

West Allegheny Edition

Allegheny West

Volume 16, Issue 94
February/March 2015

FREE Direct Mail Community Publication

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Magazine



*North Fayette
joins Live Well initiative*

*Findlay's
first manager retires*

*Behind the Stripes:
Referees' love of the game*

*WA Football gets
some fresh paint*

*Remember When?
Old Imperial Foodland*

*In remembrance of
WA Hockey's Duane Foy*



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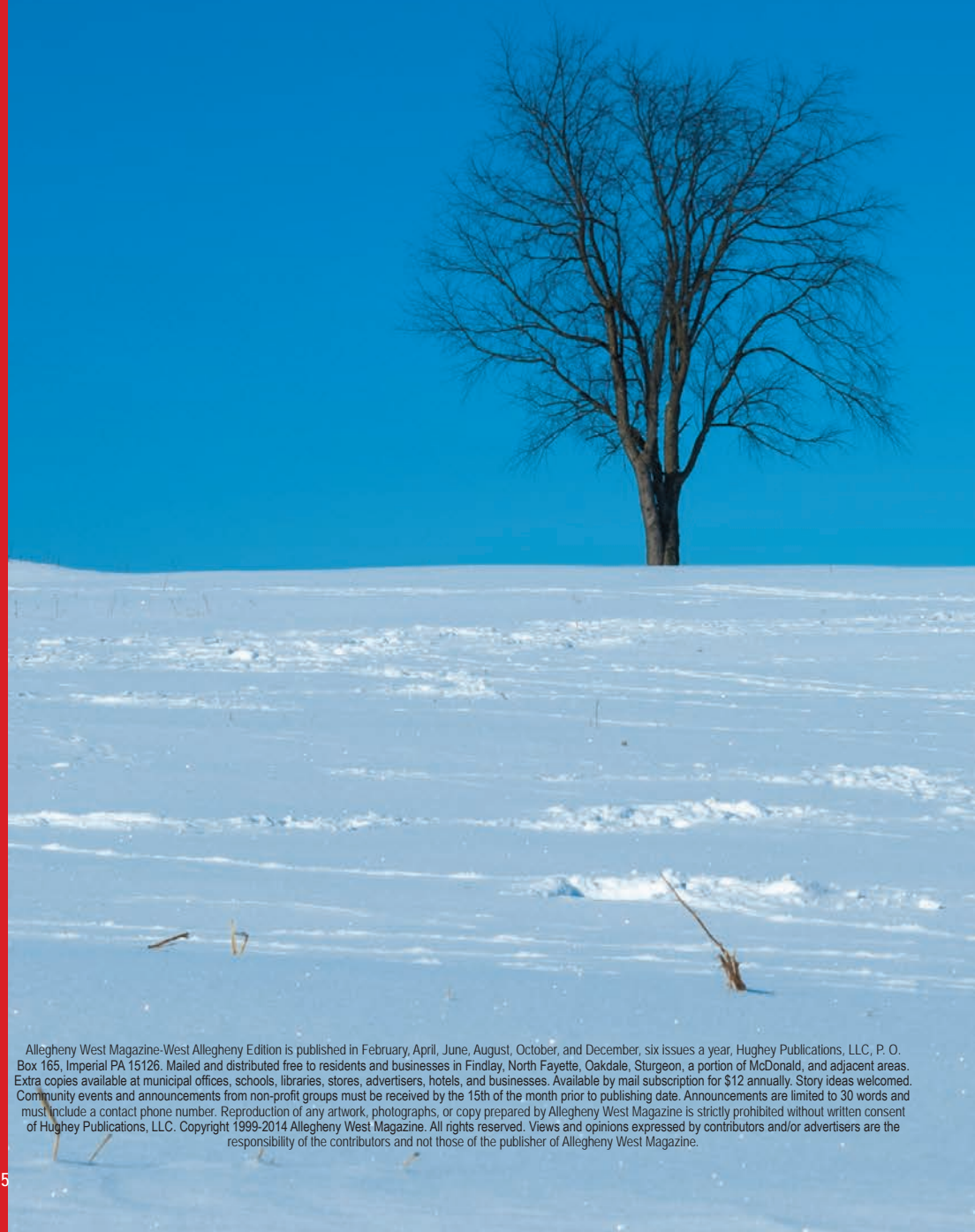
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A lone tree stands in a snowy field in Clinton.

PHOTO BY SARAH HUGHEY



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From the Publisher



Dear Readers,

Have you ever been watching a sport, either in person or on television, and gotten irked by a call from an official? Has it made you want to vent, maybe at the officials themselves or on some venue that could broadcast your frustration?

Recently, a story came out about a replacement NFL official who had the unfortunate luck of having to make a tough call on national television that invited the ire of a lot of people. It got so bad that he had to leave a good job and his marriage ended. That story got me thinking about what our own local referees must go through each time they step on the field, so we talked to a few.

These folks are just as passionate about sports as the rest of us. It's what draws them to the game. But they also put up with a lot while performing a very essential duty. It was eye opening to hear just how much, and to get their perspective, which is one that we don't hear often, if ever. You can read the article we put together about them on page 48.

Of course, we don't want to lose sight of the fact that this is a good news magazine, and what draws us all to sports is something overwhelmingly positive. Sports are for many fans an escape, redeemed by the fact that they celebrate individual and team achievements, passion, and hard work. At the heart of sports though is sportsmanship, which is evident in how our culture treats not just referees, but coaches, players, and each other. That is worth examining.

Also in this issue we reflect on an individual whose passion for the sport of hockey, as well as his children and the West Allegheny community, could not be mistaken by anyone. The passing of West Allegheny Hockey Association president Duane Foy came as a shock to all who knew him. If you'll recall, our article on WA hockey just ran in December's edition. Read about him on page 51.

This month we also take a look at the long career of Gary Klingman, Findlay Township's first manager who retired recently, on page 50. Our newest Remember When column reflects on the old Imperial Foodland grocery store on page 22. Read about a new Live Well campaign in North Fayette Township on page 6.

On page 44 we have lots of upcoming events to mark on your calendar, so be sure to look through. As always, I hope you will continue to reach out to us, your community magazine, to relate your stories, announcements, events and more.

Doug Hughey,
Publisher and Editor

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Snow covers corn fields in late January in Clinton.
Photo by Sarah Hughey.

North Fayette joins countywide Live Well initiative

STORY BY JOCELYN GRECKO



North Fayette celebrated its designation as a Live Well Allegheny community Nov. 16 with a number of local officials, including Allegheny County Councilman Tom Baker, North Fayette Supervisor James Mangan, Allegheny County Health Department Deputy Director Dr. Roderick Harris, Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, North Fayette Supervisor Bob Dodatto and North Fayette Supervisor James Morosetti. PHOTO SUBMITTED

North Fayette is a rural, suburban, residential, lively community where families and friends can find activities of all types. On Nov. 16, the township's efforts to contribute to the health and well-being of residents were formally recognized when elected and appointed township officials came together with leaders from Allegheny County at Donaldson Community Park. There, the township was designated a Live Well Allegheny community.

The day included a 1.1-mile fun walk on a park trail, during which North Fayette Parks and Recreation staff members were present to hand out information about their programs. Representatives from the Western Allegheny Community Library, which assembled a display on the program, were also present.

Live Well Allegheny was launched last January to promote wellness initiatives across the county. The program promotes physical health, mental wellness, personal and community safety, prevention and preparedness, and more. Dr. Karen Hacker, director of the Allegheny County Board of Health, is at the helm of the Live Well Allegheny campaign. One of its main goals is to engage all of the county's 130 municipalities, along with all 90 neighborhoods in Pittsburgh. North Fayette, which is one of the fastest growing communities in the county, according to census

data, became the fifth municipality to join the effort.

North Fayette earned the distinction as a result of its efforts to foster a community that lives well, with a focus on mind, body and spirit. The township promotes a voluntary wellness campaign for its employees by providing biometric screening, an employee fitness room and pedometers. Using these resources, employees have engaged in friendly contests to promote weight loss.

At the same time, North Fayette also focuses on activities that encourage active lifestyles for its residents. With a walking trail at Donaldson Community Park and new trails planned in the future, township residents have options for outdoor physical activity throughout their community. North Fayette Parks and Recreation also offers numerous ongoing exercise choices for both young and old. Later this year, the township will add to its amenities when it opens a new \$4.5 million community center at Donaldson Park.

"My perspective is that Live Well North Fayette is essentially encouraging residents to have a fit and healthy lifestyle," says North Fayette Township Supervisor Bob Dodatto. "The benefits of regular exercise have been shown to increase your energy, improve your immune system and help your overall well-being. As a supervisor, I want to ensure our township has taken the steps to encourage and help facilitate healthy living. Our parks provide a great area for walking, jogging and athletics that help showcase the commitment we have to healthy living."

According to Allegheny County Councilman Tom Baker, who represents the First District, "It is incredibly important for residents to consider the role of exercise and nutrition in their daily lives. North Fayette is making that easy for this community as they make resources that focus on healthy living which exist in their township available to all ages."

The township is asking local businesses to support the program by offering incentives to employees that fit within the Live Well campaign. For additional information regarding Live Well North Fayette, contact Sue Walls at (724) 693-3117, or by email at swalls@north-fayette.com.

WACL celebrating 25th anniversary

The Western Allegheny Community Library is gearing up to celebrate its 25th anniversary with several upcoming promotions. The first, inspired by Willy Wonka's "golden tickets," is already under way. To commemorate their silver anniversary, the WACL is hiding silver tickets in books and other materials. Every silver ticket is worth a chance at a monthly drawing for prizes, such as a \$25 gift card. Those who find a silver ticket can stop by the customer service desk to pick up an instant prize.

Other fun promotions throughout the year include top 25 book, music and movie lists dating from 1990. Twenty-fifth anniversary t-shirts are available in youth and adult sizes for \$10. On the 25th of each month in 2015, the library also will be offering special treats.

In November, the library will celebrate its official birthday with a free open house event, which will include historic area photos and stories from the past 25 years. Anyone interested in helping with the celebration committee can email librarian Amanda Kirby at kirbya@einetnetwork.net.

West Allegheny Food Pantry news

Thanks goes out to everyone who supported the West Allegheny Food Pantry in 2014, whether through donations of food, money or time. The food pantry depends on the community to help assist families in the West Allegheny neighborhoods.

Currently, the food pantry serves 150 families on average each month. Donations to the pantry can be mailed to 520 Route 30, Imperial, PA 15126. Donations can also be dropped off on Wednesdays and Fridays from 11 a.m.-1 p.m., and on Saturdays from 8 a.m.-noon.



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Ohio Valley Hospital volunteer makes a difference in his community

Don McVay has made a life out of volunteering. He started helping others back in World War II, when he climbed aboard a Navy ship, the U.S.S. Amphion, and sailed off to join the war effort. Returning to Allegheny County, he purchased his current home in Ingram in 1950 and promptly joined the St. Vincent de Paul Society through his church across the street. He volunteered there for the next 30 years, helping those in need to buy food and furniture.

Don has always valued giving back to his community. Perhaps no volunteer job gave more value to the residents of Ingram than the leadership role he took on as their two-term mayor. He also served as the president of Ingram's Borough Council. During his 20-year commitment to the borough, he served both unpaid roles happily because he wanted to "help shape the community in a positive way."

Don began volunteering following his retirement from the railroad, where he successfully started and became his union's president. He has volunteered at Ohio Valley Hospital, a place that is central to his community, for 20 years. It made sense for him to volunteer there. It's just an eight-minute drive to the hospital

from his front door. In his role as front desk greeter, he's been able to meet and help residents from his own neighborhood, along with those from McKees Rocks, Kennedy Township, Robinson and Coraopolis.

Last spring, Don was recognized for serving 11,000 hours at OVH. At

Don McVay is recognized during Ohio Valley Hospital's annual volunteer recognition luncheon April 7, 2014. McVay has served over 11,000 hours at the hospital.

87 years young, he credits the time he spends volunteering for his good health, saying, "I think it does me good physically and mentally to be here. I enjoy what I do . . . I get to kid around with people, and show off my lighthearted side."

Anyone interested in volunteering at OVH can fill out a form at www.ohiovalleyhospital.org, or contact the hospital's coordinator of community services and seniority at (412) 777-6395.

Local performing arts students get special access to "Elf" cast

It's not often that a 13-year-old lands a spot in a Broadway show on national tour. When Shane Treloar, an Imperial resident and student at Karen Prunzik's Broadway Dance Studio and Performing Arts, landed the role of Michael in the Broadway tour of "Elf," the first thing Broadway Dance Studio did was organize a trip to Hershey to show support.

Not only did students enjoy the show, but they were surprised with a private question and answer session with the cast after the performance. The cast spent a great deal of time telling stories

Clearview FCU Announces Community Service Award Winner

Clearview Federal Credit Union announced the winner of its seventh Annual Joseph C. Cirelli Community Service Award as Sherry Knight. The award recognizes Knight's volunteer efforts with Pet Search, an all-volunteer nonprofit animal rescue and placement service. Pet Search rescues,

cares for, and places homeless and unwanted domestic animals across southwestern Pennsylvania.

In 1985, Knight started People for Animal Welfare, the first non-euthanizing, home sheltering animal rescue and placement organization in Washington County. In 1996, the name of the organization was changed to Pet Search. Over the past 28 years, Knight has developed a rescue program that oversees as many as 20 animal foster homes and works with five different veterinarians to care for animals that have been abused, relinquished or abandoned. Additionally, Sherry has developed five low-cost rabies inoculation clinics, programs for low-cost spay/neuter assistance, feral cat trap/neuter/return programs, humane education for children and pet therapy.

Since 1985, Knight and Pet Search of Washington County have been responsible for the rescue, care and placement of over 8,000 domestic pets. Knight also works as a full-time visual arts teacher in the Trinity Area School District and has taught for 38 years.

In recognition of Sherry's commitment to community service, Clearview made a \$2,500 donation to Pet Search. The organization intends to use the donation to continue caring for animals in the program, as well as to maintain their recently purchased cargo van, which is used extensively to transport animals for adoption, pet therapy, humane education and veterinary care.

Mark Brennan, president and CEO of Clearview, said, "We're proud to recognize Sherry for her hard work and dedication to Pet Search. We are very pleased that the funds will be used to help the people and animals of Washington County."



Sherry Knight of Pet Search is presented with a community service award and \$2,500 donation from Clearview Federal Credit Union. She is joined by former Clearview president and CEO Joseph C. Cirelli, current president and CEO Mark Brennan, and Clearview board chairman Brian B. Notman, Jr.

about how they got involved with the show and answering students' questions.

