

We're a

Valley Heart

with a

LEARN • SUPPORT • ENGAGE

with local nonprofit organizations



Highlighting:

501CFree

Wilkes-Barre YMCA

Wyoming Valley Alcohol & Drug Services

Candy's Place

Thanks for Giving

Charles M. Barber
President and CEO of The Luzerne Foundation

A few weeks ago, a friend of mine who is a teacher shared with me how one of her students voiced that she had never previously considered how the items we spend money on can directly impact social issues. Her young student suddenly stopped to contemplate how her personal financial decisions might enable (or in part help to disable) systemic problems. She began to realize that institutions hold economic and social power, which is fueled by consumers' choices to buy certain products. For the first time in this youngster's life, there was a lightbulb moment of discovery in considering how just one person's actions are part of a bigger, interconnected narrative. That larger story of connection is something that I've been giving quite a bit of thought to lately.

Specifically, I've been thinking about how each of us are uniquely linked to one another personally, socially, and economically. You may have heard of the ripple effect or butterfly effect, but I can't help thinking about the concept of interconnectedness as more of a tapestry. If even one single thread begins to fray, the entire piece may be at risk of unraveling. In my mind, our region is a delicate weaving made up of a variety of people, social programs, governmental initiatives, nonprofits, businesses, and other organizations who give structure to our small corner of society. We depend upon each of these common threads to hold together the fabric of our communities.

Thinking more broadly, I also reflect on how the issues that affect vulnerable populations in our region impact all of us on a personal level. Homelessness, poverty, availability of quality medical care, educational opportunities, access to arts and culture, community development, environmental concerns: these are all issues that impact not just individuals, but entire populations. If specific demographics are disenfranchised, not only does it impact them directly, but they are prevented from contributing to the greater good and the economic development for everyone. In turn, this damage impacts citizens across all socioeconomic levels. How can we foster leadership in future generations if we can't promise each individual the foundations of what they need to thrive today?

These pressing issues which affect all of us urge me to consider how we can best reach those members of our community who need help most. By offering direct financial support to reputable local nonprofits, the Luzerne Foundation is able to bolster the economic and social success of northeastern Pennsylvania. As we honor Black History Month this February, I wanted to share a few words from Martin Luther King, Jr., who eloquently stated, "I look forward confidently to the day when all who work for a living will be one with no thought to their separateness...a dream of a nation where all our gifts and resources are held not for ourselves



alone, but as instruments of service for the rest of humanity." I think these words ring especially true for our area, where the generosity of individuals has, for a long time, helped to sustain our region and make our communities stronger.

The financial support of local citizens like you has enabled The Luzerne Foundation to enrich our local neighborhoods for decades. We hope to continue to honor that promise with our ongoing efforts to make northeastern Pennsylvania a better and brighter place. If you'd like to learn how you can take part in our efforts, please contact The Luzerne Foundation by emailing info@luzfdn.org, calling (570) 822-2065, or visiting luzfdn.org. And remember, none of us is alone in our fight to make our region the best it can be. Each of us has a vital role to play. What will yours be?

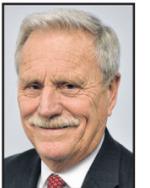
A Note from our Publisher

Mike Murray
Publisher, Times Leader
Media Group

Every non-profit organization has a mission. Every non-profit organization is driven to serve that mission thanks to the many volunteers working tirelessly to help those less fortunate than others. Today's section on four non-profits in the area is well worth reading. While each of these organizations helps a different segment of our population, the common bond is helping people in a time of need.

If you've ever thought about how you can make a difference in someone's life, reach out to one of these four or any of the many others in the valley and ask how you might help. Donations of time and energy are as important in many cases as monetary donations. Either way, your contribution is appreciated in so many ways by so many people. You can make a difference.

We hope you enjoy today's special section as much as we've enjoyed putting it together!



Nonprofit Spotlight — 501C Free

Westmoreland Club launches non-profit initiative and competition

Non-profits are always looking for ways to enhance their footprints and services.

Thanks to 501cFree Raise to the Finish, an initiative of the Westmoreland Club in Wilkes-Barre being chaired by Elyse Wilson and co-chair Jason Nataupsky, you can



501C FREE
RAISE TO THE FINISH
A Luzerne County Community Campaign

nominate an organization to receive promotional assistance, fundraising help and donations.

Only one organization will win the grand prize, but all will benefit one way or another.

"The Westmoreland Club has been a cornerstone of Wilkes-Barre since 1873, known mostly for fine dining and elegant events," Wilson said. "Last year I was tasked with bringing to life an integral part of the Westmoreland Club's Vision, 'We care about and influence our surrounding community and engage in philanthropic outreach.'"

What does the winning organization get?

A \$5,000 credit toward hosting a fundraising event at the Westmoreland Club, in addition to being the 2020 beneficiary of the club's women's committee's "Acts of Kindness" event in December, which last year raised more than \$5,000.

