

West Allegheny Edition

# Allegheny West

Volume 17, Issue 98  
October/November 2015

FREE Direct Mail Community Publication

# Magazine

Preserving stories of war

McDonald forms  
backdrop to new novel

Author's local roots  
and  
world travels

Local teen  
pens first novel

Log homes tour  
opens doors  
to rarely seen area cabins

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School District  
Official Newsletter  
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Author Brandon Wilson posed for this picture at Mount Everest base camp in Tibet in 1992 while hiking through the Himalayas. Wilson, a Moon Township native with Clinton roots, has written four books about his travels and was recently named a fellow of The Explorers Club. For more, see page 16.



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# From the Publisher



Dear Readers,

Each month, as we set out to put together our next issue of Allegheny West Magazine (we publish three different editions, Moon, Montour and West Allegheny), we don't always do so with a theme in mind. Themes do though inevitably emerge, and this issue is no different.

One theme to this issue is history, which is nothing new to this publication. Just about every month you can find an interesting story about local history or historians in this magazine.

The second theme to this issue is exploration. We don't often publish stories about explorers in this magazine. Being locally focused, it's not the type of subject that's usually appropriate for us. This month, though, we did come across a story about an explorer with local roots who has traveled the world; much of it on foot. He's also written four books about his adventures. Read about this author with Clinton roots on page 16.

Another theme to this issue is local authors. In addition to the one mentioned above, who is also pictured at left, be sure to read two other stories we've included this month about local authors. On page 14, read about a new novel set in the town of McDonald and the considerable research the author has put into this authentic look at the town's early history. Then flip to page 19 and read about a local teen who just completed her first novel.

Next, turn to page 12 and read about a regional movement to record war stories, as told by the local veterans who lived them. These individuals threw caution aside to serve their country and went on great adventures that have since been written about in history books. Their tales inform that history, making it all the more complex.

Next, flip to page 46 and read about a new effort to open the doors of area log homes to the public. These homes are crucial links to our region's past and our understanding of the adventurous early settlers who first made their homes here.

As with every issue of Allegheny West Magazine, there's plenty of additional good news on these pages. Read about the efforts of local municipalities and organizations to protect our local watersheds on pages 28 and 29. Check out all the fun Halloween and upcoming holiday events on page 50. Finally, on page 54, read about some local teens who are making connections with big time Christian rock stars through their love of music.

We'll be back again with our next issue in December. Until then, I hope you enjoy this one; and if there's something you think we should be writing about, I hope you will let us know.

Doug Hughey,  
Publisher and Editor

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## ABOUT THE COVER

Pumpkins and Halloween decorations usher in the fall season at Jansoki's Farm and Greenhouse in Clinton. Check out our listing of family-friendly Halloween events taking place across the area highlighted in orange, starting on page 51.

PHOTO AND STORY SUBMITTED BY  
KAREN PRUNZIK'S BROADWAY DANCE STUDIO

STORY SUBMITTED BY  
WEST ALLEGHENY ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME

## Billy Porter visits Karen Prunzik's Broadway Dance Studio

Tony and Grammy award-winning Pittsburgh native Billy Porter took time out of his Broadway schedule to appear in a production of "Kinky Boots" during its opening week at the Benedum Center in August. Porter played the role of Lola, the same one that won him a Tony Award for best actor in a musical on Broadway, for the hometown crowd.

While in Pittsburgh, Porter also took time to visit Karen Prunzik's Broadway Dance Studio and Performing Arts in Robinson Township, where he taught a master class to over 50 students. The visit marked a reunion for Prunzik and Porter, who performed together in a production of "Chicago" at the Pittsburgh Playhouse when Billy was a sophomore at Carnegie Mellon University. At the time, Prunzik was a guest star on hiatus from her role in a Broadway production of "42nd Street."



Tony Award-winning Pittsburgh native Billy Porter poses for a picture with Karen Prunzik of Prunzik's Broadway Dance Studio at the Benedum Center on Aug. 4. Porter played the role of Lola during a production of "Kinky Boots" at the Benedum during its opening week. The two are pictured with Gabriela Zucckero (far left), Shane Treloar and Lani Coleman (far right).

## West Allegheny Athletic Hall of Fame nomination form now online

Over the past four years, the West Allegheny Athletic Hall of Fame has recognized athletes, coaches and patrons who have made significant contributions to West Allegheny athletics. In order to streamline the nomination process for its class of 2016, West Allegheny Athletic Hall of Fame board members have created an online form.

To fill out the form, go to awmagazine.com, click on the West Allegheny Athletic Hall of Fame tab and complete all applicable fields. In addition to a completed application, two letters of nomination are still required. Text from nomination letters may either be entered into the online form or mailed separately. A mailing address is provided on the online form.

The deadline for nomination applications, including all supporting material, is Feb. 1, 2016. Inductees will once again be recognized at a banquet in the spring.

The West Allegheny Athletic Hall of Fame accepts applications in four categories: athlete, coach/administrator, team and patron/contributor. In addition to direct contributions to West Allegheny athletics, inductees are evaluated based on their athletic contributions at the post-secondary and professional levels. Board members also evaluate nominees based on their contributions to their communities, both during and following their athletic careers.

As in years past, proceeds from the hall of fame banquet will help financially support the Providing Assistance, Love and Support Group, a North Fayette Township-based program that provides recreational opportunities to children with special needs.

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## New playground equipment part of effort to rejuvenate open spaces in Walden Woods

This past summer, the Walden Woods Community Services Association purchased new playground equipment for a park located at the intersection of Forest Glenn and Fox Chase in North Fayette Township.

The park is the smaller of two parks located in the Walden Woods housing development and sits adjacent to a blacktop basketball court surrounded by homes. Association board member Dwayne Romano says that the 10-person board budgeted for the new equipment over the course of several years, and that the equipment was purchased using fees paid by Walden Woods residents. He says that at one time there had been playground equipment in the park that was original to the housing development, which was started in 1981. He says that equipment was removed years ago.

Romano says that installing the new equipment is part of a larger effort to make better use of the development's open spaces as the area continues to shift toward a younger demographic.

"With the resurgent of younger families in the neighborhood, we wanted to rejuvenate our parks and community spaces," says Romano.

He says that the board is also hoping to commit resources to Walden Woods' larger park, which contains a softball field. The park was at one time utilized for tennis and a playground once sat adjacent to the park. Romano says vandalized wooden playground equipment was removed from the park after it was vandalized. Among potential plans being considered for the park is to utilize part of it as a dog park.

In April, the board held its first community Easter egg hunt in the park. The event attracted approximately 250 people. Romano says the board was encouraged by the turnout and believes the park could be better utilized in the future.

The Walden Woods Community Services Association board is currently taking suggestions for potential uses of the area's parks. Comments can be made by going to [www.waldenwoods.us](http://www.waldenwoods.us).



Walden Woods residents enjoy new equipment recently purchased for one of the development's parks. Pictured are (seated) Mary Muirhead, Torri Zanella, Scott Zanella (standing), Colton Romano, Connor Romano, Marinna Romano and Roman Gallucci.



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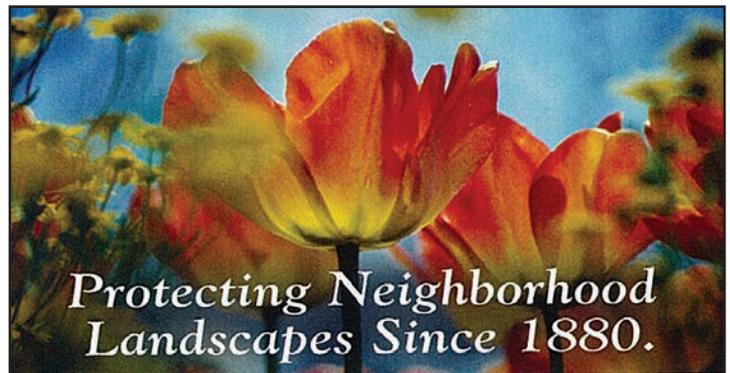
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## Class of 1975 celebrates 40th reunion

PHOTO AND STORY SUBMITTED

The West Allegheny Class of 1975 celebrated their 40th class reunion on July 25 at Celebrations in Imperial. Friendships were rekindled and a good time was had by all.



Attendees at the West Allegheny Class of 1975 40th class reunion on July 25 included: (row one) Cheryl Snyder Perry, Kathy Lafferty Hupp, Donna Glover Faux, Janet Vidmar Williams, Debbie Gower McIntyre, Betty Bugay Stawiarski, Joanne Stein Donahue, Vicky Hallum Faux, (row two) Barb Hackett Eaton, Alice Supinski McWreath, Michelle Rosenberger Ondilla, Cindy Lawrence Young, Linda Mueller Columbus, Barb Johnson Kuder, Bonnie Linn, Chris Donahue Tomb, Rae Ann Books Bingiel, Laurie Perrard Valenti, Nancy Schnatterly Clements, Sheryl Schiff McGinnis, Audrey Schepcoff Janssen, (row three) Mark McFadden, Mark Stickley, (row four) John Koehler, Clif Conner, Tom Petricko, Darrell Underwood, Ed Neiser, Kevin Berwick, Dan Faux, Dave Hanczar, Gary Daughenbaugh, Ched Davis, Don Bates, Ken Volle, (row five) Tim Miller, Steve Carter, Don Trautman, Ron Palmer, Greg Edgin, Leo Olshinsky, Ted Valenti, Dan Hamel, (row six) Mark Stiffler and Jim Helton.

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## Class of 1965 celebrates 50th reunion

Seventy-two former classmates from the West Allegheny Class of 1965 met over the weekend of Sept. 12 for their 50th class reunion. The weekend kicked off with a get together at Chuck's Bar in Imperial. Classmates then met for a dinner at the Pittsburgh Airport Marriott on Saturday night and a picnic in Clinton on Sunday.



The West Allegheny Class of 1965 celebrates its 50th reunion the weekend of Sept 12.

**Union Church Presents...**  
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## A regular gathering of veterans brings war stories to life, helping to preserve their tales for posterity

On Sept. 11, Sewickley resident Dan Telep stepped onto a C-130H transport aircraft sitting on the tarmac at the Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station.

It was the first time Telep, a Vietnam veteran, had been on such a plane since June of 1967. For him, the older model C-130H brought back powerful memories, as it did for many of the Vietnam veterans who visited the base Sept. 11 for a Veterans Breakfast Club event.

"I walked over three dead lieutenants coming back on body bags when I was dropped off in Da Nang," says Telep, who was stationed at the Con Thien U.S. Marine Corp base during the Battle of Con Thien.

During a yearlong battle centered around the base, over 1,400 U.S. troops lost their lives and over 9,000 were wounded. Telep was a 22-year-old lieutenant in the Marine Corps at the time.

Prior to the breakfast, which was held both to honor U.S. veterans and remember the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, attendees were able to tour the C-130H aircraft and talk with 911th Airlift Wing reservists who are still flying the plane today. The aircraft also formed the backdrop for the breakfast event, which took place in a large, open-air hangar on the base. During the breakfast, veterans from various eras reminisced about their wartime experiences, both with each other and about 200 service members and veterans in attendance.

The Veterans Club Breakfast event at the base was one of about 40 such events that take place in the Pittsburgh region throughout the year. Dr. Todd DePastino, who has been heading up a project to record stories told at the gatherings, says attendance numbers tend to range from 50 to 200. He says the club was started in 2008 by a South Hills resident named Dan Cavanaugh.

"His father was a World War II veteran," says DePastino, "and his dad shared his war stories with him. To pay tribute, he began volunteering on bus trips for World War II veterans. The trips were great, but the real treasures were the storytelling that would take place on the bus."

DePastino attended the second-ever meeting of the club. At the time, he was teaching history at Waynesburg University. He currently teaches a class on the Vietnam War at the Penn State University Beaver campus. He is also the author of a book about the World War II-era cartoonist Bill Mauldin.

"As an historian I've spent a lot of time in archives," he says, "but hearing these stories from the mouth of someone who was there is just fascinating."

DePastino says that since 2012, they've recorded about 600 stories as part of an ongoing oral history project dubbed Veteran Voices of Pittsburgh. He is working with the Heinz History Center to archive the recordings and make them

available online. He says compiling them has been slow, due to the amount of time required by the editing process. A handful can be heard, watched and read at [VeteranVoicesOfPittsburgh.com](http://VeteranVoicesOfPittsburgh.com).



Dr. Todd DePastino interviewed veterans during an event at the Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station on Sept. 11. Pictured are World War II veterans Warren Goss (above) and Beverly Kreger (below).

At the Sept. 11 event, DePastino served as master of ceremonies, passing a microphone through the crowd. Speakers tended not to volunteer, but shared their stories when asked. For some, a service picture was projected onto a screen as they spoke. DePastino says that initially he had intended on hearing only from post-2001 veterans, but that base leadership felt hearing stories from various eras would be beneficial to base personnel.

Some speakers talked about the horrors of war; others about the excitement of travel their service entailed. All brought an era of history to life.

"What holds it all together is they all served," says DePastino. "They all left ordinary civilian life and entered the unknown. They joined a regimented system that could very well put them in danger."

World War II veteran Warren Goss talked about his role during the invasion of Normandy, France. He volunteered for a brigade involved in the ground invasion.

"When you're young and stupid, you do stupid things," Goss told the audience.

He said that for an entire year they trained for one job: the invasion; but that when it came time for combat, everything they had trained for didn't happen.

"You just do it, I guess," he says. "We were taught that if one man goes down you keep going. After the battle was over, you didn't know who won, you just worried about how many people you lost."

Dana Chalfont, another World War II veteran, talked about serving on a sub chaser in the Navy and being attacked by kamikazes. Yet another World War II veteran, Walter Reddy, talked about serving as a radio operator on a bomber and seeing a Nazi Messerschmitt Me 262, the world's first fighter jet. The jet streaked past his B-17 during a mission.

"I heard those guys, they were going crazy," he says, "they had never seen [an Me 262] before."

Two female World War II veterans, Beverly Kreger and Ila Cole, also talked about their experiences. Cole said she joined the Navy because she liked sailors, which got a laugh from the crowd. DePastino, talking after the event, said that she served as a Navy WAVE, an acronym for women accepted for volunteer emergency service.

"They were kind of the upper crust of the women's service," he says. "They had to have two years of college and weren't just clerks. They did demanding jobs like decryption, intercepting messages and



decoding.”

He says another Navy WAVE who has attended club events worked on decoding the Nazi code machine Enigma.

A couple attendees also talked about their service in Iraq. Nicholas Megyesi and Josh Galiyas both talked about their roles rooting out enemy weapons and money. Galiyas said he worked in intelligence, while Megyesi was part of a patrol on the Tigris River targeting bomb makers and weapon caches. Galiyas touched briefly on the experience of adjusting to life following Iraq, including learning how to ignore objects left by the road that in Iraq could have just as easily been IEDs.

For more on the Veterans Breakfast Club, including a schedule, visit [Veteransbreakfastclub.com](http://Veteransbreakfastclub.com). In April, the club began publishing the magazine Veteran Voices, which includes stories heard at breakfasts. For a copy of the magazine, to sign up for the newsletter, or for more information, email [todd@veteransbreakfast.com](mailto:todd@veteransbreakfast.com) or call (412) 623-9029.

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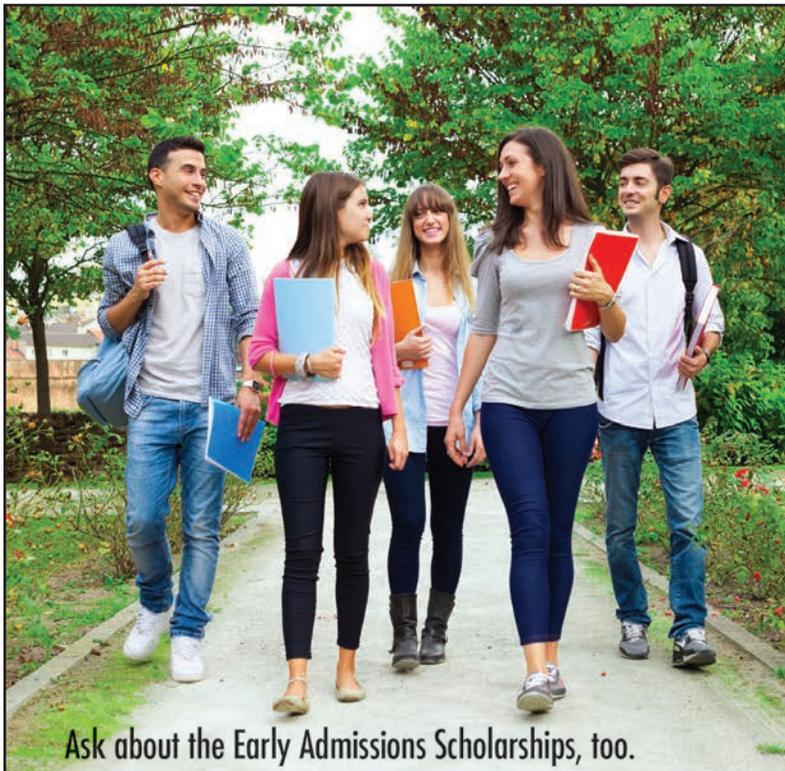
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## McDonald featured in new novel by town descendant

Though times have changed over the last 40 years, and residents of McDonald are as likely to be transplants from Texas or Oklahoma as to have been born and raised there, many are still familiar with galette cookies and the town's history as a community of Belgian immigrants.