Shane Treloar, rear, with fellow students from Karen Prunzik's Broadway Dance Studio. Students traveled to show support for Treloar, who is starring in the Broadway musical "Elf."



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Heritage Public Library gets new director

The Heritage Public Library Board of Directors has selected Mary Duranti as the library's newest director. She assumed the role Jan. 9. Heritage, located in McDonald, serves the Fort Cherry School District, including McDonald, Midway, Mt. Pleasant and Robinson Township.

"I am thrilled to be a part of the Heritage Public Library," Duranti said. "I look forward to continuing the work of our library, making it a welcoming place for those who come to find information and resources, access technology and build friendships."

A longtime McDonald resident, Duranti was the director of the Disabilities Resource Center at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, but left that position to take her current position at the library. She holds a master's degree in public policy management from Pitt. She was appointed by Gov. Ed Rendell to the Pennsylvania Health Policy Board and served for four and a half years. She was also a member of the Pennsylvania Office of Health Equity Advisory Council.

She says she is looking forward to heading up a number of programs at the library, including their 2015 summer reading program, "Every Hero has a Story."

"I look forward to promoting the love of reading and making library memories for our children," Duranti said. "The library is such an important part of our community. It's an honor to ensure the library has the support and funding needed to serve our communities and provide these vital functions."

Patrons are asked to stop by Heritage and welcome Duranti to the library.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY DANIELLE NICHOLE PHOTOGRAPHY



As Imperial dental practice changes hands, two somewhat similar immigration stories emerge

Almost a decade before Dr. Tamara Polidor opened a dental practice in Imperial, she and her husband, Jerry, arrived in San Francisco with two suitcases and a young son. The rest, including family members and careers, they'd left in communist Czechoslovakia.

The regime would later try the couple in their absence for leaving the country, which was a crime at the time. Tamara says she and her husband wanted to escape an oppressive communist regime and its incessant propaganda, much like other emigrating Czechoslovakians following the Russian invasion of 1968.

After traveling to Austria, where they obtained asylum, the family emigrated to the U.S. on refugee visas.

"My husband didn't want to raise a kid in a communist regime," says Tamara.

Earlier this year, after 20 years of operating her practice in Imperial, Tamara announced that she had sold the business to Dr. Sumana Gangadhar. Formerly known as Polidor Dental, the practice is now named Family and Cosmetic Dentistry. It still operates out of the same office on West Allegheny Road.

Not unlike Tamara, Gangadhar also emigrated to the U.S., though from India, where she was a practicing dentist. She repeated dental school at the University of Pittsburgh to obtain a U.S.-sanctioned license. It's the same school Tamara attended shortly after moving to Pittsburgh. She, too, practiced in her home country, for the government, and had to repeat schooling to practice in the U.S.

Gangadhar says she's excited to take over a practice that utilized



Dr. Tamara Polidor, (left) has sold her Imperial dental practice to Dr. Sumana Gangadhar (right).

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many of the same philosophies as her own. Though an agent connected her with the business, she says she wanted to find something close to home. She currently lives in Moon with her husband, Kevin, a structural engineer and West Virginia University graduate, and their two children. The couple met in India, Sumana says, and after graduating from Pitt, they decided to call Pittsburgh home. She has been practicing in the Pittsburgh area for the past 15 years.

For Tamara, though, her retirement marks the end of a road not without tribulations. It's a path that had her at one point arriving in a country where she barely spoke the language and struggled to find work.

Jerry, despite speaking English fluently and having worked as a chemical engineer in Czechoslovakia, also struggled to find work.

"He couldn't find a comparable job here, and

when he'd apply for a technician position, they'd tell him he was overqualified," says Tamara.

With the cost of living untenable in San Francisco, the couple moved to Seattle, where Tamara found work as a dental assistant.

"He said I was the best assistant he'd ever had," she says. "I could anticipate what he needed because I was a dentist."

In 1988, Jerry found a position with the company Vesuvius, and the couple moved to the Pittsburgh area. While pregnant with their second child, Tamara enrolled at Pitt and started repeating dental school.

"When you look back, you wonder how you did it," says Tamara, "but in the moment, you just did."



In 1991, the couple settled in Walden Woods, and in 1995 Tamara opened her practice in a building where a Rite Aid now sits on West Allegheny Road. Ten years later, when that building was sold, she moved the practice to its current location next to Allegheny West Eyecare.

Tamara says that the family found belonging while living in the West Allegheny community. Their neighbors welcomed them, and through their sons, Marek and Michal, she met many of her clients. Both sons graduated from West Allegheny, where they each became hockey standouts. Last year, Michal, now an Air Force major, was inducted into the West Allegheny Athletic Hall of Fame. Tamara attributes her sons' success in hockey to her husband's infatuation with the sport.

While living in Walden Woods, the couple applied for and obtained U.S. citizenship. Their convictions were overturned when the Czechoslovakian government dissolved in the late 1980s, and they have since been free to travel there.

Tamara says she's now hoping to use some of her free time to visit her mother and sister, both of whom still live in Prague.

Gangadhar with her assistants, Rainelle Dunlevy (left) and Tracey Walters.



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Around Your Town

Donated paint jobs added polish to West Allegheny football and weight room this past season

West Allegheny football fans and parents have had little to complain about these past 20 years, as head coach Bob Palko has led the school's team to seven WPIAL championships and a state title.

Yet while watching his son play a couple seasons ago, Bill Steele, who owns and operates Steele Auto Body in Oakdale, did find something that irked him. That thing was the sight of the team's green and yellow John Deere ATVs on the sidelines. With the team rolling over opponents, and everything from the play to the coaching to the uniforms looking crisp and professional, the ATVs stuck out like a sore thumb.

"I approached Dave," says Steele, referring to West Allegheny Athletic Director Dave McBain, "and said, 'let me paint that thing.' Everything else is so professional, I just wanted that to be, too."

The school wasn't crazy about the colors, either.

"We weren't excited about having green and gold on the field," says McBain.

As a side to his business, Steele builds custom choppers and hot rods, and even has a line of custom automotive paint he developed that is sold by PPG. His painstaking attention to detail has earned him national honors, including three Easyriders Bike of the Year awards. He is currently the only bike customizer to have won the award three times. In January, he chaired the World of Wheels car show in Pittsburgh.

Last August, just weeks before the football season was about to begin, Steele got the team's ATVs in his shop and started getting them ready for his artistic touch. He mixed up the same exact crimson that players wear on their helmets, and finished them off with custom logos on the hoods. He also put a vinyl wrap on the back of the cart and touched up the black vinyl details.

Steele's work wasn't through, though. Last summer, the school also purchased seven weight benches from the University of Pittsburgh via fundraising efforts by

the football team. The only problem was, they were painted blue, which again failed to fit with the school's colors in its new and spacious weight gym. With the benches delivered to his shop, Steele disassembled them and picked out a specific black paint with grey-silver flecks to match

the school's colors. As with the ATVs, he donated the paint and work. The benches are used not only by the football team, but also by all of the school's athletic programs and physical conditioning classes, which are taught by the high school physical education department.

"It's awesome," says Palko about the paint jobs. "We get college coaches walking through here saying how nice this weight room is. When you get people in here, they say, 'woah, you really take pride in this.' It's important to take that kind of pride in your equipment because it's a reflection on your program."



West Allegheny head football coach Bob Palko with WA athletic director Dave McBain and Bill Steele. Last year, Steele donated his shop's services by painting the team's ATVs and weight benches.

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Student-run coat drive helps those in need

Mackenzie Walters, a 14-year-old West Allegheny High School freshman, says she felt for people who couldn't afford coats and warm clothing late last year. That led her to coordinate with Amy Rocchio, a family consumer science teacher at her school, who sent out emails asking for donations from school staff.

Within a month, Mackenzie had collected over 100 coats, many of them from WA faculty and neighbors. On Nov. 24, Mackenzie, along with her parents, John and Marilyn, delivered the coats to the Light of Life Mission in Pittsburgh's North Side. The mission takes a faith-centered approach to programming intended to help the homeless and poor, as well as those struggling with addiction, according to its website.

"We had all three rows of John's Explorer packed to the roof," says Marilyn.

In addition to spurring the coat drive, Mackenzie is also busy with 10 different clubs at the high school, including the community service-based Kiwanis Key Club. She also plays junior varsity tennis.

"I'm very appreciative of everyone who donated," said Mackenzie, "and especially Mrs. Rocchio for helping."



Mackenzie Walters in front of the Light of Life Rescue Mission in Pittsburgh's North Side. Mackenzie donated 100 coats she collected to the mission via a coat drive she initiated in November.

Sunny's Wee Kids Palace places again in annual PPG gingerbread house contest

For the third year in a row, before and after-school elementary students at Sunny's Wee Kids Palace on Steubenville Pike constructed a gingerbread house that earned honors at the PPG Place Gingerbread House Display and Competition. As in the past two years, Sunny's Wee Kids' entry placed in the top three in the elementary age category. Their gingerbread house was one of hundreds on display at PPG Place Plaza in downtown Pittsburgh from late November through early January.

Sunny Zastawa, who owns and operates the daycare center, says that students each year start drawing out ideas in September. With the help of their instructor, Sherri Griffin, they come up with a feasible plan. Students do all the decorating using edible materials.

"You must use royal icing made with sugar and meringue," says Griffin. "Tape or glue is unacceptable."

All that confectionery makes the house heavy. Griffin estimates they used 10 pounds of powdered sugar as they went taller with their design this year while keeping with the same castle theme.

"It was kind of a castle amusement park," says Griffin, "with little elves on candy canes."

By the time the children are done each year, they're already coming up with ideas for next year. Still, come mid-November, they're always scrambling to meet the deadline. Griffin says the most challenging part is trying to make their gingerbread houses look different each year.



Patrick Konieczny is the owner of Thomas-Little Funeral Service, Inc. with locations in the McDonald, Midway, Imperial, and Oakdale communities. He and his wife, Kristen, live in McDonald, North Fayette Township, with their two daughters, Mya and Allie.

Patrick is a graduate of Thiel College and Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science. He is a member of the West Allegheny Foundation, St. Alphonsus R.C. Church, McDonald Lions Club, Oakdale Merchants Association, and Oakdale F&AM Lodge #669. He is a former member of the West Allegheny School Board, served as vice-president and is present superintendent of the Oakdale Cemetery Association.

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American Freestyle Karate

American Freestyle Karate Academy is a new karate school in the West Allegheny community that teaches American Karate as opposed to karate derived from Eastern styles. AFKA's highly qualified professional instructors undergo extensive basis studying of martial arts. While teaching proven self-defense techniques, AFKA is also mindful of the need to encourage leadership and communication skills in students. AFKA accomplishes this by inspiring them to achieve their own personal best in an environment characterized by positive reinforcement.

While there are many fine Asian martial arts schools in the region, American Karate has evolved over the years to blend karate theory and historical lineage with American values and practical real world application. AFKA is not part of a corporate chain and does not bow to any foreign flag. AFKA treats each student as a unique individual and inspires them to do their personal best at their own pace.



ABOVE: Dr. John Stakeley, who heads American Freestyle Karate Academy, instructs his daughter Marissa how to block a punch. **BELOW:** Stakeley with his daughters, Miranda (left) and Marissa (right).

Karate offers many physical, mental and emotional benefits to students. For younger ones, this includes self-confidence, self-control and well-being. AFKA teaches students to plan for success, set and achieve goals and work well with others. These skills prepare students for the rigors of academic and business challenges. At an age when many adolescents tend to play video games, watch television and lead inactive lifestyles, AFKA's program builds strength, coordination, stamina and flexibility. Many students show improvement in school and other sports.

AFKA also can offer benefits to adults, many of whom work in front of a computer for long periods, attend long business meetings and travel frequently. AFKA's program enables students to live a healthier lifestyle. When combined with a proper diet, the program can have a positive effect on body weight, blood pressure and cholesterol.

AFKA believes strongly in teaching through positive reinforcement in a fun and energetic environment.

Dr. John Stakeley, who heads AFKA, has lived in Oakdale since 2002. For years he considered serving the community with an American Karate program, but did not have the time. In 2014, after completing his doctorate degree in information systems and communication, Stakeley felt the time was right to start teaching a program in North Fayette.

Stakeley lives with his wife, Stacey, and three children, Miranda, Marissa and Max. He is president of the Muninn Group, a local software engineering firm, and teaches business at the University of Pittsburgh. He also teaches business and leadership at Robert Morris University. He is an Army veteran and was deployed to Iraq in 2005.

AFKA holds its classes at the North Fayette Community Center. For more information, call (412) 335-1959 or email afkasensei@gmail.com.




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West Allegheny student earns Eagle Scout rank

Anyone planning a trip to the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden this spring should be sure to pay a visit to a newly constructed sheep shed built by West Allegheny's very own Daniel Shemon.



West Allegheny sophomore Daniel Shemon in front of the sheep shed he completed at the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden.

Last summer, Daniel embarked on the project, which he thought would greatly benefit the PBG while allowing him to earn his Eagle Scout award. A sophomore at West Allegheny High School, Daniel has been a scout for the past 10 years. He joined Troop 830, based in Clinton, when he was in first grade.

When it came time to choose his Eagle Scout project, Daniel was proactive and optimistic that he would find a meaningful endeavor, one that would allow him to learn, grow and give back to the community. Planning ahead, Daniel explains, "I chose this project because I wanted to complete something that would be long-lasting and a benefit to the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden."

Located in North Fayette and Collier townships, the PBG is set to become an attraction for many visitors over the next 10 to 20 years. Daniel explained that the PBG hoped to have his sheep shed completed for its August 2014 opening. After months of planning, construction, and working with all parties involved, Daniel was able to complete his project and help the garden meet their

deadline.

According to Daniel, the project was a chance for him to learn a variety of skills.

"I learned a lot about carpentry and construction, leadership, and the importance of time management," he says. "I also learned what it takes to complete a big project and that planning, preparation and organization play a key role."

In the end, for Daniel and the PBG, hard work paid off. The sheep shed is now a visitor attraction for the PBG, and on Nov. 28, Daniel was honored by his troop and became an Eagle Scout. The rank is the highest rank attainable in the Boy Scouts of America program.

Even amidst his busy schedule, Daniel finds ways to remain busy and continue to grow.

He runs cross country at West Allegheny and plays the trumpet in the high school's jazz band, brass ensemble and symphonic band. He is also part of the high school's MCJROTC program.

His sense of involvement and giving back doesn't stop there. He is already considering plans after graduation.

"I plan on joining the military after high school," he says.

Though not certain, Daniel says he is considering the Air Force and the United States Air Force Academy.

Shemon with a plaque honoring his Eagle Scout project at the PBG.



