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On Our Cover: Model Abigail Golden – part of Camille's House of Style for Johnstown Fashion Week – leads an all-star lineup this edition that celebrates all things couture and culinary.

Photography by Dave Luciew/Ultra Snaps,
Galleria Mall, Johnstown

Cover Design by Kaytlynn Williams



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The Great Release of Fall

What to Let Go of This Season – Mentally, Emotionally and Physically

By **MIRANDA SIMUNIC, LCSW**
Special Columnist, Johnstown Magazine

You’ve heard of spring cleaning – the annual ritual of clearing out the old to make space for the new. But what about fall release? Just as trees shed their leaves without clinging

or resistance, fall invites us to do the same: to loosen our grip on what we no longer need – not just in our homes, but in our hearts.
In spring, we prepare to grow. In fall, we

prepare to rest. This is a season of surrender. And in that surrender, there is peace.
Here are some things you may want to release this fall – physically, mentally and emotionally.

1. Let Go of Clutter

Our society thrives on accumulation – more clothes, better gadgets, having all the “just in case” items. Just as physical clutter can take up space in our homes, emotional clutter can take up space in our minds.

Studies have shown that clutter increases stress and anxiety.

Here are some items to consider letting go of:

- Clothes that don’t make you feel good when you put them on
- Expired pantry and skincare products
- Broken items you’ve promised to fix “someday”
- Old tech and random wires (Let’s be honest, the likelihood you are going to put your 10-year-old phone charger to use is about the same as floppy disks and dial-up internet making a comeback.)

Each item you let go of can represent a mental or emotional weight you’re ready to release.

As you part with it, say to yourself: “I’m making space for things that feel better for me.”

2. Let Go of the Need to Be Busy

There was a time when I believed being constantly busy made me valuable. I was addicted to productivity, to proving myself. That mindset led me straight to burnout and illness. My body literally hit the brakes for me. I developed an autoimmune condition that forced me to slow down, because I wasn’t going to do it on my own.

It took me years to understand through nervous system regulation that rest is not laziness – it’s medicine, for our mind, body and soul.

It can be theorized that many often cling to busyness because they’re avoiding stillness. But stillness is where truth lives.

This fall, give yourself permission to do at least one of the following:

- Sit down and rest without guilt
- Leave a to-do list unfinished (I promise, the world won’t fall apart.)
- Cancel that plan you’re secretly dreading

Busyness doesn’t mean you are succeeding. Peace does.

3. Let Go of the Past

You can’t change the past – unless you’ve got a time machine. The mistakes, heartbreaks and people who hurt you already happened. But you can stop letting those memories live rent-free in your present.

Try this: for every regret or pain you recall, write down what it taught you.

Growth doesn’t mean forgetting your pain but learning from it.

Let go of:

- The people who caused you more grief than joy
- Photos that don’t spark joy
- Old conversations replaying in your head
- “What could have been”
- Subscriptions you forgot existed (and never miss)



4. Let Go of Your Ego

Your ego wants you to stay the same, because familiar feels safe. But staying in that comfort zone can keep you stuck and hold you back from your full potential. Below are a few things your ego might be clinging to that it may feel good to release. You don’t have to release them all today. Simply try turning the volume down, one notch at a time.

- Comparing yourself or your life to others (Here’s a secret: Most people only post their highlight reel. It’s not the full story.)
- Judging yourself and yep, others, too
- Defending beliefs you’re not even sure you still agree with, just to feel right
- Chasing approval (You are enough exactly as you are. Really!)

5. Let Go of the Desire to Change Others

So much of our suffering comes from trying to rewrite someone else’s story instead of living our own. Our thoughts can easily be preoccupied with wanting someone to be more kind, more available, more what YOU want from them. But they are who they are and it’s not your job to change or “fix” them.

People don’t transform because we pressure them. They change when they feel safe, motivated and ready.



6. Let Go of Fear of Change

We often hold tight to what’s familiar, even when it hurts.

Why? Because it feels predictable. But the only thing predictable about life is it keeps moving on.

Fall embodies change: The wind, the shifting colors, the crisp air are all gentle reminders that transitions can be beautiful.

You don’t need to be fearless to change. You just need to be willing.

Part of that willingness is learning to adjust your style as you change.

Let go of clothes that no longer fit the current you, not just physically, but energetically. Make room for looks that express the most authentic version of you.

Adjusting your style isn’t just about clothes; it includes your haircut, your overall look, and how you present yourself to the world. Try new colors, shapes or styles that excite you, even if they feel different from what you’re used to.



7. Let Go of Friendships That Drain You

You don't need a dramatic exit or confrontation. Sometimes, quiet distance is enough.

- Let go of:**
- People who leave you anxious or unseen
 - Connections built on guilt or obligation
 - Relationships where you have to shrink yourself to fit in them

If someone drains your energy faster than a 2009 BlackBerry, you can send a simple text such as, "I'm taking some time for myself to focus on my own needs, hope you understand." Focus on spending your time with the people who uplift you – who feel like a breath of fresh air.

8. Let Go of the Need to Fit In

Maybe you were taught to blend in and not be "too much," to be acceptable. But Fall isn't afraid to be vibrant and bold and neither should you.

You weren't born to be like everybody else. You were born to express your own rhythm, purpose and colors.

This season, get real with yourself by asking:

- What am I holding onto that no longer serves me?
- How different would my life feel if I finally released them?

BONUS ACTIVITY: Fall Release Master Checklist

After checking off 3 or more: Reward yourself with something you've been wanting – whether that's a little indulgence, a bold outfit, a new creative project, or an adventure with someone who lights you up. This season, make space for more you.

- ☐ Clothes that don't make you feel good
- ☐ People who caused you more grief than joy
- ☐ People who leave you anxious or unseen
- ☐ Expired pantry products
- ☐ Photos that don't spark joy
- ☐ Connections built on guilt or obligation
- ☐ Expired skincare products
- ☐ Old conversations replaying in your head
- ☐ Relationships where you have to shrink yourself to fit
- ☐ Broken items you've promised to fix
- ☐ "What could have been"
- ☐ Judging yourself and others
- ☐ Old tech and random wires
- ☐ Subscriptions you forgot existed
- ☐ Comparing yourself or your life to others
- ☐ Defending beliefs you're not sure you still agree with
- ☐ Old papers and unread mail
- ☐ Chasing approval

Share Your Story

If you did this, please feel free to write in about your experience and what you learned about yourself.

At Johnstown Magazine, we want to hear from you. Share your journey and reflections – what surprised you, what challenged you, and how the process of letting go shaped your path forward. Your story could inspire others who are on their own paths to release and renewal.



MIRANDA SIMUNIC is an experienced therapist with a unique approach to helping people overcome stress and improve their overall well-being. With a certification in trauma therapy and a specialization in holistic healing, Miranda blends traditional therapeutic techniques with innovative, outside-the-box solutions to empower individuals to live their best lives.

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Why Don't You Go Where Fashion Sits?

Exploring **Johnstown Fashion Week 2025** | A 'Global Fashion Adventure' at the Galleria!

By **CAMIILLYA TAYLOR**
Correspondent, Johnstown Magazine

Johnstown, Pennsylvania, is about to experience a fusion of global fashion and local flair, as, for the first time, Johnstown Fashion Week descends upon the Galleria Mall.

This year's event promises to be an extraordinary celebration of creativity and style, culminating in a showcase that brings the vibrant spirit of the Bahamas right here to the heart of Johnstown.

A Bahamian Touch

Prepare to be swept away by the exquisite designs of renowned Bahamian designer, Marton Evans. Her unique perspective and artistic vision, cultivated across the turquoise waters of the Bahamas, will grace the runway at the Galleria, offering a glimpse into the beauty and creativity of Caribbean fashion.

Local Talent Takes Center Stage

While the international collaboration adds an exciting dimension, Johnstown Fashion Week remains deeply rooted in celebrating local talent. With an emphasis on local. The event will feature the innovative creations of designers the likes of:

Kelly Kreation

Showcasing their unique style and glam team. Kelly Kreation will be one to look out for at Johnstown Fashion Week.

Designs by Reeto

Known for their remarkable designs.

- Sew Starr, Audio-visual, Mookay, Aidin Fortson, Jeanine Marie, On the Depths and Nia Taylor

These designers bring their individual artistic approaches to the Johnstown Fashion Week stage.

More Than Just a Fashion Show:

Johnstown Fashion Week is more than just a runway presentation; it's a dynamic event designed to engage the community and showcase the breadth of creative talent in the region. The multi-day event at the Galleria Mall includes:

A Meet and Greet Photography Exhibit held at Ultra Snaps Studio

This exhibit offers a chance to connect with the photographer Dave Luciew, designers from the show, and models behind the scenes of this season's photography exhibit.

A Fashion Showcase

The event will highlight the designer Marton's collection from the Bahamas.

The Main Show

Featuring a diverse array of looks from talented regional designers.

An After Party

It's a chance to dress your best, to celebrate style and to network.

- A Networking and Business Brunch Mixer

This event provides opportunities for collaboration and growth.

- A Fashion Show with Galleria Mall Stores

Showcasing the latest styles available at the mall from stores like Camille's House of Style Salon and Boutique, Shop Sexy and Maurices.

And you can join the Celebration:

Johnstown Fashion Week is a testament to the power of fashion to bring people together and celebrate creativity. Get ready to be absolutely dazzled as Johnstown Fashion Week returns, promising a spectacular showcase of local and regional design talent.

This multi-day event, held at various locations in downtown Johnstown, brings together a diverse group of designers, models, and fashion professionals.

Highlighted Designers to Watch:

Anthony Jacobs with
Audiovisual Apparel

Originally from Philadelphia and now residing in Johnstown, Anthony has been a consistent participant in Johnstown Fashion Week, captivating audiences with the Audiovisual Apparel line.

Starr Thomas

Starr Thomas, from Pittsburgh, is set to present designs for children. Her work is truly spectacular.

Maggie Kelly with
Designs by REETO

From right here in Johnstown, Maggie joins the lineup with “Designs by REETO,” known for intricate details and sustainability using eco-friendly fabrics and ethical production.

Hannah Zimmerman
with Oh the Depths

Salix-based Hannah Zimmerman is set to bring design skills to the JFW stage. “Oh the Depths” explores creative design, such as fairy hats, princess gowns with a level of elegance.

Tee Tee from Mookay

Originally from New Jersey and now residing in Johnstown, Tee Tee from Mookay joins the JFW showcase. Tee Tee offers a curated selection of women’s clothing for style and comfort



Jeanine Marie

Representing Harrisburg, Jeanine Marie brings design work to Johnstown. “Jean-Marie Made It” showcases her work in web design, illustration, and bold, maximalist hand-painted creations.

Nia Taylor

A local talent from Johnstown, Nia Taylor is a familiar face at JFW, and an advocate for showcasing the creativity of crocheting.