The recently published novel "The Narrow Gate" by first-time author Janet Roberts is set predominantly in McDonald in present times, and focuses on a large and dysfunctional Belgian family by the name of Delcroix.

Older town dwellers and those who grew up in McDonald in the 1950s and 1960s will appreciate Roberts' descriptive references to bygone large and small landmarks of the town. Several include the penny candy store on North McDonald Street run by sisters Bess and Babe, and the towering "coal washer" that spanned Route 980 near Route 22/30.

Other remaining landmarks, such as the Belgian Club, stately banks at the main intersection and the French Church, are also scattered throughout the story, along with familiar names of Belgian families.

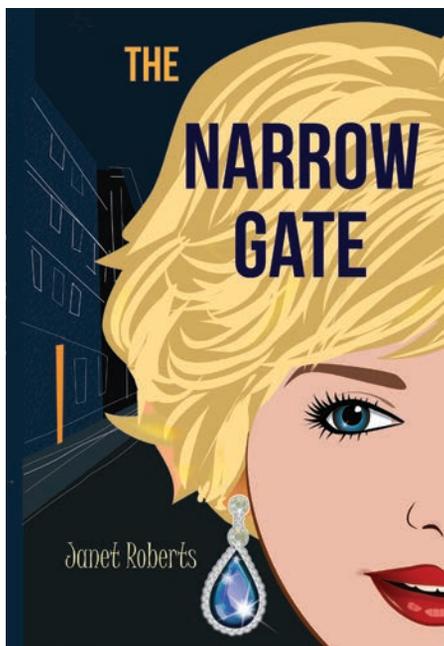
Though born and raised in Erie, and never a resident of McDonald herself, Roberts spent many childhood days there visiting relatives. She was fascinated by the town's history and the role her ancestors played in its development.

Roberts is the granddaughter of Frank and Esther Masquelier, who were both born in McDonald at the turn of the 20th century during the town's heyday as an oil-producing mecca. The idea for the Delcroix family construction business is loosely modeled after Roberts' great-grandfather and great-uncle, Jules and John Masquelier, both of whom emigrated to the town from Belgium in the 1800s. The two ran a carpentry business there and were responsible for building quite a few of McDonald's older homes and buildings.

"The Narrow Gate" is told from the point of view of half-sisters Elise and Nova Delcroix and their grandmother, Eugenie, whose chapters are the only ones Roberts writes in a first person voice. The novel goes back and forth in time, revisiting various eras of the characters' lives. It includes Eugenie's passage with her parents across the Atlantic Ocean from Belgium at the beginning of World War II and her memories surrounding the Vietnam War.

The novel focuses primarily on a void left in Elise's life by a lack of attention and understanding from her father, Emil, and the damage their fractured relationship has inflicted on the entire family. There are several interesting scandals throughout the story, which begins with an adult Elise returning to McDonald after an 11-year absence. Elise returns for her father's funeral with hopes of finding retribution from both members of her family and townspeople.

The author not only describes landmarks specific to McDonald, but also the beautiful mountainous landscapes and porch swing settings that have a uniquely western Pennsylvania feel to them. Though a bit wordy at times, the story flows nicely and engages the reader, encouraging them to learn more.



Roberts is adept at dialogue, making readers feel as though they are on a lawn chair in a small town listening to two old friends reconnect. She intersperses Belgian language into some of the conversations, for which she used a translation company for the correct usage of the Walloon dialect.

Always intrigued by the idea that forgiveness is a difficult virtue, Roberts wrote her debut novel about strained family dynamics and the concept that judgement by a person will push the judged loved ones away from the very thing that could help them. Feelings of love, loss and perceived parental favoritism in "The Narrow Gate" will connect in one way or another with most readers.

Before the age of 10, Roberts began composing poems as gifts for her teachers and says she felt the need to develop plays and stories as a way to "get the characters I kept seeing out of my head." She earned a

bachelor's degree in journalism from Temple University and, years later, a master's in communication from Edinboro University.

Roberts has worked for trade magazines and newspapers, and spent considerable time in corporate communications in Cleveland. During a period of depression and boredom in her life, along with a lack of creativity at her job, Roberts felt compelled to return to her love of writing creative fiction. She began two novels while living in Cleveland and started attending an annual writer's conference in New York City; actions she believes were catalysts for her persistence to succeed as a novelist.

Roberts has invested roughly eight years of research and over \$5,000 to self-publish the book. It's a format for writers she characterizes as having evolved from "shameful to cutting edge." She says that the entrepreneurial publishing start-ups and online options for new writers are a welcome change from old-school standard publishing houses that exercise too much control over the content and profits of a book project, as well as the timeframe in which it is finished.

With her new connections in self-publishing, Roberts went from an approved manuscript to holding the finished book in her hands in several months. She hired a talented young artist from Bosnia to create the cover design.

"The Narrow Gate" may be ordered in paperback for \$10.58 at [www.bookbaby.com/book-distribution](http://www.bookbaby.com/book-distribution) or as an eBook for \$5.99 from iBookstore, Amazon Kindle, Barnes and Noble, Kobo, Baker and Taylor, Copia, Gardners, eSentral, Scribd, Goodreads, Oyster, Flipkart, Ciando and EBSCO.

Pictures, fun facts about the author, and a question and answer section may be viewed at [www.booksbyjanetroberts.com](http://www.booksbyjanetroberts.com).

Roberts' second novel, "The Leaf Queen," about an insecure girl raised by her Irish grandmother, will be published in early 2016. The book is set in Ireland and Erie. She is also hard at work on a third book about the need for titles in corporate America, though Roberts finds little free time for writing due to her current position as a security awareness developer for a large firm near Chicago.

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## St. Clair Hospital's Breast Care Center Welcomes Tara L. Grahovac, M.D.



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*Raye J. Budway, M.D. earned her medical degree at Hahnemann University in Philadelphia. She completed her residency training in general surgery at The Western Pennsylvania Hospital and a fellowship in surgical critical care at UPMC. She previously served as the Site Program Director for the Allegheny General Hospital General Surgery Residency Program, and Director of the Surgical Breast Disease Program and Surgical Intensive Care at West Penn Hospital. She is board-certified in surgical critical care and general surgery. She is a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and serves on the Fellowship's Commission on Cancer.*

*Tara L. Grahovac, M.D. specializes in breast surgery. She earned her medical degree at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, Cincinnati, Ohio. Dr. Grahovac completed her residency in general surgery at Allegheny General Hospital, and a fellowship in breast surgery at UPMC Magee Womens Hospital.*



## Author with local roots named The Explorers Club fellow

STORY BY DOUG HUGHEY  
PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Author Brandon Wilson says that he has always had an insatiable curiosity about the world. He attributes that in part to his father, Dr. Edgar Wilson, who was a history teacher at West Allegheny.

Over the past three decades, that curiosity has driven Brandon as he's walked thousands of miles across six continents and written four books about his experiences. The kinds of places he's explored one wouldn't necessarily find on the guided bus tour. His month-long journeys have taken him through the Himalayas, across Africa, from France to Jerusalem and through Central America. He describes his journeys as the "beauty of slow travel and immersion into small cultures." Along the way, he's at times relied on locals, from pygmies to Tibetan monks, to survive. Many treks he's been the first American to ever complete.

In August, Wilson was named a fellow of The Explorers Club, an honor reserved for individuals who have demonstrated considerable contributions to the field of exploration. Its website lists the likes of Teddy Roosevelt, Chuck Yeager and Sir Edmund Hillary among its honorary members.

Wilson graduated from Moon Area High School, where he worked as a stringer for the Coraopolis Record and Moon Bulletin. His grandfather, John Wilson Sr., owned a Chevrolet dealership in Clinton, and a bus company serving West Allegheny School District. Wilson says an ancestor of his, Rev. William Wilson, was an early Clinton settler who founded the Clinton United Presbyterian Church.

"He also preached to the Native Americans," says Wilson.

These days, Wilson lives in Hawaii with his wife and longtime traveling companion, Cheryl. The couple first moved there in 1986 after returning from their first adventure, a yearlong trip across the world, through Asia, the South Pacific, Europe and the Middle East.

"We traveled like locals on \$35 a day," he says, "and crossed sites and experiences off our bucket lists very inexpensively. We stayed in one star or falling star hotels and traveled with backpacks. I was 32 at the time."

In 1989, they set off on their second big adventure, a trip across Eastern Europe that came just in time to swing sledgehammers into the Berlin Wall. They then joined a "do-it-yourself safari group," as Brandon puts it, traversing Africa, from London to Cape Town. Fearful of their guides' inexperience, Brandon and Cheryl set off and completed the 10,000-mile excursion across 17 countries in seven months on their own.

"We white water rafted down the Zambezi River, went hunting with pygmies, crossed the Sahara Desert, climbed Kilimanjaro and photo stalked gorillas in Zaire," Brandon says.

Along the way, they traversed war-torn Mozambique and Soweto as Nelson Mandela was being freed in South Africa. He recounts the experience in his first book, "Dead Men Don't Leave Tips: Adventures X Africa."

In 1992, the couple set off again on yet another adventure, this

one through the Himalayas.

"We saved up some money and took off again," he says. "We heard about a trail that went across Tibet that had been closed since the Chinese invasion."



**ABOVE:** Author Brandon Wilson has written four books about his explorations. Here he is photographed in Istanbul, Turkey in 2006, after five months of hiking from France to Jerusalem.

**BOTTOM RIGHT:** Cheryl Wilson poses for a photo with Sadhu, a horse she and her husband, Brandon, purchased to help them on a trek through the Himalayas.

The trail had at one time been a pilgrimage route for Tibetan monks. Brandon says he and Cheryl had tried without success to get visas before leaving America.

"The Chinese said there was no place to stay or eat along the route," he says. "They gave us a litany of why it was 'impossible!' But the more they insisted, the more I wanted to go."

When they arrived in Kathmandu in Nepal, they weren't sure if they would be allowed to cross the border and travel the route alone. The day before they applied for visas, though, the border opened. They started their trek in Lhasa, Tibet, and became the first Westerners to complete the route. They bought a Tibetan horse named Sadhu to carry their gear, since they were

hiking at 11,000 to 16,000 feet for the 650 miles across Tibet; but even that did not allow them to carry the provisions they needed to be entirely self-sufficient.

"We arrived with only four or five days of provisions and were dependent on finding supplies each day," he says.

Brandon says they stayed with local families along the way and "learned to beg like monks." They subsisted on a diet of yak meat, yak butter, yak cheese, "cans of Chinese mystery food" and tea.

"We hiked to Everest base camp, were shot at by Chinese soldiers, presented prayer flags to the king of Nepal, and made it back just before the snow, which would have blocked the route until spring," he says.

Nowadays, he says, foreign travelers are required to bring a Chinese guide and the route has been paved.

After leaving Nepal, the couple traveled to France, where Brandon wrote about their Himalayan adventure in "Yakbutter Blues." The book later won an IPPY Independent Publisher Book award. The couple then crisscrossed the West Indies, flew to Venezuela, traveled overland across Columbia and Panama, then traversed Central America to Arizona by bus.

Brandon has since tackled four pilgrimage trails in Spain, including the 500-mile Camino de Santiago twice, the Via de la Plata, the Camino Catalan and the Camino Aragones. In 2004, he hiked a 373-mile route from Oslo to Trondheim, Norway known as St. Olav's Way. The trail ends at Nidaros Cathedral, which marks the burial place of King Olav Haraldsson, who is credited with bringing



Christianity to Scandinavia in 1030. Brandon also became the first American to hike the 1,150-mile Via Francigena, a medieval pilgrimage route from Canterbury, England to Rome; but not even that trek would top a 2006 journey he undertook with his French friend Emile across two continents and 2,700 miles. Their route followed the same route used by English soldiers during the First Crusades and the pair received media attention from newspapers and national television along the way. Brandon used the occasion to respond to the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as tensions between Israel and Palestine.

"I wanted to talk to people about choosing peace versus the never-ending wars we've been thrust into," he says. "I walked and plotted this ancient trail so others could follow it in the future as a path of peace, regardless of nationality, culture or religion."

That journey inspired his next book, "Along the Templar Trail: Seven Million Steps for Peace." He entered it in the Society of American Travel Writers' Lowell Thomas Travel Journalism Competition before he and Cheryl took off on a 2009 hike on the Via Alpina across the backbone of the Alps, from Italy to Monaco.

"It was the toughest trip I've ever taken," says Brandon, "because you climb a mountain every day for four months. You sleep at a hut at the top of a mountain each night and start again in the morning. It's the equivalent of climbing 12 Mount Everests based on elevation."

Following the grueling trek across eight countries, he checked in with his mother, who at that time lived in Glenwillard. She informed him he'd gotten a package in the mail.

"She said it was an iceberg," he says.

Actually, it was the 2009 Lowell Thomas Gold Award for Best

Travel Book from the Society of American Travel Writers. When the competition committee couldn't get ahold of him because he was traveling, they sent it to him in the mail.

That trek along the Via Alpina Brandon recounts in his latest book "Over the Top and Back Again," which won the 2011 Bronze Award for Best Travel Essay from ForeWord Reviews.

At age 62, he's not done yet. Last summer, Brandon again trekked St. Olav's Way, this time across Sweden and Norway. After completing it, he was inducted into the Sovereign Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem-Knights of Malta. He's currently planning a trek on the Alta Via 1 and 2 across the Italian Dolomites. He says that he hopes his books inspire others to explore and travel.

"There's an adventure out there for everyone," he says. "Being on the trail allows you to connect again with what's important in life. It allows you to travel outside while travelling within. Don't wait. And never say, 'Impossible!'"

Brandon's books are available on Amazon.com. Visit his website at [www.pilgrimstales.com](http://www.pilgrimstales.com). View Brandon's photos, follow his blog and read accompanying excerpts from his books on his Facebook page, Brandon Wilson Adventure Travel Author.



Cheryl Wilson took this photo of her husband, Brandon, while they were hiking in the French Alps on the Via Alpina in 2009.

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## Local teen Anissa Clay publishes novel of young adult fiction



On a Friday in January of 2013, Anissa Clay was resting her eyes during a migraine when the plot for a novel suddenly formed in her mind. It happened during the bus ride home from Lincoln Park Performing Arts Charter School, where Clay was a seventh-grade student.

A little more than two years later, the teenager has sold 80 copies of “The God Conception,” a work of young adult fiction and the first book in a planned trilogy. Clay, a resident of Findlay Township and now a sophomore, is experiencing a whirlwind of activity from the recent publishing, including a book launch party, signings at local fairs and library events, and accolades from a renowned national author who helped edit her book.

“The God Conception” refers to an ability to see events in one’s future, a talent acquired by the book’s teenage heroine, Delilah Danton, after she becomes the first to undergo an experimental procedure to achieve this ability. The child of an abusive, drunken father and a terminally ill mother, Delilah was specifically chosen for the experiment to allow her to see life beyond the daily trauma with which she lives.

Set primarily in Pittsburgh, with several chapters occurring in Clay’s mother’s hometown of Clarksburg, West Virginia, the novel follows Delilah’s life after she is placed with a wealthy foster family following the death of her mother and the arrest of her father. Delilah possesses an angelic singing voice and lands a recording contract because of her new family’s connections.

A talented musician who composed her first song at age four, Clay’s musical ability is displayed in the novel through four original songs which she plans to record in the near future. Clay admittedly created “the perfect version” of herself in the musically inclined Delilah.

Written for a 12- to 18-year-old audience, “The God Conception” at times reads like a youth fantasy with “the

richest family I had ever seen” taking their new foster/adoptive daughter to live in an elaborate mansion and granting all of her wishes. Dominic, the gorgeous best friend of Delilah’s foster brother, immediately becomes her love interest, a high school romance that is not without some deceit and violence.

The plot is creative, however, and young readers will appreciate Clay’s skillful development of the storyline and dialogue between characters.

Clay was assisted in the publishing process by local author and family friend Gia Tatone, who responded to a Facebook post about “The God Conception” when Clay still planned to self-publish the book. Tatone invited Clay to an author’s conference in Hershey last August, where she met other authors who used Red Engine Press, a Bridgeville publishing company with which Tatone is affiliated.

Three editors and a cover designer at Red Engine reviewed the book and Clay signed a contract with the company in March. One of those editors, New York Times best-selling author Dwight Jon Zimmerman, co-wrote “Lincoln’s Last Days” with national news celebrity Bill O’Reilly. Zimmerman’s endorsement on the book’s first page reads “it is rare to see such maturity and skill in storytelling from a first-time novelist” and that Clay is “destined to become a major force in literature.”

Clay’s mother, Joyce, marveled that “The God Conception” was picked up by Amazon before the family had even seen the finished copy. The first shipment of 50 books sold within a week. The book can also be ordered on Clay’s website at [anissaclay.com](http://anissaclay.com).

The young writer has completed most of the second book in the trilogy, “The Psychic Capability,” in which Clay incorporates her love for ancient history. She did considerable research on both Greek mythology and wedding planning - even signing up for The Knot website - as the second novel features Delilah’s wedding, which occurs among the ruins of Delphi.

Clay was recently awarded the TAZ Pittsburgh Emerging Author Award and is a finalist in the young adult fiction category. The winner will be named at an Oct. 22 ceremony at the Rivers Club.



