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the Wilkinsburg Sun

VOL. 11 NO. 8 May 2018

A FREE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER BRINGING YOU GOOD NEWS ABOUT WILKINSBURG

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Concert to Feature Mayor Garrett as Narrator

“An American Salute,” a Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra’s community engagement concert will fill Wilkinsburg High School’s historic auditorium with patriotic music on Thursday, May 31 at 7 p.m. This is the PSO’s 15th concert in the borough.

The concert will feature Wilkinsburg students, Mayor Marita Garrett as narrator, vocalist Katy Williams, and PSO principal flute Lorna McGhee.

Held a few days after Memorial Day, this program will honor our service men and women with musical selections including the *Armed Forces Salute*, *God Bless America*, and *Stars and Stripes Forever*. A George Gershwin Medley, *Amazing Grace*, and a concerto feature will round out the program—all under the direction of Conductor Andrés Franco. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students and can be purchased at the door.

All proceeds from this concert benefit the music education programs in the Wilkinsburg School District.



Show House Benefit Opens May 5 at 1300 Wood Street



A few details of the Show House renovation in process and Brian Sieffert, the house contractor for the project.

This month, the Junior League of Pittsburgh (JLP) is showcasing its startling transformation of the old Yingling mansion interior at 1300 Wood Street in Wilkinsburg.

The JLP chose the 6,200-square-foot Georgian Revival-style mansion as its Designers’ Show House, remaking more than 25 rooms and spaces

“We are thrilled to be partnering with talented designers and landscape architects on this event, which will highlight the latest design trends while honoring the character and architecture of the historic

property,” said Junior League of Pittsburgh President Madeline Wahl. Each room is the responsibility of a different designer.

The history of the house begins with Roswell G. Yingling who purchased the land for the mansion in 1905, according to Carol J. Peterson, who traced the history of the home. Yingling was secretary and treasurer of the Kittanning Brick and Fire Clay Co and founder of what is now known as Clarion University.

In 1927 the family left and the building became a Wilkinsburg local

continued on page 5

Library Sale Is at Eastridge Location

Friends of the Library will hold their second Book Sale at the Eastridge Branch location, 1900 Graham Blvd., on May 4, 5, and 7, from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Shop for books, DVDs and CDs.

Family Education Day at Orchard

Covenant Fellowship RP Church and the Allegheny Sierra Club invite the public to their Community Family



Education Day at the Grace & Fruit Pollinator Gardens and Orchard on Saturday May 12.

The orchard is located at the corner of Glenn and Swissvale Avenues.

From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., families can learn about plants in the garden, including using herbs as pollinators and for medicine. Other activities include children's games, food, music, and movie at 4 p.m.

Recreation Jobs Available

• Summer Recreation Supervisor

The Borough of Wilkinsburg is seeking a supervisor for a recreation program for two months from June 18-August 10, noon-8 p.m. A college student with a sports, recreation, physical education major or teacher/coach preferred. Candidate must be dynamic and work well with youth 6-12 and have necessary clearances. Compensation ranges \$12-14 per hour.

• Summer Recreation Assistant

The Borough is also seeking an assistant for a recreation program for two months from June 18-August 10, noon-8

p.m. A high school student, 16-18, with an interest in sports, recreation, or physical education preferred. Candidate must be dynamic and work well with youth 6-12, and have clearances if necessary. Compensation is \$10/hour.

Send resumes for the above positions to info@wilkinsburgpa.gov or to the Borough offices at 605 Ross Ave., Wilkinsburg, Pa., 15221.

Summer Camp Focused on Arts

The Entertainment Consortium is offering a 10-week camp for youth ages 8-15 from June 11 to August 17 weekdays from 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. at the Community Forge Building (Old Johnston School)

This years' camp focuses on music, dance, theater, visual arts and media arts. For costs and more information, visit www.tecarts.org 412.969.7714 or 412.414.6565.

Librarian Selected for Fellows Program

Taylor Lee, children's department librarian, has been selected as one of ten Fellows for a yearlong study of Allegheny County libraries.

Conducted by the Forbes Fund for the Allegheny Regional Asset District, this study group represents large, medium and small libraries.



The Fellows mission is to analyze the current trends in local community life, including workforce development and job skill requirements in the near future. With this data and analysis, the group will create recommendations as to how libraries can best help meet the changing needs of our citizens of all demographics.

