

THE EVENT, WHICH BEGAN IN 2011, was originally known as Polar Plunge and raised money for a single charity. In 2015, it was changed to support multiple charities in the Cambria/Somerset region. In the last three years, it has raised awareness and over \$100,000 for local charities.

This year's supported charities include: Alleghenies United Cerebral Palsy, Cambria/Somerset CASA-Beginnings, Coaches 4 Kids Foundation, Cambria County Backpack Project, Camp PARC, NAACP Johnstown Branch, PAWS House, Inc., Trinity Farms Center for Healing, and Greater Johnstown Community YMCA.

To participate, go to www.chillinforcharity.org and choose the charity you wish to support and then raise at least \$50 in pledges.

Although the fundraising aspect is most important, Chillin' for Charity also is a fun event for participants and spectators alike. The family friendly winter event includes bonfires, costume contests, food and entertainment. Among this year's musical acts are two local favorites: Felix and the Hurricanes and Who's Your Daddy. Former television meteorologist "Big Jim" Burton will once again serve as MC.

Festivities begin at 9 a.m. with registration beginning at 10 a.m. and the plunge taking place at 2 p.m.

Organizers say local EMS units will be on hand during the entire event with Swift Water Rescue in the water.

Participants are encouraged to dress in layers. Shoes are mandatory at all times, even in the water. Bonfires and warming areas will be available to take the chill off and there will be heated changing tents for those taking the plunge.

Die-hard participants can make arrangements to bring campers and stay overnight. (www.quefamilyrec.com)

Only those participating in the plunge are permitted to park at the Que. All others must park at the North American Hoganas parking lot at 111 Hoganas Way, Hollsopple, where McIlwain shuttle buses will run from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. >>Arlene Johns

Craft Business Thursdays @ Creator Square

Craft Business Thursdays @ Creator Square (CBT @ Creator Square) is a series of monthly lectures featuring a special guest artist as speaker. The series was launched Oct. 26 at Goldhaber-Fend Fine Arts Center gallery at the Community Arts Center of Cambria County in Westmont.

CBT@ Creator Square was started to help keep the public updated on the progress of Creator Square, an "artisan residency program developed to stimulate urban revitalization, economic development, and workforce training." According to the website, the facility will be housed in the Parkview Building on Central Park, "an existing historic structure that will be transformed into a community maker space and live/work studio facility."

"Emerging leaders in the maker community – locally and nationally – will be chosen for residencies," the website explains. "The program is designed to connect the dots between the region's manufacturing heritage and contemporary advances in small batch manufacturing and maker space innovation." Creator Square is expected to open in 2018-19.

"As we get closer to making Creator Square Johnstown a reality, we want to introduce the Western Pennsylvania community to a wide range of successful local craft businesses," says Paul Rosenblatt, founder and executive director of Creator Square. "Our goal is to inspire potential applicants near and far for our artist/artisan residency program and begin to think about how their skills and interests can be transformed into businesses through small batch manufacturing approaches that lecturers in the Craft Business Thursdays @ Creator Square are using to great success."

Past speakers in the CBT@ Creator Square series include Maia Leppo-Photo by Julia Reynolds in January.

November featured Justin Merrell, CEO of Adiaon, a company focused on the development of makerspace management platform, and co-founder and current board chair of Catalyst Space, an Altoona-based



Paul Rosenblatt

makerspace.

Myles Geyman of Stak Ceramics spoke at the October event. Geyman and his wife, Heather, started a community ceramics studio in

Pittsburgh.

Stak Ceramics began in the basement of the couple's home and quickly expanded. The studio is now located in a beautifully remodeled multi-use industrial building in Homewood.

Future lectures include:

Kim Fox of Workerbird is scheduled for the February 22 lecture.

On March 22, Benjamin Saks of KerfCase will give the talk.

Saks has worked in varied capacities in film, design, architecture, and business and brings extensive management experience working with large clients in creative industries. Since launching KerfCase, Saks' work has been published in the W.S.J., G.Q., Elle, and TechCrunch. Based in Pittsburgh, Saks is a filmmaker, adjunct professor at Carnegie Mellon University.

Richard Nicol and Michael Johnsen of Pittsburgh Modular Synthesizers, are the speakers for the April 19 event.

Lectures take place from 6 to 8 p.m.

For additional information, go to creatorsquarejohnstown.com or email paul@springboarddesign.net. >>Arlene Johns



Community garden team

Creating beauty, producing food

He who plants a garden plants happiness and hope.

A community garden is typically a piece of land collectively gardened by a group of people in a local community. They provide fresh produce giving the community greater access to nutritious food while fostering community and connection between local residents.

The Community Garden Capture team was created to serve as an educational network for community gardens established by the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies approximately five years ago.

During their initial assessment, the team found that some gardens in our area were well established, but others lacked volunteers and leadership. While these gardens are already managed and funded by various organizations, it is the team's goal to inspire people to become involved with their community garden by hosting hands-on educational events and developing youth programs within neighborhoods. The team's goal is to lead by example in the development and implementation of new gardens throughout our community.

In addition to helping with the community gardens, members of the team have lent a hand on other projects. Volunteers planted plugs at the Sandyvale Conservancy Greenhouse for community garden use and use by local residents. Members worked with over 100 Starbucks employees during their Global Month of Giving in



several community gardens and the Jim Mayer Riverswalk Trail in April. During the growing season, May through October, team members worked with a Girl Scout troop at the Solomon Community twice a month to plant seeds, weed, learn about compost with live earthworms and the importance of pollinators including live monarch butterflies in various stages of development. The team also started a collaboration with a church garden group in Moxham to offer additional assistance in their garden.

This team has supported and inspired gardeners in neighborhoods and churches to continue their gardening practices and share produce. They've provided instruction and shared recipes with local youth and their parents. Through this effort, they hope to inspire other neighborhoods to start gardens.

"The Community Garden Capture Team hasn't 're-invented the wheel' related to public greenspace and home gardens," Sue Konvolinka says. "Instead, we have 'pumped up and realigned garden tires' for a smooth gardening experience. We are building on the foundation originally established and are improving gardening practices for use by all interested gardeners in our region as we lead by example."

If you have a passion for gardening and want to share your talent with others or if you have an interest in gardening, please contact Vision2025 at (814) 535-8675 or online at Johnstown25.com. No experience necessary. >> Jennifer Tiffany