Oakdale Boy Scout Troop 248 news

Troop visits Gettysburg

In November, 54 members and leaders of Boy Scout Troop 248 visited Gettysburg for the park's Remembrance Day celebration, held in honor of the anniversary of the Gettysburg Address. The unit hiked 17 miles along both Union and Confederate battle lines and toured the Battle of Gettysburg. Troops visited Old Gettysburg, viewed the Remembrance Day Parade, and toured the National Civil War Museum. They also visited the Fort Indian Town Gap Pennsylvania National Guard facility in Annville. Scouts interacted with many different Civil War reenactor groups, and all youth members in attendance were able to earn Gettysburg Historical Hike patch sets and a hiking medal.

Troop earns the National BSA Gold Centennial Unit Award

Boy Scout Troop 248 has earned the gold standard for the National Boy Scouts of America Centennial Award for 2014. To qualify for the award, the national BSA evaluates the entire unit's performance against a national standard of adult and youth leadership, advancement, outdoor program, community service and organization of the unit. Each unit is awarded points for their performance toward a bronze, silver or gold rating. Troop 248 has earned the National Gold Standard every year since its inception in 1910.

Troop earns National BSA Outdoor Challenge Award

Boy Scout Troop 248 has once again earned the National BSA Outdoor Challenge Award for 2014. The troop has earned the award every year since its inception in 1910. The National Outdoor Challenge is based on the unit's outdoor program performance and the youth advancement program in the outdoor-related fields.

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Getting Your Household Cash Flow Back Under Control

Developing a better budgeting process may be the biggest step toward that goal.

Where does your money go? If you find yourself asking that question from time to time, it may relate to cash flow within your household. Having a cash flow management system may be instrumental in restoring some financial control.

It is harder for a middle-class household to maintain financial control these days. If you find yourself too often living on margin (i.e., charging everything) and too infrequently with adequate cash in hand, you aren't the only household feeling that way. Some major economic trends really have made it more challenging for households with mid-five-figure incomes.

So how can you make life more affordable? Budgeting is an important step. It promotes reliance on cash instead of plastic. It defines expenses, underlining where your money goes (and where it shouldn't be going). It clears up what is hazy about your finances. It demonstrates that you can be in command of your money, rather than letting your money command you.

Budget for that vacation. Save up for it by spending much less on the "optionals": coffee, cable, eating out, memberships, movies, outfits.

Buy the right kind of car & do your cash flow a favor. Many middle-class families yearn to buy a new car (a depreciating asset) or lease a new car (because they want to be seen driving a better car than they can actually afford). The better option is to buy a lightly used car and drive it for several years, maybe even a decade. Unglamorous? Maybe, but it should leave you less indebted. It may be a factor that can help you to ...

Plan to set some cash aside for an emergency fund. According to a recent Bankrate survey, about a quarter of U.S. households lack one. Imagine how much better you would feel knowing you have the equivalent of a few months of salary in reserve in case of a crisis. Again, you can budget to build it – a little at a time, if necessary. The key is to recognize that a crisis will come someday; none of us are fully shielded from the whims of fate.

Don't risk living without medical & dental coverage. You probably have both, but some middle-class households don't.

According to the Department of Health & Human Services, 108 million Americans lack dental insurance. Workers for even the largest firms may find premiums, out-of-pocket costs and coinsurance excessive. This isn't something you can go without. If your employer gives you the option of buying your own insurance, it could be a cheaper solution. At any rate, some serious household financial changes may need to occur so that you are adequately insured.


Budgeting for the future is also important. A recent Gallup poll found that about 20% of Americans have no retirement savings. You have to wonder: how many of these people might have accumulated a nest egg over the years by steadily directing just \$50 or \$100 a month into a retirement plan? Budgeting just a little at a time toward that very important priority could promote profound growth of retirement savings thanks to investment yields and tax deferral.

Equity investing has helped many middle-class Americans attain wealth. Increasingly, it looks like the long-term difference between being consigned to the middle class and escaping it. Doing it knowledgeably is vital.

Turning to the financial professional you know and trust for input may help you to develop a better budgeting process – and beyond the present, the saving and investing you do today and tomorrow may help you to one day become the (multi-) millionaire next door.

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BY PAT JENNETTE

Old Imperial Foodland

Just over 20 years ago, the mainstay in Imperial for residents to buy groceries, earn a living, and find support when times were tough closed. The old Foodland store on Route 30 in Imperial shuttered its doors in 1994.

The late John Ergen opened the store in 1914 as a general store and part of the Clover Farms chain. Located on Main Street in Imperial, the store operated in a building next to what is now Imperial Flooring. Ergen sold the traditional grocery items, as well as other items residents needed at the time, including dynamite and kerosene. The store even had live chickens and pigs.

When the family's duties were done at the store each day, they would go home to their apartment above the store. There, Ergen and his wife, Mary, raised their children.

Beth Ergen-Peters' father, Tom, was one of John and Mary's children. She recalls hearing the story of how her father was born in the apartment and weighed on the meat scale. She said that her grandfather died when Tom was just 11. Today, the white-sided building houses four apartments.

Four of John's seven children - Sylvia, Jennie, Vic, and Tom - worked in the store. John and Mary also had a daughter, Amelia, who died as a baby. Their oldest son, John, died in his 20s. Their other son, Frank, owned the Hotel Imperial on Route 30.

In 1962, the family joined the Foodland chain of stores. They opened in a building next to Cole's Pub on Route 30 in Imperial, which was then the New Star Inn.

Beth Ergen-Peters said the store provided a stable place for the community to come for their day-to-day needs. During hard times, the store extended credit to its customers until their paychecks came in so they could feed their families.

The family donated food to families in mourning, too. It was a meeting place, where the community gathered and generations worked and grew. High school kids learned work ethics and were given second chances.

Many residents worked at the store. In fact, generations of residents did, and their stories are numerous.

Michelle Dietz Halbedl worked in the bakery and deli for a couple of years, starting in her senior year of high school. She said, "We had a great group of people working there. We got along at work and had a great time hanging out outside of work. Great memories!"

Linda Pekular said she was a cashier there for ten years. She recalls, "Ed Nalesnick, a grocery manager for awhile, dressed as



This photo shows Mary Trenen Ergen and John Ergen, who originally opened the first Clover Farm store in Imperial.

Santa. And short, sweet little Sylvia Kostelic! She always had a smile on her face welcoming customers, and occasionally a red face, when joking with one!"

Elaine Hazel worked there as a cashier from 1978 to 1982, starting at the old building then moving to the new one. She said, "I remember Larry Cook, Ed and the rest of us dressing up for Halloween."

The Ergen family built another Foodland store in Bridgeville in 1966, which Vic and Jennie managed. Later, the family bought the property adjacent to the original Foodland store and expanded.

The Bridgeville store was sold in 1984. Vic and Jennie came back to Imperial to work alongside their siblings. All four of them continued to work at the Imperial store until the day it closed.

Continuing the family tradition, all 13 of the owners' children worked at the stores at some point. Beth Ergen-Peters recalls that her brother James was a manager when the store closed. Sylvia's son, Max - or "Ray" - still works in the grocery business as a butcher at the Giant Eagle Market District in Robinson, she added. A fourth generation is keeping the grocery blood in the family, albeit for a short while at least. Ergen-Peters said her son, Nicholas, is currently working at the Market District as he pays his way through college.

Other residents share their memories of the Foodland store. Christine Homol remembers her parents coming home from a shopping trip at the Imperial Foodland and saying that Sylvia wanted to see her.

"Dad drove me down and waited in the car," she says. "Sylvia took me to the last checkout counter and put some items on the belt and showed me how to run the register. Next thing I know, she gave me a smock and sent customers over! She said, 'you can work until we close.' That's how I was hired! I was 16. She then went out and told my dad when I would be done!"

Homol added, "One of the best times I had growing up was working at Foodland. I stayed until I went to college. I learned to have a good work ethic and be responsible under Sylvia's guidance. She was sweet and so was Tom. Ed Nalesnick was great also. I also met my husband working at Foodland. He also worked there and would somehow manage to be the stock guy to help bag groceries at the register that I was running. We are still together after 27 years and Sylvia used to tease me that she never received her matchmaker's fee! Had great fun working at the Imperial Foodland."

The late Sylvia Kostelic had stated in an article written in a local paper when the store closed in 1994 that they would use hand-cranked adding machines before technology changed things. Susy Parry remembers those times. She worked in the office at the old store. She left when she started college, but returned when the new store opened the next spring.

She recalled how Beth Ergen-Peters was the "office queen," showing her and the other ladies at the new store all the ropes. Parry added, "I do remember that we had two adding machines in the office. One was electric and one was punch. And we used them both to do checks. And when power went out, people could still

buy. Sylvie just moved that manual machine to the checkout and got everyone taken care of."

She said, "Sylvia taught me way more about customer service and business than any college class. She was an original! She loved the lottery, the polka...we had a lot of fun times with her."

Parry lived up on the hill across the way from Tom and Betsy Ergen's family at the top of Valley Cemetery. When it snowed and someone couldn't get to work, Sylvia would call her. She would put on her snow boots and walk down the hill. Business had to go on, and the store needed to serve the community.

She said, "Us 'Foodlandies' from the hill could schmuck it down the hill in bad weather. I never minded it."

Marlene Kostelic Wilson, remembering her mother, Sylvia, said, "She really loved working in that store. And she liked to work with all the young kids. I think they all kept her young. She quit working at 75 only because the store closed."

Barbara Kennedy recalled, "My job at Foodland was the most fun job I've ever had. Many years and many jobs since then but I still wish I could find a job that allows me to talk and play all the time."

The fun times would eventually come to an end, and the era of a small-town, family-owned grocery store with its heart and soul embedded in the community was over. Once the Foodland store closed, the family rented it to the Family Dollar store. It was eventually sold to a vinyl company that now runs its business on that site.

Ergen-Peters said it was a memorable time, a fun time, although there were moments when it was difficult.

"When a family has a business, it is the center of your universe," he said. "It made some family relationships difficult, being with each other all the time. There were

lots of dinner interruptions with phone calls. When I was younger the blue laws existed. Sunday was our only family day together."

Today, the building still remains, and the Ergen siblings are gone. What stands out most to people is how vital the local store and its owners were to the sense of community, helping families when times were tough, giving many residents a place to earn a living, giving back to the community.

The "old Foodland" will always remain special in many local residents' hearts.



Tom Ergen with his mother, Mary, pictured at right, in front of the family store in Imperial.

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National Honor Society inductees recognized at ceremony



Hard work and commitment paid off for 55 students when they were inducted into the National Honor Society on November 19. To be eligible for membership, juniors and seniors must have maintained at least a 3.75 QPA, and must be taking or have completed three classes of advanced standing in each of the five major academic disciplines: English, foreign languages, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Among those inducted were seniors Daniel Aromando, Jordan Crawford, Alyssa Formosa, Vickilyn Johnson, Alexis Juzwick, Eric Nguyen, Robert Rankin, Mackenzie Starr, Steven Stasik, and Shawn Weiss; and juniors Allison Banas, Mark Behme, Maya Black, Mikayla Bogaski, Cassidy Bordo, Adam Brierton,

Maria Capo, Janghyen Cho, Rowen Conrad, Jessica Crider, Carli Eger, Hunter Evans, Haley Grogan, Kara Hamilton, Alexis Hill, Alicia Hower, Sarah Hughes, Jenna Josey, Abigail Kidder, Karly Krisovenski, Pryclynn Kubatka-Campbell, Anastasia Kwiatkowski, Jared Lanni, Brenna Laughery, Laurn Long, Felicia Mackey, Angela Martelli, Skyler Mason, Reilly Mercurio, Mara Ojeda, Jarrett Parker, Angeline Peng, Annie Kate Raglow, Ryan Rohm, Lauren Schaupp, Abigail Shipley, Erin Smith, Julianne Spataro, Sarah Steward, Carolyn Stout, Bethany Tepley, Allyssa Tome, Megan Wurst, Emily Zeigler and Reilly Zimmerman.

Lynn Birnie and Lauren Barry serve as faculty sponsors.

FBLA students qualify for state conference

Several members of the Future Business Leaders of America team advanced to the State Leadership Conference after qualifying in regional competition December 10. First place finishers included: Cameron Kehm, Impromptu; Adele Smith, Help Desk; Catherine Wheatley, Public Speaking I; Megan Ye, Business Math; and the team of Maya Black, Rowen Conrad, Abby Kidder, Angeline Peng and Julianne Spataro, Parliamentary Procedure.

Second place finishers included: Stephanie Berhosky, Introduction to Business; Lucia Bruschi, Introduction to Business Communications; Frank McCullough, Desktop Publishing; Wade Schriener, Securities and Investments.

All of these students will be traveling to the state conference, which will be held April 13-15 in Hershey. Mike Shaffer serves as the FBLA advisor.

District launches Facebook page with student photo contest

In an ongoing commitment to expand communication, the District announced the launch of its official Facebook page, found at West Allegheny School District. The social media site will share good news occurring in the District, including student and staff activities, achievements and upcoming events.

To kick off the page, the District Communication Department is sponsoring a student photo contest with the winning selection being featured as



the West Allegheny Facebook cover photo. The winner will receive a \$50 iTunes gift card. All student photo buffs are encouraged to submit no more than three photos to communications coordinator Karen Ruhl at kruhl@westasd.org that depict life at West Allegheny. The student's name, grade and school should be included in the email. The photo should be horizontal and submitted as a jpeg attachment. The deadline for submissions is April 1. May the best photo win!

High school administrative team reorganizes

The high school administrative team has reorganized to a co-principal model that reflects District priorities. Dan Smith has been named lead principal, Kevin McKiernan has been promoted to academic principal, and Katharine McClelland has been named assistant principal for instruction and student affairs. The reorganization will help define roles and responsibilities to maximize student achievement and focus efforts across a three-person administrative team.

The model will build on priorities identified in the District's Framework for Academic Excellence, and will directly align to Priority 1, which provides for academic rigor, equity and excellence for all students; and Priority 2, which provides for a high quality teacher in every classroom, every day. In addition, this shift will allow the leadership team to effectively manage and lead initiatives that impact academic rigor, course offerings, graduation requirements and classroom instruction. All three administrators will be directly involved in supporting teachers' professional growth and evaluation.

As lead principal, Smith will continue to provide executive management of the school through support and evaluation of teaching and non-teaching staff while overseeing student services, school safety, budgeting, student activities, athletics and arts. Smith will also continue to serve as a liaison between the school and Parkway West Career and Technology Center. Hired in 1993, Smith transitioned to high school principal in 2003.

