

West Allegheny Edition

Allegheny West

Volume 17, Issue 100
February/March 2016

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ISSUE



West Allegheny School District
Official Newsletter
Inside Page 33



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From the Publisher



Dear Readers,

Thank you for picking up this edition of Allegheny West Magazine. As you may have noticed from our cover, this issue marks our 100th West Allegheny edition. We publish two other editions - a Moon and a Montour edition - as well, but WA is where this publication began.

In honor of this milestone, we looked back through our archives and picked out nine of our most memorable WA editions. Pat Jennette, our publisher emeritus, picked nine from her 16 years of publishing this magazine. I chose three from the 13 editions we have published to date (including this one).

On page 46, we've written a short recap of our history to go with our reflections on these editions. We enjoyed this trip into the past. I hope you do as well. If you're a longtime reader of this publication, there will no doubt be a few familiar stories in there and maybe some covers you haven't seen in a long time.

As always, we have plenty of useful and interesting news to share this month. On page 6, read about a WA alumnus whose tattoo art is making its way onto the big screen. On page 8, read about a WA alumna whose military service in West Africa earned her a distinguished international honor. Then flip the page and read about yet another WA military standout as she is on the cusp of graduating from the U.S. Naval Academy.

As an area resident, you are no doubt familiar with attempts by the Department of Defense to close the 911th Airlift Wing in Moon Township. This base is of vital economic importance to the region and serves an important role in our national defense, yet there have been a number of attempts to close it. Read about the latest hurdle facing the base and what you can do to help.

On page 18, prepare for spring by reading about new bridges that were completed on the Montour Trail last year. Then flip to page 43 and read a Valentine's-themed story about a couple whose chance meeting grew into a lifelong romance.

We'll be back with our next WA edition in April. In the meantime, I hope you will continue to reach out to us with your stories, ideas and announcements.

Doug Hughey,
Publisher and Editor

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Reese, Ashley and Michael Vidt of McDonald - along with a fourth, unidentified passenger sandwiched in between - enjoy a sled ride down the sled riding track at North Fayette Community Park. PHOTO BY DOUG HUGHEY



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ABOUT THE COVER

The covers of our first 100 West Allegheny editions, including this one, our 100th, make up our cover this month.

WA alumni designed tattoos for new “Outsiders” television series

West Allegheny alumnus and tattoo artist Dooner Sadauskus is used to seeing his artwork walking around in public. Right now though he’s also enjoying seeing his artwork on television, during the first season of WGN America’s new television series “Outsiders,” which premiered Jan. 26.

Sadauskus owns and operates Up in Arms Tattoos and Piercings in Moon Township. The shop initially opened its doors in a plaza across from the West Allegheny High School campus in 2007 and moved to Moon Township in 2012.

Last year, Sadauskus, along with fellow tattoo artists Sean Seretti, Will Fazzolare - another WA alumnus - Gabe Gunning and Jason Trunick, created hundreds of tattoo sketches for the show. Seretti says they were approached by the show’s producers after an assistant to actor Ryan Hurst called them looking for a cover-up for a shoulder tattoo. Sadauskus put together some sketches for Hurst, and soon after they were asked to create tattoos for the entire cast.

Hurst plays the role of Little Foster on the show, which filmed last year in Millvale, Monroeville and at the 31st Street Studios in the Strip District. The plot revolves around a backwoods Kentucky family defending their off the grid, outlaw way of life.

Hurst is probably best known for another heavily tattooed character he played on the FX show “Sons of Anarchy.” According to an interview he did with 411 Mania in 2009, he worked with both graphic artists and tattoo artists to design tattoos for that role as well.

When it came time to work on tattoos for “Outsiders,” though, Up in Arms artists didn’t just work with Hurst; they worked with a number of cast members individually.

After taking some artistic direction from producers, they worked with each of the show’s actors and actresses to develop tattoos that were right for their characters. Among those they worked with were Gillian Alexy and David Morse. Alexy has appeared in numerous shows, including FX’s “Damages” and “The Americans.” David Morse is a well-traveled actor who has appeared on HBO’s “Treme” and “Real Detective,” as well as in the movies “The Green Mile,” “World War Z” and “Concussion,” to name a few.

Seretti says the style of work was a little different than what they are used to, as producers wanted them to create prison-style or tribal tattoos that looked like they’d been made with crude tools like guitar strings.

“It was strange because we’re used to fixing tattoos,” he says. “But they wanted us to make tattoos that looked homemade, like they’d been made by razor blades.”

Seretti says that for almost three months they worked after shop hours and well into the night making upwards of 30 sketches for a single tattoo. A full back tattoo that Hurst wears in the show took around 20 sketches, he says.

“We’d tattoo all day and then the cast would come at night and

we’d work on the show,” he says.

Cast members and producers would then flip through their sketches until they found something they liked. Once a sketch was decided upon, it was sent to a company that makes temporary tattoos. On the set, the temporary tattoos are applied by makeup artists.

It wasn’t just enough to come up with the right design, though. Because the sketches need to fit exactly, shop artists used cellophane to make templates by tracing body parts.

West Allegheny alumnus Dooner Sadauskus (pictured at center) owns and operates Up in Arms Tattoos and Piercings in Moon Township. Last year, Sadauskus and his team of artists worked with actors and producers to create tattoos worn by characters on the new television series “Outsiders.” Pictured here in the Up in Arms studio are Alex Rocco, Sean Seretti, Sadauskus, Deb Naples and Jason Trunick, with their dog, Rocky.



They also came up with a filing system to keep all the sketches straight, and did all of that while working under filming deadlines. The artists say that it was the first time any of them had worked on a television or movie project.

“It was definitely the most intense art project I’ve ever worked on,” says Seretti.

Still, he says, they’d do it again in a heartbeat.

Adding to the difficulty of the project was the unexpected loss of Fazzolare, who passed away May 23. Seretti says they were scheduled to meet with Alexy around that time, and that when she showed up, she commented on the candles they’d placed around the studio.

“She was really nice about it,” says Seretti. “She said, ‘Don’t worry about it, you guys don’t need to worry about this now.’ But we got it done.”

Hopes are that the show gets picked up for another season. If it does, the Up in Arms artists say they feel confident they’ll be the ones doing the tattoos.

For more on Up in Arms Tattoo and Piercings, visit upinarmstattoo.com.

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Area native receives Florence Nightingale Medal

On Oct. 12, 2014, as an Ebola outbreak was ravaging countries across West Africa, Oakdale native and U.S. Army Col. Laura Favand arrived in the Liberian capital of Monrovia.

At the time, Favand, an Army nurse, was part of a larger mission sent to West Africa by President Barack Obama to help stem the tide of what would become the largest Ebola outbreak in history. By the time Favand arrived in Liberia, the disease had already claimed over 4,000 lives in Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal and



Survivors of the Ebola virus proved to be a valuable asset to a military unit led by Oakdale native Col. Laura Favand, who was tasked with educating healthcare workers about the disease in Liberia in 2014. Here, survivors talk to students about their experiences.

Favand says that when they landed, they did not have a curriculum in place. Instead, they worked with the WHO to put one together on the fly. She recalls a superior of hers comparing the situation to building a plane in the air.

The curriculum they developed required students to complete two days of class time before diagnosing and treating mock patients in their staged ETU. Playing the role of those patients were people who had contracted Ebola and survived. Many were healthcare workers.

“They could say, from healthcare workers and a patient perspective, this is what it feels like to go through the disease,” says Favand. “Instead of just lectures we had hands-on scenarios and made students diagnose and put them into a treatment program.”

Over the next two months, 1,600 healthcare workers completed the curriculum that Favand’s unit developed. In addition, four mobile units traveled via air transport to offer the course in outlying areas. Favand says that poor road conditions would have made travel to those areas otherwise impossible.

By late 2015, no new Ebola cases were being reported in Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia. As of this writing, months have passed since the last new case of Ebola was reported in West Africa.

In October, the International Committee of the Red Cross awarded 38 individuals worldwide who had, as their website terms it, demonstrated courage in time of disaster or armed conflict. Many of those individuals recognized last year played a role in the West Africa Ebola outbreak. Among those recognized was Favand. The medals are awarded on a bi-annual basis.

“Col. Favand said that she didn’t think that she did anything special, that this is what nurses do,” says American Red Cross chief nurse Linda MacIntyre. “Yet, under her leadership, 1,500 Liberian healthcare workers were trained on the safe care of individuals infected with the Ebola virus.”

MacIntyre quotes Favand’s nominator as stating that none of the workers Favand and her staff trained have succumbed to the virus.

Also in October, Favand was invited to speak at a national conference on emergency nursing about, as she puts it, “performing humanitarian healthcare on a large-scale basis very quickly.”

In December, after 26 years of active duty, including a tour in Iraq, Favand retired from the Army. The 1985 West Allegheny graduate now lives in Kentucky with her husband, Leonard Winiarski. Locals might remember Favand’s mother, the late Shirley Favand, who taught business-related courses at West Allegheny until 1991. Her father, Jules, still resides in the area.



U.S. Army Col. Laura Favand (pictured second from right), an Oakdale native, was one of just 38 individuals awarded the Florence Nightingale Medal by the International Committee of the Red Cross in 2015. She is pictured here at an Oct. 28 ceremony at the Red Cross headquarters in Washington, D.C. with American Red Cross chairman Bonnie McElveen-Hunter, American Red Cross president and CEO Gail McGovern, and American Red Cross general counsel and chief international officer David Meltzer.

Sierra Leone. In Liberia, 201 healthcare workers had contracted the disease and almost half had died. A World Health Organization report published in October of 2014 calls those figures an “alarming feature” of the outbreak. Two months prior, in August, Doctors Without Borders had called the situation in Monrovia “catastrophic.”

“The hospitals were nonfunctioning by the time we got there,” says Favand, referring to Monrovia. “Hospitals were one of the main points of transmission.”

A University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing graduate with 25 years of active duty experience, Favand says she first learned of the mission Sept. 16. On Oct. 1, a day after officials confirmed the first case of Ebola in the U.S., her unit got their orders. They were to be part of an effort to train upwards of 500 healthcare workers per week in West Africa.

Over the next couple of weeks, as media outlets in the U.S. seized on two more confirmed stateside cases, Favand’s unit arrived in Monrovia. There, despite a thousand people having died from the disease, Favand says people were carrying on as best they could.

“It was interesting because we realized everyone back home was terrified, but there, life goes on,” she says.

Outside public venues like grocery stores, Favand recalls there being hand washing stations and people taking temperatures.

“That’s how they were able to continue business, because if you didn’t have a temperature you weren’t contagious,” she says.

Attached to the 101st Airborne Division, and with 85 military personnel under her command, Favand says her unit set up a training facility at a police barracks outside the capital. At the Liberian National Police Training Academy, her unit erected a mock Ebola treatment unit to train students.



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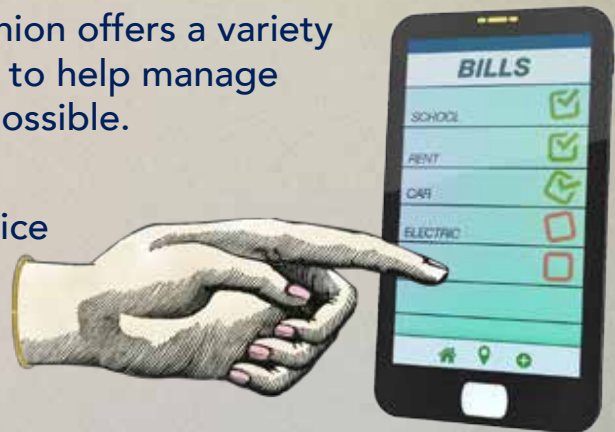
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WA alumna to graduate from Naval Academy

Packing up one's bags, loading them in the car and heading off to college is a bittersweet moment for any up-and-coming college freshman. As they prepare to enter a new chapter in their lives, they face an exciting time full of new opportunities that also comes with some nerves, apprehension and sadness - especially for someone like Findlay Township native Barb Lesko. Her roots, family and friendships lie deep in her community. For Lesko, her unique college experience not only set her apart from most high school graduates, but also taught her that it's not just her hometown she's passionate about, but rather her homeland. In just a few short months, Lesko will graduate from the U.S. Naval Academy.

Rewind to 2011, when the then-West Allegheny High School junior had lots of decisions to make. She always had a sense of discipline in her life, thanks to her parents Gail and Jesse, who worked to instill that trait in their children. Jesse, who is also chief of the Findlay Township Police Department, served in the Army and fostered his values, including a hard work ethic and sense of patriotism, in Barb and her older brother Jesse III. At WA, Jesse III was involved in ROTC and is now a first lieutenant in the Army. Barb was a talented athlete. Her volleyball coach, Brian Begor, encouraged her to consider playing collegiate volleyball for the Naval Academy.

"At first, I was a little unsure about the idea," said Barb, "the military aspect of the school was a bit intimidating."

That, coupled with one of the lowest college acceptance rates in the nation, at 7.9 percent, made the prospect all the more daunting for the high school junior.

"But once I looked into it and became a little more informed of the opportunities that would be available to me as a student there, I decided to apply," said Barb.

She recalled starting the process toward the end of her junior year at WA. In addition to her application to the academy, Barb



also had to receive a Congressional nomination and go through an interview process.

Fast forward a few years, and what seemed like such a big feat to overcome is now a thing of the past. Barb knows the experience helped give her the best opportunity as a young person in today's world. Looking back, the midshipman says her time spent at the academy taught her valuable life lessons - both in and outside of the classroom. They're lessons she couldn't have learned anywhere else.

"Plebe year was rough," Barb recalled of her first year.

She was off to her first year of college earlier than most of her fellow WA alumni, having to undergo what's known as "plebe summer." Barb said that she was pleasantly surprised to make friends easily.

"Everyone faced similar challenges of embarking on the new adventure and got to spend lots of time together," she said.

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That's not to say she didn't experience homesickness or moments of difficulty - typical experiences for any college student. For Barb, though, the good outweighed the bad and she began to see the real value of a Naval Academy education.

"Being at the academy has made me a well-rounded person," she said. "I get to attend a four-year college where I know that when I graduate, I will be prepared for anything."

Her education also did not cost her a dime, as students at the academy have their tuition paid for as part of a five-year post-graduate commitment to the Navy.

Each student graduates from the academy with a bachelor of science. For Barb, she will graduate with a degree in political science, but says that as a student, she was also enrolled in ethics and leadership courses - all while traveling the country and learning about the U.S. Armed Forces.

"I backpacked through and lived in the Rocky Mountains in Wyoming for an outdoor leadership school. I spent a month in San Diego flying in planes and helicopters, shooting at the range with Marines, going underway on submarines and ships," she said. "I learned to fly Cessna planes by myself, and I also spent a month with Marines in Quantico while undergoing a leadership evaluation to be selected as a Marine. Those are experiences that you don't get at any other college."

She explained that all of those experiences combined have helped prepare her for life after college.

"Anywhere I go, I'll be ready... with leadership and time-management experiences, I will be prepared for civilian work," she said. "Those are skills not only the military needs but also one that every major company looks for when employing people."

With just a few months before graduation, Barb will be commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps. Her service selection is aviation.

She is excited for what the future holds.

"I am extremely grateful for all the opportunities the U.S. Naval Academy has provided me, and I look forward to all the adventures to come in my future service as a Marine officer," she said.

Barb is one of at least four West Allegheny graduates to attend the Naval Academy, and one of two current midshipmen. Tory Delmonico is currently a freshman at the academy. West Allegheny alumni Christine Taranto and Rob Brinzer are both former midshipmen.

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On Jan. 8, Melissa Merritt, owner of Helping Hands Childcare in Imperial, hosted her ninth annual scrapbook weekend at the Double Tree Hilton Hotel in Moon Township. Over 80 women attended the event, including three vendors.

As in years past, attendees once again participated in many charitable activities over the weekend. This year marked the third time that the group collected over 400 items and cash donations for the West Allegheny Food Pantry. The group also raised \$350 for the Duane Foy Hockey Scholarship for West Allegheny Hockey. Merritt assembles a prize package of scrapbooking supplies and sells tickets to raise money for the scholarship fund.

