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WG football makes history

911th looks to future, and a changing mission

Road dedication recalls area aviation icon

WA teacher's novel explores her Greek heritage

Survivors with local roots help others

McDonald gets its holiday lights back



**West Allegheny
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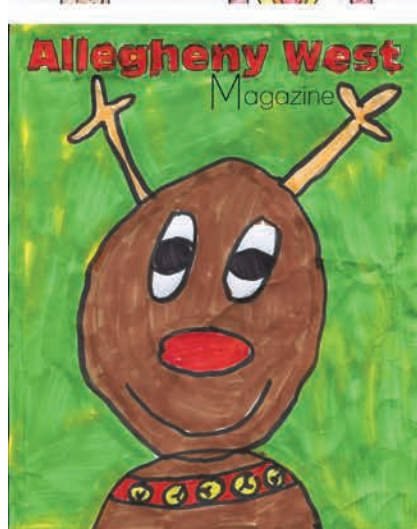
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For the second consecutive year, we asked West Allegheny elementary students in grades one through five to create the cover for our December edition. They did not disappoint. WA teachers helped select submissions from each grade and we chose our overall favorite for our cover. The artists who created these pieces of art are (starting at top left): grade 1: Emma Brule, Irena Santoro, Jaydn Brock; grade 2: Brinley Zakrzewski, Mila Harrison; grade 3: Aubrey Schwarz, Chase Buzza, Haley Trosky; grade 4: Aubrey Police, Ava Kosta, Breanna Ford, Marina Slutiak; grade 5: Eden Schotting and Eva Lutz.

From the Publisher

Dear Readers,

I'd like start this editor's note by thanking all the West Allegheny elementary students who participated in this year's holiday coloring and drawing contest. This was the second year that we held this contest and, once again, students did not disappoint. We opened this contest up to students in grades one through five and teachers helped pick the best selections from each grade. Our overall favorite is printed on this month's cover. The rest are printed at left.

Also in this holiday edition we're bringing you our 2016 Holiday Season Guide, starting on page 37. In this guide, we list area holiday-related events, including light-up nights, breakfasts with Santa and more. Check it out and mark these dates on your calendar. Then flip to page 6 and read about the latest album from area musician Dan Hanczar, and how it's helped a familiar cause. On page 8, we check out WA teacher Rita Wilson's new book about her Greek heritage, and on page 10, we profile two people who survived life-threatening diseases and are now looking to help others. On page 11, we cover a recent road dedication that recalled an area aviation icon. Be sure to read the latest WA school news starting on page 27. Look for our next edition in February. Until then, I hope you have an enjoyable holiday season.



Doug Hughey, Publisher/Editor

Allegheny West Magazine

P. O. Box 220, McDonald, PA 15057
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PUBLISHER AND EDITOR

Doug Hughey
WRITERS

Sonja Reis
Jocelyn Grecko
Carolyn Morrison
Jill Bordo

Pat Jennette
Mike Stancil

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Sarah Hughey
WEBMASTER

www.ddswebdesign.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Barb Kleiman
Jesse Forquer
Erma Dodd

FOUNDING PUBLISHER

Pat Jennette

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ABOUT THE COVER

West Allegheny second-grader Joy Rose created this piece of artwork for our second-ever holiday coloring and drawing contest. We liked Joy's message and how she expressed it with bright colors and an interesting design.

Dan Hanczar's new album celebrates Christmas and helps a familiar cause

STORY AND PHOTO BY
DOUG HUGHEY

On the morning of March 12, 2011, West Allegheny junior Julie Hanczar was driving to Moon Area High School to take the SAT test when a Ford F-150 slid on a turn on Oakdale Road and slammed head-on into her car.

Hanczar suffered compound fractures in both of her legs and was flown by Life Flight to a hospital. She told paramedics she was worried she would be late for her test. As she was being prepped for surgery, she cautioned doctors as they were inserting her breathing tube, saying, "I'm a singer." The night previous, she'd performed in the high school's musical "Footloose."

Three days later, Hanczar suffered a stroke caused by globules of fat from her bone marrow seeping into her bloodstream. Doctors gave her three days to live.

Hanczar, though, managed to exceed expectations, much like she had done in the classroom.

At the time of her accident, Hanczar was an AP English and AP physics student looking ahead to studying at Penn State University, just like her dad, Dave. She spent almost a month in intensive care and pulled through, but wouldn't come home for almost another eight months. Even before then, it had become apparent that her road to recovery would be a long one. While people who knew Julie wouldn't be able to help her talk or walk again, they did what they could. Kris, Julie's mother, who works at West Allegheny, says

both the district and community were incredibly supportive.

"There were a slew of fundraisers right out of the gate," says Dave. "There was a Chick-fil A one. They had so many people show up they ran out of chicken and had to run up to the mall for more."

That September, the football team held a teal-out, in honor of Julie's favorite color, for its first home game of the 2011 season. Julie's uncle, Dan, a retired West Allegheny Middle School teacher and musician living in Oakdale, organized a concert made up of area praise bands at Oakdale Presbyterian Church. He dubbed the concert Teal to Heal. Proceeds benefitted Julie.

Dan has since organized two more concerts. Both were held at Crossroads Church. The most recent Teal to Heal concert took place Nov. 17. During it, Dan and a collection of musicians calling themselves the Dan Hanczar Orchestra played selections from a Christmas album they recently released called "Christmas of the Ancestors." Sales benefitted Julie.

The album marks Dan's third and, like his previous two albums, features a variety of musicians. This album in particular sports a heavy string presence, with violin, cello and guitar. Some songs, like the title track, are original. Others are rearrangements of Christmas classics like "Ave Maria," which opera singer Zapryanka Mladenova - who also plays cello on the album - performs.

"I always wanted to do a Christmas album," says Dan. "I had

written three or four Christmas songs, one back in the 1990s. I had a couple of my own plus traditional ones."

This album marks Dan's first in the classical genre. His previous two, "Be Thankful" and "Summer," explored a variety of rock genres. Just like in "Be Thankful," however, family and faith come across as big influences. "Russian Christmas," for instance, recalls the Hanczar family's first Christmas without their patriarch, Constantine, who passed away a few months before Julie's accident. Another has Dave singing "Psalm 8" while his cousins sing Christmas carols, in a cappella.

"There's an eclectic mix on there," says Dan. "Some are rockin', some are really mellow and more traditional. It's a mix."

Asked how shows of support like the Teal to Heal concerts have made her feel, Julie replies, "Pretty darn awesome." Her parents

say she's come a long way since that first concert in 2011, when she could only chuckle. The fact that she could chuckle, though, and respond to what was going on around her was a good sign at the time, they say.

"That's when we knew she was there and would come back to us," says Dave.

Julie returned home on Nov. 1, 2011, and at the start of 2012 began going back to school a couple of days a week. Because she had already completed so many weighted courses, she only needed three-and-a-half credits to graduate. She did graduate,

on time, wearing a distinguished honors sash and to a standing ovation. West Allegheny head football coach Bob Palko pushed her wheelchair across the stage so she could receive her diploma.

Dollars from the various efforts have helped Julie adjust to her new life. The family was able to buy a handicap-accessible van and pay for one of Julie's home health aides. They eventually had to hire three in total, one specifically to help transport Julie to physical therapy.

What's next for Julie is anyone's guess. After graduating, she tried to take a placement exam at the Community College of Allegheny County but had difficulties. Dave says her vision has been affected and she has trouble tracking to successive lines of text. Julie has a sharp memory when it comes to music, though, and can sing, but not like before her accident. With some help, she can use Facebook by controlling an iPad with her right hand. She talks softly, using a couple words at a time, a limitation that belies a sharp wit. She cracks jokes and laughs, and still knows how to use the remote better than her mother, even though she needs mom to push the buttons.

Recently, Dan's wife and Julie's aunt, Kate, bought Julie a mug that reads, "I'm silently correcting your grammar." That is no doubt the case.

Dan's album, "Christmas of the Ancestors," can be found on iTunes, Amazon, CD Baby and at www.danhanczar.com.



Dan Hanczar (pictured in back) celebrated the release of his Christmas album with a fundraiser to support his niece, Julie (pictured at center). They are pictured with Julie's mother, Kris, and father, Dave, who also performs on the album.



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West Allegheny football makes history

STORY BY DOUG HUGHEY
PHOTO BY EMILY DAVIS PHOTOGRAPHY



West Allegheny quarterback Nick Ross runs into the endzone for a game-winning two-point conversion in the WPIAL 5A championship game.

Even before West Allegheny kicker DJ Opsatnik lined up to attempt a 46-yard field goal that could send the first-ever 5A WPIAL football championship game at Heinz Field on Nov. 18 into overtime, WA's coaches were already considering the scenario that could win them the game.

"Honestly, we didn't think we could stop them, again," said head

coach Bob Palko about their opponent, the McKeesport Tigers. "And so we had said, if we win the toss, we get to play defense first, and they score and kick the extra point, and we score, we're going for two. We had made that decision before overtime even started."

Throughout the game, WA's defense had found itself trying to stop a bruising McKeesport run option attack, the likes of which WA defensive coordinator Bryan Cornell said the team had yet to encounter that season. After holding opponents to an average of just under six points per game during the regular season, and rolling over Woodland Hills in a 35-7 win the week prior, WA's defense had given up 14 points in the first half.

"Our defense had been unbelievable all year," says WA offensive coordinator Mark Davis. "We hadn't seen an offense like that. They were very physical and we had some kids banged up."

WA's offense and some bold special teams plays, though, had kept the team within striking distance. WA's Kenny White ran for a 70-yard touchdown in the first quarter to tie the game. After McKeesport went ahead with their second touchdown of the half, WA called a gutsy fake punt from deep in their own territory. Anthony Delovade took a direct snap to pick up the first down which would allow quarterback Nick Ross to hit White running down the sideline for a 37-yard touchdown pass to make the score 14-14.

A 65-yard punt return in the third quarter led to a McKeesport

touchdown and two-point conversion that made the score 22-14, setting the stage for a dramatic fourth quarter. After a high snap over Opsatnik's head led to a McKeesport safety, WA surprised the Tigers with an onside kick that Kolbe Stout recovered for WA. On the ensuing drive, Ross hit Joey Diven on a critical fourth-and-three pass that gave WA a first down on the McKeesport 24. Later in the drive, Ross hooked up with Mateo Vandamia for the touchdown.

After McKeesport blocked the extra point attempt to keep a four-point lead, WA surprised the Tigers with yet another onside kick. Stout, who also kicked this one, again recovered. On the ensuing drive, Ross hit Vandamia on a short pass that ended up going to the McKeesport 13. A fourth down holding penalty set up WA for a touchdown score that gave them the lead, but not for long. McKeesport responded with a touchdown of its own with 58 seconds left, but failed on a two-point conversion, leaving the lead at three instead of four.

On the ensuing WA possession, Ross hooked up with receiver Connor Johnson for eight yards, Brandon Lipford for 12 yards, Diven for 41 yards and Vandamia for two yards to set Opsatnik up for a long field goal. That kick got much shorter after a roughing the kicker call that gave Opsatnik a chance at a 35-yarder that he nailed to send the game into overtime. When WA won the coin toss, they deferred, which led to McKeesport scoring a touchdown in four plays and kicking an extra point.

After eating up huge chunks of yardage throughout the game on wide receiver screens, WA running back Will Weber took a direct snap on the WA possession and ran through a huge hole for a touchdown. As WA players lined up to go for two, there seemed to be some confusion, but Cornell says that was because Palko wanted the referees to spot the ball in the center of the field instead of on the right hash for a field goal attempt.

"When we made the decision to go for two, the kids didn't know it until the down," says Cornell. "They just did it."

After a McKeesport timeout and offside penalty, Ross faked to Lipford before rolling to his right. With no one open, he tucked the ball, ran between two defenders and scored to hand the WA football program its eighth WPIAL title. That also made Palko the first coach in WPIAL history to win eight football titles and WA the first to win a WPIAL championship in the newly created 5A division.

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911th looks to future, and a changing mission

STORY AND PHOTO BY DOUG HUGHEY

Six C-130 aircraft departed from the Pittsburgh International Air Reserve Station in Moon Township on Nov. 6 in what could mark one of the last training missions of its kind in the area.

Five of the aircraft performed airdrops in the region while a sixth flew a simulated aeromedical evacuation mission to Canada. All six planes then regrouped north of Pittsburgh before flying in formation back to the 911th.



These C-130 aircraft took part in an annual exercise, possibly for the last time, at the 911th Airlift Wing on Nov. 6.

This year's exercise proved unusual because the base was able to assemble such a large number of C-130 aircraft, said Wing commander Col. Douglas Strawbridge. While an impressive sight in the skies over Pittsburgh, Strawbridge said the annual exercise is also a tremendous training opportunity for base pilots, navigators, loadmasters, engineers, nurses, maintainers and others.

"It's a good thing for the base to see it, it's a great thing for the community to see it," said Strawbridge, "but we filled a tremendous number of training squares today..."

Sept. 29. The legislation funds expansion of a taxiway and hangar for the larger aircraft, as well as installation of a new fuel hydrant system. Strawbridge says the base is now awaiting passage of the National Defense Authorization Act to begin construction.

With the new aircraft, Strawbridge says the base's mission would shift from a tactical to a strategic one. In other words, because the C-17 aircraft are air refuelable and have a global flight range, the base wouldn't just be a hub for training missions. Rather, aircraft could be flying directly to other theaters.

"Most of the time when you see training missions here in the states, we're on training missions getting ready to deploy," said Strawbridge. "If and when the C-17s get here, they're heading off and going somewhere to either pick something up and bring it over or pick something up and bring it back."

Strawbridge said that the base's existing C-130s, some of which are upwards of 40 years old, could be sent to other bases, sold to foreign countries or be decommissioned. For now, he says, the base is continuing with its current mission. Asked if he's cautiously optimistic about the conversion to C-17s, Strawbridge said that was "a good way of putting it."

While the conversion would likely require some base personnel to either retrain or follow the aircraft with which they are familiar to other bases, they would also require more full-time reservists. Additionally, temporary construction jobs would be required to outfit the base's existing infrastructure for the new aircraft.

Advocates for the base, including lawmakers, have been optimistic that the conversion will keep the base open following several attempts by the Department of Defense to close it. Each of those attempts have both been met by public outcry and thwarted by Congress. Were the base ever to close, the economic impact would be significant. Each year, the 911th injects an estimated \$30.2 million into the local economy. Its total economic impact has been estimated at about \$126.6 million.

In return, the base saves the Department of Defense millions of dollars, thanks to an arrangement with the Allegheny County Airport Authority that allows the 911th to use Pittsburgh International Airport's runways, tower and emergency services for just \$20,000 annually. Its maintenance department has also recorded some of the quickest turnaround times for a reserve base, despite flying some of the oldest aircraft in the Air Force.

"For years, the 911th has stood head and shoulders above the rest as one of the most efficient, skilled, and mission ready airlift units in the country," says Rep. Tim Murphy. "With a new C-17 squadron we'll continue to enhance our national security, create jobs, and boost our local economy. I want to thank our service men and women of the 911th for their hard work and dedication. They are the ones who deserve credit for this great accomplishment."

Some reservists say that morale at the base has improved following Congress' most recent decision to keep the base open. Until the next NDAA is signed, however, base personnel are finding themselves in a familiar position as they wait for a final decision from lawmakers.

