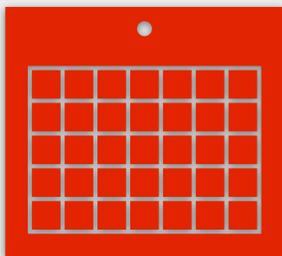


Susquehanna County Democrats Newsletter



Important Dates

- Register to vote or update your registration - Oct. 18
- Last day to apply for mail-in or civilian absentee ballot - Oct. 26
- Municipal Election - Nov. 2
- Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted mail-in or civilian absentee ballots - Nov. 2 by 8 P.M.



One Reason Why This Year's Election is So Crucial

By Barbara Scott

Even though we would love to have our courts be independent, the reality is that they have become overly politicized. For this reason, it has become essential that we elect Democratic judges to our courts. Remember, Judge McCullough of the Commonwealth Court was the Republican judge who voted in favor of Trump's efforts to overturn Biden's victory and promote the "Big Lie" that he won in a landslide. The state Supreme Court overturned her ruling.

In addition, over the past six years, our Democratically controlled Supreme Court (5 of 7 judges) and the oldest appellate court in the country, struck down a congressional map drawn in 2011 by our Republican controlled Legislature as an unconstitutional gerrymander and ordered a new map be drawn for the 2018 midterm elections in which nine Democrats were elected to Congress. This court went above the heads of both

Join Us at Our Fall Rally

Join the Susquehanna County Democratic Party at our Fall Rally on October 23, at Thompson Hose Company at 1 p.m. Cost is \$30/person or 2 for \$50. We will have basket raffles and 50/50. All the judicial candidates will be invited. Hope to see you there!



State Committee Update

At the recent state committee meeting, they passed resolutions congratulating President Biden and Vice President Harris on their wins, as well as supporting statehood for D.C. For more information regarding these resolutions, [click here](#).



Governor Wolf and the GOP Legislature to allow a lawsuit challenging the state's education funding. They upheld Pittsburgh's paid sick leave ordinance, which Republicans said was bad for businesses. They sided with Wolf's backing of health care workers' right to organize and they threw out a 1990s workers' compensation law that limited how long partially disabled individuals can receive benefits. Perhaps most importantly, Pa's Supreme Court sustained a wide interpretation of the state Constitution's environmental rights clause, empowering environmentalists.

November 2 provides us with an opportunity to solidify our majority on the Supreme Court by replacing a retiring Republican judge with Democrat Maria McLaughlin and adding Democrats to our state's other two appellate courts by electing Timika Lane to the Superior Court and David Spurgeon and Lori Dumas to the two open seats on the Commonwealth Court.

From the Chair

I recently attended a town hall featuring State Senator Lisa Baker and State Representative Jonathon Fritz. Hoping for a rational give and take discussion on topics of interest, I went. Unfortunately, it became a far right rally bashing Democrats. Even the opening invocation by a minister from the Jackson Baptist Church entered the fray, implying hatred and conspiracy. Can you believe it? From a prayer! It went downhill from there. Representative Fritz was confrontational and came across as an angry man.

What this event highlighted to me was the need for more work on our part. We as a party need to recruit and support candidates that truly represent ALL, not just the far right hair on fire folks. We need to step up our support for more rational, inclusive elected officials. We can do that in so many ways. We can join forces and work as a cohesive unit challenging the policies of exclusion.

Please consider participating in our party activities,

Reality Check Chat is Now on Spotify!



Here's a reality check! The Reality Check Chat podcast, sponsored by the Independent Democratic Women of Susquehanna County, is now available on Spotify.

Judy, Barb and Liz discuss a wide variety of political and social issues facing rural people everywhere, not just Susquehanna County.

Catch up on previous episodes and don't forget to subscribe.

Visit realitycheckchat.com today to learn more.

becoming a committee person, running for local office, staying informed on what your elected officials are promoting and doing. You can start by enrolling in our email list, liking our Facebook page, and checking out our website. Do not hesitate to contact myself as to how you might help. We need you and welcome your input and participation.

Rick Ainey, Chair, Susquehanna County Democratic Party
richard.ainey@aol.com
570-947-8433

Get to Know Our Judicial Candidates



Judge Lori Dumas is running for the Pennsylvania Commonwealth

Court. She has served on the bench for over 18 years. While serving in family court, Judge Dumas was a leader in creating the First Judicial District's Juvenile Human Trafficking Court, which provided services to victims of commercial exploitation. She led many

initiatives to ensure that system children received services to lead them to success.



