



The Delaware County Digest

Your source for the latest news from Delaware County | February 6, 2026

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America250PADelco Shares Plans to Celebrate America's 250th Birthday Throughout the County

At Wednesday evening's Delaware County Council Meeting, America250PADelco Director Andrea Silva gave a presentation about the events, initiatives, and programs the organization has this year to celebrate America's 250th birthday and honor Delaware County's critical role in US history.



Silva gave a summary of how America250PADelco, a nonpartisan initiative to engage all Delaware County residents on America's 250th anniversary, has involved local, statewide, and national groups to celebrate Delco history.

"We in Delaware County have so many cool historic sites and stories," said Delaware County Council member Elaine Paul Schaefer. "In the past we haven't been great about getting out there and promoting it but the America250PA Delco Commission has done such a great job of elevating what we have to offer in Delaware County. I hope everyone gets involved this year."

Council member Schafer was also appointed to the America250PADelco Commission at Wednesday's meeting.

Among the events and programs that America250PADelco has held already, Silva mentioned the Keystone Classroom Initiative, Bells Across PA, and the unveiling of the commemorative banner series at the Media Courthouse as some of the most meaningful.

The Keystone Classroom Initiative involved volunteers and historical re-enactors visiting local elementary schools to teach students about Pennsylvania history and distribute PA history-themed goodies. Volunteers visited Park Lane Elementary in Darby Borough, Bethel Springs

Elementary in Bethel Township, and Concord Springs and Garnet Valley Elementary in Concord Township, where they read "K is for Keystone" and discussed the importance of Pennsylvania in American history.

Delaware County had two bells installed as part of the statewide Bells Across PA initiative, which is installing 108 bells across the Commonwealth. The first bell was unveiled at the Drexeline Shopping Center in Drexel Hill in October and designed by Joshua Ruggeri. The second was revealed as part of the opening ceremony for the Delaware County Festival of Lights at Rose Tree Park in Upper Providence Township in December and designed by Tucker Rodkey and students from Legacy Arts Chester.

In September, America250PADelco partnered with the Media Arts Council to unveil five commemorative banners in front of the Delaware County Courthouse as part of their Delaware County birthday celebrations. The banners, which will be displayed through December 2026, each honor a transformative moment or figure that helped shape American history and their connection to Delaware County.



- **"The Nation Makers"** commemorates the 1777 Battle of Brandywine, which happened in modern day Chadds Ford.
- **Thomas Garrett**, an Upper Darby quaker who was an Underground Railroad station master, assisted more than 2,700 people escaping slavery.
- **Dr. Anna Howard Shaw**, a Rose Valley resident who served as the president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association and was a driving force behind the 19th amendment, which granted women the right to vote.
- **The labor force of Sun Shipbuilding**, which honors the 35,000 workers in Chester who built 40% of the U.S. tanker fleet during World War II
- **Dr. Martin Luther King**, commemorating the time he spent at Crozer Theological Seminary in Upland and Cavalry Baptist Church from 1948 to 1951.

Silva ended by discussing Delco Volunteers, an online space for schools, nonprofits, and community groups to post volunteer opportunities all in one place. This extends beyond America250PADelco events and will increase civic engagement in Delaware County for years to come.

Council Vice Chair and America250PADelco Commissioner Christine Reuther lauded the Delco Volunteers initiative, saying "I think that America250PADelco can leave a terrific legacy not just for how we celebrate, but how we are as a county because one of the great strengths of Delaware County is its sense of community."

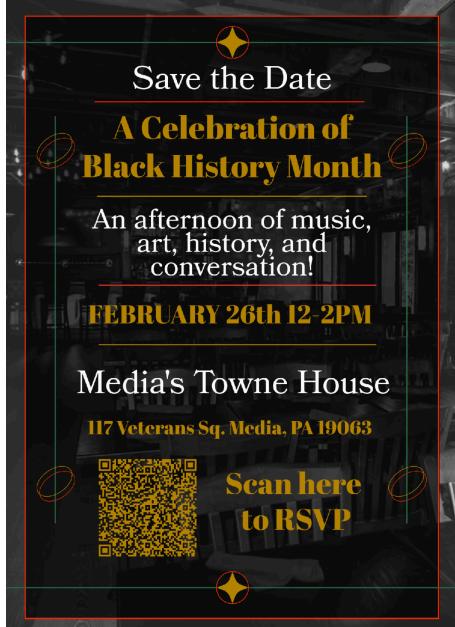
For more information about America250PADelco events and initiatives, visit america250padelco.org.

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Delaware County Invites Residents to their 3rd Annual Black History Month Celebration at Towne House in Media

Delaware County Council is excited to announce that this year's Delaware County Black History Month celebration will be held at Towne House in Media on **Thursday, February 26 from noon to 2 PM**.

To register, click [here](#).



The event will focus on the 100-year anniversary of Black History Month celebrations and the contributions of African American veterans to the history of our county and our nation. Director of the Delaware County Department of Military and Veteran's Affairs Col. Arthur Jenkins (Ret.) will serve as the MC and Lt. Col. Eclemus Wright Jr. (Ret.) will serve as the keynote speaker.

Jenkins worked his way up to the rank of Colonel in the Army Reserves and was commissioned as an officer in the Medical Service Corps. He has enhanced outreach to local veterans since starting his role with the county in 2023 and engaged with the Black veteran population in Delaware County.

Wright was a U.S. Army Ranger and served two tours in Vietnam before serving for over two decades in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. He has received a Purple Heart, Silver Star, Bronze Star, and the Combat Infantry Badge for his service.

