, Kennett Square, PA. All are welcome. If you are interested in singing in a community choir email me. Email: dochollisv@aol.com

Natalie Santiago -Kennett Trails Alliance is creating a greenway and creating a way to connect. In front of the firehouse creating a park and then on South Street creating another park. They partner with many organizations. Just donated 200 bicycles! Email: nsantiagovazquez@ksqroots.com

Liliana Gomez - The Garage Community Youth Center –She told us that there are many Spanish-speaking families who are looking for a mentor, and vice versa. These mentees could also teach Spanish in reverse. They are looking for women's and men's gloves and hat donations. Email: liliana.gozman@garageyouthcenter.org

Jeanne Searer - Casa Guanajuato needs to get ready for the Posada at the church in West Grove – You can donate candy for the event. Email: jeannecrew491@hotmail.com

The group then mingled and “bridged” and made the following bridges:

- Susan Dunn Lisuzzo, Nick Everhart, Lillian Guzman, Tom Hoehle, Isabel Atanacio, Christine McDonald plus four Friend's Home residents want to learn English and Spanish. They will start an Intercambio/Bi-Lingual Conversation at The Garage. TBA.
- Liliana Guzman and Cathy Brison “bridged” about bringing mac and cheese dinners for the kids at The Garage Youth Center and collecting hats and gloves for The Garage Youth Center.
- Patrick, Christine McDonald and Janet Zeis “bridged” around the subject of food in the Kennett area and what happens to the leftovers. Exploring ways to address this.
- Janet Zeis “bridged” with Joan Holliday who will talk to Esther Rochester about sharing her experience with weight loss; healthy eating and exercise on a KACS podcast .
- Isabel Atanacio has a cleaning service and “bridged” with Joan Holliday who took two business cards for two of her friends. Isabel's daughter goes to the garage and is in the 9th grade!
- Nick Everhart “bridged” with Sophia Soto, Christina McDonald and Barb Daugherty about participating in the “A Place in the Conversation” podcast interview about their organizations.
- Joan Holliday and Cathy Brison “bridged” around becoming a board member at the Kennett Area Senior Center and will talk further about the MLK breakfast event.
- Kathy Hrenko “bridged” with Good Samaritan's Lead Resource Guide, Rebecca Villanueva about art therapy at the Homeless Shelter.