

GREEN TREE TIMES

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Walk or Ride and Enjoy Nature, Architecture and History this August



Walk the Burgh is offering a variety of tours this month.
~courtesy of Walk the Burgh

Our weeks are forever changing! We are living in a world where we need to be able to adapt very quickly and that makes it difficult to predict what activities will or will not be available to do in August.

What we do know, is that summer is usually hot in Pittsburgh. There is a good bit of rain but also lots of sun so heading outdoors is a pretty good bet for most days.

With that in mind, I thought we could focus on nature's beauty. It never disappoints!

The Pittsburgh Botanic Garden has a lot to see this time of year. Enjoy the lush and scenic beauty of the gardens. One exhibit is Garden of the Five Senses. A walk through this whimsical garden is a journey of discovery and fun. Designed for all ages, visitors can engage in nature in unique ways as they explore the sights and sounds of the woodlands. There is a zone for each of the different senses. This garden was designed with key elements to be accessible and friendly to all, including individuals on the autism spectrum.

They offer an additional five other gardens that each have a specialty feature including a pollinator garden and woodlands.

Buy advanced tickets for a specific visit time, wear a mask and practice social distancing. The garden is a walking outdoor experience for all. Info at pittsburghbotanicgarden.org.

On a rainy day you can be inside but feel like you are outside at Phipps Conservatory. They are open and invite all back to their glasshouse and gardens to enjoy the Summer Flower Show: Back in Bloom running through Sept. 27. This special new show celebrates by connecting guests to nature through beautiful, horticultural displays and serene spaces. A stroll through glasshouse rooms overflowing with lush greenery and colorful blooms is sure to provide peace at a time when it is needed more than ever.

The Phipps' Discovery team have created a new plant identification game sheet for you to use with your children when you visit. All tickets must be purchased in advance and you can enter by showing an electronic or printed copy of your receipt to our guest services team. Masks must be worn and social distancing is in place. Info at phippsconservatory.org.

Take advantage of the nice weather and discover some new things with a Walk the Burgh Tour. They are offering a variety of tours and keeping it safe by limiting the number of people per tour, wearing masks and social distancing. There's the Best of the Burgh Tour, Black & Ghost Tour, and the new Simply Steps. Each tour is 1 1/2 - 2 hours each and includes a free water bottle and coupons for partnering restaurants. Info at walktheburgh.com.

There are Self-Guided Walking Tours to Explore Pittsburgh available through GPSmyCity. They have five different expert-designed self-guided walking tours to explore the area on foot at your own pace. You can also create your own self-guided walk to visit the city attractions which interest you the most.

All you need is a phone or tablet. Download the app "GPSmyCity: Walks in 1K+ Cities" from iTunes App Store or Google Play to your mobile phone or tablet. Each walk comes with a detailed tour map as well as photos and background information for the featured attractions. The app's navigation functions guide you from one attraction to the next. The app works offline, so no data plan is needed when traveling. More info at www.gpsmycity.com.

SELF-GUIDED WALKING TOURS: The Pittsburgh Art in Public Places guidebook features tours of three Downtown neighborhoods, the North Shore, and the Northside. Each tour takes 80 - 120 minutes. You can obtain a free, hardcopy of the book by visiting the office at 810 Penn Avenue, 6th Floor, 15222, or at the Visit Pittsburgh Welcome Center at 120 Fifth Avenue, 15222. The book is also available as a free download. The Office of

Public Art is open Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Info at pittsburghartscouncil.org.

The Green Tree Nature Center Trail is open. The entrance is at the corner of Crestmont Dr. and Hillcrest Ave. Enjoy the lush flora and fauna that helps Green Tree live up to its name. You might see some wild turkeys, deer, owls, salamanders or even a fox or two if you get lucky! There are walking trails to help guide you and a bridge to help you traverse over the gully. Natural streams can also be found. You'd never believe you're only two miles from a major city! Dogs are now permitted in the Green Tree Nature Center but MUST be on a leash and they ask that you please clean up after your pet.

Locally there are the Montour Trail and the Panhandle Trail for walking.