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# Library News

## 25th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION, Nov. 14

Join the WACL on **Nov. 14** as they celebrate the 25th anniversary of the library with a community open house. The library's 25th anniversary committee, consisting of board members, community volunteers and library staff - both current and retired - have organized an event that will offer something for everyone. The day's events will kick off with a ceremony recognizing this milestone and the efforts of all those who made the dream of a library a reality. Following the ceremony, there will be an open house featuring displays celebrating the library's last 25 years, including a 25th anniversary commemorative quilt designed by Jan Senovich and a historic photo display of Findlay Township, North Fayette Township and Oakdale created by the library's history committee. There will also be refreshments, entertainment, children's activities and a visit from local author Todd Vicker, who will be reading and signing his picture book, "The Hunt for Luke's Bone." For a full schedule of the day's events, check the library website.

## HOLIDAY PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES

**HOLIDAY MOVIE & CRAFT, Oct. 24, 10 a.m., Nov. 8, 2 p.m.**

**HALLOWEEN STORYWALK, Oct. 28, 6:30 p.m., Clinton Park.**

**LIBRARY TRICK-OR-TREAT, Oct. 30, 1 p.m.**

**ANNUAL GINGERBREAD WORKSHOP, Nov. 30**

**COOKIE EXCHANGE, Dec. 6, 2 p.m.**

**MAKE & TAKE ORNAMENTS, Dec. 12, 2 p.m.**

## ADULT PROGRAMS

**PINTEREST PLAYGROUND, Christmas Wreath, Nov. 11, 6:30 p.m.**

**LEGO CLUB FOR ADULTS, every other Tuesday, 6 p.m.**

**BEGINNING COMPUTER CLASS FOR SENIORS, Nov. 5, 2 p.m.**

**BOOK CLUB, COOKBOOK CLUB, BOOKWORMS, YA @ HEART, check website for schedules.**

## TEEN PROGRAMS

**LIBRARY LOCK-IN, Oct. 24**

**CREEPY TREATS FOR TEENS, Oct. 29, 3:30 p.m.**

**HUNGER GAMES FINAL FILM RELEASE PARTY, at CINEMARK, Nov. 21**

**HOLIDAY ORNAMENTS & CARDS, Dec. 17, 3:30 p.m.**

Stop by the library or check out the WACL website for full program information and to sign up today!

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## CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

**BABY STORYTIME, Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m.**

**TODDLER STORYTIME, Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.**

**PRESCHOOL STORYTIME, Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.**

**PJ STORYTIME, Mondays, 6:30 p.m.**

**PRESCHOOL KIDS IN MOTION, Thursdays, 11:30 a.m.**

**PRESCHOOL ART AND SCIENCE, Tuesdays, 11 a.m.**

**LEGO CLUB, Mondays, 4:15 p.m.**

**FAMILY FOOD DETECTIVES, Oct. 27, 6:30 p.m.**

**FAMILY MOVIE NIGHTS, Nov. 4, 6 p.m.** Pixar's "Inside Out" (PG)

**AMERICAN GIRL TEA PARTY, Nov. 22, 2 p.m.**

**STAR WARS PARTY, Dec. 6, 2 p.m.**

**STUFFED ANIMAL SLEEPOVER, Dec. 19**

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PHOTOS AND STORY  
SUBMITTED BY UNIQUE BOUTIQUE

## Unique Boutique returns for 14th year Nov. 14



Beaver WoodWright

Custom jewelry, delicious food, boutique clothing and charming gifts from talented area artisans will once again be available at Unique Boutique, an event benefiting the Heritage Valley Sewickley Foundation, on Nov. 14. The Unique Boutique is now in its 14th year of providing a special shopping and lunch experience for those seeking one-of-a-kind gifts for the upcoming holiday season.



The Blake Collection

Presented by UPMC Health Plan, this year's Unique Boutique will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Edgeworth Club in Sewickley. All proceeds benefit Heritage Valley Health System's Community Health Services High Risk Pregnancy program, which provides specialized nursing care to high-risk pregnant women. From referral to after the birth of the infant, nursing care is provided by Heritage Valley Health

System registered nurses. Goals of the pregnancy Health Services Program are to work collaboratively with physicians to prevent preterm delivery, prevent low birth weight infants and reduce the incidence of smoking during pregnancy. Care is based on patient

need and may include - but is not limited to - assessment and follow-up, home visits, telemanagement, development of an individualized service plan, referrals for support services, and interventions based on current standards of practice.

Admission cost for Unique Boutique is \$10 per person or \$35 per person for admission and lunch. A buffet lunch will be served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and reservations are required. A courtesy shuttle will be available to shoppers from the Heritage Valley Sewickley Hospital garage located at Fitch Circle (720 Blackburn Road) to the Edgeworth Club. The shuttle will make rounds every 30 minutes, from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For questions and reservations, contact Susie Abercrombie at (412) 749-7050 or visit [www.heritagevalley.org](http://www.heritagevalley.org).

Artisans participating in this year's Unique Boutique include The Blake Collection, Whimsical Wonders, Beaver WoodWright and Camila Jewelry.



Whimsical Wonders



Camila Jewelry

ABOVE: A sampling of some of the items that will be available at this year's Unique Boutique on Nov. 14.

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## Unique Boutique

*Presented by the Heritage Valley Sewickley Foundation*

*Benefits: Heritage Valley Health System's  
Community Health Services High Risk Pregnancy program*

**Saturday, November 14, 2015**  
**Edgeworth Club, 511 East Drive, Sewickley**

50 Artisans & Vendors, Clothing, Gourmet Food,  
Home Decor, Jewelry/Accessories

10:00 am to 4:00 pm (Shopping & Chinese Auction)

\$10 Admission or \$35 Admission & Lunch

Courtesy Shuttle Service Available

RSVP/Questions: 412-749-7121 or [foundation@hvhs.org](mailto:foundation@hvhs.org)



## Troop 248 member becomes 84th to earn rank of Eagle Scout

On Sept. 2, Boy Scout Troop 248 member Samuel J. Miller Jr. completed his Eagle Board of Review, thereby becoming the 84th member of Troop 248 to earn the rank of Eagle Scout.



Miller is a senior at South Fayette High School and the son of Sam and Tracy Miller of Bridgeville. For his Eagle Scout Service Project, Sam worked with members of the Oakdale Masonic Hall 669 to organize a child identification event with the Children's Health Insurance Program. He has held and served in leadership positions

such as den chief, patrol leader and senior patrol leader. He is currently a junior assistant scoutmaster. Sam was also selected as one of 153 delegates to represent the Laurel Highlands Council at the 100th anniversary National Order of the Arrow Conference in August.

Following graduation, Sam plans to attend college. He is in the process of choosing a university.

## Members of BSA Troop 248 selected as delegates to the BSA National Order of the Arrow Conference 2015

Ten members of Boy Scout Troop 248 were selected to be part of a 153-member delegation that attended the 100th National Order of the Arrow Conference. Local Scouts represented the Laurel Highlands Council, Allohak Menewi Lodge 57 of the Order of the Arrow. Members attending the 100th anniversary of the NOAC from Troop 248 were Scott Zanella, Mike Behr, Richard Mamula, Jake Kanaskie, Peter Poplos, Noah Magdich, Scott Zanella Sr., Thomas Taylor and Joel Erickson.

The conference was held Aug. 3-8 at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan. Fifteen thousand delegates, along with 1,000 staff members from every BSA council in the U.S. and several countries, joined together to celebrate the anniversary.

The NOAC is held once every three years at a major university and each BSA council is allotted delegate spots. Delegate members attend weeklong training seminars in over 150 activity venues. They also compete in sports such as swimming, golf, basketball, bowling, gaming, Native American singing and dance competitions. Additionally, Scouts compete in every aspect of lodge operations, Scoutcraft and outdoor skills. Lodge delegates compete for "bragging rights" to be the best in the nation until the next NOAC is held.

During the conference, delegates have the option to enroll in specific training classes on leadership and leadership development as well as assorted outdoor living skills, leisure sports and conservation. National instructors teach courses on environmental studies. Delegates can also test their skills in 100 different activities, including horizontal and vertical rock climbing, ice climbing, obstacle courses, BMX biking, cable slides and blacksmithing. Each evening is capped off with a nationally recognized stage show and theme show. During the final day of the NOAC, lodges man booths promoting their hometown, council and state. Numerous musicians, performers and celebrities perform at the carnival celebration.

The next NOAC is scheduled to take place in 2018 at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana.

Members of Boy Scout Troop 248 in Oakdale represented their lodge at the 100th National Order of the Arrow Conference in East Lansing, Michigan in August. Pictured are Scott Zanella, Mike Behr, Richard Mamula, Jake Kanaskie, Thomas Taylor, Peter Poplos, Noah Magdich, Scott Zanella Sr. and Joel Erickson.



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PROVIDED BY GARY KLOBCHAR, JR.

## 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.

**Gary Klobchar, Jr. may be reached via telephone at 724-544-2489 or by email at gary.klobchar@milestonesfg.com. You can learn more about him and his company by visiting [www.milestonesfinancialgroup.net](http://www.milestonesfinancialgroup.net)**

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PHOTOS AND STORY SUBMITTED BY  
SUGAR BEAR CLOTHING SUPPLY COMPANY

## Local students start clothing company

This past spring, sisters Madison and Alayna Nai, ages 10 and 8 respectively, of Oakdale, donated some of their clothes to charity. When the two West Allegheny students went shopping to buy new clothes, though, it turned out to be an exercise in frustration.

“They couldn’t find the right designs or colors, or clothes that were cute enough to fit their tastes,” says their father, James.

That led James, who works in sales and marketing for US Foods, to off-handedly suggest they start their own clothing line.

“They didn’t really jump at it at first,” says James, “but not long after they came back and said, ‘Hey dad, how do we go about starting that clothing company?’”

Earlier this year, James registered for a tax identification number under the fictitious name Sugar Bear Clothing Supply Company, and by the middle of July, they were up and running.

The small enterprise has turned out to be an entrepreneurial learning opportunity, with all the aspects of a large company, just on a much smaller scale. The sisters create their own designs and pick out clothes using market research gathered from what they’ve observed among girls their age. They market online using social media, including on Instagram and Facebook; with parental controls on, of course. They’ve sponsored some local sports teams and events, and are working with athletes to get them to endorse their line, which can best be described as recreational wear for girls ages 8-14.

They also keep inventory, and purchase their clothing through a printer that emblazons their logos on hoodies, yoga pants, headbands, beanies and more. James says he doesn’t want his daughters working with a heat press quite yet, though that could change in the future.

“The biggest thing right now is getting out there and creating brand awareness,” says James.

Saturday nights are usually when the family sits down to work on the business, during the short reprieve between school and related activities. Madison is a member of the cheer squad and plays basketball. Alayna plays softball.

If the clothing line were to take off, it wouldn’t be the first that

started out in someone’s bedroom. Whether the small business helps one day pay for college or just gives the Nai sisters access to the clothes they like, they will have benefited from the learning experience it has provided.

For more about Sugar Bear Clothing Supply Company, visit [SugarBearSupply.com](http://SugarBearSupply.com). Also follow them on Facebook, and find them on Twitter and Instagram at [@SugarBearSupply](https://www.instagram.com/SugarBearSupply).



Madison and Alayna Nai, ages 10 and 8, of Oakdale, have started their own clothing company with their father, James.

**SPAGHETTI DINNER**  
**Bake Sale & Chinese Auction**  
**PLUS SPECIAL PIE SALE**  
**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24**  
**4:30 – 6:30 p.m.**

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 MIBS, Inc.  
 MTS Sales & Services, Inc.  
 Prime Communications  
 Prudential  
 Revelation Hair Designs  
 Robinson Township Historical Society  
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**25 years**  
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**20 years**  
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 Alisa Faulk, Immediate Past Chair  
 Jim Gill, Treasurer  
 Mike Belsky, Vice Chair  
 Sean Henderson, Vice Chair  
 Melissa Hodge, Vice Chair  
 Don Smith, Vice Chair

### Chamber Staff

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 Michelle Kreutzer, Executive Vice Pres.  
 Doug Keeter, Membership Director  
 Tammy Lynn, Bookkeeper  
 Susan Hovanec, Mbrshp. Svcs. Manager  
 Peg Eger, Office Manager  
 Kelly Burgos, Communications Specialist

### RIBBON CUTTINGS

**August 27 - Speedy Furniture of Robinson**  
 Speedy Furniture of Robinson enjoyed their official Ribbon Cutting ceremony with Chamber Ambassadors on August 27.



**August 28 - Villa**  
 The team at Villa was joined by Chamber Ambassadors on August 28 for their official Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.



### Coming Up . . .

**October 30** - Breakfast Briefing with Christina Cassotis and Matt Smith; 7:30 - 10 a.m. at the Sheraton Pittsburgh Airport

**November 4** - PAACC Education Series Seminar: Improving Your Bottom Line Through Project Management; 8 - 10 a.m. at the Wyndham Garden Pittsburgh Airport

**November 11** - Gitomer Seminar: Connections & Networking; 7:15 a.m. - 12 p.m. | Crowne Plaza Pittsburgh West - Green Tree

**November 13** - Breakfast Briefing: Military Benefits in the Airport Corridor - Safety and the Economy; 7:30 - 10 a.m. at Pittsburgh Airport Marriott

The Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce presents

## Connections & Networking

A Jeffrey Gitomer Seminar

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 Crowne Plaza Pittsburgh West - Green Tree

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- > Master how to position yourself to become known
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## West Allegheny Workcamp returning in 2016

STORY BY DOUG HUGHEY  
PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Last summer, 440 teen and adult volunteers from seven states participated in the first-ever West Allegheny Workcamp. Over the course of a single week in June, the out-of-staters helped repair and upgrade 70 homes in western Allegheny County belonging to people who they had never met. Materials were either donated or bought with monetary donations and the work was all done free of charge.

The not-so-random act of kindness was coordinated by Group Mission Trips and Heroes Supporting Heroes, a local faith-based organization founded by North Fayette residents John Lee, Jeff Lutz and Don Steward. HSH is a local 501c(3) nonprofit that provides support to veterans, the families of veterans and area seniors.

Currently, HSH is in the process of evaluating sites for its second work camp, which is planned for the week of July 31 through Aug. 6, 2016. Steward says they are once again looking to have 70 active sites at any one time and could do some type of work on over 100 homes. Repairs could include painting homes inside and out; building wheelchair ramps; refurbishing decks, sidewalks and stairs; weatherization; mobile home skirting; and more.

Steward says they'll be evaluating sites primarily with an eye on feasibility, safety for volunteers and need.

"We'll be looking to do basic home repair jobs that people can be quickly shown how to do," he says.

Throughout the week, campers will once again be staying at West Allegheny Middle School. As with last year, the school will be hosting work camp volunteers at no cost to taxpayers, as Group Mission Trips volunteers pay their own expenses. Additionally, about \$20 or so from each camper, Steward says, will go toward material costs for home repairs.

In order to purchase the materials and supplies needed, though, HSH is looking to raise an additional \$50,000 by next July.

"We don't want to have to say 'no' to a wheelchair ramp because we don't have the money," says Steward.

As with last year, the workcamp is also asking to borrow ladders from the community; everything from a six-foot ladder to a 30-foot extension ladder. Steward says they prefer ladders be delivered to a site that has yet to be determined, but that

volunteers can also pick them up and drop them off if preferred.

Additionally, HSH is looking for volunteers to help with hospitality by serving food to campers throughout the week and to help at a social event. Any food vendors interested in sponsoring the event should contact HSH.

Steward says they are not looking for volunteers to help with workcamp projects, as Group Mission Trips prefers that campers visit places with which they are not familiar. While protecting the privacy of homeowners, he says there's also a spiritual explanation behind that reasoning.

"That's' how God works," he says. "When you're exposed to something different and out of your element, that's how He works."

Anyone interested in having workcamp volunteers perform work on their home can fill out and return the application on the adjacent page. Tax-deductible donations can be made by contacting HSH at WAW@



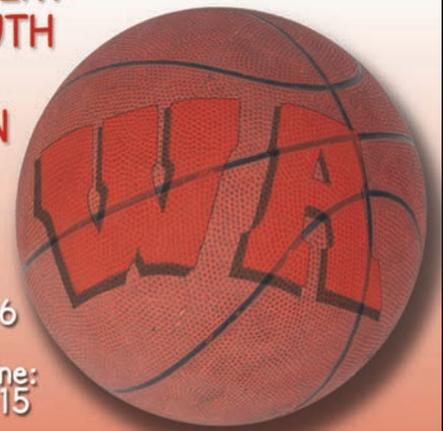
HeroesSupportingHeroes.org.

For more, visit [www.HeroesSupportingHeroes.org](http://www.HeroesSupportingHeroes.org). For more on Group Mission Trips, visit [groupmissiontrips.com](http://groupmissiontrips.com).



**ABOVE AND ABOVE CENTER:** Out-of-state volunteers work to repair and upgrade area homes during last year's West Allegheny Work Camp.

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31 July – 06 August 2016



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- Wheelchair Ramp repair/construction
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**Heroes Supporting Heroes, ATTN: WAW Application, P.O. Box 787, Imperial PA 15126.0787**

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ Do you own your home?  Yes  No

Is your home within a 30-minute drive from **West Allegheny Middle School**  Yes  No

Directions to your home from **West Allegheny Middle School** (please be as specific as possible):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the work you would like to have done: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
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[www.HeroesSupportingHeroes.org](http://www.HeroesSupportingHeroes.org)

## Local watershed association gets results

Long time local residents remember the days when Montour Run was considered a “dead” stream. Pollution in the form of de-icing fluid draining from Pittsburgh International Airport and abandoned mine drainage conspired to make Montour Run inhospitable to all but the toughest living creatures. Today, the stream abounds with life, thanks to the efforts of many people and organizations, including the Montour Run Watershed Association.

