

West Allegheny Edition

Allegheny West

Volume 16, Issue 92
October/November 2014

FREE Direct Mail Community Publication

Magazine

**TC House
reaches completion**

**TEAM RWB helps
returning veterans**

**Supporting the
911th and its traditions**

**Iraq War art exhibit
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Allegheny West Magazine - West Allegheny Edition, is an all positive, good news publication mailed free into the homes and businesses of the West Allegheny School District communities of Findlay, North Fayette, Oakdale, Sturgeon, and McDonald to connect communities, promote people, heighten awareness about the richness of the airport region, and build pride in the western suburbs of Allegheny County.



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On May 28, nine Junior Girl Scouts from Troop 54481 received their Bronze Awards, the third highest honor awarded within the organization. The Juniors, who attend West Allegheny Middle School, received the award after completing two years' worth of projects, including a secret Santa program for the elderly. For the West Allegheny Food Pantry, the troop crafted Christmas cards, made Halloween treats, and collected food, clothing, books and monetary donations. They also completed 20 hours of work with the pantry.

The projects culminated with Junior Scouts gathering peanut butter for the pantry, to the tune of 427 jars, which they presented to pantry treasurer Linda Stoner prior to receiving their Bronze Awards.

"We were so appreciative of the girls' efforts in donating that many jars of peanut butter," says Stoner. "The thoughtfulness and sense of community service in kids that young is a wonderful thing to witness."

Pictured at right are Rain Greene, Hannah Lapin, Karley Dunhoff, Alyssa Brajdic, troop leader Kim Wagner, Kaley Joseph, Myka Wright, West Allegheny Food Pantry Treasurer Linda Stoner, Hannah Wagner, troop leader Rachel Main, Emma Main and Alyssa Keefer. Not pictured is Izzy Richards.



From the Publisher

Doug Hughey,
Publisher and Editor

Dear Readers,

On Nov. 11, our country will celebrate Veterans Day, when we honor those who have served to protect our country's interests, both here and abroad.

As we were putting together our last couple of issues, we came across a number of stories about veterans in our area. We didn't necessarily intend to make a veterans' edition, but thanks to the selflessness of these individuals, it worked out that way. This month, we bring you three unique stories about veterans who are working to make a difference in our communities.

On page 30, read about Jeremiah Fountain, an Army veteran who found it difficult to return home after three years in the infantry and a deployment to Iraq. Now, Fountain is helping other area veterans connect through physically challenging activities. His efforts are in part driven by service members who found the transition home so difficult that they took their own lives.



In another story, we revisit the 911th Airlift Wing base. Every year, the base holds an annual event that's open to the family members of reservists stationed at the base. It almost didn't happen this year, due to a lack of funding. A local VFW post responded, though, and came up with money to help make it happen. What the day and the base mean to service members, and where the base stands as of now, we explore in this issue.

On page 10, read about a unique traveling art exhibit focusing on the Iraq War that honors veterans.

Be sure also to read the official West Allegheny School District newsletter on page 29, and a new, occasional historical column we've started on page 50.

As always, we've packed this magazine with as much good, useful, local news as possible. I hope you enjoy it.

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ABOUT THE COVER

The first day of autumn at Leopold Lake in Findlay Township.
Photo by Sarah Hughey.

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Changing of the guard at North Fayette Parks and Recreation

North Fayette Township's first parks and recreation director has retired. After seven years on the job, Bob Brozovich announced his decision in August. His retirement took effect Sept. 19.

"This was a decision that came real quick in the summertime," says Brozovich, who turned 60 Sept. 3.

Brozovich has since moved to Arizona, where he joins his two sons, Brett and Luc. Over the summer, Luc was hired as the head coach of the Arizona Red Hawks, a tier three, 16-21 hockey team made up of players from the western states. Bob's other son, Brett, is also a hockey coach in Arizona. After playing for four years at the Community College of Allegheny County, Brett now teaches skating in Arizona and is helping his younger brother coach the Red Hawks, says Bob. As his sons were growing up, Bob coached their teams and others over the course of 21 years.

"I've coached every age group from age six to 18," he says. "You want to have that shared experience [with your sons]."

Before accepting the job at North Fayette in 2007, Bob worked for the Penn Hills and Hampton Township parks and recreation departments. Before that, he was the first executive director of Variety, the Children's Charity. He served as a volunteer on Variety's board prior. The organization provides equipment, opportunities, and other services to children with disabilities.

In 2009, Brozovich started the Providing Assistance, Love and Support, or "PALS," group at North Fayette. The program provides recreational opportunities to children with special needs outside of a school setting. Its first event took place in September of 2010.

In order to raise money for the PALS program, Bob organized the West Allegheny Athletic Hall of Fame board, which recently inducted its third class in May. The Hall of Fame inducts standout West Allegheny athletes who have gone on to continue their athletic careers at the post-secondary and professional levels. The effort raises money through ticket and ad sales for its annual banquet. Bob ran a similar program at Penn Hills.

In addition to the PALS program, Bob oversaw the creation of an in-house summer playground program and a learning center for pre-school children. He was also involved in the design phases of North Fayette's new community center, which will house an indoor basketball court, banquet room, and sensory room for special needs

children. The project is expected to finish next fall.

Bob also oversaw seasonal programs, like the township's annual community days celebration, and senior programming, including a monthly senior luncheon, bowling at Latitude 40, Pirates games, trips to the Benedum Center, and more. At Christmas, he donned a Santa suit, for both the township's young and old residents.

"I'm going to miss the people, kids and families the most," he says, "from the pre-school kids to the seniors. Thanks for their support."

In September, the North Fayette Board of Supervisors voted to appoint Darlene Hildebrand as the township's new recreation director. Previously, Darlene served as the executive director of Fellowship House, a community center in Conshohocken Borough. She was also the borough's director of parks and recreation for nine years. She coached women's basketball at Cabrini College and at Philadelphia University, where she also played for four years under an athletic scholarship. She was named an All-American her sophomore and junior years, and has been inducted into both her college and high school halls of fame. She went on to earn a master's in elementary education from St. Jude's College. Through her combined experiences, she says she's had the opportunity to work with all age groups.

"For [senior citizens] it's about designing activities to help build confidence," she says, "and it's about socialization for the younger ones."

When Hildebrand came to the area to interview, she took time to attend a Pirates game. She says she's always been a big Pirates and Steelers fan, but fell in love with the area once she got here. She describes herself as a people person, saying that it's a necessity for the job.

Township Manager Bob Grimm says, "we are excited that, given our plans for the Community Center at Donaldson Park, that Darlene brings experience in managing a community center as well as overseeing numerous youth and senior programs."

BELOW: Former North Fayette Parks and Recreation Director Bob Brozovich (right) with township treasurer Robert Doddato, chairman James Morosetti, and vice chairman James Mangan. Brozovich, the township's first parks and recreation director, announced his retirement in August.



TC House project reaches completion

After 10 years of planning, fundraising and strategizing, a new concept in housing for adults with disabilities is now open in Imperial. Funded by the TC House organization, with contributions from the community, businesses and volunteers, the two-story home sits at the end of a street in the Maronda Homes Sunridge Plan. The home will allow four individuals with disabilities to live there semi-independently.

TC House Secretary Bob Corcoran says that, despite being close to reaching completion, the foundation is still in need of funds to cover the total projected cost of \$560,000, in part to fund operating expenses. Designed as an alternative to group homes with 24-hour paid staffing, TC House has partnered with ACHIEVA through a new program started this year called A Home of My Own.

Under the new program, says Nancy Murray, president of The Arc of Greater Pittsburgh, which operates under the umbrella of ACHIEVA, Medicaid waivers help pay for direct support professionals to assist residents. Additional help comes from friends and family.

The program, now about a decade in the making, was developed in large part because of the long list of individuals in the state on a waiting list for services through the state's Department of Human Services.

"Because of the long waiting list, we have a lot of families saying, we don't want to wait all those years," says Murray.

According to data from the Department of Human Services posted on www.pawaitinglistcampaign.org, 14,020 people were on the waiting list for community services and supports as of Aug. 31. In Allegheny County alone, there were 1,281 individuals on that list.

As of this writing, two individuals are slated to move into the TC House. One of them is Chris McGough, a 26-year-old West Allegheny graduate with Down syndrome. A staple in the community, Chris is regularly seen serving at his church, St. Columbkille Parish, and on the sidelines at WA football games. While growing up in the Walden Woods housing development in Imperial, Chris developed a close relationship with former WA quarterback Tyler Palko and Tyler's father, WA head football coach Bob Palko. Tyler, who went on to play for the University of Pittsburgh and in the NFL, now serves as chairman of the TC House Board of Directors.

Steve says that for Chris and individuals like him, obtaining another type of Medicaid waiver that could place him into a group home is both a lengthy and unlikely prospect.

"Just to give you an example, [my wife] Linda and I would have

to be 85 years old, both pass away, and Chris would have to be 50 some years old," says Steve. "Then he'd be taken off that 14,000 people waiting list and he'd be placed if I had no other relatives or siblings. So the chance of him ever getting into a group home was zero."

Murray, who started working with the McGough family a decade ago, and has been developing the A Home of My Own concept during that time, says that she's hoping the idea will catch on with other families.

"It's going to give families the idea that if someone else can do this, we can do this," she says.

Along the way, the TC House organization partnered with numerous individuals to make the project a reality, from builders and lawyers, to KDKA-TV Sports Director Bob Pompeani, who has been serving as a master of ceremonies for the organization's annual golf outing.

Steve says that people have been drawn to help with the organization, among them township residents and officials. During a tour of the house Sept. 25, Findlay Township Commissioner Tom Gallant echoed that sentiment.

"The board and staff of Findlay Township, we've always supported projects within the township like this," says Gallant. "And we've always had the support of the township also. A lot of [residents] have made statements that they think this is a great thing."

Funds for construction of the house were raised largely by private donations through the TC House annual charity golf outing. Numerous local businesses and individuals donated additional funds, services and materials. Mike Cain of Mascaro Construction oversaw construction, along with JAD Contracting. Rosedale Technical Institute students donated their time to install heating and ventilation throughout the house. Jennifer Lindemuth oversaw the interior design phase. Iannetti's Garden Center provided landscaping. Additional large monetary contributions came from Consol Energy and Industrial Scientific.

"It's bittersweet," says Chris' mother, Linda, about her son moving out of her house.

Before moving, Chris was living with his parents in Walden Woods in Imperial.

"Then again," she says, "it's only 2.8 miles away, but who's counting?"

For more on the TC House charity, and to help meet its fundraising goal of \$560,000 to fund ongoing operations of the house, visit tchouse.org.

BELOW: Chris McGough (third from right) with his parents, Linda and Steve McGough, on the deck of the nearly finished TC House. They are joined by major contributors to the program, including TC House Vice President Jim Connolly, Consol Energy Corporate Communications Manager Kate O'Donovan, Consol Energy External Relations Specialist Jessica Kearns, Findlay Township Assistant Manager Chris Caruso, TC House Interior Designer Jen Lindemuth, Industrial Scientific Vice President Garth Miller, Findlay Township Board of Supervisors Chairperson Tom Gallant, and Consol Energy Gas Safety Supervisor Craig Hunter.





THANK YOU!

Tyler Palko, Chris McGough, and the TC House Board of Directors wish to extend a very special 'thank you' to the West Allegheny Community for making our goal of building The TC House become a reality. The house will soon become a HOME to four residents who prepare to start moving in this Fall.

Achieva will provide care to these individuals through their innovative "A Home of My Own" program, which offers customized living arrangements within the community for adults with disabilities who wish to move out of their families' homes.

This opportunity to enable individuals with disabilities to fulfill their dreams of living independently was made possible with the love, generous donations and the support of our Community.

Thank you for making our dream come true!

Tyler, Chris and the TC House Board of Directors



WWW.TCHOUSE.ORG

PTI hosts Iraq War art exhibit honoring veterans

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DOUG HUGHEY

From March 1 to Sept. 25, 2005, Mike Strahle was a corporal in a Marine Reserve unit tasked with rooting out insurgents in rural villages across western parts of Iraq. His arrival there followed the Second Battle of Fallujah, after the city had been recaptured by U.S. forces.

“The battles of Fallujah, that was the main stronghold,” says Strahle. “The insurgency was operating out of Fallujah. They owned the whole city. And the Marine Corps came in there and kicked all that out. Everyone fled west and north to Syria, Jordan, and as soon as we stopped chasing them, they turned around and started coming back. And that’s when we showed up.”

Stationed at the Haditha Dam along the Euphrates, the Marines of Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment were among those who found themselves confronting a fierce insurgency as the initial invasion of Iraq ground into a prolonged occupation. Twenty-three Marines serving in the company never came home.

Today, Strahle travels with a small team made of Jim Swallen and Sean Flaharty, showing an art exhibit consisting of eight life-sized paintings of those Marines. Entitled “The Eyes of Freedom,” the exhibit was hosted by Pittsburgh Technical Institute from Sept. 16 through 17.

“Our goal is to make it a proud thing,” says Strahle, who is now the executive director of a nonprofit formed to operate the exhibit. “It’s an eye-opening exhibit for people to understand what these guys were willing to give up.”

The pieces were painted by Ohio resident Anita Miller, and initially unveiled in 2008 at the Ohio Statehouse. In 2005, Strahle says, Miller was inspired to paint the portraits after a newspaper published photos of each of the individuals in the company who had died in combat. Most were from Ohio, and had been killed in two incidents involving improvised explosive devices - a tool of choice among insurgents targeting poorly armored U.S. vehicles.

On May 11, the company was hit by its first major IED attack. That came just days after the company had suffered their first losses in a firefight that claimed their platoon leader. Staff Sgt. Kendall H. Ivy II, reassigned as the company’s platoon commander, had been with the company for just a short time when the blast hit. Strahle says he remembers Ivy keeping them late the previous night to get to know the Marines under his command. He was among those killed the next day, along with five others.

In 2004, the administration of President George W. Bush came under harsh criticism for failing to equip U.S. forces with



ABOVE: Jim Swallen, Mike Strahle and Sean Flaharty with a painting of Cpl. Andre L. Williams, Lance Cpl. Michael J. Cifuentes and Sgt. David Kenneth J. Kreuter. Strahle served with the three Marines memorialized the painting.

appropriate armored vehicles and body armor. For a time, military personnel were forced to reinforce their vehicles using scrap metal and compromised ballistic glass from landfills. Strahle’s regiment did have armed armored amphibious assault vehicles, but the military had yet to adapt to insurgents’ use of IEDs. The armor only protected its sides.

“The biggest threat at the time were the roadside bombs,” Strahle says. “Basically we needed to be protected from underneath and we had none.”

AAVs have since been replaced by Mwraps, which travel higher off the ground and have an armored undercarriage. IEDs blow out its tires, but protect occupants.

“We’ve only lost a very small handful of men since we’ve been starting to use these new vehicles in 2009 and 2010,” he says. “That’s just a far cry from where we were, where, if we hit one, everyone on board is hurt somehow. It’s just a matter of how bad are you hurt.”

On Aug. 3, the regiment hit its second IED, the largest ever recorded up to that point, says Strahle. Fourteen Marines suffered fatal injuries. The remaining members of the regiment were sent home not long afterward.

Returning stateside, Strahle started working for JP Morgan Chase. He was among those present at the initial unveiling in 2008, which took place on Memorial Day.

(Continued on page 59)



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WA alumnus signs with new professional soccer team

Earlier this year, when Nick Kolarac signed with the Michigan Bucks professional soccer team, West Allegheny School District added to its list of former athletes who had gone pro. A 2010 West Allegheny graduate, Kolarac was a member of the WA 2009 team, which was the second in school history to win a section title.

After helping the Bucks win a USL Premier Development League championship over the summer, Kolarac signed with the Philadelphia Fury - a newly formed team in the newly formed National Adult League - in August. A tier four soccer league not unlike the one the Bucks play in, NAL players enjoy the benefits of not only room and board but also earning a salary.

"It was really tough leaving the Bucks," Kolarac says. "I really liked the players and coaching staff, but you do what you need to do to move forward in your career."