"We don't know what our situation will be [a year from now]," said Maj. Jennifer Pearson, "which is exciting. We know we'll be here and we know that we'll have an exciting mission to do, it's just what mission and how we'll carry out that mission."



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In the years to come, Allegheny County residents could see even larger planes flying out of the base, and not just on training missions. In February, President Barack Obama included \$85 million in his budget for the Defense Department to outfit the 911th Airlift Wing's infrastructure to accommodate a new fleet of C-17 aircraft. Those funds were included in legislation funding the government through Dec. 9 that passed through the House and Senate before being signed by the president

Road dedication recalls area aviation icon

Clifford Ball might have never learned to fly, but his contributions to the area's aviation industry are numerous. In the 1920s, Ball founded the United Airlines precursor Pennsylvania Airlines and later went on to become the first superintendent of Greater Pittsburgh Airport. He also served as director of Allegheny County Airport.

On Oct. 18, local officials honored Ball by naming a new road in the Findlay Commerce Park in Clinton after him. The road connects Sweeney Drive with phase two of the development. The \$20 million expansion on Allegheny County Airport Authority property includes additional commercial sites in a park that's already home to Berlin Packaging, FedEx, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and Knepper Press. The airfield Ball founded, Bettis Field in West Mifflin, was a precursor to the area's commercial aviation industry. Out of Bettis Field, Ball ran a thriving airmail and then passenger service business with his wife, Alice Stinner, a former air-racing pilot.

"My dad envisioned airports, I don't know that he envisioned parking lots or business parks or anything like this," Barbara Ewing, Ball's daughter, said during the dedication, "but he would be so pleased."

At a naming dedication for Clifford Ball Drive, Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald presented a proclamation to

Ewing. As well, Fitzgerald and Pittsburgh International Airport CFO Jim Gill presented Ewing with a plaque commemorating the street dedication. Fitzgerald also read a short biography about Ball that said he first secured a contract from the federal government to run an airmail route in 1927. That same year, his company completed 468 flights and transported almost 20,000 pounds of mail. During World War II, Ball served as captain of the Civil Air Patrol and was managing director of Graham Aviation Company, which trained 1,400 instructors and 7,000 pilots for the Army.

"We are so proud of what Clifford Ball was able to do, and Pittsburgh is a place where we have had many pioneers," said Fitzgerald. "I'm talking about folks like Carnegie, Frick, Westinghouse... We're so honored that Clifford Ball joins that group of distinguished Pittsburghers."

The naming is just the latest in a number of ways that Ball's accomplishments have been commemorated in the area. In 1965, the Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics named its academic building after him and the Port Authority of Allegheny County has named one of its buses after him. The jam band Phish held a concert called The Clifford Ball in New York after reading about Ball on a plaque in Pittsburgh International Airport. Anyone who has walked through the Landside Terminal at the airport has also likely seen the first airplane to complete the airmail route Ball's company established to Cleveland. The plane, Miss Pittsburgh, is suspended from the ceiling and points toward Cleveland.

Despite all those accomplishments in the aviation industry, Ball, however, never learned to fly himself. His daughter said that is a popular misconception about her father.

"The story goes that the investors would not let him pilot one of those rickety old airplane things," she said. "So he was not a pilot. My mother did the piloting. She also sold stamps for the airmail."

Ewing said her mother sold airmail stamps at a post office in Pittsburgh. To illustrate how new that concept was to Pittsburghers at the time, Ewing recounted how a woman once asked her mother if she could airmail a letter to her sister in the South Side.



Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald and Pittsburgh International Airport CFO Jim Gill present Barbara Ewing, daughter of Clifford Ball, with a plaque commemorating a street dedication in her father's name.



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WA teacher publishes first novel dedicated to Greek heritage

STORY BY JILL BORDO
PHOTO SUBMITTED

Genealogy and ancestral research have become vogue pastimes as family historical records have become more readily available on various Internet sites.

First-time author and West Allegheny High School English teacher Rita Wilson took a more old-school approach to lineage research while writing her book “Greek Lessons, A Cultural Odyssey.”

Wilson spent years interviewing numerous relatives, both in America and Greece. She traveled to her homeland on many occasions and stayed in the residences of aunts, uncles and cousins. This luxury provided precious time to learn about her ancestors while lingering over Greek food and coffee.

“Greek Lessons” was conceived as a tribute to Wilson’s mother, Angeline Langas, who has inspired Wilson throughout her life and who provided the backbone of historical information in the book. The work is a labor of love, simultaneously exuding Wilson’s passion for family and all things Greek while making the reader want to join in traditional dances or walk among the dazzling white buildings of an ancient seaside village.

Part memoir, part biography, the book spans five generations of Wilson’s family. It alternates between Greece, Pittsburgh and the western Allegheny County suburbs.

The story begins with Wilson’s great-grandparents in Xirokambi, a town in the southern Peloponnese region of Greece. Wilson provides details of the family’s life as farmers, as they tended fragrant orange groves on their property and cultivated silkworms in order to harvest and sell the precious threads.

The author briefly describes the individual paths taken by her great-aunts and uncles before moving on to the arranged marriage of her grandparents, Achilles and Olga Nefopoulos.

In late 1923, Olga left her family and boarded a steamship with dozens of other Greek brides bound for Ellis Island and the husbands who awaited them in America. Still in her 20s, she settled in Pittsburgh with her 50-year-old husband, a successful painting contractor.

Though Wilson barely used Ancestry.com for information, one notable finding from the site was the manifest from Olga’s steamship that showed the young bride exited the boat with no money to her name.

An early portion of the book focuses on Greek immigrant life in the community of Oakland during the early to mid-1900s. Achilles and Olga raised five children together, one of whom was Wilson’s mother, Angie. The family spent several happy years in a row house on Melba Place, where all but one family in the neighborhood was Greek.

Wilson describes the sidewalk community of Oakland where banks, stores, schools and churches were within walking distance and downtown Pittsburgh was only a 10-minute streetcar ride away. Conversations in the Greek language could be heard throughout the neighborhood as parents visited on front stoops while their children played in nearby yards or empty lots.

The Great Depression and Achilles’ death at the age of 65 left Olga widowed at 42 with five children, no command of the English language and no relatives to assist her.

The Nefopoulos family survived with government aid, assistance from the Greek Philoptochos Society, and hard work by Olga and

the children. Wilson states that her mother, Angie, never felt that she and her siblings were poor, but rather that they had access to wonderful opportunities. Those included nearby Carnegie Library and social events at St. Nicholas Church, where Angie sang in the choir.

Wilson mentions her mother’s love of the Easter holiday and the rituals that occurred during the preceding week. She describes how the Greek women baked koulourakia (braidlike butter cookies) and sweet Easter bread with thick dough twisted around dyed, hard-boiled eggs baked into it. The reader can almost smell the avgolemono or egg lemon soup and the lamb roasted with garlic that permeated the Oakland streets on Easter Sunday.

Subsequent chapters of “Greek Lessons” focus on Angie Nefopoulos’ marriage to George Langas, the birth of Wilson and her younger sister, Ellen, and the family’s move from a bustling Pittsburgh neighborhood to the comparatively sparse suburb of Moon Township.

Wilson’s father, an employee of Robert Morris College, was hired as superintendent of grounds and maintenance for a second campus being built near the airport. The family took up residence in the servants’ quarters of the former Kaufmann estate. The mansion had become the faculty offices of the RMC campus. The house Wilson grew up in was located in the vicinity of the current Robert Morris University basketball arena parking lot.

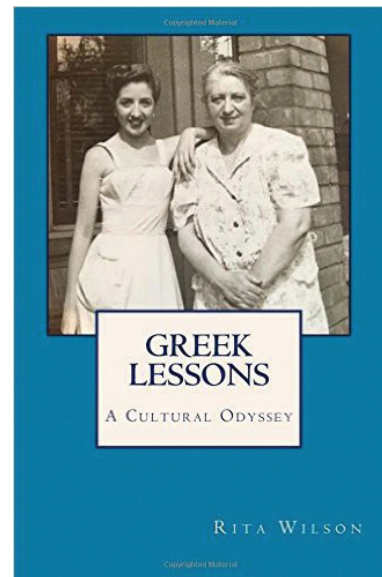
In the summer after her sixth grade school year, Wilson embarked on a trip with her mother and sister that would shape the rest of her life. The three traveled to Greece to meet and spend several weeks with Wilson’s father’s family. They continued on to Olga’s birthplace, where they visited with Angie’s aunts, uncles and cousins.

Wilson immediately connected with the place and people.

“The first time I went to Xirokambi [in 2010] I got this sense of being completely at home,” she says.

The author returned to Greece seven more times, developing such an obsession for the country and her ancestry that she often envisioned living there permanently. Wilson’s third visit, after her graduation from RMC, compelled her to begin the paperwork and application for a foreign service job there.

The process was lengthy, however, and as Wilson went about life in Moon Township, she met and fell in love with her husband, John. She did not return to her homeland for 23 more years.



Rita Wilson

After beginning a new chapter as a wife, fulltime employee, and eventually mother of two children, Wilson had little time or money for travel. Disillusionment with her marketing job at a large bank and the opportunity to teach a night class at RMC led to the realization that she enjoyed teaching enough to be in the classroom.

Wilson returned to school to get her teaching certificate and eventually landed a permanent position at West Allegheny High School. The additional responsibility of coaching tennis provided the extra income she needed to plan another trip to Greece.

In the summer of 1997, Wilson and her sister crossed the Atlantic to reconnect with family members and return to special places they had visited as children. Wilson had invested in Greek language lessons for the previous few years and was able to hold conversations with her relatives, a skill that benefited her as she gleaned information for her book.

While the first half of the book contains stories of her grandmother, mother and her own life, the second half of "Greek Lessons" focuses largely on Wilson's daughter, Alexandra, and the relationship they share.

The author was thrilled that Alexandra chose a trip to Greece with her as a high school graduation gift in 2006. Along with introductions to cousins, dinners of spanakopita and moussaka, and sightseeing, Alexandra's journey included meeting and falling in love with a boy from Sparta. Though the relationship did not survive the vast distance between them, the two met again on a journey to Greece by Alexandra and Wilson years later.

A graphic difference in the book is that the first half is interspersed with black and white family photographs, while the latter pages include tiny replicas of oil paintings done by Wilson. A talented artist, Wilson has won several awards for her artwork and has been featured in several publications.

Wilson is grateful for the patience of her husband, John, who gave her the time and space to write and supported her numerous extended trips to Greece. A nervous traveler, John had always declined his wife's invitations to accompany her to her homeland until he read "Greek Lessons."

"After he read my book, he said 'That's it, I want to meet these people!'" Wilson exclaimed.

The couple traveled to Greece for two weeks this past summer and visited all of the locations mentioned in the book. It is monumental to Wilson that her mother, Angeline, who recently celebrated her 90th birthday in Florida, was able to read and enjoy the book that was written in her honor. Wilson speaks to her mother several times a week and tries to converse in Greek for at least 10 minutes of one phone call.

Wilson's book received praise from Brian Leyden, author of "The Home Place," who remarked on "the sensual pleasures of Greek life...and the parade of colorful relations and strong women" in the book. Leyden calls the work "a vivid and original celebration of what it means to be Greek."

"Greek Lessons, A Cultural Odyssey" was independently published by NouSoma Communications. The book was released on Sept. 1 and is available for \$13.95 on Amazon.

A book launch is scheduled for Dec. 14 at 6 p.m. at Penguin Bookshop in Sewickley. Wilson will read excerpts from the book at the event.

FOOT FACTS

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For more information about bunions and their treatment, visit the American Podiatric Medical Association Web site at: www.apma.org.

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Two people with local roots who survived blood diseases are now giving back by helping others

One night in March of 2015, Rick Nolan of McDonald was supposed to attend a fundraising event. Instead, he stayed home to fight a cold. When a friend texted to tease him, Nolan, a longtime area youth sports coach, joked that his friend would feel bad if the cold killed him.

Little did either know that was a real possibility.

"We went from joking about it to two weeks later I'm in the hospital fighting for my life," says Nolan.

Nolan's cold ballooned into a full-blown pneumonia, which eventually landed him in the emergency room. A blood test revealed the presence of an aggressive form of blood cancer known as acute myeloid leukemia, which had decimated his immune system. Nolan, who says he was hours away from dying, would spend the next seven months fighting for his life. During that time, he endured a stroke, two heart surgeries and radiation treatment before undergoing a stem cell transplant last December. All the while, various area athletic organizations showed their support for Nolan, his wife, Sherry, and their three children.

This past October, Nolan, faring much better than a year previous, showed up at West Allegheny High School looking for a way to give back. He had coordinated a bone marrow drive with DKMS, a nonprofit that tests and registers potential bone marrow donors. The drive registered 18 new donors, any one of whom could eventually end up donating stem cells that could help save the life of someone with a blood disease. Organizing the drive is something Nolan says he started thinking about while lying in a hospital bed almost a year earlier, as doctors were searching for a stem cell donor who could potentially save his own life.

"I decided, you know what, I need to find a way to help people



Darcy Tannehill (at right) is pictured with her daughter, Courtney, and granddaughter, Alaina, at the first-ever Pittsburgh Amyloidosis Research Benefit in October. PHOTO SUBMITTED

in my situation," he says.

Nolan isn't the only person with West Allegheny roots to survive a potentially fatal blood disease only to turn around and find ways to help others with the same condition. On Oct. 28, the first-ever Pittsburgh Amyloidosis Research Benefit took place at Montour Heights Country Club, thanks to West Allegheny alumna Darcy Bartins Tannehill. The 1976 WA graduate, now of South Fayette, organized the event after a decade of battling amyloidosis.

Tannehill moved from a vice president position at Robert Morris University to an associate professor position a couple of years after she was diagnosed in 2012. She says she started noticing symptoms of the disease as early as 2006 but that it took doctors six years to diagnose her with the disease. Tannehill says she's lucky to be alive.

The first-ever Pittsburgh Amyloidosis Research Benefit event that Tannehill and her daughter organized raised \$40,000, an amount that encouraged her to set a date for the same event next year. It will take place Oct. 27, 2017.

"It's a bone marrow malfunction, similar to multiple myeloma," says Tannehill about amyloidosis. "It's not considered a cancer. It's extremely rare. There's about 3,000 cases diagnosed in North America in a year."

Tannehill says not many people know about the disease, though three high-profile Pennsylvania public officials have battled it, including late Pittsburgh Mayor Richard Caliguiri, Pennsylvania Governor Bob Casey and longtime Erie mayor Louis Tullio. Caliguiri died from heart failure brought on by the disease. Tullio passed away a few years after his diagnosis. Casey underwent a heart-liver transplant in 1993 but passed away in 2000.

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Amyloidosis occurs when proteins accumulate in the tissues and organs. The disease's symptoms are numerous and many times seemingly unrelated. In Tannehill's case, she experienced nausea, fatigue, carpal tunnel, atrial fibrillation and dizziness. Her heart sometimes skipped a beat while she was exercising and her cholesterol levels spiked, even though she walked five miles every day and was a vegetarian. An oncologist finally connected the dots.

"Because it's rare, and the doctors don't see it often, it's missed until someone goes into heart failure or kidney failure," says Tannehill. "By the time they get a diagnosis they may have only six months to live."

To treat Tannehill, doctors used a method similar to the one used to treat Nolan. Both underwent rounds of chemotherapy followed by a stem cell transplant. While doctors used Tannehill's own stem cells, Nolan was injected with stem cells from a donor.

