

Susquehanna County Democrats Newsletter



From the Chair

As your newly elected county chair, it is an honor to work alongside our great team of thoughtful and engaged committee members. Each of them remind me of an old movie from my youth entitled “the Mouse that Roared.” We may be small in numbers compared to our urban friends, but we are no less vocal on the critical issues that impact the daily lives of every American.

I certainly share your anxiety about the future of our fragile democracy. A Supreme Court hellbent on taking us back to the nineteenth century; candidates for office who continue to espouse the “Big Lie” and right-wing militias found in almost every state are indeed frightening.

Party Elects New Officers

In June, the Susquehanna County Democratic Party held its quadrennial reorganization meeting to elect officers to lead the group for the next four years. The new officers are:



County Chair - Ed Zygmunt, Auburn Township

Vice Chair - Joni Kaiser, Thompson

Secretary - Tom Charles, Dimock Township

Treasurer - Rick Ainey, New Milford

State Committee - Jackie Baker, Liberty Township

From the Chair (cont)

To me, they are more reason to keep fighting the good fight.

With women's right to choose in dire jeopardy, voting rights under assault in many states, environmental protections weaker by the day, and gun violence out of control, it's easy to make the mistake of fighting a war on too many fronts. We should not let our opponents divide and conquer us.

That's why between now and November 8, we must remain laser focused on one, and only one, objective: electing John Fetterman to the U.S. Senate; Josh Shapiro as governor; Amanda Waldman to Congress and Jackie Baker as our state senator. If we fail, all the progress we have achieved in the past century will surely be lost for generations.

So, please, come join us. We need your help to knock on doors, make phone calls, register new voters, financially support our county party and candidates

Also elected were 13 members of the Party's Executive Committee who are selected based on their residency in each of the county's six school districts. During this year's statewide primary election, Jackie Baker, Liberty Township, was elected by the county's Democrats to serve on the Pennsylvania State Democratic Committee.

[Click here](#) to view the list of members on the Executive Committee.

[Click here](#) to view the complete list of committee people.

The Egregious Decision to Overturn Roe v. Wade

By Barbara Scott

Well, Republicans, the Heritage Foundation, and the Federalist Society have had their way, contradicting the nearly 70% (according to the newest polls) of Americans who feel that the government doesn't have any place in the reproductive health decisions of a woman and her doctor. A U.S. Supreme Court that once was looked to for Constitutional guidance has besmirched itself in the eyes of many of us. Picture yourself, your daughters, your nieces, your mothers waking up to a world where you have fewer rights than the day before, based on the flimsiest of arguments that threw precedent to the winds and placed fetus's "lives" above the life and liberty of the woman carrying them. It's a women's health issue. It's a women's economic success issue. It's a women's right to family planning, educational planning and life planning issue.



Our entire country will suffer the loss of life and liberty that the Trump/McConnell conservative Republican Supreme Court has thrust upon us. But, besides our

From the Chair (cont)

if you are able, write letters to the editor, put those yards signs out and get your friends and family members to the polls. Never give up. Always remember: Democracy is not a spectator sport.

Ed Zygmunt, Chair
edzygmunt@yahoo.com

She’s Unbought, Unbossed and Unapologetic



Following the decision to overturn Roe v. Wade, Amanda Waldman, democratic nominee for Congress, PA’s 9th district, released this statement. “Over half the country is certain to ban abortion. Millions of Americans will lose the personal freedom of choice to decide what is best for

outrage, there is so much at stake in November: If Republicans gain control of Congress, a Federal ban on abortions before 15 months, if not earlier, will most certainly be enacted. Criminal investigations of those who miscarry and possible jail time for both women and doctors for exercising their absent rights to quality, equal, and, unbiased healthcare, will rule many states, if not the entire U.S. The Supreme Court is poised to support state legislatures' right to gerrymander, run, audit and decide elections as they see fit. And in Pennsylvania, the election of a supporter of the “Stop the Steal” lies, a January 6th insurrectionist, who is so anti-abortion, he does not want any exceptions for rape, incest, the life of the mother or viability, will set our state back decades.

In the words of our Pennsylvania Democratic Women's Caucus chair, Candace Stitzman-Duley: “We must win the United States Senate with John Fetterman. We must win the Governor race with Josh Shapiro. We must win every Congressional, State Senate, and State House race we can. We must register our neighbors and friends to vote. We must get them mail-in ballot applications. We must get the voters to the polls.our freedoms depend on us to get the job done. We are protecting all Americans' rights.”

[Click here](#) to view the full statement from the Pennsylvania Democratic Women’s Caucus.

From the Desk of Judy Herschel

Our Susquehanna County recycling event for electronics was a huge success. We had 9 tractor



their own lives. My opponent has co-sponsored bills to defund Planned Parenthood. We know abortion is a small percent of the overall budget, providing healthcare services such as cancer screenings; STI testing and treatment; contraception; education and more. Dan Meuser makes it difficult for everyday Americans to get healthcare when they need it most. I am offended by his willingness to steal the liberties of others.”

