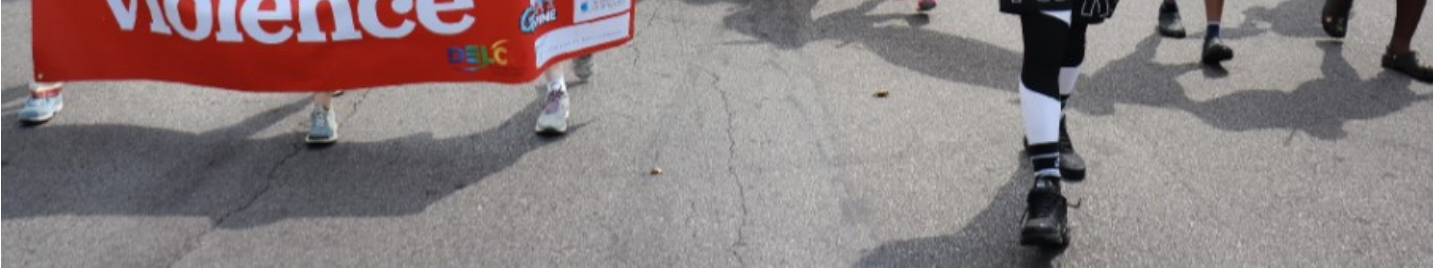


CHESTER

## Residents walk to oppose gun violence







More than 150 attendees walked for peace from gun violence at an event in Chester Saturday to raise awareness about the impact of gun violence on communities and families. PHOTOS BY QUAN KNOX



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‘We deserve to live.’ That was the message Saturday as more than 150 people took part in the Wear Orange Peace Walk through the streets of Chester.

The event aimed to raise awareness about the devastating impact of gun violence on communities and families, and to unite people in the fight for peace.

Participants called out the names of the more than 40,000 people who are killed with guns and approximately 85,000 who are shot and wounded every year.

Organizers report that Delaware County has been deeply affected by gun violence, and the Wear Orange Peace Walk is an opportunity for community members to come together, share their stories and demand change.

“We can no longer ignore the toll that gun violence is taking on our communities,” Chester Community Coalition Executive Director Alexia Clarke said in a press release. “We are coming together, across all lines of race, religion, and political affiliation, to demand an end to this senseless violence. The Wear Orange Peace Walk is a chance to show our solidarity and to say enough is enough.”

U.S. Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon (D-5th) and state Rep. Jenn O’Mara (D-165th District) encouraged attendees to continue to request gun safety legislation from their representatives, such as the Extreme Risk Protection Orders bill that recently passed in the state House with bipartisan support.

The Chester Police Department provided traffic control as the procession, which included children and adults, worked its way through the city streets demanding an end to gun violence.

Participants engaged with community members throughout the route.

The event culminated in a rally at MLK Jr Memorial Park where state Rep. Carol Kazeem (D-159th District) addressed the crowd and pledged her commitment to fight for the safety of communities.

Members of CeaseFirePA and Making a Change Group shared calls to action, and the program closed with the Trippley Foundation and Chester Community Coalition holding space for families to remember their loved ones lost to gun homicide or suicide, say their names, and release a butterfly for their loved one.

The day ended on a high note, with families enjoying free water ice, cotton candy, games and line dancing. One lucky family won the raffle prize donated by the Philadelphia Union, which included four tickets to a game.

This event was organized by Chester Community Coalition in partnership with CeaseFirePA, The Trippley Foundation, Making a Change Group, Moms Demand Action, Swarthmore Presbyterian Church, and the Delaware County Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Sponsors included the Sisters of St. Francis and St. John Chrysostom Justice and Peace Ministry.