Aidin Fortson

A recent IUP graduate from design school, Aidin is expected to make an appearance on the JFW runway.

Johnstown Fashion Week aims to foster a thriving local fashion community, attracting a diverse audience and creating opportunities for designers and models. Get ready for an exciting event that celebrates creativity, style and the entrepreneurial spirit of the region.

The event celebrates the return of staple models, such as Malaika Burks from Pittsburgh, Michelle Yarnell from Pottsville, and Amaia Taylor from Johnstown. This year’s event has shown tremendous growth in participation, from younger models, such as Emma, to male models, such as Austin. This diversity in age and experience demonstrates Johnstown Fashion Week’s commitment to inclusivity.

Johnstown Fashion Week also showcases the city’s potential. The event is a vibrant hub for entrepreneurship, creativity, and community building. It has become a fashion event that defies expectations for a small city in its third year and sixth season. JM

Writer’s Note: The organizers extend thanks to Galleria owner Leo Karruli, who allowed Johnstown Fashion Week to take place at this venue for the fall of 2025. His vision and willingness to embrace new ideas are invaluable. The organizers appreciate his openness, efficiency and collaborative spirit. Thank you, Leo, for the opportunity to showcase JFW at the mall and for contributing to the Johnstown fashion scene. With the continued support of these businesses and individuals, Johnstown Fashion Week is set to be a memorable event, celebrating fashion, creativity, and the community’s spirit.

Photography courtesy of Dave Luciew/
Ultra Snaps, Galleria Mall, Johnstown

BOUGIE ON A BUDGET

The Thrill of the Second-Hand Hunt

By **AMY BRADLEY**
Correspondent, Johnstown Magazine

Founder and CEO of The Learning Lamp, Dr. Leah Spangler is often at the front of the room. She always looks professional and polished, and she'll be the first to tell you that likely every piece she is wearing, head to toe, is second-hand.

"I started thrifting in college, really because I did not have a lot of money," Leah says. As her career and life evolved, thrifting remained a satisfying part of it.

"I was a news anchor for many years, which required a fairly substantial wardrobe," she says. "At that time, I had three small children and financially it just made sense to shop wisely."

But for Leah, it's about more than just clothing. Her entire home tells the story of second-hand chances. From furniture and art to pottery and mirrors, nearly everything she owns has been



found at flea markets, yard sales or thrift stores.

"Almost everything in our house has had a life before us."



Younger generations are also helping to fuel the rise in second-hand sales, some driven by environmental concerns, others simply looking to save money.

For 24-year-old Cole Bradley, second-hand shopping is about the thrill of the hunt.

"What I love most about thrift shopping is finding something totally unique, pieces you won't see anyone else wearing," he says. "You can put together a great look for less, and at the same time, you're giving new life to something that might have otherwise ended up in the trash."

Cole's fascination with thrift shopping began in childhood when he and his best friend headed to Goodwill to put together costumes for a social studies

project on explorers Lewis and Clark.

"We got sucked in looking at everything," Cole says. "I couldn't wait to go back."

His thrifting became particularly helpful in college.

"I played college hockey, and we always wore suits to our games," Cole says. "I would find the coolest jackets, suits, shirts and ties, and I always knew no one else would be wearing the same thing."

His love of thrifting does not stop with clothes. He's keen on cool knickknacks, old albums and golf clubs.

"I have a bit of a putter collection going," Cole says. "It's a fun thing to hunt for. Golf clubs hold their value and often you can find some very interesting clubs."

Deb Adams manages one of St. Vincent DePaul's eight regional thrift-stores. She sees a mix of customers, some looking for something very specific, others looking to make a buck.

"We have some people who thrift shop as a side hustle," Deb says. "They buy cartloads of clothing to resell online."

"We don't mind a bit; every item they



purchase helps us help others."

St. Vincent DePaul uses the revenue from its stores to put back into the community, helping people pay for medical issues, emergency housing, utilities and more. Deb also sees people who appreciate the quality of older clothing.

"A lot of the fabric used today is not as high quality. The more vintage clothing was better made; the fabric is more substantial and more likely to hold up."

Leah agrees. "The fabrics manufactured

decades ago are really high quality and the workmanship is amazing. Some of today's clothing seems almost disposable in comparison."

Leah's love of thrifting combines nicely with her love of travel.

"I make it a habit to head to thrift shops whenever I travel," Leah says.

"What I find in Maine or Michigan is really different than what I find in Pennsylvania. It's always fun to see what's out there."



Her favorite finds to date include a few treasured necklaces, a pair of cowboy boots and an \$8 leather coat that has become a staple of her winter wardrobe.

Cole also loves to visit out-of-town thrift stores from time to time.

“Being a Boston sports fan there is nothing better than hitting the second-hand stores in Rhode Island and Massachusetts.” A favorite find for Cole – a Boston Celtics T-shirt from the 2018 playoff run. “This was a shirt given to fans at the game. There is no way I could have purchased that shirt, such a fun find.”

Second-hand fashion is on the rise. In fact, in the United States, second-hand sales are growing seven times faster than the overall U.S. clothing market. That’s according to ThredUp’s 2025 Resale Report. That same report estimates the global second-hand apparel industry will reach \$367 billion within the next five years.

That’s great news for Leah, who values the positive impact second-hand shopping has on the environment.

“I love that we can keep things out of the landfill,” she says. JM



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EMERALD ANGELS

Featuring the photography of
Stephanie Bosworth/
Emerald Photography



Stephanie Bosworth



“

With a broken wing
She carries her dreams.
Man, you ought to
see her fly.

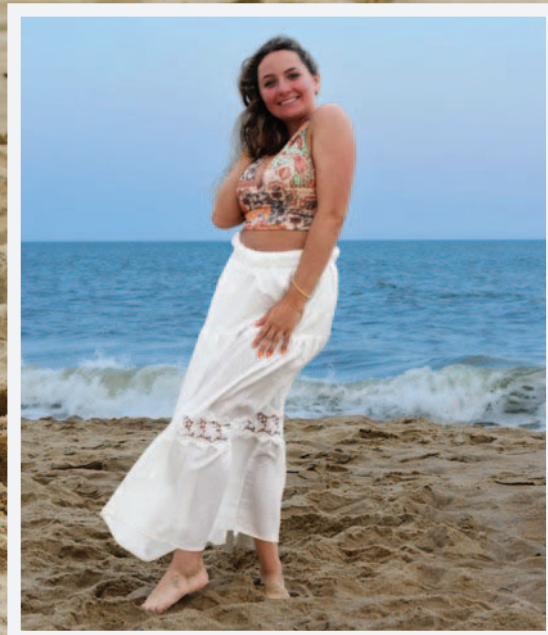
– Martina McBride

”

Featured Models: Erin Carr and Angel Ports
Photo of Stephanie Bosworth by Jessie Janelle

THE REMAINS OF THE SUMMER DAY

Featuring the photography of
Denny and Liz Miller/Miller Moments Photography



“

Summer was about freedom
and youth and no school and
possibilities and adventure
and exploration. Summer was
a book of hope.

– Benjamin Alire Sáenz

”



“

Summer ends, and Autumn comes, and he who would have it otherwise would have high tide always and a full moon every night.

– Hal Borland

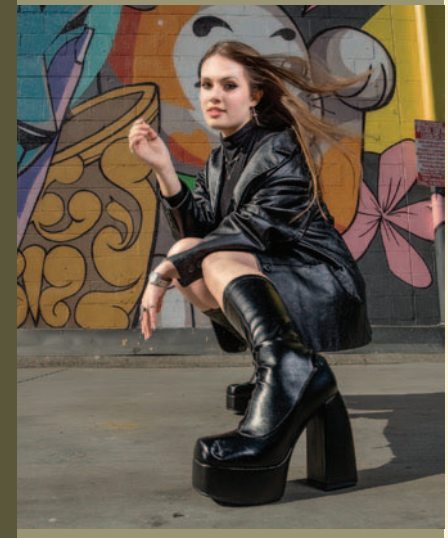
”



Featured Models in this special fashion section include: Abigail Borge, Hayley Carlin, Nick D’Angelo, Olivia Iandoli and Greg Orris.

THE LAW OF FASHION

Featuring the photography of
Rick Law/Rick Law Photography



“

Don't be into trends.
Don't make fashion
own you, but you
decide what you are,
what you want to
express by the way
you dress and the way
to live.

— Gianni Versace

”



Featured Models: Evelyn Clubb, Kat Dewey, Miranda Lawery, Keira Turner, Haidyn Turney, Katelynn Tutokey and Sophia Velez.

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JOHNSTOWN magazine

LITTLE RED REBOOT

Featuring the photography of
Stephanie Rager/
SNR Photography

“

The perfect time
to be **awesome**
is **now**.

— Unknown

”



Featured Model: Elynn Rager



Stephanie Rager



WHO SAYS WOMEN SHOULDN'T
'SPEAK EASY?'



Featuring the photography of
 Photography by Karissa Lupton/Photographs by Riss



"THEY WERE BOTH IN
 WHITE AND THEIR
 DRESSES WERE RIPPLING
 AND FLUTTERING AS IF
 THEY HAD JUST BEEN
 BLOWN BACK IN AFTER A
 SHORT FLIGHT AROUND
 THE HOUSE."
 - F. SCOTT FITZGERALD
 THE GREAT GATSBY





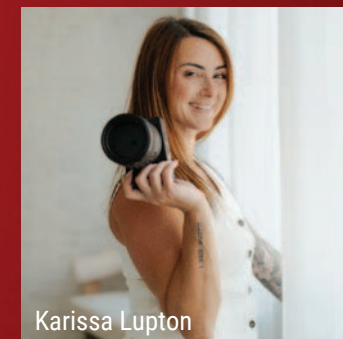
Featured models: Linda Bobkoski, Joyce Calpin, Nicole Cramer, Rosalie Danchanko, Shannon Farabaugh, Linda Golden, Tina Honkus, Tina Pelesky, Jenn Randall, Amy Stango, Jess Thompson, Tina Trimbath and Kathleen Vuckovich.



“
Your attitude is like a box
of crayons that color
your world. Constantly
color your picture gray,
and your picture will
always be bleak. Try
adding some bright
colors to the picture by
including humor, and
your picture begins
to lighten up.”
— Allen Klein



Featured models:
Kristy Botteicher,
Mya Bradford,
Angela Cole
and Autumn Hobor.



Karissa Lupton

Photo of Karissa Lupton by
Hunter Lupton

Featuring the photography of Karissa Lupton/Photography by Riss

FALL HOME IMPROVEMENT

Remedies for creaky floors

Hardwood floors are coveted features in many homes. The National Wood Flooring Association says wood floors are the most environmentally friendly flooring options available. In the United States, the hardwood forests that provide flooring products are growing twice as fast as they are being harvested. Furthermore, wood floors can last for many generations and require fewer raw materials to produce than other flooring options. That means less waste may end up in landfills.

