

Bridging the Community was held at LCH, 731 W. Cypress St., Kennett Square, PA 19348 on Wednesday, May 08, 2024, from 7:00pm to 8:30pm. This is our 154th meeting with twenty conscientious attendees present. There was a mix-up with the first email announcement being 6pm, so some had left.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 10, 2024, from 7:00pm to 8:30pm at First Baptist Church, 415 W. State St., Kennett Square, Pa. Before the meeting at 6pm, we will meet for our annual picnic. Hot dogs and buns will be provided. Everyone is encouraged to bring a healthy salad or dessert and enjoy getting to know the broader community.

Minutes of *Bridging* meetings are posted on the web site: www.bridgingthecommunity.org and 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.

Kate Wickersham and **Jeanne Searer** welcomed everyone and led us in a moment of silence in appreciation for nurses (this is Nurses' Week), Email: kwickersham@lchservices.org, jeannecrew491@hotmail.com Kate gave information about the structure of a "bridging" meeting.

Esther Rochester, Kate Wickersham and Tom Hoehle recognized Joan Holliday's May birthday with balloons, signs, cake and a birthday tierra. Cake was enjoyed when everyone "bridged."

Kate Wickersham shared information about LCH. Our meeting was held in the Education Room where Nutrition and other classes are held. There is a Primary Care Practice in Kennett and Oxford. They have Integrated Behavioral Health and Social Services at both sites. They also serve pediatrics, OB/GYN and dental. (They currently need a bi-lingual dentist.) Mental Health services are available in the Pia Center Behavioral Health at LCH West Grove, LCH Oxford, and LCH Kennett Square locations and via Telehealth. They take Medicare, Medicaid, Insurance and have a sliding scale fee for uninsured. They are accepting new patients. Email: kwickersham@lchservices.org

Kate shared Bridging's Framework and Jeanne the Guiding Principles.

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 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

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.

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

Lois Weyer (Girl Scouts) told us that since her retirement, she has been working with Kennett/Unionville Service Unit elementary school Hispanic girls, who without volunteers "would not otherwise be Girl Scouts." They are involved in many activities, and she sees this as an opportunity to expose the girls to career possibilities. They meet for one hour, on the first Monday of the month at First Baptist Church. She is looking for an assistant for one hour a month. She also is looking for occasional volunteers, who would attend field trips, help with crafts etc. and share a special skill or interest. Email: GSBVSU610@gmail.com or lweyer2@verizon.net

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 (elementary school), Silver (middle school) and Gold (high school) awards. Always feel free to email Karen with ideas. Email: kdagusto@aol.com

Crystal Ayala (ELRC) told us her role at the Early Learning Resource Center is Family Engagement, helping low-income families with resources and signing-up for Child Care Works and Early HeadStart. CCIU CARES will have a “Connecting with the Community Fair”---Rain or Shine at Ash Park, 300 Kersey St., Coatesville PA on Thursday, May 23: 2024 from 2:30pm to 5:30pm. There will be Early Education Resources, Outdoor Play, Raffles/Prizes, Snacks, Free Books and more. They are looking for donations for raffles and prizes. For more info: elrcregion19@pa.gov Email: crystala@cciu.org

Yessica Luna (CCMCHC) told us that they make home visits twice a month to families with small children and help parents become their child’s first teachers in preparation for school. They will be recruiting new enrollments from birth to 5 years old starting in July. Yessica looks to network as this meeting. Email: yluna@ccmchc.org

Trevor Pruitt (Clinical Herbalist/Mental Health) is hosting *Meet Ups for the Plant Nerds and The Plant Curious*. The next meet up will be on Sunday, May 12th 9am to 2pm in Landenberg, PA. On a biweekly basis, join us for a get together for those of all experience levels to share in herbalism, plant stewardship with foods, and ethnobotany! Share in knowledge and garden abundance, harvest together, adopt plants, nerd out and enjoy tea. Leave with a fuller cup, however that looks. Email TrevorPruitt@gmail.com for Address and Additional Details.

