

the Lansdowne Leader

November 2020 "Accountable Leadership, Accessible Government" Vol. XXVIII, No. 2

JOE BIDEN ★ KAMALA HARRIS

The Man for Our Time

By Desmond Pringle

His name is Joseph Robinette Biden Jr., born in the hardscrabble city of Scranton, in Lackawanna County Pennsylvania, to Catherine Eugenia and Joseph Robinette Biden Sr. From this humble beginning, Joe would scale the heights of the United States’ political ladder to eventually become Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and eventually Vice President of the United States. He now stands on the cusp of being elected President of the United States of America. He comes as one of the most prepared, and qualified candidates - shaped by a lifetime of experience – to aspire to the office.

Biden, serving as member of the Foreign Relations Committee during President Reagan’s administration vigorously led the opposition to South Africa’s system of apartheid and the administration’s approach of “constructive engagement” - an alternative to the economic sanctions and divestment from South Africa demanded by the UN General Assembly and the international community. His opposition to a

continued on page 8



A Fighter and Leader

By Jacquie Jones

I grew up as a Black girl in Delaware County with a family that told me I could be anything I wanted. I set my eyes on the Presidency. I had the best grades, the quickest wit, and the fiercest fire to protect the innocent. I had all it took to be a President of the United States except I wasn’t white and male. When I left for college 28 years ago, I figured that I needed to find a way to make sure those things didn’t stop me.

Kamala Harris is the first Black and Indian American woman to run for Vice President, and to represent California in the Senate. Kamala Harris’s father immigrated to the US from Jamaica as a student of economics, her mother immigrated from India. Accordingly, I imagine she had many of the same dreams even though America showed her many of the same limitations.

I went off to college in the Midwest, to a school nothing like the one Ms. Harris attended. She went to Howard University, a school we call the Mecca. Whether you went to an HBCU or not,

continued on page 8

State and Local Elections SEE PAGE 7 FOR CANDIDATE PROFILES



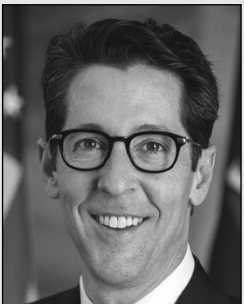
Mary Gay Scanlon
PA House of Representatives



Margo Davidson
PA House of Representatives



Josh Shapiro
PA Attorney General



Joseph Torsella
PA Treasurer



Nina Ahmad
PA Auditor

VOTING
BY MAIL?
DON'T GO
NAKED!
SEE PAGE 3

PRESERVING A TRUE DEMOCRACY

Election Security in Pennsylvania

By Suzanne McElroy

Have you ever wondered how we secure our elections? As Americans, we all share the magnitude of the importance to defend the integrity and security of our elections. We want to ensure both our right to vote and our confidence that our vote will be counted accurately. Reports of Russian interference in our election process in 2016, and currently, have only reinforced our dedication to protecting the integrity of our election system.

Since 2016, the Pennsylvania Department of State has greatly intensified its election security efforts. They have increased monitoring, fortified voting system defense, and added layers of protection to the commonwealth’s voter registration database. In 2018 they directed all 67 PA counties to select new voting systems with voter-verifiable paper records. These new systems were all implemented by the 2020 primary election, some as early as in 2019. Delaware County’s new system was brought out for the primary election. It has successfully completed penetration testing, access control testing, and testing to ensure that every access point, software and firmware, are protected from tampering. Governor Wolf signed into law ACT 77 which provided much needed monetary backing for these new systems.

New election systems within the commonwealth utilize layers of protection including firewalls, encryption, password and permission protections, multi-factor authentication, and pre-election testing. Independent vulnerability assessments and post-election audits are frequently performed. There is no evidence that Pennsylvania’s voter rolls or vote results have ever been

hacked or compromised.

Precinct election results are not submitted through a network. Actually, it is forbidden for election scanners to connect to the internet. The precinct results are scanned at the precinct and then hand-delivered by precinct officials to county election officials and duplicate copies of the printed results are retained.

Mail-in ballots are scanned in by the county officials. Rules and procedures ensure that they are as private as those cast in-person. Mailed ballots must be signed on the outer envelope to match with voter registration signatures.

All votes are tabulated before being reported to the public. Although we may know who won the election within a few hours, election results are not official until the vote is certified by the election office. Official election results are certified under the seal of the county and are physically delivered to the state.

There’s a lot that goes into keeping Pennsylvania elections secure, but it’s worth every effort to preserve a true democracy where the voice of the people is always heard.

There is no evidence that Pennsylvania’s voter rolls or vote results have ever been hacked or compromised.

RUTH BADER GINSBURG 1933-2020
This edition of the *Lansdowne Leader* is dedicated to the life and memory of The Honorable Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg for her dedication to equality, liberty and justice. May she rest peacefully while those of us who remain take up the mantle of her unfinished work.

CHAIR’S COLUMN

If We Don’t Save Ourselves, No One Else Will!

By Charlotte Hummel

Having served as the chair of the Lansdowne Democratic Committee from time to time over the past 23 years, I have written a lot of these columns. Most of them focused on two issues – how wonderful it is to live in this borough and how important it is to vote in each and every election. This iteration will not be much different although I hope the level of importance and urgency of this message comes through. This has been a hard column to write for many reasons – the impact of an unprecedented pandemic, the uncertainty of the economy, the state of race relations, and the threat to democracy in our nation. Mostly it has been hard to write because while I am usually optimistic and hopeful, right now I am feeling nervous about our borough and afraid for our country.

Small Towns Need Big Hearts

Our little village is a pretty special place, but we are not altogether exceptional. We have some of the same issues – economic, political, sociological and environmental – as any other place. What makes us special though is that we are small enough that human connections can be nurtured to grow and strengthen. We support one another physically, emotionally, economically and spiritually. I look at groups like our churches and food pantry, our library, our school district and our various community based groups like Animal Friends of Lansdowne, Buy Nothing Lansdowne, and the Lansdowne Garden Club. Over the past six months we have maintained our closeness even as we also have kept our distance. We share what we are able and are encouraged to ask for what we need. Yet, as strong as we are, in times of fear, we must also acknowledge that we are fragile, perhaps even because of our diversity and closeness. Some remember the history

of our struggle to BECOME the town we are and see how far we have come. Others focus on how we can be even better, seeing only how far we have to go. In our passion to address economic, political or sociological issues, we risk damaging the very relationships we need to work through our different opinions or approaches. Personally, I fear that those who did not struggle through the evolution of Lansdowne (we were not always so diverse, progressive or welcoming) might not

I am truly afraid that this may very well be the last time we get to vote in this country.

appreciate how much effort it took and will continue to take to keep this place special. Even as we continue on a progressive and inclusive path, to be on the cutting and creative edge of social issues, to be successful, we need to remember that the people we are talking to or about over controversial or sensitive topics, are also our neighbors,

our friends and our volunteer leaders. Our love of our town, our shared goals and our closeness, and a bit of kindness, should guide our way. I have spent much of my adult life intentionally trying to create the kind of village where I wanted to live, raise and educate my kids, and even retire. My hope for Lansdowne has always been that people of goodwill and who think the best of each other’s intentions will find a way to face their differences and remain committed to making and keeping this place one we all want to live in, not only for us but for our children and grandchildren.

