

# Allegheny West

# Magazine

**WEST ALLEGHENY  
EDITION**

Volume 15, No. 87  
December 2013/January 2014

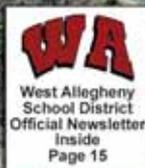
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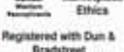
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## "GOOD NEWS ALWAYS, MAILED & DELIVERED FREE, EVERY TIME"

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

### West Allegheny Edition

VOL. 15, NO. 87, ISSUE 3 DECEMBER 2013/JANUARY 2014

**RIGHT:** The West Allegheny Boys Soccer Boosters sponsored its annual Youth Soccer Night in September during the varsity team's home game against rival Montour High School. Boosters provided hot dogs and drinks for every youth, along with face painting. The high school boys' varsity team, which has since become the first soccer team in West Allegheny school history to become WPIAL champions, threw out autographed soccer balls. Varsity starters also initiated a European soccer tradition where youths walk out during the national anthem with players and salute. The night was a memory in the making as the West Allegheny Show Choir performed the national anthem while the young players held the hands of varsity team members.

The West Allegheny High School art department provided artists for face painting, and Major Robert Word, ROTC for West Allegheny, had his ROTC display the colors.

The youth group from WAYSA played small-sided games during halftime. The goal of the event was to promote soccer in the community and develop young players. PHOTO SUBMITTED



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### ABOUT THE COVER

A winter scene in Imperial along a Montour Creek tributary.  
PHOTO BY PAT JENNETTE

### Did You Know?

*North Fayette is home, jointly with Findlay Township and Oakdale Borough, to the largest school district, geographically, in Allegheny County, West Allegheny School District, at 56 square miles.*

### MORE INFO

Allegheny West Magazine-West Allegheny Edition is published in February, April, June, August, October, and December, six issues a year, by Jennette Communications Group, 15 Walnut Street, Suite 101, Imperial PA 15126. Mailed and distributed free to residents and businesses in Findlay, North Fayette, Oakdale, Sturgeon, a portion of McDonald, and adjacent areas. Extra copies available at municipal offices, schools, libraries, stores, advertisers, hotels, and businesses. Available by mail subscription for \$12 annually. Story ideas welcomed. Community events and announcements from non-profit groups must be received by the 15th of the month prior to publishing date. Announcements are limited to 30 words and must include a contact phone number. Reproduction of any artwork, photographs, or copy prepared by Allegheny West Magazine is strictly prohibited without written consent of Jennette Communications Group. Copyright 1999-2013 Allegheny West Magazine. All rights reserved. Views and opinions expressed by contributors and/or advertisers are the responsibility of the contributors and not those of the publisher of Allegheny West Magazine.



## From the PUBLISHER

From the time I was young, I dreamed of being an editor and writer. My writing journey started as a little girl when I wrote a book of poems for my mother for Mother's Day. It manifested itself when I became editor of my high school newspaper, and later when I morphed into a reporter for various newspapers, including the *Pittsburgh*

*Post-Gazette*, a stint that lasted eight years. Sandwiched in between, I enjoyed a profession as a school public relations coordinator for 12 years at West Allegheny School District, and worked as an educational trainer and a public relations consultant for schools and businesses for a number of years. Yet it was always my passion to create a magazine.

So, over the past 15 years, I have watched that fledgling idea become what I believe is an established and integral part of the fabric of our community. We've grown from one magazine serving the West Allegheny area to three editions serving the Moon and Montour areas as well.

A long time ago, a West Allegheny schoolteacher presented me with Norman Rockwell's limited edition plate, "Storyteller," because he saw me in that role in our community. You know, I have to agree. I have had the blessing of using my God-given talents to be this community's storyteller over the past 15 years. The gifts I have received back have been tenfold. I have written stories about hundreds of wonderful people, businesses, and organizations. I have made many new friends. I have learned countless new things about our neighborhood I never before knew. Through it all, I was able to connect our community in ways not even I thought possible.

As this year comes to an end, I will pass this marvelous gift of our community's storytelling on to a highly capable young man who has been working side by side with me for the past two years. Doug Hughey, pictured right, started with this magazine, first as a writer, and then as our assistant editor.



In 2014, Doug will become the publisher and editor of *Allegheny West Magazine*. Doug is a lifelong, hometown guy. His family has roots deeply embedded in this community. He is a West Allegheny alumnus, and holds writing degrees from both the University of Pittsburgh and Emerson College. He has enormous talent, keen insight, and a deep curiosity to learn more about his hometown. It is a blessing in and of itself to see Doug carry on the name and reputation of *Allegheny West Magazine*. I leave it in the most capable hands possible.

I will continue to be part of the magazine for a while, assisting where I can to help Doug make a smooth and successful transition.

Thank you -- our customers, our readers, our contributors, our community partners, and our staff -- for the opportunity to serve you, and for helping me to make this experience the highlight of my writing and communications career.

Thank you for allowing me to use the talents that the good Lord has given me to communicate what I felt was important for you to know about your neighborhoods and the people who live and work in them.

I especially thank my husband, John, pictured with me, above, for his unwavering support and his belief in me every step of the way. John, I could not have done it without you.

Yes, it has truly been a gift to be your community "storyteller," and to make my living doing so. This experience will remain close to my heart forever.

For the last time as your publisher and editor, I say, "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!"

Pat Jennette - Publisher/Editor

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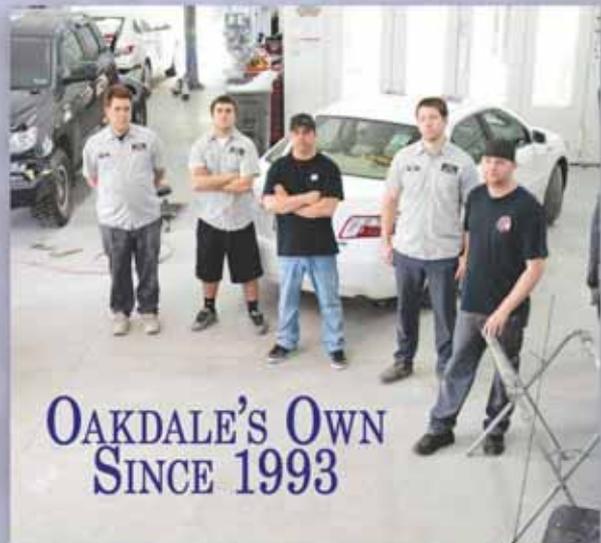
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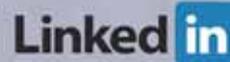
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*Scott A. Holekamp, M.D. earned his medical degree at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. He completed his residency and internship in general surgery at the Beth Israel Medical Center, New York City, and a fellowship in colon and rectal surgery at the University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Hospital. Dr. Holekamp practices with Colorectal Surgical Associates, a division of St. Clair Medical Services.*

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BY DOUG HUGHEY

AN

END

TO

VIOLENCE

## RICHARD SMITH

**A** is no stranger to violence. He grew up with it on the tough streets of 1970s Lawrenceville, living with a widowed mother and defending his younger siblings in daily street battles. Long before he became the owner of a multi-million dollar security firm in Imperial specializing in protecting others, he confronted violence as a daily way of life.

At the age of twelve, Richard's life took a turn when he befriended Pittsburgh boxing legends Fritzie Zivic and Billy Conn, and learned to focus his talents on the sport of boxing.

"Fritzie had a bar there with a lot of memorabilia, and I was really fascinated by all that stuff. I'd walk by and peek in at the pictures," Richard says.

The two older fighters took an interest in the teenager and started training him at a nearby boys' club. They used old school methods like having him work on the heavy bag with a string tied between his ankles, and showed him reel-to-reel fight films of themselves and Rocky Marciano. The undefeated heavyweight champion still is something of an idol to Richard.

Boxing, he says, kept him out of trouble and taught him important life lessons, like respect and discipline. Those life lessons became invaluable when boxing turned into a nighttime security gig, and eventually a professional business and fruitful career.

By 19, Richard had fought in two Golden Gloves championships. Despite losing both, he had caught the eye of a spectator who offered him a job performing bodyguard services in the evening. He began learning the trade under a former Secret Service agent, and at his encouragement, attended the Executive Protection Academy.

Over the next dozen years, Richard performed high profile, professional protections for CEO's and celebrities, including Jane Fonda and Whoopi Goldberg. When the company he was working for sold in 1997, he struck out on his own. He had \$50,000 in start-up money saved and a solid client base. No bank, though, would give him a line of credit.

Today, that company, USA Special Services, he says is one of, if not the fastest growing companies in the industry. With annual gross revenue well into the millions, Richard says the business boasts more millionaire and billionaire clients than any other in the industry, many of whom he can't name because of contractual agreements.

From an unassuming and largely nondescript office in the corner of a shopping plaza in Imperial, the company arranges its security-related services, including protection details in some of the most dangerous parts of the world. The company relies on

about a dozen individuals with special operations military training; former Navy Seals and Secret Service agents Richard describes as "extremely intelligent and extremely dangerous."

If there's a central goal to this business, though, a mission statement that's made it a successful enterprise, it's the circumvention of violence altogether. Abroad, Richard says that means forward scouting, and canceling a trip if an analysis reveals that violence, drug cartel activity, or kidnappings are on the rise. At home, that can mean overseeing the termination of an employee, including one with a history of violence.

USA Special Services also advises on the implementation of a successful armed security plan, in addition to a wide range of services, including executive protection, armed security, electronic debugging, phone line detection, investigations, and background checks.

Increasingly, Richard says, companies are demanding armed security as more incidents of work-related violence end up on evening newscasts. He says that in the past five years he's seen many companies switch from unarmed to armed security.

However, as more armed guards find their way into business environments, and lawmakers consider providing funds to put more armed guards in schools, supervisors and managers also need to be educated and trained on how to handle and detect workplace violence, Richard says. His own company handles armed security by going into businesses, conducting security evaluations, and putting together an "elite" team of personnel. These aren't the minimum wage security guards most people are used to seeing.

"I want no part of that," he says.

These also aren't bodyguards; the type who are quicker to use their fists than their heads, and who have a tendency of attracting lawsuits.

"You have the physical ability, but not everyone has the mental

ability to handle that situation," he says. "These guys, they stand there and look big, but they don't have any training. When something goes down, they don't know how to handle it. They handle it by hitting somebody."

As a cocky young boxer, Richard got a personal lesson in discretion when he volunteered for a fight at the Western Penitentiary. Taking on a former Philadelphia gang member serving three consecutive life sentences, he came away with three broken ribs and the worst beating of his life. Richard later learned his opponent whiled away his days punching cracks into the cement wall of his cell.

"That was stupid on my part because there was no benefit," he says. "Sometimes you just need to back up and evaluate and ask whether it's worth it."

Having applied that life and professional lesson to work, Richard says the company has earned a distinction attracting both the best talent among contractors and top clients, in an industry in which reputation is everything.

"It's not something you advertise," he says. "It's all referrals, from celebrities, attorneys, corporations, and law firms."

A few years ago, he says such a recommendation came from the Secret Service, as Pittsburgh was preparing to host the G20 Summit. Richard says they provided executive protection for five dignitaries, and ended up demonstrating bomb-debugging techniques for a newscast.

"I was really proud of that and to be recommended," he says.

Richard says he hasn't forgotten where he comes from, and makes frequent drives through his old neighborhood. He also tries to give back to the community where he sees a need, particularly when it

comes to a struggling young person. Via a close friendship with an individual with Down's syndrome, he got involved with the Imperial-based TC House charity, which is seeking to build a home for adults with special needs. When he heard about a family with a son with cancer that was struggling financially, he bought them a washer and dryer, which they couldn't afford.

Earlier this year, Richard moved his company to Imperial, not far from where his wife, Denise Garrett Smith, graduated from West Allegheny High School. Their two children graduated from Moon. His son, Zachary, works for the company, while his daughter, Kelsey, is starting a nonprofit that trains rescue dogs.

Richard says he's done a lot of crazy things in life, and that he's been in situations in countries where he thought he'd never get out, but that his training and life lessons kept both him and his clients safe.

"Not everyone can do it. You never know until you get into that situation," he says, "9-11 changed the world and the way we think. We will never forget."

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related violence  
end up on evening  
newscasts.

## Brief Overview of the Home Improvement Consumer Protection Act

Most reputable home improvement contractors know that they have to register with the Bureau of Consumer Protection in the office of the Pennsylvania Attorney General as required by the Pennsylvania Home Improvement Consumer Protection Act (HICPA). But many are unaware of some of the other important requirements of HICPA.

For instance, contractors must now include their PA registration number in all advertisements (print, radio, Internet, or TV) and on all printed materials. These include contracts, estimates, proposals, brochures, pamphlets, signs, letterhead, and business cards. Any contract over \$500 must be legible, in writing, and, at a minimum, must contain certain pieces of information.

There are also a number of voidable provisions if contained in the contract, a complete review of which is beyond the scope of this article. A contract that does not comply with the specific requirements of HICPA is not valid or enforceable against the owner. However, HICPA will not allow a consumer to be unjustly enriched by accepting services, then voiding the contract for failure to comply with HICPA, and subsequently refusing to pay for the services provided by the contractor.

HICPA applies to home improvement contractors that contract for over \$5,000 and under \$50 million in home improvement contracts annually. A violation of HICPA can have serious consequences for a home improvement contractor, including criminal and civil violations. A violation of HICPA is now also a violation of the Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Law (UTCPL).