The MRWA was incorporated in 2000. Its purpose is to improve water quality within the 36-square-mile watershed that encompasses parts of Findlay, North Fayette, Moon and Robinson townships, along with Coraopolis Borough. The Pittsburgh International Airport makes up nearly one-third of the watershed.

MRWA has earned an excellent reputation with state, federal and local municipal governments, regulatory and funding agencies, as well as other local watershed groups. It takes a non-political, common-sense approach to find effective solutions to water quality problems and obtain results. As such, MRWA was the proud recipient of the prestigious 2009 Karl Mason Award presented by the Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Professionals.

A watershed is an area of land where all of the water that drains from it goes to the same place. In this case, that “place” is Montour Run.

The stream is much more vibrant today than in the “dead” days of earlier decades. The Pittsburgh International Airport’s switch from plane de-icing compounds was a critical step toward reducing toxic ammonia levels. The airport also invested in new de-icing pads to limit drainage of the reformulated de-icing fluid into McClaren Run, a major tributary of Montour Run.

MRWA has made further strides toward improving water quality in the watershed through stream bank stabilization projects and the construction of four AMD treatment systems. These systems are generally located in the upper reaches of the watershed in Findlay Township. Two are on Pittsburgh International Airport property. A fifth project, to be located in North Fayette Township, is in the works.

Substantial underground coal mining and some surface strip mining began in the late 1800s in the headwaters of Montour Run. Transportation was provided by the Montour Railroad, the bed of which is today the popular Montour Trail. After mining ceased, underground mines filled with water. This acidic water, tainted with iron and aluminum from the coal seam, escapes to the surface and drains into Montour Run tributaries.

Acidity and metal sedimentation create conditions in which small invertebrates and minnows cannot thrive and become food for larger species. MRWA’s AMD projects treat this water through contact with limestone and other materials, along with aeration from trompes, or gravity-powered aerators. Over \$1 million in

BY BILL MACEK, TREASURER,  
MONTOUR RUN WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

grant funding has been raised for these projects, resulting in nearly 10 miles of improved stream water quality by reducing acid and suspending metals. Montour Run now has a healthier pH and a more diverse population of invertebrates supporting the food chain.



Montour Run Watershed Association volunteers help clean up a section of Montour Run.

Until funding for its next AMD project is secured, MRWA is working in cooperation with the Montour Trail Council to obtain grants to stabilize stream banks along three troublesome areas of Montour Run. Cooperative activities are also planned with the Hollow Oak Land Trust.

Many local residents may be surprised to learn Montour Run is stocked with rainbow and brown trout by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission every year. These stockings commenced in 2003 after stream conditions proved suitable to carry the sensitive fish species.

The Forest Grove Sportsmen Club conducts trout stocking as well. Small mouth bass, walleye, panfish and catfish

are among the many kinds of fish now caught in Montour Run.

MRWA is an all-volunteer organization. Volunteers help conduct an annual springtime stream “bug count,” staff a booth at Moon Park’s Earth Day celebration and interact with people at the Trout Unlimited “Cabin Fever” event. They will also have an information booth at future community events in Findlay, North Fayette and Robinson. Assistance is appreciated during routine maintenance at the four passive AMD projects. New members and interested bystanders are encouraged to participate.

MRWA is a nonprofit corporation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Memberships and donations are tax deductible. For further information, visit [www.MRWA.INFO](http://www.MRWA.INFO).

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## Local townships teaming to address watershed pollution

Everyone lives in a watershed, an area that drains to a common waterway such as a stream, lake or wetland. As such, every individual plays a role in the pollution potential of storm water, which carries chemicals, metals, bacteria, viruses, organic compounds and other pollutants directly into creeks, lakes, rivers and streams. Pollutants can include toxic substances, chlorinated water discharge, landscaping and lawn care, pest control, pet waste management, household hazardous wastes, residential car washing, trash and debris.

Management of storm water from regulator's perspectives has changed dramatically over the past several years, shifting from just flood control to a more holistic goal of sustaining rivers and watersheds. Local governments across the country are required



North Fayette, Findlay, South Fayette, Collier and Moon townships teamed up to offer an educational seminar to the public on Sept. 24 about storm water management at the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden.

to take action and educate communities about the pollution potential of common activities. The Pennsylvania DEP requires local governments to provide

residents with clear guidance on steps and specific actions required to reduce storm water pollution potential.

As a result, North Fayette, Findlay, South Fayette, Collier and Moon townships are taking an innovative approach to storm water management. On Sept. 24, the five townships hosted the first in a series of seminars geared toward educating the public about factors contributing to storm water pollution at the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden. A couple of these seminars will be held throughout the year. In addition, townships will be making educational materials readily available and enforcing existing regulations. Builders, contractors, businesses and residents who are negligent may be fined.

### Here are some simple tips to keep watersheds clean:

- Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly.
- Repair automobile leaks.
- Dispose of household hazardous waste and used auto fluids such as antifreeze, oil, etc.
- Dispose of batteries at designated collection or recycling locations.
- Clean up after pets.
- Use a commercial car wash or wash cars over a lawn or other unpaved surface.
- Sweep up yard debris instead of hosing down areas.
- Compost or recycle yard waste when possible.
- Clean paint brushes in a sink, not outdoors.
- Properly dispose of excess paints through a household hazardous waste collection program. The PA Resources Council usually hosts several events per year.
- Sweep up and properly dispose of construction debris like concrete and mortar.
- Don't litter; always dispose of trash and other debris in an appropriate receptacle.
- Help to prevent erosion by planting steep slopes and bare spots.
  - Loose soil will erode a stream bank, harming fish and wildlife.



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# Fall Getaways

## Pittsburgh International Airport

Autumn in Pennsylvania, New England and all across the U.S. offers amazing scenery, invigorates the senses and restores the soul. Whether on a robust hike in the forest or sipping hot cider by the fire, new nonstop domestic and international flights on a range of low-cost and traditional carriers make getting to your business or leisure destination easier and more affordable than ever.

This year, Pittsburgh International Airport saw the addition or announcement of 15 new destinations on carriers including Allegiant, Sun Air Express, OneJet, Delta, Southwest and Vacation Express. By the start of the busy holiday travel season in November, the total number of destinations you can fly to nonstop from Pittsburgh will be 51, the most in more than a decade.

So, as nature takes a big, rustling breath in before winter, check out all the great places you, your family or your business associates can fly to from your world-class, hometown airport this fall and all year long!



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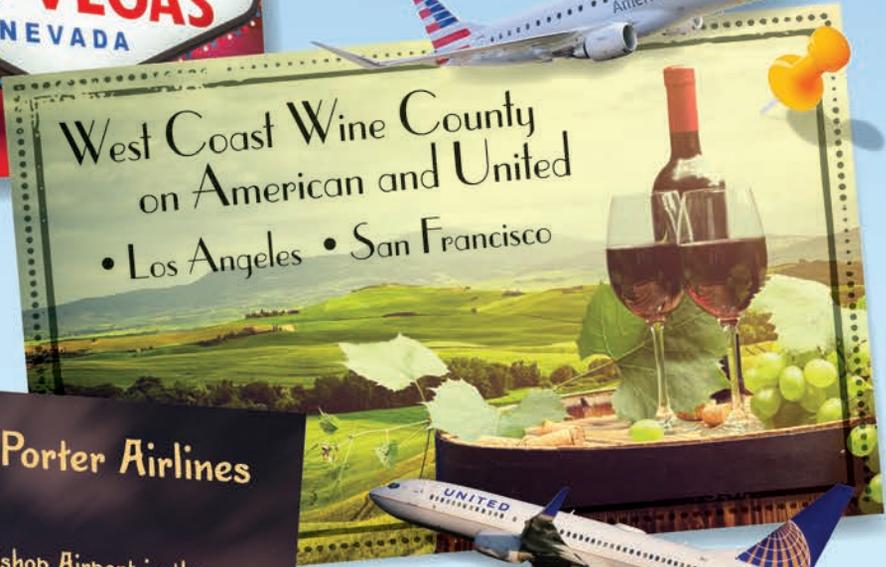
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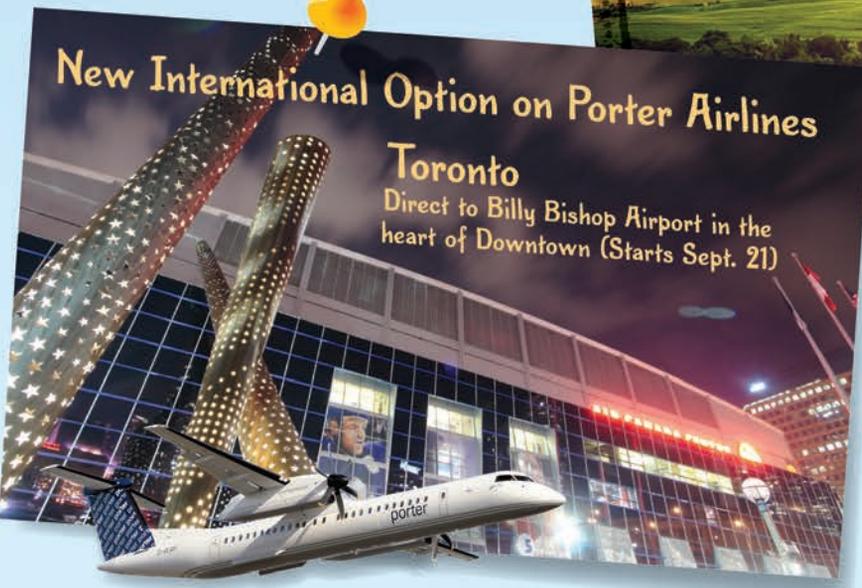
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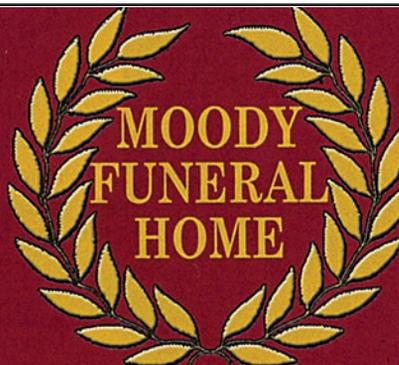
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## Back-to-school in-service days provide fun and support

It was a great start to the school year, as the administrative team welcomed back teachers and staff for in-service days August 25-27. This year's agenda included a District welcome and the second annual Teachers' Institute.

The District welcome back event kicked off in the morning with teambuilding activities followed by the first-ever WA Amazing Race. The competition required teams to complete 10 cognitive and creative challenges. Tasks included a poetry slam - which expanded on the Framework for Excellence - a constructive review of the District's culture, and the creation of an individualized license plate that represented each participant's role in demonstrating a growth mindset.

Following a District-wide cookout provided by the District's new food service company Nutrition Inc., school board president Debbie Mirich kicked off the afternoon session in the auditorium. The high school marching band welcomed everyone back with a performance showcasing selections from their fall lineup. Teachers and administrators also faced off in a friendly yet spirited game of Family Feud, with questions revolving around District priorities and District trivia. Superintendent Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert concluded the day by introducing an inspiring dance video tribute to teachers and staff that featured the administrative team.

The remaining two days featured the Teachers' Institute, which provided subject- and grade-specific professional learning around curriculum development and alignment, literacy standards, math practices, and an introduction to new course offerings.



A WA Amazing Race team works to complete their tasks.



The marching band performs for administration, teachers and staff.



A team of high school teachers showcase their poetry slam.



Teachers face off during a Family Feud segment.



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# Superintendent's Message

In August, I sent parents a welcome back-to-school letter that addressed the ongoing commitment to our priorities: 1. Academic Rigor, Equity and Excellence for All Students; 2. High Quality Instruction in Every Classroom, Every Day; and 3. Financial Responsibility and Operational Efficiency. The letter also contained information on our preliminary 2015 PSSA data for grades 3-8 in English language arts and mathematics. Although the Pennsylvania Department of Education has not officially released the 2015 spring PSSA data at the time of this writing, the public release of scores across schools in Pennsylvania is expected by late September. The

table below indicates our preliminary spring 2015 assessment scores. As noted in the welcome back-to-school letter, we did realize a decline, as compared to the 2013-2014 test scores, in the number of students scoring proficient and advanced. We continue, however, to outperform the state average in almost all tested areas, including our surrounding districts. Dramatic declines across the state occurred as a result of the new assessment being aligned to the more rigorous PA Core Standards. Given the dramatic change in the assessment, the spring 2015 PSSA data should be considered a baseline measure and not directly comparable to previous years.

Although we did experience a decline, it is imperative that lower scores are not viewed as student, teacher and/or school failure. Our students and teachers are defined by much more than one test score, particularly in the year that the test became considerably more difficult.

2015 PSSA ELA	% Advanced	% Proficient	Combined %P/A	% Basic	% Below Basic	West A - State Overall Attainment	How did we compare
West A 3rd	16.7	58.6	75.3	17.6	7.1	13.4	Out Performed the State
State 3rd	12.8	49.1	61.9	24.7	13.5		
West A 4th	21.4	50.8	72.2	21.4	6.5	13.6	Out Performed the State
State 4th	21.3	37.3	58.6	28.5	13.0		
West A 5th	29.4	49.8	79.2	15.7	5.1	17.5	Out Performed the State
State 5th	17.5	44.2	61.7	24.9	13.5		
West A 6th	26.7	46.1	72.8	24.3	2.9	12.2	Out Performed the State
State 6th	21.0	39.6	60.6	29.3	10.1		
West A 7th	20.8	56.1	76.9	20.8	2.3	18.3	Out Performed the State
State 7th	16.7	41.9	58.6	34.8	6.6		
West A 8th	15.6	50.4	66.0	29.6	4.4	8.1	Out Performed the State
State 8th	14.3	43.6	57.9	31.1	11.0		

2015 PSSA Math	% Advanced	% Proficient	Combined %P/A	% Basic	% Below Basic	West A - State Overall Attainment	How did we compare
West A 3rd	26.8	33.9	60.7	19.7	19.7	12.2	Out Performed the State
State 3rd	19.7	28.8	48.5	26.6	28.0		
West A 4th	18.1	36.1	54.2	33.7	12.0	9.6	Out Performed the State
State 4th	16.7	27.9	44.6	30.6	24.8		
West A 5th	23.5	34.9	58.4	27.8	13.7	15.5	Out Performed the State
State 5th	15.2	27.7	42.9	31.1	25.9		
West A 6th	13.9	37.7	51.6	33.6	14.8	11.6	Out Performed the State
State 6th	11.3	28.7	40.0	34.9	25.1		
West A 7th	5.4	21.2	26.6	50.0	23.4	-6.5	Performed Below State
State 7th	9.5	23.6	33.1	33.4	33.5		
West A 8th	8.0	25.2	33.2	36.4	30.4	3.3	Out Performed the State
State 8th	7.9	22.0	29.9	32.6	37.5		

2015 Keystone Exams	% Advanced	% Proficient	Combined %P/A	% Basic	% Below Basic	West A - State Overall Attainment	How did we Compare
Algebra 7	35.7	47.6	83.3	16.7	0		
Algebra 8	12.2	46.9	59.1	40.8	0		
Algebra 9	1.4	26.8	28.2	56.3	15.5		
West A Algebra	11.9	36.9	48.8	39.8	11.4	-1.9	Performed Below State
State Algebra	21.3	29.4	50.7	35.1	14.3		
West A Biology Grade 9	32.3	38	70.3	19.4	10.3	11.6	Out Performed the State
State Biology	28.3	30.4	58.7	22.1	19.1		
West Lit Grade 10	11.2	64.5	75.7	21	3.3	7.7	Out Performed the State
State Lit 10	9.7	58.3	68	22.8	9.2		

Although we did experience a decline, it is imperative that lower scores are not viewed as a student, teacher and/or school failure. Our students and teachers are defined by much more than one test score, particularly in the year that the test became considerably more difficult. Although we did experience lower proficiency than in previous years, our data has both good news as well as urgent news, as indicated below.

### Good news:

1. In 11 out of 12 tested areas, we scored higher in performance/attainment than the state average.
2. In three out of six math tested areas, our proficiency rate was more than 10 percentage points higher than the PA State proficiency average.
3. In five out of six ELA tested areas, our proficiency rate was more than 10 percentage points higher than the PA State proficiency average.
4. In ELA, our sixth grade students in 2014 demonstrated increased proficiency rates in seventh grade on the spring 2015 assessment, going from 75 percent proficiency in 2014 to 76.9 percent proficiency in spring 2015. This cohort had no proficiency loss on a much harder assessment. The state cohort dropped in proficiency, going from 64 percent to 59 percent.
5. The focus on literacy in the District last year minimized proficiency loss.
6. In Keystone Literature and Keystone Biology, we outperformed the state average for first-time pass rates.

### Urgent News:

1. Our math proficiency rates across all tested grades 3-8 are not where we would like them.
2. Seventh grade math achievement was lower than the state average.
3. Our Algebra Keystone Exam first-time pass rates in ninth grade are below the state average, at only 23 percent of first-time test takers passing after taking algebra in ninth grade.
4. Our overall District algebra first-time pass rate, including seventh, eighth and ninth grade, is also below the state average.