The group also handmade over 100 scrapbook pages to be put into books for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. One of them, Rose Tinlin, an avid scrap booker, makes special Walt Disney scrapbooks for Make-A-Wish. Children who request a Disney trip as their wish are given the handmade scrapbooks already decorated and themed for a Disney trip and can add their pictures to them. Rose has been creating and donating scrapbooks to Make-A-Wish for many years.

For more information on the January 2017 event, please contact Melissa Merritt at: helpinghands001@verizon.net.

Paragon opens new model home in South Fayette

STORY AND PHOTOS
SUBMITTED BY PARAGON HOMES

Paragon Homes has opened a new model home in top-ranked South Fayette School District, just down the road from the district campus. Like all Paragon homes, this decorated model shows off many of today's most sought after features. It also allows each Paragon client to create a custom home that is unmistakably theirs.

In addition to the new model home, Paragon has a number of large lots to build custom dream homes on in a quiet cul-de-sac. These homes start at \$405,000 and come with many features that other builders would charge extra to include. The new furnished model home gives buyers an idea of what they can expect, with spectacular views and a location just minutes from Robinson Township, Southpointe, downtown Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh International Airport.

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A new holiday tradition in Findlay benefits a good cause



A group of 26 young women raised money by caroling Dec. 18 as part of an annual tradition started in 2013 by the Chiodo family. Pictured are Cierra Chiodo, Brianna Chiodo, Cayla Chiodo, Katelyn Kusic, Nadia Pollinger, Lily Lee, Emma Bohley, Annabelle Lapin, Sydney St. John, Madison Montello, Amanda Schoppe, Nikoletta Jaram, Chrisoula Jaram, Allison Keefer, Brenna Downing, Olivia Nicholson, Sarah Spokart, Mia Palmer, Abigail Schoppe, Haley Denes, Britney Wilson, Kylie Cornell, Julia Stalling, Olivia Thompson, Jada Babich, Allie Godwin, Alyssa Keefer, Delanie Malatak, Jillian Wallace and Lindsay Danzik. PHOTO BY TODD JONES.

In 2013, Gino and Lori Chiodo of Findlay Township decided to take their three daughters, Cierra, Brianna and Cayla, along with a few of their friends, around their neighborhood to do some caroling. As they did, they also collected donations for the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

All went well that year, so each year since they have continued the effort. As they have, their numbers have grown, to the point that this past holiday season they numbered 26. All 26 young women went out on a snowy and cold Dec. 18 to carol and collect donations. To date, the Chiodo's efforts have raised over \$200 and their efforts have become known as Caroling for a Cause.

Having experienced the excitement and energy that they have poured back into the Findlay Township community, plans are to continue the tradition once again next year.

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New Keelboat Farms CSA in North Fayette offering locally grown, fresh produce and more

Ernie and Elizabeth Lee have been North Fayette Township residents since 2003. They lived in the Pointe West development prior to purchasing their farm property in 2012.

“I always kept a vegetable garden when we lived there,” says Ernie. “Many of our friends and neighbors would stop by to see what we were growing. I really enjoyed sharing our harvest and teaching people more about where our food comes from.”

Ernie says they initially moved to the farm to enjoy a more rural lifestyle. After growing produce for their family for a few years, they decided to start farming on a larger scale, in part as a way to give back to the community. The name Keelboat Farms pays tribute to Mike Fink, an early resident of North Fayette Township.

The Lee’s farm uses a community supported agriculture model. From a business perspective, he says, it is the most viable option for small family farms like theirs.

“Members join our CSA before the growing season starts, which really helps from a planning perspective,” he says. “We know exactly how much seed to buy, how much land to prepare, and how much of each crop to plant. Since our crops are marketed in advance, we can focus more of our time and energy on growing great produce.”

Keelboat Farms is currently accepting members for their 2016 CSA. They plan to grow over 75 varieties of vegetables during their 24-week growing season, which runs from June through October.

“We grow customer favorites like heirloom tomatoes, fresh carrots, cucumbers and salad mix,” says Ernie. “We also grow many unique varieties that you won’t find in your local grocery store.”

Keelboat Farms offers three share sizes to accommodate a variety of households. Their standard share provides enough produce to meet the needs of an average family of four. Their half share is designed for smaller households and their plus share is best for larger families or vegetarian households. They do not

use synthetic fertilizers or conventional pesticides and are in the process of becoming a Certified Naturally Grown farm.

The farm is also providing environmental and educational benefits.

“Farmland is a valuable resource that is disappearing as the area becomes more developed,” says Ernie. “We want to be good stewards of the land we are blessed with and use it to make a positive impact in our community.”

This year, they’ll be starting a Grow-It-Yourself Club to help families start their own gardens. Club members will receive all of the seeds and transplants they need to plant their own backyard garden. Keelboat Farms will also provide a complete garden plan and expert advice to help take the guesswork out of gardening.

Prior to starting their farm, Ernie was a science teacher and stay-at-home dad. Elizabeth has a business and accounting background.

“It works well because we each bring a different skill set to running our farm operation. I handle the agricultural side of things and she takes care of the business aspects of the farm,” he says.

They say that as far as they know, they are the only CSA growing in North Fayette.




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The future of the Air Force in the airport corridor could hinge on this decision

One day, the miracle of the 911th will be a story that will go down in Pittsburgh history books. For now, though, members of the local military and business community are trying to write a new chapter to this story, one that hopefully cements the future of an Air Force Reserve base in the airport corridor.

As many people in this region know, since 1995 the Department of Defense has regularly attempted to close the 911th Airlift Wing in Moon Township. The most recent attempt started in 2011, but after months of diligent work by the Military Affairs Council of Western Pennsylvania, local, state and federal elected officials, the Pittsburgh International Airport, and many local businesses led by the Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of

Commerce - headed then by PAACC president Sally Haas - the Air Force announced in 2013 that the 911th was safe. A coming together of Democrats and Republicans on Capitol Hill, in Harrisburg and locally to save the base from these multiple closure attempts led to the phrase, "the miracle of the 911th."

Since then, the Military Affairs Council of Western Pennsylvania has been able to go on the offensive, tirelessly building and documenting the case for our local military bases, including their economic impact to the western Pennsylvania region, their strategic importance to our national defense and the cost saving advantages to the DOD. This work will prove helpful as grumblings of base closures are on the horizon with Pentagon budget cuts.

The greatest current risk to the 911th is the age of its C-130 aircraft, which is related to the most recent attempt to close the base. The Air Force, however, is currently looking for an Air Force Reserve base to house a new squadron of eight C-17 aircraft. These aircraft are much larger than the C-130s. Should the Air Force select the 911th for the C-17s, the risk that its base could be closed due to the age of its aircraft could be eliminated. Also under consideration for the fleet are Dobbins Air Force Base in Marietta, Georgia and Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

The 911th has every reason to be at the top of that list, and once again the MAC, political leaders from every level of government and business leaders in our region are working to make sure the top Air Force brass know that before a decision is finalized. The 911th was awarded recognition as the top Air Force Reserve base in the country in 2015. It continues to be one of the most economical Air Force bases in the country because of a cooperative and dedicated relationship with the Allegheny County Airport Authority. The airport authority leases over 50 acres of property to the Department of Defense for \$20,000 annually. This is an astronomical cost savings to the DOD, considering that \$20,000 would buy less than 4,000 square feet annually in an industrial office park in the airport corridor.

Yet, amazingly, the Airport Authority's lease also includes world-class fire and rescue services and runway maintenance. That includes snow removal and rubber burn off, co-joined access to four runways and an integrated air traffic control system at an

international airport that has only closed for 10 hours in the last 20 years for weather. Other bases nationwide pay millions of dollars annually for this type of prime real estate and the services that go with it.

In return, the base generates over \$126 million in economic impact to the airport corridor. That's a pretty good trade-off for both parties.

In addition to the tremendous cost savings, Pittsburgh's location provides a strategic advantage to the Air Force and our national defense. Pittsburgh has close air support proximity to the nation's capital in Washington, D.C. and is a short distance from major cities such as New York and Chicago, as well as the entire East Coast.

Pittsburgh is also close to many eastern U.S. cargo hub bases, including the Defense Logistics Agency Regional Distribution Center, the Letterkenny and Tobyhanna Army depots, and the Naval Supply Activity Center in Mechanicsburg. This proximity would result in significant fuel savings if cargo was transported through our rail and road networks, eliminating a short air stop in heavy East Coast air traffic and allowing planes to fly directly from Pittsburgh into the international theater.

The conversion of the 911th to C-17 aircraft would require an \$87 million investment from the Air Force and the DOD. It would also include additional costs that would be necessary for the expansion of the current apron space to accommodate larger aircraft. This investment would bring significant jobs to the local airport corridor during the construction phase and additional jobs to the base, which would require a larger full-time reserve force to accommodate the new aircraft. The tri-state area of western Pennsylvania, West Virginia and eastern Ohio has been designated one of the strongest military recruiting centers in the country, yet another point that strengthens the argument to keep the 911th. Should the base be selected as the site for the new squadron, its mission will change from short-term tactical airlifts of C-130 planes to a strategic long distance airlift overseas mission, due to the ability of the C-17 to be refueled in flight.

The decision of where the new C-17 squadron will be based is projected to be made in February, when the president presents his budget to Congress. The MAC is working diligently with all levels of government to ensure a case for Pittsburgh is made to its fullest. In order to achieve this, the support of the local business community is paramount.

If you would like to help the effort, please contact your Pennsylvania and U.S. elected officials. Encourage them to contact the Air Force and lobby in favor of placing the C-17 air fleet at the 911th. Together, we can hopefully write a final chapter to "the miracle of the 911th" that includes a happy ending for all.

Bernadette Puzzuole is the president of the Airport Area Chamber of Commerce. Kristi Hilbert is the president of 3 Rivers Tax and Business Services and a co-chair of the PAACC Military Affairs Committee.



Should the Air Force decide to base a fleet of new C-17 aircraft, like the this one pictured above, at the Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station, it could ensure the survival of the 911th Airlift Wing for a long time to come. PHOTO BY PETERFZ30 OF SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



MTC celebrates opening of three new bridges

The Montour Trail Council has long viewed the Montour Trail as something of a continuous linear park, connecting the townships of Moon, Robinson, North Fayette, Kennedy and Findlay to sections in Washington County and southeastern Allegheny County. Connecting all those sections across streams, dilapidated bridges, busy highways and other obstacles has been nothing short of a challenge; but it's one that got a big boost last year.

In October, the MTC celebrated the openings of two new trail bridges that allow trail users to completely circumvent a number of busy roads and intersections. With those bridges now open in Cecil Township, Peters Township and Library, a trail user can travel 36 continuous miles from mile 0 near Route 51 in Coraopolis to Route 88 in Library. Some road crossings remain, but it is no longer necessary to ride on the berm of public roads to avoid unfinished sections.



ABOVE: Participating in the ribbon cutting for the Flyover Bridge (pictured below) was James Foringer of PennDOT, CH&D Enterprises president Heath Younkin, PennDOT project manager James Sisul, Montour Trail Council president Ned Williams, state Rep. Jason Ortity, state Sen. Camera Bartolotta, Cecil Township supervisor Andy Shrader, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission transportation planner Leann Chaney, Markosky Engineering project manager Jonathon Balko, Cecil Friends of the Montour Trail president Dennis Sims, Mary Shaw of Shaw-Weil Associates and MTC maintenance crew leader Bill Capp.

"This has been an extraordinary year for bridge openings on the Montour Trail," said MTC president Ned Williams, "with the ribbon cuttings for the Library Viaduct, the Valley Brook Number Two Bridge and the Venice Bridge, also known as the flyover."

In a speech delivered during a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Valley Brook 2 Bridge on Oct. 3, Williams said the bridge completes a safe connection between the Montour and Arrowhead trails. The project started after the opening of its sister project, the Valley Brook Bridge Number One Bridge, in September of 2013. "In 1985, Peters Township had the vision to purchase the abandoned Montour Railroad corridor in Peters Township," Williams said. "Soon afterward, they built the Arrowhead Trail, the first section of what was to become the Montour Trail."

Williams said that the new bridge fulfills a promise made by the MTC in 2002, when the council leased the remaining abandoned railroad corridor from Peters Township. In that agreement, the MTC agreed to build, maintain and operate the trail.

Mark Imgrund, MTC project manager for the Valley Brook One and Two bridges, said the Valley Brook Bridge Number

Two project couldn't finish soon enough for the thousands who walk and bike that section of trail.

"It significantly increases the safety for trail users," he said. "Crossing a busy, high traffic road like Valley Brook is tricky at best, and a real barrier for many. It's important that we've now

eliminated the at-grade road crossing and the temporary construction detour, especially for families enjoying the trail with their children."

Funded by PennDOT, the completed Venice Bridge in Cecil Township now allows trail users to pass



Participating in the Valley Brook Bridge ribbon cutting were: Roy Weil, Mary Shaw, Montour Trail Council president Ned Williams, Washington County commissioner Diana Irely Vaughan, Rep. Tim Murphy, Peters Township Parks and Recreation Board member Brittany Smith, Peters council chairman David Ball, Peters Township Chamber of Commerce chairman Greg Gold, Burgh's Pizza and Wing Pub owner Tom Dally and bridge project manager Mark Imgrund.

over a busy four-way intersection at the crossing of Route 980 and Route 50. Previously, trail users also had to walk down a flight of steps in addition to crossing the intersection.

In a Nov. 11 speech, Williams said the completion of the project marked a 20-year effort by the state to improve the busy road intersection for citizens and travelers of northern Washington County.

"The angled, offset road alignment has been eliminated," he said, "and the trail completely separated from motor vehicle traffic. The level of safety has been greatly increased for everyone, and traffic flow through the area optimized."

Williams said the project corrects a problem started long ago when horses and wagons still traveled dirt farm roads, including one running under the Montour Railroad.

MTC Cecil Friends of the Trail president Dennis Sims said he was elated that the old Venice Bridge had finally been replaced. He said he had been waiting 20 years for the project to be completed.

Jesse Forquer has been volunteering with the Montour Trail for 19 years. He is the director of trail security and oversees the Trail Monitor Patrol Program. Anyone interested in volunteering can contact him at: jjforquer@comcast.net.

The Empress Arabian horse farm sits along mile 34 of the Montour Trail in Peters Township. It is one of several sites that trail users can see as they bike along 36 continuous miles of trail connected by three new bridges.



Local sports agency's contributions to minor league football recognized



Mary Jo Lestini

Plenty of college football players dream of one day playing for a professional NFL team. According to data compiled by the NCAA, though, only about 10 percent of all Division I players are selected in the NFL draft. Of all Division I, II and III players, only about 1.6 percent get drafted by an NFL team.

For those who don't quite make the cut for the NFL, but still want to keep playing, there are still plenty of options

out there. That's where John and Mary Jo Lestini come into play.

For much of the past 22 years, the couple has run Lestini Group Sports Management, a sports management agency, out of Imperial and South Carolina. The agency helps connect players with teams like those playing in the Arena Football League and Canadian Football League.

Since 2003, the couple has also been organizing an annual pro camp in Mobile, Alabama that allows players to demonstrate their abilities in front of scouts and coaches. The camp takes place in January at the University of South Alabama on the Sunday prior to the Senior Bowl, an all-star game for players who have completed their college eligibility. John says their camp hosts about 50 to 75 players who likewise have completed their eligibility.

John, a retired insurance agent and NFL Players Association agent who has also represented players in European leagues, says they started the camp initially at the urging of CFL personnel. He says a number of former CFL coaches continue to help make the camp a success.

"We have a lot of people who believe in what we're doing," says John. "It's a big tree with a lot of limbs."

Retired CFL coach Adam Rita says that he used to attend the Lestini's camp in Mobile when he was coaching for various CFL teams. His resume includes time with the Edmonton Eskimos, Toronto Argonauts and British Columbia Lions. The Lestini's camp is where he recruited Bryan Pray, a former third-team All-American out of Pittsburg State University who could, as he puts it, "shorten the field." He says finding players like Pray who are good in space is important to CFL coaches, as teams in the league play on a field that is both wider than the one in the NFL and has an end zone that is 10 yards deeper. Pray now plays for the Philadelphia Soul in the AFL.

