

Official Newsletter of the Pennsylvania Federation of Democratic Women, Inc.

Kathy Jordan, Editor

Star Brown, Business Manager

Spring 2025 Issue

THE SURVEY

SAVE THE DATE

Election Day May 20th, 2025

Next Board Meeting 2025 97th Annual Convention

97th Annual Convention July 31 – August 3, 2025

Fall Survey October 2025

Find us on the Web & in Instagram

www.PFDW.org

#DemWomenRule

PFDW Mission

In 1927 The Pennsylvania Federation of Democratic Women, Inc., was founded to promote the appointment and Democratic election of responsible women to positions within all branches of government, to encourage the advancement of women in both the public and private sectors, and to advocate the principles of the Democratic Party.



President's Message



I am generally a fan of Spring. I love how light shines more and more each day and life begins again, replacing the cold and darkness of winter. I see life in the garden, in the animals that emerge from their slumber, in people as they become more active in the neighborhood. I am experiencing more challenges this year - a little more grey, cold lingered a bit longer, more storms both in nature and in real life

Mother Nature is very tuned in to our political times - she knows we are also weathering more stormy dark times, with the onslaught of news every day. The national landscape is frightening, almost surreal. The uncertainty of "what next?" is daunting. While I usually feel inspired by the promise of spring and more good things to come, I feel more challenged to motivate and sometimes question what the

next best action could be. Despite this insecurity, I see leaders in Pennsylvania continuing to make strides, fight back, and push forward in new ways to keep our Commonwealth steady and strong. How can we in the throes of this administration's first hundred days bring light and beauty to our work and not succumb to the darkness?

On March 25, we held our annual Women in Blue event and it was an outstanding day. Over 80 of us were greeted by many of our leaders from the house, Senate, as well as Judge Michael Wojcik and Lt Governor Austin Davis. We were greeted on the House floor, the Senate gallery, and were able to take part in a rally to protect our healthcare and to ensure PA residents can continue to receive services they need.

On Sunday, April 6, also in Harrisburg, we celebrated our Outstanding Elected Women of 2025. We celebrated 15 honorees from around the state and they shared enlightening stories of how they persevere in each of their respective roles to bring Democratic values to every sector of leadership.

We can bring light in small ways every day to our work. I am hopeful for all of the great efforts and energy that we are all making on the board, in our respective communities, and with our individual clubs. I am still concerned at the influence of dark money and constant negative messaging, but I know that the strong voices and actions of our Federated Democratic Women will continue to bring strength and new resolve wherever we serve. I encourage all of you to make your way to Philadelphia this summer for our Annual convention "Old and New Keeping Pennsylvania Blue", from July 31 – August 3rd.

I can't think of a better place to renew and celebrate each other and recommit to supporting our common goals. I look forward to experience what the convention planning team has been preparing for us.

I am proud and honored to serve you and indebted to all of you for the effort and commitment to work for the preservation of Democracy in the state of Pennsylvania. Because of all of you, I remain strong and ready to share light and the promise of good things to come.

Gratefully yours, Lorí Vargo Heffner, President PFDW



PENNSYLVANIA FEDERATION OF DEMOCRATIC WOMEN, INC 2025 CENTURY CLUB

An Invitation to All Democrats

PFDW's Political Action Committee (PAC) is largely funded by the Century Club. Meeting the challenges of increased funding for more women candidates will be possible only through increased participation in the Century Club. Can you help us fund good Democratic candidates?

We sincerely hope that all PFDW Board members, women and men elected officials, individuals, clubs, and those who are financially able will renew or begin a CENTURY CLUB membership. This year, as we elect candidates across Pennsylvania, we extend our thanks for your continued support. If you have joined in the past, we invite you to join again this year. We welcome new members to join in order to assure the PFDW's continued financial support to WOMEN and STATEWIDE CANDIDATES. We welcome male members to join in any category as Associate Members (with no voting rights in the PFDW).