Hardwood floors can endure for decades in a home, but over time those same floors may need some tender loving care to keep them looking good and working as they should. Squeaky floors are a common nuisance that homeowners may experience. Squeaking is often caused by movement and friction between floorboards. Treating the problem involves identifying the underlying issue.

Loose hardware

Squeaky floors may be due to the loosening of the hardware holding the floor in place, says The Home Depot. When nails or screws no longer are secured tightly, the boards can rub together. The noise heard is the sound produced by rubbing. Tightening or replacing the hardware can help reduce the squeaking.

Counter-snap kit method

This Old House says this kit method is a great way to fix squeaks without damaging the floor. Once the source of the squeak is located, drill a 3/32-inch pilot hole through the hardwood flooring. Then insert a screw through the kit's depth-control fixture and into the pilot hole, and drive it until it automatically snaps off below the wood surface. Follow this up by filling the hole with wood



putty that matches the floor color. Once the putty is dry, lightly sand the area to blend.

Use a shim or shims

Sometimes the floor may squeak because of a gap between the joists and the subfloor. Filling the gap with a small piece of wood called a shim can help alleviate the gap or gaps.

Drive up screws

If a squeak is just in one spot, The Home Depot says that you may be able to drive short screws from below into the subfloor.

Small gaps

For small gaps between boards, sprinkle talcum powder or powdered graphite between squeaky boards to reduce friction. Wood filler applied with a putty knife also may work. For larger gaps, use a liquid filler designed for wood floors.

Homeowners also can visit their local home improvement center for other hardware solutions designed for underfloor repairs to remedy squeaks. Many work from underneath the floor and involve mounting plates or brackets to sure up the floor.

Squeaky floors can be problematic, but noises can be banished with some repair work. ☺

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What to expect of a room addition project

There are many reasons homeowners consider adding a room to their current homes. Some outgrow an existing space, while others take up new hobbies or have different needs that were not apparent when purchasing the home. Indeed, a room addition can remedy a host of issues affecting a home.

Those considering adding a room may wonder what is involved in this type of project. According to The Spruce, no home improvement project is more complicated or expensive than building an addition. The National Association of Realtors says building an addition can cost between \$90,000 and \$270,000, depending on the size and intended purpose of the room. An addition structurally changes a home, which requires the work of professionals whether homeowners plan to build upwards or outwards.

With so much to ponder when con-

sidering a home addition, here's a look at what homeowners can expect of the process.

• **Design and planning:** Homeowners must determine the purpose behind the addition and how it will integrate with the existing home. A bedroom design likely will be different from a garage addition or family game room.

• **Hire an engineer and contractor:** An addition changes the footprint of a home. Homeowners will require professional contractors and structural engineers/architects to properly design the addition and ensure that it will not compromise the existing structure. Detailed architectural plans will be drawn up considering the layout, size and integration with the existing structure. The home may require a new property survey as well.

• **Comply with building codes:** The project will have to meet with local

zoning regulations, building codes and homeowners association rules.

• **Timing involved:** Adding a room is a major overhaul of a space. It may require months of a home being in upheaval. If the renovations are particularly extensive, homeowners may need to temporarily move out of the space. Electrical, plumbing and HVAC must be considered, and drywall and finishing the interior are some of the last steps to make the room habitable.

• **Demolition:** Adding a room may involve taking down walls or modifying existing spaces, necessitating hiring a dumpster to remove debris. This is an added consideration and expense.

Putting an addition on a home is a complex process that will take time and money. Such a project requires careful planning and consultation with an array of experts. ☀



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Signs it's time to replace gutters

Home improvement projects run the gamut from complex undertakings like room additions to simpler renovations like a new front door. Some home renovations excite homeowners more than others, but all improvements are a way to make a home safer, more comfortable and/or more functional.

A gutter replacement might not inspire the same level of excitement as a room addition or an overhaul of an outdoor living space, but new gutters can help to prevent roof damage and make properties safer by ensuring rain water is directed away from walkways. Homeowners who suspect it might be time for a gutter replacement can look for these signs of fading gutters.

• **Cracks or splits:** Cracks or splits at the seams of the gutters where two pieces connect is a telltale sign they need to be replaced. Cracks or splits are can slowly lead to separation of

gutter pieces, which will lead to leaks. But not all cracks or splits are found at the seams. In fact, some homes feature seamless gutters, which also can crack or split. Regardless of where they're found, cracks or splits are a warning signs of fading gutters.

• **Rust:** Rust is rarely a good sign whether you're looking at a vehicle or even garden tools. Rust also is a bad sign in relation to gutters. Gutters are painted, and not only for aesthetic purposes. Paint on gutter also serves to protect them from water. When paint begins to flake, gutters will begin to rust and may even produce noticeable rust flakes on the ground below. Rust on gutters and rust flakes beneath them are indicative of gutters that need to be replaced.

• **Gutters pulling away from the home:** Gutters that appear to be pulling away from the home is a sign that they need to be replaced. Gutters are fastened to a home during installation, which ensures they can withstand rain and water. Over time, those fasteners can wear down, ultimately leading to gutters that appear to be pulling away from the home. Though gutters can be refastened, eventually they will need to be replaced.

• **Pooling water:** Pooling water in a gutter may just be a sign that gutters need to be cleaned. However, pooling water on the ground directly beneath gutters indicates they're not effectively



directing water away from the home.

• **Water damage inside:** A home's interior might not be the first place homeowners look when inspecting for damaged gutters, but a flooded basement or crawl space could indicate a gutter problem. Gutters and downspouts are designed to direct water away from a home when functioning properly. When that isn't happening, water can pool beneath the foundation, leading to pooling water and other water damage in basements and crawl spaces.

Gutter replacement projects may not be exciting, but new gutters can make a home safer and prolong the life of a roof and other features on a property. ☀

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STRIPPED DOWN EATING

Because Great ‘Taste’ Never Goes Out of Style

By DAVID W. FOX
Culinary Contributor

The term high fashion scares some people. It invokes fanciness and snobbery, and conjures images of skinny models sporting incomprehensibly avant-garde clothing. To many, it means Paris runways and New York Fashion Week, the annual Met Gala, and a host of other events they’ll never be invited to. But it doesn’t have to mean all that. High fashion is really just about trying something new, perhaps something from another place or time, or maybe an unexpected combination of familiar things. This is also true of the foods we eat. Indeed for 2025, the food world seems to be leaning toward exotic meals from faraway places, plant-based alternatives, and surprising fusions of familiar foods, such as sushi pizza or even pizza sushi. It’s all about getting creative and surprising your palate. It can be hard to separate fad from fashion. Just like clothing and hairstyles, food fads come and go. I remember in the 1970s, everyone had to have a fondue pot for some reason. Then in the 1980s, frozen yogurt stands popped up all over the place. I’m sure everyone can remember popular foods from when they were young that aren’t as trendy anymore. Some have endured, but

others simply ran their courses and went away, like bottles of Zima and potato chips made with Olestra. For me, it’s all about what tastes good. Great-tasting food never goes out of style. Lately I’ve been into fusion recipes, which combine different styles to create something new. For example, Asian fusion is a mix of Japanese, Chinese, Thai, Korean and other influences from that part of the world. It’s not about recreating an “authentic” dish, but about mixing flavors from various places. I also need to put a word in about plant-based alternatives, which seem to be everywhere these days. My own thinking is that if you want cauliflower, eat cauliflower and if you want red meat, eat red meat. There’s no sense trying to force one to taste like the other; you will usually come away disappointed. Instead, I would encourage you to enjoy vegetarian or vegan cuisine for what it is, not for how well it imitates something else. Above all, in food as well as fashion, don’t be afraid to try something new. It’s OK to not like every recipe you try out. The important thing is keeping an open mind, and being receptive to new experiences.



Zucchini “Crab” Cakes

2½ cups grated zucchini	¼ cup minced onion
1 egg, beaten	1 tsp Old Bay seasoning
2 Tbsp melted butter	¼ cup flour
1 cup bread crumbs	Vegetable oil, for frying

Directions: In a large bowl, combine the zucchini, egg and butter. Stir in the breadcrumbs, onion and Old Bay. Mix well. Shape the mixture into patties. Dredge in flour. Heat oil over medium high. Fry patties on both sides until golden brown



Haitian French Toast

French baguette	¼ cup sugar
1 cup orange juice	dash of nutmeg
½ cup heavy whipping cream	3 Tbsp butter
2 eggs	2 Tbsp powdered sugar
1 tsp cinnamon	

Directions: Cut off the ends of the baguette. Cut the remainder into ½” slices. Let the slices dry for a few hours or overnight. In a small shallow bowl or casserole, combine the orange juice, heavy cream, eggs, cinnamon, sugar and nutmeg. Place the slices in the bowl, turning over to absorb liquid. In a large skillet or griddle, melt the butter over medium high heat. Cook the slices a few at a time, turning over to brown both sides, about 5 minutes. Dust with powdered sugar. Serve warm with maple syrup.



Asiago Cheese Bagels

6 cups flour	1 pkg instant yeast
2 tsp salt	2 cups asiago cheese, shredded
2 cups warm water	

Directions: In a stand mixer, combine flour, salt, water and yeast and knead on low speed for 8-10 minutes. Add in 1 cup of the asiago cheese and mix until combined. Place in a large, lightly oiled bowl covered with plastic wrap, and set aside for 2 hours or until doubled in size. Portion the dough into approximately 3 oz pieces. Shape dough into balls. Gently poke a hole in the center and stretch the dough to widen the hole. Preheat oven to 400°. Boil a large pot of water. Boil the bagels for about one minute on each side. Transfer to a baking sheet and top with the remaining cheese. Bake for 20-25 minutes until tops are golden brown. Cool on a wire rack. Toast the bagels to serve.



Lobster Mac and Cheese

6-8 small lobster tails	2 tsp salt
4½ cups shredded cheddar cheese	1 tsp garlic powder
1 cup shredded gruyere cheese	½ tsp nutmeg
1 cup grated parmesan cheese	black pepper
1 stick butter	parsley
6 Tbsp flour	
5 cups whole milk	1 box elbow macaroni

Directions: Cook the macaroni according to package directions until slightly al dente. Drain and set aside. Cook the lobster by any method. Chop into large chunks. Preheat oven to 400°. Melt the butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the flour and stir until thickened, about 3 minutes. Whisk in the milk a little at a time. Stir in 3 cups of the cheddar cheese, the gruyere cheese and half of the parmesan. Reserve the rest for the topping. Add salt, pepper, garlic powder and nutmeg to the cheese sauce. Stir until combined. In a large bowl, combine the macaroni, cheese sauce and lobster pieces. Prepare a 9” x 13” baking dish with cooking spray and transfer the mixture to the pan. Top with the remaining cheese. Bake for 20-25 minutes, until bubbly. Sprinkle with parsley if desired.



