

August 2024

Washington County Department of Human Services



Enjoy the outdoors in Washington County. Check out Washington County Parks and Recreation for upcoming classes. Pictured above is an Evening Paddle at Cross Creek Park.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Washington Salvation Army Car-Nival

August 1st and August 15th 6pm-8pm
Washington Salvation Army

North Strabane Community Day

August 3rd 4pm-fireworks
North Strabane Township Park

Monongahela Farmers Market

August 9th 3pm-6pm
Chess Park

FlightFest

August 10th 12pm-6pm
Washington County Airport

Love Our City Festival

August 9th-11th
Wild Things Park

Washington County Fair

August 10th-17th
Washington County Fairgrounds

Main Street Farmers Market

August 22nd 3pm-6pm
Washington Main Street Pavilion

International Overdose Awareness Day

August 31st 11am-2:30pm
Washington Park



American Foundation for Suicide Prevention



WALK WITH US

TO PREVENT SUICIDE

REGISTER TODAY

Washington County Out of the Darkness Walk

September 28, 2024

Main Street Pavilion, 139 S. Main Street, Washington, PA
For more information, email rebecca.salsbury@co.washington.pa.us



Register at afsp.org/WASHINGTONPA



American Foundation for Suicide Prevention



OUT OF THE DARKNESS Community Walk



Arc Human Services

Save the Date!

Connecting Through Inspiration Arts Festival

August 17th 12pm to 6pm
111 W. Pike St. Canonsburg PA

If you or someone you know wants to be a vendor go to www.ArcHumanServices.org/art-festival

SAVE THE DATE!



LITERACY COUNCIL OF SOUTHWESTERN PA

Friday, October 11, 2024 • 5:00 PM-9:00 PM

The Literacy Council of Southwestern PA's 3rd Annual Charity

SCHOLAR'S BOWL

The Alpine • 735 Jefferson Avenue, Washington, PA 15301

Support your favorite charity!

Teams will play for their chosen charity.

Prizes:

1st Place: Trophy & \$500 donated to their charity

2nd Place: \$300 donated to their charity

3rd Place: \$100 donated to their charity

Register your team today!

\$240 per team and up to 8 people per team!

Sponsorship opportunities:

Includes press, signage, social media, e-blasts, etc.

Einstein Premiere Level Sponsor: \$5,000

(Premiere level also includes a VIP team, table preference, signage at each table, and upgraded table snacks!)

Hawking Level: \$2,500

Curie Level: \$1,000

Newton Level: \$500

Food, snack, drink & wine pull sponsorships:

\$500 and includes signage, floor/program

For more information call **724.228.6188** or email lauren@lcswnpa.org

Please email logos in a PNG file format no later than October 1

Registration information and money due by September 6. Make entry fees and/or sponsorship choices payable to "Literacy Council of Southwestern PA" PO Box 1584, Washington, PA 15301



Scan the QR code to register your team or sponsorship today!

TRIVIA, SCORING, & MUSIC BY:
YOU KNOW IT ENTERTAINMENT
Emcee: Ellen Rossi, **EQT**
EQT Foundation President



What's the Buzz at the Department of Human Services



The Washington County Department of Human Services held a public hearing on July 19th, to discuss housing stability needs in Washington County. Representatives from Human Services, Blueprints, and SPS Connect were in attendance.



Veterans Affairs celebrated Mr. Peter Ladisic, veteran and resident of Washington County, at the VA Pittsburgh Health System Veterans Town Halls on the Move and Veterans Resource Fairs event on July 15th. Pete is a WWII Air Force veteran and a ball gunner (a ball gunner rides below the bottom of the aircraft in a literal ball with a machine gun and ammunition)! His 100th birthday was July 21, 2024. As a gunner, he was shot, had a broken leg that was amputated and has had a wooden leg for years. He was awarded two purple hearts, among other Air Force commendations. Pete said his life's motto is: "You only get out what you put into life". Pete received a coin and proclamation from VA Secretary McDonough, congratulations from Congressman Reschenthaler's office, and a proclamation from the Washington County Commissioners.



Abigail Gerlach, Human Services Community Outreach Liaison, had the opportunity to attend the Amerihealth Caritas of Pennsylvania resource fair in Charleroi, PA on July 10th. She was able to share information about Human Services and resources in the community to the Haitian population.

Employee Spotlights

David Painter, BHDS Chief Financial Officer

Dave served in the Air Force from 1986-1990 and then attended the Douglas School of Business where he obtained an associate degree. Dave expressed that he has been with Washington County since October 1997. He mentioned that the most rewarding part of his job is knowing that we help the people that really need it. Dave stated that he looks up to John Orndoff, a previous supervisor. Dave mentioned that he learned a lot from John and took over his position when John left. Dave enjoys camping and spending time with his family. His favorite TV series is M*A*S*H.