Kolarac says that he's gone from being one of the oldest players on a team to one of the youngest. While a step up in competition, he says it wasn't quite as difficult as going from playing in college to playing for the Bucks. Prior to signing with the team, he played for St. Francis University, where he ranks fifth in school history in career shots taken and points.

"Going from college to Michigan, you're playing against players from all over the world," he says. "It definitely helped prepare me for the NAL."

As of this writing, the Fury sit at 3-1 on the season, and Kolarac has started every game while recording a goal and two assists.

He says he's enjoying the challenge, and is looking forward to a few trials with the USL Professional Division in October. The tier three league is the one in which the Pittsburgh Riverhounds play.

Late last year, as the WA boys' soccer team made their playoff run, and surpassed the 2009 team's success by reaching a state championship, St. Francis was in the midst of its season. Kolarac's brother, Josh, was a senior on the team. Nick says that while he couldn't attend any games, he did watch some videos of them at his parent's house, and other games over the Internet.

"I was really impressed and happy for them and Coach Amos," says Nick, referring to West Allegheny head boys' soccer coach Kevin Amos. "It's always good to see a program excel."

BELOW: Nick Kolarac (center) with his father, Tom, and brother, Josh, when he was still playing for the Michigan Bucks soccer team. PHOTO BY SHARON KOLARAC.



STORY BY REBECCA L. FERRARO

Local MMA fighter looks ahead to ninth fight

Over the past ten years, mixed martial arts has been rising in global popularity, as evidenced by the first United Fighting Championship fights becoming available on pay-per-view in 2006, and more countries legalizing the bare-knuckled, full contact sport. In 2010, UFC President Dana White went as far as to claim that MMA had become more popular than professional football.

As the sport has grown, McDonald resident Zach Forrester has been pursuing his dream of becoming an MMA fighter. Forrester, who trains in Imperial, has been interested in MMA fighting ever since he was about eight years old, and saw his first match. In early 2015, he plans to compete in his ninth fight, as he continues to work his way through the amateur level of the sport.

"I fought in a milk barn once," Forrester says, drawing a comparison between amateur and professional levels of the sport. "The more you win and the bigger the show you put on, the better the fights that come to you."

At Fort Cherry High School, Forrester played roller hockey. He says he would have played football or wrestled, but didn't have the necessary means of transportation. Despite growing up watching MMA fights, the sport wasn't something Forrester considered trying until Bobby Mader, a childhood friend and fellow fighter, encouraged him to join a fighting gym.



"When your friend asks you every week, you try it so he'll leave you alone," Forrester says.

In 2011, Forrester began training, initially just to lose weight. The adrenaline he experienced from fighting, however, appealed to him. He says he was irascible when he was younger, but that fighting gave him the outlet he needed, relieving stress, amping him up, and then exhausting him.

On the floor at the gym where he trains, Forrester is constantly in motion, moving his feet in maze-like patterns that make it evident where he got his nickname "Zig Zag."

"It's about speed, the way I move," he grins. "I bounce around like a rabbit."

Asked what his best move is, Forrester says a spinning heel kick.

"I can kick a dime in mid-air," he says. "Probably need about three tries."

Forrester's fight this past July was in the Bantamweight category, at 5'7" and 135 pounds. The tough loss left his record at two wins and six losses. Along the way, he's faced fighters with over 20 fights under their belts, a challenge for someone who just completed his eighth.

"I train hard and I don't get tapped out or submitted," he says. "I'm going to keep on grinding and find that inner beast and let it out."

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North Fayette Parks and Recreation helps save softball tournament

Over the weekend of July 19, the Oakdale Youth League 10 and under Sluggers hosted Battle at the Boro, a girls' slow pitch tournament at Peter Greck field in Oakdale. Ninety-eight children participated from Collier, Upper St. Clair, Mt. Lebanon, Greentree, Ingram, Mt. Washington, and North Shaler. The tournament was scheduled to begin Saturday, July 19 and finish Monday, July 21.

However, on Friday evening, rain began and continued for nearly 12 hours, soaking the field at the park and rendering it useless for the entire weekend. The Oakdale Sluggers reached out to North Fayette Sunday morning for help, and within 30 minutes, the township offered the use of its fields next to the township building. Parents of the Sluggers mobilized to move all the equipment and concessions to serve visitors from a tent. The first pitch was tossed at noon on Sunday.

"Participants from the surrounding communities were amazed at the kindness of North Fayette," says North Fayette resident Mike Kiss, who coaches the team and his daughter, Jessica, "that they were that concerned about the event and the children playing in it."

After playing eight games at North Fayette Sunday, Peter Greck field was dry enough to complete the tournament there through Tuesday. The Sluggers captured the championship in an exciting game against Mt. Washington.

"The Oakdale Sluggers wish to thank the township of North Fayette, [former] Parks and Recreation Director Bob Brozovich,

and the North Fayette Athletic Association for their kindness and generosity giving a true example to all the children and visitors of what being a neighbor really means," says Kiss. "Thank you from the players, coaches and parents."



ABOVE: The Oakdale Sluggers with three tournament championship trophies that they won last year, among them Oakdale's Battle at the Boro, which they hosted. The tournament would have been cancelled if not for the help of North Fayette Township. The team also won a regular season championship, and in the past two years has placed first in six of seven tournaments. They are (standing) Olivia Almady, Allie Gass, Delaney Walsh, Giana Yellock, Tiffani Hrapczak; (kneeling) Jessalyn Scott, Brynn McKenna, Alexia Petito, Elizabeth Conforti, Makenna Priddy and Jessica Kiss.

Through VFW Post 7714 golf outing, local businesses help local veterans

Montour Valley VFW Post 7714 held its annual golf outing June 14 at Rolling Green Golf Course. Between golfers and sponsors, the post raised \$5,000, which will be split between Sharing and Caring, Heroes Supporting Heroes and the Buddy Poppy Fund. Each nonprofit serves area veterans.

The outing's gold sponsors included Industrial Scientific, Andrew Logistic Inc. and Oakdale Lodge No. 669. Silver sponsors were Friends of Mark Mustio, Quaker Steak & Lube, Wharton-Herrick Funeral Home, Insulator Local No. 2., Judy Dewey's Notary Messenger Service, Vesuvius, Monark Student Transportation, Express Container Services, Povero Building, Dr. Hartsock, John Meyers Plumbing and Heating, Burgman Chiropractic Clinic, Sunrise Accounting, Angelia's Pizza, Keystone Physical Rehabilitation, Eat'n Park, Smith Electric, W&N Construction, Friends of Bob Doddato, North Fayette Police Department Youth Program and Coraopolis Collision. Bronze sponsors were Up In Arms Tattoo & Piercing, Thomas & Little Funeral Services and Floral Magic.

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Around Your Town

West Allegheny class of 1969 celebrates 45th reunion



The West Allegheny class of 1969 celebrated its 45th reunion at Peter's Place in Bridgeville Sept. 13. Pictured (front) Debbie Clark-Burton, Sherri Speelman-McLaughlin, Terri Kirk-Watson, Diane Casia-Yurosky, Mary Kaye Gorczyca-Kropf, Michele Borkoski, Kathy Neely-Stark and Denise Sabaton-Geramita; (second row) Tom Wojtowicz, Lucy Mackey-Arnett, Anthony Zupancic, Mary Ann Coombs-Shrum, Billie Ann Auten-Nestor and Kathleen Roedler-Spangler; (third row) Frank Stuckwisch, Diane Speelman-Lang, Debbie Schmidt-Gresh, Linda Nester-Speelman, Ted Seeman, DeWayne Warmon, Jim Cool, George Beck and Jim Willy; (fourth row) Bill Beaumont, Bill Thompson, Michael Papke, John Malinosky, Frank Palas, Ralph Robson and Keith Hughes; (not pictured) Bonnie Hlavay-Soloman, Ron Soloman, Judy Fritz and David Bundy. PHOTO BY NEWBROUGH PHOTO.

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Kevin P. Bordeau, M.D. earned his medical degree at Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston and completed a residency in urology at the Eastern Virginia Medical School. Dr. Bordeau is board-certified by the American Board of Urology.

Arnold J. Sholder, M.D. earned his medical degree at the University of Illinois College of Medicine and completed his residency and fellowship at Northwestern University-affiliated hospitals in Chicago. Dr. Sholder is board-certified by the American Board of Urology.

Jeffrey R. Wilson, M.D. earned his medical degree at The Ohio State University College of Medicine and Public Health, Columbus. He completed residencies in general surgery and urology at The Ohio State University-affiliated hospitals.

FOOT FACTS

Bunions are among the most common type of foot ailment today's podiatrist treats, especially in women. Studies show that women are anywhere from two to nine times more likely to develop a bunion than men! While your high heels and peep toes are partially to blame, your foot type (passed down through your family) is the true culprit. Here's the good news! Today's podiatrist is the true expert when it comes to diagnosing and treating bunions.

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

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

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

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Local talent shines again: Treloar and Mercier in the spotlight

STORY BY PAT JENNETTE

In 2009, eight-year-old Imperial resident and West Allegheny student Shane Treloar made his first local debut by singing the "The Star-Spangled Banner" during the dedication of the Liberty Tree Grove at Donaldson Park. Fast forward five years and, today, at age 13, Shane's resume is longer than most three times his age.

Shane was recently cast to play the supporting lead role of Michael, Buddy the Elf's little brother, in the Broadway national tour of "Elf." The North Fayette resident began rehearsals this month, and will join his cast mates this fall on a 12-city tour along the east coast and throughout the midwest. The tour begins Nov. 7 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and concludes Dec. 28 in Schenectady, New York, with 54 performances along the way. Although no shows are scheduled in Pittsburgh, it will be performed in Cincinnati, Ohio; Hershey, Pennsylvania; and Huntingdon, West Virginia.

Over the past five years, Shane has become a regular performer for area sports teams, singing the national anthem for the Pittsburgh Pirates, Penguins, Riverhounds, and Power. He has performed at numerous nonprofit and fundraising functions, as well as at Robert Morris University's Colonial Theatre in Moon Township and Lincoln Park Performing Arts Center. Among his many honors, he was the first runner-up at the Kean Quest talent competition in north Pittsburgh in 2012, where he sang "Defying Gravity" from the Broadway musical "Wicked." As first runner-up, he joined the ranks of another Kean contest winner, Jackie Evancho, a now world-famous vocalist who has performed in some of the most prestigious venues in the U.S. and abroad. Last year, Jackie returned to the competition as a guest judge and Shane won the grand prize of Audience Choice with his performance of Whitney Houston's "One Moment In Time."

Karen Prunzik, owner of Prunzik's Broadway Dance Studio in Robinson, where Shane studies, said that she began taking Shane to auditions in New York City two years ago. She said, "Shane has

(Continued on next page)



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been back

resume of artistic achievements, Shane has also been signed by one of New York City's leading talent agents for children and young adults, Nancy Carson of the Carson-Adler Agency. This connection came through Connecting Talent Company, a New York-based professional management and coaching company for young talent. Its founder, Jody Prusan, viewed a YouTube link of Shane's and promptly reached out with an interest in representing Shane.

Last year, Shane was accepted into the Lincoln Park Performing Arts Charter School in Midland, Beaver County. His parents, Kim and Bob Treloar, have had the ride of their lives alongside their son over the past five years. His older brother, Keegan, is his biggest fan, said Kim. She has accompanied Shane to New York City numerous times for auditions, and has gained the support of family and friends to launch his website and Facebook page, the latter of which just reached over 1,000 fans.

Said Kim, "We are very thankful for the love and encouragement so many give to Shane. During every setback I would remind him that God didn't bless him with such talent and not have a purpose for it. The combination of our faith and the support of remarkable family and friends have been pertinent to his success. We hope Shane will inspire other young boys to follow his lead, the theater needs them!"

Before Shane headed off to New York, he had a bit of performing work to finish back home. He was cast in his first local professional show as the Artful Dodger in "Oliver," at the Strand Theater in Zelienople. The show ran through Oct. 5.

Another up-and-coming performer, Josie Mercier, eight, is following in Shane's footsteps. The Imperial resident attends Wilson Elementary School. She, like Shane, performed in "Damn Yankees" at RMU's Colonial

ABOVE: Shane Treloar and Josie Mercier are two up-and-coming stage talents in the area. PHOTO SUBMITTED

auditioning for show after show always making it to the very end but never getting cast. He never let it deter him or discourage him."

With this most recent role in a long and quickly growing

(Continued on page 59)

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Improvement projects help raise the roof at the Western Area YMCA

The Western Area YMCA has completed a project costing over \$30,000 to replace the interior ceiling of its front tennis court building. In addition to the cosmetic improvement, the new ceiling also provides better lighting for safer and more consistent play. An indirect lighting system provides lighting on the tennis courts by reflecting light from the ceiling. The old ceiling had started to show gaps of gray that reflected a duller and less clear light.

The project was funded by a number of sources, including the United States Tennis Association, the Pittsburgh Tennis League and Dick's Sporting Goods. The project was also paid for with individual donations and dues from members, some of whom have played tennis at the community venue for over 25 years.

For the lighting upgrade, the Western Area YMCA partnered with Constellation energy. The upgrade will also increase energy efficiency.

"The project involves replacing just about every light in the building," said Richard Perallo, vice president of facilities and construction of the YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh. "We'll be reaping the benefits for years to come. The upgrade will produce a 50 percent savings in electricity."

Western Area YMCA Executive Director Kim Feeley says that the courts get heavy use from the community and for special events.

"We have children starting to play tennis at age three and have members through age 85 still playing tennis," said Feeley. "The tennis courts are used constantly by our community, providing

private and group lessons to children, adults, and seniors, along with USTA tournaments, and members playing on their own. Tennis is a sport that can be played for a lifetime."

The new ceiling and lighting projects are just a couple undertaken over the past year to refurbish the facility. The Western Area YMCA has also resurfaced their courts, replaced their front desk, refurbished their child watch room, converted their court reservation sheets to an online system, and improved landscaping to prevent flooding. All of these projects are helping to improve the Western Area YMCA's ability to serve the area as a cornerstone for all community members.



ABOVE: The interior ceiling before renovation.
RIGHT: The ceiling after renovation.





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PHOTO AND STORY BY WHITE VIPER KARATE

West Allegheny student "Hurricane" Hope Chase inducted into NBL Hall of Fame

"Hurricane" Hope Chase, a West Allegheny School District high school junior and six-time Sport Karate World Champion, was inducted into the National Blackbelt League Hall of Fame this past summer. Hope is a student and assistant instructor at White Viper Karate, a studio her family operates in Imperial. She was inducted into the NBL Hall of Fame for her history-making performances at the 24th Annual NBL Super Grands World Games in Charleston, South Carolina last December.

"I never thought I was going to win anything such as a World Title let alone make history," explained Chase. "It came as a complete surprise and I am very honored to be inducted into the NBL Hall of Fame at such a young age."

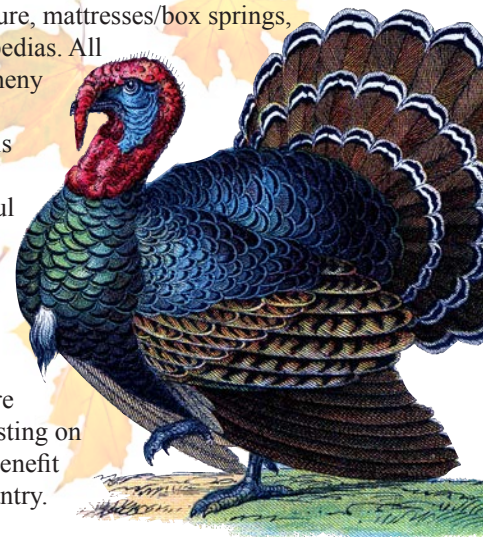
Chase trains six days a week at her family's studio. For more about her, and to see videos of her in action, visit www.hurricanehopechase.com.



