

inside

the Wilkinsburg Sun

IDOL REGISTRATION FORM	3
BOROUGH	3
NEIGHBORHOOD CLEANUP DAY	4
SCHOOL DISTRICT	5
CALENDAR	7
CALLING KIDS TO END HUNGER	8

VOL.1 NO. 10 july/august 2008

A C O M M U N I T Y N E W S L E T T E R

Comprehensive Plan

Where do you see Wilkinsburg in 2018? What direction would you like to see the borough take over the next 10 years? Now's your chance to speak up.

Wilkinsburg is updating its comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan is a blueprint for development over the next decade. It's advisable to do one every 10 years, and Wilkinsburg is right on schedule, the last plan being completed in 1998. This year, the comprehensive plan will be put together alongside the early intervention plan, a five-year plan aimed at improving a community's financial management capability and strengthening its fiscal stability through multi-year planning. Both plans will be compiled by Delta Development Group, a professional planning and development company based in Mechanicsburg, Pa., with an office in Cranberry.

The comprehensive plan involves taking an inventory of all the community's assets—residential and commercial property, infrastructure, community services, transportation—and identifying its strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities, before recommending strategies to maintain a community's economic base, improve its housing stock and provide public facilities.

In order for a plan to be successful, says Borough Manager Marla Marcinko, there needs to be a high level of community involvement, in

continued on page 4



County Executive Dan Onorato came to Wilkinsburg to cut the ribbon on two new housing initiatives in Wilkinsburg. The first stop was three houses in the Hamnett Place neighborhood on Jeanette Street and one on Holland Avenue that was developed by Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation. The second stop, above, was the Peebles Square project, where six historic townhouses were dedicated. Action Housing is the developer for Peebles Square.

MORE RAIN BARRELS!

The Nine Mile Run Rain Barrel Initiative is one of the largest projects of its kind in the U.S. Since the initial installation of 500 barrels in 2004, we have continued to refine the program, including designing and producing our own barrel and increasing our outreach and education to program participants. Our goal is to provide residents with easy, practical, and affordable ways to improve the health of their watershed.

The NMRWA barrel is manufactured by a local family-owned plastics company, holds 133 gallons of roof runoff, is made of recycled plastic, features a siphon overflow system, a removable lid for easy cleaning, and comes complete with all parts and accessories. Since May 2007 we have installed more than 200 of the new barrels within the watershed. Any watershed resident can get a NMRWA rain barrel for a subsidized cost which includes the barrel, an assessment for proper placement, and installation by NMRWA staff.

In addition to installations, the NMRWA rain barrel crew is conducting ongoing

continued on page 6



The Wilkinsburg Sun
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The Wilkinsburg Sun is a monthly community newsletter published by The volunteer Wilkinsburg Community Newsletter Board, with the support of the Wilkinsburg Borough, the Wilkinsburg School District, the Wilkinsburg Chamber of Commerce and the Wilkinsburg Community Economic Development Corporation. The Sun is grateful for generous support from the Western Pennsylvania School For The Deaf without which publication might not be possible. The Sun would also like to thank the Honorable Representative Joseph Preston for his continuing support of a community newsletter for the Borough of Wilkinsburg.

Please submit all articles and calendar events to: editor@wilkinsburgsun.com, or by mail, P.O. Box 86064, Wilkinsburg, PA 15221. Please submit articles 6 weeks before publication and calendar events 4 weeks before publication. To advertise, e-mail adsales@wilkinsburgsun.com, or call 412-853-0388

The Sun accepts submitted articles provided they are related to Wilkinsburg and are civic-minded. The Sun reserves the right to withhold articles from print.

Please note that The Sun does not publish political or opinion pieces.

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN from page 1
order to identify and understand the community's interests. "We will publicize the meetings any way we can," she says. "We want to hear from a lot of key stakeholders."

Marcinko believes the current plan, completed in 1998, was underutilized. "It's very important that we come away with tangible goals and guidelines that are implementable over the next 10 years."

One difference she expects in the upcoming plan is a master site plan for the business district, which would serve as a guide for the future of the Main Street Program. The site plan would evaluate factors such as park-

ing, existing businesses and available commercial space and would present a forecast of future business district development.