Voting In Your Last Election

That brings me to my usual second topic – voting. You will find much of the information you need about this November election in this edition of The Leader, on the internet or through other civic outlets. Deadlines for registration, applying for mail in ballots, returning those ballots and in person voting are laid out in many

different places. Signs around Lansdowne direct you to Votespa.com and other sources of information. One of the most important cultural norms in Lansdowne is that Lansdowne votes! We are not near 100%, but if we continually remind each other that voting is a part of living in Lansdowne, I think we can get pretty near that percentage. But voting this year raises another fear for me. In the 45 years that I have been a voter, and especially in the last several decades, I have often echoed the sentiments like: “Vote as if your life depends on it” or “Your vote is your voice” or “This is the most important election of your lifetime.” While I believed all of those things about previous elections, I also feel something entirely different about this one. I am truly afraid that this may very well be the LAST TIME we get to vote in this country. Now, that might sound like hyperbole or fear-mongering, but I am serious. I am frightened at where this country is headed under this clearly incompetent, lawless and immoral President and his corrupt administration. I am not confident that our current branches of government will be able to reign him in and protect our democracy if he remains in power. I do believe, sincerely, that this might be the last opportunity we get to vote in this nation. And if that resonates with you, then you are as afraid as I am. As chair of the Lansdowne Democratic Committee it is my privilege to write this column and share my feelings. I have worked hard to keep democracy alive and well in this town. Right now I need your help to conquer my fears and to find that place of hope in my heart again. You can help me, our community and our nation immediately by making a plan to vote, reaching out to your neighbors to make sure they have a plan as well. Before Election Day, make sure your ballot has been returned. Or, vote in person. Truly the only thing that is going to save us is for us to vote in overwhelming numbers. Whether it’s keeping our small village thriving or our democracy safe, it’s up to all of us and each of us. If we don’t save ourselves, no one else will.

BETTER LIVING THROUGH BIKE LANES

Progressive Pathways for Lansdowne’s Future

By Ben Hover

Located just outside of Philadelphia, PA, Lansdowne Borough possesses many amenities: beautiful homes, historic districts, shade trees, and numerous green spaces throughout the town. Over the past two decades, Lansdowne Borough Council with the support of Lansdowne Democrats has committed to our development as a gateway community to both Philadelphia and Delaware Counties. Borough Council has worked in the past few years to incorporate the Borough’s transportation planning into the long-term economic and transportation goals of State, Regional, and County Planners. Lansdowne Borough Council believes in working with regional planners to create community development, to maximize our potential in creating economic opportunity based on sound environmental initiatives. Through county and regional planning, Lansdowne Borough Councilmembers are working towards transit-oriented development and creating transportation alternatives to encourage residents to drive less and walk and bike more. Unlike other municipalities in our region, Lansdowne Borough possesses two SEPTA train stations and two trolley stations within walking or biking distance, as well as numerous bus stops. We are uniquely poised with access to public transportation to, not just maintain, but grow our status as a commuter suburb. Bicycle facilities create growth in real estate value, develop recreational activities

within the community, preserve the environment, and meet the goals of the Green New Deal.

Regional Planning for Transportation includes Bike Lanes

Last spring, both the Environment, Parks, and Recreation Committee and the Infrastructure Committees explored the plans presented by the Delaware County Bike Plan and the Delaware Valley Regional Plan to recommend the installation of Bike Facilities. In June 2019, Lansdowne Borough Council—under the leadership of then Council President Michael Schleigh—unanimously voted to develop a Bicycle Facilities Plan to unite with PennDOT’s Paving Plan to create dedicated Bike Lanes on Lansdowne Avenue from Marshall Road to Fairview Avenue. To explore the possibilities for connecting to these Bike lanes, Council voted to contract with the engineering firm of Pennoni and Associates to develop a preliminary plan for the creation of Bicycle Lanes connecting Baltimore Pike to Lansdowne. This would not only provide more recreational activities through Hoffman Park with the development of the Darby Creek Greenway but also create the vital East to West arterials connecting Lansdowne to the North to South Arterial of Lansdowne Avenue. On September 30, Pennoni Engineering presented their first draft plan to receive public comment and to make necessary revisions. In the coming

months, Lansdowne Borough Council will host Pennoni Engineers to offer additional periods of public comment to discuss any proposed changes along the anticipated bike routes. The proposed plans presented are not finalized and all public comments will be taken into consideration by Council in making its final decisions. This past Spring, Council continued the commitment to regional planning by passing unanimously a resolution to apply for a grant with the DVRPC to extend the Bicycle Facilities into all of Eastern Delaware County. With Lansdowne leading the way, Upper Darby Township, East Lansdowne Borough, and Yeadon Borough have all committed to and received a grant through the Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI) to develop Bicycle Facilities throughout the entire Eastern Delaware County Region. Lansdowne Borough recently received an \$85,000 grant to develop a plan to connect our bicycle Facility Plan with these other named communities, and to connect with the Circuit Trails in Southeast Pennsylvania. Through this development, the members of Council are fulfilling their promise to work to develop and create 21st Transportation Planning and to work with our neighbors in our common interests. Detailed Rationale for Bike Lanes Economic Impact of Bike Lanes The creation of dedicated bike lanes is a proven tool for economic development

in established mature communities, like Lansdowne. Because of the proven success of bike lanes in raising house values, continued on page 6

the
Lansdowne Leader

Published by the
Lansdowne Democratic Committee
P.O. Box 1136, Lansdowne, PA 19050
610-626-7086

Circulation: 5,000

Editor-in-Chief:
Catherine Coll

Production/Layout:
Hoff Communications, Inc.

DISCLAIMER: Inclusion in or coverage by the Lansdowne Leader of any individual, business, organization or event does not necessarily imply endorsement of The Leader’s political or editorial point of view.

