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Allegheny West

Volume 20, Issue 118
February/March 2019

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Inside
Page 29

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From the Publisher

Dear Readers,

Thank you for picking up our first West Allegheny edition of 2019! I hope you had a great holiday season.

To kick things off this year we're bringing you a special section in this edition with a rundown on area wineries. If you recall, we did a similar story on local breweries in this same edition last year. This year, we're taking a look at seven different wineries in or near the West Allegheny area that are producing their wine locally. We're also listing some satellite wineries that produce wine elsewhere in the state but are selling their wine here. We're bringing you a bit of background on each winery so you'll know what to expect if you decide to visit them. Much like the individuals behind the various breweries popping up in the area, many of these entrepreneurs came from a variety of walks of life before they entered into wine making. Now, their efforts are adding a unique flavor to the area and raising awareness of locally made products. Read more, starting on page 44.

Following our local winery story, we're bringing you some comfort food recipes that go nicely with your favorite wine. Some are even made with it. Our chef columnist Barb Kleyman writes about cheese fondue, baked apples and poached pears, starting on page 50.

In this edition as well, we interview newly elected state Rep. Valerie Gaydos, who at the beginning of January was sworn in as the new state representative for the 44th Legislative District. Gaydos replaces longtime state Rep. Mark Mustio, who made the decision not to run for reelection last year. We take a look at Gaydos' business background and get an idea of her

Allegheny West Magazine-West Allegheny Edition is published in February, April, June, August, October, and December, six issues a year, Hughey Publications, LLC, P. O. Box 220, McDonald, PA 15057. 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 \$15 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 Hughey Publications, LLC. Copyright 1999-2019 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.

Contents

Steubenville Pike Auto - 8
donates sixth car

HSH names new CEO - 12

Pittsburgh Technical College - 25
students help local families

Gaydos succeeds Mustio - 26

WA Today - 29

Local winery guide - 44

Comfort food, - 50
made and enjoyed with wine

Columns

Locally Sourced - 6

Chamber Link - 17

Your Schools - 21

Legislative Update - 26

Library Programs - 42

Barb's Recipe Box - 50

On the Horizon - 52

ABOUT THE COVER

Brandon Newsome, Nicole Ormsby and Gavin Ormsby of North Fayette Township enjoy a sled ride on fresh snow that fell over the weekend prior to Martin Luther King Jr. Day. PHOTO BY DOUG HUGHEY



A fine layer of snow covers the grounds at the Hankey House in North Fayette Township. Black Dog Wine Company, which is one of several local wineries we profile this month, operates out of the picturesque and historic farmhouse mansion on Steubenville Pike. Read more on page 44.
PHOTO BY DOUG HUGHEY

legislative agenda moving forward on page 26.

If you are a frequent reader of this publication then you have likely read some of coverage of initiatives spearheaded by Heroes Supporting Heroes, including the West Allegheny Workcamp. This nonprofit with local roots has been helping meet the needs of area veterans and senior citizens for over a decade. The organization recently announced it has a new CEO. Read more on page 12.

On page 25, read about a long-running philanthropic effort at Pittsburgh Technical College and how it once again aided local families in need this past holiday season. Starting on page six, be sure to read news from our readers and, starting on page 29, check out the latest official West Allegheny School District newsletter. Then, on page 52, we're listing upcoming area events and parks and recreation information from North Fayette and Findlay townships. Peruse upcoming events and programs at the Western Allegheny Community Library on page 42.

Look for our next edition in April, when we'll be bringing you a special section on the latest inductees into the West Allegheny Athletic Hall of Fame.

In the meantime, I hope you have a great start to the New Year.

Doug Hughey,
Publisher and Editor



Ohio Valley and Heritage Valley complete affiliation

After receiving final regulatory approval, Ohio Valley Hospital and Heritage Valley Health System have officially joined together. The two not-for-profit healthcare institutions share the common mission of bringing high quality, cost-effective healthcare to their combined communities. By unifying the organizations, the enlarged health system can expand their footprint to further meet the healthcare needs of the region.

“We are looking forward to what the future holds for Ohio Valley Hospital by joining forces with an organization like Heritage Valley, that we highly respect and trust,” said Mark Brennan, chair of the board of Ohio Valley Hospital.

Ohio Valley Hospital is now a subsidiary of Heritage Valley Health System. Both boards of directors have collaborated over the past year to develop an agreement that best meets the needs of the community and patients who are served by Ohio Valley Hospital.

The alignment is expected to enable Ohio Valley Hospital to enhance its medical staff, expand clinical services and fund future capital projects. Ohio Valley Hospital, like many independent community hospitals, has been challenged over past years by increasing operating costs and decreasing reimbursement.

“Our priority has always been, and will continue to be, to provide and increase quality healthcare for our community members,” said Brennan. “Affiliating with Heritage Valley Health System will allow us to do just that.”

“Heritage Valley is very pleased and honored to have Ohio Valley join our integrated healthcare organization,” said Lynn George, PhD, chair of Heritage Valley Health System Board of Directors. “Our board unanimously supported the affiliation and identical to Ohio Valley Hospital’s Board, remains committed to high quality, cost effective, locally accessible community healthcare.”

Ohio Valley, Heritage Valley... a unique connection

The affiliation of Heritage Valley Health System and Ohio Valley Hospital represents a unique connection in health care that reaches well beyond the newly aligned three hospitals and expands the range of health care offered to western Allegheny County communities.

The Health System continues to offer the most utilized health care services at the Heritage Valley Medical Neighborhoods located in West Allegheny/Imperial and Robinson Township. Primary care, ConvenientCare Walk-in Clinic, diagnostic imaging, mobile MRI and CT and lab draw services are offered at both sites, with West Allegheny/Imperial offering physical therapy and behavioral health as well.

Beyond the Medical Neighborhood locations, primary care physicians continue to deliver high-quality care in Kennedy Township, West Allegheny, Robinson Township and Moon Township areas with the potential of specialty services added in the future. Also, as part of the affiliation, wound care and pain treatment services will remain in the community along with Senior Living at the Willows.

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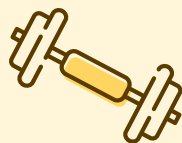
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Steubenville Pike Auto announces recipient of December vehicle giveaway

December's recipient of a used vehicle from Steubenville Pike Auto through its Steubenville Pike Auto Repair Charity program is Tamara Wagner of Pittsburgh.

"The committee once again had a very difficult choice to make," said Jason Pottle, owner of Steubenville Pike Auto. "There are many deserving people in our area. Good people who work hard but still have trouble making ends meet. Tamara Wagner is one such person."

Wagner has held her current job for 13 years. In addition, she started working a second job a number of years ago in order to help her aging mother and other family members. In 2015, Wagner's daughter and son-in-law lost their home and their beloved dogs in a fire. When this happened, Wagner picked up a third job to help her daughter's family get back on their feet.

Her daughter and friends say that Wagner never complained or felt sorry for herself, she just kept pushing on and moving forward. Wagner continued working three jobs until she suffered some health complications in late 2017 and was forced to go on short-term disability. She returned to work as soon as her doctors would allow but complications with her disability payments caused her to fall behind on her bills. As a result, Wagner was unable to keep her vehicle. Wagner was not used to relying on help from others. In fact, she was used to being the helper; the one who everyone came to with their troubles and issues. Forced to rely on friends and family to get her to work, doctor's appointments and the grocery store, Wagner quit all but her main job because her home is not on a bus route. She had to rely on her neighbor for rides to and from work.

With the weather ready to turn, Wagner was getting very nervous



Steubenville Pike Auto president Jason Pottle and the rest of his team presented Tamara Wagner with a refurbished vehicle through the the company's Steubenville Pike Auto Repair Charity program in December. PHOTO BY DOUG HUGHEY

about continuing to ask her neighbor for rides. Her daughter, Courtni, saw a change in her mother and became concerned that she was losing faith that her situation would ever improve. Without her mother's knowledge, Courtni submitted a nomination form to SPARC.

"We are just so happy to be able to restore some peace of mind to a person who has spent her life helping and supporting others," said Pottle.

Once again, Heroes Supporting Heroes paid for the transfer fees and registration for the car donation. As such, it helped make a merry Christmas for the entire Wagner Family. For more about Steubenville Pike Auto and the Steubenville Pike Auto Charity Repair program, visit steubenvillepikeauto.com.



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Clearview and JA partnering on immersive educational program

Clearview Federal Credit Union has entered into a multi-year partnership with Junior Achievement of Western Pennsylvania to take part in its experiential learning laboratory, JA Biztown.

JA Biztown is a nationwide, innovative hands-on program that utilizes 10 weeks of classroom curriculum and an immersive, day-long experience of STEM-related jobs in a simulated “town.” Junior Achievement of Western Pennsylvania is building a 10,000-square foot JA Biztown mock business community in Bridgeville. The facility will offer middle and junior high school students the opportunity to learn about financial and business realities of commerce during “real world” exercises. A Clearview storefront will be the leading financial institution in the new JA Biztown location. As the town’s credit union, it will offer banking services to other businesses in the town, including a grocery store, technology companies, retailers, manufacturers, engineering and science-focused corporations, health care facilities, and a car dealership.

Each participating organization will have a storefront built to their branded specifications. Students will spend the day working in their selected company and train in the day-to-day functions of thriving businesses and communities. Students from 360 school districts across western Pennsylvania will study a 10-hour curriculum in their classrooms in preparation for the deeply engaging experience.

As the leading financial institution in the town, Clearview’s participation will help students learn money management skills and develop a working knowledge of business and personal

financial literacy. It will also help them learn how to open checking accounts, secure business loans and gain the specific job skills required for a career in finance. Thus, students will gain experience in all aspects of financial literacy along with a hands-on understanding of commerce and business management.

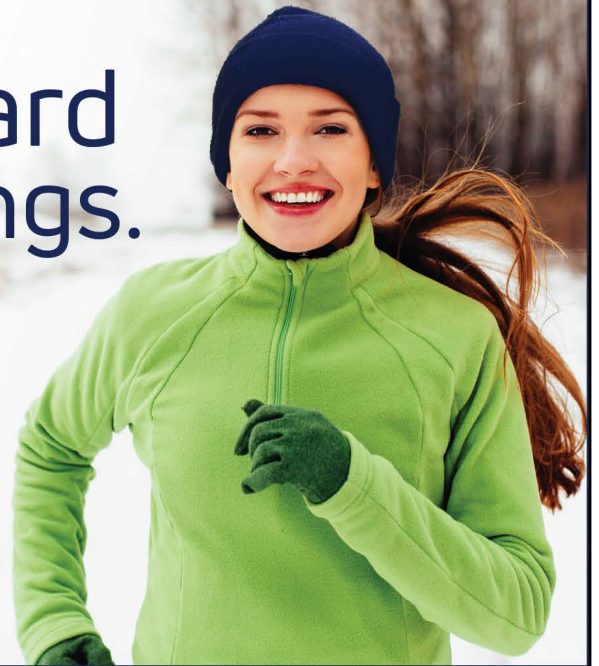
“We are excited to be a partner with Junior Achievement and JA Biztown. The learning provided through hands-on experience is vital to successful futures for the participating students and our region,” said Ron Celaschi, CEO of Clearview. “Clearview’s involvement will provide students the skills to develop an understanding of economics and commerce and the basic importance of the free enterprise system in a creative and engaging way. Clearview is committed to our region, our economy, and our members. This partnership is a demonstration of that commitment now and for years to come.”

Nationally, JA has seen great success with the JA Biztown projects. Using a third-party evaluation team, JA found that 92 percent of participating students were likely to continue their education and choose a career based on their abilities and interests. An overwhelming 97 percent of the participants reported the program inspired them to work harder for better grades. Teachers also reported that 97 percent of attendees work more collaboratively with their classmates after completion of the program.

Construction has begun on the local JA Biztown® and the buildout is expected to be completed by early fall 2019.

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North Fayette VFD asking for help at various levels

Times are ever changing and so is the North Fayette VFD. The department, however, still operates as a 100 percent volunteer not-for-profit organization and is currently seeking professional, courteous, dedicated and motivated individuals who have a desire to help their neighbors and community. The VFD prides itself on being able to continue to serve the growing community, just as it has done since 1974. The department remains the primary responding fire/rescue agency for every resident and business located in North Fayette Township.

Last year proved to be one of the department's busiest years on record. Township volunteer firefighters responded to 442 fire- and rescue-related emergency calls at an average rate of around 1.2 calls per day. These calls for service included various fire alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, vehicle accidents, residential and commercial structure fires, mutual aid responses, water conditions, and more.

The department is seeking recruits for active interior and exterior firefighters, associate (non-firefighter) members, junior firefighters (16 to 18 years of age), and qualified drivers/pump operators. Experience is welcome but not required. The department pays 100 percent of all costs associated with acquiring state-certified training. It also provides uniforms and personal protective equipment at no cost to members.

If riding on the trucks and responding to emergencies doesn't sound appealing, don't worry. The department has many other opportunities in the form of administrative and auxiliary support

roles that can be fulfilled by associate members. Support members help with a variety of details and events including the department's annual fund drive, fire prevention/community outreach, North Fayette Community Days, community and business events, holiday details, IT support, and much more. The department is also seeking volunteers to perform building and property maintenance, as well as truck maintenance.

Benefits for qualified members include: fully paid state-certified training, paid local gym membership incentives, local earned income tax credits, Allegheny County Fire Vest scholarships, insurance incentive program, and tuition incentives from select universities for family members of fire department personnel.

The department is also asking for support through its annual fund drive, which will take place in the spring of 2019. Look for the department's direct mailer or visit www.northfayettevfd.org. The department does not solicit by phone.

Contact the department today to discuss becoming a volunteer and help the VFD serve the community. Visit them online at www.northfayettevfd.org.



WA Hall of Fame launches website

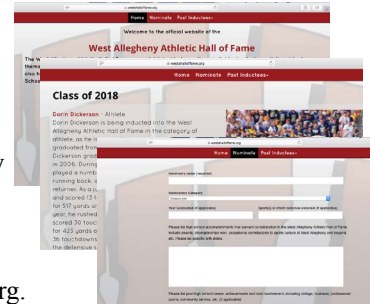
Earlier this year, the West Allegheny Athletic Hall of Fame launched a new website at www.westahalloffame.org. The new website both creates an archive of past inductees and makes it easier for community members to nominate potential inductees.

As well, the hall of fame will be using the site to post information about its various fundraising events, including its annual induction banquet that will once

again be taking place this coming May.

Money raised from the hall of fame's various efforts helps raise the profile of West Allegheny athletics by both honoring inductees and financially benefitting West Allegheny athletics.

Those interested in nominating an athlete, coach, contributor or team can do so by completing the online nomination form at www.westahalloffame.org.



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Local military charity Heroes Supporting Heroes welcomes new CEO

Heroes Supporting Heroes announced the appointment of Kristi Hilbert as its chief executive officer in January.

A staunch supporter of military members, veterans and their families, Hilbert had been serving on Heroes Supporting Heroes' executive board of directors. She was previously the director of the Heroes Support Network, a virtual community center that she was instrumental in developing. The network links over 500,000 veterans, active duty and reserve military service members in western Pennsylvania with business and civilian support programs and organizations.

Hilbert brings with her an impressive resume of leadership positions in business and military support organizations. She has received many prestigious awards in recognition of her dedication to the military and veteran community in southwestern Pennsylvania and beyond. Currently, Hilbert serves on the United States Air Force National Civic Leader Board, is co-chairman of the Military Affairs Committee for the Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce, is an assistant coordinator for the United States Marines Toys For Tots Foundation and a partner of the Fort Pitt Chapter of the Association of the United States Army.



Kristi Hilbert

"We are fortunate to have someone of Kristi's caliber and experience step up to lead Heroes Supporting Heroes," said John Lee, the founder and current president of the organization. "We are at a critical moment of growth for the organization and we are excited that, with renewed leadership, we will take our mission to new heights, helping more currently serving military families, veterans and members of our community."