If you know a non-profit in Luzerne County that's deserving of such recognition and assistance, here's what to do: visit 501cFree.info on the web to nominate and learn more. The non-profits will participate in a competition where anyone in the world can vote for them thanks to the Luzerne Foundation's secure voting portal.

There are two rounds of voting: April 1-30 and July 1-30, and all that is required to vote is a donation of \$5 or \$10 (depending on the round). The second round of voting is for the top 15 organizations.

Then, a reveal party will be held at the Westmoreland Club on August 15 where the winner will be announced.

But, every participating organization seemingly wins thanks to companies like Westmoreland Worldwide, MLB Advertising and Omnitized, which will provide each with a media kit to help promote themselves on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and e-mail. This will help the companies spread their messages to the community while asking for votes.

It's a win-win for all parties, including Wilson and Nataupsky, who are enlisting the help of the Westmoreland Club's network to generate traction.

"Through our vast network of business professionals and community resources, ever-willing to give back, we found an exciting way to engage, enrich and elevate our local non-profits," Wilson said. I couldn't be more proud to be part of this movement."

Nataupsky echoed those sentiments.

"It's rare that you are given the unique opportunity to utilize an establishment like the Westmoreland Club, to help directly benefit some of the best organizations that make our tight knit community so wonderful," he said.

"So, when Elyse Wilson, chair of our program, asked me to join the 501cFree initiative, it immediately seemed like a natural fit for me. Giving back to the community that we belong to is a value that has been woven into the fabric of my entire life, from very early on," Nataupsky continued. "Highlighting the many great Luzerne County non-profits and helping them to share their 'why' has also helped me to evolve my role here at home, which I find great fulfillment with."

To learn more or nominate a non-profit, visit www.501cFree.info.



Elyse Wilson
Committee Chair



Jason Nataupsky
Committee Co-Chair

More Info:

- 570-822-6141
- 501cfree.info

Nonprofit Spotlight — Wyoming Valley Alcohol & Drug Services

Wyoming Valley Alcohol & Drug Services (WVADS) is dedicated to providing both treatment and prevention education to the citizens of Luzerne County. WVADS prides itself on administering professional and confidential outpatient care to anybody who needs it. One phone call can get you or a loved one a private assessment, which is the first step on the path to recovery for those suffering from substance abuse issues.



Wyoming Valley Alcohol and Drug Services, Inc.

Jason Harlen, CEO of WVADS since 2014, recognized how far the agency has come since its formative days. Reflecting on the organization's growth, Harlen commented, "We began back in 1973. We were very small-scaled at that point, with just a few counselors. In 2020 we have three facilities, so we've expanded drastically in the last 47 years." Indeed, over the past nearly five decades, WVADS has also accrued a long list of awards and achievements, including the Veterans of Vietnam War, Inc. National Community Service Award and an international MARKIE Award for treatment and prevention/education. In addition, more than 10 of WVADS' staff members have been distinguished with a Superior Service Award by the Luzerne-Wyoming Counties Drug and Alcohol Program Executive Commission.

Of course, half the battle against drug and alcohol abuse or dependence is preventing these hardships from occurring in the first place. "We do prevention education as well," Harlen said. He continued, "We go into school districts and the community and we teach different populations about substance use disorders, and provide education about drugs and alcohol. We do hundreds of presentations each year and thousands of hours of prevention education too." In fact, WVADS also shares a variety of resources on its website for free, including a list of drug terminology, screening tests, and downloadable books and pamphlets.

Beyond treating and educating the public about alcohol and drug disorders, WVADS is also the first agency in Pennsylvania to be certified to treat people for gambling problems. The agency offers confidential assessments/evaluations to determine the appropriate treatment for individuals who are suffering from gambling addiction.

It should be noted that WVADS offers financial assistance for individuals or families who may be unable to fully pay for treatment. "We work with people financially," Harlen said. "If someone doesn't have insurance, we have different forms of funding we can initiate to help them."

Harlen encouraged anyone thinking about getting help to consider WVADS for treatment: "If someone feels they need help, we'll get them help; we're here for them. We're a community agency and we'll do our best to help them out; we don't refuse people." To learn more about WVADS, visit their website at wvadsinc.com or at their Facebook page @WVADSInc, and for information on donating, call (570) 820-8888.



Jason Harlen

Chief Executive Officer

More Info:

- 570-820-8888
- wvadsinc.com

WVADS Photos



Nonprofit Spotlight — Wilkes-Barre YMCA

The YMCA has existed as a global organization for 175 years, and it's had a presence in Wilkes-Barre, PA for nearly just as long. The Wilkes-Barre YMCA (or simply "the Y") was founded in 1863, and has since strived to impart Christian principles through helping its community members build healthier minds, bodies, and spirits. Beyond the recreational facilities offered by the Y, the Wilkes-Barre chapter of the organization also boasts a long history of community service involvement throughout the Wyoming Valley.



