



Hello, I am Michelle Kichline. As a Chester County Commissioner, I have been proud to serve our County from 2014 through 2023. I want to tell you about a very special celebration that's fast approaching. And I want to invite you to join in.

On July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026, America will be marking a major Milestone, the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence: the founding of this great country.

America 250 is a multi-year effort to commemorate this historic event. This effort is being led at the national level by the U.S. Semi-Quincentennial Commission, created by Congress and the non-profit America 250 Foundation. Its mission is to inspire a more perfect union by designing and leading the most comprehensive and inclusive celebration in our country's history.

Here in Chester County, we are preparing to celebrate and commemorate, too. We are working with public and private entities across Chester County to make America 250 a once-in-a-lifetime experience for all County residents, of all ages and all walks of life.

Chester County is our story. We can tell it through the history of our farmlands and battlefields, the old iron furnaces, the steel mills, the telltale signs of the Underground Railroad that once ran through this place. Through our Civil War heroes, and fallen World War soldiers, and our many famous Sons and Daughters who have already taken their place in history in the areas of the Sciences, the Arts, Business, Industry Sports, Diplomacy, and Education.

Our story includes the founding of many historic towns and villages that still dot our landscape. It includes the churches, community groups, and historic organizations that through the years have all brought value and purpose to our lives.

And now we can tell our story and tell it richly through the personal accounts of everyday citizens just like you.

So today I am here to challenge you to get ready for the biggest, most inclusive commemoration in U.S history.

How? First ask yourself: What does history mean to you? And then, "What can we do going forward to help renew and strengthen this daring experiment we call America, so it can last another 250 years?"

I encourage you to keep coming back to this website in the weeks and months ahead to get updates on coming events, and to read inspiring stories and personal accounts of Chester County's history. You can also find ways to get involved personally in the celebrations and commemorations.

So, when in the course of human events it becomes necessary to commemorate this great experiment in democracy, I want to welcome you aboard. Thank you.

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