Senior Fun Day

Senior Fun Day will be happening throughout the summer and fall months: May 15, June 12, July 17 and

August 14, September 11, and October 9, November 13 and December 11.

Call 412.244.2900 to be placed on the notification list. The monthly event includes exercise, lunch, informational programs and social activities.

Spoken Word Open Mic

The next poetry reading at Biddle's Escape is May 9 at 6:45 p.m. For more information, see "2nd Wed.s Spoken Word Open Mic" event Facebook page. All are welcome.



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Lynne Gordon, Editor

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

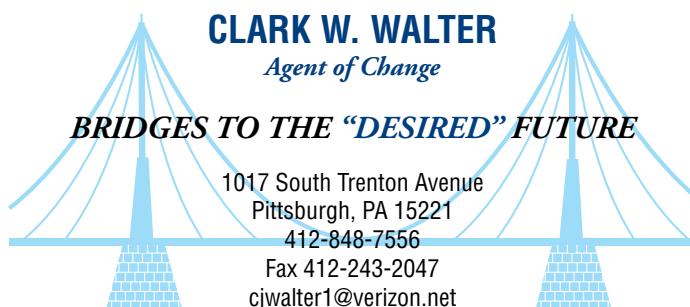
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Please submit all articles and calendar events to: editor@wilkinsburgsun.com, or by mail, P.O. Box 86064, Wilkinsburg, PA 15221. **Please submit articles 5 weeks before publication and calendar events 3 weeks before publication.** To advertise, e-mail adsales@wilkinsburgsun.com, or call 412.680.1381. The Sun accepts submitted articles provided they are related to Wilkinsburg and are civic-minded. *The Sun* reserves the right to withhold articles from print. Please note that *The Sun* does not publish political or opinion pieces.

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Summer Events Planned for the Borough

Wilkinsburg Borough Council and Mayor are planning a busy summer of activities for Borough residents. Final planning is underway for a variety of events and programs for the community.

The Borough is cooperating with the Wilkinsburg Community Development Corporation for the Wood St. Two-Way Street Fest May 19. (See page 4 for more information.)

The Art in the Park Concert Series will return to the Penn Avenue Parklet. The free concert series is a summer mainstay for the Borough.

Live bands and disc jockeys are featured at the newly renovated stage from 6-8:30 p.m. Watch the Borough web site, Facebook page, and *Wilkinsburg Sun* for information on the acts performing at Art in the Park.

The concerts coincide with the Wilkinsburg Thursday Open Market in the parking lot of LifeCare Hospital (See page

7 for more information).

The summer movie nights are back for a second year. The free movies will be held at three different parks in the Borough on the following Fridays at dusk (between 8:30 and 9 p.m.): June 15, July 13, and August 10. There will be free popcorn. Final movie selections and park locations will be announced in May.

Summer recreation will continue for its second season in June, including chess, soccer, basketball, science programs and more. (See page 5 for more information.)

The Senior "Fun Day" will also be happening throughout the summer. (See the previous page for details.)

The Mayor has announced a new date and location for the annual Community Day festivities: August 11.

The new location is the Penn Ave. Parklet and nearby parking lots. Planning is in the early stages and detail will be out in June.



The front of the stage on the third floor of the Borough Building was recently exposed after years of being covered.

The Auditorium Returns!

The Borough Council recently took steps to return the third-floor auditorium to its original purpose of a community gathering space. The third floor has been used for smaller meetings and storage over the past few decades. The false platform with library book overflow and shelving have been removed as well as thousands of unused library books. The books were donated to charity and shelving and other items offered to other libraries.

Over the summer the remaining items will be removed and some minor repairs made to allow use of the stage. A study was recently performed for renovations and funding will be sought to cover the costs. Uses are already being planned with the space, which will hold over 100 people.

Wilkinsburg Is Tree City USA

Wilkinsburg was named a 2017 Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation in honor of its commitment to effective urban forest management. The Borough met the program's four requirements: a tree board or department, a tree care ordinance, an annual community forestry budget of at least \$2 per capita and an Arbor Day observance and proclamation.