In his new role as academic principal, McKiernan will be responsible for introducing and leading initiatives that support student and teacher success. McKiernan will be responsible for designing and implementing a new College and Career Readiness Indicator System and developing academic academies, such as early college programs. He will also facilitate external partnerships and grant attainment. McKiernan has served as the high school assistant principal since joining the District in 2009.



The reorganized West Allegheny administrative team now consists of assistant principal for instruction Katharine McClelland, lead principal Dan Smith, and academic principal Kevin McKiernan.

McClelland's role as assistant principal for instruction and student affairs will encompass coordination of student services and provide leadership in mathematics and institutional technology. McClelland joined the District at the start of the 2014-2015 school year.

"I am excited with the board's enthusiasm and support for the re-organization of the administrative team to further the academic mission and goals of our high school," said Dr. Jerri

Lynn Lippert, superintendent. "Mr. McKiernan's promotion to academic principal signals the commitment of the high school administrative team and staff to continue to pursue academic excellence and college and career preparedness for all of our students. I anticipate great things happening for our students as we continue our journey to increase the rigor and academic expectations and requirements for graduation under Mr. McKiernan's leadership."

Superintendent's Message

Happy 2015! I am excited to share some important work underway in the new year that will provide great benefits to our students, teachers and families.

First, as announced in December of 2014, the District and West Allegheny Education Association reached an Early Bird Settlement Agreement. The new three-year contract, effective the first day of the 2015-2016 school year, will allow teachers, administrators and our school board to focus on priorities identified in the District's Framework for Academic Excellence. Those priorities are: 1. provide academic rigor, equity and excellence for all students; 2. provide a high quality teacher in every classroom, every day; and 3. demonstrate financial responsibility and operational efficiency. The Settlement Agreement supports the District's collective investment in the Framework by establishing the stability necessary to move the work forward, and thereby ensuring every student achieves success. This agreement is a significant milestone and benefit to the District and the West Allegheny community. It allows us to maintain and deepen our focus on advancing our academic goals. The District and WAEA worked collegially and collaboratively to develop a fiscally responsible Settlement Agreement while valuing our teachers' hard work on a daily basis. It was a true pleasure working with the WAEA negotiating team to reach an agreement that is fair to both taxpayers and teachers.

Second, in response to input from all of our District stakeholders, we have been working to establish an increased level of student academic expectations and academic press. At the high school level, students in the graduating class of 2017 (current sophomores) and beyond will now be required to complete additional credits in science, math and social studies, as well as complete certain courses to meet graduation requirements. Currently, students are required to take four credits of English, three credits of science, three credits of math and three credits of social studies. With the class of 2017, the credit requirement of each of these disciplines will be four. Additionally, all students will be required to successfully pass Algebra 1 and 2, geometry, biology, chemistry and physics. It is expected that, during their senior year, students will be taking higher level math, science and humanities courses. In other words, the days of the easy senior year will be a fading memory. It is imperative that we work to bridge the academic requirements of post-secondary education with the junior and senior year expectations.

Several new and exciting courses will be developed over the next two school years to support the additional fourth year requirements, including conceptual chemistry and conceptual physics, AP computer science, AP environmental science, anatomy and physiology, discrete math replacing consumer math, sociology of sport, comparative religions, studies of the Holocaust and genocide, and additional AP offerings in social studies. Another significant change involves moving all physical education classes to co-ed to be in compliance with

Title IX legislation, while still offering personalized choices.

.....
The high school administrative team and counseling team have been working since August to develop a three-tiered framework called the **Career and College Readiness Indicator System**, which is based on research from the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University. This system focuses on three dimensions of college and career readiness, including academic preparedness, academic tenacity, and college and career knowledge. This system will help students build success as they move through high school and look toward their post-secondary goals. We will use several indicators as proxies for the three dimensions. GPA and performance on standardized assessments such as PSAT, SAT, AP exams and state assessments will be used for academic preparedness. Attendance rates will be used for academic tenacity.

To elevate students to their highest potential, the CCRIS will ensure that all students see an increased level of involvement from counselors, teachers and administrators. Plans

are being established that will include a new counseling curriculum, which will allow the counselors to more efficiently address student needs one-on-one, in small groups, in large groups and in the classroom setting.

In response to the above focus on raising academic expectations, the high school administrative team was recently re-organized to designate Kevin McKiernan as academic principal, Dan Smith as lead principal, and Kate McClelland as assistant principal for instruction and student affairs. The

re-organization facilitates the leadership team's ability to effectively manage and lead work that will optimize support for students and teachers as academic expectations are implemented. Mr. McKiernan's primary responsibilities include leading the academic transformation and implementing the Career and College Readiness Indicator System.

"I am extremely excited to be given the opportunity to lead this pressing work," said McKiernan. "There is a need for a more intensive academic program and focused areas of study for our students to truly prepare them to be successful after high school. This new designation allows me the opportunity to focus on our academic programming and support student and staff to meet the higher expectations."

Similar to the high school, academic expectations are being raised for our middle school students. Next year, all middle school students will have increased time in mathematics. Further, all students will have a pre-advanced placement curriculum with more rigorous instruction and expectations. The mission of our middle school will be to ensure that all students are academically prepared for high school, with a larger number of students pursuing honors courses in ninth grade. Also, the middle school committee, consisting of teachers and administrators, has identified a vision of becoming

**"There is a
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- Kevin McKiernan,
academic
principal**

Superintendent's Message, cont.

a STEAM - or science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics - school. The STEAM focus will transform the specials/related arts that are currently offered. A few examples of possible content areas are: food and consumer science will focus on designing business models and entrepreneurial activities; industrial arts will shift concentration to engineering and gaming; and music will be infused with digital technologies. The middle school STEAM committee is excited about the opportunity to bring 21st century experiences to our students that prepare them for high school and build career awareness and interest.

Lastly, we are committed to moving the middle school to a one-to-one environment, meaning each student would have their own personal device to extend learning beyond the classroom walls. The middle school STEAM focus will take a few years to fully implement.

"Our team is looking forward to evaluating our current programs and visiting area schools for new STEAM ideas that will benefit our students," noted Richard Smith, middle

"Our team is looking forward to evaluating our current programs and visiting area schools for new STEAM ideas that will benefit our students."

- Richard Smith, middle school principal

school principal. "We are also looking to form partnerships with area postgraduate institutions to provide added academic opportunities."

The work under way at both the high school and middle school builds on the District's Framework for Academic Excellence and are directly aligned to Priority 1, academic rigor, equity and excellence for all students. The complete middle and high school academic programming presentation may be found on the District's website at www.westasd.org. This presentation details the academic programming changes presented above and was shared with our board during the December committee meeting.

We look forward to partnering with students and parents over the next few years to further develop and implement these academic advancements so that our graduates are able to experience collegiate and career success and compete globally.

Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert,
Superintendent

New volunteer clearance requirements announced by state

Act 153 of 2014 was recently adopted by the Pennsylvania legislature and signed by the governor. Act 153 amends the Child Protective Services Law and includes provisions creating clearance requirements for unpaid volunteers in schools, as well as requiring periodically updated clearances for volunteers. A volunteer is defined as "an adult applying for an unpaid position as a volunteer responsible for the welfare of a child or having direct contact with children."

Prior to Act 153 of 2014, District volunteers needed only submit the Act 34 Pennsylvania Criminal History Clearance and the Act 151 Pennsylvania Child Abuse Clearance to volunteer within the District. Volunteers were not required to submit the Act 114 FBI Criminal Background Clearance. Volunteers were then permitted to continue to volunteer without renewed clearances if volunteering consistently from year to year.

Act 153 of 2014 now requires each volunteer to have all three criminal background clearances and to update these clearances on a three-year cycle. The volunteer will bear the responsibility for the procurement and cost of obtaining all clearances.

In lieu of submitting the Act 114 FBI Criminal Background Check, a volunteer may attest, in writing, that they have been a Pennsylvania resident for ten years prior to application, and that they are not disqualified for any crime listed in the Child Protective Services Law.

Additional information, instructions and links may be found under "News" on the home page of the West Allegheny School District website at www.westasd.org. In addition, volunteers may stop by the District Office Tuesdays through Thursdays from 2-4 p.m. with any questions regarding updating clearances. Queries can also be emailed to mkelsey@westasd.org.

District awarded Safe Schools grant

The District was recently awarded a Safe Schools grant for \$25,000 from the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The grant will be used to install a new surveillance security system at Donaldson Elementary School, as well as upgrade components of the existing system. These improvements will place Donaldson's security on par with that of the high school and middle school. Comparable systems are planned for McKee and Wilson Elementary schools.

Teachers' Cup set for March 13

The high school will host the District's annual Teachers' Cup event March 13 at 7 p.m. in the high school gymnasium. As in years past, teachers from across the District will face off in a series of friendly competitions to raise money for the West Allegheny Foundation. New this year will be the addition of a District administration team challenge. Funds from the foundation go toward awarding grants for educational and community-related initiatives across the District. Now in its tenth year, the WA Foundation has donated over \$250,000 to local and educational programs.

Gold Card Club members celebrate the holidays

Members of the West Allegheny school board and administration welcomed nearly 140 attendees to the school's annual Gold Card Club holiday breakfast December 12. Following a complimentary hot breakfast provided by the food service department, attendees participated in a spirited competition testing their knowledge of West Allegheny history. Middle school band students added to the holiday atmosphere by providing background music, and JROTC students volunteered their time and assisted with greeting and serving.

Gold Card Club members were then treated to the sounds of the season with concert performances from the Middle School Show

Choir, under the direction of Andrew Peters and Meagan Bruno; the High School Brass Ensemble, under the direction of Steve Groba; and the High School Wind Ensemble, under the direction of T.J. Fox.

Any district resident age 60 or older interested in joining the Gold Card Club can register and pick up a card at the District Office at Wilson Elementary School. The Gold Card grants members free admission to all events sponsored by the District for which there is generally a charge. These events include all concerts, plays, science fairs, art shows and regular season athletic activities. Membership does not, however, provide free admission to fundraising events sponsored by booster organizations, such as spaghetti dinners or other activities. Everyone issued a Gold Card is also placed on a mailing list to receive newsletters and other information from the schools.

Current members interested in replacing their old paper cards with the new plastic ones can stop by the new District Office located at Wilson Elementary School.



Gold Card members unscramble a West Allegheny-themed trivia timeline.

Wilson renovations ahead of schedule

The Wilson Elementary School staff was busy in late December and early January, as phase two of the school's renovation project was completed almost two months ahead of schedule. Fifteen classrooms have been made ready for occupancy, including new art, music and resource rooms. In addition to state-of-the-art amenities and student-friendly furniture, lockers were also added, allowing for student privacy and space. Skylights in the vaulted hallways provide an abundance of natural sunlight, reducing energy consumption.

With phase three of the project under way, an additional 14 classrooms are under construction. This phase also includes development of the collaboratory, an open space designed for multiple class use. Phase three is expected to be complete by early to mid summer, prior to the start of the 2015-2016 school year.



McKee Cares gives back to community

McKee Elementary recently formed a service organization called McKee Cares, which focuses on promoting community service and charity efforts.

The organization kicked off its projects in November with a pajama day. All funds collected benefitted Project Bundle Up. Efforts continued in December when McKee students and staff showed their support for a Donaldson student facing serious medical issues. McKee Cares lent its support by hosting a gum day. Proceeds were used to create a basket filled with games, books and snacks that the student could take to the hospital.

Additional events were implemented to benefit the TC House project in Imperial. The TC House provides housing for local individuals with disabilities, allowing them to thrive with independence and confidence by living fuller lives and giving back as members of the community. The McKee Arts Alive team of Claire March and Terisa Sharlow held the TC House fundraiser. For a donation, students were invited to wear pajamas for McKee's annual Holiday Sing-A-Long. A successful pumpkin raffle was also held during an open house and the funds raised helped McKee purchase two sponsor bricks to help complete the TC House patio.

McKee Elementary has raised \$2,000 this year to support the community.

West Allegheny to present “Chicago” as its 24th musical theatre production

West Allegheny School District will present the glitzy dance musical “Chicago” as its 2015 spring production. Five performances will take place in the high school auditorium. Performance dates are April 10 at 7 p.m., April 11 at 7 p.m., April 12 at 2 p.m., April 17 at 7 p.m. and April 18 at 7 p.m. The school’s annual Gold Card luncheon will be held prior to a matinee performance April 12.

Set during the roaring 1920s, “Chicago” tells the story of two rival vaudevillian murderesses - nightclub star Velma and chorus girl Roxie - who find themselves together in jail. Velma enlists the help of prison matron Mama Morton and slickster lawyer Billy Flynn, who turn her incarceration into a murder-of-the-week media frenzy. “Chicago” opened in 1975 and is still running on Broadway, holding the record for the longest-

running American musical. The Academy Award-winning 2002 movie version was directed by Rob Marshall.

Justin Fortunato returns as director with auditions and rehearsals already under way. The production staff is excited to follow up on last year’s Gene Kelly Best Musical Award-winning performance with one befitting the glamorous and stylized show “Chicago.” The school is also excited to have the opportunity to showcase a talented cast ready to shine and meet the artistic challenges involved.

Tickets will be available online for the first time this year, with details to be announced. For more information contact Tom Snyder, executive producer, at (724) 695-5269, or by e-mail at tsnyder@westasd.org.

Sweet Harmony Festival showcases West Allegheny students

Seven middle and high school students were selected to participate in the Sweet Harmony Festival November 14 at Upper St. Clair High School. Selection was based on student applications and teacher recommendations. The concert showcased young women in grades six through nine and was sponsored by the Southwest Region of the American Choral Directors Association of Pennsylvania. Dr. Gabrielle Dietrich, director of choral ensembles at Penn State University Behrend, served as guest conductor.

Students pictured include: (front) Rachel Kiss, Carly Thompson, Abigail Leslie, Loren Perry and Caitlin Davis; (back) Mackenzy Gerard and Katie Carnot.



High school drama team places at state championship

The cast and crew of the high school drama team claimed fourth place in the State Drama Championships for the team’s performance of “Elephant’s Graveyard.” Catherine Wheatley was the first student in West Allegheny history to place in an all-state cast. The competition took place at Susquehanna University on December 5 and 6.

Actors included Morghann Simon, Victoria Sadauskas, MacKenzie Walters, Gabriella Hatch, Caleb Bartholow, Max Bruce-Rudge, Taylor Schmac, Cameron Kehm, Emily Bower, Reilly Zimmerman, Catherine Wheatley, Sydney Campbell, Isaac Bower and Adele Smith. The crew included: Daniel Hovanec, Nick Staub, Frank McCullough and Robert DeFazio. The

costume and makeup crew consisted of Ciera Forrester, Rachel Zelesnik, Grace Sollosi and Nick Morrison.