The *Leader* welcomes your letters to the editor. Letters must include your name and a valid phone number in order to be considered for publication. Please address correspondence to:

Lansdowne Leader c/o
Lansdowne Democratic Committee
P.O. Box 1136, Lansdowne, PA 19050

LansdowneDemocrats.org
Facebook: Lansdowne Democrats

Save the Postal Service

By Craig Horle

Long before the internet was invented, the founders knew that democracy could not exist without a reliable system of conveying information. The Constitution of the United States in Article I, Section 8 authorizes Congress to “establish Post Offices and post Roads.” Thus, postal delivery by the government began with the birth of this country.

Millions of Americans have relied on the mail and in spite of the advances of privatized delivery services and

electronic communication, the United States Postal Service (USPS) continues to serve, because they provide reliable, cost-effective service to every single address in the United States and to military and diplomatic personnel overseas. Did you know that the USPS provides this cost-effective, reliable service without government revenue?

The modern USPS resulted from the 1971 Postal Reorganization Act, which was intended to make the USPS self-financing from its own revenues, and to make it an independent, non-political public service. It established a Board of Governors who were responsible for selecting the Postmaster General and setting policies and budgets. It allowed the USPS to use its revenue to finance its operations without any appropriation process.

The USPS has long enjoyed overwhelming support from Americans for the job it has done bringing all sorts of mail to every nook and cranny of the United States. Deliveries include, to name a few: medicines to those in need, in particular

Military Veterans; Social Security checks to older Americans; bills owed and bill payments; shipments to chicken hatcheries of newly hatched chicks; absentee ballots both domestic and from overseas; mail-in ballots in a number of states; holiday cards and packages; and packages of all sorts. Forty-eight percent of the world’s mail volume is handled by the

Postal Service. In addition, more than 6.6 million passport applications were accepted at Post Offices during 2019.

The USPS employs over 630,000 employees, and has collective bargaining agree-

ments with seven different unions. It has a long history of providing career opportunities to veterans, reservists, and their family members, currently employing nearly 100,000.

There are nearly 42,000 ZIP Codes in the country, all of which are serviced by the USPS, which almost certainly would not be serviced by private companies because of the lack of profit in many rural and small town areas. Additionally, USPS serves those in the military in 67 countries through Military Post Offices and those in diplomatic service in 113 countries through Diplomatic Postal Service.

In 2006, the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act was enacted by a lame-duck Republican-led Congress, a first effort at privatization. It required the USPS to create a \$72 billion fund to pay for the cost of its post-retirement health care costs. These payments would be projected to fund the liability of a period in excess of 50 years, whereas previously the service funded the benefits on a pay-as-you-go



basis. This burden, a pre-funded mandate, applies to no other federal agency. In 2018, President Trump’s Task Force on the USPS reaffirmed this effort in a further push to privatize the postal system. In early 2020 the Board of Governors proposed a stimulus for the USPS of \$25 billion, which was rejected by the Trump administration.

The current Board of Governors, all appointed by Trump, selected Louis DeJoy, a major Trump and Republican donor, as Postmaster General. Upon assuming office in June 2020, DeJoy began taking measures, such as banning overtime; extra trips to deliver mail; and removing sorting equipment and collection boxes - allegedly to reduce costs. In effect, this just slowed down the mail service. In July 2020, he sent a letter to 46 states warning that USPS might not be able to meet deadlines for requesting and casting absentee ballots. In August 2020, he displaced 23 senior officials, disrupting oversight of day-to-day operations. While DeJoy oversaw dismantling USPS capabilities that delayed mail delivery, he cited that as an “unintended consequence”. Simultaneously, President Trump told a TV interviewer that he was blocking funds for the postal service in order to hinder mail-in voting.

Democrats raised the alarm and called for the measures to be rolled back. Rep. Gerald E. Connolly, who chairs the House committee that oversees the post office, said the reorganization was “deliberate sabotage”. Concerns were raised that mailed ballots for the November 3 election might not reach election offices on time.

Voting by mail has been growing exponentially as a common practice in the United States: in 1996 (8%); in 2016 (20%); and in 2020 (predicted 40%). This prediction is due to COVID-19 and the possible danger of congregating at polling places. The analysis predicted that 80 million ballots could be cast by mail in 2020, more than double the number in 2016. This might seem alarming at first, until you consider the USPS track record. During the December 2019 holiday season, the USPS projected that it delivered 2.5 billion pieces of first class mail (probably dominated by holiday greeting cards) and 800 million packages. This occurred prior to Trump’s fears about mail-in ballots and prior to Mr. DeJoy’s obstruction to the mail service. A healthy USPS, reinstated to its proper functioning level could readily handle the surge in mail-in votes. Let’s put pressure on our officials to get back to that level.

CONGRESSWOMAN SCANLON INTRODUCES THE ACCESSIBLE VOTING ACT

Voting Made Easier For All

By Kellie Bowker

There is no doubt that the November 2020 election is the most consequential of our lifetime. And there is also no doubt that there are people in power who are trying to make voting as difficult as possible, thereby limiting the number of people who have a say in our democracy. Fortunately, in Pennsylvania’s 5th District, Representative Mary Gay Scanlon is working to make voting easier for all of us, but especially for people who have faced challenges voting in the past.

On July 23, Congresswoman Scanlon, along with Jamie Raskin (D-MD) introduced the Accessible Voting Act bill to expand voting rights for older Americans and Americans with disabilities. On her website, Scanlon has stated that “Every day, but particularly during this Pandemic, we must ensure that every eligible voter has access to the ballot and can vote safely. The accessible Voting Act will make it easier for older Americans and Americans with disabilities to get voting information, request their mail-in ballots, access voter registration and absentee ballot application, and will support states to make that happen.”

The Accessible Voting Act would, among other things, establish an Office of Accessibility to support and oversee state efforts to expand voter accessibility and to establish a state grant program to improve accessibility for voter registration, voting in person, and voting by mail. It would also provide up-to-date voting information to ensure voters know how to register, cast an absentee ballot, and how to find help if their vote is challenged. In addition, Scanlon has joined the congressional oversight to protect the postal service, which will need all the support it can get to ensure vote by mail is successful during this pandemic.

In addition to these legislative efforts, Congresswoman Scanlon’s office has spearheaded a large volunteer campaign, sending 30,000 postcards and running phone banks across her District to encourage voters to sign up to vote by mail as early as possible.

If you’re a Democrat in Delaware County, you probably already know many people doing voter outreach with postcards and phone banking. If you would like to get involved, contact the following: <https://www.mobilize.us/padems/>



“Naked ballots” are mail in or absentee ballots returned in the return envelope without the white privacy envelope that says “OFFICIAL BALLOT.”