Hilary Burchett, CYS Intake Manager

Hilary attended Waynesburg College (now Waynesburg University), where she received her bachelor's degree in criminal justice with a minor in sociology. Hilary expressed that the most rewarding part of her job is keeping children safely in their homes, empowering families, connecting families to resources, and identifying their supports. She stated that Anne Schlegel is someone she looks up to professionally. Hilary mentioned that Anne inspired and rejuvenated her in the world of child welfare. Hilary has 2 children who are 25 and 11 years old and enjoys going to their activities and going to/watching sporting events. She is currently watching Mayor of Kingstown, Evil, and her favorite TV series is Yellowstone. Her favorite movies are the Marvel movies, Jurassic Park, and National Treasure.



Brenda Wacker, Aging Services Senior Center Coordinator

Brenda attended Washington & Jefferson College, where she received her bachelor's degree in accounting. Brenda expressed that the most rewarding part of her job is assisting the aging population. She mentioned that they are very grateful. Brenda stated that she has been with the county for 15 years. She started in Tax Revenue and then came to Aging Services. Brenda mentioned that she looks up to Mary Lynn Spilak, Aging Services Director. Brenda enjoys playing the banjo and working outdoors.



Columbia Gas of PA

Guest Columnist: Alexa Mapstone, Outreach Education Coordinator

Columbia Gas is a utility company that provides natural gas services since 1885. We provide natural gas services to 18 counties in PA, including Washington County. Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania is one of seven energy delivery companies of its parent company, NiSource, which provides natural gas and electric service to roughly 4 million consumers.

Our company cares about our customers and offers several different customer assistance programs to assist customers with energy efficiency information, help with overdue balances, and affordable payment plans. We promote all our customer assistance programs throughout our service areas, but customers can also call our universal services number 1-800-537-7431 or go to our website ColumbiaGasPA.com/Assistance, to apply and learn more about our programs.

Columbia Gas is passionate about raising awareness of our customer assistance programs. If your agency/organization has an opportunity to table, staff training, client training or distribute information on Columbia Gas Customer Assistance Programs, please email Alexa Mapstone at amapstone@nisource.com If a client needs assistance please have them visit our website or call 1-800-537-7431 to start the process in applying for our programs.

Healing Bridges

Guest Columnist: Riley Bitonti, Marketing & Development Specialist

Healing Bridges is a recovery-oriented nonprofit that guides and connects residents of Washington County and neighboring communities to comprehensive behavioral health and developmental health services. Since the organization was founded in 1968, Healing Bridges has helped individuals and families overcome hurdles and find solutions to their integrated care needs with diagnostic, therapeutic, rehabilitative, and developmental practices that improve overall wellness and quality of life. Today, Healing Bridges provides counseling/therapy, medication management, and mobile case management services to motivate positive self-growth journeys by connecting disadvantaged populations to the tools, skills, and resources necessary to live life to the fullest. We are currently accepting new intakes and referrals in all programs!



FOR MORE INFORMATION
Call us at 1-800-537-7431
Visit ColumbiaGasPA.com/Assistance
Contact us on Facebook, Twitter or Nextdoor

Columbia Gas
AN Source Company

Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania offers a variety of customer assistance programs. You can increase your home's energy efficiency, enroll in an affordable payment plan, or apply for assistance with overdue balances. To find out which programs fit your needs, SCAN THE QR CODE on this page to enter your information into the eligibility calculator or CALL US AT 1-800-537-7431.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY	AFFORDABLE PAYMENT PLANS	ASSISTANCE WITH OVERDUE BALANCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WarmWise Low Income Usage Reduction Program• WarmWise Audits and Rebates• WarmWise Energy Efficiency Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer Assistance Referral & Evaluation Services (CARES)• Customer Assistance Program (CAP)• Budget Payment Plan• Budget Plus	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)• CRISIS Program• Homeowner's Assistance Fund (PAHAF)• Dollar Energy Fund



To make a referral or access the organization's services, please call us at 724-225-6940 or visit www.myhealingbridges.org/services/intake-process. Any referring agency or individual inquiring about Outpatient Counseling/Therapy or Medication Management will be directed to our clinical intake coordinator to get initiated into our electronic health record system and scheduled for an in-person or telehealth clinical assessment. Any referring agency or individual inquiring about Mobile Case Management (Blended Case Management or IDD/A Supports Coordination services) should contact the Washington County Base Service Unit, Center for Community Resources, at 724-914-3058.