WA Food Pantry happenings

Come and shop at the Thrift Store every Saturday morning from 8 a.m. until noon, and on days that the food pantry distributions are taking place. The Thrift Store is located at: 520 Route 30, Imperial, PA 15126. For more information, call (724) 695-1305. New clothing and household items are added every week. Clothing selections coincide with the current season. Many items are brand new with tags. Donations are accepted on Saturday mornings, and on Wednesdays and Fridays between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. The store accepts only clean and gently used items. It does not accept televisions, computers, printers, scanners, stuffed animals (unless new), furniture, mattresses/box springs, large appliances or encyclopedias. All sales benefit the West Allegheny Food Pantry.

The Model Train Display is coming back to the Findlay Activity Center Nov. 29. Paul Linko, Jr., a train enthusiast for over 50 years, will bring his collection of rare tracks, which run through amazing scenes spanning winter, summer and spring. For more information, see the event listing on pages 42 and 58. Proceeds benefit the West Allegheny Food Pantry.



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WACL brings Little Free Library movement to area

The Western Allegheny Community Library has opened three Little Free Libraries throughout the area. Based on a “take a book, return a book” philosophy, the publicly displayed, permanent box structures allow anyone to borrow a book or two at a time, or keep a book by donating another. The WACL and the Western Allegheny Friends to Enhance the Library group partnered with Findlay Township, North Fayette Township, and Oakdale Borough to set up a library in each community.

Amanda Kirby, head of youth services at the WACL, worked with leaders from each municipality to bring the project to life.

“When I learned about the Little Free Library concept, I thought it was an excellent way to extend our library out into the community,” she says.

Each municipality donated funds to defray the cost of building the structures, which were constructed by Jacob Gibson of Crates by Jake. Community members can find the new little libraries on display at the Findlay Township Activity Center, at the gazebo in Oakdale, and at the township building in North Fayette.

Prior to being installed in their permanent locations, the structures were on display at the library for a month-long A Book and a Buck kick-off campaign. Each little library was displayed with a donation jar and book basket. Residents were encouraged to participate in a friendly competition among the three municipalities by donating books and funds to stock the libraries for the opening.

The Little Free Library movement began in 2009, when Todd Bol of Hudson, Wisconsin built a model of a one-room schoolhouse as a tribute to his mother, a former schoolteacher who loved reading. He filled it with books and put it on a post in his front yard. At the encouragement of his neighbors and friends, he built several more and gave them away, each with a sign that read “Free Books.”

By the summer of 2010, the mission and purposes served by the little boxes of books were becoming clear. Each Little Free



ABOVE: WACL Director Marianne Sforza with the Little Free Library boxes before they were distributed throughout the area.

Library structure was unique, but they all shared the theme of exchanging good books and bringing people together. Along with co-founder Rick Brooks, Bol started Little Free Library, a nonprofit network to provide more effective communication channels and support for each new library.

Their goal was to build 2,510 Little Free Libraries - as many as Andrew Carnegie - by the end of 2013. That goal was reached in August of 2012, a year and a half before the original target date. In January of 2014, the total number of registered Little Free Libraries in the world was conservatively estimated to be nearly 15,000, with thousands more being built.

For more information on the project, or to donate to the WACL, visit www.westernalleghenylibrary.org or stop by the library at 181 Bateman Road in North Fayette.

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Cross Connections holds fourth annual block party

Cross Connections Alliance Church in McDonald held their fourth annual Back to School Giveaway Aug. 16. Once again, the church invited the community to participate in a day of games, door prizes, food, inflatable attractions and a dunk tank. The Word-FM van was also on hand again, along with DJ Kenny Woods to spin a prize wheel.

As in years past, the church used the event as an outreach program to distribute donated school supplies to the community. This year, the church gave away 170 backpacks filled with supplies. With over 200 in attendance, the event marked one of the largest outreach events the church has held.

A number of local businesses in McDonald contributed to the event, including Subway and Nation Funeral Home. Bridgeville-based businesses Kings, Big Phoenix Cinema, Texas Roadhouse and Philly Pretzel Factory contributed as well. Additional contributions came from Fort Cherry Ambulance, the Pittsburgh Riverhounds, Shop 'n Save in Imperial, Eat 'n Park in Robinson Township, Casciola's Twin Twist in Cecil and American Beverage Company in Verona.

The day of the event, the Washington Wild Things lent their mascot, while the McDonald VFD assisted. School supplies handed out during the event were donated by the church's congregation. Plans are to hold the event for a fifth time next year.



Ohio Valley Hospital 's Acute Rehab Unit feels close, like family

SUBMITTED BY OHIO VALLEY HOSPITAL

The first time Graham Tennent recovered in Ohio Valley Hospital's Acute Rehab Unit, he knew he had found a place that made him feel at home. It was 2008. He just had brain surgery, and needed to learn how to redo basic daily tasks.

"I had bad balance, I was dizzy," he said. "Without my rehab doctor pushing me, I wouldn't have recovered as well."

Ohio Valley Hospital's Acute Rehab Unit utilizes a multi-disciplinary approach to rehabilitation, therapy, education and counseling, which helps to restore the health and independence of its patients. Whether they have had a recent hospital stay, are prone to falls, or have experienced a decline in their functional status, the ARU works with patients to redevelop and improve upon their skills.

During Tennent's time at the hospital, he and his doctor discussed other health issues that were plaguing him, namely his knees.

"They were bone on bone, with arthritis," Tennent said.

At 433 pounds, if Tennent wanted a knee replacement, he first would have to undergo gastric bypass surgery.

Fast-forward to 2013, when Tennent underwent his first surgery to replace his right knee. When it came time to choose a recovery location, he didn't hesitate to pick Ohio Valley Hospital.

"This is the best recovery unit I've ever been to," he said. "The staff is polite, kind, and generous. Even if I'm busy, they always check in to make sure I'm alright."

This second stay involved lots of work. There was walking to try, wooden steps to climb, weight lifting, and whole body exercises. The occupational therapy and physical therapy staff encouraged Tennent to get out of bed and walk to get his clothing every morning so he would be able to do the same at home. They kept him busy, strengthening his knee, and helping him bounce back. For Tennent, the work was worth it.

When it came time for Tennent to have a left knee replacement in 2014, it wasn't even a question of where he would choose to spend

his recovery time.

"I trust the staff here," he said. "I've been other places, and I didn't feel as comfortable there as I did here. My rehab doctor is the best - he is like a second dad to me."

Tennent may take a few months to recover, but his various visits to OVH's Acute Rehab Unit have given him a second family for life.

For more information on Ohio Valley Hospital's Acute Rehab Unit, call (412) 777-6770, or visit www.ohiovalleyhospital.org.

BELOW: Ohio Valley Hospital Acute Rehab Unit therapists work with Graham Tennent to help him regain his mobility.



Enjoy autumn splendor in the PBG's meadows

Explore two of the PBG's distinct meadow areas and enjoy the plants, birds and other wildlife that call them and the surrounding wooded areas home.

Lotus pond stocked with fish

Thanks to a grant from the EQT Foundation, PBG's Lotus Pond has been stocked with a variety of native fish. The fish were transported from Fish Haven Farm in Candor, New York on Sept. 20 by Mid-Atlantic Stocking and released at the optimum time that day. Included in the delivery were 55 large-mouth bass, 150 bluegill sunfish, 165 rainbow trout and 15 pounds of fathead minnows. While visiting the Lotus Pond, be sure to look for the fish!

Scout camp under construction

A camp site that will be used by scout troops is being built in the woods below the Lotus Pond. The camp site will initially have room for 10 to 12 tents, and will later be expanded to accommodate up to 50 tents. It will also include a fire pit. Troops wishing to use the site are asked to conduct a work project at the PBG. They may also use the site if there is an Eagle Scout in their troop who is completing or has completed a PBG project. For more information or to reserve the camp site, call (412) 444-4464.

Plant sale returns to the PBG in 2015

Next year's sale will be held Saturday, May 16 at the PBG. Construction this year meant that the sale had to be held elsewhere, and the Chartiers Country Club graciously allowed the sale to be held in their parking lot. The committee is looking for new members to help plan the event, so if anyone would like to get involved, contact Kelli Mainous at (412) 444-4464 ext. 222 or at kmainous@pittsburghbotanicgarden.org.

Upcoming Events

Early Bird Walks

Oct. 12 & 19, 8 a.m.

Join ornithologist Bob Mulvihill of the National Aviary on a bird walk through the PBG. The walk will last until approximately 10 a.m.

Admission is \$10 for non-members, free to members.

Register via the website:

www.pittsburghbotanicgarden.org

Fall Wildflower Tour

Oct. 12, 2 p.m.

Learn about wildflowers growing at the PBG. Free with admission. No pre-registration required.

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Visitor receptionists, Greeters, and Trail Monitors are needed.

There's something for everyone!

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News from Heritage Valley Health System

Heritage Valley announces Cameos of Caring awardees

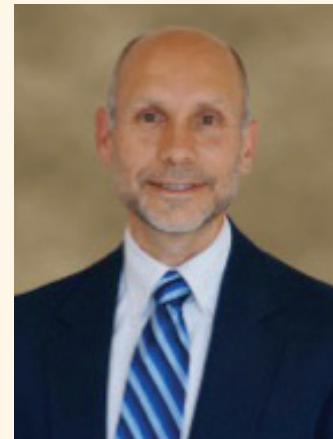
Heritage Valley Health System has named Pauline Hutsler of the Critical Care Unit/Progressive Care Unit at Heritage Valley Sewickley and Scott Rodenbeck of the Cardiopulmonary Unit at Heritage Valley Beaver as its 2014 Cameos of Caring awardees. The award honors exceptional bedside nurses who work in acute care hospitals. Recipients must demonstrate a commitment to consistent, evidenced-based clinical decision-making and excellence in nursing care. They must also serve as effective advocates for patients and their families, encourage and motivate others, be recognized as a role model for the profession of nursing, practice nursing involving direct patient care, be a licensed RN and a direct employee of the hospital.

Hutsler graduated from the Heritage Valley Sewickley School of Nursing in 1996 and went on to obtain a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from Waynesburg University. She is currently a Clinical Supervisor on the Critical Care and Progressive Care Units at Heritage Valley Sewickley. When Pauline is not working at Heritage Valley, she uses her skills and talents to serve American soldiers and airmen. Pauline holds the rank of captain as a critical care nurse for the 171st Air Refueling Wing/Medical Group Pennsylvania Air National Guard.

Rodenbeck graduated from Carlow University with a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing in 1999 and is a registered nurse in the Cardiopulmonary Unit at Heritage Valley Beaver. Scott decided on a nursing career after returning from living in Japan. He was looking for a career that he could use anywhere in the world, where he could help people and didn't have to be at a desk every day.

"Nursing has allowed me to help care for people in a very close setting, which I love," said Rodenbeck. "I'm always amazed at how grateful patients are for the care they receive."

Pauline and Scott will be honored at the 16th Annual Cameos of Caring Awards Gala Nov. 8 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center.



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Color in the landscape

Autumn serves as a reminder of just how vibrant nature can be. There is nothing more beautiful than a brilliant blue sky set off by an array of red, orange, yellow, and green leaves. The fall season in particular teaches that with appropriate planning, a landscape can have color all year long. This can be achieved by focusing on mass plantings and/or adding color to a hardscape by situating plants in such a way that one color complements another.

To introduce drama into a landscape all year long, install mass plantings of a particular plant. Plant hundreds of the same color of bulbs, such as white snowdrops (*Galanthus nivalis*), yellow daffodils (*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*), or red tulips (*Tulipa*) for a dramatic spring splash of color. In the summer, offset two rows of double blossom red-pink knock-out-roses (*Rosa x damascena*) and watch the color fill a large portion of the landscape. To bring color from one season into another, consider planting something like black-eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia*) because they begin to bloom late in the summer and often, depending on the variety, bloom into the early part of fall. Burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*) is another two-season showstopper. It produces beautiful green foliage in the summer that turns bright crimson in the fall. Winter color can be achieved by planting red or yellow-twig dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera* or *Cornus sericea*) in mass. The colorful twigs stand out against the white snow of winter and add a strong color element when other plants are dull and drab.

Another way to introduce color into a garden is to manipulate various aspects of a hardscape. Paint a wall a solid color and use it as a backdrop for plants. For a bold contrast, paint the wall periwinkle blue and place potted red geraniums in front of it, or paint the wall dark orange and plant a mass of flowers in the blue-purple-violet range. *Salvia* or *ageratum* work well. Accent with smaller masses of white Queen Anne's lace (*Daucus carota*) and melon-colored irises. To elicit a more soothing mood, paint the wall turquoise and plant black bamboo (*Phyllostachys nigra*) in front of it. Another way to obtain a subdued mood is to place a variety of medium to large colorful pots in and around patios or porch areas. This effect is especially beautiful in the fall, if

the colors echo what is occurring in the trees. A maroon pot, for example, can be filled with yellow mums (*Chrysanthemum*) and placed on or beside a porch for a striking effect.

This can be a really fun project, but, as with all planning and planting, there are a few basic rules one needs to follow. First, make sure the chosen plants have the appropriate growing conditions. Plants must be able to survive in this zone and they must have the right lighting and soil conditions. Second, have some kind of color pallet in mind when planning and planting a landscape design. In order to obtain the best results, limit the color selection to no more than three or four colors and be sure to consult an artist's color wheel to ensure that all of those colors complement one another. Let the natural beauty of this and every season inspire your planning.

Best wishes with fall planning and planting projects from the North Fayette Garden Club.

The North Fayette Garden Club meets at 1 p.m. on the last Tuesday of each month at the Oakdale Community Center, unless otherwise noted. For additional information regarding club membership, contact Colleen Stripp at (724) 693-0123.



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Fixed indexed annuities can be very useful investments. As the name implies, FIAs are fixed annuities with a rate or return linked to the performance of a stock market index (often the S&P 500). Because of this stock market exposure, they can sometimes bring conservative investors very nice returns – often, considerably better returns than the ones provided by CDs, bonds, or money market accounts. They really aren't designed to outperform the stock markets; they are designed to outperform the fixed markets.

Principal protection and a chance to benefit from market gains. During the accumulation phase of an FIA, you have the opportunity to benefit from stock market gains while your principal is protected against stock market losses. The annuity contract usually guarantees you a minimum rate of interest on your purchase payments while the annuity is growing; the insurance company involved will credit you with either the minimum return stated in the contract or a return based on the performance of the linked index.

If you are skittish about the stock market, you can potentially realize the benefits of stock market participation through this comparatively low-risk investment. If the linked stock market index has a bad year, you don't incur a loss.

Participation rates to note. Each FIA has a particular participation rate. The participation rate signifies the percentage of the invested assets within the annuity keyed to the linked index.

Let's say you have an FIA linked to the S&P 500 and the participation rate is 60%. That means 60% of your invested assets are exposed to the index. If the S&P 500 gains 10% across a year, this means your annuity gives you a 6% return for the year (before any fees and administrative charges). Compare that 6% potential return to so many CDs and money market accounts which often return substantially less.

Some FIAs measure an index's gain on an annual basis, others over the entire term of the annuity. Sometimes there are

"caps" on just how high a return you can realize. From time to time, participation rates may be reset by the insurance company. Occasionally, a margin or "spread" determines the index-linked interest rate instead of a participation rate (if your annuity gains 10% and the spread is 2.5%, your interest-linked credit is 7.5%.)

Tax-deferred growth, an income stream & often a death benefit. Most FIAs give you all the features of a fixed annuity: your earnings are not taxed, and when the distribution phase of your annuity starts, you can receive periodic (usually monthly) income payments. (It is your withdrawals that are taxed.) There is often a guaranteed minimum death benefit payable to your beneficiary when you pass away.

Would you like to learn more? If you are planning to maintain or improve your quality of life in retirement, maybe you would like to see how fixed indexed annuities can potentially help you. If that's the case, then ask a qualified insurance or financial advisor about them today.

Gary Klobchar, Jr. may be reached via telephone at 724-544-2489 or by email at gary.klobchar@milestonesfg.com.

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Donaldson Elementary School earns National Blue Ribbon Award

Donaldson Elementary School was named a 2014 National Blue Ribbon School on September 30 by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. Donaldson was one of 337 schools to receive the award.