Judge David Spurgeon is running for the Pennsylvania

Commonwealth Court. He joined the Allegheny County District Attorney's Office as an assistant district attorney in 1998. In 2009, Judge Spurgeon was the youngest person promoted to deputy district attorney. He implemented the first Intimate Partner Violence Homicide Review Team to identify systematic

breakdowns and prevent future violence.

Stop by Our Booth at the Harford Fair

Going to the Harford Fair? Be sure to stop by the booth for the Susquehanna County Democratic Party. We still need volunteers to help man the booth too. If you're interested in volunteering, please contact Judy Herschel at judy.herschel@gmail.com and see available time slots below.

Time Slots Available

Monday, August 16
6pm - 10pm (1 slot)

Friday, August 20
10 am - 2pm (1 slot)

Saturday, August 21
10am - 2pm (2 slots)
2pm - 6pm (2 slots)



Judge Maria McLaughlin is running for Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

She worked as an assistant district attorney in Philadelphia, later serving as chief of the Child Support Enforcement Unit. She was one of the youngest female chiefs ever appointed in Philadelphia. Her life was dedicated to protecting the rights of children.



Judge Timika Lane is running for Pennsylvania Superior Court.

She worked as a major trial attorney for the Defender Association of Philadelphia, litigating complex criminal jury and waiver trials for indigent adults and youth in Philadelphia's criminal justice system. Later, she became chief legal counsel for State Senator Anthony H. Williams.

[Visit our website](#) to learn more about our judicial candidates.

Patriot Picnic Recap

By Liz Kearney

About 50 patriots weathered a cool, damp afternoon for the Susquehanna County Democrats' July 18 Patriot Picnic, held at the Hallstead softball fields.

Candidates for various statewide offices attended to introduce themselves and their platforms.



Auditor's Report - June 2021

This month the auditor's report will focus on the one item that has been an issue since I took office 18 months ago. It's an issue that has involved the audit of the Register and Recorder's Office.

In January of 2019, upon taking office, it was informed that the general account of this office had not been properly reconciled since June 2018. For the first few months of 2019 we attempted to do our best at reconciling this account. After constant attempts, we informed the county commissioners that we were unable to and that a different approach was warranted.

The commissioners agreed and after meeting with the register and recorder, it was agreed that additional funding would be allocated to accomplish this goal. The register and recorder submitted a name and the commissioners put on their agenda this submittal request. Just before the meeting began, it was determined that the name submitted by the official

Those attending were Senate candidate Alex Khalil whose campaign slogan is "Community, Compassion, Justice, and Prosperity for All." She supports expanded Medicare and a \$15 minimum wage.

Khalil noted that the U.S. spent billions of dollars helping rebuild Europe through the Marshall Plan after World War II. She wants to see a similar investment in the U.S.

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From the Desk of Judy Herschel

There's quite a bit going on in the county this summer.

I recently toured a solar farm in New York State with the Board of Directors from the Progress Authority. I would like to arrange an informational town hall on solar energy options, barriers and opportunities later in the year or next spring. There is state legislation on the horizon that would allow for the potential growth of this industry in PA.



I took part in the parades at Montrose, Thompson, and Susquehanna.

I resumed visits to borough and township meetings with a plan of attending 2-3 meetings per month for the rest of my term.

An engineering study of how to accomplish the middle mile portion of our broadband initiative in Susquehanna County has been completed. A pole survey is being conducted throughout Susquehanna County. This survey will allow us to have an understanding of beginning costs

was her daughter. The request was removed by the commissioners as unethical.

The Commissioners then secured the services of two individuals to each take a year (2019-2020) and bring the books up to standard to be audited. This took some time. We received 2019 first and audited to its conclusion, reconciling it completely without major issues.



Upon receiving year 2020, 10 checks were noted payable to the official's daughter in the amount of \$1,000 each. This was done after the commissioners determined that such a hiring would be unethical and the commissioners' approval would be necessary before anyone was contracted to do anything.

The county code directs the auditors to have the annual audit completed and filed with the court by

for this project.

Susquehanna County will have two booths at the Harford Fair. Representatives for the Susquehanna County Election Office will have their own booth all week. We have a second county booth for various county offices and initiatives to be there throughout the week. I will provide a list of dates and offices prior to the fair.

To address issues involving the mental and behavioral health of Susquehanna County residents, we are planning several mental health initiatives and substance use initiatives for the month of September. These events and initiatives will be announced in the local newspapers and social media.