LEVELS OF MEMBERSHIP

All members will receive an individual listing in the Convention Program Book

2025 PFDW Century Club Lapel Pin

DIAMOND CIRCLE -\$1,000

RUBY CIRCLE- \$500

EMERALD CIRCLE - \$250

TOPAZ CIRCLE - \$100

Fiscal Year is January 1 – December 31, 2025

Please respond by December 31, 2025

* * * * * Please detach & return with your contribution * * * * * *

I am enclosing a contribution of \$______for membership in the 2025 PFDW CENTURY CLUB.

NAME:		
TITLE:		
ADDRESS:		
PHONE:	EMAIL:	
**Checks payable to: PFDW-PAC and mailed to:		
SANDI VULCANO		
PFDW Century Club Chair	Many thanks for your contribution.	
531 Philadelphia Road		
Easton, PA 18042.		

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Call B -

PENNSYLVANIA FEDERATION of DEMOCRATIC WOMEN

97th ANNUAL CONVENTION 2025 REGISTRATION FORM July 31-August 3, 2025 REGISTRATION PACKAGE - Deadline July 10th, 2025

Crowne Plaza Hotel – Philadelphia

260 Mall Blvd King of Prussia, PA 19406 (across from King of Prussia Mall) Free Parking

<u> Thursday - July 31st Social Event</u>

Join Philly's

- Shopping trip to Philly's famous Reading Terminal Market
- Social dining (on your own) at Iron Hill Brewery and Restaurant
- Bus leaving hotel at 1 pm and returning at 8:00 pm to hotel
- Cost to Travel to Downtown Phila. \$25 Reservation Required



- AUG

Packages

All Packages include Breakfast if staying at hotel

Packages with Saturday Night Dinner includes Formal Sneaker Ball Event



Friday Lunch \$65 Friday Dinner \$75

Saturday Scholarship Luncheon \$65 Saturday Dinner with Formal Sneaker Ball Event \$100 Registration fee of \$10 REQUIRED with separate meal ticket

-----CUT HERE TO SEND IN------

NAME:	PHONE:
ADDRESS:	COUNTY:
EMAIL:	

 YES - I will be attending Shopping/Dining Trip
ADDITIONAL \$25 ENCLOSED **NO** - I will not be attending Shopping/Dining Trip PACKAGE CHOICE: DIAN A -\$275 🗆 PLAN B - \$225 PLAN C - \$160

INDIVIDUAL CHOICES: FRIDAY LUNCH - \$65 FRIDAY DINNER - \$75 SATURDAY LUNCH - \$65

□ SAT. NIGHT DINNER/FORMAL SNEAKER BALL EVENT - \$100 TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$_

FOOD RESTRICTION:

CHECKS AND REGISTRATION FORM MAIL TO: MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: PFDW 2025 CONVENTION RUTH RAGLIN 7510 BRIAR RD PHILADELPHIA, PA 19138 215.668.3674 Pfdwpres2017@gmail.com

WWW.PAFDW.ORG

PENNSYLVANIA FEDERATION OF DEMOCRATIC WOMEN



2025

PFDW Annual 97th Convention Ad Form

Old & Now Keepin' Pennsylvania Blue

PLEASE REMIT PAYMENT MAIL CHECKS TO:

HELEN COOK 101 Walnut Street East Berlin, PA 17316 717.649.6924 DEADLINE JULY 10TH, 2025

Back Cover	\$500_SOLD	Full Page (7 ½ X 4 ½)	\$150
Inside Front Cover	\$250_SOLD	Half Page (3 ½ X 4 ½)	\$75
Inside Back Cover	\$250	Quarter Page (3 ½ X 1 ¾)	\$50

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: PFDW 2025 CONVENTION

PLEASE NOTE:

SEND YOUR AD COPY ELECTRONICALLY TO: helencookpfdwvp@gmail.com

NAME:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBER:

Region 1 – Black Democratic Women of Montgomery County Co-Presidents: Roberta Hill & Sonya Sanders Regional Director: Tracey Tucker



The Black Democratic Women of Montgomery County proudly announce our new copresidents, Roberta Hill and Sonya Sanders, who bring fresh perspectives and leadership to guide our Club towards exciting new opportunities. Our membership committee has undergone a transformation, introducing innovative strategies to enhance our recruitment process with improved interviewing techniques and behavioral-based screening questions.