Tannehill says she organized her benefit both to raise awareness about the disease and to help researchers develop treatments specifically for it. In Nolan's case, he says he wants to help more people with blood diseases like cancer get matched with stem cell donors. Doctors told him that, without his own stem cell transplant, his chances of survival would have been about 20 percent.

Sometimes, family members make good donors. Because they share the same DNA, there's a one in four chance they can also have the same tissue type. In Nolan's case, two heart surgeries within months of each other left him in a precarious situation. Doctors feared unless they found a perfect match, Nolan's body

could reject the cells. Even his own sister's stem cells weren't similar enough to his own. That meant doctors needed to find a complete stranger with stem cells identical to Nolan's; a feat that may have been impossible if not for the National Marrow Donor Program.

Nolan ended up being matched with a 47-year-old male whose name Nolan doesn't even know. The registry doesn't release names, but did allow Nolan to write a letter thanking the donor for saving his life. Had the registry not connected Nolan with that donor, his battle to that point might have been for not. After his diagnosis, Nolan suffered congestive heart failure and a stroke caused by a fever brought on by the pneumonia. He recovered, only to end up in the ICU when his blood pressure dropped and to find out he needed a triple bypass. All of that happened within seven months.

During his fight, West Allegheny, Montour and Fort Cherry athletic teams all showed both moral and financial support, collectively raising \$15,000 to help Nolan pay medical bills. A longtime coach of both area youth football and for the Oakdale Youth League, Nolan coached several players on those teams.

"The whole community was so awesome," says Nolan. "People from Fort Cherry, from West A and Montour football all donated money. [West Allegheny football head coach Bob] Palko did a Rally for Rick game during one of the games. I had a ball signed by all the kids that I had during my hospital stay...I don't think if I was anywhere else people would have reacted like that. I don't think the community is as tight as it is here."

Neither Tannehill nor Nolan have been cured. They both say they expect to continue undergoing chemotherapy and possibly stem cell treatments. Tannehill says that's one of the most difficult things to accept about her condition. As long as she can fight, though, she says she wants to help others, and if she can't any longer, her daughter, Courtney, has already promised to carry on the benefit she started.

For more about DKMS, visit dkms.org. For more about the Amyloidosis Foundation, visit www.amyloidosis.org.



Rick Nolan is pictured with his wife, Sherry, and their children, Jenna, Nathan and Emily.
PHOTO BY EMILY DAVIS
PHOTOGRAPHY

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McDonald gets its Christmas lights back

For much of the latter part of the 20th century, McDonald Borough celebrated the holiday season by hanging lights on telephone poles along its main thoroughfares.

When a truck making a turn through the town's central intersection clipped a telephone pole, though, it snapped an electrical line feeding those lights. McDonald police chief Mark Dorsey says that a report was filed about the incident, but that police were unable to locate anyone who had actually witnessed it.

"We canvassed the business district down there knocking on doors, but no one had seen it," says Dorsey, "and we didn't have any video coverage."

McDonald council member Mike Schall says that the borough explored repairing the electrical line, but upon doing so discovered it was so old that the entire system needed to be replaced. Faced with that unexpected cost, the borough instead opted to purchase green and red flags to hang in the interim. Schall says that residents, though, missed the lights, and McDonald council member Ray Miller says that several residents complained about their absence.

At the end of 2015, the McDonald Area Redevelopment Association stepped in to help by making replacing McDonald's holiday light system part of its strategic plan for 2016. MARA member Dale Csonka says that, after 50 years, community members missed having the lights.

After voting on the measure, MARA member Tim Thomassy requested \$4,500 from the borough to cover the cost of material for the new wires. A committee of MARA members made up of Schall, Miller, Thomassy, Csonka and others set about fundraising to cover the cost of additional materials and labor for the project.

"We try to do a community project every year," says Thomassy. "If it's a big project like this one, maybe every two years. We've done major things around town here. We picked it up and said let's give it a try."

MARA, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, was formed with the mission of fulfilling community development projects in McDonald. The organization owns a building that it remodeled called the McDonald Trail Station that sits adjacent to the Panhandle Trail off South McDonald Street. MARA holds regular meetings there and special community and fundraising events. Part of the building is dedicated to a museum exploring the town's history.

Thomassy says MARA kicked off its fundraising campaign by writing letters to area residents. He says that netted about 200 responses with individual amounts ranging from \$1,000 to \$5 and totaling over \$12,000. An additional \$6,500 was raised during MARA's regular

fundraisers, including pancake breakfasts and bake sales. MARA also coordinated a fundraising event with Subway in November.

By the middle of November, MARA's total raised for the project amounted to \$23,500. Csonka says the project's overall goal is \$35,000, which is what MARA has estimated will be needed to complete the entire project.

With the dollars it did raise through October of 2016, MARA paid for new electric lines to be strung on one side of West and East Lincoln avenues, from Heritage Park on the town's western end to Miller Street

on its eastern side. Lines were also hung from South McDonald Street to the McDonald Volunteer Fire Department near the start of Valley Street. Thomassy says the work would not have been possible without the help of Steve Kashmer, who owns Imperial-based Valley Electric. He says Kashmer, a McDonald resident, performed the work at a considerable discount.

With the money it had raised, MARA also purchased enough new LED lights to hang on every other telephone pole. The lights will last longer, consume less energy and are considerably brighter than the old ones, says Thomassy. On Thanksgiving, the holiday lights were turned on in McDonald for the first time.

MARA is continuing to collect donations to meet its fundraising goal and complete the rest of the project. Anyone who would like to contribute can send a check or money order to: McDonald Area Redevelopment Association, Christmas Lights Project, P.O. Box 152, McDonald, PA 15057.

For more about MARA, visit www.mcdonaldtrailstation.com.



McDonald's new holiday lights are tested the week before Thanksgiving.
PHOTO BY DOUG HUGHEY



Steve Kashmer of Valley Electric strings a new power line for holiday lights in downtown McDonald. Kashmer, a McDonald resident, performed the work at a discount as a service to the community.
PHOTO BY TIM THOMASSY

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Longtime area dental practice changes hands

In the mid-1970s, Dr. Robert Luther and Dr. Kenneth Noel founded a dental practice together off Oakdale Road in North Fayette Township. Fresh out of the University of Pittsburgh Dental School, the two dentists saw a niche for their services in an area served by a number of dentists reaching retirement age.

Over time, as local housing developments and shopping areas grew, so did Luther and Noel's practice, from four chairs to eight chairs. Newer technologies also changed the way dentists treated patients.

In the 1990s, Luther and Noel began utilizing no-drill lasers, which in many cases could

be used to treat cavities without a local anesthetic. That was particularly good for younger patients, says Dr. Luther.

Now, high-tech equipment like lasers and scanners are the norm in the dental practice.

"If I'd come out of school [back then] and came into this office [today], there's a lot I wouldn't know what to do with," says Dr. Luther.

Late last year, after almost 40 years of running their dental office together, Luther and Noel sold the practice to Dr. TJ Ameredes. The practice is now called Advanced Dentistry and is Dr. Ameredes' second dental practice. He also runs another office in Wheeling, West Virginia. Dr. Ameredes lives in Oakdale with his wife, Samantha, and their three children, Athena, 5, Niko, 4, and Olivia, 1.

While Dr. Noel has retired, Dr. Luther continues to work for the dental office he founded.

Dr. Ameredes says that the practice will continue to utilize new technology to improve patient comfort and treatment, including laser dentistry. A soft tissue laser allows various procedures to be completed with minimal trauma to the tissue while a hard tissue laser is used to aid those patients who are anxious about dental care. For those with high anxiety or mental impairments, or who just prefer to have their dental treatment done comfortably while under anesthesia, the practice can also offer sedation.

Recently, the practice installed a CT scan in order to guide implant placement and obtain Ceph images for orthodontic treatment and planning. As well, the practice is now using a scanner as opposed to the mouth trays of yesteryear to get impressions for dentures and other orthodontics.

Just like with Luther and Noel, adequate time with a dental hygienist remains a must at Advanced Dentistry. Each patient can still expect to spend a full hour with a dental hygienist who will provide the proper care and diagnosis needed.

The second of three brothers, Dr. Ameredes grew up in Weirton, West Virginia. His father, Ted, worked as a pharmacist and his mother, Athena, who emigrated from Greece, worked as an



Dr. Robert Luther (pictured at right) and Dr. Kenneth Noel (not pictured) recently sold their dental practice, Luther and Noel Dentistry, to Dr. TJ Ameredes (pictured at left) of Oakdale. The practice is now Advanced Dentistry.

STORY SUBMITTED BY ADVANCED DENTISTRY
PHOTO BY DOUG HUGHEY

x-ray technician. His older brother, Alex, followed in their father's footsteps and is now the pharmacy manager at Giant Eagle's Settlers Ridge location. His younger brother, Harry, is now an orthopedic radiologist.

In March of 2000, Athena passed away following a long battle with cancer. A foundation set up in her name, Athena's Closet, now helps those with financial difficulties who are also battling cancer.

Dr. Ameredes graduated as the salutatorian from Weir High School and then Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science from Bethany College. He completed dental school at the West Virginia University School of Dentistry

and has spent the last 12 years gaining experience in all fields of dentistry. He has completed thousands of hours of continuing education on implantology, endodontics and orthodontics. He practices comprehensive dentistry, full mouth rehabilitation and minor oral surgery.

Advanced Dentistry can also fit patients with Invisalign braces.

Dr. Ameredes says he was drawn to Luther and Noel Dentistry because it had become such a staple in the community.

"The reputation established by Dr.'s Luther and Noel was already one of professionalism and quality dental care," say Dr. Ameredes. "I'm thankful for the opportunity to carry on the practice."

Advanced Dentistry is located at 1050 Oakdale Road in Oakdale and is now accepting new patients. Call them for a free consultation or second opinion at (412) 788-6300. Find them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/advanceddentistry412.



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How to update a cocktail classic

As Industry Public House gets ready to celebrate its first full year at its North Fayette location, let's take a look at the local craft cocktail scene that it's helping to energize, both in the western suburbs and on its home turf in Lawrenceville.

Everyone seems to be touting "craft" and "artisanal" cocktails today, but what does that really mean? In no specific terms, a craft cocktail is one that is skillfully made with very special attention paid, not only to taste, but also to aesthetic presentation. Craft cocktails are typically built without crutches, unlike the pre-flavored spirits, mixers or syrups that the popular drinks of the 1980s relied upon so heavily. Freshly squeezed juices, house made syrups, bitters and tinctures have replaced store bought bottles of cloyingly sweet mixes.

Really, it's just a return to the basics. Bartenders are again making the flavors they desire from scratch. Need to add a subtle bit of complexity to your Manhattan? Try infusing your favorite rye whiskey or bourbon with coffee beans, pecans or fresh ginger (more on that later).

Like other "craft" movements, the cocktail scene sometimes suffers from being perceived as pretentious. Some individuals are put off by what seems like a steep learning curve. Frankly, a lot of guests have a hard time shelling out \$10 to \$12 per drink. As a craft cocktail establishment, we want our offerings to be accessible to everyone and for the onus of education fall on our shoulders. People are more willing to give that \$10 drink a chance when they realize that every ingredient was carefully selected, prepared in house and skillfully built as they watch. Arguably the best part of

the craft cocktail universe is that every drink seems to have a story - or several versions of the same story.

The Manhattan cocktail is perhaps the most famous in the modern scene, and rightfully so. It has a seemingly perfect balance of flavors. Its simple, three-ingredient recipe has spawned an almost infinite number of variations. The Manhattan cocktail is made with: whiskey, vermouth and bitters. Simply manipulating any one of those three aspects results in a unique variation of a classic. The Manhattan as we know it seems to have surfaced in the late 1800s and most often consisted of American rye whiskey, Italian vermouth and a few dashes of bitters. If origin stories are your thing, a simple Google search will yield sufficient results.

Today, you're as likely to receive bourbon in your Manhattan as rye whiskey if you don't specify your preference. However, if you're ordering a Manhattan without requesting a specific whiskey, you're missing out. The endless array of whiskies available at your local watering hole might complicate this process, but that is a perfect opportunity for you and your friendly bartender to have a dialogue about what your taste preferences are and how a particular whiskey might be right for you. Even though we don't always explicitly call them Manhattans, we always have a cocktail or two on our menu that is a variation of the old classic. Here's a recipe for a classic Manhattan, along with some variations you can find at Industry Public House.

Check out Industry Public House at The Pointe in North Fayette. Call them at (412) 490-9080. Visit them online at industrypgh.com.

Classic Manhattan

- 2 oz. rye whiskey
- 1 oz. sweet vermouth
- 2-3 dashes bitters

Combine these ingredients over ice and stir until thoroughly chilled. In this instance you don't want to shake as it will cloud the drink and give it a thinner mouthfeel, although if shaking is your thing...shake away! After all, it's your cocktail

Strain into a cocktail glass and garnish with a cherry. If you prefer, strain into a rocks glass filled with fresh ice. Also, don't ruin your drink with one of those cherries from the kid's Shirley Temples. Use Luxardo brand maraschinos or our favorite, Fabbri Amarena cherries.

We prefer Bulliet Rye, Dolin Sweet Vermouth, and a combination of Angostura and Peychaud's bitters.

The Union Bushel

This is a Manhattan variation with a harvest theme that we roll out every Fall. We use bourbon in place of rye and add Calvados, an apple brandy from Normandy, as well as house-made bitters.

- 1 ¼ oz. Bulleit Bourbon
- ¾ oz. Calvados
- ½ oz. sweet vermouth
- ½ oz. maple syrup
- 3 dashes fall spice bitters

Add ice and stir until chilled and strain into rocks glass over fresh ice. For the garnish, we take a thin slice of a Granny Smith apple and add a layer of sugar, which we then quickly brûlée with a kitchen torch.

You can substitute your favorite bourbon or rye whiskey. If Calvados isn't readily available, Laird's Applejack is a reasonable substitute. The recipe for fall spice bitters is our secret, so you're on your own for that one. Angostura bitters will work in a pinch, however, as will Fee Brothers Cardamom bitters. While not quite the same as our fall spice bitters, it will add a nice layer of complexity.



The Union Bushel is just one of several twists on a cocktail classic that Industry Public House in North Fayette offers.

Praline

Old Fashioned

Pecan-infused bourbon can give your favorite whiskey cocktail an added layer of complexity that will make your friends think you're a pro. We use it in our Praline Old Fashioned.

- ¾ cup toasted pecan halves
- 1-750 ml. bottle bourbon of choice

Combine and steep for 24 to 48 hours then double strain and re-bottle. Use pecan bourbon in your Manhattan, old fashioned or mint julep - or simply sip neat.



Checklist for Avoiding Snow Shoveling Injuries

SUBMITTED BY HOMETOWN SPINE AND SPORT

The snow is blowing and the wind chill is bitter. As you are watching all of this transpire from the comforts of your warm and cozy home, the thought crosses your mind about when will be the right time to shovel all of that snow. Will you be lucky enough to have someone else shovel for you or will you be the one doing the dirty work? Whether you're on the short end of the stick shoveling snow that day or your car needs cleaned off to drive, chances are likely that sometime this winter you will be affected by shoveling snow.