[Click here](#) to visit Amanda Waldman’s website.

We Need to “Back the Better Baker”



Following the overturning of Roe v. Wade, Jackie Baker, democratic nominee for PA Senate 20, released this statement.

trailers full!

Our first Hike for Hope (for suicide awareness) took place at Salt Springs on May 14. If you would like to participate in the Susquehanna County Suicide Awareness Committee, please contact me via email. We meet monthly to bimonthly via Zoom, depending on the time of year.



The Homeless/Housing Initiative Committee continues, with participation growing amongst providers and individual community members. If you would like to participate in this group, please send me an email. We meet monthly at Interfaith in Montrose.

Susquehanna County’s annual Economic Development event with the Progress Authority took place at the new public safety building and was very well attended. An economist spoke in detail about an array of economic issues relevant to Susquehanna County.

The Commissioners are continuing to work with the Progress Authority and the economic development board on a new strategic plan for Susquehanna County. This plan should be completed by September. I will share the completed plan in the near future. Through the Progress Authority, the county is applying for a grant (funded by the federal infrastructure bill) to pay for the “middle mile” portion of our broadband initiative in the county.

Norther Tier’s annual full commissioner meeting took place with the director of outdoor recreation, discussing his new position and the potential development of an outdoor recreation department in the Commonwealth.

The Hartford Fair signup has been set up. Don’t forget to sign up! There are still slots available! Send me an email if interested.

Susquehanna County Health, Wellness and Safety Day will be September 24, 2022, from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M., at the new public safety building.

“Today’s decision...sets a dangerous legal precedent that can now erode away all our freedoms. A woman’s healthcare, which includes reproductive health, is personal and should be private. Any decision that she needs to make about her own body should be her own. Private decisions about when to have children or whether to have children have now been wiped away with this court ruling. Access to family planning, birth control and maternal health services are under threat, now more than ever. I will always stand up and fight for women’s rights and women’s healthcare access.”
[Click here](#) to visit Jackie Baker’s website.

Important Dates

Oct. 24 - last day to register to vote

Nov. 1 - Last day to submit a completed absentee ballot application

Nov. 8 - Election Day. Polls are open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The Susquehanna County Recovery Alliance continues to meet monthly to bimonthly. Currently, the group is working on a media plan (billboards, testimonials, social media, print media) to educate the community on the rise and deadly effects of fentanyl in our community. If you would like to participate in this group, please contact me by email.

Just Believe, a treatment facility near Elk Mountain, is now accepting Medical Assistance and also offering an intensive outpatient program. This allows easier access for treatment for Susquehanna County residents in the Forest City/Clifford/Uniondale areas.

There has been the creation of a new forensic/intensive case manager through Trehab. The position will work at the jail and assist inmates in access services in and outside the jail upon release. This job is to be posted in very near future. This position will be under Trehab, who the county contracts with for such services.

I’ve attended several meetings to discuss mental health issues in Susquehanna County and how treatment and prevention are being delivered.

The Marcellus Legacy Mini Grant Application is now available on our website www.susqco.com. This program will provide grants allocations to nonprofit organizations only (municipalities and for-profit businesses are not eligible) with projects that support and advance the goals and objectives of the Marcellus Legacy Fund. The use of these funds include acquisition, development and repair of greenways, recreation trails, open space, natural areas, community conservation and beautification projects, community and heritage parks and water resource management. It is important to note that there are changes to the disbursement of the grant. This year, there will be 6 projects approved for grant funding. Funds will be allocated in the following manner: 3 projects up to \$20,000; 1 project up to \$10,000 and 2 projects up to \$5,000.

If you vote by mail, make sure your ballot gets to the county election office no later than 8 p.m. Do NOT take a mail-in ballot to the polls on Election Day, but do take it to the courthouse.

Auditor’s Report

The county auditors filed the required annual audit for 2021. This is the second year we have done so after discovering that it was required and had not been done in prior years. This adds to other requirements we have found that have not been adhered to in prior years. These included the audit of municipal tax collectors and the filing of asset forfeiture audits from the District Attorney’s office. This year’s annual audit had the following findings:

Register and Recorder Improvement Fund: In addition to the ten checks written to the daughter of the official on 2020 there were two more checks written in 2021. These checks written without a scope of work for a no show job constituted violations of the state unavailable.

The commissioners have agreed to use Marcellus Legacy Funds to also continue to provide funding for the Ag Lab at all of our local schools. The Susquehanna County Long Term Recovery Meeting continues to meet quarterly. If you would like to take part in this meeting or learn more about what this group does, please contact me via email.

The commissioners hosted an employee appreciation picnic on the Green in June. Primary election recount took place. We’re proud to announce that there was no deviation from original numbers.