Another section of the comprehensive plan is a management audit, which will make recommendations for the level of staffing necessary to implement the plan's recommendations—for example, possibly taking on the responsibility of community development and redevelopment, or hiring a borough planner.

The tentative timeframe for completion of both the comprehensive and the early intervention plan is sometime in the fall of 2009. **WS**

FARMERS MARKET



If you can't make it to the farm, let the farm come to you. All through the summer, The Wilkinsburg Farmers' Market, sponsored by the Wilkinsburg Chamber of Commerce, sets up shop in the parking lot between Ross and South avenues from 3:30 to 6:30. Vendors come from all over Southwestern Pennsylvania, and are eager to talk to you about their farms and where your food comes from. In addition to a wide assortment of nutritious fruits and vegetables, you can find spring bedding plants and hanging baskets, organic produce and baked goods. For more information, call 724-452-0391.

Free First-Time Home Buying Workshop

Monday July 14, at 6 P.M. on the second floor of the Wilkinsburg Borough Building, 605 Ross Avenue. Sponsored by Pittsburgh Housing Development Association, with Dollar Bank. Learn what it takes to buy a home! Counselors will be on hand to help consumers on, credit repair, how to secure grant money for closing cost, low interest Mortgage options, down payment assistance, free credit report!

Please RSVP by calling 412 687.1197, or logging on to www.phdainc.org.

wilkinsburg borough

Wilkinsburg Borough Council

Mayor John Thompson
412.244.2920
mayorjt@choiceonemail.com

1ST WARD
BLACKRIDGE
TURNER SCHOOL
HUNTER PARK AREA
Barbara Ervin
Chair, Public Property Committee
412.244.4939 ext. 314

Eugenia Moore
Council President
412.371.5337
Paige Trice
Representative to
the Council of Governments

2ND WARD
BEACON HILL
PRINCETON PARK
JOHNSTON SCHOOL AREA
Jason Cohn
Council Vice President, and
Chair, Finance Committee
412.241.4536
jscene@gmail.com

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Chair, Parks, Recreation and the Arts
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Barbara Nicholas
Chair, Personnel Committee
412.638.3390
barbnicholas@comcast.net

3RD WARD
HIGH SCHOOL
KELLY SCHOOL
REGENT SQUARE AREA

Carl Lewis
Chair, Public Safety
412.403.2910
cdlewiss@hotmail.com

Denise Edwards
412.241.4195
dwinebr696@aol.com

Tracey Evans
Chair, Economic Development
412.244.9588
ct.evans@verizon.net

**Problems with trash pick-up?
Call 412-244-2923**

JULY MEETINGS			
17	Chamber of Commerce annual meeting	5 PM	South Avenue Methodist Church
23	Community Day planning committee	5:30 PM	Wilkinsburg Borough Building 605 Ross Ave.
24	Wilkinsburg Community Development Corporation (WCDC) design committee	6 PM	Wilkinsburg Borough Building 605 Ross Ave
AUGUST MEETINGS			
4	Wilkinsburg Planning Board	6 PM	Wilkinsburg Borough Building 605 Ross Ave.
6	Community Day planning committee	5:30 PM	Wilkinsburg Borough Building 605 Ross Ave.
6	Wilkinsburg Borough Council planning session	7 PM	Wilkinsburg Borough Building 605 Ross Ave.
7	WCDC Economic Restructuring committee	6 PM	Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf
13	WCDC Organization committee	11 AM	PNC Bank, Penn & Wood Sts.
20	Wilkinsburg Borough Council legislative meeting	7 PM	Wilkinsburg Borough Building 605 Ross Ave
21	WCDC Promotion committee	7 PM	Wilkinsburg Borough Building 605 Ross Ave.
28	WCDC Design committee	6 PM	Wilkinsburg Borough Building 605 Ross Ave

The 3rd ANNUAL WILKINSBURG IDOL TALENT REGISTRATION FORM
Saturday, August 23, 2008 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Located at Penn Ave. Parklet (Next to H & R Block)
The deadline for registration is August 15.

Name: _____ Age _____ # in Your Group _____

Parent/Guardian's Name _____
(If Under 18)

Address _____

Phone _____ Alt Phone _____

Type of Talent Performing _____

How Much Space Needed _____

If singing, please be sure to bring your own music on a CD. TAPES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

If Singing, what is the name and artist of the song being sung? _____

PROFANITY, VULGAR OR DEGRADING ACTIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED!!!

