

West Allegheny Edition

# Allegheny West

Volume 20, Issue 116  
October/November 2018

Magazine

FREE Direct Mail Community Publication



**Pittsburgh International Airport  
soaring high on air growth**

**West Ridge Church building  
new community park**

**Locals helping church collect  
gifts for children for 20th year**

**Long-running pow-pow  
holds significance for local family**

**“Barnwood Builders” revisits  
Killbuck Lodge**

**The Pointe to get new bike lane**



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Sturgeon and McDonald in the West Allegheny School District



West Allegheny  
School District  
Official Newsletter  
Inside  
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# Allegheny West Magazine

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Pat Jennette

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the Montour Edition of *Allegheny West Magazine*,  
and the Cornell Edition of *Allegheny West Magazine*.

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



@AlleghenyWest



Apples spill out of a basket at Half Crown Hill Orchard in North Fayette Township.  
PHOTO BY DOUG HUGHEY



## From the Publisher

Dear Readers,

Thank you for picking up our October West Allegheny edition of Allegheny West Magazine. I hope you're having a great start to the school year and are looking forward to the upcoming holiday season.

In this edition, we're once again bringing you a combination of stories focused on the West Allegheny community and the larger region. On page 18, our publisher emeritus Pat Jennette looks back on Pittsburgh International Airport's significant growth over the past couple of years, over a decade after it lost its hub status with US Airways. The airport's dramatic air service growth was recently detailed by Bryan Dietz, the airport's vice president of air service development, at an event hosted by the Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce. Jennette covers that and more in this month's Chamberlink column.

Starting on page 6, we're bringing you news from our readers while on page 22 we take a look at a local effort to send gifts to children all over the world. Though this effort has centered on a church in McDonald, there have been participants across the West Allegheny community who have helped to keep this initiative going.

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On page 20, Pat takes a look at a new community park being built by another local church and, on page 24, we interview a local family that’s been keeping a local Native American tradition going for two decades.

Then on page 27, we take a look at a new bike lane project at The Pointe and, on page 26, we give you an update on the reconstruction of Killbuck Lodge after it was recently revisited by the DIY Network show “Barnwood Builders.”

On page 31, be sure to read the latest official West Allegheny School District newsletter.

Look for our next edition at the beginning of December, when we’ll be bringing you our holiday guide with fun, holiday-related happenings around the area. If you know of something we should list, I hope you’ll let us know.

Until then, I hope you enjoy the fall season.

Doug Hughey,  
Publisher and Editor



### ABOUT THE COVER

A scarecrow stands guard outside of a corn maze at Janoski’s Farm during its annual Pumpkinland celebration, which takes place throughout October. PHOTO BY SARAH KIZINA

## Scarmazzi Homes partners with City Mission to provide housing for homeless women with children in Pittsburgh region

More than 2.5 million children, many below the age of six, are homeless each year, according to The Bassuk Center on Homeless and Vulnerable Children and Youth. More families experience homelessness in the U.S. than in any other industrialized nation, mothers with children being the largest growing segment. Last year alone, Washington City Mission had to turn away 257 women and 88 children in the Pittsburgh area due to lack of space.

To provide a safe haven for these women with children, Washington City Mission, along with Scarmazzi Homes, builder of The Courtyards at The Preserves patio home community located in North Fayette Township, embarked on an intensive rehabilitation of the mission's current women's shelter to provide suites that will allow for a living space, bedroom and private bath for each family unit.

"It's heartbreaking to turn away these women, but we just didn't have the room," says Dr. Sally Mounts, chief development officer at City Mission. "We're making a dent in that."

By doubling their current capacity, 32 homeless women and children will now have a place to call home.

The suites are not the barracks-style construction typically found in social housing. Lisa Scarmazzi of Scarmazzi Homes, a corporate partner of City Mission and Interior Designer, created comfortable, warm and inviting spaces to eliminate the stigma associated with living in a shelter.

"It's important that these women see that they deserve better, that there are people who care about them and want to help," said Scarmazzi.

In addition to living suites, City Mission Avis Arbor Women with Children's Shelter will also feature a staffed daycare and nursery. By providing safe and stable childcare, these mothers will now be able to focus on their goals, whether they be recovery, education or job training.

"Our goal is to create a safe place, a place of dignity, a place where a mother can rest, get her head straight and get back into

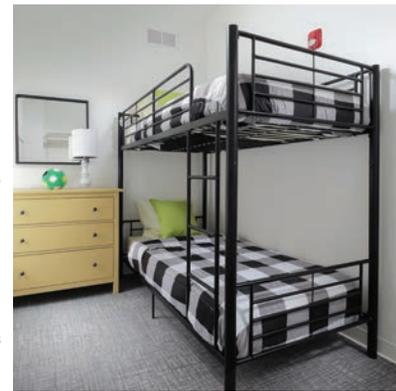
society to provide for her family," says Brian Johansson, chief operating officer for the mission.

A full program specific to this population is now underway with a focus on programs and solutions for these women to eliminate barriers to independent living.

City Mission receives less than two percent of its overall budget from state and federal money. The construction phase of Avis Arbor renovation has been provided through grants, local agencies and organizations. Scarmazzi Homes has helped City Mission to launch Avis Arbor Fixer Upper 2018, a fundraiser to raise monies needed to furnish the remaining unsponsored suites, daycare, lounge, laundry and office.

"I'm hoping that others in our region feel as much of a connection with this project as we do," says Scarmazzi. "We use our expertise and experience to provide homes to our customers every day. There's no better fit than to carry it a bit further and help to provide a safe and nurturing home for these mothers and children."

For more information or to help furnish City Mission Avis Arbor Women and Children's Shelter, visit [www.citymission.org](http://www.citymission.org) and view Avis Arbor Fixer Upper or contact Dr. Sally Mounts at (724) 705-7122.



Lisa Scarmazzi of Scarmazzi Homes, a corporate partner of City Mission and Interior Designer, worked to create these comfortable, warm and inviting spaces at the shelter.



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## Clearview opens newly renovated Moon Township Financial Center

Clearview Federal Credit Union celebrated the reopening of its newly remodeled financial center at its headquarters in Moon Township on July 28. To celebrate, Clearview President and CEO Ron Celaschi led a ribbon cutting ceremony. He was joined by Clearview Financial Center Manager Brock Hamula, Clearview employees, credit union members, local officials, the Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce and others. A special plaque revealed during the ribbon cutting dedicates the project to Clearview members.

During the ribbon cutting, Clearview also made a \$500 donation to the Moon Township Public Library. Anita Greene-Jones, the library's director, accepted a \$500 check on behalf of the library's board of directors and staff.

The newly remodeled financial center features plenty of updates, including new teller pods, an interactive kiosk, LED screens, new comfortable seating and a beverage station.

"The new layout was designed to facilitate a more collaborative and welcoming experience," says Celaschi. "It differs from the traditional banking structure and sets the stage for an increased level of personalized interaction between staff and members."

The re-opening marked the end of a multi-year project that involved relocating the financial center's lobby into a temporary building on the adjacent parking lot while construction was completed. At the same time, Clearview installed video teller machines that allow members to chat, face-to-face, with personal video advocates. The machines have been operating on extended hours, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday.

With the new financial center open, Clearview was able to move out of its temporary facility and grade the parking lot for handicap parking and a loading dock. Excess fill from the project was donated to Moon Township and used to fill an area behind the Galaxy Baseball Field. John Scott, Moon Township's operations manager of the public works department, says that the new field should be open next year. He says Clearview donated roughly 400 yards of fill to help the project.

The ribbon cutting showcased how Clearview keeps its members and the community in mind, whether by offering technology solutions and service to members, providing funds to the local library, or donating clean fill to the park.



ABOVE: Clearview Federal Credit Union board chairman Doug Montanari cuts a ceremonial ribbon to celebrate the re-opening of the lobby at Clearview's Moon Township headquarters.



ABOVE: These pictures show the remodeled interior and exterior of Clearview's Moon Township Financial Center. BELOW: Clearview President and CEO Ron Celaschi is pictured with Moon Township Public Library trustee Pam Dilanni, library director Anita Greene-Jones and trustee Eric Fogel.





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<sup>1</sup>Source: Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council

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

## TWO CONVENIENT LOCATIONS

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*Tara L. Grahovac, M.D. specializes in breast surgery. She earned her medical degree at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, Cincinnati, Ohio. Dr. Grahovac completed her residency in general surgery at Allegheny General Hospital, and a fellowship in breast surgery at UPMC Magee Womens Hospital. She is board-certified by the American Board of Surgery and is certified as a trained clinical fellow in breast surgical oncology by a Society of Surgical Oncology-accredited program.*

## Heritage Valley Medical Neighborhood opens in Robinson

Heritage Valley Health System extended its reach into the airport corridor by relocating and expanding its Heritage Valley Robinson Township Medical Neighborhood. The new facility is located at 2201 Park Manor Boulevard in the former OfficeMax building.

“We are eager to bring additional, high-quality health care services to Robinson Township and the airport corridor area,” said Norm Mitry, president and CEO, Heritage Valley Health System. “It is the commitment of our board of directors to ensure that the communities we serve have access to the services they need without having to make a trip to the hospital. Our medical neighborhoods are at the heart of meeting those needs.”

The Heritage Valley Robinson Township Medical Neighborhood offers primary care physicians, a new ConvenientCare walk-in clinic, lab draw services, x-ray, ultrasound, mobile CT and MRI, mammography, DEXA, heel screening, and specialty physician offices.

The Medical Neighborhood also includes a Heritage Valley ConvenientCare walk-in clinic that is new to the area. ConvenientCare provides treatment for minor illness or injury with no appointment necessary. The clinic is open seven days a week, with operating hours Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sunday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Heritage Valley Medical Group Family Practice Robinson, the primary care practice of Dr. Denise Wegrzynowicz, Dr. Melissa Kashlan and Dr. Melissa Rau, along with diagnostic imaging and lab services, relocated to the new space from their prior location on Steubenville Pike.

Diagnostic imaging services includes recently updated, high-tech mobile MRI and CT scanners. The technology is the same available at hospital locations and alleviates the need to travel to receive the best care. The new high-tech mobile MRI and CT

scanners are available at Robinson, as well as other Heritage Valley Medical Neighborhoods.

In the coming months, additional specialty physician services will be identified that will further enhance the scope of care available at the Heritage Valley Robinson Township Medical Neighborhood.

Heritage Valley Medical Neighborhoods are currently located in Chippewa, Calcutta (Ohio), Edgeworth, Ellwood City, Moon Township, Robinson Township and the West Allegheny area. These locations provide a variety of health care services, conveniently in one location.

For more information on Heritage Valley Medical Neighborhoods, go to [www.heritagevalley.org/medicallneighborhood](http://www.heritagevalley.org/medicallneighborhood).

**Heritage Valley Health System recently moved its Robinson Township Medical Neighborhood location to the former OfficeMax building in Robinson Town Centre along I-376.**



SUBMITTED BY STEUBENVILLE PIKE AUTO

## Steubenville Pike Auto Repair Charity to donate car in December, asking for nominations

On Dec. 6, Steubenville Pike Auto in Robinson Township will give away a refurbished, pre-owned vehicle to a local individual or family in need.

Giving back is a key value at Steubenville Pike Auto and, after many great years in business, they are continuing to share their blessings through the charity. The donated vehicle is one that Steubenville Pike Auto has serviced by installing new tires and brakes, replacing fluids, updating the Pennsylvania state inspection and emissions test, and detailing to like-new condition. This will be the second car that the charity has donated this year and seventh overall.

Steubenville Pike Auto Repair Charity will be accepting nominations for an individual or family deserving of this opportunity from Nov. 1 through Nov. 30. The ideal nominee is somebody who thinks of others before themselves, is in need of a vehicle and resides in the local area. The winner will be announced Dec. 7. As with its previous car donation, which took place in May, Heroes Supporting Heroes will once again be covering Pennsylvania state transfer fees.

Nominations can be mailed to: Steubenville Pike Auto, ATTN: SPARC, 6112 Steubenville Pike, Robinson Township, PA 15136.

Email nominations to [SPARC@steubenvillepike.com](mailto:SPARC@steubenvillepike.com) or click on the link at [steubenvillepikeauto.com](http://steubenvillepikeauto.com) beginning Nov. 1. An independent group of trusted community members will review nominations. The recipient must have a current Pennsylvania driver's license and be able to obtain vehicle insurance.

Nominations must include the name, address, phone number and email of both the nominee and nominating person, along with a statement explaining why the individual or family nominated needs and deserves a vehicle.

Steubenville Pike Auto Charity looks forward to seeing the nominees and Steubenville Pike Auto is available for all of your vehicle needs. To set up an appointment, call (412) 787-9800.



# Thank you!

To all those that made the 2018 West Allegheny Workcamp possible, we at Heroes Supporting Heroes offer our sincere thank you! Our community continues to come together to have a positive impact on the living conditions of the Residents that we serve, on the lives of the Participants who paid to serve our communities, and our Servant Heroes (volunteers)!

Thank you to the West Allegheny School District for allowing us to rent the Middle School, to Doug Hughey for his continued support of Heroes Supporting Heroes and our project, the West Allegheny Workcamp; and to all those that served in the following roles. You made a difference!