"Tree City USA communities see the impact an urban forest has in a community first hand," said Dan Lambe, president of the Arbor Day Foundation. Trees help to improve the visual appeal of a neighborhood, increase property values, reduce home cooling costs, remove air pollutants and provide wildlife habitat, among many other benefits.

| UPCOMING MEETINGS | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|---|
| 5/1 (Tues.) | 6 P.M. | Planning Commission, 2nd floor |
| 5/2 (Wed.) | 7 P.M. | Council Work Session, 2nd floor |
| 5/7 (Mon.) | 6:30 P.M. | Social Media & Promotions Committee, 2nd floor |
| 5/9 (Wed.) | 6 P.M. | Business Outreach and Jobs Development |
| 5/10 (Thurs.) | 1 P.M. | Constituent Service & Special Events Committee, 2nd floor |
| 5/10 (Thurs.) | 6 P.M. | Wilkinsburg Arts Commission, 2nd floor |
| 5/14 (Mon.) | 4:30 P.M. | Library Board, 2nd floor |
| 5/14 (Mon.) | 6 P.M. | Budget and Finance Committee, 1st floor |
| 5/16 (Wed.) | 7 P.M. | Council Legislative Session, 2nd floor |
| 5/17 (Thurs.) | 5:30 P.M. | Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, 1st floor |
| 5/21 (Mon.) | 9 A.M. | Public Safety Committee, 2nd floor |
| 5/21 (Mon.) | 5:30 P.M. | Joint Tax Committee, 2nd floor |
| 5/23 (Wed.) | 5:30 A.M. | Blight and Capital Planning Committee, 2nd floor |
| 5/23 (Wed.) | 6:30 P.M. | Shade Tree Advisory Committee, 1st floor |
| 5/24 (Thurs.) | 9 A.M. | Personnel, Policy & Procedure Committee, 1st floor |
| 6/4 (Mon.) | 6:30 P.M. | Social Media & Promotions Committee, 2nd floor |
| 6/5 (Tues.) | 6 P.M. | Planning Commission |

All meetings will take place in Wilkinsburg Borough Building, 605 Ross Ave.

Celebrating that Wilkinsburg Is Good All Over



On Saturday, May 19, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., the Wilkinsburg Community Development Corporation (WCDC) will host their second annual Two-Way Street Fest, closing off Wood St. from vehicle traffic for vendors, visitors, and residents to enjoy all of Wilkinsburg's offerings in one place.

At last year's inaugural event, over 1,000 people came together to learn about local businesses and organizations, sample food and drink, participate in outdoor activities, interact with artists, and enjoy live music and performances. With over 80 businesses promising to participate in this year's event, the WCDC expects another fantastic turnout.

In addition to local businesses, food trucks, and other vendors, Fest activities will include a slate of live performances, including steel pan drummers, Barrels to Beethoven, Brazilian percussion group, Timbeleza, professional

dance trainers, K-Theatre Dance Complex, and more. Attendees can also spend the day learning to skateboard, rock climb, pogo, and slackline.

New, through a partnership with Wilkinsburg Historical Society, those interested in something more low key can participate in a walking tour in the business district to learn more about Wilkinsburg's unique history and architecture.

Though Wilkinsburg continues to face many challenges, including high rates of vacancy, blight, and tax delinquency, the community's strengths and opportunities are equally substantial. The WCDC created the Two-Way Street Fest to celebrate Wilkinsburg and highlight these strengths and assets, from accessibility and historic architecture to a strong business community and dedicated residents.

Fest attendees can visit the WCDC's table to learn more about community initiatives and current



projects, like the Wilkinsburg Train Station. Last year, residents, visitors, and alumni rallied together around the WCDC's Train Station Restoration Project. The project will restore the more than 100-year-old Train Station building on Hay Street that once served as a bustling center for workers and travelers. The end goal is to create a community-focused space, perhaps with a restaurant and/or cafe on the main floor and retail and/or office space on the lower level.

The flood of support for the Train Station Restoration Project—the WCDC has already raised \$3.5 million toward the project and Phase II of construction is now underway—shows that the community of Wilkinsburg values its past history, its present community, and its future progress.

The Two-Way Street Fest will celebrate this community, and the people and places that make Wilkinsburg good all over. For more information, visit bit.ly/TWSF2018 or call 412.727.7855.

Save the Dates!

Monday, May 7, 5-7 p.m.: WCDC Board Meeting, 1001 Wood St.