Did you participate in Wilkinsburg Idol last year? If no, how did you hear about Wilkinsburg Idol? _____

I agree to follow the rules of Wilkinsburg Idol. I understand that if I violate any of the rules I will be disqualified from participating in this event. In the event that I am a cash prize winner, my signature authorizes my name to be published in the Wilkinsburg Newsletter.

Contestant's Signature : _____

Parent's Signature: _____

WHITNEY CLEANUP



On Saturday May 3rd, the Whitney Park Neighborhood Association, founded by Councilwoman Tracey Evans, held its 5th annual Whitney Park cleanup. Approximately 30 residents came out to lend a hand to spruce up the park. We would like to thank the Chief Coleman and the Wilkinsburg Police department, DPW, Nine Mile Run Watershed Association, Sestilli Nursery, and all the residents who came out to prune trees, pull weeds, rake leaves, plant flowers, and help make the neighborhood a better place. If you would like to join the Whitney Park Neighborhood Association, please contact Rick Hawkinberry at hawkinberry@verizon.net or Michael Lefebvre at michael_lefebvre@verizon.net



NEIGHBORHOOD CLEANUP DAY SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST 2

One Wilkinsburg neighborhood is tackling the problem of abandoned properties and vacant lots with its second annual neighborhood cleanup day Saturday, August 2. The cleanup will take place on two blocks of Swissvale and Hill avenues, near the former Bell's Drug Store. The goal of this year's cleanup day is not only to beautify but to secure dozens of properties by boarding up doors and windows and painting them in an attractive way. Teams will also be clearing trash, weeds, brush, and small trees from those properties, as well as from nearby vacant lots.

"We received a large number of expressions of gratitude from people all over the borough after last year's cleanup day," says Elder Drew Gordon of Covenant Fellowship Church on Swissvale Avenue, which is organizing the event. "What meant the most was hearing from neighbors who felt their neighborhood was nicer as well as a little safer," he says. "We also found that, when we came forward to volunteer, people in borough government were generous in assisting us with whatever they could provide."

"In New York City they found that making small improvements in an area could have a big impact, even bringing down violent crime by 50 percent," says Gordon. "When people work together and take pride in their neighborhood, small victories can turn into big victories. But our immediate goal is just to make this a nicer place for Wilkinsburg residents to live, work, play, and worship, without having to worry about what goes on in the abandoned properties near them."

To volunteer for the cleanup day, or for more information, contact Drew Gordon at 412-731-2854. **WS**

Get on Board To Make A Home Your Own with The Fifth Third Homeownership Mobile
The "eBus" is a 40-foot bus that doubles as a mobile classroom and it's FREE to the community!

What you can do on the eBus:

- Request a free credit report
- Apply for a mortgage loan*
- Receive information on the prevention of foreclosures
- Receive money management and budgeting information
- Receive a personalized evaluation of your finances
- Browse multi-lingual, self-directed programs on homeownership and credit counseling
- Open a checking or savings account and apply for a credit card*
- Apply for employment at Fifth Third Bank
- Talk to representatives from community service organizations for additional help with financial literacy
- Receive giveaways, including a free Fifth Third Guide to Residential Lending
- Enter to win daily prizes

And much more!

Fifth Third Bank Homeownership Mobile "eBus" Coming Soon

Wednesday, September 3, 2008 (12:00 PM - 4:00 PM)
City of Pittsburgh Kick-off Celebration - East Commons Park
19 Union Place (Union Place & East Ohio Street)

Thursday, September 4, 2008 (11:00 AM - 4:00 PM)
Save A Lot, 725 Ross Avenue, Wilkinsburg

Friday, September 5, 2008 (11:00 AM - 4:00 PM)
East Liberty Town Square, 5952 Penn Avenue

Saturday, September 6, 2008 (10:00 AM - 3:00 PM)
McKees Rocks Shopping Plaza (Big Lots), 422 Charliers Avenue, McKees Rocks, PA

FREDDIE MAC
We make home possible™

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT FIFTH THIRD BANK - JADA GRANDY AT 412.291.5482
FIFTH THIRD BANK FIFTH THIRD BANK AND ASSOCIATED MARKS OF FIFTH THIRD BANKCORP. *Not available in all areas.