- All of our Donors
- Site Survey Teams
- Ladder Day Saints
- Hospitality
  - Staff Dinner
  - Sunday Bell Hops
  - Adult Lounge and Massage Therapists
  - Photo Booth—Cityscape
  - Adult Gift Bags
  - Sunday BBQ
  - Afternoon Snacks
  - Evening Snacks
  - Fiesta Friday

A special thanks to our team leads:

- Debbie Mirich
- Jill Grover
- Michael Starkman
- Rita Melvin
- Robin Starkman
- Suellyn Fratangelo

#### By the Numbers:

- Participants: **220**
- Hours Worked: **6,600**
- Crews: **36**
- Sites: **31**
- Youth Groups: **13**
- States: **9 + Japan** (CT, DE, IA, IL, MA, MD, MI, MO, RI)
- Community Resources: **3,748** (products to Food Pantry)

**Let's do this  
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## Unique Boutique returns for 18th year

Custom jewelry, delicious food, boutique clothing and charming gifts from some of the most talented artisans in the region will once again be available this November at Unique Boutique, an event sponsored by the Heritage Valley Sewickley Foundation.

Now in its 18th year, Unique Boutique provides a special shopping and lunch experience for those seeking one-of-a-kind gifts for the upcoming holiday season. The event will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Nov. 10 at the Edgeworth Club in Sewickley. All proceeds benefit the Patricia S. Snyder Maternal Child Health Department Center at Heritage Valley Sewickley Hospital.

Admission is \$15 per person or \$35 per person for admission and a buffet lunch, which will be served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Lunch reservations are required. A courtesy shuttle will be available from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. to transport shoppers from the Heritage Valley Sewickley Hospital garage at Fitch Circle (720 Blackburn Road) to the Edgeworth Club. To register, visit [www.heritagevalley.org](http://www.heritagevalley.org), call (412) 749-7050 or email [foundation@hvhs.org](mailto:foundation@hvhs.org).

Fifty vendors and artists from the tri-state area will be on hand to offer a boutique shopping experience to satisfy even the most discerning shopper. While the event benefits local artisans, it also serves a good cause.

“At the heart of the Unique Boutique are the varied artists and vendors who enrich our boutique market with their unrivaled treasures,” says Terri Tunick, Heritage Valley Health System Foundation board member and chair of the event. “Our shoppers are delighted to support small local businesses and the Patricia S. Snyder Maternal Child Health Department at Heritage Valley Sewickley who will benefit from the proceeds. It is a win-win for everyone!”



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**FOOT FACTS**

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

For more information about bunions and their treatment, visit the American Podiatric Medical Association Web site at: [www.apma.org](http://www.apma.org).

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## Two local studios with one goal: physical and mental empowerment

### Premier Martial Arts

Dictionary.com defines martial arts as “any of the traditional form of Asian self-defense or combat that utilize physical skill and coordination without weapons, as karate, aikido, judo or kung-fu, often practiced as sport.”

Martial arts, though, is also an art form of strength and mobility that empowers women, builds confidence and camaraderie in children, and is an excellent form of physical activity with the benefits of self-defense and self-preservation.

Currently, Premier Martial Arts, a new martial arts studio in Oakdale, is welcoming students from age 4 to 64 who feel they would benefit from such instruction.

The studio is located in the Point View Place plaza next to Tonidale at 7053 Steubenville Pike, Suite 14.

Whether coming to learn self-defense or for physical fitness, each student is treated equally and trained to the best of their own ability and potential. A student is never compared to anyone else. Instructors at Premier Martial Arts are there to guide, instruct and motivate their students to become the best that they can be.

The core of Premier Martial Art’s classes is to strive for personal development through a physical discipline. The instructor conducts exciting, yet disciplined, classes to focus a student’s attention, thus improving his or her ability to learn. Learning, in turn, builds a sense of accomplishment.

With each new accomplishment, a student’s self-confidence grows - and confidence is the first step in the empowerment of an individual’s physical and mental abilities. These combined physical and character foundations help children excel in their academic school studies, sports and social endeavors. It ensures that they will have the confidence in themselves and the character to make the right decisions when confronted with peer pressure. They’ll also develop a non-quitting spirit to overcome life’s obstacles.

Instilling that spirit helps a child become a goal setter and a goal getter. It also helps them overcome challenges and succeed in the face of adversity. They become leaders rather than followers.

Premier Martial Arts officially opened Oct. 6. On Saturday, Nov 10, the studio will be offering a free self-defense class for adult women. The studio’s regular hours of operation can found on Facebook. Search for Premier-Martial-Arts-Oakdale-Pa.

For more information, call (412) 773-9179. The studio will also have its website up and live soon.



ABOVE AND BELOW: Walt Nesbit works with a student at Premier Martial Arts in Oakdale.

### Movement Studio Pittsburgh

A small group fitness studio located in Imperial, Movement Studio Pittsburgh offers personal training and unique workouts to promote both physical and mental wellbeing. The studio has been in operation since 2010 and the styles of classes have evolved over the years. It started out offering tai chi, kickboxing, TRX suspension training and yoga. Today, classes include, but are not limited to, TRX, cardio circuit training, kettlebell, aerial yoga, yoga and personal training, along with exciting and entertaining events that encompasses all of the different disciplines offered. Its growing staff includes more than three yoga instructors while ownership teaches TRX, kettlebell, cardio circuit training and personal training.

Though the studio has grown, its motto has remained the same: “A healthy lifestyle is a movement.”

For more information on Movement Studio Pittsburgh, visit [movementstudiopittsburgh.com](http://movementstudiopittsburgh.com) or call (412) 401-9052.

The common denominator of both studios is owner and Oakdale native Walt Nesbit, who holds a second degree black belt with the United Fighting Arts Federation. Nesbit is also an ACE Certified Personal Trainer and ACE Certified Nutritionist. He has been teaching martial arts since he was 14 with the UFAF organization.

Nesbit says he was encouraged to start this new endeavor with Premier Martial Arts because of their mission.

“They promote the skills in life to succeed such as confidence, focus, self-esteem, and physical well-being,” he says. “I decided to pursue this business venture with Premier Martial Arts not only for their mission, but also because they are very hands-on with the success of their units, staying up-to-date with the best practices in the martial arts field, making sure all the units are certified, insured and properly trained.”

Nesbit says he’s excited to enter back into martial arts instruction. “I’ve been a personal trainer since 2002 and Movement Studio Pittsburgh has been a success on many levels for me personally,” he says. “Upon hearing about Premier Martial Arts, I was thrilled to join this incredible organization and add this franchise to my resume. I believe in the mental and physical health of others and I feel both of these studios will offer an invaluable service to bring out the best in everyone within my community.”



Walt Nesbit





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## The single woman's guide to buying a home

Let's face it, searching for a new home can be a daunting task. This all-consuming journey through a plethora of brochures, tours, questions and doubt is enough to drive anyone mad. Now, let's imagine you're a single woman - a strong, independent, educated female who has made decades of decisions for yourself without as much as a blink, until now.

As a female home builder, I can assure you that this scenario is quite common. It's our nature to want to have every bit of information gathered so that we can make an informed decision. We pour over literature, scour the web and talk to anybody who will lend us their ear on the subject. Do we need to know what type of house wrap is used? Are the studs 16 inches on center? Do the windows have LowE glass?



Unfortunately, my answer to these questions is not a resolute one. All of this information is important when choosing a home and builder. What you should know, however, is that all new construction is built under stringent building codes with an emphasis on energy efficiency. All new homes are also reviewed throughout the building process by third-party inspectors. Your job is to find which builder goes above and beyond. Who offers the amenities and lifestyle you desire? Who provides warranties and guarantees above industry standards? This type of information is what will matter long after you've bought your home. This is what will offer you peace of mind and allow you to enjoy your home and community for years to come.

Here's a bit of advice from one woman to another on buying a home:

- 1. Bring along anyone whose opinion matters to you.** From a neighbor with construction experience to a girlfriend whose taste you love, every bit of feedback helps.
- 2. Do your homework.** The internet is your best friend when researching builders. Customer testimonials tell all - from the good, to the bad, to the ugly.
- 3. Talk to residents.** Take a walk through the community and talk to the home's neighbors. Do they enjoy their home and community? Would they recommend the builder?
- 4. How safe is the community?** Are the streets well-lit at night? Do the residents feel secure and comfortable? Are the home's entry points well lit?
- 5. Assess social opportunities.** Is there a community clubhouse or pool? Are there neighborhood gatherings and social events?
- 6. What type of maintenance is required on your home?** Is the home constructed with no- or low-maintenance materials so as to allow for years of maintenance-free living?

**7. Is there a homeowners' association?** Does the community provide lawn services? Is snow removed not only on your driveway but also your sidewalk as well? Will you get the benefit of professionally landscaped grounds without the hassles of maintaining them yourself?

**8. Is this home one that you can grow old in?** Is the home designed for easy access and movement throughout? Are steps eliminated? Is there a support network of neighbors if needed?

**9. What do you love to do?** Do you love gardening, spending time relaxing outside in the summer, entertaining or walking? Does the home provide you the opportunity to do what you want most?

**10. Have confidence in yourself.** Your judgement has served you well up to now. Trust your gut and move forward!



*Lisa Scarmazzi is a Principal of Scarmazzi Homes, the area's largest patio home builder. Scarmazzi Homes has provided over 500 homeowners in the Pittsburgh region with the low-maintenance form of home ownership they desire and deserve. For more information on a Scarmazzi Homes' patio home community, visit [www.scarmazzihomes.com](http://www.scarmazzihomes.com) or call (724) 223-1844.*

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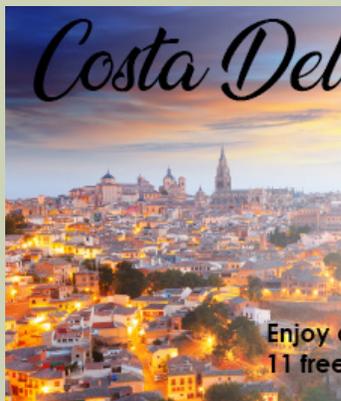
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**11/15/18** - BizBlast @ Noon, Networking Lunch

**12/7/18** - JingleFest

For full event details please visit the Chamber's website, [paacc.com/events](http://paacc.com/events)

## Pittsburgh International Airport soaring high on air growth

When Pittsburgh International Airport was named 2017 Airport of the Year by Air Transport World, that designation was no small recognition. The announcement put Pittsburgh International in the same category as other major international airports such as London Heathrow and Singapore Changi.

Pittsburgh International Airport has been soaring high on growth on various levels during the past few years, catapulting it from a hub for a single major airline to a departure point for several dozen carriers. These carriers run the gamut from national known airlines to international carriers. The expansion of carriers and their options for destinations has resulted in passenger growth from 8.2 million in 2015 to 8.99 million in 2017. To put that into perspective, Pittsburgh offered 37 nonstop destinations and served 7.9 million passengers in 2013. Today, those numbers have burgeoned to more than 65 nonstop destinations with a year-to-date passenger growth rate of more than nine percent through July.

These numbers back up a statement made by Bryan Dietz, vice president of air service development at Pittsburgh International Airport, during a recent breakfast briefing sponsored by the Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce.

“There is no industry that can match supply and demand so quickly as aviation,” he said.

He went on to say, “We are telling the story of a redefined Pittsburgh, our transformation story.”

Just a decade ago, Pittsburgh was a hub airport, anchored by then US Airways, now American Airlines. When the airline made the decision to pull the plug on its hub status, airport officials went back to the drawing board to determine how to fill gates and replace flight options for travelers. At one point, a portion of one of the concourses remained cordoned off and unused, with no airlines available to fill those gates.

Pittsburgh International Airport has been focusing on adding a combination of regional service and European destinations, among them nonstop service to London, which it announced in July. Here, airport CEO Christina Cassotis (third from right) and Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald (second from right) are joined in applauding remarks given by Simon Brooks, British Airways senior vice president for North America. PHOTO BY ALLEGHENY COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY



Travelers make their way through the air-side terminal at Pittsburgh International Airport. PHOTO BY ALLEGHENY COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY

Six years ago, US Airways announced yet another blow to its already shrinking status in Pittsburgh. It closed a long-time flight operations center here as part of its merger consolidation with American Airlines, which already had a flight operations center in Texas at its Dallas/Fort Worth headquarters.

Fast forward to 2018, and Pittsburgh International Airport is soaring high. CEO Christina Cassotis, who was hired in 2015, has led a new airport growth strategy that is proving to be a winning combination. A growing proportion of millennials, an exponentially rapid gross regional product growth and continual employment growth have also made a recipe for success as far as air travel is concerned, explained Dietz.

While US Airways - now American - dominated air traffic for decades, this past year the numbers showed a dramatic turnaround. Combined, American and Southwest shared just over 50 percent of



Pittsburgh's air traffic. Not far behind was Delta, with 17 percent, and United, with 15 percent. The remaining balance is shared by a rapidly growing cadre of regional and international airlines.

Dietz said the Airport Authority's strategy has been to focus on a combination of regional service and European destinations. While not every route is a success, such as the recent announcement that nonstop service to Paris will end soon, the airport continues to build in both areas.

"We're trying to establish enough options so that there is a price point for every type of traveler," he said.

As efforts continue to expand the airport's portfolio of low cost regional and international carriers, many of those airlines are offering what has long been a void for travelers - nonstop service. Among new carriers that now offer nonstop service from Pittsburgh are Alaska Airlines, Allegiant, Condor, Frontier, One-Jet, Spirit and WOW Air. Those new carriers join the legacy carriers of Air Canada, American, Delta, Southwest, United and others operating at the airport.



**Bryan Dietz, vice president of air service development at Pittsburgh International Airport, talks at a breakfast briefing sponsored by the Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce. PHOTO BY ALLISON FRANZ**

Dietz acknowledged that, for all its success, the Airport Authority continues to be challenged with expanding flight options for travelers to New York and Philadelphia while it focuses on recent growth strategies. He said that, although Pittsburgh offers more nonstop flights to Boston today than when it was a hub, there needs to be more of the same for New York and Philadelphia.