Photography in part by Miller Moments

Dave Fox (along with Todd Hall) hosts the wildly popular streaming cooking program, Fox Hallow Kitchen, available primarily on YouTube and other various streaming services

Reuben Meatball Sliders

2 lbs ground chuck	½ cup chopped fresh parsley
1 cup shredded Swiss cheese	1 Tbsp oil
½ cup toasted rye breadcrumbs	2 cups sauerkraut, drained
1 tsp caraway seeds	1 cup Thousand Island dressing
1 tsp salt	12 slider buns
½ tsp black pepper	12 bamboo skewers or large toothpicks
2 lg eggs	

Directions: Preheat oven to 400°. Mix the ground beef, cheese, breadcrumbs, caraway seeds, salt, pepper, eggs and parsley in a large bowl just until well mixed. Scoop out ¼ cup at a time to make into meatballs. Heat a cast iron skillet over medium heat with the oil. Fry the meatballs on one side until golden brown. Do in batches if necessary. Bake the partially cooked meatballs in the oven at 400° for about 10-15 minutes, until done all the way through. Brush the buns with melted butter and toast them in the oven. Heat the sauerkraut in a saucepan. Mix in the Thousand Island dressing. Place a meatball on the bottom slider bun. Top it with the sauerkraut mixture, then the top bun and skewer it together. Serve immediately.

JM DINING GUIDE

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Down to Earth Dining Out

JOHNSTOWN NOW BOASTS TWO MORE PLANT-BASED EATERIES

By AMY BRADLEY
Correspondent, Johnstown Magazine

Downtown Johnstown now has two new options for those looking for plant-based cuisine or those just wanting to try something new. Vida Verde opened in January and the Dominican Garden Café in April.

Both restaurants are family owned, 100% plant-based and both started with personal health journeys.

“The kids were vegan before us,” says Ernesto Lopez, owner of the Dominican Garden Café. “At first I just gave up fast food but eventually my wife Lisa and I decided to follow the kids.”

He began to see positive results. His blood pressure and blood work notably improved.

Luis Hernandez, owner of Vida Verde, lost both parents to cancer and he was suffering with Barrett’s Esophagus, a complication from gastroesophageal reflux disease or GERD.

“It came from eating bad for so long,” says Luis. “I worked in downtown Philadelphia and was living off cheesesteaks, hoagies, pizza and calzone.”



Luis’s wife Marisol and daughter Micaela treated him to a health getaway in Tennessee, where he started a new eating regimen with impressive results.

“My heartburn was gone, my migraines disappeared, and my skin cleared up,” says Luis.

Both Luis and Ernesto also lost significant weight, they say, without even trying.

Neither entrepreneur has ever owned a restaurant before. Their personal journeys and passion for plant-based cuisine were the motivators. Both were able to pursue their love of cooking thanks to the affordability of Johnstown, where they say they have been warmly welcomed.

“My son lives in Johnstown,” Ernesto says. “We liked the small-town vibe and the people are so nice. New York is so fast paced, a ‘move, get out of my way’ type vibe.”

Luis and his family were looking to get out of Philadelphia.

“We wanted to get a little bit of land and some elbow room,” he says. “We had enough of the big city and are so happy here. Everybody is so friendly, and they always say hi. In the big city, people are too busy, you know – get out of the way. It is a rat race.”

The Dominican Garden Café offers a colorful and cheerful ambiance proudly showcasing Dominican culture. It offers a plant-based menu filled with Spanish flavor. Ernesto makes his own sofrito, a Dominican flavoring made of bell peppers, cilantro, onions and garlic. It’s blended and used in rice, beans and stews.

“In Dominican culture it is meat on meat with a side of meat,” jokes Ernesto. “We can transfuse that Dominican flavor into plant-based options that people sometimes find hard to believe are not meat. Every once in a while, someone will come back in, we do not know what is wrong, but they just want to tell us that the food was amazing.”

Vida Verde owner Luis says he and his daughter Micaela are foodies.

“If we are not eating food we are talking about it,” Luis says. He prides himself on making 95% of the products in the restaurant. Even the sauces, dressings and seasonings come from scratch. “Many of people have told me, ‘You know you can buy that?’, but I feel like that is cheating. I want to make it fresh, make it the way I want to eat it.”

Luis realizes not everyone is ready for a totally plant-based diet, but encourages people to give some of his recipes a try.

“ I want to make it fresh, make it the way I want to eat it. ”



“If you do not want to go 100% plant-based, try it once or twice a week. Your body will sigh, give it a break.”

The two restaurants are likely hitting the market at the right time. A Grains of Truth study by the non-profit EAT forum shows 68% of respondents want to add more plant-based foods to their diet, but only 20% report doing so regularly.

The number of vegans worldwide has grown to an estimated 79 million and climbing. Future Market Insights predicts the global plant-based food sector will triple in the next 10 years.

“Let Johnstown know that we got more coming,” Ernesto says. “When they think of vegan, they think bland, no flavor. But we are bringing flavor to Johnstown.”

“We want to grow with what the people of Johnstown want,” Luis says. As for the business which takes up typically 18 hours of his day? “I’m loving it, I’m tired, but I’m doing exactly what I want to do – I’ve just got to find a way to get some sleep.” JM

HUMMUS

A TUNE

From JENNIFER SHEARER
Special Contribution

Never use store-bought hummus again after trying this recipe for Chorizo and Roasted Veggie Hummus. It's a customer requested favorite.

HUMMUS

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 can chickpeas, drained | 1 tsp salt |
| 3 garlic cloves, chopped | 1/4 cup ice cubes |
| 2 Tbs lemon juice (1/2 of a lemon) | Toppings: |
| 1/8 cup olive oil | Chorizo and roasted veggies of choice |
| 1/4 cup tahini | Dukkah (recipe to follow) |

Directions: Peel the chickpeas. This is optional but will give you a smoother texture. Fill a bowl with water and dump in your chickpeas. Rub them between your hands; the skins will float to the top. Skim them off until you have removed most of them! Add all your ingredients except ice cubes to a food processor or blender. Blend for a few minutes. Start to add 1 ice cube at a time, every minute or so until you have a smooth consistency. You will need to blend 8-10 minutes total to achieve a very smooth hummus! Smear hummus on a plate and top with warm ground chorizo, roasted veggies and pistachio Dukkah! Enjoy with pita, cucumber or chips!



JENNIFER SHEARER is the owner, CEO, and manager of the Loft on Franklin, Craft Modern Kitchen and Stone Bridge Brewery. She was voted "Favorite Chef" by the readers of Johnstown Magazine in our 2025 Best of Johnstown promotion.



PISTACHIO DUKKAH

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1/2 cup pistachios | 1 tsp oregano |
| 2 Tbs coriander seeds | 1 tsp sumac |
| 1 1/2 Tbs sesame seeds | 1/2 tsp kosher salt |
| 2 tsp fennel seeds | |

Directions: Toast pistachios in a dry pan, watching closely, until fragrant and toasted. Toast coriander seeds, sesame seeds and fennel seeds, watching closely, until fragrant. Cool seeds and nuts and place in food processor. Pulse until a nice crumble is achieved, you want texture! Place in mixing bowl and add oregano, sumac and salt and combine. Store in airtight container. Enjoy as a topping for your hummus, toasted veggies, grilled meat or salads!

Original photography by Stephanie Bosworth for Johnstown Magazine. 2025

ELECTRIC COWBOY



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HIT ME WITH YOUR BEST SHOT

*If whiskey
makes you
frisky ...*

BY WILLIAM HAND
Culinary Contributor, Johnstown Magazine

Remember, in those old Westerns (starring everyone from John Wayne to Kevin Costner), the cowboy would saunter up to the bar, dust flying from his overcoat. He'd take out his hat, damp with sweat and throw it on the bar. Then order a shot of whiskey ... straight. He'd gulp it quickly, grab his pistol and shoot the bad guy who was trying to launch a sneak attack from an inside balcony.

Whiskey – for better or for worse – was distilled right alongside of American history. Call it whiskey with the E, whisky without the E, Scotch or Bourbon, but this adult libation has been wetting the whistles of cowboys, members of the Rat Pack, Don Draper types in “man caves” and “dens” for generations.

But did you know that a splash of this distilled spirit can also be a welcomed addition to chicken and beef? It can make an interesting flavor for brownies and can even be made into a sweet sauce that you can pour over everything from pancakes to ice cream.

It's true. To help commemorate the Whiskey Rebellion which took place right here in this neck of the woods, I thought I'd take a “shot” (see what I did there) of adding this libation to your menu this fall. Now, go use that bottle you've been hiding for a special occasion. The one your dad gave you the day of your wedding that the wife doesn't know anything about. You know its hiding place ... behind the Louis L'Amour novel on the living room bookshelf. **AM**

Filet Mignon with Sweet Bourbon Coffee Sauce

1/2 cup water	1/2 teaspoon black pepper
3 tablespoons bourbon	1/4 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 teaspoons sugar	4 (4-ounce) beef tenderloin steaks, trimmed (about 1 inch thick)
1/2 teaspoon beef-flavored bouillon granules	Cooking spray
1/2 teaspoon instant coffee granules	2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Combine first 5 ingredients in a small bowl; set aside. Sprinkle pepper and salt over both sides of steaks. Heat a medium nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Coat pan with cooking spray. Add steaks; cook 2 minutes on each side. Reduce heat to medium; cook steaks 2 minutes or until desired degree of doneness. Transfer steaks to a platter; cover and keep warm. Add bourbon mixture to pan; cook over medium-high heat until mixture has reduced to 1/4 cup (about 3 minutes). Serve sauce over beef.

Whiskey Ginger Chicken

4 (4-ounce) skinless, boneless chicken breast halves	2 teaspoons dark sesame oil
1/3 cup bourbon	1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper
1/3 cup soy sauce	2 garlic cloves, minced
3 tablespoons brown sugar	Cooking spray
2 tablespoons hoisin sauce	1 tablespoon water
1 teaspoon grated lime rind	1/2 teaspoon cornstarch
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice	1 teaspoon sesame seeds, toasted
2 teaspoons grated peeled fresh ginger	

Place each chicken breast half between 2 sheets of heavy-duty plastic wrap; pound to 1/2-inch thickness using a meat mallet or rolling pin. Combine bourbon and the next nine ingredients. Reserve 1/3 cup marinade. Pour remaining marinade into a zip-top plastic bag; add chicken. Seal and marinate in refrigerator for at least hour and up to overnight, turning occasionally. Preheat grill to medium-hot using both burners. Turn left burner off but leave the right burner on. Remove chicken from bag; discard marinade. Coat grill rack with cooking spray. Place chicken on grill rack over right burner; grill 2 minutes on each side or until browned. Move chicken to grill rack over left burner. Cover and cook 5 minutes or until done. Slice each breast diagonally into thin strips; place chicken on a platter. Cover loosely with foil. Combine water and cornstarch, stirring well with a whisk. Place reserved 1/3 cup marinade in a small saucepan; stir in cornstarch mixture. Bring to a boil; cook 15 seconds, stirring constantly. Drizzle sauce over chicken; sprinkle with sesame seeds.