The Montour Trail stretches 60-plus miles around Pittsburgh — the longest suburban rail-trail in the U.S. The relatively flat half-loop stretches from Coraopolis (along the Ohio River) to Clairton (on the Monongahela River). A northwest branch connects directly to Pittsburgh International Airport. The Trail is ADA accessible as well. The Montour Rd. Trailhead is probably the closest to our readers but you can find maps and driving directions on the website to all starting points and parking. Info at montourtrail.org.

The Panhandle Trail stretches for 29 miles from Walkers Mill in Collier Township, PA to Colliers, WV. Details and maps at panhandletrail.org.

There's 150 miles of biking and hiking from Cumberland, MD to Pittsburgh, PA on the The Great Allegheny Passage. This trail is open daily, dawn to dusk. The trail is nearly level with the

(continued on back page)



Eye catching sunflowers at Pittsburgh Botanic Garden.

MUSINGS...Wanna Scream?



Editor's Note: Sharon Eakes is a personal and executive coach, who is a regular columnist for our paper as well as for the Huffington Post. She is the author of Fresh Views on Resilient Living. She may be reached by calling 412-741-1709 or email Sharon@hopellc.com.

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Go Ahead and Scream

This might be one of the most creative ads ever. Iceland, a country I visited and love for its quirky sense of humor, came up with a way you can record a scream on your computer and it will be let loose in one of 7 wild places in Iceland. Go to www.lookslikeyouneediceland.com, and record your scream. I did it, and my scream was let loose in Ffestarfall, Reykijanes, Iceland. This is a subglacial volcano.....a perfect landing place for my scream.

I am not making light of the raw situation we're in. Calling on all our strength and wisdom, we are working to stay safe from COVID-19, find our way to social justice, and live with economic uncertainty. The thing is that while we grapple with these huge issues, daily life goes on. So after we scream, instead of railing at the situation, what if we shift to seeing how creatively, kindly and safely we can get through it?

Other Ways to Cope and Have Fun

There are some other big and small ways people have found to cope and have fun. Here are a few:

-Sing in a virtual choir. Eric Whitacre, American composer and conductor, created a Virtual Choir 10

years ago. During the pandemic it has expanded exponentially. People sang and recorded their parts at home, and Whitacre put it together. To his amazement over 17,000 people from 129 countries participated. Whitacre composed a piece especially for the pandemic, Sing Gently. It was performed July 19 and can be played on YouTube. The Choir is Virtualchoir6 and the history and thinktank can be found at www.virtualchoir6.com.

-Watch a movie with a friend – remotely. Agree in advance what you'll watch. Have your popcorn ready. Talk or text a bit just to get ready. Giggle because it feels so strange. Then count down to start the movie at the same time. Text when anything really notable happens. Talk afterward to share what you liked about it.

-Zoom or Facetime scavenger hunts. Especially good for grandchildren.

-Meet online with your siblings.

-Write a story or a poem with one or more others, consulting on the phone, Zoom, or FaceTime.

-Plant and nurture a garden. It's not too late. My friend Maria always quoted an old Russian proverb, "All sorrows go into the dirt." And it's true.

-Get fit. Try the app Walk@Home. I love it! I now get 30 minutes of cardio a day using this app. I love that it's fun and done inside. Leslie Sansone, the trainer, who's from New Castle, PA, is encouraging and keeps it interesting so I don't get bored and quit.

-Learn to meditate. There are many Youtube videos, or use an app like Headspace or Calm.

-Look up and try a new art form, like poured painting or Tunisian knitting.

-Call an old friend you haven't talked to in years.

-Listen to podcasts – they are available on every imaginable subject. Read or reread a book.

We can cope and get through this weird time..... together.

COACHING TIPS/QUESTIONS

- 1.How well are you coping?
- 2.Would a good scream launched into Iceland help? If so – do it now. Go Ahead and Scream
- 3.What other activities can you share that are helping keep you sane?
- 4.What have you thought of doing, but haven't gotten around to? Do it.
- 5.Please send me your best ideas. I'll post them in a future piece.