In support of our community, we stand behind our member Margaret Mullen-Whiting as she runs for Township Commissioner, rallying our collective support for her campaign. Collaborating with grassroots organizations, we aim to co-sponsor Town Halls, community health and wellness fairs, and financial seminars to foster community engagement and empowerment.

As we gear up for our annual Breakfast Bingo Fundraiser Experience, we anticipate another sold-out event, building on the success of previous years. The Black Democratic Women of Montgomery County are committed to driving positive change and meaningful connections within our community, and we look forward to the impactful initiatives ahead.

Region 1 – Chester County Federation of Democratic Women (CCFDW) President: Diane Welsh Regional Director: Amanda Hammock

A Year of Growth, Community, and Action

Our vision for a dynamic organization where women come together to support one another and drive meaningful change has truly come to life.

Since our founding, the Chester County Federation of Democratic Women (CCFDW) has flourished beyond our expectations, and we couldn't be more thrilled about what's ahead! A Year to Remember We launched our journey in May with a kick-off picnic at Christine Fernandes' home, welcoming over 50 Charter members. The energy from that day carried into June, when we danced the night away at Margaret Reif's "Home By 10:00 Dance Party."

October brought another milestone as we partnered with Zone 10 to host a Halloween fundraiser for Danielle Friel Otten and Kristine Howard at Sherry McVickar's historic home. We closed the year with our first annual holiday party, graciously hosted by Senator Katie Muth and Trevor. That night, we welcomed our 90th member!

Looking Ahead Our first-year goal was to build a strong, supportive community of Democratic women. We have done just that, and we are more engaged and excited than ever. The momentum we've created reaffirms our belief in the power of women working together for progress. As we embark on another year, we invite you to stay involved and continue making an impact. The need for strong, united voices has never been greater. Together, we will keep making a difference!



Region 2

Region 2 - Concerned Democratic Women on the Move President: Kathryn Huggins Region 2 – Philly Democratic Women Caucus President: Shantale Galloway

Regional Director: Barbara Carroll

WOMEN IN BLUE



The Women in Blue Luncheon, coordinated by Co-Chairs, Shelly Glessner, 3rd Vice President and Kathy Huggins, PFDW Board Member was a very successful event on Tuesday, March 25th 2025. Two busloads of women from the Western part of Pennsylvania and from Philadelphia and Delaware County toured the capital and sat in on House of Representatives and Senate meetings.

Women in Blue is an annual trip to the Capitol in Harrisburg, PA for meetings and lunch. It's an event in Women's History month that we support. See you in 2026!

Convention! Convention! The 2025 PFDW Philly Convention is on our minds!

The PDWC is gearing up as one of the Philadelphia hosts for the 2025 PFDW Annual Convention. The convention is at The Crown Plaza Hotel in King of Prussia from July 31st to August 3rd 2025, where **ALL** events will take place.

Philly clubs are working together to bring the best experience and delightful "Taste of Philly"!

Not only will we have activities, dynamic speakers, raffles, and workshops...but we are also honoring and celebrating one of Philadelphia's groundbreaking pioneers, The Honorable Mrs. Jannie Blackwell, at the convention's first-ever Sneaker Ball! Our club has been busy not only for the convention, but also for the primaries, especially supporting our much-needed Judges in retention.

Hope to see you in Philly!



Celebrating the Life of Pearl Hilley July 23, 1929 – May 17, 2025



Region 2 pays a memorial honor and tribute to one of our original members in the Pennsylvania Federation of Democratic Women, Ms. Pearl Hilley.

Ms. Hilley, affectionately known as "Ms. Pearl", has been a PFDW member and has served as a board member in the capacities of Protocol and as Regional Director for over 50 years. Ms. Pearl was president of her club, Expansion Phase II, and proudly worked to see that other clubs were formed in the city of Philadelphia. Region 2, Philadelphia, will keep the Democratic baton going as we stand strong and united; the way Ms. Pearl would have wanted.

We thank you Ms. Pearl...for your dedication and foundational footsteps for Democratic women in Philadelphia to be of something greater.

Region 4 – Lackawanna County Federation of Democratic Women President: Patti Rieder Regional Director: Maryann Kapacs

The Lackawanna County Federation held their 10th Annual Cocktails Petition event on February 19th.

