

# Susquehanna County Democrats Newsletter



## Important Dates

- Last day to apply for mail-in or civilian absentee ballot - May 10
- Primary Election - May 17
- Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted mail-in or civilian absentee ballots - May 17 by 8 P.M.
- Patriot Picnic - July 17
- Harford Fair - August 15-20



## Reaching 'Sometimes' Voters with Our Postcard Project

By Barbara Scott

The first of several postcard projects is underway. Over 19 volunteers will be writing close to 1,500 postcards over the next couple of weeks as we try to tell voters ages 18-46 about some of the county and private businesses who have received American Rescue Plan money. Our cards show how "Democrats Delivered For Susquehanna County."

**Democrats Delivered**  
For Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania, and the U.S. of A.!  
**Our Republican Representatives Voted NO!**  
The American Rescue Plan awarded money for:

Barnes Kasson and Endless Mountains Health Hospitals \$180,000+	
Local Restaurants, Hotels, & Inns \$400,000	\$3.6 million toward our new Public Safety Building
Hallstead for Flooding Mitigation \$120,000+	
Municipalities/Townships Each Received from \$50,000 - \$284,000	

**VOTE**  
It Makes A Difference!

## Join Us at Our Patriot Picnic

Join the Susquehanna County Democratic Party at our Patriot Picnic on July 17 at the Hallstead Ballpark on Rt. 11. From 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Please bring a covered dish to share. To RVSP, please email Laura Bonner at [bonnerlaura324@gmail.com](mailto:bonnerlaura324@gmail.com)

## We Need Volunteers for the Harford Fair

Join us at the Harford Fair, held August 15-20! We will need volunteers to help man the booth for the Susquehanna County Democratic Party. If you're interested in volunteering, please contact Judy Herschel at [judy.herschel@gmail.com](mailto:judy.herschel@gmail.com)



We hope to send out two more postcard mailings before the general election. We want to push "sometimes voters" to the polls this November when we will elect a new governor, state senator, congressional rep in our new District 9 and a state senator in our new District 20. Contact the Susquehanna County Democrats if you'd like to help with this project.

## From the Chair

The May 17th election will be decision time. We will decide who will lead into battle for both the soul as well as morality of not only our state but also our country. We need a Democratic governor to establish a firewall against the efforts of the Republican party, which negatively affects the lives of Pennsylvanians. We need to elect a Democratic senator to maintain the needed balance of a Democratic senate. We certainly deserve a Congressional representative that represents our interests and the interests of America. These are all decisions we will make on May 17th to move our state and country into the future.

On a local level, our county party begins our path into the future with an election that determines the next four years. We choose those who will lead our party as committee people and party officers. There will be many empty ballots for these positions. Please consider getting a few write-in votes to have representation at the beginning of this voyage. Those elected on May 17th will have the duty to determine the officers of our party in June. With that being said, I wish to convey to you all that I will not seek or accept another term as your chair. I believe that change is good to keep moving forward. I thank you for the opportunity to serve in this capacity for the last eight years and appreciate all the support you have given me. Thank you!

Rick Ainey, Chair, Susquehanna County Democratic Party  
[richard.ainey@aol.com](mailto:richard.ainey@aol.com)  
570-947-8433

## Democrats Deliver Campaign

Over the last several months, the Communications and Government Affairs committees have been running ads in the Mulligan's Shopping Guide to educate residents in Susquehanna County on how Democrats are delivering for every American. We want to demonstrate to voters what exactly Democrats are accomplishing, as well as cut through the lies spread by the GOP. One of the ads is shown below. Stay tuned for more ads on how Democrats deliver!

**Democrats Deliver for EVERY American**

Susquehanna County received **\$3.6 million** from the American Rescue Plan passed by President Joe Biden and Congressional Democrats for the new Public Safety Building to provide vital support for local Police and First Responders



**We Put People First**  
[www.susquehannadems.com](http://www.susquehannadems.com)  
[susquehannadems@gmail.com](mailto:susquehannadems@gmail.com)  
[@susquehannadems](https://twitter.com/susquehannadems)

This ad paid for by the Susquehanna County Democratic Party

## From the Desk of Judy Herschel



There is an Open House for Susquehanna County's new Public Safety Building on April 29th from 5-7 p.m. Come and check out our new courtroom, 911 center, and emergency operations. All are welcome, and I hope to see you there! [Click here](#) to view the flier.

There has been continued concern regarding the mental health of our community members. The Suicide Awareness Alliance, along with the Commissioners, continue to produce public service announcements on social media/radio. [Click here](#) to watch a video. Our advertisement campaign uses social media, billboards, and resource cards. We are planning a Hike for Hope and Candlelight Vigil at Salt Springs on Saturday, May 14.

We continue to work with our sheriff's office and NAMI to distribute gun locks and educate the public. In April, we met with Scranton Counseling Center, who provide our crisis services, to discuss crisis and mental health concerns. We arranged for a motivational speaker to come to our local high schools (he has completed 4 events) to speak about mental health, bullying and self care.