Lee also praised Hilbert's vision as well as her proven track record of execution and communication skills as a civilian leader who has "earned crucial respect within the military community."

"As a member of our executive board for the last year, and involved as a volunteer and partner since our inception, she has an unparalleled understanding of our needs and vision," Lee said. "We could not be happier to welcome Kristi as our new chief executive officer."

Heroes Supporting Heroes is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that was originally formed to provide various forms of support to families of deployed military personnel. That support over the years has included home repairs, financial assistance and more. The organization has even helped secure cars and car repairs for veterans and their families. Over time, Heroes Supporting Heroes has also expanded its mission to aid senior citizens. West Allegheny Work Camp, a faith-based initiative that brings volunteers into the area to help those in the area with home repairs, now operates under the nonprofit umbrella of Heroes Supporting Heroes with the mission of helping seniors and others in need in the area.

"I could not be more honored and proud to be chosen for this position," said Hilbert. "I have a deep connection with Heroes Supporting Heroes, its founders, board members and our mission of serving our military, veteran and first responder communities. While not a veteran myself, I come from a family with a history of military service and I have a great respect for all of those who raise their hand in service to our great nation and their family members who sacrifice so much as a result of that commitment. I have dedicated a large part of my life to military support and I look forward to leading our organization to expand our reach within western PA and beyond."

For more about Heroes Supporting Heroes, visit www.heroessupportingheroes.org.

WA student performed in Citrus Bowl halftime show

STORY AND PHOTO
SUBMITTED

West Allegheny eighth-grader Sarah Rankin performed in the All-American Halftime Show during the Citrus Bowl on Jan. 1. She was one of hundreds of dancers from across the country selected to perform in the show, which aired nationally on ABC-TV.

To prepare for the event, Sarah was required to memorize two routines from a video sent to her via email just after Thanksgiving. Participants then met just prior to the show to practice.

This year's show featured singer CeCe Teneal performing music by Aretha Franklin, who passed away in August. Teneal performed two of Franklin's hits for the show: "Respect" and "Think." Both songs required dancers to perform a number of complex ripples and groupings.

For many dancers, this marked their second, third or even eighth time performing in the event, which annually takes place in Orlando, Florida. This year's Citrus Bowl took place at Camping World Stadium, where the Kentucky Wildcats upset the Penn State Nittany Lions 27-24.

At West Allegheny, Sarah is a member of the middle school cheer squad and an alumni of the West Allegheny Youth Cheerleading program. She is also a competitive cheerleader for Rain Athletics in McKeesport. She was chosen to perform in the All-American Halftime Show after an audition held during West Allegheny's cheer camp, which is run coach Joseph LaGrosse.

A video of the halftime performance can be viewed on YouTube and a practice video can be viewed on Facebook by searching for All American Halftime Show.



Sarah Rankin



STORY AND PHOTO
SUBMITTED

Organization looking to help those with terminal illnesses

A family with West Allegheny area roots who lost a loved one to brain cancer is actively working to raise money to help others faced with a similar situation.

The DAO Memorial Foundation was founded in 2016 in memory of David Andrew Oravetz, who passed away in 2015.

“Dave’s love for his family and his ongoing concern over their ability to maintain their financial stability led to the development of the foundation in his honor,” says Suzanne Robbins, who is a founding board member of the organization and a cousin of Oravetz’.

Robbins, an area native, says the foundation’s mission is to help others who are now dealing with the struggles that a terminal illness can bring.

“Loss of income, struggles with maintaining a home, planning for the future, creating a support system and dealing with the emotional issues surrounding all the change are just a few of the possible challenges that ill people and their families face,” she says.

Through a small army of volunteers in Allegheny and Westmoreland Counties, the foundation helps to alleviate some of the day-to-day struggles that these

individuals and their families face. Volunteers help with light housekeeping, socialization, respite care and financial planning. The organization can even assist with monthly bills, as needed.

To raise funds, the DAO foundation is hosting a bingo fundraiser March 2 at the Findlay Township Activity Center in Imperial. The evening includes dinner. For more details, see the listing Bingo Fundraiser under Findlay Parks and Recreation programs on page 50 in this month’s On the Horizon section. The organization is also asking for donations of items to be awarded as prizes at

the event, along with food and beverages. Anyone interested can contact Robbins at soravetz83@gmail.com or (412) 302-2150.

Those who are coping with a terminal illness or who have a loved one with a terminal illness that would like assistance from the DAO Memorial Foundation can email dao124@gmail.com or call (412) 378-5444.



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STORY AND PHOTOS SUBMITTED

New church now meeting at PTC

TreeLine Church is now meeting each Sunday morning at Pittsburgh Technical College in Oakdale at 10 a.m. The new church launched last September and is focused on impacting future generations with a lineup of youth programming aimed at teens and children.

The church was started by its pastor, Rev. Brian Henry, his wife, Kristi, and their three young daughters. Brian is a native of the area who graduated from West Allegheny High School in 1998. After moving away to attend college, he resided in several different regions of the country before settling in Indiana for 10 years. He moved back to his hometown to start TreeLine Church.

In addition to his family, six other people from Indiana and two from New York have relocated to the area to help get the church up and running. They have spent the last year building a team, raising funds and securing the church's location.

"There are many people from all over the country and the region who have been supportive and played a part to get this brand new church off the ground," says Brian. "It has been a lot of work but we are excited to finally be meeting on a regular basis."

He says they recognize that pioneering

anything is hard work but that they believe the payoff is worth the investment being made.

Often asked whether another church is really needed in the area, Brian says that he believes that as long as there are people who don't have a church they belong to the answer is "Yes."

"There are great churches in our communities," he says, "but even if they were at full capacity there still wouldn't be room for everyone who has yet to connect with a local church."

He says the church has a huge heart for the community and will be looking to serve and connect with the people living here. The church gets its name from its mission of impacting family trees through a lifelong relationship with Jesus.

At TreeLine's Sunday services, visitors can expect hot beverages, live music, relevant teaching and a clean, safe, fun environment for children. Find out more about TreeLine on their website www.treeline.church and on Facebook or Instagram @treelinechurch.

FROM TOP: As part of its programming, TreeLine Church offers children's programming and live music. The new church has also been conducting outreach efforts in the community. Brian and Kristi Henry are pictured with their children.



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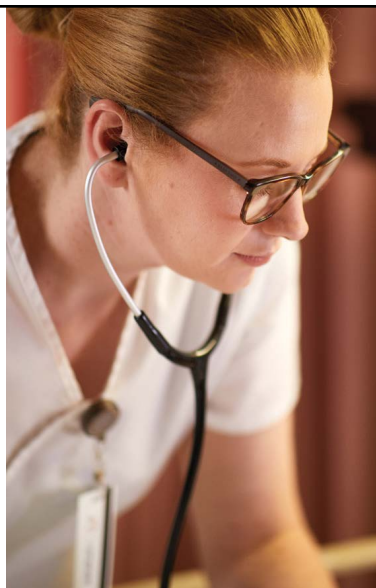
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A New Year and a new opportunity to help a new generation

BY DEB GRAY

More than ever, so many of us are focused on making things work for a group of individuals - whether it's family, our work team, volunteer organizations, our church or a combination. It requires a level of juggling, decision-making and prioritization that can be a real challenge. For most people I know, it has become a normal (and healthy) part of life to have regular check-ins with ourselves to improve our awareness and ensure that we are selecting the right things as priorities.

My reflection on decision-making is a result of observing family and friends throughout the fourth quarter and challenging myself to prioritize better. Though I'm passionate about many things, I have learned that there are but a few things that last. So, in this new year, I challenge myself to continue to refine my awareness of those things and all that matters most to me. High on my list is the desire to help others at home and in the workplace.

A recent sermon at church brought another priority to mind. In the sermon, a 10-year-old child was complaining about his math homework. He could not understand why he needed to learn multiplication and division. A few years later, his engagement in a challenging school project brought him to the realization that he wants to pursue a medical career. Upon discovering his passion, he quickly understood why he needed that math. What a gift we can give by helping others find their passion!

I hope that the goal to help others is a priority for you and your network as well. From where I sit in the employment industry, I see a critical need that presents a good opportunity for all of us: helping our student population get real-life work experience.

It is a fact that students are not getting enough work-study opportunities and we need better partnerships between schools and businesses.

Pennsylvania requires all school districts to have a K-12 School Counseling Plan as part of Chapter 339. Resources are defined at: www.education.pa.gov/K-12/PACareerStandards/Resources/Pages/339CounselingPlan.aspx.

In a tight labor market with increasing job vacancies, employers face a growing skills gap. Too many young Americans graduate with degrees and skills that don't match the needs of employers.

An effective solution is to provide students with real-life work experience before graduation. Having high school students learn early on about the most sought-after educational disciplines, workplace culture and how their educational experience translates into the real world helps ensure that students graduate with the skills and education employers need.

Express Employment Professionals partners with local entities to provide early education and work-study opportunities for high school students to help raise a workforce prepared to fill the shortage of skilled workers.

Another Express solution is Job Genius, a free, video-based program created by Express to successfully prepare students to enter the workforce. The program also serves as a tool to connect educators with the needs of businesses. With parent and facilitator guides for teachers, Job Genius explores everything from job market forecasts, post-secondary education requirements and

resume creation, to career pathing, interviewing, money management, and the soft skills employers are looking for but do not find in a startling 27 percent of applicants. Express' Pittsburgh West office will help high school teachers facilitate this program, which can be customized for the classroom or other groups looking to help students prepare for future work.

"Job vacancies continue to outnumber

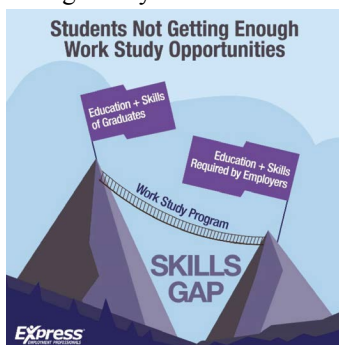
available workers," said Bill Stoller, Express CEO. "That means we need to continue drawing more people into the workforce, with an especially strong focus on helping those of limited means recognize and seize the opportunities that are out there. Businesses, educators and community leaders need to work together to remove as many barriers to jobs as possible."

It is necessary and right for every level of the community- businesses, schools, churches and volunteer organizations - to provide opportunities

for students to experience real-life work and hands-on activity that sets them up to make good life and career decisions. This can be achieved through job shadowing, internships, externships or sharing information about an open job. Also, sharing about our work life helps parents and educators understand the expectations and prepare our future workforce with the skills and education required.

I look forward to focusing on my key priority to help as many people as possible in 2019. If I can help you, please reach out to me at deb.gray@expresspros.com.

Deb Gray is the owner of Express Pittsburgh West. With offices in Robinson Township and Monaca, Express Pittsburgh West serves the western region of Allegheny County as well as all of Beaver County. Local businesses and job seekers are encouraged to stop by, visit expresspros.com/wpittsburghpa/ or call (412) 494-2000.





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Each year, the Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce (PAACC) awards scholarships to deserving students in our region in honor of the late Sally Haas, who served as President/CEO of our Chamber for 14 years before her unexpected passing in 2012. This year, the Chamber awarded two scholarships. One is a general scholarship and the other is for a student who is a member of a military family in the Airport area. It is our pleasure to announce the winners of these scholarships.



Congratulations, Mackenzie Pifko of Montour School District for having a GPA of 3.0 or greater and for your involvement in the community. Mackenzie we wish you the best as you continue your education with a focus in Early Childhood Education and Special Education.



Also, congratulations to Alondra Cosme Acevedo of West Allegheny School District for having a GPA of 3.0 or greater and for your involvement in the community. Alondra's father served with the 316th Army Expeditionary Sustainment Command. She is the winner of our Sally Haas Memorial Military Scholarship. Alondra, we wish you the best as you continue your education with a focus in Political Science.



Thank you to all the students who applied for these scholarships and best of luck on your continued education.

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New Member Orientation

Friday, February 15 - 9-10:30 a.m.

New Member Mixer

Thursday, March 7 - 5:30-7:30 p.m.

For more information about
our events, please visit
paacc.com/events.

Area veterinarian now helping pet owners through end-of-life decisions

During Dr. Mark Ferris' 32-year career as a veterinarian, he helped hundreds of pet owners and their pets with a variety of needs. Many pets he treated throughout their entire lives.

As those pets neared the end of their lives, however, part of Dr. Ferris' job involved helping pet owners make tough decisions. It was a process that he felt demanded the right amount of empathy and compassion, but one that wasn't always best suited to the veterinarian's office.

"It's just something that we, as veterinarians, have not really figured out how to get right," he says.

For Dr. Ferris, part of the problem was the veterinarian's office itself. With its cold, steel examination tables and sterile setting, it's not at all the kind of place where a pet owner wants to say "goodbye" to their beloved companion. In addition to the lack of privacy for the grieving family, there is also the unfortunate aspect in most cases of having to schedule an appointment to accommodate the doctor's schedule rather than what is best for the client and their pet.

For pet owners with aging pets, just transporting their pet to the office can also prove to be a struggle and an unbearable anxiety for the pet.

Some owners may not even know if their pet is nearing the end of its life or if it's suffering from a treatable condition.

In 2016, after 20 years of ownership, Dr. Ferris sold his practice in Burgettstown (Hilltop Animal Hospital) and transitioned into a different aspect of veterinary medicine. While working part time at Five Points Veterinary Clinic in Hopewell, he began a new service dedicated exclusively to assisting pet owners with end of life decisions in their own homes. Peaceful Goodbyes provides owners the option of saying goodbye to their loved ones at the time and place of their choosing.

As a pet's health and quality of life decline due to age or illness, pet owners often struggle with whether it is even time to say goodbye. Thus, Dr. Ferris will, if requested, visit with the family prior to a scheduled euthanasia to meet the pet, assess the patient, and try to answer the many questions concerning their loved one's failing health. There is no fee or obligation when a client requests this introductory visit.

Though not an emergency service, Dr. Ferris does his best to accommodate the family's needs. There are no time constraints with a typical house call and owners are given as much time as needed during the process to say their goodbyes. He will typically bring a veterinary technician with him and, after the pet has passed, provide cremation options if requested. When private cremation is preferred, he will personally transport the pet to the crematorium and, a few days later, return the cremains to the family in a beautiful wooden urn with engraved nameplate as well as a clay paw print keepsake.

The feedback Dr. Ferris has received from clients has been overwhelmingly positive. An entire section on his website contains moving testimonials. One reads as follows:

"[Our cat] Fox was telling us it was time, and it was to our immense relief that Dr. Ferris agreed to visit our home to gently and mercifully ease this cherished family member into his last moments. No jostling Fox's aching body into a carrier for a last, bumpy ride to an unfamiliar and sterile clinic; instead, Fox peacefully - and gratefully, we're convinced - spent the final hours of his life at home, unstressed and surrounded by all that was familiar."

More testimonials can be read at: peacefulgoodbyes.com/testimonial.html.

In the spring of 2019, Dr. Ferris says he will begin offering in-home examinations, vaccines and routine bloodwork for pets that are fearful and anxious about car rides and visiting the veterinarian's office. For now, though, he's applying his expertise, along with his skills of compassion and empathy, to help pet owners through the euthanasia process.

Dr. Ferris is currently making house calls throughout western Allegheny County and other parts of the tri-state region, including Washington County, Beaver County, and parts of Ohio and West Virginia.

For more information, visit peacefulgoodbyes.com or text/call (412) 671-3773. Dr. Ferris can also be reached via email at mferris61@verizon.net.



Dr. Mark Ferris



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STORY SUBMITTED
PHOTO BY DOUG HUGHEY

Advanced Dentistry welcomes new dentist



Dr. David Mascio is pictured with Dr. TJ Ameredes, who owns and operates Advanced Dentistry in North Fayette Township. Mascio, who has been practicing for 22 years, joined the practice last July.