Much attention has been focused on encouraging nonstop service to the West Coast. Southwest now offers nonstop routes to Los Angeles. Spirit Airlines, which bills itself as the leading low cost carrier in the nation, now offers the same service. United added a second daily nonstop flight to San Francisco during high season. Nonstop service to Salt Lake City via Delta began on July 9. Alaska Airlines launched nonstop service to Seattle on Sept. 6 and British Airways announced in July that it plans to start nonstop service to London Heathrow in April of 2019. It's been 20 years since that airline last served Pittsburgh.

On the ultra-low-cost carrier spectrum, three airlines - Allegiant, Frontier and Spirit - have provided gradually expanding service out of Pittsburgh. Frontier just added service to San Diego out of Pittsburgh, expanding the continued focus on flights to the West Coast.

These factors, Dietz explained, added to the airport's most recent traffic growth, which showed an average 10 percent growth month over month just this summer. Dietz said, "It's all coming together to drive down airfares in our region."

On the day of the breakfast briefing, the first-ever international charter flight carrying 300 tourists from Shanghai, China was landing at the airport. Dietz said it's the first time Pennsylvania has hosted a charter of international tourists from China. The start of chartered flights such as the one from Shanghai brings the potential for more passengers to spend their dollars in the region on everything from hotels and tours to dining and shopping.

Another charter arrived a week later in August. It's the beginning, Dietz said, of a five-year strategy to bring charter service here.

"No other country, to our knowledge, has this type of charter flight service to a major airport," he said.

British Airways, which recently announced nonstop service from Pittsburgh to London, is also contributing to the airport's international focus and helping to draw spending to the region.

"Each British Airways flight can conceivably bring as much as \$245,000 to our area," he said.

Plus, he added, service by British Airways will also provide air cargo service.

"Having international cargo service is unique here; it will be a timesaver all around," he noted.

Dietz concluded, "We are no longer dependent on one major airline. We have now diversified to meet the needs of all types of passengers."

Coupled with the announcement earlier this year of plans to dismantle portions of the current airport and reinvent the space to accommodate the new growth and diversity, Pittsburgh International Airport is now poised to advance beyond its hub days in ways that will not only serve all passengers, but also enhance the economic vitality of the region.

He said, "We can all help continue to build our airport's growth by traveling the nonstop flights, telling the story of how we are growing in air traffic success, and simply bragging about our great city of Pittsburgh!"

**Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald; Simon Brooks, British Airways senior vice president for North America; and Pittsburgh International Airport CEO Christina Cassotis cut a cake shaped like a double-decker British bus to celebrate the start of nonstop service to London. PHOTO BY ALLEGHENY COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY**



## West Ridge Church breaks ground on new community park

STORY BY PAT JENNETTE  
PHOTOS SUBMITTED

The members and leadership of West Ridge Christian Community Church in North Fayette Township had a vision in 2016 to transform their ballfield and accompanying property - five acres in all - into a space that would welcome the community and provide much-needed recreational space along the Montour Trail at the Enlow intersection in Imperial.

Their vision morphed into a grand design that will be known as Ridge Park. The park will encompass a picnic and playground area complete with pavilions, playground equipment, sitting benches, and more. It will support the growing needs of those who use the Montour Trail and the entire community.

The church broke ground in August to begin preparations for the parking lot and utilities. If all goes as planned with funding, volunteers and permits, West Ridge hopes to open Ridge Park with a community-wide celebration in 2019 or 2020.

Those familiar with the ballfield at the Montour Trail intersection at Enlow's Five Points will see this area transformed into what West Ridge Church calls its Community Bless project.

Says John Goebbel, lead pastor for West Ridge, "In December 2016, the Lord gave West Ridge Church leadership the vision to develop a five-acre tract of property, located at the intersections of Cliff Mine Road and McClaren Road. For years, this land has been designated as a baseball field and has only been used a few times a year. Wanting to do more to bless families and those who use the Montour Trail, we originally planned to place a simple playground structure on the property. However, the more I talked to Jesus, the clearer the idea became for developing Ridge Park - a full community park with an enlarged parking area."

The park will include clean restrooms, ADA-compliant playgrounds and swings for ages 2 through 13, picnic areas with pavilions and grills, and a wedding pavilion. There will also be open fields for sports, running, or family-friendly concerts and events. As well, there will be walking paths and a fully fenced single entrance/exit for peace of mind as parents allow their children to have fun in a safe place.

As Montour Trail users also know, parking at this trailhead has become congested due to growing use of the trail. West Ridge plans to expand parking by adding 60 spaces to support the park and the Montour Trail.

Ridge Park isn't the only church project in the works. Last year, West Ridge combined with Church of the Living Christ in Imperial to become one congregation. In doing so, the vacant facility on West Allegheny Road gave the combined congregation an opportunity to see another vision: a centralized youth center. Called Awaken, the former Church of the Living Christ property is currently being converted to serve the community's youth. It will include a worship area, basketball court, game room and meeting areas. West Ridge anticipates its opening sometime in 2019.

Goebbel adds that projects like these come through a great deal of commitment, community volunteerism and support.



West Ridge Christian Community Church is currently building a new park in the Enlow section of Imperial. Plans call for the park to eventually include a playground, open area for sports or concerts, and a 60-car parking lot.

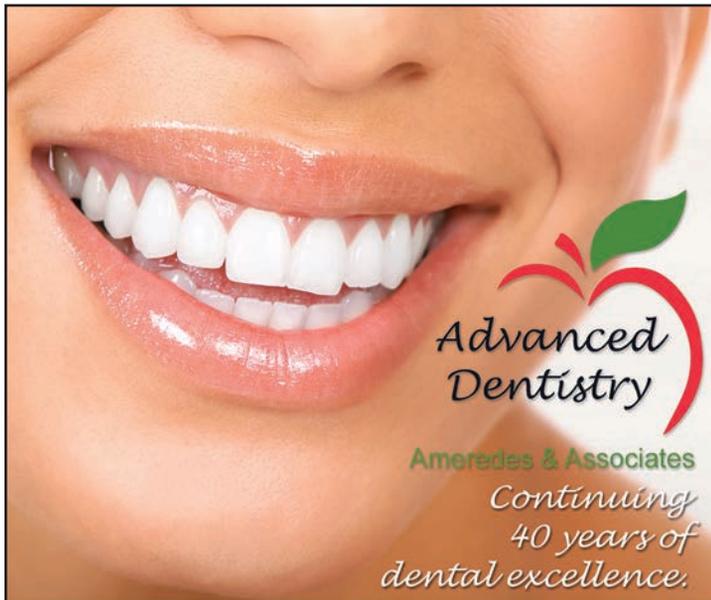


He says, "We know we don't want to develop this [Community Bless Project] alone! We are inviting individuals, churches, and businesses to partner with us to bless our communities."

The project is estimated to cost \$700,000 to develop as planned. Community volunteers are welcome to express their interest to build the playground structures when the time comes. More than 200 people will be needed to assemble the equipment. "Our desire is to make this a community-wide effort from funding, building, usage; and in the end it will be a blessing for all," Goebbel explains.

Since West Ridge does not believe in incurring debt, it will develop the new park as the community comes together to make the vision a reality. Individuals, groups and businesses interested in supporting this project are welcome to make tax-deductible donations. West Ridge has established a unique website for the Community Bless Project. Donations can be made through the secure on-line platform. Donations can also be made by check with "Community Bless" on the information line.

To learn more, visit [www.communitybless.org](http://www.communitybless.org) or contact West Ridge Church at (724) 695-7500 or by email at [info@westridge.cc](mailto:info@westridge.cc).



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## Locals helping church collect gifts for children abroad for 20th year

STORY BY DOUG HUGHEY  
PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Back in September, Michelle Unruh was already thinking about Christmas.

In fact, she'd been thinking about it for months. Over a month before Halloween, she was already picking up gifts at places like Lowe's and Sam's Club.

Those gifts, however, weren't intended for her friends or family. Rather, they were donated by those stores for children in as many as 160 countries around the world. In November, the gifts will be sent off in shoeboxes to a warehouse where volunteers with the faith-based organization Samaritan's Purse will sort, label and ship them.

This year marks Unruh's 20th of helping to coordinate a local effort to benefit the program, which is known as Operation Christmas Child. She says she first got involved in the program after she got a mailer about it at McDonald Presbyterian Church, where she was teaching Sunday school. Unruh thought it would be a nice project for her students.

That first year, Unruh says, they packed up about a dozen boxes, which she says was more than she thought they'd send. It also started an annual tradition that's since grown exponentially over time.

"Somewhere along the line it just took off," she says. "It just kind of stuck. Each year we would collect items and then the whole congregation got involved."

After 11 consecutive years of sending boxes to Samaritan's Purse, the organization asked Unruh if the church would consider becoming an official drop-off location. Since then, for one week in November each year, Unruh has been working as a drop-off site coordinator for Samaritan's Purse at McDonald Presbyterian Church. She and several volunteers receive thousands of shoeboxes packed with toys, school supplies, clothing and other items bound



ABOVE: Ida Galicic hand-crocheted these hats for Samaritan's Purse, which will send them to children across the globe this holiday season. RIGHT: Adam, Sam and Zoe Unruh take a picture to commemorate their involvement in Operation Christmas.





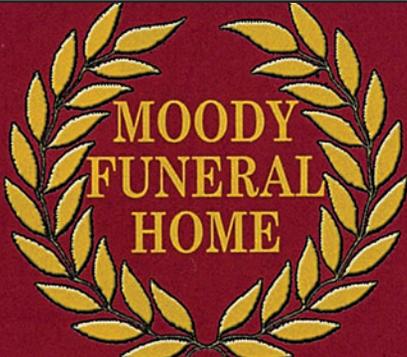
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for children in other parts of the world. Her fellow congregation members donate items year-round and attend their church's packing party in November.

"Ida Galic has hand-crocheted hundreds of hats to add a personal touch to our shoebox gifts - 650 this year," she says.

Many of the donated shoeboxes come from locals, including other area churches like Valley Presbyterian Church in Imperial, Crossroads United Methodist Church in Oakdale, West Hills Baptist Church in Coraopolis, Rennerdale

United Presbyterian Church in Carnegie, the First Baptist Church of McDonald and the McDonald United Methodist Church. Costco, Sam's Club, Lowe's, Shop 'n Save in Imperial and Giant Eagle in McDonald have all donated items for the boxes as well.

Last year, Helping Hands Childcare chipped in by hosting their own drive for boxes, which they donated to the effort.

In all, the drop-off site Unruh oversees collected 2,650 boxes last year - but, as she points out, "We're just one little link in the chain."

Across the entire mid-Atlantic region, Samaritan's Purse collected over 1.5 million boxes in 2017. Nationally, the organization collected almost 9 million boxes and worldwide the number of boxes shipped exceeded 11 million.

This year, McDonald Presbyterian Church will again be collecting shoeboxes during Operation Christmas Child's annual collection week from Nov. 12 through 19. The official drop-off address is 202 West Lincoln Avenue. There's a spot to pull up and drop off boxes just inside the church. Check [www.samaritanspurse.org](http://www.samaritanspurse.org) for drop-off times. Other area drop-off locations include The Bible Chapel in McMurray and Fairmount ARP Presbyterian Church in Sewickley.

Along with the boxes, the organization also asks for a \$9 donation to help cover costs associated with shipping and printing of a Christian booklet that's packed with the boxes.



**ABOVE AND BELOW:** Volunteers at McDonald Presbyterian Church help collect shoeboxes packed with gifts for Operation Christmas. **LEFT:** Since receiving her own shoebox through Operation Christmas, Elena, who is from Russia, has been sharing her testimony about the program. Last fall, she visited McDonald Presbyterian Church and was given a new box with one of Ida Galic's crocheted hats.

Boxes need not be wrapped but, if they are, the lid and box should be wrapped separately. While toys and school supplies are always good to send, hygiene products like soap and toothbrushes are also not a bad idea. The boxes are carefully inspected at the processing center warehouses to be sure nothing perishable, breakable, liquid or war-related is packed inside.

The \$9 shipping donation can be made online and includes tracking information. The organization even encourages donors to write letters to recipients.

McDonald Presbyterian Church is also looking to get community groups involved in collecting boxes and for volunteers who want to help sort boxes at the church. There are other ways to help as well.

"There are lots of different ways to get plugged in, depending on what your skills are," says Unruh. "If people want to pack a shoebox they'll be done for a year or they can plug in throughout the year to help raise awareness."



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## Long-running pow-wow holds special significance for local family

For about the past 25 years, a group of people with Native American ancestry have been making their way to Heritage Park in McDonald each September.

They come from as far away as Arizona and as close as Ohio, pulling campers and driving recreational vehicles. For four days, they camp. There are drum circles, dancing and ceremonies based largely on woodland Native American customs. Anyone is welcome to attend and watch, or even participate.

At one time, schools even took educational field trips to the pow-wow. John Zirwas of Cecil Township, who has been helping to organize the event for much of the past two decades, says that they used to host schools on field trips for free and would even waive fees for vendors who would give a lesson to students. Because of schedule changes and cutbacks in school budgets, though, they haven't hosted field trips in some time, but John says they would like to start doing so again.

This year's Red Eagle Village Pow-Wow took place the weekend of Sept. 8. During it, dancers braved the rain while performing around a smoldering fire to the beat of Native American drum performers like White Buffalo Thunder, Clear Water and Shawnee Spirit. Ropes forming a circle around the fire were decorated with ribbon, the colors of which hold symbolic significance in Native American culture, says Zirwas.

"They come in the east gate, which is yellow, which stands for the beginning of life," he says. "The red is when you're growing up and learning. The white is for whenever you are older and wiser. And the black gate, the reason it's closed is only the ancestors go through there, the spirits."