Currently with our outpatient programs, we have three on-site mental health therapists, two psychiatric nurse practitioners, one licensed practical nurse (LPN), one child board-certified psychiatrist and one adult board-certified psychiatrist/medical director on staff to help people of all ages find relief from mental health challenges. We are able to offer psychiatric evaluations, medication check-ins and pharmaceutical treatment plans for clients needing prescribed medications for psychological and emotional needs. We also offer a full-service pharmacy at our site location through Genoa, a QoI Healthcare Company.

In our mobile department, Healing Bridges currently has three blended case managers, nine supports coordinators, two supports coordination supervisors, and one supports coordination training specialist on staff to help our clients diagnosed with mental health disorders and intellectual and developmental disabilities/autism get connected to needed vocational, medical, financial, social, and educational services.

Our organization operates with a value-based care model, so all of our services are billed via insurance to keep rates affordable and accessible. To improve the agency's workflow and meet the high demand of underserved people needing behavioral and developmental health services, Healing Bridges plans on implementing an online intake form in the near future that will significantly improve overall patient and provider experience. We are open from 8:30am to 5:00pm Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. We are open until 7pm on Thursdays. If you have any questions or would like to schedule a meeting with Healing Bridges, please email rileyb@myhealingbridges.org or call 724-225-6940 ext. 122.



The Trevor Popeck Foundation, Inc.

Guest Columnist: Laurie Popeck, Vice President



The Trevor Popeck Foundation Inc. is a 501 (C) (3) nonprofit organization to help offset medical expenses. It was started in January of 2023 by Trevor Popeck, who is a recent graduate of Chartiers-Houston High School.

When Trevor was 3 years old, he went to preschool, and they conducted a vision screening. They noticed that his left eye seemed to have a few abnormal results; they suggested to his parents, Steve and Laurie Popeck, that they follow up with a pediatric ophthalmologist. So, his mom checked with their insurance and found a doctor nearby. Dr. Paviglianiti, MD, one of the doctors at Pediatric Ophthalmology, discovered the problem with Trevor's left eye. "I can still remember the conversation like it was yesterday," said Laurie. "Dr. Pav (that is what everyone calls Dr. Paviglianiti) conducted the eye exam and turned to me and said, "Well, Trevor has a juvenile cataract." It took me a minute, then I asked what that meant because I had only heard of cataracts happening to older people, not a three-year old. At this point, I just cried as I was trying to listen, but I was so overrun with emotion. I tried to think of anything and everything I did or didn't do during pregnancy that could have caused this. Dr. Pav could see I was upset, and he assured me it was something that happens to 25% of the population. While it wasn't uncommon, it would need to be removed, so Trevor did not lose his vision in that eye. I can remember asking him where the other parents were, as this was the first time I had ever heard of it... I honestly cannot remember what he said at that point. I just looked at Trevor, who was just staring at me because I was crying, and then think to myself, "Ok. I need to be strong here for him."

A few months later, surgery was scheduled at Children's Hospital in Pittsburgh. Trevor's parents went with him while his younger sister, Brooke, stayed with her grandparents. Dr. Pav conducted a successful 8-hour long surgery to remove the cataract, which felt like an eternity to Steve and Laurie in the waiting room. The recovery included patching his "good" eye to help get the connections strong in the left eye. This was a struggle at times because a toddler doesn't fully accept wearing a patch for a long time. Trevor eventually got glasses to help him with reading, as he is not allowed to wear contacts. The prescription is strong in the left eye, but completely clear in the right eye. Somehow, the days passed quickly into years, and it was time for Trevor to go to kindergarten. While many children with juvenile cataracts require IEPs, to receive large font accommodations, Trevor did not need one.



Trevor was successful in the classroom and in sports. He played baseball and basketball (while wearing prescription sport goggles). Eventually, he played football and wore a prescription face shield to protect his eyes but did not have to wear the sport goggles.

Fast forward to today, Trevor graduated high school in the top ten percent of his class and is soon moving to Cleveland to attend Case Western Reserve University and study engineering while also playing football. His family is beyond proud of him and the hard work he put into ensuring that The Trevor Popeck Foundation was successful.

To date, The Trevor Popeck Foundation has fundraised \$10,000 and their focus has now shifted to distributing funds as mini grants. The mission of the nonprofit is: A Foundation for Sight; A World of Possibility. The mini grants will help to offset medical expenses for children and adults that need financial assistance.

Trevor has seized the opportunity to inspire others. He personally wants to help other families feel like they are not alone. "I want other kids to know that if this happens to them that they can overcome it. Your future will still be bright, and this will just be part of the story you tell someday. Be strong and persevere through the trials."

For more information and to make a donation to The Trevor Popeck Foundation, Inc., please check out their website: <https://www.thetrevor popeck foundation inc.org/> or scan the QR code below:

