

Bridging the Community meeting was held at Kennett Borough Hall, 600 S. Broad Street, Kennett Square, PA 19348 on **Wednesday, May 13, 2026** from 7:00pm to 8:30pm. This was our 166th meeting with 22 attendees.

Our next meeting will be on July 8, 2026 at The Gathering Place (formerly the Senior Center) in Kennett Square, PA. 7pm-8:30pm. This is the month of the annual picnic, which will start at 6pm. People are asked to bring a healthy food to share. All are invited to the picnic and meeting!

Minutes of Bridging meetings are posted on the web site: www.bridgingthecommunity.org and there will be a copy of the minutes at Kennett Library in the Bayard Taylor Room (bottom shelf on the left behind the door.) Bridging the Community meetings are held at different sites every time---to provide exposure to all segments of the community.

Joan Holliday said due to losing our Constant Contact library help, the notification email notices that she sent out for the meeting may have gone into Spam from her private computer. She is working on finding another organization that will provide this help. She thanked everyone for attending.

Kate Wickersham facilitated the meeting with **Tom Hoehle**.

Kate, Co-Facilitator welcomed everyone. Kate said she has been bridging for about 4 years. As part of the meetings, the host is asked to speak about the stie, but no one was present from the Borough. Kate said the Borough does want people to utilize the building and feel welcome here. Kate encouraged people to reach out to the Borough to thank them and ask about any opportunities. The borough facilitator are Bob Norris and Rachel Berkowitz, Borough Secretary.

Tom Hoehle, Co-Facilitator introduced himself. He has attended Bridging meetings for 15 years before moving away and still comes whenever he can. It's a wonderful group, he said.

Kate invited Trevor Pruitt to share the framework of Bridging. Trevor introduced himself as an herbalist and has been Bridging for about 2 years.

The tetrad framework starts horizontally from the GROUND coming from the heart moving towards the GOAL of creating community. The vertically line starts below as the MEANs with taking on a Role and moving upward towards the VISION: "Kennett Square: Every day a better place to grow up in and grow old in" and drawing on our living philosophy: peaceful, progressive, inclusivity.

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

Kate introduced members of the core team helping with Bridging meetings: Joan, Tom, Tina, Rana and Jeanne. We are always welcoming volunteers to be involved. Esther was not present due to her mother's recent passing.

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

NAME: Rosalie Foster with Kacie's Cause

She said before Kacie died of a drug overdose, she asked her father to help others with addiction. They have a car show in the fall and they are trying to find avenues to do education and prevention in the community. The library event for volunteers was how she found out about Bridging. They are looking for community events where they can have an education table set up. They also have a Support Group for families dealing with drug addiction.

NAME: Sandra Leon a case manager with Young Moms

Explained that they help young mothers under 21 navigate through life and teach the eight dimensions of wellness, adding that since many are not from this culture, they help them find their way into American culture. Their offices are next to the United Way in Kennett at 708 E. Baltimore Pike, Kennett Square, PA. They work in Oxford, Avondale, Toughkenamon, West Grove, areas as well. They are always looking for volunteers to help with childcare when they have Club Night for the moms.

Others who shared were:

NAME Rana Sakr

Bridging for 3-4 years and part of the core team said she came to this meeting under the hat of Learning Life Skills Together. She is program coordinator for the preventative mental health program through West Chester University. There is a website—just google “Life Skills Together” West Chester University and register. This is a free tool through a state-funded program to provide preventive tools in Spanish and English, like babysitters, librarians, parents, etc. She invited people to reach out. They have bridged with Young Moms.

NAME Karen D'Agusto

Karen complimented Rana Sakr, who came to Girl Scout's Thinking Day and talked about her childhood in Lebanon.

Karen is on the board at the Gathering Place: where they will have “the yard sale of the year” on May 30 from 8am to 2pm. She is also having a personal yard sale Saturday May 16th from 10am to 3pm.

She handed out postcards for our US Senators asking them to follow the constitution in regards to ICE arrests.

NAME Jeanne Searer

Said Casa Guanajuato is having on 437 Gap-Newport Pike yard sale Saturday, May 16 from 8-8pm to raise funds for a dance group.

NAME Annabell Ocegüera

Came to represent the Maternal Health Care Consortium, which is recruiting new families for their program for families with children under the age of 5, helping them navigate community resources. The only requirements for participation are being pregnant or with a child under the age of five. More information is at www.CCMCHC.org

She also talked about Parietal Holistic Wellness Event for new doula initiative, a program brought through Southern Pa Maternal Health Coalition. At the Gordon Center March 26 at Penn Township Building.

Dave Nuttall

Discussed the Indivisible Organization trying to mitigate the harm being done against immigrants. He also said that in the Kendal Community there is a group interested in damage being done to healthcare, and finding solutions through political action. They are in need of volunteers.

Tom Hoehle

Encouraged people to get involved with Action Friday, a political group to promote candidates by collectively fundraising for preferred candidates.. More information is at www.actionfriday.org.