“We are elated about Donaldson’s accomplishment earning the National Blue Ribbon distinction,” said Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert, superintendent of West Allegheny School District. “The staff at Donaldson serves as a model of excellence for the District and is constantly striving for better student results.”

“The National Blue Ribbon designation that Donaldson Elementary has earned speaks to the dedication of our outstanding staff to focus on the growth and achievement of our students,” said Patricia Nolan, Donaldson Elementary School principal. “This award also reflects the support consistently provided by our West Allegheny parents, school board, administration and community. I could not be more honored to be the principal of Donaldson Elementary.”

“We are extremely proud of Mrs. Nolan and the entire staff and students at Donaldson Elementary for earning National Blue Ribbon status,” added Debbie Mirich, school board president. “Our community can now boast of the accomplishment and our administration, principals, teachers and students for leading the way for successful futures. This is one more benefit for those who are looking to become part of our West Allegheny family. This is a national recognition for our community, which proves our students’ level of achievement.”

Donaldson Elementary parents expressed their pride for the

Acitelli named National Merit Scholarship semifinalist

Senior Kiera Acitelli has been named a 2014-2015 National Merit Scholarship semifinalist, placing her among 16,000 seniors nationwide to earn this honor. The distinction recognizes students for their academic ability and success. It is awarded to less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors. Qualifications are based on 2013 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test scores.

“The West Allegheny School Board and administration are extremely proud of and applaud Kiera’s recognition as a National Merit Scholar semifinalist,” said Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert, school superintendent.

Acitelli will now compete for one of 7,600 National Merit Scholarships, which total \$33 million. Semifinalists must meet several criteria to advance, including submission of a detailed application that highlights their academic record, participation in school and community activities, leadership abilities,

school receiving the distinction, and applauded the dedication of everyone involved. Parent and school board member Tracy Pustover has children who have attended Donaldson since kindergarten.

“I see firsthand how much everyone in the building cares,” said Pustover.

Kristi Gunderson serves as the Donaldson PTA president and added, “We are so excited that we have been chosen to receive such an outstanding award. It is truly a remarkable honor.”

The Department of Education will honor 287 public and 50 private schools at a recognition ceremony November 10-11 in Washington, D.C. In its 32-year history, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has bestowed this coveted award on just under 7,900 of America’s schools.

“These great schools are fulfilling the promise of American education—that all students, no matter their name or zip code, can flourish when schools provide safe, creative, and challenging learning environments,” Duncan said. “National Blue Ribbon Schools are models of consistent excellence and a resource for other schools and districts.”

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private elementary, middle, and high schools where students either achieve very high learning standards or are making notable improvements at closing the achievement gap. The award affirms the hard work of students, educators, families and communities that are creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging content.

employment, and honors and awards received. In addition to having an outstanding academic record, semifinalists must be recommended by a high school official, write and submit an essay and earn SAT scores that show the student has maintained his or her performance.

In addition to being a member of the National Honor Society, Acitelli is involved in the Science and Key Clubs, is the co-captain of the varsity swim team, and is a volunteer coach for middle school swimmers.

“Kiera is one of 120 students locally to be recognized as a National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist,” said Dan Smith, high school principal. “West Allegheny High School is proud of Kiera and her academic achievement. We wish Kiera the best of luck in the final round to be announced in February 2015.”



Kiera Acitelli

Superintendent's Message

Let me begin by expressing my sincerest appreciation for the warm welcome I have received since arriving at West Allegheny. In the last three months, I have spent considerable time learning about the District and community by connecting with parents, meeting with community members, collaborating with our administrators, teachers and staff, working with our board members, meeting students and observing classroom instruction. Resoundingly, a common theme from all stakeholders I have encountered is pride in the District with a strong desire to achieve even better outcomes for our students.

With this information, and through extensive collaboration with our school leaders, we have identified our proven successes and strengths that must continue while recognizing areas for growth and focus. We want to ensure that all of our students are able to compete favorably with other students locally, nationally and internationally for college acceptance, degree completion, and 21st century career attainment.

To that end, we defined and shared the West Allegheny Framework for Excellence with our staff in August. This framework is our guide for achieving better results for all students, and a roadmap to how we are going to do that.

Framework for Excellence

Building on Our Successes: West Allegheny has established a legacy of excellence and a strong foundation that is represented by our successes in academics, arts and athletics. Examples of our most recent accomplishments include ranking eighth in Allegheny County based on our 2013 District Performance Profile score of 93.6. Four of our schools have received the Governor's Award for Academic Excellence. Donaldson Elementary School received a National Blue Ribbon award. Our high school won Gene Kelly Awards for best musical and best actor. A sophomore earned a National Scholastic Art and Writing Medal. Four West Allegheny teams claimed WPIAL championships, with numerous athletes winning individual titles.

We recognize that through our students' participation in arts and athletics, they develop essential non-academic skills such as grit, perseverance, teamwork, discipline, tenacity, and the belief that effort creates ability. These essential, non-academic skills facilitate academic studies while preparing our students for college and the workforce.

We will provide more challenging, relevant instruction with the appropriate supports and resources at every grade level.

Defining the Framework for Excellence: While our accomplishments are many, there remain areas for us to grow, and a clear desire to focus on better results for all of our students. Our Framework for Academic Excellence builds on the District's tradition of excellence so that all of our students are provided with the skills needed to compete globally, out-compete others for college placements and career opportunities, and prepare them for whatever they desire to do. The Framework identifies three priorities which are nested in learning environments that ensure safety, foster students' abilities, and support college and career readiness. The priorities are as follows:

1. Academic Rigor, Equity and Excellence for All Students
2. High Quality Instruction in Every Classroom, Every Day
3. Financial Responsibility and Operational Efficiency

Expanding on the Framework for Excellence Priorities

Priority one: Academic rigor, equity and excellence for all students ensures that each student will have access to rigorous, equitable academic opportunities and excellence in teaching and learning that meets their needs. This priority supports achievement of the following academic goals:

- **95 percent** or more of students reading at or above grade level
- **50 percent** or more of students taking Advanced Placement courses
- **85 percent** success/pass rate on first time Keystone exams
- **70 percent** or more of students achieving advanced on state-wide assessments
- **90 percent** or more of students enrolled in career and technical training, experiencing success on exams and acquiring industry certifications
- **75 percent** or more of students participating in an extracurricular activity

To reach our goals, we will provide more challenging,

At West Allegheny, we want to have the best teachers who are able to provide one year or more of academic learning for each student per school year.

relevant instruction with the appropriate supports and resources at every grade level. We will closely examine and make modifications to the sequence of how courses are offered in order for students to have the best advantage. We will provide

our students with resources, such as 24/7 access to technology-based programs to support mastery of content and skills. We will use multiple indicators to determine access and placement into accelerated courses instead of just a test score alone. We will provide a more rigorous curriculum in pre-advanced placement for courses grades 6-10, as well as teacher training to better prepare our students to have the confidence to pursue and succeed in AP courses. We intend to require more rigorous course completion prior to graduation, including four years of science, social studies and mathematics. We will also require all students to successfully complete Algebra 2 and physics. We will continue to expand dual enrollment options. As well, we need parents' help to ensure students are coming to school, doing their homework, maintaining GPA's above 2.5, and asking for help if they are struggling.

Priority two: High quality instruction

in every classroom, every day, ensures that each student will have a highly effective teacher in every classroom that challenges them academically, builds authentic relationships with them, and espouses a growth-mindset. At West Allegheny, we want to have the best teachers who are able to provide one year or more of academic learning for each student per school year. We want every teacher to have positive, authentic relationships with students. We expect teachers to instill the belief that effort creates ability while challenging their students and holding high expectations for learning and meeting their unique needs.

We will support professional accountability, growth, and peer collaboration as a means to obtain better outcomes for our students. We will provide teachers with opportunities to participate in high quality, professional development. Examples of professional development include: providing teachers access to in-District instructional coaches, working collaboratively with local districts to share best practices, and elevating our most effective teachers to support professional learning in each school.

We will work with teachers to expand our focus on student data/indicators beyond standardized assessments to include a concentration on diagnostic data, GPA, attendance, and course selection/participation rates. This expanded focus on multiple indicators will be - and has been - used to better determine placement into courses, as well as to emphasize the data that matters most, thereby ensuring graduation and college/career readiness.

Priority three: Financial responsibility and

operational efficiency ensures that all students are provided with high quality academic programs, cutting edge technology to enhance learning, and support services, all while exercising fiscal responsibility and identifying operational efficiencies. As with most districts in the commonwealth and nation, we do anticipate some fiscal challenges. In order to establish financial stability, we will strive to ensure that our expenditures do not exceed our revenues. We will be focused on planning a multi-year budget by identifying cost savings and enhancing revenue resources. We want to invest in what we value and in what has greatest impact on student learning. As such, we want to carefully analyze cost-saving opportunities that will have the least impact on our classrooms and student learning.

Also, we need to identify ways to increase our efficiency without compromising quality. As an example, we have refined our West Allegheny Virtual Academy. We were able to save costs by changing our instructional software provider, as well as our hardware provider, and by using our own teachers. We were able to expand the WAVA program to include credit recovery while creating opportunities for students to take courses not offered in the curriculum. We are also partnering with local school districts and educational institutions to share best practices and offset professional development costs. Additionally, we have recently partnered with Cenergistic, an energy conservation company, to identify energy savings. Our work with Cenergistic will significantly reduce the amount of money we spend on utilities.

With our Board of School Directors, we are also looking to enhance revenue sources through careful partnership with Allegheny County and our local townships to support business development within our District. As well, we are aggressively pursuing grant opportunities to support our academic initiatives. This will allow funds to stay where we need them: in the classroom and supporting our students' success.

With these priorities at the heart of our Framework for Excellence, West Allegheny is poised to reach new heights, with all of our students achieving tremendous success and being prepared to excel in college and/or the 21st century workforce. It will be through thoughtful collaboration, authentic partnering, and a philosophy of growth that we will hold to our vision of "A Tradition of Excellence . . . A Vision for Tomorrow" for ALL of our students.

**We
want to
invest in
what we value
and in what has
greatest impact
on student
learning.**

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

District hires assistant to the superintendent for professional learning and educator effectiveness

Kimberly Basinger has been hired to fill a recently established position of assistant to the superintendent for professional learning and educator effectiveness. She began her new role in September.

Basinger came to West Allegheny after serving as director of professional development at Pittsburgh Public Schools. Prior, Basinger worked as a coordinator in the office of teacher effectiveness for PPS.

“Kim is energetic and extremely knowledgeable with respect to adult learning and educator effectiveness,” stated Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert, West Allegheny School District superintendent. “Her background as a director of professional development will be a tremendous asset as she joins the West Allegheny team.”

Sean Aiken, assistant superintendent of schools for personnel



Kimberly Basinger

and student support services, said that Basinger brings valuable experience to the District.

“The interview team was thoroughly impressed with Kim’s knowledge of instructional leadership and her leadership around professional development,” said Aiken. “She brings a wealth of experience and knowledge and will be an asset for the teachers, principals, and central office administration. We are fortunate to have her join the team here at West Allegheny, and I personally look forward to working closely with her.”

Basinger is currently working toward a doctorate degree in educational leadership and policy. She holds a master’s in educational leadership and policy, and a bachelor’s in elementary education. She earned both degrees from the University of Maryland.

District welcomes new teachers

Twelve new teachers were welcomed to the District in August when they came together during the school’s New Teacher Induction. In addition to meeting with mentors, the District’s newest teachers were briefed on District goals and policies, as well as classroom procedures.

Teachers new to the District this year include: (front) Brittney Counihan, Kennan Killeen, Kateri Meinert, Claire Bertinet, Lauren Petraglia and Becky Barney, (back) Samantha Yuretech, Jacob Minsinger, Kaitlyn Huff, Ella Netzel, Leah Shuck and Kristina Tissue.



School year kicks off with excitement, vision and focus

On August 25, the West Allegheny staff not only returned to a new school year, but to a new administrative team as well. When the doors opened for the 2014-2015 in-service days, teachers had an opportunity to interact with Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert in her new role as superintendent. Teachers were also introduced to Sean Aiken, the new assistant superintendent of schools for personnel and student support services, and Kim Basinger, assistant to the superintendent for professional learning and educator effectiveness.

As the four-day program kicked off, teachers and support staff were taken by surprise when members of the West Allegheny Marching Pride high stepped into the high school auditorium performing patriotic selections. The day progressed with a talk-show theme that featured teacher and West Allegheny Education Association president Brian Lambert as host. This platform served as a means of getting to know the new team and gaining



LEFT: Teachers race to complete their team building challenge.
BELOW: Administrators introduce key points during the District priorities gallery walk.



insights from retiring assistant superintendent Dr. William Englert. The day’s events concluded with a humorous skit performed by Debbie Mirich, school board president.

Day two began with an action-packed, team-building challenge led by athletic director David McBain. At the high school stadium, administrators and teachers were presented with a series of tasks that brought out the competitive spirit in everyone.

Teachers were then invited to participate in a gallery walk that featured several information sessions highlighting the District’s vision. These gatherings underscored key priorities focused on academic targets, literacy, data trends and fiscal responsibility.

The remaining days of the Teacher’s Institute offered instructors a variety of professional development opportunities, in the form of extended and mini-sessions. Teachers participated in courses that included Deepening the Understanding of PA Core Standards, Engaging in Early Literacy, Learning to Exploring College Readiness, and Implementing Mobile Technology in the Classroom.



Brian Lambert (center) serves as talk show host when he interviews (from left) Sean Aiken, Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert, Dr. William Englert, Kim Basinger and Kate McClelland.

District announces important calendar update

Please be advised that a change has been made to the elementary and middle school calendar that does not impact student days off, but does alter conference day schedules. Elementary schools will have an in-service day November 6, and will have conferences November 7. The middle school will have conferences November 6 and an in-service day November 7.

The calendar was modified to reduce conference days from two to one to afford elementary and middle school teachers the opportunity to receive valuable training and professional development. If additional time is needed to schedule a parent/teacher conference, please contact the appropriate school principal to arrange an alternative date.

Renovations transform Wilson



When the doors of Wilson Elementary School opened on the first day of school September 2, the surroundings looked very different than when teachers and students left for summer break. With phase one of the renovation project complete, several new areas were ready to welcome students, including the front entrance, kindergarten classrooms, computer lab, library, nurse's suite and Wilson administration offices. In addition, District administration offices were completed, along with a training center/board room.

The scope of renovations was comprehensive, as new HVAC, electrical and plumbing systems were installed, as well as energy efficient, computer controlled LED lighting and ADA-compliant restrooms. A high-speed computer network was also put in place to accommodate innovative technology. Additional windows and skylights were added to allow for the infusion of natural light.

To accommodate the construction schedule, seven classes, along with their teachers, were relocated to Donaldson Elementary for the school year. The District hosted a welcome to Donaldson picnic in August for those students being transferred, along with their families. Students went on guided tours, learned about bus and lunch procedures, and visited their new classrooms.

As the year progresses, phase two of the renovation project remains on schedule. This stage of construction will include work on 16 classrooms, including art, band and chorus.

Ken Fibbi, director of buildings and grounds, added, "The refreshed design of Wilson Elementary School, through the use of natural lighting, innovative technologies and energy efficient systems, will provide a safe, creative and inviting learning environment that will foster student achievement for years to come."

Pavilion dedication honors and inspires



Volunteers help with construction of the Tonya Curigliano Memorial Pavilion.

Jack Curigliano was surrounded by family and friends as he offered heart-felt remarks September 12 in front of a beautiful pavilion constructed in honor of his late wife, Tonya, who passed away earlier this year. The structure was erected over the summer on the grounds of Donaldson Elementary School, where Tonya was a teacher for over 10 years.

Several volunteers gave their time to assist in the construction, including friends, members of the West Allegheny staff and Jack's co-workers, while he contributed the funds for materials.