HICPA initially came about as the result of unscrupulous home improvement contractors preying on homeowners - particularly the elderly - by offering home improvement services, taking payment for such services in advance, and either not completing the services or performing the services in an unworkmanlike fashion. However, a potentially unintended result of HICPA has been to punish reputable contractors for failing to have their contracts in full compliance with HICPA.

Any home improvement contractor in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania should meet with an attorney experienced in this area of law to review their contracts, advertisements, and printed materials to make sure the material is in compliance with HICPA.

*This information is provided courtesy of Brian E. Koeberle, Esq. He is a West Hills based attorney practicing in the areas of Small Business Representation, Wills & Estate Planning, Real Estate Law, and Sports & Entertainment Law. He can be reached at (412) 788-9554 or [brian@koeberlelaw.com](mailto:brian@koeberlelaw.com). [www.koeberlelaw.com](http://www.koeberlelaw.com)*

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Can't wait for spring and warmer temperatures to get outside and onto the ballfield? Then come down to the Oakdale Community Center and sign up for our baseball and softball programs. OYL offers a great league atmosphere for ages 5 -18 that includes: T-ball (5 by Aug 31), Slow and fast pitch softball; Instructional thru Colt League baseball.

Our league has clinics, extended play for All Star and club teams during the summer months, and a great fall program that includes softball and baseball and a chance to compete in the WPISL.

The Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Softball League (WPISL) is a competitive slow pitch softball fall league offered by various school districts. It is recognized but not affiliated with the West Allegheny School District.

Please feel free to check out our Website or contact us by phone 724-693-8951. <http://www.leaguelineup.com/oyl>

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YOUTH LEAGUE

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Join us on the following sign-up dates:  
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Saturday - February 1 - 1 pm - 4 pm  
Wednesday - February 5 - 6 pm - 7 pm  
Saturday - February 8 - 1 pm - 4 pm

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## Parkway West CTC

### New Programs Off to a Great Start

Electrical Systems Technology is one of four construction-related programs for students to explore. Students who elect to continue their education in this program will learn the basics of electrical systems through layout, assembly, installation, wiring, maintenance, and trouble-shooting for residential, commercial, and/or light industrial locations. In addition, students will be educated on PLC's and transformers. Safety is first and foremost in this class. Adherence to the National Electric Code is emphasized as well as trade safety.

The new Veterinary Technology program teaches students how to keep proper medical records, schedule appointments, and offer client education. In addition, students will practice laboratory procedures, assist with nursing duties, prepare for surgeries, and assist during a routine exam. Students will also acquire the skills appropriate for grooming and daily care of an animal.

### PWCTC Career Exploration Day

Career Exploration Days are set aside for visiting students to try a potential career of interest at Parkway West CTC.

Students from 12 sending school districts will visit two programs of their choice on Wednesday, February 5.

Visitors will have about an hour in each selected program to experience different forms of education and learn about PWCTC. Hands-on related activities are created for each of the visitors to experience. It's an excellent experience for any student, as they will have the opportunity to network with industry professionals who just happen to teach their intended careers. PWCTC offers industry certifications and additional scholarship opportunities. Best of all, there's no tuition cost. Visit [parkwaywest.org](http://parkwaywest.org) for more information.

### New Certifications Added to Programs

PWCTC's Health Assistant program offers many options for future health professionals. These include CPR for health care providers, PA State Nurse Aid Registry (CNA), and Personal Care Home Direct Care Staff for first and second year students. Finally, first year senior students may take courses to earn either their Pharmacy Technician certification (CPhT) or Phlebotomy Technician certification (CPT). Juniors and seniors in the program will work with real patients at real medical sites with real professionals.

In addition, select Health Assistant and Public Safety Technology students may qualify to attend CCAC two days a week and earn college credits while attending PWCTC. The courses can be used to get a jump start on an associate's degree from CCAC or be transferred to most colleges in the region and across the state.

Students wanting to be nail technicians can enroll as a Nail Tech student through PWCTC's Cosmetology program. Students can acquire the amount of hours needed to sit for the PA State Board Licensing exam to be a certified Nail Technician. Learn basic manicures, pedicures, and nail art. Also learn to apply acrylics and to adhere gels.

Many students have gone through PWCTC's Cosmetology program and have earned their PA Cosmetology Licensure after acquiring the needed 1,250 hours to sit for the state board exam. For an additional 500 hours, students may continue their education to acquire their cosmetology teacher's license, should they want to teach their profession. Should a nail tech student earn licensure, they too would be eligible at a state approved school to teach students how to become nail technicians.

## Pittsburgh Technical Institute

### PTI Opens New Energy Technology Center



**ABOVE:** Senator Matt Smith, PTI President Greg DeFeo, Congressman Tim Murphy, and Allegheny County Conference on Community Development CEO Dennis Yablonsky cut the ribbon to PTI's new technology center.

On November 7, state representatives, civic leaders, energy sector professionals, and regional business interests gathered at Pittsburgh Technical Institute's campus in North Fayette for a ceremonial ribbon cutting in front of the school's new \$3.5 million Energy Technology Center. The new facility, which features oil and gas electronics, HVAC, and welding labs, as well as \$750,000 in equipment donated by private companies, will be used in part to train students to fill jobs in the region's burgeoning oil and gas industry.

Earlier this year, PTI announced that it would begin offering a certificate in welding technology and add an oil and gas electronics concentration to its electronics engineering technology program. The school says that it is the first in the area to offer the latter. Students in both programs will train in the new facility.

Among those recruited for the school's inaugural oil and gas electronics program was Bryan Black. The New Kensington native switched after initially enrolling in PTI's Smart Building Technology program. Now, instead of learning how to integrate and manage centrally controlled lighting, security, computer, and audio/video installations, Brian is learning how to use equipment and controls like the Emerson FloBoss. Academic Chair Dave Becker says the FloBoss emulates equipment found across the vast infrastructure of pipelines and compressor stations operated by upstream, midstream, and downstream companies.

PTI's new programs prompted McDonald resident Jacque King to make an even more drastic career change. Before enrolling in the welding program, the 49-year-old taught business courses at Westminster College. He left when the school didn't offer him tenure, and enrolled at PTI. He says welding is a field that's long interested him, and that he's hoping to make three times what he was earning as a teacher. He aspires to eventually become a welding inspector on a gas pipeline.

**RIGHT:** PTI student Bryan Black with Academic Chair Dave Becker.





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# West Allegheny Youth Soccer Association

## SPRING 2014 REGISTRATION

Season runs March 29 through mid-May

**DEADLINE: JANUARY 31st**

Registration for In-house players only  
will be accepted until February 15 with a \$10 late fee.

Child must be 4 years old by 7/31/13

**NO EXCEPTIONS**

Visit [www.leaguelineup.com/westasoccer](http://www.leaguelineup.com/westasoccer) for age chart, more information  
and many changes

U5/U6 Boys & Girls coed	Wednesday 6:00 – 7:00 pm	Saturday 10:00 – 11:00 am	Youthtowne	\$60.00
U8 Boys & Girls coed*	Tuesday 6:00 – 7:00 pm	Saturday 11:00 – noon	Youthtowne	\$75.00
U10 Boys and Girls coed*	Monday 6:15 – 7:15 pm	Saturday 8:30-9:30 am	Argenta	\$75.00
*U8/U10 additional skills training by Youth Elite Soccer	Thursday 6:15 - 7:15 pm	6 sessions	Argenta	Included!
Travel (U11 and above)	TBD practice day and location	Sunday afternoon games	(U11/12) 2 additional skill sessions by YES	\$85.00

## Ways to Register:

- Go to: [www.pa-wallegheny.sportsaffinity.com](http://www.pa-wallegheny.sportsaffinity.com)  
(Register on-line and SAVE \$5.00)
- Print registration form and mail to P.O. Box  
- Sat., January 25,  
at King's Family Restaurant, Imperial, from 11 am - 1 pm

Questions Call Heather Chappel (724) 693-2536 OR Michelle Abbott (724) 693-8073

[www.leaguelineup.com/westasoccer](http://www.leaguelineup.com/westasoccer)



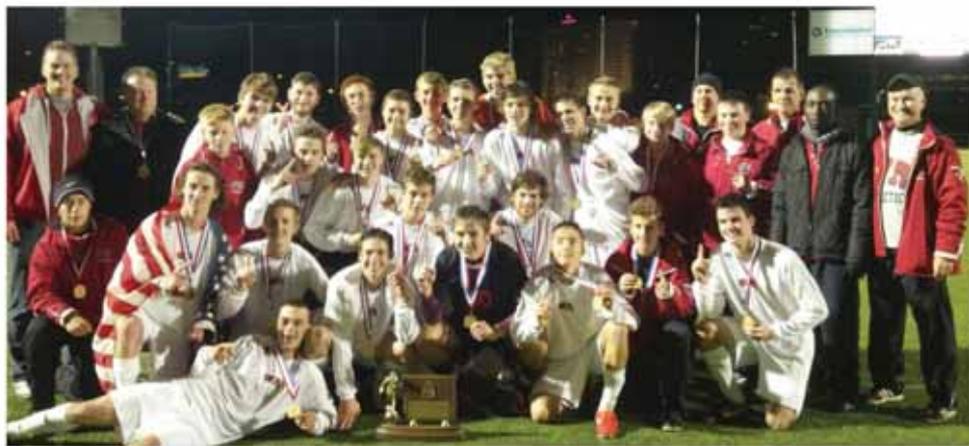
## Soccer Season of Firsts

Congratulations to the West Allegheny boys' soccer team for a sensational season of firsts as they clenched the WPIAL title and claimed an impressive second place PIAA state finish.

As the PIAA soccer season concluded on November 16 with games in Hershey, Pennsylvania, West Allegheny came up short in the final game versus Holy Ghost Preparatory School. With an undeniable effort to gain the edge during regulation play, the Indians were left with a 1-0 defeat in the first overtime

period. With an overall record of 21-1-3, the Indians defined their history-making season with plaudits that included the team's first undefeated regular season, winning the program's first WPIAL title, and advancing to the PIAA Championship. What can be highlighted prior to the title match was an eight-game streak of shutouts, allowing only five goals throughout the year.

"It was a great season with few disappointments," stated head coach Kevin Amos. "On the last day of the season, we were just a



Soccer team celebrates West Allegheny's first WPIAL Championship.

little bit unlucky. It was a pleasure to see these boys grow together as a team and individually. This team set a very high bar for future teams to try and exceed. These boys will be remembered as one of

the greatest soccer teams. For the seniors moving on, I wish them the best of luck and I will miss them."

Although the accomplishments were a team effort, the following individuals were recognized for their outstanding contributions:

**All-State:** Zach Graziani.

**All-WPIAL**

**AA:** Zach Graziani, Josh Kolarac, Nick

Jaroszynski, Collin Wurst, Mike Cummings, Spencer Wolfe.

**All-Conference – Fabulous 15 AA Section 5:** Zach Graziani (player of the year), Josh Kolarac, Nick Jaroszynski, Collin Wurst, Mike Cummings, Spencer Wolfe, Cooper Amos (honorable mention), Kevin Amos (coach of the year).

The team was led by head coach Kevin Amos and assistant coaches John Aromando, Elliott Constantine, Tom Jackson, Warren Kelley, Derek McCracken, and Luke Navickas.

## Middle School Students Place First in Sumdog Competition

For the second year in a row, a team of 37 students from West Allegheny Middle School placed first in an online math competition sponsored by Sumdog, a web-based provider of math tutorials and challenges. As a team, the students answered 16,222 questions correctly and won both a daily high score and overall contest. With a total of 1,829 students from 18 schools in Allegheny County participating, Horizons teacher Jon Denk and eighth grade math teacher Ryan Cleary encouraged the students to challenge themselves throughout the weeklong competition.

Individually, eighth grader Billy Robertson answered 993 out of 1,000 questions correctly, earning him third place overall. Additional members of the winning team included: Anden Acitelli, Michael Bagnell, Michael Behr, Chloe Black, Michael Cook, Curtis Cowher, Sarah Cummings, Robert DeFazio, Mark

Evans, Elise Fitsioris, Selena Garcia, Wade Gunderson, Jenna Haston, Zach Hoge, Connor Johnsen, Victoria Juzwick, Jared Konop, Caitlin Kutzavitch, Brianna Medved, Arielle Moulinie, Avery Naleppa, Caleb Parrish, Jordan Puskar, Dylan Rossman, Victoria Sadauskas, Logan Scheider, Gregory Schriener, Patrick Shearer, Aaron Silvis, Austen Simon, Grace Sollosi, Brianna Watters, Lacey Wilkinson, Olivia Younger, Jennifer Zelesnik, and Rachel Zelesnik.

Sumdog rewarded each team member with a complimentary subscription to the online site and middle school principal Rick Smith provided each student with a T-shirt.

Sumdog is designed for students of all abilities and offers self-paced learning in the form of entertaining yet challenging games and tasks. To strengthen a student's foundation in math skills, the lessons are based on the Common Core Standards.

## High School Counselor Named Committee Chair

West Allegheny High School counselor Julie Sitko was named to serve as committee chair on counselor education for the Pennsylvania Association for College Admission Counseling (PACAC). The goal of her ad hoc committee was to explore establishing a PACAC presence in graduate counselor education programs throughout the Commonwealth.