Like a lot of customs at this particular pow-wow, the circle isn't strictly based on any one particular Native American culture. Rather, says Zirwas, as an intertribal pow-wow, the customs honored there are drawn from the traditions of a number of nations, including Shawnee, Cherokee, Blackfoot, Apache and Lenape.

For many people who have been coming to the pow-wow over the past two decades, that's part of its appeal.

"This is the best pow-wow in the three-state area," says Mike Golden of Barbour County, West Virginia. "We have fun. The rest of the pow-wows, they try to keep it more traditional. This is fun, family."

Golden, who has Navajo ancestry, used to sell clothing and intricate carvings that he makes out of soapstone at pow-wows across the region. Once his fine motor skills began to deteriorate, he started making large woodcarvings using a chainsaw.



ABOVE: John Zirwas is pictured with his daughters Alexis, Rennika and Abbey at the Red Eagle Village Pow-Wow this past September in McDonald. BELOW: Dancers perform traditional Native American dances. BOTTOM: Alexis, in the role of lead female dancer, prepares to enter the ring with the head male dancer.





ABOVE: John Zirwas is pictured with Mike Golden and a wood carving Golden made. BELOW: Golden displays a pipe he crafted in part by carving this piece out of soapstone.



“Now I’m too nervous to do the little ones,” he says about the carvings. “So I picked up the chainsaw...you can always carve out a mistake with them. And if it don’t turn out ok all you do is make firewood out of them.”

He says he started coming to this particular pow-wow 20 years ago at the suggestion of Zirwas as a vendor. Now, he says, he just comes for the people and the enjoyment of it.

John Kountz of Youngstown, Ohio, says he’s also been coming to this particular pow-wow for over 20 years. At this past pow-wow, he served as the arena director while wearing traditional Native American clothing and a U.S. military veteran ball cap.

“That’s one of the nice things about it,” he says. “This one’s almost like a family. It’s a nice family event.”

Though originally started by someone else, Zirwas says his family has largely been planning and organizing the pow-wow for the past 20 years. Zirwas says he and his wife, Robin, got involved after happening upon it one day and later took over organizing duties altogether. When Robin passed away seven years ago, Zirwas and his daughters picked up the reins and kept the tradition going. To honor her memory, they named the pow-wow after Robin’s Native American name, Red Eagle Woman.

“This is part of the reason I keep doing this,” John says. “She really enjoyed it. She really put her heart and soul into it. I just keep it going for my kids and my grandchild.”

They also passed on that love of the pow-wow to their daughters Alexis, Abbey and Rennika.

“This is honestly the most important part of my heritage to me,” says Alexis. “I’m Italian, I’m German, I’m a whole bunch of other stuff, but my Shawnee heritage is the most important part of my heritage.”

She points out, though, that for a long time the family wasn’t aware of their Native American ancestry, even during the early years that they were organizing the pow-wow. Robin and John later discovered that they both had Shawnee ancestors, but for one reason or another, that fact had been obscured.

John says that when he found out, the realization confirmed stories he’d heard when he was child.

“I can remember my great grandmother always telling me that there was a relative of ours whose great uncle or great great grandfather or whatever, he was in the Bill Cody Wild West Show,” he says. “I didn’t believe it but my great grandma has a tin photo of him. I have a glass negative of her in what they call a tear dress. I didn’t believe it...”

About Robin, he says, “We found out later that her great grandmother got pregnant by a Shawnee up around the Great Lakes and they moved down here to save face.”

Through the pow-wow, the couple found a way not only to celebrate their long lost ancestry but also the means to connect with the traditions and people who descended from other Native American cultures. Those people, in turn, became a second family to them, says Alexis.

Now, Alexis says, when she dons a traditional Shawnee dress and acts in the role of the head female dancer, she feels closer not only to that family and her own heritage, but also to her mother as well.

“A lot of it, I feel closer to my mom even though she’s gone,” she says. “When I’m at pow-wow, she’s here.”

## “Barnwood Builders” returns to see finished Killbuck Lodge

Over the summer of 2015, cast members from the DIY Network show “Barnwood Builders” helped rebuild Killbuck Lodge, the meeting place of Boy Scout Troop 248, in Oakdale.

As Mark Bowe, who owns the company that “Barnwood Builders” follows, pointed out in a recent airing, however, oftentimes there’s plenty to be done even after the show leaves.

That was certainly the case at Killbuck Lodge where, by the end of filming in July of 2015, the cabin had walls and a new foundation but was still in need of a roof. It also needed chinking and, because the new structure was taller than the former structure that had been knocked down, the chimney needed to be extended about another four feet. Killbuck Lodge also needed a new front porch and windows.

What Bowe’s crew did do was help the Friends of Killbuck Lodge with the monumental task of erecting the cabin’s frame. In doing so, they used a combination of logs salvaged both from the original Killbuck Lodge cabin and another 18th century cabin from Westmoreland County. Unlike when the cabin was originally moved and reconstructed on the site in the 1930s, Bowe’s crew made sure the logs were notched down instead up, which had caused much of the original structure to rot.

The effort was also aided by significant in-kind donations from numerous area companies that helped do everything from hoist and transport logs to pour the foundation and draft blueprints.

This past summer, Bowe visited Killbuck Lodge again for a subsequent airing of “Barnwood Builders” and found the lodge much more put together than how the show had left it three years ago. The segment aired on Sept. 23 at the tail end of a show dedicated to Bowe revisiting former projects.

In the Killbuck Lodge segment, Bowe found a cabin that not only had a roof but also windows, a front porch and chinking. Scouts from Troop 248 demonstrated the working fireplace by lighting a fire and scout Noah Mavich showed him how they had framed a knife Bowe’s crew had made for them as a gift.

Matt Cochran, past president of Friends of Killbuck Lodge, says that since the show filmed, subsequent work has largely been completed by volunteers, including scout parents. One of the few items they had to lean on a specialist for was the difficult task of chinking, he says.

“That was the biggest financial outlaying,” Cochran says. “It’s very highly specialized and labor-intensive.”

During the most recent show, Bowe, upon seeing the chinking, jokes to Cochran that he’s glad that he wasn’t around for that part of the work.

Among the faster projects was actually the one that was at the top of the priority list immediately following filming.

“After the ‘Barnwood Builders’ left, the first order of the business was getting the roof on,” says Cochran.

Thanks to volunteers, that work, however, went fairly quickly, says Cochran.

With so much work already put into keeping the structure original - or at least period - the organization sourced reclaimed lumber for its gable ends and to rebuild the porch. For the porch’s flooring, they found antique, tongue-and-groove flooring from a grain barn.

Inside the lodge, they were able to use donated supplies for the vaulted ceiling. Because the roof was now higher, they were able to add a loft as well.

Cochran says they found their windows for \$40 at a yard sale and that one of the parents re-wired Killbuck’s original chandelier so that it could be used in the rebuilt lodge. The wheel was originally crafted by relatives of Scoutmaster Tom Taylor at a blacksmith shop in Oakdale.

During Bowe’s visit, Troop 248 Scout Nathan Mavich also showed Bowe chains that they aged with vinegar to give them a patina. Cochran says they paid special attention to those details throughout the lodge.

“We did that with all the hinges, too,” he says. “We’re really picky about what kind of hardware we used in the building. We wanted to make sure it functioned like new hardware but looked old.”

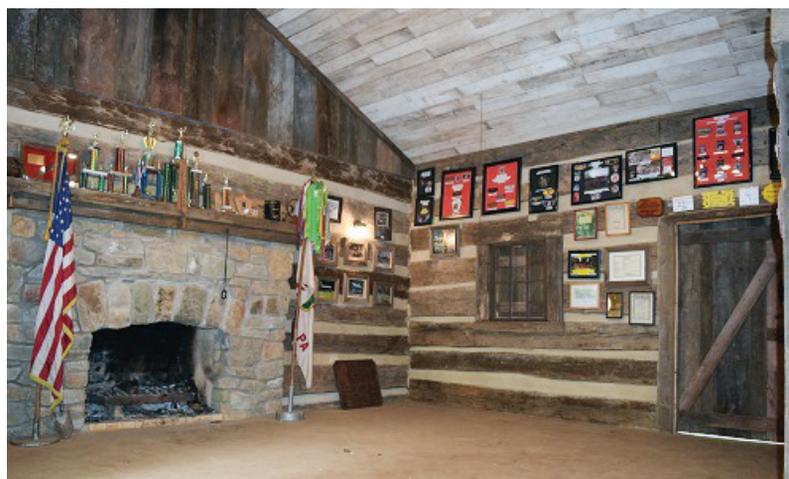
Next up, Cochran says they’ll be looking to construct a standalone bathroom adjacent to the lodge. As Boy Scouts of America are transitioning to a co-ed organization, Cochran says they want to make sure they are accommodating everyone who will be using the lodge in the future.

Cochran says he’s now trying to their volunteers to do another area project, but he’s not sure if he’ll be successful. Despite all the difficult work, rebuilding Killbuck Lodge was a phenomenal experience, he says.

“Working with ‘Barnwood Builders’ was great but it was just as much of a pleasure to work with the volunteers,” he says. “We were just able to do so much with so little. Our structure isn’t just a museum. It’s actually being used and will be there for generations to come.”



ABOVE: Members of Boy Scout Troop 248 are pictured with the cast of “Barnwood Builders” in 2015 shortly after reconstruction of Killbuck Lodge’s frame. PHOTO BY DOUG HUGHEY. BELOW: This more recent interior shot shows the completed Killbuck Lodge. PHOTO BY RON PARRISH



## North Fayette planning new bike lane for The Pointe

North Fayette Township is planning to install a new pedestrian and bike lane at The Pointe in North Fayette.

Laura Ludwig, the township's community development director, says that the new lane is intended to improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists traveling along Summit Park Drive. It will be located to the right of Summit Park Drive's inbound lane heading toward Robinson Township on a 50-foot right-of-way owned by the township.

The first phase of the project will involve paving of the new bike lane from Quinn Drive to Park Lane. North Fayette is also planning to extend existing sidewalks in between Montour Church Road and Andrew Drive to Quinn Drive. Ludwig says subsequent phases may eventually connect the lane with the Montour Trail.

She says the need for the lane was evident from the worn footpaths along Summit Park Drive. In addition to improving safety, though, Ludwig is also hoping the bike lane will give the shopping area, which is often mistaken for being in Robinson Township, some unique character.

In the future, the bike lane could connect with office developments near the intersection of Park Lane Drive and Summit Park Drive. Burns and Scalo is currently planning construction of two office buildings on either side of Park Lane Drive near the intersection while Elmhurst has graded the land across Summit Park Drive for a future construction project.

The Pointe is also home to several existing office buildings and a number of hotels. Ludwig says the bike lane will make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists traveling from those locations to The Pointe's various restaurants and retail stores.

The project is being funded by a \$775,000 grant awarded through the Southwest Pennsylvania Commission by the Transportation Set-Aside Program, which is administered by PennDOT. At the time of this writing, Ludwig says the township's engineer is working out plans for the lane. If PennDOT approves those plans, work could begin as early as next summer.

Ludwig says she's hoping to apply for funds to complete the rest of the project next year.



North Fayette Township is planning to install a bike lane along Summit Park Drive in The Pointe that will allow pedestrians and cyclists to travel safely from Park Lane all the way to Montour Church Road.



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# LIBRARY PROGRAMS & SPECIAL EVENTS

## MESSAGES FROM SPIRIT with Jennifer Rowan, Psychic Medium Sunday, October 21, 2:00 p.m.

As a Psychic Medium and Reiki Healer for the past fourteen years, Jennifer Rowan has dedicated her time to providing guidance and healing to people by connecting with their departed loved ones, angels, and spirit guides to bring messages of comfort and peace during their time of grieving and to help them through life's challenges. A group reading will give attendees an opportunity to receive a message from departed loved ones in a group setting. Program fee = \$30 per person. Space is limited, so stop by the library or call with a credit card to sign up today!

## PICTURE BOOK ART DAY Sunday, October 28, 1:30—2:30 p.m.

What could be better than books and art? We will read a book together and then we will learn about the illustration style and recreate our own versions of the book! Please register for this program online.

## WINDOWS 10 WORKSHOP Monday, October 29, 6:30 p.m.

Had to make the switch to Windows 10? Learn all about some new features, including the PIN login, start menu with live tiles, Cortana (your digital personal assistant), various apps including Microsoft Edge, and more. We'll also cover how to streamline the look of Windows 10 to make it act more like the Windows 7, and show you how to find the many options still available under advanced menus. There'll be plenty of time for Q&A at the end, so be sure to bring your Q's! Please register online.

## HALLOWEEN PARTY Wednesday, October 31, 11:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

It's that time of year again at the library! Enjoy all things spooky with fun games, crafts, and a costume contest. All ages welcome!

## PRESCHOOL SCIENCE DAY Sunday, November 18, 1:30—2:30 p.m.

Do some cool STEM projects with your little ones, all based around our five senses! For children & their caregivers; register online.

## SELF-PUBLISHING WORKSHOP Monday, November 19, 6:00 p.m.

"Indie" publishing has hit today's book market by storm, with many quality works and runaway bestsellers generated by everyday self-published authors. Whether you have already tried traditional publishing or are just in the beginning stages of writing a novel, this workshop will go through the steps of print-on-demand publishing via Amazon.com's CreateSpace and ePublishing via Kindle Direct. Author H. L. Blake has self-published herself as well as assisted several others with CreateSpace, and will demo this free, easy service followed by a Q&A.