Bourbon Brownies

1/4 cup bourbon	1 1/3 cups sugar
1/4 cup semisweet chocolate chips	6 tablespoons butter, softened
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour	1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa	2 large eggs
1 teaspoon baking powder	Cooking spray
1/2 teaspoon salt	

Preheat oven to 350°. Bring bourbon to a boil in a small saucepan; remove from heat. Add chocolate chips, stirring until smooth. Lightly spoon flour into dry measuring cups and level with a knife. Combine the flour, cocoa, baking powder, and salt, stirring with a whisk. Combine sugar and butter in a large bowl; beat with a mixer at medium speed until well combined. Add vanilla and eggs; beat well. Add flour mixture and bourbon mixture to sugar mixture, beating at low speed just until combined. Spread batter into a 9-inch square baking pan coated with cooking spray. Bake at 350° for 25 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool in pan on wire rack.



Bourbon Pecan Sauce

1 cup sugar	1 1/2 tablespoons butter
1/3 cup water	1 tablespoon bourbon
1/3 cup chopped pecans, toasted	2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 tablespoons fat-free milk	

Combine sugar and 1/3 cup water in a small saucepan over medium-high heat. Cook 5 minutes or until sugar dissolves, stirring constantly. Stir in pecans, milk, butter, bourbon and vanilla extract. Reduce heat and cook 3 minutes or until mixture is thick and bubbly. Serve over pancakes, waffles or even ice cream.

Orange Whiskey Punch

1 3/4 cups Irish whiskey	1/2 cup Oleo-Saccharum
1 1/2 cups strong black tea	7 dashes Angostura bitters
1/2 cup fresh orange juice	1 1/2 teaspoons freshly grated nutmeg, plus more for garnish
1/2 cup fresh lemon juice	

Combine whiskey, tea, juices, Oleo-Saccharum, Angostura bitters and 1 1/2 tsp. nutmeg in a large bowl or pitcher; cover and chill up to 8 hours. Strain into a punch bowl over ice. Serve punch in cups.

Classic Whiskey Sour

1 1/2 ounces whiskey	Crushed ice
4 ounces sour mix	1 maraschino cherry

Combine whiskey and sour mix in a large old-fashioned glass with ice. Stir, garnish with cherry and serve.

Photos in this feature in part by Cody Steckman



WILLIAM M. HAND is a chef with 40 years of experience. Bill has been a food writer for magazines and newspapers for 25 years and was a culinary arts educator for 15 years. He is the author of the successful cookbook *Hand in the Kitchen*. A sequel to that book is currently marinating.

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THE VIP EXPERIENCE

By SHANE RIGGS
Managing Editor, Johnstown Magazine

Party Busses, Snowstorms, and the launch of the Laurel Highlands Pour Tour

It's been about 25 years now, but when I worked for a newspaper as a reporter in Ohio, my editor at the time thought it would be a great idea if I was dared by readers to go on adventures. The editor would go through emails and look for "dares" for me to try out and then he would assign them to me and ask me to write about the experience in the first person. And I did that series for about a year off and on. I took kickboxing and karate lessons, got into cages with baby tigers, learned to snowboard, experienced acupuncture and hot yoga for the first

time, and did ride-a-longs with area police departments. The series actually won a feature writing award in 2001 with one judge noting, "I usually don't like the firsthand 'look at me, look at me' type of articles but Shane Riggs has a knack for telling firsthand stories in a way that is self-deprecating, infused with humor, enlightening and satisfying."

I can't help but think of that series now and the judge's comments about it as I wrap my mind around taking the VIP experience tour, launching the 2025 Go Laurel Highlands Pour Tour. There is absolutely no way to convey

this experience to you without telling it in first person because sometimes, stories just present themselves best in this manner. I don't know if this particular feature will win any trophies or accolades or even earn me any free merch from the Laurel Highlands peeps, but in trying to figure out how to write this, I thought you might appreciate it if I simply lifted my thoughts from a journal I kept on that particular day.

First, let me preface this by saying – yes, the Pour Tour kicked off in January and yes, that was months and months ago. But I thought you might want to

hear about all the snow that fell that day when it was closer to winter and not in June or July. Besides, we are going into fall, and what better time is there to drive through the Pennsylvania woodlands with flora, fauna and a case of Moscata rolling around in the trunk? Oh yea, it's also Western Pa. So snow will be back any minute now.

The kick off of the pour tour officially happened on Thursday, January 16. My nephew and his wife texted me that very morning while I was on my way to this assignment with the news that they were in labor. Great. So while my new nephew is being born, I am on a white-capped Pennsylvania mountain hoping I make it back in time for the arrival.

That said, I sent a text of my own that morning. To Eric Knopsnyder, director of public relations and community outreach. My worried text said something like "We are expecting a foot of snow. The kick off still on?"

Within moments, I got a text back. "Yup. We got a party bus for it. See you soon!"

Wait? What? A party bus? In a snowstorm? All I keep thinking is this is going to be like an episode of Real Housewives of Salt Lake City gone bad.

No good ever came out of a rented party bus.

"But don't worry. We reserved a room for you at the nearby hotel just in case," came another text. Just in case? Just in case of what?

"We're providing journalists with shuttle service between the stops," Eric texted. "You can just sit back and enjoy the different stops we're going to make."

"No worries."

No worries? Easy for him to say.



2 P.M. MEET AT COMFORT INN CONNELLSVILLE

I am among only about eight other passengers on the rented party bus.

The driver seems confident although the snow continues to come down. Eric tells us some other winery and distillery owners who were going to be on the bus with us lowly writers have opted out. And two of the first stops we were scheduled to make – Christian Clay Winery and Ridge Runner Distillery – have taken themselves off the list for the day for fear the bus might get down their road but not back up. I've been to Christian Clay. I like Christian Clay. Smart people work and run that place.

Instead we head directly to what was supposed to be stop number three officially – West Overton Distillery. The snow is coming down even harder now. But I resign myself to the fact

that this is happening. I have been in worse conditions on a bus before. My trip to D.C. from Cleveland with angry steelworkers protesting in 2002 comes to mind.

When our small group exits the bus, we take a group photo in front of the building and head inside. I feel oddly at ease and comfortable here. It's a mix of leather and wood, a real 1930s ski lodge feel. I don't know how I would react to this setting without the snow falling outside the window.





Located in the very seat of the whiskey rebellion, West Overton Distilling is a small, craft distillery that supports the educational mission of West Overton Village, a nonprofit museum and historic site. From the early 19th century to Prohibition in 1920, West Overton was home to a large and successful distilling operation.

Since 2020, West Overton Distilling has revived the tradition of making rye whiskey on site in a modern distillery, located in a renovated 19th century barn. West Overton Distilling produces Monongahela rye whiskey, considered the classic American whiskey before Prohibition.



Additionally, West Overton Village offers guided tours of the 1838 Overholt Homestead, where visitors can learn about the Overholt family’s history of whiskey distilling and explore an attached museum. The Sam Komlenic Gallery, opened in 2024, features more than 450 artifacts related to the history of Pennsylvania whiskey, including more than 270 historic whiskey bottles.

Here, the barkeep tells me as he pours a flight of samples and makes up a cocktail for one brave soul in the group, is where whiskey began – in Pennsylvania. Not in Tennessee or Texas. But good old Pennsylvania – from farmers who figured how to make a living from grain alcohol.

What a concept! The tasting room here is comfortable and feels more like a study, a parlor, or a grand library of a private home. With a warm shot of this adult libation in my belly, I sit in one of the oversized pub chairs and watch the snow outside the window as if I don’t have anywhere else to be.

Eric Knopsnyder pats me on the shoulder and tells me it’s time to leave for our next brief stop on the guided VIP tour of pours through Laurel Highlands.

Leave? I just took my off my jacket and was about to start a Tolstoy novel!

We head next for Deer Creek Winery and Watson Estate. Here it truly feels like winter has taken hold of the area.

When we arrive, the property is coated with a gorgeous white. We are told it’s karaoke night and we wonder – collectively as a group – who would come out to sing some bad Shania or Whitney in this weather.

Deer Creek Winery is in the old 1790 Stable of the Watson Estate in German Township just 2.3 miles west of Uniontown. This location and tasting room has a fun gift shop attached for wine connoisseurs and distilled grape lovers. There is even food – five different kinds of flat-bread pizzas and ample salad – all while enjoying a glass of wine – some of which is infused with raspberries, blueberries and even coffee. Deer Creek has a nice bed and breakfast attached to it. The Watson Estate B&B offers 12 antique decorated guest rooms, each with a private bathroom. There are also two cottages on the property.

My grandfather always told me while having an adult beverage to stick with that beverage and don’t mix. I hear his voice at Deer Creek as I enjoy a glass of wine with my meal. I figure that whiskey sample from stop one didn’t really count. Did it? And heck, we got the party bus, right?

Around 6:30, about 12 people come in from the cold. Did I mention it was karaoke night? Apparently, amateur singers are a hearty bunch of people.

And no one is stopping Amber from singing some Miranda Lambert tonight!

No singing for my group, however. It’s back in the bus for what seems like an eternity to get to the next and last stop on our VIP excursion. Mind you, we have only sampled three of the planned five stops. And there are a total of 64 wineries, distilleries, and breweries on the Laurel Highlands Pour Tour.

Eric tells our little group on the big bus that the last stop of the day is the Yough River Brewing. He said this is a ticketed kickoff for the pour tour and open to the public, unlike the private tours we had at the other two locations.

The Yough River Brewing Company is only about a mile off the GAP bike trail in Connellsville. When we pull up,



Photos for this feature by Alex Byers/Go Laurel Highlands and by Shane Riggs of Johnstown Magazine.

I see a parking lot full of cars, some of which are covered in freshly fallen snow. I see heated igloos on a patio and I hear music and laughter.

When I step inside, I feel like I am back in college, back to that favorite bar in the downtown area near the university I attended. This brewery has that welcoming feel – as if I just stepped late into a party already in progress. And perhaps we have. The snow is coming down hard, the roads are slick, but this place is packed.

People are elbow to elbow at the bar and shoulder to shoulder standing. But no one seems bothered by it. In fact, they all seem downright giddy to be part of the public kickoff of the campaign.

Around 9 p.m., a member of Eric’s team approaches me and two other “travel reporters” that the bus is ready to take us to the hotel whenever we are. And I am. I have tasted two whiskeys, three wines and two beers. And I am not a drinker. I am what is called a lightweight. And so I am glad with the snow storm outside and the fermented and distilled liquid jostling around inside, I have a place close by to crash and a wonderful driver of a quieted party bus to get me there safe and sound.

The next morning, I woke up, had some breakfast, packed up my whiskey and wine purchases from the night before, wore the sweatshirt the Go Laurel Highlands team gifted me, and headed back for home on newly plowed hills and highways.

And I actually made it back in time for the birth of my great nephew who arrived on the evening of January 17. I’m saving a bottle of the rye I purchased so I can tell him when he turns 21 about the time his uncle walked up hill – both ways – in a Pennsylvania snow storm to buy this special bottle that I have kept since 2025.

Three stops down on the Pour Tour. Only 61 more to go! JM



Warning signs for heart disease

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women, men and people of most ethnic and racial groups, advises the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. One person dies from heart disease every 33 seconds. Understanding the risk factors for heart disease is the first step toward prevention and management.

There are many things people can do to modify their risk for heart disease, but also some that cannot be changed. Ultimately, education is essential either way, and learning the risk factors for heart disease is vital to such education.

- **Age:** The risk for heart disease increases with age. For men the risk rises after age 45, and for women, it increases after menopause, or around age 55. Aging naturally leads to changes in the heart and blood vessels that increase the likelihood of developing cardiovascular problems, says the National Institute on Aging.

- **Sex:** Initially men are at a higher risk of developing heart disease. However, over time a woman's risk after menopause tends to equal that of a man's. As estrogen levels decline after menopause, fat can build up in the arteries, causing them to narrow, says the British Heart Foundation. After menopause, body weight may increase, which also is a risk factor for heart disease.

- **Family history:** Those with a close relative who developed heart disease at an early age may be at elevated risk.

- **Race:** UChicago Medicine says Black and Hispanic people have an elevated risk of dying from heart disease compared to white individuals.

People may be able to change the following controllable risk factors for heart disease.

- **Hypertension:** Hypertension, also

known as high blood pressure, forces the heart to work harder and can stiffen the arteries. This can damage blood vessels over time. Medications and additional lifestyle changes can help seniors combat hypertension.

- **Smoking:** Smoking tobacco can damage blood vessels and reduce oxygen in the blood. Smoking also increases the risk of blood clots. Johns Hopkins Medicine says cigarette smokers are two to four times more likely to get heart disease than nonsmokers.

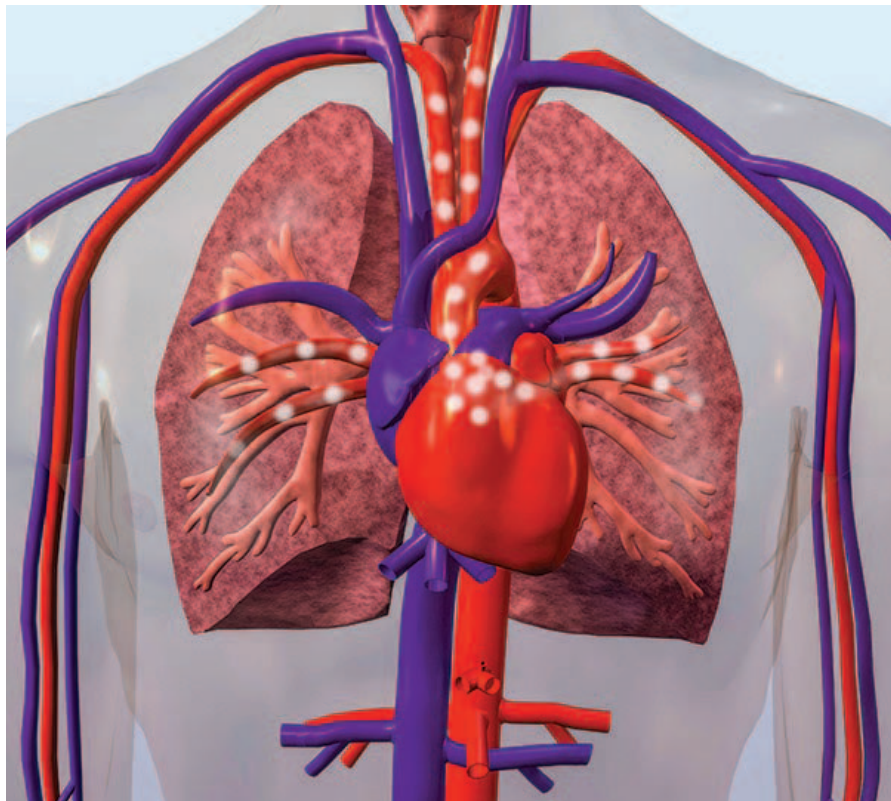
- **Cholesterol:** High levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL), known as "bad" cholesterol, contribute to the buildup of

plaque in the arteries. This can narrow arteries and restrict blood flow.

- **Sedentary lifestyle:** A lack of physical activity is a risk factor for obesity, high blood pressure and high cholesterol, each of which increases a person's chances of being diagnosed with heart disease.

- **Dental health:** Poor dental health can allow bacteria to enter the bloodstream, which can potentially lead to inflammation that affects heart health.

By understanding risk factors and actively making changes to behaviors that can be modified, people can take strides toward protecting heart health and avoiding cardiovascular disease. 🌸



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Why walking is a perfect exercise for seniors

△ Aging changes the human body in myriad ways. But even with those changes, seniors' bodies have many of the same needs as the bodies of their younger counterparts.

Exercise is one thing the human body needs regardless of how old it is. But some exercises are better suited for particular demographics than others. Walking, for ex-

ample, is an ideal activity for seniors, some of whom may be surprised to learn just how beneficial a daily stroll can be.

- Walking strengthens bones and muscles. The Mayo Clinic notes that regular brisk walking strengthens bones and muscles. Intensity is important when looking to walking to improve muscle strength. A 2015 study published in the journal Ex-

ercises and Sports Sciences Reviews found that achieving a 70 to 80 percent heart rate reserve during workouts lasting at least 40 minutes four to five days per week can help build muscle strength. GoodRx defines heart rate reserve as the difference between your resting and maximum heart rate, so it's important that seniors looking to walking to build muscle strength exhibit more intensity during a workout walk than they might during a recreational stroll.

- Walking helps seniors maintain a healthy weight. Overweight and obesity are risk factors for a host of chronic illnesses, including diabetes and heart disease. The Mayo Clinic notes walking can help seniors keep pounds off and maintain a healthy weight. In fact, SilverSneakers® reports that a 155-pound person burns around 133 calories walking for 30 minutes at a 17-minutes-per-mile pace. A slight increase in intensity to 15 minutes per mile can help that same person burn an additional 42 calories.



- Walking lowers seniors' risk for various diseases. It's long been known that walking is a great way for seniors to reduce their risk for cardiovascular disease. In fact, a study published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society noted in 1996 that walking more than four hours per week was associated with a significantly reduced risk of being hospitalized for cardiovascular disease. How significant is that reduction? A 2023 report from the American Heart Association indicated people age 70 and older who walked an additional 500 steps per day had a 14 percent lower risk for heart disease, stroke or heart failure. In addition, the Department of Health with the Victoria State Government in Australia reports walking also helps seniors reduce their risk for colon cancer and diabetes.

- Walking boosts mental health. Researchers at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health note that replacing one hour of sitting with one hour of a moderate activity like brisk walking can have a measureable and positive effect on mental health. The researchers behind the study, which was published in the journal Psychiatry in 2019, saw a 26 percent decrease in odds for becoming depressed with each major increase in objectively measured physical activity.

Walking can benefit all people, but might be uniquely beneficial for seniors. Walking is free, which undoubtedly appeals to seniors living on fixed incomes, and it's also a moderate intensity activity that won't tax seniors' bodies. Such benefits suggest walking and seniors are a perfect match. 🌟

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Did you know?

Age, gender and activity levels affect how much calories the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services advises aging individuals to consume each day. According to DHHS guidelines, sedentary men ages 61 and older should consume roughly 2,000 calories per day. Moderately active men between the ages of 61 and 65 are advised to consume 2,400 calories per day, while men at that activity level age 66 and older are urged to consume roughly 2,200 calories per day. DHHS recommendations indicate active men between the ages of 61 and 75 should consume 2,600 calories per day, while those 76 and up should reduce that consumption to 2,400 calories per day. Women's recommended calorie intake is significantly lower, as DHHS guidelines advise sedentary women age 61 and older to consume 1,600 calories per day. Women 61 and older who engage in moderate physical activity each day are urged to consume 1,800 calories per day, a recommendation that increases to 2,000 calories per day for those in the same age group who live a physically active lifestyle. It's important to note that these recommendations are just guidelines, and seniors should consult a physician familiar with their medical history for more personal recommendations regarding calorie consumption. 🍷



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Did you know?

The significance of exercise is well documented, and that even goes for seniors. But in the case of exercise, can there be too much of a good thing? Should seniors be exercising every day? Seniors can exercise most days, but daily, intense workouts are not necessary. Cedars-Sinai says adults 65 and older should aim for between 2.5 to 5 hours of moderate exercise each week, which aligns with recommendations from the Department of Health and Human Services. Seniors crunched for time can engage in between 1.25 and 2.5 hours of intense aerobic exercise each week. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week. That can translate into 30 minutes of daily exercise for five days, or it can be broken up into other intervals as necessary. Strength and balance training also should be a consideration. Seniors should keep in mind that overdoing intensity or length of workouts may contribute to injury, which can derail efforts to get fit. 🌸



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MUSIC BEAT

PLAYING WITH TOY

By KAYLEE KOLONICH
Correspondent, Johnstown Magazine



Photography for this feature courtesy of
Vision Wave Photography and by Hannah Kay



From the Route 22 Rock and Blues Festival in Huntingdon to Altoona’s Mass N Tha Grass Music & Arts Festival, rising band Toy has been making its mark from Pittsburgh to Johnstown’s own Central Park.

The Altoona-based band started its career modestly, planning on doing a recording project with “just a few shows.” A few shows would lead to them becoming the house band for McGarvey’s Bar and Grill and from there they hoped to develop their own sound.

Guitarist Julian Saborio says Toy is different from a lot of other bands in “establishing and curating our own unique sound.”

“You can tell if a band is going for something if the sound means more to them,” says lead vocalist Christian Douglas. “I’m not just going to write about girls and dragons because I like Led Zeppelin. We want to find a crowd that goes for a band, not a band that sounds like another band.”

“We all come from different careers and lifestyles, so we’re a pretty diverse group of people and it’s awesome that we’ve been able to come together and make this work,” says classical guitarist and Toy’s bassist, Adela Howsare-Palacios.

Adela attributes the band’s success in developing its style from a variety of life experiences.

“When we play covers you can usually tell which band member suggested each song.”