TO MAKE SURE YOUR BALLOT IS COUNTED:

1. Completely fill the bubble for each candidate you want to vote for.
2. Put your ballot in the white privacy envelope (the one that says “Official Ballot”) and seal it.
3. Put the privacy envelope with the ballot inside it in the return envelope (the return label has your unique voter identifier so the County can track the ballot) and seal it.
4. Sign the affirmation on the back of the return envelope and write the date you signed it.
5. Drop the return envelope with the ballot inside in the mailbox (postage prepaid), a Delco ballot drop box or take it to a Delaware County Election Office.

Remember, only you can return your ballot unless you are disabled. Disabled voters can designate an agent to return their ballot.

ADAPTING TO THE NEW NORMAL IN EDUCATION

Teaching By Day During COVID

By Joe Martino

I teach science at Penn Wood High School at the Green Avenue campus (WPHS-GAC). Four days ago I began to document our first week of staff development at the William Penn School District, writing a bit each day about this new remote experience. Looking back, it feels really reflective of this pandemic and time during Trump’s first term: I have a hard time relating how I feel today to how I felt at the beginning of the week, because the beginning of the week feels like 3 million years ago. I also understand that when this is published, things may be completely different from when I wrote this.

Day One

As I log in on Zoom, there is an awkward, eerie silence. Normally at this time, staff would be sitting and speaking together, seeing how our summers went, where we’ve vacationed or worked, and what grade our kids are going into this year. This year it’s different. This year I am staring at this screen with all these faces staring back at me. In the left corner of each face is a little red microphone symbol with a slash through it. My colleagues and I are all muted and for good reason: can you imagine four hundred plus educators all having personal conversations coming out through one speaker? It couldn’t be done. It’s sort of deflating. Usually at this time the nervous excitement for the new year amongst the staff around me is palpable, but now it’s just the silence of my home office and these tiny, familiar faces.

With all that being said, I still am glad to be in the uncomfortable silence of my office and not together, because I recognize that if I was in person with my colleagues what I would be feeling would not be the excitement in the room, but anxiety throughout it. Massive, massive anxiety. Due to the failed federal response of the Republicans in charge, there is no way to safely open schools in our country, hybrid or otherwise, and I am grateful our

district, whose school board is led by Democrats, recognized this unfortunate reality.

Day Two

Today we started off with a staff meeting for our building members, which for WPHS-GAC is around 100 people. The previous day we weren’t able to talk and didn’t hear from our administrators, but today we do and it is extremely welcomed. You can already see the effect of the pandemic on people and the way we are relating to one another. Our principal opened up by giving a personal heartfelt story and then segued into explaining how she will have a one-on-one conversation with every staff member this year, telling us the specific questions she was going to ask us. It is just a reflection that many in our society are realizing how important our social-emotional well-being is and how we need to help take care of one another; in order to do that, we first need to know each other. This made me feel really good, like we are all realizing that our relationships are some of the most important things we have.

Day Three

Wednesday starts off with a department Zoom meeting. Finally, a small group and we all can talk! A lesson I have already learned is that I must incorporate the ability for my students to talk and interact, or their virtual experience will be awful. Speaking freely with a smaller group of people is far more reflective of the natural social environment.

After this meeting we have a professional development (PD) that is run by fellow teachers. As is the norm of teacher led PDs, it is extremely useful and targeted to our needs. They go through tips and tricks to use in Google Classroom, as well as additional programs used to increase engagement. As we mess around with some things, the facilitators stick around and answer questions as teachers type them in the chat, because, unlike in the spring where a lot of focus was just making sure our students were

showing up in the chaos of what was the beginning of a global pandemic, this time for me the focus is engagement. I hope that I will be spending less time just trying to get in contact with students and parents and more time delivering fun, engaging content while connecting with my students on a personal level, more like I was able to in person. It’s at this point that I am starting to get a little excited now that I have a taste of what is available for us to use in our virtual classroom, instead of just being fearful of how this is all going to work.

Day Four

I hate this. We have to go over our school improvement plan and try to figure out how we as teachers can overcome issues caused by the poverty and systemic racism our district faces. Let’s not forget to mention that our district has literally had to sue the state because of the lack of funding they have provided. Test scores and attendance are used to judge how ‘good’ our school is, but test scores have the strongest correlation to housing costs in a district.

Have low attendance rates in your school? Well, the state expects that teachers just make their lessons more engaging so that students will show up and our legislators won’t have to address the root issues of the homelessness or lack of affordable childcare due to poverty that keeps many students out of school. If only we just made our lessons more engaging, or called their parents more to stress to them how important showing up at school is. Apparently if we do this some students would no longer have to stay home to watch their little brother or sister, they’d just show up to class. It disgusts me, and I don’t blame my administrators for trying to push us to find ways to get students in school because their job performance is tied to these scores and they don’t have the legislative power to fix the root issues. However, I do expect my district leaders to use their platform to verbally speak out and educate our communities against the root issues that hold our students back.

The rest of the day is awesome because we get to collaborate with our colleagues. This is a huge part that is missing in the US education system. Many countries’ school systems have a lot more time dedicated in their day to collaboration because they understand its value. During this time, I showed colleagues one of the add-ons to Google Slides that helps make a slide presentation so much more engaging.

Thanks to our Zoom meeting, they can experience the student side, but can also see the teacher side because I am able to share my screen with them. We go back and forth on what we like, how we can use this, how this should be implemented, that we should add social and emotional questions at the beginning and end, to go beyond just our content area, and keep in mind the whole student. It’s now that my excitement is once again peaking for the upcoming year. I am finally realizing that not only can we make this work, but we are creating a whole new possibility for student engagement. They live a lot of their lives through a digital medium so we are now meeting them where they spend most of their time. This really might be a great thing!

Day Off

I have been part of a book group with some staff that has been meeting each week to discuss racism. Today one of our members brought up that even though some of us never spoke much beyond a passing hello in the hallway, we have developed such powerful connections that when we can finally see each other in person we will have to give hugs to each other. And it’s true, we were able to form strong connections with each other, though we never once met in person, and this really shows me that if done right, strong connections can be made in our virtual classrooms. As I finish writing this, the last thoughts in my head are about how excited I am to get to know my new students and start this virtual school year!

Delaware County Will Finally Get a Health Department

By Nicole Johns

The Covid-19 Pandemic has made it evidently clear the importance of a strong and well-coordinated public health system. Delaware County lacks a county department of public health, despite decades of advocacy and work by community leaders and organizations. But things will change in 2021 when the county will finally institute a health department. This article will give the background on the process that led to this outcome.