Dallas resident Jim Thomas has worked with the YMCA for 44 years, serving in roles including Program Executive and Youth & Camping Director before becoming Executive Director in 1994. Under Thomas' leadership, the Wilkes-Barre YMCA has evolved to serve individuals ranging in age from infancy to older adulthood through the implementation of several community-based programs, including childhood education, summer day and overnight camps, summer learning loss prevention, chronic disease prevention and management, wellness, aquatics and more. Recently, the Greater Wilkes-Barre Friendly Sons of St. Patrick named Thomas their Man of the Year for his lifelong service to his community through his efforts at the Wilkes-Barre YMCA.

In addition to its wide variety of athletic and wellness programs, clinics, and leagues, the Y also offers childcare services, including daycare for ages 6 weeks through 3 years, preschool programs, and a before/after school program for children grades K-6 attending any Wilkes-Barre Area school. Free tutoring is also offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout September to May, provided by students from Wilkes University. The Wilkes-Barre YMCA also operates YMCA Camp Kresge in the Pocono Mountains, featuring day camps for children ages 6 to 12 and teens ages 13 to 16; registration for summer 2020 is currently open and accessible at wbymca.org. Regarding membership, the YMCA is able to provide financial assistance for those living on a fixed or limited income, thanks in large part to the organization's donors.

The Y will also be hosting a fundraiser on May 2nd: the Kentucky Derby Gala at the Westmoreland Club, which will feature a dinner, screenings of the race, and a silent auction. The Wilkes-Barre YMCA is always happy to accept donations, and any contributions go toward improving facilities, enhancing programs, and helping low-income and under served families and individuals. Donations can be sent to Wilkes-Barre Family YMCA, Development, 40 W. Northampton Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701 or



Jim Thomas

Executive Director

More Info:

- 570-208-9622
- wbymca.org

made online at their website, wbymca.org. Additionally, to stay up to date on YMCA news and events, visit their Facebook page, [@wbymca](https://www.facebook.com/wbymca).

Wilkes-Barre YMCA Photos



Nonprofit Spotlight — Candy's Place

"No negativity in my aura." That was the catchphrase of Candice Vincent-Mamary, the namesake of Candy's Place. In 1997, Candy was diagnosed with lung cancer in her 40s, despite living an active life and being a non-smoker. Unfortunately, Candy passed away only six months after her diagnosis, but she told her sister, Penny Cunningham, that she wanted something good to come out of her disease. Thus, Candy's Place was founded the very next year.

Candy's Place's current CEO, Lisa Orlandini, has her own personal connection to the center's mission. "My mom has been living with stage 4 colon cancer for 4 years," Orlandini said. "So my sister took her here and my mom got some wigs. When Candy's Place was about to close, my mom and sister saw an article about a new administrator position, and I applied. And here we are!" Orlandini has served as CEO since December 2018 and the center has since expanded in February of 2019, adding another 3,000 square feet to their facilities.

The center, located at 190 Welles Street, Suite 166 in Forty Fort, aims to provide as many options of support and care as possible to anyone ages 18 and up experiencing any type of cancer, male or female. Open Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Candy's Place offers, as Orlandini put it, "a little bit of everything." The center's "healing arts hallway" is home to massage therapy, vibrational sound therapy, and reflexology sessions, which aim to reduce stress and mitigate the side effects from chemotherapy or radiation treatment. The new portion of the center hosts the "expressive arts corner." Orlandini stated, "We started launching expressive art workshops to help people can use that creative process to help them work through the things they're experiencing."

Also in the new, expanded portion of Candy's Place is the fitness center, which houses an assortment of new exercise equipment, and plenty of open space for aerobics classes hosted in the mornings and yoga/cardio classes in the evenings. Nearby is the center's new rec room, complete with a big-screen TV, reclining couches, a pool table, and a dartboard. Orlandini commented, "It's been fondly referred to as the 'man cave,' but I say, 'In all fairness, it's also the ladies' lair!'"

As for upcoming events, Candy's Place is hosting a "Purse 'Plus' Bingo" fundraising event at King's College on March 27th, with prizes ranging from designer bags, to ties, to golf clubs. In addition, the 23rd Annual Walk for Candy's Place is scheduled for May 9th: more information can be found on their Facebook page or their website, cancerwellnessnepa.org.

Monetary donations can also be made through their website, but the center also accepts items on its wishlist. Orlandini encouraged anyone curious about Candy's Place to visit for a tour of the facilities: "A lot of the time, people just don't know what's available, but once people come in and see what it's all about, they're amazed."



Lisa Orlandini

Chief Executive Officer

More Info:

- 570-714-8800
- cancerwellnessnepa.org

Candy's Place Photos



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