"Tonya was a lifelong member of the community and a proud educator in the West Allegheny School District," stated Jack. "West A was a large part of who she was and that is the reason I felt the need to give something back. The entire West Allegheny community, past and present, offered their endless support and encouragement throughout her brave battle with cancer. My hope is, as present and future teachers and students use the pavilion, they can reflect on who Tonya Curigliano was, and be inspired to live their lives, as Tonya did, a proud member of the West Allegheny family."

Jack Curigliano dedicates the pavilion in honor of his late wife.



West Allegheny Foundation announces grants for 2014-2015

The West Allegheny Foundation Grants for Teachers program awarded five grants totaling nearly \$8,000 for the following innovative educational projects, which will be implemented during the 2014-2015 school year:

Early American Days (McKee Elementary): As an extension of the social studies curriculum, students in kindergarten through fifth grade will experience life through the decades. Activities include such lost skills as butter churning, candle making, cooking in a Dutch oven, and making applesauce. Students will also experience the times through the eyes of a storyteller, dulcimer player, a Native American Indian representing the Delaware Tribe, and a member from the Scottish Highland Infantry from the French and Indian War.

Etiquette in the Classroom (Wilson Elementary): This comprehensive etiquette program will cover topics that include respect for others, how to make proper introductions, the art of conversation, table manners, and the importance of correct oral and written communication skills.

Props for Plays (Donaldson Elementary): Props and costumes will be acquired for use in Reader's Theater plays to

bring students' roles to life. Research indicates that as students read and reread their parts, they improve fluency.

Alternatives in Exercise (high school and middle school): This program will include the purchase of Volcano PADDs, which are exercise mats that help students who have intellectual or developmental disabilities better understand and perform basic exercise functions. The program was designed to make exercise an exciting part of everyday life for these individuals.

Turnitin (high school): Through the use of web-based service Turnitin, students have the ability to submit written work such as essays, narratives and research papers to the site, which has many features designed to aid both teachers and students. With Turnitin's originality checks, students learn to recognize plagiarism and uphold their academic honesty. The program teaches students to utilize proper citation formats. In addition, students get instant feedback on mechanical errors, grammar, spelling and punctuation.

In addition to awarding these grants, the West Allegheny Foundation, along with Home Depot, assisted in funding landscaping around the Tonya Curigliano Memorial Pavilion.

Wal-Mart Foundation grant inspires innovation in the classroom

High school teacher Colleen Barnes was awarded a \$1,500 grant from the Wal-Mart Foundation through the company's Local Facility Giving Program. Barnes was able to purchase 6 iPad minis and an Apple TV with the grant money to use in her Algebra 1 and Algebra 2 classes.

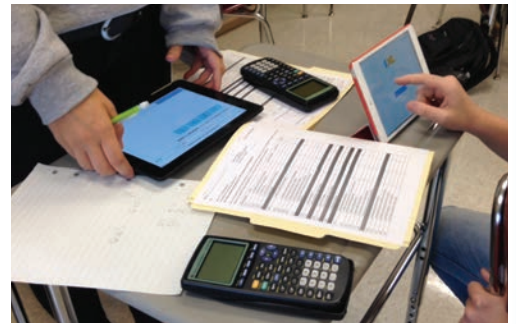
The technology adds an interactive component to Barnes' classes and incorporates innovative methods to facilitate learning. Students now have the opportunity to learn mathematics through internet-based and hands-on activities. They are also able to apply them to real world applications.

Students may choose how they master content. An interactive lesson utilizing a video explains the concept, while a variety of apps help students practice skills.

Barnes has also created lessons in which students work together to solve real life problems using algebra. In other

lessons, students are able to conduct research and apply their algebraic skills to create a presentation for the class.

"With the incorporation of the Apple technology, students will be more engaged in the lessons and I will have the ability to differentiate my instruction for each student," said Barnes. "The students will also have the ability to work at their own pace."



West Allegheny joins SMALLab Consortium

West Allegheny has joined forces with McKeesport Area, Elizabeth Forward, and Seneca Valley school districts, as well as Pittsburgh Public Schools, to create a partnership called the Pittsburgh SMALLab Consortium. The purpose of this alliance is to develop software, which will be used in each district's SMALLab.

"A SMALLab is an embodied learning environment," states the company's website. "Motion-capture technology tracks students' 3D movements as they learn in immersive, interactive space. For example, as students are learning about a physics concept like velocity, they can hear the sound of their actions getting faster. They can see graphs and equations that represent their motions in real time. They can feel the weight of an object in their hand as they interact in real physical space."

The Pittsburgh SMALLab Consortium was created to establish

open communication and relationships between area districts, and provide approximately 25,000 students with academic skills in all content areas through a unique and innovative approach.

The consortium will pool its resources and work with the Entertainment Technology Center at Carnegie Mellon University to create and implement software games and learning tools, which each of the participating districts have access to use at their own discretion.

The consortium districts welcome the opportunity to seek out innovative ways to bring cutting edge technology into the classroom. The uniqueness of the Pittsburgh SMALLab Consortium to expand opportunities for students in several school districts is made possible through a \$56,000 grant from the Grable Foundation.

Substitutes needed

The West Allegheny School District is in need of substitute teachers and nurses. The District is also seeking support staff positions for custodians, instructional paraprofessionals, clerical workers and cafeteria workers.

To apply as a substitute teacher or nurse, visit the district Web site at www.westasd.org. Select Employment - Professional Openings. To apply as a substitute for a support staff position, please visit the district Web site and select Employment - Support Openings.

West Allegheny featured at STEAM Grant Showcase

West Allegheny was well represented at the STEAM Grant Showcase September 11, when middle school assistant principal Megan Huchko shared educational advancements derived from



Middle school students Anna Parker, Racheal Nuckels, Merrin Prevade and Emily Durkin share SMALLab testimonials at the STEAM Grant Showcase at the IBEW Circuit Center Ballroom September 11.

the school's SMALLab installation. Four middle school students accompanied Huchko to share testimonials about the embodied learning environment and hands-on lessons the lab has provided to students. In addition, showcase participants were afforded the opportunity to interact with local innovators, inventors and organization representatives, allowing for collaboration between educators.

The SMALLab was installed at the middle school last year, and provides a dynamic technological atmosphere where learning becomes a physical experience. Students interact with motion-capture technology that allows them to be immersed in the content they are studying.

West Allegheny was one of 25 schools to be awarded a \$20,000 STEAM Grant from the Allegheny Intermediate Unit for the 2013-2014 school year. Grants were awarded for various applications of STEAM learning in the disciplines of science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics.

The STEAM Grants were made possible by the Claude Worthington Benedum and Grable Foundations.

Helping Hands extend their reach

Twelve Wilson Elementary School students spent part of their summer learning how to assist others during a two-day training session as part of the Helping Hands program. Now in its eleventh year, the program is a volunteer opportunity for students entering fourth grade who were recommended by a teacher, counselor or principal.

A key goal of the program is for volunteers to work with special needs students. Volunteers complete training sessions that focus on leadership, communication, team building and working with others. Life lessons taught during the student training include themes of "helping with" versus "doing for" and what it is like to be differently-abled.

Upon completion of training, students utilize their skills by volunteering to work with students involved in the Extended School Year program sponsored by the West Allegheny School District. This fall, students will also begin working with special needs students in the context of social skills activities. Schedule permitting, they will also participate in physical education and swimming with life skills students.



School counselor Kathy Taylor facilitates the Helping Hands program with the assistance of school psychologist Erica Cicero. Both led the summer training session.

School psychologist Erica Cicero (far right) and school counselor Kathy Taylor (far left) with Helping Hands volunteers (front) Andrew Dudek, Emma Bohley, Cierra Chiodo, Jacob Spiegel, Cole Egan, Olivia Ginocchi, Taylor Eannace; (back) Katelyn Kusic, Anna Sawford, Nadia Pollinger, Nathan Steele and Annabelle Lapin.

Parent Information Notice

Services for Disabled Preschool Age Children

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

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

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

Services for School Age Exceptional Students

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

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

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

Screening and Evaluation

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

Level 1: Review of group-based data

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

Level 3: School Based Intervention Teams

The Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE)

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

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

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

Individualized Education Plan

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

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

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

Parent Information Notice (cont.)

Notice of Recommended Educational Placement

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

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

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

Services for Protected Handicapped Students

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

Services for Students in Nonpublic Schools

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

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

Public Notice on Student Records

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

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

Confidentiality of Student Records

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

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

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

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

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

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

Senior project promotes fun and fitness

Runner Rebecca Lawrence was passed a torch this summer as she took on a cross-country training program for her senior project. Now in its ninth year, the program was designed to introduce students to running while building self-esteem and stamina.

Lawrence took on the fast-paced project as she organized and led training for incoming sixth graders. The schedule included two sessions a week for eight weeks. The practices started out slow, with participants getting to know each other during easy jogs. As the weeks progressed, so did runners' confidence and intensity.

The final challenge was to prepare sixth graders for a real cross-country meet against Holy Trinity at Settler's Cabin Park on August 18. Lawrence had 16 runners from her team complete the race.

Lawrence coordinated efforts with cross-country and track and field coach Jim Hamilton.



ABOVE: Summer cross-country runners included: (front row) Jamie Collins, Jessica Sibbet, Allie Godwin, Gianna Giacomino, Mackenzie Taranto, Hailey Sabin, Meghan Grogan, Laura Croco and Katie Bleil; (back row) Madeline Salek, Alexis O'Shea, Jacob Peluso, Justin Edwards, Larsen Maasikas, Cameron Kostik, Tyler Morgan, Josh Salek, Alex Kot, Rebecca Lawrence and cross-country coach James Hamilton.

WA athletics support Wounded Warrior Project through Purple Heart game

On September 19, the West Allegheny Athletic Department, in conjunction with the football boosters, helped support the Wounded Warrior Project by hosting a Purple Heart football game. Proceeds from the game against Ambridge and sales of t-shirts benefitted the WWP.

The theme of the evening was one of honor, support and recognition for the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces, who have sacrificed for the defense of their country. The WWP raises awareness and enlists the public's aid for the needs of injured service members; to help injured servicemen and women aid and assist each other; and to provide unique, direct programs

and services to meet their needs.

"With such a military presence as we have in our community, we wanted to pay it forward while still recognizing the ongoing efforts to support our many veterans who face daily challenges," said David McBain, director of athletics at West Allegheny.

West Allegheny's Marine Corps JROTC program, in concert with Ambridge's Marine Corps JROTC program, presented the nation's colors during a pregame ceremony. A boot collection was also taken during the game, and was conducted by West Allegheny's JROTC.

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Holy Trinity Catholic School

Holy Trinity cross country off to a fast start

The fall cross-country season is well underway for teams at Holy Trinity Catholic School in Robinson Township, where runners are experiencing success.

In September, the varsity and junior varsity cross-country teams both participated in the Slippery Rock Invitational. Approximately 2,500 runners from elementary through high school ran in the event. A number of Holy Trinity's runners finished as medal winners. Ryan Gehring finished second and Joseph Palamides finished 18th out of 251 junior varsity boys. Reagan Walsh finished eleventh and Chiara Golomb finished 15th out of 321 junior varsity girls.

At a recent meet hosted by St. Malachy at Fairhaven Park between six other schools, the junior varsity boys and girls, along with the varsity girls, all took first place overall as teams. The boys' varsity team finished third overall.

Among the junior varsity girls, Reagan Walsh finished first, Chiara Golomb finished third and Kennedy Walsh finished tenth. On the junior varsity boys' team, Ryan Gehring finished first, Joseph Palamides finished third and Seth Moore finished seventh.

Of the varsity girls, Madeline Minsinger finished third, Sarah Bechek finished fifth and Tess Strub finished 10th. Mark Roberts of the boys' varsity team also finished 10th.



TOP: Holy Trinity cross-country team members at a recent eighth grade recognition ceremony: Evan Jakicic, Michael Czerniejewski, Ryan Parker, Bethany Smith, Lindsey Seibel, Tess Strub, Madeline Minsinger, Abby Minzer, and Connor Miller.

FAR LEFT: Holy Trinity's Ryan Gehring (front) and Joseph Palamides (back) en route to a solid first and third place finish.

CENTER LEFT: Holy Trinity's Joseph Palamides grinding it out on the course.

CENTER RIGHT: Holy Trinity's Ryan Gehring running hard en route to a first place finish.

FAR RIGHT: Holy Trinity's Joseph Rees stretching for the finish.



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Pittsburgh Technical Institute

PTI hosts law enforcement agencies for career day

Over a dozen local, state and federal law enforcement agencies attended a career fair on the Pittsburgh Technical Institute campus Sept. 24. During the Law Enforcement and Emergency Services Career Day, students were able to talk to - and in some cases interview for positions with - various agencies, including the Central Intelligence Agency.

For the past 12 years, the CIA has been recruiting candidates from PTI to manage telecommunications networks at embassies and government buildings across the globe. Past PTI graduates have been hired as telecommunication information systems officers and system engineers. These individuals travel worldwide to install, integrate and maintain secure networks at telecommunications facilities. They also manage systems integration for voice and data communication systems.

More recently, the agency has been searching out HVAC technology students at PTI.

“The CIA was interviewing students constantly throughout the day,” says Josephine Smith, PTI’s career services director. “The students they’ve hired from PTI get to travel around the world. They’re also able to get their clearances, which can be a valuable asset to them.”

In addition, several high-ranking Pennsylvania State Police officers were on hand to speak with students, among them Lt. Judy Burroughs, western section commander of the bureau of integrity and professional standards. A 20-year veteran of the state police, Burroughs previously served in the Army and worked in international banking. She says a strong interest in public service drove her to pursue a place on the force, and that she looks for a similar drive in prospective candidates. Attending a criminal justice program like the one at PTI, she says, isn’t a requirement, but can help prepare prospective candidates for the training process.

“Any exposure they get to the criminal justice system surely helps,” she says. “Because that’s part of it. When we go to the academy, we have to learn about the law.”

Capt. Margaret Dropinski, director of the administrative division in the bureau of training and education, was also on hand. Dropinski says that the state police are currently looking to close a 600-person shortfall in the state police due to retirements. She says the force is looking for a diverse group of candidates between the ages of 20 and 40. Prospective candidates must have earned 60 college credits, though military service and law enforcement experience can help waive some of those credits.

She says reaching out to schools at events like the career day at PTI helps them inform students early about what they need to



ABOVE: Pennsylvania State Police officers talk with students and prospective candidates at a Law Enforcement and Emergency Services Career Day at Pittsburgh Technical Institute on Sept. 24. The force is currently looking to fill a shortfall in its ranks due to retirements. PHOTO BY PTI GRAPHIC DESIGN STUDENT SARAH YOEST

accomplish in order to enter into a career in law enforcement.

“We love interacting with candidates at the schools,” she says. “We have a great relationship with PTI.”

In addition to the state police and CIA, other law enforcement agencies present included the Carlow University Police Department, Pittsburgh and Allegheny County police, the Pennsylvania Game Commission, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and the U.S. District Attorney’s Office Department of Justice.

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The Model Train Display

is coming back to the Findlay Activity Center on

Saturday, November 29
from 11:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.

Paul Linko, Jr., a train enthusiast for over 50 years, is bringing his collection of rare tracks, which run through amazing scenes spanning winter, summer and spring. Admission to the event is \$5 for adults, \$3 for children 12 and under, \$3 for senior citizens 65+.

OR pay the family price of \$10.

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There will also be raffles and a bake sale. Bring the family, grandkids and friends and kick off the holidays with this awesome show!!

Hosted by the Findlay Township Parks and Recreation Department.

"Wrap It Up" Holiday Christmas Wrapping Party

Thursday, Dec 11, Findlay Township Activity Center, 6-11 p.m. Wear "Ugly Christmas Sweater" bring snack or appetizer to share, paper, tape, scissors & ribbon, get a 6 or 8 foot table to wrap your gifts. FREE event, donation jar for Food Pantry, Registration required - 724-695-0500 x 240 or 246.





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Ribbon Cuttings

August 12 - PTI Energy Center
PTI Energy Center enjoyed their official ribbon cutting ceremony August 12 with Chamber Ambassadors.