CYBERSUN The Wilkinsburg Sun is now available online. Check us out at wilkinsburgsun.wordpress.com/. The site offers past copies of the Sun in PDF format, a calendar of upcoming events, a listing of stories in the print edition and more. Any suggestions? Pass them on to editor@wilkinsburgsun.com, along with any story ideas you may have.



Alexander Clark, a Johnston third-grader, is one of more than 100 Wilkinsburg students to take advantage of the Vision Van, a free optometrist's office on wheels, brought to town by the Give the Gift of Sight Foundation.

THE GIFT OF SIGHT

Coming to school ready to learn isn't possible if students aren't able to see what's going on in the classroom. Thanks to the Give the Gift of Sight Foundation, over 100 children in Wilkinsburg can see clearly now that the Vision Van has come, bringing free screenings, exams and new glasses to students from all six District schools, as well as St. James School. "We see great improvement, both academically and socially, in our students when their vision has been properly corrected," says Bernadette Skoczylas, Social Services Coordinator for the Wilkinsburg School District.

Charlie Batch Delivers Commencement Address

The 2007-2008 school year ended as it began with a visit from Charlie Batch, who delivered the commencement address at the Wilkinsburg High School graduation ceremonies on June 5. Stressing the importance of hard work and dedication to success in life, Mr. Batch encouraged the graduates to be proud of who they are and where they come from: "When I'm asked where I'm from," he said, "I don't say I'm from Pittsburgh. I say I'm from Homestead. Be proud to say that you come from Wilkinsburg."

Mr. Batch visited Turner School on the first day of the school year, backpacks filled with school supplies generously donated by the Covenant Church of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Youth Partnership, LSI Corporation, Geno Levi Spirit of Style Salon, and Costco, in partnership with Communities in Schools.

The Vision Van is like an optometrist's office on wheels, minus the cash register. It has everything onboard for a volunteer doctor to provide a thorough eye exam and make a new pair eyeglasses for children in need. In addition to volunteer doctors, our Vans are also staffed by volunteer Luxottica Group employees and Lions clubs members. Doctors and staff of the Luxottica Retail association donate their services to provide thorough eye exams and eyeglass fittings. Those few students who the doctors determined may need more extensive services have been sent vouchers that can be taken to any Lenscrafters, Sears or Target for a follow-up examination in the office.

Founded in 1988, Give the Gift of Sight is a family of charitable programs providing free vision care and eyewear to underprivileged individuals in North America and in developing countries around the world. Sponsored by Give the Gift of Sight Foundation and Luxottica Group, these programs have helped six million people on five continents and in hundreds of communities across North America. While all of the glasses that the Give the Gift of Sight Foundation distributes in North America are brand new, in-kind donations, the foundation partners with the Lion's Club International to distribute recycled, donated glasses in developing nations. "Because it's so important that our students learn about giving back," says Mrs. Skoczylas, "we are going to be coordinating a glasses drive this fall, asking students to collect used glasses that can be distributed to people in need around the world." All glasses, no matter how damaged, can be useful in some way. Thanks to the Wilkinsburg Borough and Police Chief Ophelia Coleman for providing free parking for the volunteers.

RIF grants Johnston Elementary the 2008 Marirose Radelet Award

Johnston Elementary school has been awarded the 2008 Marirose Radelet Award for Exemplary Site Performance by RIF Pittsburgh. It is awarded annually to one book distribution site that goes above and beyond the requirements as a book distribution program for the current school year.

Far more goes into a RIF book distribution than just handing out books. "We are required to create reading activities around each of the distributions," says Allison Scuillo, fourth grade teacher and site coordinator at Johnston. "Three times a year, when the books are distributed, the whole school is involved in our theme. Volunteers come and work with students around that theme, and we have prizes related to the theme." When the theme was the Negro Leagues, for example, a prize was tickets to see the Pirates play at PNC Park. "Allison Scuillo has been amazing," said Beth Ann Novak, Director of Special Events and Communication for RIF Pittsburgh. "Overall, her creativity, her communication, and her advocacy for RIF and for literacy exemplify what RIF is all about."