Advanced Dentistry in North Fayette Township recently welcomed a new dentist.

Dr. David Mascio, who brings with him 22 years of experience, joined the local practice last July. He has been working with Dr. TJ Ameredes, who owns and operates Advanced Dentistry, to serve the dental needs of the West Allegheny community. Ameredes has been operating Advanced Dentistry in the area since he took over the former practice known as Luther and Noel in 2015. The practice is still located on Oakdale Road just off the Route 22/30 Hankey Farms Exit. Ameredes also operates a second practice in Wheeling, West Virginia.

While searching for a new doctor, Ameredes says Mascio's skill and experience made him the perfect choice.

"Dr. Dave Mascio's reputation as a caring, competent and skilled dentist preceded him," says Ameredes.

Mascio graduated from Walsh College with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1992 and then earned his doctorate from the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine in 1996. After three years of working as a dental associate, he purchased his own practice in 2000.

He says that when the opportunity arose to join Advanced Dentistry, he jumped at it.

"I'd heard of all the wonderful things that Advanced Dentistry was doing," says Mascio, who is originally from Steubenville, Ohio, "and I also love the area so the decision was simple."

He says that he and his wife, Cheryl, are looking forward to moving to the area soon.

For 19 years of the years that Mascio has been practicing he's worked in general dentistry. As such, he's treated patients of all ages. At Advanced Dentistry, he'll likewise be working with Ameredes to offer a comprehensive range of services, from preventative and pediatric care to implants. The practice also offers a number of cosmetic dentistry services to help patients achieve their ideal smile, including teeth whitening and the popular Invisalign teeth straightening system.

Additional services offered by Advanced Dentistry include crowns, bridges and dentures. The practice can also help treat sleep apnea and, for those who fear going to the dentist, sedation dentistry.

To give patients the best possible treatment, the practice utilizes cutting-edge scanning technology, including digital scanners and a highly accurate cone beam CT. Because preventative care is essential to dental health - particularly for younger patients - Advanced Dentistry's care plans include cleanings with a dental hygienist. During cleanings, patients regularly undergo a dental prophylaxis cleaning procedure, which thoroughly cleans the teeth and gums, thereby removing harmful bacteria.

Ameredes says it was essential to have another doctor in the office who was not only skilled but could also communicate well, and thus help determine the best possible treatment plan for each patient.

"The treatment planning will be that much better going forward," says Ameredes.

Advanced Dentistry is located at 1050 Oakdale Road. For more about the practice, including its range of services, visit them online at www.advanceddentistry412.com. To make an appointment or get a second opinion, call (412) 788-6300.



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Local tattoo artists open new shop in Imperial

STORY AND PHOTOS SUBMITTED



Local tattoo artists Sean “Murf” Seretti and Jason Trunick recently opened American National Tattoo in the Essex Plaza in Imperial on Steubenville Pike. Some of Trunick’s work is pictured below and Seretti’s at right.

Two tattoo artists who have worked in the area for a combined 15 years opened a new tattoo and piercing shop in Imperial at the end of 2018. Sean “Murf” Seretti and Jason Trunick are now operating American National Tattoo in Essex Plaza at 7900 Steubenville Pike. The shop is open Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. The studio offers custom tattoo, piercing and body modification services. Walk-ins are welcome.



Many locals would likely know Trunick and Seretti from the work they’ve done on their own tattoos. Others have probably inadvertently seen Trunick and Seretti’s work walking around in the area. The two specialize not only in traditional tattoo styles but also black work (or dot shading), neo-traditional, grey scale, lettering and traditional Japanese tattoos.

The two say their business’ name refers to the classic tradition of tattooing that started among American naval personnel.

A 2000 West Allegheny High School graduate, Trunick grew up in Imperial and studied art and design at Pittsburgh Technical Institute, which is now Pittsburgh Technical College. After school, he went to work in the oil and gas industry. Trunick says, though, that he never gave up on his art.

“I was out of the art world for a long time,” he says, “but I always wanted to come back to it.”

An apprenticeship in a tattoo shop steered him back and, at the same time, introduced him to Seretti, who he worked alongside for the next four years. A 2007 graduate of Moon Area High School, Seretti’s career in tattooing started when he dropped out of art school to take an apprenticeship at a shop in Pittsburgh’s South Side. He became a professional tattoo artist in 2010 and has worked in the suburbs for much of his career. He credits his mother, Michele, with encouraging his early interest in art.



While working together, Seretti and Trunick came to appreciate each other’s aesthetic values. They also developed a vision of how they would run their own tattoo shop, should they ever be given the opportunity. Now that the two are on their own, their success hinges on meeting - and exceeding - the aesthetic expectations of their clients. They say they’re aiming to do just that in a clean, safe and professional environment.

“We’re strictly business and personal relationships with clients,” Seretti says.

While walk-ins are always welcome, making an appointment is never a bad idea. Call them at (724) 695-1412 or email them at anationaltattoo@gmail.com.

To see more of Seretti’s work, follow him on Instagram at [@murfson](https://www.instagram.com/murfson). Follow Trunick on Instagram at [@flfty1flfty](https://www.instagram.com/flfty1flfty).



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STORY AND PHOTO SUBMITTED BY PWCTC

Parkway West Career and Technology Center

When Kellyanne Hernandez-Rivera graduates from West Allegheny High School this spring, she'll have a number of options in front of her.

Not only will she have the experience necessary to enter directly into the workforce, but she'll also be prepared to pursue her post-secondary education in sports medicine rehabilitation therapy technology, thanks to her education at Parkway West Career and Technology Center.

Hernandez-Rivera is one of many students in grades nine through 12 studying at PWCTC. In all, PWCTC provides education and training that allows students to be college- and career-ready in 15 different career pathways. These pathways include: auto body technology, automotive technology, building construction technology, cosmetology, culinary arts, diesel technology, digital multimedia, electrical systems technology, health assistant, HVAC/R, information technology essentials, public safety technology, sports medicine and rehabilitation therapy technology, veterinary assistant technology, and welding technology.



Kellyanne Hernandez-Rivera is a senior at West Allegheny High School who is studying sports medicine rehabilitation therapy technology at Parkway West Career and Technology Center. Upon graduating in the spring, she'll be able to enter directly into the workforce and, if she wishes, pursue her post-secondary degree.

PWCTC students who complete their program requirements have the opportunity to earn industry credentials that will allow them to enter directly into the workforce after high school or pursue further training at a post-secondary institution. Graduating students enter into this post-graduation stage with four years of free career education. This sets PWCTC students at a clear career and post-secondary advantage over other students. They graduate equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in their area of study due to the extensive training he/she received.

With continual technological advances in society, PWCTC is constantly striving to improve program delivery through upgrades in the equipment and technology used to train and prepare students to become members of tomorrow's workforce. The demand for skilled workers has dramatically increased over the past 10 years. By 2026, the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics predicts a marked increase in the need for health care, construction, automotive and information technology professionals. The free, four-year training that students receive at PWCTC allows them to fill this labor need. Students who choose to pursue a post-secondary degree after graduation will be at a distinct financial advantage over other students, as many of their prerequisite course requirements will have already been met thanks to their training at PWCTC.

At PWCTC, students prepare for future success through 15 career-related programs that provide them with the technical abilities to be successful in a career or post-secondary path.

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Robinson Township Christian School

STORIES AND PHOTOS
SUBMITTED BY ROBINSON TOWNSHIP CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

New community choir forms at RTCS



The newly formed community choir, directed by Lindsay Shaffer (pictured below) performs in a concert in December.

Fifty years - that's the age gap between the oldest and youngest members of a brand new community choir that recently started at Robinson Township Christian School.

"Choir members range from current and former students, to parents, friends of the school, current teachers, former teachers, and even just some volunteers," said the choir's director,

Lindsay Shaffer, who has taught music at RTCS since 2013.

The idea of a community choir came to her when she noticed how many "RTCS family" were musically inclined. Now, adult vocalists have a chance to be on stage and the high school choir benefits as well.

"It gives them a chance to perform more difficult and varied repertoire, while introducing them to members of our greater community who are great role

models and friends," Shaffer said.

After the choir's first performance Dec. 14, Shaffer, who has almost completed her master's degree in conducting, was excited about the choir's success, especially in the Latin and German selections. However, she was most thrilled about the experience of watching such a varied group become a cohesive choir:

"Together, we explored diverse musical themes and styles and grew in our musicianship, all the while blessing our audience as we give glory to God," she says.



The choir, which plans on performing twice a year, will put on its next concert in May.

Shaffer is the high school choir director at RTCS as well as the director of a nine-person ensemble called New Song, which tours the U.S. and Canada each summer. A certified K-12 music teacher, Shaffer strives to teach students about their world and how to both live in and contribute to it by experiencing, enjoying and sharing music while developing personal skills and talents.

RTCS to perform

"Seasons of Love: A Musical Journey"

Robinson Township Christian School is proud to present the premiere of "Seasons of Love: A Musical Journey" on Feb. 28 at 7 p.m., March 1 at 7 p.m. and March 2 at 2 p.m.

The show follows four friends as they pursue their dream of starring in a musical and discover that chaos will ensue unless a "director" guides them and they can work together. Many familiar songs are woven throughout the story.



RTCS drama students prepare for their 2018 show.

Tickets go on sale at the beginning of February. Call (412) 787-5919. Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$5 for students (including college students) and \$5 for senior citizens.

The RTCS drama department's vision is that the school's students will develop their talents as actors, singers and dancers in an environment that encourages growth. The school's intention is that this will act as a continuation of the acquired wisdom, knowledge and compassion for others that students are already learning at RTCS.



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St. Philip School

JA visits St. Philip

Under the auspices of the Junior Achievement program, students from Bishop Canevin High School spent the day at St. Philip School teaching children about economics in its various forms. Lessons were presented at all grade levels and included topics such as money use in kindergarten, business strategies in fifth grade, and communications and transportation in sixth grade. The children enjoyed being taught by students just a little older than themselves and related well to this style of learning.



St. Philip fifth-grader Lilly Price gets instruction from St. Philip alumnae and Bishop Canevin students Brianna Caridi and Breanna Bazeck.

JA Worldwide is a partnership between the business community, educators and volunteers - all of whom work together to inspire young people to dream big and reach their potential. JA's hands-on, experiential programs teach key concepts of work readiness, entrepreneurship and financial literacy to young people all over the world. Bishop Canevin students train and present this event yearly and enjoy being teachers for a day. Students also enjoy having St. Philip graduates return as instructors. The local JA program and Bishop Canevin offer scholarships to eighth-graders who have attended Catholic school and participated in the JA program.

Students host Toys for Tots campaign

The Student Council Toys for Tots campaign was a huge success this past holiday season. Over \$500 and three SUVs full of toys were donated. Student Council officers, along with Miss Astwood, Mrs. Davis, and Mr. Fischer, took all the donated and purchased toys to KISS FM's Stuff-A-Bus in Robinson Township. They filled more than 10 shopping carts full of toys and helped "stuff" bus numbers 34 and 35. The radio station was able to fill a total of 60 buses full of toys that went to the U.S. Marine Corp. Toys for Tots program.



St. Philip Student Council members Branden Sniadach, Sean Kelsch and John Henry Luke, along with St. Philip eighth grade teacher Roy Fischer, shop for Toys for Tots donations.

St. Philip hosts families for holiday presentations

St. Philip students prepared for the past holiday season with three dramatic presentations depicting historical events behind the celebration. The annual Christmas program was a look back in time to all of the ancestors of Jesus from the Old Testament. Middle school students took the parts of figures on the Jesse Tree from Adam to John the Baptist and talked about their roles in the story of Redemption. Interspersed with the Biblical stories were songs performed by children in grades one through five dressed as Biblical figures. The program ended with all participants performing "Pachelbel's Canon."

St. Philip Middle School, under the direction of Spanish teacher Nancee Marshall, produced a posada, a Christmas pageant that celebrates Spanish songs and traditions. A highlight of the performance was the re-enactment of Las Posadas, a Christmas festival originating in Latin America that dramatizes the search of Joseph and Mary for lodging. The story includes Mary and Joseph, innkeepers, animals of the stable, and the Three Wise Men.

Finally, some school students took part in a live Nativity sponsored by the parish that was staged in the church and courtyard. The scene depicting the Christmas story was complete with live animals and song.



St. Philip fourth- and fifth-graders depict Old Testament figures in the school's Jesse Tree pageant.

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Holy Trinity Catholic School

Heritage helps teach students about blood types

Students in eighth grade completed a life science unit with a lab that allowed them to determine their blood type. With assistance from Heritage Valley Health System's Dr. Denise Wegrzynowicz and their science teacher, Darci Smith, the students used a self-test kit designed for at-home use and drew a finger prick blood sample to test for their blood type based on the ABO and Rhesus-D systems.

Prior to participating in the hands-on activity, students learned that blood contains a biochemical makeup as unique to an individual as a fingerprint. They also watched a tutorial to help them prepare for the lab. The work was done in conjunction with a unit the students are studying on the heart and cardiovascular system.



Dr. Denise Wegrzynowicz of Heritage Valley Health System helps students use blood testing kits to teach them about blood types.



GeoBee winner announced

Fifth through eighth grade students participated in the National Geographic GeoBee at Holy Trinity Catholic School in January.

The National Geographic GeoBee is an annual competition designed to inspire and reward students' curiosity about the world. Eighth-grader Caiden Ohr won the competition at Holy Trinity and qualified to compete in an online state competition.

The top 100 ranked students in each state qualify to represent their school at the state level GeoBee competition. The state champion then travels to National Geographic headquarters in Washington, D.C. to compete in the national championship.

Honorable mentions went to seventh-grader Aaron Williams, who finished in second place, and fifth-grader Elise Hornyak, who finished third.



Caiden Ohr (center), Aaron Williams (right) and Elise Hornyak (left) finished atop the school's geobee.

Learning about ecosystems through biomes

Holy Trinity Catholic School's fifth grade class created miniature biomes with soil, moisture, plants and animals that are consistent within that ecosystem. Students were put into groups based on their interest of biome type - deciduous forest, desert, grassland or tropical rainforest. Students then researched information such as climate, land type, producers, primary consumers and decomposers that are native to their biome. The fifth grade shared their bio-domes and their knowledge with grades K through four.

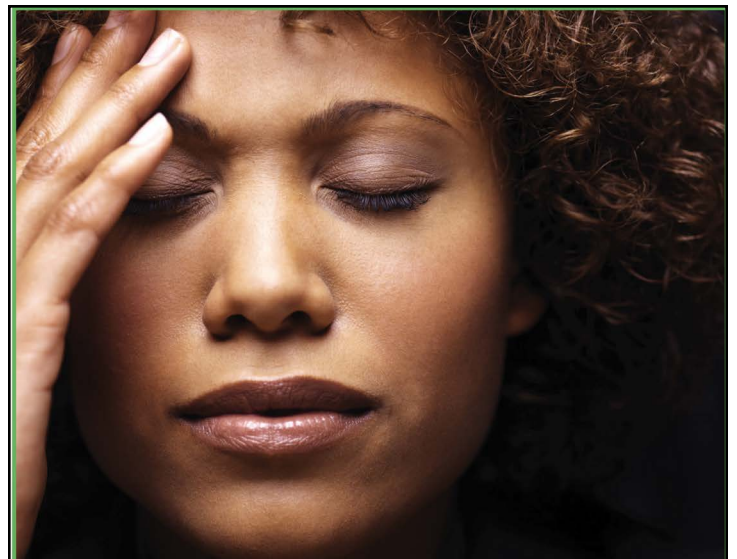


Fifth-graders display a biome they created to learn about ecosystems.