Rita says that since the Lestini's started their camp, more pro camps have been taking place in Canada. What continues to set theirs apart, he says, is both the location of the camp and the Lestini's themselves.

"They're really honest people," says Rita. "It's not just a money grab. They put in a lot of time in and it's very well done."

The Lestini's contributions to minor league football haven't gone unnoticed. Both have earned inductions into the Minor League Football News Hall of Fame and the Minor League Football Hall of Fame. Mary Jo was slated to be formally inducted into the latter this past December but a medical condition delayed her induction

until 2016. According to information listed on the Minor League Football Hall of Fame website at www.leaguelineup.com, Mary Jo's induction recognizes her contributions as a female executive of her and her husband's agency. It also recognizes her scouting and evaluation reports she compiles during their pro camps.

Dick Suess, who organizes the Minor League Football Hall of Fame event and nominated Mary Jo for induction, says he first met the couple at a pro tryout he invited them to organize in Cleveland. When he started publishing Minor League Football News, he reached out to the couple again.

"One of the first people I contacted...was Mary Jo, to ask her to send me info on all the combines they were planning," he says.

Prior to operating the agency with her husband, Mary Jo was an assistant to the producer and then associate producer of the Penn State University Football Story, a syndicated football highlights program. She was also an office manager for Pittsburgh Steelers Pro Football Hall of Fame linebacker Jack Ham. She met John in 1993 and they married in 1995.

Together, they represented another Hall of Fame Steeler named Mike Webster, securing appearances and signings for the retired center as he battled personal problems now believed to be linked to concussions. Webster also lived with John for two years.

Additionally, in the late 1980s, John worked with former Steelers lineman Steve Courson, arranging speaking engagements for him to talk about his use of steroids. John says that he helped Courson prepare for testimony he gave in front of Congress in 1990 about steroids.

For a time, John says, the couple ran a privately funded 1-800-Steroid number that allowed anyone struggling with substance abuse, including steroids, to find help under an organization called the National Steroid Research Center and Other Drugs of Abuse in Sports. John founded the organization in 1990. It operated through 2015.

As of this writing, Mary Jo is scheduled to be inducted into the Minor League Football Hall of Fame on Dec. 2 at an event in Las Vegas.



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SUBMITTED BY MATTHEW CONNELL,
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“Hey, I have a tax question for you...”

This is a phrase that I hear often and for good reason. As a CPA and a trusted tax advisor, I expect questions and am happy to offer suggestions that provide answers to people who are looking for assistance.

Sometimes, I am asked questions that are very detailed or client specific. However, oftentimes I hear the same question a number of times. Over the past few months, I have been making a mental note of these questions. Here are a few to consider as we head into tax season.

Q: Should I be worried about identity theft and tax scams that are related to the IRS?

A: Yes. If you feel like you have been exposed to tax-related identity theft you should contact the IRS immediately. The IRS has a dedicated hotline for identity theft-related situations, which evidences the prevalence of this growing problem. Many clients over the past year have called and told me that the IRS contacted them and informed them that they owe tax money. The IRS does not contact taxpayers via telephone. They contact them via mail. Never pay the IRS over the phone if they contact you. Don't be a victim, don't be scared and don't be afraid to ask for help if you are faced with this situation.

Q: Should I contribute to my company's 401(k) plan?

A: My answer to this is almost always a concrete, “Yes.” Every dollar that you contribute to your company retirement plan is a

dollar that you do not pay taxes on today. If you are in a 25 percent income tax bracket and you put \$10,000 into your retirement plan, you save \$2,500 (\$10,000 x 25 percent). How many investments can offer an immediate 25% return? Also, many employers will match your contributions to a certain extent so if you don't participate you may be missing out on free money.

Q: How much in taxes will I save if I buy real estate?

A: The tax consequences of real estate are dependent on your personal income tax situation. I have many clients who reap various tax rewards from investing in real estate and are making money. I also have clients who have not been as fortunate for a countless number of reasons. Sometimes, real estate looks good from a tax perspective, but if it is not a cash flow positive investment it will ultimately become a money pit. When investing in real estate, don't lose sight of the ultimate goal, which is to make money.

I often see that taxpayers aren't receiving guidance on how to save money on their taxes and protect themselves. The tax environment is constantly changing and effective tax planning is a critical element to financial success. That makes tax planning a year-round process.

Matthew Connell is a CPA and a shareholder with Imperial Tax and Accounting. He can be reached at (724) 695-7354.

FINDLAY TOWNSHIP GARDEN CLUB PRESENTS: “GARDENERS HUDDLE”

Saturday, April 2nd
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(Doors open at 7:30 a.m. for registration)
Findlay Township Activity Center, Imperial.

If you are a gardening enthusiast, you won't want to miss this event! Spend the morning gaining information on improving your gardening knowledge from 3 speakers: Steve Piskor (cool tools and other stuff for gardeners), Kitty Vagley (introducing the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden), and Carol Kirkpatrick (gardening with deer in your yard).

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Coming Up . . .

Feb. 19 - Breakfast Briefing: State of the County Address with Allegheny County Executive, Rich Fitzgerald; 7:30 - 9:30 a.m. at Embassy Suites Pittsburgh Airport

Feb. 25 - BizBlast@Noon Networking Lunch; 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 pm. at Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank

March 17 - BizBlast@Noon Networking Lunch; 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 pm. at Cafe des Amis

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RIBBON CUTTING LifeSpan Community Resource Center January 14



On January 14, LifeSpan Community Resource Center was joined by Chamber Ambassadors for an official Ribbon Cutting ceremony. Among government officials in attendance were PA State Representative Mark Mustio; Bob Grimm, Bob Doddato, Laura Ludwig and Jim Morosetti of North Fayette Township; Dawn Lane and Amy Ottaviani of Moon Township; and Anthony Saveikis, Magistrate District Judge.

PAACC Members Helping Area Middle School Students To Make Smart Choices

CHOICES, a national program delivered to our region's youth through the Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber Enterprise Foundation, is an interactive classroom seminar that gives junior high school students a chance to see into the future and recognize the importance of the personal and academic decisions they make today. The program offers creative, highly participatory exercises



PAACC member business representatives, Jackie Price and Chris Park, serving as volunteer CHOICES presenters at David E. Williams Middle School in Robinson Township.

facilitated by volunteers from the business community.

Students are challenged to think about their future career options based on the level of education they decide to achieve, as well as the impact their choices will have on others and the world around them. Self-discipline is encouraged as the key to success in their endeavors and at the end of the seminar they are given a "Key to Success" as a reminder of the control they have over their choices and their futures.

In the 2015/2016 school year, PAACC member volunteers from the business community presented the CHOICES curriculum to 1,464 middle school students in 10 Pittsburgh airport area schools.

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STORY SUBMITTED BY JO'S GENTLEMEN
PHOTO BY DOUG HUGHEY

Jo's Gentlemen's barbershop relocates

Jo's Gentlemen's barbershop has become a well-known barbershop in Robinson Township over the past 10 years. Fathers, sons, grandfathers and friends have gotten to know their barber there and all feel like family.

Owner JoAnn McMurray has been barbering at the shop in Chiodo's Plaza since its inception. In January, the shop relocated just a stone's throw away, to the West Way Shoppes across the road near Downey's House. There, JoAnn is still offering services that customers associate with her barbershop, including a great haircut finished off by a hot lather straight edge razor neck shave.

JoAnn says that when she mentions to her customers that she still offers a hot towel face shave, their mouths drop open in disbelief.

"They always say, 'We thought that was a thing from the past,'" she says. "I always recommend the next time they call in for an appointment to mention they would also like a shave. Women pamper themselves all the time, so why shouldn't men?"

JoAnn says she prides herself on the cleanliness of her shop and that customers seem to appreciate its homey feel. She's outfitted her new shop in a Caribbean theme.

"When you visit the new barbershop, you can sit back and watch television while enjoying a cup of coffee or a cold beverage," she says. "When you look around, you'll get the feel of relaxing on a little island, just minus the surf and sand!"

JoAnn says she's looking forward to welcoming all of her longtime customers to her new shop on their next visit. She also welcomes new customers to give her a try.

"I think you will be pleasantly satisfied," she says.

JoAnn suggests calling ahead for same day appointments to avoid having to wait. She is open five days a week and closed on Wednesdays and Sundays. For appointments, call (412) 787-7879. Be sure to like Jo's Gentlemen on Facebook.



JO'S GENTLEMEN
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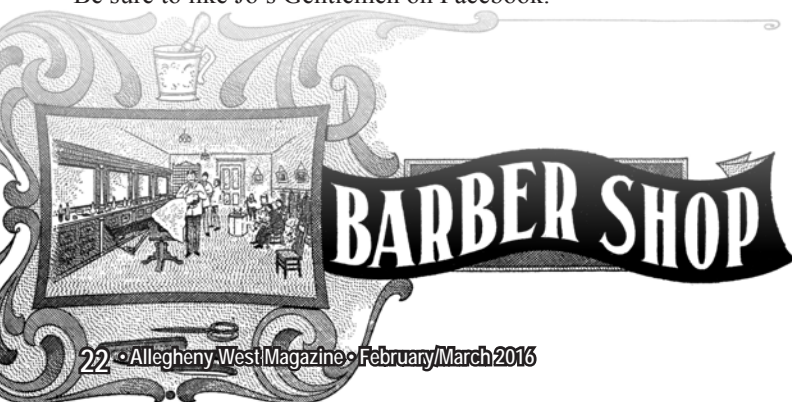
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PROVIDED BY GARY KLOBCHAR, JR.

What Should You Do With Your Tax Refund?

A few possibilities to consider.

Will you be receiving a tax refund this year? If so, you might want to think about the destiny of that money. Here are a few options to consider:



- **Start (or add to) an emergency fund.** Do you have a dedicated rainy day fund? Consider setting this money aside for a tight spot you may find yourself in at another time.
- **Invest in yourself.** You could put the money toward education, career training, or personal improvement.
- **Use it for a down payment on a vehicle or real property.** Real property may represent a better financial choice, but updating your vehicle may have merit - cars do wear out.
- **Put it into a retirement account.** If you haven't maximized your contributions this year or have a chance to get an employer match, it may be worth considering.
- **Pay down debt.** Almost always a wise move.
- **Get your home ready for the market.** Spruce up the yard, exterior, or interior of your residence, or hire professional who can assist you with staging it.



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

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North Fayette Township Senior community center opens in Imperial



Ambassadors from the Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce and local officials helped celebrate the opening of the new Life Span Resources and Services for Seniors community center in the Penn Lincoln Plaza on Jan. 11. PHOTO BY RYAN HRECKZOSIEJ

A new senior community center located in Imperial opened its doors in January. Opening of the new Life Span Resources and Services for Seniors in the Penn Lincoln Plaza was celebrated with a ribbon cutting ceremony Jan. 11.

LifeSpan is a private, nonprofit 501(c) 3 corporation funded in part by the Allegheny County DHS/Area Agency on Aging. LifeSpan offers resources and services for adults 60 and older. The nonprofit's center in Imperial has been dubbed The Gathering Place, with two activity rooms, a game room and a café. Adults 60 and older are welcome during the hours of 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Seniors will have access to a variety of services and resources that promote socialization, education and wellness.

The Gathering Place offers a daily catered noontime meal; social/recreation activities; health and education programs; information and assistance; transportation registration for Access, Older Persons Transportation, Port Authority Transit Bus Passes; and more.

LifeSpan welcomes seniors to stop by and learn more about the center and resources available to them. Seniors are invited to enjoy a cup of coffee in the café, weekly bingo, activity rooms, a game of pool, free Wi-Fi and a daily lunch. The LifeSpan center in Imperial will also offer Meals on Wheels for adults 60 and older who are homebound and unable to shop or prepare their own meals.

For more information, contact Courtney Audley, center services regional manager, at (724) 218-1669.

Township promotes four police officers

The North Fayette Police Department has promoted four officers within its ranks. Sean Heffern was promoted from part-time to full-time patrol officer. Mark Kern was promoted from patrol officer to corporal. Don Cokus was promoted from patrol officer to corporal, and Bryan Greco was promoted from corporal to sergeant.

"These gentlemen are all dedicated officers," says North Fayette police chief Mark O'Donnell. "These promotions are deserving and these officers are an asset to the community."

O'Donnell says the promotions were prompted by the retirement of Sgt. John Bates at the end of 2015. Bates served as a school resource officer at West Allegheny School District schools in North Fayette for 17 years. He has been succeeded by Sgt. Michael Hayes.



The North Fayette Police Department promoted officers Sean Heffern, Col. Mark Kern, Col. Don Cokus and Sgt. Bryan Greco. Pictured here are (front row) North Fayette supervisors Bob Doddato and J.R. Mangan, Kern, township supervisor Jim Morosetti, Cokus, (back row) Lt. Mike Hamm, township manager Bob Grimm, police chief Mark O'Donnell, Heffern, Greco and Lt. John Walls at a board of supervisors' meeting Jan. 12. PHOTO SUBMITTED

Family Chiropractic Center donates to help local veterans

Family Chiropractic Center in Robinson Township donated over \$1,000 to Heroes Supporting Heroes after a fundraiser in the fall of 2015.

Heroes Supporting Heroes is a local organization that strives to meet the needs of local military families, veterans and seniors. For more information, or to find out how you can help, go to www.heroessupportnetwork.org



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Findlay Township

Police captain retires

On Feb. 4, Capt. Mark Joyce of the Findlay Township Police Department retired. Joyce's career started in 1986 as a patrolman in McDonald Borough. He was hired by Findlay Township in 1989 and assigned to patrol. He spent the majority of his career in the Findlay department.

In 1992, Joyce was promoted to sergeant and assigned as a patrol shift supervisor. In 2008, he was again promoted, to the rank of captain. As second in command of the police department, the captain is responsible for many day-to-day operations, including patrol, accreditation and emergency management.

As the department's accreditation manager, Joyce led the department through many CALEA and PLEAC assessments in order to maintain international and state-accredited status. Joyce also served as chairman of the CHAR-WEST COG training committee, which was responsible for bringing the latest training - such as active shooter response training - to more than 300 local police officers, Air Force reservists and National Guard members.

Joyce holds a bachelor's degree in business and is a graduate of the prestigious Southern Police Institute at the University of Louisville, where he earned a master's in justice administration. Joyce has no definitive plans but intends to maintain his ties with law enforcement as an instructor. He has taught at local Act 120 programs and is currently seeking other similar opportunities. His plans also include spending more time with his wife and children.

Police to host drug take-back program

The Findlay Township Police Department, in cooperation with the DEA, is hosting a Drug Takeback Program at the Findlay Township Municipal Building on April 30 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Residents are encouraged to bring any expired or unused medication to the police department located at 1271 Route 30 in Clinton. An officer will be present to provide any necessary assistance and or information.

Medicine take-back programs are the only secure and environmentally sound way to dispose of leftover and expired medicines. They have the following benefits:

- **Safe disposal to reduce drug abuse**

Prescription drug abuse is the fastest-growing drug problem in the U.S. In some states, almost 11 percent of teens use medicines for non-medical reasons. Abuse of medicines by teens has often resulted in medical emergencies or fatal overdoses.

Most abusers of medicines, including teens, get drugs from a friend or relative, often without their knowledge, instead of from a drug dealer. A safe medicine take-back program gets potentially dangerous leftover drugs out of homes.

- **Safe disposal to reduce accidental poisoning**

Unwanted medicines left in the home can endanger children, seniors and pets. Poisonings from prescription and over-the-counter medicines are increasing. About half of phone calls to a poison center concern young children who have been poisoned by medicines found at home. Disposing of unwanted medicines through a take-back program is an important part of being safe at home.

- **Safe disposal to reduce medicines in the environment**

Traditional methods of disposing of drugs, including flushing or mixing with kitty litter before throwing in the garbage, can still allow drugs to find their way into the environment. Flushing drugs sends them directly into waters while drugs thrown in the garbage are available for others to take and use. Returning medicines to a take-back program is the only environmentally sound method for dispose of unused medicines.

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Patrick is a graduate of Thiel
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He serves the community through
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Boy Scout Troop 248 news

STORY AND PHOTOS
SUBMITTED BY BOY SCOUT TROOP 248



Members of Boy Scout Troop 248 visited Harrisburg in December. Pictured inside the Pennsylvania State Capitol are ABOVE: (top row) Thomas S. Taylor, Michael H. Snyder, Noah Magdich, Nicole Magdich, (bottom row) Matthew Ford, Jaxon Pottle, state Rep. Jason Ortity, Anthony Snyder, Joey Cosnek, Kyle Magdich, Ethan Cooper and Brett Kot. Pictured outside the governor's mansion are BELOW: Ethan Cooper, Noah Magdich, Anthony Snyder, Kyle Magdich, Joey Cosnek, Jaxon Pottle, Matthew Ford and Brett Kot.

• Members of Boy Scout Troop 248 joined state Rep. Jason Ortity for his bus trip to Harrisburg on Dec. 8. The trip included a tour of the Pennsylvania governor's mansion, tours of the Pennsylvania State Capitol building, senate chambers and a Christmas tree lighting. Scouts also had the opportunity to meet and have a discussion with Ortity.

• On Dec. 1, troop member Jarrett W. Parker completed his Eagle Board of Review. For his Eagle Scout service project, Jarrett designed, built and installed two bridges on walking trails at the Pittsburgh Botanic Gardens. His project helped provide better access to the garden trails and open additional areas to the public. Parker, a senior at West Allegheny High School, will be attending college in the fall. He plans to major in engineering.



• Life Scout Hayden Shipley has earned the National BSA Outdoor Challenge Award for camping. National BSA Challenge Awards are available in five different outdoor challenge areas and are earned by demonstrating advanced skills and knowledge of a specific field challenge.

• Boy Scout Troop 248 has won two national awards, the National BSA Journey to Excellence Gold Award and the National Outdoor Challenge Award, for 2015.

The BSA Journey to Excellence Award is a yearly evaluation of each unit in the country and is rated on a bronze, silver or gold standard, with gold being the highest. Units use a national standard to evaluate all phases of a scout group's performance and organizational structure. The diagnostic tool looks at the overall unit program, camping and outdoor program, community service, advancement of the youth, planning, organization of the adult and youth leaders, and training of the adult and youth. Troop 248 has kept the gold standard every year since the award's inception six years ago.

The National Outdoor Challenge Award encourages outdoor trips and long-term camping, and to have an annual program plan. This is the fifth consecutive year that Troop 248 has been able to earn this award.

Follow Troop 248 on Facebook by searching Oakdale Troop 248.

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SUBMITTED BY ANDREW WARD, PH.D.,
ASSOCIATES IN BEHAVIORAL
DIAGNOSTICS AND TREATMENT

Destination determines direction

A man approaches a gas station attendant and asks for directions to a store. When the attendant asks what type of store he is looking for, the man says that it doesn't matter and that any store will do. To this, the attendant replies, "If any store will do, then any road will get you there...eventually."

Each new year brings with it an opportunity to reflect on the past and create new direction. With a clear vision of where you want to be, you can map out how to get there and gauge progress along the way. While this may seem simple, many people struggle to actualize their goals because they lack clear vision of where they are trying to go. Instead, they face the new year with the same approach as the year before, hoping that if they drive long enough they will eventually reach their destination. The results often leave people feeling discouraged and uncertain.

Step One this year: Be crystal clear with yourself about the meaning of your goal and your ultimate destination. Allow this clarity to be the driving force behind every decision you make. For instance, you may set a goal to be a better parent, with the belief that good parents help their children with their homework. With a true awareness of this goal, the decision of whether to work late or leave on time becomes straightforward. When you remain acutely focused on what you are trying to achieve, the steps getting you there become much simpler.

But what about times when the path doesn't seem so simple? For instance, what if you have a pressing deadline that requires you to work late and prevents you from being home to help your child with their homework? Does this mean that you need to resign yourself to never reaching your goal of being a good parent? Not at all. Staying on track, however, does require that you recognize when your behaviors and choices are not consistent with the goal you're trying to achieve.

Step Two this year: Understand that each decision you make can either help you or prevent you from reaching your goals. It is not important what goal you set, but it is important that you clearly understand your goal and that you evaluate your decisions based upon how they impact your ability to reach that goal. Make your daily decisions conscious choices.

On your personal journeys for change this new year, consider some helpful tips:

- Set goals that are consistent with the values of who you want to be.
- Be specific and concrete about your goals rather than general or vague.
- Prioritize goals.
- Confide in others about your desire for change.
- Examine whether your daily decisions are actually getting you where you want to be or are barriers to your own change.

Dr. Andrew Ward is a Clinical Psychologist and co-owner of Associates in Behavioral Diagnostics and Treatment (AIBDT Psychological Services), locally serving Moon and Robinson townships. To reach the practice, call (412) 329-7778. Visit them online at www.aibdt.com.



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WA senior awarded PAACC aviation scholarship



Daniel Hovanec, a senior at West Allegheny High School (pictured at left) was named as this year's recipient of the Sally Haas Aviation/STEM Scholarship, which is awarded through the Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce Enterprise Foundation. He is pictured here with foundation board members Jim Katsafanas and Larry Schwartz at the PAACC 2016 Annual Celebration of Excellence on Jan. 22.

Daniel Hovanec, a senior at West Allegheny High School, was honored with the Sally Haas Aviation/STEM Scholarship at the Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber Commerce 2016 Annual Celebration of Excellence on Jan. 22. To be eligible for the \$2,500 scholarship, Hovanec was required to have a 3.0 GPA or higher and be an applicant, or enrolled in, a two- or four-year post-secondary school with the intent of pursuing a degree in an aviation- or STEM-related field. Hovanec has been accepted to Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona. He will begin pursuing a degree in aerospace engineering this fall.

Part of the application process for the PAACC scholarship required Hovanec to submit a 500-word essay explaining why he chose his specific course of study. Hovanec also provided a list of his community activities and organizational memberships over the past four years. Hovanec surpassed expectations with his impressive 4.0 GPA, which he maintained from 2012 until the present day. He also has a notable list of both school and volunteer activities.

At West Allegheny, Hovanec has been involved in various activities well beyond his studies. From serving on the stage crew, to helping troubleshoot technology problems as the president of the Tech Squad, he has developed himself into a well-rounded student. Hovanec also dedicates himself outside

the classroom, enhancing himself professionally in the field of aviation. He is a member of the Greater Pittsburgh Aero Radio Control Society and Academy of Model Aeronautics, and serves as a volunteer on ThumbSat/ThumbNet, a global network of monitoring stations for satellites in orbit headquartered in Florida. Hovanec participates in activities such as building Yagi antennas, operating a ground station, and tracking and monitoring satellites.

The Sally Haas Aviation/STEM Scholarship was a deserved honor for Hovanec. As he prepares for his post-secondary education in aerospace engineering, the PAACC wishes him the best in his bright future ahead.

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ADULT

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Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.
 Feb. 24: Propagation
 March 23: Annuals & Perennials
 April 27: Vegetables

Basic Self Defense Skills for Women and Teen Girls,
 Saturday, Feb. 27, 10 a.m.

Author Visit:

Frances Southwick
 Sunday, Feb. 28, 2 p.m.

Interested in Pinterest
 Thursday, March 3, 6:30 p.m.

A Medium's Journey
 Saturday, March 5, 1 p.m.

Language Learning Apps
 Tuesday, March 8, 6:30 p.m.

Trying Twitter
 Thursday, April 7, 6:30 p.m.

YOUTH & FAMILY

Teen Advisory Board (grades 6-12)
 Tuesdays, March 8 and April 5, 4:30 p.m.

Geek Club
 Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m.
 Feb. 16; March 1 and 15; April 12 and 26

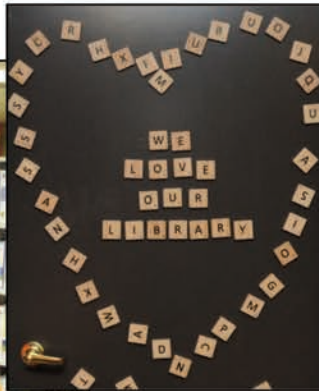
Battle of the Books Practice Nights
4th and 5th Grades
 Tuesday, March 8, 6:30 p.m.
 Thursday, March 10, 6:30 p.m.

Family Maker Days
 Saturday, 12-3 p.m.
 Feb. 13; March 12; April 9

Family Fort Night
 Friday, Feb. 26, 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Winter Reading Cookie Party
 Monday, Feb. 29, 6:30 p.m.

Spring Celebration
 Saturday, March 19, 1:30 p.m.



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ADULT

Crochet Club
 Saturdays, 9:15 a.m.

Cookbook Club
 1st Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

Adult Coloring Group
 2nd Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.

Bookworms
 2nd Wednesdays, 1 p.m.

Pinterest Playground
 3rd Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.

YA @ Heart
 3rd Tuesdays, 6 p.m.

Bingo @ The Library
 4th Tuesdays, 12 p.m.

Anime & Manga Club
 4th Tuesdays, 6 p.m.

YOUTH & FAMILY

Preschool Storytime
 Mondays, 10:30 a.m.

Chill (grades 6-12)
 Mondays, 3 - 5 p.m.

Lego Club
 Mondays, 4:30 p.m.

Spanish Storytime
 Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m.

Drawing Club
 Every other Tues., 4:30 p.m.

Baby Circle Time
 Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m.

Toddler Storytime
 Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Family Storytime
 Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.



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GOURMET TOPPINGS	Whole 1.49	Half 1.99	Whole 2.79	Half 3.49	Whole 3.69	Whole 3.49

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Chicken Ranchero
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BBQ Chicken Pizza
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Spinach and Feta
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Classic Italian
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Spicy Italian
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PICK UP SPECIAL

Medium Cheese Pizza **7.49** +tax
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XLarge Cheese Pizza **10.49** +tax

TOPPING SPECIAL

Medium 2 Topping Pizza **10.99** +tax
or
Medium 1 Topping Pizza **9.99** +tax

1 TOPPING SPECIAL

Large 1 Topping **10.99** +tax
or
XLarge 1 Topping **11.99** +tax
or
Sicilian 1 Topping **10.99** +tax

TWO PIZZA SPECIAL

2 Medium Pizzas **16.99** +tax
or
2 XLarge Pizzas **20.99** +tax

Large Cheese Pizza & 12 Wings **17.99** +tax

or
Large Cheese Pizza & Whole Classic Hoagie **17.99** +tax
Make it a Gourmet Hoagie for extra .99

2 Gyros and Order of Fries **10.99** +tax

36 Wings **24.99** +tax

2 Whole 16" Classic Hoagies **16.99** +tax

or
Whole 16" Classic Hoagie and 12 Wings **16.99** +tax
Make it a Gourmet Hoagie for extra .99

New members inducted into National Honor Society



Inductees gather before the National Honor Society ceremony on November 24.

Forty-nine students were recognized for their hard work during West Allegheny's annual National Honor Society induction ceremony November 24. National Honor Society membership is open to juniors and seniors who have maintained at least a 3.75 QPA and must be taking or have completed three classes of advanced standing in each of the five major academic disciplines: English, foreign languages, mathematics, science and social studies.

Among those inducted were seniors Hannah Charlton, Anthony Dominick, Abigail Glowark, Daniel Hovanec, Emily Nolan, Taylor Schmac, Keri Watters, Sean Weber, Danielle Wicklund and Olivia Zizak; and juniors: Tyler Anderson, Katelynn Antoszeski, Sarah Behr, Nathan Bly, Zachary Constantino, Adam Dolan, Martin Durkin, Julia Falcioni, Kaylee Fields, Sydney Foy, Hunter Gatchell, Moira Gibson, Joseph Gluzman, Shawn Holl, Allison Koester, Dorissa Large, Huynh Le, Marina Maropis, Gary McMurtrie, Trent Michaels, Danielle Monaco, Kaylee Musiol, Anh Nquyen, Ali Perry, Garrett Powell, Gabrielle Prevade, Kristen Quasey, Danielle Rance, Andrew Roberts, Hannah Salvucci, Sydney Saunders, Natalie Sciulli, Christina Sible, Andrew Silvis, Michael Starkman, Kaylie Wallace, Jessica Wasek, Kaitlin White and Morgan Ziolkowski.

Lynn Birnie and Lauren Barry serve as National Honor Society faculty sponsors.



Newly inducted NHS members take the stage for a traditional candle lighting ceremony.



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West Allegheny
School District

Christopher Shattuck promoted to assistant superintendent position

West Allegheny School District has promoted Christopher Shattuck to the position of assistant superintendent of schools, effective January 21. At its January 20 regular meeting, the board of school directors voted to approve a 4.5-year contract for Shattuck, who will fill the position vacated by Sean Aiken. In November, Aiken accepted the superintendent position at Shaler Area School District.

Shattuck currently is the principal of Wilson Elementary School, where he will continue to serve and oversee day-to-day responsibilities. The District intends to conduct a robust search and hiring process for his replacement. Shattuck will assist school superintendent Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert in the duties of the assistant superintendent position mostly outside of Wilson school hours. Temporarily filling this dual role will allow Shattuck to be instrumental in hiring and training a new Wilson principal while transitioning to the assistant superintendent position. His full-time responsibilities will commence July 1.

“West Allegheny School District is home to some of the most amazing talents in the form of leaders, educators, staff members and students,” said Shattuck. “Current and past administrations, along with the school board, have provided opportunities for team members at all levels to build successful programs in the areas of academics, arts and athletics. As a graduate, I am very passionate about the success of West Allegheny. I sincerely appreciate the administration and the school board for extending me the opportunity to continue to lead within the district and look forward to working with them for years to come. I am excited to continue my work with the amazing individuals in the community to provide our students the very best educational experiences possible.”

As a school administrator, Shattuck has served on the Technology, School Safety and Health and Wellness committees, while overseeing the major renovation project at Wilson Elementary. Prior to serving as Wilson principal, Shattuck held the position of assistant principal/dean of students



Christopher Shattuck

at West Allegheny High School for seven years. He was a teacher at Wilson Elementary School for eight years. Shattuck is a 1993 West Allegheny alumnus.

“Chris is an excellent candidate for the assistant superintendent position,” said Dr. Lippert. “He demonstrates a level of commitment and dedication to the District that is admirable. I have been impressed with Chris’ leadership abilities, eagerness to learn and grow, and willingness to always help others in the year and half I have worked with him. Chris brings with him extensive school-based experience across K-12 as well as a broad knowledge of academic curricula, instruction and supervision. He is much deserving of the position and I am confident he will be instrumental in continuing to advance West Allegheny School District.”

Debbie Mirich, school board president, said she could not think of a better fit for the position than Shattuck.

“He has proven that when you work hard, show commitment, set goals and have strong determination to make a difference in education, you can climb the ladder to success and fulfill your dreams,” said Mirich. “Chris is a wonderful, caring, dedicated and well-educated person who has earned the respect of his coworkers as well as our students. I look forward to working with him in this new position.”

High school principal Daniel Smith said that Shattuck’s knowledge across grade levels will benefit the District.

“It was a pleasure to work with Chris at the high school,” said Smith. “His knowledge of both the secondary and elementary levels will be beneficial to the community, staff and students. Chris is a student-centered educator who is well respected throughout our schools and the community.”

Shattuck is currently working toward a doctorate degree from the University of Pittsburgh, where he also received his master’s degree. He received his bachelor’s degree from Grove City College. He is married, has three children and resides in McDonald.

High school welcomes new guidance counselor

The District welcomed Laura Montecalvo to the high school guidance team February 1. Montecalvo’s responsibilities will encompass scheduling and college and career planning. She will also provide social and emotional support to students. Montecalvo comes to West Allegheny from the Steel Center for Career and Technical Education, where she served as a career educator/counselor.

“I am thrilled to be a part of the West Allegheny School District family,” said Montecalvo. “I am looking forward to assisting students with academic, personal/social and career-related concerns. I am excited to be a part of a comprehensive, developmental school counseling department where I can help students realize their full potential as well as help them make informed and positive choices for their futures. Through collaboration with teachers, students, parents and administration, I look to provide high quality counseling services to the student body.”

In her previous role, Montecalvo was responsible for development and implementation of career curricula for 11 feeder schools and delivered classroom lessons aligned with the Pennsylvania Career and Work Standards.

“Ms. Montecalvo is a welcomed addition to our guidance staff,” said Kevin McKiernan, high school academic principal. “Her experience delivering classroom-based lessons focused on career and post-secondary exploration will complement our team and support efforts to connect every student to a career or college pathway. We look forward to learning from her experience developing a PDE Chapter 339 counseling plan as we continue to build our framework to best support students K-12 in academic, career and social/emotional development.”



Laura Montecalvo

Superintendent's Message: Preparing students for the leap to post-secondary education and careers

High school students are often asked, "What do you want to do after high school?" Not all students are confident in answering, however. At West Allegheny High School, the answers to this question vary greatly. Some students are able to provide a thorough, well-prepared response filled with detailed goals, researched institutions, necessary programs, specific career paths and established timelines. Other students' responses are vague and provide limited details. Others still indicate they have no plan.

At West Allegheny, our goal is to equip all high school students with the resources and skills they need to confidently state what they want to do after high school with great specificity and confidence. We want to ensure every graduating senior is connected to a career and/or college so they may experience post-secondary success. In order to accomplish this, they need to be successful in a rigorous academic program of study and be aware of the post-secondary options available to them.

To that end, the high school has developed and implemented a Career and College Readiness Indicator System designed to focus on three dimensions: academic preparedness, academic tenacity, and career and college knowledge. Research indicates these three dimensions are crucial components for students preparing for college and career success. These dimensions ensure an effective transition after high school regardless of a chosen career or college path:

Academic preparedness refers to key academic content knowledge and cognitive strategies needed for career training and college-level work. More rigorous coursework, high quality instruction, engaging lessons, access to Advanced Placement classes, and increased academic requirements have bolstered students' capacity to make strides in this dimension.

Academic tenacity refers to the underlying beliefs and attitudes that drive student achievement. Focusing on developing a growth mindset - based on the belief that effort creates achievement - while reinforcing the importance of school attendance, perseverance and developing strong work habits, helps students develop into "tenacious" learners prepared to approach and tackle challenges.

Career and college knowledge is the knowledge base and contextual skills that enable students to successfully access and navigate college and career paths. Thorough and early identification of a student's individual interests, skills and personality traits, coupled with individual and large group exploration of career clusters, post-secondary options and focused course selection, enables students to develop the skills to weigh opportunities and make informed decisions.

In order to better prepare students for post-secondary endeavors and strengthen the effectiveness of the CCRIS, it is essential for every student to establish a connection to a

viable career and/or college pathway. Doing so provides school counselors, teachers, administrators, parents and the individual student the knowledge and focus to navigate the myriad of core academic and elective course options available to them.

In an effort to ensure every student benefits from this connection, the West Allegheny High School Program of Studies will feature the newly developed **Career and College Pathways**, which has been designed to connect students to a viable career and/or post-secondary education. Career and College Pathways provides a multi-year program of studies that thoughtfully guides each student through their high school experience. Students identify with one or more concentration areas, based on individual interests and skills, post-secondary goals and potential career aspirations. Aligned Holland codes, career clusters and potential career options within each concentration area help students focus on course selections based on recommended courses for each pathway. Student choice and flexibility, both within and among the pathways, allow students to navigate a well-rounded foundation and experience a plethora of curricular options related to each specified Career and College Pathway.

The Career and College Pathways consist of seven concentration areas, including (1) Arts and Communication, (2) Business and Finance, (3) Career and Industry, (4) Computer Science, (5) Human and Public Services, (6) Pre-Engineering and (7) Science and Health.

The graphic below identifies each Career and College Pathway concentration area. It includes potential careers a student connected to a respective pathway may aspire to pursue.

While providing focused options, the broad nature of the seven

	Concentration Area	Career Connection
1	Arts and Communication	News Broadcast Analyst
2	Business and Finance	Accountant
3	Career and Industry	Auto Mechanic
4	Computer Science	Information Security Analyst
5	Human and Public Services	Teacher
6	Pre-Engineering	Civil Engineer
7	Science and Health	Pharmacist

concentration areas allows all students to experience a pre-established, pre-college and career curriculum inclusive of four credits respectively in English, math, science and social studies. All students will successfully complete the minimally required core academic courses, including four years of English courses, Algebra I, geometry, Algebra II, United States history, American government, biology, chemistry and physics regardless of a chosen pathway. A student will be able to maintain flexibility in regards to changing concentration areas. They can also focus on multiple areas throughout their high school course work. Career and college pathways provide direction and focus while developing a four-year program of study as students navigate over 200 course options available to position them for success in the future.

Continued on page 36

Superintendent's Message: cont.

At West Allegheny High School, the goal is for every student to be ready to transition beyond high school to a viable career and/or post-secondary institution without the need for additional remediation, which can waste valuable time and money. Developing students' career and college readiness by focusing on academic preparedness, academic tenacity, and career and college knowledge - while following a Career and College Pathway - will allow every student to confidently answer the "after high school" question.

By completing valuable course work and developing specific skills, students will be prepared to meet and exceed the challenges beyond their time at West Allegheny High School.



Dr. Jerrí Lynn Lippert,
Superintendent

Sample Career and College Pathway

Concentration Area:		Science and Health	
Associated Holland Codes		Associated Career Clusters/Pathways	Possible Careers/Field of Study*
Primary	Secondary	Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources	Zoologist and Wildlife Biologist
Investigative	Conventional	Health Science	Athletic Trainer
Realistic	Artistic	Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics	Chemist
Social			
Recommended Courses Within Concentration*			
Honors Biology		Exercise Science	
Honors Chemistry		Food for Sport	
AP Physics 1		Child Development	
Anatomy & Physiology		Child Development II	
AP Chemistry		Relationships & Parenting	
AP Biology		AP Psychology	
AP Physics 2		Honors Psychology	
Principles of Biomedical Sciences		Honors Sociology	
Human Body Systems		Intro to Psychology	
Medical Interventions		World Languages	

*The above list of courses and career fields is not all inclusive or final. These examples are provided to give an overview of what each pathway will suggest. Please refer to the published 2016-17 Program of Studies for complete recommendations and information.

West Allegheny High School's 2016-17 Program of Studies enhances course options

West Allegheny teachers, school counselors and administrators have been focusing on increasing schedule flexibility and options for students while expanding and enhancing course offerings for the 2016-17 school year. The 2016-17 Program of Studies will feature Career and College Pathways to help students focus course selections related to potential college and career goals. Throughout the Program of Studies, students and parents will find a growing number of exciting course options across several departments. Many of the new and/or enhanced courses are being offered as semester courses, allowing students to experience a wider variety of courses throughout high school. Additional enhancements provide more rigorous course options, promoting academic preparedness and career and college readiness.

In the social studies department, Advanced Placement world history will allow students to continue to learn about the world we live in through a rigorous, pre-college curriculum, expanding available AP options in social studies to four courses. Four new semester options, open to junior and senior students, include honors comparative religions, honors holocaust and genocide studies, world cultures and sociology of sports.

The Business, Computer, and Information Technology department will offer AP computer science principles, a complement to the currently offered AP computer science A

(formerly CHS Java). AP computer science principles will allow students who are either preparing for a more advanced course in AP computer science or who simply want to learn more about technology and computer science and access a college-level curriculum. Successful completion of AP computer science principles will count toward a fourth math credit required for graduation. Also in the BCIT department, students can now earn college credit by completing College in High School accounting, which has replaced the formerly offered Accounting II. Three new semester offerings in BCIT include business ownership and entrepreneurship, fashion merchandising, and digital arts. Students progressing through the West Allegheny Gaming Academy by Zulama will benefit from additional semester options, including 3D Modeling I and II, game production and marketing, and real world projects.

Recent modifications in the English department include providing increased access to AP English literature and composition. Enrolling in this course continues to expose students to a rigorous pre-college curriculum, while allowing them to possibly earn college level credit. Many students are already reaping these benefits and will be prepared for a more advanced level of study. All students enrolled in an AP course take an AP exam that is fully paid for by the District, which is proud to increase its AP course offerings from 13 in 2014-15 to

2016-17 Program of Studies: cont.

17 courses in 2016-17.

The mathematics and science departments have enhanced course offerings by adding advanced geometry and forensic science. Advanced geometry will allow successful Algebra I students to challenge themselves in a more appropriately aligned rigorous course. Forensic science will replace currently offered Earth and space science to provide a more relevant course as a fourth science credit option.

Enhancements to arts department offerings include acting and technical theater for students wishing to learn more about on-stage and behind-the-scenes work on theater production. An increased number of courses in the art, music and media arts departments will also be offered on a three-day per rotation schedule, allowing students who may not have taken an arts-

focused class to choose this option. Previously, some students would have elected to not take the class at all due to schedule conflicts.

Efforts to increase overall schedule flexibility have also driven modifications in the health and physical education department. Junior and senior students will continue to have a variety of physical education electives to choose from, including currently offered aerobic fitness and team sports. They will only be recommended to enroll, not required as part of meeting graduation requirements. As such, junior and senior physical education electives will be provided as semester courses with both three-day and six-day per rotation options.

Check out the 2016-17 Program of Studies available on the District's website to view the full menu of course offerings.

Gold Card Club members enjoy holiday concerts

Nearly 140 West Allegheny Gold Card Club members attended the club's annual holiday breakfast December 4. The breakfast event was hosted by the administration, as well as the food services and arts departments. Attendees enjoyed breakfast in



the high school cafeteria and spirited rounds of seasonal trivia. Members of JROTC were on hand to direct parking as well as serve coffee and food alongside school board members, administrators and staff. The high school brass ensemble displayed their musical talents as they played during breakfast.

Following breakfast, attendees were escorted to the Stewart Morgan Auditorium for a holiday program that showcased the talents of the middle school jazz and percussion ensembles, led by Steve Groba, and the high school show choir, led by J.R. Weichelt.

Gold Card Club membership is open to District residents who are 60 or older. Cards can be obtained at the District office at Wilson Elementary School. Card holders can gain free admission to all events sponsored by the District for which there is generally a charge. These events include all concerts, plays, science fairs, art shows and regular season athletic activities. Membership does not, however, provide free admission to fundraising events sponsored by booster organizations, such as spaghetti dinners or other activities.



Gold Card Club members met up with friends before a holiday breakfast December 4 (TOP) followed by a holiday performance (BOTTOM).

Speech and Debate team continues to make its mark

With the speech and debate season in full swing, West Allegheny students continue to make their mark at regional competitions. At the Pittsburgh Central Catholic High School Tournament on December 19, senior Morghann Simon earned second place in the prose and poetry category. Simon also earned first place at the Pine Richland High School Tournament on January 16 in the same category. At the North Allegheny High School Tournament on January 9, senior Reilly Zimmerman placed fourth in the prose and poetry category. Regional and state competitions will continue to showcase student talent throughout the upcoming months.

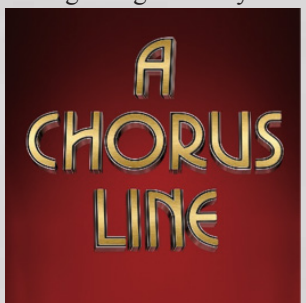
Mike Shaffer serves as the speech and debate head coach.

"A Chorus Line" ticket sales announced

West Allegheny will present the hit Broadway musical "A Chorus Line" as its 2016 spring musical production. Five performances will take place in the Stewart Morgan Auditorium at the high school. Show times are April 1, 2, 8 and 9 at 7 p.m. and April 3 at 2 p.m. An annual Gold Card Luncheon will be held prior to the matinee performance on Sunday, April 3. A cast of 55 students, including 24 named roles within the ensemble, began rehearsals January 25.

Advance, reserved seat tickets will be on sale online through the District website www.westasd.org again this year, as well as by mail and at the high school office beginning February 15. Regardless of purchasing option, tickets for adults are \$15. Tickets for students and senior citizens are \$10.

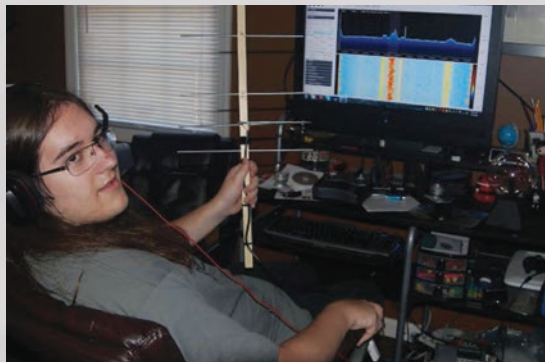
Tom Snyder, executive producer and district arts coordinator, can be contacted with questions at (724) 695-5269 or at tsnyder@westasd.org.



Senior project draws global attention

Senior Danny Hovanec was showcased in December's issue of the global newsletter Thumbsat for his interest in aerospace engineering and ThumbNet, a topic that is also the focus of his senior project. ThumbNet utilizes science, technology, engineering and mathematics - or STEM - concepts and computers to monitor satellite communications. Ultimately, students around the planet work together to establish a global radio tracking network.

The publication noted that: "Since the ThumbNet procedures are simple and the equipment required is so basic, Danny hopes to show how the ThumbNet project can be used to bring people from various communities and cultures together to increase education about space and engineering."



Handmade pieces benefit Light of Life Mission

Inspired by the Light of Life Mission, the high school art club started a crochet class to create and provide handmade items to be donated to the shelter. Art teacher Leah Shuck initiated and taught the class, which meets weekly after school. Students were excited to use their newly acquired crocheting skills to help those who are less fortunate.

Students display hats and scarves they crocheted for the Light of Life Mission. Pictured are Lexi Vogt, Greg Schriener, Lauren Bayer, art teacher Leah Shuck, Alisha Beiber and Kaitlyn Uram. Missing from the photo were Huynh Le and Sydney Saunders.



Sweet Harmony Festival showcases WA voices



Eight West Allegheny students participated in the Sweet Harmony Chorus Festival. They were: Carly Thompson, Kaitlyn Carr, Mya Clay, Ava Meier, Emily Durkin, Kiera Bruno, Cayla Chiodo and Audra Cook.

Eight West Allegheny students attended the Sweet Harmony Chorus Festival sponsored by the American Choral Directors Association. The celebration was held November 20 at Upper St. Clair High School and showcased young women in grades 6 through 9. Students were selected based on their applications and teacher recommendations. Dr. Katherine Mueller from Grove City College served as guest conductor.



Annual powder puff game raises funds for local families



Seniors celebrate winning the annual powder puff game, which raised money to help local families.

The West Allegheny junior/senior powder puff football game was held November 12 and raised \$1,800 for local families in need during the holiday season. The National Honor Society sponsored the fundraiser, which resulted in a 34-7 senior win.

Lynn Birnie and Lauren Barry are the NHS faculty advisors.



History Bee winner named as two students advance to regional level

Josh Holder was named champion of this year's WAMS History Bee while Hayden Shipley claimed the runner-up spot. Both eighth-graders received qualifying scores that will advance them to the regional level of competition. The bee was held January 12 with a total of 10 students participating. Jeff Kiser and Jessica Henry serve as sponsors.

West Allegheny Middle School History Bee winners Hayden Shipley (runner-up) and Josh Holder (first place) have both qualified to compete in regional competition.

Substitutes Needed

West Allegheny School District is in need of substitutes for the following positions: teachers and nurses; support staff positions, including custodians, instructional paraprofessionals, clerical workers and cafeteria workers.

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

Team effort produces “WA Today” broadcasts

As the school year kicked off, so did the creativity and ingenuity of middle school teachers and students when they came together to produce “WA Today,” a quarterly, school-based television broadcast. Initially the brainchild of teachers Bonnie Sikorski and Jacob Minsinger, the project got a boost when Minsinger received a grant that allowed him to purchase a video camera and green screen. The pair then met with middle school Horizons students who quickly got onboard with the concept and were bursting with ideas.

Following several planning and taping sessions, the team launched their first broadcast in the fall with stories that highlighted a variety of school activities and featured on-the-spot interviews. Students are responsible for creating, writing, editing and filming, as well as sharing their final video with the school during lunch periods. With oversight from Sikorski, students are also learning how to use a green screen and video editing software. Teacher Bob Mayo got involved by creating a laser engraving to serve as the set's background logo.

Students and staff have also helped create an advertisement for the school's fall dance. Sikorski has been collaborating with music teachers Andrew Peters and Steve Groba, as well as their students, to create music for the advertisement's opening and closing.

“As we move forward, the ideas keep growing, and the student's enthusiasm is wonderful,” said Sikorski. “They really enjoy being on camera, practicing public speaking skills, and using video as a way to communicate. I have always enjoyed seeing how creative the students can become when collaborating and showing their talents in a different format. Hopefully we'll be able to grow it into a daily news show in the future.”



Wilson Log House Day educates and entertains

Wilson Elementary students celebrated their annual Love Our Log House Day on November 24 with a variety of hands-on activities that both educated and entertained. The historic log house, located on school grounds, provided the historical significance for the day. Activities included: tin punching, square dancing, pioneer songs, storytelling, silhouette creations and visits with miniature horses. Students also enjoyed making and sampling applesauce, popcorn, butter and Johnny cakes.



Students enjoyed a number of activities during Love Our Log House Day on November 24, including visiting with a miniature horse and observing a Dutch oven being used.

Donaldson students demonstrate District-wide robotics program

Fifth graders in all elementary buildings are exploring science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics concepts introduced through the new Lego Robotics curriculum. Donaldson students have begun applying learned computer programming skills to measure and design a course that allows their robot to travel from start to finish with a variety of obstacles added along the way. The final challenge, designed by teacher Leah Vestal, requires students to use mathematics and a variety of robotic sensors to program the course.



Students Camden McClelland, Logen Mackey and Owen Casuccio design a course for their Lego robot.

Through this new curriculum, students in each grade level will imagine, create and explore computer science and computer programming concepts designed to encourage and establish a healthy and valuable curiosity of STEAM technology.

McKee renovations ahead of schedule



Students enjoy the bright natural light of the new library at McKee Elementary School.

With major portions of the McKee Elementary School renovation project completed, the finishing touches have been added to several classrooms, the cafeteria, library and school offices. As construction enters phase 3 a month ahead of schedule, work continues on the band, chorus and art rooms, as well as fifth grade classrooms. Work is expected to be finished by the end of February. This phase also includes the installation of energy efficient LED lighting along the school drive and parking lots, as well as the installation of new telephone and data networks, which are now fully operational.

Phase 4 is expected to begin in early March and will include the renovation of new kindergarten classrooms. Phase 5 will continue into the summer months with the addition of a new state-of-the-art collaboratory and completion of the remaining classrooms, hallways and the gymnasium.

With construction ahead of schedule, the entire project is slated to be completed by August, prior to the first day of school.

Athletic department launches new website

The athletic department is excited to launch a new user-friendly website at www.westasports.com. The new site allows families to easily access practice and game schedules, directions, team updates and articles. An app is also available for download to a smartphone or tablet, allowing the user instant access to important information and timely announcements.



PIAA updates athletic classifications

The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association recently announced changes that delineate how sports are classified in the state, which will alter the landscape for most high school athletics. Starting with the 2016-17 school year, all team sports without an individual component, such as tennis, track, golf and swimming, will have a different assigned class for the next two-year cycle. The following sports will be reclassified within an assigned range of levels. West Allegheny's new classification is identified in red:

- Football - **5A** out of 6 classes (currently 4 classes)
- Boys and Girls Basketball - **5A** out of 6 classes (currently 4 classes)
- Baseball - **5A** out of 6 classes (currently 4 classes)
- Softball - **5A** out of 6 classes (currently 4 classes)
- Boys and Girls Soccer - **3A** out of 4 classes (currently 3 classes)
- Girls Volleyball - **3A** out of 4 classes (currently 3 classes)

What this means for the Indians is a change from traditional rivalries and a departure from what the school has become accustomed to, with regards to sectional alignments and potential post-season formatting.

WEST ALLEGHENY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS

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	Mr. David McBain, Director of Athletics

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



Free Home Repair

31 July – 06 August 2016



APPLICATION



Workcamps are intensive one-week trips that help people grow in Christian faith through service. Youth and their Adult Leaders, from around the country, will spend one week in our community performing hands-on home-repair projects for elderly, low-income, and disabled families. The work at each home will be done by 5 young people, and at least one adult leader, representing many Christian denominations. Eligible repair projects may include:

- Porch repair/construction
- Stair/Step repair
- Painting: exterior and/or interior
- Weatherization
- Wheelchair Ramp repair/construction
- Mobile Home skirting

Application must be received by **31 March 2016** *to be considered!*

Both labor and materials are free to qualifying households. To learn how your home *might be included*, please complete & sign this confidential application and return via email, fax or USPS to:

eMail: WAW@HeroesSupportingHeroes.org | Message/FAX #: 412.235.1737

Heroes Supporting Heroes, ATTN: WAW Application, P.O. Box 787, Imperial PA 15126.0787

Your name: _____ Daytime phone: _____

Physical address: _____

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

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Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Love Truly IS Blind!

STORY BY PAT JENNETTE
PHOTOS SUBMITTED

North Fayette resident Lori Feely still remembers the day she met her husband, Scott, as vividly as yesterday. A couple's first date is memorable for many reasons. In Lori's case, however, it was truly a case of the blind leading the blind. Ironically, her reason for going on the blind date hinged solely on the excitement of getting a free limousine ride.

In April of 1998, radio station Y108 held their first blind date contest. Recalls Lori, "I had heard about it on the radio and thought that it would be a lot of fun. I had just ended a relationship and wasn't really looking at this as a possibility of meeting a new boyfriend let alone my future husband."

Scott was working at the VA hospital at the time. His female co-workers encouraged him to call in to be a contestant.

Lori says the contest was based on the old show "The Dating Game."

First, the station asked women to call in to describe themselves. The radio station chose one of them and men who were interested called in with hopes of being the one she chose.

She says, laughing, "I was picked as the girl. I posed questions to three guys, and Scott was one of them. I went with Scott for many reasons, but at this point, I still was not at all interested in finding a mate."

On April 4, DJs from Y108 picked her up at her apartment in the promised beautiful limo.

"They were a great bunch of people. One of the DJs is still a good friend to this day and she was in our wedding," Feely continues.

After blindfolding Lori, the entourage arrived at Scott's apartment. Then they blindfolded him before he got into the limo. For the next five hours, the two had dinner at the Getaway Cafe in Baldwin. Scores of people showed up to watch the date unfold. Afraid she would spill her meal while trying to eat blindfolded, Lori ordered a grilled cheese sandwich.

Says Scott, "Not considering the complexity of eating while blindfolded, I ordered linguine."

The DJs were recording everything so they could air it on the following Monday.

Added Scott, "We spent the evening trying to get to know each other with a bunch of people and cameras all around us. Needless to say, we did not learn much about each other."



Finally, the moment came for the "unveiling." Off came the masks.

Lori remembers, "We hugged and they sent us right back into the limo because they had to get it back."

Scott recalls that the couple mostly talked to the DJs instead of each other while riding back in the limo.

"We exchanged numbers, but neither one of us saw this as a future husband or wife," he says.

Fate has a way of making things happen, however. Lori says, "We did talk a few days after and decided to go to the Pirates opener. It was that night that I fell in love with this gentle, kind, caring man. I couldn't believe that I almost missed my chance. I wasn't thinking that he and I were even remotely compatible. I don't think he was, either. From that first real date on, that was it for me. I knew that I wanted to have this man in my life."

That summer, while they were vacationing on Kelleys Island in Lake Erie, Scott was offered a position as a math and science teacher at the Island

School. He couldn't turn it down. Lori had a photography business that was going very well in Pittsburgh, so she couldn't leave.

In April of 1999, one year after the infamous blind date, Scott took Lori back to the Getaway Cafe and proposed.

"It was a very funny night because I completely missed the proposal. It came out on a dessert plate with a heart around it and

I was concerned about where my cake was! I never even noticed the ring," Lori says. "At the same time a good friend of ours who was with us was upset that her coffee wasn't on the table. We were both so confused and to this day Scott says that I never did actually say 'Yes.'"

In May of 2000, the couple were married on Kelleys Island by an Elvis impersonator in front of 150 guests. Lori has always been a huge Elvis fan.

She says, wistfully, "Now that I am a little more mature,

I would love to renew our vows with an elder from our church. That is on the bucket list."

Lori and Scott have moved a few times since and had many wonderful opportunities and experiences, not to mention two wonderful sons, Tanner, 16, and Oscar, 12.

Lori notes, "We really wanted to raise our children close to our families, so we moved back to North Fayette in 2002."

"It has been a beautiful life, all thanks to a silly radio contest," chuckles Scott.



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Pittsburgh Technical Institute will be offering a continuing education course via webinar on consecutive Thursdays in March on HTML5 and CSS3. The course takes place in four, two-hour sessions, from 6-8 p.m. on consecutive Thursdays. Eight Act 48 credits can be awarded upon successful completion.

Students will learn how to code a web page with a multiple-column layout that rearranges to suit any screen or device size. It will cover media queries, percentages, and rems to control and adjust web page layouts. A basic understanding of HTML and CSS are required.

To register, go to <http://www.pti.edu/programs/continuing-education-courses-at-pti/web-design>.

Students explore San Francisco hospitality and travel industry

Students at Pittsburgh Technical Institute made presentations based on their San Francisco “FAM trip” travel experience Jan. 7. Guests enjoyed an introductory presentation, themed reception, prizes and a trade show, all orchestrated by PTI School of Hospitality students.

Each year, PTI School of Hospitality instructors Mark Bellemare and Mevalee Spain challenge students to select a destination. Students research and collaborate to identify a walkable city with expansive leisure, business and cultural attractions. Students advocate for a destination until a front-runner emerges. Then, the real planning - and professional development - begins.

Students negotiate with vendors and plan visits to top attractions, a stay at a hotel, meals at restaurants, transportation options and excursions to neighborhoods to develop a day-by-day itinerary that introduces the best the destination location has to offer.

“Our familiarization [FAM] trips give PTI students an actual, hands-on, feet-on-the-ground experience. Students live and breathe a city and its personality instead of just reading about it,” said Spain, a PTI hospitality instructor who accompanies students on their FAM trips. “We give the students tasks to immerse them in a city’s different neighborhoods. They navigate the city using maps, interview locals, visit restaurants and tourist spots, and learn to present some of the region’s most interesting attributes to future travelers.”

For the past 16 years, PTI School of Hospitality students have participated in FAM trips, which replicate an industry tool that introduces travel agents to destinations, venues and resorts. In addition to San Francisco, PTI FAM trips have explored San Antonio, Texas; Orlando, Florida; and San Diego, California.

After their visit to San Francisco in the fall of 2015, hospitality students were required to plan a trade show and reception for 200 friends, family and industry representatives for the Jan. 7



ABOVE: Gabrielle Davis, Kelsey Kollar, and Makenzie Collins stand in front of the Muir Woods trade show booth. Muir Woods was one of the featured excursions selected by PTI hospitality students for their FAM trip.

BELOW: Family, friends, classmates and employers enter the gallery through a replica of the iconic Chinatown Gate, which was constructed by School of Design academic chair Brian Maitland.

travelogue event.

Each trade show booth is designed to showcase a site visited or a feature experienced during the FAM trip. PTI School of Hospitality students who major in hotel and restaurant management or travel and tourism management create the evening’s menu. Hotel and casino management students design floor plans. Keynote speakers describe the travelogue capstone course, share trip highlights and invite guests to visit the trade show booths to learn more about the highlighted destination.



Next open house is March 19!

Visit PTI.edu to register
or call 1-800-784-9675.



In honor of our 100th West Allegheny edition, we went back through our archives and picked out our most memorable WA editions and stories. Here are some of our top ones, as picked by Allegheny West Magazine publisher emeritus Pat Jennette and current publisher Doug Hughey.

First, though, here's a quick editor's note recapping the history of this publication:

In August of 1999, the first edition of Allegheny West Magazine was published. As it is now, the edition was mailed to every home and business in the West Allegheny School District. Publisher and editor Pat Jennette felt this was an essential component to a community publication.

"I believed from the beginning that all residents should receive their good news, free, all the time, thus our slogan," says Jennette. "Having worked as a reporter for several newspapers, I was aware that not everybody read just one newspaper, but that news was caught randomly, depending upon whether one happened to pick it up at the newsstand or subscribe to it."

Jennette had decided to launch her publication after another beloved local publication, The Record-Enterprise, closed that same year. The newspaper was formerly known as The Record-Outlook.

"When we learned that The Record-Outlook was suddenly shuttering its publication after 100-plus years, it was a shock, because we adored The Record-Outlook and its wonderful editor, Liza Northrop, who sadly passed away not long ago," says Jennette. "I had forged a great relationship with Liza and knew the important role her newspaper played in the community. I decided to launch the magazine so that people would have a solid source of community news."

Jennette published the first edition of Allegheny West Magazine using her own funds. In so doing, she realized a lifelong dream that started when she was a child. That dream had developed as she became the editor of her high school newspaper

and then a reporter. For eight years, she wrote for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.

Her husband, John, worked as a welder and encouraged her to take the chance. That same year, though, John was diagnosed with a life-threatening lung disease that forced him to leave his job. Pat wanted to find a full-time job with benefits to help support the family but John encouraged her to stick with it. She continued running the magazine while working as a public relations consultant with several school districts. For 12 years, she was the WA public relations consultant.

"It was a tough time for awhile," she says. "It took several years juggling both workloads, while supporting John through his medical tribulations and raising a daughter, before I was finally able to focus on just the magazine. We were blessed that it worked out."

In 2003, Pat launched a Montour edition. A Moon edition followed in 2005. Along the way, much of the magazine's support came from local businesses.

In 2014, ownership of the magazine transitioned to the author of this article, who was Pat's assistant editor for two years. Doing so allowed Pat and John to step away from the business and enjoy retirement.

"The blessings I received from my publishing journey far exceeded the early challenges," says Pat. "I wouldn't have traded it for the world. Today, John's health is stable, our children have grown and are on their own, and we are now in a new life chapter - traveling in our RV and seeing our nation's national parks. Not only were we fortunate to establish

a magazine for our communities that endured and served its residents, but were especially blessed to have a remarkable writer, Doug Hughey, and his talented wife, Sarah, take over when we retired. Both are local natives and strongly rooted in this community. They are successfully carrying on the Allegheny West Magazine legacy, and we are deeply grateful for that."



Pat's most memorable issues (comments from editor preceding):

Volume 3, Issue 14, Oct./Nov. 2001

Over the course of just five days in August of 2001, hundreds of

volunteers came together

to build a house on Walnut Street for a local family. The short, dead-end street is also where Pat and John ran the office for this publication for 15 years. Along with volunteers, dozens of businesses and community organizations donated to make the project a reality.

Pat: "The building of the Bouchon house was the first time the community



pulled its resources together to tear down an old home and build a new one for a family. The outpouring of support, from churches and individuals to contractors and businesses, was overwhelming. When six pastors stood on the porch of the new home to dedicate and bless it, and several hundred volunteers were in attendance standing on the street, all receiving communion from every church denomination, we knew that was a special experience in our community.”

Volume 6, Issue 32, Oct./Nov. 2004

In September of 2004, a strong, Category 3 hurricane named Ivan made landfall in Alabama. After wreaking havoc on the southeastern U.S., the weakened cyclone continued northeast, dumping heavy rains along its path. In Pittsburgh, the devastation from flooding was so bad that then-President George W. Bush toured the area. It wouldn't be the last time this magazine covered a flood in the

WA community, or the positive community response that followed.

Pat: “The devastation of the Oakdale floods was mind boggling. Walking through Oakdale immediately afterward, talking to residents and business owners, watching the cleanup, viewing the utter devastation, was a sad time. Oakdale looked like a war zone for a time. People were sorting through their water- and mud-filled belongings, trying to piece their lives back together. It made me realize how quickly life can change.”