“
The band is going in a great direction and it pushes all of us to be better musicians.
”

While Adela Saborio is inspired by the more contemporary music of Julien Baker and Charli xcx, Christian admits that he often asks himself whether or not the Beatles would “laugh him out of a room” when he’s writing music as a test to determine if he’s on the right track.

The band’s name comes from the use of the word “toy” as graffiti slang.

“If you see bad work, you would paint ‘toy’ over top of it,” Christian says.

The group, however, uses this reference ironically for the simplicity of the word and as motivation to always strive to be better. The band members oppose the gatekeeping and labeling that can be common in the music world.

“It’s tough to break into it, and we want to open doors for others that were hard for us to open,” Christian says.

“The band is going in a great direction and it pushes all of us to be better musicians,” says drummer Matt Savino. Part of the reason for this is because of the experiences “meeting so many different bands and playing so many different spots.”

“Music is always a good ice breaker,” Christian says, adding he believes the band has become better as musicians and more confident as Toy’s members made more friends among other area bands.

Adela encourages other musicians to “go to shows, talk to the bands, and ask for advice. Consistently liking and engaging with other bands is key. Make connections.”

Like the intersection of the band members’ different interests and personalities, Christian says “songs mean something different to everyone who hears them, despite the writer’s original intention. When you write the songs belong to you. When you play they belong to the people who hear them.” JM

To learn more about Toy, follow the band on social media @toytheband. A new single “Target Audience” is out now.





MISSIONS ACCOMPLISHED

“Whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.”

By **JOSH KNIPPLE**
Correspondent, Johnstown Magazine

When I was growing up, the word missions always held an overseas connotation for me. Something for single people with a super spiritual connection to God. Or it also meant a select few who could speak other languages. I never made it past Spanish in high school and that included watching Selena, Cheech & Chong, and mastering UNO. Even in college, my mindset when mission classes were offered was that’s not for

me. How ignorant I was, never realizing that when Jesus talked about going into the world, that could include my neighbors right here in town. That my everyday living could be and is a local mission. It is something God is calling all of us to. My conversations, my interactions, my daily life, were living out Jesus in “missions.”

I would go on a few short-term mission trips here and there across the country and occasionally out of the

country. During those times, I would always sense God’s presence and truly would come back refreshed, alive, with a mindset that there must be more to life.

Yet, it always seemed at arm’s length. Then Katrina hit.

The church called on a few of us to go and serve. I never knew how much my life would be impacted. We fixed roofs, we tore out drywall, we made repairs. But more importantly, we listened. We heard all the stories.



Men and women who were praying for help not knowing from where it would come. A woman crying out to God at 4 a.m. having lost everything except her home.

At 7 a.m., my dad knocked on her door saying a team was there from Pennsylvania to help her. Talk about God’s providence. I remember coming home from those trips with the prayer “God, if you can use me in Mississippi with complete strangers, will you use me in Johnstown?”

And He answered.

That change in my mindset has led to life being about local missions. Sharing Jesus and being a light here in the community. Fixing homes, building handicap ramps, revitalizing properties, sharing Jesus with our community.

It reminds me of 1 Peter, when he says to always be prepared to give a reason for the hope you have.

How can you not tie that verse into missions? Always be prepared to give a reason for offering to help. The door is wide open. We do missions, we help out, because Jesus has changed our lives and now we want to share that joy with others.

That is the heart and soul behind local missions. Getting to know your neighbor. Hearing their stories. Giving them hope. Maybe it is as simple as cutting their grass, fixing a porch, or even just taking them a cold drink.

Matthew 25:45 says: “They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’

“He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’” JM



JOSH KNIPPLE is the Pastor at Crucified Ministries, and founder of Greater Things Outreach. He is also the author of the children’s book, “Eli Goes to Church.” He is married to Lindsey and has 4 kids; Eli, Silas, Evans, and Elliston.



Rebranding, Renovating, Restoring

BEHIND THE SCENES AT HERITAGE JOHNSTOWN

By KAYLA SCHWERER
Correspondent, Johnstown Magazine

Heritage Johnstown has undergone major changes over the past few years. Long-time President and CEO Richard Burkert retired in August 2023, having dedicated 44 years to the organization, previously known as JAHA – Johnstown Area Heritage Association.

Other recent developments include a major exterior renovation to Johnstown Flood Museum and the debut of a new, permanent exhibition titled “Forging a Nation: Johnstown Iron & Steel” at the Heritage Discovery Center. The Johnstown Train Station was also added to the roster of global train stations livestreamed by a popular website called Virtual Railfan.

Among the changes that have transpired over the past few years, perhaps none is as big as the organization’s rebranding, which took effect in January 2025. The non-profit’s new name, Heritage Johnstown,

comes complete with a logo and tagline. The logo features an I-beam, which highlights the region’s steel history, while the tagline – “History. Culture. Community.” – speaks to the organization’s continued mission to support those ideals.

Deb Winterscheidt, Heritage Johnstown’s Chief Operating Officer, said that the rebranding was a year-long process that involved gathering input from the general public, stakeholders, board members and staff members.

These groups met regularly to evaluate and discuss all the attractions underneath the organization’s umbrella. They also asked questions that required respondents to consider what the organization stands for, where it’s been and where it’s going.

“A lot of thought went into this because we needed our rebrand to reflect who we are and who we are going to be,” Deb says. “We are the

repository for so much of Johnstown’s history, and we can’t move forward without acknowledging that. The more you learn, the more you’re tied to your community. It makes you appreciate what Johnstown’s been through and what this city has to offer going forward.”

Heritage Johnstown not only owns and operates the Johnstown Flood Museum on Washington Street but also the Heritage Discovery Center/Johnstown Children’s Museum and the Wagner-Ritter House & Garden on Broad Street. The organization debuted the Peoples Natural Gas Park on Johns Street in 2012. Every summer, music fans flock to Peoples Natural Gas Park to attend Heritage Johnstown’s largest annual event: AmeriServ Flood City Music Festival. The organization also hosts another popular gathering, The Polacek Family Johnstown Slavic Festival, at the Heritage Discovery



Center every September. This year’s Slavic Fest is scheduled to take place September 19-20.

Heritage Johnstown is also the force behind the Stone Bridge Lighting Project, which illuminates the city’s iconic Stone Bridge for three hours every evening throughout the year. Dedicated in memory of Rep. John Murtha, the Stone Bridge Lighting Project uses programmable LED lights to illuminate the bridge, which is regarded as an iconic Johnstown landmark on account of its association with The Great Flood of 1889. When the South Fork Dam broke on that fateful day in May, the bridge held its ground but unfortunately became a place where debris gathered and a fire started, killing trapped flood victims.

“The Stone Bridge Lighting Project has restored and beautified this historic structure, which serves as a lasting memorial to the disaster and its victims,” Heritage Johnstown’s website states.

In December 2010, Heritage Johnstown was bequeathed The

Johnstown Train Station, which was built in 1916. This historic train station, according to Heritage Johnstown’s website, “was meant to mark Johnstown as an important place in the steel industry, and was designed by Kenneth Murchison, who studied in Paris and specialized in train stations with Beaux Arts designs, with a few Neoclassical elements.”

Since 2022, the Johnstown Train Station has been undergoing a restoration that is designed to return it to its original state. It’s become a popular place for wedding and graduation photos, Deb says.

In an effort not to confuse those who aren’t yet aware of the rebrand, the organization’s official website retains the same color scheme, but the URL has been updated to heritagejohnstown.org. Heritage Johnstown’s website gets an impressive amount of traffic. Whether visitors are perusing the line-up for the Flood City Music Festival, reading a blog post about Johnstown’s history, seeking information about booking Wagner-Ritter House tours or inquiring about the

possibility of hosting a birthday party at the Children’s Museum, Heritage Johnstown’s website serves as a great way to keep the public informed of the organization’s happenings. It also highlights the benefits of supporting Heritage Johnstown through memberships.

Heritage Johnstown is also part of the Reciprocal Organization of Associated Museums (ROAM), which enables members to visit more than 500 museums across 46 states and eight provinces in Canada for free. A few international locations are also on the participating museums list – American Museum & Gardens in Bath, England, for example.

A group of volunteers established ROAM in 2013 with the purpose of filling “a need among museums and their members, a free reciprocal network that connects world-class institutions for the benefit of our members,” according to ROAM’s website. Deb says members who are taking advantage of their ROAM benefits are “just thrilled.”

“One of the only few restrictions of

the program is that you have to live more than 25 miles away from the museum you're visiting," she says. "So, you can't live in the heart of Pittsburgh and use a ROAM membership from Heritage Johnstown to get into the Carnegie Museums because they have the right to ask you for proof of address.

"Sometimes finding that obscure little museum that you might not have thought of checking out . . . that's really exciting," Deb says. "It's always interesting to find those obscure museums."

"The great thing about ROAM is that it opens the door to museums that appeal to all interests and ages."

Twice a year, in July and December, Heritage Johnstown holds a sale that takes 15% off the price of all membership levels.

"People buy memberships as Christmas gifts left and right," Deb says. "A membership to Heritage Johnstown is the gift that keeps on giving, and many people enjoy giving and receiving experience-based gifts. Membership really does help us with our operations."

As Heritage Johnstown prepares for the fall events it will be hosting, it's worth noting that the organization remains steadfast in its mission to showcase Johnstown's charm and assets.

Deb Winterscheidt also emphasizes that the organization is "not a stand-alone" one.

"That's the other thing that we strive to do, is work with our community partners," she says. "We're so pleased to be able to step in and help Discover Johnstown with the Christmas tree and the Christmas houses this December.

"We've worked with the Johnstown Symphony Orchestra. We just take such great pride in being part of the Johnstown community." JM



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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2025



Morley's Run is a 5 mile Run or a 5 Mile Walk. Both events are competitive, family oriented and open to all ages. The race course takes participants by many Johnstown landmarks, beginning at the Westmont Grove and ending in downtown Johnstown at Peoples Natural Gas Park. All proceeds from this event benefit the Newspapers in Education (NIE) program that supplies newspapers to area teachers to use as curriculum in their classrooms.

Register today at **www.morleysrun.org**

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Now – September 6
American Legion County Fair

This week-long event near Ebensburg, PA, is a celebration of agriculture, a showcase for creators, and a fun place for all ages. This fair features carnival rides and games, food and craft vendors, and a wide variety of entertainment. Visit www.cambriacofair.com or call 814-472-7491 for more information.

September 5 - 26
Johnstown Farmers Market

The Johnstown Farmers Market brings together people of all backgrounds and ages, local farmers, craft makers, artists and artisans, and agencies dedicated to positively impacting our community. This even happens every Tuesday from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Visit www.johnstownpa.gov/johnstown-farmers-market for more information.