Shoveling snow is both an aerobic and anaerobic exercise, which means that your body is getting the same kind of work out as if you were biking while lifting weights at the same time. That puts a lot of strain on the body! To the unconditioned person, this may put an aggressive strain on the cardiovascular system as well as the musculoskeletal system. Injuries are common while shoveling snow, so make sure that you are prepared before going into battle with mother nature.

A recent study found that an average of 11,500 snow shoveling-related injuries and medical emergencies were treated in emergency departments in the U.S. each year from 1990 to 2006. Staggering statistics resurface every year after a major snow storm. Along with snow comes a lack of daylight. Conditioning your muscles before shoveling will both decrease your risk for an injury and prepare your body for a rigorous lifting activity. As always, consult with your doctor if you experience any type of low back pain while shoveling snow. Chiropractic, physical therapy and massage are great conservative care options for managing an injury.

Basic Hip and Low Back Stretches

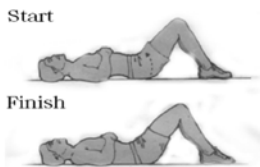
1. Hip Stretch: This stretch can be performed while laying on your back or seated. Pull your knee up to your opposite shoulder and hold for 10 seconds. Repeat 2-3 times on each leg.



2. Hamstring Stretch: While using an exercise strap, dog leash, towel or any other band, play the strap around the bottom of your foot while laying on your back. Pull your leg upward to stretch out the muscles on the back of your thigh, the hamstrings. Hold the stretch for 10 seconds, relax, and repeat 2-3 times on each leg.

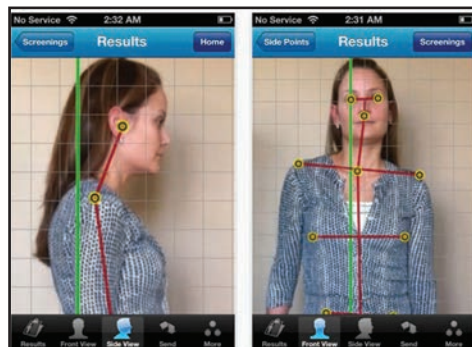


3. Supine Pelvic Tilts: Laying on your back, try to flatten your lower back on the floor while activating your abdominal muscles at the same time. Hold for 3 seconds then relax. Repeat 10-20 times.



Checklist to decrease your risk of injury while shoveling snow

- Give yourself plenty of time to shovel. If you rush through it, your risk of an injury greatly increases.
- Do warm-up stretches beforehand. Spend time stretching the shoulders, back, hips and legs before shoveling. This will help wake up the muscles.
- While shoveling, push the snow forward to a snow bank. Don't throw the snow. The repetitive motion of bending, lifting and turning puts your spine at extreme risk for an injury.
- Bend and lift with your knees and hips. Let the muscles of your legs and arms do the work instead of your back.
- Keep feet at a wide stance. Put weight on the front foot while shoveling and push the snow straight ahead.
- Take frequent breaks to alleviate the strain on your muscles.
- Stay well hydrated with water before and after you are done shoveling.



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SUBMITTED BY BARB KEARNS,
HUNTINGTON LEARNING CENTER

A Christmas poem from the test prep leader

Twas the
weeks before Christmas
and all thru the schools
No students were anxious to learn English rules.
Their books were all stuffed in their backpacks (with care)
In hopes no assignments would remove them from there.
The seniors were nestled, all snug in their beds
While visions of acceptance letters danced in their heads
The juniors were thinking "There's plenty of time,
To prep for spring tests, I bet you a dime"
When from CollegeBoard there arose such a clatter
PSAT scores are out! Come see how they matter!
Away to computers, they all flew like flashes
To enter name and password before the site crashes.
What do they report? Did they do great or poor?
What on Earth does it mean by a composite score?
And what is the difference between the two tests?
Who can we find to explain it the best?
Then what to our wondering eyes should there enter?
An ad for the local Huntington Learning Center!
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Come in, take a test, then we'll all get together
To discuss the results and decide what is better.
Which schools are shoe-ins? Which ones are called reaches?
Which ones are real close to all the great beaches?
But don't wait till spring. You can start prepping now.
The May or June tests aren't the only they allow.
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There's February, March and April when you have less distraction.
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Noblestown UMC donates church to Heroes Supporting Heroes to use as new headquarters

In April's edition of Allegheny West Magazine, writer Jill Bordo reported on two milestones that Noblestown United Methodist Church in Oakdale would be observing: the celebration of 120 years in service and discontinuation of its services.

Bordo quoted lifelong members of Noblestown UMC, who stated then that they were seeking "another church or Christian-based ministry that would be able to make use of the building and benefit the community for years to come." That article is being credited with helping the church pass its torch to Heroes Supporting Heroes, a nonprofit charitable organization founded in Allegheny County. In October, permission was granted by the Western Pennsylvania United Methodist Conference to donate the property to HSH.

A faith-based initiative with local roots, HSH has been helping local residents with basic housing needs since 2012. They have also been vital as a cosponsor of the biennial West Allegheny Workcamp project. The work camp has been in partnership with Group Mission Trips, a 501(c)(3) organization based in Loveland, Colorado that brings youth groups from nearby states to serve local residents with basic home repairs.

Jeff Lutz, HSH vice president, said that when he read the Allegheny West Magazine article he almost could not contain himself. He said he felt immediately that Noblestown UMC was talking about HSH as the ministry group that could benefit from this property. Lutz contacted his colleagues John Lee, HSH president, and Don Steward, HSH executive director, and asked if they had read the article.

To date, HSH has provided its services with a very small budget made up of local donations from individuals, businesses, churches and civic groups. The nonprofit aspires to gain corporate sponsors but have yet to reach a level of recognition that will help them multiply their impact. By acquiring a physical headquarters, HSH hopes to do just that. To date, the organization has been run largely from home-based offices. The new headquarters is expected to lend credibility to HSH and expand the amount of government and non-government organization grants that HSH will be qualified

to obtain. Too often, grants require that a nonprofit group has a physical headquarters. In the past, this has severely limited the grants that HSH could obtain.

In addition to the church building, this gracious gift includes a rental property (former parsonage) as well as vacant property adjacent to the church building that HSH plans to convert for parking or storage of equipment.

Besides being able to host a location as their home base, HSH also hopes to remodel the building so they can provide space for: other nonprofit startups; veterans and other residents on a job search who need internet access; community meetings; hosting large group meals to honor veterans and senior citizens; youth group and faith-based activities, including scouting; and adult social groups such as quilters or civic groups.

To do all of that, HSH has begun to plan an extensive remodel to convert the worship area to a level surface, add office space and make needed changes so that the new HSH office is compliant with the American with Disabilities Act.

None of this would have been possible if not for the dedicated, lifelong members of the former Noblestown UMC. To be allowed to gift the building, they had to first merge with another nearby United Methodist Church. That happened last July, when the church transferred its membership to McDonald UMC. The next step was to petition the Western Pennsylvania United Methodist Conference. Noblestown UMC deacons and HSH found a champion for their cause in Brad Lauster, district superintendent for the Washington District.

After months of discussions and negotiations, Lauster was able to locate the right parties to help. Lauster said that this was in large part due to the persistent, faithful group at Noblestown UMC, who never gave up on their vision. Debbie Masciola, former secretary of Noblestown UMC, said that, in retrospect, "we were calling out to Heroes Supporting Heroes from the start!"

For more on HSH, visit HeroesSupportingHeroes.org. Call or fax them by dialing: (412) 235-1737. Letters can be sent to their new office at: 7313 Noblestown Road, Oakdale, PA 15071-1905.

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STORY AND PHOTO SUBMITTED BY
HOMETOWN SPINE AND SPORT

New chiropractic office raises money for PALS



Dr. Joshua Slomkowski, owner of Hometown Spine and Sport, is pictured with North Fayette Parks and Recreation director Darlene Hildebrand. Slomkowski presented a check to Hildebrand for the PALS program.

Hometown Spine and Sport celebrated their grand opening Nov. 12 at their offices at 7350 Steubenville Pike in Oakdale by offering free examinations and spinal adjustments to the community. The chiropractic office collected donations on behalf of Providing Assistance, Love and Support - or PALS - a local charity which hosts recreational events and activities for children with special needs.

Hometown Spine and Sport is a chiropractic and sports rehabilitation clinic that specializes in a hybridized blend of chiropractic, soft tissue massage and rehabilitative exercises.

The practice accepts all major insurances, including UPMC, Highmark Blue Cross, Aetna, Cigna, United and Cigna.

For more, visit www.hometownspineandsport.com.

STORY AND PHOTO SUBMITTED

Local youth wins pre-teen pageant

Madison Daugherty of Imperial represented Pittsburgh and surrounding communities in her first Pennsylvania Miss Teen pageant competition Oct. 16. Madison competed in the Miss Jr. Pre-Teen division, one of four divisions, which included a personal interview, casual wear and formal wear. Madison competed in the Miss Jr. Pre-Teen division and took first place in the category of most photogenic and finished as the second runner-up overall in her division.



Madison Daugherty

Additionally, Madison finished first overall among all divisions at the pageant in the photogenic category. With that win, she was awarded an all-expense paid trip to Orlando, Florida to compete in the 2017 National Pageant Competition, where she will compete against other finalists from across the country. The winner will receive \$30,000 in scholarship prizes.

Sponsorships are available for each contestant and help cover costs associated with competing in the pageant. Businesses, organizations and private individuals who may be interested in becoming a sponsor to Madison may contact the Miss Jr. Pre-Teen pageant coordinator at 1 (877) 910-4190.

STORY AND PHOTO SUBMITTED BY
BOY SCOUT TROOP 248

Troop 248 adds three more Eagle Scouts

Three more members of Boy Scout Troop 248 passed their Eagle Scout Board of Review recently, raising the total number of scouts from the troop to earn the honor to 92.

On July 26, Lochlann Gilbert completed his Eagle Scout Board of Review after logging over 400 hours of community service. Those hours included his service project, which entailed trail maintenance along the Panhandle Trail in the Oakdale area. Gilbert is a member of the West Allegheny Marching Pride, the West Allegheny stage band, the West Allegheny chorus and a member of the West Allegheny Marine ROTC program.

On Oct. 12, Nathan P. Mavrich passed his Eagle Scout Board of Review after logging over 120 hours of community service by designing, building and installing pollinator boxes. The boxes are designed to house different species that pollinate plants and

flowers in the garden, as well as farm and food systems in the area.

Also on Oct. 12, Michael A. Starkman passed his Eagle Scout Board of Review after logging over 180 hours of community service by organizing, feeding and housing a youth ministries group through his church.

For more about Troop 248, visit them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/groups/365841620255793/.



Boy Scout Troop 248 member Lochlann Gilbert is pictured with Kurt Ellenberger, main leader, advancement chair for the Frontier District of the Boy Scouts of America.

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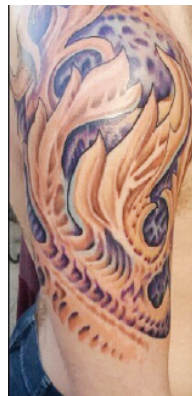
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Mutiny Tattoo Studio opens in McDonald

STORY AND PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY MUTINY TATTOO STUDIO

For decades, McDonald locals visited Clark's Barbershop in the heart of downtown McDonald to get a haircut and catch up on the latest local news. Today, there's a new business operating out of the storefront, one that's indicative of the changing times and generations.



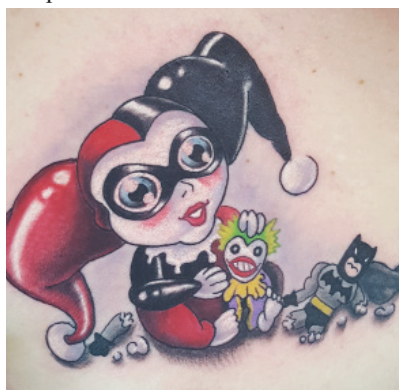
Mutiny Tattoo Studio officially opened at 111 South McDonald Street in March and the shop's three artists have been busy inking customers ever since. The studio is the product of "Mohawk" Jesse Yunker, who worked for almost a half decade in a well-

established western Pennsylvania tattoo studio before striking out on his own. He runs the new shop with Megan Calabro, an Art Institute of Pittsburgh graduate, and their apprentice, Tim Sites.



The three artists specialize in a range of aesthetics, from photo-realism to surrealism and illustration. They are taking clients six days a week, Monday through Saturday, from noon until 7 p.m. Walk-ins are welcome but appointments are a good idea. Their work can be viewed at: www.mutinyej.com.

Yunker says that, even before he started tattooing, art had long been an outlet for him. Once he started tattooing, he says he found his passion and purpose. Like many aspiring tattoo artists, he discovered that finding a way into the profession can be difficult.



"Mohawk" Jesse Yunker (pictured above) opened Mutiny Tattoo Studio in McDonald in March. He now runs the shop with Megan Calabro and Tim Sites (pictured below).



However, he persisted, working at it on his own until landing a job as an artist at the shop where he worked for almost a half decade.

Yunker specializes in realism, though he says biomechanical and organic styles interest him most. He's also expanded to add new school, geometric, patterned and neo-traditional to his skill set.

Above all, he says, he just wants to make his clients happy.

"I strive to be able to create custom, unique, eye-catching tattoos for every client who sits in my chair," says Yunker.

Before Calabro started tattooing, she studied entertainment design at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh. Her specialties range from traditional, to realism, to illustration. She also works with a variety of text styles. On the side, she works for Face Paint Pittsburgh, a job she says she enjoys because she gets to meet so many different people.

Sites operated his own automotive business for eight years before he started apprenticing in April. He began cultivating his artistic talents at an early age and is now enjoying the freedom of expression that tattooing allows. He specializes in photo-realism and surrealism, and particularly likes working in black and white.

"I really enjoy doing art that creates or captures a feeling or moment when you look at it," he says.

View more of Mutiny Tattoo Studio's artwork on Facebook. Find Mutiny's artists on Instagram by searching #MutinyTattooStudio.

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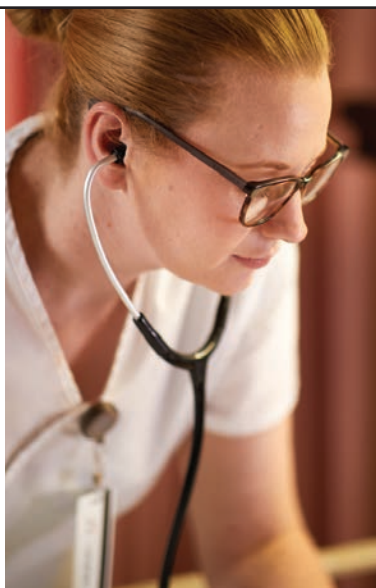
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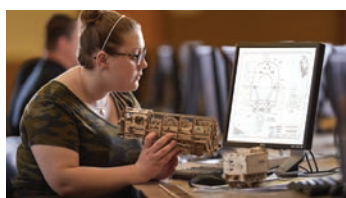


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WA TODAY

DECEMBER
2016
Vol. 39,
No. 2

INFORMATION FOR RESIDENTS OF FINDLAY AND NORTH FAYETTE TOWNSHIPS AND OAKDALE BOROUGH

High school achievement focus of press conference and academic celebration

West Allegheny High School was proud to host a press conference and academic celebration October 27 when the National Math + Science Initiative recognized students and teachers for outstanding advanced placement achievement. West Allegheny partnered with NMSI in 2014 and, through a \$730,000 grant, has provided additional supports designed to transform student outcomes. The grant has also helped the District better prepare students for college persistence and 21st century careers while growing teacher practices.