September 3 - Restaurant Depot
Restaurant Depot was joined at their new location by Chamber Ambassadors for their September 3 ribbon cutting ceremony.

Coming Up . . .

October 2 - BizBlast@Noon at City Mission from 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
October 4 - "I Have a Great Idea" Business Workshop at the PAACC office from 10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon
October 20 - Core Four Business Planning Course begins at the PAACC office from 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
October 23 - Breakfast Briefing "The Election: What to Expect and What to Hope For" featuring David Shribman, Pulitzer-Prize winning journalist

and Executive Director of the Pittsburgh Post Gazette at Chartiers Country Club from 7:30 AM - 10:00 AM
October 24 - Education Series Event "Improving Your BAT-ing Average" Sales Seminar at Courtyard by Marriott Pittsburgh Settlers Ridge from 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM
November 6 - Breakfast Briefing "Transportation Update" featuring Dan Cessna of PennDOT, Jim Gill of Allegheny County Airport Authority and Lynn Manion of ACTA at DoubleTree by Hilton

Green Tree from 7:30 AM - 10:00 AM
November 13 - BizBlast@Noon at Consol Energy Canonsburg office from 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
November 14 - Education Series Event "Can Asking Questions Be The Answer?" Sales Seminar at Courtyard by Marriott Pittsburgh Settlers Ridge from 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM
November 21 - Volunteer Fair & Lunch at Doubletree by Hilton Green Tree from 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

CORE FOUR[®] Business Planning Course

Presented by The Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce and The Enterprise Foundation

Opportunity is knocking!
Register for this four-part course and learn what every entrepreneur really needs to know about planning a successful business!

Classes run Oct. 20 - Nov. 10
Monday evenings 6 - 9 at the PAACC office in Moon Twp.

For details about these and other Chamber programs, contact 412.264.6270 or paacc.com.

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Support remains strong for 911th and its traditions

During retired Air Force Master Sgt. Russ Short's 33 years on active duty, he was stationed on bases from Japan to Texas. None, though, left the kind of impression on him that the 911th Airlift Wing in Moon Township did.

"I never met anyone here I didn't like," he says. "Great commanders, great sergeants; just a great bunch of people."

Short could be biased. His daughter, Gina Shaffer, serves as a master sergeant on the base. She just completed her 15th year in August, after enlisting right out of high school. Short's other daughter, Candace, also served in the military. She left recently though after she became pregnant. Short's son, Chad, served as well, including in Kuwait. Had he not tragically lost his life in a car accident, this year would have marked his 20th in the military.

As the Short family does every year, they came out to the base for its annual Family Day Picnic Aug. 2. During the annual event, military personnel stationed at the 911th bring their families out for a day of food, games, a race, music and socializing, on what would otherwise be a workday. For the Shorts, it's a down day they get to spend with what Russ calls their "extended family."

Senior Master Sgt. John Lee, a reservist at the base, says that the day is a morale booster, and for military members creates a rare occasion when families and military personnel get to intermingle. He says it's also a way to thank and welcome home those returning from deployment. Lee points out that it's not just service members who sacrifice during deployment. Families back home sacrifice as well. That's what prompted him to start a nonprofit named

Heroes Supporting Heroes a couple of years ago, with the mission of helping family members of deployed service members with everything from leaky roofs to car repairs.

Though a reservist base, about one-half to one-quarter of personnel at the 911th are usually on deployment at any one time, he says.

This year, amid a shrinking defense budget, the Air Force approached Lee about finding alternative funding for the family day event.

"They knew I was connected to the community and that I could probably help," he says.

In June, Lee also became the commander of VFW Post 7714 in Imperial. At almost the same time, he was named junior vice commander of Pennsylvania VFW District 29, which covers Allegheny County. Via a grant through the VFW Unmet Needs program, Lee was able to secure \$4,500 to donate to the event. The VFW Post 7714 also donated \$300.

For Lee and many other reservists, the 911th isn't just a job, it's a way to serve both their country and community while still having time for a life outside of the military. Such was the case for Master Sgt. Jim Crane, a K-9 officer with the city of Pittsburgh who also serves on the honor guard at the 911th. During the family day event, Crane gave demonstrations to a crowd with his police dog.

Prior to becoming a reservist, Crane served on active duty as a military police officer in the Army for eight years. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, he wanted to reenlist, but not at the cost of leaving his family for extended periods. He's since found a part time but meaningful



TOP: VFW Post 7714 members Dee and Aaron Morris, with VFW District 29 Commander Henry Mannella, VFW Post 637 Commander Ken Frankenberry, VFW Post 7714 Commander John Lee, VFW Post 402 Commander Dave E. Marchetti, and VFW Post 7714 Quartermaster Marty Morris at the 911th Airlift Wing Family Day Picnic Aug. 2. Through a grant, the national VFW donated \$4,500 to help fund the event. VFW Post 7714 donated an additional \$300.

ABOVE: Runners cool down after a fun run at the 911th Airlift Wing Family Day Picnic Aug. 2.



role with the base's honor guard, which handles military funerals across western Pennsylvania, as well as into Ohio and West Virginia. The only other closest honor guard is an active duty one stationed at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Youngstown, Ohio, he says. Crane says he probably handles about 90 to 200 funerals per year, and estimates he's performed 500. In 2009, he was named Ceremonial Guardsman of the Year.

The honor guard is just one way that the 911th serves the region. Another is a state-of-the-art firing range that it operates and makes available to both local and federal agencies. A much more significant contribution to the area, though, in addition to providing regional defense, is the \$59.6 million in salaries and \$30.2 million it injects into the regional economy. That comes both from local reservists and an additional 800 to 1,400 reservists who make their way to the base each month for training. According to authorities at the 911th, there are 1,366 Air Force Reserve members serving at the base, along with 320 civilians. Its total economic impact is estimated to be \$126.6 million. Following the opening of a new Navy Operational Support Center in early June of this year, the base added another 300 Navy Reservists who will create an additional economic impact on the local area.

Almost 18 months ago, the Air Force announced that it was reversing an earlier decision to close the 911th. Leading up to that decision, supporters of the base touted not only its importance to regional defense and the local economy, but also its efficiency. Thanks to a post-World War II partnership with the Allegheny

County Airport Authority, the base utilizes the county airport's runways, emergency services, air traffic controllers and other amenities for just \$20,000 per year. That arrangement has remained a talking point for supporters of the base. In March, Lt. Gov. Jim Cawley visited both the 911th and 171st Air Refueling Wing, where he characterized the base's efficiency as a model.

Last March, the Air Force announced it would continue funding the base through 2014, and since then, the 911th has seen continued unification among other branches of the military. In addition to the Pennsylvania Air National Guard base already operating adjacent to it, and the new naval operations center which has relocated from North Versailles Township, a Marine Corps Reserve base could be the next to make its way to the area. The Pentagon has already allocated funds to pay for construction of a new Marine Corps Reserve base on property owned by the Army in Findlay Township.

In addition, the 911th has been exploring options that would link it to the 171st, either via a road across the airport's runways or an underground tunnel. Currently, the 171st is also at the top of a list to receive 12 new KC-46A aerial refueling tankers, a move that will add an estimated 59 additional new personnel to the base.

In August, however, the Air Force followed through on plans to decommission its Civil Engineering squad. The move is expected to cost the base an estimated 59 reservists, 22 civilians and one fulltime position. Lee, who is a member of the squad, says that the Air Force is working with those affected to find positions



TOP: Retired Air Force Master Sgt. Russ Short (left), with his daughter, Master Sgt. Gina Shaffer (right), and their family at the 911th Airlift Wing Family Day Picnic Aug. 2.

ABOVE: VFW Post 7714 members Dee Morris and her husband, Aaron Morris, talk with airmen at the 911th Airlift Wing Family Day Picnic Aug. 2.

elsewhere, such as at Wright Patterson. He says that the squad is much smaller than others at the base, including the 32nd Aerial Port Squadron and the Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron.

For Tech Sgt. Josh Rager, the 911th allowed him to move closer to home, finish college on the GI Bill, and start a family. He did so after eight years on active duty, during which time he was stationed in Kuwait and Afghanistan.

In May, Rager graduated from Robert Morris University. Recently, he and his wife celebrated the birth of their first child. He says the decade of working in financial management for the military has helped him find a good job outside of it, and that the family day picnic is a nice way to relax with fellow service members.

"It's a down day to come out with the family," he says. "I'll take it." •

W.A.F.E.L.'s Semi-Annual Used Book Sale

at the WACL, **Nov. 6-Nov. 8**. Great books from all genres at unbelievable prices. Most are \$5 per bag. Some individually priced. Materials include fiction and non-fiction books, audio books, movies, puzzles, magazines, games and more! There will also be raffle baskets and a bake sale. Proceeds benefit WACL. Volunteers and book donations needed. Call the library at (724) 695-8150 for details or to sign up.

Barnes & Noble Bookfair to benefit WACL

Nov. 29, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Come to the Barnes & Noble store at Settlers Ridge in Robinson. Mention the library and a percentage of each purchase will be donated to the WACL. Lots of fun and activities are planned for the whole family. Details can be found at www.westernallegHENYlibrary.org.

Children's Programs

Baby Storytime & Playgroup, Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. A

20-minute storytime that introduces children ages birth through 24 months to books and reading with engaging stories, songs and activities. Half hour of baby playgroup to follow.

Toddler Storytime & Playgroup, Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m. Join to share stories, songs, and rhymes, for children ages 18 months to three with their caregivers! Toys will be out after storytime for open play!

Preschool Storytime, Wednesdays, 2 p.m. A weekly, 45-minute long storytime designed for children ages three to five years old. Share books, songs, games or activities, and a craft.

PJ Storytime, Mondays, 6:30 p.m. Wear pajamas to this nighttime storytime! Share stories, songs and make a craft. For children up to third grade.

Music & Movement, Thursdays, October 2, 16, 30, and November 13, 2 p.m. Children ages three and up will learn delightful songs, dances and musical activities to enhance developmental concepts and have a ball.

Spanish Storytime, Tuesdays, Oct. 14, 21, 28, and Nov. 11, 18, 25, 2 p.m. Hola & Bienvenidos! Join for a brand new Spanish language infused storytime. Children will be introduced to Spanish vocabulary through songs, stories and games.

Paws for Reading (grades K-3), Oct. 14 and Nov. 4, 6-7:15 p.m. Come to the library and read with a registered therapy dog from Therapy Dogs International. Register for a 15-minute slot.

Lego Club, Wednesdays, Oct. 15, 29, and Nov. 12, 4 p.m. Come create with Legos at the library. There will be building challenges and free play. Please do not bring Legos from home.

Crazy 8's Clubs, Mondays at 4 p.m. (grades K-2), **Wednesdays at 4 p.m.** (grades 3-5). A new kind of math club that includes building, running and jumping, making music and making a mess! Includes bouncy dice explosion, glow in the dark geometry, toilet paper Olympics, and more!

Teen Programs

Fans of Fantasy Book Club, Oct. 23 and Nov. 20, 6 p.m. Get together for a fun-filled night of games, snacks, movies, and crafts, all based on the fantasy book.

Teen Yoga, Aug. 23, 9:15 a.m. Yoga class is for all levels and is led by Kristen Kolenda from Yoga H'om. Bring a mat/towel and a bottle of water.

Teen Advisory Board, Oct. 19, Nov. 16, Dec. 14, 2 p.m. Contribute to the community, make important decisions regarding the teen library space. Get leadership and resume building experience.

Cookflix, First Saturday of each month, 1 p.m. Pairing of films and food! Watch a movie and share treats inspired by the film.

Teen Open Mic Night, Oct. 6, 7 p.m. Join for a relaxed open performance hour for teens to share expressive art forms such as comedy skits, monologues, short stories, poetry readings, musical performances, dance routines, magic shows or anything else.

tArt (Teen Art Time), Oct. 23, 5-7 p.m. Brushes and oils or acrylics will be provided, but it's BYOC, or bring your own canvas.

Hunger Games Late Night, Nov. 14., 5-10 p.m. In anticipation of the third Hunger Games film, join for a movie marathon of the first two films, with activities, prizes, and food. May the odds be ever in your favor...

Mockingjay Movie Party @ Cinemark, November 22 (afternoon, exact time TBA), Cinemark in Settlers Ridge in Robinson. The library will be hosting a private movie party with Hunger Games-inspired games, trivia, crafts, and pizza before the movie. The \$10 cost includes movie ticket, lunch, and movie snack box. Transportation not provided.

Adult Programs

The Cookbook Club, first Tuesdays, 7 p.m. Stop at the circulation desk to pick up the cookbook of the month. Register and come hungry!

Social Media Savvy Series, second Thursdays, 6:30 p.m. Get savvy with Facebook in October and Twitter in November. Each class includes an overview and account set up. Basic computer knowledge and current email address required. Library laptops provided. Bring a mobile device to try out the app version.

Coupon Exchange, second and fourth Tuesdays, 6 p.m. Grab coupons (even those that have expired) and come to the library to clip, swap and sort. Get tips and information.

YA @ Heart, third Tuesdays, 6 p.m., begins Sept. 16. Young adult literature isn't just for teens anymore. Share in this new book club for adults only. Pick a book and watch part of the movie version.

Anime/Manga Club, fourth Tuesdays, 6 p.m. Lovers of Anime and Manga gather together to explore these formats, watching and discussing everything from the art form, cultural context, mythology, history and pop culture. Adults and older teens welcome.

AARP Refresher Driving Classes, Oct. 9 and Oct. 10, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. AARP members \$15, non-members \$20, must attend both classes. Pre-registration required.

Pre-Planning Your Final Arrangements, Oct. 22, 6:30 p.m. Join representatives from the Historical Cemeteries of Pittsburgh and learn how to prepare and organize the needed information when there is a death in the family.

Yarnies, Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m. and Thursdays, 10 a.m. All skill levels welcome for conversation while working on projects. Hooks, needles and yarn provided for those wishing to learn a new skill.

W.A.F.E.L., first Mondays, 7 p.m. Join the Western Area Friends to Enhance the Library and play an active role by helping to plan and implement fundraising activities.

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Why should I get my furnace checked?

Furnaces should be cleaned and checked every year. The older the furnace, the more important servicing it is. Newer gas furnaces are equipped with failsafes that shut the furnace off when a problem is detected. Older furnaces have no such failsafe.

Over time, furnaces can develop small cracks in the combustion chamber. These cracks may not be visible to the naked eye, but through these cracks, carbon monoxide can leak into a home.

A furnace that is not running at peak performance can be deadly, as it produces excess carbon monoxide, a natural byproduct of incomplete combustion. Virtually every gas furnace produces some carbon monoxide, which is usually carried away from the home through the chimney or PVC venting. A clean, efficient gas furnace produces very small amounts of carbon monoxide. A dirty, inefficient gas furnace can produce amounts that are deadly. Carbon monoxide is colorless and odorless, and can cause flu-like symptoms, including disorientation, confusion and even death.

Scale and flakes of rust produced by carbon monoxide and water vapor - both of which are byproducts of burning gas - may settle on burners and impede gas flow. Over time, as the furnace harbors moisture, the problem can compound, resulting in rust on a larger scale.

Some fixes to a furnace are relatively easy. For instance, to make a furnace more efficient, consider changing its filter regularly. A new filter makes a furnace use less energy, thereby saving money.

For a gas or electric furnace check, or a gas boiler check, either during the day or in the evening, call H&L Heating and Cooling at (412) 403-4900.

About H&L Heating and Cooling

After 25 years of working in the sales, service and installation of residential heating and cooling equipment, Heath Weigner of Oakdale is now servicing clients' heating and cooling needs through his own business, H&L Heating and Cooling. Weigner runs the business with his two sons, Tim and Larry, and his wife, Debbie. All four graduated from West Allegheny and Parkway West Career and Technical Center. Both Heath and Larry were named outstanding seniors in their HVAC classes at PWCTC. Heath graduated in 1989, and Larry graduated exactly 25 years later in 2014.