Janet Zeis (KACS, ACE and VA) told us about KACS having a partnership with the KSQ Farmer’s Market every Friday 3-6pm at 600 S. Broad Street. Buy extra food for the food cupboard and place it in designated donation bins. All donations will be distributed at KACS Food Cupboard site. She also invited non-profits to set-up a table sharing information about their services at the Kennett Food Cupboard on Tues. and Thurs. between 12 and 6pm and Wednesdays 12 to 7pm. She has flyers to pass out about services for Veterans and asked attendees to post on bulletin boards far and wide. Email: janet@kacsimpact.org

Joan Holliday (Community) told us that the Kennett Community Grocer (KCG) will have their store at 600 Broad St., Kennett Square after the site is renovated. They are still recruiting member/owners. Joan also shared that the Kennett Area Senior Center is looking for a part-time Activities/Program Director. Please get the word out. Email: dochollisv@aol.com

Cierra Walker (Recovery Coach) told us that she offers “Conscious Connections,” a recovery coaching service offered to those community members who have “fallen through the cracks.” She brings her diversified Recovery Coaching training along with her personal experience as a queer black woman and a person in long term recovery to her new practice. She offers a Queer Crafting Group/ “They/Them Mayhem” at the Kennett Library the 2nd Monday of the month from 6:30pm to 7:30pm. On the first Monday bi-monthly she hosts a Queer book club called “Over the Reading Rainbow,” however, in June it will be on the 24th from 6:30pm to 7:30pm. Register for the book club through the library’s website. Email: cierra892alker@gmail.com

Kathy Hrenko (Art Therapist) told us that she works with organizations on mental health through art therapy. She informed us that May is National Mental Health month. She works with AHHAH. She also is a member of the Longwood Rotary and they welcome new members. Their motto is “Service Above Self.” Email: khrenko@comcast.net

Rebecca Villanueva (Good Samaritan Services) told us that the homeless shelter on Birch Street previous 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. They work with all of Chester County. Email: rebeccav@goodsamservices.org

Esmeralda Carrillo (The Garage Community & Youth Center) told us that she is the Program Coordinator in Avondale. They will have a summer camp for 6 weeks starting June 10th from 11am to 4pm Monday through Thursday for 6th to 12th grades. They have transportation for Kennett and AvonGrove but not Unionville, who may attend. They are looking for someone to manage the Lunch Program in the summer. This would be a great part-time job. Esmeralda was happy with the Cinco de Mayo that the students put on for 5/5/2024. Email: Esmeralda.carrillo@garageyouthcenter.org

Tom Hoehle (Community) told us about The Wardrobe, which has integrated the New Garden, Wings for Success into their organization. Kennett's site has clothes for sale and the returns go back to the mission. This organization helps those looking for employment with counseling services along with clothing that matches the need. Tom was showing off a shirt he purchased there. Email: tomhoehle@yahoo.com

Jeanna Searer (Casa Guanajuato) said she was very pleased with the way the Cinco de Mayo turned out on 5/4/2024 on the streets of Kennett. Even though it rained there was a good turnout, and attendees really had a great time with the entertainment of singers and dancers, as well as enjoyed the vendor's food. Many youth were involved in helping. Email - jeannecrew491@hotmail.com

Lilianna Guzman (Kennett's Garage Community & Youth Center) provided information that the youth will put on a Talent Show on 5/9/2024 from 6 to 8pm in honor of Mother's Day at The Garage in Kennett. Everyone is welcome. Email:

The group then mingled and "bridged" and made the following bridges

- Karen D'Agusto "bridged" with everyone with flyers to share with the Girl Scouts for projects. She also found out that at a previous meeting the Girl Scouts promised to donate Scout cookies to The Garage and they did, as well as collected food for the Food Cupboard three different times with a truck outside of GIANT. They also have helped with gardens in the area.
- Leticia Cruz from YoungMoms "bridged" with Esmeralda Carrillo around The Garage activities.
- Kathy Hrenko "bridged" with Kate Wickersham about mental health services at LCH.
- Kate Wickersham "bridged" with Joan Holliday about Train the Trainer from RSVP and also the news that she recruited WSFS Bank to join in this effort so their clients can do online banking as well as use the LCH portal.
- Janet Zeis "bridged" with many with the flyer for Veteran's health and human services.
- Yessica Luna "bridged" with Crystal Ayala about filling out a form for subsidized childcare.
- Kate Wickersham "bridged" with Cierra Walker around her services for a family member.
- Joan Holliday "bridged" with Karen D'Agusto about High School Girl Scouts helping with a digital literacy training project. She also "bridged" with Lois Weyor around a potential volunteer for her Girl Scout troop.
- Esther Rochester "bridged" with Kate Wickersham, who had children's books for the Kennett laundromat, which Joan and Esther delivered after the meeting.

Thanks to LCH for hosting with a great room set-up. A special thanks for the birthday cake, tangerines and water! It was a special celebration!