A press conference kicked off the day with superintendent Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert and academic principal Kevin McKiernan welcoming guests and sharing West Allegheny's results.

"NMSI has developed a model that yields remarkable results by working with schools to remove barriers for students to access rigorous coursework," noted Lippert.

"We were thrilled to recently learn that our students had achieved unprecedented results exceeding our three-year growth targets in just our first year," added McKiernan. "This is a great source of pride for the West Allegheny community and shows that our students will be well-prepared for what lies ahead beyond high school."



ABOVE: Pennsylvania Secretary of Education Pedro Rivera (at right) joins NMSI and XTO Energy representatives as they present an award check to AP scholars Zachary Costantino and Angela Dale.



ABOVE: JROTC members serve as student ambassadors.

RIGHT: Superintendent Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert and academic principal Kevin McKiernan welcome guests and shared the District's unprecedented AP achievements.

BELOW: Bob Yost won the first-ever lip sync contest.



Special guest Pennsylvania secretary of education, Pedro Rivera, addressed the audience by noting the importance of STEM education and forming strategic partnerships. NMSI president Gregg Fliesher was on hand and announced that, out of 6,588 schools, West Allegheny ranked first in the nation for percent increase, at 544 percent, in qualifying scores in math and science. Fliesher and Mike

Johnson from XTO Energy also announced a three-year, \$26 million grant from ExxonMobil and XTO Energy to expand NMSI's College Readiness Program in western Pennsylvania.

Following the press conference, the high school held a pep rally, organized by assistant principal Kate McClelland and hosted by athletic director Dave McBain, to celebrate student academic achievement in the areas of AP, attendance, National Honor Society and National Technical Honor

Society. Rivera joined Fliesher and XTO representatives as they presented a \$46,300 check that reflects both student and teacher awards for their 2015-2016 AP test results.

Teachers Kennan Grabner, Amy Schweinsberg, Angela Burnett, Katie Zanella and Bob Yost provided entertainment at the rally with a spirited lip sync contest. With students voting, Yost came away with the win for his portrayal of Bruno Mars.

The day's guests, which also included superintendents, principals and board members from several area districts, were greeted and escorted by members of the JROTC.

The collective events of the day showcased the incredible talents of West Allegheny students and staff while the District continues to build on its tradition of excellence.



McKee building dedication showcases completed renovation project

McKee Elementary School students, staff and administration were anxious to share their recently completed building at a dedication ceremony October 12 following 18 months of renovations.

Superintendent Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert welcomed guests and members of the McKee Boy Scout Troop, who presented the flag and led guests in the Pledge of Allegiance. Lippert took the opportunity to thank school board members and former superintendent Dr. John S. DiSanti and assistant superintendent Dr. William Englert, Jr., both of whom were in attendance, for their foresight and vision. Kenneth Fibbi, director of buildings and grounds, was recognized for his attention to detail and ensuring the building be completed on schedule and under budget.

School board president Debbie Mirich also addressed guests and noted the extensive planning that went into creating the space that was designed to better serve students. Additional speakers included Rob Rensi from the project's architectural firm, Hayes Design Group, as well as Fibbi, who presented a building rendering to McKee principal Thomas Orr.

McKee fifth-graders served as student hosts for the event and provided organized tours of the school.



TOP: Boy Scouts lead the Pledge of Allegiance. ABOVE: Former superintendent Dr. John S. DiSanti addresses attendees. BELOW: Ken Fibbi, director of buildings and grounds, presents a dedication plaque to McKee principal Thomas Orr. BOTTOM: Superintendent Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert joins McKee student tour guides.

Building Features

McKee's new design keys in on a student-centered blueprint that incorporates safety, functionality and energy efficiency. Features include:

- **Collaboratory** - delivers a bright, open space that welcomes students and teachers to come together and collaborate in a creative, comfortable setting.
- **Full-Service Kitchen** - provides staff with state-of-the-art appliances and equipment, which allow fresh, hot meals to be prepared onsite.
- **Computer Lab and Technology Integration** - includes managed wireless access and classrooms that are now outfitted with J Touch Interactive Panels that partner with new integrated laptops.
- **Library** - encourages students to explore the spacious, colorful and imaginative setting while inspiring an appreciation for reading.
- **Gymnasium** - offers students a full-sized, dedicated physical education space that features hardwood floors, a drop-down screen divider, LED lighting and a refurbished stage with progressive sound system.
- **Private Classrooms** - allow for focused instruction.
- **Skylights** - provide significant natural lighting while reducing energy consumption.



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Superintendent's Message

Every year, our administrative team works collaboratively to review and refine the District's Framework for Academic Excellence with the intent of being responsive while maintaining relevancy and clarity. In response to events last school year, Priority 2 was expanded to state: High Quality Instruction in Every Classroom Every Day Within a Safe and Supportive School. A direct result of this addendum was the establishment of the Safe and Supportive Schools Committee, which was tasked with identifying ways that we can develop and nurture positive student relationships with staff and other students, a belief many experts note is the most essential step toward successful learning in all aspects of education.

At West Allegheny School District, we believe that our students and staff have the collective potential to accomplish their greatest aspirations by working together and valuing one another. Beginning this year, one important step toward this goal includes the District-wide adoption of the Rachel's Challenge program to strengthen our school culture for students and staff. Rachel's Challenge is a nonprofit organization that seeks to make schools safer, more connected places where bullying and violence are replaced with kindness and respect, and where learning and teaching are awakened to their fullest. On October 18, our elementary and middle school students and staff participated in our first-ever Rachel's Challenge launch. The District also hosted an evening event where over 100 of our family and community members viewed a presentation on Rachel's Challenge. Our launch was meant to inform participants about the profound positive impact we can have on those around us and to help ensure a safer and more supportive learning environment for everyone.

Rachel Joy Scott was the first person killed at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. Rachel was known by students and teachers as someone who was always kind and compassionate toward everyone. As a very young child, Rachel aspired to have a positive impact on the world, where she wanted to touch millions of peoples' lives. Following her death, students and staff reached out to her parents and media to share their stories of how Rachel's caring and kindness positively impacted their life. From these stories, a national organization was created to spread acts of caring and kindness in schools. Today, Rachel's message reaches over 1.5 million people each year through 1,200 presentations given in schools and communities around the country. Our goal is that Rachel's Challenge will start a chain reaction of spreading acts of kindness and compassion. We want the relationships that exist amongst our students and between our students and staff to

strengthen and focus on the best aspects that every individual brings to our learning environment each day. One of the people who inspired Rachel was Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who she quotes in her journal:

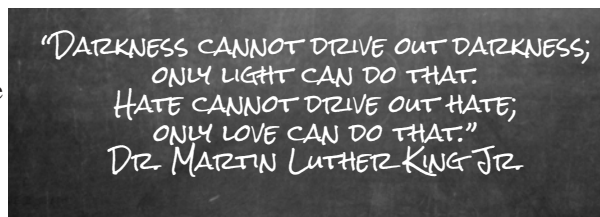
"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

Since launching Rachel's Challenge, our students and staff have taken to Rachel's promise of kindness and compassion. The middle school has launched a Friends of Rachel club with the goal of finding ways to implement lessons associated with Rachel's Challenge during advisory period each month. Sixty

students and 12 staff members lead the school's FOR club and meet each month to plan and work together to build a safer and more positive learning environment. Since participating in their launch in October, the middle school FOR Club has worked to lead the whole school on a project known as High-Five Hallway. This activity involved all of our middle school students tracing their hands, as Rachel had done on her bedroom dresser, and writing out two acts of kindness they will follow up on at some point this year. FOR Club students will display all student hands in the entryway and main hallways. Students will be encouraged to "high-five" their hands once they complete acts of kindness. The middle school

FOR Club is also working to develop a new student welcoming committee, a positive acts of caring and kindness marketing committee, and will plan larger school-wide activities that promote the best attributes of all of our students.

Through focusing on Rachel's Challenge and other connected positive relationship building programs, such as school-wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports and the Honoring Outstanding Professional Educators - or HOPE - award, West Allegheny Middle School has begun to improve student attendance rates. Student discipline referrals have decreased, as have reports of bullying incidents. This has helped improve the amount and quality of time spent focusing on rigorous instruction and learning. One of the best and most inspiring attributes about Rachel's Challenge is the response to such a simple message. Rachel's Challenge facilitators are well-trained to motivate, inspire and equip participants to self-lead their own events, programs and activities. With the addition of Rachel's Challenge at the middle school, our students and staff have enhanced their own leadership capacity and ability to work toward a common goal of finding the best in ALL of OUR students.



continued next page

Superintendent's Message (continued)

At our elementary schools, excitement for Rachel's Challenge was generated with school assemblies held on October 17 and October 18. Both content and context were adapted at the elementary schools to make it age appropriate and include five key challenges:

1. Use kind words and do kind things.
2. Accept and include others.
3. Choose positive influences.
4. Set goals.
5. Keep a journal.

Following the assemblies, all staff members were trained on Rachel's Challenge and introduced our school-based program to students in more detail during their first bi-weekly classroom meetings in November. All elementary students and staff signed a pledge banner accepting Rachel's Challenge. At our elementary schools, the number of students who accepted Rachel's Challenge was truly overwhelming and indicative of our positive school culture. Our elementary schools have also started to build chain links that will be displayed to recognize each other's acts of kindness as a visual reminder that one person truly can start a chain reaction of kindness. Wilson Elementary School has also

been working to implement a school-wide PBIS plan.

Due to the overwhelmingly positive response to Rachel's Challenge at the middle and elementary schools, we chose to bring the program to the high school and repeat the evening community event on November 15. Our high school students and staff were excited and very touched by the assembly launch. The high school is also establishing a FOR Club with 70 students involved and 20 teacher sponsors. The high school FOR Club is already working on ideas to implement. Those include a welcoming committee for ninth graders, a puzzle-like mural for kind hands, a big brothers and sisters program, bathroom mirror kindness messages, a kindness student video, and many more.

Rachel's Challenge is just one means of ensuring the District's commitment to providing a safe and supportive environment in which our students can learn, grow and realize their aspirations. Finding the best in one another and developing authentic, caring relationships is key to reaching the full potential for our staff and students. It is also ultimately a key indicator of a quality District.

.....
Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert,
Superintendent

Curriculum Nights provide helpful information at all school levels

The District was excited to host Curriculum Nights at all school levels throughout the month of October with the goal of providing insights to parents about their child's courses and available supports.

At the high school, teachers from each department were available to share information regarding course offerings and progression, primary resources, and academic support opportunities. School counselors were also available to discuss

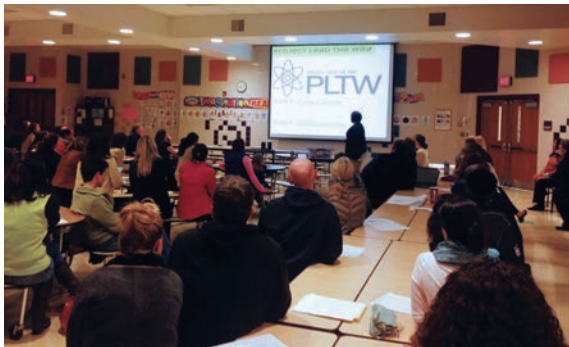
PSAT registration and provide information related to career planning, college readiness, and mental health and counseling resources. Attendees perused curricular areas of interest and learned more about the scope of each department, including scheduling and college and career pathways.

At the middle school, teacher representatives from the English

language arts, math, STEM and student services departments were available to speak as parents rotated through stations to learn about curriculum expectations, materials and resources, assessment, grading, and homework. Participating parents were provided the opportunity to learn how to support their children across multiple disciplines.

All three elementary schools came together at Donaldson Elementary for their Curriculum Night. The session opened with an overview of elementary instructional programs, including digital platforms for new reading and math programs. Both the Creativity, Innovation and Design program, and the WIN - What I Need - program will be offered daily to students for enrichment and acceleration of literacy, math concepts and skills. Attendees then broke into grade levels as representative teachers explained curriculum progression, instructional resources, assessment, grading and homework.

Parents in attendance expressed appreciation for the opportunity provided by the Curriculum Nights and the information shared.



NCAA requirements focus of high school parent presentation

High school guidance counselor Laura Montecalvo hosted an NCAA Division I and II information night for parents of potential collegiate student athletes November 9. Topics included NCAA requirements and eligibility, as well as a high school check list. Montecalvo's presentation may be found on the high school guidance web site page.

Parents attend an information night on college athletics.



#WeAreWestA

West Allegheny's online academy offers solutions and flexibility

Now in its seventh year, the West Allegheny Virtual Academy continues to provide an alternative learning platform for West Allegheny students in grades K through 12. The online learning environment offers flexible solutions to address every child's unique needs. Courses are taught by highly qualified, Pennsylvania-certified teachers. By aligning to the District's curriculum and graduation requirements, students are able to continue down an academic pathway that fits their personal preferences for learning that include:

Full-time: WAVA provides a comprehensive online educational program that students can work on anytime, anywhere; yet still enjoy the benefits of West Allegheny highly qualified teachers facilitating their courses. WAVA students work with their school counselor to guide them through academic planning and career and college readiness.

Hybrid (Part-time): The WAVA hybrid model allows students the flexibility to take some classes at school while engaging in other classes online. This schedule is well-suited for students who need or want flexibility due to medical problems, work obligations or other factors.

Summer School: West Allegheny offers its own summer school for students who are in need of credit recovery or want to accelerate their learning for a nominal fee. Students should talk with their school counselor to determine if this option is right for them.

WAVA courses are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week so students are able to work from home and still participate in extra-curricular activities such as sports sponsored by the District. Upon completion of their graduation requirements, all WAVA students are awarded a West Allegheny High School diploma and are eligible to participate in commencement exercises.

Free to all West Allegheny students, WAVA does not cost the District additional funds. West Allegheny residents may not be aware that when students leave the District to attend an outside

cyber or charter school, the District is required by law to pay over \$11,000 per regular education student and \$20,000 per special education student in tuition.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is my child eligible to enroll in WAVA?

Any student in grades K through 12 residing in the West Allegheny School District can enroll. If a student has an Individual Education Plan, a team meeting must be held prior to enrollment.

Is there a cost to attend WAVA?

No. As a public school, West Allegheny students can take regular online courses completely free of charge during the school year.

Are there opportunities for social activities for students in WAVA?

Since all online students are members of the West Allegheny School District, they have the opportunity to participate in any activities offered by the schools, including sports, clubs, dances and more.

How much time do students spend doing school work during the day/year?

All students in the WAVA program follow the District calendar for beginning and end dates, as well as grading periods. Students are expected to work in their classes for 180 days, as required by the state of Pennsylvania. All courses are created to meet this requirement and a daily calendar is provided to enable students to remain on target for attendance and completion of courses. The average time spent is about 40 minutes per day, per course.

Can WAVA students enroll in Parkway West Career and Technology Center courses?

Yes. We encourage students to pick the path that best fits their learning needs. Vocational-technical students may participate in either online or traditional courses.

For more information on WAVA and its online course offerings, contact Toni Baldanzi, supervisor of ancillary programs, at (724) 695-7368 ext. 3702.



Candace Vaughn poses at West Allegheny's 2016 Commencement Ceremony with Toni Baldanzi, supervisor of ancillary programs. Vaughn maintained dual enrollment at WAVA and Parkway West Career and Technology Center.