Forensics team competes at second meet

Holy Trinity Catholic School's Forensic Team attended their second meet Jan. 11 at Our Lady of Fatima School. Holy Trinity earned a third place finish, with eight first place, 14 second place and three third place ribbons. Both Bianca Golomb and Allison Weaver received two first place ribbons. Riley Lecker, Evie Minzer, Olivia Mulvay and Olivia Wegrzynowicz each received one first place ribbon.

The top 10 Holy Trinity Catholic School students will compete at the finals competition and the top student in each category - prose, poetry, drama, declamation, impromptu and multiple reading - will compete in the all-star competition.



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Pittsburgh Technical College

Annual philanthropic effort again nets gifts for local families in need

Faculty, staff and students at Pittsburgh Technical College once again donated their time, money and talents to make the holiday season a little brighter for families and children in need in the area this past December.

On Dec. 12, their efforts culminated in a daylong gift wrapping and sorting operation that resulted in the donation of gifts to 25 local families. As well, 50 homeless bags were distributed through the Salvation Army and stockings stuffed with presents were donated to children at the Bradley Center.

Mark Bellemare, PTC hospitality faculty member and community service coordinator, says that students from healthcare, justice, hospitality, business and a number of other tracks lent their time to the effort. He says students also did much of the shopping.

Faculty, meanwhile, raised funds by purchasing ornaments on a “giving tree” and by donating during “jean days.” He says PTC generously matched all funds donated to bring the effort to fruition.

While serving the local community, Bellemare says that the two-decade-old effort also serves as a personal learning experience for students. Generally, he says, those students can be broken down into two categories.

“There are students that had no idea that there was a need for this,” says Bellemare about one of those groups. “They came from

a two-parent family, celebrated the holidays, Christmas, and had Christmas [presents] under the tree. Then we have students who were on the other end of things and had to rely on the goodness of other people to participate in something like this.”

He says one student this year broke down in tears because she had benefitted from a similar charitable effort as a child.

“So she was very happy to be on this side of it and helping out other families,” he says.

Some students said they weren’t aware that an organization like the Bradley Center existed in the area before they got involved. The center provides treatment services for children who are experiencing emotional, developmental and behavioral health problems.

“It’s something that especially around the holidays makes them feel pretty good about themselves,” says Bellemare about the students helping the center.

He admits, though, that it also looks great on a resume.

Brandon Westman and Sarah Esposito, two of Bellemare’s students who helped coordinate the gift-wrapping day, say they were impressed with the response from students and the amount of gifts donated. This was their first year helping with it.

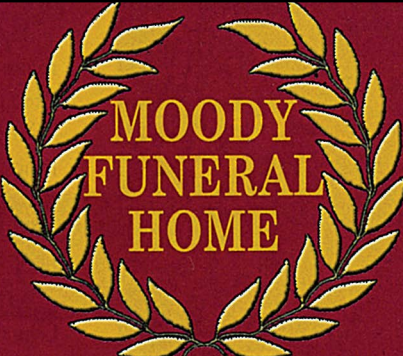
In all, 89 students, faculty and staff helped wrap gifts for just under 400 people.



ABOVE: Health care students Phylicia Strickland, Nicoal Smith and Stacy Suder lent some of their free time in December to an initiative at Pittsburgh Technical College aimed at donating gifts to families in the area in need. BELOW: Hospitality student Brandon Westman directs stocking-stuffing efforts.



BELOW: Students wrapped throughout the day on Dec. 12.



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Gaydos takes over for Mustio as 44th District representative

A swearing-in ceremony in Harrisburg on New Year's Day propelled Valerie Gaydos into office as the Pennsylvania state representative for the 44th District, a seat held for more than 15 years by Mark Mustio.

Gaydos, a 51-year-old businesswoman from Aleppo Township, had never held a statewide office prior to the November election. However, she is counting on her years of expertise in small business ownership, angel investing and advising start-up companies to serve her well in strengthening the state's business climate.

The new representative, who defeated former Kennedy Township schoolteacher Michele Knoll, said she heard from voters that they were less interested in political parties and more interested in the specific intentions of the candidates.

A self-described lifelong conservative and defender of the Constitution, Gaydos is passionate about education initiatives that include training in the trades, economic development that leads to good jobs, and the protection of personal rights and freedoms.

Gaydos attended Quaker Valley High School but graduated from Sewickley Academy in 1985. She majored in Russian and Soviet studies at Dickinson College and spent two summers studying in Moscow.

In the late 1980s, Gaydos was an intern for the late Sen. John Heinz, followed by a period of employment as a legislative aide for then state Sen. Mike Fisher. Both of those opportunities greatly impacted her life, said Gaydos, adding that the respect both men showed to all colleagues and constituents with whom they worked, regardless of party affiliation, helped to "set her political tone."

After dabbling in politics, Gaydos decided to hone her entrepreneurial skills. She founded Capital Growth, a Maryland-based investment company that sold financial data to subscribers such as investment banks.

When her husband passed away in 2002, Gaydos took over his publishing company. Most recently, she has been the chief operating officer for CDNS, an international cyber security firm.

She also served as president of The Pennsylvania Angel Network, a statewide group that represents investors in start-up companies. During her tenure, the network expanded from eight to 18 groups.

For nine years, Gaydos was also a member of the Pennsylvania Business Council, a role which involved interviewing potential political candidates for the state. She began to consider running for office herself and made it official when she learned that Mustio would not seek reelection.

"Whether I won or lost, there was no down side to running," stated Gaydos, who believed she could have the most impact on people's lives by taking on a local governmental role.

The new representative remarked that other states are much more favorable to start-up companies than Pennsylvania, a major catalyst in her decision to campaign. Revising the tax laws to

enable small start-ups to recoup tax money to invest in their own growth is a main objective for Gaydos, as is advancing a mass transit system for the area, an effort that has stalled for 30 years.

Gaydos also expects pension reform to be one of her greatest challenges while in office. Though she admits to having no immediate answers, she stated that the issue "can't be tabled anymore. We have to address it and that starts by talking about it."

Gaydos says she knocked on nearly 8,000 doors and conversed with many senior citizens who have worked hard all of their lives and now find themselves on fixed incomes and having to sacrifice because of taxes and unforeseen expenses.

"Every day brings a lot of burdens," said Gaydos of the senior population, adding that "government should not be one of them."

Job creation and growth at Pittsburgh International Airport will be another central focus for Gaydos. In December, she attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the Innovation Campus to be built on airport property and was surprised and excited to be given a shovel and hardhat by Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald.

Gaydos hopes to help Pennsylvania achieve solvency and commented that "personal freedom comes with economic freedom." In her first effort to save local taxpayers money, Gaydos chose to remain in the same office used by Mustio at 1009 Beaver Grade Road and to keep the same phone number: (412) 262-3780.

Mustio stated that it has been easier to leave the position knowing that a person of Gaydos' quality and character will be taking over his seat.

"Valerie is a good listener which is an essential asset to have in this job," said Mustio, adding that her knowledge, experience and energy will provide "really good representation for our district."

Mustio has mixed emotions about his time in office coming to a close. After becoming the 44th District's representative in 2003, he was an integral force in the expanding development around Pittsburgh International Airport, including upgraded infrastructure, construction of the I-79 connector, and the expansion and renaming of I-376.

He was also involved in the growth of the local Marcellus Shale industry, the establishment of an anti-windfall property tax that rolled back taxes on reassessments, and a six-year effort on legislation that required assisted living facilities in the state to have carbon monoxide detectors.

Mustio admitted, however, that the increased use of social media in politics, as well as the negativity and combative nature of both the media and the public has become "very tiring" for those in office.

"It's time for some new blood," stated Mustio, adding that "15-and-a-half years is about my attention span."

Mustio will continue to operate his local insurance agency and plans to stay involved in the community but will spend more time at his home in Jupiter, Florida.



State Rep. Valerie Gaydos is sworn into office by D. Michael Fisher, the former Pennsylvania state senator and attorney general who is now a federal judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, on Jan. 1. PHOTO COURTESY PA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, REPUBLICAN CAUCUS

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

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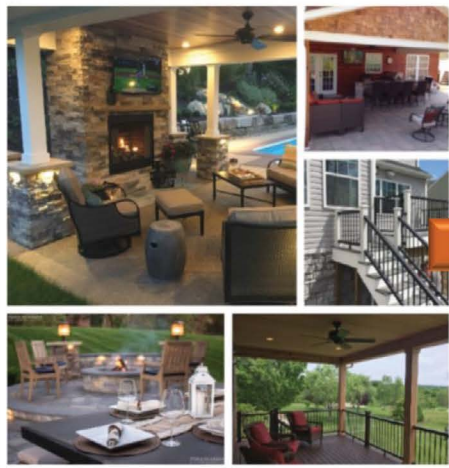


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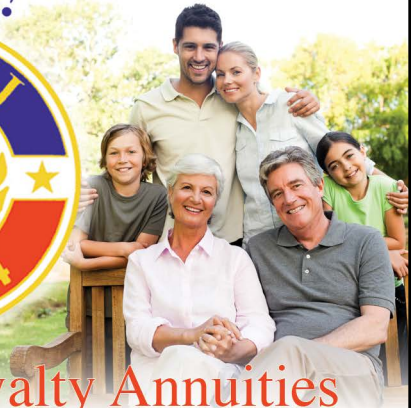
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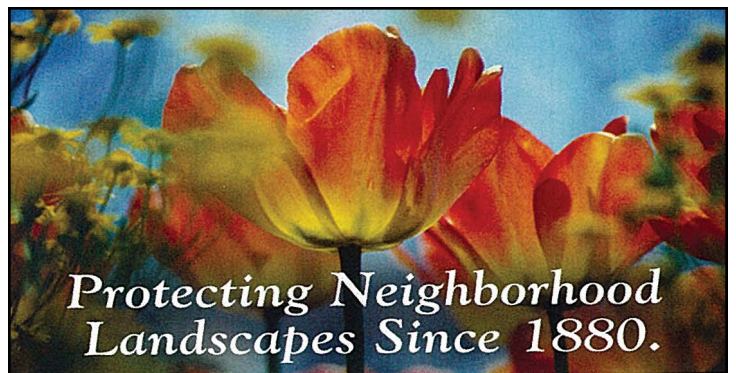
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High school students recognized for academic achievement



Seventy-two students were recognized for earning passing scores on their Advanced Placement exams.

West Allegheny High School students continue to set a high bar when it comes to academic success. Recently, ceremonies held to recognize both Advanced Placement achievement and National Honor Society induction recognized some of these students.

For the third year, students earning a passing score of three or higher on Advanced Placement exams were celebrated during a ceremony and breakfast November 19. Parents and guardians of 72 current students were invited to the recognition ceremony with awards and words of congratulation being presented by superintendent Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert and principal Kevin McKiernan. Guest speakers included current and former students who shared their insights on the important role AP courses have played in preparing them for future college/career



This year's National Honor Society induction welcomed 47 new members.

endeavors. Completing the third year of the \$730,000 AP grant and a partnership with the National Math + Science Initiative, West Allegheny students have earned over \$60,000 for their scores, which jumped from 70 qualifying scores in 2014 to 323 in 2018.

On December 18, the National Honor Society inducted 47 new members based on the organization's four pillars: scholarship, leadership, character and service. To be eligible for membership, juniors and seniors must have met one of two requirements: maintain a minimum GPA of 3.75 with at least two honors level classes in ninth grade and two honors level classes in 10th grade, and schedule for two AP, or 5.0 level classes in 11th grade and 12th grade for seniors inducted or have an overall QPA of 4.0 or higher. A student-led ceremony continued the time-honored candle lighting tradition welcoming new members.

Jennifer Cook and Sara Ferko serve as faculty sponsors of NHS.

#WeAreStudentStrong

Superintendent's Message

As a parent of school-aged children, have you ever wondered how you are going to pay for college? Or have you wondered if your child - or children - will be prepared for post-secondary success after high school? In this follow up to last issue's Superintendent's Message, I would like to further expound on a hallmark opportunity available to our students through the Early College In High School Academy (ECIHSA).

As we embark on our second semester of the school year, we are thrilled to have over 250 students enrolled in our ECIHSA program. ECIHSA is a concurrent enrollment model that allows our students to earn college credits, a certificate and/or an associate degree by completing their first or second year of college before graduating from West Allegheny at a fraction of regular tuition costs. Nearly one-quarter of our high school students are enrolled in the program and working toward acquiring over a combined 1,100 college credits. These students are reaping both the academic and financial benefits of earning college credits while at the same time earning credits toward their high school diploma.

We are pleased to announce that, since publishing the previous Superintendent's Message, we have expanded our program offerings through ECIHSA to include both Mechatronics and General Studies. These courses add to our growing list of programs available for the 2019-2020 school year. Multimedia Game Simulation, Cybersecurity, Mechatronics and General Studies are now all being offered through ECIHSA. Thanks to

our special relationship with CCAC, our students will now have a remarkable opportunity to participate in 30 West Allegheny approved courses that include 48 embedded CCAC courses and the potential to earn up to 150 college credits. Courses are taught by 19 of our high school teachers who have been certified as CCAC adjunct professors across eight academic departments.

The cost savings provided to our students and families through ECIHSA are significant. These programs are available to our students at a cost of no more than \$113 per course for concurrent enrollment courses or \$56.50 per course if you are enrolled in one of the four certificate programs. That is correct - these costs are NOT per credit, but per course. For students receiving a free or reduced lunch, the District offers full scholarships, paying 100 percent of tuition. Regular-priced lunch students receive partial scholarships, with the District paying for 50 percent of certificate courses. These savings add up to tens of thousands of dollars. For example, the Cybersecurity certificate is completed in four WA courses with eight embedded CCAC courses worth 25 credits. For our students, the course costs just \$452 along with a one-time matriculation fee of \$25. By comparison, the full college tuition for these courses at CCAC would cost \$904. Our students are also able to transfer their credits to most colleges and universities, providing significant savings to our families.

This is just one example. The various programs offered through ECIHSA have different requirements. The Multimedia Game

	Certificate	Associate Degree	4-year	3-year	2-year (Pending)
Cybersecurity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Multimedia Game Simulation	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Mechatronics Technology (NEW 2019-20)	✓		✓	✓	✓
General Studies (NEW 2019-20)	✓		✓	✓	✓

	WA Courses Certificate	CCAC Courses & Credits Certificate	WA Courses Associate Degree	CCAC Courses & Credits Associate Degree
Cybersecurity	4 WA Courses	8 CCAC & 25 credits	13 WA courses	21 CCAC & 71 credits
Multimedia Game Simulation	6 WA courses	9 CCAC & 27 credits	13 WA courses	19 CCAC & 62 credits
Mechatronics	5 WA courses	10 CCAC & 30 credits	NA	NA
General Studies	8 WA courses	9 CCAC & 35-36 credits	NA	NA
Concurrent Enrollment	30 WA courses include 48 approved CCAC courses with 150 eligible credits			

Superintendent's Message, cont.

Simulation certificate is completed in six WA courses with nine embedded CCAC courses. The Mechatronics certificate is completed in five WA courses with 10 embedded CCAC courses. The General Studies certificate is completed in eight WA courses with nine embedded CCAC courses.

When developing the ECIHSA curriculum, a primary goal was identifying programs that would support growing career demand across both the region and country. According to recent data, annual job openings in the mechatronics field were 1,258 regionally and 15,078 nationally, with median hourly earnings at \$35.21 regionally and \$37.68 nationally. In cybersecurity, recent job openings were 1,560 regionally and 18,993 nationally, with median hourly earnings of \$33.68 and \$36.87, respectively. The multimedia game simulation field is also experiencing demand, with 1,144 job openings regionally and 13,376 nationally. Median hourly earnings are \$32.27 and \$33.83, respectively. Data shows that these numbers are anticipated to grow in each of these fields over the next decade.

The general studies program, meanwhile, provides the foundations of a baccalaureate liberal arts degree. Upon successful completion of this program, students will be prepared to write critically, speak effectively in a professional environment, demonstrate college level mathematical skills, distinguish among the experiences of diverse cultures, and demonstrate computer literacy.

The opportunities afforded to our high school students through the ECIHSA support their post-secondary preparedness and is yet another way the District can ensure that every student is career and/or college ready with a viable post-secondary pathway at the time of graduation. We encourage families to learn more about these opportunities through the information flyers that were created to outline the four programs available through the ECIHSA. They are available to students/parents in the guidance office and on the District website.

Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert,
Superintendent

WA

Early College In High School Academy



Multimedia Game Simulation

Creativity Meets Technology in Multimedia Game Simulation

Through the Early College in High School Academy, a unique partnership with Community College of Allegheny County, West Allegheny High School is excited to offer a Multimedia Game Simulation program. This dynamic opportunity allows our students to complete their first year or two of college by earning a college certificate or as programming simulation diploma.

The Multimedia Game Simulation opportunities to learn about practices. Additionally, standard hardware, software beginning with framework into design and implementation.

Course Credits
The Multimedia Game Simulation earning either a certificate or diploma program consists of West Allegheny courses, college credits earned in:

Career Opportunities
As with most technology opportunities continue to traditionally involve creating animation, and visual effects media.

Career Demand
According to 2017/2018 multimedia game simulation, 13,376 nationally. The regionally and \$33.83 nationally to grow by 8% regionally decade.

Benefits of the Early College In High School Academy Multimedia Game Simulation Program

- In six (6) West Allegheny courses, students complete nine (9) CCAC courses earning 27 college credits and complete the Multimedia Game Simulation Certificate

Early College In High School Academy



General Studies Certificate or Concurrent Enrollment

Building a Foundation for Academic Success

Through the Early College in High School Academy, a unique partnership with Community College of Allegheny County, West Allegheny High School is excited to offer a General Studies program. This distinct opportunity allows our students to complete their first year or two of college by earning a college certificate while also

The General Studies program consists of baccalaureate liberal arts courses. Upon successful completion, students are prepared to:

- Write critically
- Speak effectively
- Demonstrate mathematical skills
- Distinguish among the experiences of diverse cultures
- Demonstrate computer literacy

Course Credits
The General Studies program consists of 35-36 CCAC courses. A total of 150 college dual/concurrent enrollment credits.

Transfer Opportunities
Students should select a field of concentration university.

How to Enroll
Please visit your school enrollment options

Benefits of the Early College In High School Academy General Studies Program

- In only eight (8) West Allegheny courses, students earn 35-36 CCAC credits through the General Studies Certificate program.

Early College In High School Academy



Cybersecurity

There has Never Been a Better Time to Earn a Degree in Cybersecurity

Through the Early College in High School Academy, a unique partnership with Community College of Allegheny County, West Allegheny High School is excited to offer a Cybersecurity program. This distinct opportunity allows our students to complete their first year or two of college by earning a college certificate or school diploma while also

Identified as a high-demand, high-growth field, cybersecurity is a growing field that requires the technical skills necessary to work with industrial robots, programmable logic controllers and other automated equipment.

Course Credits
The Cybersecurity certificate program consists of 14 West Allegheny courses.

Career Opportunities
Graduates of the Cybersecurity Program will be prepared to pursue careers in advanced manufacturing, systems integration, electromechanics, process control and industrial maintenance, as well as serve as technicians in supply chain, electronics, instrumentation, robotics and automation.

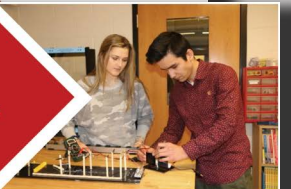
Career Demand
According to 2017/2018 data, annual job openings in the cybersecurity field were 1,560 regionally and 18,993 nationally, with median hourly earnings of \$33.68 and \$36.87, respectively. The median hourly earnings were \$33.68 regionally and \$36.87 nationally. These numbers are anticipated to grow over the next decade.

Benefits of the Early College In High School Academy Cybersecurity Program

- In five (5) West Allegheny courses, students complete 30 CCAC courses earning 30 college credits and complete the Cybersecurity Certificate program, while earning up to four industry credentials/certifications.
- Students have the opportunity to earn a Cybersecurity Technology Certificate in two (2), three (3) or four (4) years.
- Courses are taught at West Allegheny High School by our teachers certified as CCAC adjunct professors during the regular school day, while students earn credits toward their WA diploma.
- Any student enrolled in the certificate program will receive a 50% or 100% academic scholarship to fund certificate completion (students must maintain a 2.8 GPA and a minimum of 90% attendance). Families will be responsible to pay up to \$56.50* per CCAC course.
- Students who elect to take courses as concurrent enrollment only, will be responsible for an associated cost of \$113* per CCAC course as compared to \$425* for a four-credit course as well as a one-time \$25 matriculation fee.
- Students are eligible for all benefits available to CCAC students including access to the library, Math Café, and Writing Labs.

*Costs are subject to change based on CCAC tuition costs.

Early College In High School Academy



Mechatronics Technology

Prepare for Tomorrow's Manufacturing Careers Today

Through the Early College in High School Academy, a unique partnership with Community College of Allegheny County, West Allegheny High School is excited to offer a Mechatronics Technology Program. This distinct opportunity allows our students to complete their first year or two of college by earning a college certificate while also attaining a WA high school diploma.

For students interested in advanced manufacturing, mechatronics is a growing field that requires the technical skills necessary to work with industrial robots, programmable logic controllers and other automated equipment.

College Credits Available
The Mechatronics Technology college certificate program consists of 30 college credits earned through five (5) West Allegheny courses.

Career Opportunities
Graduates of the Mechatronics Technology Program will be prepared to pursue careers in advanced manufacturing, systems integration, electromechanics, process control and industrial maintenance, as well as serve as technicians in supply chain, electronics, instrumentation, robotics and automation.

Career Demand
According to 2017/2018 data, annual job openings in the mechatronics field were 1,258 regionally and 15,078 nationally, with a 7.4% and 12.3% increase respectively. The median hourly earnings were \$35.21 regionally and \$37.68 nationally. These numbers are anticipated to grow over the next decade.

Benefits of the Early College In High School Academy Mechatronics Technology Program

- In five (5) West Allegheny courses, students complete 30 CCAC courses earning 30 college credits and complete the Mechatronics Certificate program, while earning up to four industry credentials/certifications.
- Students have the opportunity to earn a Mechatronics Technology Certificate in two (2), three (3) or four (4) years.
- Courses are taught at West Allegheny High School by our teachers certified as CCAC adjunct professors during the regular school day, while students earn credits toward their WA diploma.
- Any student enrolled in the certificate program will receive a 50% or 100% academic scholarship to fund certificate completion (students must maintain a 2.8 GPA and a minimum of 90% attendance). Families will be responsible to pay up to \$56.50* per CCAC course.
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- Students are eligible for all benefits available to CCAC students including access to the library, Math Café, and Writing Labs.

*Costs are subject to change based on CCAC tuition costs.



Kindergarten

Registration



Kindergarten Registration for the 2019-2020 School Year is Now Open.

Children must be 5 years of age before September 1, 2019.

The preferred method of registration is online at:

www.westasd.org

-OR-

Call:

Donaldson Elementary – (724) 213-1010

McKee Elementary – (724) 693-8451

Wilson Elementary – (724) 695-3300

Pennsylvania launches Safe2Say Something for schools

West Allegheny School District is now participating in Safe2Say Something, a youth violence prevention program initiated and run by the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General under Act 44, which passed in 2018. The program teaches youth and adults how to recognize warning signs, especially within social media, from individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others and to “say something” BEFORE it is too late.

Safe2Say Something provides a tip line, app and website for students, teachers, community members and others to submit

anonymous tips regarding student and school safety. Tips are triaged by analysts in the Office of the Attorney General Crisis Center. The crisis center sends all submissions to school administration and/or law enforcement for intervention.

For more information, visit www.safe2saypa.org/.



Three West Allegheny teachers earn doctorate degrees

West Allegheny is proud to announce that three teachers have advanced their degrees by earning doctorates from Pennsylvania institutions.

High school special education teacher Lauren Barry earned her doctorate degree in special education from the University of Pittsburgh on August 11, 2018. Barry joined the District in 2013.

Elementary teacher Kim Buser earned her doctorate degree from Robert Morris University with a concentration in coaching models for elementary mathematics teachers. She graduated August 20, 2018. Buser has most recently served the District as the elementary mathematics specialist. She joined the District in 2007.

High school English teacher and department chair Stephanie White earned her doctorate degree in leadership and administration after graduating from Point Park University on December 16. White has been with the District since 2010.



Dr. Lauren Barry



Dr. Kim Buser



Dr. Stephanie White

#WeAreTeacherProud

West A to present “The Addams Family”

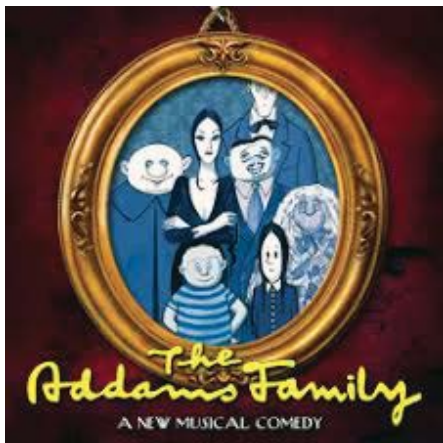
West Allegheny School District is proud to announce that it will be presenting the musical comedy “The Addams Family” as its 2019 spring musical production. Performances take place March 22-23 at 7 p.m., March 24 at 2 p.m. and March 29-30 at 7 p.m. As has been tradition, a Gold Card Luncheon will be held prior to the matinee performance on Sunday, March 24.

Opening on Broadway in 2010, the musical comedy is based on the iconic characters from the TV show that ran from 1964 to 1966 and appeared in two subsequent movies in the 1990s. In the kooky, upside-down world of “The Addams Family,” to be sad is to be happy, to feel pain is to feel joy, and death and suffering are the stuff of their dreams. Nonetheless, this quirky family still has to deal with many of the same challenges faced by any other family, including the spookiest nightmare of all - the Addams kids are growing up! While the Addams would be only too happy to continue living that way, they must face up to the one horrible reality that they’ve managed to avoid for generations: change.

Rehearsals are underway with the familiar lead characters cast as follows: Shannon Clontz as Morticia, Dylan Mersing as Gomez, Skylar Brown as Wednesday, Brock Stickley as Pugsley, Nathan Presutti as Uncle Fester, Loren Perry as Grandma, Jacob Costantino as Lurch, Trevor King as Lucas Beineke, and Nathan Mavrich and Lindsey Sabo as his parents, Mal and Alice. Rachel Kiss is the Dance Captain.

Mara Greer returns as director, assisted by Michael Greer as choreographer/assistant director, Robert Neumeyer as musical director, and Tom Snyder as producer.

Tickets will be sold online and at the high school starting in mid-February. Everyone is invited to come out for a fun evening of laughs and a powerful message about acceptance delivered by West Allegheny’s talented cast, tech crew and orchestra of over 70 students.



#WACARES High School Spotlight



Positive messages greeted students on their first day of school in August.

From the desk of Ms. McHone, high school assistant principal:

West Allegheny High School students are benefitting from the positive impact of #WACARES, which is enhancing the learning environment and culture across the District. Sixteen #WACARES high school committees are encouraging students to “Connect for Success” by increasing college and career readiness, celebrating student achievement and attendance, advocating for students’ needs, and more.

To kick off the #WACARES focus, students were welcomed back on the first day of school with a jazz ensemble and teachers greeting students. Students also enjoyed a photo op taken in “West-A-Gram” style that were hung around the school. The day before winter break, every student received a candy cane from teachers as the hand bell choir performed beautifully in the main lobby. These are only two examples of how the Monthly Motivators Committee builds excitement while creating connections between students and staff.

The environment at West Allegheny High School is noticeably different. As a student walks through the hallways, goes upstairs or steps into a restroom, positive messaging and brighter colors are visible. Display cases and bulletin boards showcase positive messaging as well as academic information. Additionally, live plants have been placed on windowsills throughout the cafeteria. Teachers are working to support students by making the school environment more enjoyable and uplifting.

Connecting every student to a viable post-secondary career and/or college pathway is a primary goal of the high school. The Career and College Committee is helping to achieve this goal by continuously highlighting a variety of post-secondary options of interest to students. The committee has also organized career/college spirit days that highlight a students’ favorite colleges and staff members’ alma maters.

Planned for this spring, the Friends of Rachel Club will open a Rachel’s Closet at the high school. Rachel’s Closet will be stocked with clothing, personal hygiene items and more, with the goal of providing items to students who may be in need.

The high school is excited to help expand on the #WACARES theme by providing extra supports for students and their families. The staff at West Allegheny High School continuously demonstrates how they CARE about their students!



Staff members at the high school created positive messages throughout the school.

#WeAreInnovators&Designers

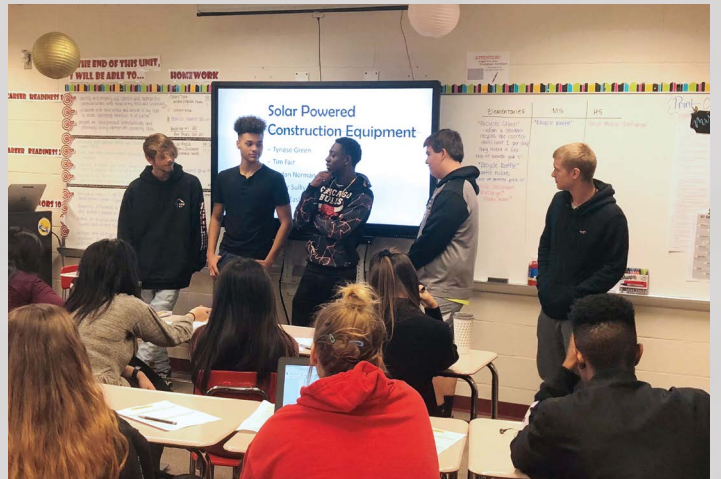
SADD students decorate symbolic tree

For the second year, the Students Against Destructive Decisions club participated in a DUI tree decorating activity. The high school hosted the event November 20, in conjunction with the PA DUI Association, PennDOT and Allegheny County Pre-Trial Services. The decorations represented statistics related to traffic accidents throughout the holiday season. West Allegheny was selected again this year with the aim of raising awareness of the initiative throughout the Pittsburgh region.

Students display DUI statistics symbolized by tree decorations.



Students sink their teeth into “Shark Tank” project



Shark Tank teams present their proposals to faculty.

To encourage West Allegheny’s budding entrepreneurs, students in Amy Krek and Kennan Grabner’s Career Readiness English class were challenged to create their own “Shark Tank” project. Students were grouped into like-minded career clusters and identified a problem or an opportunity in their fields. Once they created a solution, they then wrote a proposal, completed a business plan and pitched their idea to high school faculty members. The panel judged them based on a series of criteria and subsequently awarded the group with “money” for their score plus bonus opportunities such as creating a prototype, providing a live demonstration and creating a video of their product in action.

High school tradition continues with annual Powder Puff Game

The annual powder puff football game was held November 8 and, after a hard-fought battle, the senior girls defeated the juniors 31-19. The National Honor Society raised \$2,800 and used the funds to purchase Christmas gifts for local families through the West Allegheny Family Support Committee. Leading up to the game, juniors and seniors also participated in a friendly competition to see who could collect the most canned goods. The end result was over 800 items collected for the West Allegheny Food Pantry and a senior victory that gave them a three-point advantage at the start of the game.



Seniors prepare to take the field for the annual Powder Puff game.

Future Educators of America club hosts workshops for members

Submitted by Senior Sean Collins, Student Leader, Future Educators of America Club, West Allegheny Chapter

Picture this - first day of school - you are on a step stool grabbing new math workbooks from the cabinet and your students are sitting patiently at their tables when your principal gets on the PA to make a random welcome back announcement. You hear intense distress and chaos behind you. You turn around to find 10 of your 18 kindergarteners crying and running out the door. What are you going to do?

Members of the high school Future Educators of America club tackled this, among other, difficult scenarios in a classroom management event. In December, the club hosted several teachers from the high school to learn about the philosophy and techniques of running a classroom. The event kicked off with mock parent-teacher phone calls where two student members would be a teacher and two would be a parent; members read a scenario and improvised a full phone call while a teacher observed and gave feedback. Camryn Tudor (future K-8 special education teacher) found the importance of addressing parental concerns as a gateway to bring up things she has to say about separate issues in order to have productive, effective parent engagement. After warming up with the mock phone calls, members and guests had a round-table discussion about classroom management; guests included Colleen Cunningham (Spanish teacher), Andrew Barry (health/physical education teacher), Rachel Ochsenhirt (science teacher and deputy

teacher advisor), Angela Burnett (social studies teacher), Kevin McKiernan (principal), and Doug Murdoch (math teacher). The conversation began with discussion questions about students off task, inappropriate behavior, and giving instructions. Participants brought up strategies such as interventions, using students with positive attitudes as agents for change, collaboration with guidance and administration, and engagement techniques.

Members built upon their knowledge from the discussion at their January meeting when they created scenarios and “built” a classroom that would best support student learning and classroom control by evaluating seating designs, technology integration, and ease of use.

Future educators learn how seating arrangements impact learning.



Middle school students explore college and career options

As a component of West Allegheny’s college and career readiness program, middle school students attended their first annual Future Ready field trip this past fall. The eighth grade class visited two of the following six locations to learn more about college and career opportunities in their interest areas: Community College of Allegheny County, Robert Morris University, Parkway West Career and Technology Center, Community College of Beaver County, and the Keystone Mountain Lakes Regional Council of Carpenter’s training center. At each location, students were provided with information on programs offered. They also toured the campuses, visited classrooms and lectures, and participated in several hands-on programs. The goal of the Future Ready trip was to expose students to multiple college and career opportunities within the area while also providing students with the feel and experience of being a student at each location. The middle school will continue their career education initiatives with a Career Fair on February 27 and eighth grade students’ Career Interest Project presentations on March 19.

TOP: Parkway West Career and Technology Center staff conducted Emergency Medical Technician demonstrations for interested students. BOTTOM: Students toured the Keystone Mountain Lakes Regional Council of Carpenter’s training center and learned more about career opportunities in the field.



Student visit to Allegheny General Hospital gets blood flowing

High school nurse Barb Lecker provided a unique opportunity for several students November 30 when they traveled to Allegheny General Hospital to observe open heart surgery. The procedure was a pulmonary thromboendarterectomy (PTE) performed by Dr. Robert J. Moraca. AGH is one of about 10 medical centers in the country that performs this highly complex surgery. The patient had breathing problems, was dependent on oxygen and had limited mobility. The surgery is expected to greatly improve the patient’s quality of life.

The following attending students are interested in pursuing a career in the health care industry: Paige Warhola, Tara Coulter, Madison Krek, Haylee Sturgeon, Shannon Clontz, Jake Costantino, Emma Palombia, Mackenzie Spiegel, Vesta Daniels, Scott Zanella, Rachel Kiss, Madison Twardy, Sydney Williams, Kellyanne Hernandez Rivera, Mackenzie Reed and Haley Kozel.



High school students travel to AGH to observe open heart surgery.

Middle school students enjoy sweet tradition



Students add the finishing touches to their gingerbread house.

Students in Kim Patterson's eighth grade German I classes enjoyed the cultural tradition of gingerbread house building in December. They invited friends to help in the building and designing of their festive houses before they were put on display in the middle school office for everyone to see.

Seventh grade candy donation demonstrates #WACARES

Over the past several years, the Seven Wonders and Ups Teams have sponsored a number of service learning projects to benefit the community. This year was no exception, as students and staff collected boxes of Halloween candy and snacks that were donated to the West Allegheny Food Pantry. Following this year's theme of #WACARES, students experienced firsthand the rewarding feeling of giving generously to help others.

Students Dorian Baurle, Annie Costantini, Kelsie Sabin, Andrea Hamilton, Emma Russi, Hope Fronczek, Danielle Slovic and Jacob Semulka helped organize the Seven Wonders and Ups Teams annual candy collection drive.



#WeAreStudentStrong

Middle school art students accept the Wyland Challenge

Students in Sharon Harn's middle school art classes took part in this year's Wyland Challenge, a national art competition sponsored by internationally known environmental artist "Wyland" and the Wyland Foundation. Students were encouraged to study the latest issues related to water and environmental health and submit either individual pieces or a group collaboration on a large scale mural project. The project provided students not only with an opportunity to showcase their artistic talents but also allowed them to explore their passion for environmental conservation.

The students who participated in either the individual or the group submissions were: Antonio Votour, Jackson Dicesaro, Karly Kruze, Kenzie Heidenreich, Kylie Ye, Amanda Schoppe, Brian Curry, Sophia Morton, Madison Montello, Emma Bohley, Emma Kyle, Max Seibel, Jada Drewery, Nadia Pollinger, Hannah Roberts, Rene Taiyrova, Clara Santos, Kristen Stofan, Kylie Stacy and Cierra Chiodo.



Students proudly display their group mural submission for the Wyland Challenge.

Messages of kindness demonstrated in art



ABOVE: This year's anti-bullying poster winners were recognized by the board of school directors and District administration.
RIGHT: McKee principal Melissa Wagner presents Emma Short with her award.

In its third year, the Wellness and Safe Schools Committee sponsored its anti-bullying poster contest for students. With over 100 entries this year, judging was especially challenging. Based on creativity and their messages of kindness, one winner was selected from each of the following schools: middle school, Casie Yonker; Donaldson Elementary, Delaney Geiges; McKee Elementary, Emma Short; Wilson Elementary, Irena Santoro. The board of school directors recognized the winners at their November meeting.



#WeAreWestA

Elementary students pay tribute to veterans

Students at Donaldson and McKee elementary schools paid tribute to family, friends and staff who have served in the armed forces in recognition of Veterans Day in November. Honorees were touched by heartfelt ceremonies during which students introduced veterans and thanked them for their service. The celebration was a fitting and meaningful culmination of students' research of American symbols and monuments.

LEFT: Donaldson fifth grader Josiah Johnson honors his guest. **RIGHT:** Jackson Herald, first grader at McKee elementary salutes his Uncle Dan.



Wilson Log House provides hands-on history lessons

The longstanding tradition of celebrating the Wilson Log House continued November 20 when students and staff went back in time to discover the landmark's rich history. Students enjoyed learning how to make applesauce, Johnny cakes and butter without modern conveniences. They also participated in square dancing, pioneer songs and games, and listened to tales from historians.



Students enjoy learning about a day in the life of a pioneer.

Gold Card Club members celebrate holidays with West Allegheny



Gold Card Club members take part in a holiday game.

The District was pleased to welcome over 150 Gold Card Club members to this year's holiday breakfast December 7. In addition to a breakfast provided by the food service department, guests also enjoyed musical performances by the middle school show choir, directed by Terisa Sharlow; the high school wind ensemble, directed by TJ Fox; and the middle school small instrumental ensembles, directed by Steve Groba. JROTC students served as greeters and assisted throughout the morning. Administrators and board members were on hand to serve guests as well.

West Allegheny recognized for good sportsmanship

High school principal Kevin McKiernan and athletic director David McBain joined six senior student-athletes in representing West Allegheny at the annual WPIAL Summit on Sportsmanship at the Heinz History Center on November 15. West Allegheny won the Sportsmanship Award for the 2017-2018 academic year and was presented with a banner for their positive behavior on and off the field.

Student representatives at the annual WPIAL Summit on Sportsmanship were Nathan Dragisich, Ian McBain, Tanner Prevade, Alyssa Goldstrohm, Grace Faulk and Amaka Joanis. They were accompanied by high school principal Kevin McKiernan.



#WeAreWestA

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Mrs. Tammy Adams, Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services	Ms. Megan Huchko, Middle School Assistant Principal
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Mr. Kevin McKiernan, High School Principal	Mrs. Rachel Gray, Wilson Elementary Principal
Ms. Katharine McClelland, High School Academic Principal	Mrs. Toni Baldanzi, Supervisor of Ancillary Programs
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	Mrs. Karen Ruhl, Community Relations Coordinator

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AND DELAYS.

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ONLINE:**

WWW.WESTASD.ORG

All material has been prepared,
written or edited by
Karen Ruhl,
School Community
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LIBRARY PROGRAMS & SPECIAL EVENTS

AUTHOR TALK

Tuesday, February 19, 6:30—8:00 p.m.

Audrey Abbott Iacone, a local romance author, is coming to discuss her first published book, *The Lady's Desire*. Copies of her book will be available for purchase and signing!

EXCITING EXCURSIONS: TOP GOLF

Monday, February 25, 6:00 p.m.

Join us for a fun-filled night out practicing your golf swing and playing games against one another at TopGolf in Bridgeville. No experience necessary! Food and drinks are available for purchase. \$10 per person to cover the cost of the bay. RSVP required by February 15 to ensure we reserve enough bays.

READ ACROSS AMERICA CELEBRATION

Saturday, March 2, 10:30—11:30 a.m.

Join us in celebrating the life and works of one of our favorite authors, Dr. Seuss! We will have a special storytime celebrating reading, as well as crafts. Please register online.

MESSAGES FROM SPIRIT with Jennifer Rowan, Psychic Medium

Sunday, March 10, 2:00 p.m.

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

MONEY SMART WEEK: March 30—April 6, 2019

Money Smart Week is a public awareness campaign designed to help you better manage your personal finances. Hundreds of organizations across the country come together to stress the importance of financial literacy, inform consumers about where they can get help, and provide free educational seminars and activities. See our website for these and other special financial programs.

EXTREME E-COUPONING

Saturday, March 30, 12:30 p.m.

Are you still clipping coupons to save money? Why not ditch the scissors and hit the apps instead! We'll overview this new wave in couponing using cash back services like Ibotta and Checkout 51, plus discuss paperless coupons in RetailMeNot and various store-specific savings and rewards programs.

MONEY SMART eRESOURCES

Tuesday, April 2, 6:30 p.m.

The first step in being Money Smart is being money-savvy! Come learn about all the FREE library eResources to help you manage your money. We will have a short overview of our variety of Consumer and Financial databases, & show how to access them at home using your library card.

For more information on all programs & events, visit www.WesternAlleghenyLibrary.org or call 724-695-8150.

ONGOING PROGRAMS

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

ADULT

Bookworms

1st Wednesdays, 1:00 p.m.

We Be Book'N Book Club

3rd Thursdays, 6:00 p.m.

Anime & Manga Club

4th Mondays, 6:00 p.m.

TEEN

Teen Anime Club

Mondays, 4:00 p.m.

Teen D&D

Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m.

Teen Maker Lab

Wednesdays, 4:30 p.m.

YOUTH & FAMILY

Baby Circle Time

Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m.

Little's Storytime

Tuesday & Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.

Sensory Storytime

Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.

Play K

Mondays, 10:30 a.m. OR

Tuesdays, 1:00 p.m.

Location:

181 Bateman Road
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Wineries

CONTINUE TO OPEN IN WESTERN COMMUNITIES

Dionysus, the Greek god of winemaking, is smiling down on the Allegheny West readership area.

In less than 10 years, numerous wineries have popped up in the surrounding communities, with more than half of them opening in the last two years.

From the availability of large event spaces, to proximity to bike and walking trails, to the debut of the first vineyard in Allegheny County, each one has a unique draw in addition to their wine production.

Black Dog Wine Co.

Black Dog Wine Company in Hankey Farms is housed in the largest, most historic building of all of the wineries profiled, and is the only one with multiple locations.

Mark Rozum had been making wine at home for years, but became more serious about it when he lost his job as a software engineer

in 2015. He says he used the time to “go pro” and acquired the licensing and equipment to turn winemaking into a business.

Rozum sold his products at local markets and festivals and the wines were well-received. Though he had returned to a full-time job, the challenge of keeping up with inventory demand for Black Dog eventually led Rozum to give that up.

Along with his wife, Amy, Rozum owns three locations. Their North Fayette operation is the largest, with the other two locations in Grove City and Penn Hills. A fourth location is in the works for early 2019.

The winery’s flagship location operates out of the historic Hankey House farmhouse mansion along Steubenville Pike. Black

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WWW.BLACKDOGWINECOMPANY.COM

Dog moved into the 19th century home last June and has already hosted numerous private and public events there, including regular live music events. A large caterer’s kitchen, spacious rooms and an L-shaped, light-filled sun porch that can seat 50 have made the winery a desirable party venue.

Even more interesting is the cozy, wood-paneled rathskeller, a basement pub believed to have been used as a speakeasy during Prohibition. Designed by John Hankey, a German descendant and former owner of the Hankey Baking Company, the room features raised plaster friezes that convey the history of bread making.

A private speakeasy party held last fall at Black Dog sold out almost immediately. Three weekends of parties leading up to Halloween sold out as well. Rozum hired a local ghost hunter known for several television shows to lead a “Spirits with the Spirits” event. Guests, with drinks in hand, wandered around the mansion hoping to connect with ghosts.



Rozum acquires all of his grapes from the Erie area, as well as fruits and pumpkins from local farms such as Janoski’s, Trax and Soergel’s. He has increased his production from 700 cases in 2016 to 3,000 cases in 2018, which amounts to 36,000 bottles. All of the wine is made on-site.

Rozum said that he doesn’t intend to produce more than 5,000 cases so that Black Dog’s high product standards can be maintained. The winery employs 17 people, most of them part-time, at its three venues.

Black Dog offers a range of wines, from dry reds to sweet whites. Beer drinkers can also choose from several varieties of Pennsylvania craft beers.

Rozum says he’s proud of the accolades he has already received



ABOVE: Last year, Black Dog took up residence in the Hankey House and now operates its flagship location out of the historic residence along Steubenville Pike in North Fayette Township. ABOVE RIGHT: The wood-paneled rathskeller in the Hankey House is believed to have once been a Prohibition-era speakeasy. Today, Black Dog utilizes the space for special events.

as a new commercial wine maker. He commented that most of his wines have won at least a silver medal at national wine competitions in places such as Denver, San Francisco and the Finger Lakes area of New York.

In 2017, Rozum attended the Denver International Wine Competition and received a double gold medal for his “Keelboat” wine, a dry red made from DeChaunac grapes. He says that, in a room full of California cabernets and Washington rieslings, attendees commented to him that they didn’t even

know wines were made in Pennsylvania. More exciting, and what Rozum calls “one of the coolest experiences of my life,” was winning the award for best sweet wine in Pennsylvania for 2018 for his “Trophy Wife” product.

With Black Dog’s location on a main road as well as the bus line, Rozum would like to see the formation of an organized wine trail that would incorporate some 15 wineries that are within a 20-mile radius of Pittsburgh.

Black Dog Wine Company is operated by Mark and Amy Rozum of North Fayette Township.



Michael Stephen Kavic Winery

Michael Stephen Kavic Winery, owned by Michael and Patricia Kavic, was the first official winery and tasting room to open in the western suburbs of Pittsburgh. Both Michael and Patricia had been making wine at home since childhood. It was a skill they learned from their immigrant grandparents who came from Italy and Serbia.

1013 CAMPBELLS RUN ROAD,
CARNEGIE
HOURS:
SATURDAY: 12-5 P.M.
SUNDAY: 12-4 P.M.
WWW.KAVICWINERY.NET

While on a trip to Italy in 2005, Patricia saw an article in USA Today about the rise of urban wineries in the U.S. The Kavics owned a building on Campbells Run Road that was built by Patricia’s father as a medical office for Michael’s surgery practice. When Michael was recruited by a hospital in Ohio, the couple moved their family to Youngstown and the building sat empty for years.