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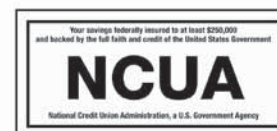
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The Fishin' Hole



by Sam Hall

The list of good things to come from the summer of 2020 might be short but it will also be powerful. Time spent with family, even though some of it might not be by choice but out of necessity, is still time well spent. I trust you are caring for one another and finding the time rewarding in some way.

The very hot dry weather has made some of the local fisheries tough to figure out this summer. The

creeks are low as are the rivers. Early morning and night time will continue to be your best bets through August and on the streams look for that faster moving water that will bring more oxygen to the fish giving them more energy for eating.

Maybe you're looking for a new spot to fish? Now there is a really cool service from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission now available. Simply go to www.fishandboat.com.

Once there, simply scroll down and click on Best Fishing Waters and a list of the very best places to fish by type of fish will pop up.

There are plenty of locations nearby and it even breaks down the rivers into sections so you can figure out how to give yourself the best opportunity for success. Speaking of success...

What a great catch for Fishin' Hole fanatic Willie from Pittsburgh this past month. Six year old Willie was fishing at a location he would rather not tell everyone about because he doesn't want it to get over-

fished, when he landed this beautiful green sunfish. "The scientific name is *Lepomis Cyanellus*," Willie explained to the Fishin' Hole. This particular fish was very feisty. After the fight, well at least he thought it was after the fight, Willie wanted to see up close the beauty of this fish. He got a little too close in his examination and paid the price with a whack in the face from his foe's tail! Undaunted by this, albeit provoked and unexpected attack, Willie proceeded to break down the experience for other fishermen in the area so as to ensure they did not suffer a similar fate! That's being a good neighbor AND a good angler. That is why the Fishin' Hole is honored to call Willie a friend and colleague! Be like Willie and get out there, catch those fish and help your fellow anglers this month. Keep those lines tight and send your pictures and stories to samdhall@comcast.net Oh and wash your hands and maintain that social distance!



Willie and his *Lepomis Cyanellus*.



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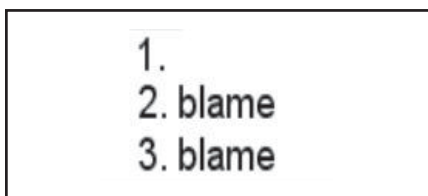
Fun and Games for Kids



Solve the Rebus Puzzles

Find the eight differences in the pictures below.

(Answers on back page)



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**Enjoy Nature, Architecture and History***(continued from front page)*

Some nature on the Montour Trail.

~photo courtesy of Chuck Dieterle

ily Nature Trivia Night at Succop Nature Park and Monarchs and Milkweed at Beechwood Park. Masks are required to participate in all ASWP programs, including outdoor hikes. All info can be found at aswp.org.

Venture Outdoors are having regular outside activities for all ages. The Venture Outdoors Again program is for 50+ and really engages that age group and there are hikes, bike rides and more that are perfect! Each month you could go geocaching, hiking, walking and more. Go to the website for information. All activities are prepared for COVID safety.

The Adult Adventurer Learning Series is great for anyone who wants to feel more comfortable getting outside! They provide information to help you learn and engage in a variety of outdoor experiences that can be done both in and outdoors. In each category we provide you with a handout and activity related to that topic! Topics include Knot Tying, Stewardship, Trail Basics, Wildflower Identification, iNaturalist App, Yoga, First Aid and Tree Identification.

If you don't feel up to being outside they are offering some fantastic virtual experiences! There are Senior Virtual Outdoor Experiences, including a weekly zoom activity as well as Youth Virtual activities. These are definitely worth checking out! Info at ventureoutdoors.org.

average grade of less than 1%. It has a packed crushed limestone surface for a smooth ride. The trail starts downtown and you can find details and printable maps with everything you need to know. You can even rent bikes. Info at gaptrail.org. All of the above trails ask that you social distance, and don't litter. Bathrooms and water fountains are closed so bring your own water.

All trails at Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve, Succop Nature Park, and Todd Nature Reserve are open. All visitors need to practice appropriate social distancing (remain at least 6 feet apart) techniques. Join a naturalist for a walk on Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve's trails - it's free and takes place every Wed. morning at 9 am, year round. Try the Fam-

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