The Robert Wood Johnson County Health Rankings are of particular interest in comparing the surrounding suburban counties that have public health departments. Delaware County is ranked 47 for health outcomes and 33 in length of life, compared to neighboring counties which have significantly lower (better) rankings. In short, the disparities of race, social justice and environmental factors are taking a toll in some long neglected municipalities in the county.

Act 315, Pennsylvania’s Local Health Administration Law, provides funding to improve local health administration by authorizing state grants to counties and to certain municipalities which have established departments of health and meet certain requirements. Additional funding

is provided by state and federal grants and local funds. Services are aimed at improving the respective community’s public health with direct health services, health education and community health leadership and control.



Emphasis is placed on primary and secondary preventive health services. The overall goal of these programs is to reduce the disease burden and loss of life among the local population and to promote healthy lifestyles. Act 315-funded health departments are required to provide public health

programs in the areas of administrative and supportive services, personal health services and environmental health services.

County health departments in Pennsylvania utilize methods such as surveillance, code-enforcement, prevention and control measures to address infectious diseases such as rabies, sexually transmitted infections (STI’s), hepatitis, HIV, and of course, Covid-19. Delaware County has more cases and higher case rates of STIs, HIV and some vaccine preventable diseases such as Pertussis, than our neighboring suburban counties. Public health departments have a significant role in the surveillance, prevention, and treatment of infectious diseases, particularly sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections like Hepatitis C and HIV. Our neighboring counties have Public

Health Departments to target testing and prevention services to communities who are most at risk and have a high prevalence. Those departments receive state and federal monies to do that work.

Delaware County faces several environmental health issues that raise important social justice concerns for many municipalities in Delaware County. Surveillance, code enforcement and prevention measures need to be enacted to further reduce cancer, asthma and lead rates while ensuring water quality and environmental conservation. Prevalence of childhood lead poisoning needs to be addressed particularly in older housing units built before 1978, which in Delaware County is 83% of the housing units. Delaware County has received an “F” grade from the American Lung Association for high level ozone days. The Asthma and Allergy Foundation has ranked the Philadelphia area as the 4th worst asthma capital in the nation. Chester City has long been known as one of the nation’s worst cases of environmental racism and has a childhood asthma hospitalization rate three times the state average and almost three times the Delaware County average.

An improvement of maternal child health outcomes in Delaware County would benefit from a county health department by better coordinated community engagement, improving awareness, access and utilization of services by current providers in the county. In Delaware County, there

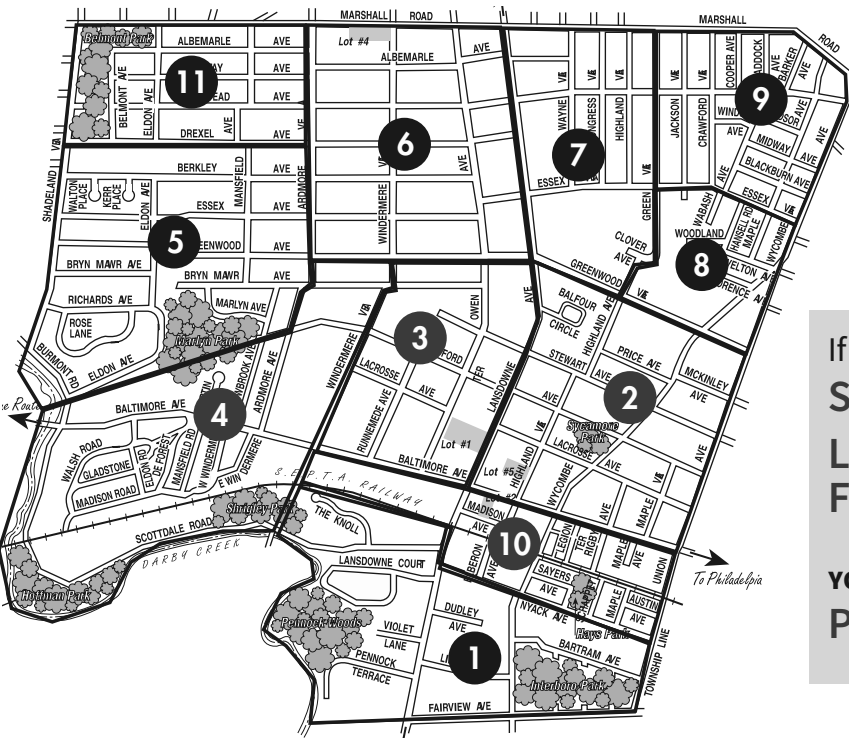
continued on page 6

Polling Place Updates for Lansdowne Borough

Tuesday, November 3, 2020 General Election

Due to health concerns caused by COVID-19, the Delaware County Bureau of Elections voted to consolidate numerous precincts in Lansdowne Borough for the November 3, 2020 General Election.

- Precincts 2, 3, and 4** will now vote at Penn Wood High School.
- Precinct 10** will now vote at the Twentieth Century Club.



UPDATED POLLING LOCATIONS

- 1st Precinct:** Twentieth Century Club
- *2nd Precinct:** PENN WOOD HIGH SCHOOL
- *3rd Precinct:** PENN WOOD HIGH SCHOOL
- *4th Precinct:** PENN WOOD HIGH SCHOOL
- 5th Precinct:** Ardmore Ave. Elementary School
- 6th Precinct:** Ardmore Ave. Elementary School
- 7th Precinct:** Penn Wood High School
- 8th Precinct:** Penn Wood High School
- 9th Precinct:** Pepper's Pharmacy
- *10th Precinct:** TWENTIETH CENTURY CLUB
- 11th Precinct:** Ardmore Ave. Elementary School
- *NEW LOCATION**

If you **PREVIOUSLY VOTED** at
**Simpson Gardens or
Lansdowne
Fire Company**

YOU WILL VOTE AT
Penn Wood High School

If you **PREVIOUSLY VOTED** at
**Lansdowne Public
Library**

YOU WILL VOTE AT
Twentieth Century Club

BIKE LANES

continued from page 2

Delaware County Council, DVRPC, and even the National Association of Realtors have invested in the creation of bike lanes throughout the county, state, and country. Bike lanes have been repeatedly shown to enhance quality of life, and recreational investment in communities.

Delaware County adopted the County Plan for Housing, in which Lansdowne Borough is identified as a mature neighborhood. In the Housing plan, the County identified both assets and liabilities in communities. They made recommendations to build upon the assets possessed by Lansdowne, as both a commuter suburb and a community developed with shade trees, flowering yards, and access to numerous parks. The Housing Plan recommends “creat[ing] walkable neighborhoods” and “foster(ing) distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.” Similarly, the Housing Plan found that communities that provide amenities like access to bike trails will benefit from long term investments in bicycle facilities. According to the housing plan, “Focusing on community character can be a major selling point in attracting and retaining residents, especially in areas struggling with school quality or high taxes. ... Communities that actively promote attractive features like walkability, transit access, and mixed uses can be poised to take advantage of this emerging market.”