## In the Mood for Some Takeout – TECH TAKEOUT!

"Tech Takeout" is a smorgasbord of gadgets, gizmos, and tools for you to take home (and bring back when you're done, of course!). In addition to our already popular items like WiFi hotspots, GoPro Hero camera, radon detector, and Nintendo Classic gaming systems, we have recently added even more cool items for taking out and taking home!

Brand new to our collection are our four Roku kits. With a Roku device, you can watch the free Roku channels – and because we have subscribed, you also get free access to Netflix! Note: Roku requires a wireless internet connection. Don't have internet at home? Ask about checking out one of our wireless hotspots at the same time. Check our online catalog for availability, or ask at the library front desk to place a hold.

For more information on all programs & events, visit [www.WesternAlleghenyLibrary.org](http://www.WesternAlleghenyLibrary.org) or call 724-695-8150.

## ONGOING PROGRAMS

Please check our website for specific dates & to register for all programs.

### ADULT

#### Bookworms

1st Wednesdays, 1:00 p.m.

#### We Be Book'N Book Club

3rd Thursdays, 6:00 p.m.

#### Anime & Manga Club

4th Mondays, 6:00 p.m.

### TEEN

#### Teen Anime Club

Mondays, 4:30 p.m.

#### Teen D&D

Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m.

#### Teen Maker Lab

Wednesdays, 4:30 p.m.

### YOUTH & FAMILY

#### Baby Circle Time

Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m.

#### Littles Storytime

Tuesday & Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.

#### Sensory Storytime

Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.

#### Play K

Tuesdays, 1:00 p.m.

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### Library Hours:

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Friday – Saturday: 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
Sunday: 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.



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PITTSBURGH TECHNICAL COLLEGE

## Pittsburgh Technical College

### CAD students restoring, digitally modeling a 1901 Singer sewing machine

Every academic quarter, Pittsburgh Technical College students nearing graduation are required to complete a capstone project that allows them to apply what they've learned in the classroom to solve a real-world problem.

Computer aided drafting students are currently working on such a project with Mark Malecki, the team leader at PTC's School of Design. These students are restoring a 1901 Singer sewing machine. Not only are they bringing the antique back to working condition, but they're also measuring and creating each part as a 3D digital model. As well, they're creating a modernized user manual and producing all of the engineering documents for it.

"The most interesting discovery is when taking apart all the pieces of the sewing machine and the desk, we are amazed at the complexity of these parts produced over 100 years ago," says Malecki. "Trying to reproduce parts made by hand with computers would seem to be a simple task, but it might be one of the most challenging tasks we have attempted. Just think how remarkably talented these individuals were to create such craftsmanship on a device that will still work over 100 years later. It really is a humbling experience for the students and the instructors helping to restore and reproduce a 3D working replica."

Students began working on the project in September and intend to complete it in just 11 weeks, which is hardly a simple task considering the 500-piece parts list.

Students are approaching the project by following these steps:

1. Take the sewing machine apart and create a parts list.
2. Measure the parts.
3. Create each part in 3D using the software CREO (Pro Engineer).
4. Create assemblies in the software. These types of documents are commonly packaged with products that require home assembly, maintenance or instruction on how to use the product correctly. Assemblies are also used for people to order replacement parts online or paper versions of manuals.

5. Draft a modernized user's manual.
6. Create engineering documents on how to reproduce the machine.
7. Put the machine back together and restore it to working condition. The computer 3D version is for simulation testing and could eventually be used by machine shops or fabrication companies to reproduce parts.

PTC students are excited to be working on such a unique project. Not only will it give them first-hand experience with an interesting project that they can discuss with potential employers, but the experience they gain will have direct applications in their future careers.



ABOVE: Computer aided drafting students at Pittsburgh Technical College are working on a capstone project that entails creating three-dimensional digital models of every part of a 1901 Singer sewing machine. BELOW: A computer-aided drafting student works on a digital rendering of the machine. PHOTOS BY MARK MELECKI, PTC SCHOOL OF DESIGN



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**VETERANS DAY BREAKFAST**

**Thursday, Nov. 8, 9-10 a.m.**

Once again, Findlay Township will be honoring veterans and their families with a breakfast at the Activity Center on Main Street in Imperial. Join us for a continental breakfast from 9-10 a.m. A performance by the West Allegheny Show Choir will follow. We encourage all veterans to come and be recognized. You must have a reservation to attend. We are so proud of our many local veterans and their service to our country.

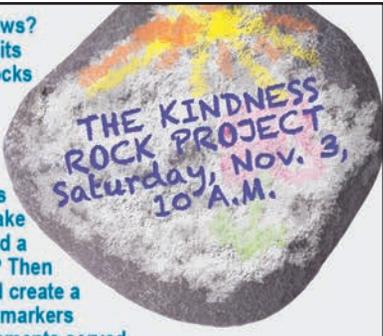
**For questions or to register, call the Findlay Township Recreation Department at (724) 695-0500 x 240 - Steph x 246 - Darlene**

**LAST FOOD TRUCK THURSDAY Oct. 25, 4-8 p.m.**

Wok of Life, Meat Here and Buster's Ice Cream Municipal Building in Clinton



Have you heard the news? Findlay Township has its very own Kindness Rocks Project Garden at Rainbow's End Playground in Clinton Park! If you stop by & see a rock that catches your eye, feel free to take it with you! Want to add a rock to our collection? Then come to this event and create a masterpiece. Paints & markers provided. Light refreshments served. Bring some small smooth rocks(3"-5" in diameter) and wear old clothes! Like us on Facebook... "Findlay Township Kindness Rocks Project." Findlay Township Municipal Building \$2 • Ages 10+ (under 16 with parent) • Please register by Oct. 27.



**Holiday Canvas Painting SATURDAY, DEC. 8, 11 A.M. - 2 P.M.**

Looking for some great gifts for the holidays? We have just the perfect gift idea that is fun for all ages and is easy to do! Join Laura Burns for a family friendly painting project that will be done on 8x10 canvases. Holiday pictures will be pre-drawn on the canvas and there are 10 different ones to choose from! There will be light refreshments available for purchase and extra canvases for sale the day of the event. Registration is preferred and walk-ins welcome with limited availability. Call the township for choice of pictures. Findlay Township Activity Center / Upper Level. \$5 each canvas (please have selection when registering)



# TODAY

OCTOBER,  
2018  
VOL. 41,  
No. 1

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

## Community caring proudly on display

The West Allegheny community once again demonstrated its generous and giving nature when the District launched its #WACARES initiative by organizing a first-ever Day of Community Caring on August 18. After a rally at the high school, cloudy skies cleared just in time for over 130 District staff members, administrators and board members to visit designated community neighborhoods to collect items for the West Allegheny Food Pantry.

The caring spirit was also evident in the generosity of several District partners that made the morning possible. Monark Student Transportation, the District's transportation provider, donated the buses and drivers that accompanied volunteers into neighborhoods, with the buses serving as mobile storage for the tremendous amounts of donated items. Findlay, North Fayette and Oakdale police led six entourages of volunteers into communities with sirens sounding to remind neighbors of the collection efforts. Crossroads United Methodist Church helped organize and promote the Day of Community Caring and provided volunteers to unload donations. Administrators and board members also collected items along the Findlay parade route on the same day as they accompanied the Community Book Bus.

By midday, an estimated 10,000 items were collected and organized, ready for delivery to the Food Pantry's temporary location at Valley Church in Imperial. The pantry's permanent location is still being renovated.

"We were overwhelmed by the number of our staff who participated with over 130 volunteering their time and even more overwhelmed and touched by the generosity of our community in support of the West Allegheny Food Pantry," said superintendent Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert. "It was estimated that we collected over 10,000 food items. We are so grateful to have such wonderful and caring partners in the North Fayette, Findlay and Oakdale Police Departments, and Monark Student Transportation working with us to support our students and families on a daily basis. We have committed to hosting an annual Day of Caring for our WA community. It was such an inspiring and uplifting way to start the school year. The staff beamed with excitement at the opportunity to model an act of kindness and community service for our students and greet them in the neighborhoods as a way to welcome them back to school."



ABOVE: A team of middle school volunteers visits with school families while collecting donations.

RIGHT: Mark Schmitt from Monark Student Transportation; Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert, superintendent; and Andrew Miller from Crossroads United Methodist Church finish unloading donations after collecting busloads of items.

BELOW: Volunteers work to organize an estimated 10,000 items.



# #WeAreWestA

## District welcomes new faculty and staff

The District was excited to welcome new staff members during its redesigned induction program, which was held August 7-10. Under the leadership of Dr. Shana Nelson, assistant to the superintendent for curriculum, instruction and development, the program consisted of building a foundation for understanding the District's Framework for Excellence. It also included a focus on safety and ALICE training, effective teaching practices, and research-based strategies. The program concluded with time for new staff to interact with and learn from their mentors.

Nelson introduced a new element to the program titled The West A Way: Community Connections and Conversations, in which new staff learned about the West Allegheny community through the voices and perspectives of various stakeholders, including students, parents, community members and the president of the school board.

"We have a passionate and enthusiastic new group of staff members who are ready to build meaningful student relationships and provide high quality engaging instruction for every student, every day," said Nelson.



The District was excited to welcome Kelsey Zombek, Wilson kindergarten; Rebekah Tomazich, Wilson fifth grade; Amanda Spada, high school English; Rachel Ochsenhirt, high school biology/chemistry; Jessica Keys, high school English; Samantha Petrick, high school mathematics; Deirdre Conway, Wilson first grade; Michelle Psaros, Wilson nurse; Taylor Cavalovitch, Donaldson fourth grade; Meredith Henderson, Wilson fifth grade; Hannah Nohe, Wilson special education. During induction, they had the opportunity to tour the Community Book Bus with Carrie Lowery, youth services librarian at the Western Allegheny Community Library. New hires not pictured are Angela Deveraux, high school physical education, Ashley Tomaceski, McKee music and Major Erik Orient, high school JROTC.

## Student services department draws on experience and compassion to support student success

At West Allegheny, the Department of Student Services plays an integral role in the development and support of all students, empowering them to be academically, socially and emotionally successful, lifelong learners. Through ongoing collaboration with students, families, school staff, administrators and community partners, the student services team works to ensure students are educated in safe and supportive school cultures that foster wellness, acceptance and connectedness.

With the hiring of Tammy Adams as assistant to the superintendent for special education and student services, the department is under new leadership and guidance. Prior to joining the West Allegheny team, Adams worked within the South Side Area School District, where she served 11 years as the director of pupil services and five years as the superintendent. Her extensive knowledge in gifted and special education reflects her passion for student advocacy and has garnered Adams distinction at the state level. She brings to the department experience in all aspects of student services, including interagency partnerships, counseling services, nursing services, inclusive practices, special education law and supervision and administrative collaboration.

School psychologists Meredith Gillo and Erica Cicero work collaboratively with assistant to the superintendent for special education and student services Tammy Adams to support students, families and staff through the student services department.



The student services department also encompasses an experienced team of certified school psychologists made up of Meredith Gillo and Erica Cicero. Both Gillo and Cicero are committed to helping students succeed academically, socially and emotionally. By collaborating with students, educators, parents, agencies and other professionals, they work to create safe, healthy and supportive learning environments for all students. Gillo and Cicero were instrumental in launching the Stand Together program at the high school. In its second year, this peer-led group focuses on raising awareness about mental health and substance use disorders while reducing stigma.

In addition to working with students, the student services department has expanded its focus to include a staff training series around understanding and appreciating student perspectives. Topics include childhood trauma, mental health (ADHD, anxiety, depression), physical impairments, Autism and learning disabilities, and building positive relationships along with all students.

Programs under the Student Services umbrella include:

- Special Education
- Gifted Education
- English as a Second Language
- Foster Care
- Health and Wellness Services
- Homeless
- Homeschool
- Preschool/DART
- Psychological Services
- School Counseling/Social Work
- Safe and Supportive Schools

The student services department continues to host parent workshops that address timely issues facing students and families. This year's line-up includes:

**Ending the Silence: National Alliance on Mental Illness, October 25, 6-7 p.m.**

**Student Services Department and Meeting the Needs of All Learners, November 29, 6-7:30 p.m.**

**Mental Health and Trauma Spring 2019**

# Superintendent's Message

As we welcome our teaching staff and students back to school, it marks the time of year when we celebrate our Pride Points from the prior year as well as identify areas where we need to focus and improve. The 2017-2018 school year provided numerous celebratory accomplishments, from significant academic achievement gains, to music awards, to another year of not raising taxes. Below are just some of the notable accomplishments:

⇒ Our amazing K-12 music department was recognized as one of the 2018 Best Communities for Music Education awarded by the NAMM Foundation, along with our Marching Pride being named Band of the Year.

⇒ Chronic student absenteeism was down significantly from 440 students in 2015-2016 to 152 students last year, which is under five percent of our students across all five schools, an accomplishment that was recognized nationally. Chronic absenteeism is defined as a student missing 10 percent or more (18+ days) of the school year. Our goal is to have every student attend school 95 percent of the year, missing nine days or less.

⇒ Our Board of School Directors approved the 2018-2019 budget without a tax raise, which reflects a remarkable 10th consecutive year without raising school district taxes.

⇒ The West Allegheny Middle School was awarded the National Schools to Watch designation.

⇒ The Board of School Directors won the D. Richard Wynn Distinguished School Board of the Year, awarded by the Tri-State Area School Study Council.

⇒ Our high school students continue to achieve tremendous success in Advanced Placement courses with 360 students taking more than 780 AP exams. This compares to 211 students and 178 exams in 2014-2015.

⇒ We continue to increase the number of students taking advantage of our Career and Technical program, with 116 students earning an incredible 108 Industry Certificates in 2017-2018.