Saturday, May 19, 1-5 p.m.: Wilkinsburg Two-Way Street Fest, Wood St.



To support the WCDC, send a tax-deductible contribution to 1001 Wood St., Wilkinsburg, PA 15221 OR donate online at wilkinsburgcdc.org Thank you! 412.727.7855 • 412.871.3149 (fax) info@wilkinsburgcdc.org

SCHOOL CALENDAR

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------|---|
| 5/8 (Tues.) | 6 P.M. | Finance Committee |
| 5/14 (Mon.) | 5 P.M. | Finance Committee |
| 5/14 (Mon.) | 7 P.M. | Board Planning Session |
| 5/16 (Wed.) | | Early Student Dismissal (1/2 day Inservice) |
| 5/22 (Tues.) | 5 P.M. | Finance Committee |
| 5/22 (Tues.) | 5:30 P.M. | Policy and Procedures Committee |
| 5/22 (Tues.) | 5:30 P.M. | Policy Committee |
| 5/22 (Tues.) | 7 P.M. | Board Legislative Session |
| 5/28 (Mon.) | ALL DAY | Memorial Day—School Closed |
| 5/29 (Tues.) | 7 P.M. | Special Voting Meeting |
| 5/22 (Thurs.) | 7 P.M. | An American Salute with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra at Wilkinsburg High School building (See story on page 1.) |
| 6/7 (Thurs.) | ALL DAY | Clerical Day—No Students |
| 6/8 (Fri.) | ALL DAY | Last Day of School |

Meetings are held at Wilkinsburg School Administration Building at 718 Wallace Avenue.

SHOW HOUSE, from page 1

hospital, then Miller Convalescent Home and, most recently, the Gibbs Personal Care Home. The property was purchased by Nicole Santella in 2016.

Santella bought the house with the intention of using it to strengthen

connections in the community. She hopes it to be a gathering place for people of all ages, where she can hold meetings and educational events.

“When you start turning lights on, other people start turning lights on,” she said of her desire for the house to be a beacon of renewal.

All proceeds from the show, entitled “Window into Wilkinsburg,” will go directly to support the JLP’s mission of working with the surrounding communities to eliminate food insecurity in the East End.

“Show House comes at a time when the Junior League of Pittsburgh is celebrating 95 years



A closeup of the recently laid hardwood floor on the third floor. The hardwood was donated by Allegheny Mountain Hardwood Flooring.

Summer Recreation Program

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board of Wilkinsburg, with assistance from the school board, will run a recreation program this summer at Ferguson Park, corner of South and Center Avenues.

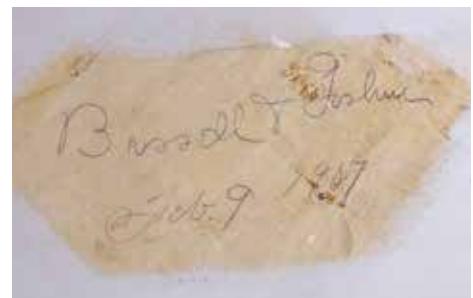
The program will run full time, starting with a free lunch at noon at the South Avenue Methodist Church across

the street, until 8 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Park It!
SUMMER RECREATION

Besides the typical physical and arts and crafts activities, chess, soccer and art lessons, science presentations from CMU, Pitt, and the Carnegie Science Center will be offered.

A kick-off will be Monday, June 18, 5-7 p.m. at Ferguson Park. Parents interested in electronic activity notifications can follow the borough’s website, Facebook page, or email info@wilkinsburgpa.gov. An activity schedule will be posted weekly.



This signature, dated 1907, was uncovered under old wallpaper during the remodeling process.

of supporting local communities,” said President Wahl.

The Show House will be open to the public for viewing May 5-20. Tickets are \$25 in advance at www.jlpgh.org, \$30 at the door.

The hours of operation are as follows:
Monday—Closed
Tuesday—6-8 p.m.
Wednesday—Closed
Thursday—6- 8 p.m.
Friday—10 a.m.-8 p.m.
Saturday—10 a.m.-6 p.m.
Sunday—10 a.m.-6 p.m.

Helping Borough Trees to Thrive

Wilkinsburg's Shade Tree Committee offers suggestions on how residents can help out the street trees bordering their homes in a way that allows these valuable plants to thrive.