After reading the urban winery article, Patricia said she knew how they could put the building to use. Michael was a bit more skeptical. At that time, other than a few in California, wineries that were not located in vineyards were fairly uncommon.

Along with Patricia’s brother, Patrick Fleck, who now acts as the winery’s operations manager, and his wife, Amy, the couple transformed the medical building into a small but cozy four-room winery complete with a “library” for conducting wine education. Kavic Winery opened to the public in 2009.



Now, Michael and Patricia return from Ohio each weekend to run the operation. They use only Pennsylvania-grown grapes for their wines. The winery’s semi-sweet, full-bodied “Lafayette” is one of their most popular reds, while the Blaufrankisch, called the “pinot noir of Eastern Europe,” won them their first award almost immediately after they opened.

In the next phase of the winery’s development, the Kavics will



Michael Kavic (left) and Patrick Fleck (right) are pictured at their North Fayette vineyard.

serve as local pioneers in 2019 by harvesting grapes from their own vineyard, which has been designated the first commercial vineyard in Allegheny County.

The first vines were planted five years ago in the lower of two vineyards on the Fleck and Kavic family property in North Fayette. Incidentally, vines were

planted around the goalpost constructed over a decade ago for Pat and Amy’s son, Aaron, a kicker for championship football teams at West Allegheny High School and Duquesne University.

In addition to the engineering principles he used to lay out and plant the vineyards, Pat Fleck’s assistance with construction and operational design at the facility has been paramount to the winery’s success, according to Patricia and Michael.

“None of this could have happened without Pat,” said Patricia.

The Kavics researched and chose a disease-resistant and cold-hardy grape developed in Minnesota for their first endeavor. The Marquette, a red hybrid grape typically compared to zinfandel and cabernet, will be the only one ready for harvest next year.

The second vineyard will produce vidal blanc grapes. Most commonly used for ice wines, the Kavics intend to use it for a pleasant, semi-sweet white wine.

With state-of-the-art harvesting equipment from Italy and a “perfectly neutral” soil test result from the Penn State agricultural department, the Kavics are prepared for their new business venture. Michael even spent time working in the vineyards at Presque Isle to learn as much as possible about the process.

The Kavics were surprised last August by how quickly their grapes reached optimal sugar levels, a development which unfortunately resulted in a harvest missed by one week. However, the experience prompted Patricia to state that “I am confident that we will have a very good harvest this year.”

Four Twelve Project

988 BRODHEAD RD.
MOON TWP.
HOURS (ONCE OPEN):
TUESDAY-THURSDAY:
11 AM-10 PM.
SATURDAY:
11 AM-MIDNIGHT
SUNDAY: 11 AM-8 PM.

Kevin and Josianne Romasco have been making wine at their home in Moon Township for over five years. Up to this point, they've primarily sold their products at local markets and festivals. They've built their reputation through word of mouth, including on social media.

The young couple specializes in dry reds and believes in a back-to-basics, old-school methodology. Though they have no official tasting room at their residence, they always let visiting buyers sample wines there and are happy to make home deliveries to customers.

Josianne says they've experienced much success selling wines with higher price points than many of their area competitors because locals appreciate the handcrafted quality of their wines.

Examples include a \$35 cabernet and a pricier "experimental" wine that they aged in a bourbon whiskey barrel. The latter product is described by Josianne as a "samoa cookie on the nose with a caramel finish." An entire barrel of a unique Chilean Carmenere sold out within six months of its release.

The couple plan to increase their list of wines aged in whiskey barrels to meet demand for this "crossover" experiment, a practice not commonly done in this area.

"The method allows us to offer the same cabernet two different ways, appealing to both wine and whiskey enthusiasts," said Josianne.

"You won't get a red wine headache from our wine," she said, adding that the Romascos add no sulfates to their products and "won't skimp" on any part of a fairly costly process.

Depending on what they are making, they purchase grapes from various regions, including California and Chile.

The couple has been mentored in wine making by Duane Rieder, owner of Engine House 25 Wines in Lawrenceville, where Josianne works as a tasting manager.



Four Twelve Project will be opening soon as a winery and dinery in Moon Township.

With the success of their wines, the recent availability of some prime real estate in Moon Township, and a friendship with established restaurateurs, the Romascos decided to forge ahead with a new winery concept.

As of this writing, Four Twelve Project, a winery and dinery at 988 Brodhead Road, is scheduled to open in February. A newly renovated farm fusion style restaurant, complete with a hibachi kitchen and bar area serving the Romasco's wines, will be housed on the spacious upstairs level.

By summer, the lower level will open as a 21-and-over speakeasy with a separate entrance near the large rear parking lot.

The Romascos both hold regular jobs. Kevin is the principal at a cyber school in Midland and the couple has four children aged 10 years and younger. They are passionate, however, not only about locally produced wine and food, but also about showing their children what goes into running a business.

The couple co-owns Four Twelve Project with Josh and April Egal, current owners of The Smokestack Cigar Lounge in Moon. The new winery and dinery will feature beef and chicken dishes made with meat from Zelienople, prepared with new spices, and presented in fun and surprising ways.

PK Winery

Conveniently located on the main street in the center of McDonald's business district, PK Winery opened to the public in May of 2017.

116 E. LINCOLN AVENUE, McDONALD.
HOURS:
THURS-SATURDAY: 3:30-8 P.M.
SATURDAY: NOON-8 P.M.
SUNDAY: NOON-5 P.M.

Owners Mike and Tammy Pollard purchased the licensing and inventory of the former Reese winery on 4th Street in 2016 and began operating out of a satellite location near Giant Eagle. Prior to that, Tammy had been helping the Reeses sell their wines at local festivals.

The Pollards soon outgrew their small, original space and were thrilled when the current storefront location became available.

Regular customers developed quickly at PK, all of whom, Tammy says, have been extremely welcoming.

"One of the main comments I get from people," she said "is that everyone made them feel so comfortable," oftentimes by sharing space at their tables with strangers.

Proximity to the Panhandle Trail and McDonald Trail Station have benefited the winery. This past summer, Tammy placed a PK sandwich board sign advertising wine snow cones near the South McDonald Street intersection of the trail and enticed many customers to take a break from their walk or bike ride.

The couple bought their first winemaking kit in 2006 and quickly became hooked on the process. As the sole employees of PK, they have produced 38 different wines using grapes from California and Chile. Popular offerings include the Station Street Pinot Noir and the Harley Girl Chardonnay, a non-typical white with a smooth, oak finish.

Tammy commented that the greatest challenge has been getting into a scheduled routine so they are able to keep up with inventory. She and Mike nearly doubled their supply in one year, producing 2,200 gallons of wine in 2018.

PK Winery offers live music at least once a month and sells a variety of small-scale merchandise, much of it made by local artists. Glass charms are crafted by an artist in Midway, t-shirts and cups come from a resident of Hickory, and earrings are made by someone who lives above the winery.

The Pollards have partnered with several other McDonald businesses, including the Nose 2 Tail Cat

Rescue across the street and the new Valentour's Family Restaurant, which sells PK wines. The couple donates any tips they receive to local charities.



Mike and Tammy Pollard are pictured at PK Winery in McDonald.

Raccoon Creek Winery

Chris and Dawn Kramer didn't have to think too long about jumping into the local winery scene, as they already had an established greenhouse business in a spacious new facility located on a main thoroughfare in Burgettstown.

Chris credits Dawn with the idea of selling wine as a way to supplement the greenhouse business during the off-season. The Kramers launched Raccoon Creek Winery in 2009, focusing on fruit and berry wines.

The "country store" type building next to the greenhouse offered a number of craft and gift items, and the racks of multi-colored wine bottles filled it out nicely. Always a proponent of "try before you buy," the Kramers had a tasting counter for customers for several years after opening.

When Dawn's next brainchild, the Coal Tipple Brewery, launched in 2016, the Kramers added a full-fledged tasting room

1905 STEUBENVILLE PIKE,
BURGETTSTOWN
HOURS:
MONDAY-THURSDAY, 9 AM-5 PM,
SATURDAY, 9 AM-9 PM,
SUNDAY, 10 AM-5 PM.



Dawn and Chris Kramer (above) at their Burgettstown Winery, Raccoon Creek (right).

for all of their beverage offerings. The brewery opening has resulted in a significant increase in wine sales.

The couple gets most of their fruit from local hobby farms - people who grow berries in their backyards. They buy apple juice from Brown's Orchard and honey from Bedillion Honey Farm, both in Hickory. Depending on what they are making, they buy juice from brokers in California, Oregon and Washington. They also currently sell products with juice from Australia, Argentina, Chile and South Africa.

Bestsellers include Black Raspberry Merlot and Peach Apricot Chardonnay. The two are always on hand at Raccoon Creek. The more labor intensive and harder to ferment Mojito D'alba is a lime wine infused with mint and produced only in small and occasional batches.

"When we have something different, word gets around and it sells out quickly," said Chris, adding that 100 bottles of the Mojito D'alba will only last a few weeks.

The Kramers currently produce about 100 gallons of wine per month. They have made roughly 40 varieties over the last decade, with sweet wines outselling dry by 10-to-one. However, Chris said that he is most proud when "a dry drinker likes something we make."

The Kramers have five to seven part-time employees and the help of several family members for their business ventures. The couple has been pleasantly surprised by the immediate success of both the winery and brewery, as well as by the number of home wine makers in the area who buy supplies from them.



Welcome Spring to Findlay!

Call (724) 695-0500 To Register!

SPRING COMMUNITY CLEAN UP

Saturday, April 27th,
9 AM - Noon

Findlay and North Fayette Townships are collaborating again to organize a community clean-up day.

Donate a few short hours to help make our community a place we can be proud of. We encourage any youth groups or high school students to come out and accumulate some community service hours. If you would like to volunteer, please call Stephanie at the township office. *Bags, gloves and vests provided. If possible, volunteers need to provide their own transportation to and from their clean-up site.*

Meet on the lower level of the Findlay Township Activity Center,
310 Main Street, Imperial

Spring Canvas Painting Sunday,

March 31st, 1 PM

Spring is in the air! Please join Laura Burns for a family friendly painting project that will be done on 8X10 canvases. The spring/summer time pictures will be pre drawn on the canvas and there are 14 different ones to choose from! There will be light refreshments available for purchase as well and extra canvases for sale the day of the event. Registration is preferred. Walk-ins limited. \$5/canvas. Have selection ready when registering. See selections at right and view more online at: www.findlaytpw.org.



D & O Wine Cellars

The most recently opened winery in the area is D&O Wine Cellars, located near one of central Crafton's main intersections. Owners Doug and Olesia Johnston celebrated their grand opening Aug. 11 and reported that they are "having a really good time and getting a great response from the community."

The couple began making wine at home in 2009 and acquired their license in 2017. After selling their products at local festivals and markets for a year, they began to search for a brick and mortar location.

The Johnstons initially looked for property in Carnegie and Robinson, but when the storefront site on East Crafton Avenue became available, they were immediately interested. They said they loved the large space, proximity to a main road and the one block walk to the well-known Italian restaurant Sarafino's.

As Sarafino's is a BYOB eatery, D&O has already established a partnership with the restaurant by accommodating customers who are waiting to be called for a table and wish to have wine with their meals, or allowing them to bring take-out food from Sarafino's and other establishments to eat at the winery.



Doug and Olesia Johnston with their youngest daughter, Andrea, opened D&O Wine Cellars this past August.

Doug and Olesia both hold full-time jobs and have no employees to assist them. They've kept their wine production for 2018 at about 1,700 gallons. However, they hope to double that amount this year with the help of their three grown children and 11-year-old daughter, Andrea, who Doug refers to as the "child executive officer."

The Johnstons buy the majority of their juice from the Lake Erie region. Their dry red wines are made with juice from Pennsylvania, California, Chile and Italy.

Ironically, their best-selling product last year has no grape juice in it, but rather is their version of hard lemonade. People love "Lemon Essence," said the Johnstons, who quickly went through 170 gallons of the fermented lemonade last year and will not replenish until spring.

Doug used his talent as a craftsman to renovate the large D & O space, finishing everything from the tile floor, to the industrial pipe shelving, to the long bar, which he built in a day. Paintings from local artist Miriam Scigliano adorn one wall of the winery and may be purchased there.

While D&O was still under construction last summer, the Johnstons were thrilled to be asked to participate in the Crafton holiday house tour in December. The winery was used as the "box office" for attendees of the event who had to stop there for their house tour map booklet.

The winery also sponsored a fundraiser on Dec. 21 to benefit the first annual "Crafton Celebrates" Christmas concert. The weeklong festival, which ended on Jan. 4, offered carnival attractions, fireworks and performances by local musicians.

Olesia commented that "it was nice to have so much community interest in us before we even opened."

70 E. CRAFTON AVE.
PITTSBURGH
HOURS:
THURSDAY, 5-8 P.M.
FRIDAY: 5-9 P.M.
SATURDAY: 1-9 P.M.
SUNDAY: 12-5 P.M.
BY APPOINTMENT:
MONDAY-WEDNESDAY
DOWINECELLARS.COM

Red Fox Winery and Lounge

Though slightly out of the Allegheny West readership area and tucked out of sight on a country road in Hickory, Red Fox Winery and Lounge has a local connection and is quickly becoming a destination in the region.

Mike Lauderbaugh, a Cecil Township resident whose extended family lives in North Fayette, bought the former bar situated on 16 acres at an auction in October of 2016. The 43-year-old had just lost his job in the oil and gas industry after it experienced a downturn. Lauderbaugh used a buyout for his purchase, "retired" and began renovating the declining property.

In addition to upgrading the main facility, Lauderbaugh installed a small, manicured lake that greets visitors as they start up the long, winding driveway. Four cozy overnight cabins named for wines were also added.

Fast-forward a mere two years and Lauderbaugh's winery and banquet facility on beautifully landscaped grounds have gone gangbusters. The owner reported that Red Fox hosted 30 weddings in 2018 and has events booked into 2020.

Last year, Lauderbaugh produced nearly 2,300 gallons of wine on-site with grapes and juice from California, Chile, Italy and South Africa. He stated that he always has 10 to 14 different wines available, from sweet whites to dry reds. Pennsylvania-made beer and distilled spirits are also offered.

Lauderbaugh said that it is tough to keep up with the demand for Red Fox wines, particularly for weddings or large event weekends. The owner joked that "we'll have 200 people, most that have never been here before, drinking all of our wine."

Lauderbaugh manages the property with fiancé Tera Brownlee, who handles event coordination, including regularly scheduled musical entertainment. With a spacious indoor room and a large covered patio and deck in the back, the facility can accommodate a crowd.

"I didn't realize we'd be this blessed this quickly," said Lauderbaugh, adding "I can't believe what we're going through."

80 RED FOX RD, HICKORY
HOURS:
THURSDAY & FRIDAY, 5-10 P.M.
SUNDAY, 12-5 P.M.
SATURDAY (CHECK WEBSITE)
REDFOXWINERYANDLOUNGE.COM

We Welcome Your Visit

1013 Campbells Run Road
P.O. Box 780
Carnegie, PA 15106

www.kavicwinery.net

(412)279-WINE (9463)



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Please Check our Website for Hours of Operation
and Calendar of Events

www.kavicwinery.net

PITTSBURGH MADE AND PITTSBURGH PROUD

Satellite Wineries

Several wineries located in northwestern Pennsylvania also have outlet stores or tasting rooms in the Allegheny West area that allow customers to sample and buy their wines.