In its first year, participation in Susquehanna County's Drug Court continues to grow. In addition, a committee of mental health and behavioral healthcare providers has been developed and we are working on areas of improvement as it relates to access to these services while incarcerated and upon release. A plan is being developed and I will present the initial plan to the Jail Board in May. A new 20 bed transitional housing placement option for men being released from jail opened in March in the

## Excellent Discussion Enjoyed at Our Issues Forum

Approximately 15 participants attended our Issues Forum held on April 16 at the Montrose Library.

The topics discussed included voting rights, the Build Back Better/ infrastructure bill and the role of the General



Assembly in Harrisburg.

After engaging in lively discussion and debate in three smaller groups, the groups came together to summarize the important takeaways from each discussion. The voting rights group determined that the best way to protect our voting rights from being subverted is to encourage as many Democrats as possible to vote in the upcoming primary

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Poconos. Susquehanna and Lackawanna Counties (we are in a joinder together) are guaranteed 5 of those beds at all times.

I am meeting regularly with recovery providers and the Susquehanna County Recovery Alliance as substance use and overdoses continue to be a concern in our county. Local, personal testimonials on recovery are added to the [website](#) and [Facebook page](#) regularly.

Our Sheriff's Department continues to distribute narcans throughout the community, and the SCRA met recently in person to discuss our strategic plan for the year. We will continue to focus on education, support, and prevention and are planning a community event that will be part of the Susquehanna County Health, Wellness and Safety Day (Formerly Resource Day) for later in the year (tentatively September). If you are interested in taking part in this committee (SCRA), please contact me. Susquehanna County will be receiving money from the PA vs Johnson and Johnson \$1.07 billion lawsuit- (amount unknown) and will be announced by the summer.

We are working closely with the Progress Authority and are in regular contact with local providers (Claverack, NEP Telephone) on tackling tie issue of getting high speed internet to all areas of our county. Recently, funding has been made available to local service providers, with additional funding becoming available in the form of grants in the near future through the infrastructure bill, allowing these companies to begin to expand into areas of our county that really need it right away. Though it will take time, possibly several years, I am confident that we will get there, thanks to the infrastructure bill! Grants will be available for the county and our municipalities for the "middle mile" portion by the summer.

We are looking at ways to better serve our seniors currently and in the future. There continues to be concerns regarding active living center programs and participation, meal delivery and home care services. I have discussed these concerns with the Area Agency on Aging

**Auditor’s Report -  
May 2022**

After many extensions and hurdles, the 2020 annual audit has been filed with the courts and proper state agencies. It can be viewed on the county website [susqco.com](http://susqco.com) under county offices - auditors. Some of the hurdles included poor record keeping in the Register and Recorder’s office that had the records unbalanced for two years when my term began. Outside vendors were contracted to correct and bring them into balance for auditing. During this process unqualified expenses were discovered that required a thorough investigation. This investigation was difficult with the county refusing to supply what we considered to be the necessary funds to properly review this situation with legal assistance. We applied for multiple extensions from the required deadline of July 1, 2021, and were granted them by the courts.

We finally finished the report with findings

(represents Susquehanna, Sullivan, Bradford and Tioga), and I have reached out to the Department of Aging for guidance. I have asked the AAA to host a town hall regarding senior needs and concerns, however, they declined. I will follow up soon with a public announcement regarding this issue in detail.

I am also assisting local initiatives related to EV stations for electric cars, tourism, homelessness and several economic development initiatives throughout the county that have recently begun with local organizations and groups.

I am always available. Please reach out anytime with questions, comments or concerns. [jherschel@susco.com](mailto:jherschel@susco.com)

**The Faces of Our Party:  
Interview with Hallstead  
Borough Council President  
Laura “Laurie” Bonner**

Laura "Laurie" Bonner answered questions about her elected office via email recently. She has served on the Hallstead Borough Council for five years, including two years as vice president and has served as president since December, 2021.



**What compelled you to run?**

I was previously on the school board for eight years, and when I lost my last election I knew I wanted to stay active in my community.

and submitted a personal surcharge to the Register and Recorder and filed on March 1, 2022. The findings included some remarks such as: needing receipts for expenses reimbursed; maintaining a bank account with a one cent balance for years; having outstanding checks beyond the three year deadline for escheating; journals not listing all checks drawn; bank accounts opened with no funds without activity resulting in inaction fees; and especially an outside vendor being engaged outside of the legal process required. This outside vendor was determined to be a relative of the Register and Recorder who engaged the individual. This vendor was paid \$1000 a month for 12 months without a scope of work or any work reports during the time being paid.

Based on relevant law we the auditors personally filed a surcharge to the Register and Recorder for these improper expenditure of funds.

After all of this, it was found by late submitted records

**What are your main tasks and areas of concern?**

Work with the borough secretary on matters of the council, chair the monthly meetings, facilitate discussions with borough members, work with the engineer on storm water project, ensure budget preparation and implementation. We received \$125,000 from the infrastructure bill and are using the towards storm water and flood mitigation and road repair. We finally have a full council and are doing wonderful things for our community including improvements in our parks and honoring veterans with flags.