The tree pit—the area of dirt and mulch in which the tree is planted—should be well-maintained to provide optimal health of street trees.

Things to Do

Keep the tree pit clear of plastics or trash which would otherwise prevent rainwater from getting to the tree roots.

Pull weeds growing in the tree pit since they will compete with the tree for water and nutrients.

Prevent vines from growing in the tree pit or climbing up the tree. Vines harm the tree, including common groundcover vines like English ivy, myrtle, and pachysandra. Other vines to keep off the tree are Virginia creeper and grapevine. Pull vines out by the roots if they've already started growing in the tree pit. If they already have woody roots and stems, cut them off at the base using sharp pruning shears, then watch for regrowth and repeat the procedure.

Things Not to Do

Don't use pesticides to kill weeds or vines in the tree pit. This could harm the tree.

Don't prune Borough trees if you see a broken or dead branch.

Don't touch poison ivy if that's the vine growing on the tree. Poison ivy is recognizable by its leaves which grow in clusters of three. Another indicator is the hairy stalk of the vine.

Report any street tree problems to the Borough at 412.244.2900 or fill out a service request form at <https://www.wilkinsburgpa.gov/community-resources/service-request-form/>.

Residents with concerns about trees or who are interested in knowing more about the Shade Tree Committee should consider attending one of its meetings on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the Borough Building. All are welcome.



Community Forge had a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate its official opening as a community center on April 11. Left to Right: Andy Johnson, ombudsman; Jackie Skirpan, board member and tenant director; Leigh Pugliano, board advisor; Nick Ryan, board member and director of operations; Patrick Cooper, board member and building director; Rich Longo, non-affiliated, Duquesne SBDC; Mike Skirpan, executive director; Ariel Beach-Westmoreland, board member and director of events and programming; Travis Alvarez, board member and director of membership and volunteers.

The Bible Chapel Introduces Youth and Sports Director

The Bible Chapel in Wilkinsburg has announced their new Director of Youth and Sports Ministry, Jaakan "Jay" Thompson.

Jay received a degree in Christian ministry and pastoral leadership from a Bible college in Chicago and has a heart to disciple youth in an urban context and looks forward to working with the church.

"Life is a journey, and in this season of my life, God has allowed me to come and serve the community of Wilkinsburg. I am both humbled by this opportunity and excited to see what God does in the years to come," said Jay.

He and his wife, Jessica, have a daughter, Jonelle, and another child on the way.

The Bible Chapel's Wilkinsburg campus is located at 754 Ross Avenue. The youth group meets Wednesday, May 9, 6-8 p.m. and is for students grade 5-12. A young adults gathering meets Thursday, May 3 and 17, at 6:30 p.m.



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The 2018 Wilkinsburg Thursday Open Market Promises To Be Bigger And Better Than Ever.

The Wilkinsburg Thursday Open Market (WTOM) season begins June 14 and runs through November 15. The market will be open every Thursday from 3–6:30 p.m. in the LifeCare parking lot at the corner of Penn and South Trenton Avenues.

So far, there are vendors offering traditionally-raised vegetables, fruits and corn, organic farm produce, locally produced wine, nursery plants, smoked meats and sides, organic teas and lemonade, sweet treats, fresh flowers and community organizations. And the Chamber is not done yet!

Vendor applications are still available. For more information email info@wilkinsburgchamber.com or visit www.wilkinsburgchamber.com/wilkinsburg-thursday-open-market/

The Chamber thanks Lifecare Hospital for their support of the market and our community.



You're Invited!

The Greater Wilkinsburg Chamber of Commerce offers opportunities to meet local business owners, share experiences and become involved in the community. Please join us at any or all events.

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Two-Way Street Fest | Saturday, May 19 | 1–5 p.m., Wood Street between Franklin and Penn Avenues |
| Business Networking | Tuesday, May 22 | 5:30–7:30 p.m., First National Bank, 732 Penn Avenue |
| Business Networking | Tuesday, June 19 | 5–7 p.m., Protohaven, 214 North Trenton Avenue |
| Opening Day for WTOM | Thursday, June 14 | 3–6:30 p.m. |
| 125th Anniversary Celebration | Thursday, Sept 20 | 6–9 p.m. |

Support Wilkinsburg Business!