Another requirement of the award is raising 5% of the cost of the books that are distributed at each site. Johnston's donations come from the teachers and staff who pay a dollar to wear jeans on Friday.

The Marirose Radelet Award is named in honor of the founder of RIF Pittsburgh, a long time Northside resident and advocate for helping children become lifelong readers. RIF Pittsburgh is the fifth largest RIF distribution center in the United States, distributing books to over 20,000 children annually.

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL IS SEPTEMBER 2!

Getting Drawn In



Drop in to the Drawn In: David Hahn, manager of the Drawn In Café, Waverly and Peebles, is on the lookout for ways to make the coffeehouse/performance space/convenience store more neighborhood-friendly.

Things are getting busier every week at the Drawn In Café, says proprietor David Hahn. At the corner of Waverly and Peebles streets, the combination coffeehouse, art gallery, convenience store, performance space and whatever may still be evolving held its grand opening on July 10, although the shop has been operating on a limited basis since the spring.

Hahn, 41, a former CMU art student, moved back to Pittsburgh last year after spending some time on the west coast framing houses and working in green construction. His friends (whom he does not want to name) own the Waverly Street building, and he says they had talked about turning it into a coffee shop for some time.

Artwork, much of it Hahn's, lines the walls, and hand-designed T-shirts share space with Tylenol and Blue Bunny ice cream. An old turntable and a stack of vinyl serve as a jukebox.

"We're looking for ways to keep customers here for the second cup," Hahn says.

As word spreads around the neighborhood, the walk-in trade has escalated and more money has crossed the counter. But not a whole lot just yet.

"When we first started, I figure I was making about \$6 an hour," says Hahn. "Now it's probably up to about 10."

For more information about the Drawn In Café, visit the café's Myspace page. Go to www.myspace.com/drawnincafe. **WS**

THE WILKINSBURG COMMUNITY URGENCY FUND FOR CHILDREN

by Jean Kirkland

Four years ago fruition for such a fund was ignited by Mrs. Gwendolyn Butler and Mrs. Jean Kirkland when we visited a child who was injured in an automobile accident and as he recovered all we could do was pray. Prayer is always in order to call upon God to heal our wounds and spirits. Thus, we began to seek a solution for our youth to encourage their recovery. We want to include the businesses and citizens of our great borough to join us.

How can you help? We have set up with PNC Bank to receive your donations to be dispersed to say "We love you and our community wants the best for every situation." Stop in PNC Bank and deposit your gift, or send a check or money order to:

Wilksburg Community
Urgency Fund for Children
P.O. Box 86013
Pittsburgh, PA 15221

You will receive a receipt. Thank you!

RAIN BARRELS from page 1

inspections of each barrel, checking for problems with the barrel and leaving the latest information on maintenance. A barrel that is broken, disconnected from the downspout, or is not being drained will not help to improve the Nine Mile Run Watershed. If you're a Nine Mile Run Watershed resident with a rain barrel you can expect to get a visit from us in the near future!

Please visit the rain barrel page on our Web site (www.ninemilerun.org/programs/rainbarrel) for more information. Let us know if you have any questions or comments by contacting us on the Rain Barrel Hotline at 412-371-3095 or writing to rainbarrel@ninemilerun.org.

The Rain Barrel Initiative is funded by the PA Department of Environmental Protection's Growing Greener II program, The Richard King Mellon Foundation, and the Roy A. Hunt Foundation. **WS**





NEED HELP?
The Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf (WPSD) Work Training Center Program is looking for projects. If you need help with mailings, collating, packaging and some assembly type work we can do the job for you! Our services are free and provide a wonderful opportunity for our students to develop various job skills.