Mike Shaffer served as director, Stephanie White as assistant director, Joe Sible as technical director and Sandy Pittinaro oversaw costumes and make-up.



High school students participate in Model European Union competition

High school students traveled to the University of Pittsburgh to participate in the Model European Union competition December 2. A total of 16 students from the West Allegheny Model UN Club took on the role of EU countries to tackle such issues as "The EU response to Ukraine," "The United Kingdom potential secession from the EU" and "The rise of extremist parties within the EU." Teams worked collaboratively to address real-life topics and ultimately negotiate a resolution.

Faculty advisors of the Model UN Club are Allison McLaren and Dan Prevade.

"This is a great activity for kids who are interested in international affairs and diplomacy," said McLaren.



Model UN Club members traveled to the University of Pittsburgh for a Model European Union competition December 2.

AP German students take up blogging

AP German students have embraced a new means of communicating their second language, as they are now blogging in German. German teacher Katie Zanella has introduced the challenge to her students through a site called Edmodo. She begins by identifying the topic and presents them with a question that provokes interest and response. They have discussed topics such as bullying and responsibility, as well as the pros and cons of computers/cell phones in school. Upcoming topics will encompass opinions about the future role of scientists - and technology - and their responsibilities to mankind, and discussions of immigration policies in Germany. Students are also learning to create and support arguments in German while applying appropriate and difficult language devices.

"It is a fun way for the students to interact regarding topics that are important to them, but also promotes intensive reading and writing skills," stated Zanella. "They enjoy going back and forth with each other!"

There are seven students in the class, and they are required to blog at least three times every two weeks. Students are graded on the thoughtfulness of their entry and correct language usage.

Middle school geography bee names champion



The top 10 middle school geography bee finishers this year were (front) Sean Collins, Gillian Davis, Chloe Black, Ethan Cooper (runner-up), and Jackson Faulk; (back) Josh Holder, Haley Kozel, Aaron Silvis (winner), Brandon Raglow, and Vishaal Saravanan.

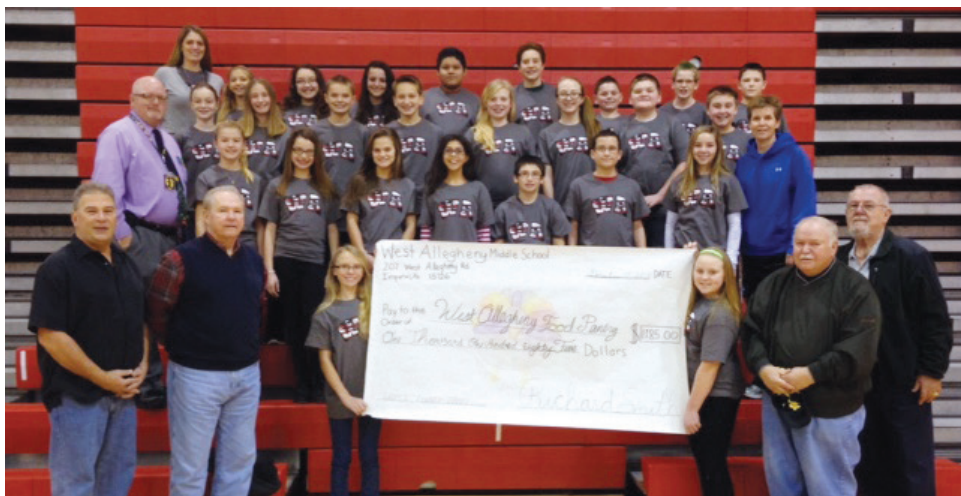
The middle school hosted its annual geography bee, sponsored by the National Geographic Society, January 13-15. With near perfect rounds, eighth grader Aaron Silvis was named this year's champion. All middle school students took a qualifying exam at the beginning of December. The top 20 scorers competed in the initial rounds until only 10 students remained. Of those ten, five qualified...Social studies teachers Nancy Watkins and Valerie Meehan organized this year's contest, which was hosted by Jeff Kiser.

As the District winner, Silvis received a t-shirt and a trophy and will now take a written test to determine if he will move on to the state championships in April. Should Silvas win at the state level, he would qualify to compete in a national championship, which will be held in Washington, D.C. The national winner will receive a \$25,000 college scholarship and a trip.

Fifth annual Turkey Trot benefits West Allegheny Food Pantry

The middle school held its fifth annual Turkey Trot on November 26, which included a one-mile walk around the high school track. Named for the Thanksgiving holiday, the event afforded students a chance for physical exercise and an opportunity to brighten the holidays for those in need. A contest was added this year, with the homeroom collecting the most items and funds winning t-shirts. Over 1,500 nonperishable food items were collected, and \$1,185 raised to benefit the West Allegheny Food Pantry.

The event was coordinated by Mary Lococo, Jeff Kiser and Lisa Rippole.



Donations were presented to representatives from the West Allegheny Food Pantry.

New Family and Consumer Science club applies skills to benefit community



FCS officers display piles of jeans collected for homeless shelters. They are Sarah Hughes, treasurer; Rachel McLaughlin, president; and Chrissy Sible, secretary. Not pictured is Victoria St. Claire, vice president.

The high school Family and Consumer Science Department started a new club this year and kicked it off with course-relevant service projects. Members baked cookies for the West Allegheny Food Pantry bake sale, and made holiday ornaments to accompany gifts for children on the school's angel tree. The club also organized a Teens for Jeans campaign, for which over 90 pairs of jeans have been collected and will be donated to teens and children in homeless shelters.

Future projects will encompass sewing pillowcases for cancer patients, making blankets for children in local hospitals through Project Linus, and a food drive for the West Allegheny Food Pantry. Club members will also create cards to be sent overseas so that deployed members of the armed forces can send them to family members for holidays, anniversaries, and birthdays.

"The FCS Club provides students with amazing opportunities to give back to their community," said FCS president, Rachel McLaughlin.

There are currently 84 members in the club. The club's faculty advisors are Jennifer Cook, Sara Ferko, Kristin Persing and Amy Rocchio from the high school, as well as Claire Bertinet from the middle school.

Gradkowski scores with Wilson students



Wilson Student Council sponsored a fundraiser through which students purchased tickets to win lunch with Pittsburgh Steeler quarterback Bruce Gradkowski. The money raised will go toward the student activity fund, which provides money for students unable to attend field trips and other events due to financial difficulty. Nancy Sale and Tania Garofoli serve as Wilson Student Council sponsors.

Middle school students sponsor tree at Clinton Park

The middle school Life Skills program and Student Government Association enjoyed a day out November 14 as they came together in true holiday spirit. Students went shopping to purchase ornaments for a tree they decorated at Clinton Park. Despite the cold, students had a great time working together to create a beautiful middle school tree. Lunch followed at The Mall at Robinson, along with a photo with Santa.

Middle school students (front) Juliana Dominick, Shreyas Muley, Samantha Stone, Merrin Prevade, Hayden Shipley, Alex Morrison and Ben Reno; (back) Dominic Zellous, Robert Moran and Austin Legnine proudly display their tree at Clinton Park.



Donaldson kindergarten classes perform holiday play

Donaldson kindergarten classes celebrated the holidays with a performance of the play "The Littlest Christmas Tree" on December 22. Students, dressed in costumes, entertained family and friends as they acted out their roles.

Kindergartner Brandon Boyce plays the role of the littlest Christmas tree.



Touching tribute to veterans offered by Donaldson students



Donaldson fifth grade students celebrate Veteran's Day by singing patriotic songs.

Fifth grade students at Donaldson Elementary School likely gained more than expected as they set out on a quest to learn about the sacrifices made by members of the military. Students were first asked to compose a short essay on a friend or family member who is a veteran or on active military duty. Students also researched the meaning of U.S. symbols and monuments, wrote poetry, and created artwork in library and computer classes to demonstrate their learning. Music classes also got involved by learning patriotic songs.

To culminate the learning process, interviewees and their families were invited to a touching tribute where students presented their research, poetry readings and songs. Students honored each military member as they were introduced with a meaningful and memorable history of their service. As the honorees were introduced, they were presented with a gift of appreciation.

The project was coordinated by Beth Schultz, librarian; Leah Vestal, computer teacher; Jaime Mahramas, music teacher; along with fifth grade teachers Debra Hamilton, Tiffany Mangan, Elise Sunseri and Lynda Stout.

Cheerleading takes on new meaning



When Donaldson fourth grader Anya La Mar answered her front door in early September, she had no idea of the surprise waiting for her on the other side. It quickly became clear when she found the West Allegheny varsity cheerleading squad in her yard cheering for her.

The idea of surprising her came to neighbor and cheerleader Faith Orsini and her mother, Jodi, when they heard Anya had been diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma, a rare form of bone cancer. Anya was facing several rounds of chemotherapy treatments and surgery to remove the tumor and part of her femur. Knowing how much Anya liked watching her practice and learning cheers, Faith wanted to do something to motivate her to keep fighting and remain positive. When the Orsinis contacted cheerleading coach Amanda Ozanich, there was no hesitation. The team was on board and the plan put in place.

Anya's reaction was one of surprise and disbelief when she realized the cheerleaders were there for her. A video of the

High school athletes attend WPIAL Summit on Sportsmanship

Six West Allegheny High School athletes attended the annual WPIAL Summit on Sportsmanship at the Sen. John Heinz History Center November 12. The gathering was an opportunity for over 600 student-athletes from around Western Pennsylvania to come together to discuss good sportsmanship on and off the field.



Student-athletes who attended the summit included: (front) Lauren Costa, Casey Tokarski and Sarah Davis; (back) Terence Stephens; Andrew Koester and Christian Stout.

visit was posted on YouTube and can be viewed at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M0aLB3ZFapc>

Since that day, Anya has received treatments and underwent surgery before Christmas. Despite the challenges, Anya has maintained a positive and fighting attitude that was so genuinely encouraged by the entire West Allegheny cheer squad.

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All material has been prepared,
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Karen Ruhl,
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**Look on
page 46
for more
Findlay
events!**



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Holy Trinity Catholic School

Kindergarten class gets a visit from "Frozen" star



Gabrielle "Gabby" Giglio, a former Holy Trinity student, paid a visit to some admiring kindergarten students at her alma mater Dec. 18 while dressed as Elsa from the popular Disney movie "Frozen."

Giglio, who currently attends the Columbus College of Art and Design, and is majoring in fashion design, created the

costume as part of a college assignment. Giglio is also a graduate of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart High School in Moon.

Students of the month



December's students of the month, pictured with principal Kim Stevenson, were Natalia Gonzalez, first grade; Liam McAndrews, second grade; Dominic Bodek, third grade; Melaina Merlo, fourth grade; Cheyenne Gorsuch, fifth grade; Luca Lacchetti, sixth grade; Larissa Krulac, seventh grade; and Sabrina Skukalek, eighth grade.

Each month, Holy Trinity Catholic School selects a student to represent each grade as its student of the month. Students are nominated by their teachers based on several criteria, including academic performance, leadership, exemplifying Catholic values, classroom participation, kindness and service to others.

Honoring Catholic Schools Week

As part of Catholic Schools Week, the entire Holy Trinity school assembled in the school gym Jan. 26 and students formed a rosary. Students, faculty and guests prayed the rosary for the children of Chimbote, Peru, where the Pittsburgh Diocese has a long-standing missionary commitment, as part of their focus on missions and service to others throughout the week.



World War I poster winners

While studying the history of World War I, Holy Trinity Catholic School eighth graders were given an assignment to create or recreate their own World War I propaganda poster. The school's staff believe in tapping into all the abilities of each student to help them learn new material.



Winners of the eighth grade World War I poster competition (pictured) were Abby Minzer, third place; Lindsey Seibel, second place; and Maddie Minsinger, first place




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Parkway West CTC

Interact Club inducted at PWCTC

The Parkway West Rotary inducted its newest Interact Club at Parkway West Career and Technology Center during a luncheon Jan. 28. Members of the entirely student-run club will perform a number of community service projects throughout the school year, from food drives to fundraisers. The luncheon was prepared and served by PWCTC culinary students.

Thus far, about a dozen students have signed up for the club, says Parkway West Rotary member Sam Duerr III. Sarah Lenkner will serve as the club's president, Natalie Vizman as vice president, Christina George as treasurer, Sydney Stewart as secretary, and Maddy Persinger and Lane Postava as directors. PWCTC history teacher Fred Bearman is the club's sponsor.

Bearman says the new club provides not only a service to local organizations, but also serves as a learning experience for students.

"You're showing them that donating to a charity isn't always just about writing a check," says Bearman. "Sometimes you need boots on the ground, and in some ways that's much more valuable."

Bearman says he jumped at the chance to sponsor the club. As a member of the University of Pittsburgh football team from 1977 to 1980, he remembers participating in a number of community service projects, including visiting local children's hospitals during bowl games. In high school, he was a member of a Kiwanis Key Club.

Earlier this year, Bearman helped coordinate a food drive contest among students and the Parkway West Rotary. Programs squared off to see who could donate the most nonperishables, with the health assistants' class coming out on top. Currently, PWCTC's health assistant program is also collecting ties to donate to the Verland Foundation, which provides housing and services to individuals with disabilities. Verland converts the ties into bow ties, and receives \$.50 apiece for them to support its equestrian program.

Duerr says that there are 50 Rotary Clubs in District 7300, where the Parkway West Rotary operates, and 27 Interact Clubs. Participating schools include Ambridge, Bethel Park, Upper St. Clair, Montour and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. PWCTC is one of just three area technical schools to host an Interact Club, according to information provided by the Rotary.

Each year, Interact Club members at schools throughout District 7300 are recognized at an annual meeting, with one chosen as club of the year.

Parkway West Career and Technology Center history teacher Fred Bearman (second from left) will serve as sponsor to a new Interact Club at the school. With him are club officers Sydney Stewart, secretary; Sarah Lenkner, president; Natalie Vizman, vice president; and Christina George, treasurer. They're joined by Parkway West Rotary member Sam Duerr III (far right) and president, Eric Dalton (far left).



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Nail Salon is dream for both owner and clients



Anyone who has frequented Home Drive in the Pointe at North Fayette has likely driven past Ann's Spa and Nails, which over the past two years has been offering a variety of personal pampering and beauty services.

What started out as a dream for salon owner Ann Nguyen has grown into a successful business and environment where friends come together for a chance to relax and receive top of the line care. Nguyen explains that she started her business in order to pursue her dream and provide an opportunity for her fellow nail technician friends.