Volume 9, Issue 54, June/July 2008

In 2008, approximately 2,000 athletes representing 50 states participated in the National

Kidney Foundation's 2008 U.S. Transplant Games in Pittsburgh. Among them were a number of athletes in our coverage area. It was a subject that hit close to home, as John was and still remains on a lung transplant list. Pat and John interviewed five individuals from our coverage area and ran profiles on them in this edition.

Pat: “This story started out as an overview of several people who had received transplants and were participating in the Transplant Games. John and I visited each person to hear their story. Most of the time we ended up spending a full afternoon or evening with each of them. We walked away from these experiences inspired that so many brave people had such perseverance and hope. In turn, it gave us hope for the future for John's sake as well as mine.”

Volume 14, No. 79, Aug./Sept. 2012

Since 1988, there has been an ongoing effort to convert hundreds of acres - much of it reclaimed strip mine - in North Fayette and Collier townships into a world-class botanic garden. In July of 2012, the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden held official groundbreaking ceremonies. Since then, the PBG has opened 60 acres of property to the public and received the Governor's Environmental Excellence Award. The garden is hoping to one day convert all 460 of its acres into hiking trails and gardens. Pat was there the

day of the initial groundbreaking and has been covering important PBG milestones well before then and since.

Pat: “When I learned that a world-class botanic garden was going to be planting itself right in the midst of my hometown, I was elated! I visit botanic gardens when I travel, and I recognized the value of having one of our own.



I was immediately endeared to the enthusiasm and passion of the staff at the garden. Immediately putting support of the magazine behind such an incredible major regional attraction, I soon got involved as a volunteer. Watching the process evolve, from the original groundbreaking to the grand opening, which was attended by U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary Sally Jewell, was an amazing experience!”

Volume 12, No. 70, Feb./March 2011

In 1992, WA produced its first musical, "Once Upon a Mattress." The school's musicals have since earned numerous Gene Kelly Awards and continue to churn out talent. At the same time, WA alumni making an impact in the entertainment industry has become a recurring theme in this magazine. In 2011, Pat looked back at WA's first 20 musicals using the photography of Paul DeBor.

Pat: “What talent WA has nurtured and sent out into the world over two decades! When I started researching the current whereabouts of some of our musically talented former students, and as I spoke with some of them, I was so impressed with their success out in the entertainment world. It made me proud to be a West Allegheny resident!”



Volume 14, No. 80, Oct./Nov. 2012

In 2012, the Western Allegheny Community Library moved from the North Fayette Community Center building to a more spacious venue with tons of potential off Bateman Road. There, the WACL continues to provide the community with access to important programming and resources.

The unfolding story of the WACL is one that Pat has followed since its beginning.

Pat: “When the original three mothers opened the library way



back when, I was a reporter for the local newspaper at the time, The Town and Boro News. I remember how passionate these three ladies were to get a small library in their hometown started. Over time, the library slowly grew. As a magazine, we threw our support behind the library. We hosted two Christmas tree festivals to benefit it, and we sponsored their outdoor wine festival during the years they had one. I became part of the committee to seek a way to grow the library into another space. After several different options were explored, it was exciting to see the library open in the old Amcom building. The day we took the photo of the library staff in front of their new sign, with them wearing shirts with their new library logo on it, was so memorable, largely because I had experienced the transition of this important piece of the community since its inception.

“We have a wonderful community! I am continually amazed by the goodness, talent and positivity of our residents and organizations. Because of that, telling our community’s stories over the years has been a most memorable journey for me.”

Doug’s most memorable issues:

Volume 17, Issue 97, June/July 2015

Last summer, Killbuck Lodge in Oakdale became the subject of a reality television show segment on “Barnwood Builders,” which airs on the DIY Network. The show follows the

Antique Cabins and Barns

Company as they travel the country, reconstructing log cabins that are oftentimes historically significant. After show producers got wind of local efforts to rebuild Killbuck Lodge, meeting place of Boy Scout Troop 248, they reached out to Friends of Killbuck Lodge president Matt Cochran. A story about the forthcoming project ran in our June, 2015 issue. A follow-up feature ran in the August issue.

This story had a sense of community, history, community service and star power. As I wrote in my editor’s message to this edition, I was struck by how down-to-earth producers and stars of the show were when

we showed up to cover the project. Our writer Rebecca Ferraro wrote the story while I got to take photos. At one point, I asked show producers Katie Rolnick and Travis Tips for a photo, as I wanted to make sure we acknowledged their efforts to bring the show to Oakdale. This was, as it turned out, the show’s first philanthropic effort. With the camera turned on them for once, Katie asked, joking, whether to leave her fanny pack on or not. I told her leave it on, saying, ‘It’s real.’ They laughed, saying I sounded like them.

The show coming to Oakdale prompted an enormous outpouring of donations, both monetary and in-kind, from area companies and individuals. With so many moving parts, it was inspiring to see how so many different people could come together to build and preserve a local landmark and institution. Looking back through archives, I’m struck by the similarities to the Bouchon house project story from our Oct./Nov. 2001 issue listed on the previous page.

Volume 16, Issue 91, Aug./Sept. 2014

This edition had a little bit everything. Our writer Carolyn Morrison interviewed Dwayne Bauknight - owner of Shared Acres in Findlay

Township - to see how he had bounced back from a catastrophic injury and become an expert on renewable energy. We previewed West Allegheny fall sports and ran an update on the West Allegheny Foundation’s efforts to invest over \$250,000 in the West Allegheny community and schools. I also got to write a story about a well-known police dog in the area following the passage of Rocco’s Law. It was interesting to learn about the time, money and emotional investment that goes into training a police dog, as well as to learn about the psychology that drives one. As a dog lover myself, this piece continues to resonate.

In this edition as well, Pat recapped the work of the first-ever West Allegheny Work Camp. A project of Heroes Supporting

Heroes, this faith-based initiative resulted in out-of-town volunteers fixing up dozens of homes across the area. Pat also covered the opening of the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden, a massive ongoing project to convert 460 acres of reclaimed strip mine into a world-class garden.

My favorite part about this issue though was the cover. My wife, Sarah, designs and lays out much of the magazine each month, and she once again went above and beyond with this edition. The chalkboard cover worked perfectly for our back-to-school theme. I can assure you that it was not easy to create but it remains my favorite to date.

Volume 15, Issue 89, April/May 2014

Just before my wife and I took over ownership of this publication, I interviewed an Imperial resident named Jani Persin-Lampus.

Persin-Lampus’ mother had 11 brothers, every single one of whom at one point or another enlisted in the U.S. Armed Forces. Between them, and their father, they accounted for 136 years of active duty in the Army, Navy and Marines. Their father had served in World War I and multiple brothers served in World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam. At one point, five of the brothers were serving in Vietnam at the same time.

It took months to get this story finished, between the magazine schedule and required research, but ended up being well worth it. The story of the Black family is a sprawling one that we tried to do justice. It was a challenge but very rewarding.

In this edition also our writer Jocelyn Grecko covered construction of the TC House. Not entirely unlike the Killbuck Lodge and Bouchon house projects, the TC House demonstrates what can be accomplished when a community pulls together for an important cause. The TC House is now providing a home for three adults with special needs in the West Allegheny community, allowing them to live semi-independently.



Ongoing

Fort Cherry Friends of the Montour Trail, seeking donations for equipment to maintain 10 miles of trail from Allegheny County line to Cecil Township, www.gofundme.com.

Greater Pittsburgh Football Officials Association Seeking New Officials

GPFOA has officials working at the youth, scholastic, college and semi-pro levels, new applicants learn the rules and mechanics associated with serving as an official so as to assist them in obtaining PIAA certification, certified officials not already affiliated with another chapter are encouraged to join, (412) 398-6545.

Winter clothing donations

being sought by the Salvation Army Chartiers Valley Service Center on 225 West Main St. in Carnegie; drop off winter coats, hats, gloves, scarves, boots and new socks **10 a.m.-3 p.m.** weekdays, for pickup: jamilhollan@gmail.com, (724) 413-0604.

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

Support Groups

Brain Injury and Stroke Support Group, third Wednesdays, 12-1:15 p.m., HealthSouth Sewickley, third floor boardroom, call to confirm meetings on holidays, Michelle McCann, (412) 749-2388.

Amputee Support Group, third Mondays, 3 p.m., HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Sewickley, library, call to confirm meetings on holidays, (412) 749-2255.

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

Networking Groups

Greater Pittsburgh Business Connection, Wednesdays, 7:15 a.m., Eat'n Park on Rt. 60, find new leads and make more sales, for over 20 years the GPBC has been a dedicated group of business professionals committed to expanding their business through professional networking, run and governed by members for members, (412) 364-6446 x 302, www.gpbc-pgh.org.

Toastmasters International City of Bridges, odd Thursdays, 12-1 p.m., Robinson Township Eat'n Park on Rt. 60, world leader in communication and leadership development, become a more confident speaker and leader, guests welcome, www.d13tm.com.

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.

Events

Valentine Sweetheart Pancake Breakfast, Feb. 13, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., Oakdale Community Center, includes pancakes, sausage, fruit cup, drink, Chinese auction, donations welcome, benefits reconstruction of Killbuck Lodge, \$6 adults, \$5 senior citizens, \$3 ages 5 and under, (724) 693-9230.

Super Saver Sundays Community Flea Market, Feb. 28, March 6, 20, April 10, 17, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Father Ryan Arts Center in downtown McKees Rocks, buy, sell, trade lightly used goods with neighbors and friends, tables \$15 per Sunday, vquiroz@forstorox.org, (412) 771-3052.

"Anne of Green Gables" musical, Robinson Township Christian School, March 11, 7 p.m., March 12, 2 p.m., \$8 adults, \$5 students/children, Heather, (412) 498-8176, hlstyer@comcast.net.

Family Bingo Night, March 11, Wilson Elementary School cafeteria, 6-8 p.m., doors open 5:30 p.m., bingo prizes, student door prizes, Chinese auction, 50/50, concessions, sponsored by Wilson School PTA, ptawilsonselementary@gmail.com.

Beauty and the Beast, Carnegie Performing Arts Center, 300 Beechwood Ave., Carnegie, March 18-20, Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m., Sunday, 2 p.m., \$15 adults, \$12 children and seniors, (412) 279-8887, www.carnegieperformingartscenter.com.

Soup 'n Salad Supper, Montours Presbyterian Church, March 19, 4-6 p.m., varieties of homemade soups, includes salad, desserts, beverage, Mancini's bread, \$8 adults, \$4 children, under age 4 free, (412) 787-1050, www.montourschurch.org.

Hollow Oak Land Trust 25th Anniversary Brewhaha, March 26, Robin Hill Park Mansion, celebrate 25 years of local land conservation, artisanal pairings of local craft beers and foods from Allegheny City Brewing and Fellowship Foods, auction, raffles, presentations, beer tastings, \$50 includes food and brew pairings, goodie bag, take-home bottle of 25th Anniversary Bourbon Barrel Stout, info@hollowoak.org, (412) 264-5354.

Jacob Ferree Chapter DAR Events

reservations can be made by contacting Bonnie Kappert at (412) 771-7526 or at kkandcompany@msn.com.

American History Tea, March 5, Montour Heights Country Club; presentation of the DAR Good Citizen Awards, the American History Awards and the Junior American Citizen Awards; 1 p.m., \$10, register by March 1.

Historic Preservation, April 2, 11 a.m., Montour Heights Country Club, with Civil War re-enactor Marilyn Sorvas, \$21, register by March 29.

West Hills Symphonic Band

Concerts take place at West Allegheny High School unless otherwise noted.

Feb. 28, 2016, 3 p.m., "The WHSB's Greatest Hits"

May 1, 2016, 3 p.m., "Spring Luster"

March 31, 2016, 8 p.m., Soldiers and Sailors Hall in Oakland, Association of Concert Bands Convention



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Findlay Township Parks and Rec.

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

Wedding Planning 101, Feb. 25, 6:30-8:30 p.m., informative class helps newly engaged couples choose and manage venues, caterers, florists, wedding attire, themes, learn where to spend money and where to cut corners, katherinesdaughterevents.com, \$10 per person.

Annual Indoor Flea Market, March 5, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., \$10 per table, call for availability.

Beginner Needle Felting, March 23, 9 a.m.-noon, needle felting is sculpting wool that is not spun using a special needle, learn by making an Easter Bunny, register by **March 9**, \$35 per person, <http://www.runredrun.com>.

Gardeners' Huddle, April 2, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., 7:30 a.m. registration and continental breakfast, presented by Findlay Township Garden Club, prepare for spring by spending the morning gaining information on improving gardening knowledge, with speakers Steve Piskor (cool tools and other stuff for gardeners), Kitty Vagley (introducing the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden), and Carol Kirkpatrick (gardening with deer in your yard), register by **March 29**, \$25.

Tuesday Open Painting, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., February 16, March 1, 22, April 5, 26, May 10, 24, open painting session for all mediums, not a class but an open session for painters, \$4 donation encouraged, call to register.

Young Living Essential Oils Make and Take Classes, 1-2 p.m., ages 16 and up, three classes cover benefits of oils and allow students to take home their own creations; **Feb. 27**, Oral Hygiene Products, lip scrub, lip balm, toothpaste and mouthwash; **April 16**, Spring Cleaning Products, all-purpose cleaner, rug refresher, room deodorizer and dryer ball; **June 11**, Summer Surprise, TBA; \$25 per class, checks payable to Imperial Dragon, register by calling (724) 695-1976 at least one week prior to class.

AARP Safe Driving Classes, April 27 and 28, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Findlay Township Municipal Building Meeting Room, ages 55+, eight-hour course taught in two, four-hour sessions over two days, refine existing driving skills and develop safe, defensive driving techniques, no driving tests involved, upon completion participants eligible to receive state mandated multi-year discount on auto insurance premiums, \$15 AARP members, \$20 non-members, Findlay residents pay half, checks only and payable to AARP, four-hour refresher course, **April 12, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.**, same location and cost, available to anyone who has completed eight-hour class in last three years with proof of attendance, bring certificate and driver's license, insurance company can provide a copy.

Photography Workshops Open to residents and non-residents. Contact Sherry Remaly for more information or to register, (724) 695-7947, remalysh@gmail.com.

Creativity, Clarity and Character, Mondays, March 7-April 11, 6:30-9:00 p.m., \$125, step away from traditional rules and techniques and into a relationship experience with photography subject, find new ways to express thoughts and feelings through photography, no class **March 28**,

for intermediate and experienced photographers.

First Steps in Digital Photography, Wednesdays, March 9-March 30, 6:30-9:00 p.m., \$99, consists of lectures, critiques, peer review and guided practice with a final project demonstrating understanding of the coursework, for beginners.

From Composition to Post Photography Workshop - Part 2, Mondays, April 18-May 9, 6:30-9 p.m., \$99, for intermediate and experienced photographers.

Findlay Kids' Programs

Time for Toddlers, 10:15-11:15 a.m., Feb. 15, 16, March 7, 8, 21, 22, April 4, 5, 18, 19, May 9, 10, 23, 24, June 13, 14, 27, 28, for children under the age of 4, hour of movement, music, activities and snack, meet other families and toddlers, adult must stay with child, registration required, \$3, sessions cancelled if West Allegheny cancels due to inclement weather.

Annual Easter Egg Hunt, March 19, 11 a.m., Clinton Park, for residents and families of residents, meet at Rainbow's End Playground parking lot, up to 3,000 eggs hidden in park, ages preschool through grade 5, bring baskets, check website if weather is inclement.

Exercise Programs

Findlay Township Walking Group, April 6, 9 a.m., kick-off meeting on National Walking Day, walking is a low-risk and easy way to start exercising, also good for companionship and motivation, receive a pedometer and hand-outs to track progress, \$10/year.

Water Aerobics, Wilson Elementary School, 6-7 p.m., Monday spring session, **April 4-May 16, Wednesday** spring session, **April 6-May 18**, low-impact aquatic exercise works the heart and lungs while toning muscles, registration required, payment due at first class, \$5 discount for attending both Monday and Wednesday classes, cancelled in event school cancels due to weather, \$35 / 7 sessions.