412-371-7000
wpsd.org

Contact Tony DiMenno at 412-244-4260 or email at tdimenno@wpsd.org

calendar

AUGUST 14- AUGUST 17	WILKINSBURG BASEBALL AND MIDGET FOOTBALL ASSOCIATIONS, along with the School District and Wilkinsburg Parks and Recreation Department, will be sponsoring a CARNIVAL AT TURNER FIELD, Thursday August 14 through Sunday, August 17. There will be both adult and children's rides, games and food. Tickets can be purchased at the Turner Field concession stand. Tickets are sold in sheets of 18 for \$10.	5-11 PM THURSDAY & FRIDAY Noon-11 PM SATURDAY NOON -8 PM SUNDAY
JAZZ IN THE PARK (PENN AVENUE PARKLET) Tuesdays 6:30 – 8 P.M.		
JULY 8	Nelson Harrison	Jazz Quartet
JULY 15	Philip Russell & Friends	Gospel
JULY 22	Eugene Ludwig	Jazz Trio
JULY 29	Al Dowe & Etta Cox	Jazz & Song
AUGUST 5	Tony Campbell	Tony Campbell
AUGUST 12	New Show Band	Funk/Soul
AUGUST 19	Gerald Haymon	Jazz Quartet
AUGUST 26	Jazz Workshop	Big Band
Bring a chair, a friend, and your family for an enjoyable night out in the Parklet on Penn Avenue every Tuesday in June, July and August. In case of rain, the program will move to Dunamis Baptist Church, 751 Wallace Avenue. Jazz Workshop, Inc. is partly funded by the Multicultural Arts Initiative, Regional Asset District, The Heinz Endowments, Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, The Grable Foundation, PPA and private donations. For more information, call Jazz Workshop at 412-731-3080 or 412-244-0480, or Wilkinsburg Borough, 412-244-4900, ext. 101.		

WILKINSBURG FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION 2008 SCHEDULE

- Aug. 9 Wilkinsburg vs. Kingsley @ Wilkinsburg
- Aug. 16 Wilkinsburg vs. Lincoln @ Lincoln
- Aug. 23 Wilkinsburg vs. North Side @ North Side
- Aug. 30 Wilkinsburg vs. Homewood @ Wilkinsburg
- Sept. 6 Wilkinsburg vs. Clairton @ Clairton
- Sept. 13 Wilkinsburg vs. Hill @ Hill
- Sept. 20 Wilkinsburg vs. North Side @ Wilkinsburg (Homecoming Game)
- Sept. 27 Wilkinsburg vs. Clairton @ Wilkinsburg (Hornet Recognition Day)
- Oct. 4 Wilkinsburg vs. West Pittsburgh @ Wilkinsburg
- Oct. 11 Wilkinsburg vs. Garfield @ Garfield
- Oct. 18-19 First Round Playoff games
- Oct. 25-26 Second Round Playoff games
- Nov. 1 Championship Game @ Cupples Stadium

Officer Promoted



Newly appointed Sergeant Wayne McKenith earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and a master's in organizational leadership while serving on the Wilkinsburg Police Department.

Wayne McKenith, an 11-year veteran of the Wilkinsburg Police Department, has been promoted to sergeant. McKenith, 45, is the new commander of the 4 P.M. to midnight shift, supervising six patrol officers.

Before joining Wilkinsburg in 1997, McKenith worked on the Braddock force, did private security and personal protection work and served as a military policeman in the Army, at Ft. McClellan, Alabama and Fort Hood, Texas.

Before being promoted in April, McKenith served as an acting sergeant for a couple of months. In addition to his work resume, McKenith has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from LaRoche College, and a master's from Geneva College in organizational leadership. He is on the criminal justice faculty at Everest Institute.

So far McKenith is enjoying the additional responsibility that comes with the stripes.

"Sometimes I have to look at things a little differently," he says. "I have to keep the men motivated." **WS**

CALLING ALL KIDS —YOU CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank is calling on all kids to end hunger. They can do it. Many of them already are. Working together or on their own, kids are helping to end hunger in southwestern Pennsylvania. So Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank is calling on all kids to join the Kids' Campaign to End Hunger and help get the job done once and for all. And there's a Web site that will help: www.pittsburghfoodbank.org/kids.

Last summer, seven-year-old Jacob asked adults he knew to donate money for each hit he got in his last three Little League games. Then he called the Food Bank, created his very own "big check," and presented the Food Bank his collection of more than \$200.

Each year more than 6,000 Boy Scouts help the Food Bank raise tens of thousands of pounds of food in April during their Scouting for Food Drive. And several hundred Girl Scouts give out shopping lists and collect food in the fall during Giant Eagle's Fall FoodShare Food Drive.