Our math data supports the academic modifications we put into place, including a new kindergarten through eighth grade mathematics program and dedicating two instructional periods to math. Increasing the amount of time spent on mathematics instruction resulted in the District hiring three new mathematics teachers at the middle school and a part-time math teacher at the high school. Modifications, including extended time on mathematics, have also been made to support increased algebra proficiency among students taking the Algebra Keystone Exam for the first time. At the elementary schools, most grades two through five now have two teachers per section, one focused on English language arts and another focused on mathematics and science. Having two teachers allows each to become a specialist in their area and affords the District more focused professional learning. By supporting our teachers with appropriately aligned materials and added instructional time, students across all grade levels will benefit from these academic advancements.



As the Pennsylvania Department of Education prepares to release the official PSSA results, I wanted to share information from a letter I received from Pennsylvania Education Secretary Pedro A. Rivera, in which he wrote: "It is important to note that these anticipated results represent a snapshot in time of student progress on a more rigorous assessment. The PA Core standards that were adopted in 2013 set the bar high, purposefully, in order to better prepare our students to be college and career ready when they graduate, and be successful in the 21st century work force. Our students haven't changed, but the assessment has."

Further, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf recently announced that the state will not use the 2015 PSSA scores to calculate the School Performance Profile (SPP) and the newly implemented teacher effectiveness ratings.

"Fixing our schools is my top priority, and part of improvement is having fair and consistent accountability standards," Governor Wolf said. "We must prepare students to be college and career ready in the 21st century, and we need accountability measures that ensure we are on track to do so, but we cannot over burden our students and teachers with measures that do not fairly account for performance or improvement."

In closing, we are using our spring 2015 assessment results to establish a new baseline for the District, aligned to the new more rigorous standards. West Allegheny is not alone, as almost every school district in the commonwealth realized similar or even more dramatic declines. We will continue to assess individual student mastery of essential concepts, content and skills. We will also continue assessing the degree of our academic programming and assessment system as it aligns to more rigorous standards. Our teachers and administrators began working aggressively last school year with leading national experts to align instructional practices and programs to the new PA Core Standards. We made academic programming modifications for this school year, including the addition of full-day kindergarten, required summer reading, added time spent on math instruction in grades 6-10 with associated hiring and staffing changes, adoption of new instructional resources in K-8 math and K-12 English language arts, and refining our assessment system. Although we began the work last school year, it takes several years to effectively align academic programs and curricula to the new standards and associated assessments. As we make necessary programmatic changes, it is common and expected to experience bumps in the road along the way. It is important that parents communicate any concerns as we transition to more rigorous expectations.

Rest assured, we are on the right track and taking the correct steps to support student success with the goal of having every West Allegheny student ready for college and/or a career by the time they graduate.



*Dr. Jerrí Lynn Lippert,*  
**Superintendent**

Please visit the Pennsylvania Department of Education website to learn more about the PSSAs.

<http://www.education.pa.gov/Pages/PSSA-Information.aspx#.VgLc29F0zug>

## Foundation Grants 2015-2016

The West Allegheny Foundation Grants for Teachers program awarded 10 grants totaling over \$8,300 for the following innovative educational projects, which will be implemented during the 2015-2016 school year:

**Freshman Transition Pilot Program (High School):** This program was designed to ease the transition from middle school to high school and to support ninth grade students as they navigate crucial decisions that will determine their future success. The grant will provide students with The Work Smart-Academic Planner to assist them with setting tasks and scheduling priorities.

**Project Greenhouse (High School):** This project has a dual purpose in that it will allow over 300 biology students to plant and grow seedlings in a new greenhouse. The seedlings will be transplanted to the Wilson community garden, where harvested vegetables will be donated to community food pantries.

**Video Production Studio (Middle School):** In an effort to incorporate technology into the classroom, the middle school will create a video production studio. This addition will allow students and teachers to produce parent and student tutorials.

**Everyone WINS (Donaldson, McKee and Wilson):** Starting in the 2015-2016 school year, newly created WIN (What I Need) periods will be implemented in grades 1-5. This intervention program will be strategically targeted to individual needs of students. The grant could potentially provide software,

## High school teacher named recipient of Math Hero Award

High school math teacher Colleen Barnes was recently selected as the recipient of a \$2,500 MathMovesU Math Hero Award sponsored by the Ratheon Company for her effective, innovative methods to promote student enthusiasm and achievement in math. In addition, West Allegheny High School will receive a \$2,500 matching grant to be applied toward math-related equipment and/or materials to enhance the math program at the school.

books, art supplies, apps and building materials in order to meet individual needs.

**STEM with Kinders (McKee):** Kindergarten teachers look to teach students to use hands-on, minds-on investigation of science in the world around them. Through the purchase of STEM Early Learning Kits, students will learn how to explore and naturally solve problems while learning how things grow, change and interact with their environments.

**Enhanced Student Engagement (McKee):** The focus of this project is to provide multi-sensory materials that will be used to stimulate young learners enrolled in the District's full-day kindergarten program. Supporting these students through a variety of learning tools will engage them physically, mentally and socially.

**Supplemental Elementary Math Centers (Donaldson):** To supplement classroom mathematics lessons that align to the PA Core Standards, the securing of math blocks, tiles and fraction cubes will provide valuable hands-on learning for students.

**Read-A-Thon (Wilson):** Through a kick-off assembly, students will learn about the Read-A-Thon and be encouraged to participate as an extension of the District's focus on literacy. The grant will be used to secure individual and group prizes for participation incentives.

**An additional three grants are pending that total over \$2,000.**

## District welcomes new teachers

Nine new staff members were welcomed to the District in August when they came together during the New Teacher Induction. In addition to meeting with their mentors, they were briefed on District goals, policies and classroom procedures.



The new staff members are: (front) Bonnie Sikorski, middle school; Lauren Petraglia, middle school; Christiana D'Agostino, elementary; Elizabeth McMullen, Wilson; Alyssa Roberts, middle school; (back) William Chersky, Wilson; Sam Taylor, middle school; Louis Didio, high school; and Emily Hoffmann, McKee.

## West Allegheny High School Band: The Band's Big Break



By Student Writer Sarah Behr

For years, the West Allegheny concert band and Marching Pride have spent serious time working to increase participation. Just two years ago, the concert band stood at 115 students, with only 75 students in the Marching Pride. Band director T.J. Fox encouraged students to join the band in an attempt to increase the head count. The combined hard work of students and their band director has since paid off, with a huge influx of students joining. There are currently 150 students enrolled in music classes throughout the day, with 105 of those students in the Marching Pride. It is important to note that the Marching Pride only had 59 members in 2009.

For the Marching Pride alone, the increase of members is a huge accomplishment. In the past, the Marching Pride was a competition band. They would participate in weekend competitions, weeks of practice over the summer and several after school practices. In response to time constraints and participation numbers, the band decided to stop competing. This change in time commitment, geared toward making the band appealing to athletes and busy students, made the Marching Pride more available to a larger audience. After many years of work to bring the Marching Pride's numbers up, the elusive membership total of 100 has finally been broken.

An increase in the Marching Pride's numbers would not have been possible had it not been for the leap forward the concert band has made. The band makes an effort to appeal to the musical side of any student, offering a huge variety of instruments to learn and skills that will help the student succeed after high school. Fox now spends his full day at the high school, with three periods of band class and two of jazz studies, including a jazz choir. Remaining periods are spent working with students in small groups and allowing band students to spend their study halls practicing and receiving help on their instruments. Band members may also utilize one of these periods as an independent study, where they can receive more in depth training and learn more about what music has to offer in their future.

As the band grows, so do feelings of accomplishment among its current members and director. In two short years, 35 students have joined the band program and 30 students have joined the Marching Pride. It is no small feat to expand the band by such a large margin in a small period of time, let alone keep these students engaged and interested in their learning over a four year span. Working together with their peers, students can expect a continued rise in participation over the years to come.

This year's Marching Pride show theme is titled "Music Royalty," with such musical selections as "Jailhouse Rock," "Crazy Train," "Respect," "Michael Jackson Medley" and "Can't Help Falling In Love." Drum majors are seniors Allison Banas, Hunter Evans and Sarah Steward.

## Art club travels to Europe

It was a summer to remember for 33 West Allegheny High School students who traveled to Europe June 18-27 with the art club. With stops in London, Paris and Rome, students and their chaperones visited such favorites as Buckingham Palace, the London Eye, Tower Bridge, Notre Dame Cathedral, Eiffel Tower, the Coliseum, the Vatican and several notable art museums.

"Europe was an unforgettable experience that I will carry with me for the rest of my life," said senior Emily Nolan. "If you ever go there, expect your perspective to change."

Chaperones included teachers Mike Short, Brandie Short, Leah Shuck, Debbie Hamilton and Claire March.

"This is literally an experience of a life time," added high school art teacher Mike Short. "The knowledge and culture that the kids learn from an opportunity such as this is unparalleled. We as teachers have the opportunity to bring what we teach in the classroom to life by visiting places such as the Louvre or even the Vatican...it is simply awesome!"

The art club has plans to return to Europe in June of 2017 and will travel to Athens, Rome and Florence.



Students point out a graffiti hand while on a street art tour in London.



The group takes a break from sightseeing to pose for a photo in Paris.

## Book Bus rolls into neighborhoods

Over the summer months, the Book Bus began visiting neighborhoods across the West Allegheny community. A Western Allegheny Community Library early literacy outreach specialist and librarians, as well as a host of volunteers, were excited to welcome both children and adults. They enjoyed the opportunity to read to children, complete early literacy activities and circulate books.

### Book Bus by the Numbers

Throughout the summer months the Book Bus:



Had  
724  
Visitors

Made  
36  
Neighborhood  
Stops

Circulated  
423  
Books

### Fall 2015 Book Bus Schedule

#### FINDLAY ACTIVITY CENTER

Tuesday, October 13 & 27,  
November 10 & 24, December 8  
Bus open 10 a.m.—noon  
Program at 10:30 a.m.

#### OAKDALE ACTIVITY CENTER

Tuesday, October 13 & 27, November 10 &  
24, December 8  
Bus open 1—3 p.m.  
Program at 1:30 p.m.

#### NORTH FAYETTE ACTIVITY CENTER

Tuesday, October 6 & 20, November 3 & 17, December 1 & 15  
Bus open 10 a.m.—noon  
Program at 10:30 a.m.

#### VIRGINIA HILLS COMMUNITY CENTER

Tuesday, October 6 & 20, November 3 & 17, December 1 & 15  
Bus open 1—3 p.m.  
Program at 1:30 p.m.

Visits will also be made to local preschools through December. Families are welcome to stop and visit!

The Book Bus is provided thanks to a partnership with West Allegheny School District, the Western Allegheny Community Library and Monark Student Transportation Corporation, along with the generosity of community support.



## Peer mediators reach out to classmates

A group of West Allegheny Middle School eighth-graders were trained as peer mediators on August 4 and 5. Students were selected to receive training in conflict resolution to help solve minor problems between their peers. The two-day training focused on feelings, listening skills, body language, perspective, questioning, reflecting, brainstorming and confidentiality. The 34 participating students passed a test and were sworn into the program by District Judge Anthony Saveikis.

Peer mediators assisted on the first day of school by welcoming sixth-graders, answering questions and showing them how to buy their lunch. Throughout the year, trainees will also apply what they learned as conflicts arise. They will meet with both parties involved and work toward a peaceful, mutually agreeable solution.

The program is coordinated by Jeff Kiser, middle school guidance counselor, with the assistance of Anita Berich, Valerie Meehan, Gabrielle Monti and Pearl Hellmann.



Peer mediators are sworn in by District Judge Anthony Saveikis at a ceremony August 5.

CALL THE NEWSLINE  
724-695-5205

FOR WEEKLY EVENTS, SCHOOL CLOSINGS, AND DELAYS.

VISIT WEST ALLEGHENY ONLINE:

WWW.WESTASD.ORG



All material has been prepared, written, or edited by Karen Ruhl, School Community Relations Coordinator, West Allegheny School District (724) 695-5274

## WA College Fair Opens Doors

The West Allegheny High School guidance office hosted an in-house college fair for current juniors and seniors September 14. With 60 schools and a selection of military professionals on hand, students were encouraged to gather information, speak with admissions representatives and inquire about the admissions process, majors, housing, financial aid and athletic programs. For many students, this was an invaluable introduction to collegiate offerings and opportunities.

Students talk with admissions representatives from post-secondary schools at a college fair hosted by the District on September 14.



## Summer running program takes off

This summer's running program for incoming sixth-graders was organized by cross-country runners Tiara Dramble, Anastasia Kwiatkowski, Brandon Macasek and Jarrett Parker. Now in its 10th year, the program was designed to introduce students to running while building self-esteem and stamina. The practices started out slow, with participants getting to know each other during easy jogs. As the weeks progressed, so did runners' confidence and intensity.

The final challenge was to prepare the sixth-graders for a cross-country meet against Holy Trinity at Settler's Cabin Park.

"I was beyond proud of all of them seeing them finish the race," said Kwiatkowski, "you could see the improvement and the feeling of self-confidence as they all completed their first dual race."

Student coaches coordinated their efforts with cross country and track and field coach James Hamilton.



### WEST ALLEGHENY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Mr. Edward Faux, Vice President

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Elementary Principal

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of Athletics

# Parent Information Notice

## Services for Disabled Preschool Age Children

Act 212, the Early Intervention System Act, entitles all preschool age children with disabilities to appropriate early intervention services. Young children experiencing developmental delay or physical or mental disabilities are eligible for early entrance services. He or she is considered to have a developmental delay when difficulties exist in the areas of cognitive, communicative, physical social /emotional and self help development. Services for special needs children, below school age, who reside in suburban Allegheny County, are provided through two different systems linked by a transition process. Birth through age two programming is provided through the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare funding and is coordinated by the Alliance for Infants and Toddlers, Inc. Students who are three years old to entry age are serviced through the Pennsylvania Department of Education funding. This preschool program is presently coordinated by the Allegheny Intermediate Unit's Early Childhood and Family Support Services program, DART.

For more information, please contact the Alliance for Infants and Toddlers, Inc. at 412-885-6000 or the Allegheny Intermediate Unit/DART Program at 412-394-5736.

You may find information regarding the appropriate developmental milestone descriptors for infants and toddlers at the Center of Disease Control (CDC) website: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/ActEarly/default.htm>

## Services for School Age Exceptional Students

The school district provides a free, appropriate public education to exceptional students according to state and federal mandates. To be eligible, the child must be of school-age, need specially designed instruction, and meet eligibility criteria for mentally gifted and/or one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities as set forth in the Individual with Disabilities Education Act which was re-authorized in 1997 (IDEA -97) and the Chapter 14 Special Education Services and Programs State Regulations: Autism, Blindness/Visual Impairment, Deaf- Blindness, Deafness/Hearing Impairment, Emotional Disturbance, Intellectual Disability, Multiple Disability, Orthopedic Impaired, Other Health Impaired, Specific Learning Disability, Speech and Language Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury.

Identified students are provided with a continuum of services designed to meet the individual needs of eligible students. These services may include supportive intervention in the regular class, supplemental intervention in the regular class or in a special education resource program, placement in a part-time or full-time special education class in a regular school or placement in a full-time special education class outside of the regular school. The extent of special education services and the location for the delivery of such services are determined by the parents and staff at the IEP team meeting and is based on the student's identified needs and abilities, chronological age, and the intensity of the specified intervention. The school district also provides related services, such as transportation, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and counseling services that are required to enable the student to derive educational benefits.

Parents of public school students who suspect that their child is exceptional and in need of special education may request a multidisciplinary team evaluation of their child through a written request to the Building Principal or Director of Pupil Services. Please contact the Building Principal or Director of Pupil Services for the required form.

## Screening and Evaluation

The West Allegheny School District employs the following procedures for locating, identifying, and evaluating specified needs of school age students requiring special programs and services.

*Level 1: Review of group-based data*

*Level 2: Review of hearing, vision, motor, speech and language*

*Level 3: School Based Intervention Teams*

## The Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE)

The MDE is a process to gather information that will be used to find out if children really do need special education and if so, the types of services needed. Prior to an MDE, the District must obtain permission via the Permission to Evaluate form. Before an evaluation can occur, the form must be signed by the parent or legal guardian.

Evaluations are conducted by a certified school psychologist. Additional information is provided by the parents, classroom teacher, and other pertinent individuals who work with the student. All of this information is compiled into an Evaluation Report (ER). This report will recommend whether a child has one or more disabilities or mental giftedness. It also recommends whether or not the child requires special education and the type of program and services that the child needs. The ER may recommend that a child is not exceptional and therefore does not need special education services. If this is recommended, the report will list changes that may be made in the regular classroom to make the child more successful. All members of the MDT, including the parents, are entitled to review the ER.

Reevaluations for students, who are eligible for special education services, are compiled every three years or two years for students with intellectual disabilities or when requested by one or more members of the IEP team (please see information on Individualized Education Plan).

## Individualized Education Plan

Children who are regarded to be exceptional by the MDT team are entitled to receive special education services. The document that specifically addresses these services is called an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Required members of the IEP team include: The child's parents, At least one of your child's regular education teachers, At least one special education teacher, A representative from the school district who: (1) is qualified to provide or supervise special education programs (2) knows about the general curriculum (3) knows what resources the Local Education Agency (LEA) can offer, Someone who can interpret the evaluation results, who may already be a member of the team, at your request or that of the school, Other people who know your child well or who have worked with your child, Your child (at age 14 when planning will be done for life after graduation or any time before that age when you want your child to be present), or A representative from a vocational-technical school if a vocational- technical school is being considered for your child.