Similarly, the National Association of Realtors published a policy paper in 2017 “Bike Lanes: Build them and They will Come,” which details their policy to encourage communities to build bicycle lanes as part of a “complete streets” policy. The policy position states, “Walkable communities reflect the theory of Placemaking in that they create places where people want to live and visit. ... Many communities are implementing Complete Street policies, which are designed and operated to make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bike to work for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities” (<https://www.nar.realtor/blogs/spaces-to-places/bike-lanes-build-them-and-they-will-come>).

Several studies show that the creation of bicycle lanes and the support of ancillary businesses, like bike shops, small eateries, and tourism attracted by the bike lanes and bike trails, helps to support small communities like Lansdowne. Even today, VisitDelco, the official tourism promotion agency, has an entire section devoted to walking, biking, or hiking the trails in Delaware County. One of the trails highlighted is the Darby Creek Trail—the

same trail Lansdowne is working with Delaware County to connect the Darby Trail, from Darby all of the way into Haverford, as a biking and walking trail. With the completion of the Greenwood Avenue bike lane, we will have an arterial network connecting the Darby Creek to Lansdowne Avenue bike lanes, with a direct connection to downtown Lansdowne businesses. The development of the bicycle facilities plan is one part of a larger strategic plan to invest in the arts, the green spaces, historic buildings, and the development of bike lanes to connect to Lansdowne Avenue and Baltimore Avenue bikeways.

Environmental Impact of Bike Lanes

Finally, the Lansdowne Borough Council has consistently fought for the belief that our decision-making should be based on science. From the initiatives of the first majority Democratic Borough Council in developing recycling programs in Lansdowne, and fighting for preservation of open space and Green space in Reservoir Park and Gateway Slope, Lansdowne Borough Council has positioned our community as a haven for environmental policy. To that end, Lansdowne Borough is a long-standing Tree City (designated by the Arbor Day Foundation) and recently earned Birdtown status (as recognized by the Audubon Society) because of our newly

adopted Native Plant and Bee-Keeping Ordinances, and recently created Environmental Advisory Council.

As part of this initiative, the elected members of Lansdowne Borough Council are working with the Environmental Advisory Council on strategies towards the goal of 100% clean energy as advocated by the Sierra Club. We believe the science of the climate crisis is real, and action needs to be taken. According to the statement released by Congressional Democrats, the goal of a Green New Deal involves “overhauling transportation systems in the United States to eliminate pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector as much as is technologically feasible” (<https://bikeleague.org/content/five-principles-bike-new-deal>).

By encouraging the development of bike lanes, Council is working to effectuate the progressive goals of the Green New Deal and create the necessary infrastructure to encourage walking and biking in our town over driving. By adding clear, demarcated bike lanes to the already accessible to public transportation excellent neighborhoods for walking, Lansdowne Borough will have the clear green infrastructure advocated by Green New Deal champions, and move further towards being a Green Place to grow in.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

continued from page 4

were 13.5 deaths per 1,000 births (264 fetal deaths and 191 infant deaths) between 2008-12, which is higher than in the surrounding counties. Black, non-Hispanic women are about three times more likely than white women to experience a fetal or infant death (21.5 deaths/1,000 births vs. 7.4 deaths/1,000 births). Maternal child health services commonly provided by a public health department are primarily prevention focused such as WIC, family planning and prenatal care. In the case of Delaware County WIC services are already provided and would most likely continue in the current structure with a county health department providing support if needed.

Delaware County also has a significant challenge in regard to drug use and overdose deaths. In Delaware County, there were an estimated 13,570 individuals with drug use disorder (2016) and 190 estimated accidental and undetermined drug overdose deaths in 2017-2018. The role local public health department’s play as conveners and/or supporters of community-level coalitions and partnerships is critical to address the multifaceted nature of this epidemic. This type of collaboration and coordina-

tion between federal, state, and local partners is integral to identifying and implementing our county-level response. The opioid epidemic looks different in every county – the economics, demographics, and cultural characteristics shape how drug use looks in our community. Therefore, our county-level response, including prevention and interventions, need to address local concerns while integrating local resources and systems.

The importance of having a local health department has never been as evident as it has been in the last year. Delaware County had to contract with Chester County to help out with our county response to the Covid-19 pandemic. We are lucky that we have neighbors willing and able to help out, but this is not the same as having dedicated local public health professionals working day-to-day to protect and ensure the county’s health and well-being. Currently, there are six county and four municipal health departments in Pennsylvania. It is notable that Delaware County is the nation’s largest county (by population) without a local health department. It’s time we change that and support local efforts to develop a county health department and ensure our county is a healthy and safe place for all residents.

Endorsed Candidates in State and Local Elections

Mary Gay Scanlon U.S. House of Representatives

Congresswoman Mary Gay Scanlon, an education and human rights advocate, currently represents Pennsylvania’s 5th Congressional District. She was first sworn into U.S. House of Representatives on November 13, 2018. Congresswoman Scanlon’s priorities in Congress include voting rights, education, common sense gun safety legislation, and protecting the rights of children, families, veterans and our seniors. She currently serves as Vice Chair of the House Judiciary Committee, the House Rules Committee, and the House Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress. Congresswoman Scanlon played a vital role in the impeachment proceedings against President Trump.

Nina Ahmad PA Auditor General

A resident of Philadelphia PA for 35 years, Nina is a tireless progressive advocate for women’s rights. In her extensive record of service, advocacy, electoral support and activism, Nina has always centered women’s rights with a focus on intersectionality and diversity. As a scientist, Dr. Ahmad is uniquely qualified to bring expertise to the data collected by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Nina has earned several important endorsements such as the Delaware County Progressive Activist Caucus, Philadelphia’s Southwest Coalition, State Senator Art

Haywood, State Senator Katie Muth, Philadelphia Local AFL-CIO Council, IBEW Local 98, and of course, Delaware County Democrats and Lansdowne Democrats!

Josh Shapiro Pennsylvania Attorney General

Attorney General (AG) of PA Josh Shapiro previously held office as Chairman of the Montgomery County Commissioners. The highlights of his work as AG include: identifying 301 predator priests and thousands of victims of the Catholic Church. He has twice secured national injunctions protecting women’s access to no-cost contraception as required by the Affordable Care Act. He is currently leading a multistate investigation into pharmaceutical manufacturers and distributors and defending voters’ rights in a multi-state lawsuit seeking to halt unilateral changes at the Post Office.