Since its inception, the salon has offered nail and waxing services, but Nguyen and her team have worked tirelessly to evolve it into a salon living up to its name. In October, the spa welcomed another friendly face to their salon, a spa specialist, thus adding to the list of manicures, pedicures, waxing and permanent makeup services. Customers also now have the option to receive facials, and as with all of Ann's services, in a clean and relaxing setting. Additionally, the salon uses aromatherapy and phytotherapy natural skincare, as well as beauty treatments with each spa service.

Nguyen says that maintaining a clean environment is a top priority for her and her staff. Last summer, they began a new standard of care for customers. For each customer, the salon utilizes a new set of buffing and nail filing materials.

"This helps us maintain our standards of cleanliness and hygiene," explains Nguyen. "It's what is best for the customer and for us."

The salon takes great pride in the work they do, and Nguyen says they are very thankful for their customers' loyalty over the past two years.

"We can't thank everyone enough," she says.

Ann's Spa and Nails offers nail fills, perfect pedicures, a day at the spa, and unique gifts. Walk-ins are welcome. For more information, call (412) 490-5800.

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Coming Up . . .

February 20 - Breakfast Briefing: The Year Ahead in Washington and Harrisburg, 7:30 - 10 a.m. at Embassy Suites Hotel.
February 23 - Informational Meeting for Amalfi Coast Trip, 6 p.m. at the PAACC office in Moon Township.
March 2 - BizBlast @ Noon, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at Pittsburgh Penguins / CONSOL Energy Center.
March 19 - Mixer with Shakers, 5-8 p.m. at the Sheraton Pittsburgh Airport.

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Deborah Krall of the 171st Air Refueling Wing accepts a special donation for military families in need. The check was presented by HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Sewickley, winners of the JingleFest table decorating contest.

On December 5, the Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce held its annual JingleFest event at Montour Heights Country Club. JingleFest is a signature PAACC event that serves as a holiday mixer for businesspeople, but there are also some delightful additional elements adding to the charm and holiday spirit of this highly anticipated mixer.

A table decorating contest is one of the fun elements of JingleFest. Companies choosing to participate as table decorating sponsors enjoy additional benefits and have the opportunity to show off their creativity by decorating their company's table. Three secret judges cast their votes and a winner is chosen. The winner of the 2014 contest was HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Sewickley.

Charity is another element of JingleFest, as each year the PAACC takes the opportunity to accept donations to help military families in need. Deborah Krall of the 171st Air Refueling Wing attended the event to participate in the check presentation and talk about how helpful it is to military families she works with who are experiencing difficulty. This year's event raised over \$1,800, thanks to the generosity of those who attended and chose to make a donation.

JingleFest is just one of the ways the PAACC directs its focus toward charitable efforts. The upcoming Mixer with Shakers event March 19 will also raise significant funds for a variety of regional nonprofits for their charitable endeavors. For more information, call (412) 264-6270 or visit paacc.com.

The Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce presents

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Library News

Youth Programs:

Baby Storytime & Playgroup (birth-24 months)
Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. No storytime Feb. 18 and April 22.

Toddler Storytime & Playgroup (18 months-3 years)
Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m. No storytime Feb. 18 and April 22.

PJ Storytime (all ages)
Mondays, 6:30 p.m. No storytime Feb. 23, March 23 and April 20.

Pre-K Art & Science (ages 3-5)
Mondays, 11 a.m. No class March 2 and 23, April 20.

Paws for Reading (grades K-3)
Saturdays, March 21, April 18, May 16, 2-3 p.m.

LEGO Club (grades K-5)
Wednesdays, 4 p.m. No class April 1 and 22.

Crazy 8's Club (grades K-2)
Mondays through April 6, 4:15 p.m. No class March 23.

Middle Grade Mythbusters (grades 4-7)
Tuesdays, Feb. 10 and 24, March 10 and 24, April 7 and 21, 4:30 p.m.

Chess Club
Odd Wednesdays, 6 p.m.

Fans of Fantasy Book Club (grades 4-7)
Fourth Thursdays, 6 p.m.

Teen Game Nights (grades 6-12)
Feb. 12, March 5 and April 16, 6 p.m.

Teen Zone (grades 6-12)
Sundays, Feb. 15, Mar. 15 & Apr. 12, 3 p.m.

90 Second Video Cast (grades 6-12)
March 9, 4 p.m. Come to the library and make a video "book trailer!" Learn how to create a 90-second video from idea to creation.

Stump the Librarian (grades 6-12)
March 10, 6 p.m. Test the technical knowledge of the Technical Services Librarian.

Stop by the library or check out our website at www.westernalleghenylibrary.org for full program information and to sign up today!

All Ages & Family Programs:

Family Movie Night
Feb. 11, 6 p.m. "Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day."

Hug & Kiss Hunt
Feb. 13, all day. Celebrate Valentine's Day by searching the stacks for Hershey's Hugs & Kisses.

Painted Birdhouses
Sunday, Mar. 22, 2 p.m.

Adult Programs:
Therapeutic Uses for Essential Oils
Natural aids for healthy weight loss, Feb. 10, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Natural ways to detox home and body, Feb. 24, 6:30-7:45 p.m.

Wells Fargo Advisors - Planning for the Future
Feb. 19, 10 a.m.-noon and 6-8 p.m.

Pinterest Playground
Easter wreath, March 8, 2 p.m., \$3, red, white and blue wreath, April 14, 6:30 p.m., \$5.

Social Media Savvy Series
Using YouTube, Feb. 12, 6:30 p.m., Tumblr over Tumblr, March 19, 6:30 p.m.

Beginning Computer Class for Seniors
Monday, Mar. 9, 2 p.m.

The Cookbook Club
First Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

The Bookworms
Second Wednesdays, 1 p.m.

Coupon Exchange
Third Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.

YA @ Heart
Third Tuesdays, 6 p.m.

Anime/Manga Club
Fourth Tuesdays, 6 p.m.

Yarnies
Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.

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Greater Pittsburgh Football Officials Association Seeking New Officials, GPFOA has officials working at the youth, scholastic, college and semi-pro levels. New applicants will learn the rules and mechanics associated with serving as an official so as to assist them in obtaining PIAA certification, certified officials who have obtained PIAA certification and are not already affiliated with another chapter are encouraged to join, GPFOA President Mike Conlon, (412) 398-6545.

Women's Business Network, Robinson Township Area Chapter, Meets first and third Tuesdays of each month at 7:30 a.m. at Panera Bread meeting room in North Fayette, advances the presence of aspiring and successful businesswomen by providing personal and professional resources, meeting agendas include self marketing, business presentation by an individual member, table topic discussion and networking, Barb Dull, (412) 608-3616.

Western PA Kidney Support Group, second Sunday monthly, 2:30-4:30 p.m., King's Restaurant, Imperial, (724) 796-1603.

No Veteran Dies Alone, Volunteers needed for one-of-a-kind program that provides companionship and assistance to veterans entering the final stages of life, Deborah Goral, deborah.goral@va.gov

Feb. 14 Auditions for The Little Princess Children's Theater, Carnegie Performing Arts Center, ages 5-12, 10 a.m., 13 and up, 11 a.m., performances held month of April and rehearsals on Saturday mornings, (412) 279-8887, carnegieperformingarts.com.

Feb. 14 "Till Death Do Us Part," 7 p.m., Holy Trinity Catholic School, hilarious lessons on the Sacraments of Marriage and the Last Rites, including a wacky version of the Newlywed Game, Father Hermann Hall, doors open 5:45 p.m., cash bar available 6 p.m., free childcare, \$25, Dave Hess, (412) 787-3853, holyltrinityrobinson.org for details, benefits charitable activities of the Knights of Columbus.

March 7 Hunting and Conservation 101 Class, West Allegheny High School cafeteria, 2-6 p.m., informative session addresses issues and topics important to Pennsylvania sportsmen, including state wildlife history, regulations, conservation facts, species information, firearm safety, more, state conservation officers and NRA-certified instructors to attend with Venture Crew #1390, Katelyn Cerciello, kcerciello@gmail.com.

March 13 Teacher's Cup, 7 p.m., West Allegheny High School gymnasium, WA teachers face off in a series of fun competitions, benefits West Allegheny Foundation, which raises funds to support educational programs throughout the WA School District.

March 14 "A Humble Mask on a Proud Face" book signing and release, Robinson Township Eat'n Park, 1-3 p.m., portion of book sales benefits Bradley Center programs to help at-risk children and adolescents, autobiography by Dan Fisher explores pride and how it affects all aspects of life through author's spiritual awakening, mrdan333@gmail.com.

March 21 Soup 'n Salad Supper, Montours Presbyterian Church, 4:30-6:30 p.m., homemade soups including chicken noodle, beef vegetable, potato, beef barley, bean, chili, potato, wedding, and stuffed pepper (subject to change), includes salad, desserts, beverages, Mancini's bread, \$8 adults, \$4 children ages five to 10, ages four and under free, (412) 787-1050 or (412) 788-4770, www.montourschurch.org.

March 22 Bowling for Dollars, Noble Manor Lanes, 1 p.m., \$20, includes beer, food, shoes, three games, Chinese raffle, 50/50, head pin action, register by March 13, sponsored by Parkway West Rotary, www.parkwaywestrotary.com.

March 26 Western Area YMCA Vera Bradley Purse Bingo, Holy Trinity Cafeteria, doors open 1 p.m. for lunch and a large Chinese auction, games begin 2 p.m., benefits after school programs, summer camps and recreational activities for children of low-income families, providing a safe and supportive atmosphere while teaching children the importance of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility, \$25 before March 20, \$30 after, (412) 787-9622.

Jacob Farree Chapter DAR Events
Contact Bonnie Kappert for reservations at: (412) 771-7526.

American History Tea, March 7, 1 p.m., \$10 coffee/tea, dessert.

Informational Luncheon, April 4, 11 a.m., \$20 lunch, learn more about an aspect of the DAR, topic TBA, reserve by March 27.

DAR Good Citizen Awards presentation, American History Awards and the Junior American Citizen Awards, come and acknowledge the winners of these contests and the hard work that went into their essays, reserve by Feb. 28.




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Friends of Killbuck Lodge Events

Event proceeds go toward reconstructing a 200-year-old log cabin in Oakdale, home to Boy Scout Troop 248.

Gun Bash, March 21, 2-6:30 p.m., doors open 1 p.m., Oak Ridge Fire Hall, 1214 Oak Ridge Road in McDonald, pick of the table gun raffles, 50/50, instant lottery tickets, mystery raffles, skill games, cash and gun drawings every 15 minutes, also benefits Oak Ridge VFD, Bill Supin, (412) 295-3369.

Valentine Pancake Breakfast, Feb. 22, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., Oakdale Community Center, pancakes, sausage, fruit, drink, Chinese auction, donations requested for auction, Ron Parrish, (724) 693-9230.

Wilson PTA Events

Little Lamb's Closet Spring Fundraiser, May 2, 9 a.m.-noon, Findlay Township Activity Center, two levels of vendors selling crafts and gently used children's clothes and toys, independent sales consultants, great deals on children's items, interested vendors or crafters contact Shannon Kumpfmiller, Kumpfmillerclan@me.com, \$30 table, benefits Wilson PTA.

Family Bingo Night, Wilson Elementary School gymnasium, **6-8:30 p.m.,** doors open **5:30 p.m.,** three cards for \$5, Chinese auction, 50/50, concessions, benefits Wilson PTA.

Heritage Public Library

Register by visiting the library or call (724) 926-8400.

Preschool Story Time, Thursdays. 1-2 p.m., Feb. 12-March 19, registration required.

AARP Tax Prep, Feb. 4, 18, 25, March 4, 18, 25, April 1, 15, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Feb. 11, March 11, April 8, 2:30-6:30 p.m., call ahead for appointment.

Heritage Library Book Discussion Group, Feb. 10, 1-2 p.m., "Orphan Train" by Christina Baker Kline, no registration required.

Imperial VFD

111 Pine Street, Imperial, (724) 695-8845.

Night at the Races, March 7, doors open **5:30 p.m.,** betting and races **7-11 p.m.,** \$10 at door or by calling the fire department, soda, beer, food provided, BYOB.

Good Friday Fish Fry, April 3, 10 a.m.-7 p.m., take out, delivery and eat-in, check website for additional possible dates, call for menu.

Super Bingo, March 2, Findlay Township Activity Center, doors open **5:30 p.m.,** kitchen **6 p.m.,** bingo starts **7 p.m.** sharp, \$25 for 12 cards and five specials, extra cards and specials available at door, quickies and jackpots sold on floor, throwaway cards used, bring a dobber.

West Allegheny Indians Hockey Special Event Nights

Games held at Airport Ice Arena. For more information contact president@wahockey.com. For complete schedule visit wahockey.com.

Senior Night, varsity, Feb. 12 versus Erie Cathedral Prep, **8:30 p.m.,** honors the organization's six graduating seniors and their families, seniors are Bailey Foy, Antonio Garofalo, Brandon Healey, Ethan Peternel, Brendan Rossi and Steven Stasik.

Community Night, varsity, Feb. 27 versus Moon, **6:30 p.m., JV, Feb. 20** versus Chartiers Valley, **7:50 p.m.,** special admission rates for adults accompanied by children under 12 years old, contests, raffles, skate with varsity team and coaches following game, skate free for all in attendance.

West Hills Symphonic Band

For more information, contact Clem Rolin, WHSB music director, at (412) 788-4713, clementrolin@comcast.net, or visit www.whsb.org. All concerts are free and take place at West Allegheny High School.

March 1, "Labors of Love," Irish folk tune "Molly on the Shore" by Percy Grainger, powerful overture to Verdi's opera "La Forza del Destino," or "The Force of Destiny," music from "Man of La Mancha," "Satchmo", a musical tribute to Louis Armstrong and Sousa's "Sabres and Spurs" march, Janice Coppola returns as featured solo clarinetist playing Artie Shaw's "Traffic Jam," WHSB concertmaster Sara Snyder in Delibes' "Flower Duet" from "Lakme."

May 3, "Spring Bouquets," Holst, "Second Suite," highlights from Cole Porter's "Kiss me Kate," Saint-Saens, "Carnival Overture," music from "Sweeney Todd," march and swing favorites, more.

We'd like to hear from you!

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CELEBRATE WITH US!

Lenten Teaching Series

Uncovering the Cross in the Old Testament

Begins February 24 @ 7pm

Continues every Tuesday through March 17

Good Friday Service

April 3 7:00 - 8:00pm

Easter Sunday

April 5 @ 10am

Come early and enjoy some coffee



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Worship on Sundays @ 10:00am

SNPJ Club

Events take place at the SNPJ Lodge 106 Club, (724) 695-1411, snpjimperialpa.com, imperialpoomsnpj.com. Memberships available to the public at door in the clubroom.