The issues discussed at the Rural Development Council Meeting on July 11 with state officials and board members included mental health, childcare, broadband access and housing issues. The commissioners met with an arborist to discuss the issues regarding infestations and threats to Susquehanna County as it relates to our trees. He will be submitting a written overview of our discussion to share with the community. I will be attending the County Commissioner’s Association of PA (CCAP) Conference in Lancaster for 4 days in August.

I am always available. Please reach out to me with questions or concerns. jherschel@susco.com

Mid-Term Election Update

Make sure you are registered to vote! Call the Susquehanna County Elections office at (570) 278-6697 to double check on your registration or [click here](#).

If you prefer to vote by mail, apply now. If you have any concerns about voting in public, why take the chance you won’t want to go to the polls in November? Request your mail-in ballot now! Call the elections office for a paper application to be mailed to you or [click here](#) to apply online.

There has been confusion with mail-in ballots and whether

ethics act in three areas. The official reimbursed the county for the \$12,000, making a surcharge against her unnecessary and unavailable.

Register and Recorder General Fund (old and new): Having two accounts for the same task was questioned as to the need. Also, many times there was a balance adjustment with no documentation as to what and why. Also one account gets interest and the other does not.

Register and Recorder Inheritance and State Reality Accounts: These were not submitted for audit. There is currently a legal question as to why not.

Multiple Register and Recorder Accounts: There are multiple outstanding deposits listed that are years old. There appears to be no reasonable explanation as to how a deposit can be outstanding for this length of time.

Domestic Relations Bail Account: This account is submitted for audit monthly. During the last

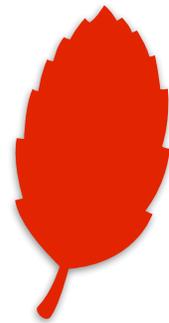
you receive a mail-in ballot for all future elections. Here's an easy fix: If you want a mail-in ballot, apply for it. If you don't want one, don't. If you receive a mail-in ballot, vote by mail.

If you vote by mail: be sure to put your ballot in the privacy envelope, sign the outer envelope where indicated, affix postage and mail, or hand deliver it to the Susquehanna County Elections Office by 8 p.m. Nov. 8.

Do you have known Democratic friends who you suspect don't vote? If so, please do ALL you can to get your non-voting friends to the polls. If they think their vote doesn't count, point out the narrow margins in many state and local elections. One vote really can make a difference. Tell them their vote is their voice, and it's time to speak up!

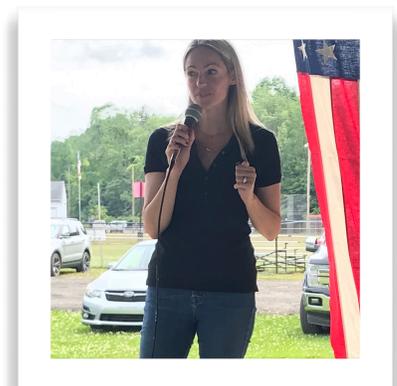
Join Us for Our Fall Rally

The Fall Rally is one of our primary fundraisers, as well as a great opportunity for candidates to come out and speak to our voters. The 2022 Fall Rally will be held on Saturday, September 24, at one o'clock in the afternoon. It will be held at the Great Bend Hose Company Fire Hall, 54 Tannery St, Great Bend. The cost is \$35 per ticket or two for \$60. Send an email to vicechair@susquehannadems.com to inquire about tickets or for any other information.



Patriot Picnic Recap

We hosted our Patriot Picnic on Sunday, July 17, at the Hallstead Ball Field. Although the weather was warm, many Democrats came out to enjoy some good food and hear from our political



two and half years this account has had no activity with a continuous balance of \$.01. Question as to need or at least the need for monthly audits.

Jail Account: This account was wrongfully charged bank fees last year and have yet to recoup all of them.

Treasurer's License Account: There were months not submitted that made the account impossible to audit. This audit was filed with the courts and is available for public inspection at the auditor's office or on the county website under auditors.

Our county hosted the regional Auditor's Association at the new public safety building. These other counties were impressed with the facility and remarked they appreciated the event and the location.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you.

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

leaders.

We were honored to have Scranton Mayor Paige Cognito; Senator Sharif Street (PA District 3) and Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta, (PA District 181) join us for the afternoon. They came to show their support for candidates running for election this fall, including Lt. Governor John Fetterman, who is running for U.S. Senate and Attorney General Josh Shapiro, who is running for governor. We hope you enjoy these highlights from the event!



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



4th of July Parades

Many thanks to everyone who came out in support of or participated in the 4th of July Parades in Montrose and Thompson. We always need to remind the people of Susquehanna County that this is not a “red” county. Vote blue!



www.susquehannadems.com
f t i susquehannadems