

AIDS Awareness: Silence Can Kill You

By Charlotte Beverly

Maybe let's just get to the point as Marea Walker-Smith, City councilwoman, did at the National Black HIV-AIDS Awareness Day. She said the silence is what's killing this community. Emphasize "THIS community." Delaware County has the third highest mortality rate for AIDS in Pennsylvania, with 1,239 cumulative cases between 1980 and 2005. The State Department of Health reports that 508 if those are presumed alive and 731 have been reported dead. These figures are based on the reported cases only. There are two to three times as many infected that are not even aware of it.

African Americans -- 13% of the population--50% of all new HIV cases.

Now it's easier to get tested, and there's less anxiety in waiting for results. There are new techniques that require no blood work at all.

A week to 10-day wait -- results currently within 20 minutes.

At the National Black HIV-AIDS Awareness Day, keynote speaker William Brawner spoke about his own infection at age 18 months from a blood transfusion. He's a 27-year-old who is HIV positive. Brawner is with the HIV Program at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children Youth in Philadelphia.

For more information, visit www.blackaidsday.org or call Mrs. Walker-Smith at 1-610-447-7753.

In Memoriam

Our condolences and our prayers go to the families of

Cora Lee Dixon, in whose name a youth scholarship is awarded each year at the Annual Awards Dinner.

Joyce Cottrell, sister of the late beloved James Cottrell.

Sophie Norwood.



Cora Lee Dixon, 1920-2006

(Vote Campaign, from page 1)

But the low voter turnout in election after election in Chester tells a different story. Somehow we've forgotten those sacrifices that were made back in the sixties.

Chester Vote Campaign 2007

In order to reverse this trend, Chester NAACP is mounting a voter registration and education campaign, organized by the Political Action Committee. It has begun with a series of presentations and a sign-up day, March 24, in front of the Chester Post Office and the Freeman Gallery at 5th Street and Edgmont Avenue.

This first phase of the campaign is aimed at this spring's primary election, May 15. The deadline for registration is April 16. But registering is only part of it. Unless people go out and vote on election day, they might as well not be registered. In the late summer and fall, we will be working to get more people registered and out to vote on November 6.

Why Vote in the Primary, Anyway?

The very lowest vote counts occur in primary elections, because so many of the candidates either face no or only token opposition. But it's a mistake to pass up this opportunity to exercise your political clout. Here's why: If politicians see a low turnout in a particular precinct, they figure that's one less they have to worry about. Conversely, when they see a big vote total, they know they need to pay attention to the people in that part of the district. And no politician, even one with a lopsided majority on his side, willingly gives up one vote. Maybe it's a matter of pride, but they want to show they are popular with the folks back home.

So every election - including the one coming up in May - is one you should be sure to vote in. You owe it to yourself. You owe it to your kids. And you owe it especially to those people who died so you could do it.

Our Hard Working Committees: They Need You!

Standing Committees, Chester Branch, NAACP

- Armed Forces:** Bruce Neal
- Economic Development:** Charlie L. Warren
- Education:** Ella McFarland and Will Richan
- Finance:** Charlotte Beverly
- Health:** Karen Jones and Darice Jones
- Housing:** Ella McFarland
- Labor & Industry:** Charles McNear and Karen Jones
- Legal Redress:** Tonya Warren
- Membership:** Ella McFarland and Karen Jones
- Office:** Karen Jones
- Political Action:** Will Richan, Tonya Warren, and Darice Jones
- Press & Publicity:** Karen Jones
- Religious Affairs:** Donna Mims
- Youth Work:** Betty Bonds
- Prisons:** Richard Carter

It is the standing committees that make any organization a real influence in the community and beyond. They have been called the lifeblood of any organization.

Check over the list of committees on this page and see which ones fit your special gifts. Then call the office and let us know where you want to serve. Committees give you the opportunity to become more involved.