The event was well attended by both candidates and voters. We saw a jump in attendance by people looking to get involved and learn more about the petition process. Many of the newcomers have joined the LCFDW!

Thank you to Colleen Gerrity, Mary Kate Donahue and all the LCFDW volunteers who make this event a success every year!

On Sunday, February 23rd the LCFDW hosted a brunch to recognize and show gratitude to Senator Bob Casey and Congressman Matt Cartwright for their Outstanding Public Service! With over 300 in attendance the following made remarks honoring both Senator Casey and Congressman Cartwright; David Demas, President AFGE Local 3003, Dr. Maria Montoro Edwards, President and CEO of Maternal and Family Health Services, Chris Barrett, President and CEO, Pocono Mountain Visitors Bureau, Jason Kavulich, PA Secretary of Aging, Marty Flynn, State Senator 22nd District and Eddie "Day" Pashinski, State Representative 121st District.

LCDFW Bruch Committee members were Rita Bagatta, Charlene Doyle, Colleen Gerrity, MaryAnn Kapacs, Maryclare Kingsley, Susan Notarianni, Ann Opeil, Paulette Schank and Carol Thomas. Region 7 – Adams County Federation of Democratic Women President: Helen Cook Regional Director: Laura Quick



Our group successfully organized the "Adopt a Family for Christmas" initiative, ensuring that middle school students had a joyful holiday season. However, we paused to reflect on the loss we experienced on January 20, 2025. Both our members and the Adams County Democratic Committee came together to mourn and support one another during this difficult time.

The following day, we shifted our focus to strategizing for the upcoming midterm elections. It was inspiring to see so many people attend our event to advocate for school board candidates and City Council positions.

We are committed to advancing our agenda with a comprehensive plan that includes protests, outreach through postcards, and utilizing the Five Calls app. Our engagement is crucial as we prepare to support candidates from the Adams County Federation of Democratic Women who are running for Congress, with particular attention on Beth Farnham's campaign in 2026.

As we approach the New Year, I would like to extend my heartfelt wishes for a Happy New Year to everyone.

Region 7 – Lebanon County Democratic Women's Association President and Regional Director: Laura Quick



In December we discussed the idea of starting a Democratic Support Group due to a lot of the despair people were feeling about the impending Trump Administration. We wanted to limit the group to only women but not to just Democrats so we came up with the name of Blue Peeps (since they make marshmallow peeps in Pennsylvania) Support Group. We had our first meeting on Sunday, February 2nd.

Our focus is primarily on self-care and navigating our relationships and feelings in this very stressful

political time. Presently we meet on the first Sunday of the month for 2 hours and have made the Blue Peeps group an extension of the LCDWA.

The LCDWA organizes an event every last Sunday for in-person signing of petitions. This year, we've combined it with writing postcards for the Wisconsin Supreme Court Special Election on April 1st. Both the petitions and the postcards will be taken up to Harrisburg on Monday the 10th.

This will be the third annual LCDWA Spring Luncheon. Our keynote speaker will be Kadida Kenner from The New PA Project and formerly of Why Courts Matter. We always invite all statewide candidates and this year we will be honoring Lebanon County Commissioner, Jo Ellen Litz with a Nancy Pelosi Years of Public Service Award and the three Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justices who are going for retention with the Ruth Bader Ginsburg Award for Judicial Excellence. Attendees can win door prizes and local candidates are invited to talk about their campaigns.

Welcome BLUE PEEPS!

Region 8 – Berks Democratic Women President: Susan Roeckie Regional Director: Linda Woleslagle

Berks Democratic Women Leaders are creating safe gathering places for women to discuss their concerns. Presenting programs of Hope Warriors creating a "Shared Future from a Fractured World".

- February 2025's Program
- Reclaiming DEI
- Building Strong Foundations
- During Challenging Times

With Guest Speaker: Dr. Tiffenia D. Archie - Temple University - Assoc. V.P. and Chief Inclusion Officer

At our inspiring Second in-person meeting with approximately 60 people at Mimmo's Restaurant discussing: **D**iversity - **E**quity - **I**nclusion - making a strong community.

Berks Democratic Women Leaders have been involved in many community events.