Sitko received a grant to attend the PACAC annual conference at Seven Springs, where she presented the committee's work. The presentation was so well received that her committee was granted a one-year extension to continue working to incorporate a college counseling curriculum into graduate coursework in Pennsylvania. The goals this year focus on connecting with the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) schools, as well as writing a curriculum that will be used by graduate schools in Pennsylvania.

In addition to her ad hoc committee work, Sitko was selected to spend four days as a faculty member at the PACAC Summer Institute, held at Bucknell University, in July. She was one of two public school counselors on faculty who spoke to new college admissions professionals and high school counselors on a variety of topics that included the high school profile, first generation college students, and the college application process.



## Elementary Teacher Receives "Champions of Change" Award

Donaldson Elementary School teacher Leah Vestal received the 2013 "Champions of Change" award at a luncheon hosted by the Allegheny Intermediate Unit's (AIU) Center for Creativity and its partner Common Sense Media. The ceremony was in honor of Connected Educator Month and was held on October 21.

Champions of Change is a program promoted by the White House, which recognizes educators who "are doing extraordinary things in their communities to out-innovate, out-educate, and out-build the rest of the world." The award acknowledges those educators and leaders who use a creative approach to enhance learning, embrace technology, and seek new and effective ways to engage children in the learning process.

Vestal was recognized for assisting the West Allegheny administration in facilitating a Summer Technology Training initiative for teachers. The initiative included determining teachers' technology needs and competencies, and designing



Donaldson Elementary School teacher, Leah Vestal, center, receives the Champions of Change award, accompanied by Donaldson principal, Patricia Nolan, left, and superintendent, Dr. John S. DiSanti, right.

training sessions that utilize technology to increase student engagement. Upon completion of training, teachers' skills were evaluated and Digital Driver's Licenses (DDL) were awarded. Teachers with a DDL were then encouraged to submit a Technology Opportunity Proposal (TOP) requesting new technology for their classrooms. These District-sponsored TOP grants resulted in 14 teachers receiving new technology, including iPads, Chromebooks, and Surface RTs, which ultimately will support the educators in their efforts to engage learners and raise student achievement.

"Mrs. Vestal is very passionate about providing dynamic classroom learning experiences that would not otherwise be possible without innovative technologies. That is why she is so committed to sharing her expertise with colleagues and supporting their efforts to provide highly engaging learning opportunities using digital delivery methodology. She is a true 'Champion of Change' for our District," said superintendent, Dr. John S. DiSanti.

# West Allegheny to Host Workcamp

During the week of June 22-28, 2014, West Allegheny School District will host youth groups from across the country through a new community organization, West Allegheny Workcamp. This group, which operates under the auspices of Group Mission Trips, will bring together upwards of 450 youth workers and their adult leaders who will spend their time in the community engaging in simple acts of kindness through a variety of basic home repair projects, helping as many as 75 local families with home repairs at no cost to the recipients.

Group Mission Trips has over 30 years of experience coordinating work camps and overseeing nearly 25,000 volunteers nationwide each summer.

The youths and their leaders will set up home for the week at West Allegheny Middle School, where they will eat and sleep. The District will be fully reimbursed by the organization, and its national affiliate, Group Mission Trips. Each participant pays for his/her own travel to and from camp, as well as the registration fee, which covers the cost of food, lodging, programming, insurance, and a portion of the project materials.

Several local people formed West Allegheny Workcamp, which is not affiliated with West Allegheny School District, earlier this year. The organization is operating as a nonprofit group through the West Allegheny Ministerial Association (WAMA), where donations can be sent. The organization

needs to raise funds for the supplies necessary to complete the projects. Such projects may include interior and exterior painting, basic porch and wheelchair ramp construction and repair, winterization, and other projects within the ability of teenagers.

"Our District is delighted to collaborate with the West Allegheny Workcamp and Group Mission Trips to offer support and assistance to members of our community who are in need," stated West Allegheny superintendent, Dr. John S. DiSanti. "Just as important, we are demonstrating our commitment to the concept of 'service above self.'"

West Allegheny Workcamp is seeking donations, volunteers, and residents to help in a variety of ways and connect with the campers during their visit. For more information, visit [www.westworkcamp.org](http://www.westworkcamp.org).



## Applications Being Accepted

Applications are being accepted for elderly, low-income, and disabled families who are in need of home repairs. Both labor and materials are free to qualifying households. To learn how your home might be included, please e-mail: [info@westworkcamp.org](mailto:info@westworkcamp.org) or send a letter to West Allegheny Workcamp, P.O. Box 787, Imperial, PA 15126 to obtain an application.



## West Allegheny to Host Gold Card Club Holiday Breakfast

Members of the West Allegheny School District Gold Card Club are invited to a complimentary holiday breakfast on Friday, December 13, to celebrate the season and enjoy the talents of West Allegheny students. The event will begin at 8 a.m. in the high school cafeteria.

Following breakfast, attendees will be escorted to the auditorium to enjoy a holiday program showcasing the creativity and talent of students beginning at 9:30 a.m. Reservations are required by December 9, and should be made by calling (724) 695-3422.

The District welcomes new members into its Gold Card Club. Any district resident age 60 or older interested in joining can register and pick up a card at the District office at Donaldson Elementary School. The Gold Card entitles members to free admission for all events sponsored by the District for which there is generally a charge. These events include all concerts, plays, science fairs, art shows, and regular season athletic activities. Membership does not, however, provide free admission to fundraising events sponsored by booster organizations, such as spaghetti dinners or other activities.



Eric Finkelstein



Grace Rosus

## Band Students Selected to Represent West Allegheny

The West Allegheny arts department is proud to recognize four band members for being selected to showcase their talents in Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) performances.

On October 8, over 400 students from 60 schools auditioned at South Fayette High School for the PMEA Honors Band. The four students selected to represent West Allegheny include twelfth graders Eric Finkelstein, Ray Haim, and Jodi Kutzner, and eleventh grader Grace Rosus. These students practiced every Saturday in November with world-renowned composer and conductor, Sam Hazo, to prepare for a performance at Carnegie Music Hall on November 24.

Finkelstein was also selected from over 150 students from 60 schools for the PMEA Honors Jazz Band. He will be rehearsing with world-renowned conductors Eric DeFate and Dr. James Moore, on December 13 and 14, and will perform in a concert on December 14. The auditions were held on October 28 at Pine Richland High School.



Jodi Kutzner



Ray Haim

## Middle School Students Participate in Mucho Macho Festival

Four middle school students participated in the Mucho Macho Festival on November 5 at North Hills Middle School. The event was sponsored by the American Choral Directors Association to showcase male singers. The participating students included eighth grader Will Wiechelt, seventh grader Joseph Clutter, and sixth graders Matthew Zaletski and Hayden Shipley.

## West Allegheny Presents Fall Play

West Allegheny Arts presented this year's fall play "Alice in Wonderland" / "Through the Looking Glass" on October 26 - 27, and November 2 in the Stewart Morgan Auditorium at the high school. A cast of more than 30 middle and high school students was selected through auditions, and featured seniors Carli Cardillo as Alice, Maura Vulakovich as the Red Queen, Jeff Biers as the Caterpillar and Humpty Dumpty, Angela Mazzocco as the Duchess and Tiger-Lily, and Ryan Borgo as Cheshire Cat, White King, and a variety of zany characters she meets on her journeys.

Preparations for the performances began in June, with stage and tech crews designing and creating the set and the cast rehearsing characterization and dramatization. This year's production also featured student make-up, costume, and special effects crews.

High school English teacher Stephanie White served as director, and high school media teacher Michael Shaffer filled the roles of assistant director and technical director.



Students, left to right, Carli Cardillo, Ryan Borgo, Annie Raglow, and Gabriella Hatch take to the stage in a scene from "Through the Looking Glass."

## Forensic Team Earns Membership in National 200 Club

The West Allegheny High School Forensic Speech and Debate team has earned membership in the National Forensic League's (NFL) 200 Club and was ranked among the top five percent of schools nationwide. This recognition reflects the points and degrees West Allegheny has earned based on competitive and service-related activities for the 2012-2013 school year.

"This milestone is remarkable because it demonstrates outstanding commitment to teaching students essential life skills, including communication, research, listening, writing, and organization," states J. Scott Wunn, NFL executive director.

Michael Shaffer is the West Allegheny Forensic head coach and Speech and Drama coach. Michael Quinn is assistant coach and Congress and Debate coach.

# World Peace Day Inspires Eighth Graders

Eighth grade students in Deborah Kazar's English and pre-AP English classes dove into the school year with a project-based learning activity designed to promote world peace. While learning about the United Nations' Peace Day, which is celebrated around the world every September 21, students watched a documentary by Jeremy Gilley that launched the movement. The inspiring piece detailed his efforts to create awareness of this day and how he mobilized thousands to implement active peace-making activities around the world.

Students brainstormed ideas on how to promote awareness of Peace Day throughout the community, and worked on a variety of student-driven projects, including: generating Youtube videos, sharing the message on various social media sites, creating community posters, designing T-shirts, and posting signs along the high school campus drive. Students also wrote thank you letters to present-day peacemakers and individuals who make a positive change in their communities.



Victoria Hensler, Tori Juzwick, and Courtney Hurey stake Peace Day posters along the road on the high school campus.

# PA School Performance Profile Provides Insights

The Pennsylvania Department of Education recently released the PA School Performance Profile. This public site (<http://www.paschoolperformance.org>) provides an academic performance score for public schools in the state. This performance score is designed to inform the public of school performance, provide a building level score for educators as part of their evaluation system, allow the public to compare schools across the state, and give schools a methodology to analyze their strengths and needs.

While public schools across the state have previously received designations under No Child Left Behind such as Made Adequate Yearly Progress, Making Progress, Warning, School Improvement, and Corrective Action, schools will now receive an academic performance score based upon many data points. Test scores, progress in closing achievement gaps, and degrees of student growth over time are factored into the scoring, while other identifiers of high achieving schools such as graduation, promotion, attendance rates, and evidence of rigorous courses are also considered. Schools may also earn extra points beyond the 100-point scoring system for those students who have earned advanced scores on the state, industry, and Advanced Placement exams. In addition to the scoring aspect of the site, the public can compare schools within and across the state.

"The School Performance Profile uniquely evaluates a range of data to measure academic strength," said Dr. Chris Assetta, assistant to the superintendent for curriculum and instruction at West Allegheny. "The key aspect of this benchmark is that it affords us the opportunity to acknowledge West Allegheny's strengths as well as use it as a tool for improvement."

West Allegheny administrators and staff have begun to review the PA Performance Profile data and calculations. The District is pleased to note that all buildings are showing moderate to significant evidence that the schools are exceeding the standards for PA Academic Achievement, Closing the Achievement Gap, and Academic Growth. Grade levels and departments are meeting to analyze the data and identify action plans to address the specific strengths and needs of each grade level. The focus of the data analysis sessions is to identify strategies to promote increased student performance on the PSSA and Keystone exams. Performance of the West Allegheny Schools is listed below:

Donaldson Elementary	96.9
McKee Elementary	94.1
Wilson Elementary*	95.2
West Allegheny Middle School	80.5
West Allegheny High School	93.9

**90-100 Range:** Indicates significant evidence that the school exceeded the standards for PA Academic Achievement, Closing the Achievement Gap, and Academic Growth.

**80- 89.9 Range:** Indicates moderate evidence that the school exceeded the standard for PA Academic Achievement, Closing the Achievement Gap, and Academic Growth.

**\* Title I Distinction as High Progress:** For 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years: Highest 5% Title I schools based on aggregate PVAAS growth score in reading and mathematics for PSSA and/or algebra I/literature for Keystone Exams for all students.

# Students Explore Careers at Pittsburgh Technical Institute

West Allegheny sophomores traveled to Pittsburgh Technical Institute in North Fayette on October 9 for a day of hands-on career exploration. Tenth graders were divided into teams and spent the day rotating through four programs that have proven popular as career interests for many students.

In each program, students participated in an activity that allowed them to experience that field firsthand. For instance, in a criminal justice session, students interacted with video simulations of real-life crime scenes and learned the correct way to gather evidence. Other career fields included electronics (with a green energy focus), computer aided drafting, and nursing.

In keeping with the District's emphasis on career exploration and community involvement throughout high school, the West Allegheny High School Guidance Department partnered with Pittsburgh Technical Institute for the sixth year to sponsor this event.



Sophomores Donald Petrocelli, left, and Michael Messner participate in Career Explore activities at PTI.

## College Fair Offers Valuable Insights

The West Allegheny High School Guidance Department hosted an in-house college fair for current juniors and seniors on October 10. With more than 80 schools and a selection of military professionals on hand, students were afforded the opportunity to gather key insights and information, speak with admissions representatives, and inquire about the admissions process, majors, housing, financial aid, and athletic programs. For many students, this was an invaluable introduction to collegiate offerings and opportunities.

The fair was organized by counselor Julie Sitko, and guidance office student/clerical aide Renee Bollman.



Seniors, left to right, Jamie Williams, Julie Snatchko and Jenelle Slodki visit with a representative from Slippery Rock University.

# Levee Project Builds Engineering Skills

The West Allegheny High School civil engineering and architecture students participated in the National Guard Engineering Education Program presented this fall. This program partners with local high schools across the country to teach students about engineering design and failure.

As engineers play an important role in the National Guard, they assist local areas during natural disasters and protect America's interests overseas. Accomplishing this dual mission, serving community and country, relies heavily on the skills and capabilities of National Guard engineers.

As a learning exercise, the National Guard provided industrial arts and technology teacher Martin Lestander with educational material to create miniature levees designed and built to save a model city. Through this hands-on learning opportunity, students discovered the importance of structural stability and the role levees play in preventing potentially disastrous floods.



Civil engineering and architecture students, left to right, David Waxter, Nick Hayes, Nick Venturini, Connor Browning, and Zack Brandy test their levee design.

## Read for the Record Encourages Kindergarten Students

On October 3, members of West Allegheny High School's Future Educators Association (FEA) participated in Jumpstart's Read for the Record®. The nationally celebrated event brings adults and children together in an effort to jumpstart a child's future through reading. Kindergarten classes at Donaldson and McKee Elementary Schools were visited by FEA members who read the students this year's book choice, "Otis," by Loren Long, and led students in several book-related activities.

High school teacher Jennifer Jones is the FEA advisor.

Juniors Amanda McGeary, left, and Janell Lulkovitz, right, read to kindergarten students at McKee Elementary.



## Willkommen zu Oktoberfest!



Students, left to right, Reanna Turner, Megan Nixon, Nicole Snatchko, Angeline Peng, and Jordan Serventi take part in singing traditional German songs.

The West Allegheny High School German classes celebrated Oktoberfest with traditional songs, dances, and foods on October 11. Under the direction of German teachers Katie Zanella and Karen Estermyer, students sang spirited songs of camaraderie and joined together to perform the Chicken Dance (a German Polka) and the Das Fliegerlied. Students also enjoyed sampling such cultural dishes as bratwurst, German potato salad, and potato pancakes, and were invited to participate in a sauerkraut eating contest.

## West Allegheny School Board Reorganizes

At their annual reorganization meeting on December 4, 2013, the West Allegheny Board of School Directors welcomed three new members. Commencing their four-year terms are:

### Mr. George Bartha

#### Oakdale Region 1

*Education:* Bachelor of science from Indiana University of Pennsylvania with a double major in management information systems and accounting, MBA from Widener University

*Profession:* Director of infrastructure operations at Bayer

*Family:* Wife, Kathy; daughter, Michelle, graduated from West Allegheny in 2012; son, Alex, graduated in 2013.

### Mr. James "Chip" McCarthy

#### North Fayette Region 2

*Education:* Bachelor of arts in accounting from Washington & Jefferson College, MBA in finance from Duquesne University's John F. Donahue Graduate School of Business

*Profession:* Investment banking, public finance

*Family:* Wife, Andrea, daughters Morgan (age 4), Reese and Mia (twins age 3).

### Mrs. Tracy Pustover

#### North Fayette Region 2

*Education:* Clarion University of Pennsylvania

*Profession:* Former client service manager and corporate sales manager. Currently a stay-at-home parent.

*Family:* Husband, Joe, children Ava and Joseph (twins age 10).

A sincere thank you is also extended to outgoing School Board members for their commitment and dedication to the West Allegheny students, staff, and community:

Mrs. Linda Diffendal (2011-2013)

Mr. Eugene Sciulli, vice president (2009-2013)

Mr. John Scott (1993-2013)



## Sixth Grade Walkers Raise Over \$5,100 for Charity

The lingering drizzle did little to dampen the spirits of West Allegheny Middle School students on the sixth grade Shark Team who raised over \$5,100 for the National Honor Society (NHS) holiday gift basket project by participating in a Walk-a-thon, "Trail for Toys." The walk was held at the West Allegheny High School on October 11.

Students solicited sponsors to donate money for toys and gifts that will go to the children of District families in need of help. Using toys as the theme, students competed in teams named for toys to raise the most money. The winning team earned a pizza/sundae party hosted by the teachers. Prizes were also awarded to teams for best costume, poster, and cheer.

With the funds collected, the students and teachers will shop for toys and clothes, which will be gift wrapped and added to the NHS holiday distribution. Any money not needed for the NHS program will be donated to the West Allegheny Family Support Committee.

Middle school teachers coordinating the event included Rachel Adair, Tom Burke, Mary Damratoski, Bill Marx, Lisa Midgley, and Valerie Meehan.



Team Crayon raised the most money for the Trail for Toys Walk-a-thon, with a total of \$946. The team consisted of, front: Britney Wilson, Sarah Spokart, Mia Palmer, Cayla Chiodo; back: Merrin Prevade, Emma Hamm, Annie Koester, Olivia Nicholson and Mia Bizzari.

## Wilson Students Transported Back in Time

Wilson Elementary School students experienced firsthand what life was like before electricity, stoves, and computers as they celebrated Love Our Log House Week, October 14-18.

The historic log house on school property provided the backdrop for a variety of activities throughout the week. Highlights from Wilson Log House Day on Friday, October 18 included more than 20 hands-on activities that ranged from ink-making and quilting to weaving and Civil War reenactments.

Food preparation proved to be a challenge for students as they experienced the limitations of making funnel cakes, butter, applesauce, and popcorn without modern cooking conveniences.

Third grade students Nathaniel Lowman, Alan Berlinger and Hayden Elm learn to write with ink and quills.



## Donaldson Elementary Assists Those in Need

The lessons learned by Donaldson students and teachers alike extended far beyond the classroom this fall. Through their dedication and hard work, they have organized three inspiring acts of generosity.

First, who would have thought that scissors in the hands of elementary students would make for a selfless act. When several Donaldson teachers decided to organize a Relay For Life team to benefit the American



Kindergarten student Ethan Rineer gets a little help cutting Ellen Campbell's hair.

Cancer Society, kindergarten teacher Ellen Campbell knew immediately how she could help. Through *Cut for a Cause*, she raffled the chance to cut her hair, which she had been growing for several years in anticipation of donating it to the Pantene Beautiful Lengths program. Tickets were sold to those who wished to be one of three students selected to don the scissors during a brief assembly on October 25. Students Ethan Rineer, Ally Shansky, and Gianna Giacomino were the lucky winners and assisted in clipping Campbell's three ponytails. Over \$475 was collected and will be donated to the American Cancer Society.

As a second act of generosity, Donaldson second grade teacher Cindy Hensler organized a collection of nonperishable items from District families for the *Donaldson Delivers* program. The annual food drive benefits the West Allegheny Food Pantry. Each grade adopts a month during which they are responsible for the collections. This allows for a steady donation schedule that spans eight months and a continual infusion of items for the pantry.

The *Pasta for Pennies* campaign served as the third act of kindness, which was sponsored by Donaldson Elementary, and raised a total of \$2,412 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. In addition to providing financial support for the organization, which is seeking to help people with these life-threatening illnesses, students in the top fundraising class were able to earn a pasta party, provided by the Robinson Township Olive Garden Restaurant. With a total raised of \$283, Jacqui King's fourth grade class won the pasta party. Erin Dierker, elementary English as a Second Language teacher, and Kristen Tracy, elementary home school visitor, coordinated the project.

# High School Establishes Key Connections with Check In-Check Out

For decades, educational research has supported the importance of a positive relationship between children and adult role models. In his role as high school assistant principal, Kevin McKiernan recognized this fact and applied the philosophy to West Allegheny students - many whom could benefit from a student/teacher connection.

With the help of teachers Katie Zanella and Julie Dennis, McKiernan developed the Check In-Check Out (CICO) program. This program, which was initiated in 2010, encourages "at-risk" students to check in, check out for five or ten minutes to talk about their day and set goals with their designated teacher.

"We have many teachers who naturally serve as mentors and are able to build great relationships with young students," explained McKiernan. "We also realized we weren't reaching every child. Some students just aren't into sports, band, or chorus, but still want to belong and need a positive connection to an adult in their life. We began this program with those kids in mind."

With 10 students benefiting from the program in its inaugural year, the program has since grown to reach more than 30 each

year since. In response, additional teachers have been recruited, including Mindi McFate, Mike Short, Elizabeth Shannon, and Kristin Persing.

With teacher guidance, students establish personal goals and strategies to help improve grades and keep them in school. The program is not just academic; it addresses personal and social issues as well. Zanella is confident that the program has far reaching effects.

"Helping students become more successful in school and feel more confident about their future is truly inspiring," Zanella adds. "Not everyone has to be an A+ student to be a success, but everyone has to feel accepted and believe in themselves to achieve their goals and become mature adults."

The rewards of the program were apparent from the start. Very few dropped out, grades for most improved, and students started to feel as if they belonged in the building. Other teachers, inspired by the efforts of the CICO team, also began to mentor and help troubled students.

The CICO program is now also open to any high school student who may benefit from the one-on-one connection. If interested in learning more, contact Kevin McKiernan or Katie Zanella at the high school.

## McKee Walking Club Gains Strides in Popularity

Since the start of the 2013-14 school year, McKee Elementary students have been offered a healthy and relaxing alternative to the playground thanks to Mr. Robbins' Walking Club.

Initiated by fifth grade learning support teacher Scott Robbins, the club is open to students who desire a break from the noise and activity of the playground and prefer to explore nature in the wooded setting of the school grounds. Robbins, along with aide Sharon Zysk and teacher Gwen Tate, lead the 20-minute walks. Not only do the students benefit from exercise, they also enjoy the time of quiet discussion with friends and access to teachers in a nonacademic setting.

More than 90 students have participated in the walks as the informal club continues to draw interested members.



McKee students join Scott Robbins and Gwen Tate, back row, for a walk around school grounds.

## Children's Author Visits Elementary Schools



Author Lindsay Barrett George shares her writing and artistic methods with McKee students.

Author/illustrator Lindsay Barrett George shared her passion for book creation when she visited students at the three elementary schools October 23 through 25. Known for her picture books, George has been widely praised for her accurate view of nature, evidenced by her illustrations of animals in their habitats.

George presented her interactive program to kindergarten through fifth grade. She shared illustration tips and invited students to draw with her.

"I believe every child has a story to tell . . . it's fun to help make that happen," stated George.

George's visit was arranged by elementary school librarians Denise Medwick, Beth Schultz, and Nancy Howell.

# Indians Shine and Advance through WPIAL and PIAA Play

West Allegheny sports fans had a lot to cheer about this fall, as athletes advanced through WPIAL contests and set their sights on state competitions. In addition to the boys' soccer team playing in the PIAA final championship game, cross country runners and the football team also earned their respective places in West Allegheny sports history.

## Cross Country

With the conclusion of the cross country season on November 2 at the PIAA finals in Hershey, WPIAL "AA" girls' champ Alexis O'Shea took home a third place finish in the state. Running in the top three throughout the race, O'Shea finished the challenging course strong to earn a place on the medal stand. On the boys side of the race, two medals were brought home, as Zach Salek finished fifteenth and Zack White twenty-fourth. RJ Freese finished out of medal contention, but still in the top 50 in the state.



Cross country runners, right to left, RJ Freese, Alexis O'Shea, Zack Salek and Zack White compete at PIAA finals in Hershey.

## Football

As most fall sports have concluded their seasons, West Allegheny's football team continues to make its way through the semi-final stages of the WPIAL tournament. With a 21-12 victory over the Panthers of Franklin Regional, the win sets up a second Parkway Conference showdown with previous opponent Central Valley in the WPIAL Championship at Heinz Field on November 23. In week five of the season, WA defeated

Central Valley 13-7 in a tightly contested game, one that was anticipated to be repeated at Heinz Field.

In other sports news, the winter sports season began November 18. Come and watch WA athletes apply their skills as they continue with their plans to meet personal and team goals this winter.

*David McBain*

West Allegheny Athletic Director

## Powder Puff Football Game Raises \$2,167 for Local Families

The West Allegheny junior/senior powder puff football game on November 7 raised \$2,167 for West Allegheny Christmas Families Charity.

The National Honor Society (NHS) sponsored the fundraiser, which directly benefits area families in need during the holidays. Once families are identified, students use the game profits to assemble food baskets and purchase gifts for the children.

The game resulted in a 21-7 junior win and was held at the Joe P. DeMichela Stadium.



Senior Alyssa Amadio rushes the ball during the annual powder puff football game.

## SCHOOL BOARD

Mrs. Debbie Mirich, President	Dr. Anne Bolind	Mr. Robert Ostrander	Mr. Chip McCarthy*
Mr. Eugene Sciulli, Vice-President	Mrs. Linda Diffendal	Mr. Ronald Pasic	Mrs. Tracy Pustover*
Mr. Edward Faux	Mr. Edward Faux	Mr. John Scott	
Mrs. Tracy Kosis	Mrs. Tracy Kosis	Mr. George Bartha*	

\*The newly elected members of the school board begin their terms of service on December 4, 2013.

## ADMINISTRATION

Dr. John S. DiSanti, Superintendent	Mr. Richard Smith, Middle School Principal
Dr. Christine Assetta, Assistant to the Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction	Ms. Megan Huchko, Middle School Assistant Principal
Dr. William Englert, Jr., Assistant to the Superintendent for Personnel and Student Support Services	Mrs. Patricia Nolan, Donaldson Elementary Principal
Mr. George Safin, Business Manager	Mr. Thomas Orr, McKee Elementary Principal
Mrs. Elaine Fitzgerald, Pupil Services Coordinator	Dr. Kathleen Sites, Wilson Elementary Principal
Mr. Daniel Smith, High School Principal	Mrs. Toni Baldanzi, Supervisor of Ancillary Programs
Mr. Chris Shattuck, High School Assistant Principal	
Mr. Kevin McKiernan, High School Assistant Principal	



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

### NEW SUPPORT GROUP FORMING FOR AT-HOME MOMS

The MOMS Club of Pittsburgh West hosted a chapter kickoff event at the Shawnee Pavilion at Settlers Ridge Cabin Park this fall.

“With so many mothers working outside the home, it can be extremely hard for stay-at-home mothers to meet each other and network,” said Brandi Hugar, founder and president of the new local group. “The MOMS Club allows at-home mothers, including those who have home-based businesses, or who work part time but are home with their children during the day, to get together in a supportive atmosphere.”

What makes the group unique - aside from being the only international nonprofit organization specifically for at-home mothers - is the wide range of activities allowed under the MOMS Club banner, Hugar noted.

“For example, we’re going to have monthly member socials and meetings with interesting speakers and topics for discussions, outings around town and playdates for mothers and their children, a monthly moms night out, holiday and seasonal activities and crafts, and service projects benefiting needy children in the community,” she explained.

Because the MOMS Club is a support group specifically for the mother-at-home, all meetings are held during the day, and mothers may bring children to anything the club does.

“We believe that a woman shouldn’t feel isolated just because she has children,” she continues.

All at-home mothers and children in the Robinson, Moon, and surrounding airport areas are welcome at MOMS Club activities. For more information, e-mail [momsclubpghwest@gmail.com](mailto:momsclubpghwest@gmail.com), or visit [www.momsclubpghwest.org](http://www.momsclubpghwest.org).

### SPC’S COMMUTE INFO PROGRAM SEEKS VANPOOLERS

Are you or someone you know interested in vanpooling? The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission’s CommuteInfo program is currently looking for riders for a vanpool that travels from the Weirton, West Virginia area with stops at the Imperial Park and Ride lot and the Oakland/Lawrenceville area. Riders would arrive for work by 7:20 a.m. and leave work by 4:40 p.m. There are other vanpool and carpool groups for additional commuting locations and times.

If you want to sit back and let someone else drive, contact CommuteInfo for more information at 1 (888) 819-6110 or visit [www.commuteinfo.org](http://www.commuteinfo.org).

The SPC CommuteInfo® program is designed to increase the number of people who travel to work or school by transit, carpool, vanpool, or bikepool. CommuteInfo operates the region’s carpool and vanpool program. Over 1,200 commuters a day ride in a CommuteInfo carpool or vanpool. The goal is for commuters living, working, or attending school within the 10-county SPC region (including Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Washington, and Westmoreland counties) to choose ridesharing at least twice a week.

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## LIHEAP APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE FOR HEATING BILLS

Applications for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) are now being accepted. The federally funded program offers low-income residents assistance in the form of crisis grants as well as cash grants, sent directly to the utility company.

Individuals earning 150 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for assistance through LIHEAP. That translates to \$17,235 for one person, \$23,265 for a family of two, \$29,295 for a family of three, \$35,325 for a family of four, and \$41,355 for a family of five.

State Senator Matt Smith urges people to contact his office at (412) 262-2260 for an application and assistance in completing it. Applications may also be submitted online at [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us) or through the county assistance office.

### STATE SENATOR MATT SMITH

1009 Beaver Grade Road, Ste. 230  
Moon Township, PA 15108  
(412) 262-2260  
<http://www.pasenate.com/MSmith>



### STATE REPRESENTATIVE MARK MUSTIO

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Moon Township, PA 15108  
(412) 262-3780  
[www.repmustio.com](http://www.repmustio.com)



## WEST ALLEGHENY MEALS ON WHEELS

Volunteers are needed to deliver meals one or two times a month to local residents. This flexible, volunteer opportunity can provide an excellent way to help others. If you can give a few hours a couple of days each month, please call Sue Wise, (724) 693-0844 or Lena Cool, (724) 695-2836.

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*J.R. Mangan*

J.R. Mangan

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# Western Allegheny Community Library



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[Westernalleghenylibrary.org](http://Westernalleghenylibrary.org)

At this time of year, generosity and giving thanks are frequently on our minds. At the Western Allegheny Community Library, we are thankful for many things, especially you and for your past support of the Library and its services. We wanted to take a minute to offer you our sincerest thanks and to share what we have been able to accomplish this year because of you.

Thanks to our friends and patrons in the community, along with our municipalities, we were able to gather the funds to open our new library. The walls were gutted, carpet was ripped out; it wasn't a pretty sight. However, as a team, we came together and our hard work and passion created a beautiful new library. It was a labor of love and we are so proud to be able to call this space our new home.

Opening our new location at 181 Bateman Road was a giant step in the process of expansion, but there is still much to be done. Once we have the funds to do so, we need to update our existing shelving, add safety guardrails around the perimeter of the parking lot and renovate the roughly 6,000 square feet of undeveloped space at the back of the library. Additionally, we need funds to maintain this larger facility as well as to continue offering our numerous activities and services.

Because we are a community library, we greatly depend upon the community for funding. In exchange for your support, you will continue to have access to the most powerful card a wallet can contain: your community library card. If you don't currently have a library card, stop by today and get yours and see the beautiful new library. Find out for yourself just how much we have to offer.

With your help, the Library can continue to provide valuable services to the West Allegheny community. Please consider supporting our library with a tax deductible donation, and help us continue to change lives in our community. The future of the Western Allegheny Community Library depends on you! Every dollar can make a difference.

Sincerely,  
Pamela Perry  
President, Board of Trustees

Marianne Sforza  
Library Director

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Or give a special Christmas gift to the Library. Donate \$30 and we will dedicate a book to the person of your choice. We will also send them a personalized Christmas card acknowledging the gift in their name.

**You can also donate online through our website!**

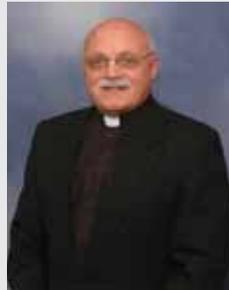
## Remembering “Father”

I’m not sure he ever won the lottery, but I’m glad he stopped to play...

I’ll never forget working at Fast Eddie’s when I heard his voice, “How’s it going?” he asked. His visits always made me smile, and he always carried that warm grin on his face. His soft spoken voice could have been recognized by almost anybody who has lived in the community for the past 13 years – calming, welcoming, peaceful Fr. Domenic Mancini.

It’s no surprise that Father became well known and loved by many after serving as pastor of St. Columbkille Roman Catholic Church in Imperial for more than a decade. Father served his people faithfully and prayerfully until God called him home in November. And whether you had just met him, or your relationship dated back to his early service as St. Columbkille’s Parochial Vicar in the 90s, you were bound to be touched by a man with an unwavering devotion to God.

When Father was assigned as pastor of St. Columbkille in 2000, his role was to guide his faithful parishioners closer to God – and that is exactly what he did. He always seemed to know what to do and what to say, and gave subtle assurance that no matter what life handed, everything would be ok. “We have God. What more could we want?” he would always say. In his 13 years of service at St. Columbkille, Father saw the community through some of its saddest and happiest of times. He was there to pray with the Kocher family when their son Matthew was diagnosed with leukemia. He was there to lend support when the Morrosetti’s house burnt to the ground. He



was there to celebrate life, marry couples, baptize babies, teach parishioners, mark St. Columbkille’s 100th anniversary, and much more. Through his involvement in the West Allegheny Ministerial Association, he served the entire community – Catholics and non-Catholics.

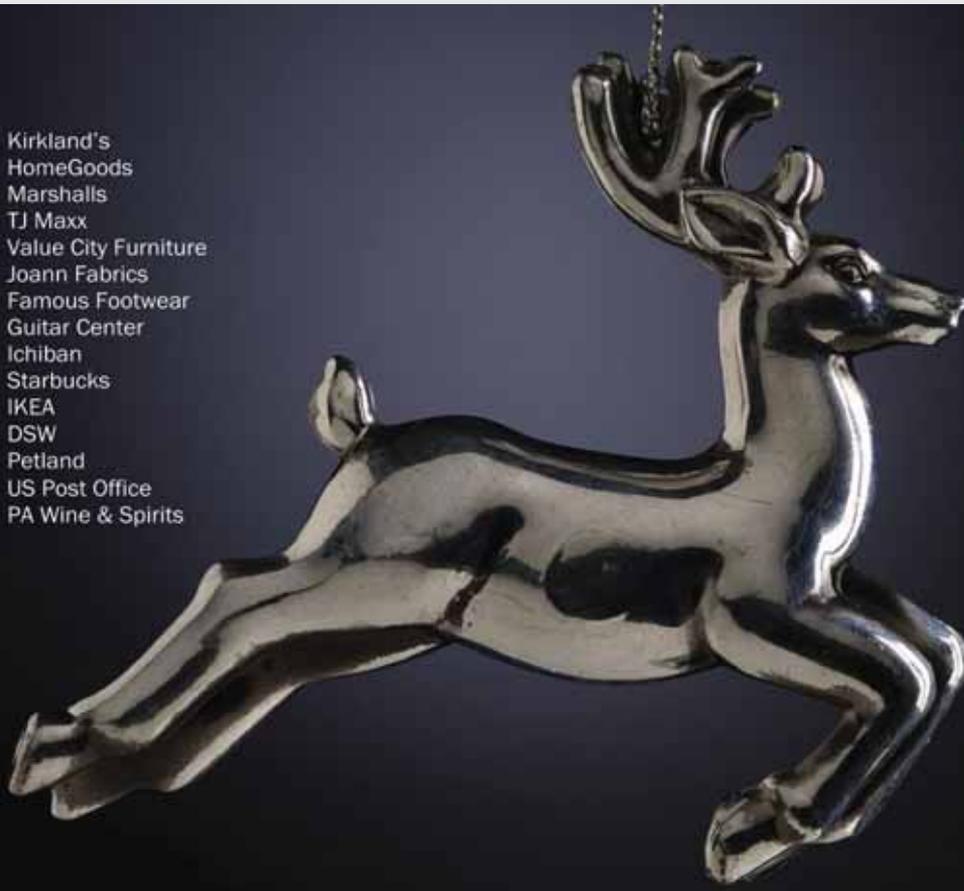
He showed such care for others of all ages. I’ll never forget the annual high school graduation luncheon he hosted for graduates of the parish. “Call if you need anything,” he said, sending us off into the world. A few years later, I took Father up on his offer and paid him that phone call. It wasn’t that I needed anything; I was just calling my priest, my priest who had become my friend.

It wasn’t until early this past November that I realized how Father had become a friend to all. After suffering over three years from a blood disease, Father grew weak and realized that his earthly service could no longer be fulfilled. While delivering what would be his final homily, there wasn’t a dry eye in the church as he told his parishioners he loved us. It hit me: Father’s ability to reach others was truly a gift. He shared

a unique relationship with each one of us, and his illness brought him and his people closer to God. Although Father grew weaker in body, we all grew stronger in faith.

Today, Father has taken on what I like to think of as a new assignment: his home in heaven. It’s one that is quite different than the one he received 13 years ago, but he will still continue to watch over us.

Who knows if he ever won the lottery, for it truly doesn’t matter. Fr. Domenic won our hearts, and for that, I am grateful. He will live on through our St. Columbkille Parish family.



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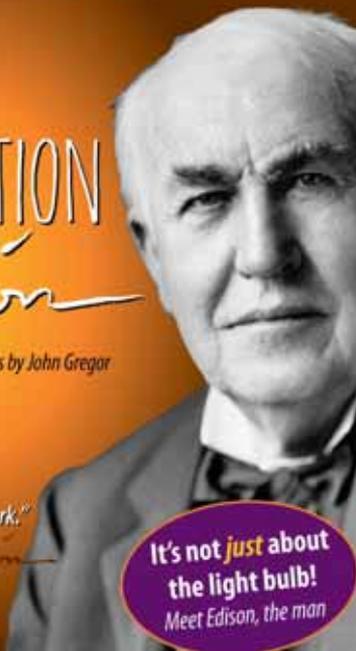
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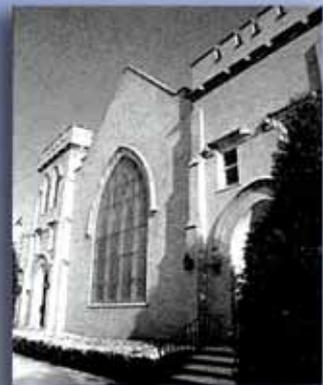
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## 2014 Pavilion Rental Season Near!

### NEW PAVILION CONSTRUCTION AT RECREATION & SPORTS COMPLEX

As many already know, a groundbreaking ceremony was held at the Independence Day fireworks at the Recreation and Sports Complex for a new pavilion that will be built for 2014. The facility will seat 150+ and will have kitchen facilities. Due to the size and amenities, the pavilion will have a higher rental cost than the already established ones.

More details coming.

Check out the picture of the new pavilion, below!



## Findlay Township Residents

**Business and Adult/Youth Groups begin Saturday, February 1, 9-11 am at the Township Office on Route 30 in Clinton. Applications issued on a first come/first serve basis.**

Beginning Monday, February 3, reserve online. Log onto [www.findlay.pa.us](http://www.findlay.pa.us). (Go to interactive site/reservations) OR by calling the township.