⇒ Our students continue to excel in Pennsylvania state-mandated standardized assessments, including grades three through eight PSSAs English Language Arts and Mathematics, Keystone Algebra, Keystone Biology, and Keystone Literature, with achievement gains in 14 out of 17 tested areas. The tables at right highlight the four-year attainment results and significant improvements.

⇒ In mathematics, our four-year average improvement is 17.5 percentage points, with an average 5.7 percent improvement in proficiency from 2017 to 2018.

⇒ Seventy-seven percent of our elementary students are performing on or above grade level in mathematics, with 42 percent achieving advanced recognition.

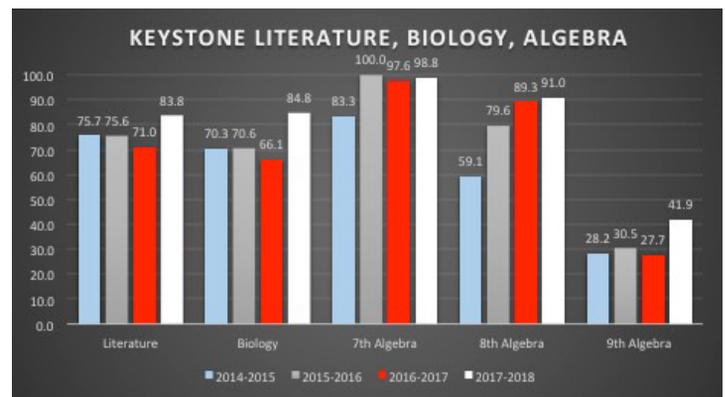
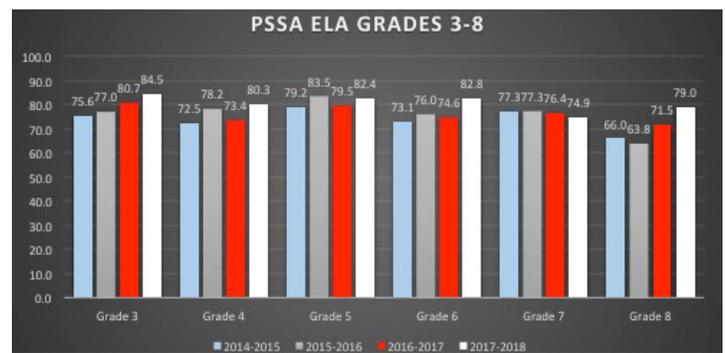
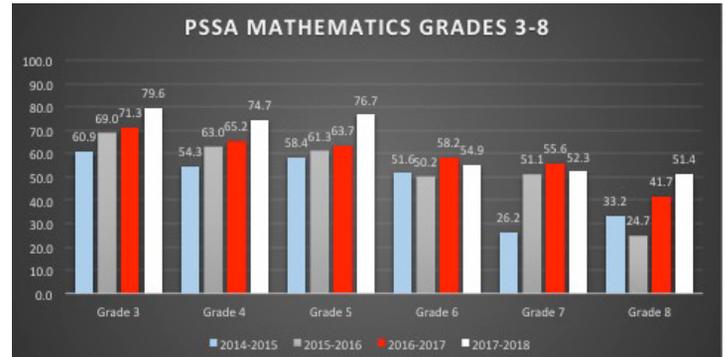
⇒ Seventh and eighth grade mathematics improved 26 percent and 18 percent, respectively, since 2015.

⇒ Eighty-five percent of our students are performing at the proficient and advanced levels in third grade, which marks a critical milestone in literacy acquisition.

⇒ Eighty-one percent of our students are able to celebrate reading at the proficient and advanced level of achievement across grades three to 12.

⇒ The Keystone exam results are also impressive, with our students achieving proficient and advanced designations of 84 percent in literature, 85 percent in biology and 77 percent in algebra (99 percent in seventh grade, 91 percent in eighth grade and 42 percent in ninth grade).

⇒ Our algebra proficiency has improved by 20 percentage points since 2015, with a 5.7 percent average increase from 2017 to 2018.



It is important to acknowledge the dedication of our teachers, since without their conscientiousness and dedication to continually improving their practice and expertise, our outstanding student achievement would not be possible. As we celebrate our accomplishments, we will continue to focus on our primary goal of ensuring that every student is on track for a career and/or college, defined by 90 percent or above attendance and a 2.8 or higher GPA. We are committed to ensuring that every West Allegheny graduate has a viable post-secondary career and/or college pathway upon award of their diploma. As the above charts indicate, we still have focus areas where we look to improve our students' success. Our goal is to continue to increase our proficiency rates each year as the four-year trends have indicated and to have 95 percent of our students performing on or above

## Superintendent's Message, cont.

grade level in 17 out of 17 tested areas. We will continue to focus and implement the priorities, foci and critical actions contained in the District's Framework for Excellence while advancing all of our students' preparedness and achievement.

It is my sincere hope that, as a District and a community, we all share a deep sense of pride in these accomplishments as we celebrate the best that is West Allegheny.

*Dr. Jerrí Lynn Lippert,*  
Superintendent

## McKee families get scoop on new principal

McKee students had the opportunity to meet their new principal, Melissa Wagner, on July 25 when the District hosted a tasty and fun-filled ice cream social. Wagner greeted nearly 150 students and family members and shared her background and hopes for the new school year. The evening provided both students and parents with an opportunity to ask questions and learn more about their new principal prior to the start of the school year.



ABOVE: New McKee principal Melissa Wagner welcomes students.  
BELOW: Families build their ice cream sundaes.



## WACARES Spotlight: Donaldson Elementary

As part of West Allegheny's ongoing preventive CARE measures, we will proudly spotlight a different school in every issue of WA Today throughout the 2018-2019 school year. CARE is an acronym for Connections and Culture, Awareness, Relationships and Extra support. Our CARE measures represent our commitment to engaging students in meaningful and positive relationships. In this issue, we are excited to spotlight Donaldson Elementary School and the staff's efforts that demonstrate how much #WACARES.

### From the Desk of Mrs. Patricia Nolan, Principal:

Donaldson Elementary students and staff have wholeheartedly embraced the #WACARES theme this school year! If you want to experience #WACARES, we invite you to stop by and visit our school to witness how we are committed to **"Lifting and Supporting Our Students Every Day!"**

As the year kicked off, Donaldson students and staff have thoroughly enjoyed working together to show how much we care about each other. Students have been earning **True Color Awards** for exhibiting outstanding behaviors that demonstrate positive character traits. Many of our kindergarten through fifth grade students have had their names proudly announced for receiving a True Colors recognition and having their name put on our True Colors Wall. The more colors you see with names on them, the more you know our students are working hard to make great choices!

We are also focusing on our dismissal and busing procedures this year. Our students continue to receive many dismissal/bus line raffle chances because we Caught Them Being Good! To receive this recognition, students have to be observed sitting in their bus line, listening for directions, keeping their hands and feet to themselves, talking with their inside voices, and leaving our school in a safe and orderly fashion. Students are given a chance in a raffle drawing to receive a special privilege such as a few extra minutes of recess, lunch with the principal, or games in the gym. At the end of each day, we proudly announce names of all who received a Caught Them Being Good chance.

Donaldson staff have initiated many additional ideas to continue this positive momentum throughout the school year. Some examples of upcoming activities include:

- Surprise greetings, which will feature staff members enthusiastically meeting students as they arrive at school, dressed in either costumes and/or themed outfits with music playing to welcome them.
- Our English language learner families will be invited to share their incredible bank of fascinating customs and cultural information with our students.
- Our new family welcome committee will create welcome baskets and lead new students on a scavenger hunt to get to know the building.
- Certain classrooms will be learning about the **Seven Habits of Healthy Kids** throughout the year, while the entire building will participate in activities focusing on one positive character trait per month that aligns to the **True Colors** program (September: Respect/Kindness, October: Responsibility, November: Gratitude, December: Generosity, January: Trustworthiness, February: Compassion, March: Growth Mindset/Perseverance, April: Celebrating Diversity, and May: Citizenship).

Both our Donaldson students and staff have excitedly embraced the District's #WACARES theme for the school year and we can't wait to see all of the great outcomes that stem from caring for one another and **Lifting and Supporting Our Students Every Day.**



TOP: Fifth grade students join staff members Lisa Panucci, Mala Hari, Tiffany Mangan, Deb Hamilton, Lyndy Stout, principal Trish Nolan and Janet Burke in the hallway that displays their #WACARES initiatives.

MIDDLE: Donaldson staff came together during a back-to-school in-service day to display their #WACARES spirit.

BOTTOM: The theme of Lifting and Supporting Our Students Every Day is evident in the halls of Donaldson Elementary.

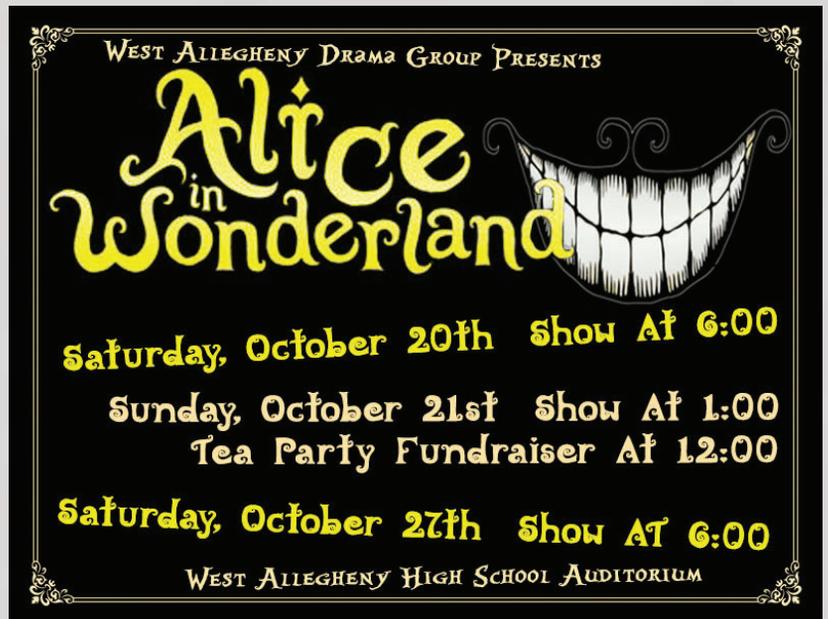
# #WeAreStudentStrong

## Drama Group presents “Alice In Wonderland”

The West Allegheny Drama Group is proud to present “Alice In Wonderland” as the high school’s fall play performance. This year’s company consists of the group’s largest cast of actors and actresses, as well as four support crews that include design and build, tech and stage, costume and makeup, and advertising and marketing.

Attendees are invited to follow Alice’s adventures down the rabbit hole as she experiences the magic of Wonderland. Performances will be held on October 20 and 27 at 6 p.m. A matinee performance will be held on October 21, at 1 p.m., with a preshow tea party starting at noon. Hosted by the Drama Group, the tea party will feature a meet and greet with the cast and crews along with refreshments. Tickets for all performances will be sold at the door.

This year, the Drama Group is partnering with the North Fayette Police Shop With A Cop Program to sponsor a toy drive for local children and families in need.



WEST ALLEGHENY DRAMA GROUP PRESENTS

# Alice in Wonderland

Saturday, October 20th Show At 6:00

Sunday, October 21st Show At 1:00  
Tea Party Fundraiser At 12:00

Saturday, October 27th Show At 6:00

WEST ALLEGHENY HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

## West Allegheny representatives Stand Together in Washington, D.C.



Danyelle Hooks and Michael Gruber of Stand Together partner with Jacob Volk, Erica Cicero and Laura Montecalvo from West Allegheny to present their work at the National Training Institute in Washington, D.C.

West Allegheny was well represented at the National Training Institute in Washington, D.C. on July 28 and 29 when Stand Together advisors Laura Montecalvo and Erica Cicero, along with student Jacob Volk, partnered with the program’s coordinators to offer a workshop at the conference. Stand Together is a high school peer-driven committee that is working to raise awareness surrounding mental health and substance abuse disorders while reducing the stigma that exists in society. Volk shared his personal experiences from Stand Together as well as the impact the group has had on his life.

“We couldn’t be more proud of the courage and poise that Jacob demonstrated while delivering such an impactful message,” said Cicero, “his testimonial was both informative and moving to members of the audience.”

# #WeAreTeacherProud

## Decades old writing project has lasting impact

Middle school teacher Anita Berich recently received an email from a former student that absolutely made her day. A class project from nearly two decades ago was still making an impact halfway around the world.

When Katie Jo Kisow had Berich for English over 17 years ago, she was assigned a class project that involved writing letters to students in Greece. Kisow recently shared a blog about what happened next; excerpts follow:

“I had the pleasure of writing to Danai. The assignment was the ultimate test of patience and reward for an impatient middle school kid. We would wait several weeks to receive our overseas snail mail responses, but the fun of opening a letter from halfway around the world was always a rush of excitement that made me want to immediately write back.

The assignment eventually wrapped up with the school year and students stopped writing. Well, almost all of the students.

Danai and I kept writing letters that summer. And the letters turned into packages, packages turned into Christmas cards and birthday presents. The letters spanned months, and then years.

Over the years, we mailed photos, magazines, mix tapes and more overseas, giving each other a glimpse into our Greek and American teenage lives. We shared successes, school updates, dreams of travel and our future plans. This was all before social media and iPhones.

In early 2018, while wedding planning, the Greek islands kept coming up as a destination as a honeymoon. Naturally, I wondered



After nearly two decades, Katie Jo Kisow (second from right) and her new husband meet middle school pen pal Danai and her mother in Greece.

if my now-husband and I could build in an extra day in Athens into the trip with the intention to meet Danai. It was a big ask to my husband and a lot of faith, trust and anticipation went into planning for it.