- 4 02-09-2025 at the Zion Baptist Church: "Harriet Tubman play "Harriet The Promise Land" by ZBC SWAGG - Young Ministry.
- **4** 02-18-2025 Jamie Baez Council President candidacy Announcement.
- 02-18-2025 Berks Democratic Committee: "Make the Road" Presentation on "Immigration" and candidate Petition signing.
- 02-19-2025 Susan Roeckle's candidacy for Muhlenburg School Board and Petition signing
- 4 02-20-2025 BDW Meeting: "DEI" presentation
- 4 02-21-2025 Vanessa Campos Candidacy for Council President and Petition signing
- 4 02-27-2025 Black Excellence Soiree by Bring the Change at St. Francis University
- 4 03-01-2025 Open "Mic Night" LGBT Center
- 4 03-01-2025 Zelda Yoder Greater Reading PAC
- 4 03-08-2025 Women's Resource Faire by Johanny Cepeda-Freytiz

Berks Democratic Women Leaders are planning a car Caravan Adventure to visit the Women's Veterans Museum in Mt. Pocono, PA - started and continues the initiative in establishing the Museum by Claudette Williams (20-year US Sergeant Major; retired).

Region 8 – Northampton County Council of Democratic Women President: Pamela Pearson

Northampton County Council of Democratic Women is having a busy year!



We held a "Celebrating Women" brunch on November 17th at Green Pond Country Club which was attended by over 100 people, and



it was just the thing to lift everyone's spirits post-election. We had 12 local elected officials modeling clothing from Chico's. Our Keynote Speaker was Fadia Halma, Director at PA Department of Community& Economic Development, and PA Senator Lisa Boscola, Senate District 18, also spoke and participated as a model. Proceeds went to our PAC fund which will be used to help our 2025 County Municipal candidates.

We are now full swing into petition season to help get our candidates on the ballot!



Region 8 – Nazareth Area Democratic Women and Vicinity President: Linda Woleslagle

At our November post-election meeting, all were thanked for the great work they did and to not get disillusioned – stay focused on local races for 2025 and 2026 mid-terms. We need to create an environment of fellowship and mutual aid. We had our year end / holiday celebration in January at Miguel's in Belfast. We enjoyed camaraderie, great food, interaction, and friendship. Members were also asked to bring a donation to the Food Bank of Nazareth.

Our members voted to hold a collection at every meeting moving forward to support local nonprofit groups. At our February meeting, members collected \$70 to donate to Loaves and Fishes, a local faith-based food bank. We continue to do our part to help with candidate petitions for county, schoolboard, and local municipalities.







Region 10 – Clinton County Democratic Women: Commitment to Action and Change President: Heather Marie Yost Regional Director: Shannon Miller

We've held a peaceful rally to raise awareness about potential cuts to the VA and to show our unwavering support for veterans.

Engaged in petition signing events for local candidates and statewide judicial races because every signature counts in shaping our future.

We continue to supports the fight against cancer with Relay for Life Daffodil Days, a meaningful way to contribute to lifesaving research and patient support. We aim to be a club dedicated to creating real change in our communities—from encouraging women to run for office to hosting social events and sponsoring membership to our club for women 30 and under.

We also stand in solidarity with independent media outlets, recognizing their crucial role in democracy.

Commitment to Action and Change

Region 10 – Williamsport Area Democratic Women: Turning Anger into Action President: Denitra Moffet Regional Director: Shannon Miller

The WADW held our first meet and greet in March. The focus was on Power and Purpose: Building Community, One Connection at a Time. Special guests include candidates who will shared their vision, along with Stacey Richards, former Carter White House staffer, who gave insights on leadership and public service.

Join us-let's turn passion into progress!

Turning Anger into Action

Region 11 – The Federation of Democratic Women of Indiana County Co-Presidents: Jane Mitchell and Theda Ray Regional Director: Lynne Alvine



The FDWIC has been busy in the aftermath of the disastrous November election!

Spaghetti Dinner and Petition Signing

FDWIC held its annual Spaghetti Dinner and Petition Signing event Feb. 22, at the Chevy Chase Community Action Center. Thanks to our dedicated volunteers, we proudly served 153 meals and raised approximately \$3,000 to help support Democratic candidates. Local borough council and school board candidates joined us!