Non-residents may rent beginning on April 1. In the case of inclement weather on February 1, check web site or hotline for cancellation notice.

Check out other Findlay Township programs on Page 51:

Yoga ~ Walking Fitness ~ Toddler Cooking Spring Flea Market and More!

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## WEST ALLEGHENY SPORTS HALL OF FAME ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS

The West Allegheny Hall of Fame committee is accepting nominations for inductees through January. Consideration requirements include being ten years out of high school so as to have established a college career and advanced on to post-college success. The committee seeks to honor extraordinary individual, team, and coach success, as well as patrons and contributors who have brought prestige and pride to the West Allegheny School District athletic program. To date, the committee has inducted fourteen individuals and one team. Inductees receive a plaque and the opportunity to share the honor with friends and family and former teammates at the Hall of Fame's annual banquet.

The goal of the Hall of Fame is to promote the positive role that athletics serve in the school district. It seeks to attract alumni back to the school and promote their involvement in the area, increase community involvement with athletics, and showcase role model attributes of honorees. Inductees may also include athletes that attended school at North Fayette, Findlay, or Oakdale prior to the merger of the districts in 1949.

The Hall of Fame committee will review the nominations in February and expect to announce inductees in March. Honorees will be honored at the third annual banquet on May 17 at the Cornerstone at Tonidale. Banquet proceeds benefit P.A.L.S., a local organization providing recreational opportunities for special needs children.

To nominate a candidate, visit the Parks and Recreation section on the North Fayette Township web site at [www.north-fayette.com](http://www.north-fayette.com) and click on P.A.L.S., or log onto the school district web site at [www.westasd.org](http://www.westasd.org). Nomination forms can also be acquired by e-mailing [rbrozovich@north-fayette.com](mailto:rbrozovich@north-fayette.com), or calling (724) 693-3118.

## RETIRED WA TEACHER FORMS PSU SCHOLARSHIP



In 2012, retired West Allegheny elementary teacher Robin Gilden pledged \$50,000 to her alma mater, Penn State University. The money has been used to set up a scholarship in her name in PSU's school of education. Robin says that PSU's Robin Gilden Scholarship in Education is meant for those who "fall through the cracks," meaning those who don't qualify for federal loans but are still struggling to pay for their education.

As an undergraduate, Robin attended PSU during the turbulent 1970s, at the height of the anti-war movement. She worked her way through college as a waitress. She says she'd rather students have time to study than have to work a part time job like she did. Freshmen cannot qualify for the scholarship, since, Robin explains, freshmen are still trying to figure out their career paths. She has set a required 2.5 GPA.

Robin says she'd been meaning to make the donation for years, but that the Jerry Sandusky scandal, which broke in late November of 2011, finally formed the impetus. For Robin, characterizations of PSU as a university corrupted by its pervasive and powerful sports program aggravated her to the point that she decided to give back.

"The media made it sound like Penn State was just all about football," says Robin. "That wasn't Penn State for me."

After college, Robin went on to teach grades 1-4 for 33 years at West Allegheny. She says she most enjoyed teaching fourth graders, who to her were just on the cusp of independence. One of her proudest moments came when some of those former fourth graders placed first in a statewide writing assessment as eleventh graders.

During her time at WA, Robin also worked with a pre-DARE anti-drug program at both the elementary and high school levels.

"PSU made me into the person I am," she says. "It gave me my career."

## Remembering Nettie Prosser

Last year, *Allegheny West Magazine* featured a story on two centenarians who made their mark here in the community. One was Nettie Prosser, who passed away last month. Nettie, 101, served as a Notary Public out of an office in her home in Clinton for 60 years. She was a lifelong resident of the community. Her kindness, generosity, and "can-do" attitude will be remembered by many.

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

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

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## Allegheny Muscle Therapy and Massage

Renee Swasey thinks people have the wrong idea about what they can gain by visiting massage clinics like the one she just opened in July on West Allegheny Road.

"People look at it like it's a luxury," she says, "but actually, if you're hurting, you need to treat your muscles for them to heal."

During her 20 years of working as a massage therapist and instructor, Renee, a Findlay resident and married mother of two, has helped a lot of people with legitimate and significant musculoskeletal conditions. These aren't people who are just looking for a relaxing massage. They're looking to relieve chronic pain and stress, which is oftentimes the result of car accidents, playing sports, and working. When asked about what she does at her business, Renee gives a much more descriptive term for what massages are accomplishing for individuals with chronic stress and pain.

"This is muscle re-education," she says.

By retraining the musculoskeletal system and reintroducing proper blood flow to knotted muscles and strained tendons, clients emerge over time with less pain, increased motion, and better health.

Though visitors to Allegheny Muscle Therapy and Massage might not go in looking for a relaxing massage, they do get just that, in a soothing and relaxing environment. Renee's business features three massage rooms in a newly remodeled space with classic wooden floors and earth tone painted walls.

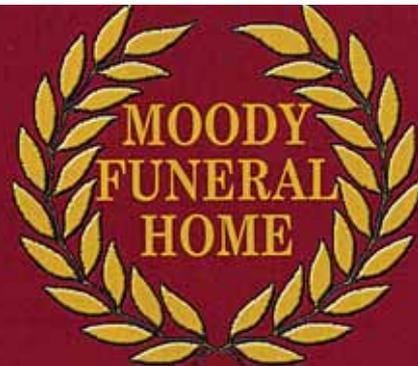
On December 13, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., visitors can get a free, 15-minute massage and \$10 towards a full session if they bring a bag of canned goods to the location. All donations go to the West Allegheny Food Pantry, and visitors will come away feeling good, both for a generous deed and having benefitted from a therapeutic massage.

Appointments at Allegheny Muscle Therapy can be made by calling (724) 695-5300, by visiting [www.alleghenymuscle.massagetherapy.com](http://www.alleghenymuscle.massagetherapy.com), or via e-mail at [muscletherapyandmassage@gmail.com](mailto:muscletherapyandmassage@gmail.com).



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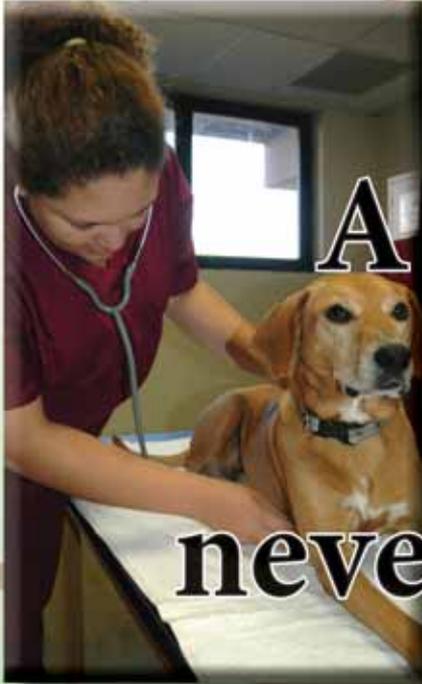
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**January 30** – BizBlast @ Noon at the Sewickley YMCA from 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

**February 7** – Breakfast Briefing: Economic Development at the Chartiers Country Club at 7:30 a.m.

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**Ribbon Cuttings and Celebrations**



**ABOVE:** Left, Vital Health Chiropractic enjoyed their Ribbon Cutting Ceremony with Chamber Ambassadors; Right, Deer Creek Winery in The Mall at Robinson celebrated its reopening with a ribbon cutting with the Chamber Ambassadors.



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# Christmas Church Services

**Clinton United Presbyterian Church** - Christmas Eve Service, **December 24, 7 p.m.** (724) 695-7993, [clintonupchurch.weebly.com](http://clintonupchurch.weebly.com).

**McDonald Presbyterian Church** - **December 15**, Presbyterian Women's Gift of Music at **7 p.m.** (Trinity Center), **December 24**, Christmas Eve: early service at **7 p.m.**, late service at **11 p.m.**, (724) 926-8561, [www.mcdonaldpres.org](http://www.mcdonaldpres.org).

**Montours Presbyterian Church** - **December 24, 7 p.m.** Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with communion, (412) 787-1050, [www.montourschurch.org](http://www.montourschurch.org).

**Noblestown United Methodist Church** - **December 24**, Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at **7 p.m.**, "Still He is Searching," (724) 693-2755, [Noblestown.UMC@gmail.com](mailto:Noblestown.UMC@gmail.com).

**Oakdale U.P. Church** - **December 15** at The Rock, West Allegheny Show Choir, 4 p.m., free soup and sandwich dinner, 5 p.m., Christmas play, "Giving Christmas Away," 6 p.m.; **December 24** at the church, Christmas Eve candlelight service, 7:30 p.m., (724) 695-8950.

**Resurrection Lutheran Church**, **December 24, 8 p.m.**, Christmas Eve candlelight worship & holy communion, (412) 788-4513, [rlc10380@verizon.net](mailto:rlc10380@verizon.net).

**St. Columbkille Roman Catholic Church** - **December 24: 4 p.m., 6:30 p.m., 10 p.m.; December 25: 8 and 11 a.m.**, (724) 695-7325, [stcolumbkilleparish@comcast.net](mailto:stcolumbkilleparish@comcast.net).

**The Bible Chapel** - **December 24**, Christmas Eve Services, **7 and 9 p.m.**, "Preparing Our Hearts for Christmas," babysitting available for **7 p.m.** service, meets at Pittsburgh Technical Institute, (724) 941-8990, [www.biblechapel.org](http://www.biblechapel.org).

**Valley Church** - **December 24, 7 p.m.**, (724) 695-0300, [www.valleychurchweb.com](http://www.valleychurchweb.com).

This represents information that was submitted by these churches by our deadline. For more information on the individual churches, please refer to the listings on page 53 under Community Connections.

## AMERICAN LEGION, LOCAL BUSINESSES HELP DISABLED VETS

Local businesses and their patrons helped raise money for disabled veterans by supporting the Buddy Poppy Campaign, run by the Ladies Auxiliary of VFW Post 7714. Poppies are the VFW's official memorial flower. Through the program, disabled veterans assemble paper versions of the little red flowers, which are purchased through Veterans' Affairs. Any monies raised during the campaign are earmarked for disabled veterans.

Participating businesses included: Kings Family Restaurant, Garden of Eating Pizza, Angelia's Pizza, The Inn Place, Marathon at Tonidale, Grab'n Go, Essex Beer Distributor, and Downey's House.

The Oakdale American Legion Post 171 is also looking for men and women to become members. The post is seeking men to join its Sons of the American Legion and be part of the American Legion and the community service it performs. The post is searching for women to start a Ladies Auxiliary.

For information about the SAL, contact Ted Lewandowski, adjutant, at (412) 788-0776. For the Ladies' Auxiliary, contact Jill Grover, commander of the Ladies' Auxiliary, at (412) 638-2754.

For more information on how to help disabled veterans by becoming involved with the Buddy Poppy Campaign, e-mail Pamela Sloan, [msspsloan@gmail.com](mailto:msspsloan@gmail.com) with "Buddy Poppy" in the subject line.

## HELP SUPPORT NORTH FAYETTE'S NEW K-9 DOG

North Fayette is getting its own K-9 dog soon, Corporal Todd Heufelder of the North Fayette Police Department has announced. Corporal Heufelder said the dog, a German Shepherd, will come from the Shallow Creek Kennels in Sharpsville. The facility is certified as a master trainer through the North American Working Dog Association.

By late spring 2014, Corporal Heufelder and the dog will attend six weeks of training together before introducing him to the community. The dog and Corporal Heufelder will complete the rigorous program, which will focus on obedience, narcotics detection, tracking, building searches, evidence and area searches, and apprehension.

Corporal Heufelder shared several key points that indicate why a K-9 dog is important to North Fayette. These include building a bond with the public, educating the public, narcotics detection, tracking, and officer safety.

As a startup program in the township, it is generally not part of the annual budget. Contributions will go toward the healthcare, maintenance, and training of the dog.

To donate to the fund, contact Corporal Heufelder at (412) 787-8900, or via e-mail at [nfpdth@north-fayette.com](mailto:nfpdth@north-fayette.com). Or, send a contribution to: North Fayette Township K-9 Fund, 400 North Branch Road, Oakdale, PA 15071.

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## End-of-the-Year Money Moves

What has changed for you in 2013? Did you start a new job – or leave a job behind? Did you retire? Did you start a family? If some notable changes occurred in your personal or professional life, then you will want to review your finances before this year ends and the next one begins.

Even if your 2013 has been relatively uneventful, the end of the year is still a good time to get cracking and see where you can plan to save some taxes and/or build a little more wealth.

Do you practice tax loss harvesting? That is the art of taking capital losses (selling securities worth less than what you first paid for them) to offset your short-term capital gains. If you fall into one of the upper tax brackets, you might want to consider this move, which directly lowers your taxable income. It should be made with the guidance of a financial professional you trust.