#WeAreStudentStrong

Students embrace Peer-2-Peer Empowerment Program

West Allegheny students involved in the Peer-2-Peer Empowerment Program participated October 4 in one of two yearly workshops. The program is designed to help young people develop skills to deal with social justice issues associated with adolescence. Students took the initiative to be leaders and to develop a program that addresses issues in their school or community. They will work as part of a team to make social change through positive projects.

West Allegheny students joined 15 other districts at the new North Fayette Community Center, where they began brainstorming and developing a plan for the multi-district project. This year, the project is centered around teen dating violence. Districts will partner with both Crisis Center North and Dr. Cuccia, the father of a teen dating violence victim. Together, they will work to promote awareness and present a team action plan to increase youth ownership of this prevention in families, schools and community.

The Peer-2-Peer project will be completed in early February and presented in April.



Peer-2-Peer teams brainstorm on their projects.

High school's production of "Babes in Toyland" entertains audiences



The "Babes in Toyland" cast and crew pose for a group photo.

Audiences of all ages were entertained by this year's fall play, "Babes in Toyland," which is written by playwright Rebecca Ryland. A talented cast of high school students portrayed the play's characters with cartoon-like humor and mystery. With record attendance, the show ran for three performances in November.

Cast members were: Casey Bachowski, Caleb Bartholow, Lauren Bayer, Max Bruce-Rudge, Lucia Bruschi, Sydney Campbell, Mackenzie Gillie, Gabriella Hatch, Madison Johnson, Makayla Mascellino, Nick Morrison, Abhilasha Raghuvanshi, Brandon Raglow, Danielle Rance, Victoria Sadauskas, Rachel Schade, Claire Shemon, Hayden Shipley, Jeremy Taranto and Catherine Wheatley.

Mike Shaffer served as producer/director. Stephanie White, Lauren Barry, Joseph Sible, Sandy Pittinaro and Mike Short served as supporting directors.

West Allegheny hosts Sweet Harmony Choral Festival



Nineteen students represented West Allegheny during the Sweet Harmony Choral Festival, which was hosted by the District.

West Allegheny was proud to host 120 female students from 15 schools at the first Sweet Harmony Choral Festival the District has held since 1989. The daylong festival was held on November 4 with multiple rehearsal sessions throughout the day that culminated in a performance for parents.

Dr. Caron Daley, director of Choral Activities at Duquesne University, served as guest conductor. Members of the University of Pittsburgh Women's Choral Ensemble were guest performers under the direction of Lorraine Milovac.

The festival was held for female students in grades six through nine and was sponsored by the American Choral Directors Association of Pennsylvania. Meagan Bruno served as festival host and Andrew Peters served as festival registrar and co-host.



Grim Reaper Day impacts students

An average of 10 teens are killed in a crash every day in the U.S. On October 27, school resource officer Sgt. Mike Hayes, sponsor Carol Bookmiller and the SADD club organized and sponsored Grim Reaper Day to demonstrate the impact of this statistic.

Following a theme identified by the national program, student Matt Holmes dressed as the Grim Reaper and randomly selected 10 students who then wore a Grim Reaper shirt, had their faces painted and were not permitted to talk the rest of the day. Those students each symbolized one of those 10 teens who are killed each day in the U.S.

Grim Reaper Day is a national program that has been sponsored by the SADD club for several years.

WAMS Winter Warm-Up benefits families in need

Sixth grade students and staff organized the WAMS Winter Warm-Up by collecting several boxes of hats, gloves, scarves and coats, as well as monetary donations, for community families in need this winter season. Homerooms collected donations from October 14 through November 10 and paper glove cutouts were added to the bulletin board to show participation.

Sixth grade students proudly display just a few of the boxes of donated items.



Student Matt Holmes, dressed as the Grim Reaper, visited classrooms and selected students. Those students had their faces painted to symbolize one of the 10 teens killed each year in automobile accidents in the U.S.

Reading is a Treasure Night sails into McKee



Principal Tom Orr and teacher Kirsten Davis welcome guests to Reading is a Treasure Night.

McKee staff and PTA came together November 3 to host their annual Reading Night, which this year was themed Reading is a Treasure. Principal Tom Orr and McKee staff, dressed as pirates, helped the PTA organize activities that included a book raffle, scavenger hunt, crafts, pirate-themed snacks, storyteller Mike Perry and musician Paul DeBor. Attendees were also asked to donate canned goods to benefit the West Allegheny Food Pantry. Approximately 100 families attended the evening's activities.

McKee families work on their pirate-themed crafts.



Drug-free message is focus of Wilson Red Ribbon Week

Wilson Elementary students and staff celebrated Red Ribbon Week from October 24 through 28 to promote drug-free messages. The initiative encourages students to make good lifestyle choices. This year's theme was: Be Responsible, Be Respectful, Be Drug Free.

Event coordinator and guidance counselor Kathy Taylor worked to raise student awareness with a variety of themes promoting anti-drug messages. They were:

Red-y to be Drug Free - Red Clothing Day

Sock it to Drugs Day - Crazy Sock Day

Follow your Dreams, Don't Do Drugs - Pajama Day

I Have the Power to be Drug Free - Super Hero Day

Team Up Against Drugs - Favorite Team Jersey

Red Ribbon Week is celebrated throughout the District.



Students Eden Shottling, Mia Mangieri, Nevina Waldorf and Juliana Carbone take Crazy Sock Day to a whole new level.

Donaldson honors veterans during annual celebration

Fifth grade students at Donaldson Elementary School honored veterans with a touching celebration November 9 in recognition of Veterans Day. In addition to presentations, students shared their research on U.S. symbols and monuments. They also performed patriotic music selections.

To culminate the learning, veterans and their families were invited to a tribute, during which students presented their research and messages. Students honored each military member as they were introduced with a meaningful and memorable history of their service. As honorees were introduced, they were presented with a gift of appreciation.

Former Donaldson students and members of the high school JROTC were on hand to lead attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.



ABOVE: JROTC students lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

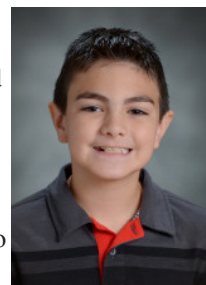
BELOW: Donaldson fifth grade students celebrate Veterans Day with patriotic songs.



Student editor praised by Amazon

Sixth-grader Dominic Fiordilino has accomplished something few students his age have; he has edited two children's books, for which he has been recognized by Amazon. Fiordilino's uncle Daniel David Elles is the self-published children's author of the Elvis the Pug series, in which he shares important school and life lessons through his dog's adventures.

To relate to children, Elles recruited his nephew to edit his books "Lost in Canada" and "Bullies are Bad . . . Kids R. Kool." Fiordilino not only edited the text but also provided input to help shape the series. Once the book was published and listed on Amazon, the series and Fiordilino were recognized by members of the company's



Dominic Fiordilino

editorial review, which gave both high marks and praise. The books were created for children ages 7 to 11 and are available on Amazon.

#WeAreTeacherProud

Indians excel in post-season

As the WPIAL season wound to a close, two West Allegheny teams came out on top. In football, history was made when the Indians claimed a 38-37 victory over McKeesport in a thrilling overtime finish at Heinz Field on November 18. The win marks West Allegheny's eighth WPIAL title, all won under head coach Bob Palko, who is the first coach in league history to reach that milestone. Both teams battled to the end but it was a gutsy two-point conversion that won the game. The gamble paid off when quarterback Nick Ross ran it in for the win. The win qualified the team for the first round of the PIAA playoffs against Meadville.

The girls volleyball team laid claim to the AAA WPIAL title, edging out the Hampton Talbots 3-1 on November 5. That marked the program's third WPIAL trophy, after winning back-to-back championships in 2008 and 2009. The girls continued a winning streak, advancing past Punxsutawney with a 3-0 win in the first round of PIAA play and past Knoch in the quarterfinal, also with a 3-0 win. In a hard-fought semi-final game, Somerset came out on top 3-2 to end the team's season.

In boys soccer, the team registered a 3-0 victory over Belle Vernon to advance past the first round of WPIAL AAA play. In the quarterfinal round, the team fell in a tight game to neighbor Chartiers Valley, 1-0.

Junior Maddie Salek advanced to the PIAA cross-country finals at Hershey after registering a qualifying time in the WPIAL finals at Coopers Lake on October 27.

With the winter sports season well under way, the athletic department wishes all of its teams good luck.



ABOVE: The football team celebrates its 5A WPIAL championship win over McKeesport.



RIGHT: The girls volleyball team displays their AAA WPIAL championship trophy.

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All material has been prepared, written, or edited by
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Rosedale Technical College

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We are very excited to
offer unique craft
programs to the
township this winter
and spring. Findlay
residents Josh & Jennifer
Miller have launched a

new company, Hobby Prodigy, and we are
excited to be partnering with them. Hobby Prodigy,
founded in Imperial, was created to bring out the
creative genius in all of us. Guests will have the
opportunity to create their own brilliant DIY projects at
different venues, including, homes, centers or offices in
the Pittsburgh area. View projects and register at
www.hobbyprodigy.com. Classes are
scheduled for January 12th and 13th at the
Findlay Township Activity Center.
You can also call the township if
you need more information
or to register.



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TUESDAY ADULT CANVAS CLASSES

Classes held 6-8 PM
Findlay Township Activity Center,
310 Main Street, Imperial
December 6th, January 10th and February 7th
\$30 per person
Register online: www.createacanvaspgh.com

CHILDREN'S PAINTING CLASSES

Classes held 10 AM-NOON
Findlay Township Activity Center,
310 Main Street, Imperial
Ages 6 and up
January 14th and February 11th
\$20 per child
Register online: www.createacanvaspgh.com



Holiday Guide

Festive events in and around your area



Local light-up nights

Clark Griswold's got nothing on these community light-up events, which bring together neighborhoods to celebrate the holidays. Get the family in the car, put on some holiday music and head out to these to enjoy the twinkling lights of the season.

Christmas Light-Up

in Clinton Park, 600 Clinton Park Drive off Route 30 in Clinton, **5-10 p.m. nightly through Jan. 1,** \$10/car, mile-long drive-through light-up display winds through the woodlands in Clinton Park, hayrides available, benefits local charitable organizations, visit website for special program schedule, christmaslightup.com.com, (724) 899-3602 to volunteer, (724) 899-3159 for hayrides.



The Christmas Light-Up in Clinton Park features light-up displays along a mile-long route.

27th Annual Woodland Ridge Light-Up Night, Dec. 11, 7 p.m., Woodland Ridge Community on Tiffany Ridge Drive off Thorn Run Road in Moon Township, drive-through residential light-up night with judged decorating contest and luminaires lining the streets, free.

Pittsburgh Technical College

Holiday Light Show, Dec. 7-Jan. 3, 4-11 p.m. nightly, PTC campus in Oakdale, tune to PTC Radio at 96.3FM and listen to rock versions of holiday classics while enjoying the glow of 25,000 lights, display by electronics students and faculty, www.ptcollege.edu.



Electronics students at Pittsburgh Technical College create this annual display on the school's campus.

Visits with Santa, breakfasts, cookie sales and more



The holidays are time for a number of things, among them taking the kids to visit with Santa and eating lots of good - albeit often unhealthy - food. Some of these area events combine the best of both worlds.

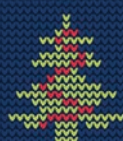
The Mall at Robinson Photos with Santa, Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Santa breaks 1-2 p.m. and 5-6 p.m., Sunday, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Santa breaks 2-3 p.m., Santa set closed Thanksgiving, same-day reservations available, see page 39.

Brunch with Santa, Dec. 10, Courtyard by Marriott Pittsburgh Airport, two seatings available at 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., box brunch, crafts, photos with Santa, \$10/person, call Moon Parks office to register: (412) 262-1703.

Kennedy VFD Pancake Breakfast with Santa, Dec. 11, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., French toast, sausage, more, Kennedy Township's annual Christmas event benefits Kennedy VFD, visit and take photos with Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus, treats, goodies, special treats for children, fire station tours, \$7 adults, \$4 children, Mitch Galiyas, (412) 787-5422.

SNPT Club Children's Christmas Party, Dec. 11, 1-3 p.m., food, games, music, visit from Ol' Saint Nick, in the Imperial Room, open to the public, (724) 695-1411, snjimperialpa.com, imperialproomsnpj.com.

Sixth Annual Holiday Pancake Breakfast and Cookie Walk, Dec. 18, 8 a.m.-12 p.m., Moon Area High School Cafeteria, \$7 in advance, \$8 at door, children 5 and under free, pancakes, sausage, juice and coffee, cookie walk container for \$10, walk through cafeteria and fill with homemade cookies, fundraising@moonband.org for advanced tickets, benefits Moon Area High School marching band.



Holiday concerts and shows



Check out these area shows and concerts for some live entertainment celebrating the holiday season.

"Christmas on the Fung-Wah" (A Musical in One Act), Dec. 10, 6 p.m., Dec. 11, 9 a.m., 11 a.m., 6 p.m., West Ridge Christian Community Church in Coraopolis, it's Christmas Eve when five people traveling from Chinatown in New York City to Boston on the Fung-Wah Bus get stranded in Connecticut and discover the true meaning of home, (724) 695-7500.

West Hills Symphonic Band Holiday Concert, Dec. 11, 3 p.m., "Our Gift Uplifts, The Beloved Music of Christmas," West Allegheny High School auditorium, traditional secular and sacred holiday favorites, "Carol of the Bells," "It's the Most Wonderful Time," "Bring a Torch," "The Skater's Waltz," "Sleigh Ride," free event.

"The Nutcracker," by Carnegie Performing Arts Center

Andrew Carnegie Free Library and Music Hall, Dec. 6-18, 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays, 41st performance with 60 area dance students ages 5-adult, Montour student Allison Vicker plays the part of Clara, \$15 adults, \$12 seniors and children, purchase at door, raffle, Chinese auction, (412) 279-8887, www.carnegieperformingartscenter.com.



Montour freshman Allison Vicker plays the role of Clara in "The Nutcracker."

Dan Hanczar Christmas Concert, Dec. 19, 7 p.m., The Rock community center in Oakdale, with the Trinity Jazz Orchestra and Dan Hanczar Orchestra performing music from their new Christmas album, (724) 693-8241, hanczar@verizon.net.

Continued on next page >>

Concerts and Shows

(continued)

"The Nutcracker" by Karen Prunzik's Broadway Dance Studio, Dec. 17,

7 p.m., December 18, 2 p.m., Carlynton High School; Tchaikovsky's iconic score pairs with a magical growing tree, opulent costumes, snowflakes that blanket the stage and the enchanting performances by Karen Prunzik's Broadway Dance Studio and Performing Arts students; call or email for group rates of \$10/person for seniors in groups of 10 or more, (412) 920-1841, prunziksbroadwaydance.klyn@gmail.com, \$18 adults, \$12 children, buy at www.tututix.com/client/karenprunziks.



Head to the SNPJ Club in Imperial

You don't have to be a member of SNPJ Lodge 106 in Imperial to attend one of these upcoming seasonal programs. Stop in during any of them to enjoy some food and live entertainment. There's also a brunch with Santa for the kids **Dec. 10** (see page 37).