Discussion about DT's First Executive Order

At the FDWIC monthly Membership Meeting on March 3, 2025, our guest speaker was Jodi Solito, former Director of the Women's Center at Slippery Rock University. Her presentation focused on the first Executive Order signed by Trump on January 20, 2025, titled "Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government." The Executive Order suggests that it protects women from men who might falsely claim to be women to access women's spaces. This controversial topic sparked a discussion amongst our members, leading to a broader conversation about Medicaid and its potential cuts. We examined the impact such cuts could have on our local hospital and nursing homes, particularly where facilities rely heavily on Medicaid funding.

Community Service

At the FDWIC Christmas Party, 100 pounds of non-perishable food and \$140 in donations were collected for the Chevy Chase Community Center, a local charity that feeds many people throughout Indiana County each day. The FDWIC collected new pajamas from infant to adult sizes for Indiana's Free Store for their Holiday Pop-Up on December 7th.







Region 13 – Democratic Women of Westmoreland President: Helen Sitler



After much hard work to elect Democrats in 2024, our county, like the nation, elected Republicans. When Democratic Women of Westmoreland (WOW) met after the election, we processed the loss we felt, but were encouraged over learning that our efforts had made a difference within the county.

The election's outcomes increased WOW's membership. Our most recent meeting (in February) had 73 attendees. The energy in the room was palpable.

WOW is now working to channel that energy and talent. We're beginning by studying issues important to members, such as cuts to Medicaid and the VA, and making action plans. We're also focusing locally through regular attendance by small groups at meetings of the county commissioners and at local school boards. Our new Regional Director-in-training, Margie Zelenak, a WOW member, has arranged for a bus that will bring 40 Westmoreland County members/guests to the Women in Blue Advocacy Day in Harrisburg.

We are working to raise WOW's visibility in the county. We opened 2025 with 2 speakers, in January, Democratic County Commissioner Ted Kopas, and in February, Michelle Milan McFall, Chair of the Westmoreland County Democratic Committee. We have invited speakers from Fair Districts and the League of Women Voters. We're attending events and advertising in programs for the local NAACP and YWCA. WOW will plan future service events in the county. We will support local Democratic candidates for school board and other offices, and work to retain and elect Democratic judges at the state level.

Lawrence County Action's (LCA) motto for 2025 is to

Make Noise and Protect

Club members have taken this action seriously and are busy calling, writing, protesting, emailing, and even donning t-shirts that subtlety, but clearly, showcase where our beliefs lie.

One of the most important actions has been for club members contacting the offices of our Congressman and Senators, making sure they know and understand how their constituents feel.

LCA members continue to protect to protect our U.S. Dept. of Education, protect Medicare, protect Social Security, and to protect our rights!

In addition to our Make Noise and Protect efforts, we have been busy educating and informing Lawrence County democrat voters on the importance of serving the county as a Precinct Committee Person, Judge of Elections, Inspector of Elections, School Board Director, Township Supervisor, and the various other open seats.

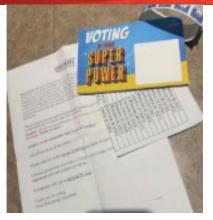
Seven candidates are running for three seats for Lawrence County Court of Common Pleas Judge. Of those seven, three are registered Democrats. At LCA's March meeting all three Democratic candidates for judge and District Attorney Josh Lamancusa attended the meeting, presenting the group of over 35 people with details of their experience and qualifications.

Additionally, LCA members eagerly wrote 600 postcards in support of the Florida Democrat candidate for U.S. Congress, Josh Weil and Democrat candidate for Wisconsin Supreme Court, Susan Crawford in the two special elections.











Pennsylvania Federation of Democratic Women, Inc. P.O. Box 23773 Philadelphia. Pennsvlvania 19143



Today the Pennsylvania Federation of Democratic Women consists of more than 1,600 members in local affiliates throughout the counties of the Commonwealth. These associations are grouped into 18 geographic regions, each coordinated by a Regional Director. The PFGW consists of a president, six vice-presidents, a treasurer, corresponding and recording secretaries and committee chairs.