Fabiana decided other people needed food more than she needed birthday presents, and asked her 10th birthday party attendees to bring donations for the Food Bank instead. She raised \$80.

Isabella's birthday party raised \$400 and more than 100 pounds of food because all her friends thought bringing donations instead of presents was a great idea!

The Youth Group at Rodef Shalom Congregation volunteers for the Food Bank's Empty Bowls event. They bake for the bake sale, create centerpieces of canned food, help run the parking detail, and staff the soup-to-go table. Meanwhile, dozens of middle and high school students make bowls for Empty Bowls, or decorate lunchboxes for Hunger Awareness Day.

The new Web site www.pittsburghfoodbank.org/kids is a work in progress, but already there is information and downloadable materials to help kids have a food drive or a "party with a purpose," plus other ideas. There is also a page for adult leaders of kid groups – scouts, school classes, clubs, parents – with downloadable invitations, activity pages and more. And everyone will be able to let us know about your event or activity, and we'll post your pictures and your story.

The Kids Campaign to End Hunger wants to let kids now that they CAN make a difference, and that difference is important. In a world of complicated problems, sometimes all it takes is a kid with an idea to start a movement, a kid who hasn't yet learned that "nothing can be done" about complicated problems. Calling all kids: step up to the plate. Donate. Volunteer. Speak Out. Join the Kids Campaign to End Hunger. Visit www.pittsburghfoodbank.org/kids and find out what you can do.

BLUES FESTIVAL The 14th annual Pittsburgh Blues Festival at Hartwood Acres, July 25-27, is the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank's biggest fund-raiser. Since its inception, the blues festival has raised more than \$800,000 to provide food for more than 120,000 people in the Greater Pittsburgh area.

This year's festival lineup includes Mardi Gras Night on Friday with Li'l Brian and the Zydeco Travelers, and Tab Benoit. All-day concerts on the weekend feature local acts and Homemade Jamz, the Joanna Connor Band and Taj Mahal on Saturday; and wraps up Sunday with Southern Culture on the Skids, Ivan Neville's Dumpstaphunk and the Tommy Castro Band. Tickets are \$22 for one day (in advance) and \$25 at the gate. Weekend pass (advance sales only) is \$40. Kids 12 and under get in free. Price of admission for the Friday night show: canned goods. Whatever you can bring.

New this year: volunteer to help out at the festival and get in free. Go to <http://www.pghblues.com/volunteers.htm> to volunteer, or call 412-460-BLUE.

SUMMER CAMP

Waverly Presbyterian Church, at the corner of Forbes and Braddock avenues, will be sponsoring a music, art and drama camp for children in grades two through six the week July 21-25 from 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. each day. The camp is free but enrollment is limited. For more information or to register, call the church at 412-242-0643.

West Nile Virus

A mosquito collected on June 25 on the Pittsburgh side of Peebles Street was the first to test positive for West Nile Virus this year.

The Wilkesburg Code Department and Allegheny County Health Department staff applied larvicide to the area on July 2, and will also be identifying other potential breeding grounds throughout the borough and treating them. West Nile is a dangerous virus and residents should educate themselves on what steps they can take to stay safe.

While mosquitoes and birds pass the virus to each other via mosquito bites, West Nile is transmitted to humans by infected mosquitoes and not by birds carrying the virus. People can protect themselves from mosquitoes by getting rid of standing water, closing openings to their house, using window screens, applying insect repellent, wearing long-sleeve tops and pants, and avoiding outdoor activities at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are more likely to bite. So far this year, no infected birds or human cases of West Nile illness have been reported in Allegheny County. No dead birds tested positive in 2007, but one human case and 19 positive mosquito samples were reported.

The public is asked to report certain dead birds—crows, hawks, owls, bluejays and falcons—to the health department by calling 412-687-ACHD or by visiting its Web site at www.achd.net.

WILKINSBURG COMMUNITY DAY is Saturday August 23, noon to 9 P.M., in the 700 Block of Wallace Avenue. Come out and join us for a fun-filled day of activities. Admission is free. Wilkesburg Idol is BACK! The deadline for registration is August 15. (See registration form on page 3).

If you would like to be a vendor at this event, please contact Bour Associates at 412-780-7802