The event will begin with a luncheon provided by Towne House, followed by some words by Col. Jenkins and the Black National Anthem performed by Delaware County Assistant Director of Talent Management Charnee Washington. Then, Chester Mayor Stefan Roots will reflect on 100 years of Black History Month celebrations and Delaware County Budget Director James Hayes will do a reading about Black excellence on the military stage. After that, Lt. Col. Wright will give his keynote speech and awards will be presented to five individuals.

Awardees will include the family of 1st Lt. William Rice, who was an original Tuskegee Airman and Thaddeus Barnes, who was an original Montford Point Marine. The program will also honor county employees Hazel Johnson, Wayne Dixon, and Lysandra Greene.

While there is a focus on veterans in the program, this event will be celebrating the valuable contributions and history of all Black Americans. Everyone is welcome, although attendees must RSVP.

If you are interested in attending, please RSVP [here](#). The address of Towne House is **117 Veterans Square, Media, PA 19063**. Please reach out to DelcoComms@co.delaware.pa.us with any questions.

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Delaware County Council Names Chris Welsh as Interim Chief of Social Services and Community Programs



At Wednesday evening's Delaware County Council meeting, Chris Welsh was named the Interim Chief of Delaware County Social Services and Community Programs after being approved unanimously by Council.

Welsh brings a wealth of experience, including the last five and a half years as the Chief Public Defender for Delaware County. In this position, he reduced the daily prison population at George W. Hill Correctional Facility by nearly 40% or roughly 700 people per day. He also uncovered

allegations of abuse in the county Juvenile Detention Center, leading to the closure of the facility

in 2021. Welsh also transformed the staff in the Public Defender's office, increasing the diversity of the office and hiring more social workers.

"I'm looking forward to seeing what Mr. Welsh can do to bring some of the same expanded scope of mission to the various social services organizations," said Delaware County Council Vice Chair Christine Reuther. "I really appreciate his willingness to take on this role because I recognize it's a stretch going from running something that you know and that you've been doing for most of your career."

Before starting at the County, Welsh was the Executive Director of the Center for Ethics and the Rule of Law at the University of Pennsylvania Law School. He also spent 10+ years at the Defenders' Association of Philadelphia, where he worked his way up to Deputy Defender of Operations and System Development. He has an undergraduate degree from St. Joseph's and a law degree from Temple.

Throughout his career, he's worked on major trials, municipal court, juvenile defense, mental health, domestic violence, and more, making him uniquely qualified for this role.

Welsh has deep Delco ties, with his mother growing up in Sharon Hill and attending Archbishop Prendergast and his father growing up in Springfield and attending Cardinal O'Hara. He lives in Havertown with his wife and two daughters.

Welsh will look to optimize the operations of the Delaware County Department of Human Services, which includes Fair Acres Geriatric Center, Housing & Community Development, Libraries, Medical Examiner, Substance Abuse and Recovery, Veterans Affairs, and Workforce Development.

Welsh will be replacing Sandy Garrison, who will be the new Chief of Grants Compliance Administration, a role created under the recommendation of the **Budget Task Force** to enhance revenue.

On Wednesday night, Taylor Dunn was unanimously named the Interim Public Defender to fill Welsh's old position. Dunn, who was previously the County's Deputy Public Defender, has spent over 15 years in the office and has trained more than 30 new attorneys in that time.

To learn more about Human Services, visit delcohsa.org. To learn more about the Public Defender's Office, visit delcopa.gov/publicdefender.

Take Part, Spread the Word, Stay Connected



State Sen. Tim Kearney and State Rep. Leanne Krueger to Hold Property Tax/Rent Rebate Event

State Senator Tim Kearney and State Representative Leanne Krueger are hosting a Property Tax and Rent Rebate Event on **Wednesday, February 11th from 11 AM to 3 PM at the Ridley Township Public Library**. The program supports Pennsylvania homeowners and renters who are 65 and older, widows and widowers 50 and older, people with disabilities 18 and older, and your household income is \$46,520 or less annually. Please **call 610-544-6120 or 610-534-6880** to register.



COSA Offering Weekly Chronic Pain Self-Management Program Starting next Thursday, February 12

The Delaware County Office of Services for the Aging (COSA) is offering the acclaimed *Power Over Pain* program to provide residents over 60 with self-care tools and life skills that support them in reaching their personal goals to manage their chronic pain. The program, which will be done over Zoom, will happen on Thursdays from 9:30 AM-12 PM, beginning on February 12 and going through March 19. The program is **FREE** however class size is limited so registration is required. **For more information, email williamse@co.delaware.pa.us or call 610-499-1937 and provide your name, address, phone number, and email address.**



State Sen. Tim Kearney and State Rep. Gina Curry Present 5th Annual Black & Diverse Business Forum

Join Senator Tim Kearney and State Representative Gina Curry for the 5th Annual Black & Diverse Business Forum on **Friday, February 20th from 9 AM to noon**. The event will be held at Delaware County Community College's Marple Campus in the Academic Building. This is a chance to hear from subject-matter experts on topics that can help you grow and scale your business while providing networking opportunities. Those who are interested can register by clicking [here](#), calling Senator Kearney's office at **610-544-6120**, or by calling Rep. Curry's office at **610-259-7016**.



DCHD Continues Birth and Beyond Class Series

Birth and Beyond is a DCHD program in collaboration with the Foundation for Delaware County's Family Village designed to improve maternal and infant health outcomes by increasing access to education, supportive services, and community resources during pregnancy, postpartum, and beyond. DCHD plans to host monthly pop-up events throughout the county in 2026 to share resources and promote birthing classes. Each month will have a different theme, which will focus the sessions on different topics and resources. February's events are **February 13 and 20 from noon-1:30 PM** at DCHD's Wellness Center in Yeadon. The events are for birthing or expecting parents only. **Registration is required through DCHD's Wellness Line at 484-276-2100.**



Delaware County Council members



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