Valentine's Day Dinner and Dance, Feb. 14, 7 p.m.

clubroom, with singing by Jan Lawrence of SNPJ Lodge 138 and DJ Kevin, dinner, entertainment.

Bar Bingo, members and guests, **second and fourth Thursdays**, sign the weekly book and play an evening of Bar Bingo in the clubroom, early bird games start **6:30 p.m.**, regular games **7 p.m.**, play until **9 p.m.**, kitchen open.

Back Alley Blues Band, open to the public, **Feb. 21 and April 11, 7:30-11:30 p.m.**, kitchen open.

Jam/dinner night, open to public, **March 7, clubroom, 8-11 p.m.**, with the International Button Box Club, bring musical instruments and join in on the fun!

The Sensations, live concert in the Imperial Room, open to the public, **March 28, 8-11 p.m.**, great musical group from Youngstown, Ohio, advance tickets \$8, purchase in clubroom by **March 27**, \$10 regular admission, \$10 buffet.

Seems Like Old Times Dance, **March 29 and April 26**, lodge, **7-10 p.m.**, kitchen opens **4 p.m.**, \$10 buffet, \$5 at door, with the Wally Merriman Trio for a ballroom-style dance celebrating the music of America's greatest generation!

Children's Easter Egg Hunt, **April 4, 1-3 p.m.**, Imperial Room.

Recommend a new SNPJ Lodge 106 Member, refer a member so they can enjoy all the benefits of being a life insurance or annuity member of SNPJ Lodge 106 today.

Findlay Township

Events take place at the Findlay Township Activity Center unless otherwise noted. Call Darlene Larson at (724) 695-0500 x 246 for more information.

Garden Club

Meets **third Thursday of each month, 6:30 p.m.**, activity center or other location, past projects have included Imperial Honor Roll, community vegetable garden at Valley Church, bicycle planters at Fair in the Woodlands, upcoming holiday bus outing to Phipps Conservatory, Sue Peindl, (724) 350-9837.

Mind, body, spirit, **Feb. 15, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.**, unique event with Mary Petrella of Petrella Ancient Healing Arts, purchase enchanting and unique gifts, relax with a chair massage or Reiki session, psychic, angel card, palm reading, free admission, bodywork/spiritual sessions \$25 for 20 minutes, visit www.petrellaancienthealingarts.com for more.

Wedding Planning on a Budget, **Feb. 24, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**, join Joanne Jamis Cain of Katherine's Daughter Events for informative class on choosing and managing venues, caterers, florists, wedding attire and theme, learn where to spend money and where to cut corners, \$10, katherinesdaughtererevents.com.

Family meals in 30 minutes or less, **Feb. 26, 6:30 p.m.**, learn how to reenergize mealtime with quality meals prepared in a half hour, get tips on how to plan meals and handle picky eaters, bring a beverage, free, register by **Feb. 23**.

First Steps in Digital Photography, **March 11-April 1, 6:30-9 p.m.**, four-class workshop consists of lectures, critiques, peer review and guided practice, students present final project to demonstrate understanding of coursework, designed for beginners, learn to use the automatic and icon modes, point and shoot, bridge and DSLR cameras welcome, produce photos for sharing, social media and printing, \$99.

Free Self Defense Class for Women, **March 18, 7-9 p.m.**, Findlay Township Municipal Building, self-defense class based on pressure points and controlled tactics SHARP program and the Mary Conroy method of self defense, addresses carjacking, safety in the workplace, safety while traveling and other self defense strategies, with retired state police parole agent Jack Leonard, bring a pillow and wear comfortable clothing, registration required, free.

Indoor Flea Market, **March 21**, browse two levels of over 60 tables, **9 a.m.-1 p.m.**, coffee, water, donuts and concessions.

Computer and Appliance Recycling, **March 21, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.**, Findlay Township Municipal Building, following accepted for free: CPU's, laptop computers, keyboards, mice, computer monitors, radio equipment, telephone equipment, cell phones, desktop model copiers, scanners, non-freon household appliances, washers, dryers, microwaves, lead acid automobile batteries, limit of one television per vehicle.

Findlay Township Garden Club presents "Gardeners' Huddle", **March 28, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**, doors open **7:30 a.m.** for registration and continental breakfast, spend the morning improving gardening knowledge, speakers on various gardening topics including new varieties for 2015, door prizes and raffle, call (724)-695-0500 by **March 20** to register, \$25.

Annual Easter Egg Hunt, **March 28, 11 a.m.**, Clinton Park, meet at Rainbow's End Playground parking lot, up to 3,000 eggs hidden in park, for Findlay Township residents preschool through fifth grade, participants grouped according to age with prize eggs in each, preschool children receive goody bags from Easter Bunny, bring baskets to carry goodies, in event of inclement weather check www.findlaytpw.org or call.

Glamour Makeover Workshop, **April 8, 6:30 p.m.**, free event, with Mary Kay sales director Stephanie Musta, get that new look by learning proper makeup techniques, professional consultants guide the makeover process, order products, registration required, first 20 to register before **March 31** receive a gift.

CarFit AARP educational program, **April 9, 1-3 p.m.**, offers older adults opportunity to check how well their personal vehicles "fit" them, provides information and materials on community-specific resources enhancing their safety as drivers and increase their mobility in the community, technicians ensure vehicles "fit" owners, takes 20 minutes, registration required, free.

AARP Safe Driving Classes, **April 13 and 14, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.**, Findlay Township Municipal Building Meeting Room, eight-hour course taught in two, four-hour sessions over two days, refine existing driving skills and develop safe, defensive driving techniques, no driving tests involved, upon completion participants eligible to receive state mandated multi-year discount on auto insurance premiums, \$15 AARP members, \$20 non-members, Findlay residents pay half, checks only and payable to AARP, four-hour refresher course, **April 22, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.**, same location and cost, available to anyone who has completed eight-hour class in last three years with proof of attendance, bring certificate and driver's license, insurance company can provide a copy.

Moms and Grandmas with Cameras Workshop, **April 23, 6:30-9:30 p.m.**, \$50, with Emily Davis of Emily Davis Photography, learn how to use that new camera correctly and with more creativity, then go for a fun ladies' night out, no more blurry or orange sports pictures, workshop includes wine, punch and snacks, BYOB, each participant receives a goody bag, register by **April 16**.

Water Aerobics, Wilson Elementary School, **6:15-7:15 p.m.**, **Monday** spring session, **March 23 and 30, April 13, 20 and 27, May 4 and 11, Wednesday** spring session, **March 25, April 1, 8, 15 and 22, May 6 and 13**, low-impact aquatic exercise works the heart and lungs while toning muscles, registration required, payment due at first class, \$5 discount for attending both Monday and Wednesday classes, cancelled in event school cancels due to weather, \$35 / 7 sessions.



PiYo Exercise Class,
Tuesdays, Jan. 27-April 28, 7:15-8:15 p.m., Saturdays, February 7, March 7 and April 25, 9-10 a.m., hybrid workout uses strength-building moves of yoga and muscle-sculpting reps of Pilates with a flow that helps increase flexibility and strength while shedding fat, burn calories by using every muscle in the body without touching a single weight, low impact high quality workout, bring yoga mat and water bottle, registration required, \$5 per class.

"WALK Live" Classes
Tuesdays and Thursdays through the end of May, 6-7 p.m., Donna Kuzio opens doors to a better way of health and weight loss, \$5 per class, kuziofjr@gmail.com.

Yoga for Beginners & Beyond
Fridays, March 6, 13, and Sundays, Feb. 15, 22, 6:30-7:30 p.m., yoga for all levels, benefits whole body with exercise, stretching and meditation, \$5 per class, Julia Harvey, (724) 695-1976.

Senior Yoga and Qi Gong, Thursdays, 9-10 a.m., chase away the winter chill with a mixed yoga and Qi gong class, mixed levels for all participants, great for older adults, (724) 695-1976 or info@idtsd.net, discounts for Findlay residents and members of the Findlay Senior Citizen Group, \$5/class, instructor Master Julia Harvey.

Pavilion Rentals for 2015 Season, open to Findlay Township residents, businesses, and youth or adult groups, \$60 with \$25 refundable deposit, two separate checks, 9-11 a.m. at municipal building, online, non-resident reservations after April 1, \$85 with \$25 refundable deposit, new pavilion at Recreation and Sports Complex: residents \$100, \$175 with kitchen, non-residents \$150, \$250 with kitchen, \$100 refundable security deposit required for all, seats 150-165 with full kitchen facilities and nearby restroom, www.findlay.pa.us.

Findlay Kids' Classes

Time for Toddlers, 10:15-11:15 a.m., Feb. 23, 24, March 2, 3, 16, 17, 30, 31, April 13, 14, 27, 28, May 4, 5, 11, 12, June 1, 2, 15, 16, 29, 30, for children under the age of four, hour of movement, music, activities and snack, meet other families and toddlers, adult must stay with child, registration required, \$3, sessions cancelled if West Allegheny cancels due to inclement weather.

Kids' Creative Cooking, Feb. 26 and March 26, 4-5:15 p.m., popular hands-on class introduces participants to preparation of a variety of easy and delicious seasonal recipes satisfying after school hunger pangs, payments taken at class, pre-register at least two days prior, no walk-ins, grades K-5, \$8.

Tang Soo Do Karate School, call for class times and availability, (724) 695-1976, traditional Tang Soo Do program helps children develop self confidence, healthy life skills, respect for self and others, classes for youth, teen and adult students, Monday and Wednesday evenings, Little Dragons class, ages 3-6, special program for preschool children is designed to get them started on the path to positive development.



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Behind the stripes:

Drawn to the sports they love, referees face unique challenges

Tim Barker missed playing football much of his senior year of high school due to some broken ribs. He wanted to stay involved, though, even beyond high school, so first he tossed around the idea of trying to coach. Then a family friend suggested officiating.

Barker, now 26, officiates both high school and college football. He's been doing it since he was 19.

Usually, sports fans watching games that Barker officiates are so engrossed that they hardly notice him, or realize just how different the game would be were he not ensuring that the rules are being followed and that the games run smoothly. At times, though, Barker has to make a controversial call that riles fans on one side of the stadium. That's when moods can change from joyfully entertaining to angry, and sometimes even downright belligerent.

"If you're lucky, half the stadium will like your call. But your call is usually going against one team," said Ryan Novosel, 38, a high school football official.

Novosel has been officiating high school football for the past eight years, and like Barker, has made calls inviting ire from spectators, many of whom are at times parents. It's a challenge that all officials face and accept when they walk onto the field, no matter whether on the largest or smallest stage.

"All sports are facing a shortage of officials," said Joe Kulik, 57, a football referee of 28 years. "It's so much better to sit in the stands and question than to step up. Well, step up. I'll gladly send you an application."

Kulik has been a football referee for 28 years at numerous levels, from youth to high school. He works with the Greater Pittsburgh Football Officials Association, calling games and mentoring officials. The league provides referees to schools throughout the region, including West Allegheny, and to youth football and other local sports.

Just to what extent referees face blowback from the calls they make was made apparent recently by the Yahoo Sports article that

ran in January about Lance Easley. A former U.S. Marine, Easley told Yahoo Sports reporter Dan Wetzel that he's suffering post-traumatic stress disorder, not from serving in the military, but from officiating football.

For a short time, Easley was a replacement official in the NFL. He was given the job when the league's unionized referees went on strike in 2012. It was Easley who made the notorious Fail Mary call after M.D. Jennings and Golden Tate both caught a last minute, Hail Mary pass from Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson

in the end zone on Monday Night Football. Easley ruled in the Seahawks' favor, handing them the game and eliciting death threats from fans and bookies. He was also shunned by the NFL, which claimed the call he made was wrong, but he says refused to tell him why. Once the vice president of a Bank of America branch, Easley's life has since devolved to the point that he is unable to work, according to Wetzel's article.

"I can see how it can happen," Novosel said. "It's challenging knowing there's that amount of people judging you. You have to react quickly and it's a tough pill to swallow."

"I feel for Lance," Barker agreed. "After the results and constant replays and sports talk shows going on about one of the hardest plays to officiate on any level, it definitely plays a great deal on your mind to feel responsible for all of that,"

Eight-year football and basketball referee Todd DuBrock, 50, is less sympathetic to Easley's plight.

"When I make calls as an official, I gotta live with it," DuBrock said. "There's a lot of pressure in the NFL. They were put in as replacements by people who thought they could handle the job. The next morning the sun comes out and you have to move on. This gentleman obviously has different ways of handling it. Am I going to be perfect? Absolutely not. But I will work through it."

While the circumstances might differ for many referees, a love of the game is what draws them to it. An injury might have banished them to the sidelines, or the time commitment of coaching might have been too much. For others, it's a way to spend time with family. Regardless, it's something they each profess to find fun.

"I wouldn't do it if I didn't think it was fun," Novosel said. "You definitely don't do it for the money. You do it because you love it. It's stressful and rewarding."

"It's not an economical value to me," DuBrock agreed. "I found a hobby that I enjoy doing and they pay me to do it!"

GPFOA referees have their share of stories from the sidelines, or front lines, depending upon the interpretation. The roughly 100 officials who make up the organization are knowledgeable about their positions. They have to pass a 100-question exam and know the rules and mechanics in order to defend calls. They make some that are controversial, and get reactions, but that doesn't mean those reactions are always quite necessary, or kind. While each of the officials interviewed for this piece remarked that they've





Greater Pittsburgh Football Officials Association referees officiate games ranging from high school to youth leagues. They are:

Joe Kulik opposite page bottom left, this page top left and bottom right;

Jennifer Burke, opposite page bottom right and this page bottom right;

Dave Gaertner, opposite page bottom right;

Ron Gregory, this page bottom left;

Mike Traver, this page top right.

PHOTOS SUBMITTED

experienced little if any trouble from West Allegheny fans, they tell tales about fans in other communities who have exhibited questionable behavior.

"The key to getting past it is to own up to your call or mistake and have short-term memory. Forget the last play because it is gone and the next play is already developing," Barker said.

Sometimes, however, fans make forgetting and moving on nearly impossible.

"It's rough," Kulik said. "I go back to the first game I ever officiated. I was trying to figure out what I'd gotten myself into."

In that game, one of the two mentors Kulik was with threw a flag and the coach threw the flag back at the official's head. Vulgarly ensued as fans rushed the officials, pushing one to a sidewalk and another down some concrete steps.

"I had never seen anything like that," Kulik said.

Though these kinds of instances normally aren't quite so severe, hearing about calls from fans has become somewhat of the norm.

"It's not unusual," says Kulik. "You get a lot of comments. They yell, curse, question your parentage and your eyesight."