The IEP will review all of the evaluation material and will determine how your child is performing in school. The IEP team will write annual goals that can be measured and which meet the needs of your child.

IEPs for eligible students are developed on an annual basis, or sooner, if requested by one or more members of the IEP team.

# Parent Information Notice (cont.)

## Notice of Recommended Educational Placement

Once the IEP has been developed with the IEP team; you will receive a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP). The NOREP explains the placement or class recommended for your child and explains your rights. You must approve the NOREP in writing for your child's first special education placement if you want it to go into effect. You will receive a NOREP with each completed IEP and you have 10 calendar days to return the NOREP. In circumstances when this form is NOT completed parental consent is NOT required, the school will proceed after 10 calendar days.

West Allegheny School District offers a continuum of educational services designed to meet the needs of eligible students including varying degrees of gifted, learning, and speech and language support. In addition, related services such as transportation, occupational therapy, physical therapy, vision support, and deaf and hearing support are available to those students that qualify.

Detailed information regarding special education procedures may be obtained by calling the Special Education Department at 724-695-5221.

## Services for Protected Handicapped Students

There are instances in which students are identified as handicapped or disabled, but may not qualify for Special Education services. If it is determined necessary, the school district will provide these students, without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services or accommodations which are needed to ensure equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school programs and extracurricular activities. To qualify as a protected handicapped student, the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program. Services and protections for protected handicapped students are different from those applicable to all eligible students enrolled in special education programs. These services are outlined in a Chapter 15 Service Agreement. Questions regarding Chapter 15 should be directed to the Director of Pupil Services at 724-695-5221.

## Services for Students in Nonpublic Schools

Public special education is accessible to resident students attending nonpublic schools by permitting the nonpublic school student to enroll on a part-time, dual enrollment basis in a special education program operated in a public school. The student must have a multidisciplinary team evaluation completed and an Individual Education Plan must be developed with the public school; parents must sign a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement.

Parents of nonpublic school students who suspect that their child is exceptional and in need of special education may request a multidisciplinary team evaluation of their child through a written request to the district Director of Pupil Services.

## Public Notice on Student Records

The Education Records Plan for Exceptional Students is a state approved plan for the local school districts within the Allegheny Intermediate Unit which defines all procedures for collection, maintenance, and dissemination of educational records belonging to exceptional students. Education records are needed to provide appropriate educational programs, but at the same time it is necessary to protect the rights of privacy and confidentiality of students and parents.

Official student education records are kept where a student attends a district operated class. Copies of the District Education Records Plan may be obtained from your building principal.

## Confidentiality of Student Records

The privacy rights of parents and students are mandated by federal legislation known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Buckley Amendment), state regulations (Chapter 14 - Special Education Services and Programs, Chapter 12 - Student Rights and Responsibilities), and district policy.

The different categories of information maintained by the school district are as follows: educational and health records, personally identifiable information and directory information. With the exception of receiving school district, educational and health records, personally identifiable information cannot be disclosed or released without parental consent or adult student's (a student who is eighteen years of age or older, married or attending an institution of post secondary education) consent.

Information known as directory information can be released without consent. Directory information means information which would be considered not harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. This information includes the following: student's name, address, date and place of birth, courses taken, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student.

Written, parental or adult student request is required for the disclosure of educational and health records and personally identifiable information. The consent must specify the records that may be disclosed and the purpose of the disclosure; and identify the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made. A written record of the disclosure must be maintained by the school district.

Parent or adult students have the right to inspect and review the students' educational records within thirty (30) days of the date the district receives a written request for access. Parents of eligible students should submit to the building principal a written request that identifies the specific records they wish to inspect. Parents or adult students can seek to amend the student's educational record that is believed to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. The parent or eligible student in writing must clearly identify the parts of the record to be changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the district decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student will be notified of the decision and advise the individual of his/her right to a hearing regarding the requested amendment.

Parents or adult students have the right to file complaints concerning alleged failures of the district to comply with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Such complaints should be directed to the Health, Educational and Welfare Office, Washington, D. C. With regard to parents who do not understand English, the School District will attempt to inform them of their rights in their native language. Further information regarding the Policy of the Collection, Maintenance and Dissemination of Records is available through the principal's office.



# Pittsburgh Technical Institute

## Sen. Pat Toomey tours PTI's Energy Tech Building



Sen. Pat Toomey addresses an audience assembled for his visit to the Pittsburgh Technical Institute campus Aug. 3.

Sen. Pat Toomey visited the Pittsburgh Technical Institute campus in Oakdale on Aug. 3 to accept the Spirit of Enterprise Award from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The PTI Energy Tech Center formed the backdrop for the presentation. During Toomey's visit, representatives from both the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce toured the PTI campus, visited labs and met members of faculty and staff.

"Today, I visited the Pittsburgh Technical Institute to learn about the great work they are doing to train students for jobs in the energy industry," Toomey posted on his website. "We discussed the positive impact the energy industry is having on Pennsylvania. I was honored to receive the Spirit of Enterprise Award from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for my pro-jobs initiatives."

As an interested crowd of business executives looked on, Maggie Sheely of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce presented the Spirit of Enterprise Award to recognize Toomey's efforts to support American enterprise. Sheely extolled Toomey's record of

supporting business through legislation.

The event was organized by Bernadette Puzzuole, president of the Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce. Puzzuole was joined by Tommy Johnson, vice president of government affairs with Consol Energy, and PTI Executive Vice President George Pry in delivering remarks.

After welcoming guests and providing a brief college history, Pry acknowledged a grant PTI received from the Commonwealth to help construct the school's Energy Tech Building. Construction and outfitting of its labs was made possible by a combination of grant dollars and donations from regional companies.

Johnson stated that a skilled workforce is critically important and that the key to a talented workforce is public policy and its intersection with energy. He concluded by complimenting PTI on its tremendous facility.

Toomey also answered questions from the audience and explained his point of view on business and energy.



Maggie Sheely of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce presents Sen. Pat Toomey with the Spirit of Enterprise Award in the Emerson/ECI Oil and Gas Lab at Pittsburgh Technical Institute on Aug. 3. The award recognizes Toomey's efforts to support industry through legislation.



Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce President Bernadette Puzzuole addresses an audience assembled for Sen. Pat Toomey's visit Aug. 3. Puzzuole coordinated the senator's visit.



# MACARONI KID

As Seen Regularly On KDKA Pittsburgh Today Live

Entertain, Educate & Exhaust Your Kids

[robinson.macaronikid.com](http://robinson.macaronikid.com)

## Stay Healthy this Winter with the Findlay Township Activity Center!

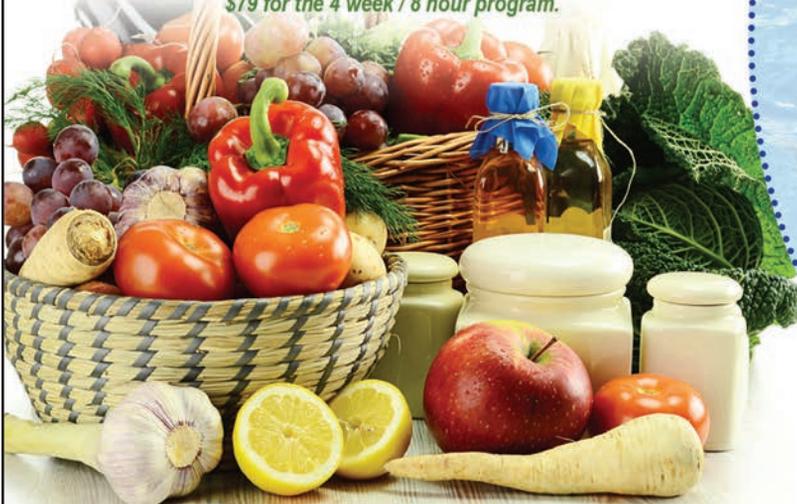
### Healthy Eating for Healthy Living

November 9, 16, 23, & 30, 7-9 p.m.

Do you ever feel like no matter what you do, you can't get control of your eating? Do you struggle to find the time to cook for you and your family? Are you confused by all the diets out there? Then this is the class for you! In this hands-on class series, Bill Orr & Jackie Damp, YMCA personal trainers, group exercise instructors and nutrition coaches, will teach you how to eat healthy for the rest of your life! We also do a healthy cooking demonstration to teach you how to make healthy, delicious dinners right at home. Class will include lectures, worksheets, handouts, and a healthy cooking demonstration. Participation in the class is encouraged.

**SIGN UP NOW AND GET IN CONTROL BEFORE THE HOLIDAYS!!!**

**\$79 for the 4 week / 8 hour program.**



### WATER AEROBICS

Mondays, October 12, 19 & 26, November 2, 9, 16, & 23,  
December 7 & 14 and January 11, 18 & 25

### AND INTRODUCING

### WATER ZUMBA

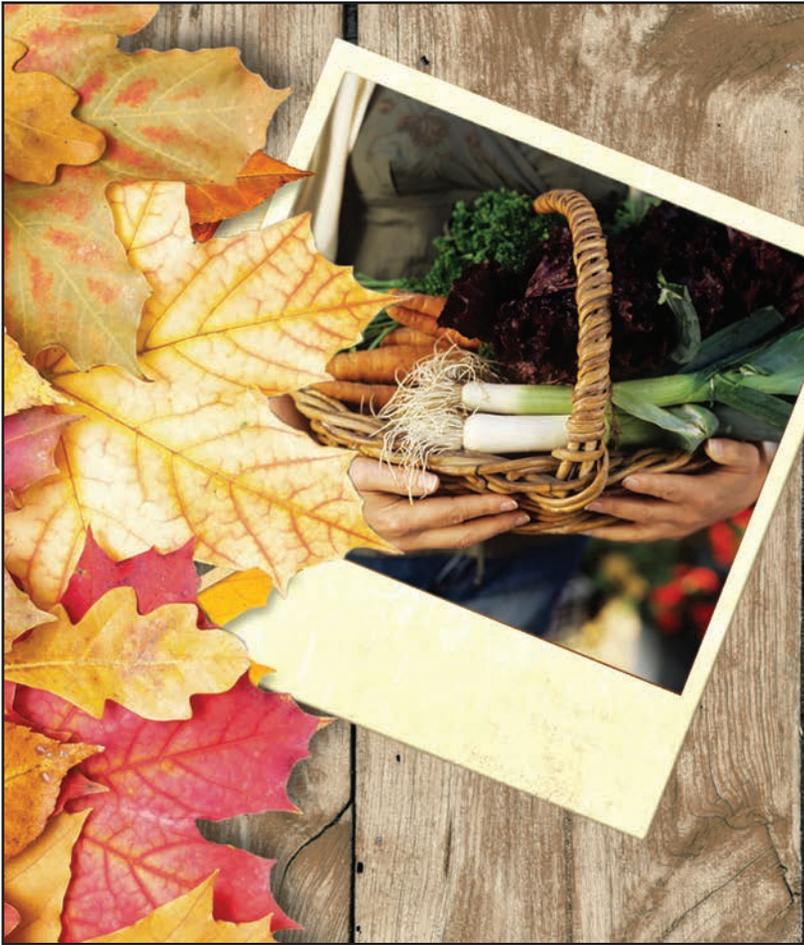
Wednesdays, October 14, 21 28, November 4, 11, & 18,  
December 2, 9 & 16 and January 13, 20 & 27

**All sessions from 6-7 p.m.; \$65 for 13 classes.**

Do you need to get started exercising or need a variation in your workout routine? Is inclement weather keeping you from outdoor activities? Then come and join us for water aerobics. Aquatic exercise is a fun way to exercise your heart and lungs while toning muscles. The water provides a great form of resistance with little impact on your muscle and skeletal systems. All levels of ability can benefit from this program. Preregistration required, payment due first class. There is a \$5 discount for attending both Monday & Wednesday classes. PLEASE NOTE: These classes are held at Wilson Elementary School. We follow the WA School District Schedule. In the event of inclement weather or any district school closings, we will not have class.

Call now and register!

Findlay also offers classes in PiYo, Senior Yoga and Qi Gong and "WALK Live," look for information on page 51.



West Allegheny Food Pantry and Thrift Store  
 520 Route 30  
 Imperial, Pennsylvania 15126  
 (724) 695-1305

We here at the West Allegheny Food Pantry would like to take a moment to thank everyone who contributes to the pantry. Whether you volunteer your time, donate products or provide financial aid, it is greatly appreciated. Your ongoing support is what enables the doors of the pantry to remain open and provide much-needed assistance to over 200 households in the West Allegheny community.

"Neighbors helping neighbors" is a basic and timeless concept that works.

Sincerely,

Linda A. Stoner and Tim Dpfermann

PITTSBURGH PRO PERFORMANCE CENTRE ANNOUNCES

"EXTREME GYMNASTICS"

WITH OUR NEW HEAD COACH ASHLEY SCHIFF!

Ashley is a local resident and a 2009 graduate of Robert Morris University. She has studied dance and gymnastics since the age of three and achieved many regional and national titles, including two-time World Talent from Lida Productions. She was an extremely versatile gymnast which lead her to break records in WPIAL and USA gymnastics, win back to back team championships, and achieve all-around state medals. Ashley is passionate about creating a program that the community can be proud of, not only for the students success in the gym, but also for their integrity and heart in all aspects of their life. Her combination of experience, passion, and the ability to connect with students will take Pittsburgh Pro's gymnastics program to the next level!

Photos by Ashley Faye Photography

Celebrating 15 years in North Fayette Township!

Now enrolling new students for our fall programs.

We offer Gymnastics, Tumbling, Acro, Cheer!  
 Other programs include a wide variety of Dance Classes, Zumba, Ballroom and Baton Twirling!

**Pittsburgh Pro Performance LLC**  
 7966A Steubenville Pike, Imperial Pa 15126  
 724-695-8890 | Pghprodance@gmail.com | Pittsburghproperformance.com

STORIES SUBMITTED BY PITTSBURGH TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

## PTI holds mock disaster drill



Harley Miller, a Pittsburgh Technical Institute criminal justice student from Hanover, prepares to place an evidence marker near a mock crime scene during a disaster drill held Aug. 26. PTI students worked with professionals from a variety of state and local law enforcement and emergency service departments and agencies during the drill. PHOTO BY CHRIS BOMBARDO

On Aug. 26, Pittsburgh Technical Institute faculty turned a serene setting at Raccoon Creek State Park into a mock disaster area, complete with actors wearing makeup lying bloodied and screaming in a grassy picnic area. With the help of criminal justice instructor Shannon Wintruba, who is also an award-winning makeup artist, the scene was constructed to look like the aftermath of a convenience store robbery. It was made to appear that, after escaping in a hijacked getaway car, two perpetrators had opened fire in a crowded park and taken off in different directions.

Criminal justice, practical nursing and ASN students were brought to the scene unaware of the situation they were about to confront. While nursing students evaluated victims, criminal justice students worked in groups to collect evidence, photograph scenes and interview victims and witnesses. The exercise provided

students with an intense, hands-on training session that tested their ability to respond to a real-world situation.

“It felt real,” says Caitlyn Williams, a criminal justice student at PTI. “I was afraid I wouldn’t remember what I was supposed to do. When we started processing the scene I got over it. It was really cool actually. My teacher said you’re going to see some gruesome things in the real world, but you’re going to have to hold yourself together.”

## PTI again named top workplace in region

For the fifth consecutive year, Pittsburgh Technical Institute has been named a Top Place to Work in the Pittsburgh region. The award was given by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette at an event held at the Fairmont Hotel on Aug. 26. To select the winners, the Post-Gazette retained Workplace Dynamics, a research firm, to conduct a study. Over 1,400 companies were invited to participate. PTI was one of 25 mid-sized companies to be selected for the award, which is based in part on a survey among employees evaluating leadership, values and other company attributes.

## Early admissions deadline approaching

Early admissions to Pittsburgh Technical Institute for the class of 2016 ends Nov. 20. High school seniors who apply for admission and submit their transcript release form, tuition deposit, and, if their program requires one, their background check, earn a \$500 early admissions grant. They are also eligible to compete for one of three \$3,000 early admissions scholarships by submitting an essay at: [www.pti.edu/earlyadmissions](http://www.pti.edu/earlyadmissions).

**SNPJ LODGE 106**

**THE CHRISTIAN BECK BAND**

Live in Concert!  
Saturday, November 14, 2015  
7:30 – 11:30 p.m.

Advance Tickets Only \$8 <small>Tickets purchased by 11/13/15 in the Lodge 106 Clubroom</small>	Admission at the door \$10	Food Buffet Only \$10 +tax
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Imperial Room at SNPJ Lodge 106  
255 West Allegheny Road • Imperial, PA • 15126  
724-695-1411 • [www.snjimperialpa.com](http://www.snjimperialpa.com)

**Affordable Family Fun**  
Every Saturday Night  
April through September

**Auto racing in Imperial, PA**

Thanks for coming out in 2015, see you next year!

Log on to [www.ppms.com](http://www.ppms.com)  
for 2015 racing schedules and special offers!