"I enjoy the satisfaction, I enjoy the people," says Heath. "When they call you, they're usually in their time of need."

He says they always try to repair before replacing, and pride themselves on polite and friendly service. He wants to keep the business small so as to keep that personal touch.

"With the big companies, you never know who you're going to get," he says.

Right now, H&L is offering furnace checks both during the day and in the evening to accommodate any schedule. Daytime and evening rates are the same. For an appointment, call (412) 403-4900.

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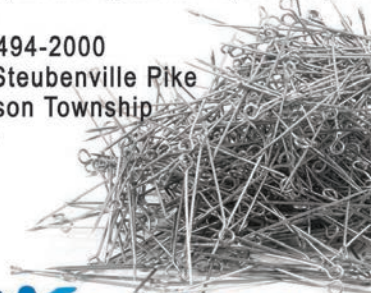


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Clinton Lake

Just after the turn of the 20th century, in 1901, the Clinton Fair was a popular and highly anticipated annual fall event. Held at the former Bellefield Driving Park, which surrounded Clinton Pond, the fair drew upwards of 5,000 attendees over three days. Adult admission to the fair was a quarter.

The event was a big affair, and organized under the auspices of the Clinton Fair Association. The association operated with a board of officers and individual superintendents, each of whom oversaw one of the fair divisions. These divisions included horses, swine, sheep, cattle, and poultry, as well as a floral hall and agricultural displays. There was a gate committee superintendent and a fair marshal.

Special trains were scheduled to run between Imperial and Clinton on the old Montour Railroad. Cattle, horses, and sheep were exhibited by their owners vying for ribbons, and the ladies displayed their creative talents at the floral hall.

The top attraction, however, was horse racing. Horse owners came from Pittsburgh and beyond to race for lucrative monetary purses. The draw for horse racing also brought money to the area, and horse owners took advantage of the stables that the association oversaw at the grounds. Stables would consistently be built to accommodate horses.

Once winter came, the pond's frozen surface drew many to skate away a cold winter day or evening. A 1905 newspaper clipping noted, "Clinton Lake boasts of the best skating pond in the west part of the county."

By 1924, the Bellefield Driving Park was but a memory, and the fairs that once drew thousands ceased to exist. It soon became a summer resort, where campers pitched their tents and came to enjoy hot summer days. Some entrepreneurs set up booths and sold their wares, and the lunch stand became a popular place to grab a quick bite to eat. Residents enjoyed fishing, diving, swimming and sunning. In the evenings, entertainment lent a festive atmosphere, as campers brought out their instruments to entertain the crowd. They brought mouth organs, jew's-harps, violins and victrolas. Quartets became popular, and campers, along with local residents, would sit around the grounds to listen to the groups perform.

Fishing grew in popularity by 1933. The pond was stocked with bass, catfish, yellow perch and yellow pike.

Although the large fair that drew thousands was discontinued in the 1920s, by 1940 Clinton Pond had new life as the location for the annual Clinton community picnic held in the summertime. Residents knew to come to the annual picnic at the "old Clinton fairgrounds," and spent the day with their families, enjoying baskets they brought filled with food and refreshments.

Eventually, the pond grew to be known as Clinton Lake.

Amy Campbell shared information about the lake during that period. She noted, "It was Ed Wilson's family - my family as well, that owned the lake; the same Wilsons from the founding pastor of the Clinton United Presbyterian church - the Reverend William Wilson. Ed Wilson was my mother's family. The owners of the lake were the family of Algernon Wilson, the grandson of the

BELOW: A view of Clinton Lake today.



minister."

Campbell also said she remembers family recalling a story about the Wilson's house on the lake having bars on the windows because of Indian attacks.

Judy Bolind added, "Ed Wilson's ancestors owned the Clinton Lake property in the mid 1800s. It was their farm but was turned into Clinton racetrack and fair grounds."

She said it was sold to Pittsburgh Coal Company in 1916.

Other local families - the Saunders and McElhaneys - owned the property at different times throughout the century.

From the 1950s through the 1970s, the lake drew people from around the region. Campbell recalls that many kids were bussed to the lake from Pittsburgh in the 1950s through the 1970s.

Rebecca Reynolds and Keith Wilson both recall that a man died swimming at the lake in the 1970s.

Other area residents have memories, too. Penny Layne said, "My dad got bit by huge catfish there. We used to catch the catfish with beach towels!"

Ernie Leopold said, "I went there as a kid with my aunts. Remember a little beach area at the end of the lake near the road. It had a small concession stand and high diving board. Mud bottom and rumor had it, it was full of catfish that would sting you."

Others recall iceskating there in the winter.

The A.R. Building Company purchased the old Clinton Lake property several years ago and began developing the area for residential use. Now, just down the road from Clinton Commerce Park, the new Clinton Lake development offers townhouses available for rent. Developers have maintained some of the historic nature of this once popular community spot, by keeping a six-acre section of the old Clinton Lake as a centerpiece to the development. A walking trail has also been added around the lake.

Today, those who make their home at Clinton Lake can look out on the water and be reminded that they are a part of history, where people from around the region would come to enjoy the annual Clinton Fair more than a century ago.



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Professional Training for the Sincere Student

Veterans adjust to life outside military through organization's local chapter

Anyone spending time on the Montour Trail recently in Robinson Township may have seen a bearded man hiking along the trail with a rucksack with two flags attached, pushing a three-wheeled stroller with intent and purpose. The flags, along with a shirt that proudly reads "Team RWB," are there to catch the attention of passersby. They are also part of what drives Jeremiah Fountain to hike the trail and engage with those who notice and speak with him.

Fountain is an Army veteran. He spent three years in the infantry, during which time he completed a tour in Iraq. His wife, Miranda, is still on active duty. Like so many of the nation's soldiers, Fountain found it difficult to adjust back to civilian life. The absence of structure, camaraderie and physical activity made his homecoming feel like alienation. Not long after, his health began to decline.

"It's difficult to maintain the level of fitness they expect in the military," he says, recalling his struggle with his weight, "and they could be pretty ruthless if you don't fit the expected mold."

The stress and pressure that developed in the absence of military structure kept Fountain isolated. He struggled to connect with civilian life and to maintain his health and well-being. His wife noticed his struggles and suggested he contact Team Red, White and Blue. The nonprofit organization seeks to connect returning military personnel with their communities through social and athletic activities. With an estimated 36,000 active members, the impact on soldier reintegration is growing as more local chapters form. Like a number of other organizations, Team RWB is a grassroots reaction to the ongoing struggle uniformed men and women face when returning home. In a 2012 report, the Department of Veterans Affairs found that, in 2010, 22 veterans committed suicide each day.

Yet while there are programs in place like Wounded Warriors for those who are battling severe trauma, Team RWB provides a home and support for those who may have less apparent problems, or are just having a hard time adjusting to civilian life. Their focus is solely on interaction and building community.

Group dynamics are unique to soldiers in particular, Fountain explains. A soldier may hate PT, but when a group would get together, they'd all fall in and end up enjoying the work. For Fountain, Team RWB offered that companionship, as veterans and active duty soldiers alike got together with civilians to spend time, often through physical activity. Fountain says the group recognizes that including non-military participants, such as those in other organizations, can be an exercise in breaking down barriers.



Jeremiah Fountain recruits members to Team Red White and Blue along the Montour Trail in Robinson Township. PHOTO BY SANDRA KIZINA

“When a civilian enters a VFW, it can be intimidating. Everyone there has a shared experience that the civilian doesn’t have. But soldiers were civilians first - and that shared experience is what RWB is about,” Fountain explains.

Fountain’s wife, Miranda, had already been involved with Team RWB. She joined in the summer of 2013 while stationed at Fort Lee, Virginia. She experienced the transformative encouragement that it fostered while separated from her family for a six-month Army logistics program.

“The changes I saw in myself, physically and emotionally, during my first few months of membership convinced me that this was something that would help our family thrive. I knew that we should all get involved when we moved to Pittsburgh, and the team here has made us feel like this has always been home,” she recalls.

When Jeremiah and his wife moved from Virginia, he joined a Team RWB chapter in Pittsburgh. Feeling that soldiers in western Pennsylvania were very spread out, he initiated subdivisions that would help local groups get together more often and engage with each other.

When Jeremiah looked into the group, he saw that many members were training for half marathons and 5K runs.

“I promised my wife that I would never pay to run,” he remembered, “I never liked running or any PT outside of my training.”

Within months of becoming involved

with Team RWB, Fountain was participating in 5K’s with his local chapter. Instead of running, however, he would pack up his rucksack and “ruck” the race to honor his military roots. As he began to train for events, he decided to take his rucking approach to training and turn it into a memorial hike for fallen troops. He attached two flags to his pack to garner attention, and for each hike, he prints and laminates a story about a fallen soldier that he can share with anyone who takes the time to talk with him. He hopes the idea will spread, and he’s created the hashtag #RucktoHonortheFallen in order to spread the word.

His projects are all an extension of his belief in Team RWB as a positive force in the community, and with the group members - military and civilian - who participate in local events.

“Like anything else, an organization is only as good as the people in it,” says Dan Blevins, a current member of Team RWB’s Western PA chapter, “and the Fountains are some of the best. Jeremiah is always working hard to organize many different outdoor activities for Team RWB and he is one of the friendliest people I have had the pleasure of meeting. He is one of the driving spirits that keeps this organization so great.”

Currently, Jeremiah is training for the Bataan Memorial Death March in White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico.

The 26.2-mile hike honors soldiers who defended the Philippines in World War

II. He plans to fill his ruck with printed stories of fallen soldiers he carried during his training.

Though every Team RWB chapter operates differently, they are locally run and organized. The fundamental idea is the same among them; social and athletic interaction to build community and support.

“You don’t have to be a soldier or a marathon runner,” Jeremiah says, “just look at my picture!”

It’s up to each person how much they want to be involved. Some come to cheer and offer support, while others run or participate to the extent they can. Jeremiah, for his part, has lost 30 pounds and continues to increase his rucksack weight and hiking distance.

“The most important aspect [of Team RWB] is connection,” he says.

Nearly all of the money donated to the organization goes to local events. Jeremiah emphasizes that fundraising is only done locally by individual members and that none of the money is used for other fundraising efforts; only for events hosted by Team RWB. The goal, the measure of success, is the bonds formed and the good that grows from them.

For more information, visit www.teamrwb.org, or visit the Facebook pages for Team RWB Western PA, Team RWB West Allegheny Ruck/Hike/Run Group, and Ruck to Honor the Fallen.



Team Red White and Blue members Eric Ripper, Bruce Fuscaldo and Nick Crewl get ready to ruck along the Montour Trail in Robinson Township.
PHOTO BY JEREMIAH FOUNTAIN

Pittsburgh International Airport

AIRMALL Grand Opening

Pittsburgh International Airport celebrated the completion of a \$10 million renovation that created a new retail core in the center of the airport's airside terminal. The renovation was designed to reconfigure the layout of new retail units to address changes in passenger traffic and put stores squarely in the path of millions of travelers every year.

The special event included a ribbon cutting ceremony, live music and a first for the airport: a runway fashion show featuring the latest styles for men and women from AIRMALL shops!

"As a vital part of our regional economy, Pittsburgh International Airport has always set the standard for high-quality shopping and dining when you're traveling," said Rich Fitzgerald, Allegheny County executive. "We welcome these new brands to the region as we also welcome flights to new destinations. We are thrilled by an increase in travelers over the last several months and we encourage our flying public to take advantage of these exciting offerings."

The new retail stores include international luxury brands, including Italian-based Pinko, which opened its first U.S. store in the AIRMALL. Other stores include Furla, Lacoste, Armani Jeans, Hugo Boss, Tumi, Spanish-based Desigual, Collezioni-The Beauty Gallery and Bottega dei Sapori, an Italian specialty foods store. The new units join a host of other new brands in the AIRMALL at PIT, including Metalsmiths Sterling, Erwin Pearl, Pinkberry and Green Beans Coffee.



JetBlue: Daily Nonstops Pittsburgh to Ft. Lauderdale

JetBlue Airways will launch new service from Pittsburgh International Airport to Ft. Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport (FLL) October 29. Flights can be booked now at jetblue.com.

An extra bonus: the first checked bag is free and every seat in a JetBlue aircraft is equipped with a video monitor and complimentary programs. To help increase bookings for this new service, the Allegheny County Airport Authority announced that it will begin a parking promotion to coincide with the flight's start. JetBlue's PIT-FLL service will complement the airlines' existing route from Pittsburgh to Boston Logan International Airport, which departs four times daily.



More People Are Flying

Passenger traffic at Pittsburgh International Airport took off over the summer. The number of scheduled passengers increased by 4.1 percent in June and by 6.2 percent in July of 2014, in comparison to the same periods a year ago, according to the Pittsburgh International Airport Monthly Scheduled Airline Traffic Report prepared by the Allegheny County Airport Authority.

These were the fourth and fifth consecutive months of increases in enplaned passengers at PIT. Some of the contributing factors include: maturing routes on Southwest to Houston Hobby and Nashville, operating for more than a year and almost a year respectively; an additional 3,000 passengers on PEOPLExpress flights to Newport News in July; service on American Airlines to Los Angeles operating for 11 months; and larger aircraft flying to Chicago.

Trusted Traveler Center Now Open

A joint center to apply for expedited airport screening has opened at Pittsburgh International Airport. The Department of Homeland Security Trust Traveler Enrollment Center offers passengers a choice between the TSA Pre✓™ and the Global Traveler Program of Customs & Border Protection (CBP). TSA Pre✓™ and Global Entry provide an improved passenger experience, while enhancing security and increasing system-wide efficiencies. Global Entry or TSA Pre✓™ travelers have provided information to the government and paid a fee to get expedited service through the screening checkpoint and during international arrivals at participating airports.

The Center is located at the ticketing level of the Landside Terminal across from the US Airways Ticket Counter. Travelers can pre-enroll for the TSA Pre✓™ application program at www.TSA.gov. Walk-in appointments for the TSA Pre✓™ application program will be honored on a first come, first served-basis; pre-enrollment is recommended. Pre-enrollment for Global Entry via www.CBP.gov is required.



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Pittsburgh International Airport (PIT) is the first airport in Pennsylvania to offer airport travelers valuable rewards when they park, shop and dine at the airport.

This program allows airport passengers to automatically earn more frequent flyer miles or hotel points. Enrollment in FlyPIT Perks is free and easy. Passengers simply register any credit or debit card at www.thanksagain.com/PIT and then use those cards for purchases at participating locations to earn one mile, two hotel points or a Visa gift card for every dollar spent. Points and miles automatically accrue. New members will also receive 100 bonus miles when they enroll with a mobile device by texting FLYPIT to 82257.

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Ongoing

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

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

Emotions Anonymous, Wednesdays, 7 p.m., Valley Presbyterian Church in Imperial, helps those with emotional difficulties maintain or improve emotional health and cope with everyday life, Meghan, (412) 584-9618.

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

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

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

October 18 Jacob Ferree Chapter DAR annual benefit, Pittsburgh Airport Marriott, 10:30 a.m., visit with friends, shop a Chinese Auction, purchase delectable baked goods, enjoy a delicious lunch, entertainment by the Ambridge High School Steel Drum Band, reservations due by October 4, \$25, includes lunch, Julia Vogel, (412) 931-4309, Sue Strunk, (412) 787-1347.

October 23 Senior Expo, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Sheraton Pittsburgh Hotel in Moon Township, hosted by state Rep. Mark Mustio and state Sen. Matt Smith, free health screenings, flu and pneumonia shots, nutrition and exercise, government services, safety, financial planning, fraud protection, (412) 262-3780 for more info and to schedule flu shot.

October 25 Valley Church Fall Harvest Spaghetti Dinner, 4-7 p.m., \$6 child, \$8 adult, \$6 senior citizens, dine in or take out, spaghetti, salad, bread and ice cream w/pizzelles for dessert (dine in), brownies for take out dessert, tickets in advance or at the door, (724) 695-0300.