Joseph Torsella Pennsylvania State Treasurer

Ambassador (Ret.) Joseph M. Torsella is a successful civic leader who will bring integrity, energy, and vision to the office of Pennsylvania State Treasurer. A Democrat, Joe was the first declared candidate for the April 2016 primary election. Prior to serving as Treasurer, Torsella served as an U.S. Representative to the United Nations and led the development of the National Constitution Center.

Margo Davidson Pennsylvania House of Representatives

Davidson was first elected to the House of Representatives in 2010. Throughout her years in public service, she has fought to stabilize communities and create jobs. Davidson serves on the Commerce, Consumer Affairs, Finance, Insurance, and Professional Licensure committees, as well as the Committee on Committees. She has authored and co-sponsored legislation that supports small business growth, public safety and minimizes the tax burden on the middle class and working families. She serves as vice chair of the PA SAFE Caucus. Davidson is the first Democrat, the first African American and the first woman to represent the 164th Legislative District. Representative Davidson’s daily COVID-19 email newsletter has been a vital source of local information during the crisis, sign up at RepDavidson@pahouse.net

LANSDOWNE DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Charlotte K. Hummel, Chair | 610-626-7086 |
| Suzanne K. McElroy, First Vice Chair | 610-213-1172 |
| Clare Hughes, Vice Chair for Engagement | 610-613-3997 |
| Catherine Coll, Vice Chair for Communications | 202-669-7933 |
| Kate Schleigh, Secretary | 610-284-0411 |
| William T. Smith, Treasurer | 610-213-2022 |

■ COMMITTEE MEMBERS

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| 1st Precinct | |
| William Horton..... | 267-240-6747 |
| Sinoe Naji-Taylor | 267-716-1867 |
| 2nd Precinct | |
| Michael Schleigh | 215-740-7047 |
| Kate Schleigh | 610-406-3660 |
| 3rd Precinct | |
| Elliot Borgman | 610-715-6803 |
| William Hodgson | 610-259-0884 |
| 4th Precinct | |
| Craig Horle | 215-823-9607 |
| Susan Corbin | 610-284-0411 |
| 5th Precinct | |
| Michael McElroy | 610-284-5503 |
| Desmondé Pringle | 610-202-2743 |
| 6th Precinct | |
| Bill Smith | 610-213-2022 |
| Allison Truman..... | 610-453-2547 |
| 7th Precinct | |
| Mark Anthony French | 610-517-5251 |
| Bernadette Domenick..... | 610-585-2353 |
| 8th Precinct | |
| Two vacancies | |
| 9th Precinct | |
| Louis Govinden | 610-213-3789 |
| Jan Tong..... | 215-518-3605 |
| 10th Precinct | |
| Peggie McCormack..... | 610-772-3947 |
| One vacancy | |
| 11th Precinct | |
| Kellie Bowker | 484-410-9209 |
| Kristin Bellafante | 703-597-5857 |

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| At-Large | |
| Magda Byrne | 484-362-3351 |
| Tony Campuzano | 610-259-0543 |
| Caryl Carpenter | 610-623-6449 |
| Catherine Coll | 202-669-7933 |
| Andy Farquhar | 610-626-7086 |
| Wardell Holt II | 215-704-3869 |
| Benjamin Hover | 610-357-3731 |
| Clare Hughes | 610-613-3997 |
| Charlotte K. Hummel | 610-626-7086 |
| Suzanne McElroy | 610-213-1172 |
| Charles L Royal | 610-284-9338 |
| Joe Stevenson | 610-623-3487 |
| Laurie Wolfe | 215-823-9407 |



Photos by
Catherine Coll

Though COVID may have us socially distanced, Lansdowne is still socially aware, and we communicate our values with lawn signs.

Bottom left: Greenhorn Gardens is one of many vendors with delicious fresh produce at the Lansdowne Farmers Market.

Below: Rose Fagan is one of the many faces smiling behind a mask at the market.



JOE BIDEN
continued from page 1

government oppressing and marginalizing any of its citizens demonstrates that as president every American would be accorded equality under the law, and he would be the president of all the people regardless if someone voted for him or not.

Likewise, he would assiduously work to heal the gaping rift created and fomented in the country. His longstanding commitment to equal rights makes him more than qualified to tackle the nationwide epidemic of conflict between people of color and the police. Biden has a plan to institute a better screening and selection process for police candidates, better training, better supervision and accountability, transparency regarding investigations of alleged wrongdoing, and a national database which would prevent terminated officers from hopscotching from one city, township, or municipality to another for work.

Biden will harness his vast international experience to focus on renewing frayed relationships with our international allies. Additionally, he will once again establish America as a global force for good, by supporting our traditional, hard-won alliances in NATO, and not coddling autocrats or dictators. He will support international human rights and restore alliances that have been severely frayed. The international community will once again know that pronouncements by the United States government will carry weight and have credibility.

As a parent whose child has served America in uniform, someone who has comforted grieving families of our fallen sons and daughters, and who has unwaveringly supported our troops, President Biden will never disparage those who bear arms on behalf of the nation, nor ridicule those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. Understanding the sacred duty and honor embodied in wearing the uniform, he will never relegate our troops to being a prop or backdrop to achieve some political end or on a whim send our troops into harm’s way.

As the world struggles with the Coronavirus pandemic, America is strangely absent from the world stage. Unlike previous instances where the U.S. led the response to pandemic outbreaks such as the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), and the swine flu of 2009, under a Biden administration, trust will be restored in the scientific and medical community to respond as they have previously done. Just as he did when he was tasked by President Obama to lead America’s response to the Ebola outbreak, he will work collaboratively with all legislators to get funding for the initiative, even under Republican controlled House of Representatives. Joe Biden will mobilize the country’s medical community, public health experts, and first responders, and employ a national approach in collaboration with state governors, to eradicate the contagion.

Recognizing the economic havoc brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, Joe Biden will again harness his experience and expertise in leading the country out of its current economic quagmire. Like the Obama

KAMALA HARRIS
continued from page 1

Howard calls you home as Black person in America and tells you there is a place for you. Like Harris, I joined the first sorority founded by Black women- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. In that organization we learned, and continue to learn, that even just a generation removed from slavery, Black women are unstoppable.