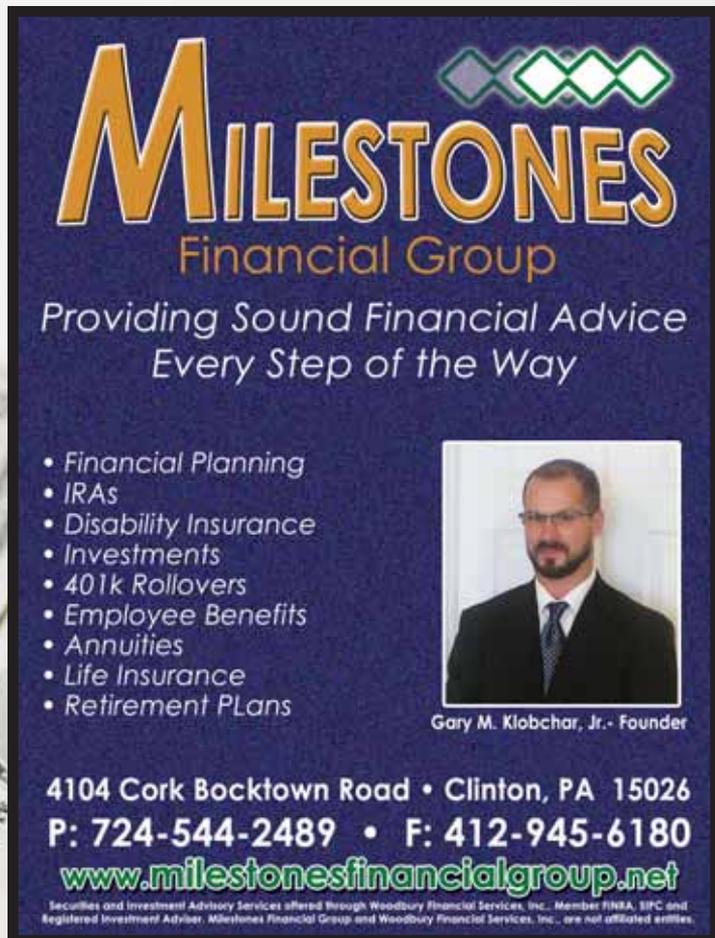
Could you ramp up 401(k) or 403(b) contributions? If you can do this in November and December, that will lower your taxable income for

2013. Do it enough and you might be able to qualify for other tax credits or breaks available to those under certain income limits.

Should you convert all or part of a traditional IRA into a Roth IRA? You will be withdrawing money from that traditional IRA someday ... and those withdrawals will equal taxable income. Withdrawals from a Roth IRA you own are never taxed during your lifetime, assuming you follow the rules. Translation: tax savings tomorrow. Before you go Roth, you do need to make sure you have the money to pay taxes on the conversion amount. If you do this and change your mind, the IRS gives you until October 15 of the year after a conversion to undo it.

What can you do before they sing “Auld Lang Syne?” Talk with a financial or tax professional now rather than in February or March. Little year-end moves might help you improve your short-term and long-term financial situation.

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Learning Curves is provided as a service to advertisers of Allegheny West Magazine to share educational and/or informational knowledge with the readership. To inquire, call (724) 695-3968.

## CLEARVIEW CELEBRATES 60th BIRTHDAY

Clearview Federal Credit Union celebrated its sixtieth anniversary in November. The credit union, formerly known as Allegheny Airlines Federal Credit Union, opened on November 13, 1953 at the Washington National Airport with just 5 members and \$5,000 in assets. Today, Clearview serves nearly 84,000 members, with reported assets valued above \$804 million.

Employees and members celebrated with a birthday party and cupcakes at each of its branches. Clearview also donated gift cards for 60 Thanksgiving turkeys to the West Hills Food Pantry, while employees gathered food items to fill 18 baskets for the pantry. Each basket contains everything needed to prepare a Thanksgiving feast for one family.

## GIRL SCOUTS EARN SILVER AWARD

Seven West Allegheny High School freshmen have been awarded the second highest honor given by the Girl Scouts of America, the Silver Award, for their work at Pittsburgh Botanic Garden.

Troop #50085 received the award at a banquet on September 27. They were recognized for their efforts to complete projects in the woodlands section of the park. Projects included building structures, making clay faces that help children identify trees, building a nest, and restoring picnic tables. Troop co-leader Gretchen Ecoff says that the projects took about 18 months to complete. During that time, the scouts worked under the direction of garden director of development Kitty Vagley.



**ABOVE:** West Allegheny High School freshmen earning their Girl Scout Silver Award: Sai Bhatte, Katie Berg, Rachel Ecoff, Mackenzie Morgan, Sydney Saunders, Claire Shemon, and Lindsey Watters.

## IMPERIAL CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE MOVES

Imperial Nazarene church is moving to Florence to the old Florence Presbyterian Church. The new address is 1080 Steubenville Pike Burgettstown, PA 15021. For more information, call (724) 947-9223.

## FROATS TO SPEAK AT PENN STATE COMMENCEMENT

Ted L. Froats, Jr., a 2001 graduate of West Allegheny High School, has been invited to be the commencement speaker at Penn State Beaver's fall graduation on December 20.

He earned his bachelor's degree in Corporate Communications from Penn State, and went on to serve in the U.S. Air Force for six years. Ted is currently the public affairs specialist in the Health and Human Resources Department in Washington, D.C. He is pursuing his master's degree in Public Affairs Administration at the University of Baltimore.

Ted and his wife, Sarah, reside in Waldorf, Maryland, with their seven-month-old baby daughter.

## TALLO NAMED TO HALL OF FAME

Erica Tallo, a 2001 West Allegheny graduate, was inducted into the Westminster Hall of Fame for Women's Basketball in November. She was a four-year letter winner and starter at Westminster from 2001-2004. The team's MVP in her junior year, Erica ranks fourth all-time in career scoring, third all-time in career rebounding, first all-time in career blocked shots, and fourth all-time in career steals.

Erica majored in English at Westminster. She resides in Rochester, where she is the associate membership director at Baierl Family YMCA.

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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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**2013-2014 West Hills  
Symphonic Band  
Season**, now in its sixth season  
of residency at West Allegheny  
High School, Stewart Morgan  
Auditorium, free admission,  
**December 8, 3 p.m.**, "That  
Christmas Feeling," **March 2,  
3 p.m.**, "Verdant Pathways,"  
**May 4, 3 p.m.**, "The Heart of  
Spring," www.whsb.org.

**Listen Locally:  
Chamber Music Series**,  
Andrew Carnegie Free Library and  
Music Hall, **February 24**, Freya  
Quartet (string quartet), **March 31**,  
Ferla-Marcinizyn Guitar Duo with  
contralto Daphne Alderson, **April  
28**, Matt Murchison Mutiny (eupho-  
nium, flute, piano, bass, drums),  
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**December 6-15**  
**"Nutcracker"** as presented  
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Center, for two weekends  
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and ending **Sunday, December  
15**, Andrew Carnegie Music Hall,  
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p.m.** on Sundays, tickets at the  
door: \$15 adults, \$12 seniors and  
children, (412) 279-8887 or  
www.carnegieperformingartscenter.com.

**December 7**  
**Polar Express Movie Night**,  
West Allegheny High School,  
**6-9 p.m.**, West Allegheny Marching  
Pride will show the movie, "Polar  
Express." Come dressed in pajamas  
and slippers, and bring a blanket.  
Hot chocolate, cookies, and popcorn  
will be served, and Santa will make  
an appearance at intermission when  
parents can visit crafter/vendor  
tables, \$5 child, adults free with  
food donation for the food pantry,  
(412) 527-5771, e-mail:  
angelaandercyoder@hotmail.com.  
**Moon Township Garden  
Club Greens and Things  
Holiday Sale**, **December 7,  
9 a.m.-1 p.m.**, Robin Hill Park,  
decorative holiday centerpieces,  
wreaths, and swags, holiday door  
prize, proceeds benefit garden club  
philanthropies, (412) 262-4719.

**December 14**  
**The Sounds of Pittsburgh  
Chorus, Sweet Adelines  
International Annual Show**,  
**7 p.m.**, REA Auditorium at  
Sewickley Academy, chorus,  
chorus quartets, and guest quartet  
The Hot Air Buffoons. Women  
encouraged to join for an appear-  
ance in the show singing carols,  
partial proceeds benefit wig fund  
at Magee Women's Hospital,  
www.soundsofpgh.org or Mary  
Ann, (412) 279-6062, rehearsals  
held at the Coraopolis United  
Methodist Church Monday evenings,  
**7 p.m.**  
**Jacob Ferree Chapter DAR  
Meeting, Montour Heights  
Country Club**, **December 14,  
11 a.m.**, \$20 lunch, programming  
theme "Sounds of the Season,"  
celebrate holiday season with  
Lincoln Park School, reserve by  
December 7, guests welcome,  
Bonnie Kappert, (412) 771-7526,  
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## December 28

**Lenora!** Lenora Nemetz Brings Broadway to Carnegie's Carnegie Hall, 8 p.m. Veteran Broadway performer Lenora Nemetz performs at Andrew Carnegie Free Library & Music Hall's annual benefit, reception to follow, refreshments, orchestra tickets \$125 (\$90 tax deductible), open seating \$75 each (\$40 tax deductible), benefits library and music hall, (412) 276-3456, ext. 13, www.carnegie.carnegie.org

## December 15

**Kennedy VFD Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser,** 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Kennedy Fire Hall, French toast, sausage, and more, benefits department, visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus, face painting, fire station tours, \$7 adults, \$3 children 10 and under, (412) 787-5422.

**Third Annual Holiday Pancake Breakfast and Cookie Walk, December 15,** 9 a.m.-12 p.m., Moon Area High School cafeteria, hosted by the Moon Area High School Marching Band and Orchestra, \$6 adults, \$4 children/seniors, includes pancakes, sausage, juice, coffee, \$9 large container of homemade cookies, www.moonband.org.

## Findlay Programs

**Super Bingo,** first Monday of each month, January 6, February 3, March 3, April 7 (for exceptions check schedule), Findlay Township Activity Center, doors open 5:30 p.m., kitchen open 6 p.m., bingo starts 7 p.m., package of 12 cards and 5 specials \$25, extra cards and specials available at door, quickies and jackpots sold on floor, throwaway cards used, bring a dobber.

**Indoor Flea Market, March 15, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.,** Findlay Township Activity Center, browse two levels and over 60 tables without worrying about the weather.

## Kids' Creative Cooking

Findlay Township Activity Center, **Thursdays, starting January 23, 4-5:15 p.m.,** introduction to preparation of a variety of easy and delicious seasonal recipes that will satisfy those after school hunger pangs, \$8, payment taken at class, pre-register at least 2 days, prior, no walk-ins.

## Time for Toddlers,

**Mondays and Tuesdays, January 6, 7, 13, 14, 27 and 28, 10:15-11:15 a.m.,** for children under 4, hour of movement, music, activities, and snack, opportunity to meet other families, adult must stay with child, program is cancelled if the school district closes due to weather, \$3, call Darlene, (724) 695-0500 x 246.

## Yoga for Beginners and Beyond, December 27,

**January 3 and 10, 6:30-7:30 p.m.,** Findlay Township Activity Center, exercise, stretch, and meditate, \$5, with Master Julia Harvey of Imperial Tang Soo Do School, (724) 695-1976.

**Walk Live, Tuesdays and Thursdays except December 24, 26, and 31, 6-7 p.m.,** Findlay Township Activity Center, get healthy and lose weight with indoor walking classes, \$5, with Donna Kuzio, kuziofjr@gmail.com, (724) 695-0500 x 246.

**Water Aerobics and Lap Swimming,** call or check township web site for 2014 schedule at Wilson Elementary.

## North Fayette Programs

**Silver Sneakers Splash, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5 p.m., \$2,** BlueCross/BlueShield members can use their cards, Donaldson Elementary School.

**Water Walking, Monday through Thursday, 6-8 p.m., \$2,** Donaldson Elementary School.

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**Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of GOD.**  
**John 3:3**



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**December 19, 11 a.m.,**  
Cornerstone at Tonidale, \$5.

**Bowling at Latitude 40,**  
December 9 and 16, 1 p.m. \$2/  
game plus \$2 for shoes.

**Monthly Movie, December**  
17 and January 28, noon,  
community center, bring \$1 or a  
covered dish.

**Highmark Holiday Pops,**  
December 15, \$60, includes  
ticket and transportation to Heinz  
Hall, bus leaves North Fayette  
Township Building at 1:15 p.m.

**Parents' Day Out,**  
December 8, 2-6 p.m., parents  
can drop their children off with  
Parks & Recreation and library  
staff for games, arts and crafts,  
fun, and a movie, while parents  
Christmas shop, set up the  
house, or run errands, Western  
Allegheny Community Library,  
\$10.

**Future Stars Floor**  
**Hockey, K-grade 5, starts**  
January 4, teaches basic skills  
and provides team play, \$45,  
includes jersey, helmets with face  
shields/shin pads required,  
gloves, elbow pads, knee pads  
optional but recommended.

**Future Stars for 4, 5, 6-**  
**year-olds, starts February 1,**  
Sundays through March,  
community center, 10 a.m., sticks  
provided, \$35, includes jersey,  
helmets/shin pads mandatory,  
elbow pads/gloves recom-  
mended.

**P.A.L.S. Floor Hockey,**  
Friday nights through  
January, 6:30-7:30 p.m.,

community center gym, in  
conjunction with the West  
Allegheny Inline Hockey Associa-  
tion, free.

**P.A.L.S. & West Allegh-**  
**eny Football Team,** team  
plays games with kids from  
P.A.L.S., community center,  
Fridays at 6:30 p.m.