PiYo Exercise Class, Tuesdays through May 24, 7-8 p.m., no class March 15, hybrid workout uses strength-building moves of yoga and muscle-sculpting reps of Pilates with a flow that helps increase flexibility and strength while shedding fat, burn calories by using every muscle in the body without touching a single weight, low impact high quality workout, bring yoga mat and water bottle, register or drop in, \$5 per class.

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

Yoga for Beginners and Beyond, Fridays through May 27, no class March 4, 25, 6:30-7:30 p.m., yoga for all levels, benefits whole body with exercise, stretching and meditation, \$5 per class, Julia Harvey, (724) 695-1976.

Senior Yoga and Qi Gong, Thursdays, 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m., chase away the winter chill with a mixed yoga and Qi gong class, mixed levels for all participants, great for older adults, (724) 695-1976 or info@idtsd.net, \$3 per class or free to Findlay seniors 55+.

Pickleball, courts are located at the Recreation and Sports Complex at Leopold Lake beside the skate park, clinics offered **April 26, 10 a.m.-noon, April 28, 7-9 p.m.**, call to register for clinics.



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Co-Ed Adult Soccer League, tentative practices to start **April 18** and games **May 2** on **Monday evenings**, ages 30+, 3-3 games with no goalie, 8-week season, \$35, register by **March 31**.

Pavilion Rentals for 2016 Season, reserve in person or online at www.findlay.pa.us. reservations now open to residents, businesses, and youth or adult groups, \$60 with \$25 refundable deposit, two separate checks, at municipal building, online, non-resident reservations start **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, seats 150-165 with full kitchen facilities and nearby restroom, reserve in person.

North Fayette Parks and Recreation

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

Piyo, Tuesdays, 6-7 p.m., North Fayette Community Center, \$5 per class.

Hankey Farms Pool, March 1-April 15, early bird special.

Open Gym, Monday-Friday, 7:30-9 a.m., stay out of the cold and take in a morning walk.

Water Walking, Donaldson Elementary School Pool, Monday-Thursday, 6-8 p.m., \$2 per person.

Water Aerobics, Donaldson Elementary School Pool, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5-6 p.m., \$2 per class or medical insurance card, no swimming ability required, ages 18+.

Senior Luncheons, North Fayette Volunteer Fire Hall, LaFayette Room, doors open 11 a.m., \$5 lunch, **March 9, April 13 and May 11**.

Senior Trips, check monthly senior newsletter for more information about upcoming trips.

Easter Egg Hunt, March 19, 11 a.m., Donaldson Park.

PALS, Fridays through Feb. 26, 6:30-7:30 p.m., recreational programs for children with special needs.

Future Stars Floor Hockey, ages 4-6, Saturdays, February 13-March 26, \$25 residents, \$35 non-residents, helmets required, volunteer coaches needed!

Afterschool Programs, 3:30-5:30 p.m., K-8, programs designed to provide a safe environment for children to come to after school, **Mondays-Wednesdays**: After School Program; **Thursdays**: Winter (Crafts) Spring (Science); **Fridays**: Winter (Basketball) Spring (Dodgeball), transportation provided from school to community center when school is in session.

Summer Employment Opportunities, North Fayette is looking for lifeguards, concession workers, summer camp staff.

Elementary Floor Hockey, Sundays, Jan. 3-March 27, grades 1-5, \$45.

North Fayette Summer Camp Registration, Sundays, Jan. 3-March 27, grades 1-5, \$45.

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

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

Frank Palombi Band, Feb. 13, 7:30-10:30 p.m., the kitchen will be open, musicians are welcome to join in on the fun on stage.

Dick and Jack Tady Bands, Feb. 21, 2-8 p.m., back-to-back performances, kitchen will be open.

Seems Like Old Times Dance, March 13, 7-10 p.m., the Wally Merriman Group performs a ballroom-style set celebrating the music of America's greatest generation, kitchen opens 5 p.m., \$10 buffet, \$8 admission.

International Button Box Club, March 19, 7:30-10:30 p.m., featuring Garrett Tatano, musicians are welcome to join in on the fun on stage, kitchen will be open.

Polka Classics, April 23, 7:30-11 p.m., featuring Rob Deblender from Detroit, first-ever performance, kitchen will be open, musicians welcome.

Heritage Public Library Located at 52 4th St. in McDonald. To register for events, stop by the library or call: (724) 926-8400, heritagelibrary@comcast.net, www.washlibs.org/heritage

Preschool Story Time, through March 4, Fridays, 10:30-11:30 a.m., registration required.

AARP Tax Assistance, Wednesdays through April 13, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., free for seniors over age 60 and any low income tax payers, registration required.

Fit Club Exercise Group, Monday nights except second Mondays, 7-8 p.m., adults only, \$2 per session.

Constituent Outreach, second and fourth Thursdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., staff person from state Rep. Jason Ortity's office will be available in the community room for various state-related services and questions.

E-Reader Help, Tuesday mornings, 10 a.m.-noon, learn how to download eBooks and eAudio Books to a tablet, no registration required.

Valentine Bags, buy a Valentine gift bag for \$7.50 for a sweetheart or to donate to seniors, bag includes two books, valentine and a Sarris's Milk Chocolate candy bar, available at library.

We'd like to hear from you!

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



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- Express Employment Professionals**, p. 27, 412.494.2000, www.expresspros.com
- Family and Cosmetic Dentistry**, p. 44, 724.695.8447
- Family Chiropractic**, p. 24, 412.787.3320
- Findlay Township**, p. 20, 724.695.0500, www.findlay.pa.us
- First Steps Pediatrics**, p. 13, 412.788.1999, www.fspkids.com
- Heritage Valley Health System**, p. bk. cover, 412.749.6934, www.heritagevalley.org
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- St. James Catholic School**, p. 13, 412.741.5540, www.stjamesschool.us
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- WA Athletic Hall of Fame**, p. 55, 724.307.3725
- Weirton Medical Center**, inside front cov., 412.489.6445, www.wmpaphysician.com
- West Allegheny School District**, p. 33, 724.695.3422, www.westasd.org
- West Allegheny Workcamp 2016**, p. 42, www.HeroesSupportingHeroes.org
- White Viper Karate**, p. 10, 44, 412.489.2460, www.whiteviperkarate.com

Community Connections

MUNICIPALITIES

- Findlay Township**
1271 Route 30, Clinton, PA 15026
(724) 695-0500, www.findlay.pa.us
- North Fayette Township**
400 North Branch Road, Oakdale, PA 15071
(412) 788-4888, www.north-fayette.com
- Oakdale Borough**
6115 Noblestown Road, Oakdale, PA 15071
(724) 693-9740, www.oakdaleborough.com
- McDonald Borough**
151 School Street, McDonald, PA 15057
(724) 926-8711, www.mcdonaldboro.com

PUBLIC & PRIVATE

SCHOOLS K-12

- West Allegheny School District**
110 Bruno Lane, Imperial, PA 15126
(724) 695-3422, www.westasd.org
- Parkway West Career & Technology Center**
7101 Steubenville Pike, Oakdale, PA 15071
(412) 923-1772, www.parkwaywest.org
- This list includes only those public and private schools located within the municipalities served by the West Allegheny Edition of Allegheny West Magazine

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

- AI-Anon, West A area**, (412) 683-4279
- American Legion Post 171 Oakdale**, (724) 693-8759
- American Legion Post 335 Imperial**, (724) 695-0491
- Boy Scouts-Grtr. Pgh. Council-Frontier**, (412) 325-7971 or 7995
- Faith in Action**, (724) 921-0027
- Findlay Athletic Assn.**, (412) 874-9348
- Findlay Garden Club**, (724) 350-9837
- Girl Scouts WPA**, (724) 774-3553
- Heritage Public Library-McDonald**, (724) 926-8400
- Kiwanis Club of the Pittsburgh Airport Area**, PAAKiwanis@gmail.com
- Lions Club Imperial**, (724) 513-7616
- Masonic Lodge #669**, (724) 693-8274
- McDonald Area Redevelop. Assn.**, (724) 926-4617
- Meals on Wheels-W.A.**, (412) 279-5670
- Montour Run Watershed Assn.**, www.mrwa.info
- Montour Trail Council**, (412) 257-3011
- Montour Valley Grange**, (724) 695-0481
- Mothers of Preschoolers-Crossroads**, (412) 494-9999
- Mothers of Preschoolers-Hebron**, (724) 899-2276
- North Fayette Athletic Assn.**, (412) 580-0655
- North Fayette Garden Club**, (724) 693-8413
- Oakdale Youth League**, (724) 693-8951
- Rotary - Parkway West**, (412) 787-5280
- Senior Citizen Groups:**
- **Findlay Township**, (724) 695-0500
 - **North Fayette Township**, (724) 693-3118
 - **St. Columbille**, (724) 695-7325
 - SNPJ Lodge 106**, (724) 695-1411
 - Sturgeon Athletic Association**, (724) 926-2150
 - The ROCK Community Center**, (724) 693-2777
 - VFW Ladies Auxillary**, (412) 788-4674
 - VFW Post #7070 Oakdale**, (412) 427-9195
 - VFW Post #7714 Imperial**, (724) 695-8866
 - West Allegheny Food Pantry & Thrift Shop**, (724) 695-1305
 - West Allegheny Foundation**, inquiries@wafoundation.org
 - West Allegheny Friends to Enhance the Library (WAFEL)**, (724) 695-8150
 - West Allegheny Ministerium**, (724) 693-8950
 - West Allegheny Booster & PTA Groups**, www.westasd.org
 - Western Allegheny Community Library**, (724) 695-8150
 - West Allegheny Aqua Club**, (412) 608-4583
 - West Allegheny Inline Hockey**, (412) 334-2640
 - West Allegheny Youth Assn.**, www.westayouth.net
 - West Allegheny Youth Soccer Assn.**, (724) 693-8073
 - West Allegheny Youth Wrestling**, (724) 695-8132

CHURCHES

- Church of The Living Christ**
220 West Allegheny Road, Imperial, PA 15126
(724) 695-7188, www.cotlc.com
- Church of the Nazarene**
(moved to Florence) 1080 Steubenville Pike, Burgetstown, PA 15021
(724) 947-9223, www.nazarene.org
- Clinton UP Church**
25 Wilson Road, Clinton, PA 15026
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(meets at Courtyard Pgh. Airport)
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(412) 788-4513
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- St. Patrick's Church**
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(724) 693-9260, www.saint-patrick-parish.com
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- The Bible Chapel**
@ Pittsburgh Technical Institute
(724) 941-8990, ext. 124
www.robinson.biblechapel.org
- Valley Presbyterian Church**
237 Main Street, Imperial, PA 15126
(724) 695-0300, www.valleychurchweb.com
- West Ridge Christian Community Church**
100 Gorwood Drive, Coraopolis, PA 15108
(724) 695-7500, www.westridge.cc

News from Heritage Valley Health System



Heritage Valley Medical Group ConvenientCare welcomes UPMC for You Patients

Heritage Valley ConvenientCare is pleased to announce that UPMC for You, the Medical Assistance (Medicaid) program of UPMC Health Plan, is now accepted at all six ConvenientCare walk-in clinic locations. UPMC Health Plan has contracted with Heritage Valley Medical Group ConvenientCare walk-in clinics to provide insurance coverage and access for their UPMC for You patient base.

Heritage Valley Medical Group ConvenientCare is open seven days a week with extended hours providing treatment for minor illness and injuries by a staff of certified registered nurse practitioners. ConvenientCare walk-in clinics are located in the Chippewa, Edgeworth, Ellwood City and West Allegheny medical neighborhoods, as well as the Monaca and East Liverpool, Ohio Wal-Mart stores.

“We are pleased that UPMC for You now covers their patients to be seen in our ConvenientCare locations. Now, instead of going to the emergency department, patients with minor symptoms and injuries will actually receive excellent care more quickly at ConvenientCare clinics,” said John Luellen, MD, chief operating and chief quality officer at Heritage Valley Health System. “Additionally, ConvenientCare locations are directly connected to Heritage Valley’s full service network of care - primary and specialty physicians, hospitals, full service labs and diagnostic centers. This enables medical information to be shared between all service lines, resulting in more efficient, cost effective care delivery.”

To locate a Heritage Valley Medical Group ConvenientCare, visit www.heritagevalley.org/convenientcare.



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The doctor's office waiting room was quiet. Two ladies were waiting while loved ones were going through procedures. They struck up a conversation.

"Hi, I am Jane," the one said.

"And I am Debbie," the other replied.

Small talk followed.

Jane asked, "Do you have children?"

"Yes, one daughter," Debbie said. "We just celebrated her birthday."

Debbie shared how happy her daughter was with the simplest gifts. That led Debbie to explain that her daughter's age is about 5 and she has been that age for 15 years. Her daughter is mentally challenged.

This mom was so positive and her smile so bright while talking about her daughter.

After talking for a while, Jane said, "We will probably never meet again. May I ask you a question?"

"Sure," Debbie responded.

"How have you coped with your daughter being different?" Jane asked.

Debbie's answer was unforgettable.

"Our daughter is always happy," she said. "She is always excited about Christmas and Santa and celebrating her birthdays. The smallest things make her happy. And that will not change because she will always be 5."

Debbie said, as if to illustrate, "When you are going on vacation to Paris and your plane lands in London, you can choose to enjoy London or waste your vacation being disappointed and angry."

Debbie is choosing to enjoy.

Just a walk in the park?

It was a beautiful day. Matt was walking his dog in North Fayette Park, his time to decompress. As is sometimes the case, his thoughts went back to his childhood and his dad, Don.

It had been 25 years since his dad became ill. Matt was only 7 when his dad passed away. His favorite boyhood memory of his dad is his laughter as they watched the television show "M.A.S.H." Matt was so young that he did not quite understand what was going on that brought about his dad's laughter but he remembers laughing with him and loving being with his dad.

Matt inwardly longed to know more about his dad, who was an engineer on a railroad. That beautiful day, another man, Tim, was walking his dog in the park. As a young man 40 years prior, Tim had gone to work on the railroad and was trained as a brakeman by an engineer whose name was Don. He and Don became good friends and spent many 10-hour shifts together as the train traveled the tracks. After Don's death, Tim often wondered what became of

Don's little boy, Matt.

Two dogs and a simple "hello" in the park led to more than the two men could have imagined.

As they made small talk, as strangers in a park sometimes do, Tim said some words that resonated with Matt. He recalls, "It was as if a calm fell over me, as if I had known this stranger for my entire life."

Maybe it wasn't too far from just that.

Tim said, "I walk up here often now that I am retired from the railroad."

Matt shared that his dad was also an engineer on the railroad. It was not long before they both realized that they had one thing in common.

Tim worked together with Don for over 16 years. They were on the train together when the call came in that Don's wife was on her way to the hospital to have their baby. Tim got Don to his car and Don arrived at the hospital just before his wife gave birth to Matt, their youngest son. For the next seven years, as the train rolled down the tracks, Don shared stories of his amazing little boy who brought him so much happiness.

"What were the chances that two men, who had never met or known each, had such an incredible connection?" says Matt.

He does not feel the meeting was by chance.

That "hello" was two years ago and it formed a friendship. Tim is happy to know Don's little boy turned out okay, and Matt treasures stories of his dad.

A walk in the park? Matt believes "divine stories do happen." He believes it was divine intervention in the park.

Nic talks to Jesus

This is a true conversation between Nic, age 2-and-a-half, and his mother, Liz, late at night while Liz is lying in bed with Nic trying to get him to sleep:

Nic looks up, waves skyward, says, "Hi Jesus"

Liz: "Do you see Jesus?"

Nic: "Yep" (it's his new way of saying, "Yes").

Liz: "What's Jesus doing?"

Nic: "He's doing dishes."

Liz: "What else is Jesus doing?"

Nic: "Drinking milk. No, pop."

Liz: "Does Jesus love Nicky?"

Nic (asking Jesus): "Jesus love Nicky?"

Nic (still questioning): "Yes?"

Then confidently, Nic answers his mother: "Yep."



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