ARROWHEAD WINE CELLARS sells its wines at several locations around the Pittsburgh region, the closest being at Janoski's in Clinton. Janoski's wine room manager Rachael Seibel says Arrowhead grows all of its own grapes and other fruit that the winery uses in its wine on an orchard in northeastern Pennsylvania. Arrowhead also makes its wine there. Janoski's sells the wines out of a dedicated special winery room in its newly remodeled and expanded farm market. Stop by and sample wines any time starting at 10 a.m. during the week and 11 a.m. on Sundays. Visit janoskis.com to see current closing times.

Janoski's carries around 30 different offerings from Arrowhead Wine Cellars. In addition to the sweeter wines usually offered by Pennsylvania wineries, choices also include dry, fuller body cabernet and merlot blends, as well as oaked and un-oaked chardonnays. On the sweeter side, Arrowhead offers a full complement of fruit wines, including several award-winning berry wines. They also sell specialty and seasonal varieties like port wine, a true vidal ice wine, several ciders and an ever-popular seasonal cranberry wine.



Carol Daniels and Raechel Seibel man the counter in the Arrowhead wine room at Janoski's in Clinton.

Seibel says that since opening the Arrowhead wine shop, it's become popular among guests who frequent Janoski's popular events like its annual Pumpkinland festival, and among its many visitors shopping for fresh produce. She says they've even had some bridal showers swing through.

For more, call (724) 899-3438 or visit janoskis.com.

THE WINERY AT WILCOX is located north of I-80 in the Allegheny National Forest and has been in operation since 1994. Originally the smallest of Pennsylvania's 40 wineries with an annual production of 1,100 gallons, Wilcox has become a leader in the state's wine industry. Wines may be sampled and bought at the outlet store at 1940 Settlers Ridge Center Drive in Robinson Township. Hours are noon to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday and noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday.

PRESQUE ISLE WINE CELLARS, one of Pennsylvania's longest operating wineries, opened an outlet store in Robinson Town Centre in mid-December. Located in the largest grape-growing region east of the Rocky Mountains, Presque Isle has sold equipment and supplies to amateur winemakers from its facility in northeast Pennsylvania since 1964. Founder Doug Moorhead was instrumental in developing the state's Limited Winery Act of 1968, legislation which permitted Pennsylvania wineries to sell their self-produced wines on their premises.

The business opened to the public as a winery in 1969, one of the first of two in the state since Prohibition. Call (814) 725-1314 for hours.

DEER CREEK WINERY is located in Shippenville but the winery has five stores across the state, including one at The Mall at Robinson. According to their website, the winery opened in 2009 and specialized in raspberry wines. It now makes roughly two-dozen different wines. For more, including hours, visit www.deercreekwine.com.



BLACK DOG WINE COMPANY



At Historic Hankey House
7425 Steubenville Pike
Oakdale, PA 15071
724-485-WINE
blackdogwinecompany.com



Check our Website for Upcoming Special Events and a Live Entertainment Schedule!



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Tickets & Group Tent Rentals available April 1!

7th Annual Janoski's Farm WINE FESTIVAL & FARM TO FORK BUFFET

Saturday, July 20, 2019
3 - 8 pm

IN ADVANCE: \$39 AT GATE: \$49

724.899.3438 • www.janoskis.com

Comfort food: poached pears, baked apples and cheese fondue

After a long, hard day - or when the temperature dips below 30 and the days become shorter and darker earlier - we tend to crave comfort food. It's like wrapping a warm blanket around your shoulders and sitting in front of a roaring fire, all toasty and warm; only you eat it and it triggers that wonderful, nostalgic feeling of family, culture and the joy of eating something that links us to our past.

What is your comfort food? The list is endless: fried chicken, meatloaf with mashed potatoes, shrimp and grits, roasted chicken, brisket, chocolate Texas sheet cake, tomato soup and grilled cheese, baked ziti, dumplings, or maybe baklava? Here are some you may want to consider: poached pears, baked apples and cheese fondue. These are easy to make for two or a crowd and bring back wonderful memories.

Baked apples



Fall apple picking is a family favorite. There's nothing like coming home with overflowing bags of multi-colored jewels for pies, applesauce and baked apples, which are simple to make. First, core your washed apples and slice off a bit of the top to expose the flesh. Grease an eight-inch pan with butter and place four cored apples in the pan. I stuff the empty core with raisins then fill them until they're overflowing with honey. Add a half-inch of water to the pan and sprinkle cinnamon on top. Bake 25-30 minutes at 350 until you reach the desired firmness. I like them mushy, so I go more toward 35-40 minutes.

Optional: Instead of honey, use brown sugar, maple syrup or granulated sugar. You can make them as simple or as decadent as you like. You may add butter inside the apples or, instead of raisins, use nuts or pumpkin seeds. We would pour buttermilk over them before we ate them but you may also use cream, mascarpone or, of course, vanilla ice cream.

Poached pears

Poached pears are also easy. Leave the stems on the pears - which I completely forgot to do in these photos - and peel your pears and slice a thin piece off the bottom so they will stand up when you serve them. For these quantities, use four firm bosc pears.

In a six-quart pot, add:

1 cup port wine or any red or white fruity wine. Use a wine you like to drink, though.

2 cups water

¾ cup granulated sugar

1 cinnamon stick

3-4 strips orange peel

2 strips lemon peel

- Place the ingredients in a pot and bring to a boil. Stir, making sure the sugar dissolves.
- Turn down to a simmer and place pears in liquid. Cover pan and cook 45-50 minutes, turning pears every 10 minutes (they float) until a knife comes out smoothly.
- Let cool in liquid. You may serve once cool, or place in the refrigerator overnight in a pot with liquid and the pears will continue to absorb the liquid and the color!
- Cook down liquid in pot and pour some of the sauce over the pears. Serve with mascarpone, cream or ice cream.

Optional: You can also use a non-alcoholic poaching liquid such as cranberry juice, pomegranate juice or simple syrups (equal parts water and sugar) flavored with ginger, cinnamon, vanilla, maple syrup, etc.





Fondue

After spending a year in Switzerland, cheese fondue and Raclette became two of my favorite comfort foods. My family is now hooked as well. What could be more comforting than dipping a cube of fresh French bread into a pot of warm, gooey, melty cheese. We also dip vegetables and cornichon (mini pickles). Cut-up apples, pears and boiled potatoes are also great, but it really is up to your imagination.

This recipe looks complicated but it is not. You may use an official fondue pot with a sterno under it, or a two-quart stainless steel pot over an induction burner or warmer. A crock pot works as well. Fondue forks are not essential but are helpful and can be purchased on Amazon for under \$10.



Serve this with a big green salad with Poached Pears and vanilla ice cream for dessert!

For different cheeses and herbs to use for fondue, check out the tips at The New York Times. <https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1018556-classic-fondue>.



Remember, there are also chocolate and hot oil fondues, too!

Some of my tips:

Never, ever use the "cooking" wines or sherries you might find in the grocery stores near the vinegars. These are high in salt and not at all tasty. If you'd rather not use wine in your fondue, a low-salt chicken or veggie stock will work.

Classic Cheese Fondue

Serves 2-4

Time 15 minutes

Before you start cooking, have the table set, the glasses filled and anything you want to eat with the fondue cut and ready to go. You'll probably even want to call everyone to the table because this does not take long to cook and, when it's ready, it's go time!

Ingredients

- ½ pound Swiss (Emmentaler, Appenzeller, or Raclette) cheese shredded
- ½ pound Gruyere cheese shredded
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- ½ tsp dry mustard
- ½ tsp nutmeg
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 cup dry white wine (again, pick a wine you like to drink)
- 1 Tablespoon Kirsch-cherry liquor (optional)



- In a large bowl, toss shredded cheeses with cornstarch, mustard and nutmeg.
- Rub garlic all over inside of fondue pot.
- Add wine to pot and bring to simmer.
- Add cheese to simmering wine a handful at a time and stir constantly to melt.
- Once all the cheese is melted and it is smooth, stir another minute or two. Add Kirsch if using and start enjoying.

Keep the pot on low heat so the cheese remains melted. It will eventually thicken and maybe even crust as you get to the very bottom. YUM!

Since this issue contains great information on local wineries, these recipes are perfect to try out some of your delicious new finds. Remember, only use wines you enjoy drinking for cooking. If you don't enjoy the wine, you won't enjoy the food you cooked with it. Try these out and you will be pleasantly surprised. They may even go on your comfort food list.

Enjoy!

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CERTIFIED CHEF.
CHECK OUT HER WEBSITE:
BARBSBARS.COM.

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3151 Montour Church Road

Saturday, March 30 4:00 – 6:00 pm

Many homemade
soups, salad,
desserts, beverages
& Mancini's bread



Adults \$9.00 Children (5-10) \$5.00 (4 & under) FREE

For information call: 412-787-1050 or
go to www.montourchurch.org

West Hills Symphonic Band Concert, March 3, 3 p.m., Montour High School, Winter's Wonders, music by Sibelius, Artie Shaw, Charles Azneavour, Edith Piaf, J.P. Sousa, Cole Porter, free, whsb.org.

Diabetes Day, March 21, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Ohio Valley Hospital, see page 7.

Burst Your Bubble, March 23, 7:30-9:30 p.m., The Parkway Theater in McKees Rocks, trivia game pits teams of at least five against each other in a combination of trivia and silly - albeit fun - challenges to help players get over the mid-week hump, Mrdan333@gmail.com.

Montours Soup and Salad Dinner, March 30, 4-6 p.m., homemade soups, salad, desserts, beverages, Mancini's bread, adults \$9, children \$5, under 4 free, (412) 787-1050, www.montourschurch.org.

Toast of the Rox, March 31, 8 a.m.-1 p.m., Kennedy Township Fire Hall, French toast breakfast featuring Mancini's Bakery and Jenny Lee Swirl Bread from 5 Generation Bakers, benefits Greater McKees Rocks Area Rotary charities, \$8, for tickets call Ashley Strouse: (412) 771-6781.

Fourth Annual Craft/Vendor Show, April 28, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Imperial VFD, 111 Pine Street in Imperial, 60+ vendors, shop for Mother's Day, www.imperialvfd.org.

Lifespan Senior Resource Center

Yarn Donations, Yarnies crochet club in need of yarn donations, Betsy: (724) 218-1669.

Montreal & Quebec, Canada Trip, April 28-May 4, six breakfasts, four dinners, guided tour of: Montreal, Old Montreal, Quebec City and Old Quebec, Notre Dame Basilica; visit: St. Joseph's Oratory/Shrine, St. Anne De Beaupre Shrine, Montreal Casino, Albert Gilles Copper Art Museum, Montmorency Falls, more; \$100.00 deposit, must have valid passport, trip leaves from Bethel Park Center, \$840 per person/double occupancy, (412) 831-7111.

Memberships, \$10/year, visit any site to renew or sign up.

Jacob Ferree DAR Chapter


Meetings are held at the Montour Heights Country Club unless otherwise noted. RSVP to Ruth Pickett: (724) 538-4623, rpickett12351@embarqmail.com. Questions: Melissa Moore, melissamdar@gmail.com.

Awards Tea, March 2, 1 p.m., Montour Heights Country Club, RSVP by Feb 27.

Chapter Meeting, April 6, 11 a.m., with SW District Director Ann Harder, RSVP by April 3.

Annual Business Meeting, May 4, 11 a.m., Union Presbyterian Church Chapter Social/Potluck, RSVP by May 1.

Chapter Meeting, June 8, 11 a.m., with PA State Regent Cyndy Sweeney, RSVP by June 5.



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Findlay Parks and Rec.

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

Walk 15, Tuesdays and Thursdays, cardio workout for all levels, 6-7 p.m., \$5/class.

Yoga for Beginners and Beyond, Fridays, 6:30-7:30 p.m., \$5/class.

Senior Yoga and Qi Gong, Thursdays, 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m., (724) 695-1976, Info@jdtisd.net.

Crochet for a Cause, fourth Thursdays through May, 6:30-8 p.m., create items for local area hospitals and patient care centers, no experience necessary, also accepting completed 6"x6" squares.

Wrapped in Love, Feb. 16, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., create warm no-sew fleece blankets for area cancer patients, bring fleece and scissors, donate fleece at Municipal Building during regular business hours.

Bingo Fundraiser, March 2, doors open 5:30 p.m., 6 p.m. dinner, 7 p.m. bingo, \$35/person, light dinner, drinks (beer, wine, soda), 10 games of bingo, RSVP: dao124@gmail.com, benefits DAO Memorial Foundation.

Self Defense Class for Women, March 6, 7-9 p.m., Findlay Township Municipal Building, registration required, free.

Spring Wreath, March 20, 6:30 p.m., see page 47.

Project Linus - Make a Blanket Day, March 23, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., make blankets for children who are seriously ill, traumatized or otherwise in need, bring fleece material and scissors.

Spring Canvas Painting, March 31, 1 p.m., see page 47.

Garden Huddle, April 6, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., doors open 7:30 a.m. for registration and continental breakfast, with speakers Andrea Jackson from The Western Pennsylvania Unit of the Herb Society of America and Len Lehman from Allegheny Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society, \$20/person, checks payable to Findlay Township, register by April 1.

Annual Easter Egg Hunt, April 13, 11 a.m., Clinton Park, Rainbow's End Playground, egg drop contest immediately to follow.

AARP Safe Driving Refresher, April 18, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., cost and location same as eight-hour course.

AARP Safe Driving Class, April 23-24, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Findlay Township Municipal Building AARP members \$15, non-members \$20, Findlay residents pay half, checks payable to AARP, class size limited, registration required.

Spring Community Cleanup, April 27, meets at Findlay Township Activity Center, 9 a.m.-noon, see page 47.



Christie Kosenina
Tricia Blazer

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North Fayette Parks and Rec.

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

Adults and Seniors

Tai Chi Ch'uan, Saturdays, 9 a.m.

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

Insanity, Mondays, 9:45-10:45 a.m.

Body Sculpt, Mondays, 6-7 p.m.

Boot Camp, Thursdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m., Saturdays, 10-11 a.m.

Total Body Strength, Tuesdays, 6-7 p.m.

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

Adult Volleyball League, Tuesdays,

sfox@north-fayette.com.

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

Senior Luncheons, second Wednesdays, call to RSVP, email dhildebrand@north-fayette.com to receive monthly senior newsletter.

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

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

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

Youth

Indoor Flag Football, ages 6-14, Saturdays through Feb. 23.

Youth Indoor Soccer League, ages 6-7, Thursdays through March 21, ages 8-9, Mondays through March 25.

Super Kids Basketball, ages 3-5, Wednesdays through March 20.

Mommy and Me, ages 0-4, Wednesdays through March 27.

Youth Tumbling, ages 3-6, Tuesdays through Feb. 19.

Preschool, ages 2-4, kromano@north-fayette.com.

Afterschool Programming, Monday-Friday, 3:30-5:30 p.m., K-8 programs designed to provide a safe environment for children to come to after school, transportation provided from schools to community center when school is in session, registration details at www.north-fayette.com, email nkreutzman@north-fayette.com for more.

PALS, Providing Assistance Love & Support, recreational activities for individuals with special needs, email dhildebrand@north-fayette.com to be added to email list and for upcoming events.



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Dr. Kiser earned a medical degree with honors from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He subsequently completed a residency in general surgery there, as well as fellowships in cardiac and thoracic surgery. From 2011 to 2016, he served as the Chief of the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he was also the Byah Thomason-Sanford Doxey Distinguished Professor of Surgery. Later, Dr. Kiser served as the J. Mark Williams Distinguished Professor in Cardiac Surgery, Chief of Cardiac Surgery, and the Director of Cardiovascular Surgical Services at East Carolina Heart Institute, which is affiliated with East Carolina University, in Greenville, North Carolina. In May, 2018, Dr. Kiser earned an MBA degree from the Kenan-Flagler Business School, also part of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Dr. Kiser is employed by St. Clair Cardiovascular Surgery Associates, part of St. Clair Medical Services.

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