Joan Holliday

Said another newly formed Bridging the Community group is meeting next week in West Grove and she encouraged people to attend that meeting. There were several requests from people in the West Grove community but not enough people there to fill them. **It will be Thursday, May 21st 6:30pm to 8:00pm.** Note the time is different than the 7pm in Kennett and this is on the third Thursday of the month. The facilitators Carol Black and Jean Thompson will let you know of the following meetings.

She said Kennett Coffee Klatch is held every Thursday at 10:30-11:30 in the Kennett Library and all community members welcome. Dialogues about the broader community, learning of resources and from each other.

She also mentioned work by RSVP Volunteers is putting on workshops on "Frauds and Scams awareness with technology. Kate said there is also RSVP bilingual digital literacy education being offered through LCH.

Joan shared the news about Esther's mother, who had a stroke and is on Hospice. She has been coming to Bridging for a long time, but couldn't come to this meeting. She asked that we keep her in our prayers and thoughts. (Note: Ruth Rochester died on 5/14/26 at 4am.)

Trevor Pruitt

He is hosting a Garden Party May 21st from 2pm-midnight at his and Cierra Walker's home at 237 Skycrest Drive, Landenberg, to include a bonfire and poetry reading. Bring a dish if you wish. Free plants.

He shared that Brandywine Pride will have a picnic May 30, 11-2 pm, open to the public at Anson B Nixon. There will be a food truck or bring your own picnic. Bring chairs or blanket.

On June 5 6-8 pm Oxford Pride is hosting an event at 7 East Locust Street in the Ware Pavillion, and the Kennett Library will be offering a community craft project relating to crafting and reading at the event.

Rana Saker

Leads a community of French speakers that will join the French Alliance of Philadelphia and another non-profit for a tour bus trip from Philly and Kennett to Lancaster on June 6. Contact Rana to sign-up.

Jane Dickinson

Came to represent Home of the Sparrow, an organization that focuses on subsidizing housing for single women with kids, teaching them financial literacy, and helping them to keep their

housing stable for a year. They are planning a Walking with Women fundraising event. They are interested in becoming more active in Southern Chester County.

NAME: Kate Wickersham

Representing LCH, shared an opportunity for families Safety Around Water. Pre-registration is required. The first meeting will be Thursday May 21st at the LCH in West Grove at 5 pm for an introduction, and then everyone will go to the YMCA in Jennersville to work on skills in the pool. Everyone must be over the age of 3 and accompanied by a parent. It is a free program in English and Spanish.

Susan Rzucidlo

Avondale's Mayor, invited everyone to a Bubbles for kids event on June 27 10am—1pm. More information is on the Avondale website.

Jim Mercante

Co-Chair of Chester County Digital Alliance with Joan Holliday. They advocate for digital literacy, affordability and access to internet for everyone. RSVP Volunteers is the provider, who is managing digital navigators who can help one-on-one in-person or virtually to help people figure out what is going on with their phone or computer. They also are willing to put on a class for basic computer skills and internet safety.

Keith Smithyman

From Maker's Space at the Library said there will be a Kennett Family Fun Day June 6 from 11-2 at Chatham Financial, sponsored by the Kennett Township Police Department.

Attendees then mingled and “bridged” for a half-hour

Bridges made:

Tom Hoehle said he “bridged” with David Nuttall about a political action group

Kate “bridged” with Trevor Pruitt about the plant party and he said he'd offer her plants she could kill. They talked about two pride events in Anson B. and Oxford as well

Rana Sakr and Kate Wickersham “bridged” about working on health education and made a plan to talk about it further with LCH

Karen D'Agusto said she is selling bubbles at her garage sale and “bridged” with Susa for her bubble event. And she gave cards to people to mail. And she said she loves to appeal Medicare decisions.

Joan Holliday said she “bridged” with Susan Long who is going to West Grove Bridging and will bring a friend. She “bridged” with David Nuttall who suggested we use crayons for the name tags so there is readable print. She “bridged” with Derrick Watkins who is doing recordings with his music. He will be singing the National Anthem at the Avondale Veterans event.

Contact Derrick at: DWatkins1926@gmail.com for a link to a free song from his album, Smile.

Rosalie Foster “bridged” with Rana who gave her contacts for agencies to help with Kacie's Cause. She also spoke with Keith about the car show. And she “bridged” with Joan Holliday and will attend the West Grove meeting next week.

Jesse Cocks representing Brandywine Pride said they are looking for volunteers. Sign up at BrandywinePride.org. There were more allies than queer people in the parade last time, she said, adding that it is for everyone and very family friendly. And she said she “bridged” with Derrick about music and having him check out the FLASH for a performance.

Susan Long “bridged” with Joan and Karen to find out about the yard sales.

Rana said she followed up last month’s request for things to do at Kennett Friends House and now students from the High School will be going to play games and read.

Kate closed encouraging everyone to keep attending and bridging.

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If you would like to send condolences around the loss of Ruth Rochester
Minutes submitted by Tina Skinner