**What's fun about your position?**

I enjoy making a difference in people's lives. We have lively discussions and try to include a bit of humor in our jobs as the only time we generally hear from people is when they have a complaint. I also enjoy working with the secretary who has been there just over a year and has done a dynamic job.

**How do you balance being a Democrat in a predominately Republican county?**

I have never experienced problems on the council with politics. I was also elected as School Board President by a majority of Republicans. There is a time and place for that. Outside of these positions I have never been afraid to wear my democratic colors. I am who I am. I love a good debate and gladly invite anyone to change my mind. I respect everyone's right to have their own opinions but seldom let an opportunity go by to try and change their mind.

**Are there any particular challenges in filing and running for office in a Republican-majority county?**

I don't like straight party voting because Democrats are outnumbered by Republicans and this works against us. I don't like the fact that our signs are stolen just because we disagree with someone's beliefs, and I find that disrespectful. I would like to find a way to educate people about all the benefits they enjoy thanks to Democrats.

(January submitted in March) that the Register and Recorder had deposited the improperly paid funds back into the account they were drawn on. Since this money was paid in the year 2022, it will be noted in that year's audit due July 1, 2023.

We have finished the audits of all municipal tax collectors and have started all annual account audits. Susquehanna County will host the Northeast regional meeting of the Auditor's conference in May at the new county public safety building.

I want to again thank you for the opportunity to be your county auditor and if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

Rick Ainey  
County Auditor  
[richard.ainey@aol.com](mailto:richard.ainey@aol.com)  
570-947-8433

### **What advice would you offer to other Dems thinking about running for an elected office?**

Do it, do it now. If you believe in something don't let anyone stop you. Also get involved with the local Democratic Party because they can help.

## **Learn About the Candidates for U.S. Senate**

### **John Fetterman**

[www.johnfetterman.com](http://www.johnfetterman.com)

 [JohnFettermanPA](#)



### **Connor Lamb**

[www.conorlamb.com](http://www.conorlamb.com)

 [ConorLambPA](#)



### **Alex Khalil**

[www.alexkhalilforussenate.com](http://www.alexkhalilforussenate.com)

 [Alex4USSenate](#)



Continued from page 4  
and the General Election  
in November. This  
aligned with the message  
from the group that  
discussed the General  
Assembly in Harrisburg.  
It's important



that Democrats  
maintain control in  
either the House of  
Representatives or the  
Senate. The GOP is  
working hard to gut our  
state constitution, so  
that their power may go  
unchecked. We need to  
prevent this.



One way to do this  
stems from a key point  
that the infrastructure/  
Build Back Better group  
summarized in their  
discussion.

## Malcolm Kenyatta

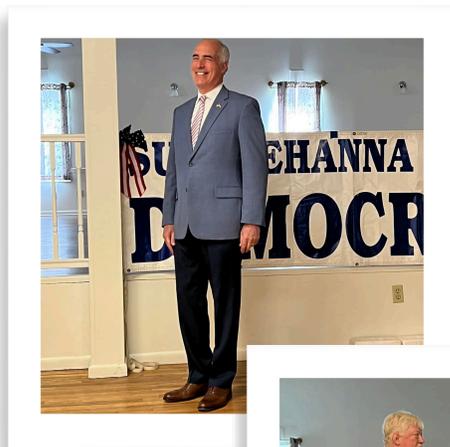
[www.malcolmkenyatta.com](http://www.malcolmkenyatta.com)

 [malcolmforpa](https://www.facebook.com/malcolmforpa)

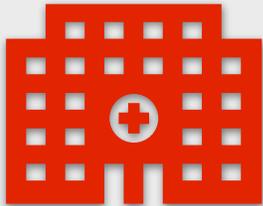


## Senator Casey Visits Susquehanna County Democrats

On Wednesday, April 13, Senator Bob Casey came to Susquehanna County for a meet and greet with local Democrats. Check out these photos from the event!



Thanks to President Biden's American Rescue Plan, Susquehanna County received funds for



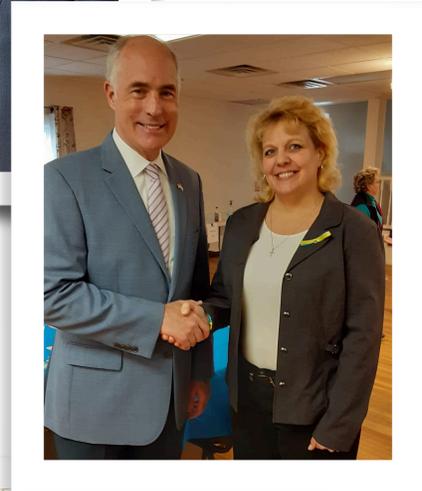
its hospitals, local restaurants, inns and hotels, as well as the new public safety building.

We also received funds for flooding mitigation in Hallstead. We need to remind Susquehanna County residents that thanks to Democrats, we received this valuable



money, while our representatives voted against it.

Thanks again to everyone who came out for our Issues Forum. It was a great discussion!



[www.susquehannadems.com](http://www.susquehannadems.com)  
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