October 26 Vera Bradley Purse and Accessories Bingo, doors open 1 p.m., starts 2 p.m., Holy Trinity School in Robinson Township, 20 games of bingo, Chinese auction, raffles, lunch, tickets \$25 in advance via www.westernarea-y.org or at Western Area YMCA, (412) 787-9622.

October 28 Montour Run Watershed Association Annual Dinner, 6 p.m., Mario's Family Italian Restaurant in Moon Township, Consol Energy representative to speak on environmental protection measures pertaining to natural gas drilling activities at Pittsburgh International Airport, early registration required, see www.mrwa.info for registration forms or call (412) 787-7875.

November 8 Craft Show, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Holy Trinity Church in Robinson Township, two halls, cafeteria and gym filled with a variety of crafts, free admission, lunch available, (412) 787-8121, darcy.mueller3@yahoo.com.

November 8 Jacob Ferree DAR Chapter Social and Service Meeting, Union Presbyterian Church in McKees Rocks, 11 a.m., learn how to be of service to the DAR, learn about volunteer service projects that can be done at home with Melissa Moore, everyone to bring a favorite covered dish, tableware, beverages, rolls and butter provided, Bonnie Kappert, (412) 771-7526, kkandcompany@msn.com by Nov. 1.

November 11 Troops 'N Hoops Basketball Game, John Jay Gymnasium on the Robert Morris University campus, 7 p.m., RMU faculty face off against military personnel in a basketball game to benefit Operation Troop Appreciation, which provides wish list items to troops, organized by RMU senior communication seminar students, donation of any amount for entry, Chinese auction, food by Primanti Brothers, Whitney Snyder, (814) 490-4527, wgsst3@mail.rmu.edu.


November 16 Bishop Canevin High School 13th Annual Holiday Craft Show, 10 a.m.-3 p.m, hand-made crafts from 120+ crafters, "Crafts with Katie" for children while adults shop, silent auction, 50-50 raffle, lunch, bake sale, free shuttle for overflow parking, free, (412) 922-7400 x 24.

November 22-January 4 Christmas Light Up, Clinton Park, walk-thru only, 5-10 p.m. every day including holidays, \$10 per car, for special event info and volunteer opportunities call Lloyd and Patty Faux, (724) 899-3602.

December 5-14 The Nutcracker, Andrew Carnegie Music Hall, 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 2 p.m. Sunday, \$15 adults, \$12 children, (412) 279-8887, CarnegiePerformingArtsCenter.com.

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: info@awmagazine.com.



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Findlay Programs

Unless otherwise indicated, contact Darlene Larson for more information or to register, (724) 695-0500 x 246, dl Larson@findlaytpw.org. Events take place at Findlay Activity Center unless otherwise noted.

"WALK Live" Classes

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6-7 p.m., Donna Kuzio opens doors to a better way of health and weight loss, \$5 per class, kuziofjr@gmail.com.

Garden Club

Meets **third Thursday of each month, 6:30 p.m.**, activity center or other location, past projects have included Imperial Honor Roll, community vegetable garden at Valley Church, bicycle planters at Fair in the Woodlands, upcoming holiday bus outing to Phipps Conservatory, Sue Peindl, (724) 695-9837.

Pavilion Rentals for 2015 Season

Open to Findlay Township residents, businesses, and youth or adult groups, \$60 with \$25 refundable deposit, 2 separate checks, begins **Feb. 7, 9-11 a.m.** at municipal building, after **Feb. 9**, online, non-resident reservations after **April 1**, \$85 with \$25 refundable deposit, new pavilion at Recreation and Sports Complex: residents \$100, \$175 with kitchen, non-residents \$150, \$250 with kitchen, \$100 refundable security deposit required for all, seats 150-165 with full kitchen facilities and nearby restroom, www.findlay.pa.us.

Bingo, First Monday of each month, Imperial VFD, **Nov. 10, Dec. 1, Jan. 5**, doors open **5:30 p.m.**, kitchen at **6 p.m.**, bingo at **7 p.m.**, package of 12 throwaway cards and five specials is \$25, quickies and jackpots sold on the floor.

Time for Toddlers

Mondays: Oct. 20, 27; Nov. 10, 17; Dec. 1, 15; Jan. 12, 26.
Tuesdays: Oct. 21, 28; Nov. 11, 18; Dec. 2, 16; Jan. 13, 27. Bring children under four for an hour of movement, music, activities and snack, registration required, \$3 per session, **10:15-11:15 a.m.**, (724) 695-0500, Kids Creative Cooking Class **Oct. 16, Nov. 13 and Jan. 22, 4-5:15 p.m.**, popular after school

cooking program, register at least two days before class, grades K-5, \$8 per class, class size limited, (724) 695-0500.

Yoga for Beginners & Beyond

Fridays: Oct. 10 and 17; Sundays: Oct. 19; 6:30-7:30 p.m., yoga for all levels, benefits whole body with exercise, stretching and meditation, classes continue past October with participation, \$5 per class, Julia Harvey, (724) 695-1976.

Wrap It Up Holiday Christmas Wrapping Party

Dec. 11, 6-11 p.m., wear your "ugly Christmas sweater," bring snack or appetizer to share, paper, tape, scissors and ribbon, get a six or eight-foot table to wrap gifts, free, donation jar for Food Pantry, registration required, (724) 695-0500 x 240 or 246.

Boy Scout Troop #830 Pancake Breakfast

Nov. 8, Findlay Township Activity Center, **7:30 a.m.-noon**, \$6 adults, \$5 seniors and kids ages 5-12, children under five free, all you can eat, donations accepted for food pantry & small gifts for pantry kid's birthday closet, dine-in, take-out, Chinese auction.

Halloween Pre-Pizza Party and Parade

Oct. 25, register in advance, **12-12:45 p.m.**, \$2 per person, Iceman Reptile Show, **12:45-1:30 p.m.**, (724) 695-0500, Halloween parade down Main Street from Activity Center at **1:30 p.m.**, stays at activity center if weather is inclement, prize drawings for those in costume only.

Findlay Township Trick or Treat

October 31, 6-8 p.m.

Computer and Appliance Recycling

Municipal Building, Oct. 25, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., accepted for free, no limit, computers, monitors, printers, scanners, laptops, non-Freon appliances, phones, keyboards, mice, radio equipment, lead acid auto batteries, televisions one per car, Freon appliances, \$15, Cynde, (724) 695-0500.

continued on next page



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On the Horizon

Findlay Events (continued)

AARP Safe Driving Classes

Municipal Building, **November 18 and 19**, 8-hour class, **9 a.m.-1 p.m.**, 55 and over, refines existing driving skills and develops safe, defensive driving techniques, no driving test, refresher course **Nov. 13, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.**, AARP members \$15, non-members \$20, Findlay residents pay half, checks only, payable to Findlay Township, reservations required. (724) 695-0500.

Model Train Show

November 29, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Paul Linko, Jr., a train enthusiast for over 50 years, brings his collection of rare tracks running through amazing scenes spanning winter, summer and spring, \$5 adults, \$3 children under 12, \$3 senior citizens 65+, \$10 per family, benefits West Allegheny Food Pantry, raffles, bake sale.

Oakdale Events

Boy Scout Troop 248 Annual Haunted Cabin,

Oct. 22-25, 7-9 p.m. nightly, nearly an acre of haunted fun, covered bridge, creek critters, maze, torture chamber, spinning vortex of doom, barracuda cove, more, \$5, \$3 group rate, for groups and reservations call (724) 693-0549.

Annual Halloween Parade and Trick or Treat,

Oct. 31, 5:30 p.m., lineup at **5 p.m.** at Willow Creek, kick off treat or treat with a parade to the Oakdale Fire Department where children will receive treat bags, sponsored by Oakdale Hose Company, trick or treat runs **6-8 p.m.**, (724) 693-9740.

Montour Valley VFW Post 7714 Events

For more information on any event, stop by or call the VFW Post 7714 at (724) 695-8866, or email nbeyerbach@gmail.com.

Veterans Outreach Program, second Thursday of each month, **6-8 p.m.**, programs to help veterans in a variety of ways, financial planning, PTSD, troubles one may be facing in life.

Halloween Party, **Nov. 1, 8-12 p.m.**, with D.J. Geo, open to the public and free, prizes for best costume, drink specials, pumpkin carving contest, bring your best carved pumpkin, snacks provided and welcomed.

Veterans Day, **Nov. 11**, open to the public starting at **4 p.m.**, join in remembering true American heroes, dedication of the Missing Man Table in the dining area, dinner from **4-8 p.m.**, formal dedication ceremony at **6:45 p.m.**

UNION CHURCH INVITES YOU TO SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19 - 4-6 PM TRUNK AND TREAT



Trunk and Treat is a safe and fun way for kids to enjoy Halloween and a great way to interact within our community. Vehicles will be decorated in a creative way by their owners and children will trick or treat from trunk to trunk filling their bag with goodies

Come dressed in a costume and enjoy a fun filled night!
This event is **FREE** and open to anyone in the community.

UNION CHURCH, 6165 STEUBENVILLE PIKE

For more details and to RSVP, contact Lisa at 412-737-1313 or lisaberger26@yahoo.com

Iraq War art exhibit (continued from page 10)



ABOVE: A visitor to the “Eyes of Freedom” exhibit hosted by PTI Sept. 16 views a painting memorializing Lance Cpl. Jourdan Lin Grez, Lance Cpl. Christopher Jenkins Dyer and Lance Cpl. Aaron H. Reed of Lima Company.

“It was a very special day because all of the family members were there, all of the Lima Marines were there,” he says. “And the Lima Marines - these are so good and so real - that none of them wanted to be around the paintings.

“We were there to support it, we were there to be around the families and help the project, but it was just a difficult room to be in, if you can imagine.”

Following that initial exhibit, Strahle convinced Miller to show the paintings at a motorcycle rally to benefit the Wounded Warrior Project. The idea to take the exhibit on the road formed from there.

Under the umbrella of a nonprofit, Strahle now takes the show to about 30 or 40 events per year. It was recently featured in *The American Legion Magazine*. The invitation from PTI came not long after that.

PTI has been recognized nationally for its efforts to assist military members with financial aid, deployment policy and transition assistance. Through the Yellow Ribbon Program, the school offers institutional aid to veterans who are matched by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The school’s director of public safety, Oakdale Police Chief Dr. James Lauria, is a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel. In November of 2012, PTI dedicated a military lounge to its military students, faculty and staff.

Strahle says that, in the beginning, Miller was driven by a desire to help the families of those depicted in her paintings. Now, however, he sees the exhibit as appealing to a much wider audience.

“They’re representing something more,” he says. “They’re representing the entire military.”

The exhibit travels with a Gold Star Registry, a digital collection of records containing the names of every military veteran who has died in the course of active duty since World War I.

For those who did serve in the regiment, he says that now it’s not unusual for them to travel from near and far to visit the exhibit.

“Over time that’s helped to heal a lot of the Lima guys who survived, myself included,” he says. “All of the guys who came back home over the years - we’re coming up on 10 years already - the same guys that were in that room avoiding those paintings are the same guys who drive three or four hours to see it.”

Treloar and Mercier in the spotlight (continued from page 19)

Whitaker. Most recently, she was cast in a UPMC Health Plan commercial which will air later this fall. Josie will also be busy this fall with a show she has been cast in: Pittsburgh Musical Theatre’s “A Lyrical Christmas Carol.” It will be presented at The Hazlett from Dec. 17 through 21.

Josie said, “From watching Shane and working with him on the sets of musicals, I have learned one thing. He never gives up. What I try to do is follow in his footsteps. I like that he is serious, and I am trying to work on that.”

Josie is the daughter of Debra and Mark Mercier.

“We have been blessed to find ourselves surrounded by supportive families who are willing to share their knowledge of the performing arts business freely and unselfishly. Kim Treloar is always the first to pass along information about local music-related auditions,” Debra said. “Without Kim, we would never have heard of the opportunities available at RMU’s Colonial Theatre. Kim has also helped many of us to navigate the unfamiliar world of resume and bio writing for the performing arts. When it comes to understanding the film industry’s lingo, Diana Messner is our go-to mom. Our community is full of people willing to take the time to show you the ropes, and I think that has been the most pleasant surprise of this whole experience with Josie.”

This fall, Josie begins her studies at Pittsburgh Musical Theater, where she will take classes in tap, ballet and musical theater.

Local talent has become a tradition in the West Allegheny area. Within the last two decades, such notables as Tim Bish, Andrea Leigh Von Halle (Czyzewicz), Eddie Wiernik, Eric Rieger and other West Allegheny residents have found their professional niche in the performing arts. Josie and Shane are well on their way to continuing that tradition.

BELOW: Shane Treloar in front of the Carson-Adler Agency office in New York City. The agency, which specializes in representing young talent, represents Shane. PHOTO SUBMITTED



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Just one life

**“To the world you are one.
But to one you are the world.” - Selestian Missions**

Ronny Munroe, leader of the metal band Metal Church, and his guitarist, Paul Kleff, wrote a hard hitting ballad entitled “Pray.”

The band’s drummer, Tony Rossi of Pittsburgh, told his fiancé, Stephanie Orlando, about the song. She told Tony, “I feel led to write a script for the music video.”

Stephanie and Tony reached into their pockets and life savings to finance the production of the video.

Cyndi Roach from Hankey Farms encouraged Orlando and Rossi, and co-produced the video. Roach knew of a chapel that would be perfect for the church scenes in the video. Roach also knew of a farm in North Fayette that would work for some scenes.

Together, Roach, Rossi and Orlando brought together friends, and friends of friends, who volunteered to make the video a success.

Rossi, who is a carpenter by trade, built a house front on the farm for the band’s backdrop, which they painted in graffiti.

Guitarists Paul Kleff and Sean Baker arrived with bassist David Donigian from Michigan. Munroe, the band’s vocalist who lives in Seattle, drove in from a gig. The director, Joe DeWitt, came in from California.

The band, actors and crew filmed scenes at Champion Ridge Farm on Finks Run Road in North Fayette in the bitter cold. It was just days before the season’s biggest snowfall. Lee Roach, Cyndi’s mother, was on the scene with hot coffee, a homemade buffet and desserts. Lee kept the fireplace burning.

The story line and the song are about gangs and revenge. A 14-year-old boy attends a church service with his dad and mother. The film crew used Montours Memorial Chapel for the scene. The next day, the boy’s father, who is a pool shark, wins a lot of money by doing what pool sharks do. The gang attacks and kills

his father. For years, as the son grows and becomes a man, his goal is to seek revenge, and kill his father’s killers.

Scenes of motorcycle gangs engaged in gang fights were portrayed and filmed on the farm. An accountant, a banker, firemen, paramedics, a graphic artist and bartenders played the parts of the 18 bikers.

Scenes were also shot at Knucklehead’s Bar in the North Hills part of Pittsburgh. Co-owner Pammi, along with her husband, Eddie, contributed much to the video, and were among those filmed in the biker scenes.

The song “Pray” encourages those seeking revenge to turn from gang violence and revenge. It encourages them to pray, and look toward the future by having faith. The song encourages them to throw away their guns. In the final scene of the music video, guns, one by one, are thrown into the river.

The song’s message will be heard by many, not in a church, but through a heavy metal piece.

Cyndi, Rossi and Orlando say that, “If this video will touch just one life, if one person turns to God and to faith and throws away their gun, and with the gun, their desire for revenge, it will be worth it.”

“That one life being changed will also affect the lives of so many in positive ways,” says Orlando, who is now Mrs. Tony Rossi.

The music video has been released and can be viewed on YouTube. The song is on the album “Electric Wake.”

Stephanie writes, “When one sees another person going through a bad time, and becomes angry with God, and asks God, ‘Why do you let this happen? Why don’t you do something?’ God might answer, ‘I did do something, I created YOU’.”



BY ERMA DODD
NORTH FAYETTE
TOWNSHIP
RESIDENT

Tony Rossi, drummer in the band Metal Church, with Erma and Chuck Dodd on their Champion Ridge Farm. Rossi constructed a backdrop for scenes in a video of the band’s song “Pray” on the farm, where scenes of the video were shot. PHOTO BY CYNCITY PHOTOS





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