On a Tuesday in July Danai met my husband and I in front of our Athens hotel. She had messaged me earlier in the day to tell me what she'd be wearing, but it wasn't necessary, because we immediately recognized each other. The moment was surreal, filled with hugs and greetings in both English and Greek.

The next day, Danai and her friends picked us back up from the hotel to travel to her hometown. An hour outside of Athens, we spent the afternoon swimming at a beautiful beach. The highlight of the day was when Danai invited us to meet her parents at their home. Her parents

only spoke a few words of English, but we never felt like there was a language barrier. We all sipped Greek coffee while sharing stories and laughter about the pair of pen pals who were crazy enough to meet.

This entire experience and friendship would not have been possible without that 7th grade assignment. It sparked an interest and appreciation for a culture I would have otherwise not had a personal connection with. I have studied a language I would have otherwise never been motivated to study. And now I am forever thankful to have beautiful memories of spending nearly 24 hours with Danai, my husband, her friends and family in Greece.

And yes, the letters will continue until we can meet again.”

## West Allegheny students claim 2018 Carnegie Library Teen Media Awards

More than 200 Allegheny County middle and high school-aged teens vied for awards in Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's 2018 Teen Media Awards competition this summer. Several West Allegheny students brought home awards.

The first place winners of the 2018 Laby Awards for music were Amir Littles and Paige Corsello for “i can see the end.” In gaming, Amir and Akira Littles tied with PA Virtual Charter for their creation “50K Challenge Fashion.”



Siblings Akira and Amir Littles proudly display their 2018 Carnegie Library Teen Media Awards. Missing from the photo are Paige Corsello and Brianna Longo.

Brianna Longo earned an honorable mention in the short prose category of the 2018 Ralph Munn Creative Writing Awards for her piece “Outcasts.” The Teen Media Awards were judged by program partners, including local authors, artist educators from the Andy Warhol Museum and the Society for Contemporary Craft, and staff from WPTS Radio. The awards were presented on August 11, at the Carnegie Lecture Hall in Oakland.

## Students provide helpful insights on moving up

Elementary and middle school counselors visited with sixth grade students in September to discuss the transition process they experienced last year in fifth grade. They led question and answer sessions to explore which activities students found most helpful in their move to the middle school and welcomed suggestions for future classes.



ABOVE: Kathy Taylor of Wilson and Kristen Tracy, Donaldson (front); and Pearl Hellmann, Melissa Rectenwald, Jeff Kiser, middle school, and Emily Hoffmann, McKee (back) lead information sessions with sixth-graders.

BELOW: Sixth grade students answer questions about their move-up experience.



# #WeAreInnovators&Designers

## Families and staff work together at Wilson



ABOVE: The PTA designs a rock garden.

Students, parents and staff at Wilson Elementary have partnered to create both a rock garden to showcase student artwork and a peaceful playground to be enjoyed at recess. Since the beginning of the year, students have proudly painted individual rocks that represent their own unique personality. The PTA embedded the artwork into a rock garden outside the school entrance and dedicated the space with a quote from the book "Only One You" by Linda Kranz: "There is only one you in this great big world. Make it a better place."

Families and staff members also volunteered their time over Labor Day weekend to paint and decorate a new peaceful playground for students. The playground now features a number and alphabet line as well as a walking and jogging trail. Students were surprised when they returned to school to find their playground transformed. The playground was made possible through a donation from the PTA.

BELOW: Students of all ages help parents and staff design their peaceful playground for all to enjoy.



## McKee students show appreciation for their bus drivers



ABOVE: McKee students chalk kind messages for their bus drivers.

BELOW: Camille Eberhardt is grateful for the cold water and the thoughtfulness displayed by her student passengers.



With the temperatures cresting 90 degrees at the start of the school year, McKee students recognized those who got them to where they are now: their bus drivers. With the help of staff members, students made sure their Monark Student Transportation drivers were remembered when they delivered cold waters and chucked kind messages of thanks on the sidewalk. These thoughtful gestures were part of the #WACARES focus and were sincerely appreciated by the drivers who safely transport students every day.

## Students mark September 11 with classroom lessons

Students from across the District spent September 11 learning about the events that changed our nation on that day seventeen years ago. With most students not yet born on this day, it was truly a history lesson that was also merged into English and JROTC classes.



LEFT: Elementary teacher Brittney Kuhn reads a children's book about the events of September 11, 2001.

BELOW LEFT: Middle school classes viewed documentaries on the day's tragic happenings.

BELOW RIGHT: JROTC instructor Maj. Erik Orient discusses the impact of 9/11 and the military actions that followed.



# #WeAreWestA

# Parent Information Notice

## Services for Disabled Preschool Age Children

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

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

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

## Services for School Age Exceptional Students

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

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

Parents of public school students who suspect that their child is exceptional and in need of special education may request a multidisciplinary team evaluation of their child through a written request to the Building Principal or Mrs. Tammy Adams, Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services. Please contact the Building Principal or Mrs. Adams for the required form.

## Screening and Evaluation

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

*Level 1: Review of group-based data*

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

*Level 3: School Based Intervention Teams*

## The Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE)

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

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

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

## Individualized Education Plan

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

The IEP will review all of the evaluation material and will determine how your child is performing in school. The IEP team will write annual goals that can be measured and which meet the needs of your child. IEPs for eligible students are developed on an annual basis, or sooner, if requested by one or more members of the IEP team.

# Parent Information Notice (cont.)

## Notice of Recommended Educational Placement

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

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

Detailed information regarding special education procedures may be obtained by calling Mrs. Adams at 724-695-5221.

## Services for Protected Handicapped Students

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

## Services for Students in Nonpublic Schools

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

Parents of nonpublic school students who suspect that their child is exceptional and in need of special education may request a multidisciplinary team evaluation of their child through a written request to Mrs. Adams.

## Public Notice on Student Records

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

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

## Confidentiality of Student Records

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Bus driver recognized for heroic efforts

The West Allegheny School Board and administration thanked Monark Student Transportation bus driver Linda Reilly for her quick thinking when it came to the well-being of one of her kindergarten passengers. Reilly was recognized at the September 19 school board meeting with a Heroic Effort Award for her life-saving actions on behalf of the student.

Linda Reilly (center) was recognized with a Heroic Effort Award at the September school board meeting.



## In memory of Mike Quinn

On behalf of the West Allegheny School District and community, we remember Mike Quinn for his 30 years of unwavering commitment to students, staff and board of school directors. His memory will live on in the generations of students Mike impacted through his kind and caring way.



# #WeAreWestA



Like us  
on Facebook!  
West Allegheny  
School District

## WEST ALLEGHENY SCHOOL DISTRICT

### BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS

Mrs. Debbie Mirich, President	Mr. George Bartha Mr. Edward Faux	Mr. Robert Ostrander Mr. Ronald Pasic
Mr. Mark Rosen, Vice President	Mrs. Tracy Kosis Mr. Chip McCarthy	Mrs. Tracy Pustover

### ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert, Superintendent	Dr. Frank Hernandez, Middle School Principal
Dr. Christopher Shattuck, Assistant Superintendent of Schools	Ms. Megan Huchko, Middle School Assistant Principal
Mrs. Tammy Adams, Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services	Mrs. Patricia Nolan, Donaldson Elementary Principal
Dr. Shana Nelson, Assistant to the Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Learning	Mrs. Melissa Wagner, McKee Elementary Principal
Mr. George Safin, Business Manager	Mrs. Rachel Gray, Wilson Elementary Principal
Mr. Kevin McKiernan, High School Principal	Mr. Toni Baldanzi, Supervisor of Ancillary Programs
Ms. Katharine McClelland, High School Academic Principal	Mr. Kenneth Fibbi, Director of Facilities and Operations
Ms. Cheryl McHone, High School Assistant Principal	Mrs. Karen Ruhl, Community Relations Coordinator
Mr. David McBain, Director of Athletics	

FOR WEEKLY EVENTS, SCHOOL CLOSINGS, AND DELAYS.

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[WWW.WESTASD.ORG](http://WWW.WESTASD.ORG)

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**Western PA Kidney Support Group, second Sundays, 2:30-4:30 p.m.,** Eat'n Park Robinson, (724) 796-1603, RSVP.

**"Alice in Wonderland," Oct. 20, 27, 6 p.m., Oct. 21, 1 p.m.,** West Allegheny High School, by West Allegheny Drama Group, see page 35.

**Heartsaver CPR/AED, Oct. 20, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.,** CCAC West Hills Campus, learn how to recognize and treat life-threatening emergencies requiring CPR and how to properly use a defibrillator on adult-infant patients, register at [shopcommunityed.ccac.edu/Courses/Public\\_Safety\\_Miscellaneous/Heartsaver\\_C\\_P\\_R.aspx](http://shopcommunityed.ccac.edu/Courses/Public_Safety_Miscellaneous/Heartsaver_C_P_R.aspx), sabner@ccac.edu, (412) 788-7394.

**VFW Post 402 Purse Bingo, Oct. 21, 1 p.m.,** VFW Post 402 in Coraopolis, designer purse bingo, \$30 includes lunch, drinks, dobber, dessert, cards, 16 games, purchase tickets at VFW, (412) 660-6719.

**Monster Bash, Oct. 29, 5-8 p.m.,** The Landing, 330 Hookstown Grade Road, ages 12 and under, games, food, candy, face painting, live Disney characters, more, free event, [www.impactpittsburgh.com](http://www.impactpittsburgh.com).

**Pioneers West Historical Society Photos with Santa, Nov. 10, 10 a.m.-2:45 p.m.,** Walker-Ewing Log House, 1355 Noblestown Road, Collier Township, 15-minute photo session in 18th century log home with Santa, must bring camera, \$20, reservations required, (412) 600-4340, text or leave voicemail.

**Unique Boutique, Nov. 10, Edgeworth Club, courtesy shuttle operates 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m.** from Heritage Valley Sewickley Hospital garage at Fitch Circle, \$35/person with lunch, \$15/person admission only, reservations preferred, see page 12 for details, [foundation@hvhs.org](mailto:foundation@hvhs.org), register at [www.heritagevalley.org](http://www.heritagevalley.org).

**Blood Drive, Nov. 12, CCAC West Hills Campus, blanket drive coincides, sabner@ccac.edu, (412) 788-7394.**

**Holiday Extravaganza Craft Show, Nov. 24, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.,** Imperial VFD, 111 Pine St., 15126, 50+ crafters/vendors, [www.facebook.com/events/171936063446087](http://www.facebook.com/events/171936063446087).

**Turkey Trot, Nov. 22, 7-8 a.m. registration, 8:30 a.m. start, 5K** run through War Memorial Park in Sewickley, medals for top three male and female finishers, benefits Faith in Action project of the Sewickley Valley YMCA, [www.heritagevalley.org/pages/turkey-trot](http://www.heritagevalley.org/pages/turkey-trot).

**West Hills Symphonic Band Concert, Dec. 9, 3 p.m.,** West Allegheny High School, "Love's Time - Christmas Time!", [whsb.org](http://whsb.org).



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## North Fayette Parks and Rec.

Programs take place at the North Fayette Community Center at Donaldson Park, unless otherwise noted. Visit [www.north-fayette.com](http://www.north-fayette.com) or call (724) 307-3725 for more information or to register.

**Vendor Show, Oct. 19-20,** email [dhildebrand@north-fayette.com](mailto:dhildebrand@north-fayette.com) to participate, more details on website.

**Fall Festival, Oct. 20, 5-7 p.m.,** fall family fun with trunk-or-treat, pumpkin patch, crafts, children's costume contest, more!



## Seniors

**Senior Trip to Johnston Tea House, Dec. 14, \$45, register by Nov. 14.**

**Senior Luncheons, second Wednesdays,** call or email [dhildebrand@north-fayette.com](mailto:dhildebrand@north-fayette.com) to receive monthly senior newsletter.

## Sports and Fitness (Adult)

**Tai Chi Ch'uan, Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Saturdays, 9 a.m., begins Sept. 4.**

**Yoga, Sundays, 12:15-1:15 p.m., Wednesdays, 7-8 p.m.**

**20/20/20, Mondays, 6-7 p.m.**

**Boot Camp, Mondays, 7:30-8:30 p.m., Saturdays, 10-11 a.m.**

**Power and Punch, Tuesdays, 6-7 p.m.**

**PiYo, Wednesdays, Fridays, 6-7 p.m., 9-10 a.m.**

**Adult Co-Ed Softball, recreational and competitive leagues, sfox@north-fayette.com.**

**Adult Volleyball League, sfox@north-fayette.com.**

**Pickle Ball, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8-10 a.m., Fridays, 9-11 a.m., 5-7 p.m.**

**Water Walking, Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, 6-8 p.m., Donaldson Elementary.**

**Water Aerobics, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5-6 p.m., Donaldson Elementary.**

**Fitness Center and Walking Track, available to members during open hours.**

## Youth

**Flag Football, ages 4-14, co-ed, Sundays through Nov. 4.**

**Super Kids Floor Hockey, ages 3-8, Mondays, Oct. 29-Dec. 3.**

**Developmental Volleyball League, ages 9-15, Wednesdays, Oct. 24-Jan. 30.**

**Super Kids Soccer, ages 3-8, Oct. 25-Dec. 6.**

**Indoor Flag Football, ages 6-14, Nov. 3-Feb. 23.**

**Afterschool Programming, Monday-Friday, 3:30-5:30 p.m.,** K-8 programs provide a safe environment for children to come to after school, transportation provided from schools to community center when school is in session, register online.