**Township Ice Skating**  
**Rink,** public sessions **Fridays**  
7-9 p.m., **Saturdays 2-4 p.m.**  
and **7-9 p.m., Sundays 2-4**  
**p.m.,** rink available for rentals,  
contact Parks & Recreation  
office, public sessions \$3, some  
skate rentals available, goals  
available for pond hockey.

**Township Picnic Pavilion**  
**Rentals,** reservations start  
**February 1, 7 a.m.,** residents  
only, \$75 for N.F. Township Park,  
\$50 for Donaldson Community  
Park, \$50 security deposit.

**Community Center**  
**Rentals,** gym and community  
room rentals available, call for  
available hours, starts at \$50 for  
two hours.

### Oakdale Programs

**A Christmas Celebration**  
**at the ROCK and**  
**Oakdale U.P. Church,**  
Sunday, December 15, The  
ROCK, Oakdale, 4 p.m., West  
Allegheny Show Choir, 5 p.m.,  
soup and sandwich dinner, free,  
all welcome, followed at  
6 p.m., with a Christmas play,  
"Giving Christmas Away" at  
Oakdale U.P. Church.

For program information, Findlay Township,  
(724) 695-0500, North Fayette Township, (412)  
788-4888 x 118, (724) 693-3118, Oakdale  
Borough, (724) 693-9740

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### Did You Know?

Only Pittsburgh CLO Academy students who are enrolled at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester are eligible to audition for Pittsburgh CLO summer season shows.

This year we will be auditioning\* students for the following:



\*Specific audition requirements are determined by the individual show director and will be posted at the CLO Academy when information becomes available.

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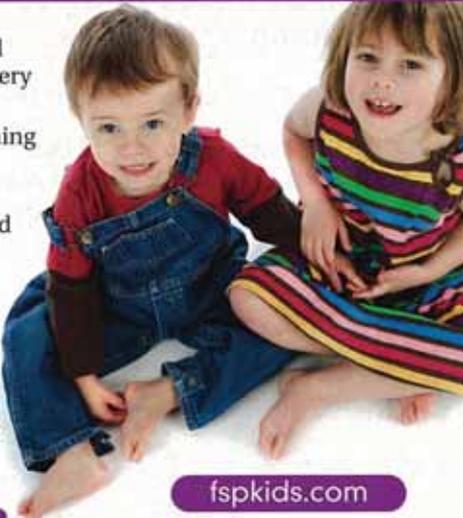
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News from the  
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**Peek & Preview Tours!**

We are hosting one-hour Peek & Preview Tours until Opening Day (mid-2014) to introduce visitors to the Woodland Gardens and its historic homestead front door. Learn about the history of the area, current work, and future plans! Call (412) 444-4464.



**New Fireplace!**

The plaza adjacent to the Bayer Welcome Center now displays its new stone fireplace. This structure helps to frame the plaza. An outdoor kitchen, the Wedding Garden, and the large indoor event space complete the frame for this spacious area. The working fireplace will give respite to future cross-country skiers and winter visitors and help to extend the garden's rental season.

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## MUNICIPALITIES

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

## CHURCHES

**Church of The Living Christ**  
 220 West Allegheny Road, Imperial, PA 15126  
 (724) 695-7188, [www.cotlc.com](http://www.cotlc.com)  
**Church of the Nazarene**  
 (moved to Florence) 1080 Steubenville Pike,  
 Burgettstown, PA 15021  
 (724) 947-9223, [www.nazarene.org](http://www.nazarene.org)  
**Clinton UP Church**  
 25 Wilson Road, Clinton, PA 15026  
 (724) 695-7993  
**Clinton Wesleyan Church**  
 1022 Clinton Road, Clinton, PA 15026  
 (724) 695-7076  
**Covenant Family Church**  
 P. O. Box 15533, Pittsburgh, PA 15244  
 (724) 263-7147, [www.covenantfamily.cc](http://www.covenantfamily.cc)  
 (meets at Courtyard Pgh. Airport)  
**Crossroads Methodist Church**  
 1000 Crossroads Drive, Oakdale, PA 15071  
 (412) 494-9999, [www.crossroadsumc.org](http://www.crossroadsumc.org)  
**First Baptist Church**  
 141 N. McDonald Street, McDonald, PA 15057  
 (724) 926-4216  
**Hebron Presbyterian Church**  
 1767 Route 30, Clinton, PA 15026  
 (725) 899-2276  
**Independent Bible Presbyterian Church**  
 112 Dempe Street, McDonald, PA 15057  
 (724) 926-3355  
**Montours Presbyterian Church**  
 3151 Montour Church Road, Oakdale, PA  
 15071, (412) 787-1050,  
[www.montourchurch.org](http://www.montourchurch.org)

## PUBLIC & PRIVATE SCHOOLS K-12

**West Allegheny  
 School District**  
 600 Donaldson Road, Oakdale, PA 15071  
 (724) 695-3422, [www.westasd.org](http://www.westasd.org)  
**Parkway West Career &  
 Technology Center**  
 7101 Steubenville Pike, Oakdale, PA 15071  
 (412) 923-1772, [www.parkwaywest.org](http://www.parkwaywest.org)  
 This list includes only those public and private  
 schools located within the municipalities served  
 by the West Allegheny Edition of Allegheny West Magazine

**Noblestown United Methodist Church**  
 7313 Noblestown Road, Oakdale, PA 15071  
 (724) 693-2755  
**Noblestown United  
 Presbyterian Church**  
 7427 Noblestown Road, Oakdale, PA 15071  
 (724) 693-8250  
**Oakdale United Presbyterian Church**  
 62 Hastings Avenue, Oakdale, PA 15071  
 (724) 693-8950  
**Rivers of Living Waters Church**  
 7120 Steubenville Pike, Oakdale, PA 15071  
 (412) 787-1888, [www.rolwc.tripod.com](http://www.rolwc.tripod.com)  
**Resurrection Lutheran Church**  
 7600 Steubenville Pike, Oakdale, PA 15071  
 (412) 788-4513  
**St. Columbkille Church**  
 103 Church Road, Imperial, PA 15126  
 (724) 695-7325, [www.saintcolumbkilleparish.org](http://www.saintcolumbkilleparish.org)  
**St. Patrick's Church**  
 7322 Noblestown Road, Oakdale, PA 15071  
 (724) 693-9260, [www.saint-patrick-parish.com](http://www.saint-patrick-parish.com)  
**The Church of Jesus Christ**  
 57 Moore Road, Imperial, PA 15126  
 (724) 899-3935  
**The Bible Chapel**  
 @ Pittsburgh Technical Institute  
 (724) 941-8990, ext. 124  
[www.robinson.biblechapel.org](http://www.robinson.biblechapel.org)  
**Valley Presbyterian Church**  
 237 Main Street, Imperial, PA 15126  
 (724) 695-0300, [www.valleychurchweb.com](http://www.valleychurchweb.com)  
**West Ridge Christian Community Church**  
 100 Gorwood Drive, Coraopolis, PA 15108  
 (724) 695-7500, [www.wrccc.org](http://www.wrccc.org)

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

**Al-A-Non, West A area**, 412.683.4279  
**American Legion Post 171 Oakdale**, (724) 693-8759  
**American Legion Post 335 Imperial**, (724) 695-0491  
**Boy Scouts-Grtr. Pgh. Council-Frontier**,  
 (412) 325-7971 or 7995  
**Faith in Action**, (724) 921-0027  
**Findlay Athletic Assn.**, (412) 874-9348  
**Girl Scouts WPA**, (724) 774-3553  
**Heritage Public Library-McDonald**, (724) 926-8400  
**Kiwanis Club**, TBA  
**Lions Club Imperial**, (724) 513-7616  
**Masonic Lodge #669**, (724) 693-8274  
**McDonald Area Redevelop. Assn.**, (724) 926-4617  
**Meals on Wheels-W.A.**, (724) 695-0634  
**Montour Run Watershed Assn.**, [www.mrnwa.info](http://www.mrnwa.info)  
**Montour Trail Council**, (412) 257-3011  
**Montour Valley Grange**, (724) 695-0481  
**Mothers of Preschoolers-**  
**Crossroads**, (412) 494-9999  
**Mothers of Preschoolers-Hebron**, (724) 899-2276  
**North Fayette Athletic Assn.**, (412) 580-0655  
**North Fayette Garden Club**, (724) 693-8413  
**Oakdale Youth League**, (724) 693-8951  
**Rotary - Parkway West**, (412) 787-5280  
**Senior Citizen Groups:**  
**- Findlay Township**, (724) 695-0500  
**- North Fayette Township**, (724) 693-3118  
**- St. Columbkille**, (724) 695-7325  
**SNPJ Lodge 106**, (724) 695-1411  
**Sturgeon Athletic Association**, (724) 926-2150  
**The ROCK Community Center**, (724) 693-2777  
**VFW Ladies Auxiliary**, (412) 788-4674  
**VFW Post #7070 Oakdale**, (412) 427-9195  
**VFW Post #7714 Imperial**, (724) 695-8866  
**West Allegheny Food Pantry  
 & Thrift Shop**, (724) 695-1305  
**West Allegheny Foundation**, [inquiries@wafoundation.org](mailto:inquiries@wafoundation.org)  
**West Allegheny Friends to Enhance the Library  
 (WAFEL)**, (724) 695-8150  
**West Allegheny Ministerium**, (724) 693-8950  
**West Allegheny Booster & PTA Groups**, [www.westasd.org](http://www.westasd.org)  
**Western Allegheny Community Library**, (724) 695-8150  
**West Allegheny Aqua Club**, (412) 608-4583  
**West Allegheny Arts Advocacy**, TBA  
**West Allegheny Inline Hockey**, (412) 334-2640  
**West Allegheny Youth Assn.**, [www.westayouth.net](http://www.westayouth.net)  
**West Allegheny Youth Soccer Assn.**, (724) 693-8073  
**West Allegheny Youth Wrestling**, (724) 695-8132



By  
Erma Dodd  
North Fayette Township  
resident

## *"Each day is a gift."*

Country clubs and West Allegheny's McDonald's have something in common. Old and new friends meet for breakfast. They enjoy coffee, laugh, and celebrate.

To join the gathering, one just needs to be a senior citizen to blend into the fun and conversations. And seniors do have simple fun.

It started with two West Allegheny widows, Jackie and Nancy. They met on a Friday morning about 9 a.m., and still do.

They began to visit with other seniors who were stopping in alone for coffee.

The group has grown. The men chat about military service and world matters. The women practice hospitality.

Bill T., 89, no longer drives, but he gardens. He brought the ladies flowers, and Bubba L. brought Bill.

Joe S., 88, brought tomatoes and zucchini from his garden.

The following week, Jackie N. had transformed the zucchini into yummy bread that disappeared with the cups of coffee.

Ozzie O. will soon celebrate his 90th birthday. Someone will bring cupcakes and all will sing the birthday song, joined by a McDonald's manager.

One thing they all agree on, Eileen (Leopold) Kennedy is at the top of the list for her ongoing acts of kindness, including her role as a driver for the local Meals on Wheels.

It is only one hour, and by 10 a.m. the friends are on their way. They will be back next Friday.

The purpose of this story is to invite

others who are widowed and alone, or just alone to stop by, visit, make new friends, and receive a cup of hospitality. A simple call to Jackie at (724) 695-3839 is all that's needed.



T'was some time before Christmas, when all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even the cats.

The family was nestled all snug in their beds. Til 2 a.m. There arose such a noise from Mr. Ted it awakened Mrs. Connie. She thought, "What was the matter?" She nudged Mr. Ted. He responded, "What?"

They fell back to sleep for about half an hour, then there arose such a clatter from Mr. Ted, and then silence.

Their world was turned upside down. Connie cried out, awakening their son, Stephen, home from college, and daughter, Robyn, three days short of high school graduation.

Stephen dialed 9-1-1. North Fayette Police and Northwest EMS were dispatched.

Under the caring, trained direction of the 911 dispatcher, Connie began CPR to save her husband's life. No pulse, no breathing, time stopped. The officers arrived within minutes with their Automated External Defibrillator and continued CPR until paramedics arrived. More CPR, more shocks. Heartbeat restored, but weak.

Ted became the police officer's unforgettable first real life-saving CPR encounter.

While the quiet community was sleeping, our first responders -- police and emergency personnel -- were facing a life or death situation.

Ted had suffered sudden cardiac arrest. His heart had stopped. He had died.

The ambulance driver and EMS crew got him to the hospital. He was unconscious, ventilated, then packed in ice for 24 hours to lower his body temperature to minimize damage and jumpstart his vitals.

Ted is a man of God. His cell phone wallpaper reads, "God is Calling." Now family and friends were calling God persistently.

It took two days before Ted first awoke briefly while hospitalized for a week. Ted does not recollect the days that followed, while his family and friends watched and prayed as he teetered on life or death. He does remember once when he awoke, the carpenter in him, "was expecting to go to work."

Doctors and medical staff had no answer as to what caused Ted's heart to stop.

They "installed" an internal cardio defibrillator. It will shock and restart his heart if it stops again.

Finally, he was able to return home, but not to work for awhile.

Christmas will be a wonderful holiday; a Christmas with a new perspective.

Quoting Ted and Connie, "Each day is a gift."

Remember our emergency personnel, our police, firefighters, and EMS. They, too, are gifts.

Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!

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