September 5
Duane Betts & Palmetto Motel

Duane Betts ignites and brings an evolution to the Southern rock tradition. Backed by his band, Palmetto Motel, Betts delivers a dynamic live show filled with searing guitar solos, heartfelt storytelling, and a mix of classic influences with fresh energy. Fans can expect a blend of roots rock, blues, and some improvisational jamming, creating an electrifying yet deeply authentic experience. With top-tier musicianship, a connection to rock ‘n’ roll history, and the desire to make every performance a true experience, a Palmetto Motel show is an unforgettable journey that no music lover should miss. Visit www.1stsummitarena.com/event/duane-betts-palmetto-motel or call the 1st Summit Arena @ Cambria County War Memorial at (814) 536-5156.

September 6 - 28
Ebensburg Farmer’s Market

The Market – held every Wednesday through September – features local growers and their produce, as well as, other homemade goodies. Visit www.ebensburgpa.com/farmers-market

September 6
Sandyvale Wine Festival

The Sandyvale Wine Festival is always on the first Saturday after Labor Day. The event is held outdoors in several large white tents on an 11-acre public garden next to the Stonycreek River with a mountain backdrop of gorgeous fall trees. Enjoy 16 of the best wineries in Pennsylvania, grab a bite from our gourmet food vendors and shop at more than 25 of the most unique vendors around as you listen to live music by talented musicians from Pittsburgh and the region. Visit www.sandyvalememorialgardens.org/wine-festival or call Sandyvale Memorial Gardens at (814) 266-7891.

September 6
Homegrown Music & Community Festival

The Homegrown Music & Community Festival is a community festival organized to help the Community of Johnstown. Bringing local favorite bands, the best food trucks the county has to offer, showing off the coolest local goods, and much more all at Peoples Natural Gas Park! The best part is that that all the proceeds go back to Johnstown, whether it’s helping local businesses or giving funding to local charities. Visit www.give.nonprofit-partners.org/event/homegrown-music-and-community-festival/c676923 or email sjohansson@heritagejohnstown.org

September 7
Afrika Yetu - West African Dance and Drum Ensemble

Experience the spirit and rhythm when Arika Yetu lands in Johnstown. The afternoon is jammed pack with gospel, heartbeats of the Congo and Afropop vibes, Kid’s corner and Drum Circle. Visit www.galleryongazebo.org/afrika-yetu-west-african-dance-and-drum-ensemble or call (814) 539-4345.

September 13 - 14
Cambria County Arts & Heritage Festival

This weekend festival highlights the Cambria County area and its rich history featuring living history groups, Civil War battle reenactments and camps open to the public, live musical performances, and plenty of other great activities to keep you entertained. Visit www.lhhv.org or call the Laurel Highlands Historical Village at (814) 241-6123.

September 17
Healing at the Halle Sound Bath

Join the Grande Halle on the third Wednesday for the finale of its Sound Bath series. Relax into the soothing sounds of bowls, vocals, and more Please bring yoga mat, blanket(s), pillow and eye mask (optional). Visit www.grandhalle.com/sound-bath-series or call (814) 254-4033.

September 18
In This Moment: The Black Mass Tour

In This Moment with Special Guests Dayseeker and The Funeral Portrait. This concert will be held at the 1st Summit Arena @Cambria County War Memorial. For ticket information and prices, visit www.1stsummitarena.com/event/in-this-moment-the-black-mass-tour or call (814) 536-5156.

September 19 - 20
Polacek Family Johnstown Slavic Festival

The Johnstown Slavic Festival is a dynamic and culturally enriching event held in the heart of Cambria City, Johnstown’s Cultural District. This festival serves as a tribute to the Slavic heritage that is deeply ingrained in the region. Attendees are treated to a captivating display of Slavic traditions, including lively music, dances and a selection of mouthwatering Slavic dishes. Visit www.jaha.org/events/johnstown-slavic-festival or call (814) 539-1889.

September 19-20
Baconfest

Food trucks, craft vendors, kids activities, car show, bacon eating contest, music and fun! Sponsored by the Richland Township Volunteer Fire Department. Visit their Facebook page or the Baconfest social media pages for more information and late breaking details.

September 20
New Germany Festival of Arts & Crafts

Take a leisurely stroll through the peaceful New Germany Grove and browse through an excellent selection of artisans, food and more! This two-day event encompasses a variety of area makers and helps support a local fire company. Visit www.newgermanyartsandcrafts.com or call (814) 495-4079.

September 20
Rave On! – The Music of Roy Orbison & Buddy Holly

Rave On! is a band that features the music of Buddy Holly and Roy Orbison, playing hits such as “That’ll Be The Day,” “Peggy Sue,” “Not Fade Away,” “Pretty Woman,” “Crying,” and “Only the Lonely” along with other classic early rock and roll songs. This is music that paved the way for rock and roll and influenced The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen and countless other artists. Visit www.arcadiawindber.com/event/rave-on-the-music-of-roy-orbison-buddy-holly or call the Arcadia Theater at (814) 467-9070.

September 21
Travis Pastrana Warm Up PAMX MDRA Summer Clash

Sponsored by Visit Johnstown and Pleasure Valley Raceway. Be a spectator or race at an AMA sanctioned Pennsylvania Motocross facility located in Seward. Visit www.pvrmtx.com/event-schedule or call the Pleasure Valley Raceway at (814) 317-6686.

September 26- 28
Rally at the Rock

Rally at the Rock is Rock Run’s end of the year event, a way to say goodbye to another riding season and to thank season pass holders and other supporters for contributing to the site’s continued success. Rally at the Rock offers riding, guided tours of the park, food, vendors and other entertainment. It’s a great weekend to spend in the mountains of Central Pennsylvania with your riding family. Rally at the Rock is always held the last full weekend of September. Visit www.rockrunrecreation.com/rally-at-the-rock

September 26
“Loot”

Murder Mystery Dinner Theatre: A masterpiece of black farce, “Loot” follows the fortunes of two young thieves. Dennis works for an undertaker. Hal’s old Mum has just died. They rob the bank next door to the funeral parlour and find just the place to hide the loot. With the money hidden in Mum’s coffin, there’s no place for Mum, whose body keeps re-appearing at the most inopportune times. When Inspector Truscott turns up, the already thickened plot goes topsy-turvy. Visit www.caccc.org/log-art-theatre or call the Community Arts Center of Cambria County at (814) 255-6515.

September 26 - October 31
Imaginarium Sanitarium – Haunted House

Imaginarium Sanitarium – Haunted House is located in the abandoned Cresson Prison and Sanitarium. This haunted house features a 3/4 of a mile walk-through of interactive terror. This year’s theme of “This is WAR” takes the prison to a whole new level. Are you scared yet? Visit www.imaginariumsanitarium.com, call (814) 329-1563 or email imaginariumsanitarium@gmail.com

September 27
Ebensburg PotatoFest

The Ebensburg PotatoFest is an annual event celebrating Cambria County potatoes and their growers. It is held on the last Saturday of September each year! The county is the second-largest supplier of potatoes in the state. Entertainers perform throughout the day with music to please all ages. More than 200 crafters and artisans line the streets for blocks with homemade wares, food, and of course potato candy! Visit www.ebensburgpa.com/potatofest or call (814) 472-8780

September 27
WPACASE (WPA Cryptid and Supernatural Expo)

WPACASE is a Cryptid and Supernatural Expo that hosts speakers and vendors that cover paranormal, cryptid, metaphysical and more. Vendors include authors, artists, crafts, 3D printing, etc. Visit www.wpacase.com or contact the event organizer, Johnstown Masonic Event and Conference Center, at (814) 659-1854

September 27
Ditko Con 2025

An annual festival focusing on the life and career of Steve Ditko and his fascinating Spiderman and all things Ditko created. Website: www.bottleworks.org/bw-special-events or call Bottle Works for more details at (814) 535-2020.

Do you have an event you would like to see featured? Send us all the written details to sriggs@johnstownmag.com. We will be happy to help promote your local event right here! All events were current and accurate as of press time. Johnstown Magazine recommends directly contacting or visiting the social media for the venues involved for more information, cancellations and ticket policies, or updates.

PUT A RING ON IT?

Want to be included in our next big Wedding Issue? Want to see your wedding photos in an award-winning magazine? Maybe even make the cover? Now's your chance!

In January 2026, we will once again feature an edition dedicated to what it means and what it looks like to get married in the Greater Johnstown area and in our surrounding communities.

We are currently looking for photos of weddings – from those of you recently hitched to those who have been honeymooning for longer than they care to admit. We want to see traditional, nontraditional, white wedding or alternative hues, indoor, outdoor, big affair, close friends and family, church or courthouse – yes, we want all kinds of weddings.

This is your chance to share the wedding of your dreams with our readers and to be part of a countieswide celebration of commitment! What's it look like and what does it mean to be married in Johnstown? Cambria County? Surrounding areas? We want to find out. Show us.

Readers and local photographers who have shot weddings are asked to submit their materials – with as much written detail included as possible – to sriggs@johnstownmag.com.

We are looking for wedding photos now through Friday, October 24, 2025.

If you “done the deed,” just say “I do” and we’ll do the rest.

You have your assignment, Johnstown. JM

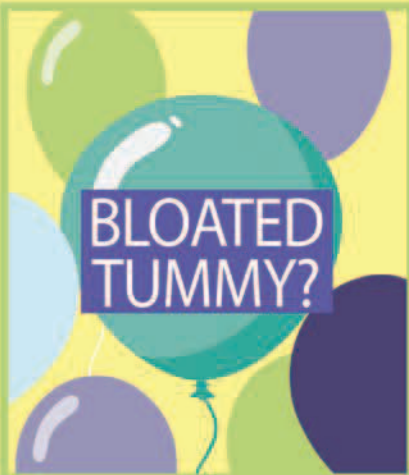


Ovarian CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

REMEMBER IN SEPTEMBER

Why You Need to Know the Symptoms?
Ovarian cancer is very treatable when detected early. But, it's hard to detect because the symptoms are vague and often misinterpreted by both women and physicians. There is no test to find it and no way to prevent it. But, there are symptoms. Early detection is possible if women learn to OvaryAct!

Know Your Family History: Document any history of ovarian or other gynecological cancers. Talk to your doctor about the risk of developing hereditary cancer and get advice on genetic testing. Some hereditary ovarian cancers also increase your risk of developing other cancers, including breast cancer.



If You Experience Symptoms: Women should contact their physician if any symptoms occur almost daily for more than a few weeks. Experts suggest a pelvic/rectal exam, a transvaginal ultrasound, and a CA-125 blood test. If ovarian cancer is suspected, consult a gynecologic oncologist immediately.

Life Saving Legacy!

In 2000, Ann Smith, an energetic and vivacious 50 year-old woman from the Johnstown area, was diagnosed with Stage IV ovarian cancer. Shortly after her diagnosis, Ann and her family organized the Laurel Auto Group Pro-Am Charity Golf Classic to help raise awareness about ovarian cancer. Ann lost her valiant fight against this silent disease in 2002. Her unwavering commitment to helping others learn about ovarian cancer lives on.



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