The Area Agency on Aging is beginning to open up our county's Active Living Centers for our seniors. An Active Living Center Committee has been established to determine the direction to go with Active Living Centers as it pertains to activities and locations. I serve on both the board at the AAA and on this committee. There are some concerns regarding the AAA closing the center in Forest City. I have involved mayor Chris Ginton to do what we can to prevent this from happening. Meals on Wheels continues to deliver pre-prepared meals to participants weekly.

Our Susquehanna County Long-term Recovery Committee continues to meet monthly.

Susquehanna County's COVID-19 vaccination providers have seen a drastic decrease in individuals who are receiving the vaccination. Though our numbers for infections have remained low throughout the summer, there is concern regarding the Delta variant as we move into the fall months. We continue to actively work with our local health care providers and pertinent state departments.



The Governor's Rural Council (I am a member of the

following legal processes.

This has been an experience that has no precedent in Susquehanna County, creating a lot of unknowns for us. We are attempting to do the proper thing in the correct way. If you have any questions or comments, please let me know. As I have said previously, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to be your eyes on county finances.

Rick Ainey
County Auditor
richard.ainey@aol.com
570-947-8433

Join Our Government Affairs Committee

The Susquehanna County Democratic Party recently created a new committee. The committee has many goals, including holding our local representatives accountable. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact Eric Herschel at governmentaffairs@susquehannadems.com.

board) continues to focus on initiatives centered on broadband, mental health, and health care. I meet with this council monthly, and I am very vocal regarding the needs of our county.

Our new Public Safety Building is set to be completed in September, with an open house to be scheduled for the public upon completion.

We have an open house scheduled at the courthouse on August 6. At the open house, we will also be honoring 50 and 75 year voters.

I took part in the Susquehanna County Human Services Planning Public Meeting this month and honored BPW's Girl of the Year.

Susquehanna County Resource Day will take place on September 25 at Blue Ridge School District.

I am always available. Please reach out anytime with questions, comments or concerns. jherschel@susco.com

Our Online Community Continues to Grow

Thanks to everyone who follows the Susquehanna County Democrats on Facebook. We appreciate you liking, commenting on and sharing our posts. It's how we make our presence known! Don't forget to follow us on Twitter and Instagram. As we move closer to the municipal election, it's important we share facts and educate within our community to counteract the misinformation that spreads so easily.

www.susquehannadems.com
 **susquehannadems**

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John McGuigan, also running for the U.S. Senate, said he will sign the Green New Deal pledge, and he is opposed to all fracking.

“I am concerned about our ability to live on this planet,” he said.

Kevin Baumlin, another U.S. Senate candidate, is an emergency department doctor in Philadelphia. He said his ER experience in managing doctors and patients are transferable skills to the U.S. Senate. He appeared in medical scrubs and traveled to Hallstead in a secondhand, refurbished ambulance.

Lori Dumas is a Common Pleas Court Judge in the Philadelphia Family Court, and she’s running for a seat on the Commonwealth Court. She said we need good elected officials and “judges who aren’t afraid to do what’s right.”



Senate candidates John McGuigan, Kevin Baumlin and Alex Khalil



John McGuigan

Lieutenant Governor and Senate candidate John Fetterman, who had initially confirmed he would attend, appeared electronically, citing last-minute child care issues. He thanked us for our work and told us he understood how difficult it can be to be a drop of blue in a red county.

And Congressman Matt Cartwright, a Democrat who represents PA District 8, stopped by. Cartwright’s district includes a lot of

northeastern Pennsylvania, encompassing all of Wayne, Pike, and Lackawanna counties, along with almost all of Luzerne and Monroes counties.

Cartwright, an attorney, had worked often in the Susquehanna County Courthouse in Montrose.



Kevin Baumlin speaks to picnic attendees.

“I’ve stuck up for people from Susquehanna County for a long time,” he said.

Susquehanna County Democrats Chair Rick Ainey thanked Cartwright for attending an event that’s not even in his district.

“A big shout out to U.S.Congressman Matt Cartwright for inspiring us,” Ainey said. “Imagine a neighbor representative knowing where Susquehanna County is. I personally have yet to see our own congressman in Susquehanna County at a non-political event here. Let’s hope redistricting puts us in Matt’s district.”

Ainey shared some thoughts and thank you’s after the event.

“Our patriot picnic was a great success considering the weather,” he said. “Eric Herschel did a fantastic job as emcee, the events committee planned the event well, and thanks to all who helped and participated. Special thanks to our candidates who attended.”



Rick Ainey with judicial candidate Lori Dumas



Congressman Matt Cartwright

Eric Herschel served as emcee



Lynda Charles, Tom Charles and Jackie Baker