**170 Kelso Road, Imperial, PA 15126.**  
**Noblestown Exit of Rt. 22**

**DIEHL OF ROBINSON**  
724-695-3363 or 0393

PHOTOS AND STORY  
BY DOUG HUGHEY



This desk sits in the archives room at the Walker-Ewing Log House in Oakdale. The house, which is usually only open four times a year to members of the Pioneers West Historical Society, was one of several in the area that welcomed visitors Sept. 19.

# First-ever Historical Log Homes Tour opens doors to rarely seen area cabins

Across western Allegheny County, there are a number of organizations dedicated to preserving historical log cabins. Three of those cabins are located in Oakdale, and a fourth in Imperial. Yet another is located in Robin Hill Park in Moon Township.

Representing hundreds of years of local history, the log homes are today used as meeting places and for educational programming. They are not, however, usually open to the public, or at least not all at once.

Bucking that trend, five organizations coordinated the first-ever Historical Log Homes Tour on Sept. 19. Five area historical log cabins opened their doors to anyone interested in exploring their interiors. Participating homes were the McAdow-McAdams Wilson Log House in Imperial, the Coventry Log Cabin in Moon Township, Killbuck Lodge in Oakdale, the Walker-Ewing-Glass Log House in Oakdale and the Walker-Ewing Log House, also in Oakdale.

Each of the log homes, aside from Coventry, date to the early 18th century. The Coventry Log Cabin in Moon Township dates back to 1825.

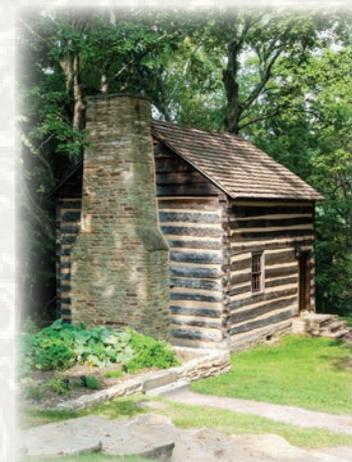
The only cabin that visitors couldn't actually enter was Killbuck Lodge in Oakdale, home of Boy Scout Troop 248. Visitors could however view the structure from across Clinton Creek, where Scouts served up apple tarts and apple cobbler made from a mixture of apples, sugar, cinnamon, ginger ale and cake batter in Dutch ovens.

The lodge is still in the process of being reconstructed, following a lengthy rebuilding project that got a leg up earlier this year when it became the subject of a "Barnwood Builders" episode. Cast members from the show helped erect new walls using logs from the original structure and from another cabin built around the same time period. Local businesses and organizations have also pitched in to help with everything from building a new foundation to drafting blueprints to lending equipment.

Originally constructed in the 1700s, the cabin was moved from the Robb Farm in Oakdale to its current location in 1932 by horse-drawn carriage. The property was owned by American Legion Post 171, until a decade ago, when the post sold it to the nonprofit Friends of Killbuck Lodge for \$1. The nonprofit was formed to maintain the property with the intent that it be used for scouting.

Despite recently reconstructing a new roof, and acquiring roofing materials, help is needed to install a new tin roof and gutters, as well as chinking, running electrical lines, installing custom windows and more. Due to reconstruction, the troop is also unable to hold its annual haunted cabin fundraiser. It is therefore holding alternative fundraisers throughout the community.

To make a donation, and keep up to date on what's still needed, visit: <https://www.gofundme.com/r2t77g>.



The Walker-Ewing-Glass Log House (pictured above) at the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden was open for the first time since renovations Sept. 19.

Though visitors to the lodge were unable to tour it, they were able to witness volunteers hoisting an 800-pound squared log onto the lodge's new front deck by hand.

Driving out of Oakdale toward Collier Township, curiosity seekers were able to tour two cabins once owned by descendants of the same family. While the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden opened the doors to its Walker-Ewing-Glass Log House, the Pioneers

Volunteers helped welcome visitors to area log homes on Sept. 19. Pictured below are Jerry Andres and Cathy Scott at the Walker-Ewing Log House and Charlie Brown (at right) at the Walker-Ewing-Glass Log House. Also pictured at right is Cole Cochran, 9, of Collier Township.



over \$700,000 to repair. The new structure was built to mimic the original.

Since acquiring the property from Allegheny County in 2013, the PBG has been working to restore the remaining Walker-Ewing-Glass Log House on the garden's property. Vagley says the house was in good shape for its age when PBG acquired the property, but that the garden has rehabilitated it with new perma-chink chinking, HVAC, fixtures, air conditioning, refurbished flooring, a new door and threshold, new roof, new windows where needed, and more.

As the PBG opened the doors to the home on Sept. 19, PBG education manager Amanda Joy says it marked the first time that the home had been opened to the public since the work started. Joy says the PBG is planning programming to use the home as an education resource for children.

"We're working on a field trip program for children pre-K through third grade," she says. "It will be based on pretend. They'll pretend to be early settlers from the area. They'll also pretend to be worms and plants."

On Sept. 19, visitors were able to get hands-on with pioneering activities with period re-enactor Leah Schram and learn about paw paws from PBG volunteer presenter Jay Brooks. A large fruit with the consistency of a mango and taste of a banana, paw paws are indigenous to the area, and Brooks says cultivators would toss an animal carcass under paw paw trees so that carrion flies would pollinate its flowers. The fruit has been largely forgotten, thanks in part to the

popularity of apple trees brought from Europe.

About a mile away, members of the Pioneers West Historical Society donned period clothing and welcomed guests into the Walker-Ewing Log House on Noblestown Road. Wrapped around a unique, triangular herringbone pattern fireplace, the 253-year-old home retains its historical charm but not many signs of aging. Continuously occupied by family descendants until 1972, the home for a time fell under the ownership of the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation. Historical society president and Walker-

Ewing descendent Amy Lawrence says that Walker-Ewing descendent Jane R. Grace reacquired the property and deeded it to the historical society in 1998. Historical society archivist Jerry Andres says that some structural and cosmetic work was recently completed. With chunky dark wood beams, floorboards textured by large natural knots and dramatic track lighting, the home has become something of a showpiece.

"Everyone always says, 'I can't believe how beautiful it is in here,'" says Lawrence. "It would be nice to open it up to the public more."

For now, visitation of the log home is limited to the historical society's quarterly meetings, which Lawrence says take place on the third Saturdays of March, May, September and November. Membership is \$5 per year. She says anyone with an interest in



Theresa Locke and Amy Lawrence (left) donned period clothing while welcoming guests to the Walker-Ewing Log House on Sept. 19 while Jay Brooks (above) talked about paw paws (at right) at the Walker-Ewing-Glass Log House.



West Historical Society opened the doors to its Walker-Ewing Log House. Both homes sit on land once owned by brothers Gabriel and Isaac Walker, who were awarded the property in a land grant for service in the Revolutionary War. A frame house built in 1855 also sat on the property until 2014, when it was demolished and the foundation reused to construct PBG offices. Kitty Vagley, PBG director of development, says that house would have cost

the history of the area is welcome, but that many members are descendants of the Walker-Ewing family. One member, Lawrence says, is a descendent of one of three Walker children who were abducted from the property by Native Americans in September of 1782 and later recovered in Canada.

In addition to serving as a meetinghouse, the home also houses an archives room on the second floor. It contains the original 1817 partnership land grant for the property and a blueprint sketch completed by Carnegie Mellon University students of the former 1855 house on PBG Property, among other records and objects.

Driving back to Imperial, visitors on the log home tour could get an inside look at another area landmark: the McAdow-McAdams Log House. Built in 1774, the log home sits at the



**ABOVE:** Members of Boy Scout Troop 248 in Oakdale welcomed visitors to Killbuck Lodge, which is still undergoing reconstruction, on Sept. 19. They are (top row) Nathan Moretti, Eric Diffendal, Noah Magdich, (bottom row) Alex Kot, Brett Kot, Ethan Cooper and Kyle Magdich.

**RIGHT:** Boy Scouts Kyle Magdich and Ethan Cooper serve up apple tarts across Clinton Creek from Killbuck Lodge.

**BELOW:** The McAdow-McAdams Log House on Bruno Lane was open to visitors on Sept. 19.



bottom of Bruno Lane leading up to Wilson Elementary School, at the intersection of Boggs Road. Many local elementary students are already familiar with the house, as in November of 1986 it was donated to the school and is now used as a historic learning center.



**ABOVE:** Coventry Log Cabin in Robin Hill Park was also open to the public Sept. 19.

The home gets its name from John McAdow, who built the home, David McAdams, who later purchased it, and A.D. Wilson, a former West Allegheny School District superintendent.

Wilson Elementary School principal Chris Shattuck estimates that about 45 to 50 people visited the home Sept. 19. He says some came from as far as Mt. Lebanon and Tionesta.

“I learned an amazing amount from the people coming through,” says Shattuck. “There were a real mix of people who came out who really understand history.”

Visitors were also able to visit the Wilson community garden. Started by retired Wilson principal Kathy Sites, the garden produces vegetables that are donated to the West Allegheny Food Pantry. Shattuck says the garden is completely self-sufficient, thanks to help from volunteers, students, donations and



fundraisers, including a yearly pumpkin sale coordinated by local resident Kim Bailey.

Shattuck says that since 1986, when the home went through a major restoration project, that maintenance has included regular upkeep but nothing significant. Over the summer, “Barnwood Builders” cast members visited the log home during work on Killbuck Lodge and discussed the differences between the two log homes.

The school hosts an open house day annually but hasn’t set a date yet

for this coming year yet.

Though nothing has officially been planned, hopes are to hold another log cabin tour again next year.

“The Pioneers West people really did a good job of putting this together,” says Matt Cochran, president of Killbuck Lodge. “This is going to be as big as the Covered Bridge Festival [in Washington County].”

For more on the Pioneers West Historical Society, visit [www.PioneersWestHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.PioneersWestHistoricalSociety.org), or call (412) 559-4245. For more on the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden, visit [pittsburghbotanicgarden.org](http://pittsburghbotanicgarden.org) or call (412) 444-4464

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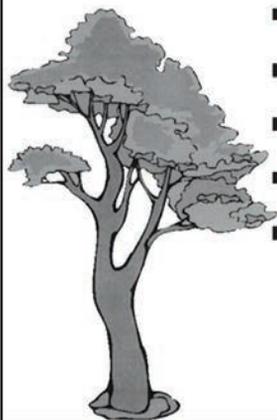
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**West Allegheny School District**, p. 33, 724.695.3422, www.westasd.org  
**West Allegheny Workcamp 2015**, p. 24, www.HeroesSupportingHeroes.org

**How to Promote Your Business through Networking, Wednesdays, 7:15 a.m.,** Eat'n Park on Rt. 60, with the Greater Pittsburgh Business Connection, a referral group of business professionals, (412) 364-6446 x 302, www.gpbc-pgh.org.

**Greater Pittsburgh Football Officials Association Seeking New Officials,** GPFSA 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 except July and August, **2:30-4:30 p.m.,** King's Restaurant, Imperial, (724) 796-1603.

**No Veteran Dies Alone,** volunteers needed for program providing companionship and assistance to veterans entering the final stages of life, Deborah Goral, deborah.goral@va.gov.

**Montours Presbyterian Church Spaghetti Dinner and Bake Sale, Oct. 24, 4:30-6:30 p.m.,** spaghetti, homemade meat sauce, tossed salad, Mancini's bread, dessert, beverages (coffee, tea, soda, water), \$8 adults, \$4 children under 12, children under 4 free, take-outs, tickets at door, Chinese Auction, pie sale, drop-off without steps behind church, (412) 787-1050.

**Trunk and Treat, Oct. 25,** Union Church, **4-6 p.m.,** all ages, cars decorated with themes and filled with candy, free event, (412) 787-1818.

**Vera Bradley Purse Bingo, Nov. 1,** Holy Trinity School cafeteria, doors open **1 p.m.** for lunch and large Chinese auction, games begin **2 p.m.,** raises funds to help children participate in afterschool programs, summer camp and recreational activities, \$25 per ticket if purchased before **Oct. 26,** \$35 at door, (412) 787-9622.

**Unique Boutique, Nov. 14, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.,** Edgeworth Club in Sewickley, presented by Heritage Valley Sewickley Foundation, benefits HVHS Community Health Services High Risk Pregnancy program, \$10 admission, \$35 with lunch, (412) 749-7121, foundation@hvhs.org.

**Christmas Craft Show,** Holy Trinity School Building, **Nov. 14, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.,** 100 crafters, lunch available, handicapped accessible, tables available, (412) 787-1822.

**Holiday Craft Show, Nov. 15,** Bishop Canevin High School, **10 a.m.-3 p.m.,** handmade-only gifts by 170+ crafters, lunch and baked goods, gift auction, 50/50, "Crafts with Katie" for children, free shuttle service from St. Paul's Seminary, proceeds benefit Bishop Canevin, Vera, (412) 922-7400 x 224.

**Burn the Bird Charity Bootcamp, Nov. 26, 9-10 a.m.,** FASTER Fitness and Sports Training in Robinson Township, benefits the Will Allen Foundation, donation only, (412) 489-6036, www.performfaster.com.

**The Nutcracker Ballet, Dec. 4-6, 11-13,** Carnegie Performing Arts Center, **Fridays and Saturdays 8 p.m., Sundays 2 p.m.,** \$12 children and seniors, \$15 adults, (412) 279-8887, www.carnegieperformingartscenter.com.

**Third Annual Polar Express Pajama Party, Dec. 5, 6 p.m.,** West Allegheny High School, wear pajamas for this viewing of the film "Polar Express," shop local vendors, sip hot chocolate, eat cookies, visit with Santa, \$4 children, \$6 adults, space limited, polarexpress\_RSVP@yahoo.com.

**Moon Township Garden Club Greens and Things 2015 Holiday Sale,** Robin Hill Park, **Dec. 5, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.,** centerpieces, wreaths, swags, seasonal treasures, fun things for the home and gift giving, register for free holiday doorprize.

**Heritage Public Library** 52 Fourth St. in McDonald (724) 926-8400 heritagelibrary@comcast.net www.washlibs.org/heritage

**Fit Club, Oct. 13, 19, 26.**

**Library Board Meeting,** second Wednesdays, **6:30-8 p.m.**

**Fall Story Time, Oct. 16-Nov. 20, Fridays, 10:30-11:30 a.m.,** registration required.

**Book Discussion Group,** second Tuesdays, **1 p.m., November,** "The Fault in Our Stars" by John Green, **December,**

"Christmas at the Mysterious Bookshop" by Otto Penzler.

**Friends Group meeting, Oct. 21, 11 a.m.-noon.**

**Jacob Ferree Chapter DAR Events**

Reservations can be made by contacting Bonnie Kappert at (412) 771-7526 or at [kkandcompany@msn.com](mailto:kkandcompany@msn.com).

**Chapter Service/Social Meeting, Nov. 7,** Union Presbyterian Church in McKees Rocks, **11 a.m.,** free event, Norene Beatty talks about Pittsburgh's Old Stone Tavern, bring a favorite covered dish, salad or dessert, tableware and beverages provided, reserve by **Nov. 3.**

**Sounds of the Season, Dec. 12,** Montour Heights Country Club, **11 a.m.,** \$21 lunch, celebrate the season and enjoy lunch while listening to the beautiful music of Christmas, guests welcome, reserve by **Dec. 7.**

**North Fayette Events**

For more information or to register for an event, call (412) 788-4888 or email [swalls@north-fayette.com](mailto:swalls@north-fayette.com), unless otherwise noted. Events are free to North Fayette residents.

**Live Well Wednesdays,** promote healthy living and a business, weekly opportunity to promote community wellness and businesses, visit [www.north-fayette.com](http://www.north-fayette.com) and click on "Live Well North Fayette" to become a Live Well partner.

**Fall Festival, Oct. 17, 5-7 p.m.,** costume party at 5 p.m., family fun, trunk or treat, pumpkin patch, hayrides, bonfire, more.

**Trick or Treat, Oct. 31, 6-8 p.m.**



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## North Fayette Parks and Recreation

For more information or to register for a program, contact Darlene Hildebrand at (724) 307-3725 or at dhildebrand@north-fayette.com, unless otherwise noted.

**Future Stars Flag Football**, Sundays, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Donaldson Community Park, ages 4-12, teaches children the basic skills and rules of football, following a couple weeks of skill drills that parents help out with participant's skill levels assessed and divided into teams of equal ability to play, \$45, coach Jeff Upton, (724) 747-8064.

**PIYO**, Tuesdays, 6-7 p.m., \$5/class, North Fayette Community Center, drop-ins welcome.

**CIZE**, Wednesdays, 6 p.m., cardio dance class for everyone, break down dance steps and build a routine by the end of the class, North Fayette Community Center, drop-ins welcome.

**Future Stars Basketball**, Saturdays, Nov. 7-Jan. 30, 9 a.m.-11 a.m., ages 4-6, North Fayette Community Center, check north-fayette.com for registration form.

**Afterschool Program**, ages K-8, 3:30-5:30 p.m., runs through conclusion of school year, variety of programs available that change throughout the year, homework help available 3-3:30 p.m. for middle school students three days per week, nkreutzman@north-fayette.com.

**The Learning Center at North Fayette**, North Fayette Community Center, structured preschool classes guided by a qualified teacher and teaching aide, enrolling now, 3- and 4-year-old programs, registration required.

## SNPJ Club

Events take place at SNPJ Lodge 106 and are open to the public unless otherwise indicated. Memberships available to the public at clubroom door. For more, (724) 695-1411, snpjimperialpa.com, imperialpoomsnpj.com.