Here are some upcoming holiday programs for the adults:

SNPJ Club Adult Christmas Party, Dec. 17, food and prizes, in the Imperial Room, open to the public, (724) 695-1411, snpjimperialpa.com, imperialpoomsnpj.com.

SNPJ Club New Year's Eve Party, Dec. 31, 8 p.m.-1 a.m., entertainment by the Party of 5, extensive buffet, party favors, pork and sauerkraut at midnight, ages 21+, reservations required, block of rooms being secured for party-goers, inquire when making reservations, \$35/person, purchase in club room, open to the public, (724) 695-1411, snpjimperialpa.com, imperialpoomsnpj.com.



Philanthropy

It's often been said that Christmas is a time to consider those in need. Amidst all the other things competing for our attention during the holiday season, that message sometimes gets lost. Want to give back? Consider these charitable efforts.



LifeSpan Cookie Drive, through Dec. 11, asking for holiday cookies for Meals on Wheels deliveries, drop off at Imperial Plaza location, (412) 464-1300.

Toys for Tots Collection, through Dec. 16, 7:30 a.m.-11:30 p.m. daily, Kennedy Township Police Department, drop off new, unwrapped toys for children in need, (412) 331-2408.

Parkway West Rotary Angel Tree Project, donate through Dec. 16; fulfills wish list items for Girls Hope, Partners for Quality, Salvation Army, families in need; call for wish list items, drop-off at Kennedy Township Police Department, (412) 458-0639.

Shoebbox for Veterans, through Dec. 21, fill a shoebox for a veteran and mark male or female, drop-off at Oakdale Municipal Building **8 a.m.-4 p.m.,** body wash, deodorant, shaving cream/razors, denture adhesive/cleaner, mouthwash (no alcohol), hats/gloves/socks, sweats/shirts/pants/hoodies, t-shirts, underwear/shoes (Velcro), snacks (granola/pretzels), games for two or more, art supplies, reading glasses, stamps, plastic shoebox preferred, (724) 693-9740.

Shopping



Lincoln Avenue Arts

Looking for a one-of-a-kind gift for someone on your shopping list? Then check out Lincoln Avenue Arts in the heart of McDonald. This artist-run store offers unique, handmade creations, including artwork, stained glass, jewelry, clothing, accessories and much more. Sales support the local artists who operate the shop.

Lincoln Avenue Arts heads into this holiday season after celebrating its 10th anniversary in July. Holiday hours are **10 a.m.-8 p.m. on Thursdays and 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.** Be sure to check them out on Facebook.



Lincoln Avenue Arts offers an eclectic selection of handmade creations from area artists. Stop in during their holiday hours.

Lincoln Avenue Arts

Unique Creations by Local Artists

- Paintings/Photographs
- Notecards/Stained Glass
- Gourd Art/Floral Arrangements
- Jewelry/Quilted Purses
- Knitted Hats/Christian Music CDs
- Handmade Soaps

110 West Lincoln Avenue, McDonald ~ <http://lincolnavenuearts.com>

724-926-4617 or 724-554-5961

STORE HOURS: Thurs thru Sat 10 am-4 pm

Additional Holiday Hours! Thursdays open til 8 pm
Open December 18-23
10 am - 4 pm

Look for holiday programs at the library, events posted on page 41.



THE MALL
AT ROBINSON

PHOTOS WITH SANTA

Monday-Saturday: 10am-9pm Santa breaks 1-2 & 5-6

Sunday: 11am-6pm, break from 2-3

Santa Set Closed Thanksgiving Day

Why wait?

Make your same-day reservation with
Santa today and come back at your scheduled time!

ShopMallatRobinson.com |    



West Allegheny Youth Soccer Association

Spring 2017 REGISTRATION

Season starts late March

DEADLINE: February 7th

(Registration for in-house players only will be accepted until February 21 with a \$25 late fee.)

Travel players must register by February 7th.

Child must turn 4 years old in 2016

NO EXCEPTIONS

Visit www.westasoccer.com
for age chart and more information

BIRTH YEAR AGE GROUPS

Players born 2012 / NO GAMES Academy Practices (6 weeks/12 sessions)	Wednesday 6:00 – 7:00 pm	Saturday 10:00 – 11:00 am	\$80.00
Players born in 2011 Practices and Games			
Players born in 2010 & 2009*	Tuesday 6:00 – 7:00 pm	Saturday 11:15 am-12:15 pm	\$80.00
Players born in 2008 & 2007*	Monday 6:15 – 7:15 pm	Saturday 8:30-9:30 am	\$80.00
2008 & 2007 Co-Ed Travel Team	See website for more information	Sunday afternoon games	\$85.00
*additional skills training by PSA (2007, 2008, 2009, 2010)	Thursday 6:15 - 7:45 pm	4 sessions	Included!
Travel (2006 & earlier)	TBD practice day and location	Sunday afternoon games	\$85.00

**PLEASE NOTE
PROGRAM
CHANGES TO
CONFORM
WITH U.S.
SOCCER'S NEW
BIRTH YEAR
MANDATE**

Ways to Register:

- Go to: www.westasoccer.com
(Register on-line and SAVE \$10.00)
No longer an additional fee for credit card payments

- Print registration form on website and mail to P.O. Box

- January 28th at WA Community Library from 10-12.

Questions Call Heather Chappel (724) 693-2536 OR Liz Pons (412) 716-8000

Email: westasoccer1@gmail.com

Financial assistance may be available to those that qualify. Contact Doug G at (724) 826-2270 to inquire





LIBRARY PROGRAMS & SPECIAL EVENTS

HOLIDAY SALE

Through Dec. 23

Our annual Holiday Sale begins after Thanksgiving and runs through Dec. 23. A variety of crafts, books, gift baskets and goodies of all sorts will be available for purchase. All proceeds benefit the library. 'Tis the season for giving - and giving back!

HOLIDAY SHOPPING PARENTS' DAY OUT

Saturday, Dec. 10, 12-3 p.m.

Drop your little ones off at the library and head out for an uninterrupted shopping afternoon! Children ages 4-12 (must be potty-trained) are welcome for activities, snacks and a movie! A great way for you to have a day out, for your kids to have fun at the library, and for us to raise money for future programs and books. It's a win-win-win! Payment is due at the time of drop off (credit/debit cards preferred). Please register ahead of time. Be sure to complete our event information form online, which includes some pertinent health information and a parental waiver.

LIBRARY HOLIDAY HOURS

Dec. 24-26: Closed for Christmas

The library will be CLOSED Saturday, Dec. 24 through Monday, Dec. 26 in celebration of the Christmas holidays. The book drop is available 24/7 for your returns, as is the online catalog. You can also request books or renew your items on our new app. **Haven't downloaded the app yet?** Search for "WACL Mobile" in your device's app store, either iOS or Android. It's a free download and makes sure you have access to your library on the go, every day, all the time!

SAVE THE DATE: Library Programs Coming in 2017

Save the dates for these upcoming 2017 library programs! See our website at www.WesternAlleghenyLibrary.org for details and to sign up in the new year.

Get Organized for Good: Reducing Clutter to Live a Simpler Life

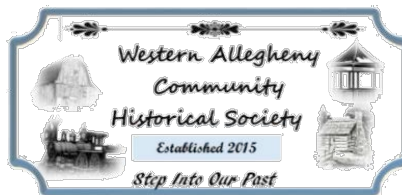
Wednesday, Jan. 18, 6:30 p.m.

Presented by Jill Yesko from Discover Organizing, this interactive presentation will provide attendees with step-by-step de-cluttering and organizing instruction, with the planet in mind. Yesko will share Pittsburgh resources for recycling, selling and donating household items, and show you sure-fire methods to simplify your home.

"History Hounds" Scavenger Hunt @ the Library

Saturday, Jan. 28, 10 a.m.

Join Gary Adams and Rob Hilt, aka "The History Hounds," as they lead us on a scavenger hunt at the library. Their love of saving lost history through the use of metal detecting has provided the educational aspect of preserving history by examining the ground on which we walk. Sponsored by Western Allegheny Community Historical Society.



After Hours Game Night: Capture the Flag!

Friday, Feb. 3, 6 p.m.

Looking for an excuse to dust off your Nerf blasters? We've got you covered! We are taking over the library after hours for a cutthroat game of capture the flag. Bring your own un-modded blasters. Open to anyone 21 or older.

Destination Disney: Planning a Magical Trip

Wednesday, Feb. 8, 6:30 p.m.

Presented by Cruise Planners



CRUISE PLANNERS

ONGOING PROGRAMS

ADULT

"Who Done It?" Book Club

1st Mondays, 6:30 p.m.

Ornament of the Month Club

1st Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.

Bookworms

2nd Wednesdays, 1 p.m.

Forever Fiction

3rd Mondays, 6:30 p.m.

Brown Bag Movie Nights

3rd Tuesdays, 5:30 p.m.

Anime & Manga Club

4th Tuesdays, 6 p.m.

TEEN

Geek Club

Every other Tuesday, 4:30 p.m.

YOUTH & FAMILY

Baby Circle Time

Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m.

Toddler Storytime

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Preschool Storytime

Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.

Location:

181 Bateman Road
Oakdale, PA 15071

Library Hours:

Monday -Thursday: 9 a.m.- 8 p.m.
Friday-Saturday: 9 a.m. -4 p.m.
Sunday: 1 p.m.-5 p.m.



WESTERN
ALLEGHENY
COMMUNITY
LIBRARY

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. Programs take place at the North Fayette Community Center at Donaldson Park, unless otherwise noted.

New programs/events and leagues

are coming in the fall/winter at the new North Fayette Community Center. Contact the recreation department for more information.

Adult/Senior Programs

Fitness classes are offered **Monday through Saturday**. Check website to stay up to date.

Pickle Ball, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9-10:30 a.m., Mondays, 7:30-9 p.m., free with membership.

Water Walking, Monday-Thursday, 6-8 p.m., Donaldson Elementary School, \$2/session, ages 18+.

Water Aerobics, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5-6 p.m., Donaldson Elementary School, \$2/session or Medical Insurance Card, ages 18+.

Senior Luncheons, second Wednesdays, doors open 11:30 a.m., \$5, entertainment Dec. 14, Jan. 11, Feb. 8.

Senior Strut and Sculpt, Wednesdays, 10-11 a.m., free with membership.

Youth Programs After School Programming 2016-2017

3-5:30 p.m., K-8 programs designed to provide a safe environment for children after school, transportation provided from schools to community center when school is in session, information and paperwork available at north-fayette.com.

PALS, Fridays, Providing Assistance Love and Support, volunteer organization dedicated to developing and facilitating structured recreational opportunities for children with special needs, call for program information.

Girls Developmental Volleyball League, Wednesdays through Feb. 1, ages 9-12: 5:30-7 p.m., ages 12-15: 7-8:30 p.m.

Youth Basketball League, Thursdays through Feb. 2, grades K-2: 6-7 p.m., grades 3-4: 7-8 p.m., grades 5-6: 8-9 p.m.

Super Kids Soccer, through Dec. 20, Tuesdays, ages 3-8: 5:30-7:30 p.m., Mondays, ages 3-5: 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Indoor Flag Football League, Saturdays, ages 6-8: 9 a.m., ages 9-11: 11 a.m., ages 12-14: 1 p.m.

Floor Hockey League, Sundays beginning Jan. 8, ages 6-8: 11 a.m., ages 9-11: 1 p.m., ages 12-14: 3 p.m.

Youth Floor Hockey, Tuesdays, Jan. 3-Feb. 7, ages 3-5: 5:30-6:30 p.m., ages 6-8: 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Youth Basketball with Chad Cantor, Sundays through Jan. 15, ages 4-6: 3:30-5:30 p.m. (times vary).

Findlay Township

Hobby Prodigy, Jan. 12, 13, Findlay residents Josh and Jennifer Miller lead participants through a DIY project, www.hobbyprodigy.com, call township for more information and to register, see page 36 for ad.

Create A Canvas, create a monthly painting with friends, BYOB, snacks, materials and instruction provided, cac.eatdrinkpaint@gmail.com, (724) 454-0615, register and pay online: www.createacanvaspgh.com, adult classes held on **second Tuesdays (except November)**, 6-8 p.m., Oct. 11, Dec. 6, Jan. 10, Feb. 7, \$30/person, children's classes held **second Saturdays**, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., ages 6 and up, Jan. 14, Feb. 11, \$20/child, www.createacanvaspgh.com, see page 36 for ad.

2017 Pavilion Rentals, begins Feb. 4 for residents, 9 a.m.-11 a.m., township office in Clinton, bring two checks for rental fee of \$60/\$25 refundable deposit, call for pricing on new pavilion, reserve online starting Feb. 6, www.findlay.pa.us., non-residents starts April 1, rental fee \$85/\$25 deposit.

Looking for holiday events? See our holiday guide, starting on page 37.



Semi-Super Morning Bingo, Jan. 13, Feb. 24, doors open 9 a.m., bingo starts 10 a.m., \$10/packet, includes one triple card for each regular game and one triple card for each special, additional packets \$5, overall jackpots \$1, dobbers available for purchase.

YOGA for Beginners and Beyond, Fridays except March 24, 6:30-7:30 p.m., \$5/class, exercise, stretch and meditate, (724) 695-1976.

Senior Yoga and Qi Gong, Thursdays, 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m., stretches and flow will be performed from a chair or seated on the ground, some standing, for all participants, great for older adults, Info@idtsd.net, free.

Walk 15™, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6-7 p.m., Donna Kuzio opens the doors to a better way of health and weight loss through indoor walk classes, \$5/class, kuziofjr@gmail.com to register or call Findlay Township Recreation Department.

Water Aerobics, Mondays and Wednesdays, 6-7 p.m., Wilson Elementary School, winter session begins **January 30**, spring session follows in **April**, call or email parks and recreation to register and for schedule/fees.

Scrapbooking Workshop, Jan. 7, 9 a.m.-9 p.m., enjoy uninterrupted time dedicated to safely protecting your photos and memorabilia, bring tools and supplies, registration required, Michelle Koester, (724) 307-3333, michellekoestercm@comcast.net, \$60, includes lunch, dinner, beverages.

Time for Toddlers, Mondays: Jan. 9, 23; Tuesdays: Jan. 10, 24; 10:15-11:15 a.m., one hour of movement, music, activities, adult must stay with child, registration required, follows WA school cancellation schedule, \$3/session.

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Little Sprouts Cooking Class, Jan. 25, 11:30-12:30 a.m., age-appropriate activities get little ones preparing healthy snacks, ages 3-5, \$6/child, registration required, call ahead, class size limited, no walk-ins.

Kids' Creative Cooking, Jan. 25, 4-5:15 p.m., grades K-5, hands-on class introduces participants to the preparation of a variety of easy and delicious seasonal recipes that satisfy afterschool hunger pangs, \$8/class, payment taken at class, register at least two days prior, class size limited, no walk-ins.

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Montour Trail monitors needed, Jesse Forquer, jforquer@comcast.net.

Greater Pittsburgh Football Officials Association, seeking new officials for youth, scholastic, college and semi-pro levels, Mike Conlon, (412) 398-6545.

Heritage Public Library Friend's Group Steeler Ticket Raffle, two tickets to the Steelers versus Browns game Jan. 1, benefits library, purchase tickets at library, 52 Fourth St., McDonald, heritagelibrary@comcast.net, (724) 926-8400.