Kamala’s fight for working families started in the Alameda County District Attorney’s Office, where she focused on prosecuting child sexual assault cases. From there, she became the first Black woman elected as San Francisco’s District Attorney. In this position, she started a program to provide first-time drug offenders second chances with the opportunity to earn a high school degree and find a job. In just a short time, she had done what she learned as an Alpha Kappa Alpha woman, and strived to be of service to all mankind.

In 2010, Kamala became the first Black woman to be elected California Attorney General, overseeing the country’s second largest Justice Department, only behind the U.S. Department of Justice. In this capacity, she managed a \$735 million budget and oversaw more than 4,800 attorneys and other employees. As California Attorney General, Kamala fought for families and won a \$20 billion settlement for California homeowners against big banks that were unfairly foreclosing on homes. I remember hearing President Obama speak of her with

Administration’s response to the Great Recession of 2008, he will bring together America’s best and brightest to turn the economy around. With his unwavering faith in America’s ingenuity and its people, he will not only bring back jobs lost due to the pandemic, but will introduce legislation to retrain workers in new technologies such as the manufacturing of autonomous vehicles and wind turbines, artificial intelligence, and the development of wearable devices such as smartwatches that will provide the ability to increasingly predict and treat health issues in people even before they experience any symptoms.

Acknowledging the fact that planet Earth is the only habitable planet for our species, Joe Biden will restore credibility to the Environmental Protection Agency. Recognizing that climate change is a global challenge, under a Biden Administration, America will unite our allies by recommitting to the Paris Accord and lead by example by reducing America’s dependence on fossil fuel.

Empathy is a word often used to describe Joe Biden. His ability to step outside himself, and to genuinely feel compassion for what someone is experiencing, is brought about by his faith, and his experience with tragedy. At 29 he lost his wife and one-year-old daughter, decades later, he lost his son Beau to cancer. Borne out of the crucible of these life experiences, he understands the pain of ordinary Americans. Also, as a young boy, witnessing his father losing his job and the accompanying humiliation and embarrassment that followed, provided the Vice President with the capacity to place himself in the shoes of another, and understand the worry and concerns brought about by financial insecurity. He has known loss, defeat, struggle, and suffering, and this has made him uniquely qualified to understand the current state of the nation, and the struggles ordinary Americans are currently experiencing in these uncertain times. Fate has a way of bringing to the fore individuals that are equipped and ready to tackle the challenges of the moment. George Washington, James Madison, and Thomas Jefferson were such individuals – flawed and imperfect though they were. Abraham Lincoln was another when the very survival of the Republic hung by a tenuous thread. Also, Martin Luther King Jr. answered the clarion call of a nation torn by racial strife. And now, in our day, at this most momentous time, Joseph Robinette Biden Jr. has for the second time, unselfishly answered the call of a distraught nation – our beloved America.

**VOTING
QUESTIONS?**

CALL DELAWARE COUNTY
ELECTIONS HOTLINE AT:

610-891-VOTE

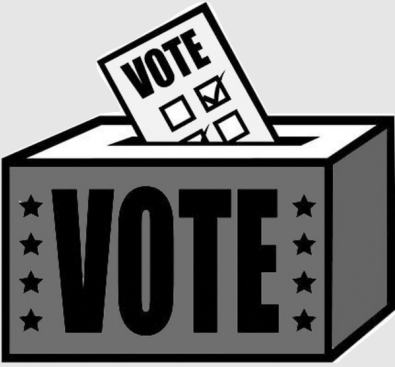
admiration and I proudly thought that someday my sorority sister could lead the world.

Kamala worked to protect Obamacare, helped win marriage equality for all, defended California’s landmark climate change law and won a \$1.1 billion settlement against a for-profit education company that scammed students and veterans. Kamala also fought for California communities and prosecuted transnational gangs who drove human trafficking, gun smuggling and drug rings.

Since being elected to the U.S. Senate in 2016, Kamala has introduced and co-sponsored legislation to help the middle class, increase the minimum wage to \$15, reform cash bail, and defend the legal rights of refugees and immigrants. More importantly for me, she has shed light on lynching in America and continues to fight to protect Black women against increased rates of maternal mortality.

Kamala serves on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that deals with the nation’s most sensitive national security and international threats. She also serves on the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee where she oversees the federal government’s response to natural disasters and emergencies, including the Trump administration’s response to COVID-19.

On the Senate Judiciary Committee, Kamala has gained national attention as she has held Trump administration officials accountable and was a powerful voice against Trump’s conservative judicial nominations. Moreover, her quick wit, pointed questions, and telling facial expressions have indicated to us all that she is not falling for the lies and won’t let us either.



**MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK
MAKE A PLAN TO VOTE!**

How to check if you are **registered to vote:**
www.votespa.com

You can register to vote on this site.
Last day to register to vote is October 19.

How to apply for **Mail-In Ballot:**
www.votesPA.com/ApplyMailBallot
or in-person to county election office:
201 W. Front St, Room 220, Media, PA 19063
You do not need a reason for a mail-in ballot.

Deadline for Mail-In Ballots:
Tuesday, Oct. 27, 5 pm
But why wait? Do it now!

What to do with your completed ballot:
Take or mail to Delco Election Bureau, 201 W. Front St, Room 220, Media, PA 19063.
Take to the Official Ballot Drop Box in front of the Lansdowne Firehouse.
Ballots will be picked up daily from Drop Box.
Deadline for completed ballots is 8pm Nov 3.
DO NOT take completed ballot to polling places.

Check the status of your mail-in ballot at
PAvoterservices.pa.gov

**GENERAL ELECTION:
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3**
Your vote! Your voice!
See map of polling places on Page 6
Polls Open 7:00 AM – 8:00 PM
If you opt to vote in person, you will need to wear a mask.

Results: Due to the high number of mail-in ballots expected, it is possible and quite probable that we will not know the results of the election as quickly as usual. Take heart and don't believe rumors or predictions prior to the official count.

Harris was one of the best candidates for President this cycle and is absolutely the choice for Vice-President. She had the strength to hold Joe Biden accountable for his former anti-busing stance and the grace to accept his growth and work with him. She ended her campaign for President but stayed present and is now poised to be the first woman to serve as Vice-President.

This is the most important election of my lifetime. It comes after 4 years of watching the Trump administration destroy lives, decimate morals, and disrespect the beautiful diversity of our country. It is with this backdrop that we move into the election season. It is with this backdrop that choose between a man who makes America hate again and a man who decided with his choice for running mate to remind us all of who we used to be. We are Americans. We are people who grew up believing that we could be anything we wanted to be. Today, the Biden Harris ticket shows us that we can and should go after our American Dream.

Jacquie Jones is a Delco Democratic Committee member, school board member, and an attorney, <http://mychesterlawyer.com>