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Meals on Wheels volunteers are still providing the essential services of delivering meals to the homes of senior citizens. (PA Post).

## **Guest Editorial**

**By Douglas Wentz**

Scott Perry's website for his campaign to be re-elected to Congress in Pennsylvania's 10th district is [PatriotsForPerry.com](https://PatriotsForPerry.com), but his conduct together with Donald Trump in the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6 was hardly patriotic.

Their efforts to overturn the 2020 election were a betrayal of democratic principles and helped to severely damage the public's trust in the electoral system. Their promotion of conspiracy theories eroded public trust in democratic institutions and helped to destabilize the country. They misused their positions to promote misinformation and divisive rhetoric, rather than focusing on unifying issues that strengthen the country as a whole.

And when Scott Perry was subpoenaed by the January 6 Committee and given the opportunity to explain his conduct and testify truthfully to what occurred, he not only refused to appear but also [allegedly sought a pardon from Donald Trump](#).

As for what I consider to be true patriotism, I offer the following thoughts about Central Pennsylvania values.

My grandfather was not Pennsylvania Dutch *per se* but was raised on a farm in Central Pennsylvania and was the oldest of 13 children. He often would tell me that when the going gets tough and your neighbor's barn burns to the ground, you pitch in and build them a new barn. That was the community spirit and sense of self-reliance that I admired in my grandfather and that was common in this part of Pennsylvania.

It's not surprising, then, that in March 1969, my grandmother, Gladys Bonebrake, started the first [meals on wheels program in Mechanicsburg](#).

It delivered hot meals, free of charge, to those in need, and was a strictly volunteer effort. It was supported by contributions and food donations from area farms and businesses and the kitchen was provided by a church. Within months my grandmother's meals-on-wheels program was bringing food and hope to over 30 clients and nourishing the body and soul of the whole community.

Today the Mechanicsburg Meals on Wheels program is believed to be the second oldest such program in the U.S. and has delivered over [750,000 meals to the elderly and infirmed](#).

I once met and admired former President George H.W. Bush. One of his enduring themes was the idea of a "thousand points of light". As he noted in his inaugural address in 1989:

"I have spoken of a thousand points of light, of all the community organizations that are spread like stars throughout the Nation, doing good ... The old ideas are new again because they are not old, they are timeless: duty, sacrifice, commitment, and a patriotism [that finds its expression in taking part and pitching in](#)."

And to illustrate his point, Bush handed out "[Points of Light Awards](#)" six days a week to citizens working to aid their communities through volunteer work.

In contrast, Donald Trump appears to have a very different view of volunteerism.

At a rally in Montana in 2018, Trump mocked not only John McCain, who was dying at the time, but also President George H.W. Bush, who had just lost his wife Barbara, noting that:

“A thousand points of light, I never quite got that one. What the hell is that? Has anyone ever figured that one out? It was put out by a Republican, wasn’t it?”

Of course, it is disappointing that Trump would say such a thing, but not surprising, as gratuitous insults are his stock-in-trade. But let me clarify something for the former president.

My grandmother Gladys Bonebrake, who started the Meals-on-Wheels program in Mechanicsburg, was a point of light.

She was a true patriot, with the kind of patriotism that, as President Bush said, found expression from taking part and pitching in.

And by contrast, Donald Trump and Scott Perry are neither points of light nor patriots. Their actions to support a violent insurrection on January 6 to overturn the 2020 election were dark moments in American history that should never be forgotten.

***Douglas Wentz, formerly of Mechanicsburg, delivered a speech on the Capitol steps on September 25 to remind listeners of the January 6 insurrection. He operates the website [MakeModeratesMatter.com](https://www.makemoderatesmatter.com).***