Oakdale Parents of Scouting Funny Fundraiser, Jan. 21, Oakdale Community Center, doors open 6 p.m., dinner 6:30 p.m., show 7:30 p.m., with: Matt Stanton (Clean Guys of Comedy), Tom Anzalone (International Musical Comedy Superstar), David Kaye (Comedy Central), 50/50, prize raffles, \$25 single, \$40 pair, includes appetizer, dinner buffet, draft beer, BYOB, (412) 848-0627, slapstickproductions.com.

DAR Jacob Ferree Chapter Programs - Historical Preservation, Feb. 11, 11 a.m., with Marilyn Holt of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, RSVP by Feb. 8, contact Ruth Pickett at (724) 538-4623 or email rpickett12351@embarqmail.com.

Bar Bingo at the SNPJ Club, for members and guests, first and third Thursdays, early bird games start 6:30 p.m., regular games 7 p.m., play until 9 p.m., kitchen open. SNPJ Lodge 106, Memberships available to the public at clubroom door. For more, (724) 695-1411, snpjimperialpa.com, imperialroomsnpj.com.

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As a community publication, Allegheny West Magazine encourages complimentary submissions of informational school news, and informational (non-promotional) news from community groups, nonprofit organizations and churches. Please submit via e-mail to: info@awmagazine.com.

HealthSouth Support Groups

Meetings take place at HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Sewickley. For more information, call Michelle McCann, (412) 749-2388. Call to confirm meeting dates on holidays.

Brain Injury & Stroke Support Group, third Wednesdays, noon-1:15 p.m., free lunch provided, call in advance if dietary modifications are required.

Amputee Support Group, call for dates, 4-5:15 p.m., free refreshments provided.

• • • • •

LifeSpan Senior Resource Center

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., 540 Penn Lincoln Drive, Imperial (724) 218-1669, www.lifespanpa.org.

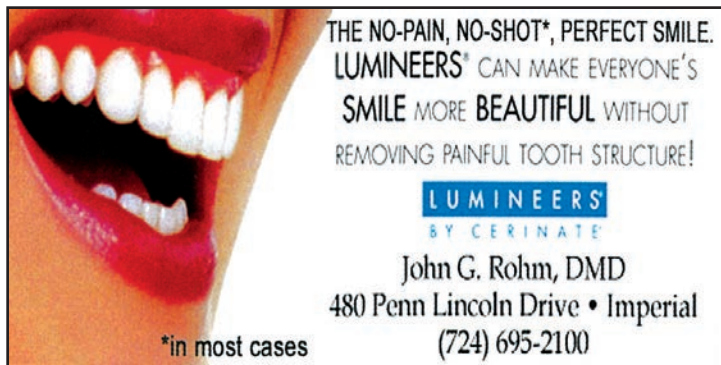
Salad bar, Mondays and Wednesdays, side \$2, lunch salad \$4.

Lunch served, 11:30 a.m., make reservations day prior by 11 a.m.

Weekly events: Wii bowling, lending library, senior computer area, WiFi Café, billiards, line dancing, card club, crochet/knitting club, Bunco, Spanish class, visit website for monthly menu and center activities.



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Worship EVERY Sunday 10:00am
December 18: Lessons and Carols
CHRISTMAS EVE
6:00 - 7:00pm and 8:00 - 9:00pm
140 Imperial Plaza Drive, Imperial PA 15126 | www.mosaicpgh.org |   

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One Winter Squash*

(*Acorn, butternut or spaghetti)

With \$5 minimum purchase in the Farm Market and w/this cpn. Expires 12/31/18.

Limit (1) Coupon Per Customer.

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The New

North Fayette Community Center

invites you to attend

Three Free Fitness Classes

Choose from:

Animal Movements - Boot Camp - Cardio Sculpt - Pickleball
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Visit www.north-fayette.com/departments/recreation
for class descriptions and schedule

Redeemed by: _____

Limit one offer per customer - must present this coupon
580 Donaldson Road, Oakdale, PA 15071
Valid through January 31, 2017

AW1210

We'd like to hear from you!

As a neighborhood based and community focused publication, Allegheny West Magazine encourages complimentary submission of informational school news, as well as informational (non-promotional) news from community groups, nonprofit organizations, and churches. Please submit via e-mail to: dhughey@awmagazine.com.

WA
ATHLETIC
HALL OF FAME

Sixth Annual Banquet

In support of
WA athletic programs

May 20, 6 p.m.

Nominate an Athlete, Coach or Contributor to the Hall of Fame by February 10, 2017!

Nominate online at awmagazine.com

Applications, sponsorships and tickets available at North Fayette and Findlay parks and rec, and Oakdale Boro Building.

(724) 307-3725

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Allegheny West Eye Care, p. 16, 724.695.3371, www.alleghenywesteyecare.com
Broadway Dance Studio, p. 47, www.prunziksbroadwaydancestudio.com; tickets: Tututix.com/KarenPrunziks
Business Legal, p. 10, 724.693.0588, www.businesslegal.net
Carousel Kennel, p. 13, 724.683.0794, www.carouselkennel.com
Clearview FCU, p. 9, 800.926.0003, clearviewfcu.org
Crossroads Church, p. 47, www.crossroadsumc.org
Davey Tree, p. 16, 724.746.8852, www.davey.com
DDS Web Design, p. 43, 412.965.0688, www.ddswebdesign.com
DiSanti, Dr. Judy, DMD., p. 42, 412.264.6229, www.coraopolisdentist.com
Express Employment Professionals, p. 23, 412.494.2000, expresspros.com
Family and Cosmetic Dentistry, p. 15, 724.695.8447, alleghenysmile.com
Findlay Republican Committee, p. 22, 412.310.1775
Findlay Township, p. 36, 724.695.0500, www.findlay.pa.us
First Steps Pediatrics, p. 16, 412.788.1999, www.fspkids.com
Heritage Valley Medical Group, p. bk. cover, 412.749.6934, www.heritagevalley.org
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Holy Trinity School, p. 26, 412.787.2656, www.holytrinityelementary.org
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Imperial Tax, p. 11, 724.695.7354, www.imperialtaxandaccounting.com
Industry Public House, p. 20, North Fayette: 412.490.9080; Lawrenceville: 412.683.1100
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Liechti, Fred E., Attorney, p. 45, 412.787.5280
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Oakdale Foot and Ankle, p. 13, 412.787.8380, www.oakdalepodiatrist.com
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Oakdale Youth League, p. 47, 412.327.4508, www.leaguelineup.com/oyl
Ohio Valley Hospital, p. 7, 412.250.2600 - Kennedy Twp., www.ovgh.org
Padgett Business Services, p. 16, 412.458.0639, www.padgettbusinessservices.com
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Pustover Financial Services, p. 8, 724.695.8885, www.pustoverfinancial.com
Rohm, John G., DMD, p. 43, 724.695.2100
Rosedale Tech, p. 35, 412.521.6200, www.rosedaletech.org
Self Storage North Fayette, p. 35, 724.695.8875, www.selfstoragenf.com
SNPI Lodge 106 Club, p. 35, 724.695.1411, www.snpjimperialpa.com
Strom Construction, p. 35, 412.474.3480, www.strom-construction.com
The Mall at Robinson, p. 39, ShopRobinsonMall.com
Thomas-Little Funeral Svc., p. 13, 724.926.2800, www.thomas-littlefuneralservice.com
Thrift Store, p. 45, 520 Rt. 30
Today's Hair, p. 36, 724.695.0478
Up in Arms Tattoo, p. 45, 412.264.3126, www.upinarmstattoo.com
WA Athletic Hall of Fame, p. 44
Weirton Medical Center, inside front cover, 412.505.8171, wmcphsphysicians.com
West Allegheny School District, p. 27, 724.695.3422, www.westasd.org
West Allegheny Youth Soccer Assoc., p. 40, www.westasoccer.com, see ad for phone contacts

FRED E. LIECHTI, JD, CPA
 Attorney-at-Law and Certified Public Accountant
 Business/Financial Law
 Tax Planning/Audits & Appeals
 Estate Planning & Administration
 Personal Injury
 Divorce/Family Law



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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

110 Bruno Lane, Imperial, PA 15126

(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

SNPJ 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

West Allegheny Youth Wrestling,

(724) 695-8132

CHURCHES

Church of The Living Christ

220 West Allegheny Road, Imperial, PA 15126

(724) 695-7188, www.cotlc.com

Church of the Nazarene

(moved to Florence) 1080 Steubenville Pike, Burgett-

stown, PA 15021

(724) 947-9223, www.nazarene.org

Clinton UP Church

25 Wilson Road, Clinton, PA 15026

(724) 695-7993

Clinton Wesleyan Church

1022 Clinton Road, Clinton, PA 15026

(724) 695-7076

Covenant Family Church

P. O. Box 15533, Pittsburgh, PA 15244

(724) 263-7147, www.covenantfamily.cc

(meets at Courtyard Pgh. Airport)

Cross Connections Alliance Church

201 Valley Street, McDonald, PA 15057

(724) 926-2453, www.crossconnectionsac.org

Crossroads Methodist Church

1000 Crossroads Drive, Oakdale, PA 15071

(412) 494-9999, www.crossroadsumc.org

First Baptist Church

141 N. McDonald Street, McDonald, PA 15057

(724) 926-4216

Hebron Presbyterian Church

1767 Route 30, Clinton, PA 15026

(725) 899-2276

Independent Bible Presbyterian Church

112 Dempe Street, McDonald, PA 15057

(724) 926-3355

Montours Presbyterian Church

3151 Montour Church Road, Oakdale, PA 15071,

(412) 787-1050, www.montourchurch.org

Mosaic Church

140 Imperial Plaza Dr., Imperial, PA 15126

(724) 695-3129, www.mosaicpgph.com

Noblestown United Methodist Church

7313 Noblestown Road, Oakdale, PA 15071

(724) 693-2755

Noblestown United

Presbyterian Church

7427 Noblestown Road, Oakdale, PA 15071

(724) 693-8250

Oakdale United Presbyterian Church

62 Hastings Avenue, Oakdale, PA 15071

(724) 693-8950

Rivers of Living Waters Church

7120 Steubenville Pike, Oakdale, PA 15071

(412) 787-1888, www.rolwc.tripod.com

Resurrection Lutheran Church

7600 Steubenville Pike, Oakdale, PA 15071

(412) 788-4513

St. Columbille Church

103 Church Road, Imperial, PA 15126

(724) 695-7325, www.saintcolumbkilleparish.org

St. Patrick's Church

7322 Noblestown Road, Oakdale, PA 15071

(724) 693-9260, www.saint-patrick-parish.com

The Church of Jesus Christ

57 Moore Road, Imperial, PA 15126

(724) 899-3935

The Bible Chapel

@ Pittsburgh Technical Institute

(724) 941-8990, ext. 124

www.robinson.biblechapel.org

Valley Presbyterian Church

237 Main Street, Imperial, PA 15126

(724) 695-0300, www.valleychurchweb.com

West Ridge Christian Community Church

100 Gorwood Drive, Coraopolis, PA 15108

(724) 695-7500, www.westridge.cc

Santa Claus vienne al pueblo

Just like children in the U.S., when children in Mexico see pictures of Santa, they see a red suit, red and white hat, round belly, white beard, glasses, a smile, and white skin.

For some children in Mexico, Sturge Sutton is that Santa. He became their Santa after planning his 2015 Christmas vacation to Mexico to visit his best friend, Arturo, an announcer for a radio station in Mazatlan, Mexico.

When Arturo's boss saw him talking with Sutton on Skype, he told Arturo to ask Sutton to be Santa for the station's charity Christmas party. Sutton said he would.

Santa Sturge began shopping for and shipping gifts to Mexico. He planned to fly to warm and sunny Mazatlan just days before Christmas. It was an exciting plan.

Then, an outbreak of dengue fever hit the town. Dengue, like Zika, is caused by mosquito bites. Sutton was already experiencing some medical problems and did not dare take the chance that he would be infected. The combination of the two put a halt to Santa Sturge's arrival in Mexico.

The party was cancelled but the gifts had all arrived and were waiting. The station also had 100 bags of candy ready to give to the children.

Plan B went into effect. Arturo would announce and invite children to come to the radio station on Christmas Day. During his three-hour program, the children could see Santa via Skype and receive the gifts he had sent, along with candy. Then they discovered the candy was missing. A friend at the station rushed out and bought 100 more bags of candy.

Blue-eyed Santa Sturge was dressed in his red suit and glasses. He has a real white beard. With his Christmas tree in the background, he sat in front of the Skype camera and computer. He was ready to say "ho-ho-ho" and delight the children, one-by-one.

That day, though, transportation to the station was made difficult by busy travelers occupying all the buses and taxis. No children arrived. Imagine the disappointment at the radio station and in Oakdale, where Sutton lives.

All seemed sadly over, until an hour later, when Sutton received a call from Arturo. He was going somewhere else with the gifts. He had gotten a call from their friend Bruno who owns a dog farm. Bruno grooms, trains and boards dogs. He had invited children from the city's orphanage to spend Christmas afternoon at his



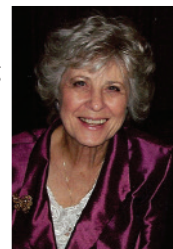
Oakdale's Sturge Sutton played Santa to children in Mazatlan, Mexico by sending them gifts, which were distributed to children spending the day on a dog farm. PHOTOS SUBMITTED



farm. This would be a perfect time and place for Santa's gifts. Bruno became Santa's helper, giving the gifts to the children. For most, the gifts were the only ones they would receive that Christmas.

Needless to say, the children were delighted. Plan C was a success. The gift of giving replaced feelings of disappointment.

A big-hearted man in western Allegheny County, who knows "God is good," helped spread Christmas joy in Mexico.



Christmas Heart.....

Trinity, age 4, made a Christmas decision.

She asked her mom, Christin, "Mom, would you mind if I give one of my Christmas presents to someone who did not get Christmas presents?"

Delightfully surprised, mom agreed it would be a nice thing for Trinity to do.

So on Christmas day, she opened her gifts from Santa. She chose the one she wanted another little girl to have. She helped her mom rewrap the chosen gift. They found a way to get the gift to a child in need. Trinity hoped she would be happy with it. This became a tradition for several years.

Now 11, Trinity's passion to share has not changed. She now looks for the red kettle, and the sound of the bell ringing and drops her allowance in that kettle.

Trinity, however, is not just about Christmas sharing. As soon as she grows out of her clothes, she helps her mom wash the clothes and she takes them to be donated. When she has outgrown her toys, she carefully cleans and donates them.

That makes Trinity smile and makes her mom and dad very proud of their daughter with a Christmas heart.

Christ Is Born!! Come Celebrate

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
With Communion – 7:00 p.m.






Christmas Day Service
10:00 a.m.

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heavenly peace

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December 24 • 2pm, 3:30pm, 5pm, 6:30pm, 8pm

www.crossroadsumc.org/christmas

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December 17th, 2016 at 7:00pm

December 18th, 2016 at 2:00pm

www.prunziksbroadwaydancestudio.com

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softball and baseball. The Oakdale

Youth League is the sponsor of the West Allegheny teams that
compete in the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Softball League.
The WPISL is a competitive slow pitch softball fall league offered by various school
districts. It is recognized, but not affiliated with, the West Allegheny School District.

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Sunday - January 29 - 12:00pm - 4:00pm

Wednesday - February 8 - 6:00pm - 7:00pm

Saturday - February 11 - 12:00pm - 4:00pm



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