Learn more about the Chamber and benefits like business networking, educational workshops, advertising, and shared office space. Visit www.wilkinsburgchamber.com, email info@wilkinsburgchamber.com or give us a call at 412.242-0234.



Greater Wilkinsburg Chamber of Commerce
900 Wood St., 2nd fl., Wilkinsburg 15221 • 412.242.0234 • info@wilkinsburgchamber.com
Join the Chamber. Get Involved. Make an Impact!



Wilkinsburg Public Library Events for April

These library programs and events are free and open to everyone.

Reservations can be made in advance at the circulation desk or by calling 412-244-2940. (M=Main Library; E=Eastridge branch)

Adult Programs

Asian Brush Art, Mondays April 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, 10 a.m.–noon—Learn or continue to develop your skill in this beautiful art form. (M)

One-on-One Tech, by appointment—Call to reserve your time with a staff member for smartphone, computer, laptop or other

digital device coaching. (M & E)

Chess, 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, 6 p.m. and 2nd and 4th Saturdays, 11 a.m.—All ages welcome. (E)

Crochet, Saturdays, 11 a.m.—Join Frankie to get tips and help with your projects. (E)

Children's Programs

Story Time, Mondays, 11:00 a.m. (M) & Thursdays, 11:00 a.m. (E) – Songs, rhymes, stories and more for all ages.

Art Club, Tuesdays, 3:30 p.m.—Calling all artists! Create something new every week from a huge supply of art materials.

For all ages. (M)

Pre-K Open Play, Wednesdays, 11 a.m.—Give your children the skills they will need to be successful in kindergarten. For all preschoolers with an adult. (M)

Mask Making, Thursdays, 3:30 p.m.—Create your very own masks with the help of a professional artist from the Neighborhood Youth Outreach Program. For all ages. (M)

Science Fridays, 3:30 p.m.—Explore the wide, wide world of science with a different experiment or project each week. For all ages. (M)

Local Artist Dee Briggs Highlighted in Art Festival



photo by Albert Vecerka

Dee Briggs' installation in Foley Square: New York, N.Y.

Wilkinsburg's Dee Briggs, known for her impressive geometric metal sculptures, will be a featured artist at this year's Dollar Bank Three Rivers Arts Festival.

Six Plates For Annabelle And Maggie, a sculpture based on the concept of chirality—the operation of symmetry and mirror images in geometric shapes—will be installed at the Gateway T station, and on view through May 2019.

The piece is made of Cor-Ten weathering steel and was fabricated at Wheaton and Sons in Braddock. And that, in part, is where the name of her sculpture is derived.

"This particular piece was made primarily by a welder named Paul Jasinski....It was Paulie's skill, intelligence and, well, patience with me and some

of the crazy things I wanted to do that really made this piece possible," explained Briggs.

"Annabelle and Maggie are Paul's daughters. I named this sculpture after them to thank Paulie for his hard work and dedication to making something like this so beautifully."

Briggs, whose studio resides in an old Wilkinsburg firehouse in the Park Triangle section, said that she always works with local suppliers and fabricators to source the steel for her projects. She feels strongly about buying U.S. steel and supporting the national economy.

"Although it is more expensive than imported steel, it is consistently of a higher and predictable quality." In addition Briggs explained, "The

environmental impact is lower because the United States, at least right now, has higher environmental standards for steel production than many other countries."

When asked how to best view her large scale sculpture, Briggs answered, "For me personally, I do not think that my intentions or what I put into the work or what the work means to me needs to be relevant to someone else. Someone who has had more experience with art might relate my work to other art, but someone who has had more experience with steel, for instance, might relate my work to their thoughts and feeling about steel. Every art work is a different experience for every viewer."

Briggs added, "I encourage anyone looking at art to focus on how the work makes you feel—instead of trying to figure out what the art work 'means.'"

For more information on the Arts Festival, visit www.TrustArts.org or call 412.456.6666.

Mac 'n Cheese Cook Off Update

The Mac 'n Cheese Cook Off benefit that was held on March 24 at the Community Forge raised \$364 for the Wilkinsburg Youth Project.

The inaugural event had seven contestants and about 50 people in attendance.

The winner of cook off and the \$100 grand prize was Jazzy Lenae.

Mother's Day Is May 13



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