Barker shared a story about a playoff football game involving 7 and 8-year-olds. A child got hit and injured, and though Barker ruled the hit as clean, the child's mother disagreed. She charged the field, confronted another official, and punched him. Parents rushed to get involved in the skirmish.

"We were in court for two months over the ordeal. After that game I had a really difficult time finding motivation to continue to officiate," Barker said. "What was even more gut-wrenching was the adults who acted more childish than the kids. You do it for the kids. The money is nowhere near enough to deal with parents harassing you as if you were doing the Super Bowl."

Novosel recognizes that emotions tend to run high in any venue where there is

competition. However, like Barker, he also acknowledges that the games are for the kids. Nothing positive can come from adults who are supposed to be role models exhibiting inappropriate behavior in the form of vulgar language or physical violence.

"It's an emotional game and the way we approach it is, from 7 and 8-year-olds all the way to high school, it's still extremely important to them. It's a Super Bowl to them and we treat it like that," Novosel said. "That passion and emotion comes through, and it's not always controlled. It leads to bad things sometimes."

Tales range from the eye-roll-worthy fans who approached a referee days later to complain about a call, to announcers urging fans to follow officials to their cars. Kulik recalls one time when he was accosted at his car after a game by a fan threatening to punch him. Kulik reminded the man it was not only a poor idea but also a crime, and the disgruntled fan backed off.

"I think if you don't react you're better off," Kulik says. "The main reason we lose officials is they're just tired of being harassed. They didn't think that's what was going to happen."

What can be done to prevent such poor behavior? These officials have several ideas that should be implemented to promote good sportsmanship and a positive example to the children they're supporting. He points out this can also help players and coaches. Fans' ire isn't always directed just at officials.

"I think it's a good move when you hear the announcers remind the parents, 'hey, act with good sportsmanship,'" says Kulik. "Okay, so a 9-year-old fumbles a football. He's a kid! Don't boo him. People boo Peyton Manning and he's an MVP!"



Barker says responsibility also starts with parents.

"They can set an example for their children better than anyone else," he said. "Just treat us how we treat your own."

DuBrock posits that it's easier to demean officials because they seem foreign and easy to blame.

"Sometimes people need to put themselves in our shoes," he said. "Until they do that, they should think about how they respect or disrespect an official."

Findlay's first manager retires

When Gary Klingman was hired as Findlay Township's first manager in 1988, the township boasted one office park. While initial infrastructure existed for others, much of the township's acreage was rural and undeveloped, but its proximity to Allegheny County Airport Authority property showed significant potential for growth. With zoning and comprehensive plans already in place, the township needed someone to oversee that growth.

After 26 years on the job, much of it spent helping to lay the groundwork for Findlay's future, Klingman retired at the end of January. He does so as the township finds itself in the grips of its fastest growth spurt in history. It is now home to seven office parks and numerous companies have set up distribution, office and manufacturing centers there. They include FedEx Ground, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Knepper Press Corporation, Dick's Sporting Goods, Okonite Company, Alro Steel Corporation, Walgreens, and most recently, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and Oxford Development Company. Gordon Food Service is also expected to open a 500,000-square-foot distribution center this year, and ProMinent Fluid Control has just constructed a new building in the RIDC Park West Industrial Park.

"The biggest thing then was to lay the foundation," says Klingman. "Because of the airport and growth potential, the board wanted to prepare for that."

Replacing Klingman is Chris Caruso, who's been with the township nearly as long as Klingman. Caruso has served for 23 years as Findlay's planning and zoning administrator, and for 13 years in both that role and as assistant manager. The township is currently looking to hire a new assistant manager with a business background to take on many of Klingman's responsibilities, including budget and financing.

Now 65, Klingman says he's looking forward to golfing more and taking up fly-fishing. He also plans to continue teaching a basic training class with the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors, and volunteering with Pittsburgh CARES.

Klingman says he's grateful to the Findlay Township supervisors he has worked with over the years.

"The nice thing about them is they've allowed me to manage," he says. "It hasn't been drudgery. That's why you stay somewhere for 26 years. Not that we never disagreed on anything, but we were always headed in the same direction."

Findlay Township Supervisor Janet Craig says that she felt she could always trust Klingman. She says he would listen to supervisors, but challenge them when he thought necessary. She points out there wasn't a single tax hike during his tenure.

"Gary was a consummate professional," she says. "His number one concern was the residents of the township."

Township supervisor Tom Gallant says Findlay was lucky to have a civil servant like Gary.

"What's especially impressive of Gary's character is that he could of made at least five times his salary in the private sector, considering his talents and dedication to his employer, which for the last 26 years were the taxpayers of Findlay Township," says Gallant.

Township supervisor Ray Chappell credits Klingman with revamping the intersection at Clinton Road and Route 30 after supervisors worked to acquire property adjacent to the intersection. He also credits Klingman with construction of the new pavilion



Gary Klingman, who recently retired as Findlay Township's manager, will be succeeded by longtime Findlay assistant manager, Chris Caruso.

at the Findlay Township Recreational Facility, and says he was instrumental in the development of the Findlay Connector project. A major four-lane toll road connecting Highway 22 and 30 with the airport and I-376, the artery will eventually connect to I-79 and Canonsburg.

"He grabbed the bull by the horns in recreation and transportation," says Chappell. "He worked his butt off to make things happen."

From 2003 to 2012, Klingman served on Findlay's municipal authority board. Much of his time during those years was spent traveling to Harrisburg and Washington, D.C., learning about planning and lobbying for Findlay by making a case for its potential to create jobs. Much of that time was also spent going in front of the Commonwealth Financing Authority with Findlay Township Municipal Authority Manager Jason Orsini. The CFA doles out money to townships, an essential component to updating infrastructure. Klingman credits then board chair Dennis Yablonsky, now CEO of the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, with helping secure those funds.

"You have to coordinate with the feds, county and state, and that all has to come together," says Klingman. "Congressman Murphy, then state Sen. John Pippy, state Rep. Mark Mustio and state Sen. Matt Smith all helped us get funding for infrastructure."

While the township made strides in those early years, Klingman says many of its projects moved forward when the Findlay Connector project started.

Some additional major other projects Klingman oversaw include a new wastewater treatment plant on Potato Garden Road, new sewer and water lines and a new water tower. In 2003, the township transferred operation of its sanitary sewer system to the water authority. That helped to balance residential and commercial usage, he says, putting the debt on ratepayers.

"We are definitely in a growth spurt," says Caruso, who lives in Findlay. "[We need to manage] it so it doesn't impact citizens. Even though we have a lot of acreage, we want to make sure we develop it right and are cognizant of the environment."

Just prior to retiring, Klingman was recognized by the Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce during its annual Celebration of Excellence. PAACC president Bernadette Puzzuole says Gary has been an active Chamber member for years.

"We will definitely miss him, but we're glad he's leaving for a good reason," she says.

West Allegheny Hockey Association president Duane Foy's enthusiasm for hockey, family and life left impressions on everyone he met, including our writer Rebecca L. Ferraro

Duane Foy, the late president of West Allegheny Hockey Association, passed away suddenly in late December. His passing came as a great shock to all who knew him, and he will be missed. He leaves behind a legacy in both his children and his dedication to WA hockey.

"If anything, his passing showed how close of a community we really have," Foy's son, Bailey, a senior at West Allegheny High School, said.

I first met Duane in the spring of 2014. I was working at Garden of Eating Pizzeria at the time and he was a customer. He mentioned on the phone that his leg was in a brace, so I offered to bring his pizza to his car. His name sounded familiar. As it turns out, I had his son in my English class when I was student teaching at West Allegheny High School. We talked for a few moments and he inquired into my job prospects in writing or education. He took my phone number in case he heard of anything he could pass along.

I learned three things about Duane that day: he loved hockey, he was willing to go out of his way to help anyone with anything he could - including a virtual stranger like myself - and he absolutely adored his family.

Anyone who knew Duane could immediately see his dedication to his children and his consequent dedication to WA hockey, for which both his children play. Duane's father passed when he was barely a year old, and as a result, he worked to give his children, Bailey and Sydney, what he never had. When he lost his job as a payroll branch manager nearly a decade ago, he worked part time for a while, but ultimately chose to stay home, get involved with WA hockey, and dedicate every moment he could to his children and his wife, Paula.

"The last eight years have been completely devoted to us," Bailey said.

When I had the pleasure of interviewing Duane last November for an Allegheny West Magazine story that ran the following month, his enthusiasm for the sport was contagious. Rarely have I encountered someone who displayed the level of excitement for anything that Duane displayed for WA hockey. He was confident in the team's abilities to perform well and was supportive of their efforts, quietly certain that any loss was a learning experience to be overcome at the next opportunity.

"He was the change everyone wanted to see in the organization," Bailey said. "When he became president of West Allegheny hockey, it was just as much work as a full-time job. Everything he put into it was for the love of the game."

Duane's position as president was strictly voluntary. While the position was unpaid, it still required a significant amount of work,

both inside and outside the rink. He worked to make WA hockey a family.

"Duane was a good, caring, thoughtful man who would go out of his way for everyone he knew. He always had a smile on his face, enjoyed life no matter what, and had fun," Brian Heyl said.

Heyl is the West Allegheny JV team manager, and his daughter, Veronica, plays on the team.

"I can still remember the first time I met Duane," Heyl said. "I was working a Jimmy Buffett concert at First Niagara Pavilion as a fundraiser. I was new to the organization. He looked at me and said, 'No matter what, have fun.' I took Duane's advice, and it was fun."

Duane was pleasant and kind, and every conversation I had with him demonstrated that love of his children, the love of the entire team, and the intense support he offered them. He took pride in



West Allegheny Hockey Association president Duane Foy with his daughter, Sydney, wife, Paula, and son, Bailey, at the NHL Winter Classic in 2011.

every goal and play.

"Even with all the effort put in, he would always stop when we came home from school. That was time to be the dad he never had," Bailey said. "The line between work and family was always as clear as could be."

Duane Foy made an impact on me just in those two encounters I had with him, and his passing shook me. I cannot imagine the impact it left on his family and friends who knew him well. While I express my deepest condolences, I am also sure that his contributions to the sport and the kindness he bestowed on all who knew him will ensure that he is remembered in this area.

"He's one of those unforgettable people," Bailey said. "I know he will always be with me in some capacity. I'll always be motivated by everything he taught me."

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The Butterfly Whisperer

One dad is bursting with pride. Former North Fayette police chief Tom Sturgeon is thrilled about his daughter, Kim Sturgeon MacNeill, authoring her first book, “Whispers.”

The title of her book comes from a butterfly. Kim tells the story:

“It was a Sunday morning, and I was leading the weekend service,” she says. “My message was about the Christian life and our spiritual formation. Knowing that we all get restless and sometimes lazy in our pursuit of God, I wanted to inspire the believer to be fully engaged in God’s constant quest to make all things new in our lives.

“One of the best illustrations of transformation is the butterfly. Though sometimes overused, I still chose it to be the key, closing image of the service.

“I decided to go big, spend some money and do a butterfly release inside the auditorium.

“At the closing of the message, I talked about the metamorphosis of a butterfly and released the first one from my hands. And then, right on cue, a host more joined in flight from those seated in the front row. It was unexpected. It took people’s breath away. It was an inspiring moment we all shared together.

“During the second service, though, something happened. We thought we had done a pretty good job clearing out the butterflies in between services, but apparently we did not get them all. In the middle of the second message one started flying around on the platform.

“People were delighted by this little butterfly that just happened to find its way inside the building. There came the moment when the butterfly had stolen the show, and I had to acknowledge it.

“So, I spoke to it and invited it to circle me and land on the teaching table-and it did.

“It alighted right on my Bible and rested there.

“The congregation audibly gasped in wonder and then broke out into spontaneous applause.

“From then on, I was called the butterfly whisperer.”

Meet the author of “Whispers:”

“I have experienced life as a daughter, wife, aunt, spiritual mother, mini-mart cashier, pizza maker, high school English teacher, youth minister, missionary, creative director, worship artist, preacher, pastor, learner and leader. And, I sold lingerie. I grew up in the East, lived in the West, and now live in the South. I grew up on a rugged road called Whittengale.”

Local folks will know Whittengale as the street just across the



BY ERMA DODD
NORTH FAYETTE
TOWNSHIP
RESIDENT

road from the North Fayette Park and police department. Kim graduated from West Allegheny in 1986 and was a majorette in the WA band. Some seeds of her faith took root at Christian Critters, a pre-teen youth group at Montours Presbyterian Church. More seeds took root while she was a member of the Coraopolis Rainbow Girls. Many of Kim’s “God whispers” have come through her kind and loving mother, Libby.

At age 13, Kim had her “ah-ha” moment, and knew her direction in life.

As a young adult, Kim always asked God at the beginning of each year, “What do you want me to do this year?” After four years of being a schoolteacher, the year came that He said, “Do full-time ministry,” and off to California she went! She first served on the North American Mission Board with the Student and Women’s Ministry.

During her first month in California, Kim met Dave, a youth pastor. She says, “I was supposed to come back to Pennsylvania after two years, but got married and stayed!”

She stayed for 18 years, serving most of the time with her husband at Clovis Hills Community Church (Baptist) near Fresno.

In 2012, Dave accepted an invitation to join Lifeway Ministry in Nashville, Tennessee. That meant Kim would be in search of a new position. She experienced the feeling of disappointment when, for a long time, no one would hire her. Finally, she got an interesting new job selling

lingerie at Victoria’s Secret.

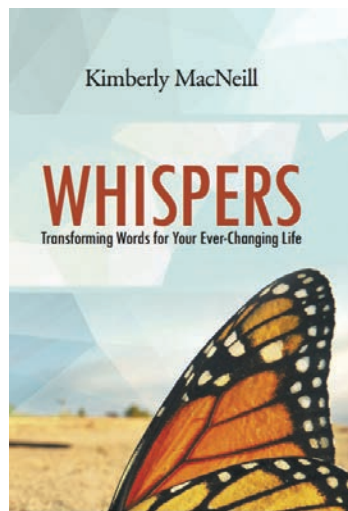
During the time she was out of work, Kim had time to think more about the book that was in her. Finally, it was time to write. Two years later, “Whispers” went to press.

Kim is serving full time at Forest Hills Church in Nashville as minister to women, writing and teaching Bible study weekly.

She says about the book, “When God comes into our lives, He changes us. And after that, He keeps changing us. We never know what is next in this life, but we know that God is with us, speaking to us. Hopefully, we are listening. It’s an adventure!”

Congratulations, Kimberly Sturgeon MacNeill.

“Whispers” is available on amazon.com. Copies signed by the author are available at Tonidale Marathon. A “Whispers Day with Kim” is being planned this summer at Montours Church, with a date to be announced.





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