**Bar Bingo**, for members and guests, **first and third Thursdays in November and December, second and fourth Thursdays otherwise**, early bird games start **6:30 p.m.**, regular games **7 p.m.**, play until **9 p.m.**, kitchen open.

**Children's Halloween Party**, Oct. 24, 1-3 p.m., Imperial Room.

**Adult Halloween Party**, Oct. 30, 8-10 p.m., come in costume to win great prizes, with DJ Kevin and karaoke, members only.

**George Suhon Duo**, clubroom, Nov. 7, 7:30-11:30 p.m., kitchen will be providing a wonderful menu of food items.

**Christian Beck Band**, live in concert, Nov. 14, 7:30-11:30 p.m., Imperial Room, up and coming country act from Freedom will perform live in concert, \$8 in advance before Nov. 13, \$10 at door, \$10 buffet.

**Children's Christmas Party**, Dec. 12, Imperial Room, 1-3 p.m., food, games, music, visit from Santa.

**Adult Christmas Party**, Dec. 19, food, prizes, entertainment, members only.

**New Year's Eve Party**, Imperial Room, 8 p.m.-1 a.m., \$35, purchase tickets in clubroom during business hours, entertainment by the George Suhon Duo, extensive buffet starting at 8 p.m., party favors and pork and sauerkraut at midnight, adults-only party, a block of rooms has been secured at the Wyndham Hotel for all party-goers, ask for reservation details when purchasing party tickets.

## Findlay Township Events

For more information or to register for an event, contact Darlene Larson at (724) 695-0500 or dlaron@findlaytpw.org, unless otherwise noted. Activities take place at the Findlay Township Activity Center unless otherwise noted.

### Halloween Events

**Pre-parade pizza party**, Oct. 31, 12-12:45 p.m., parade starts at 1:30 p.m., music, entertainment, puppets and friendly animals, \$2 per person, registration required.

**Halloween parade**, Oct. 31, 1:30 p.m., meet at the Findlay Township Activity Center in Imperial and march down Main Street to the Imperial Fire Hall for treats, all ages, prize drawings for those in costume only, tickets available upon arrival.

**Trick or Treat**, Oct. 31, 6-8 p.m.

**Kids' Cooking**, Dec. 3, Jan. 14, 4-5:15 p.m., grades K-5, hands-on class introduces participants to a variety of easy and delicious seasonal recipes that satisfy afterschool hunger pangs, payment taken class, register at least two days prior, \$8.

**Creative Cooking with Kids**, Nov. 12, 5 p.m., ages 4-12, teaches children with caregiver how to bond in the kitchen while making easy and tasty lunches, register by Nov. 9, \$5 per person.

**Healthy Eating for Healthy Living**, Nov. 9, 16, 23, 30, 7-9 p.m., includes lectures, worksheets, handouts, and a healthy cooking demonstration, participation encouraged, \$79 for the 4 week / 8 hour program.

**Time for Toddlers**, Mondays: Oct. 19, Nov. 9, 23, Dec. 7, 14; Tuesdays: Oct. 13, 20, Nov. 10, 24, Dec. 8, 15, hour of movement, music, activities and snack, great opportunity to meet other families and toddlers, adult must stay with child, registration required, \$3 per session.

**Walk Live**, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6-7 p.m., indoor walking program, \$5 per class, Donna, kuziofjr@gmail.com, or call recreation department.

**Senior Yoga and Qi Gong**, Oct. 15, 22, 29, 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m., gentle stretches performed from a chair or seated on ground, some standing, great for older adults, free for Findlay residents, \$4 nonresidents.

**PiYo**, Tuesdays, October 13, 20, 27, Nov. 3, 10, 17, 24, Dec. 1, 8, 15, Jan. 12, 19, 26, 7-8 p.m., hybrid workout between Pilates and yoga, low impact but high quality workout, bring yoga mat and a water bottle, walk-ins welcome, \$5 per class.

**Pickleball**, courts now open at Recreation and Sports Complex, cross between badminton, tennis and ping-pong, accessible to all ages and abilities, group play **Monday and Tuesday evenings, 7 p.m.**

**Next Steps in Digital Photography**, Nov. 10-Dec. 1, 6:30-9 p.m., \$99, Sherry, (724) 695-7947, remalysh@gmail.com.

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# On the Horizon

**Model Train Display, Nov. 28, 11 a.m.-6 p.m.**, Findlay Township Activity Center, train sets with scenes from winter, summer and spring, bake sale, raffle, auction, benefits Western Allegheny Food Pantry, hosted by Findlay Township Parks and Recreation, \$5 seniors, \$3 12 and under, \$12 per family.

**Semi-Super Morning Bingos, Oct. 16, Dec. 4**, doors open 9 a.m., bingo starts 10 a.m., \$10 per packet, \$5 additional packets, \$1 coverall jackpots, doblers available for purchase.

**Computer and appliance recycling, Oct. 24, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.**, Municipal Building, one television per car, computers, monitors, printers, scanners, laptops, non-Freon appliances (microwaves, washer, dryers, etc.), lead acid automobile batteries, cell phones, telephones, keyboards, mice, and radio equipment, \$15 fee for appliances with freon.

## Oakdale events

**Oakdale Trick or Treat, Oct. 31, 6-8 p.m.**

**Oakdale Hose Company Halloween Parade, Oct. 31, 5:30 p.m.**, lines up at Willow Creek Crossing near Panhandle Trail Parking Area at 5 p.m., prizes awarded for costumes, treat bags distributed to participants.

**Oakdale American Legion Post 171 New Year's Eve Gala, Dec. 31, 8:30 p.m.-1 a.m.**, over 21 only, Oakdale Community Center, buffet, DJ, BYOB, mixers provided, beer while it lasts, dinner at 9:30 p.m., \$25 per person, reservations required, Bob Mizwa (412) 693-9242, checks payable to: American Legion Post 171 and mail to Bob at: 219 Winslow Dr, Oakdale PA, 15071, full refunds for cancellations honored until Dec. 18.

## West Hills Symphonic Band

Concerts take place at West Allegheny High School unless otherwise noted.  
**Oct. 18, 3 p.m.**, "Horns of Plenty"  
**Dec. 13, 3 p.m.**, "Yule LOVE it!"  
**Feb. 28, 2016, 3 p.m.**, "The WHSB's Greatest Hits"  
**May 1, 2016, 3 p.m.**, "Spring Luster"  
**March 31, 2016, 8 p.m.**, Soldiers and Sailors Hall in Oakland, Association of Concert Bands Convention

## Raccoon Creek State Park

Call (724) 899-3611 or email paadams@pa.gov to register. Unless otherwise noted, activities start at Wildflower Interpretive Center on U.S. Route 30. Events are free unless otherwise noted.

**Fall Foliage Hike, Oct. 18, 2-3:30 p.m.**, one-mile guided hike to observe and learn about the transformation of deciduous trees.

**Haunted Night Paddle, Oct. 20, 7-8:30 p.m.**, spooky and educational night paddle around the lake, bring kayak or canoe, decorate or dress up Halloween, register by emailing shanemille@pa.gov by Oct. 18.

**Halloween Night Hike, Oct. 23, 7-8:30 p.m.**, venture along the darkened trails of the Wildflower Reserve, listen and strain to see creatures of the night, learn about nightlife in the park associated with Halloween, candy to be handed out at the historic Botany House and Hungerford Cabin, bring a flashlight, slow-paced hike a little over one mile in distance, no pets.

**Forest Trail Hike, Oct. 25, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.**, explore trails in the eastern section of the park; 4-6 mile hike can be physically challenging on hilly, wet, and sometimes rocky terrain; moderate hiking experience due to distance and terrain; dress appropriately for weather with proper hiking footwear; to register email Shane Miller at shanemille@pa.gov by Oct. 22.

**Trail Care Day, Oct. 31, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.**, help the park maintain a section of its over 44 miles of trails that are primarily maintained by volunteers, tools such as loppers and handsaws welcome, bring water and be prepared to hike approximately three miles.

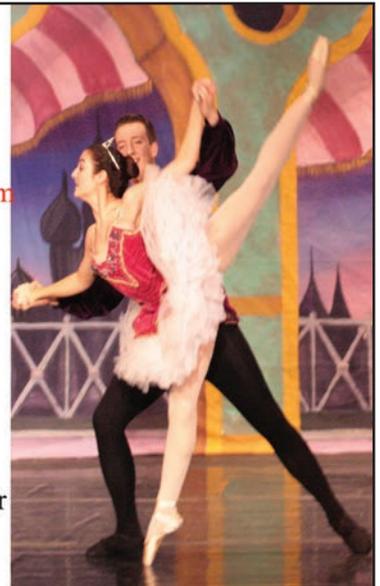
*The Nutcracker Ballet*  
 Carnegie Performing Arts Center  
 December 4,5,6  
 December 11,12,13  
 Fridays and Saturdays 8:00pm  
 Sundays - 2:00pm

Tickets \$12 for  
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 Performance Location  
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 Carnegie PA 15204

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# Community Connections

## MUNICIPALITIES

### Findlay Township

1271 Route 30, Clinton, PA 15026  
(724) 695-0500, www.findlay.pa.us

### North Fayette Township

400 North Branch Road, Oakdale, PA 15071  
(412) 788-4888, www.north-fayette.com

### Oakdale Borough

6115 Noblestown Road, Oakdale, PA 15071  
(724) 693-9740, www.oakdaleborough.com

### McDonald Borough

151 School Street, McDonald, PA 15057  
(724) 926-8711, www.mcdonaldboro.com

## PUBLIC & PRIVATE

### SCHOOLS K-12

#### West Allegheny

#### School District

600 Donaldson Road, Oakdale, PA 15071  
(724) 695-3422, www.westasd.org

#### Parkway West Career &

#### Technology Center

7101 Steubenville Pike, Oakdale, PA 15071  
(412) 923-1772, www.parkwaywest.org

This list includes only those public and private schools located within the municipalities served by the West Allegheny Edition of Allegheny West Magazine

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

**Al-Anon, West A area,** (412) 683-4279

**American Legion Post 171 Oakdale,**  
(724) 693-8759

**American Legion Post 335 Imperial,**  
(724) 695-0491

**Boy Scouts-Grtr. Pgh. Council-Frontier,**  
(412) 325-7971 or 7995

**Faith in Action,** (724) 921-0027

**Findlay Athletic Assn.,** (412) 874-9348

**Findlay Garden Club,** (724) 350-9837

**Girl Scouts WPA,** (724) 774-3553

**Heritage Public Library-McDonald,** (724) 926-8400

**Kiwanis Club of the Pittsburgh Airport Area,**  
PAAKiwanis@gmail.com

**Lions Club Imperial,** (724) 513-7616

**Masonic Lodge #669,** (724) 693-8274

**McDonald Area Redevelop. Assn.,** (724) 926-4617

**Meals on Wheels-W.A.,** (412) 279-5670

**Montour Run Watershed Assn.,** www.mrwa.info

**Montour Trail Council,** (412) 257-3011

**Montour Valley Grange,** (724) 695-0481

**Mothers of Preschoolers-**

**Crossroads,** (412) 494-9999

**Mothers of Preschoolers-Hebron,** (724) 899-2276

**North Fayette Athletic Assn.,** (412) 580-0655

**North Fayette Garden Club,** (724) 693-8413

**Oakdale Youth League,** (724) 693-8951

**Rotary - Parkway West,** (412) 787-5280

### Senior Citizen Groups:

- **Findlay Township,** (724) 695-0500

- **North Fayette Township,** (724) 693-3118

- **St. Columbille,** (724) 695-7325

- **SNPI Lodge 106,** (724) 695-1411

**Sturgeon Athletic Association,** (724) 926-2150

**The ROCK Community Center,** (724) 693-2777

**VFW Ladies Auxiliary,** (412) 788-4674

**VFW Post #7070 Oakdale,** (412) 427-9195

**VFW Post #7714 Imperial,** (724) 695-8866

**West Allegheny Food Pantry**

**& Thrift Shop,** (724) 695-1305

**West Allegheny Foundation,**

inquiries@wafoundation.org

**West Allegheny Friends to Enhance the Library**

**(WAFEL),** (724) 695-8150

**West Allegheny Ministerium,** (724) 693-8950

**West Allegheny Booster & PTA Groups,**

www.westasd.org

**Western Allegheny Community Library,**

(724) 695-8150

**West Allegheny Aqua Club,** (412) 608-4583

**West Allegheny Inline Hockey,** (412) 334-2640

**West Allegheny Youth Assn.,** www.westayouth.net

**West Allegheny Youth Soccer Assn.,**

(724) 693-8073

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## More good news about more good kids

Camp Electric drew 610 teens to Nashville, Tennessee in July. The teens came from all over the U.S., from the Caymen Islands, Alaska, Russia and even Imperial, Pennsylvania, where Gavin and Tessa Haggerty live. When they heard about Camp Electric, they knew they wanted to experience it.

Music is a passion for Gavin, age 15. He plays drums for a praise and worship team at Bible Chapel Church in Peters Township. He also plays backup for his younger sister, Tessa.

Music and dance are Tessa's passions. At age 12, she put her heart and soul into singing.

Toby Mac, a Christian hip-hop recording artist, songwriter and author, founded the camp in 2008. This year marks the camp's eighth. During the first week of camp in 2015, about 900 teens attended.

Mac and his many friends - including famous Christian music artists such as David Crowder and his band - donate their time and talents to inspire teens. Band members also volunteer and are a vital part of the camp's success.

Gavin says it was exciting having Mac come to his side as he was playing, both to watch his style and encourage him.

A drummer playing for recording artist Mandisa also came daily to encourage Gavin.

"We really got along well," Gavin says.

Mandisa has recorded four gospel and Christian albums since appearing on the television show "American Idol" in 2007.

The highlight of Tessa's camp experience came the final evening. Mac was performing and singing. Tessa was in the front row, singing along. Then Mac put the microphone in front of Tessa and the entire audience heard her sing "Steal My Show" with Mac.

For Tessa, another unforgettable experience came from spending time with a band member from the 7th Time Down Band. He came to the vocalist class every day. She sang, he inspired, assuring her she has "so much talent."

A walk around the camp during free time revealed jam sessions of teen musicians who have just met playing guitar, cello and violins while singing. Music has brought them together.

Enjoying the experience with Tessa and Gavin were their parents, Kathy and Kevin. Kathy loves to sing. Kevin plays guitar. The two volunteered to chaperone. As chaperones, they each had 12 teens to oversee. The family plans to return in 2016. They've invited other music-loving teens to join them. Kevin did not tell

the group he chaperoned that he works as a police officer and police Chaplain.

"Music in general has a powerful and spiritual impact on listeners," says Gavin. "Good or bad, I believe that God specifically created music to glorify him and his heavenly kingdom. That is what it should be about only. Being a musician, and a believer can change your whole outlook on music as far as how it should be used. It is our job to use our gifts and abilities

(music in general) to glorify our gracious and heavenly Father... Camp Electric really helped me get a great and clear insight on all the things mentioned in this paragraph. It was a great and amazing experience to see other believers my own age worshipping and praising our amazing God."

Tessa was left with a similar impression.

"You know how people say that music is 'food for the soul?'" she asks. "I think of it as strength for the mind. As Christians, we need a reminder of God's love for us and his holy word; and I think it is amazing how Christian

artists can capture that in the words of a song. One of my favorite songs is about the Crucifixion and the words are so powerful! I was amazed how someone could teach someone else a message through a song. I'd love to do that someday. To bless a person in need of a spark of hope! And maybe even lead them to Christ. Camp Electric made an impact on my life that I will never forget. From the alarm going off in the early morning to the tired, humid walk back to the dorms after an awesome concert, every moment there was filled with God. I feel very blessed to have gone there, met incredible people and made unforgettable memories that I can look back on and cherish for the rest of my life."

On Nov. 1, Tessa will be singing and Gavin playing drums during an 11 a.m. Sunday morning worship service at Montours Presbyterian Church at 3151 Montour Church Road in Oakdale. All are invited to come. A fellowship hour with refreshments and time to meet the Haggerty's will follow.



BY ERMA DODD  
NORTH FAYETTE  
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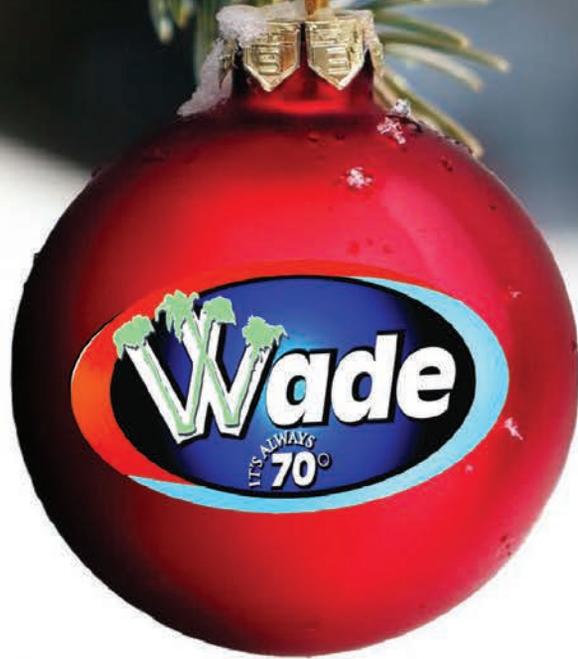


Gavin and Tessa Haggerty.



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