## Findlay Parks and Rec.

Register for any of the following programs by calling Findlay Township Parks and Recreation at (724) 695-0500 x 246 or by emailing [clarson@findlaytpw.org](mailto:clarson@findlaytpw.org), unless otherwise indicated. Programs take place at the Findlay Township Community Center unless otherwise indicated.

**Yoga for Beginners (and Beyond), Fridays, 6:30-7:30 p.m., \$5/class, (724) 695-1976.**

**Senior Yoga and Qi Gong, Thursdays, 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m., free for seniors, call to register: (724) 695-1976.**

**Walk 15, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6-7 p.m., cardio workout for all levels, call or email to register: [kuziofjr@gmail.com](mailto:kuziofjr@gmail.com).**

**Herbs from a Witch's Garden, Oct. 18, 6:30-8:30 p.m., hosted by Findlay Township Garden Club, \$5, call Laura to register: (724) 695-0500.**

**Water Aerobics, Mondays, Oct. 22, 29, Nov. 5, 12, 19, Dec. 3, 10, Wilson Elementary School, classes will be canceled if school is canceled, call to register.**

**Essential Oils Learning Lab, Oct. 24, 7 p.m., \$20/person, register by Oct. 23.**

**Kids Creative Cooking Class, Oct. 24 and Dec. 5, 4-5:15 p.m., grades K-5, register at least two days prior, learn a variety of easy and delicious seasonal recipes, \$8/class.**

**Food Truck Thursday, Oct. 25, Findlay Municipal Building lot, 4-8 p.m., see page 30.**

**Semi-Super Morning Bingos, Oct. 26, Nov. 30, doors open 9 a.m., bingo starts 10 a.m., \$10/packet, additional packets \$5, \$1 coverall jackpots, daubers available to purchase, regular games pay \$20, specials \$50, jackpot is 100% of what is sold.**

**Computer and Appliance Recycling, Oct. 27, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Findlay Township Municipal Building, computers, monitors, printers, scanners, laptops, non-Freon appliances lead acid automobile batteries, cell phones, telephones, keyboards, mice, radio equipment, one television per car, \$20 for Freon appliances, questions: (724) 695-0500 x 247.**

**The Kindness Rock Project, Nov. 3, 10 a.m., Findlay Township Municipal Building, see page 30.**

**Veteran's Day Breakfast, Nov. 8, 9-10 a.m., see page 30.**

**AARP Safe Driving Class, Nov. 15-16, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., eight-hour course and four-hour refresher offered, \$15 members, \$20 non-members, residents pay half, checks payable to AARP.**

**Holiday Canvas Painting, Dec. 8, see page 30.**

**Halloween** 🎃

**Pre-parade Pizza Party, Oct. 27, pizza 12-12:45 p.m., entertainment 12:45-1:30 p.m., 1:30 p.m. parade, \$2/person, registration required.**

**Halloween Parade, Oct. 27, 1:30 p.m., goes from Activity Center to Imperial Fire Hall for treats and costume prizes, tickets at door.**

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



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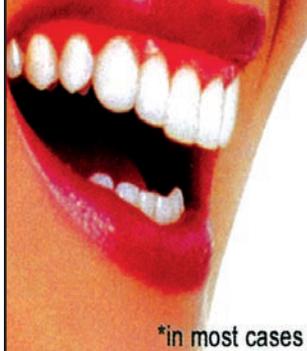


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## SNPJ Club

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](http://snpjimperialpa.com), [imperialroomsnpj.com](http://imperialroomsnpj.com).

**Bar Bingo**, for members and their guests, **Oct. 18, Nov. 1, 15, Dec. 6, 20**, special early bird games start 6:30 p.m., regular games start 7 p.m., play until 9 p.m., kitchen open during.

**Funny Fundraiser**, Nov. 4, doors open 6 p.m., 7 p.m. show, ages 18+, purchase tickets at clubroom, 50/50, Chinese auction.

## Pittsburgh Botanic Garden

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Register for programs at [pittsburghbotanicgarden.org](http://pittsburghbotanicgarden.org) or call: (412) 444-4464. Check website for regular hours.

**Volunteer Opportunity: Tree Planting**, Oct 17, 24, morning session: 9 a.m.-12 p.m., afternoon session: 12-3 p.m., help plant trees at the PBG's restoration site with staff members, tools provided, ages 18+.

**Grow a Garden Day**, Oct. 21, 9 a.m.-12 p.m., work with the PBG's horticulture team on a variety of projects around the garden, wear appropriate clothing and footwear, bring bottle of water.

**Seedlings Class: Birds**, Nov. 7, 10-11 a.m., for ages 3-6 and their caregiver, learn about birds that stay in Pennsylvania and how they adapt to the season, registration required, \$9/adults, \$6/children, includes admission.

## Black Dog Wine Company

Events take place at the Hankey House location, 7425 Steubenville Pike, Oakdale. For more on upcoming events and to buy tickets, find Black Dog Wine Company on Facebook.

**Steeler Games**, watch the game in the Rathskeller.

**Live Music**, Oct. 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, more dates TBA.

**Wine, Wags and Bags**, Oct. 27., 11 a.m.-3 p.m., designer bag and basket raffles, hors d'oeuvres, live music, benefits Distinguished Dobermans Rescue.

**Speakeasy Party**, Nov. 2 in the Rathskeller, details TBA.

**Paint 'n Sip**, Nov. 11, details TBA.

## Local Networking Groups

**Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce**, see page 27.

**Greater Pittsburgh Business Connection**, Wednesdays, 7:15 a.m., Eat'n Park on Rt. 60, find new leads and make more sales, (412) 364-6446 x 302, [www.gpbc-pgh.org](http://www.gpbc-pgh.org).

**Women's Business Network**, meets first and third Tuesdays, 7:30 a.m., Panera Bread meeting room in North Fayette.

Hosting a craft/vendor show, or want to get the word out on holiday happenings in your community? E-mail us by Nov. 7 with information to be included in this year's Holiday Season guide! [info@awmagazine.com](mailto:info@awmagazine.com)



## Oakdale Borough Events

For more, visit [www.oakdaleborough.com](http://www.oakdaleborough.com) or call (724) 693-9740.

**Boy Scout Troop 248 Haunted Cabin**, Oct. 24-27, 7-9 p.m., Killbuck Lodge, \$5/person, \$2 group rate discount (reservations required), "The Meltdown Disaster," (724) 693-0549.

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

**Halloween Promenade**, lineup at 5 p.m., starts 5:30 p.m., begins at Panhandle Trail, VFD treat bags, costume contest.

**Oakdale Light Up**, Nov. 24, starts 7 p.m., sing carols while waiting for Santa to arrive at The Rock, Christmas Tree lighting, cookies, hot chocolate.

## McDonald Borough Events

**Halloween Trail Luminary Walk**, Oct 19, 7-8 p.m., ages 12 and under, sponsored by Washington County Parks and Recreation Department, meets at McDonald Trail Station, spooky walk along the Panhandle Trail, registration required, (724) 228-6867.

**Trick or Treat**, Oct. 31, 6-8 p.m., (724) 926-8711. 

**Election Day Bake and Soup Sale**, Nov. 6, 7 a.m.-8 p.m., vote, eat, walk the Panhandle Trail, homemade soups, baked goods, hot dogs, [www.mcdonaldtrailstation.com](http://www.mcdonaldtrailstation.com).

**McDonald Light Up**, Nov. 21, 6-7 p.m., corner of North McDonald Street and East Lincoln Avenue, Santa, music, cookies, hot chocolate, treats for the children, sponsored by McDonald Area Redevelopment Association/Trail Station and Northwest Bank, [www.mcdonaldtrailstation.com](http://www.mcdonaldtrailstation.com).

## We'd like to hear from you!

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

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## “We’ll save you a lot of money”

Since 2010, Eddie Grant has been appearing on television screens across the Pittsburgh area with his daughter Alicia in an ad for windows saying, “We’ll save you a lot of money.”

Alicia has been appearing in the ads since she was 18. Now, she’s married with two beautiful little girls and works as a successful hairstylist. Eddie loves being a grandfather.

Eddie grew up in Hankey Farms in Oakdale. He played baseball on the Hankey Farms baseball field and had fun with friends in the Hankey Farms Pool. He and his friends Bobby Palko and Marvin Lewis played pee-wee football for the Fort Cherry Little Rangers when they were 7 and 8 years old. He and Palko also played varsity football for West Allegheny together. Palko went on to coach that same team and become the winning-est head football coach in WPIAL history. Lewis is now in his 15th season of coaching the Cincinnati Bengals.

When Eddie was growing up, the sign on his dad’s van read “Ed Grant Painting.” That was how Eddie got started, working weekends with his dad when he was just 8. Now, the sign on his own trucks reads “All Good Home Improvements.”

Eddie grew up across the street from another family also named Grant. The two families, however, were not related. Eddie’s parents, Ed Sr. and Betty, lived on Holstein Drive. They had three other sons: David, Tony and Jimmy. They call their mom Ever-Ready Betty. For 45 years she’s suffered from lupus, which is now in remission.

Across the street, Lee and Ann Grant raised their children: Lisa, Bubby and Lonnie. Lisa had a best friend in seventh grade named Sharon. She was the daughter of veterinarian Dr. Radovic. They spent a lot of time together with their neighbor Eddie, playing basketball and swimming. Ed calls it “hanging out and goofing off.”

In 10th grade, Eddie invited Sharon to the Soph Hop Dance and then, their senior year, he asked her to their prom. They recently celebrated their 38th wedding anniversary.

They also recently came back to the area for the West Allegheny Class of 1978 Reunion at the SNPJ Club. While in town, they got to see Eddie’s old friend Palko coach the West Allegheny homecoming football game. Two weeks later, they were off to see his friend Lewis coach the Bengals in Atlanta.

After graduating in 1978, Eddie decided to continue on in his father’s trade of painting. He received a letter to play baseball with Edinboro University but “chose Sharon,” as he puts it. He painted a friend’s garage in exchange for a red 1954 10-ton dump truck for work and cut cordwood to make ends meet. Then a call came from Dallas, Texas in 1981. Ed’s friend from school, Mark Turner, said, “Eddie, you gotta get down here. This place is booming.”

Eddie bought a one-way ticket and interviewed for a telemarketing job with another Pittsburgher named John Crivelli. It wasn’t what Ed wanted, though. When Ed got up to leave the interview, John said, “Hey, hey. Where are you going?” Ed answered, “I don’t want a desk job. I want sales.”

“I will get you hooked up with the sales department,” Crivelli said.

Ed got his job and he and Sharon moved to Dallas. Then, in 1983, the Pacesetter Window Company transferred Eddie to Cincinnati. Finally, in 1994, he started his own window company business from an office in their basement. He and Sharon now had two little girls who were 2 and 5. Ed and Sharon worked long and hard together.

Their first hires were four men from halfway houses - good men who had made bad choices. Each had telemarketing experience. Eddie laid it on the line, “If you mess up, what’s gonna happen?”

“We know, we know,” they said. Eddie said, “What is it?” Their answer: “Back to jail.” It turned into a win-win situation.

A lesson Eddie teaches when life comes to a “T” in the road is that one has to choose the greater good. Eddie also asks himself what’s good for his employees and his family. Along the way, Eddie has relied on both family and faith while making those decisions. His company’s name, Eagle Industries of Ohio, is inspired by Isaiah 40:31. They’re doing business as All Good Home Improvements. They got the idea for that name from the phrase, “It’s all good,” after they heard someone using it at a contractor convention and saw the positive way people reacted to it.

All Good is truly family-run. Their daughter Ashley “holds the checkbook,” as Eddie puts it. She started out cleaning her dad’s offices as a teenager. Then she studied business in college. Now she’s in administration.

Eddie’s brother David is the company’s regional sales manager for Cincinnati, Dayton, Northern Kentucky, Indiana, and Pittsburgh. His brother Tony is All Good’s product specialist in Cincinnati.

Their cousin Rich Boehm is the sales manager in their Pittsburgh office. He and Eddie grew up together. Sharon’s sister Sandy is the company’s Pittsburgh office manager.

They will be opening an office in Louisville, Kentucky in 2019.

Future television ads will feature Alicia and a new generation of adorable granddaughters.

Throughout All Good’s growth, Sharon, the quiet one, has been Eddie’s rock. She calls life with Eddie “just a non-stop adventure.”

“What is the opposite of fear?” Eddie asks.

The answer, he says, is, “Faith. Fear comes from another power, faith is stronger than fear.”

What he’s learned is, “Do not worry. Trust.”

STORY BY ERMA DODD  
PHOTOS SUBMITTED



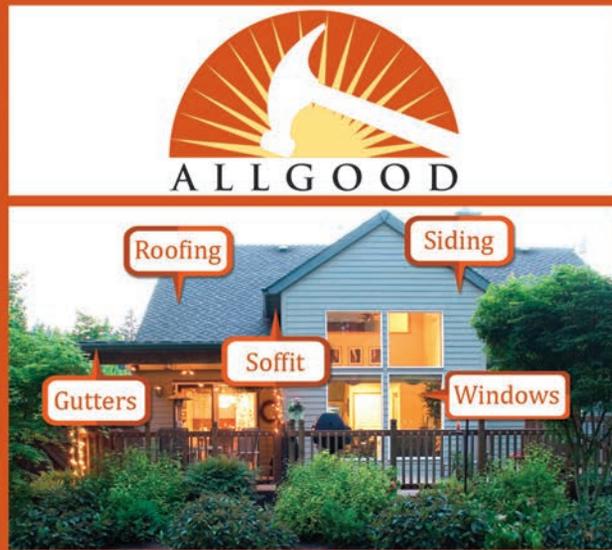
Eddie Grant is pictured above with Bobby Palko and below right with his family.



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